

# C-7A Caribou Association

Volume 25, Issue 1

## Extra, Extra !!!

### Write A Story

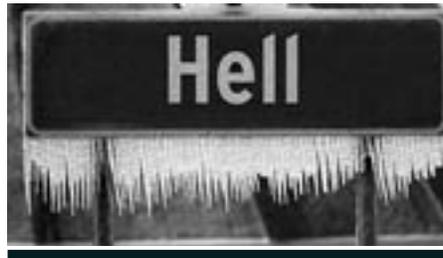
This EXTRA newsletter was made possible by your responses to my requests that you write one or more pieces

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for the newsletter. Over the past 8 years that I have edited the newsletter, your submissions have allowed me to build up a small backlog of unpublished items. THANKS for doing that. Keep it up! The more items you write, the more we will have to keep the newsletter interesting and exciting for all of us. Please, **respond** when I ask you for an article. Don't wait, **DO IT NOW!**

### It Happened!



### Spot On at Dak Seang

by Frank Godek [537, 69]

Maj. "Bear Tracks" Brown (ALCE chief at Pleiku) approached our crew and asked if we could get a couple of 4.2 inch mortars and ammo into the camp. The Special Forces team at Dak Seang reported that the tubes of their 4.2's were burned out and all they had left was small arms for defense. The crew "voted" to go down to 50 feet and drop the mortars into the camp. 1/Lt Phillip L. Lewallen was our A/C that day. We dropped the mortars right in front of the big bunker. When we got back to Pleiku, Maj. Brown informed me that the mortars were in place, were being used, and the Army said "Thanks."

Note: A good example of "You Call. We Haul." Job **well done**, guys.

### Chip Off the Old Caribou Block

Blaine "Rock" Tompkins and Air Armor Tech have developed a prototype helmet bag for the F-35 helmet from the team of Lockheed Martin, Rockwell Collins, and Elbit Systems. The helmet bag surrounds the contents completely in an air bladder. A demo (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BZ6BLqdB6GE&feature=youtu.be>) includes an introduction of the bag, inflation, insertion of an F-16 helmet, drop demo, removal of the helmet, deflation, and compacting of the bag. Air Armor Tech in Fort Worth, TX was founded by Blaine Thompson, son of Staton Tompkins [535, 68] and his wife, Debbie.

Blaine is an F-16 pilot in the USAF Reserve and a former F/A-18 Super Hornet pilot for the U.S. Navy with 17 years of service. He has almost 3000 hours flight time in tactical aircraft and 292 combat hours, with one deployment for Operation Southern Watch and two for Operation Iraqi Freedom with both the USN and USAF. Rock was the Super Hornet Demonstration pilot in 2006. He worked for a defense contractor as a Pilot Subject Matter Expert to develop the pilot training syllabus for the F-35. He is an avid hunter, fisherman, and Advanced SCUBA diver and spear fisherman. He rides both street and dirt bikes and has completed numerous triathlon competitions to include the Half-Ironman. His desire to improve products and systems is one of the few career options that approaches the satisfaction he experiences flying.



## Lost Members

by Pat Hanavan [535, 68]

We have lost track of the members listed below. We have no good address, email, or phone for them. Although they have been members, they are currently listed as INACTIVE in the roster.

If you know where they are, please let me know by email or snail mail.

Unit	Rank	First	LastName
15APS	SSG	Dick	Dowgiallo
4449	MSG	Juan	Rangel
4449	MAJ	John	Stewart
457	MSG	Roy	Dietz
457	SGT	James	Lane
457	Unk	Stephen	Smith
457	SMS	John	Walker
457	LTC	Ansel	Wood
458	COL	Neil	Crist
458	SSG	Frank	Felix
458	MAJ	Fred	Huttel
458	MSG	Truitt	Kelly
459	A1C	David	Carnahan
459	MAJ	Lee	Miller
459	TSG	Don	Vollentine
459	LTC	Sam	Wareham
483	SSG	Geo.	Chamberlain
483	Unk	Lance	Osborne
483	MSG	Angel	Pacheco
483	SGT	Dale	Smith
483	MSG	George	Stevenson
535	MAJ	Donald	Blair
535	MAJ	Brian	Hudson
535	MSG	Roger	Jarvanpaa
535	SGT	Tarry	Maxson
535	LTC	Fred	Pappas, Jr
535	MAJ	George	Staton
536	LTC	Roger	Blinn
536	A1C	Carlos	Sanchez
536	CPT	Jerry	Slaven
537	LTC	Bill	Collette
537	1LT	Felton	Havins, Jr
Unk	Unk	Leon	Gilder

## Good Book

Sam McGowan's book, *Trash Haulers*, is a history of the C-130 Herky Bird. It is available from Amazon.com and is **well worth buying and reading**. They did **hairy and awesome** things!

## 2014 Reunion Hotel Register Now!!!

The hotel in Ft. Walton Beach for our reunion this year (15-19 October) is the Ramada Plaza Beach Resort, located on 800 feet of one of the world's most beautiful beaches on the Gulf of Mexico. The hotel is within walking distance to The Boardwalk, Beasley Park, and Emerald Coast Conference Center.

Swim under the five-story waterfall and enjoy a beverage from the Beach Bar (daily) or the Grotto Bar (Friday and Saturday). Sun yourself by one of two crystal clear pools. There is something for everyone – the perfect casual Florida venue.

Several members have sent me letters and emails telling how much they enjoyed vacationing at this hotel. Reservations are open **now** for our group rate.

Call 800-874-8962 (**reservations clerk at the hotel**). Group code is "C-7A Caribou Association."

Rate is \$109.89 for a Standard Room, \$120.99 for a Courtyard Room, \$143.19 for a Poolside Room, and \$176.49 for a Beachfront Room. Rate is good from 13-21 October.

**CALL TODAY AND MAKE YOUR ROOM RESERVATION!!!**

## Time To Renew!!

Check the mailing label on this newsletter. If it does not show "2014" or later, then it is **TIME TO PAY** your Bou Tax or this will be the **last** newsletter you will receive.

If the year is before 2014, you may have: changed your address and the last newsletter went to an old address, or just sent in your check, or forgotten to send your check

**DO IT TODAY.**

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

Mike Murphy  
555 Couch Ave, Apt 432  
Kirkwood, MO 63122-5564

**DO NOT** use microwave and toaster oven at the same time. It will throw the Earth out of orbit and we'll plummet into the Sun.  
**Thank You**

## Attic/Trunk Search

Recently, Roy Padgett [537 TAS and 483 TAW, 66] mentioned that he had some orders in his personal file from his days with the C-7A. Thinking that those orders might have names of guys who were not found during my research of Caribou history at Maxwell AFB or "remembered" by someone, I asked him to send me a copy of each order.

Roy did that and they were a **GOLD-MINE!** I found 55 names that were unknown to us.

Any order (e.g., PCS, blanket TDY, award) or document from that time frame could have names we should add to the roster so they are "known" to the Caribou community.

Please, go through your files and records and find any document which could add to our history records. Every little bit helps and you can do a great service to the Association by taking a few minutes to locate them and send them to me:

Pat Hanavan, 12402 Winding Branch, San Antonio, TX 78230-2770.

## Copier Humor

**Notice: Copier is Out of Order**

Yes, we have called for service.

Yes, they will be in today.

No, we cannot fix it.

No, we don't know how long it will take to fix it.

No, we don't know what caused it.

No, we don't know who broke it.

Yes, we are keeping it.

No, we don't know what you are going to do now.

**THANK YOU!**

## Center for the Intrepid San Antonio Military Medical Center



**Center for the Intrepid.** The Association's check and the one from Frank Godek were presented to the Director of the Center, Dr. Rebecca Hooper, over the holidays. Anyone wishing to make a direct contribution to the Center can do so by writing a check made out to "U.S. Treasury" with "for Center for the Intrepid (SAMMC)" on the memo line. Any check sent to Pat Hanavan will be hand delivered by him to the Director.

**Mission** The threefold mission of the CFI is to provide rehabilitation for OIF/OEF casualties who have sustained amputation, burns, or functional limb loss, to provide education to DoD and Department of Veteran's Affairs professionals on cutting edge rehabilitation modalities, and to promote research in the fields of orthopaedics, prosthetics and physical/occupational rehabilitation. The staff and equipment for the building were selected to provide the

full spectrum of amputee rehabilitation as well as the advanced outpatient rehabilitation for burn victims and limb salvage patients with residual functional loss.

**Vision** Through the collaboration of a multi-disciplinary team, we will provide state-of-the-art amputee care, assisting our patients as they return to the highest levels of physical, psychological and emotional function.

**History** In the spring of 2005, Arnold Fisher and the board of directors of the Intrepid Fallen Heroes proffered a rehabilitation facility. Secretary of the Army Harvey accepted the proffer and funds for the facility were received from over 600,000 Americans. Ground was broken for the four story, 65,000 square foot outpatient rehabilitation facility and two new 21 handicap accessible suite Fisher Houses on 22 September 2005. The ribbon cutting for the CFI

and the new Fisher Houses was held on 29 January 2007 and patient care began in the facility on 15 February 2007.

**Capabilities** The capabilities of the CFI include state-of-the-world technologies designed to be used for rehabilitation, research, education, and training. Patients are challenged by state-of-the-art physical therapy and occupational therapy, demanding and challenging sports equipment, and virtual reality systems. They benefit from individualized case management, access to behavioral medicine services, and in-house prosthetic fitting and fabrication. The Computer Assisted Rehabilitation Environment (CAREN) provides virtual reality training, the Motion Analysis Lab allows specialists to detect gait deviations not discernible to the naked eye, the Firearms training simulator reacquaints patients with their weapons systems, and the Flowrider integrates balance, core strength training, and excitement into the rehabilitation process. The CFI is an outpatient facility under the command and control of the Department of Orthopaedics and Rehabilitation. The CFI is staffed by active duty and civilian medical staff, contract providers, and nine full-time Department of Veteran's Affairs employees. Together they work to maximize the patients' rehabilitative potential and to facilitate reintegration whether or not they remain on active duty or return to civilian life. Together they work to maximize the patients' rehabilitative potential and to facilitate reintegration whether or not they remain on active duty or return to civilian life.

Services are presented to patients using an interdisciplinary approach and include physical medicine, case management, behavioral medicine, occupational therapy, physical therapy, wound care, and prosthetic fitting and fabrication. During a typical week, 140-145 different patients are seen and account for between 550-650 patient visits. During the first year of operation, there were over 28,000 patient visits documented at the CFI.

## Cargo Door

by Carroll Wood [457, 67]

I believe it was in 1968. My aircraft commander was an IP and the copilot was new in country. We loaded up with 18 foot wooden beams and headed for Dak Pek. As I remember, it was a warm day with patchy clouds and mid afternoon when we approached Dak Pek. We were on final and at around 50 feet when we hit a wind shear. We hit the runway hard and at a high angle of attack. That caused the cargo door to break loose at the bottom latches and, on the bounce, contacted the runway. The door peeled back like a sardine can. After the aircraft came to a stop, we jumped out to assess the damage. The main tires were flat or almost flat, both inboard wing stress plates were bent, and of, course, the cargo door was of no use. The A/C contacted the Wing Command Post and a maintenance crew was flown in. It was determined by them that they could tie the door up using tie down straps, pump the tires up, and we could fly her home. It was a little hairy for a bit, but we all made it back to Cam Rahn without a hitch.

## Almost A Bou Guy

by Lt. Col. Jim Noblitt

I was stationed at Mather AFB flying T-29's in the navigator training school in 1966 and all pilot assignments were frozen because of a critical navigator shortage. When the pilot assignment freeze was lifted, several pilots were transferred to Vietnam. Most assignments were for C-123's and O-2's (Forward Air Controller), and other light aircraft. Several pilots also received assignments for the Army Caribou. The first two blocks of assignments were for these aircraft. I was to receive one of the next block of assignments. The next block of seven assignments were for staff positions. All the following blocks of assignments were flying positions. I have no idea why we received staff assignments - luck of the draw I guess.

So, seven of us were sent TDY to Nellis AFB for a one week Rolling Thunder orientation course. Rolling Thunder was the strategy of the Johnson administration for gradual escalation of the bombing campaign to force North Vietnam to the negotiating table. We were briefed on the strategy and tactics being used. Then, we were off to Vietnam.

## My Tour

by Tom Epps [483, 70]

My duty station was Cam Ranh Bay from May 1970 to 1971. I was an engine mechanic on the C-7A Caribou and worked in the docks, test cell, build-up shop, and on the flight line (days and nights). I went to many bases in Nam doing engine maintenance and repair. One in particular was Tay Ninh where a ground safety officer ran a Boo into a ditch and we came in with a bunch of other 483<sup>rd</sup> CAMS shops and security police to remove props, engines, horizontal stabilizer, wings, landing gear and some interior components so the aircraft could be air lifted to Thailand depot for total rework.

About 6 months later that same aircraft came back to Cam Ranh so we could get it ready for duty once again. I really cannot remember many of the guys names from the engine shop: Sgt. Stick, Cunningham, Penny (from Richard Gebauer AFB) and Rick Pafik (my room mate). We used to go down to the beach at Cam Ranh and party on our time off. I was also friends with some sky cops at Cam Ranh that worked on the Pigs and they worked out of a shop on the hill just above the two story barracks section. We used to go up there after work and sit on the hillside at night and watch the war – quite a sight!

If you were there at that time in the engine shop, contact me and let's get re-acquainted and trade war stories. I live in the Branson, MO area.

My email address is  
tea49@centurytel.net

## Jettisoned Tanks

External tanks provide fuel to integrate internal tanks and extend fighters and bombers. Even if they can be refueled by aerial tankers, tactical warplanes heavily rely on the jet fuel loaded in the external fuel tanks. However, the auxiliary fuel tanks represent an additional weight, additional drag, and they reduce the aircraft maneuverability.

In combat, external fuel tanks are jettisoned when empty or as soon as the aircraft needs to get rid of them to accelerate and maneuver against an enemy fighter plane or to evade a surface to air missile.

Several thousand drop tanks were jettisoned over Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War. In these pictures, you can see what happened to some of those that were recovered.



## Reluctant Navigator

by Lt. Col. Ed Rider

The “Yellowbirds” were back at Phan Rang after flying night interdiction missions in the southern part of North Vietnam and along the supply routes down through Laos. I had a patch on my party flight suit that said “Laotian Highway Patrol.”

Other than the two navigators in the squadron who would willingly fly with me, the others did not like my highly unorthodox tactics. I tried to point out to them that other pilots were getting shot up – or shot down – while I never took hits and killed more trucks than most. Those idiots were coming back with their airplanes full of holes and getting medals for it. Anyway, my navigator came down with a bad case of “Ho’s Revenge” and the other navigator was already flying, so someone had to be volunteered. The hand of fate laid its clammy finger on Bill. After an earlier adventure that ended in a belly landing due to hydraulic failure, he had sworn never to fly with me again. We had to drag him scratching and spitting, so to speak, to the airplane.

We were taking off at midnight to hit a truck park way up in Laos. I asked the crew chief if his airplane was ready, and when he said “Yes,” I gave him four beers to put into the rear compartment and told him to button it up (close all inspection doors). I didn’t insult him by inspecting the jet. The crew chiefs liked for me to fly their birds and I never had one let me down. I went around with the armorer and checked the fuzes on the bombs for proper settings and the arming wires for proper routing. Then, I spread my maps on the ramp and showed the crew chief and armorer where we were going and what we were supposed to hit.

We were in the northeast monsoon season and had 40 knots of wind blowing down the runway. The standard night departure called for a right turn to the south after take-off until reaching the coast, then a turn to the east, and

then follow the coast to Cam Ranh Bay and turn on course. This was supposed to keep you out of the outgoing artillery, but it wasted about 3000 pounds of fuel, so naturally I didn’t follow it. After I raised the gear, I turned off all external lights so that the air traffic controllers in the tower could not see me. When I was high enough to drop a wing, I turned right 270 degrees so as to cross the west end of the runway headed northwest. I roared across the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne encampment and shook all the grunts out of bed and then headed up the valley that led to Dalat in the mountains. The hills on either side were invisible as there were no lights on the ground, but if I maintained the proper heading I would not run into any rocks before I got high enough to clear them. Bill was somewhat unhappy with this exercise. In due course, we climbed out of the valley and turned north to Pleiku.

We checked in with “Blind Bat”, our C-130 flare ship and from more than 50 miles out we could see his flares and the anti-aircraft fire he was attracting. The gunners must have just gotten a fresh supply of ammo because they were even shooting at his flares. We let down and coordinated altitudes so that we would not run into each other. We made eight vertical dive-bomb passes dropping our “funny bombs” – the name that FACs gave to the M-35 fire bomb.

This was the same bomb used to start the fire storms in Tokyo in World War II. It was a large cluster bomb that opened up a few thousand feet above the ground. The falling bomb-lets made a fiery waterfall until they hit the ground. Then, they spewed out burning white and yellow phosphorus like Roman candles. Really something to see at night.

We stirred up a hornets’ nest and the flak was thick. When it got close, you could hear it popping like popcorn. We left the flare ship to count the burning trucks and then headed for home. Just another routine mission. But, we still had our 20 mm ammo left and I hated to take it home. I called the airborne

command post and asked if they had any gun targets. They told me to contact a FAC at Tchepone. He had spotted trucks on a ferry crossing the river there.

We contacted the FAC to coordinate altitudes before we got into his area. We used a secret “base” altitude which changed every 12 hours so that the enemy could not listen in and find out our heights and then set the fuzes on his shells for that altitude. That night, base altitude was 8000 feet. He said he was at base plus four, or 12,000 feet. I said, “You must mean minus four?” He said, “No.” I asked what the hell he was doing way up there and he replied that his Cessna O-2 wouldn’t climb any higher!

His flares were floating so high that they did not illuminate the ground and I had to circle until I got their reflection on the river before I could see it. Bill kept saying something about “bingo” fuel (the minimum required to get back home with 2000 pounds of fuel left).

A few guns were shooting at our sound, but not coming close. I knew there were no radar-controlled guns. Otherwise, we would have been tracked and fired on accurately while we were circling. I finally got it worked out and caught the ferry in the flare reflection on the river and rolled in. I fired about a three second burst in a 30 degree dive from about 1500 feet. The muzzle flashes lit us up like a Christmas tree and said, “Here I am! Shoot me!” and did they ever! Now I knew why that FAC was so high. I pulled about 5 G’s to get pointed straight up.

A small part of my mind registered a red light flashing somewhere in the cockpit but I was too busy to look at it. When I ran out of airspeed at the top and had figured out up from down and was upright again, the light was out.

The FAC was encouraging, saying he had seen lots of hits on the ferry with his night vision scope, so I got set up to go in again. Bill didn’t think it was a good idea. Indeed, there were lots of

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## Reluctant Nav ...(from Page 6)

guns protecting the ferry. Most of them were twin barrel 37 mm weapons. I could tell because the “red hot beer cans” streaking past the aeroplane came up in strings of eight. The 37 mm gun fired clips of four rounds, so eight meant twin barrels.

I was worried about radar-controlled 57 mm twin barrel units mounted on tracked vehicles that often accompanied large truck convoys, but there was no evidence of them. The most spectacular show was provided by the many 23 mm ZSU units. These were four barrels mounted on a tracked vehicle, and they put out a string of tracers that waved around the sky like a kid playing with a high-pressure water hose.

My normal tactic at night over a well-defended target was to get directly over it at about 8000 feet, roll inverted, and pull the nose down to the target, drop my bomb at about 5000 feet and then pull up into a vertical climb (essentially a loop beginning at the top). Just before I ran out of airspeed, I would pull the nose down to level and roll upright. This faked out the gunners because they expected me to be off to the side of the target. I was only vulnerable in the first part of my pull-up. Under very heavy fire I sometimes varied this by not pulling up immediately, but turned 90 degrees and continued to low altitude with low power, coasting a few miles away from the target (and the guns). When using my guns, I would dive slightly off to the side, go lower and pull up to a 30 degree dive before firing.

Bill kept bothering me with this “bingo” fuel business, but I didn’t have time to discuss it with him. On my second pass, I had to use the same heading as the first run in order to see the target – not a very smart thing to do. When our muzzle flashes lit us up again, I had the feeling that if I pulled up as usual every gun would be aimed at our recovery path, so I didn’t pull up. I used my alternate tactic. The sky behind and above us was filled with a

spectacular display of fireworks. The FAC was figuratively jumping up and down because we had torched off some of the trucks on the ferry and on the south shore of the river where the vessel was now resting. Now, we did not have to circle around to catch the reflection of the flares to locate the target.

We still had 600 rounds left – six seconds worth of firing. We could approach from any direction since we could see the burning target. Bill was getting a little shrill now and yelling something about “bingo minus two.” I told him I would wind it up with two more passes and then go home. After each pass, when I was pulling 5-6 G’s to fake out the gunners, there was that pesky red light in the cockpit. I was so busy trying not to join up with those strings of “red hot beer cans” that I didn’t notice what it was. We left the FAC to add up the damage and headed home.

Relieved of all ordnance and most of its fuel, the B-57 climbed like a homesick angel. In short order, we were passing 35,000 feet and I had Bill tighten his oxygen mask and check his system for pressure breathing. As we passed 45,000 feet, we had to forcefully breathe out and just relax and let the pressure blow up our lungs to breathe in. At 53,000 feet, we were above over 95 percent of the atmosphere. At that altitude the engines used very little fuel. When we arrived over Pleiku we were 150 nautical miles from home and had just 800 pounds of fuel! Normally, when you land with 2000 pounds, that is considered an emergency, but I had been through this many times before, and was only concerned with having enough fuel to taxi to the ramp.

At that altitude, when you reduce power to idle, it only reduces slightly because the engines cannot reduce fuel consumption very much without flaming out. In order to reduce power and expedite our decent, I had to shut off one engine. I shut down the right engine because we would be flying a left hand traffic pattern. Bill was somewhat

unhappy. I maintained a 0.84 Mach descent, which meant that the descent got progressively steeper as you got into the denser air at low altitude. This let us down inside the hole of the artillery doughnut at 12,000 feet, keeping us out of the arc of outgoing artillery fire.

We were approaching from the north and had to land to the east. Once inside the hole, I extended speed brakes and pushed the nose over to maintain speed. Extending speed brakes at 500 knots is like running into a brick wall and we were thrown forward hard enough to lock our automatic shoulder harnesses. That is when that pesky red light in the cockpit came on again. This time I determined what it was. It was the low fuel pressure light. This was confirmed by the unwinding of the left engine.

I was at a critical point in my traffic pattern and had no time to deal with a double engine flameout, so I shut off the left throttle, banked 90 degrees right and pulled the nose around to a heading 180 degrees from the landing heading. Then I rolled inverted, and with about 5 G’s pulled the nose down the line of approach lights to the end of the runway and then up the centerline runway lights, varying the G’s to complete my split-S at about 1500 feet and at about 400-450 knots.

While I was busy doing this, I asked Bill to inform the tower that we had a double engine flameout and might need a tug to tow us in. Bill had lost his voice and never did make the call. When I leveled off from my split-S, I hit both air-start ignition switches and advanced both throttles to idle. After a 4 G break to downwind, I lowered gear and flaps and both engines were making the low moaning sound they made when running at idle. After touchdown I raised the flaps and added power so I could hold the nose up. With 40 knots of headwind it was a long taxi to the far end of the runway. I tried to get Bill interested in betting on whether I could make it all the way into the de-arming

**Continued on Page 8**

## Reluctant Nav ...(from Page 7)

area without lowering the nose wheel to the ground. For some reason he was not interested. Anyway, I did make it with the nose wheel in the air, and scared the “bejesus” out of the de-arming troops.

While they were de-arming my guns I figured it out. It had to be an inoperative forward boost pump in the main fuel tank. When I went to full power and pulled lots of G’s at Tchepone, one fuel pump could not handle the load and the pressure dropped – not enough, thank God, to flame out the engines. When I extended the speed brakes in my descent to Phan Rang, what little fuel we had left splashed against the forward wall of the tank, uncovering the rear fuel pump and resulting in a flameout. There is an old saying, “There are old pilots and there are bold pilots, but there are no old, bold pilots”. Not so, but we bold pilots need more luck than most.

We had enough fuel to make it back to the ramp. After we parked and deplaned, I made an inspection tour with the crew chief, armed with powerful flashlights. Not a scratch on her! Again, skill and cunning triumphed over ignorance and stupidity. The crew chief brought out the four beers from the tail compartment, ice cold from their sojourn at 50,000 feet, and I spread my maps on the ramp, giving a blow-by-blow description of the mission for my crew chief and armorer. I had an additional audience of most of the crew chiefs and armorers on the ramp who were not otherwise busy. Bill did not want his beer, so I drank it too. Needless to say, Bill never got into an airplane with me again.

Note: Ed Rider came up through the enlisted ranks, having done a stint as an Airborne Electronics Technician on the B-57 in the late 1950’s.



## My Arrival In RVN

by Andy Padgett [483,66]

I was a SSgt aircraft radio technician at Wurthsmith AFB, MI (B52H’s) on 4 August 1966 when I got orders assigning me to the 6252 Operation Sq., Tan Son Nhut with TDY enroute at 4449 Combat Crew Training Squadron, Ft. Benning, GA. In the class at Ft. Benning, everyone was SSgt to CMSgt. I remember one SMSgt who was afraid to go to RVN. He drank a lot and when he got to TSN he had to get someone to fill out his paperwork because he was shaking so much. He ended up at CRB and by summer they sent him to TX for evaluation fitness for active duty.

I left Travis AFB on 16 December. At TSN we received VERBAL orders (for the first few months, all orders were verbal) assigning us to different bases. I was attached to the 17<sup>th</sup> Aviation Company at An Khe, so I asked how to get there. They said to watch the flight line for someone pre-fighting an aircraft or helicopter and ask them if they’re going your way and can you get a ride.

A friend of mine had come to Vietnam two months earlier, assigned to Ben Hoa, so I caught a bus and went to visit him for a few days, came back to TSN, caught a C-130 to Pleiku, and checked into “Tent City.” It was the monsoon season and nothing was flying into An Khe. Every morning I checked in with base ops to see if anything was going that way. I spent Christmas there. One morning, the Army Sgt. at Ops. said, “Nothing is flying, but I can get you there today.” I said, “If nothing is flying, how can you get me there?” He said, “I have a convoy going there.” I said, “Do you see this blue uniform? I am in the Air Force. Air Force people don’t convoy, we fly,” The next day, I made it to An Khe.

The first thing they did was issue me an M-16 and 90 rounds of ammo and said, “If you see a Vietnamese in civvies during the day that isn’t escorted by military in uniform, SHOOT HIM. If you see one after sundown, SHOOT

HIM.” They said I was lucky. If I had arrived earlier, I would have to be checked out on all of the Army weapons. I saw several Caribous flying with two by fours tied to the landing gear so they wouldn’t fold up on landing. They gave me a blanket, sheets, and a pillow and said to check out the tents and find an empty cot. The tents had pallets for floors and were set up in a circle around a mud puddle. I saw one Airman walk into the mud puddle and start splashing muddy water up on his pants. I thought, “He’s been here too long.” Two days later, I was doing the same thing to rinse the mud off my pants and boots before going into my tent. I believe it was the 28<sup>th</sup>. We went over to the Army side of the base to see the Bob Hope Christmas show.

I believe it was the 29<sup>th</sup> when we moved to Phu Cat (459 TCS). A couple of weeks later, my boss and I fixed the UHF on one of our birds and I went into job control to fill out and turn in the work order. While I was doing the paper work, a Captain was telling the dispatcher and my boss that anyone not listed on the board was going to CRB. I gave the work order to the dispatcher.

As they were deep in conversation, I went around the dispatch board to the board with all the names on it. It was Plexiglas, filled out in grease pencil. I had heard about CRB and knew it was a big base. I looked and no one could see me, so I took out my hankie and erased my name. I walked back around the board and said, “Captain is it true that if your name is not on the board you’re going to CRB.” He said, “Yes.” I shook my boss’s hand and said, “It’s been nice working for you.” He said, “You’re not going anywhere.” The Captain said, “Let’s check the board.” He walked back there and said, “Padgett, you’re going to CRB.” I said, “When can I leave?” He said, “We have a plane going there in one hour” and I said, “I’ll be on it.”

That’s how I transferred myself to the 483<sup>rd</sup> CAMS. On 31 July 1967. I finally got orders transferring me.

## C-7A DVD Set #2

The current planning is to have a two disk DVD set available by the 2014 reunion. A working list of the contents follows:

### Disk 1

#### Documents

AFR-64-4-Survival, Air Base Defense, Air War Over South Vietnam 1968-1975, Army Air Facilities 1973, ATC Manuals, USAF-USA Caribou Agreement, DHC-4 Maintenance Manual, DHC-4 Type Certificate Indochina Atlas 1970, M-16 Comic Book, Tactical Aerodrome Directory, Tactical Airlift by Bowers, T.O. 1-1-4 Aircraft Marking, USAF Combat Wings, 7AFP 55-1

#### C-7A images with Squadron markings (color and b&w)

457, 458, 459, 535, 536, 537 TAS

**Videos** Gunter News Video, Aussie Bou, C-7A training, Vietnam from the Air

#### Art

CRB, decal, Air Force Cross, SS, DFC, NDSM, AFCM, RVNMC, logos, patches, R-2000 prop stencil, Memorabilia masters, NMUSAF master, DHC logo, Hamilton Standard logo, P&W logo, Caribou poster, 7AF patch, 834 AD patch, R-2000, prop diagram

#### Manuals and training materials

T.O. 1-C-7A-1, Aircraft General Test, ATC 4AMF43171A-12-1, power plant notes, propeller test, CRB Approach Plates, Indochina Atlas 1970, Vietnam M-16A1 Rifle Cartoon Manual, 4442<sup>nd</sup> CCTW C-7A Accident Summary 31Oct68, 483<sup>rd</sup> TAW C-7A Standardization Guide, 834<sup>th</sup> Air Division Manual 55-1, 834<sup>th</sup> AD SEA Aircraft Accident Reviews, Aviation Week 1 April 1957 (Caribou Article), C-7A prop operation with blade switch failures, AFA Magazine June 2005, Engine Handling Chart, T.O. 1C-7A-2-1 (ground handling and airframe), T.O. 1C-7A-2-4, T.O. 1C-7A-2-9, T.O. 1C-7A-6CF-1 FCF Procedures, TAD 1967 NOV 15, TAD 1968 DEC 15, TAD 1969 JUL 15, TAD 1970 JAN 15, TAD 1973 FEB 1, TO 1-1-4 Aircraft Marking.

### Disk 2

#### Maps

ONC\_K-10, Series 1301 Charts, Series\_1501\_Charts, Series\_L509\_Charts, Series\_L701\_L7014\_Maps, Tactical VFR Chart, US Army maps v16, Vietnam Country Maps

#### City Maps

Saigon 1961, Ban Me Thuot, Bien Hoa 1968, Chu Lai 1968, Da Lat 1963, Da Nang 1969, Hue 1968, My Tho 1971, Nha Trang 1968, Quang Ngai 1966, Qui Nhon, Tuy Hoa 1968, Vinh 1970, Vinh Long 1966, Can Tho 1970, Saigon City 1962, Nha Trang Tourist Map, Saigon Cholon 1964,

#### Other maps

Administrative Divisions and Military Regions, Administrative Divisions III Corps, Administrative Divisions I Corps, CTZ I Major Road Net + Airfields, CTZ II Major Road Net + Airfields, CTZ III Major Road Net + Airfields, CTZ IV Major Road Net + Airfields, Indochina Airfields 1970, Vietnam 1971, Vietnam 2001 Vietnam Airport Capability, Vietnam Government Map, Vietnam Map, Vietnam Monsoon, Vietnam War 69-75

## Receptions at Reunions

Receptions on the first day of our reunions span a couple of hours, since people arrive at various times during the day. Our snacks, e.g., nuts, pretzels, popcorn, candies, sodas, beer, wine, chips, cheese, are sometimes supplemented by a few appetizers ordered by the reunion team from hotel catering.

The food we provide at these receptions is snacks, *not the evening meal*. At several recent reunions, some attendees have not treated the snacks as snacks, but treated the food as the evening meal. This circumstance left none of the supplemental items, e.g., meat balls, dip, quiche, crab cakes, spring rolls, crostini, for other attendees.

**Please, be aware of this problem and be considerate of others at future receptions. Take only an appropriate serving of items for yourself and make sure everyone gets their share.**

## Senior Humor

A little silver-haired lady calls her neighbor and says, "Please come over here and help me. I have a killer jigsaw puzzle and I can't figure out how to get started."

Her neighbor asks, "What is it supposed to be when it's finished?"

The little silver-haired lady says, "According to the picture on the box, it's a rooster."

Her neighbor decides to go over and help with the puzzle.

She lets him in and shows him the puzzle, spread all over the table.

He studies the pieces for a moment, looks at the box, then turns to her and says, "First of all, no matter what we do, we're not going to be able to assemble these pieces into anything resembling a rooster."

He takes her hand and says, "Secondly, I want you to relax. Let's have a nice cup of tea, and then," he said with a deep sigh . . .

"Let's put all the Corn Flakes back in the box."

Bruce Cowee [458, 68] has a new book out, *Vietnam to Western Airlines*. You can contact Bruce by email at: B2Acowee@aol.com

## Of Pigs, Cows, and Chickens

by Jon Drury [537, 68]

The Pleiku flight line put together loads for the Special Forces camps and would regularly crate cows and pigs for delivery to the camps. The camps had the choice of butchering the animals shortly after delivery, or starting herds. Usually the crates were strapped to a warehouse pallet.



The sows were big and being crated up and sitting in the heat did not help their temperament. Loading them could be a bit touchy.

Things became interesting for one of our crews when a huge, highly irritated sow got out of her crate in the aircraft during flight, before arriving at the camp. When the Flight Mechanic told the Aircraft Commander that the sow was loose, the pilot said, "Well, go back there and try to corral her so we can get to our destination."

The Flight Mechanic attempted to do it, but, his own safety in peril, returned saying, "She's mean and there is no corraling her." The pilot said, "OK, lower the ramp in flight and let her go before she damages the aircraft."

When the Flight Mechanic cracked the ramp down and the pig saw the daylight she ran out the back of the aircraft like a shot. Then, he said it was almost like a cartoon. When in thin air, it was like the pig's startled expression said, "Oh No!" and dropped like an anvil to become someone's pork sandwich.

Often when we could not land at a

destination, either because they had no runway or the runway was unavailable, we would gravity airdrop the cargo by parachute. Usually cargo was dropped from either 200 or 500 feet and was strapped to standard 48" by 48" wooden pallets. Although we could drop a maximum of five pallets, the most that could be dropped in one pass was three.

Everything had to be done correctly, or you faced the danger of the load jamming in the cargo compartment. The jam might cause the aircraft to lose the critical balance needed for flight. The Flight Mechanic and an additional crew member, a "kicker," insured that the load was released properly when the green light was illuminated by the pilot.

On one occasion when Dak Seang was closed to landings, we had to airdrop, and part of our load was crates of chickens. When the crates hit the runway, they broke open and the local Montagnard tribesmen were chasing chickens all around the runway, trying to recapture their escaping cargo.

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## Famous Quotes – Mistakes

"I'm just glad it'll be Clark Gable who's falling on his face and not Gary Cooper." – Gary Cooper on his decision not to take the leading role in "Gone With The Wind."

"The concept is interesting and well-formed, but in order to earn better than a 'C,' the idea must be feasible." – A Yale University management professor in response to Fred Smith's paper proposing reliable overnight delivery service. (Smith went on to found Federal Express Corp.)

"A cookie store is a bad idea. Besides, the market research reports say America likes crispy cookies, not soft and chewy cookies like you make." – Response to Debbi Fields' idea of starting Mrs. Fields' Cookies.

"We don't like their sound, and guitar music is on the way out." – Decca Recording Co. Rejecting the Beatles,

1962.

"Heavier-than-air flying machines are impossible," – Lord Kelvin, president, Royal Society, 1895.

"If I had thought about it, I wouldn't have done the experiment. The literature was full of examples that said you can't do this." – Spencer Silver on the work that led to the unique adhesives for 3M "Post-It" Notepads

"Drill for oil? You mean drill into the ground to try and find oil? You're crazy." – Drillers whom Edwin L. Drake tried to enlist to his project to drill for oil in 1859.

"Stocks have reached what looks like a permanently high plateau." – Irving Fisher, Professor of Economics, Yale University, 1929.

"Airplanes are interesting toys but of no military value." – Marechal Ferdinand Foch, Professor of Strategy, Ecole Superieure de Guerre, France

"Everything that can be invented has been invented." – Charles H. Duell, Commissioner, U.S. Office of Patents, 1899.

"The super computer is technologically impossible. It would take all of the water that flows over Niagara Falls to cool the heat generated by the number of vacuum tubes required." – Professor of Electrical Engineering, NYU

"I don't know what use any one could find for a machine that would make copies of documents. It certainly couldn't be a feasible business by itself." – the CEO of IBM, refusing the idea, forcing the inventor to found Xerox.

"Louis Pasteur's theory of germs is ridiculous fiction." – Pierre Pachtet, Professor of Physiology at Toulouse, 1872

"The abdomen, the chest, and the brain will forever be shut from the intrusion of the wise and humane surgeon." – Sir John Eric Ericksen, British surgeon, appointed Surgeon-Extraordinary to Queen Victoria, 1873.

And last but not least ...

"There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home." – Ken Olson, president, chairman and founder of Digital Equipment Corp., 1977

## Wanna Race?

by Jon Drury [537, 68]

Our number was 120. Our joke was that the Caribou did everything at 120 knots, climb, cruise, and descend.

One morning, having originated at An Khe, we crossed the big river, then overflowed Bong Song, where the 537<sup>th</sup> had done a lot of work before my tour. We went feet wet going north up the coast to pass Chu Lai and Da Nang, again headed for Hue Phu Bai. The water and sky were blue, there was no weather, spelling a pristine day. Getting to altitude meant relief – a break from loading, takeoff, and climb.

An Air America C-46 in the original unpainted aluminum, pulled even with me on the right. He was about the distance you would fly if flying formation – close, perhaps 15-20 feet between our wing tips. What is up with this?

The C-46 Commando was produced from 1941-1945, and at the time was the largest twin engine transport in the world. Over 3,000 were built, but it was always overshadowed by its more numerous sister, the C-47 or DC-3, of which over 10,000 were built. We knew Air America's pilots were hot dogs. You never knew what they were going to do.

He looked across to me from his cockpit, then to my shock, feathered his #1 engine. Was he having engine problems? Did he need an escort? What he did next revealed his motive. It was all for my benefit, it was all show. By advancing #2, he accelerated to pass us. "I'm hot, you're not! You are flying a dog. Hey, look at me!" Perhaps he was saying "Want to race?" If he did, we had lost out of the gate.

The Caribou wasn't built for cruise speed, but for landing in short distances. His cruise speed was 150 knots. Though his engines were R-2800's, ours were R-2000's. Our wings, horizontal stabilizer, and rudder were sizable. Sleek and sporty was not in the minds of the Caribou designers. Racing him? A losing proposition.

We just let him go his way, having

made his "I gotcha!"

What we did, we did well. He could never get into Plei Me, at 1,300 feet of clay/latelite.

## Facts You May Not Know

It takes glass one million years to decompose, which means it never wears out and can be recycled an infinite amount of times!

Gold is the only metal that doesn't rust, even if it's buried in the ground for thousands of years.

Your tongue is the only muscle in your body that is attached at only one end.

If you stop getting thirsty, you need to drink more water. When a human body is dehydrated, its thirst mechanism shuts off.

Each year 2,000,000 smokers either quit smoking or die of tobacco-related diseases.

Zero is the only number that cannot be represented by Roman numerals.

Kites were used in the American Civil War to deliver letters and newspapers.

The song, Auld Lang Syne, is sung at the stroke of midnight in almost every English-speaking country in the world to bring in the new year.

Drinking water after eating reduces the acid in your mouth by 61 percent.

Peanut oil is used for cooking in submarines because it doesn't smoke unless it's heated above 450 F.

The roar that we hear when we place a seashell next to our ear is not the ocean, but rather the sound of blood surging through the veins in the ear.

Nine out of every 10 living things live in the ocean.

The banana cannot reproduce itself. It can be propagated only by the hand of man.

Airports at higher altitudes require a longer airstrip due to lower air density.

The University of Alaska spans four time zones.

The tooth is the only part of the human body that cannot heal itself.

In ancient Greece, tossing an apple to a girl was a traditional proposal of marriage. Catching it meant she accepted.

Warner Communications paid \$28 million for the copyright to the song Happy Birthday.

Intelligent people have more zinc and copper in their hair.

A comet's tail always points away from the sun.

The Swine Flu vaccine in 1976 caused more death and illness than the disease it was intended to prevent.

Caffeine increases the power of aspirin and other painkillers, that is why it is found in some medicines.

The military salute is a motion that evolved from medieval times, when knights in armor raised their visors to reveal their identity.

If you get into the bottom of a well or a tall chimney and look up, you can see stars, even in the middle of the day.

When a person dies, hearing is the last sense to go. The first sense lost is sight.

In ancient times strangers shook hands to show that they were unarmed.

Strawberries are the only fruits whose seeds grow on the outside.

Avocados have the highest calories of any fruit at 167 calories per hundred grams.

The moon moves about two inches away from the Earth each year.

The Earth gets 100 tons heavier every day due to falling space dust.

Due to earth's gravity it is impossible for mountains to be higher than 15,000 meters.

Mickey Mouse is known as "Topolino" in Italy.

Soldiers do not march in step when going across bridges because they could set up a vibration which could be sufficient to knock the bridge down.

Everything weighs one percent less at the equator.

For every extra kilogram carried on a space flight, 530 kg of additional fuel are needed at lift-off.

The letter "J" does not appear on the periodic table of the elements.

## Pedro 83 and 84 In Afghanistan

Five 33<sup>rd</sup> Rescue Squadron Airmen were recently awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross with valor for their heroic actions during a deployment mission in 2012.

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III presented Captains Michael Kingry, Gavin Johnson and Matthew Pfarr, TSgt. Scott Lagerveld and SSgt. Robert Wells with the award Aug. 20 during his visit to Kadena Air Base, Japan. Captains Matthew Carlisle and John Larson, formerly stationed at Kadena AB, were also awarded the DFC with valor for the mission before permanently changing stations.

According to their citations, the members of PEDRO 83 and 84 distinguished themselves by heroism while participating in a two-ship HH-60G Pave Hawk combat rescue mission in Afghanistan, Aug. 4, 2012. On that day, the team demonstrated heroic actions during a seven hour, 320 mile rescue mission under direct enemy gunfire.

According to Pfarr, it wasn't just the mission that was different.

"The whole day started differently. There's a set time when we'd go pre-position all of our gear (each day). We actually got the scramble call during that time. It was a little bit of a strange day."

On a typical day during their deployment to Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, Kingry said the team would show up, put their gear on their helicopters, receive update and mission briefs on the current status and would then be on standby, waiting for the call.

"As I put my gear on the aircraft, I was halfway getting all my stuff situated when the call came in. The call we listen for comes across the radio as 'Attention on the net, attention on the net, scramble, scramble, scramble.' As soon as you hear that scramble call, you know there's somebody out there who's basically in a life or death situation,

and we've got to get off the ground as quickly as possible."

Two New Zealand coalition forces members had sustained gunshot wounds. The day would prove "strange," as the pickup location was farther than usual and was nestled within a steep mountain range, which the HH-60's could not climb because of the weight of the aircraft. Kingry said he had to first plot a course through valley passes, making the trip longer.

The lead officer, in PEDRO 83, contacted the operations center and requested an HC-130 for refueling support, realizing the team would need fuel during the extended mission.

"About halfway there we got an update from our operations center that was saying it's now five total patients," Kingry said. "Our understanding was, 'OK, the area is probably still hot, still sustaining casualties. There's an ongoing fire fight.' So that definitely led us to step up our game."

The operations center also advised there was a B-1 Lancer providing close air support overhead and gave Kingry the frequencies to contact the aircraft.

Kingry said he developed a game plan with the B-1 and JTAC for the team to get in and get the casualties out. As they got closer, they got another update – the casualty number was now seven.

As the team arrived, they located the patients within a valley flanked by very steep cliffs. Kingry and Pfarr remained overhead to provide watch while PEDRO 84 landed and picked up three patients. Kingry then landed PEDRO 83 in the same spot to pick up the other four before the team left the location.

They were too low on fuel and the patients were too critical for the team to return to Bagram AB. They had to fly to the nearest forward operating base.

The operations center notified the FOB to be ready with facilities and gas. Kingry landed PEDRO 83 with about 300 pounds of gas, the lowest he'd ever seen. The team had a few moments to reflect on what had happened when

another call came in.

There were three more casualties at the same site and the site's observation post. The team gassed up and returned to the location.

Now covered overhead by an F-16 Fighting Falcon, the team returned to the site.

"It was taking a while to package this patient just due to the fact that it was very difficult terrain," Kingry said. "They were under fire and basically the slope of that terrain made it difficult. It was starting to take more and more time, and we were burning more and more gas. So, at that point I instructed my wingman to land at the other site and pick up the remaining patient."

As PEDRO 83 and 84 were picking up their patients, they came under fire.

"As we came to a hover over the incident site and started the hoist down, the copilot came on the radio and said, 'Muzzle flashes at 10 o'clock.' I was holding the aircraft in a hover and looked out to my 10 o'clock and basically I saw five or six just bright, flashes of light all aimed at our aircraft,"

Kingry said. "I immediately started pulling the power in to go around and my first call to the gunner was '10 o'clock, 300 meters burst.' I said it again, '10 o'clock, 300 meters burst.' Finally I said 'Shoot 'em; shoot 'em; shoot 'em.' He started pouring 50 caliber machine gun rounds into their position.

"At that point, PEDRO 84 was still on the ground ... so I immediately called to them that we needed weapons support, and probably the best thing I heard the whole time as we came into the weapons pattern was 'PEDRO 84 calling in hot,'" Kingry said.

Kingry said the two aircraft spent about 500 rounds combined covering the area, with Lagerveld and Wells delivering most of the rounds.

Though the enemy threat was suppressed, the aircraft were then facing the threat of "bingo" fuel, meaning

**Continued on Page 13**

## Pedro 83 ... (from Page 12)

they had the lowest amount of gas possible to complete the mission, and the para-rescuemen (PJs) were still on the ground with the casualties. Kingry maneuvered PEDRO 83 to pick up the PJs and the casualties, while PEDRO 84 called for the tanker to move as close as possible.

Soon after, the tanker met up with the team. The next mission would be to perform helicopter air-to-air refueling, which is done by the tanker aircraft dragging a hose with a small basket behind it, and the receiving pilot directing his aircraft's probe into the basket, Kingry said.

"It was high altitude so (the basket) was bouncing around quite a bit," Kingry said. "I remember taking the controls and looking at the fuel gauge and seeing that we had about 300 pounds of fuel. Previously, we had landed with 300 pounds, and we were still about 20 to 30 minutes out.

We had to get gas or we weren't going to make it back. Luckily for me ... it kind of got calm, the basket just kind of sat there in front of me, (and) I was able to make a run in on the first try and get gas."

PEDRO 84 wasn't so lucky. The turbulence returned, and the aircraft failed at a few attempts to connect to the hose.

"I could see how much gas they had; I knew that they weren't going to be able to make it back unless they were able to (refuel)," Kingry said.

Kingry began discussing a plan to land PEDRO 84, move some of the crew to PEDRO 83 and return to the FOB, but finally Johnson was able to pilot the aircraft and connect to the tanker.

"The time that I was most afraid was ... waiting for our wingman to take fuel," Pfarr said. "We were thinking about how to make a precautionary landing in the middle of Afghanistan, and then PEDRO 83 would have to ferry crew members and patients out of there.

That was a very real possibility that we had begun to look at, and fortunately, right before we had to make that decision, they were able to get the fuel they needed. That was the most scared I felt during that day."

The team returned to the FOB, unloaded their patients and waited for more news before returning to Bagram AB.

Reflecting on the day, Pfarr said it was the type of day he expected when joining the Air Force.

"That was the type of experience that I expected to have joining the rescue community," Pfarr said. "One of the things I wanted to experience coming to the rescue community was one of those days where I could look back and know that I had done my job well and that I made a difference in people's lives."

Although humbled to receive the award, Kingry said he didn't do anything special.

"I don't think we really did anything extraordinary that anybody else in Air Force rescue wouldn't have done," he said. "I think we just happened to be the guys who were on call at that point. Anybody in our community would have done the exact same thing."

Pfarr agreed. "It's a little strange," he said. "If you were to read our mission statement, all we did was what we were there to do. In that way it's a testament to what our mission is. If that mission had dropped 10 minutes earlier, it would have been the other crew. It isn't about the individual; it's for the whole community."

Lt. Col. Pedro Ortiz, the 33<sup>rd</sup> Rescue Squadron commander, said he's extremely proud of both crews.

"They demonstrated the precise tactical execution, teamwork, and warrior spirit that has instilled confidence in ground troops for years, e.g., *Operation Enduring Freedom*," Ortiz said. "Confidence to fight the fight knowing that no matter how bad the situation gets, the 'Pedros' were covering their six and would get them out."

## B-17 Navigator's Log



10-14-43 Mission #5.

Schweinfurt, Germany. Ball bearing works. How we ever got back from this one I still don't understand! Four hours over Germany and three hours under fighter attack. Flak over the target was like a cloud and very accurate. Exactly at our altitude. We were hit three times.

Tail, wing, and glass nose broken. Kick off was at 1030. Left England at 1330. P-47 escort 20 miles inside Germany. When they left, the 109's started attacking and continued for four hours.

We were "Tail End Charlie today. In Purple Heart corner. Carried incendiaries. Clear over target and when we left it had a huge mass of flames. The whole town was burning. Flames 500 feet high.

Two B-17's burst into flames in the group ahead of us on the bomb run. 5 minutes after the target, 3 bunches of chutes opened about 7-8 in each bunch.

10 minutes later, a '17 crashed and burned in a forest.

Ju-88's were sitting out and firing rockets at us. They had everything up today. Ju-88's, HE 109's, 210's.



30 minutes later, a '17 dropped down and two fighters went down after it. 20 minutes later he came out of a cloud with his engines smoking. They all bailed out.

Our No. 1 engine ignition system was shot out. It sounded like a washing machine.

Afraid things are going to be tough from now on. No "Milk Runs."

## O-1 Curiosities

from two "Bird Dog" Pilots

All USAF Vietnam and Laos Forward Air Controllers (FACs) graduated from UPT (Undergraduate Pilot Training) and passed an annual instrument written exam and completed a formal instrument check-ride conducted by a certified flight examiner. Translation: FACs were certified to be capable of flying in the dark of night and were able to maneuver and arrive at a runway in dense weather which precluded seeing anything outside the aircraft except the inside of a cloud. They could do both those things simultaneously, fly at night inside rain and clouds and successfully arrive well aligned with the runway they were looking for. Our FACs were instrument qualified pilots.

Many of the somewhat younger FACs were graduates of an All-Jet training program and had flown the T-37 and T-38 jet training aircraft. They received minimal introductory experience flying aircraft with propellers driven by reciprocating engines (pistons, cylinders, spark plugs, exhaust manifolds) which burned gasoline instead of JP-4.

At Hurlburt, the O-1 APG (Airplane General) formal instruction consisted of precisely a one hour course, ending with "The O-1 is the Volkswagen of the air!" Systems were not complex. I recall that there were few student questions. That those metal struts connected between the wings and the base of the fuselage actually were essential items which retained the wings on the airplane during flight received no mention.

Instruction which followed the APG syllabus was mostly about learning to control a tail-dragger on the ground. "While taxiing hold the stick with full back pressure – as though there were a plow beneath the tail end of the aircraft and you were plowing the earth behind you. That technique will prevent your ground-looping the bird." That much had been left out of the formal course at Hurlburt became obvious in-country.

FACs flew each mission of their one-

year combat tour, from takeoff to landing, with their mixture lever remaining in the full rich position. (The secret of flying an O-1 is continual leaning of the mixture. Doing so not only conserves fuel, but it prevents carbon buildup in the exhaust valves.) There were occasional wistful inquiries. "What is manifold pressure, anyway?" "What is a mag and why do we check it?"

Instrument flying in an O-1 was a significant challenge to a pilot trained in the All-Jet course – no TACAN or VOR experience. The O-1 has only a whiskey compass similar in size and accuracy to those small, round, store-bought compasses one would see mounted near the rear view mirror on a Ford automobile. The airspeed and needle-ball instruments were standard, worked, and were familiar.

The O-1 had an ADF – but, it was displayed on a fixed card RMI (Remote Magnetic Indicator). On most modern aircraft, the RMI card would rotate so that your current magnetic heading was always up at the top. The O-1 was anything but modern. That "fixed card" designation meant that the O-1 background ADF card never rotated, not even a little. It was glued into place. North was forever at the top and South forever at the bottom of the display.

Flying an ADF approach using a fixed card RMI is possible, but it requires a lot of mental addition and subtraction calculations to be performed in your head without benefit of paper or pencil.

The attitude indicator was pneumatically driven. It had to be "caged" then released while in level flight. As gyros go, these were close to useless and were certain to quickly drift away from level and require a re-caging routine again after about two minutes. So the O-1 wasn't equipped for safe flight at night or in weather, or both simultaneously. If you ever had occasion to land the O-1 on a dark night you didn't enjoy your discovery that the landing light mounted on the bottom of the left wing wasn't adjustable. During round-out when you expected to use that landing

light to judge your height above the runway, your landing light just pointed out into space – illuminating no portion of the runway below.

Army observers/artillery spotters did not control (or practice the control of) air strikes. They were never trained to do so, and seldom had close liaison with USAF units/pilots. They may have done it when a FAC was not available, but I'm not aware of any such situation. In my experience, they were never armed with marking rockets (WP) or other devices.

On the other hand, USAF FACs were trained to control artillery, if necessary. They were assigned to specific Army units, worked with the commanders and staffs, and were usually thoroughly briefed on each operation. They knew the exact location of all the fire support bases (artillery) in their Area Of Responsibility and what ordnance was available. In addition, when not controlling air strikes, the FACs spent hours doing Visual Reconnaissance (VR) in the operating areas, so they were often more familiar with the "lay-of-the-land" than the troops they were supporting.

**Note:** Some Army commanders in the field complained to the Air Force that USAF FACs were not qualified to guide the delivery of bombs and rockets unless they were qualified fighter pilots. These complaints finally led to the Air Force sending only fully qualified fighter pilots (i.e., 5-level in their fighter AFSC) to FAC training and on to Vietnam assignments. Prior to that, some pilots were diverted to Vietnam after completing F-100 or F-4 training, without delivering ordnance in combat.

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## Weather Report

Wife texts husband on a cold winter day, "Windows frozen, won't open.

Husband texts back: "Gently pour some lukewarm water over it."

Wife texts back five minutes later, "Computer really screwed up now."

**7<sup>th</sup> AF DFC Citation  
S.O. G-3715, 28 Nov 1968**

“Staff Sergeant Carroll D. Wood distinguished himself by heroism while participating in aerial flight as a C-7A Flight Engineer at Duc Lap, Republic of Vietnam on 25 August 1968. On that date, Sergeant Wood flew an emergency resupply airdrop mission to beleaguered Special Forces personnel who were critically low on supplies and in imminent danger of being overrun. With unwavering calmness and courage, Sergeant Wood dropped the needed supplies to the camp at low altitude while the aircraft was being subjected to intensive hostile fire. The outstanding heroism and selfless devotion to duty displayed by Sergeant Wood reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.”



**OK, Show of hands.  
Who's tired of snow**

## Interview With A FAC

by Mike Leonard [RVN, 69]

My best memory is summarized in a single mission on a single day in November 1969. It boiled down to being a part of an effort that saved the lives of the crews of two Huey gunships. My dawn patrol flight out of Ban Me Thuot took me west to within a couple of kilometers of the Cambodian border. We had received frantic calls all night from the Special Forces (SF) camp at Duc Lap. The enemy had been mortar-

ing the outpost from positions along the airfield and from the nearby jungle. Occasionally artillery would also be fired from the Cambodian side of the border. The ceiling was less than 500 feet, so we couldn't get tactical air on the enemy positions in the area.

I called in fire support from an Army 105 mm artillery battery, along with a couple of 175 mm guns, and started adjusting fire along the runway and around a banana plantation. About two hours into the mission, I get a call from two flights of (4 in total) gunships wanting to join the flying circus. After briefing them on the very significant anti-aircraft fire and telling them which areas to avoid flying over, and telling them where to put their ordnance, they proceeded to do their own thing.

Within 5 minutes of joining the battle, I was faced with two helicopters shot down (crews were still alive, but were now in the infantry and engaged in their own fire fight), one shot up and on his way back home, and one still fully functional. The remaining helicopter and I devised a plan to try to get them out.

I unloaded my remaining White Phosphorus (WP) along the enemy position, followed by a return trip shooting up the enemy position long enough to allow the smoke to obscure the downed crewmen and hopefully getting them to keep their heads down. Right behind me came my intact Huey on a running “snatch and grab” of the downed crew. Well, it worked and, as we climbed to altitude, the Huey flew by me with a lot of happy faces waving out the door giving me the thumbs up.

As I leveled off at about 2000 feet, I realized that I'd been airborne about 15 minutes longer than the aircraft manual said was possible. I held my breath and headed east. As the runway at Ban Me Thuot slipped under my nose, I pulled her to idle and pointed the nose at the end of the runway. Landing went well and I managed to taxi off the runway about 100 feet when the engine quit. I remember that mission today as though it happened an hour ago.

## Flying Terms

**HYDROPLANE** - An airplane landing long and “hot” on a short and very wet runway.

**LEAN MIXTURE** - Nonalcoholic beer.

**MINI MAG LITE** - Device designed to support the AAA battery industry.

**NANOSECOND** - Time delay between the Low Fuel Warning light and the onset of carburetor icing.

**PARASITIC DRAG** - A pilot who bums a ride and complains about the service.

**RICH MIXTURE** - What you order at another pilot's promotion party.

**ROGER** - Used when you have no idea about what else to say.

**SECTIONAL CHART** - Any chart that ends 25 nm short of your destination.

**SERVICE CEILING** - Altitude above which the cabin crew cannot serve drinks.

**SPOILERS** - 1. FAA Inspectors. 2. Box lunches

**STALL** - Technique used to explain to the bank why your car payment is late.

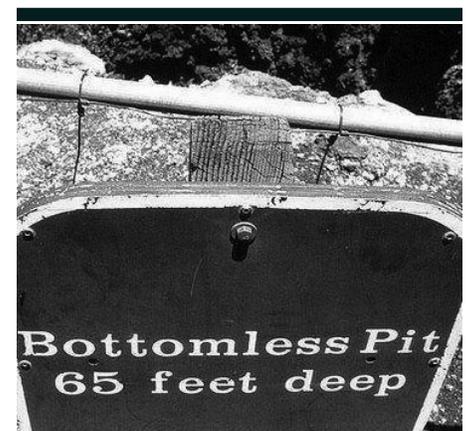
**STEEP BANKS** - Banks that charge pilots more than 10% interest.

**TURN & BANK INDICATOR** - An instrument largely ignored by pilots.

**USEFUL LOAD** - Volumetric capacity of the aircraft, disregarding weight.

**WAC CHART** - Directions to the Army female barracks.

**YANKEE** - Any pilot who has to ask New Orleans tower to “Say again”.



### **7<sup>th</sup> AF DFC Citation S.O. G-0309, 29 Jan 1971**

Captain Gary L. Clark distinguished himself by heroism while participating in aerial flight as a C-7A Flight Examiner at Dak Seang Special Forces camp, Republic of Vietnam, on 2 April 1970. At that time, the camp was under siege and had no means of resupply. Captain Clark maneuvered his aircraft through intense hostile ground fire and, despite several hits on his aircraft, successfully completed an airdrop of vitally needed water, ammunition and medical supplies. The outstanding heroism and selfless devotion to duty displayed by Captain Clark reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

## **A Day I Remember**

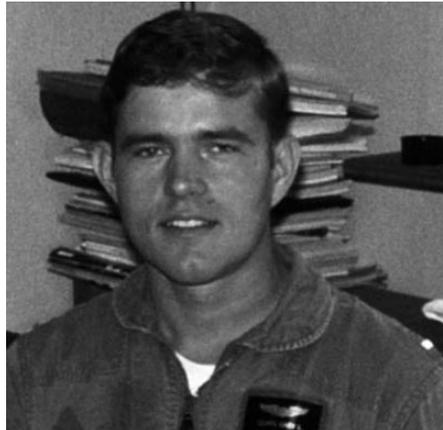
by Gary Clark [459, 69]

It's hard to believe that it's been almost 44 years since that day on April 2, 1970 when I found myself on the second day of C-7A support to Dak Seang in what was to become a siege. My being there was purely by chance.

I was a Pilot Flight Examiner at the time with the 459<sup>th</sup> TAS at Phu Cat. That day, I was assigned to give an initial "in-country" copilot qualification check ride to Capt Charles E. Cramer, Jr. who had only been in-country for a few days. Charlie had been in my UPT Class 68-E at Webb AFB. After pilot training, I drew a C-141 assignment to Charleston AFB for about a year before being assigned to Caribous. I think Charlie also flew C-141's before the C-7A.

In the early morning of April 2<sup>nd</sup>, Charlie and I departed Phu Cat on a routine flight to Pleiku to pick up a routine load. There was nothing out of the ordinary as we walked into the Pleiku ALCE. It was there that we were told that we needed to make an airdrop into Dak Seang. They told us that there wasn't any firing, but there were quite a few bad guys around the camp which prevented a landing. I was then told

I would lead a two ship airdrop into the camp with a second bird from Phu Cat that was just landing. I remember mentioning something to Charlie about his getting more than he had bargained for on his first check ride. That turned out to be an understatement.



Lt. Steve ("Chooch") Train was the pilot of the second airplane, Lt. Charles Suprenant was his copilot, and MSgt Dale Christensen was their Flight Engineer. If someone can help me with the name of my Flight Engineer that day, I would be very grateful! He needs recognition as well for the great job he did.

When Chooch and crew arrived at the ALCE, we were all given a briefing on the airdrop. We were told to contact a FAC in the area and that two F-4's would fly cover for us. At that point, I don't think there was any concern about there being much of any action, given the fact that things were quiet around the camp. The only thing that was unusual was that they wanted us to drop the load on top of the camp instead of on the runway. While we were at the briefing, our flight engineers were busy configuring the load and the aircraft. Then we all went to our planes.

I took off first and Chooch followed. We flew in a loose trail formation out to a point about 15 miles east of the camp. I contacted the FAC and was told that the F-4's were about 30 minutes out so both Chooch and I orbited east of the camp for a while. I recall that day as being clear and quite beautiful. I could see the outline of the camp in the distance.

Again things were pretty quiet. When the F-4's arrived, we began to configure the planes for the airdrop. The F-4's were carrying 250 pound bombs at the time. The plan was that I would go in first and Chooch would follow me by about a mile in trail.

Things were quiet and normal as I started my run. My flight engineer had the load ready for the drop. As we got about 100 yards from the camp fence line, the enemy opened up on us. We received a lot of tracer fire in front of the airplane and were taking hits on the tail. I distinctly remember smelling cordite in the cockpit from all of the firing. I let the FAC know about the ground fire and he called in the F-4's.

As we passed over the fence line, we airdropped the load and I went to max power and started a climbing left turn toward the south. Almost immediately, the amount of ground fire increased and became very intense. I learned later that there were several antiaircraft guns in the area, so we apparently had turned into at least one of those. I don't recall when the F-4's dropped their bombs, but it didn't seem to have any effect on the ground fire.

When I encountered the intense firing in my turn to the left, I advised Chooch about what was happening and suggested he break right to avoid what I just went through. That's a call I've thought about for years with some regret because the ground fire to the north must have been worse. Both of our airdrops were on target and we checked in on the radio with each other immediately after his airdrop. Everything seemed to be OK. We both reported we were "OPS Normal" and since I was south of the camp and he was north, we both headed back to Pleiku on our own for another load. I expected Chooch to land at Pleiku within minutes after I did, but when he didn't show, I became concerned. About 15 minutes later, I learned that he had crashed.

In a footnote relating to the crash, I

**Continued on Page 17**

## A Day I ... (from Page 16)

left the Air Force in 1972 and moved to Oregon where I eventually joined the Oregon Army National Guard as a “part-time” aviator. I initially flew Army OV-1 Mohawks for about 14 years and later the C-23 Sherpa for another 10 years. The Sherpa reminded me so much of the Caribou as it had essentially the same mission and was about the same size. In 1992 or 1993, I was talking with a helicopter pilot at the Guard unit in Salem, Oregon about Dak Seang when he told me he was there too. It turns out he was flying a helicopter near Dak Seang that day and actually was one of the first to arrive at the crash site, but nothing could be done. Apparently Chooch’s airplane was hit in the wing with an incendiary round that smoldered for several minutes before exploding. The fire retardant material in the fuel tanks apparently suppressed the incendiary round initially, but not enough to prevent the explosion. They were several miles southeast of Dak Seang when they went down.

On landing at Pleiku after the airdrop, we found that my airplane was damaged and needed repairs. We took several hits in the tail, including one that shot part of the right rudder actuator in half, effectively grounding my airplane. A decision was then made to have another airplane flown in to replace mine and that I and my crew would take a second load back into Dak Seang as soon the replacement aircraft arrived. While we waited for the replacement bird, Charlie and I and our engineer walked over to the mess hall at Pleiku for lunch. With the loss of Chooch and his crew, it was a very somber lunch. I think we all pretty much ate in silence.

Our replacement aircraft soon arrived and we began uploading and configuring the load for the airdrop. Since it was just our crew on this next trip, we took off as soon as we could and headed back for a second airdrop. We again arrived at the orbit area east of the

camp and talked to the FAC who told us that there would be about an hour’s wait before our fighter support arrived. Orbiting for that hour seemed like an eternity. A lot of things go through your mind when you have nothing to do but orbit and think about what happened that morning. When top cover did arrive it was two A-1E Skyraiders. They were carrying CBU anti-personnel ordinance.

With the A-1E’s on station, our flight engineer configured the plane for the airdrop and we headed toward the camp. This time as were about 150 yards out when the shooting started again, but at about the same moment both A-1E’s swooped in on our left and right and laid down the CBUs which begin popping and swirling and chewing up the terrain. It immediately silenced a lot of the ground fire. It was a very impressive fireworks display that was nothing short of what you would expect for a 4<sup>th</sup> of July show. We completed our airdrop then went to max power and climbed straight ahead for about a mile before heading southeast back to Pleiku. I don’t think we were hit during that last run. I have high praise for the job my crew did that day! I made one more airdrop into Dak Seang on May 12<sup>th</sup>.

I will always have a lot of respect for Train, Suprenant, and Christensen for the job they did that day. Being the second airplane in a flight of two is always tough since the enemy gunners on the ground have a chance to adjust their aim if they miss the lead aircraft. Our airdrops that day helped the camp, but at such a high price.

In the 4 days between April 2 and April 6, we lost 3 C-7A’s and 9 crewmen. It was a staggering loss and we all felt it. In those days I played a guitar, but not especially well. I did take time to put some words to music regarding Dak Seang and the C-7A losses. I sang it a few times for the guys in the 459<sup>th</sup>. It’s called “The Dak Seang Massacre” (in a nod to the Arlo Guthrie song, “Alice’s Restaurant Massacre”), I came

across the music recently and will send a copy of it to Pat Hanavan along with two other songs I wrote before I left Vietnam. One is called “The Caribou Song” and the other is “459<sup>th</sup> - The Times They Are A Changin..” The songs are not especially artful, but the words bring back a lot of memories for me. I’ve always valued my experience in Viet Nam and especially the camaraderie that existed among the aircrews.

Thank you all for your service!

Gary

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## CSAF Reading List

by Gen. Mark A. Welsh III

*The Doolittle Raid* by Carroll V. Glines

*A Higher Call* by Adam Makos and Larry Alexander

*The Unseen War* by Benjamin S. Lambeth

*On Combat* by Dave Grossman and Loren W. Christensen

*Undaunted* by Tanya Biank

*Fearless* by Eric Blehm

*House To House* by David Bellavia and John R. Bruning

*Switch: How To Change Things When Change Is Hard* by Chip Heath and Dan Heath

*Worm: The First Digital World War* by Mark Bowden

*The Art of Significance* by Dan Clark  
*Crucial Conversations* by Joseph Greeny, Ron McMillan, Kerry Patterson and Al Switzler

*Sticking Points* by Haydn Shaw

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## New Memorabilia

Two new memorabilia items are available – a Caribou refrigerator magnet and a C-7A ID plate. Examples of both were sold at the Seattle reunion. The magnet is customized for our Association. Examples were printed in the last newsletter. See the web site for pictures of the items.

## Commuting In D.C.

by Bill Campbell [535, 68]

My longest commute in four tours in D.C. occurred in January 1987. I was attending National War College (1986-87). The night before, the weather forecast was for 10-12 inches of snow the next day. Because "... no one had the stick in D.C." on whether to close the federal government, my carpool mate and I dutifully reported for our NWC classes in a snowstorm. The storm started before dawn and when it was all over at 10 PM that night, we had 16 inches on the ground.

At 10 AM, 2 ½ hours after arriving at Fort McNair, the entire federal government was released. It took Frank and I just shy of 11 hours to make it home to Woodbridge, VA that night.

Two and a half hours into this home-bound commute, I had to "download" the morning's coffee. We had been at a dead stop for approximately 30 minutes, and were about a ½ mile short of the 14<sup>th</sup> Street bridge. It was snowing hard enough so I could have easily have stepped out of the car and created a very large quantity of "yellow snow" right beside the car and no one would have seen me except Frank and the bus driver right behind us.

Instead of "yellow snow," Frank (a real "straight arrow") suggested that I just walk back to the commuter bus and ask to use their bathroom. So I walked back, the bus driver immediately opened the door and agreed to let me use the "on-board facilities." As I was about to start down the aisle, the driver smiled and said, "Be careful." I paused, because his comment seemed odd. But, "nature" mandated that I move quickly. So, I briskly walked to the rear. There were several snickers enroute which I ascribed to my condition and the rapidity with which I was moving.

Unbeknownst to me, this was a daily commuter bus between D.C. and Fredericksburg, VA (normally a 2 ½ to 3 hour commute, one way) and the vast majority of the riders were women. The

bus also regularly had beer on board for the homeward commute. After a refreshing stint in the on-board facilities, I started back forward. It became immediately apparent that the ladies had already made a significant "dent" in the beer cache and were feeling no pain! I got several pats on the posterior, two different offers to share a beer and a serious suggestion that I "stay a while, since we weren't going anywhere fast."

I seriously considered the gracious offers, but Frank being a real "straight arrow" would not likely comprehend why I did not rapidly return to the car. Also, since it was my day to drive and we were in my Porsche, I had no desire to let him drive my car in that weather! So, I graciously declined the offers and left the still-smiling bus driver, who was now shaking his head in agreement with my decision to decline and depart. I suspect that he was fearful of my safety if I stayed!

The rest of the commute was unremarkable but very long. Fortunately, I refueled in olde town Alexandria and was able to make it home with the gas on board. As the snow let up, we noticed that we were approximately 5 miles from our houses (it was a 29 mile one-way commute). The road was littered with abandoned vehicles which appeared to be functional. We learned the next day that most gas stations on the major commuter routes in VA had run out of gas by late afternoon. As a result, the majority of cars along the side of the road in the last part of the commute had run out of gas.

## Honorary Life Members

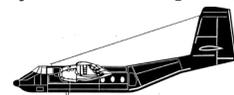
If you know of an active member who should be recognized for "outstanding service to the Association," please submit his name to the Board for their consideration. Include the member's accomplishments (over an extended period of time) that you think make him worthy of the honor and distinction of being an Honorary Lifetime Member of the Association.

## 7<sup>th</sup> AF DFC Citation S.O. G-0099, 8 Jan 1969

Major Richard B. Kent distinguished himself by extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight as a C-7A Aircraft Commander at a drop zone located near the Don Phuoc Special Forces Camp, Republic of Vietnam on 29 June 1968. On that date Major Kent flew a combat essential cargo airdrop of rations in response to an urgent request by the 5<sup>th</sup> Special Forces. The rations had to be air dropped to a search and destroy team that was isolated by enemy troops and had run out of food. Major Kent's outstanding judgement under extremely hazardous conditions resulted in the successful completion of the mission. The professional competence, aerial skill and devotion to duty displayed by Major Kent reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

## LOW ALTITUDE Drop

by Dick Kent [536, 67]



The 536<sup>th</sup> supported the 5<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group at Can Tho with at least one aircraft every day. Don Phuoc was one of its camps along a tributary of the Mekong River, north of Can Tho. The camp had a 2300 foot landing strip of sod and clay which was under water part of the year. My C-7A was tasked to air land supplies there, which was accomplished. While talking with the camp commander, he received a radio message requesting food be air dropped to some members of his team who were pinned down by the Viet Cong and out of rations. We were shown **low altitude** airdrops in training at Sewart AFB, TN, but we did not practice them. It was decided to drop several pallets of rice using this technique. This Combat Essential airdrop was successfully accomplished. The altitude of the airdrop never surfaced. The camp commander was pleased with the results.

## Ia Drang Valley

by Weaver Barkman [1<sup>st</sup> Cav, 66]

On March 30, 1966, our unit, Company A, 1/12<sup>th</sup> Airborne Infantry, 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division, was sent on a rescue mission into the Ia Drang Valley, at the foot of the Chu Pong massif. Intelligence reported that an NVA platoon “may be operating in the area.” After landing at “LZ Eagle,” we deployed and began approaching the downed helicopter when we were ambushed by the dug-in 66<sup>th</sup> NVA regiment.

The fight went through the afternoon and the NVA broke contact, moving toward Cambodia, less than a kilometer away. We withdrew to LZ Eagle and were being extracted when the second ambush took place. A CH-47 Chinook was shot down on the LZ. The fire was too intense for extraction, so we formed a small perimeter.

Darkness fell and we found ourselves surrounded and seriously outnumbered. We were rapidly running out of ammunition. The order to fix bayonets had been issued. Late that evening, or early in the A.M. of the 31<sup>st</sup>, a Caribou overflew our perimeter twice at tree top level and LOLEX'd a pallet of ammunition and a pallet of rations. It was right on the deck. I remember seeing the co-pilot in the right seat.

The first pass caught the NVA unaware. Their fire was delayed, but significant. The second pass was an entirely different story. They knew the aircraft was approaching. The ground fire was massive and tracers lit up the night with ribbons of green. It reminded me of something out of World War II. The aircraft must have been hit. To this day I have no idea how that little aircraft made it out of there.

In his volume “Stemming The Tide,” historian John M. Carland of the U.S. Army Center of Military History describes the situation and the Caribou pass.

“Returning fire, the Americans managed to reach the tree line where some fought hand to hand. Alerted that

the company commander had been wounded and the executive officer killed, Lieutenant Kapica took charge. Facing imminent disaster, the lieutenant pulled the company back toward EAGLE while gunship fire covered his front and flanks.

At 1930, a CH-47 attempted to extract Kapica's men, but it went down in a hail of fire. Convinced that any additional attempt at extraction would also fail, Hennessey instructed Kapica to form a perimeter. The lieutenant did so, centering on the downed Chinook. He had less than a hundred men left, ammunition was low, and the unit's water was nearly gone.

At 0130 on 31 March, American aircraft attempted to relieve the situation by making two passes over the position to drop ammunition and food. Neither delivery landed inside the perimeter, but the troops managed to retrieve the nearest supplies, which contained enough ammunition to withstand a sizeable attack.”

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the crew of that plane, or those planes. When I think of the crewmen that risked it all to complete their mission that night, words like *duty*, *honor*, *valor*, and *courage* come to mind.

Whoever they were – they were **magnificent!**

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## Southern Cops

Southern cops have a way with words. These are actual comments made by South Carolina Troopers that were taken from their car videos.

“You know, stop lights don't come any redder than the one you just went through.”

“Relax, the handcuffs are tight because they're new. They'll stretch after you wear them a while.”

“If you take your hands off the car, I'll make your birth certificate a worthless document.”

“If you run, you'll only go to jail tired.”

“Can you run faster than 1200 feet per second? Because that's the speed of the bullet that'll be chasing you.”

“You don't know how fast you were going? I guess that means I can write anything I want to on the ticket, huh?”

“Yes, sir, you can talk to the shift supervisor, but I don't think it will help. Oh, did I mention that I'm the shift supervisor?”

“Warning! You want a warning? O.K, I'm warning you not to do that again or I'll give you another ticket.”

“The answer to this last question will determine whether you are drunk or not. Was Mickey Mouse a cat or a dog?”

“Fair? You want me to be fair? Listen, fair is a place where you go to ride on rides, eat cotton candy and corn dogs, and step in monkey poop.”

“Yeah, we have a quota. Two more tickets and my wife gets a toaster oven.”

“In God we trust; all others we run through NCIC.” (National Crime Information Center)

“Just how big were those ‘two beers’ you say you had?”

“No sir, we don't have quotas anymore. We used to, but now we're allowed to write as many tickets as we can.”

“I'm glad to hear that the Chief (of Police) is a personal friend of yours. So, you know someone who can post your bail.”

AND THE WINNER IS ...

“You didn't think we give pretty women tickets? You're right, we don't. Sign here.”



**Help!!!**

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

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

## Aussie In The U.S.

by Don Melvin [18 Sq, 70]]

Someone might recall the RAAF Squadron Leader who regularly haunted Dyess AFB in the early '70's. During my first – and only – visit to 18 TATS in an 'IG' capacity, I flew with Maj. Ralph Fitzgerald. As a consequence, the 516 TAW Wing Commander contacted my boss – Brig. Gen. Robin Olds – extending an invitation for me to visit and fly on a regular basis. I know that some I got to know very well are no longer with us – Lt. Col. Monty Montgomery, Lt. Col. Ed Gaudin, Maj. Dale Erickson and Capt. Howie Berube. However, among others, I do have a Capt. Evanish in my Flying Log Book as the AC on a trip from Carswell to Dyess after a horde of Bous were diverted there for an overnight stay by bad weather in Dec '71. To show how small the world is, Peter Bird informed me that he was also involved in that diversion!

I never made it to Vietnam. In mid-'65, while instructing at a Flying Training School, I volunteered to undertake a Caribou conversion, obtain my Instructor and Instrument Rating Examiner categories on the beast and proceed to Vietnam, but it was not to be. Instead, I was seconded to the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) for nearly three years.

Having returned to Australia, promoted and still flying Bous, I was designated to take command of 35 Sqn., call sign "Wallaby" in Vietnam later in 1970, but again fate intervened.

The USAF requested a Caribou-experienced exchange officer from the RAAF be assigned on exchange to the Safety Operations Division, Directorate of Aerospace Safety, 1002<sup>nd</sup> Inspector General Group at Norton AFB (the 1002<sup>nd</sup> was re-designated Air Force Inspection and Safety Center midway through my tour). So that was how the opportunity arose to fly with 18 TATS. The USAF exchange was an experience that both Jacqui, my wife, and I enjoyed immensely ... you guys really

looked after us! Just for the record, following that tour I was posted to 35 Sqn – newly returned from Vietnam - as Ops Flight Commander on, you guessed it, Caribous. Promotion to Wing Commander (Lt. Col.) and Commander of the squadron followed and I was to eventually leave the Caribou world at the end of 1974.

While I have no interesting Vietnam episodes to relate, I thought that my time with the RMAF would be outside the experience of most, as it contains some "interesting" twists. The Brits had long experience seconding people to foreign armed forces, largely as a result of the breakup of the Empire during the last century. So, that was the position at that time with the RMAF – Chief of the Air Staff, squadron commanders and senior flying positions were all RAF officers. Many of the pilots were Brits as were most of the technical Senior NCOs. Canada had given a half-squadron of Caribous to Malaysia, but would not provide the training. The Australian Government was requested by Malaysia to second an instructor to train the squadron. This was a new ball game for the RAAF and I was soon to become aware of the vast difference between "secondment" and "exchange."

My awakening began before leaving Australia. I was sent to RAAF School of Languages for a "crash course" in Malay – six weeks, one-on-one, eight hours a day with a couple of hours of "homework." The irony was that all the pilots and most technical ground crew spoke good English – the Flight and Tech Manuals were in English!

The logistics people were a different kettle of fish and much of the other paperwork was printed in Malay, so some knowledge of the language was required. The bright side was that I was able to barter in their language, albeit that I had to modify the very correct form I had learned to the so-called "bazaar" Malay ... the more cynical might suggest that what I already spoke was "bizarre" Malay.

Next, I was required to wear RMAF

uniform with nothing to identify me as Australian or RAAF. The uniform – green in color – included shorts, long grey socks with blue tabs at the top, and a "songkok" (the pillbox type cap Malays and Indonesians wear). It was not a pretty sight!



Although I would be paid by Australia at our rates of pay (good), I would be required to pay Income Tax to the Malaysian Government (very, very, bad).

Finally, because Malaysia and Indonesia were engaged in armed conflict at the time (*Konfrontasi*), I received a special briefing from Air Force Intelligence. It was already known that, once

**Continued on Page 21**

## Aussie (from Page 20)

the squadron was up to speed, it would be deployed to Borneo in support of forces fighting the Indonesians. I was greeted with the comforting news that, because I was a serving RAAF officer wearing RAAF uniform and flying RAAF aircraft, my status was roughly that of “mercenary.” Their advice? Stay away from the Indonesian border and combat areas ... how the hell could I do that? I think that the Intel weenies must be the same the world over!

Initial training was to be done in Kuala Lumpur and I arrived before the aircraft and pilots arrived from Canada. In my official appointment as “Pegawai Latehan” (Training Officer), I opted to start preparing a training program to be ready for their arrival. Assuming that their system would have already stocked some Flight Manuals, I asked where I might obtain one. I was duly informed that I was expected to produce that! The RAAF was then using the U.S. Army Technical Order for the CV-2B and a wonderfully understanding U.S. Army Colonel at your Embassy acquired a number for me.

Amongst the flood of information was the news that the Caribou outfit was to be the first “all-Malaysian” squadron, i.e., from Commanding Officer through to all the enlisted troops ... except for little old me that is. However, I was wearing their uniform so perhaps nobody would notice! But, it was really difficult not to explode when the Canadian High Commissioner held a reception for the squadron and I was told that under no circumstances was I to attend ... after all, it was the first “all-Malaysian” squadron.

The same instruction was given on the occasion of the Sultan of Selangor holding a Dining-In Night at the *Istana* (palace) before our departure for Borneo. On the occasions I flew VIPs in Borneo, e.g., the Prime Minister, Tengku Abdul Rahman, I was required to be in the cockpit before they arrived and not leave it until they were out of

sight ... on no account was I to wear a uniform to any reception or to indicate that I was the aircraft captain. Although I was not subject to RMAF Military Law, quite clearly I was duty-bound to uphold military discipline ... the ability to smile through clenched teeth became an essential skill! That having been said, I hasten to add that I was welcomed warmly by the squadron members ... the numerous directives that caused the most angst were issued from “on high.” The good side was that I never appeared on a parade in nearly three years either!

Not nearly enough pilots had flown the Bou to any extent in Canada (the Canucks ferried them out), but most had experience flying the Scottish Aviation Twin Pioneer and Single Pioneer – both horrible aircraft (check them out) – in roles similar to those to be performed by the Caribou. The squadron personnel comprised three distinct ethnic groups, Malay, Chinese and Indian. Consequently a lot were trilingual, but I carefully avoided the odd ethnic friction. Their experience and ability varied widely. Some were very good indeed, but some required a great deal of work to become competent on the aircraft. The steep learning curve faced by the maintenance troops was just as formidable and we certainly had our problems. Fortunately, a de Havilland of Canada Tech Rep was on hand for the first critical months.

After about four months of training, we deployed to Borneo. Not long after becoming operational the overt conflict with Indonesia ended to become one of an “uneasy peace.” However, there were still a number of battalions to be supported. The RAF operated Westland Whirlwind helos, Twin Pioneers, and the Blackburn Beverley (only in the airdrop role) from our base, and they just could not believe what the old Bou could do in and out of the small strips. They all deployed back to the UK after a few months, thus leaving three RMAF squadrons there with me as the sole Caucasian in the whole wing. By this

time, the Twin Pioneer and Alouette helo squadrons there had been *Malaysianised*. I’m most assuredly the wrong guy to start complaining to about minority groups! The weather in-country was probably just like Vietnam. The northeast monsoon was followed by the southwest monsoon with oppressive heat and humidity, so high density altitudes were the operating norm. The strips were short with a number virtually carved out of the jungle and checking guys into them was an adventure ... probably just like Vietnam, but without someone shooting at you! Probably the biggest difference was the lack of radio and radio aids. There were absolutely no radars or landing aids, even at our base, and no navigation aids other than the odd beacons scattered along the coast. It was mainly VFR flying of sorts, creeping along the valleys under the cloud and, because of the poor quality of the available maps, local knowledge was a valuable asset which had to be acquired quickly. Demanding and challenging flying, but enjoyable none-the-less.

My qualification checks were carried out by RAF Transport Command Examining Unit, who came out from the UK regularly to carry out checks at the RAF bases in Singapore. The Commanders of that unit came across to Borneo on two occasions and both spent a number of hours with me savoring the delights of the Caribou. They were mightily impressed by its capabilities vis-à-vis the types being operated by the RAF in the tactical transport role.

Soon after my return to Australia late in ‘68, I was hit with one final whammy. The taxation arrangement had been renegotiated and Income Tax was no longer payable to Malaysia ... however, the deal was made retrospective from Jan. ’68. I was hit with a demand from the Australian Taxation Office for 11 months of back taxes! The response to my explanation that I had already paid

**Continued on Page 22**

## Aussie (from Page 21)

it to Malaysia was a threat to garnish my salary to recoup the “amount owing, plus a penalty.” The RAAF bungled the whole deal and virtually “hung me out to dry.” It was not until I put in writing that we were left with no option other than Jacqui contacting the Minister of Defence that the whole thing very quickly went away. A few other RAAF pilots were also seconded to the RMAF, but they were permanently based in Kuala Lumpur and with several RAF seconded pilots and Senior NCOs also in the squadrons. On our return home, seconding of RAAF personnel ceased.

If I could make any ‘claim to fame’, probably it would be that it is highly unlikely that anyone else has flown the C-7A while on active duty with three different Air Forces! Ten years on the Bou provided me with flying that was challenging, interesting, extremely satisfying and thoroughly enjoyable. I’m sure that you all feel the same way.

It has been said that a pilot learns what flying is really about when he converts to Caribous, and I couldn’t agree more. In my 35 year RAAF career, without doubt, the majority of my most memorable experiences were within that period of 10 years straight flying the “Jolly Green Gravel Truck.”

## Press “YES” Button



## First Woman 4-Star from the Air Force News Service

Young Janet Libby was definitely someone going places at Beaver Creek High School near Dayton, OH. She was in the National Honor Society, on both the German and Ski clubs and a soccer athlete. Even friends and well-wishers who would have signed her senior yearbook with words like “you’ll go far,” and “you’ll be a success in life,” could never have imagined that the young daughter of an Air Force pilot would become the first female in the Air Force to attain the rank of four-star general, and only the second in military history.



Today, Gen. Janet C. Wolfenbarger has come full circle from those Beaver Creek roots as the commander of the Air Force Materiel Command, at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, just a few miles from Beaver Creek high school.

She is responsible for more than 80,000 Airmen and civilians worldwide, along with a \$60 billion annual budget, leading an organization that supports the war-fighting efforts through state-of-the-art technology, weapon systems management, systems development and evaluation, and global supply-chain management system.

Shortly after her graduation from high school, Wolfenbarger made her mark. After a suggestion from her dad, she was accepted in 1976 into the first class at the Air Force Academy to accept women. “The Air Force Acad-

emy was an opportunity for me to be stretched in so many ways: physically, mentally and emotionally.”

“It was an opportunity to prove to myself that I could withstand those kinds of experiences and come out on the other end realizing that I was far more capable than I ever thought. The experience gave me a belief in myself that I have relied upon ever since.”

Commissioned as a second lieutenant in 1980, she spent most of her career in the acquisition field, leaving her imprint on the purchase, testing, and implementation of the F-22 Raptor, the B-2 Spirit, and the C-17 Globemaster III. She earned a master’s degree from MIT in aeronautics and astronautics.

Although Wolfenbarger is proud of her accomplishments and the direction women are headed in the Air Force, she said that she never wanted to be recognized for simply being a woman. “I wanted to do well and be recognized because I worked hard,” said Wolfenbarger. “I did the very best I could at every job I held.”

She tells stories of women in the early 1980’s who could be discharged for getting pregnant or even adopting a child. There were many career fields closed to women at the time. She believes that over the past three decades, women have made tremendous strides.

“We now have, not only maternity leave, but also paternity leave for our service members,” she said. “Also, when I joined, there was a host of career fields closed to women, but we can now, as a service, proudly say that we have 97 percent of our career fields open to women.” She believes that many women entering the Air Force today may take for granted their equal status, there are still areas of progress yet to be overcome.

General Wolfenbarger thinks that “There has to be a constant reminder that we all have to search for a work and life balance, because, in the end, it is our families, our friends, and our health that we have to rely on when our careers are over.”

## So, Ya Wanna Be A Habu

by Lee Shelton [459, 67]

Application for entry to the SR-71 program and the subsequent qualification phase was considerably more difficult than actually flying the airplane. In the first place, the SR was not a widely known or discussed facet of the Air Force's operation. You knew they were out there and that someone had to be flying them, but you never thought that someone was someone like you. I learned of the program and applied only because a fellow pilot in my FB-111 squadron had applied and failed to gain entry. I figured I was at least as good as the other guy and could certainly do no worse than he did. Besides, I was looking for some form of divine intervention to save me from a pending staff assignment to SAC Headquarters. You see my point.

Any "special duty" assignment is associated with literally tons of paperwork, arcane forms 'ad nauseam,' copies of all existing flight evaluations, certified records of flying hours, preliminary physical exam, copies of all existing flight physicals, copies of your family's medical history, written endorsements by carefully selected senior officers, etc., etc., etc. When you exercised the complete application drill for a special duty assignment like the SR-71, you "by god" wanted to fly the jet just to recoup some of the man years invested in the process.

On average, one or two pilots per year were selected from among all those who aspired to enter SR-71 training. In the 27-odd year history of the Blackbird, there were fewer than 100 operational pilots. If your personal mountain of paperwork cleared the gatekeepers at the Military Personal Center and those at SAC Headquarters, it was forwarded to Beale AFB for review by a panel of senior SR-71 crew members. Without a doubt, this last stop was the point of toughest scrutiny. If you cleared this

last hurdle, both intensely objective and admittedly subjective, you were invited to Beale for a week long interview, one-on-one discussions with senior officers, and group "hanger flying" sessions with the crew force, T-38 flights, simulators, social events ... and THE physical examination.



**Shelton and MacKean (RSO)**

The physical requirements and the associated physical examination stopped many a good man from even considering application to the program. It was widely held that you needed to be in pretty damn good shape when you reported for the interview. Additionally, it was widely held that the qualification physical for the SR-71 was the same one administered to astronaut candidates. The physical was far more "severe" than any routine annual exam and had a reputation for identifying otherwise undetected flaws in a pilot's physiology. Once identified, these new physical glitches could result in one's removal from flying status ... forever! You travel to Beale to become a flying god and return to your home unit grounded. You see my point.

The physical examination was usually scheduled early in the interview week. Logic being that if you busted it, there was little invested in you at that point and you could go home without consuming a lot of local resources. There was a 24 hour fast preceding the all day physical, conducted about 2 hours down the road at the large USAF Hospital at Travis AFB, Fairfield, CA. So, you arrived very early in the morning, tired, anxious and hungry-as-hell, about to play "You Bet Your Wings."

The menu was endless: pints of blood

tests, quarts of urinalysis, ocular and anal probing, aural bombardment of the ears, reflexes, height, weight, body fat, EKG via stress treadmill (aptly named), and somewhere during the day, an EEG.

This last evaluation was done to measure "normal brain wave activity" by means of numerous nasty little tacks on wire leads, driven into your head. I arrived for my EEG appointment sometime in the late afternoon, drained of most of my bodily fluids, and dehydrated, hungry enough to eat the back-end out of a possum and exhausted from trying to outlast the treadmill. We all tried to kill the treadmill ... it was the manly thing to do.

A very cute, starved and white-clad medical technician immediately began the ritual of pressing these thumbtacks into my skull. I flinched with the first couple and let out an audible groan when about number six or so entered my scalp. This darlin' little med tech stopped what she was doing, took a step back to look me square in my tear-filled eyes, smiled and said, "Don't pass out on me Hot Shot or I'll ground you right here."



Years later, we would all have occasion to ponder what a "normal brain wave" really looked like and, more to the point, what the brain wave of a Habu looked like compared to that normal one they were searching for. You see my point.



## Aussie Father

by Peter Turner ["Down Under"]

As far as I'm concerned, there is no place on God's earth better than Australia, and there are no people better than Australians. That was until recently.

My son was in the Australian Army and he was on deployment in Iraq. I can not go into his duties in great depth, but shall we say that he and his fellow army buddies were on glorified guard duty looking after the Australian Embassy. They didn't go out looking for 'action', though it was a different story in Afghanistan. There the Aussie troops chased the baddies over the hills and into the valleys.

My son and I ended a long 'phone conversation and here are some of his comments. Believe me this is what he said. We have all seen the bull\*\*\*t emails written by some clown in his lounge room pretending to be at the coal face, but this is what was said:

"Before I came over here I thought we (the Australian Army) were pretty Sierra Hotel ... was I ever wrong! ... The Yanks (I hope you don't mind me using that word) are so professional from the top to the bottom that it is almost embarrassing to be in their company, and to call yourself a soldier ... don't get me wrong, we are good at what we do, but the Yanks are so much better. They are complete at what they do, how they do it, and their attitude is awesome. They don't complain, they just get on with the job and they do it right. I carry a Minimi (SAW) so I am not real worried about a confrontation, but I tell you I feel safer just knowing that the U.S. Army is close by. If we got into trouble, I know that our boys would come running and we could deal with it, but they would probably be passed by a load of Hummers.

"No questions asked, no glory sought, the Americans would just fight with us and for us because that is their nature, to protect those in need of protection. We use the American mess so you could say that we are fed by the Americans.

They have every right to be teed off at that, but they don't bitch about that. They just make us feel as welcome as possible. What gets to me is that the Yanks don't walk around with a 'we are better than you attitude' and they could because they are. They treat us as equals and as brothers in arms. If nothing else, coming here has taught me that the Americans are a truly great Nation and a truly great bunch of people.

Let's face it, they don't HAVE to be here, they could stay in America and beat the #\*^&% out of anyone who threatened them, BUT THEY ARE HERE because they believe they should be here and the Iraqis would be screwed if they weren't here. When I come home, you and I are going to the U.S. We will buy some bikes and we are going riding."

The reason why I am sharing this with you is because I realize that you (as a nation) must get pretty angry with all the criticism you receive by the so-called "know it alls" who are sitting at home – safe. The reality is that they are safe, just as I am, because of America. If the world went arse up tomorrow there is little all we (Australia) could do about it, but I know that the Americans would be there putting themselves on the line for others. That to me is the sign of greatness.

The most precious thing in my life is my son, I look at him and I thank God that I am fortunate enough to be able to spend time in his company. We laugh, we discuss, we argue, we have the same blood. I am not happy that he is where he is but that is his duty. He joined the Army to protect and to defend, not to play games. I mightn't like it, but I accept it. My reasons for not liking it are selfish and self centered. I felt assured that he would be safe because he is in a well trained Army with an excellent record. BUT NOW, I feel a whole lot better knowing that he is with your sons, daughters, brothers, and sisters.

Whilst he was growing up. I was always there to look after him, I would not let harm befall him and I would

always put myself before him to protect him. I can't do that now. When it comes to looking after him now, he and his mates will do the job, but also THANK GOD FOR AMERICA.

Gentlemen, I have rambled on for too long, but, as I finish, I say to you, as a foreigner and outsider, a nation is only a collection of its people and its attitude is the attitude of its people, collectively and as individuals. I am really glad you are here on this Earth and I respect you as a nation and as people.

Stand up and feel proud because you deserve it, there is no one else who will do what America does without question. The next time someone howls you down, take some comfort in the fact that America is defending **their** right to act like an idiot.

Finally, thank you for looking after my son.

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## Civic Action Project

from "Yogi" Behr [459, 66]

In 1929, Pere Paul Maheu (a missionary priest), Dr. Lemoine, and two sisters began caring for about 150 lepers at the Qui Hoa Leprosarium. Although Pere Maheu departed in 1932, the Franciscan Sisters arrived to continue the good work. In 1933, a typhoon almost completely destroyed the complex and it took 500 lepers the next five years to rebuild. The Japanese occupied the territory from 1939 to 1945.

After the termination of this occupation and the resulting *coup d'etat*, all sisters of foreign nationality were forced to leave Vietnam. The Leprosarium became the responsibility of a Vietnamese priest and four Vietnamese sisters. Fortunately, on July 6, 1955, the five foreign-born Franciscan sisters were allowed to return to Vietnam. In 1957, Pere Rohmer, the present priest, arrived. His responsibility in 1966 included about 900 patients cared for by eleven Franciscan sisters, none of whom work in the leprosarium hospital.

**Continued on Page 25**

## Civic Action (from Page 24)

tal-dispensary. Although there was no doctor, a physician from the Vietnamese Military Hospital in Qui Nhon was on call. The patients were primarily Vietnamese with a few Montagnards, Chinese, Cambodians, and Indians among them.

The 92<sup>nd</sup> Aviation Company contributed building materials for the construction of a home for a leper family. The building was being completed in December and would bear the organization's plaque. The company also donated a large truckload of assorted foods to the leprosarium.

The 537<sup>th</sup> Engineering Group (Army) donated toys and practical gifts to the children of the leprosarium as well as refreshments for the Christmas party. There were 33 boys and 26 girls aged 3-7 years, 26 boys and 21 girls aged 8-12 years, and 41 boys and 18 girls aged 13-15 years in need of clothing and appropriate gifts. The 92<sup>nd</sup> Aviation Company and the 459<sup>th</sup> Troop Carrier Squadron donated clothing for the children at the leprosarium as well as cookies, cakes, and fruits for the party. The leprosarium, which had a large tailoring shop, offered to form fit each child with a suit of clothes from cloth goods bought on the local economy from voluntary monetary donations. The Sisters offered to assist in obtaining the quantities and types of cloth goods required. The leprosarium also offered to assist in individually wrapping each suit. The individual packages were distributed to the children at the Christmas party.

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## Form 781 Write-ups

**Pilot:** Suspected crack in windshield.

**Crew Chief:** Suspect you're right.

**Pilot:** Number 3 engine missing.

**Crew Chief:** Engine found on right wing after brief search.

## Bou Meets Huey

by Pat Hanavan [535, 68]

On a mission hauling POL from Can Tho to Cao Lanh, Lt. Col. Charles L. "Charlie" Brown, formerly a B-52 pilot, misjudged the clearance between his landing Caribou and a UH-1 helicopter parked on the grass along the edge of the runway. The helicopter rotor mast hit the underside of the right wing of the Caribou, damaging the leading edge, right outboard fore-flap, aileron, and sliced through the skin of the underside of the wing. Fortunately, no severe structural damage was done in the absence of a wing spar.

The squadron commander, Lt. Col. Faulkner, flew a Caribou into Cao Lanh the next day with parts and a maintenance crew to do the repairs. As Chief of Safety and an Instructor Pilot, I flew with him to gather details for the required safety report. While the repairs were being made, Lt. Col. Faulkner expressed his intention to make a no-flap takeoff when it was time to depart. My airfield survey revealed a large number of POL drums on the overrun at the departure end of the runway. This was a risky situation if there was a problem during takeoff. A no-flap takeoff was definitely not a good idea!

How could the squadron commander be disabused of the idea of making a no-flap takeoff? The answer was simple. When it came to the 'Flaps' challenge-response in the Before Takeoff Checklist, I just called out, 'Flaps set 15 degrees for takeoff' and that was that.

No discussion ensued and a safe takeoff was made.

## Repairs At Cao Lahn

by Larry Kilgore [536, 67]

Cao Lahn (V-53) was a nasty little place. I remember the Vietnamese dirt bunkers around the strip. Had piles of brass larger than the bunkers. We had two Special Forces "Rat Patrol" jeeps with Browning 50's riding around and A-1E Skyraiders making passes about 5 clicks away.

I remember an officer sitting on top of the bird with an M-16 most of the day. Was that Lt. Col. Charlie Brown protecting his Bou?

We changed the leading edge, flaps, and rebuilt all the damaged structure in the wing. Finished it off with a 36 or 40 inch square patch on the wing. Hell of a job to do in the field.

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## Movie At The Front

by Chaplain Jim Higgins

I attended a movie at NAS Anaconda. We had a large auditorium to use for movies as well as memorial services and other large gatherings. As is the custom back in the States, we stood and snapped to attention when the National Anthem began before the main feature.

All was going as planned until about three-quarters of the way through the National Anthem when the music stopped. What would happen if this occurred with 1,000 18-22 year olds back in the States? I imagine there would be hoots, catcalls, laughter, a few rude comments, and everyone would sit down and call for a movie – if they stood for Anthem in the first place.

Here, the 1,000 soldiers continued to stand at attention, eyes fixed forward. The music started again. The soldiers continued to quietly stand at attention. Again, at the same point, the music stopped. What would you expect to happen? Even here, I would imagine laughter as everyone sat down and expected the movie to start. Here, you could have heard a pin drop.

Every soldier stood at attention. Suddenly there was a lone voice, then a dozen, and quickly the room was filled with the voices of a thousand soldiers, "And the rockets red glare, the bombs bursting in air, gave proof through the night that our flag was still there. O say does that star-spangled banner yet wave, o'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave?"

It was the most inspiring moment I had in Iraq. I want you to know what kind of Soldiers are serving you.

## The Green Thing

Checking out at the store, the young cashier suggested to the much older woman that she should bring her own grocery bags because plastic bags weren't good for the environment.

The woman apologized and explained, "We didn't have this 'green thing' back in my day." The clerk responded, "That's our problem today. Your generation did not care enough to save our environment for future generations." She was right – our generation didn't have the "green thing" in its day.

Back then, we returned milk bottles, soda bottles and beer bottles to the store. The store sent them back to the plant to be washed and sterilized and refilled, so it could use the same bottles over and over. So, they really were recycled. But, we didn't have the "green thing" back in our day.

Grocery stores bagged our groceries in brown paper bags that we reused for numerous things, most memorable besides household garbage bags, was the use of brown paper bags as book covers for our schoolbooks. This was to ensure that public property (the books provided by the school) was not defaced by our scribbling and passed on to students the next year. That way, we were able to personalize our books on the brown paper bags. But, too bad we didn't do the "green thing" back then.

We walked up stairs, because we didn't have escalators in stores and office buildings. We walked to the grocery store and didn't climb into a 300-hp machine every time we had to go two blocks. But, she was right. We didn't have the "green thing" in our day.

Back then, we washed the baby's diapers because we didn't have the throwaway kind. We dried clothes on a line, not in an energy gobbling machine using 220 volts – wind and solar power really did dry our clothes back in our early days. Kids got hand-me-down clothes from their brothers or sisters, not always brand-new clothing. But, that young lady was right. We didn't

have the "green thing" back in our day.

Back then, we had one TV or radio in the house – not a TV in every room. The TV had a screen the size of a handkerchief (remember them?), not the size of the state of Montana. In the kitchen, we blended and stirred by hand because we didn't have electric machines to do everything for us. When we packaged a fragile item to send in the mail, we used wadded up old newspapers to cushion it, not Styrofoam or plastic bubble wrap. Back then, we didn't fire up an engine and burn gasoline just to cut the lawn. We used a push mower that ran on human power. We exercised by working so we didn't need to go to a health club to run on treadmills that operate on electricity. But, she's right. We didn't have the "green thing" back then.

We drank from a fountain when we were thirsty instead of using a cup or a plastic bottle every time we had a drink of water. We refilled writing pens with ink instead of buying a new pen. We replaced the razor blades in a razor instead of throwing away the whole razor just because the blade got dull. But, we didn't have the "green thing" back then.

Back then, people took the streetcar or a bus and kids rode their bikes to school or walked instead of turning their moms into a 24-hour taxi service in the family's \$45,000 SUV or van. We had one electrical outlet in a room, not an entire bank of sockets to power a dozen appliances. We didn't need a computerized gadget to receive a signal from satellites 23,000 miles out in space to find the nearest burger restaurant. But, isn't it sad that the current generation laments how wasteful we old folks were just because we didn't have the "green thing" back then?

Please forward this on to another selfish old person who needs a lesson in conservation from a smart ass young person. We don't like being old in the first place, so it doesn't take much to tee us off, especially from a tattooed, multiple-pierced smart-ass who can't make change without the cash register telling them how much.

## Marine Tall Tale

from Al Cunliffe [458, 68]

At Chu Lai in the summer of 1966, there was only the expeditionary field of 4,000 feet of shifting metal. All takeoffs were with JATO bottles. Lots of things went wrong with these, especially at night, and all landings were arrested.

One day, we taxied in to VMA-223 from a mission and noticed an Air Force C-123 parked at the main ramp. It had made an emergency landing at Chu Lai. That night at the club, the only passenger from the C-123 was there. He was an F-100 pilot in his flight suit on crutches and with two broken legs.

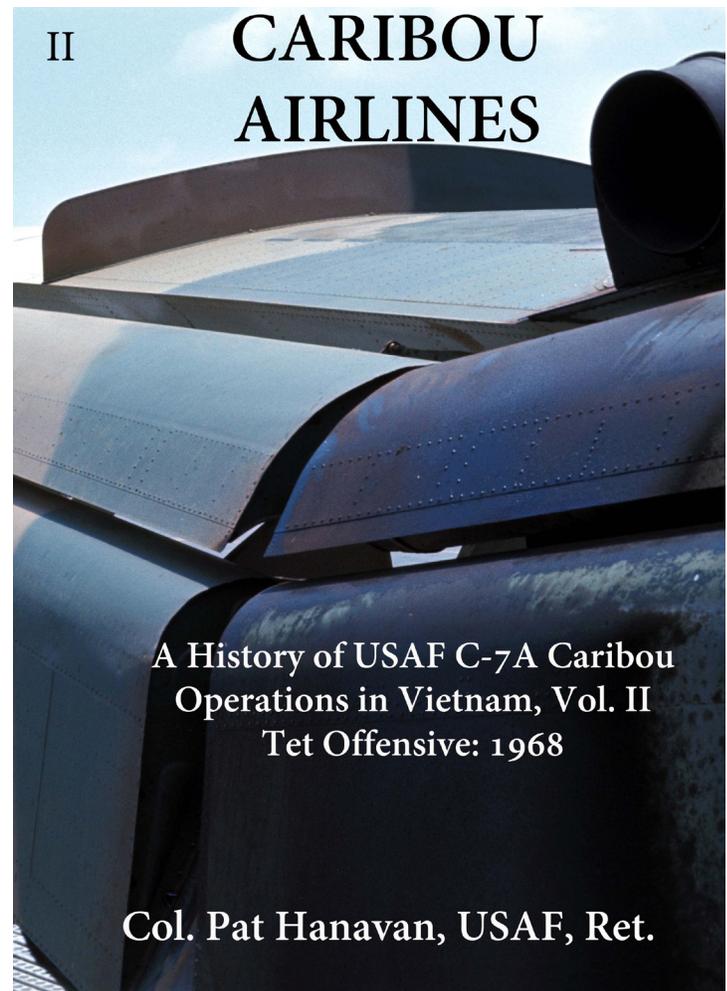
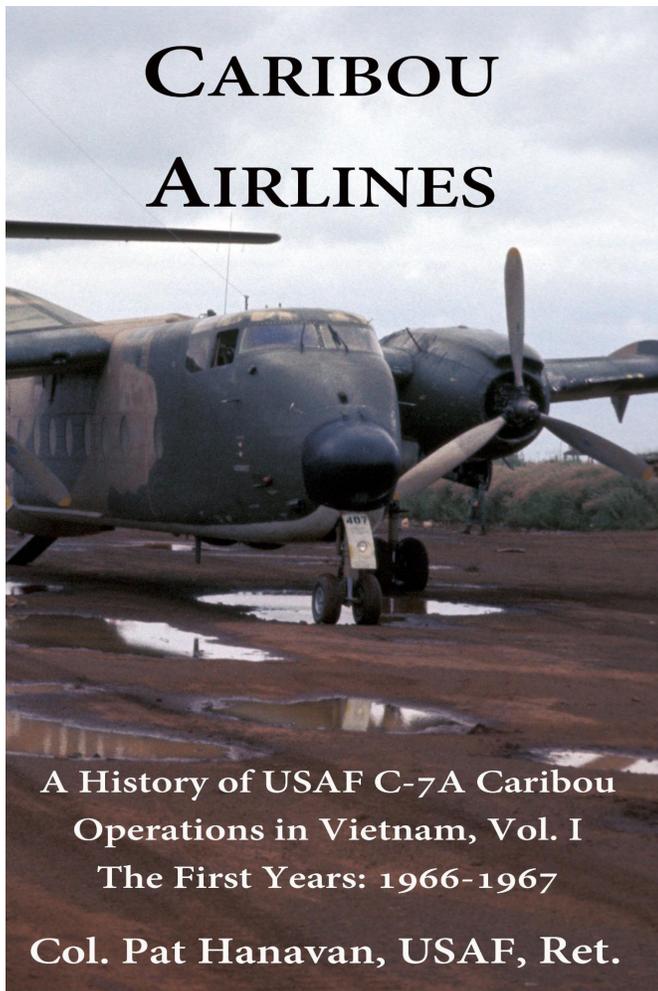
Of course, we wanted to know how he broke his legs. He told us that he was an F-100F (two seater) Misty Fast FAC. They took turns flying front and back seat. He said that it was his day to go up north in the back seat.

They found the target for the F-105's and marked it with 5 inch WP rockets. Then, after the 105's were done, they were supposed to fly low and fast and take an after-action picture of the target. He was the guy with the hand held camera. Of course, the NVA knew the routine and began shooting furiously in front of them. The front seat guy did a lot of jinking and, somehow, the lens came off the camera and disappeared.

They safely got "feet wet" and in-flight refueled for their return trip home down south. Our guy said that he kept looking for the lens, but the front seater said to forget it. They would find it after landing. Upon landing and taxi back, the front seater called "Canopy clear" and raised the canopy.

The lens had landed near one of the actuators for the ejection seat.

**Continued on Page 27**



*Caribou Airlines* is a comprehensive history of USAF C-7A operations in Vietnam. It is about aircrews, crew chiefs, maintenance officers, line chiefs, maintainers, phase inspection personnel, specialty shop personnel, supply personnel, personal equipment specialists, administration and operations personnel, commanders, staff personnel, etc. They made it possible to deliver the troops, guns, ammunition, rations, beer, soda, equipment, animals, etc. to hundreds of bases on the battlefields of Vietnam.

The 483<sup>rd</sup> Tactical Airlift Wing and its squadrons were not an airline, per se. They were tasked with supporting Army and Marine units and other customers with air landed and air dropped supplies using pre-defined, emergency, and opportune sorties to front line locations where the supplies were needed.

The history of the Military Advisory Command, Vietnam (MACV); C-7A Caribou Association newsletters; and personal stories of those involved in C-7A operations provide the context for the books.

Volumes I and II (print or Kindle) are available on Amazon.com. The planned publication date of Volume III: 1969 is the fall of 2014. Signed copies of the books can be ordered from the author for \$20: Pat Hanavan, 12402 Winding Branch, San Antonio, TX 78230-2770

### **Marine ... (from Page 26)**

He said that he heard this tremendous explosion and realized what had happened when he got seat separation about 250 feet up at the top of the arc and saw a miniature F-100 below him, missing a canopy. He said that it was like a "Wily Coyote" cartoon. There was a point where you stop going up, a pause,

and then a rapid going down thing. The F-100 didn't have a zero/zero seat either (needed 100 knots and 100 feet). So, he said that he always heard that in a long fall, one dies of a heart attack before one hits the ground. So, he kept shouting "Come on heart attack."

The drogue chute deployed and that kept his feet straight down. It

was really steep near the taxiway. They had been doing a lot of excavating and it had rained. He hit feet first. The un-deployed chute saved his back and kept it straight. He skidded down the embankment into a large pool of water. He had two simple fractures.

Needless to say, he couldn't buy another drink that night.

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### MEMORABILIA ORDER FORM

**Contact Jim Meyer at [jmeyer3019@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jmeyer3019@sbcglobal.net) to check availability of items.**

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

1. Polo Shirt*	Size - Please Mark: M L XL XXL	Qty. _____ @ \$18.00	Total: _____
2. Colored T Shirt	Size - Please Mark: M L XL XXL	Qty. _____ @ \$15.00	Total: _____
3. Round Engine (R-2000) T Shirt	Size - Please Mark: M L XL XXL	Qty. _____ @ \$12.00	Total: _____
4. Denim Shirt (short sleeve)	Size - Please Mark: M L XL XXL	Qty. _____ @ \$25.00	Total: _____
5. Denim Shirt (long sleeve)	Size - Please Mark: M L XL XXL	Qty. _____ @ \$30.00	Total: _____
6. Denim Hat	One size fits all	Qty. _____ @ \$13.00	Total: _____
7. Baseball (white) Hat	One size fits all	Qty. _____ @ \$13.00	Total: _____
8. 457 <sup>th</sup> Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
9. 458 <sup>th</sup> Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
10. 459 <sup>th</sup> Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
11. 535 <sup>th</sup> Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
12. 536 <sup>th</sup> Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
13. 537 <sup>th</sup> Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
14. 483 <sup>rd</sup> Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
15. Caribou Lapel Pin		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
16. Caribou Poster (12" x 18")		Qty. _____ @ \$5.00	Total: _____
17. Caribou Challenge Coin		Qty. _____ @ \$8.00	Total: _____
18. Caribou DVD – 1:10 long		Qty. _____ @ \$5.00	Total: _____
19. Caribou decal (outside)		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
20. Caribou data plate ( <b>new</b> )		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
21. Caribou refrigerator magnet ( <b>new</b> )		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____

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

**Total:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

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