

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive**

Phan Rang AB News No. 127

“Stories worth telling”

In this issue:

Phan Rang’s No 2 Squadron Excelled in Australia’s Civic Action Program in South Vietnam

AF Crewman Assist In Viet Mercy Mission

3 Peace Men Get Awards

600 See ‘Barefoot In The Park’

Answered Prayers by Elvis Bray

Phan Rang AB In The News

Phan Rang Staff Members

2017 Phan Rang AB Reunion Info

**PHAN RANG’S NO 2 SQUADRON EXCELLED IN
AUSTRALIA’S CIVIC ACTION PROGRAM IN SOUTH VIETNAM**

Aussies, being basically friendly people, enjoyed participating in Civic Action projects in and around Phan Rang, especially when it came to helping the many children who had become separated from their families or who were orphaned in the war.

Almost 60,000 Australians served in the Vietnam War. The 200-man No. 2 (Canberra Bomber) Squadron, Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), based at Phan Rang, was only one unit of the Australian contingent.

The vast majority of serving Aussies belonged to the No. 1 Australian Task Force (ATF) of the Australian Army, which was based at Nui Dat, Vietnam from mid-1966. That’s when Australia’s Civic Action support for local Vietnamese inhabitants began and significant programs were run in Phuoc Tuy Province.

Several RAAF operational units were based at Vung Tau, on the coast east of Saigon - namely No. 35 (Caribou) Transport Squadron and No. 9 (Iroquois) Helicopter Squadron – they were part of the larger combined allied transport effort, with duties including supporting of 1ATF. They also carried out Civic Action projects.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam ...keeping the memories alive

Phan Rang AB News No. 127 **“Stories worth telling”**

No. 2 Squadron left its overseas base at Butterworth, Malaya in April 1967 to set up at Phan Rang as a member of the USAF’s 35th Tactical Fighter Wing. After a six month settling-in period, the squadron received its first full-time chaplain/padre in the form of Father Pat McCormick.

As well as administering to his serving No. 2 Squadron flock, he was also appointed to be the first Civic Action Officer of the squadron. Thereafter, each replacement Chaplain assumed Civic Action responsibilities on an annual rotating basis.

Chaplain McCormick’s enthusiastic leadership in the Civic Action field set a very high standard indeed. He instituted a vigorous program embracing areas of health, education and social welfare, aimed at assisting not only local Vietnamese in the surrounding villages and hamlets, but also Montagnard hill-people living up to 20km from Phan Rang air base, in the foothills below the rugged ranges of Ninh Thuan Province. Before long, the scale and diversity of No. 2 Squadron RAAF Phan Rang Civic Action projects equaled or excelled those of the multiple RAAF units at Vung Tau.

Principal beneficiaries of the RAAF Phan Rang Civic Action program were the Catholic Orphanage at Tan Tai and the Buddhist Boarding School at Thap Cham. Others to receive help included the Phan Rang District Hospital and highlander centers at Ba Rau and Ka Rom hamlets.



2 Sqn volunteers working to construct facilities at the Tan Tai orphanage.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive

Phan Rang AB News No. 127

“Stories worth telling”

Specific projects arranged by respective 2 Squadron Civic Action Officers included:

- Construction of water storage and reticulation and supply of school uniforms to the Buddhist Day Boarding School.
- Distribution of food, clothing and toys to the Catholic Orphanage at Tan Tai, construction of a laundry and re-modeling of kitchen and hygiene facilities. All ranks of No. 2 Squadron frequently visited the orphanage to meet with the children and undertake “working bees”.
- Construction of immunization and physiotherapy centre at the Phan Rang District Hospital, provision of washing machines and baby scales, as well as distribution of food and clothing to patients.
- Donations of food, clothing and toys to hamlets at Cong Thanh and Thanh-y as well as weekly MEDCAP (Medical Civic Aid Projects) visits, where on one occasion 30 patients were treated and triple antigen inoculations were given to 150 children aged between 1 and 7 years.

In November 1969, as he drew near to completing his assignment as Province Senior Adviser in Vietnam’s Ninh Thuan Province, Steven A. Nager, Chief of US COORDS Advisory Team 45, wrote a congratulatory letter to No. 2 Squadron RAAF, commending it for its “extraordinary successful” Civic Action activities.

He particularly focussed on the “spectacular success” in the Ba Thap hamlets of My Hoa and Thai An, where: *“... these hamlets with VC family populations were hostile, and the people had been under VC domination for two decades. Over the last four years, Vietnamese and American efforts to reach this population had failed completely. ”*

He added:

“In the several months during which you have responded to our suggestions of Australian effort in these hamlets, the attitude of the population has changed, community action is a fact, and security has risen sharply. I recall that at the first meeting to launch your programs, only seven old men of both hamlets showed up, and a single spokesman stated flatly that “no help, no nothing” was wanted from the government. These days 80% of the population attend hamlet meetings. The people are open and friendly with visitors, the children are engaged in Junior Youth activities, and new economic improvements are visible.”

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive

Phan Rang AB News No. 127 **“Stories worth telling”**

In February 1970, as part of a Tet goodwill campaign, No. 2 Squadron presented a fully reconditioned VW Kombi van to Tan Tai Catholic Orphanage. Flight Sergeant Herb Rieck, a motor transport fitter, led this effort. At the same time, gifts were made to all prisoners at Phan Rang prison, Ngoc Dinh Buddhist Orphanage and Phuoc Duc Buddhist Charity School.

Sources of support from back home in Australia included the general public, as well as the families of serving No. 2 Squadron members.

Chaplain McCormick received an award from the Australian Government for his efforts, and his citation noted:

“In addition to his work within the squadron, Chaplain McCormick, as Civic Affairs Officer, has travelled at least once each day to the local towns and hamlets to supervise, and work on civic aid projects undertaken by No. 2 Squadron.

These include the construction of two dispensaries in the hamlets of Ap Cong Thanh and Ap Thanh-Y, the building of a playground and laundry at the Tan Tai Orphanage, the distribution of commodities such as baby foods, fruit and other foodstuffs. He has encouraged squadron members to take part in these activities and has always been the first, and most regular, to engage in the hard manual labour involved in the construction work undertaken.

It is to Chaplain McCormick’s credit, and typical of his devotion to the concept of Civil Aid that he has continued his daily visits to the local towns and hamlets during and after the Tet-68 enemy offensive of January/February when security in the local area was extremely precarious and only essential military traffic was permitted to travel outside the Base perimeter.”

Chaplains at all RAAF units in South Vietnam performed so well with their respective Civic Action projects, to the extent that the RAAF’s Chief Historian (Dr. Chris Coulthard-Clark) noted, in his official history of the RAAF in this war, that they had become one of the most highly decorated groups of RAAF servicemen in Vietnam!

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive**

Phan Rang AB News No. 127

“Stories worth telling”



Bob Howe entertaining Tan
Tai orphans, 1969.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

VN/68/0089/22

“Surrounded by children from Tan Tai village orphanage near the Phan Rang air base, RAAF Chaplain Pat McCormick (centre) is farewelled at a party prior to his return to Australia. With him is his replacement, Chaplain Stan Ford (left), and Squadron Medical Officer, Flight Lieutenant Rob Rowley.”

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive**

Phan Rang AB News No. 127

“Stories worth telling”



“Members of 2 Squadron RAAF giving a ride on a bomb cart to Vietnamese children from Tan Tai Orphanage. The children were brought onto Phan Rang USAF base for a Christmas dinner and gifts. The personnel are (from left to right) Leading Aircraftman Allan Wray; Corporal Bill 'Bushy' Trevethan (behind) and unidentified.”

Steven Nager, Province Senior Advisor from U.S. Advisory Team 45 wrote this letter to the officer commanding Number 2 Squadron RAAF. This is the text of the letter:

Dear Sir,

I would like to congratulate the officers and men of your squadron for the extraordinary successful civic action programs you have conducted in Nanh Thuan Province.

Especially the program in the Ba Thap hamlets of My Hoa and Thai An has been spectacular in success. As you know these hamlets with VC family populations were

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive**

Phan Rang AB News No. 127 **“Stories worth telling”**

hostile, and the people had been under VC domination for two decades. Over the last four years, Vietnamese and American efforts to reach this population had failed completely. Vietnamese troops in the hamlets were compromised by the population, took frequent casualties, and the hamlets were insecure.

In the several months during which you have responded to our suggestion of Australian effort in these hamlets, the attitude of the population has changed, community action is a fact, and security has risen sharply, I recall that at the first meeting to launch your programs, only seven old men of both hamlets showed up, and a single spokesman stated flatly that “no help, nothing” was wanted from the government. These days 80% of the population attend hamlet meetings. The people are open and friendly with visitors, the children are engaged in Junior Youth Club activities, and new economic improvements are visible.

As for ourselves, we much appreciate the open, responsive cooperation of your people working with the project - their patience, unflappability, easy way with the villagers, and their motivation to get a job done right.

My own departure from Vietnam is imminent, and I could not leave without telling you how impressed I am with the Australian civic action effort. In this, I know with certainty that the Vietnamese hold like opinions.

You must certainly have great pride in your command, and in the caliber of the officers and men with constitute it.

Some photos for this article and a copy of the Nager letter are by courtesy of the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, and provided by Bob Howe. Remember **Anzac Day** is April 25th which is a national day of remembrance in Australia and New Zealand that broadly commemorates all Australians and New Zealanders who served and died in all wars, conflicts, and peacekeeping operations.



**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive**

Phan Rang AB News No. 127

“Stories worth telling”

AF Crewman Assist In Viet Mercy Mission

(The Tribune, Sunday, November 22, 1970)

U.S. Air Force Technical Sergeant John E. Schmidt, son of Paul L. Schmidt, 14639 Grant street, Dolton, is one of five C-123 Provider crewmen who are credited with saving the life of an 18-month-old Vietnamese baby girl.

Sergeant Schmidt, a C-123 Provider flight engineer, and fellow crew members recently airlifted the critically ill baby to Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. She was examined, given emergency medical treatment and then flown to a USAF specialist at Cam Ranh Bay Air Base.

The baby's father, a Vietnamese Popular Forces noncommissioned officer at Nhon Co Popular Forces camp requested Air Force assistance when she became lethargic and unresponsive to antibiotics following a two-day respiratory illness.

The five-man Provider crew had completed their last cargo delivery of the day and were returning to Phan Rang when they received the emergency call, relayed by a U.S. Army Special Forces adviser at Nhon Co. He informed them of the child's condition, explaining that the camp doctor wasn't equipped to handle the case and requested her immediate air evacuation.

The Provider was diverted to the camp where the crew took the child and her parents aboard. Within 25 minutes after the initial radio contact, they landed at Phan Rang and the child was sped by ambulance to the dispensary. Examinations revealed that draining fluids caused by the respiratory infection had perforated the bone under her nose in the oral cavity.

The abscess was in an area that bordered on the brain. Unsuccessful spinal taps were attempted since the child also had symptoms typical of meningitis.

The Phan Rang medical staff located a USAF doctor at Cam Ranh Bay who had considerable background in pediatrics and the child again was air evacuated, this time a distance of 30 miles by helicopter. Medical personnel agreed that she would have died in another day unless the abscess had been drained and special care provided.

Sergeant Schmidt regularly flies aerial resupply missions in support of allied ground forces

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive

Phan Rang AB News No. 127 **“Stories worth telling”**

in Vietnam. He is assigned at Phan Rang to a tactical air support unit of the Pacific Air Forces, headquarters for air operations in Southeast Asia, the Far East and the Pacific area.

His wife, Betty, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Roy Givens of Sheridan, Ark.



3 Peace Men Get Awards

(Portsmouth Herald (NH) April 3, 1972)

Three members of the 509th Bombardment Wing were presented awards recently by Col. John M. Parker, 509th Bomb wing commander at Pease AFB.

Lt. Col. Carl W. Brage, 509th bomb Wing, received the Bronze Star for service at Phan Rang and Tan Son Nhut Air Bases in the Republic of Vietnam during his tour there from February to December of last year.

While there he served as Administrative Officer, 17th Special Operations Squaron and Vietnamese Air Force AC-119 Aircrew Training, Air Force Advisory Team No. 5. He instituted a series of quality control procedures which were noted by the 7th Air Force Inspector General. His actions displayed great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

Besides receiving the Bronze Star, he was presented the Second Oak Leaf cluster to the air Medal for the September to November 1971 period.



600 See ‘Barefoot In The Park’

(Phan Fare, The Phan Rang Weekly, March 21, 1971)

The New World Committee’s latest production, “Barefoot In The Park,” drew over 600 Phan Rang AB residents to the Red Cross Recreational Center, the Du Drop Inn, for the four

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive

Phan Rang AB News No. 127 **“Stories worth telling”**

performances Mar. 11, 12, 13 and 14, according to Sgt. Gary W. Gilmore, play director from El Paso, Texas.

Written by Neil Simon, the comedy featured a newly-wed couple taking up residence in a sixth floor apartment on 48th Street in New York City.

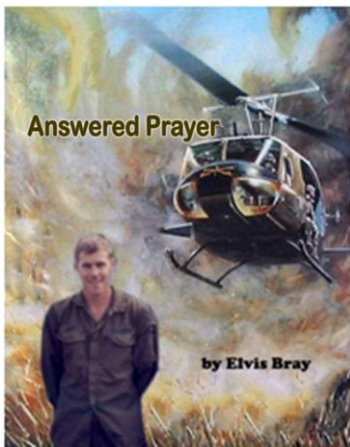
Paul Bratter, played by Airman 1st Class Richard P. Goldman, from Brooklyn, N.Y., and his wife Corie, played by Sara Porter, Richmond, Ind., Red Cross Center director, met world traveler and gourmet Victor Velasco, played by Carol Clarke, Austin, Tex., Red Cross recreational aid, sets up a dinner engagement which ends up in havoc for the marriage.

Other individuals, who played key parts in the production, were PFC David Moorhouse, Indianapolis, Ind., as the tired but enthusiastic telephone man and Gary Fernandez, as the not so-young delivery man.

Sergeant Gilmore, who extended his tour for three days to direct the play, commented, “It seemed to go perfectly and the cast and crew were fantastic. I want to thank all the crew and everyone who supported this production for a job well done.”

“We are real happy that we were able to do a play like this one,” explained Sara Porter. “It took us two months and we rehearsed every night since Jan. 26. We’ve had about 125 persons attend each night and they were really great.

David Moorhouse, whose weary jaunts up the six flights of stairs to the Bratter apartment were the high point in his performance, summed up the feeling of the entire troupe when he added, “It was quite a climb.”



Answered Prayer

By Elvis Bray

(Reprinted with permission of the author)

The muffled whine of the 1100 hp. turbine engine, the rush of wind through the open door and the distinct whop-whop-whop of the helicopter blades were the only sounds in the vast black emptiness of the Mekong Delta. An endless sea of elephant

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive

Phan Rang AB News No. 127

“Stories worth telling”

grass spanned for miles in all directions like a calm gray sea, riddled with small canals like black snakes winding their way east out of Cambodia. A lifeless half-moon shined through scattered clouds high above. There was no radio traffic, no tracers and no flares in sight.

*The 7th Armored Squadron of the 1st Air Cavalry Blackhawks was on the prowl
and someone would probably die tonight.*

Two Killer Cobra gunships followed close behind at 1200 feet, patiently waiting to wreak havoc on the enemy at a moment’s notice. Another thousand feet above and behind them, the command ship piloted by Major Albert Rodriguez kept a watchful eye. The 7th Armored Squadron of the 1st Air Cavalry Blackhawks was on the prowl and someone would probably die tonight.

I had no idea what month it was and couldn’t have cared less. They were divided only by the wet and dry seasons. This was the beginning of the dry season. Just one of 365 days I would spend in Vietnam in 1968 during my first tour. But this was no typical day. It was a night mission, and the nights belonged to the Viet Cong.

I sat in the door gunner’s seat on the right side of my helicopter manning twin M60 machine guns. Mounted at my feet were two large metal ammo boxes containing 7.62 rounds. To my left sat a large cycloptic cluster of lights mounted to the floor of my helicopter. Ten one million candle watt landing lights had been configured into a four foot round disk pointing at a ninety degree angle from my helicopter.

The code name for our mission was “firefly.” I could just imagine some West Pointer coming up with the idea and some backwoods farm boy with his welder constructing the monstrosity in one of the hangers back at Vinh Long. It reminded me of the car dealerships using giant lights that crisscrossed the skies to advertise car sales. Their sole purpose was to draw attention to the area. That wasn’t such a good idea in the Plain of Reeds. This was a free-fire zone and anything that moved got killed.

I didn’t know if actually worked or not. I assumed they had tested the damned thing before mounting it. The concept was simple enough: fly back and forth along the Cambodian border at low level, looking for sampans crossing into South Vietnam carrying supplies for the VC. Find the sampans, turn on the big light and blind the occupants. Spray them with machine gun fire

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive

Phan Rang AB News No. 127

“Stories worth telling”

until the Cobras could get a fix on their position. Turn off the light and peel away in the opposite direction, allowing the gunships time to complete their dive. Mini-guns would pour red fire from the sky at four thousand rounds per minute, followed by a swarm of rockets, destroying the supplies and Viet Cong transporting it.

It sounded pretty good during the pre-flight briefing. That is, everything except the part about leaving the other gunner at home. Major Rodriguez said it would be too dark for him to see anything on his side. How the hell did they know? This was an experimental mission and no one had actually flown one before. I had plenty of time to re-evaluate the theory of the mission during the thirty-minute flight to the free-fire zone. Normally, rounds being fired from the ground at a flying object hit somewhere behind the target. However, if the enemy aimed at the bright light in the sky, I'd be sitting right behind it. Not a comforting thought.

My eyelids were getting heavy and I was having a hard time keeping my eyes open. I'd already flown all day inserting South Vietnamese soldiers into and out of battle zones. I'd barely had enough time to refuel the helicopter, grab a bite to eat and get to the briefing before we lifted off the flight line at 10 p.m. As hard as it was to stay awake, I kept them glued to the canals below.

Major Rodriguez's voice cracked over the radio. "Comanche 6 to Comanche 24."

"Comanche 24," the pilot answered.

"We're approaching the end of the free-fire zone. Make a hundred and eighty degree turn to your left and head back south closer to the Cambodian border."

"Roger that."

Our new orders were a little unnerving. My helicopter had been hit three times by .51 caliber rounds near the border just a few weeks back. One round had entered the left front pilot's window and took out the overhead fuse panel. The second round smashed just above my head, tearing a large hole in the roof of the helicopter. The third round missed my right shoulder by an inch, smashed into the base of the transmission mount, ricocheted around my body and out through the cargo door that was locked into the open position. All three hits sounded like grenades exploding inside my chopper and the thought of encountering more .51 rounds made the hair on the back of my neck stand up.

Another thirty minutes passed without incident. It appeared this was going to be an

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive

Phan Rang AB News No. 127

“Stories worth telling”

unproductive night for the Blackhawks. The mission had to end soon because we were getting low on fuel.

All of a sudden the big light came on and the helicopter banked hard to the right. I gripped the handles of the twin 60s, searching for targets. Just below me was a clearing that looked like a giant ant hole in the middle of the tall grass. Three people stood in the center of the clearing, next to a grass hut. My finger tightened on the triggers as I aimed my weapons at them, but I held my fire. They were huddled together, staring up at us. A man, woman and small child about five years old stood next to the straw shack.

Major Rodriguez came over the radio demanding a status report. “Comanche 6, what do you have?”

“Looks like a peasant farmer, his wife and kid down there, sir.”

“Are they armed?”

“Not that we can see.”

We continued to circle, slowing all the time. The family below turned in a circle facing us as we circled them, obviously blinded by our light. The man held his wife close to him with one arm and pulled the child’s head tight against his body with the other as the boy hugged his legs. After two complete turns, the family stopped following our movement and stood still, awaiting their fate. As the helicopter slowed, the circles became tighter and tighter as we lowered towards the family.

“What the hell are they doing living in a free-fire zone?” grumbled Major Rodriguez, as if talking to himself.

“I don’t know, sir,” said the pilot. “What would you have us do?”



“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive

Phan Rang AB News No. 127

“Stories worth telling”

My heart sank as I recalled the words from the pre-flight briefing. “This is a free fire-zone, men. Anything that moves gets killed.”

I’m not particularly religious. At least, not until incoming rounds start pounding holes in my helicopter or the mortars start exploding around my barracks during the middle of the night. Then my faith in God renews itself and I pray my life be spared. Now, I prayed for the family below. “God, please help them.”

“Can you see inside the hooch?” the Major asked.

“Not from this height, sir.”

“Drop down and see if you can see anything. We’ll cover you.”

“Roger.”

The helicopter slowed too little more than a hover about thirty feet above the ground. The wind from the rotor blades smashed the tall grass flat and the family wobbled in its wake. I felt the hut would be blown away at any moment, but somehow it held.

At this height and speed, we were just as much sitting ducks as the family below us. I just knew some Vietcong in black pajamas would jump up from the tall grass or come running out of the hut and open fire on us at any second. I missed the door-gunner who would have normally protected our backside.

When we passed the front of the grass hut, the bright light shined inside, casting eerie shadows along the walls. I moved my guns from the family towards the hut, ready to obliterate anything threatening. Dirt floors, a few pots and pans and what appeared to be a small bed sat in the very back.

“See anything, Bray?” asked the pilot.

“Appears to be empty, sir. No enemy or weapons visible.”

“They appear to be alone, sir,” the pilot reported. He increased our speed and we gained a

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive

Phan Rang AB News No. 127 **“Stories worth telling”**

little altitude. “What are our orders, sir?”

The next few minutes were the longest moments of my life. Time crept slower than it did when the .51 caliber rounds had created havoc on my helpless bird a few weeks prior. As I held the 60s on my potential victims, I prayed. Please, God, don’t let them make me kill these people. Over and over I prayed, more sincerely than I had ever prayed for my own life. The wait seemed endless.

Tears streamed down the boy and woman’s cheeks. I hoped they were also praying. While keeping pressure on the triggers, I decided if I was ordered to kill them, I would make it as quick as possible to keep them from suffering. I wished I hadn’t volunteer for this mission. I wanted to be sound asleep under my mosquito net back at Vinh Long. My heart pounded and my head throbbed.

It seemed like an eternity before Major Rodriguez broke the silence. “All right, we’ve marked their position. We’ll bring some troops in tomorrow and find out what they’re doing out here. Let’s head back to base.”

“Comanche 24, roger that,” answered the pilot.

The big light went dark and we rose into the night sky. I watched the family fade from sight, placed the big guns down into the rest position and sat back against the wall. I had broken into a cold sweat. I took several deep breaths, closed my eyes and thanked God that I hadn’t been ordered to kill the family I believed was just trying to survive one more day in that stinking cesspool. I felt chilled and realized I was shaking uncontrollably.

That was forty-six years ago; I was only twenty years old at the time. I’ve often thought about that hot muggy night in the middle of a free-fire zone when nothing really happened. I sleep well, thanks partly to a decision made a long time ago by Major Albert Rodriguez.

I’m much older and wiser now. Today, I’d refuse an order to kill seemingly innocent civilians. But at the time, I wouldn’t have hesitated for a moment. I was a soldier then, and good soldiers don’t question orders; they follow them.

Thank God for answered prayers.

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive**

Phan Rang AB News No. 127

“Stories worth telling”



Enemy Fire Rakes Bases, Cities - Civilians Take Brunt of Barrage

(Pacific Stars & Stripes Sunday, June 8, 1969)

By SPEC. 4 DONALD MINNIX

S&S Staff Correspondent

SAIGON—The heaviest Communist barrage of mortars and rockets in a month raked Allied military installations and South Vietnamese cities across the country Thursday night and early Friday.

Military spokesmen said, however, that damage to bases had been slight while civilians, as usual, had suffered most of the casualties inflicted by the Red attacks.

U.S. spokesmen reported 102 shellings overnight. The new wave of Red rocket and mortar attacks was the heaviest since May 11 when Communist gunners hit 159 targets. But only 46 of the latest attacks were considered "significant," causing damage or casualties.

Targets included three U.S. division headquarters, three major air fields, U.S. Army headquarters at Long Binh and several cities and towns, including Saigon.

In the heaviest attack, forty-five 122mm rockets slammed into the Bien Hoa airfield, 15 miles northeast of the capital city, but officials said the Russian-made Missiles did little damage.

The base camps of the 1st Inf. Div. at Lai Khe and the 1st Cav. Div. at Phuoc Vinh, 30 and 35 miles north of Saigon, were hit by 107mm rockets, while five 107mm rockets crashed into the 9th Inf. Div. base camp at Dong Tarn, 40 miles southwest of Saigon.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive

Phan Rang AB News No. 127

“Stories worth telling”

U.S. Army headquarters at Long Binh, 15 miles northeast of Saigon, was hit by five 122mm rockets early Friday morning.

Two other 122mm rockets hit about three miles from the center of Saigon, but caused no damage or injury.

Eight South Vietnamese civilians were wounded when thirty-five 107mm rockets crashed into the Phan Rang air base 165 miles northeast of Saigon. U.S. casualties were light.

Other enemy rocket and mortar attacks were against field outposts and night defensive positions in all four corps tactical zones, U.S. military spokesmen said.

South Vietnamese spokesmen reported several cities and towns shelled Thursday night and early Friday. The heaviest hit was Ninh Thuan. At least 100 South Vietnamese civilians were injured by the Communist shells.

Early Friday morning, Red gunners fired 16 rounds from 60mm mortars into Bao Loc City, 90 miles north of Saigon. Six civilians and one policeman were wounded.

AF Reserves Leave Viet

(Pacific Stars & Stripes Sunday, June 8, 1969)

S&S Vietnam Bureau

NHA TRANG—The 71st Special Operations Sq., the only Air Force Reserve unit still serving in Vietnam, left Thursday for Bakalar AFB, Columbus, Ind.

The 249 men are to be released from active duty when they reach the United States. The unit was one of several Air Force Reserve units activated last year. It arrived in Vietnam with its AC-119 gunships early in 1969.

The reserves have been replaced by regular Air Force personnel through normal assignments. The designation of the new unit operating the AC-119s is the 17th Special Operations Sq.

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive**

Phan Rang AB News No. 127

“Stories worth telling”

During their tour of combat duty, air crews of the 71st flew 1,461 sorties totaling more than 6,000 flying hours.

Phan Rang Club News

Airmen's Club

Country & Western Band at the Red Horse Lounge 7:30 p.m.

FRIDAY
Country & Western Band 7:30 pm

House Band at the 1st Log Annex 7:30 p.m.

SATURDAY
Country & Western Band 7:30 pm

SUNDAY
Happy Hour is Monday through Saturday from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

TUESDAY
Show Band 7:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY
Show Band 7:30 p.m.

THURSDAY
Show Band 7:30 p.m.

FRIDAY
Show Band 7:30 p.m.

SATURDAY
Show Band 7:30 p.m.

Officers' Club

SUNDAY
Free Breakfast 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Cafeteria Service 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

MONDAY
Happy Hour 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

TUESDAY
Happy Hour 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

WEDNESDAY
Steak Night

First Drink Free 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

THURSDAY
House Band 7:30 p.m.

FRIDAY
Happy Hour 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

SATURDAY
Happy Hour and a Half 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

SUNDAY
House Band 9:30 p.m.

NCO Club

Happy Hour is Monday through Saturday from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

SUNDAY
House Band 7:30 p.m.

TUESDAY
House Band 7:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY
House Band 7:30 p.m.

THURSDAY
House Band 7:30 p.m.

Phan Fare, March 21, 1971

PHAN RANG STAFF MEMBERS

Robert Kellington & Joseph Burkhart: Master of Ceremonies

Jack Anderson: Treasurer

Lou Ruggerio: Site coordinator/Contract negotiator

Douglas Severt: Reunion Coordinator

Ed Downey/Barbara Brandt: Ceremonies

Christopher Boles: Photographer

Kirk Minert: Aircraft Historian

Bob Tucker: Keeper of the Rolls

Joe Kaupa: In Memoriam

Bruce Muller: Badge Board


Jim Erixson & Mike Maleski: Chaplain

Bob Howe: Australian Ambassador

Skip Ruedeman: Place Reunion info in VFW Mag.

Lou Ruggerio: Place reunion info in AFA Mag. & VVofA

Phan Rang AB Roll Call



Add your name to the Phan Rang AB Roll Call, a list of people assigned to Phan Rang AB, RVN. Send your info to [Bob Tucker](#).

Add your name to the Phan Rang AB Roll Call, a list of people assigned to Phan Rang AB, RVN. Send your info to [Bob Tucker](#).

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive**

Phan Rang AB News No. 127

“Stories worth telling”



Here are the costs for the Seattle Reunion 2017:

Reunion Fee: \$10.00/person

Plate Banquet Dinner: \$50.00/person

Beef Banquet Dinner: \$55.00/person

Trip to Museum of Flight: \$50.00/person

We're doing the banquet a little different this year. We'll have a plate dinner instead of a buffet. The reason: It's cheaper! The \$50 plate dinner will be your choice of Salmon, Chicken, or Vegetarian. Try letting me know your choice when you send me your check. If you want beef, it will be an extra \$5. The Museum of Flight charge will include: Transportation to and from the event and hotel Doubletree, Admission into the Museum, and a buffet lunch.

You can send your checks at any time from now until September 20th. Send them and make them payable to:

**Happy Valley Reunion
826 72nd St SE
Auburn, Wa 98092**

See you in Seattle! October 11th thru the 15th

How to Register at the Doubletree Inn Seattle:

<http://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/personalized/S/SEASPDT-PHA-20171010/index.jhtml>

Tour the Site: <http://www.gotyoulooking.com/1doubletreehiltonseattlewa/mht.html>

I hope that you enjoyed this issue of the Phan Rang Newsletter. In this issue Elvis Bray permitted me to print one of his short stories, which is the second one that I've printed. It's amazing how many authors Phan Rang produced and I've been so fortunate to showcase a lot of them here. We've terminated the sale of Phan Rang AB Challenge Coins until further notice, but soon there will be Phan Rang AB patches for sale. This newsletter was compiled and published by [Douglas Severt](#). Previous issues of the Phan Rang Newsletter are available [here](#) for download.