



REVETMENTS

The Official Journal of The Tan Son Nhut Association

A Memorial to the American Experience in Vietnam



AUGUST 2014

COMMENTS ON THE JULY ISSUE

After reading your July issue, one of the articles struck a cord. During my second tour, I worked with a scout unit in downtown Saigon when I had a little free time. There were both boys and girls in all scouting units in the RVN ... no distinction between boys and girls as in the rest of the world. The girls were required to adhere to the same standards and qualifications as the boys and earned their badges and ranks in the exact manner. It was an enlightening experience but I learned one thing. The younger girls could become quite possessive ... I had Captain Ba's (he was the scoutmaster) daughter decide that I was her personal property. She latched onto my hand when we were hiking and God help any of the other girls who approached.

Jim Haycraft (TSN 64-65 72-73)

MEMORIES OF KOREA 1951-1952

By: Walter Duke
3rd Radio Research Unit
Jun 65—Jun 66

I was recalled to active duty from the Inactive Reserves on 7 Nov 1950 as a PFC, having been separated from active duty 2 June 1950, at the ripe old age of 19.

After some hit and miss retraining I was sent to Korea, arriving in Japan in Jan 1951, under my Ordnance MOS 0912 Automotive Electrician. I was then shipped out of Sasebo, Japan to Korea on a Japanese transport that stunk to high heaven. Upon arrival at Pusan myself and several others were put on a train and sent to the replacement center near Taegue. As I recall it was in an apple orchard. We remained there for several days and were then sent forward to our units by

truck, mine being Service Company of the 21st Regiment. Upon arriving at the 21st Regiment I attempted to leave the truck when a Sergeant informed me that I had been reassigned to Company "K" and I had just had my MOS changed to 4745 Rifleman.

According to the Morning Report I joined "K" Company on 21st of Feb. 1950 and was assigned to the 1st Platoon 3rd Squad. The Platoon Leader was 2nd Lt. R. Daigle, my Squad Leader was Cpl. Henry Miner, Asst. Squad Leader was PFC Tony Baker.

I remember being involved in several skirmishes and doing a lot of walking. In reading some of the History, I believe we were involved with Operation Ripper. The first real serious battle I recall was in April when the Chinese started the 1st Spring Offensive. We were in position on a hill somewhere near a big reservoir, when we were hit. It started early in the day and continued into the night. I recall Lt. Daigle coming into the Squads position around 2 AM and checking on our ammo. The BAR man had two or three clips left and most of the riflemen had less than 6 clips for our rifles and he ordered us to fix bayonets. Sure did get my attention. Fortunately the Chinese had had enough for that night, and the next day we moved out and walked for over 20 miles before we stopped. I was wearing snowpak's and the bottoms of both feet were solid blisters. We had caught up with our Supply and Mess - first hot meal in several days. I had asked the supply Sgt. for a pair of boots and was informed that he didn't have any. Later, when passing the supply tent, there was a pile of equipment covered with a tarp and I saw some boots exposed. Upon checking, I found a pair my size and stole them. Walking was a lot better with combat boots.

The next operation I believe was the 2nd Chinese Offensive. Things had changed in the Platoon. My Squad

Leader was Sgt. Otto Bailey and I was the Asst. Squad Leader, and as I recall we were in a blocking position near a school yard. The squad on our left was tied into a unit from "I" CO. As we received word to move out we spotted a squad of Chinese on the road below us. Our light machine gun crew opened up and eliminated them. As we moved out a large Chinese force came over the ridge above and overran the "I" Co's position. We managed to escape.

In May of 1951 I was transferred to Company Headquarters as the CO's radio operator and later became the Company Communication Sgt.

In late August or early September, while in reserve, all senior NCO's were contacted to see if they were interested in receiving a direct appointment to 2/LT. I had been promoted to SFC in early August and agreed to go before the board of officers to be considered for this. I was recommended and offered a commission, which I turned down as I was to be transferred to another unit and take over a rifle platoon. I informed them that I was willing to take the Battalion Headquarters Company, Communication Platoon.

Shortly thereafter we went back on line. Just as we got settled in I was summoned to the Battalion Forward CP by Lt/Col Smith, at which time he asked me if I was still interested in the Communication Platoon. I said yes and was sent back to Battalion Hqs. to report to the Adjutant (WOJG Haas). Upon arriving at Hqs. Mr. Haas asked me if I was sure I wanted to do this as he had orders sending me home. After a short period to consider this I said yes, and was sent to Division Headquarters where I was processed, discharged on the 18th of Oct. 1951 and commissioned in the reserves and called to active as a 2/Lt. on the 19th of Oct. 1951.

I returned to the 3rd BN. on the 19th

late in the day. The unit had moved while I was gone. The next day, after meeting with Lt/Col Smith. I was briefed on the location of all the units of the Bn. by Lt. Meadows the S-2 Officer and then given a tour of the Companies on the Line, L & K. The weather was lousy with limited visibility. I CO. was in position on OPLR (Outpost Line of Resistance). We didn't get to their location, Lt. Meadows just pointed into the haze and said they are out there.

Upon returning to Bn. Hqs. It was time for evening chow. I entered the officer's mess and started eating when Lt/Col Smith said he wanted to see me in operations as soon as I finished. Needless to say I hurried.

When I arrived at operations, Lt/Col Smith said he wanted a land line into I Co, that night. Lt Meadows was also present and briefed me on how to get there. He instructed me to go to a position on the line where we had been earlier that day and start from there—take the trail straight from that location to the next trail intersection, where there I would find a dead Chinese Mule. There I was to take the trail to the left, follow that trail until the next intersection where I would find two dead Chinese Soldiers. Take the trail to the right and it would take me straight to I CO's position.

I went back to my Platoon and got a wire team of six men together and started out. We tied into the Bn. Switchboard and started laying wire. We made it to the starting point at the Co. line, found the dead mule and the two dead Chinese soldiers and turned down the trail to I Co. All of a sudden I heard talking and could see movement against the night starlit sky, but couldn't make out whether they were Chinese or American. As we were only armed with Carbines and 45 pistols, we were not in any condition to get into a firefight, so I deployed the team to either side of the trail and instructed them to lay low and keep quiet until who ever it was had passed our position. Shortly thereafter I saw some one light a cigarette and I knew then that they had to be Americans. As we approached them I challenged them and received the correct reply. I talked to the leader and found out they were a platoon of I Co. who had for

some reason left their position. He informed me that we were on the right trail to get to I Co. We proceeded on laying our land line and arrived at I Co. position a short time later, I hooked an EE8 telephone to the wire we had laid and got the Bn. Switchboard, no problem. With great relief, my first mission as the Commo officer was a success.

The I Co. Commander informed me that myself and my wire crew were to stay and replace the troops we had met on the way there. Needless to say I was not happy with this idea, so I used the telephone we had installed to call the Bn. Commander and informed him of what the I Co. CO had told me. The Col. told me to give the phone to the I Co. CO.

When he broke the connection he informed me and my crew to return to Bn. Hqs. which I immediately complied with. On our return trip I missed the turn at the intersection with the dead Chinese Soldiers and proceeded straight ahead entering the rear area of the Bn. adjacent to ours, I was not challenged until I was in their mortar position and was given direction to the 3rd Bn.

Not too long after that we got a new Bn.CO Lt/Col Edward F. Baker. I don't remember much else about my stay with the Bn. In Korea, I continued to serve as the Bn. Commo Officer, and moved with the Division back to Japan in Feb. of 1952 and rotated to the States in Mar. 1952.

Daigle R.J. 2/Lt "K" Co. Plt. Ldr.;
Lucas (Luckes) Capt. "K" Co. Company Commander;
Meadows, 1/Lt "K" Co. & Hqs. Co. Plt. Ldr./S2;
Sheehan, Edward F. 1/Lt "K" Co.;
Haas, Charles WOJG Hqs. Co. Adjutant;
Sibert, Ray Maj. Reg't Hqs. Adjutant;
Urbina, George Capt. "K" Co. Exec. Off.;
Whipple, James Capt. "Hqs. Co." Bn S-4;
Beaty, Richard 1/Lt Hqs. Co. Motor Officer;
Miller, (Pony) Capt./Maj Hqs. Co. Bn. S-3;
Bailey, Herbert Capt "Hqs. Co. Company Commander.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Many "Chaplains" begin their time in the pulpit with a joke or some important information or history. Well here are both for August!

On the 5th of August 1964 Congress approves "all necessary action" In Vietnam. Gee, I didn't know it was a necessary 'action', how about you, did you know? August also historically states August 11, 1972 US combat troops leave South Vietnam (did you know that?). Ah yes, August.

It's great to have a member of the family who is a librarian. I have three of them (even if one, my daughter, is with the Marines). From them I get a lot of resources. Because of the themes of August is about the late history of ours and Nam I choose to list a group of scriptural texts for those who choose to think of the subject.

"When you need protection in times of danger", try some of these: Psalm 9:9, Psalm 32:10, I really like Psalm 37:27-28 and of course Psalm 46:1.

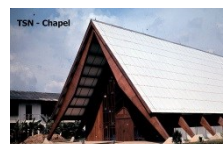
Oh yes, there are some texts that were hard to figure out, especially during a tour in Nam: Psalm 118:6 The Lord is with me, I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?

Well, humor, deep personal feelings, loneliness, loss of friends, so many emotions pass thru us at times that (or were) strange to us.

Ah well, here is the real truth about all the above efforts: it comes from 1 Peter 5:7, "Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you".

End of Sermon

Chaplain Bob



**More remembrances from Evansville
Thanks Harlan Hatfield**



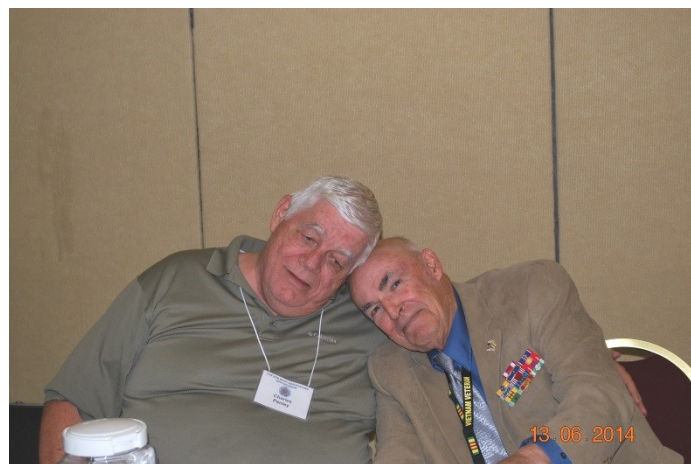
Waiting for the Silent Auction to begin on Saturday evening.



The smart saluting is one thing to enjoy, but how about those shadows!!



Yes, we had a lot of BX items to buy.
Thanks Johnnie & Sharon!



Two tired but happy "Registrars"
Thanks Charles & Harlan

FROM GARY MONAHAN

Gary F. Monahan Sp/4 Army
MOS: 76P20 Quartermaster
Headquarters Co. 58 Transportation Unit/
"D" Company 110th Transportation
Tent City "B", Tan Son Nhut Airbase
Republic of South Vietnam

I arrived in country on July 7th, 1968. We landed at Tan Son Nhut airport and disembarked the plane at the main terminal building and were promptly loaded into the back of a deuce and half and taken to the 9th Replacement Company at Long Binh. Two days later I was returned to Tan Son Nhut and assigned to Headquarters Company of the 58th Transportation unit and was billeted at Tent City "B" just behind MACV Headquarters.

I was a fair typist and as a result of that ability, instead of working in supply, I was assigned to work for a Major Jay W. Pershing as his personal clerk/typist. Major Pershing was the Nephew of the infamous "Black Jack Pershing" of WW I fame. I worked at a building just down from the main

terminal directly across the street from the morgue called Dyna Electron which processed IBM punch cards. Four months later I was re-assigned to "D" Company of the 110th Transportation Unit and was assigned as a supply clerk working in the motor pool.

During this time I mainly stayed on base with the occasional trip to Saigon. I particularly enjoyed going to the Air Force Mess instead of the Army chow hall. The food was far superior to Army food as was the EM Club. My first five months in country were rather uneventful, even a bit mundane, except for the occasional rocket and mortar attacks on the base. I stood guard duty at the Field Hospital just outside the main gate and also out on the golf course, but other than that just went to work each day and counted the days left until I could return back to the world. All of that changed at 0320 hours on January 31st, 1968.

I was part of a 70 man Quick Reaction Team (QRT) called "Task Force-35" which was comprised of 90 Army personnel, under the direct supervision and guidance of the 377th Combat Security Police. We, along with several other QRT's, Army One and Army Two, were first on the field at the onset of the Viet Cong and NVA attack on the western

end of the runways . We were NOT combat savvy troops... mostly clerks, cooks, truck drivers and other support personnel. It didn't matter. We got out there and "listened up" and followed instructions and at the end of the day we were in large part, along with outstanding air support, responsible for backing up those attackers and ultimately defeating them.

I will be forever proud of the accomplishments we, "Task Force 35", made that day and forever grateful for the guidance of the 377th Combat Security Police. They along with their Army counterparts kept a bunch of inexperienced 18 and 19 year olds from getting injured or worse that day.



JIM LANE'S STORY

By: James Lane
314th TCW Sewart AFB, TN
64-65

I was in and out of Saigon, Tan Son Nhut AB on several occasions during 1964 and 1965 as a crew chief on C-130B and E aircraft assigned to the 314th Troop Carrier Wing out of Sewart AFB Tennessee. In 1966 the 314th was moved to CCK Taiwan. I was TDY to Clark AB Philippines and Naha AB Okinawa during 1964 into 1965 as our missions increased in Vietnam.

In September 1965 I was assigned as the crew chief on C-130E 62-1825 which was loaded with the first ABCCC capsule sent to Vietnam. Arriving at Tan Son Nhut in September it was assigned to the 2nd Air Division. During the period at TSN its mission was to evaluate the C-130 ABCCC platform in SEA. In Ray Roddy Jr's book "Circles In The Sky" he credits the aircraft while at TSN with 50+ missions with one above the 17th Parallel. In 1966 it was reas-

REVETMENTS

signed to DaNang. By 1967 a total of 6 of these aircraft were assigned and operating in SEA.

My duties as the crew chief were to maintain the aircraft both pre and post flight with assistance from the TSN maintenance facilities. I flew occasionally when the crew anticipated not returning that night to TSN and did an R & R in Bangkok.

Maintaining the aircraft meant working into the night which had its moments as it was parked across the runway on a ramp with the bomb dump behind it. I had a ARVN hut about 50 yards away for security so I assumed I was well protected.

One night at dusk while working, I was approached by an Air Policeman who came out of the brush behind the aircraft with a dog. We sat and talked for awhile and he explained that he was assigned to that area so then I felt a lot better than having just the ARVN guard. He did question my sleeping on the aircraft occasionally but with the bird leaving at 6AM it didn't work going back into Saigon to the Majestic Hotel at midnight.

As far as combat my flight record indicated two combat missions so I guess we went somewhere we weren't supposed to be. The aircraft was hit several times, once in a fuel tank while airborne, but I guess it just wasn't our time.

Thank you for running an excellent website and Association and thank all of the maintenance personnel, Air Police and facilities staff for their assistance while I was stationed there.



THE AMBULANCE INCIDENT

By: Charles Penley
377th SPS

On January 31, 1968, at approximately 0320 hours, the "Attack On Tan Son Nhut, Tet Offensive began."

Tet at Tan Son Nhut, was from Jan 31, 1968 – Feb 18, 1968.

Rocket and mortars, landed on the base every day.

Charles Penley's, Ambulance Incident!

Sgt (unknown name), Charlie -5
A2C Charles Penley, Charlie-5
M-60 Machine Gun Bunker and M-16 rifle

Situation: An ambulance ran the Main Gate, Jan 31, 1968

It was reported from the 716th Military Police BN, Saigon, Vietnam, that several US Military vehicles had been stolen, in downtown Saigon, and to be on the lookout for ambulances, jeeps and deuce and a half ton trucks.

At approximately 0430 – 0500 hours, the Tan Son Nhut Main Gate, over the Base Police radio frequency, radioed to Central Security Control, that an unauthorized ambulance had run the main gate, coming onto the installation.

The ground “Attack On Tan Son Nhut,” had begun earlier and it was still going on.

Knowing about the stolen military vehicles that was reported earlier, the ambulance was of utmost concern, to the men of the 377th Security Police Squadron.

The ambulance drove west, from the main gate, on “Republic Avenue”, heading towards the Hotel-3 helicopter pad.

The main gate desperately needed any mobile unit to intercept the unauthorized ambulance and determine who they were.

At this time no Base Police or Security Police vehicle was close enough to intercept the unauthorized ambulance, that had forced its way onto Tan Son Nhut.

The unauthorized ambulance then turned right onto “Main Street,” heading north, driving toward Central Security Control and Charlie-5 Bunker, which was located on “Avenue K” and near the Flight Line.

At the intersection of “Main Street and Avenue K,” was a static Base Police Entry Control Point. It consisted of a wooden shack and a sand bag bunker. It was the last entry control point before the flight line.

At this same intersection was “Charlie-5 Bunker” which was a sand bag, M-60 Bunker. It was manned by Sgt (Unknown name) and A2C Charles Penley.

It was Central Security Control that was controlling the 377th Security Policemen in the Defense of Tan Son Nhut.

It was the 377th Security Police Squadron, who were the boots on the ground, fighting both NVA and VC personnel.

Charlie-5 personnel, had spoken briefly to the Base Policeman, at his entry control post, that if he could not stop the unauthorized ambulance that he was to get inside his bunker and hit the ground, as fast as he could.

As Charlie-5 definitely was going to open fire, on the unauthorized ambulance and stop it with armed force.

About the same time, 1LT Melvin Grover, was transporting,

wounded 377th Security Police Squadron personnel to the 377th Base Dispensary.

In addition to Grover, being in the jeep, Sgt Gerald Sommerfeldt, was seriously wounded and in the jeep also. They had come from Echo Sector, on the west end, where the main fighting was taking place.

The unauthorized ambulance did not stop for the Base Police Entry Control Point and it was the last point before entry onto the flight line area.

Sgt (unknown name) and A2C Penley fired three long bursts of fire from the M-60 machine gun, intentionally firing into the air above the ambulance and the ambulance stopped immediately.

After the proper challenges to the occupants of the ambulance were conducted, the passenger, was ordered at gun point, to get out of the ambulance and A2C Penley, put him in the prone position, face down.

Sgt (unknown name), kept the M-60 machine gun, aimed at the driver of the ambulance, who was still inside it.

At gun point, the driver of the ambulance, was ordered to get out of the ambulance, on the passenger side and placed in a prone position, face down.

Then A2C Penley requested backup from the nearest mobile unit, and several Security Police vehicles arrived to ensure no one was in the rear of the ambulance.

The mobile units, then took control of the two men in the ambulance.

Approximately 1200 hours, Sgt (unknown name) and A2C Penley were taken to CSC to give written statements about the incident.

There had been some slack in the fighting at this time.

Sgt (unknown name) and A2C Penley returned to Charlie-5, which was their assigned M-60 machine gun post.

I do not have any information on the outcome of the two American men, who were in the ambulance.

Charlie Sector received a lot of sniper fire, up and down the entire MLR (Main Line of Resistance.)

Thank you Charles for all the recent stories you have sent along for publication in Revetments. We all appreciate it, and thank all of the Air Police and Security Police that served and protected Tan Son Nhut Air Base.

Larry

Welcome Home
from
Vietnam

All Veterans
are Welcome to
be a part of the Parade

PARADE
AUGUST 23, 2014
10:00 A.M.

In 2013 more than 500 Vietnam Veterans from 28 States rolled quietly into Pigeon Forge with friends and family to march in "The Parade They Never Got." The quiet disappeared quickly into a glorious sound, a rousing celebration, a parade filled with the roar of motorcycles, music of marching bands, the sound of a Huey flying over, and the cheers from a welcoming Home Crowd that took 50 years to assemble.

*Join us again in 2014 to give these American Heroes the Welcome Home they so richly deserve.

GRAND MARSHALL
LOUISE MANDRELL

PIGEON FORGE
TENNESSEE
 For More Information
 Contact Joy McNealy or Kay Poole
 1-800-285-7557 • 865-453-8574
www.WelcomeHomeVietnam.com

The 2015 Tan Son Nhut Association Reunion will be held in beautiful Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. It will be held from May 28 - 31 at the Mainstay Suites (the same location as our 2009 Reunion).

TSNA President George Plunkett thought some of you might be interested in the above for THIS year!

Junk is something you've kept for years and throw away three weeks before you need it.

"Before you criticize someone, you should walk a mile in their shoes. That way when you criticize them, you are a mile away from them and you have their shoes."

Jack Handey



Wayne D. Salisbury, one of my best friends.

You will certainly be missed by my family and your friends.

Rest In Peace and we will meet once more in heaven.

Charles Penley



Sorry to hear, peaceful final flight Brother.

Gary Fields

Very sorry to hear about Wayne's final flight. My heart goes out to his family. He was an accomplished patriot and an inspiration to those who knew him, even for those with whom there may have been minor differences. Wayne's heart was big and his efforts on behalf of TSNA, especially during some hard times, are truly appreciated. RIP

Bob Gales



The loss of Wayne is very painful to us due to the long hard work he did to grow the association. I will really miss him. Rest in peace Wayne, you will never be forgotten.

Bill Coup



We are very sorry to hear of the loss of President Emeritus Wayne Salisbury, our condolences go out to Toby, his family and friends, unfortunately Aug. 9th is John's birthday as well as our Anniversary and plans have already been made for that day. Wayne brought much needed skills to Tan Son Nhut and he will be missed by all in the Association.

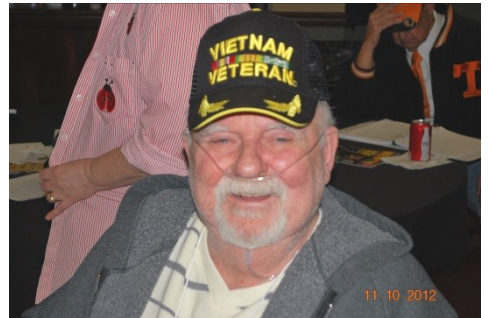
May God hold him gently in his loving arms,

President Emeritus John Peele & Michelle Peele



We will miss Wayne so very much. He was a fine man and the Association owes much of its success to Wayne and his ability to work hard, lead, and delegate. He gave so much of himself to helping build a great organization. Much love to Tobey and the family.

Johnnie & Sharon Jernigan



Well, the question of whether retired MSgt's give orders to angels or not has been answered.

Someday we all will be privy to the answer.

Save us a seat at the table Wayne and we'll play some pinochle bye and bye.

Fondly,

George



Our condolences go out to Tobey and the family. Wayne was special to me because he was the one that brought me into the TSNA. We always had that special bond and he will be missed. Wayne will remain in our thoughts and memories. I pray that we will meet again.

George & Georgette Bontya

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And our thanks again to John Bowen, TSNA Member, for another great sketch.

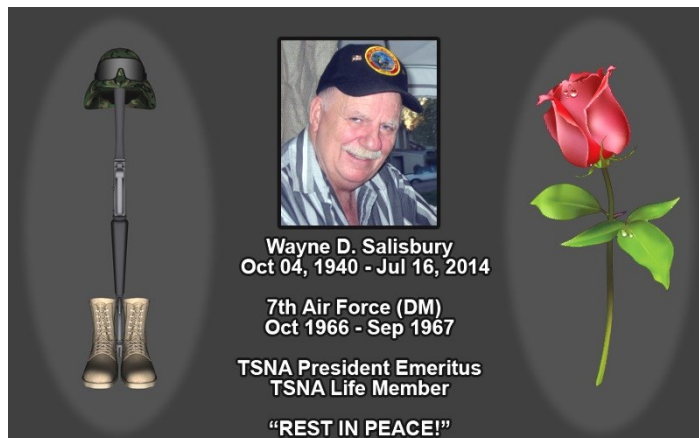
NEW MEMBERS



Mr. William C. Jennart	Hartford City	IN May 66 - May 67	155th AHC
Mr. J. Les Love	Hartford City	IN Oct 67 - Oct 68	25th Infantry

IN MEMORIAM

MSgt Wayne D. Salisbury	Roanoke	VA	Life Member	Oct 66 - Sep 67	7th AF Maint. Analysis (DMMN)
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GRAPHIC BY TSNA WEBMASTER CHARLES PENLEY

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