



# REVETMENTS

The Official Journal of The Tan Son Nhut Association

A Memorial to the American Experience in Vietnam

JUNE 2012



## NOTATIONS FROM APPLICATIONS

I was stationed at Tan Son Nhut from January 26, 1972 to January 26, 1973.

I lived in the barracks just south of the radar domes for a few months and then we were moved to the barracks just north of Camp Alpha. I cannot remember the names of these areas.

Upon arriving in country I was assigned as a crew chief to the 310 TAS. We were flying C-123K model Providers. Our mission was to transport men and supplies throughout Vietnam. We were involved in the Tet 1972 Easter offensive, flying 24 hours/day evacuating civilians in the areas around An Loc and Song Be, about 90 miles north of Saigon. This offensive lasted a week or two (at least for our unit), if I remember correctly, we were working 12 hour shifts with no days off. It was hard on men and aircraft.

We deactivated the 310 TAS around August of 1973 and I was assigned to the 21st TASS for the rest of my tour. I understand that we were the last US combat unit in Vietnam. We were flying O2-A Cessna's as Forward Air Controllers (FAC's) supporting ground troops and fighter/bomber aircraft in Vietnam.

I guess of note, on December 6, 1973 we took a pretty good rocket attack on the flight line at Tan Son Nhut. If I remember correctly, one guy was killed and several injured.

I finished out my Air Force duty at Peterson Field, Colorado in August of 1973.

Glad to be part of this organization.

Gordon C.(Chuck) Wagner

I was a SGT (E4) in the 1876th Comm. Sq. and worked in the 7th AF HQ Comm. Center in the 7th AF HG Building. We worked 7 days 6 PM -6AM had a day off then worked 6 AM -6pm for 7 days. We had the old paper tape teletype equipment and associated crypto equipment. It was a very busy place (air conditioned!). The 1876th barracks were the two story kind with sand bags around 1st level. We used lockers to divide bays into "rooms". Cut down on air circulation but shift workers could get some peace. Barracks were down a road past the mortuary and dispensary. When Tet began a rocket hit outside back door of my barracks sending shrapnel in all directions. The sandbags and lockers caught a lot of it but several airmen wounded. About 5 yards more distance it would have been a direct hit. All ran to bunker next to barracks. Spent night in there. Watched while medics helped a wounded airman in bunker. The tailfin of the rocket was stuck in ground and we were ordered not to touch it. Couldn't get any info on what's going on and what to do. Squadron weapons locked in CONEX box I hear. Told to stay in bunkers. Later went to work and reading messages got some info. Mess and BX not open but getting C-rations at work. I'm short and airfield closed down, will I get out on time? I did. Except for Tet it was mainly work & rest, not much excitement. Days off went to Saigon or Airmen's club. Never learned of battles at TSN until years later, from books and articles mainly. Looking forward to learning from others who were at TSN.

Bernard W. Bucholz  
1876th Communications Squadron

Feb 67—Feb 68

After Basic Training and Security Training at Lackland AFB, TX, was assigned to Selfridge AFB, MI, where I worked in Base Police as a Desk Sergeant.

Assigned to Tan Son Nhut AB, RVN, January 1969 to January 1970. Served in Law Enforcement, primarily at the 7th AF Headquarters Compound. Worked the gate by the 60th Photo Squadron, and the bulk of the time at the gate opposite of the Generals' Compound.

Was assigned the night shift "C" flight, then assigned to rotating Day/2nd Shift, until they were eventually "frozen". Was there for the 12-19-1969 attack on TSN early morning hours.

Then went to Westover AFB, MA as Desk Sergeant until discharged. Two years of course work at Kent State University, OH. Twenty-five years of working in manufacturing plant in Euclid, OH. Two years working for the state of Wisconsin Department of Corrections, Madison, WI. Am currently employed, for the past four years, at the Lebanon VA Medical Center, PA.

Am a member of the American Legion. Life Member of the VFW. Charter/Life Member of the Vietnam Security Police Association.

James R. Speer  
377th SPS  
Jan 69—Jan 70

Lived downtown until Tet, worked on C-123 Agent Orange aircraft all the time at TSN. Now have cancer. Go figure!!

Richard M. Cummings  
460th FMS

## MARCH OF THE HEROES

By: Janice Jones  
TSNA Cheerleader

We stand and watch you pass before our eyes. You gallant men and women who wore uniforms of the Revolutionary War, the Blue and Gray of the Civil War, the World War I and II and the Korean War are marching by us.

We also see the valiant men and women who fought in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan. We have been told that these were not "wars", but, those of you who were on the grounds of these "wars" know better! The families and loved ones of y'all who were left behind know better!

The faces of those in the march are all different, but, the walk you are doing is the same. The walk is of the worn out and tired of the battles everyone has fought in and come through. There are flags from every era on the path of the march and as each soldier sees them, the walk changes!

Each soldier walks straighter and taller and the people watching the parade begin to stand straighter and taller. The marchers and the watchers have a bond and it will always exist long after the march has passed.

These marchers are Heroes! They have paid the prices for the Freedoms that we live with and treasure so much. Since the beginning of organized war, it has taken millions of men and women to get us where we are today. The March of the Heroes gets longer every day. We will forever need this march as there will never be a world wide peace. Only the Father will grant us that peace.

We also know that if Uncle Sam would put out the call, every Vietnam Brother and Sister would walk, use their cane or have a loved one push their wheelchair to answer that call. The line would run from Washington,

DC and back again from each veteran's home. That is who they were and who they still are!

The watchers of the march love, honor and so respectfully hold you in our hearts. We don't have enough words to tell you how we feel. you can only realize the way we feel from how straight and tall we stand because of you and the number of tears running down our cheeks.

The Nam Vets have been and always will be our Heroes. If at all possible, please attend our TSNA family reunion in Dayton, Ohio in October. There is a Memorial Bench and a Moving Tribute Wall waiting there for you. Most of all, there are all Brothers & Sisters who will be there for you. WE would be honored and would love to see y'all there. Welcome Home! Thank You! You did good!

Love,

TSNA Sister,

Janice Jones

## THESE DAYS IN HISTORY

May 4, 1942: Battle of Midway begins

May 5, 1947: Marshall Plan created for European recovery.

May 6, 1944: D-Day

May 14, 1775: U. S. Army established.

May 25, 1942: Eisenhower takes command of U S forces in Europe.

May 25, 1950: North Korea invades South Korea.

## Q & A

*Q.. If you were to spell out numbers, how far would you have to go until you would find the letter 'A'?*

*A. One thousand*

## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER JUNE 2012

One of my resource calendars says "Celebrate June as Great Outdoors month"! Those of us who served at Tan Son Nhut over the years spent a lot of time "outdoors" during our Junes. We filled our memory books with something new to us almost every day and every month.

June is calendar wise a military and historical month. Way back in history wars were fought basically in the summer months. Wars were/are complicated social, political and religious event. Yes, religions too. This we are again seeing in this generation. It was in June that the life saving Marshall Plan followed WWII. Today US military medical teams are using the runway of TSN in Vietnam in another much needed life saving program and are much supported by the Saigon people. This entire history lesson leads down to Chaplains thoughts during a month that includes Father's Day.

In my city block here in Florida two houses changed families. One has no father at home as he left for a tour in Afghanistan a few days ago. Next week another family goes to the west coast to reunite with the family father, a Navy Seal.

All these scenes prompt thoughts in the "Corner" of family cares, concerns and the need for us all to be thoughtful and supportive of those about us. June, an outdoor month but one that brings pause like on the 14<sup>th</sup> as we stand under our banner on Flag Day. Our concern should be for nation and family and thank God that we are much blessed.

End of Sermon  
Chaplain Bob



## Tan Son Nhut Memorial Update

The Tan Son Nhut Memorial Project is nearing completion and the components are being readied for dedication in a few months. The anticipation of this dedication moment is beginning to take hold of our thoughts, and rightfully so. What will the memorial look like when seen in person with our own eyes? What will our thoughts be while using our own hands to touch and feel the words of dedication? Perhaps a place called Tan Son Nhut, people we served with, events that shaped our tours of duty, memories of going about our daily toils and knowing we were a part of something larger than ourselves.

The Memorial Committee has attempted to keep the association membership informed with the progress of the memorial project from inception to current planning for the dedication. This has been done by way of pictures, vivid descriptions, and information related to the funding of the project. All of this was designed to show just what the memorial would look like to the eye. While visual appeal is important, memorials should invoke emotions that causes one to look inward into one's own self.

To the museum visitor without personal knowledge of Tan Son Nhut Air Base and war's hurt and destruction, this memorial will appear to them as a large piece of black granite, two bronze plaques, and two trees set in a symmetrical pattern along with moving words of dedication. These words of dedication will speak about service, about sacrifice, and about not wanting to forget our gratitude. That is what the visitor will see and read. We can only hope they will read those words of dedication more than once and ponder their meaning while wondering who we were and why this memorial was necessary.

For those who served at, or passed through, Tan Son Nhut Air Base, this memorial will be seen on a more personal level because of memories. We

know who these persons being honored are. We know of their service and we know of their sacrifice. We know the events that shaped our collective tours of duty. We know all about the daily toils while stationed at Tan Son Nhut. We know. To some museum visitors, this memorial will rekindle memories of family and friends having served in Vietnam, especially at Tan Son Nhut. And these visitors will be reminded of their service and sacrifice.

Up to now the information about the Tan Son Nhut Memorial has been factual in nature, written to describe and to inform. The memorial project has progressed to the extent where we all know the details of what and when and how it will look. The next stage of development is upon us and it will involve the entire Tan Son Nhut Association membership. Each of us have our own memories, our own reasons for wanting a memorial, and our thoughts on the upcoming dedication.

With these thoughts in mind, the Memorial Committee now invites all members to give us a short, one to three sentence statement on just what this memorial to Tan Son Nhut Air Base means to you. The visual appeal to the eye is always important, but what are seeing and feeling with your heart? What does your memories feel and see? Look inward and ponder. And if you would like to share your personal thoughts with other members, please send us a one to three sentence statement and we will publish them in the July issue of Revetments. And if you want to remain anonymous with your thoughts, we will honor your privacy and withhold your name.

A memorial is far more than a block of granite. Its heart and soul are those persons being remembered and honored for their service. Let us know what your heart and soul tells you about the Tan Son Nhut Air Base Memorial. You may send your thoughts and reflections to [hboone@carolina.rr.com](mailto:hboone@carolina.rr.com), and they

will be shared with the membership in the July issue of Revetments. Please send your thoughts no later than June 20, 2012 so they can be made ready for the July issue of Revetments.

Thank you for your loyal support of the association and continued financial support for the Memorial project. And most of all, thank you for your service.

Welcome Home.

The Memorial Committee

### REUNION 2012 DOOR PRIZE!

Fellow Members:

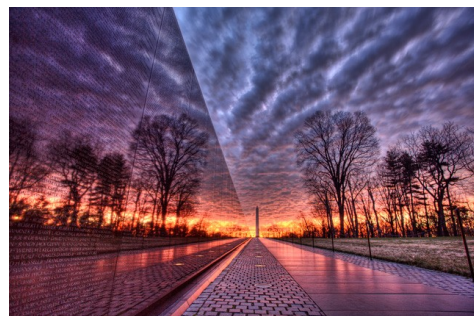
Angela Pan, a noted photographer in the Washington, DC area, has donated to the Association an absolutely beautiful framed photo of the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Wall, taken at sunrise. (Dale Bryan wrote an article about Angela Pan that was published in last month's Revetments).

A picture of it will be available on our web site soon.

Tickets will be distributed to all in attendance at the Dayton reunion banquet and the winner will be announced that evening.

I hope to see you there!!!

George



# Tan Son Nhut Association 2012 Reunion Registration

OPEN TO ALL INTERESTED IN THE HISTORY AND LEGACY OF TAN SON NHUT AND THE VIETNAM CONFLICT

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ BRANCH OF SERVICE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF YOUR GUEST(S): \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE LIST ANY SPECIAL NEEDS: \_\_\_\_\_

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY NOTIFY: \_\_\_\_\_



## REGISTRATION FEES

NUMBER OF PERSONS ATTENDING \_\_\_\_\_ X \$125. = \_\_\_\_\_

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES (NO EXTRA COST)

- Access to the TSNA Hospitality suite in the Challenger Discovery Room, (drinks, snacks, and war stories!) - \$20. daily if purchased separately.
- Leased bus round-trip to the NMUSAF for the TSNA Memorial Bench Dedication and Banquet.
- Leased bus round-trip to the Americans Veterans Traveling Tribute.
- TSNA Friday Banquet buffet dinner. \$65. if purchased separately.
- FREE breakfast every morning.
- Please circle which activities that you are paying for separately.

Your room rate has been group-discounted to \$110.00 per night. Those without Internet access can call the Holiday Inn, Fairborn (1-937-426-7800). Hotel reservations must be made no later than **September 20, 2012 to receive this special rate.**

**PAYMENT MUST BE MAILED NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 30, 2012.**

**PLEASE MAKE PAYMENTS PAYABLE TO THE "TAN SON NHUT ASSOCIATION" AND MAIL PAYMENTS TO:**

**TAN SON NHUT ASSOCIATION** C/O GEORGE PLUNKETT, 587 WILLIAMS CIRCLE, WEST COLUMBIA, SC 29172

On Friday evening, October 12, our banquet speaker will be Colonel Chuck DeBellevue.



Chuck DeBellevue was the first U.S. Air Force weapons systems officer to become an ace during the Vietnam War in 1972. DeBellevue became America's top "MiG Killer" when he and his pilot, Capt. John Madden, downed two MiGs, giving him six in total, the most earned during the Vietnam War.

During his combat tour, DeBellevue logged 550 combat hours while flying 220 combat missions. His skill as a WSO was recognized when he and the other two U.S. Air Force aces, Capt. Steve Ritchie and Capt. Jeff Feinstein, received the 1972 Mackay Trophy, the Veterans of Foreign Wars' Armed Forces Award and the Eugene M. Zuckert Achievement Award.

He retired with numerous awards, including the Air Force Cross, the Silver Star with two oak leaf clusters, the Legion of Merit and the Distinguished Flying Cross with five oak leaf clusters, among others.

## 2012 TAN SON NHUT ASSOCIATION REUNION SCHEDULE

Thursday	9 AM	Registration Desk Opens and Hospitality Suite Opens
Thursday	????	Hospitality Suite Closes
Friday	10 AM (Buses leave the hotel at 9:40 AM, return at 12:15 PM)	TSNA Memorial Bench Dedication
Friday	12 PM-4:30 PM	Hospitality Suite is Open
Friday	2 PM (Buses leave the hotel at 1:40 PM, return at 4:15 PM)	NMUSAF Self Guided Tour
Friday	5 PM (Buses leave the hotel at 5 PM)	NMUSAF Museum Shop opens exclusively for us
Friday	5:45 PM	Panoramic picture of everyone taken at NMUSAF
Friday	6 PM	Cash Bar Opens in Banquet Area/Aircraft viewing (The C-123, RF-101 and F-4 will have special access just for us)
Friday	7 PM (Buses leave the hotel at 6:30 PM, return after the banquet)	Banquet Seating
	Introduction of Guests	President George Plunkett
	Presentation of Colors	WPAFB Color Guard
	National Anthem	WPAFB Band of Flight Soloist
	Welcome	President George Plunkett
	Missing Man Table Ceremony	
	Invocation & Necrology	
	Dinner	
	Musical Presentation	WPAFB Band of Flight
	Introduction of Guest Speaker	President George Plunkett
	Guest Speaker	Colonel Chuck DeBellevue
	Awards/Coin Presentation	President George Plunkett
	Retirement of Colors	WPAFB Color Guard
Friday	10 PM—?????	Hospitality Suite is Open
Saturday	9 AM—?????	Hospitality Suite is Open
	2 PM (Buses leave at 1:30 PM, return at 3 PM)	The American Veterans Traveling Tribute
Sunday	8 AM-10 AM	Farewell Breakfast

**All:**

***We continue to seek speakers to address the group on Saturday morning, but nothing has been confirmed yet.***

***Please respond to the question posed elsewhere in this month's Revetments regarding the location and timing of our next reunion.***

***The Board of Directors works for YOU.***

***Thanks,***

***George***

## AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION

By George Plunkett  
TSNA President

The American Battle Monuments Commission, established by the Congress in 1923, is an agency of the executive branch of the federal government.

ABMC—guardian of America’s overseas commemorative cemeteries and memorials—honors the service, achievements and sacrifice of U.S. Armed Forces.

ABMC’s commemorative mission includes:

- Designing, constructing, operating and maintaining permanent American cemeteries in foreign countries.
- Establishing and maintaining U.S. military memorials, monuments and markers where American armed forces have served overseas since April 6, 1917, and within the United States when directed by public law.
- Controlling the design and construction of permanent U.S. military monuments and markers by other U.S. citizens and organizations, both public and private, and encouraging their maintenance.

Each year millions of people visit ABMC cemeteries and memorials. ABMC receives thousands of inquiries yearly, many seeking to facilitate visits or locate individual grave sites. ABMC provides the following services to requestors:

- Name, location, and information on cemeteries and memorials.
- Plot, row and grave number or memorialization location of honored war dead.
- Best in-country routes and modes of travel to cemeteries or memorials.
- Information on accommodations near cemeteries or memorials.
- Escort service for relatives to grave and memorial sites within the cemeteries.
- Letters authorizing fee-free passports for members of the immediate family traveling overseas to visit a grave or memorialization site.
- Black and white photographs of headstones and Tablets of the Missing, on which the names of dead or missing are engraved.
- Arrangements for floral decorations placed at graves and memorialization sites.
- An Honor Roll certificate, suitable for framing, containing data on a Korean War casualty.
- Digital color photographs of donated floral decorations in place.

### The Andrews Project

ABMC also provides friends and relatives, of those interred in its cemeteries or memorialized on its Tablets of the Missing, with color lithographs of the cemetery or memorial that includes a mounted photograph of the headstone or commemorative inscription. The Andrews Project, named in honor of its sponsor the late Congressman George W. Andrews, is ABMC’s most popular service.

We can assist you in planning your visit to any of our sites. We can arrange for the placement of floral decorations at an individual's grave or marker, and we can give you information on any individual buried or honored at our cemeteries or memorials.

### For More Information

You may email: [info@abmc.gov](mailto:info@abmc.gov)

You may write to:

American Battle Monuments Commission  
Courthouse Plaza II, Suite 500  
2300 Clarendon Boulevard  
Arlington, VA 22201

You may call: (703) 696-6900

## CALL FOR CANDIDATES

This is a very exciting year for your Association with the upcoming reunion in Dayton and the dedication of our long awaited memorial. However, people have to manage your Association in the posts of officers and board members. They are those who keep us alive as an active and viable organization.

I'm sure that most of you know that the office of Vice President now stands vacant. Also, the present term of one of your dedicated board members ends. The position to be filled is Director of Public Relations, and the incumbent is eligible to run for reelection. That said, we need active volunteers to stand for election to those two important positions. I emphasize the word active, because serving as an officer or board member of TSNA is not just adding a title to your name on the Association roster. Work and dedication are involved.

The Vice President's primary function is to assume the duties of President on a moment's notice should the President, for any reason, be unable to execute the duties of that office. Another duty of the Vice President will be adjudication of board actions. The TSNA Secretary is presently fulfilling some of the Vice President's duties. Duties of the Director of Public Relations are fairly self explanatory. Of course, the President or the board as a body can task any officer or board member with specific duties.

A person may nominate themselves, or any member may nominate another. If you nominate another, be certain that that person is willing to run and serve.

Please send all nominations by name and position to me via email at [dale\\_f\\_bryan@yahoo.com](mailto:dale_f_bryan@yahoo.com). Note that there is an underscore ( \_ ), not a dot on both sides of the f in my name. If you are sending the nomination by surface mail, send it to Tan Son Nhut Association, P. O. Box 236, Penryn, PA 17564-0236. Deadline for nominations is June 30, 2012. A self nominee or one accepting a nomination by another member must submit a statement of approximately three to five paragraphs of their vision for the future of TSNA and how they would help achieve that vision. The announcement of the election and a listing of all nominees will appear in the July 2012 issue of Revetments.

Thank you,  
Dale F. Bryan  
Secretary, TSNA

### The Thousand Yard Stare!

The Thousand Yard Stare  
Yes I saw it over there,

I sat with a young lad  
I old enough to be his dad,

We sipped our brews  
And watched the crews,

Scurrying around the bird  
I wanted not to disturb,

One with whose eyes shown  
So much pain, and hurt his own,

With him looking through me I felt so bare  
Him with his Thousand Yard Stare.

By: Harlan Hatfield  
460th AEMS (PMEL)  
Jan 67—Jan 68

**Tan Son Nhut Association**  
**P. O. Box 236**  
**Penryn PA 17564**

**Revetments** is an official publication of the Tan Son Nhut Association, Inc.  
P.O. Box 236, Penryn, PA 17564-0236  
The Association is a 501(c)(19) tax exempt veterans' Organization incorporated in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

President: George Plunkett  
Vice President:  
Secretary: Dale Bryan  
Treasurer: Carol Bessette  
Director of Communications/Webmaster: Charles Penley  
Director of Marketing: Johnnie Jernigan  
Director of Public Relations: Richard Carvell  
Director of Veteran and Member Services: Hector Leyva  
Director of Membership: Larry E. Fry  
Co-Director of Membership Development: Bill Coup  
Co-Director of Membership Development: Kerry Nivens  
Revetments Editor: Larry E. Fry  
Chaplains: Rev. Dr. James M. Warrington,  
Rev. Dr. Billy T. Lowe; and Rev. Bob A. Chaffee  
Co-Founders/Presidents Emeriti: Don Parker and John Peele  
President Emeriti: Wayne Salisbury  
President Emeritus: Robert Robinson Gales  
**Web Site: [www.tsna.org](http://www.tsna.org)**

Annual Membership: \$20.00  
Five Year Membership: \$80.00  
Life Membership: \$180.00



## NEW MEMBERS

Mr. Richard P. Busillo	PA richardpbusillo@aol.com	Jun 67 - Jun 68	120th Assault Helicopter Company
Mr. Gary Munoz	OH gary.munoz@mcix.com	May 72 - May 73	7th/13th Air Force - Scatback
Mr. Jimmy L. Smith	OH jimfamhist@sbcglobal.net.	Jan 68 - Jan 69	OLAA Det. 2 15rh Aerial Support Sq.
Mr. Donald J. Segraves	CA phradon94523@yahoo.com	Mar 69 - Mar 70	377 Sec. Police Sq.
Mr. William A. Steele	TX steelebbs@att.net	Dec 69 - Dec 70	360 TEWS, then Scatback
Mr. William H. Burney	GA whburney@aol.com	Jan 62 - May 62	346th Troop Carrier Sq., 2nd ADVON
TSgt. Thomas B. Marmon, Sr.	OH marmont0999@gmail.com	Nov 70 - Nov 71	377th Field Maint. Sq

TSNA and its officers, directors, employees and agents do not make any guarantees of any kind about the content, accuracy, or timeliness of information in the TSNA newsletter, *Revetments*. The use of information from this newsletter is strictly voluntary and at the user's sole risk. TSNA shall not be liable for any damages of any kind related to the information in this newsletter. The opinions expressed in the newsletter are those of the authors and do not constitute the opinion or policy of TSNA.