



# REVETMENTS

The Official Journal of The Tan Son Nhut Association

A Memorial to the American Experience in Vietnam



JULY 2021

## NOTATIONS FROM APPLICATIONS

Sometime in the near future I will send more detail which I will request you consider for Revetments. I'll send pics also. Meanwhile, let me just say I lived in Bldg. 911 & 912. Worked elbow to elbow with TSNA Member Marvin Thurman for 8 months in 377th Consolidated Base Personnel Office (CBPO) in Data Automation.

Philip G. McClurg  
Jul 67— Jul 68  
377th CSG

### Trust in the Voice of God Andy Csordas, Associate Chaplain

I spent this week touring Civil War Battlefields in Tennessee and Mississippi. Included were battles at Franklin, Stones River, Shiloh and Corinth. The toll at these battles was tremendous. At Shiloh alone there were almost 24,000 casualties of the approximately 88,000 troops in the two day battle. The north was overrun by the confederates on the first day, but the opposite happened on the second day. As a result of this battle and the subsequent battle at Corinth there were no more major battles in what was considered the west in the remaining two and one half years of the Civil War.

It is interesting that both sides thought God was on their side and that begs the question, which side was God on? How do we know what God wants us to do? This question is not just for war, it also applies to us in everyday life decisions. Should we buy that car, should we take that job, who should we marry, should we move to a new city, etc., etc?

So how do we determine what to do? Do we only need to ask God concerning big decisions or should we consult Him in what we may consider small stuff? Personally I think we should be listening for that still small voice. God can move in a mighty voice, but He also talks to us in a still, small voice. See **1 Kings 19:11-12, And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.**

God has not spoken to me audibly, He certainly

can but has not. In the above passage God did not speak to Elijah in the wind, fire or earthquakes; he spoke to him in a still small voice. God speaks to us through the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, many times in promptings or that still small voice. To hear that still small voice we need to be quiet and listen. In today's life we typically do not do quiet very well. We also need to study His scriptures and pray, again in a quiet place so we can hear the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

So back to the troops of the Civil War, can we know who was actually individually listening to the Spirit of God? No, we cannot know what is in other men's heart. People on both sides were conflicted. Parts of a number of states in the country leaned both ways. One result is the state of West Virginia. Our country paid a great price during that time at these battles and others. Afterwards we then could move forward to freedom for all, but it still took a great deal of time, effort and treasure to move forward. Perhaps if the people and our leaders had listened to the voice of God for direction, we could have settled the problem without a war. We can never know. **Psalms 118:8** tells us **(it is) better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.**

Do you trust in the Lord for direction in your decision making? **Proverbs 3:5-6** says, **Trust in the Lord with all of your heart, and lean not to your own understanding.**

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Larry,

I saw this in my copy of Friends Journal, the USAF Museum publication. It's an ad for their Legacy Data Plate Wall of Honor. Right next to John Kricho is our own Joe Kricho. Also listed is Col. George "Bud" Day, Misty 1 and MOH holder from Tuy Hoa AB. I also have my own Legacy Data Plate.

Thanks,  
George A. Bontya TSNA



## JIM AUGER'S TRAVELOGUE—PART 2 (SPECIAL TO TSNA “REVETMENTS”)

Upon our arrival at Suvarnabhumi Airport in Bangkok, we were met by our first guide (Ms Oom Wanlaya) and driver, Nom, at about 11:30 PM Bangkok time on Sunday night (we had left Albuquerque at about 7 AM on Saturday!). There is a space reserved at the airport for travel guides to meet their customers; it was the typical deal with her holding up a sign that said “Odynovo” and our last name spelled out beneath that, so it was pretty easy to find one another. Nom, the driver, had a standard Toyota van, so we had plenty of seating room, and no problems with space for luggage, or the wheelchair. We were whisked off to our hotel in downtown with all due haste, wished a good night, and off they went. On the drive to the hotel, we agreed to meet in the hotel lobby following breakfast on Tuesday morning after taking all day Monday to rest and get our own bearings. Both she and the driver in Thailand were well versed in what they were doing. We were never disappointed in any of the guides/drivers, aside from an occasional minor language issue. But we got it all done quite nicely. We spent that first day – Monday, our “down day” – to explore a bit of downtown Bangkok on our own. It was only a short walk from the hotel to a pretty major roadway, and several shopping areas. Nearby was a Starbucks, and a Carl’s Jr burger place. Nearby was a Domino’s Pizza. Very westernized, these Southeast Asian countries. We are both fans of a good locally brewed beer, and it didn’t take long to find the nearest brewpub – called Brewski – atop the nearby Radisson Hotel. Their porter was actually quite decent. And the views from the rooftop bar were absolutely stunning, especially as the sun started to set on Monday evening and the city lights came on.

While in Thailand, we visited any number of glorious Temples and other attractions. The temples in Thailand are among the most stunning, with highly ornate tile, stone and precious stonework adorning them all. And gold; LOTS of gold! Some of the most interesting were the Temple at Wat Arun, where I received a blessing from a Buddhist monk, and the Kings Palace.



***Buddhist Monk Blessing at Wat Arun in Bangkok, Thailand***

Frankly, we visited so many temples they started to blend together after a while. Thankfully my iPhone photos are all “geotagged” not only with specific location data (latitude and longitude) but also with place names to help with remembering what was what (and where). Day two took us to Wat Pho, which houses one of, if not the largest reclining Buddha images in the world. At nearly 150 Ft long, and clad entirely in gold, it is a truly impressive sight. On our third day in Thailand we took a nearly 3 hour boat ride north to the ancient city of Ayutthaya. The boat ride included an amazing buffet lunch while en route; and this was one of the only times we were in the company of other travelers besides ourselves. Essentially this ancient city was a walled fortress at the juncture of three rivers about 20 miles north of Bangkok. It was the original capital city of Siam (the original name of Thailand) thus the King also has a residence there today, known as the Summer Palace. It is a beautiful place with amazing grounds, sculptures, floral displays and all sorts of interesting history, and today is a UNESCO World Heritage site. Ms. Wanlaya was up to the task of educating us in the Buddhist beliefs and culture, as well as all aspects of the area history. This same theme proved to be true of ALL the guides we had during this trip; All were well educated and fluent in all things that mattered so we could walk away richer for the experience. You may note the use of the words “Buddha image” above. That is because there was only one actual Buddha; everything else, be it a picture, a sculpture or a statue,

is merely an IMAGE of Buddha. It was all part of the learning process. One of the very nice touches driver Nom provided each day was plenty of cold BOTTLED water (yes, you are still discouraged from drinking tap water) and cool cloth towels freshened up with a eucalyptus-like fragrance to help us cool off in the very warm temps. While temps were quite warm in Thailand, I had specifically chosen this time of year for the trip so as to avoid most of the monsoon season in all the places we would visit. It worked out nicely too, since the only real wet day we had was one day in Hanoi.





**Largest Reclining Buddha Image at 150 Ft long; at Wat Pho, Bangkok**

Back to that electric wheelchair one more time. As in most of the places we visited, the sidewalks are unusable due to both crumbling infrastructure (unusable curb cuts, where they even exist), and being parked up by millions of motor scooters! So, getting around proved to be a bit of a challenge at times. Winnie had to brave traffic out in the streets in her chair with all the crazy drivers! She was scared S...less the first day in Bangkok when we came to this realization. But she managed to overcome her fears and managed to get around fine after that first day. And there are even more crazy drivers in all these places today than there were when we (all of us Vets) last visited these places 50 or so years ago.

All the people we had met in Thailand were amazing and seemed to hold us older Americans in great regard. Indeed, they seem to hold all elders in high regard, and we could not have been treated any better. One thing of particular note was that we didn't see any panhandlers, though there were plenty of people trying to talk you into going to this or that store for a shopping experience unlike any other! After 4 days in Bangkok and the surrounding area, it was time to move on to Cambodia. I was not sure what to expect in Cambodia, having nearly nothing in the way of exposure to the country, its peoples or culture. My only cultural point of reference was of the horrific reign of Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge. I was not disappointed in what we experienced. Our guide in Siem Reap, Mr. Sip Chamnan, and driver John, had a lot in store for us when we got there.

One of the many highlights of the Cambodia leg was our visit to Tonle Sap Lake, which is home to what is arguably one of the largest floating villages in the world. Tonle Sap Lake itself is the largest freshwater lake in all Southeast Asia at just over 1,000 Sq Miles! To put this in some perspective, Cambodia covers 69,898 Sq Mi, and so is virtually the same size as Oklahoma. Oklahoma's largest body of water (according to Google) is Lake Eufaula at 159 Sq Mi! While out on the lake, it is impossible to see any shore with the exception of the one you entered the lake from, and that too soon disappears! Nearly a million people call this floating village home, and they all make their living from the lake itself. It is a very rich fishing ground, home to over 200 species of fish. Fishing boats and crews are everywhere you look. The floating village has its own postal code, churches, restaurants, and all other services it takes to support day to day life. It is truly an amazing place and should be included on your own trip if you should visit the Siem Reap area.



**Floating restaurant on Tonle Sap Lake; Siem Reap, Cambodia**

In Siem Reap, I was adamant that we WOULD absolutely see the Buddhist Temple at Angkor Wat. As a young teenager, I had seen a photo of Angkor Wat on the cover of National Geographic; yeah, a long time ago! I recall at the time thinking that it looked like an amazing place. Well, it is all that and more! Breathtaking in size and scale, it almost defies description. We wandered around the Angkor complex for almost an entire day. Needless to say, Winnie was unable to get to some (many) of the places I saw due to her chair, and inability to climb stairs, of which there are many. And they are often quite steep. The steep stairs thing was a theme everywhere; and frankly it surprised me a lot, since the people, then and now, are still quite small in stature. Steep stairs would seem out of character for them. Sadly, no one had a good answer as to why the steep stairs were so commonplace.

Built in the 12<sup>th</sup> century by the Khmer empire, Angkor Wat is the largest religious structure in the world today at 402 acres. That's a lot of football fields! Angkor Wat was originally built to honor the Hindu deity Vishnu,





**Wall details at Angkor Wat; note the bas-relief carvings and the nearly seamless joints between the stone blocks.**

and eventually also became the funerary temple for King Suryavarman. The artistry in laying the stone blocks together (no mortar of any kind was used originally), and the resulting nearly seamless look to the entire structure is simply mind boggling. And the carvings in the face of the stone, along with the many bas-relief artworks found everywhere, leaves you with a sense of wonder at how this could all have been done so very long ago. How these ancient craftsmen managed to keep a 1,200 foot wall straight and true for its entire length challenges my engineer's mind. Angkor Wat proved to be all I could have ever hoped.



**Angkor Wat Panorama: Behind us is one long continuous wall, distorted somewhat by the pano shot.**

Among the many other ruins we visited in Siem Reap, the temple at Bayon stood out, as did the one at Ta Prohm. Both are close to Angkor Wat, and each as different as can be. Both Ta Prohm and Bayon (as well as a handful of others) are part of the much larger complex known as Angkor Thom. The overall Angkor Thom complex dwarfs all the others in terms of sheer size. Built by Jayavarman VII starting in about 1181 AD, it was built to be the new capital city of the region. At its zenith, the population at Angkor Thom was almost 1 million! The fact that there were so many of these temples built in such proximity to one another leaves me to wonder how many people overall must have lived in this area during this time. Bayon is a fairly large structure, though small in comparison to Angkor Wat. (Actually, all of the other individual temples are small compared to Angkor Wat.) Bayon is distinguished by having (originally) 49 stone towers, each bearing a likeness of the four faces of Buddha, one face on each cardinal side. The meaning of the four faces are supposed to represent: 1) Career and life; 2) Relationship and family; 3) Wealth; and 4) Wisdom and health. The exact meanings seem to vary depending on which references are used, but all point to similar beliefs. Bayon was intriguing because no other temple is quite like it in style or apparent purpose.



**Bayon Temple at Angkor Thom; each of the 49 towers have Buddha (Image) faces on each cardinal side.**

Also close by, Ta Prohm is perhaps one of the more recognizable temples in all Cambodia. That is because it was used as the backdrop for the first Lara Croft "Tomb Raider" movie (ca 2001); the one which seems to be engulfed by huge tree roots, or perhaps seeming to be growing out of the jungle itself. Ta Prohm – also built in the 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> centuries – is in a state of significant decay, with huge piles of crumbled stone from the many buildings that have simply collapsed over the ages.

At the end of another day of visiting the lake and all the temples, it was time to head back to the hotel and think about rustling up some dinner. I already knew where the local Siem Reap Brewpub was located; all we had to do was get there. We went to the hotel concierge and had him summon us a Tuk-Tuk. Winnie had never ridden in one, so we just had to take the plunge and take a ride in one. When the driver dropped us at the pub, I asked him how I might

summon him back to return us to the hotel. He asked how long we expected to be, and when I told him about





**Winnie and I in front of the entrance to Ta Prohm (the “Tomb Raider” temple) at Angkor Thom; Siem Reap, Cambodia**

an hour (give or take), he said he would be waiting “over there”, gesturing to a small curbside parking area nearby. Good to his word, we found him right where he said he would be, taking a nap in the seat of his Tuk-Tuk. Aside from paying for the ride, I gave him a generous tip for taking such good care of us. I am quite certain I have the only “Siem Reap Brewpub” black polo shirt in all of Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Next time, we will take the flight from Siem Reap to Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon for us, of course) and continue the journey. This flight was the first – and thankfully only – time we ran into problems with Winnie’s electric wheelchair.

**Jim Augeri**  
**Albuquerque, New Mexico**  
**TSNA Life Member**



**(Thanks to James D. Marshall for this photo of the Bob Hope Show at Long Binh)**

**2021 “Mini-Reunion”**  
**Dayton, OH**

**Are you ready to say “Phooey with the Pandemic, I’m going to Dayton”?**

I hope so, because the Tan Son Nhut Association will host their first regional mini-reunion in Dayton Ohio on September 26-28, 2021. The membership voiced their opinion, and the Board listened to the fact that we are getting older and it is harder for us to travel, especially across country. So we are investigating the idea of smaller, regional mini reunions.

This will be our first regional reunion and we hope to have one in the Southwest in the spring of 2022. We are planning on some surprise locations that some of you may (or may not) enjoy, like actually having a reunion on a military base, an aircraft hanger converted to a resort hotel or a beach resort that offers us great discounted rates.

**But for this year, we are going to meet at the Holiday Inn, Dayton/Fairborn, 2800 Presidential Drive, Fairborn Oh 45324. Room rates will be \$117.00 and an all American Breakfast Buffet is included in that price. They are sold out September 25, so we cannot check in until Sept 26, but we can stay 3 days past the reunion for the discounted rate.**

**(MORE ON NEXT PAGE)**

**Additional information is being developed and as it is developed it will be posted on the website:**  
<https://www.tsna.org/mainpage.html>.

After a busy day reuniting with old friends or meeting new friends, we can retreat to a spacious guest room that offers many comforting touches. The guest rooms include a king size bed, (doubles are available upon request) workstation with a stationary and a moveable work desk, a task lamp and ergonomic chair, and complimentary high-speed wireless connection. All of our guest rooms offer individual climate control, a coffee maker, AM/FM alarm clock, a LG Flat Panel television with cable & pay-per-view movies, electronic key card security locks, hairdryer and iron with full-sized ironing board. We may also choose to experience the convenience of the hotels Express Check-In, Express Check-Out, room service, and a breakfast in our newly renovated “The Wright Place” Restaurant beginning at 6:00 a.m. each week day morning and 7:00 on the weekend.

The Executive Fitness Center, featuring state-of-the-art equipment, is the perfect place to kick-start the day or wind down for a restful sleep. The heated indoor pool is open 6:00 am until 11:00 pm.

For dining, The Wright Place Restaurant and Lounge serves delicious breakfast and dinner. Guests may decide to relax and catch up on the day’s news and sports or utilize room service for a quiet evening in their room. For those choosing to step off property, there are several restaurants and shopping a short distance from the hotel.

A banquet is planned for Monday evening with an amazing guest speaker. We are encouraging all who can attend to attend and we look forward to seeing you in Dayton.

### **Welcome to Holiday Inn Dayton/Fairborn I-675**

Welcome to our full-service Holiday Inn Dayton/Fairborn I-675 hotel. Located conveniently near area attractions and “must do’s” for any visitor. Wright Patterson Air force Base is less than eight minutes from our front door. The National Museum of the United States Air Force allows us to be the number one hotel choice for military reunions.





# WELCOME TAN SON NHUT



Holiday Inn Dayton/Fairborn  
2800 Presidential Drive Fairborn, OH 45324 | (937) 426-7800



## FEATURES OF THE HOLIDAY INN:

- 203 guest rooms equipped with mini fridges, Kuerig's & microwaves
- 24-hour business center
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- Full service restaurant & bar on site  
The Wright Place Hours:
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7am-10am Sat-Sun
  - Dinner/Bar: 5pm-9pm M-Sun
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- FREE parking
- Conveniently located near WPAFB, AF Museum, Nutter Center & Malls
- Outside patio with quick access to the walking bridge and fountain



## SECURE YOUR ROOM FOR THE UPCOMING REUNION!

Sunday, September 26, 2021 -  
Tuesday, September 28, 2021  
\*Stay after the reunion for up to 3 days at the discounted rate.

\$117 per night plus applicable taxes

The discounted room rate includes breakfast for up to 4 people per room

Reserve your room by calling (937) 426-7800 and ask for the Tan Son Nhut discounted rate or visit [shorturl.at/zJM69](http://shorturl.at/zJM69)

**TAN SON NHUT ASSOCIATION 2021 MINI-REGIONAL**  
**REUNION REGISTRATION**

**Dayton, OH**  
**Sep 26 - 28, 2021**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ GUEST NAME \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

TEL ( \_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

SPECIAL NEEDS (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

**Choose one of the following:**

**1: FULL Reunion Registration**

Number attending \_\_\_\_\_ x **\$85.00** = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Remittance: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**2: PARTIAL Reunion Registration**

Access to Hospitality Room (includes snacks & beverages):

Number of days: \_\_\_\_\_ x **\$12.50** = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ x No. of people: \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Banquet Only Monday, September 27, 2021

Number attending \_\_\_\_\_ x **\$41.50** = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Remittance: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail this form with payment (check only) to:**

**TAN SON NHUT ASSOCIATION**  
**P.O. BOX 236**  
**PENRYN, PA 17564-0236**

**REGISTRATION FORM WITH PAYMENT MUST BE RECEIVED**

**NLT September 8, 2021**

Questions regarding Mini-Reunion Registration should be directed to:

Paul Mortensen  
Director of Reunion Planning  
[paul@themortensens.com](mailto:paul@themortensens.com).



## MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT SAMMY L. DAVIS

By: Randall Brown  
TSNA President



This is MOH Sammy L Davis uniform, books, pics etc., at the **Indiana Military Museum** in Vincennes, Indiana. Saturday June 19th was honor the Vietnam Veterans Day.

Sammy was unable to attend because of terrible storms, flooding. The helicopter due to fly him in was grounded.

I presented him a membership to TSNA, a TSNA Hat also. Did this by Video and special delivery mail.

We will hook up at later date for pics.



## “RED” SKELTON



Red Skelton was from Vincennes and this is his military uniform, pics etc.

Also his wife's pics, helmet.

She died in 1948.

His personal museum is on the Campus downtown of Vincennes University



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**Penryn PA 17564**

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



**“Part” of the crowd at Bob Hope Show at Long Binh**  
**(Our Thanks again to Jim Marshall)**

**NEW MEMBER**

Philip G. McClurg Tucson AZ pmclclurg2@cox.net Jul 67 - Jul 68 377th CSG(CBPO) Personnel Specialist - Airmen Records

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