

Revetments

The Official Journal of The Tan Son Nhut Association



"All Included - Non Excluded"

Volume 2, Number 2

The Tan Son Nhut Association, Washington, D.C.

November, 1999



“So you’ll live, you’ll live, Young Fellow My lad,
In the gleam of the evening star,
In the wood-note wild and the laugh of the child,
In all sweet things that are,
And you’ll never die, my wonderful boy,
While life is noble and true;
For all our beauty and hope and joy
We will owe to lads like you.”

from Robert Service

A Pilgrimage of Prayers

by
Mark Reveaux

(Editor's Note: a couple of weeks ago, Member, Mark Reveaux, of Stoney Creek, Connecticut, traveled to Vietnam by himself. When he returned he gave us this poignant account, and with his permission, we are proud to present it, and some of his photos, to our readers.)

Just a short note, as I begin to recover from the trip.

I learned that the old French Cemetery is no longer there. Massive real estate changes have taken place during the past 30 years, beyond anything you or I would have imagined. If the cemetery is gone, so may be the buildings we talked about, the warehouse and U.S. Army mortuary.



*The French cemetery,
Tan Son Nhut, 1968*

Being told of this, I knew there was another way to pay our respects to those who passed through the mortuary site where I had worked.

I decided to go to the Buddhist Temple in Saigon. A cyclo driver, bicycle type, took me there.

It is the main temple for the area, near the Saigon Zoo, where Vietnamese go to pray and honor their dead.

I thought of the temple instead of visiting a church, because it seems many Vietnam veterans, although most all are Christian, relate to the Buddhist religion in connection with Vietnam and all that happened there.

So I said a Christian prayer for who you are honoring or remembering. If you were Buddhist, after lighting the incense, you would light a bundle from a package of about a dozen, wave them back and forth to fan them into glowing well, hold the bottom of the incense sticks, place them against your forehead and point them towards the Buddha figure in the center of the shrine.

In a vase in front of the shrine, which is packed with powdered clay, you insert the incense sticks, one by one, as you pray for what each stick represents.

My first thoughts were, as I placed the sticks ...

"This one is for our fellow Vietnam veterans, who instead of flying back to the 'States with body intact, were carried to the airport tarmac in metal boxes for their lonely flight home."

"This one is for our fellow Vietnam veterans who did fly back to the 'States with body intact, but not fully. These were the ones with injuries and who are still dealing with day-to-day survival in a world who wants to forget the Vietnam War, and a Government who needs to be reminded from time-to-time who we were."

"This one is for our fellow Vietnam veterans who did fly back to the 'States with body fully intact, but whose minds never really left Vietnam, and who are still dealing with the nightmares of their time here."

"This one is for our fellow Vietnam veterans who flew back to the 'States with body fully intact at the time, but later developed health problems as a result of Agent Orange exposure and other latent conditions."

"This one is for our fellow Vietnam veterans who made it back to the 'States with body fully intact and instead of walking away from what they experienced, started foundations such as The Tan Son Nhut Association, The Vietnam Veterans Association,



The rising of prayers ...

and other who are actively helping all of us with our memories, our situations and goals in life."

"This one is for Vern, Major Vernon K. Bouchee, next in command in Supply, and a best friend, who made it back to the 'States with body fully intact, but who died less than fifteen years later for conditions unrelated to his service."



Major Bouchee

"This one is for Kim, the girl who worked in our office at Tan Son Nhut in Supply, and for all the other Vietnamese nationals I knew there. Kim was cross-eyed and said she was waiting for an army surgeon who promised her an operation. I hope she was helped and is well, wherever she may be now."

"This one of for our fellow Vietnam Veterans who made it back to the 'States with body intact, but who later developed health problems because PTSD affected their judgment causing them to make mistakes. Perhaps their names should be inscribed on another kind of Wall."

(Please see Pilgrimage, continued on Page 7)

Tan Son Nhut Collection A Reality

(Editor's Note: Last month, the Public Affairs Office of the Tan Son Nhut Association, received confirmation of the establishment of The Tan Son Nhut Collection in the Vietnam Center, Texas Tech University, in Lubbock. We are publishing Dr. Reckner's interesting comments for your information.)

I would like to confirm the essence of our telephone conversation, e.g., that papers donated by the Tan Son Nhut Association will be kept together and specifically identified as the "Tan Son Nhut Collection." Individual members of the Tan Son Nhut Association can submit their personal papers which then can be identified, for example as the "Msgt. Robert Need Papers," within the Tan Son Nhut Collection.

All of these collections will be kept in discreet boxes, and will be maintained within our finding guide by their specific names. That is, each will permanently retain its individual identity as the collection of papers donated by specific individual, by name, and as part of the Tan Son Nhut Collection.

As to specific questions, please permit me to answer them, subject to future correction by the senior archivist, Dr. Ron Frankum, who is the leading professional in the field.

1. *Should both the association and individual members send materials directly to the Vietnam Center, or should the association act as the gathering agency?*

We will accept papers directly from individuals and also from the Association. Please note, though, that it would be more efficient (and safer) if materials were sent directly to:

The Vietnam Archive
Texas Tech University
Lubbock, Texas 79409-1041

I would strongly suggest that donors contact Dr. Frankum directly at (806) 742-9010. He will be particularly interested to arrange the proper paperwork, including a deed of gift. Without correct documentation, the Archive will not be free to permit researchers access to the papers.

Is it proper to assume that all such materials be designated as for The Tan Son Nhut Association Collection (with subsections as you described)?

I have already dealt with this in my opening remarks.

Does the Vietnam Center issue any type of receipt for materials submitted?

Most certainly. The Vietnam Archive will officially acknowledge receipt of all materials that are sent for deposit.

If individuals or the association want to use some of the material for various reasons, can it be retrieved and returned, or copied, etc.?

All materials donated to The Vietnam Archive become the property of the State of Texas. We will be pleased to enter into an agreement to copy and send all of the papers upon demand of the donor(s) and send copies.

If, at some later date, the association obtains its own center, can the Collection be returned or copied?

If the association does obtain its own center, the Vietnam Archive will agree to provide copies of all Tan Son Nhut Collection documents on deposit with it.

In other comments, Dr. Reckner summed up the importance of this program. "In the end, this entire effort is about preserving the record of the American Vietnam experience. I think every Vietnam veteran organization has a vital stake in what we are doing. We are anxious to share it all with everyone who is interested."

Col. McCullough Appointed TSNA Rep.

One of the original and continuing members of the Vietnam Center Advisory Board, at Texas Tech, is Tan Son Nhut Association Member, Colonel Don J. McCullough, of Lubbock, Texas.

In a previous communication, Dr. Reckner commented that "Some of the other organizations which have chosen to deposit their records here have appointed individuals to represent them at our board meetings and then to report back to them."

He recommended we appoint Colonel McCullough. The Association approached Colonel McCullough with the appointment and he immediately replied that he "would be very happy to represent (the Association)."

Colonel McCullough was assigned to the 360th Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron, Headquarters 7th Air Force, at Tan Son Nhut Air Base during 1972 and 1973.



Dr. James R. Reckner
LTCMDR, USN (Ret.)
Director, Vietnam Center

New TSNA Web Site Promotes New Memberships

The Tan Son Nhut Association Communications Officer and Webmaster for the new Association internet web site, Charles Penley, of Kingsport, Tennessee, has hit real pay dirt.

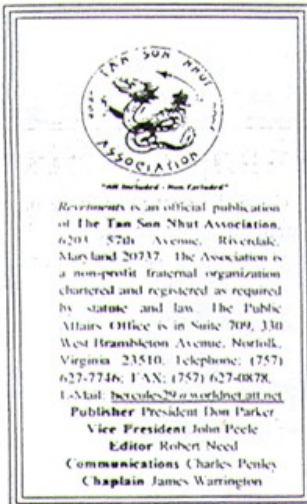
His excellent design and organization of the site is attracting attention from all over the country.

His "guest book" is rapidly expanding with comments and stories, being submitted by visitors to the site. They all show an intense interest and poignant respect for Tan Son Nhut, and their participation in the Vietnam War.

It has certainly stimulated interest in being in the Association. The Public Affairs Office has received nearly thirty new applications during the last monthly period.

If you haven't visited the site yet, please do so, and you'll be impressed. Go to: <http://www.tsna.org>

**Think Reunion!
San Antonio
June 2000!**



Veterans' Day 1999

It used to be that all over the nation every thing would come to a stop exactly at 11:05 a.m., on November 11th, and all across the nation heads would be bowed in a moment of silent prayer. A prayer of thanksgiving for those valiant heroes, who in President Lincoln's words, "So preserved us a Nation." This, the last year of the millenium, let us hope that there will still be a few heads bowed for a moment in prayer for those who, over the past two centuries have given the nation their "last full measure of devotion." Member, Charles Penley's moving poem, written for the Memorial Section of the Tan Son Nhut web site, says it much better.

Be Proud of Me

Mom! Dad! Today, I have taken another step in being an adult,

Today, I have joined the ranks of the Military Veteran ...
 Just like Elmer, Glen, Charles, Lee Roy, Joan, Vincent and all the rest ..

Of my forebearers who have served proudly before,
 I will do my best in all things possible, "Be Proud Of Me!!"

Just like my cousins James, David, Sherman, Barbara, Charlie Bill and all the rest ...

I will be leaving home soon to take our training ...
 then it's overseas,
 On to Vietnam, to be part of History, helping men to be set Free,

I've arrived and it's a terrible place, having just survived
 Day One ...

Only (364) more days to go, "Be Proud Of Me!!"

Today, is a day like many others here, it's just that Today ..
 Like so many others, the enemy did their best, trying to kill us all,

Many of our friends were wounded and some were killed,
 The number just keeps going up each day, I know that I have,
 Only (213) more days to go, "Be Proud Of Me!!"

Today I was hit, they say it's bad. Please am I going to make it?

They called the chaplain, he's here for me, now I know it's bad!!

I'm scared and want to be there with all my family and friends..
 Although I do have my friends here Mom! Dad! I didn't make it, I wanted to!

The wound was just too great for me to overcome, "Be Proud Of Me!!"

I see my name on the "Wall," panel number and line number ...
 There are more than 58,479 names here, Brothers and Sisters All!

Mom, Dad, Brother, Sister and Family, it's good to see you here ...

At the "WALL," "Now, I Know That You're Proud Of Me!!"





The Communications Center

Send us your letters, faxes, stories and e-mail, we want to hear from you!

On Observing 1 January ... I imagine that some of us have been thinking about how to observe the start of the New Millennium.

While for many years, I have come to see no more significance in the transition from December to January than from June to July, I am aware that from as long ago as childhood, I have known how old I would be in the year 2000. Now that it is almost upon us, I have been in a reflective mood and think I should be doing something meaningful to mark its start.

We all face common dangers during what have become the routine activities of modern life: driving to work; flying; living/working in earthquake zones, handling dangerous substances and numerous others that place life at risk.

Any of a long list of adventures, illnesses, or crimes could have intervened to stop me short of see 2000, but preparation, caution and luck combined to keep me here. Still, in all those years, my commonly accepted risks were greatly elevated during just a single year in Saigon, when I daily crossed the paths with unrecognizable enemies who would have killed me, if they could, just for being in the uniform I wore.

Of course, most Tan Son Nhut duty assignments could never match the dangers faced aircrew of security police, but having a desk job wasn't always enough protection.

Living off base on an alley off an alley of Truong Minh Giang, my morning commute to Tan Son Nhut always had me on wary sharp alert.

My Saigon neighbor, Staff Sergeant Glover Peeler can't be among us as the next millennium starts: he died waiting for a bus on a Saigon street on February 19, 1967. Killed in action by a grenade going to work. It easily could have been me.

All of us who came home have

been back at least twenty-five years, some almost thirty-five years. It seems so long ago now, but on January 1, the Vietnam War will have been in the last century and will seem to our grandkids as remote as the Civil War and World War I seemed to us.

Everything will sound older and more distant. Your 1998 car will seem older than two years and you degrees and diplomas of the 1960s, '70s and '80s will mark you as "old."

We lost over 58,000 dead in the 1960s and '70s. Our links to them and our time in 'Nam will suddenly take on a quantum leap in age, as if we symbolically went through a door, leaving them behind.

I am going to The Wall on January 1, full of gratitude for being there in the Year 2000. I will pay my customary respects to comrades of the previous century and millennium.

And, I will continue searching for the same elusive answers: Why was I allowed to come home? Why was I given these last thirty-three years?

**Member William Grayson
Bowie, Maryland**

* * *

I want you to know how much the Tan Son Nhut Association means to me. I received my patches today and am proud to say "I belong."

Thanks,

**Member Msgt. Ronald Bittle
Reno, Nevada**

-Memo -

*I will try and find my old
Constitutional Ballot, or at least
send a note, fax or e-mail to
the TSNA Public Affairs Office
telling them how I feel about
the proposed Constitution. So
they'll stop bugging me!*

Change of Status

Over the past year there has been tremendous improvement in the Association's communications and membership record keeping.

Unfortunately, once a record keeping system is effectively established it doesn't stay that way long unless the membership works with us.

Communications Officer, Charles Penley has the entire membership listed on the TSNA web site. And he, like Public Affairs receives messages that the e-mail address is incorrect, or names are misspelled, etc.

Neither Communications nor the Public Affairs Office have a resident swami or mind-reader. The only way we can both stay current is when the member advises us that there has been a change of status, moved to new address, changed e-mail servers, etc.

Please send all changes as soon as you can to either:

Public Affairs Office -
Suite 709, 330 W. Brambleton Ave.
Norfolk, Virginia 23510
Telephone: (757) 627-7746
FAX: (757) 627-0878
E-Mail: hercules29@worldnet.att.net
Communication -
Web Site: <http://www.tsna.org>

* * *

Reunion Plans Taking Shape

V.P. John Peele and Texas Region Director, Norman Whitlow, Reunion Executive Coordinator, report that plans are taking shape for June 2000 TSNA Reunion in San Antonio.

A number of fine speakers have already tentatively agree to be there.

Next month's issue will have a complete report on the status of the Reunion and a tentative program.



Day Four

I am beginning to learn by my fourth day that I belong to a very peculiar unit, the 33rd Cam Squadron, that is, and its parent group, the 33rd Tac Group. Here is the reason. We were under the 2nd Air Division which reported to PACAF (Pacific Air Forces) at Hickam in Honolulu.

One of the dangers of being located overseas and far away from the 'Stateside Air Force is that units want to write their own books when it comes to the rules of performing aircraft maintenance and other functions. For example, PACAF had supplemented so many of the Air Force Regulations and Manuals that we used, that the resulting procedure bore little resemblance to those that troops had used prior to coming to PACAF. The result was a terrific amount of confusion by arriving troops who were trained in the Air Force methods and procedures for running an aircraft maintenance unit. As an example, a unit in any other part of the Air Force contained a nerve center called "maintenance control," which by use of radio and controllers in a darkened room kept status of all the aircraft on the flight line by moving little miniature aircraft around on a plastic light board inscribed with the outline on the taxiways, runways, and parking ramps.

Our Maintenance Control had been rechristened "Air Vehicle Control." When I first saw that I reflected that it must have been a personage of lofty job position and too much time on his hands if he had nothing better to do than think up a new name for an aircraft. The aircraft we maintained were flown by the 315th Air Commando Group, and were C-123 Fairchild "Providers." They were sturdy high wing twin engine aircraft which looked like a half size twin engine C-130, except that the engines were R-2800 piston engines of 2,000 horsepower a piece.

The same engine was used on the World War II P-47 "Thunderbolt" fighter and the Douglas A-26 "Intruder" light bomber, which was used over the Ho Chi Minh Trail to harass the supply lines coming down from North Viet Nam. They are not to be confused with the Martin B-26 "Marauder" which had not been kept on inventory after about 1949, except for lend-lease to the French. The Martin B-26 had the nickname of "flying prostitute" because its small wings seemed to offer "no visible means of support." But it had the lowest loss rate of any bomber in World War II because enemy fighters could rarely catch it.

Our Maintenance Control did a wonderful job of controlling the 18 or so C-123 transports of the 315th Air Command Group. I think that only the 309th Squadron of the group was stationed at Tan Son Nhut, with the other two squadrons being assigned to other locations in the country.

A developing problem was that other units were beginning to arrive at Tan Son Nhut. The 460th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing had sent a detachment of jets to Tan Son Nhut after the United States was authorized to station jet aircraft there. The old "Farm Gate" units had been restricted to piston engine

aircraft (internal combustion engines similar to those in a Harley Davidson), which is the reason we had so many World War II aircraft there. These airplanes were actually better suited to operations on the unimproved airfields of Vietnam that were the jets. The concrete runways of Tan Son Nhut were an exception.

The problem developed because PACAF had written a supplement to AFM 66-1, which required any unit to arrive at Tan Son Nhut to transfer its men to the parent unit, which in this case was our 33rd CAMRON. This was a terrific morale problem to arriving units whose troops were familiar with the unit aircraft and were accustomed to having their own field maintenance and Maintenance Control.

As with the 309th Air Commando Squadron, the crew chiefs were removed from the 460th detachment and integrated in with the 309th crew chiefs who were piston guys with no knowledge of jets.

Can you imagine being sent to war with a red hot unit like the 460th and then being dragged out of it and being assigned to a base unit working on whatever they told you to work on.

Of course, since we had more aircraft to control, we had to knock a wall out of the Job Control Booth and double the size of the control board in order to accommodate the increase in number of airplanes we had to keep track of.

Next to arrive was a squadron of North American F-100 "Super Sabres" from the New Mexico Air National Guard, and, as before, they were forced to give up their personnel to us. This included their Maintenance Control and, again, we had to knock the wall out of our little maintenance control booth and build it bigger to accommodate an entire squadron of fighters.

Now, we had been taught in Officers Candidate School about a set of rules invented by a German general back in 1798 called "The Principles of War. The most important of these principles was the one called Unit of Command. In other words, a commander should have command over his own troops, and staff officers from above should not be allowed to screw around with these troops.

Gentle readers, I am normally a man of Christian background and I abhor the use of profanity. But when it comes to war, good old G.I. terms sometimes are the only way to express one's exasperation.

But, as I was going to say before I sidetracked myself, according to old General Von Stuben (pronounced "stoiben"), the general staff system merely allowed the staff officer to add to the Commanding General's expertise and gave the staff officer no authority to give orders to the commanders below. The staffs were numbered G-1 through G-5 and so on, as I remember, according to the number they were Operations, Intelligence, Plans, G-4 was Logistic. Remember how we maintenance men were 43X10 before the academy bums screwed it all up.

Well, my greatest problem as a commander was these staff pimples who would type a letter "for the Commander" at the bottom and then use one of those damned rubber stamp signatures or sneak it over the general's desk in a hurried moment up at headquarters. And, the commander below, who is actually responsible for the welfare of the troops has to "bite the bullet" and enforce a stupid procedure. This staff system was adapted by the United States at the instigation of a Lincoln Secretary of War named Elihu Root and works well for those who do not allow it to be abused.

It is abused in the Air Force.

Back to the story, the Maintenance Control



Air America C-23 "Provider"

eventually got so large that it was about to tumble like a house of cards, and then when the 4th Air Commando Squadron arrived at Tan Son Nhut in the fall of 1965, the whole thing "went to crap."

No controller on board knew much about the 12 different types of aircraft he was supposed to be controlling, and when the work order got to the shop, the shop chief would yell, "Anybody here know anything about a B-57?" If no one was formerly of the B-57 unit we just tread water until the next shift. Eventually the flying units got their maintenance troops back in the parent unit and all was well, but it took too damn long.

Well, readers, this installment, which actually covers almost my whole year is about over. My last recollection about the burgeoning growth problem is that Colonel Budway, the Base Commander, called us in to talk about the under-capacity of our facilities. He asked us to express our opinions concerning problems which were soon to come up. When my turn came, I said, "Sir, the single most pressing problem we have is there are not enough latrines to service us now. The toilets on the flight line get stopped up and pile up until it reaches your buttocks and then we have to hose them down with a pressure hose. In the meantime the men have to use the Vietnamese Air Force latrines which are "Turkish toilets" (a hole in the floor with two foot stanchions on the side of the hole, and the mosquitos bite you on the ass.)"

Colonel Budway's answer embarrassed me and was something to the effect that he would have expected such Quixotic input from a lieutenant. Imagine the laughter from the other officers.

The next time I saw Colonel Budway, he was standing in line to use one of the few latrines.

In the next episode I will tell you a true story about three of our guys who got captured by the Viet Cong. Two of the three got away.

You guys don't forget to get a yearly "finger wave." It's no fun unless you have a lady doctor, with the exception of those of you who live in West Hollywood. No kidding, I have lost two Tan Son Nhut pals to prostate cancer in the last year.

Bless you all.

Fly your
Flag on
Veterans' Day!

Traditionally,
Half-staff from dawn
and
full-staff from 11.05 o'clock
until sunset

Pilgrimage. Continued from Page 2

"This one is for our MIAs, wherever they may be, and my prayer for their safe return or accountability."

"This one is for Lieutenant Wagner, that beautiful WAF, who I heard was wounded in a mortar attack a few weeks after I had rotated back to the 'States."



Lt. Wagner

There were others that I prayed and paid my respects for. At the moment, I'm too tired to remember having been 25 hours in the air coming back.

I want to suggest that if possible, a counseling unit be available to help any Vietnam veterans who are contemplating a trip back there. I had an e-mail friend, Dennis Dash, otherwise

known as "Saigon Dash," who had been to Vietnam eleven times already and is planning another trip in December. Dennis helped me with the logistics - hotel recommendations and some other basic information.

But what I think is needed here are ways of preparing Vietnam veterans for handling their emotions when going back.

When you board Vietnam Airlines, take your seat, and realize that this isn't a dream, you're actually going to be landing at Tan Son Nhut Airport in a few hours, your emotions begin to get in front of your normal day-to-day judgment.

When you land and taxi towards the terminal, you see Russian Hind helicopters behind the revetments, women with conical hats working along side the taxiway, this tells you you're not in Kansas anymore.

Getting off the airplane and standing in line to be questioned by customs authorities wearing green uniforms with red epaulets displaying the yellow star, is a somewhat un-nerving experience. You hand him your passport. He glances at it, and then glances up at you. He then looks at things behind the high desk that you can't see. You imagine he's checking your name and passport against a computer list of some kind. He stamps your passport, looks up at you again and waves you on.

There are green uniforms and high hats with red bands and yellow stars walking about everywhere in the terminal. What used to be a one story building with tiles, is now a modern terminal with escalators that take you down to the customs area.

And would you believe there is a duty free shop named "TSN Duty Free." Can you believe that I bought a pair of stereo earphones at that store where they charged it to my VISA Card?

As you walk out of the airport there is the flag staff waving the red and yellow star. You think the hotel has forgotten to pick you up and you have no idea how to reach them by phone. You begin imagining yourself marooned at Tan Son Nhut without being sure where a taxi would really take you. The idea of going back into the terminal and asking a green uniform advice on you should do next was not a cool idea.

You're back in the 'Nam and can't be sure of anything at the moment.

You find the woman from the hotel with your name on her card and feel relief as she escorts you to their car. As we drove out of the round courtyard on the terminal area I hoped we'd turn right, where a mile or two later it would "T" into an access road onto what was the base. But no, we drove straight out. I couldn't recognize anything then. The roads were filled with motorbikes and cars, passing a lot of territory that becomes familiar now. Not specific landmarks, but the low tropical trees, heavy brush, scenes of buildings, tin work work shops, little bridges over canals with work boats painted with eyes on the bows, and the complicated smells of the area.

A lot of what we all remember.

I got through the visit okay, but might have benefitted from having some counsel with someone about the other issues that every Vietnam veteran needs to use judgment about. I didn't get into trouble, but could have.

Returning to Vietnam

by

Frank Ybarbo



(Editor's Note: When we received Mark Reveaux's comments, we passed them on to Member, Frank Ybarbo, who gave us the fine article about his return for the March 1999 issue of *Revetments*. He has kindly consented to providing us with some of the counseling Reveaux recommended.)

This information is provided for those of you who are contemplating a return trip to Vietnam. As I communicate with Vietnam veterans, I find an increasing desire that many would like to revisit the land of their youth, and in many cases the place of their worst nightmare. In any case, you want to be prepared. Therefore this information is intended to help you if you are thinking of such a trip.

I have also discovered that a number of vets have made successful return trips. Included, are myself and (TSN Member) Bob Anisko. Anyone desiring to pick our brains may feel free to contact either of us.

In fact, if you are contemplating a trip to Vietnam, it is recommend that you contact one of us, or any other person that you know who may have made a return trip. It will certainly help with whatever anxieties, and you will have them, that you may have. Remember, it is one thing (fantasy) to merely be *planning* the trip, and another (reality) when the day comes that you *actually board the foreign aircraft* that will take you to a place you once wanted to forget.

But don't worry, this reality is a natural concern in the minds of everyone who has returned, especially if you made the trip alone which I did. Keep in mind that my trip, as well as Bob Anisko's and others I have talked to were very pleasant, fun and very rewarding. In fact, I would not mind going back for another visit. This same attitude is shared by Bob Anisko who is interested in organizing a group trip for those of you who may be interested. Unless you are a loner, you will likely have a better time if you make the trip with a small group or another veteran person.

There are a number of Vietnamese travel agencies that specialize in trips back to Vietnam. If you subscribe to *Vietnam Magazine* there are several companies listed there that are experienced in these trips. I used one of them, South Sea Tour and Travel, who really bent over backwards for me. Others listed are Nine Dragons, I think Bob Anisko used this one, and Viva. These agencies offer tours, packaged or customized, to Vietnam which range from \$1,299 to \$3,000, depending on the tour and length of stay which you chose. The cost usually includes the round trip airfare, hotel, transfers and a private driver and/or guide for the time you are there.

Generally, we were received and treated very courteously. The drivers and guides really went the extra mile to be sure you got your money's worth (so you will come back and spend more.) Western influence is still very much alive and many still speak English. I was surprised to see the normalcy of the country, no guns, shooting, distant artillery. All seemed to be safe and everyone going about their day to day business.

As mentioned, your mind will play a few games with you if you are seriously thinking of going back. How you process this is up to you. But, based on my experience and those of others, once you get there and start your tour, you will be okay.

Anyone wanting more information may contact me or Bob Anisko at the following number. So, until then, *Bon Voyage!*

Frank Ybarbo
Call: (972) 681-5413
E-Mail: Bb79fb@aol.com

Bob Anisko
Call: (412) 833-4209
E-Mail: smast17@diamond.nb.net

Check out Bob's trip at: www.vaspa.com/tourvietnam-bobanisko.htm

Christmas in November

Only 54 more shopping days till Christmas, send your friends a Y2K Gift Membership now, and they'll start receiving Revetments now!



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Please clip and send to: Public Affairs Office, TSN Asse., Suite 709, 330 W. Brambleton Ave., Norfolk, VA 23510

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