



REVETMENTS

The Official Journal of The Tan Son Nhut Association

A Memorial to the American Experience in Vietnam



JUNE 2014

COMMENTS FROM RECENT ISSUES



5/1/14

Hi Larry,

I noticed the photo of the base chapel in the latest Revetments. Among the photos I had donated some years back, is one I took of the chapel the morning after a rocket attack, where a 122mm rocket destroyed the chapel. Could have been the rocket that went over our heads the night before when we were lying face-down near the tarmac, because I think that course and trajectory was a bee-line to the chapel. The rocket was low and we could hear the high-pitched hissing of the nozzle.

Mark Reveaux

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

I'm surprised, baffled and even curious, yes all of these. Our various news sources carry constant info on "global warming, climate change, potential monster storms for everywhere". When did all of this start? Ah yes!

It all started, this climate change as is recorded in Genesis! Absolutely! His name was Noah and he and his family survived the first climate change. He was warned and because he believed in the source of the warning, he followed the directions.

Ready! Read Genesis chapters 6 and 7 (especially chapter 7:11-24!!!) A real climate change and a real monster storm 40 days and 40 nights of rain. Noah did not have a rain gauge but it took a long time to dry down.

Before we go any further, I am not making fun or light of today's storms or the sadness of them. What this is all about is the furor being made over global warming era, well, how about Noah's era?

Here is the base line. A whole bunch of TSNA philosophers are gathering in June. A corner will be set up somewhere in the hospitality room for the arguments. The question is - "is climate change a modern problem or did it begin with a guy named Noah."

This can go on for a long time as we discuss the problems but there are two things to keep in mind: 1) I side on Noah

and 2) Hugh Elliott is quoted as saying "if there is one thing I know it is God does love a good joke!" And that is the reason for this "June Corner".

End of THIS ISN'T A SERMON,

Chaplain Bob



REUNION NEWS

This is the "old" Courthouse in Evansville, IN. On Saturday June 14, we will be holding our Reunion Plaque Dedication here.



PLAQUE DEDICATION CEREMONY

After much delay due to a conflicting event being held at the Evansville waterfront park which is under the control of the city of Evansville, Vanderburgh County has graciously offered us the use of the old county courthouse for our memorial plaque dedication ceremony.

This will be a temporary place for our plaques until all military plaques and the like in the county are moved to a consolidated place of honor on the waterfront in the near future.

The ceremony will take place at 11AM.

A large bus will leave the hotel at 9:30AM and it will make a later trip, leaving the hotel at 10:15AM.

It will make return trips to the hotel at 12:15PM and 1PM.

A small hotel shuttle van will pick up passengers for return to the hotel at times to be announced on the 14th when in transit to the Old Courthouse.

George

Editors Note:



Susie-Man Ahrens

Yes, I know we have read about this from Susie before. But this series of notes from her—from emails and Facebook, are so good and compelling that I am publishing them for all to read, enjoy and contemplate.

Exactly 39 years ago, at this time, I was at the DAO MACV area and was rescued by the American Chinook helicopter along with a group of Vietnamese who chose to stay at the Compound, after Tan Son Nhut air base was attacked. We boarded the helicopters with the sound of shelling and gun-fights all around us, and even after the helicopter took off we feared that we would be shot at, and even though we were glad to be rescued, chance of survival was still not 100%. The flight took about 35 minutes and we landed on the deck of the USS Hancock, anchoring somewhere in the international water of the Pacific Ocean. I had never been on an aircraft carrier before and was amazed at the size of it, and how it was equipped for war.

The next day, there were thousands more people on the ship, and the crew had pushed several helicopters into the sea to make room for them. By evening, I was standing on the deck, listening to a transistor radio with the news that Saigon had fallen under the North Vietnamese forces. I could hear the voice of the Prime Minister surrendering and offering South VN to the other side. What a moment it was, all the people who listened started to cry, I felt like something died inside. My land, my home, my belongings, memories from childhood, relatives and friends were all of a sudden, sunk in the deep dark sea, all emotions came to me like a tidal wave, and I began to sob.

I did not want to believe it. Many years of war, so many Vietnamese and American soldiers had fought and died, many families lost their sons, many of my friends lost their husbands, many kids became fatherless, it could not end like this.

I thought about my brother whom I talked briefly with on the phone before I was rescued. He was at his post on the base and wondered if he's made it out somehow. I thought about my relatives whom I had no time to say goodbye and wondered what'd happened to them. I thought about the home that I'd worked so hard to save up money to purchase just under 2 years and had barely furnished, the group around me obviously shared the same emotions. It was like at a funeral, teary eyes and bewildered looks, no one knew or cared where we go or what the future might bring. We shared the common pain and anguish about the fate of our country and the people left behind, especially the So. Vietnamese soldiers. What would happen to them, many years of trying to defend So. VN, and with the American aids with lives, weapons and money. It could not end like this!

The ship sailed slowly in the darkness, I had no idea where it was headed to, nor what would be ahead of us. I knew I was lucky to have gotten out just in the nick of time so I would not have to suffer the Communists' vengeance. It was hard to deal with the mix of emotions and the guilt of getting out alive. I threw my house key and a stack of Vietnamese money in the sea like throwing flowers in the grave, goodbye my homeland, good bye Saigon, goodbye friends and families, and did the only thing I could at the time, said a prayer for them.

(From email in answer to my asking if Larry can use the above!)

Every year around Apr 30th, me (and other Vietnamese immigrants who had the similar experience) would feel the pain of the old wound, and we are sad, and what better way to ease the pain by writing it down to share with friends.

Last Saturday, we had an Anniversary memorial service for the Soldiers and civilians who died in the VN war in general and during the Apr 30th evacuation, at the Utah Multicultural Center and it was very touching, as always. I'll send you the link with pics, article is in Vietnamese but you get the ideas from the photographs.

I was very moved with the reactions of the TSNA members over my post, I really appreciate their affections and friendship. I am so glad to be a small part of this great group.



Susie translating for the local Chief of Police who came to visit with the group.



(Photo courtesy of Angela Pan Photography.
Used with permission)

I HAVE BEEN TO THE WALL!

By: Charles Templeton
377th SPS
Oct 68 - Nov 69

On the way from Tennessee to the 377 SPS reunion in Wilmington DE my wife and I went to the Vietnam National Memorial.

Our reunion is over. My first time attending my Vietnam unit reunion, the 377 Security Police Squadron, finished up on Sunday morning and since we are half way to Canada and our daughter asked for help from her mother, we are on the way to Toronto. It's a 10 hour drive from Willington DE, most of it Interstate driving. With part of my mind as usual and especially because of the reunion, wandered into reflections of Vietnam. One of these reflections is THE WALL. Every time in the past as I thought about it, a strange emotion welled up in me. Now I know every veteran reaction is different when it comes to the wall, mine was loss and something I could not identify. The loss feeling came because of the regret of 58,178 capable and dedicated people that were not available to lead the lives and give to their country all the energy, innovation and ingenuity a full life would have accorded them. I felt that by the standards of my generation, I was C+ material and although Vietnam was not completely fought by the brightest and the best, much of it was fought by C to A- grade and the most patriotic of the brightest and the best. Just think of what those of our generation left after Vietnam accomplished! The tech boom, the international economy are two that come to mind. Where would the world be if these guys were allowed to live a normal lifespan? 58,178 names originally on the wall and 93 added since then. The numbers stagger the mind.

That other feeling I could not identify was shown to me during the reunion. During a conversation regarding PTSD and my primary hyper vigilant load, the guy (you know who you

are) started talking about survivors guilt, I looked it up and there it was, words describing that unknown feeling.

Survivor's guilt (or survivor's syndrome) is a mental condition that occurs when a person perceives themselves to have done wrong by surviving a traumatic event when others did not. It may be found among survivors of combat, natural disasters, epidemics, among the friends and family of those who have committed suicide, and in non-mortal situations such as among those whose colleagues are laid off. The experience and manifestation of survivor's guilt will depend on an individual's psychological profile. When the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders IV (DSM-IV) was published, survivor guilt was removed as a recognized specific diagnosis, and redefined as a significant symptom of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). (Source – Wikipedia)

I had hesitated going to the WALL all these years because of the grief and this unknown feeling.

It had been a beautiful sunny spring day when my wife and I arrived at the Reflecting Pool on the National Mall. The trolley driver had pointed in the general direction of where the Wall was and we got sidetracked into the Korean Memorial. After arriving at the wall, at the top of the hour, we found a guided tour was just starting. This very knowledgeable Park Service Guide was the solid ground I needed. For as each point he made and my emotion started welling up, the next topic in his presentation helped me focus. There were about a bus load of what looked like 7 and 8 graders at the wall. They all had on florescent green T-shirts with FREEDOM IS NOT FREE on the back. I had my Vietnam Veterans hat on and a windbreaker with the 377 SPS patch on it. During the time at the wall two of the kids and one of the adults thanked me for my service. You could have knocked me over with a feather.

Now as I drive north and the miles roll along, there is a sense of completeness. Between the wall, meeting my fellow 377 trouper and running into one of the guys I had trained into Delta Sector, I had taken another step into digesting the experience called Vietnam.

ARTICLES NEEDED
Send to: lfry2@dejazzd.com.

How about something about the gunships, the assault helicopters, the control tower activities, law enforcement duties and activities, thoughts on your last day at TSN, 8th Aerial Port's "MOBILITY", where all did you travel in Vietnam (courtesy of the military), and of course, anything and everything you can remember and write about TSN and your time there! I NEED ARTICLES!! Put it in an email, send it to me, and I'll take it from there. And pictures too! Thanks! Ief

Reunion News from TSNA Life Member Harold Boone:

Brenda and I will not be attending the 2014 Tan Son Nhut Reunion in Evansville next month. I do have a gift for the association which would make a wonderful door prize. Some background. The church where Brenda and I worship has a "blanket ministry" where members and friends knit lap blankets for the Wounded Warrior project. Our blankets have been shipped to many military hospitals including those in San Diego, San Antonio, Fort Bragg, and Washington, D.C. Blankets have also been sent to several Veterans Hospitals to brighten some older veterans spirits.

I was given one of these knitted blankets as a gift for the association. This particular blanket measures approximately 30 by 48 inches and was made using red, white, and blue yarn. All blankets were blessed today prior to being mailed out. As part of the service, all veterans were invited to the altar to hold the blankets during the blessing.

The blanket's monetary value is very little but its symbolism is great. The lady who knitted this blanket did so while keeping a vigil in her husband's hospital room.

MORE REUNION NEWS



Sue Ellen Parker, wife of Co-Founder Don Parker, working on the quilt which will be raffled at the 2014 Reunion in Evansville, IN June 12-15.

NOTATIONS FROM APPLICATIONS

Lived in the 100 area. Was there during April attack. Worked all posts covered by Law Enforcement.

David A. Webster
377th Air Police Squadron
Nov 65 - Oct 66

I was with an Army security company at Camp Alpha. We were next to the helicopter pad. I was working one night, when a jet took off from the base. About 2 AM, as the jet left the air field, the sky lit up with red tracers. They were shooting at the jet. That set off a red flag. We sounded the alarm, all hell started. I will never forget Tet. I was there from April 1967 to April 1968.

Edward J. Ramirez
174th Replacement Company
Apr 67 - Apr 68

**MEMORIAL DAY 2014
AT NMUSAF**

TSNA Members Johnnie Jernigan, Sharon Jernigan and Jimmy Smith visited the TSNA Memorial at The National Museum of the U. S. Air Force.

Pictures and wreath by TSNA Member Sharon Jernigan.

Thank you folks for honoring all of us with this action!



(See Page 6 for another visit to the Memorial)

Fourteen Names to be Added to the Veterans Memorial

Ceremony on Mothers Day will honor name additions and status changes

Washington, D.C. – The names of 14 American servicemen will be engraved on the black granite walls of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial over the next week, and the status designations will be changed for eight others whose names are already on The Wall, announced Jan C. Scruggs, Founder and President of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF).

On May 11 at 10 a.m., VVMF will host the Name Addition Ceremony, during which the changes will be unveiled in Washington, D.C. These men have met the Department of Defense criteria for addition to The Wall, having sustained wounds in Vietnam from which they eventually perished.

The names of the men listed below will join the others inscribed on The Wall who lost their lives or remain missing in action as a result of combat in Vietnam. These changes will bring the total number of names on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to 58,300 men and women who were killed or who remain missing in action.

Weather permitting, work to inscribe the names and change designations will be complete by May 5, and the changes will be unveiled during the press event. When names are added, the highly technical procedure requires meticulous work to match the stroke and depth of the surrounding names to within 1/1,000 of an inch. The physical work of adding the names and changing designations will be performed by James Lee of the Colorado-based company, Engrave Write.

The Department of Defense sets the criteria for and makes decisions about whose names are eligible for inscription on The Wall. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund pays for the name additions and status changes, and works with the National Park Service to ensure long-term preservation and maintenance of The Wall.

Names To Be Added to The Wall

SSG Jerry Leon Antrich, U.S. Army

Weid, Texas

June 20, 1930 – Aug. 10, 1969

Date of Casualty: Nov. 1, 1967

SFC Frederick Joseph Baum, U.S. Army

Baltimore, Md.

Feb. 22, 1930 – Feb. 28, 1971

Date of Casualty: Unknown

PFC Henry John Drozdowski, Jr., U.S. Army

Detroit

March 9, 1947 – April 30, 2011

Date of Casualty: Jan. 13, 1967

PFC Michael Noel Faherty, U.S. Army

Marlboro, Mass.

Dec. 30, 1946 – July 25, 1968

Date of Casualty: Unknown

PFC Gregory Jackson Franklin, U.S. Army

Winchester, Va.

July 19, 1949 – Feb. 12, 1979

Date of Casualty: Nov. 27, 1968

SP4 William Arthur Gabrielsen, U.S. Army

Frankfort, Mich.

April 2, 1947 – March 10, 1970

Date of Casualty: Aug. 12, 1968

PFC Ronald Hall, U.S. Army

Birmingham, Ala.

July 20, 1948 – Oct. 2, 1967

Date of Casualty: Unknown

SP4 Robert Kryptavich, U.S. Army

Tunkhannock, Pa.

Oct. 26, 1944 – Sept. 10, 1968

Date of Casualty: Unknown

SP4 Thomas Charles Littles, U.S. Army

Cleveland

Nov. 29, 1946 – June 3, 1971

Date of Casualty: Dec. 28, 1969

PFC Paul Luther Loidolt, U.S. Army

Bloomington, Ill.

Aug. 30, 1948 – Feb. 21, 1969

Date of Casualty: April 4, 1968

MSG Walter Hugh Mauldin, U.S. Army

Atlanta

Sept. 9, 1931 – May 8, 1968

Date of Casualty: Unknown

SPC Alan Leslie Seamans, U.S. Army

Grafton, N.H.

June 10, 1949 – Jan. 25, 1998

Date of Casualty: Oct. 13, 1967

PFC Danny Joe Wilson, U.S. Army

Florence, Ala.

July 8, 1944 – Nov. 16, 2012

Date of Casualty: Aug. 18, 1966

MM3 Chester Statun, U.S. Navy

Rayville, La.

July 4, 1943 – April 13, 1965

Date of Casualty: April 13, 1965

Beside each name on the memorial is a symbol designating status. The diamond symbol denotes confirmed death. The cross represents missing in action. When a service member's remains are returned or accounted for, the diamond is superimposed over the cross. In addition to the 14 names being added this year, eight designation changes will be made as well.

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And our thanks again to John Burke, TSNA Life Member, for another great cartoon.

Flowers furnished by and photo taken by Don & Sue Ellen Parker of the TSNA Memorial Bench at the NMUSAF, May 25, 2014.

Thanks folks!



NEW MEMBERS



Mr. Edward J. Ramirez TX	Apr 67 - Apr 68	174th Replacement Company	Security
Mr. Marvin D. DeBolt IL	debolt@consolidated.net	Sep 66 - Aug 67	USARV Processing troops in and out
Mr. David A. Webster IN	wwwebwood@aol.com	Nov 65 - Oct 66	377 Air Police Squadron Law Enforcement

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