# Revetments

The Official Journal of The Tan Son Nhut Association

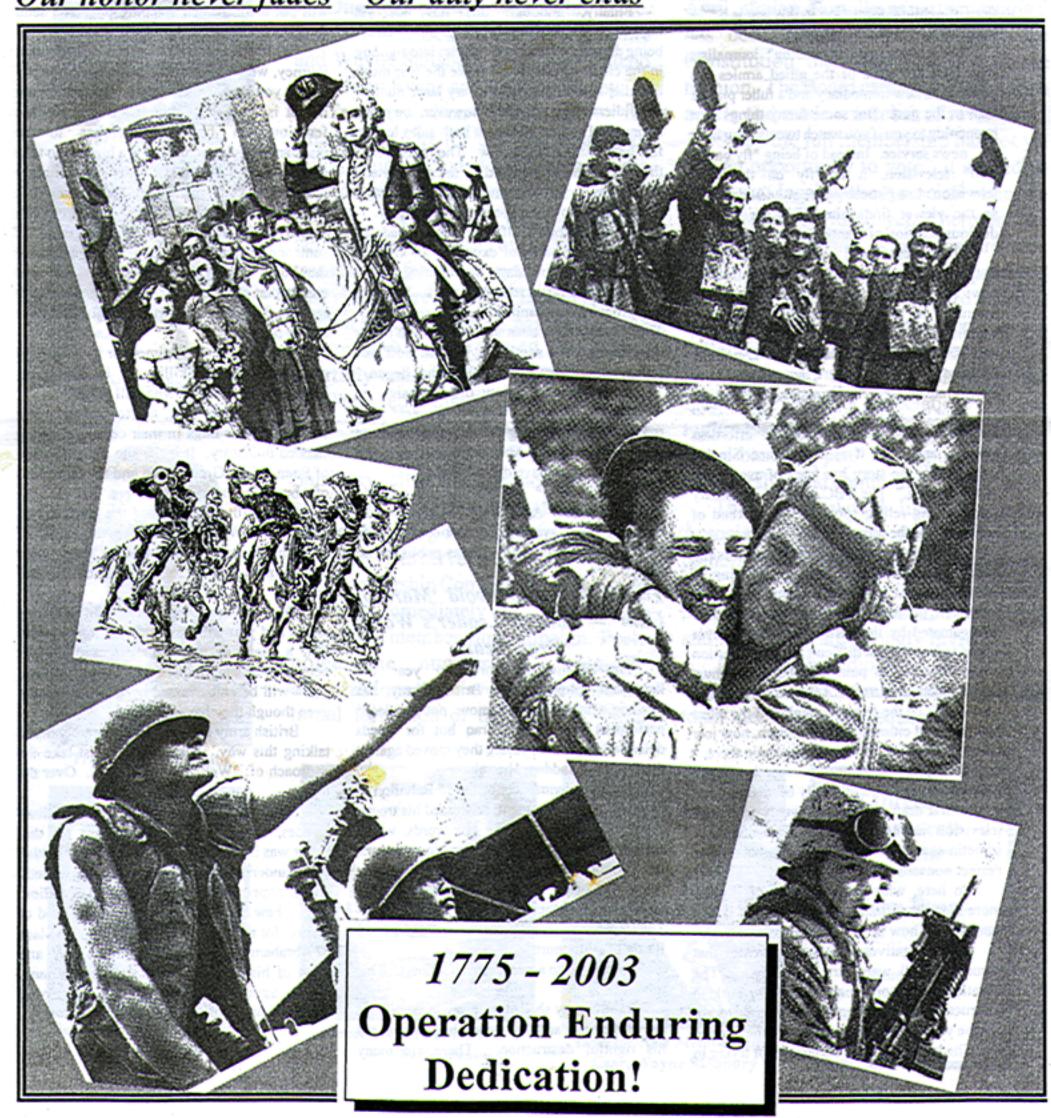


Volume 5, Number 7

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

April, 2003

Our honor never fades - Our duty never ends



## Interesting Iraqi War Perspectives From London

(Editor's Note: Member William C. Grayson, Bowie, Maryland, sent us this interesting article from *The Telegraph* of London. The Iraqi War continues to change rapidly. Although this article was published on March 25th, it still provides some interesting comment.)

#### The First Doodle

It is, in principle, a good thing that the flow of public information in this war is better than that in any war in history.

The system of "embedding" journalists with different units of the allied armies has produced a new immediacy and a fuller picture than in the past. But some funny things start happening to you if you watch twenty-four hour

news service. Instead of being "fly on the wall" television, it is "fly on the war" television. Long stretches are quite boring, and so the viewer finds himself in the morally dubious position of wanting more action.

The presenters and producers instinctively respond to this, and so strive to come up with new angles and new developments. The incentive is to find something decisive – whether good or bad does not matter much – and if, as is often the case, there is nothing decisive to be found, there is a temptation to exaggerate whatever information they possess.

Thus it was that the first days' reporting of the war gave an impression of effortless victory, and thus it is that, since Sunday (March 23), the story has been of everything "going wrong." The BBC, with its customary lip-smacking relish, spoke of "a weekend of bad news for the allied forces."

Individually small, though distressing, events such as friendly fire, the showing of U.S. prisoners, including a woman, on Iraqi television, the first British death in combat, are amalgamated by the networks with whatever seems to be the most difficult military question of the moment to paint a picture that must delight Saddam Hussein. Television presenters who would be the first to complain if the allies had flattened cities that oppose them, now jeer when any pockets of resistance remain there.

In these circumstances, perspective is lost. Newspapers have traditionally been described as the first draft of history; twenty-four hour television is more like the first doodle – sometimes pregnant with meaning – sometimes perfect nonsense.

So here, with the advantage of slightly more than three minutes to think about it, is a summary of how things may be going.

The negatives, beyond those that accompany all wars, are as follows. The situation in the north, partly thanks to Turkish obstruction, is worrying - the allies have not got the well organized second front they hoped for. The policy, in itself admirable, of trying to

minimize the loss of Iraqi lives may be exposing our forces to greater risks than would otherwise be the case.

The failure of american and British foreign policy elites to develop long-term support for the Iraqi opposition has combined with the fear engendered by Saddam's previous repression of revolt to discourage Iraqis from coming forward to support the allies until they are absolutely certain that Saddam and the Ba'athists are gone.

Finally, although this has not yet happened, there is the danger of allied forces being dragged by Saddam's tactics into fighting in the cities, which would make the war much bloodier and would require very large number of soldiers. The positives, however, are much stronger. The loss of life on both sides has, so far, been astonishingly low. The precision of the allied attacks, intended by the strategy and ensured by technology and professionalism, is impressive. So is the speed of the advance.

The previous Gulf War, which had the much easier mission of expelling an invader, required thrity-nine days of bombing before ground troops could start their work. This war saw ground troops employed on the second day. The oilfields have been secured without major destruction. The south has, for the most part fallen, and the battle for Baghdad has begun.

By all means follow the campaign on television for every waking moment, but remember that the fog of war may never be thicker than at the very moment when the cameras claim to have dispelled it.

(Editor's Note: And from The Tribune of London, we have this exceptional special report by Peter Almond. It was published on March 24)

#### Troops Urged to Avoid 'Mark of Cain' - Combat Leader's Words Draw Tears

Tim Collins, a forty-two year old lieutenant colonel in the British Army, has become a media hero, famous not for deeds performed in battle in Iraq but for words delivered to his men before they moved against the forces of Saddam Hussein.

Collins, commander of the 1st Battalion of the Royal Irish Regiment, addressed his troops at their camp in Kuwait. His words, which reportedly had many of the men close to tears, left admirers calling to mind President Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address and the "band of brothers" speech by William Shakespeare's Henry V character for the 1415 Battle of Agincourt.

According to a pool report, Collins told his

"The enemy should be in no doubt that we are his nemesis and that we are bringing about his rightful destruction. There are many

regional commanders who have stains on their souls and they are stoking the fires of hell for Saddam. He and his forces will be destroyed by this coalition for what they have done. As they die they will know that their deeds have brought them to this place. Show them no pity.

"There are some who are alive at this moment who will not be alive shortly. It is my foremost intention to bring every single one of you out alive, but there may be some among us who will not see the end of this campaign. We will put them in their sleeping bags and send them back. There will be no time for sorrow.

"Those who do not wish to go on that journey, we will not send. As for the others, I expect you to rock their world. Wipe them out if that is what they choose. But if you are ferocious in battle, remember to be magnanimous in victory. It is a big step to take another human life. It is not to be done lightly

"I know of men who have taken life needlessly in other conflicts. I can assure you they live with the mark of Cain upon them. If someone surrenders to you, then remember they have that right in international law and ensure that one day they can go home to their family. The ones who wish to fight, well, we aim to please.

"If you harm the regiment or its history by over-enthusiasm in killing or in cowardice, know it is your family who will suffer.

"We go to liberate, not to conquer. We will not fly our flags in their country. Iraq is steeped in history. It is the site of the Garden of Eden, of the Great Flood and the birthplace of Abraham. Tread lightly there."

Reportedly, Collins said the conflict was vital if the West was to curb the threat of Muslim fundamentalists, but he made clear that his men were to respect Iraqi culture and religion.

"You will see things that no man could pay to see and you will have to go a long way to find a more decent, generous and upright people than the Iraqis," he told his troops. "You will be embarrassed by their hospitality even though they have nothing."

British army commanders are rarely heard talking this way. Historically, most take the approach of: "Well, chaps, this is it. Over the top."

Daily Telegraph columnist William Deedes, whose first foreign report for that paper was in 1936, wrote last week that British commanders rarely, if ever, talked of death, and this speech broke a long military tradition.

Few talk of the "mark of Cain" and of respect for a people who live in "the birthplace of Abraham." But Collins is from Belfast, and most of his men are from Northern Ireland, where strong oratory and use of strong historical and biblical images are common.

## Memberships, Memorials and Money Viewed



President John Peele



Senior V.P. Robert Need



Treasurer, Ben White



Secretary/Parlimentarian Jerry Norville

Shortly after 11 a.m., Saturday, March 29th, Tan Son Nhut Association President, John Peele called to order the first formal meeting of the Association's Board of The meeting was being Directors. convened in the Office of Public Affairs, TSNA, in Norfolk, Virginia.

Directors present were John Peele, Robert Need, Ben White, Jerry Norville and Wayne Salisbury. Unable to attend were John Evans and Charles Penley.

Treasurer Ben White gave the financial report for the first quarter of 2003, which included the opening of the new account in January. The opening deposit was \$100, with additional deposits (Jan. - Apr. 1) of \$6,810. Funds transferred from the prior account in Maryland were \$1,322. Disbursements (which included primary payment for the new printer) were \$4,974.40. The ending quarterly balance was \$3,157.60.

Peele led a discussion of the urgent need to increase membership, which currently stands at 370. Director Wayne Salisbury, cited that the most important challenge facing the association was the task of building membership. He then volunteered to serve as Chairman of an ad hoc Membership Committee which would proceed immediately to establish an aggressive membership campaign. Peele noted the number of "spin-off" organizations that have formed since the initial formation of the Tan Son Nhut

Association. He suggested that we should begin to plan a joint reunion to be held in 2004 with a number of these other Tan Son Nhut related associations.

Director Jerry Norville led an item-byitem discussion of the Association's proposed Constitution. Since the 2002 April reunion, Norville, as parliamentarian, has been revising and "restating" the Constitution that was presented at the reunion. The Board carefully studied each article and made a number of revisions.

Since the full membership has not yet had an opportunity to vote, it should be noted that legally, the Association has no Constitution in force yet. Therefore the officers are serving as officers pro tem. Copies of the Board approved Constitution are being published and will soon be sent to all active members with a ballot for or against acceptance.

The Board discussed planning for future Tan Son Nhut Association reunions. Future issues of Revetments will outline a broad-based appeal for input from the membership and committee participation.

The Board would like to see the Association also move forward into the planning and designation of a permanent Tan Son Nhut Air Base Memorial. Membership input is vital, and comments and suggestion are strongly invited.

The meeting adjourned at 1.50 p.m. Copies of the official minutes are available to all members upon request.



Director/Communications Charles Penley



Director/New Membership Czar, Wayne Salisbury

Director, Corporate Agent John Evans No picture available Founded 1995 By

Don Parker & John Peele

Revetments is an official publication of the Tan Son Nhut Association, Inc. 6203 57th Avenue, Riverdale, Maryland 20737. The Association is a non-profit fraternal organization chartered under appropriate statutes and law.

- President, John Peele

-Treasurer Ben White

- Secretary Jerry Norville -

-Senior V.P. Robert Need -

Dir./Communications Charles Penley\_ Dir./Corporate Agent, John Evans Dir./Membership Wayne Salisbury\_ TSNA Chaplains Service

(Available for pastoral service; contact Public Affairs for information and appointments)

-James M. Warrington

Rev. Dr. Billy T. Lowe

—Rev. Dr. Julian Mills

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Membership Information

Annual Membership \$20.00 Five Year Membership \$80.00 Life Membership \$180.00 Send to Public Affairs, address above.



http://www.tsna.org



Thoughts of our Sky Pilot by TSNA Chaplain James Warrington

### The Value of Margins

One of the things a child learns early at school is to leave a margin on either side of a page where he is writing. We are offended by a printed page unless it has good margins. We know how important a margin is in framing a painting. An attractive home or an impressive public building needs an adequate margin around it.

It is equally important to have margins in our daily lives. When we rush madly from one activity to another, when we have scarcely caught our breath from one undertaking before we plunge into another, we are violating one of life's basic rules. We are not allowing the margin of time which enables us to do our best work and to make our best contribution.

Some years ago a wise book was written by Karin Roon under the title The Way To Relax. She had much to say about the need for margins in one's daily schedule. She pointed out that most of our exhaustion and confusion came from trying to do too much in too little time. She added these valuable bits of advice: "The art of living consists not in stuffing the day as full as possible, but in getting through the day with a sense of achievement, of enjoyment, and without excessive fatigue . . . Being rushed is not salutes to both members Dean Gard, a virtue . . . Don't let the details of living Bourbonnais, Illinois, and Bob Davis, swamp life itself."

gave us was to plan the day so that one's important and creative work, and to keep are doing very well in recovery a list of things to be done, trying to get the unpleasant things out of the way first.

I like to think that God added a margin to His work of creation when He Princeton, Indiana, are now set aside the seventh day for worship and rest. "And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it." (Genesis, Chapter 2, Verse 2 and 3).

One way to test the quality of your life is to measure the margins you are keeping in all that you do.

Welcome! New Members

A sharp salute and a rousing welcome to the following new members of the Tan Son Nhut Association -

February 2003

Charles P. Lazzara, Los Alamitos, CA Timothy Mootz, Utica, NY Dale W. Stickley, Caldwell, ID

March 2003

David Clark, Dover, NH Randy Crew, Elk Grove, CA Eddie McCartney, Denton, TX James Mantague, Anchorage, AK Chieu V. Phung, El Monte, CA Norbert Pirri, Colorado Spring, CO Ronald R. Robinson, Kansas City, MO Paul Schneider, Northridge, CA

April 2003

Larry Batey, Qatar Edmond H. Geisler, San Francisco, CA William Pope, Charlotte, NC Jack A. Struebing, Bacaville, CA Glen Ursch, St. Louis, MO Jerry Watts, West Grove, PA

### Special Salutes to Special Members

We are proud to render sincere Collins, Georgia. We are happy to report One other wise counsel this author that both of these comrades of ours are still tough enough to successfully best hours would be devoted to one's most overcome very serious recent surgery, and

The TSNA President Emeritus and his wife, Don and Sue Parker, proud grandparents with the arrival of their first grand daughter Lauren Elizabeth McGarrah, 8 lbs., 10 oz., with lots of black hair. She arrived on April 5th. Mother Jennifer and Daddy John are reported doing fine too!

Send Us Your Salutes! Send us your birthdays salutes, and any and all occasions you'd like us take note of and share with our members.

# he Communications Center

Member "touched" by "hero" piece - Great February newsletter! I was touched by the Reverend Lowe's cover piece on the Four Chaplains. In a time when the word "hero" is debased by its application to all sorts of self-aggrandizing celebrities and sociopathic thugs, it is very timely to remember what sorts of sacrifice deserve honor and commemoration.

In addition to my Tan Son Nhut Association affiliation, I am a Scottish Rite Mason and we have a ritual that looks to these four brave clergy as moral exemplars. If I am not mistaken, President Harry S. Truman dedicated a chapel to these men.

> Dennis Boyer Dodgeville, Wisconsin

Member shares priceless historical artifact - I liberated this beer label sometime after September 1968. I believe at the London Bar on Tu Do Street.



I carried it around for about twenty years in my wallet before getting it laminated. This is the real McCoy minus a few missing pieces.

information - I served in the Tan Son Nhut. He said things 377th Security Police Squadron were rather spartan at Tan Son information. Security Police barracks in the was fine. early part of 1969 I think. 1 believe that there were five or six lost in this crash. We had just gotten off duty around 0700- (Editor's Note: One of our 0800. I have talked to some of TSNA staunchest supporters is those who remember this, but we SMSgt. Lance Coar, of Penllyn, can't remember the date or Pennsylvania. He has forwarded anything. Can you help us get



" I never was much of a duffer. Had I found the time to try my luck at Tan Son Nhut, I most likely would have choked up commanders: and hooked one over the perimeter fence . . . at the wrong pin flag!" John Burke, Yukon, Oklahoma '66-'67

information? Your brother, Charlotte, North Carolina

In Memorial

My patient, William "Bill" Barry Jackson Betchel died March 8th. Bill was Sanford, North Carolina an Army veteran who served in a radio unit which was set up at New member seeks accident the west end of the runway at from 1968 - 1969. I was Nhut when he was assigned wondering if you could help me there. His death was a shock or tell me where I could find the since he had been in my office to I remember a get his eyes examined about a chopper crashing behind the month ago and he looked like he

> James Stewart, OD Montrose, Michigan

the following information for William "Bill" Pope dissemination to our members.)

Long Distance Scam

Upon contacting the telephone company, I informed that by pushing 9-0-# you give the requesting individual full access to your telephone line, which enables number.

this scam has been originating sorry. Sincerely, from many local jails and prisons. I have also verified this information with UCB, Telecom, Pacific Bell, MCI, Bell Atlantic and GTE. beware. DO NOT PRESS 90# FOR ANYONE.

The GTE Security Department requested that I share this information with everyone I know. Please pass it on to everyone-you know.

If you have mailing lists or

newsletters from organizations, I encourage you to pass this information on to them.

After checking with Verizon, they said it is true, so do not dial 90# for anyone.

New member worked "side-byside" with us - I am a former Vietnam Air Force (VNAF) colonel. In 1968 I was Major Commander of the Defense Group of the 33rd VNAF Wing of Tan Son Nhut Air Base, and Deputy Commander of the Tan Son Nhut Sensitive Area under Lt. Col. Cuong Kim Luu, commander.

I am a friend of Colonel Peebles (Commander of the 377th USAF Support Group). At that time there were 18,000 Americans in base, and I met many of you every day around Tan Son Nhut Air Base or in the JDOC.

I am happy to know that there is the Tan Son Nhut Association and many members were the people that worked at Tan Son Nhut Air Base during 1965- 1969, which I had worked side by side to protect the air Base.

Through many

377th USAF Support Group; Colonel Budway, Colonel Coe, Colonel Peebles.

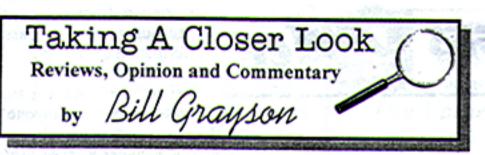
377th Air Police Squadron; Lt.Col. Benton, LtCol. Carter, Captain Holliday.

I would be very happy if I was could get in touch with all the friends that worked with me at Tan Son Nhut Air Base.

It is my pleasure to know you and the Tan Son Nhut them to place long distance calls Association. I have known billed to your home phone through Mr. Penley (Dir. TSNA Communications) that Lt. Col. I was further informed that Carter has passed away, very

> Chieu V. Phung El Monte, California





#### A Trio of Tapes

Today I'm looking at three video tapes assembled by USAF Combat Camera in the 1960s that may be of interest to the Tan Son Nhut Association membership. For the most part, these are raw, unedited footage with an indication that some multi-scene sequences had been created for some broadcast or publication purpose. The videos are not narrated and are silent except for a dubbed music track that is not pertinent to the scenes depicted.

A Day at Tan Son Nhut Air Base (45 min.) Shot in 1965-66. With the exception of the Main Gate, Base Ops and the passenger terminal, you'll have to look sharp to spot familiar on-base buildings and streets. Although entitled "Tan Son Nhut" this video could have been shot at almost any USAF base. But there are memory-jogging scenes of various USAF people at work - in showers and latrines (with modesty preserved), many aircraft types and flight line revetments and equipment. There are also some views of Saigon street scenes near the main gate. There is an extensive aerial view taken during a landing approach. On balance, I was disappointed by this tape, having expected a video "tour" of Tan Son Nhut. But I now realize that the focus during the war was USAF activity, not a travelogue. You'll need to watch the tape several times to get oriented enough to try to identify specific buildings.

Attack on Tan Son Nhut (30 min.) January 31 -February 24 1968. Although this raw footage was filmed during the attack period, there aren't any views of enemy activity and enemy attack points, routes and objective are neither shown nor discussed. The camera operators stayed behind the USAF base defenders but did capture some of them firing weapons at targets that are not shown. There are some long distance shots of friendly aircraft attacking but basically, most of the USAF base defense activity consists of armed troops crouching, crawling or taking cover and some distant smoke. Some Tan Son Nhut Association members may recognize a few of the faces - and may even see themselves. The corpses of some of the infiltrators appear several times. Unless you were on the ground at Tan Son Nhut during the attack, documentary television you may have seen presents a better, more complete picture.

Saigon Street Scenes (30 min.) As soon as this one started, the old squinty-eyed wariness I always adopted while downtown returned. Takes a viewer right back thirty-plus years. Also a "silent film" or raw footage, this tape is a good souvenir of Saigon before its name was changed. Good coverage of streets, building, pedestrians, vendors, all kinds of vehicles, traffic and signs. Some unnecessary, in my opinion, shots of a G.I. truck on an unidentified rural highway are repeated a few times. At least one of the assigned camera operators liked filming girls and women and many were captured for the record. Unlike the previous two tapes, this one has some armed Forces Radio clips in the sound track. The year or years of filming aren't given but it looks as I remember Saigon from 1966 and 1967.

All three videos may be ordered for \$19.95 from Traditions Military Videos at www.militaryvideo.com or by call their toll-free number: (800) 277-2977. Shipping is free if three or more tapes are ordered. The tapes come with Traditions' catalog of hundreds of specialized military subjects. Best regards to all of you — Bill

## Webworlds



by Charles Penley, TSNA Webmaster

Here's some very interesting websites that I feel the membership would find worthwhile visiting. Of course, start with our own: <a href="http://www.tsna.org">http://www.tsna.org</a>

The current home of the 377th Security Force:

http://www.kirtland.af.mil/organizations/SFS/Index.htm

Numerous photographs of Tan Son Nhuthttp://host.fptoday.com/COOK/ Joe McNeil's 377th Security Police Squadron Page: http://geocites.com/MotorCity/Garage/3461/joem.html

Kirt Bennet's Page, He was 377th SPS Training NCO: http://www.cyberstate.infi.net/-kbennett/vietnam.html

Loren Peterson's 377th Security Police Squadron Page: http://www.geocities.com/MotorCity/Garage/3461/rvn.html

A teenager's story about the famous Nemo, 377th SPS Sentry Dog: http://members.tripod.com/-Chiri/nemo.html

Randy Snyder's 377th Security Police Squadron Page: http://www.vspa.com/tsn-photos-snyder.htm

Six photographs of Tan Son Nhut: <a href="http://www.wwa.com/-wyco/2031Locator/photopages/places/plactsn.html">http://www.wwa.com/-wyco/2031Locator/photopages/places/plactsn.html</a>

Skip Tannery's photograph of Headquarters 7th Air Force building: http://www.petester.com/skip/skip07.html

8th Aerial Port building on Tan Son Nhut; http://www.petester.com/html/VNPICS016.html

Aerial photograph of a portion of Tan Son Nhut: http://www.flagsvs.com/victnam/605-Tansonnhat.htm

Aerial photograph of Hotel-3, Army Heliport, Tan Son Nhut::

http://www.flagsys.com/vietnam/605-hotel3.htm

Aerial photograph of a major portion of the north portion of Tan Son Nhut: http://grunt.space.swri.edu/visit/maps/tsn2.jpg

1984 Map showing what Tan Son Nhut looks like, 1:50,000 scale:

http://www.usssatvr.com/map a.htm

J.|C. Wheelers photographs of Tan Son Nhut (Non-security police) http://www.ec47.com/mytsn66.htm

Excellent website for former III

http://grunt.space.swri.edu/usafif.htm

Vietnam Security Police Association: http://www.vspa.com

... and if you're moving any time soon be sure and change your address at ..... hercules 29@worldnet.att.net



The Tan Son Nhut Association Office of the Treasurer 330 West Brambleton Avenue Norfolk, Virginia 23510

April 10, 2003

Dear Fellow Association Members,

Five members of the Association's Board of Directors have concluded that, because of a very low number of registrations for the reunion scheduled just two weeks hence, we should cancel plans for our reunion on April 25-27 of this year.

It is officially canceled.

We received a mere fifteen registrations (including spouses). Perhaps we erred in some way in marketing this reunion. If so, you have my regrets and apologies.

Beginning now we are starting the planning for a reunion in about one year. And we need thoughtful, considered input from every member. We need to know when you want to meet, where you want to meet and the events you want to be included in the program.

In the near future, there will be a questionnaire sent to the membership. You will be asked to tell us just what kind of reunion you desire. No date and no location is off limits.

If one or a number of you want to meet in St. Louis, Las Vegas, Seattle, New Orleans, or wherever, the board will give full consideration to such locations. Keep in mind that we will need a member or several members at that location who will take on the job of organizing the reunion. I, and other Board members, will be supportive and involved but we will not be performing the work that can be done only on site unless a site is chosen near where one or more of us live.

There are a number of veteran's organizations whose uniting factor is service in Vietnam and at Tan Son Nhut. If you know of such a group, kindly let us know the name and address, and (if you know) a person to contact. With this information we can address our marketing to a larger number of interested persons.

The registration checks that have already been received (or any possibly still en route) will be returned immediately. Again, all of the Board members join me in regretting that we will not be seeing each other this month, but we now have time to carefully organize a wonderful and exciting Reunion 2004!

Most Sincerely,

Ben White

Reunion Coordinator Treasurer, Tan Son Nhut Association

# Please turn to Page 7 for an important message regarding reunions.

The Tan Son Nhut Association **Public Affairs Office** Suite 709, 330 West Brambleton Avenue Norfolk, Virginia 23510

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Your TSNA membership renewal date→→→→→



Treasurer, Jan Son What Association

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