

# Revetments

The Official Journal of The Tan Son Nhut Association

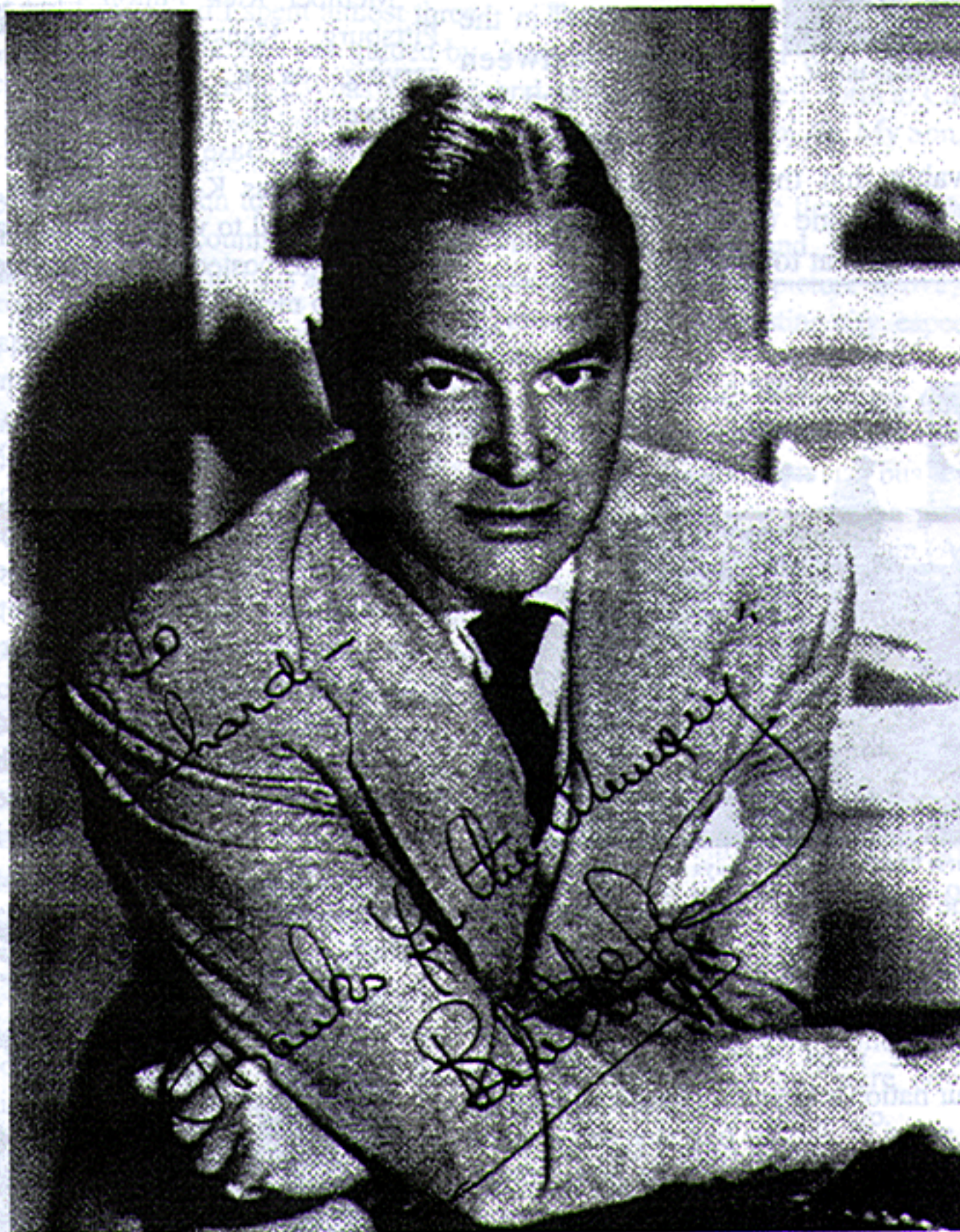


Volume 5, Number 9

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

June, 2003

*You'll never be without a buddy as long as he's around ...*



Courtesy of Member Richard Fulton (See story, Page 2)

*Happy 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday, we love ya'!!!!!!*



# A Century of Service



My god, that's you sitting there!

In his special foreword to the 1991 Brassey's book, *50 Years of The USO*, Bob Hope wrote, "Currently in the Middle East, our men and women in uniform stand in the twilight between civilization and the raw savagery of war.

It is inconceivable that they be asked to serve without some touchstone of our sympathy and support. The USO is that touchstone."



"Another outburst like that and you guys are outta here!"

Actually, if the USO was the "touchstone" it was Bob Hope who did the touching. Born in England a hundred years ago last May 29, Bob Hope rose through burlesque, vaudeville, the stage, radio and the screen to become one of the most beloved and respected entertainers in our nation's history. His overwhelming compassion and sense of duty to our men and women serving in the Armed Forces takes him far from being a mere comedian to the level of being a close personal friend to all of us. There is far more than humor in this man's dedication to the well being of those who stand in harms way to preserve the American way of life.

If he hasn't been in the place, the place doesn't exist. Your father and mine, you and I, our sons and daughters, have seen, met and cheered him in fashionable hot spots

like Goose Bay, Keflavik, Thule, Torrejon, Diego Garcia, Korea, East Dhahran, and are we forgetting somewhere, oh, yes, DaNang, Tan Son Nhut and other garden venues of Vietnam.

Member Rick Fulton, Pittsburg, Kansas, was serving as a Security Policeman at luxurious Wheelus Air Base in Libya when Bob stopped in for a show. "I was K-9," says Rick, "but that day they assigned us all to white cap duty as well as our regular shifts. I was posted behind the entertainers warmup tent and got to meet Bing Crosby's son and also to gawk at Tuesday Weld. Met Jerry Cologna too. When the show was underway was right down front but had to keep my back to the stage. An airman who took the photos gave me extra copies and I sent them to Mr. Hope, and got the autographed photo (front page) back. The hour before their plane left, they had all of us in a circle around it and Bob got off and walked the circle shaking everyone's hand and chatting with us. A nice man, but on the short side. I'm not as tall as you may remember but he was only about five-five."

Of course, Bob says it best, thanks for the memories! You'll be in ours for a lifetime. Thank you, Bob Hope, for a lifetime of magnificent service to your Nation. You have given us the gift of joyous pride!



"What do you mean, where's Raquel Welch?"



"I didn't think that joke was such a bomb, quick, driver, get me out-of here, and you, Fulton, hold 'em off until I'm off the base."





# Visit to the Descending Dragon by Daniel Lindsay

I've been reading about proposed trips to Vietnam. Several members of my family and I spent almost three weeks there during June, 2000. Our trip was guided by Diethelm Travel, a company my father-in-law has used for the past fifty years. While I enjoy the service they provide it is possible to have a very enjoyable trip hiring drivers and guides to take you from location to location. I also know people who have traveled the country by commercial bus, but I don't think I'm that adventurous anymore.

## Much the same

When we landed at Tan Son Nhut the flightline looked much as it did in 1970, many of the buildings remaining. There are cold war era antiaircraft guns, still lazily manned, on the grassy area near the runways and taxiways. The only military aircraft I saw were a few old Russian helicopters. This was in contrast to the airport in Hanoi which had MIGs sitting on the runway.

The other readily identifiable sites back at Tan Son Nhut are the two radar domes and the restaurant by the old air terminal which has been converted into a baggage claim area and final customs check. I have pictures to send to the Association but need to get reprints as I gave many to a good friend who served with me in the 45<sup>th</sup> Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron.

## Downtown bigger but landmarks remain intact

Our trip started in Saigon. The city is almost twice as large as it was thirty-two years ago, although some landmarks are still there – the Presidential Palace, the Post Office, Notre Dame de Saigon Cathedral, the Continental Palace and Caravel hotels, and the large market at Cholon, looking much as it did in 1970.

During the first two weeks, we traveled throughout the south. The first week in Saigon, and then into the Mekong Delta visiting the Cu Chi Tunnels, Tay Ninh Church, the Nike Plant at Bien Hoa, My Tho and Can Tho, and on to the floating markets at Phung Hiep and Cai Rai. We drive to Can Tho and after touring the area took a hydrofoil back to Saigon.

## And on up north

The second week we worked our way north traveling from Saigon to Dalat. From there we drove to Phan Rang and we followed Route 1 north to Cam Ranh, Nha Trang, Qui Nhon, Phu Cat, Hoi An, My Son, DaNang and finally into Hue.

The third week we flew from Phu Bai to Hanoi and visited Mai Chau and Ha Long Bay (Bay of the Descending Dragon, picture above) during this period. Hanoi is a very interesting city, especially the old French Quarter.

## Friendly atmosphere throughout

The people were very friendly throughout the country. We traveled in a medium size bus, bigger than a van but smaller than a regular bus. Our guide in the south and driver, a former Army of Vietnam (ARVN) soldier, were excellent. The guide in the north, a retired member of the Vietnamese diplomatic corp and Communist Party member, was very knowledgeable and added an interesting perspective.

The food was very good in Saigon and Hanoi. We ate at small restaurants that were affiliated with the guide service. No one got sick from the food although six of the seven of us traveling caught some sort of bug. Perhaps just jet lag and heat exhaustion, at one time or another during the trip.

The hotels in Saigon, Hanoi, Dalat, Nha Trang and DaNang were top flight and even the low end hotels were equal to a AAA one star. Contrary to my father-in-law and my expectations we were never hassled by the authorities during the entire trip.

After many years of resisting return to Vietnam, I can honestly say that we had a great trip and that I probably will return.

\* \* \*

(Member Dan Lindsay is from Davis, California. For anyone interested in the Diethelm Travel company, he offers their website: <http://www.diethelm-travel.com>)





Founded 1995

By

Don Parker &amp; John Peele

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**Membership Information**

Annual Membership \$20.00

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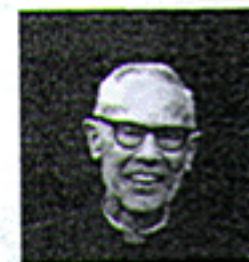


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Terrific Website

<http://www.tsna.org>

## Thoughts of our Sky Pilot

by TSNA Chaplain  
the Reverend Dr.  
James M. Warrington

**Father's Day**

Recently a young woman who is a student at a local community college wrote to me: "My parents have always maintained the idea that they would never force my brother or me to go to any particular church. I was not baptized as a child because they wanted me to choose a congregation in which I wanted to be a member. I feel that I have missed a lot of religious instruction I should have had. I am certain that my parents and I would be closer and we would have a better understanding of each other if they had provided more religious training in our home. I have seen such in other homes and I wished that positive religious direction had been practiced in ours."

"When I marry I intend to give my children a religious foundation in the home to the best of my ability. I also hope that I will marry a man who agrees with me and is willing to help in this matter."

Her words made me realize that a lot of well-meaning parents, who would not deprive their children of food or clothing or normal social pleasures, have deprived them of their greatest birthright, a knowledge of God. We have a lot of superficial thinking on this vital matter. It is quite true that congregations do not have a perfect system of religious education, but we do not have a perfect system of secular education – yet we send our children to schools for many years.

A person should have some choice about his own religious life, but he can't even make an intelligent choice unless he has been exposed to positive religious influences during his formative years.

We are answerable both to the Lord and to our own children when we neglect the greatest heritage we have to pass on from generation to generation.

It is written in the Book of Proverbs – "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

\* \* \*

Bless all you Dads!  
Remember Father's Day

Sunday,

June 15, 2003





# The Communications Center

## Revetments Apologizes for Incorrect Designation of Colonel Chieu's Command

In the May issue of Revetments, in the article, "A Visitor Takes Us Back Home to Tan Son Nhut" on Page 3, we reported that Col. Phung Van Chieu "rose to the command of the 33<sup>rd</sup> VNAF Air Wing, at Tan Son Nhut." We also captioned a picture of the colonel as the wing commander.



Colonel Phung Van Chieu at the May luncheon with the TSNA members in Norfolk, Virginia.

We regret this misunderstanding. Col. Chieu was Commander of the Defense Group of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Wing, and Deputy Commander of the TSN Sensitive Area. He later became the last base commander at Bien Hoa.

Col. Chieu has sent us a long and profoundly interesting biography of himself that is in essence a dramatic and moving historical documentation of South Viet Nam from 1945 through 1976. We are hoping to be able to include it in the next issue of *Revetments*. His narrative contains fascinating and little known information about Tan Son Nhut during the period of political/military coup d'etats during the 1960s.

Colonel Chieu also presented to the Tan Son Nhut Association a colorful and beautifully framed plaque of the official insignia of the 33<sup>rd</sup> VNAF Air Wing. He has also sent us a

COME ON FRED, THIS IS  
NO TIME TO WRESTLE.  
FRED....?



According to a briefing booklet, which I still have, there were thirteen varieties of poisonous snakes in Vietnam - cobras, kraits, and other assorted vipers - along with a delightful menu of crocodiles, tigers, leopards and bears. As for Fred's wrestling buddy above, I doubt that he has much to fret over. This devious-eyed critter is obviously an amorous female - with a playful crush on him! (Ed.Note: "Ouch!")

translation of the motto, "To Quoc" meaning "Motherland or Native Country;" and "Khong Gian" meaning "Sky Space."



Colonel Chieu goes on to interpret that this means "that the VNAF has served to protect his motherland and his air space of his sky." He is also preparing a flag for us with logos combined of the USAF, the VNAF, and US Army. Thank you, new friend.

We can always thank Jim - For some reason Association members in the Washington, D. C. area didn't seem to show much enthusiasm in going to The Vietnam Veterans Memorial, "The Wall," this past Memorial Day, May 26

But that evening, President John Peele received the following e-mail: "Just got back from The Wall. I put a wreath for the 460<sup>th</sup> Tactical Reconnaissance Wing and the Tan Son Nhut Association at The Wall. Not too many people there." Signed, "Jim Smith."

Okay! Let's see how many of us can join Jim next year.



SMSgt. Smith

Page 5  
**HISTORIC SQUADRON TO HOLD REUNION IN JANUARY**--The most decorated unit in the United States Air Force, the 377<sup>th</sup> Security Police Squadron, Tan Son Nhut Air Base, All Years, will be holding its Reunion in Albuquerque, New Mexico, from January 29 through February 1, 2004.

Please contact Reunion Planner James Stewart, P.O.Box 67, Montrose, Michigan TSN Tower 48457-0067. Home Phone: (810) 639-5755. E-Mail: [jstewart@centurytel.net](mailto:jstewart@centurytel.net)

Join the many other TSNA members who enjoy listening to

## The Victors



TSNA Member Taylor McKinnon, a professional producer, has created a stirring tribute dedicated to the heroic men of the 377<sup>th</sup> Security Police Squadron at Tan Son Nhut. Obtain your copy of this great CD! All profits go to the TSNA. Only \$19.95. Send checks or money orders to:

**Taylor Mac Productions**  
P. O. Box 381  
Patton, California 92369  
Call (909) 862-3666 Today!  
E-Mail:

[TaylorMac1@juno.com](mailto:TaylorMac1@juno.com)

## Their Greatest Hour!

This awesome and heroic transcription from the actual communications net of the 377<sup>th</sup> Security Police Squadron was created, directed and produced by Member, Major James Joyce, on behalf of the Association. All profits after production cost accrue to the TSNA. Cost for the 4 CD Set is \$49.95, including shipping and handling.

**Make Check or MO out to:**  
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## *All Members: Please Read Carefully and Reply*

### **FUTURE VIABILITY OF THE TAN SON NHUT ASSOCIATION PROPOSED BY JERRY NORVILLE**

#### **I-INTRODUCTION**

The twofold purpose of this paper is to provide a perspective on the future viability of the Tan Son Nhut Association and to propose a framework for actions by the Association's leadership and members to ensure the future viability of TSNA.

Like people, voluntary associations need regular checkups of their health. Like homes, voluntary associations also need regular maintenance and repair. The premise of this paper is that now is a good time to do a checkup and perhaps some maintenance and repair on the Association. I do not mean to imply that the Association is experiencing major difficulty. The Association has been blessed for years with dedicated people who are doing a great job. Let's think of this proposal as preventive maintenance.

In essence, this paper is a plan-to-plan. Within this paper is a framework to start the process of evaluating the organization and planning for its future viability. The first step recommended is a situation audit of the Association.

#### **II-ASSOCIATION ASSESSMENT**

A Voluntary organization such as TSNA does not have a guaranteed place in society. Unless TSNA is nurtured, it will decline in effectiveness and membership and eventually cease to exist as a viable organization. The present challenge facing the Board of Directors is to identify those elements—past, present and future—that are most significant in ensuring the future viability of the Association.

There are four essential tasks in completing a thorough assessment of the Association:

1. Outside Expectations: Identify the expectations of major interest outside the Association.
2. Inside Expectations: Identify the expectations of those within the Association.
3. Data Base: Develop and analyze an information and numerical data base of past performance, current performance and expected future performance, assuming no change in the present operation of the Association. [Base line for planning.]
4. Viability Factors: Evaluate the core viability factors of the Association to include an assessment of its strengths, weaknesses, future opportunities and future threats to its viability.

#### **III-STRATEGIES FOR ASSOCIATION VIABILITY**

Using the insights gained from a thorough Association assessment, we can then focus in step two on developing strategies that will help us ensure the future viability of the Association. In this phase of planning, I propose that we concentrate on the most fundamental and important aspects of our Association's future:

1. Purposes: Identify our fundamental purposes as a voluntary organization.
2. Vision: Formulate a vision of the Association's long-term future.
3. Goals: Identify and prioritize the Association's long-range goals.
4. Objectives: Set annual objectives supportive of the purposes, vision and goals and then prioritize, fund and achieve these objectives.



5. Plans: Develop detailed plans that support the achievement of the objectives.
6. Roles: Pinpoint specific individual and task-group responsibilities for carrying out plans to achieve the annual objectives.

#### IV-IMPLEMENTATION

If the Board of Directors approves this plan to plan as written [or as modified by the Board], then we can begin the practical tasks of getting started. In fact, we are already started to some extent. Bob Need proposed a long-range vision in his most recent e-mail to Board members. Wayne Salisbury has already proposed to Board members a framework for involving members in the planning process and for beginning our deliberations on membership. The following implementation steps are proposed:

##### 1. Meeting Preparation:

- a. Decide a date—soon. [Spacing meetings two months apart will not get the job done. Plan for a 4-5 hour work session while we are at the meeting.]
- b. Invite members to participate who are not Directors as Wayne Salisbury has suggested.
- c. Distribute all materials relating to the meeting in the next week or two. Ask those attending to provide feedback before the meeting to each person who prepared materials for the meeting. [For example, send me your comments and suggestions on this plan-to-plan so I can further prepare for the meeting—this will save valuable meeting time otherwise spent on “housekeeping” items.]

##### 2. Initial Meeting: Focus on the following tasks at the initial meeting in June:

- a. Make changes as desired to this plan-to-plan.
- b. Integrate materials already prepared by Bob Need and Wayne Salisbury into our planning.
- c. Decide who is willing to accept what tasks and determine due dates to move us forward with the planning. [We also need to identify some younger members for added responsibility—some of us are not getting any younger.]
- d. Prepare a spreadsheet for monitoring task accomplishment and deciding priorities as issues arise.
- e. Prepare a meeting calendar to cover the period June, 2003 to February, 2004— complete with the major objectives to be achieved at each meeting.

------(Cut and Mail)-----

(Mail to: Public Affairs, TSNA, Suite. 709, 330 West Brambleton Avenue, Norfolk, Virginia 23510)

(Name, Please Print)

**Your Comments** (Attach additional sheets if necessary)

Happy 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday, we love ya'!!!!!!





Director Jerry Norville

Membership input needed at...

## Critical 'Plan-to-Plan' Meeting on June 21

Tan Son Nhut Association Board of Director's members, Jerry Norville and Wayne Salisbury are spear-heading a serious program to establish a far-reaching plan to attain solid goals for the Association. Director Salisbury puts it bluntly, "We must start with the premise that as an organization, we are not well organized. We have no 'Plan.'"



Director Wayne Salisbury

Director Norville has authored a 'plan to start planning,' and the Board of Directors will be meeting at the Public Affairs Office in Norfolk, Virginia, at 10:30 a.m. on June 21 to begin taking steps to approve an initial plan to lay the ground work for the basic organizational needs before steps are taken to conduct any type of brainstorming sessions.

Membership input is vital. Dozens and dozens of members live within two hours drive of Norfolk, and are encouraged to be at the meeting in person. All members are asked to send organizational and project suggestions and comments to the Public Affairs Office immediately. For further information, or confirmation of attendance, please write: Public Affairs Office, TSNA, Suite 709, 330 West Brambleton Avenue, Norfolk, Virginia 23510 - or call (757) 627-7746, FAX: (757) 627-0878. E-Mail: [hercule29@worldnet.att.net](mailto:hercule29@worldnet.att.net)

This is an Association that has immense but dormant powers to play a leading role in the preservation of the important history of the Vietnam War and the Cold War. As Salisbury says, "Our operation is primarily the publishing of *Revetments* and conducting an annual reunion. There should be, must be more than that if we are to be a great organization." **(PLEASE READ PAGES 6 AND 7 CAREFULLY AND REPLY BY JUNE 15)**

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This date is your TSNA  
dues renewal date →

