



REVETMENTS

The Official Journal of The Tan Son Nhut Association

A Memorial to the American Experience in Vietnam



JANUARY 2020

FROM PRESIDENT BROWN



Well we have come to the end of 2019. I hope that 2020 blesses each and every one of you even more than ever before.

Each year we add to our lives, adds a few more health issues (but remember these are Golden Years), so we need to take care of ourselves a little more.

If you make resolutions, you might add one to walk a little more, eat right, get regular check-ups, and sign up a new member for TSNA.

We are heading now towards our reunion in Tucson for 2020, September 17-20. So, get that marked on your calendar, maybe make a vacation along with it.

A lot to do and see in the Tucson area. Close by is Tombstone, Bisbee and Old Town. So come enjoy a great Reunion, it is a super area of our country.

I want to wish each of you a Happy New Year and a healthy one also.

See you in Tucson.

Chaplain's Corner

By Andy Csordas, Associate Chaplain

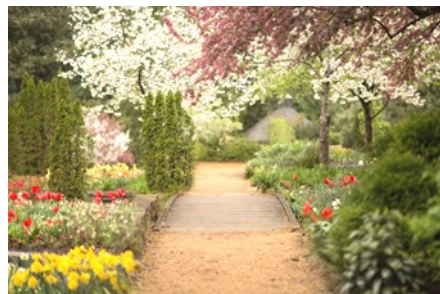
June 70 - Dec 70

Special COMSEC Support Detachment

(Originally scheduled for late Spring 2019 publication)

It has been an interesting Winter and Spring, sometimes much colder than normal, sometimes much warmer than normal, perhaps jumping from one to the other in one day and then back again the next day.

As we go through the seasons of the year Spring is always welcomed. It is a time when plants that have basically looked dead come alive with buds, flowers and leaves.



God has created so much beauty for us to appreciate on this earth, but the flowering of plants is always a highlight to me. Think of all of the incredible colors and shapes of the countless flowers on the earth. Each of them comes from a seed that has all of the complex instructions to produce that particular plant or flower, be it a blade of grass or a giant redwood tree.



Now think about how much more complex humans are compared to the plants. Compare a wooden block to the space shuttle; the space shuttle is many, many times more complex than the wooden block, but the difference pales in comparison to the difference between plants and humans.

We were created in His image, and are the highlight of His creation. He also created the plants, animals, soil, minerals, water, the atmosphere and the sun to provide an ideal environment for us to survive and thrive but we are the highlight of His creation. Remember God cares about each of us as individuals. He knew us in the womb. He created our unique and individual DNA. He knows us as individuals and He wants to be close to us as our Father. He wants to listen to our concerns and He loves for us to praise Him. Take time to praise Him and listen to Him as our spiritual Father talking to you today. God Bless!

Red Horse 823rd & 554th Combat Engineers
Vietnam Tan Son Nhut
Sept. 7th 1970 to Sept. 7th 1971

Well, it all started in June of 1969. I had orders to go to Korea, and I had to go through 6 weeks of Red Horse training at Eglin AFB Aug. Field #2. We were then part of the 560th Red Horse CES. We as a group went through 5 weeks of training to come back off of our one week of field training to find out the higher ups RED LINED our orders. So we all had to start all over at the Commanders Hall filling Dream Sheets. Some guys went to other Bases, but a lot of us stayed there at Aug. Field #2 as permanent party. A short time later in Sept. or Oct. of 1969 the lot of us changed over to the 557th Red Horse CES.

So from Oct of 1969 till July of 1970 we all worked on different projects. We built a couple Butler Buildings, one on the main base, and one at Hurlburt Field. Ray Crew and I for a while worked with Training NCO MSgt. Stout. At Aug. Field #2 we were getting Air Reserves for one week of CE training a few times a year. Ray and I both drove bus so we would go to the main base to pick them all up, and bring them all back to Field #2. They would then build a tent city, and then each AFSC would have their training throughout the week.

Towards the middle of July we heard that a class of Reg. Air Force Civil Engineer's was going to go through 6 weeks of Red Horse training, and head to Vietnam as the 823rd Red Horse CES. Class of K-9 I think it was. So they all went through the training, and towards the end of August, Headquarters was asking if any of us permanent party guys wanted to sign up to go over with them. I'm guessing there was at least 25 of us that signed up. Come Sept. 7th 1970 we all were on a Tiger Air Line headed for Bien Hoa, Vietnam.

Once we landed at Bien Hoa, got off the plane, we then walked down this road headed towards where we had to meet. I was looking around, and I was thinking wow did we just spend 32 hours up in the air and landed back down in Florida. Well that thought didn't last very long, and before you knew it we all were lined up in the Red Horse area being told what barrack's we were to stay in. The following day we all were still trying to get used to where we were. A lot of us got shipped out to other Detachments. The Red Horse Combat Engineer's were at different bases all over Vietnam.

Me, I stayed at Bien Hoa. I did make a Mail run to New Port with two other guys. The one big thing that remains in my head about that day was as we drove over this river bridge the ARVN's that were on each side of the bridge down near the river behind sand bags started shooting at something. Well I tell ya, they got my attention in a hurry. They scared the crap out of me. Time pushed on, and we made it to New Port. We got the mail loaded in the deuce and a half, and headed back to Bien Hoa.

The next day I found myself going up to the compound Carpenter Shop. The powers to be told me I was to run the Shop. Well all I had was 4 papasan's working there. They were making Bar Stool's for the NCO Bar. They looked pretty good too. One day I walked out back to check out all the lumber they had stacked up. Little did I know the shooting range was on the other side of this closed in chain-link fence. I think the Air Police were there with one of their machine guns, and they let it go. What a sound. It sounded like one of our welding machines, but a thousand times louder. Yep!! They got my attention too!! In a hurry, man what a noise. Again they scared the crap out of me!!

After a day or two the Commander came up to the compound, and they called me over to a small area we had that was a meeting place. That was the day I got my third stripe. Weren't too many people there. A guy took our picture, and that was all she wrote, I became an NCO.

I think a week went by, and as I was walking around the Shop MSgt. Little, and TSgt. Nabb drove up in a jeep. They both said Hi Fred, why don't you come with us. Well they dropped me off at my barracks, and said pack your bags we'll be back to pick you up, we're headed to Tan Son Nhut.

After we arrived at Tan Son Nhut they dropped me off in the 1200 area, Barrack's 1874 to find a bunk. We were across the street from the 8th Aerial Port Depot about four barrack's in, on the left. There was a big swimming pool behind our barracks that had no water in it. After a short stay there MSgt. Little took me up to the Red Horse 823rd. CES Compound. There I met all the guys in the Carpenter Shop. They were Philip A. Bowes, Richard D. Goodell, Douglas W. Emch, William A. Barca, William E. Jordan, Philip N. Guinn, J.W. Haliburton, and Gary Scott. There was a whole lot more of us there, but I had these names written down. Rich Goodell lived in Worchester Ma. I lived in Westfield Ma. not too far away. I tried looking for him on line, and I'm sorry to say he passed away a couple years back. Bill Barca I think still lives in Yonkers NY. My working buddy Doug Emch lives out in Michigan. Hope to go on a road trip to go see him this year. I haven't seen Doug since 1971.

The next day was the start of a long stay at Tan Son Nhut. We had quite a few guys with different trades. I was in the Carpenter Trade AFSC 55250. I think there were three good size Carpenter crews. At the time our Unit was repairing barrack all over the Base; the Carpenters would go in and repair screen doors, and walls. Then we had a couple paint crews that would go in and paint the insides of the barracks. We just took care of

one area at a time. For a while I had a small Carpenter Crew, and worked in our Compound working on a home trailer that looked like the front end of it got blown up. The floor in the front was all pushed up so we had to taper the floor so it leveled out, and raise all the cabinets. We had to replace windows too. I think we were fixing it up for some Vietnamese General.

The next job we did as a group was to work on one of the cement hangars across the road from our compound. It was a Navy Helicopter Repair Hangar. We all got in there and built a parts crib, and a second floor for an office. We also closed up both ends and added doors and some windows.

After a while the bosses needed someone to run the Masonry Crew. Well I had worked with the Mason's State side so I knew a little about cement work. Doug Emch was a painter by trade, but he knew a little also. So the Powers to be put Doug and me in charge of the Mason Crew. We had twenty Papa-sans working for us. What a crew. We had a Deuce and a half truck and a trailer to go with it. For a while we had to look for tools. No cement mixer, no trowels, we pretty much had to scrounge for a lot of our tools. The Welding shop bent up some rebar and welded it to sheet metal to make trowels, and the carpenters made up handles for them. We had some shovels and hoses, and we were ready to go. The first place we went to was the 800 Area. All the sand bags had to be removed, and they were going to be replaced with cement barriers placed around all of the barrack in that area. Steel pipe were cemented in holes all around the barracks. Wood forms were made at the Compound. Rebar was cut to be placed in the forms, and stuck out on the sides. Some of the rebar were bent in a U shape, and they were placed at the top. Cement was poured in the forms, and had to dry good for a couple days. Once they were dry they were loaded up on a flat bed truck and brought down to the 800 area. There they were unloaded by a bucket loader with a chain, and hooks. They brought them over to the pipe that was cemented into the ground, and were welded to the pipe where the rebar stuck out the side. While that was being done Doug, and I and the crew had to build cement block wall in front of the doors of each barracks. We worked our way all the way down the street and even built block wall on the back side of all the barrack's. We even went around the corner to the left and did a few barracks in that area too.

After that job was done we had a few small jobs around the base. Digging holes, and cementing poles in them for this one storage area. The welders had a lot to do on that job; make racks for storage shelves. By this time we left the 1200 area by the 8th Aero Port Depot to the 1300 area. That was over near where Security had their barracks. We were right behind the two big white Radar Domes. Our barracks was on the street across from the Chow Hall. Just about the third barracks down on the left. We fixed it up, and made a nice dayroom to chill out in, have a beer, write letters to send back home.

Doug and I and the crew had a job making small block buildings that housed toilets (We called them French Bomb Sights) on one side, showers on the other side, and a cement box water closet in the middle of the wall at the end of the building opposite the door entrance. I think we all made three of them buildings around the base. One was located across from the Heliport, at the Boot-Camp area for the VNAF. Another one was out by the Air Port in another Vietnamese training area. The last one was way over on north side of the base. It was in the area where our Army was barracked. We built in an area that was a Boot Camp for Vietnamese Field Commissioned Officers. By this time the 832nd CES changed over to the 554th CES, and HQ's was up at Cam Ranh Bay. We all did have to fly up there to do paper work of some sort, and then flew back to Tan Son Nhut.

The next big job and I mean BIG Job was at the 8th Aerial Port taxi-way in the parking area for I think C 130's. It was right behind the 8th Aerial Port Depot building. All the metal bomb shelters were up, and filled with gravel. What we had to do was install PSP Matting down the middle of the barriers, and up inside them where the planes would park. Well the job went along pretty good. We had the Mason Crew with Doug and me, and 20 papa-sans. I also think there was a Carpenter Crew with their men. There was a lot of bull work moving the PSP mat's around. The grading was done, and everything was leveled by the engineers. We just took off with the job, and completed it after a few weeks. They brought in the planes, parked them in their spots, and everything looked great. Then!! The first Monsoon Rain kicked in. It didn't take too long, and we were right back there on that job again. It rained so much the ground just turned to mush. The weight of the planes pushed them down in the mud at least 12 inches if not more. The PSP matting just came apart, and popped up in the air around the tires of the planes. They had to get bulldozers to pull them out of the holes. Once they got all the planes out of the area we had to pull all the PSP Matting up in the middle of the taxiway, and in the center of each area where the planes were parked. Those areas were at least 20 or 25 feet wide. We then brought in a trench digger. A trench was put in the middle of the taxi way along with drainage pipe, and two or three man holes. In the parking area's trenches were dug that went to the center of the taxi way. They all had drainage pipe installed too. After all the pipes were connected we put trap rock around the pipe, and right up to the top of the trench. We then replaced the PSP Matting in all the areas. Once we got down to the end of the taxi-way where it met the tar runway we had to take two pallets of cement bags, and break them open to spread them around in the area where the end of the taxi-way was. After all that time we worked in the area this spot just

wouldn't dry out. So we loaded up the area with cement and waited for it to dry. Put the last of the PSP matting down and we were done with that job!!!

Some of the smaller jobs we did were to make forms, and poured a cement floor for the Base Print shop. Then we made forms, and poured cement volleyball court for the Security Police HQ. Later on four poppa san's and I made a cement goldfish pond with a small bridge right behind the Police HQ's. They already had a nice looking fireplace made out of house brick and a small cement patio. Nice place for them to chill out!!

The next job we did was at the Communications building. I think it was right behind the Heliport that was across the street from the BX. It was a Quonset hut where they kept all their computers. What they wanted us to do was to make a cement block addition at the back end of it. The building had to be grounded also. We poured the footings with rebar and wire in it. Also we had rebar coming up through the footings where the blocks would sit. We had to cut a million pieces of rebar it seems. As we laid the blocks down we had to wire the pieces of rebar together as we built up the walls. We also filled each block with cement too. Once we got up to the top we had to form up a plywood floor, with rebar, and wire and secured up underneath it. Once we got it all secured up with beams, and the rebar was wired to the rebar in the walls we poured the roof. A little scary but it didn't cave in. In one of the walls we also put a metal double doorway frame. As we let the roof dry for a few days we worked on the floor. In the center of the room we had to dig a hole about eight feet deep. It would then at some point have a pipe put in it, and have charcoal put in around the outside of the pipe and backfilled with dirt. A grounding rod was to be put into the pipe afterwards. We did hit a snag while we were digging the hole. As we got down to our depth we hit an old grave, and casket. Well you would have thought all hell broke lose. At one point they were going to have some people from Saigon to investigate. My boss made an executive decision!! Move the hole two feet away from the casket. We did!! We then got rid of the beams and the plywood forms, and then we poured the floor. Put the hardware on, hung the doors the next day, and the job was done.

The last and probably the biggest job we did, was to start building a Ten Family Housing Unit on perimeter road on the west side of the base, and just north of the runway. Seventh Air Force engineers made up the blue prints and we were ready to get started. We dug all the footings but the darn ground was so hard we had to use a jack hammer. Well to make a long story short we built the first one, and the second one right behind it. The carpenter crews came in, and framed up the roof and put corrugated roofing on it. Then they made doors and installed them. They then made windows with louvers and installed them too. By the time the first one was finished we had the second one formed and poured the floor. The VNAF Civil Engineers were to start making the second one, and I heard forty more over time. While they were working on trying to get the second started we dug and made a huge tank out of cement blocks and piped all ten units to it. The last bit we did was to try to make a leech field for that tank. The VNAF did start the third one. They had prisoners there with picks and shovels trying to dig the footings. Didn't work out too good I don't think.

By now it was getting close to Aug. of 1971. During August we were doing some small job here and there, and HQ's sent down order's for most of us to fly up to Cam Rhan Bay. Some Sappers came in off the coast and on Aug. 25th 1971 they blew up the ammo dump. We packed our bags and belongings and flew up there within a day. We got there later in the day, most caught up with guys we hadn't seen in months. That night around 2:00 AM they called a RDF alert. Well minutes later I found myself in the back of a truck headed to the compound. As we got there we all fell into formation, and after a while they started passing out M – 16's. Right then I was thinking I really don't need this. Anyhow the line I was in had to go to bunker #12 or #13. It was pitch dark out and I went to the wrong one the first time. So I had to go down a hill and then up to the next bunker. This was the one finally. I sat there for a while really couldn't see the other guys. Finally I asked who has the Ammo. The answer I got I couldn't believe. One of the guys said, and I quote "We don't get any until the Commander gives the OK". I really couldn't believe what I just heard. The sappers snuck into the base blew up the ammo dump, and could very well still be out there on base just waiting to make a move. I said to the guy you got to be kidding me. The VC could be right on the other side of the sand bags. It's a good thing they weren't. We all would have died. After that evening I couldn't wait to get out of there and go home. Come September 7, 1971 we were all going through security and then onto a Tiger Airlines headed for the U.S.A.

Hope you enjoyed the info on my recollections of my time with the 823rd, and the 554th Red Horse Combat Engineers at Tan Son Nhut Air Force Base.

Kind Regards

Frederick R. Benda Jr.
45 Springdale St.
Westfield, Massachusetts

FRED BENDA PHOTOS



5 PM Time for everyone to go to main gate to go home for the day



Picture of the housing Project. West end of Runway.



I'm having some watermelon with one of the workers.

Big 10 family Unit for VNAF NCO's west end of runway.



MORE FRED BENDA PHOTOS



Built another shower and bathroom building. This one was near the Air Port.



Fred Benda and Doug Emch. He and I took over the Masonry Shop. Our group moved of to the 1300 area by the two big white Radar Domes.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

By: Sgt Jim Marshall
377 CSG, Hq Sq, Data Automation
Feb 1970 – Mar 1972

I arrived at Tan Son Nhut AB in February 1970 and assigned to the 377th Combat Support Group, Head Quarters Squadron to work as a Computer Operator in Data Automation working for the Comptroller. It was in Building 340 where the Base Exchange was located. The building was split down the center long ways with a building inside of building and in the far end housed a computer room which has not changed from those of today.

About 3 months later the computer broke down about the 20th of the month. By the 23rd our Officer In Charge, Major Ames was very concerned. The computer was in bad shape. We did the paychecks for all Air Force people assigned to the base and around most of the southern part of Saigon at little airfields. The paychecks had to be processed, printed before the 25th and in the hands of Finance. At the time we were doing Direct Deposit of paychecks into the local Bank of America (BoA). Instead of printing checks for each BoA account, we just generated a long list of names, amounts, etc. We all know if the troops do not get paid, they become VERY, VERY unhappy and morale suffers.

So, Sunday noon, the Major decided to declare a Disaster and print the checks and process the other backlog, Personnel, Finance, etc, at Bien Hoa AB. He decided on a 4-man team: Sgt Moore as lead, Sgt StJean, A1C Mingus and me, seeing I was the new kid in town. The mission was to DRIVE up country to Bien Hoa AB, about 35 miles NW, use their computer overnight and come back Monday with all the reports, printed checks and lists. He told Sgt Moore and I to head over to the Motor Pool and check out a pickup truck.

We brought back the only pickup available BUT it only had 2nd gear; very UNCOOL. The major was calm and cool for some reason. He asked me to drive him over to the Motor Pool and we'd talk to the Sergeant. Only having 2nd gear was not going to cut it for a trip out of Saigon and up to Bien Hoa and back. MAN, I figured he'd pull rank on him, Major versus SSgt, and ORDER him to give us a better truck. I learned a great lesson here.

When we arrived, I took him to the office and he politely asked if there was a better truck available. The sergeant looked the Major with a frown and shook his head "NO, it is the only truck I have; **take it or leave it.**". The Major looked at him and laughed. Then he said, "Sgt Marshall, you should **THANK** the Lord you are not **THIS** sergeant at the end of the month". The Motor Pool Sergeant was now curious and asked why. Well, the major explained he was going to be the most hated man in and all-round Saigon and Southern Vietnam.

This puzzled the sergeant even more when the Major turned to me and exclaimed, "because of him, no one is going to get their paycheck at the end of the month". He gasped, "including ME?". "YES", replied the Major. Then the Major swore him to secrecy explaining the computer system was badly broken and not able to create the pay checks. The plan was to pack up all the files, programs, paper, and blank green US Government check stock, drive to Bien Hoa, use their computer overnight and drive back on Monday with all the pay checks, lists printed and other Personnel plus Finance work caught up.

The Motor Pool sergeant now swore "us" to secrecy and took us out back to where a brand new, dark Blue, Dodge pickup truck sat. He explained it had just arrived, was destined for the personal use of the Wing Commander, and had not been reported as here yet. He could let us have it "if" we promised not to put one scratch on it; AWAY we drove. I learned a lesson from the Major that using persuasion versus intimidation is the best strategy.

When got back to the office, he assembled the four of us and said to go check out the "GUNS" from the Orderly Room. Hey, wait a minute, this is the Air Force, so what do we need guns for? Well for one, we were driving up country, through the countryside that was not protected from the Viet Cong (VC). Then we would be carrying US Government blank green check stock worth a fortune if stolen; yep 4000+ of them. Besides the VC, Vietnamese criminals, Black Market criminals, Koreans, Chinese, etc, and even some US types would love to get their hands on the check stock. It was easily worth many millions if forged and cashed in foreign banks. US Government green checks were automatically honored in any bank in the world, no questions asked, as I would come to learn later working in retirement for the Department of the Treasury. So, we went

over to the Orderly room and checked out M-16 rifles, 38 pistols, extra ammo, web belts, helmets, Flak jackets, etc. Once back at the shop we started talking and thinking.

If someone were to see a bright blue pickup truck driving up through the countryside with 4 crazy Air Force guys armed to the teeth, one might figure they were carrying something valuable. Hey, we are Air Force and smarter than your average troop. It is funny how youth and inexperience make you think crazy things. Therefore, we decided to hide all the helmets, flak jackets, etc, and just wear T-shirts, wear our Foster Grant sunglasses, etc, and look like we were heading out on a Sunday afternoon drive complete lathered up with sun tan lotion. Heck if the VC saw us, hopefully they would avoid us in favor of some more tempting target.

The bed of the truck was packed with all the punch card files, programs, paper and green check stock with Sgt Moore driving, Sgt StJean inside the cab as shotgun with A1C Mingus and me in the back bed. We did keep our M-16s very handy and 38 pistols very, very close. The reason for two guys in the bed of the pickup truck, one guy on one side and one on the other was to prevent someone on a passing motorcycle from flipping a grenade into the bed and speeding off. We did display our rifles but just a casual way. So, we left Sunday afternoon, had to go up through the city of Saigon and then NW. Just to go 35 miles, it was 3+++ hours and no incidences.

We rolled into Bien Hoa AB in the late afternoon and learned we could use their computer system after 2000 and work throughout the night. This meant we'd be done about 0800 Monday morning, get some chow and drive back with all processing done, checks printed and listed; Mission Accomplished.

The guys at the Bien Hoa Data Center rounded us up and said to **"make sure"** we were outside and inside the **BUNKER** by 0555 in the morning; SAY WHAT! We were puzzled and asked why. Well, it seems the VC would lob 2-3 Mortar Shells into the base every morning at exactly 0600. It was a statement to the base saying even though you know it is coming, we are all around you and **YOU CAN NOT** stop us. Holy SMOKES!!!

So, we got together and made a plan. After all we are smart Air Force guys. The logic of the plan says that if we were **"NOT"** here on Bien Hoa Air Base at 0600, then there was no way in heck of getting blown away. **"THEREFORE"**, if we busted our buns to get everything done by, say, 0530, packed the truck, we could be roaring out the front gate at 0555. What' a plan. Hey, we all patted ourselves on the back for such an outstanding plan.

So, we did just that and by 0530 we were starting to pack the truck. At about 0550 we saw guys coming out of their Hooches, towels over their shoulders heading to their assigned bunkers. I understand after the All Clear, at 0605 or so, they would continue over to take a shower, get dressed and head to eat chow.

The last thing we did was to leave a large note to the Computer Operators in the machine room; "Thanks for the help, SUCKERS". By 0555 we were roaring for the Main Gate. Approaching the Main Gate, we noticed all the guards focused looking outward scanning the surroundings ready for the attack. We blew through the gate and waved to the guards who were frantically waving to us to return. We gave them the finger and made it out and turned onto the main road and floored it.

Sure enough, exactly at 0600, we heard 2-3 explosions coming from back somewhere on the base. From that point on the drive was uneventful making it back in record time. Seems there was no to very little traffic (very odd but we did not care) until we reached about 2 miles from Saigon. We got back to the office at around 0815 and I went to report to the Major, "Mission Accomplished"!

Major Ames' face looked stunned when I came into his office. I reported our success and all he could say was, **"you can't be back this soon!!!"**. Sir, I said, we ARE, got everything done and the roads were empty. He gasped, "didn't you follow the PLAN?". We had this 2-page Disaster plan about what we were to do, arrive at Bien Hoa, call back to Saigon to report, etc. So, he says, "didn't you wait for the **CONVOY!**". I said, **"WHAT CONVOY?"**. He screams out, "the convoy which you fall behind that clears the MINES!". I screamed, **"MINES!!!"**. He grabbed the small book, looked at the procedures and gasped, "Oh God, someone forgot to update the book".

The story goes that by day the roads are ours and by night the roads belonged to the VC. They had a habit of

planting mines in the road before daylight. Today, these are called Improvised Explosive Devices or IED's. There was a convoy every day that started north of Bien Hoa and would pass the base by 0700 or so. The idea was that once it passed, your vehicle would fall at the end of the convoy and follow as the Mine Sweeper looked for mines, cleared them if found, leading all the way down to Saigon.

I went out and told the guys about what we just had done. We were all stunned. We dropped off all the weapons and combat gear at the Orderly Room, returned the pickup truck to the Motor Pool and instead of going and eating chow, we all headed over the NCO Club to get a drink; good stiff ones.

As we were lamenting about how lucky we were coming back, I recalled when we flew around a curve in the road looking over and saw a bunch of guys in Black outfits (uniform of the VC) with their AK-47s propped up against a tree. It looked like one was cooking and most were still sleeping or relaxing. I do recall one of them looking over and he had the most puzzled look on his face as this bright blue Dodge pickup truck with 4 crazy Air Force guys was long gone. I guess he believed no one was stupid enough to drive the road before the mine clearing convoy that was not expected for another 1-2 hours.

We did get all the processing done, paychecks printed and ready for distribution, Direct Deposit lists to Bank of America AND returned the Wing Commander's pickup truck without a scratch on it. I understand he was never told of our sprint up to Bien Hoa and the fact it might have been blown up. After that trip we vowed to see if we could just go down to the Aerial Port Squadron and get a hop to some other base. Hopefully it would be less eventful than our recent adventure. Actually, in my 25 months, we made one run up to Phang Rang flying on a C-123 with Vietnamese soldiers, families, chickens and pigs. The corkscrew landing and takeoff was something never to forget. From that point on I never thought of myself as one of those Smarter Air Force types.

NOTATIONS FROM APPLICATIONS

Primary duty was adjacent to Premier Cao Ky Compound next to the Communications Center.

Our trick was off 13 April, 1966 and stood guard duty around his compound and U. S. Air Field.

For fear we might shoot the wrong personnel, we were never issued ammo. We were in Air Force & Army fox-holes and trenches on the tarmac, as explosions and fires burned on the airfield.

As usual, we filled sand bags.

William A. Cooper
A Company, 69th Signal Battalion, 1st Signal Brigade
Telecom Specialist, Method and Result Clerk, Telecommunications Center
Nov 65 - Nov 66
(New Member - New Life Member!)

EDITOR'S NOTE: I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING NEW OR SPECIFIC ABOUT TET, JANUARY '68, FOR THIS ISSUE.

But in remembering past issues and comments, I would like to take this space to convey the Thanks that all who were there on that day want to give to those Security Police, and others, who gave a lot, and gave their all, for the defense of Tan Son Nhut Air Base.

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TO ALL MEMBERS:

We recently were contacted by Chris Nguyen who will be releasing his novel "The Rains On TanSonNhat" in both print and e-book Spring of 2020.

The novel is about the heartbreak love story between a USAF officer with the 7th Air Force TanSonNhat, Vietnam, and a mixed-blooded Vietnamese (German-Jew/French/Vietnamese) lady.

Chris has been kind enough to provide us with a preview of the first 4 chapters of his novel. If you are interested in the preview, please see the link below:

<http://www.tsna.org/view/TheRainsOnTanSonNhat.pdf>

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