



Shotgun Blasts

The 221st Aviation Company – Then and Now



Volume 3, Issue 8

August 2011

Delta Birddog Reunion 2011

It is just around the corner. If you are reading this on August 1, 2011 there are only 73 days, 10 hours until the reunion kicks off on 13 October 2011. More importantly, there are only 37 days, 18 hours until the Doubletree Hotel San Antonio Downtown stops accepting reservations at our rate of \$119.00 per night with free parking and breakfast included. Don't wait, make your reservations and get your registration to Tim Brinkerhoff so that we don't have any last minute problems.

I know that everyone is curious about who may be there to exchange war stories with so here is a list of those we know about. If your name is missing from the list it is because either we, or you, missed the registration.

Damon & Ann Agee, Shotgun 5
 Woody Barnes, Swamp Fox 35
 Brian Bowling, Swamp Fox 27
 Tim & Joanne Brinkerhoff, Shotgun
 Boyce & Darlene Cates, Shotgun 33
 Monte Caylor, Shotgun
 Charlie & Katherine Chase, Shotgun 24
 Robert Clayton & Kitty Munroe, Shotgun 36
 Hank & Irene Collins, Shotgun 46
 Hal Crites, Shotgun 34
 Bill & Pam Dannelly, Swamp Fox 18
 Virgil & Kathleen Dreffs, Shotgun
 Russell & Myrt Duffin, Shotgun 5
 Sam & Lynne Givhan, Swamp Fox 31
 Arthur & Bow Chu Goto, Shotgun 16

Patrick Grady, Shotgun
 Dellino & Donna Hartman, Shotgun
 Brian & Fay Kinderman, Swamp Fox 22
 Milton & Bobbi Kramlick, Shotgun
 Robert & Wannee Lewis, Shotgun
 Don & Kathy Loftis, Shotgun 35
 Amador & Martha Norma Marcha, Shotgun
 Jimmy & Fran McGraw, Shotgun 6
 Bob & Joan McKenzie, Shotgun 36
 Don & John Modica, Shotgun 6
 Ned & Barbara Moore, Shotgun 15
 Eric & Rosemary Nakasone, Shotgun
 Dan & Martha Oates, Swamp Fox 20
 Leigh Ogden, Shotgun 5
 Herb & Susie Phillips, Shotgun

Continued on page 4

Inside This Issue

- | | |
|----|--------------------------------|
| 1 | Delta Birddog Reunion 2011 |
| 2 | Ramblings by Jim Browning |
| 4 | Reunion Overview |
| 5 | Why Reunions? |
| 6 | This Month in Military History |
| 7 | Chaplain's Corner |
| 9 | It Wasn't All About Flying |
| 11 | From the Archives |
| 12 | Final Flight |

This newsletter is dedicated to the men of the 221st RAC who served from 23 March 1965 thru 10 October 1971, to the ladies that stood behind them and to that magnificent flying machine, the Cessna Birddog.

Brothers in Arms – Always

Ramblings

the 221st Attacks Can Tho Airfield...

By Jim Browning, Shotgun 26, '67 - '68

It's a little known fact that pilots from 221st attacked Can Tho airfield on two occasions. Probably because no one wanted to own up to doing it.

Instance one:

This happened sometime around September 1967. Maj. Rau and Capt Larsen somehow obtained two of the wing mounted M60 machinegun kits from somewhere, probably the 199th. The gun kits were installed on two of the 2d platoon's aircraft and of course everyone wanted a chance to try them out.

There was one small problem in that no one was really trained in how to maintain an M60. The crew chiefs took them apart, cleaned them and put them back together as best they knew how. One small problem. The sear in an M60 can go in two ways but only one way is the correct way. If it is put in wrong the gun is subject to run-away and will not be able to shut off until it runs out of ammunition. Well you guessed it; one of the guns got put together wrong.

Next one of the hapless pilots from the 2nd platoon goes out on a Sunday morning for a routine flight and takes one of the planes with the new M60 kit on it. I don't remember who it was - - perhaps the guilty one will speak up. In any case, he taxis out to the south end of the field and begins his take off roll to the north. Now it just so happens that the Special Forces compound was located on the right side of the north end of the runway.

The aircraft makes a few pumps on the 40 year-old PSP runway and just as it breaks ground, the M60 begins to fire and will not shut off. The hapless pilot has no choice but to continue his take off with gun spewing

tracers down the runway seemingly directly at the Special Forces compound. The SF guys immediately sound the alarms and start the sirens for full alert. The pilot is now in a quandary of what to do. He can't turn left or he will hose down the city of CanTho, can't turn right or he does the same to the SF compound. So the astute Shotgun pilot continues his take off until intersecting the Mekong River, which was right off the end of the runway, turns up river still spraying .30 caliber rounds out the front and trying not to shoot any sampans on the river. He continues up river until the gun runs out of ammo - - which I think was 200 rounds. To the best of my knowledge that was the only time one of the guns fired a whole box of ammunition without a malfunction.

Instance number two:

This happened sometime after Tet; not really sure exactly when. Someone in IV Corps Headquarters decided that they needed an aircraft to fly mortar patrol over the city of Can Tho from dark until daylight. Of course the 221st was designated to perform this nightly task and it was further delegated to the 2nd platoon. Now this was a heavy burden for the platoon. We had to fly our normal daily tasking plus put at least one aircraft in the sky all night long. So at least two sometimes three pilots had to put in three or four hours of night time every night.

Now flying circles around a city at night for three or four hours at a time can get really boring. Each pilot would resort to some sort of entertainment to stay awake and make the time go faster. Some of the things I did, 1) See how high an O-1 would really go. (I got 18,000 ft before it ran out of power.) 2) See how many night landings I could make in one night. (The crew chief really liked that one - - I think it was over 60.) And 3) one of my favorite ones

Continued on page 3

Continued from page 2

was to fly out over one of the small ARVN outpost and get their attention. They would then fire tracers out in some direction, hopefully where no friendlies were located and I would then fire a rocket over the outpost in the direction of their tracers. The idea being sort of harassing fire for any VC that might be moving around out there in the dark.

So, on this particular night I was on the second shift probably midnight until daylight. I had fired all my rockets playing the harassing fire game and still had an hour or so to go so I decided to land and reload with rockets. Out of sympathy for the hard working crew chiefs, we did not require them to stay up all night and wait on the airborne aircraft. So, I had to land and fetch my own rockets from the bunker and reload them into the tubes. I land and taxi up in front of our little maintenance area and leave the AC stopped on the taxi way. There sure isn't anyone else around at 0200.

Now the tower at Can Tho was directly in line with the north end of the taxi way. Then I make a classic mistake that any crew chief would have caught if it had been a normal daylight rearm. I leave all the rocket switches in the armed position. I load up the rockets, get back in the AC, fire it up, and begin my taxi to the north. I am tired - - it's 0200. I pull the switch on the stick to call the tower and KAPLOWWWW! All four rockets fire out of the tubes at once. I am sitting there watching four rockets spewing fire headed directly for the tower. Time stops. I am thinking Holy Crap, the tower guys are gonna die, I'm going to jail forever, the rockets are gonna land in downtown Can Tho. I continue watching as the rockets do their zig zag flight toward the tower and then, I swear, two passed on each side of the tower not missing it by more than a foot or two. I don't know where the rockets

landed, hopefully in the Mekong River. I am anticipating the tower guys to immediately start calling me every curse word known to man. But, nothing, total silence. I don't know if they were asleep and never saw it or what. They had to have heard them. Or they were just in total disbelief. I took the opportunity to just taxi out and leave.

I spent the next several hours pondering my fate expecting a radio call to immediately return and land. But, nothing. I complete the flight, call for landing - - still nothing. I am sure that as a minimum the Battalion Commander and armed MP's are gonna be waiting, but nothing. No one ever said a word.

lim



One "F"O-1D with machine gun armed and

Are you bored, got some free time, want to do something interesting? If you answer yes to any of these questions we have just the thing for you to do.

Sit at your computer and enter the following:
www.jigidi.com/solve.php?id=14AUA7FG

At this location you will find a very relaxing and applicable puzzle for any and all Birddog enthusiasts. Have fun, should not take more than four or five minutes.

Continued from page 1

Thomas & Judith Plott, Shotgun 45
Bill & Ann Poor, Shotgun 6
Bob Preble, Shotgun
Gary & Georgia Simon, Swamp Fox 16
Don & Renate Smith, Shotgun 8A
Al & Sandie Spain, Shotgun 8A

John & Darla Stefero, Shotgun 37
Joe and Betty Swift, Swamp Fox 12
Roy & Josefina Talley, Shotgun
Michael Tatom, Swamp Fox
Billy & Andrea Wallum, Shotgun

There are more but you will have to wait 'til next month to learn who they are.

A Reunion Overview

Thursday, October 13

Everything will kick off at 1000 beginning with registration on the ground floor, and the opening of the first day of the Hospitality Suite. If you have attended in the past you will note that the registration is not being accomplished in our Hospitality Suite this year.

At 1800 we will jump start Reunion 2011 with a Welcome Reception on the ground floor of the hotel. This reception will be with heavy Hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar for which you will be provided tickets. The reception will continue until 2100 at which time the Hospitality Suite will re-open.

Friday, October 14

This is your day to do things your way, Golf, Alamo Visit, Museums, Shopping and just relaxing on the Riverwalk. Some activities may begin as early as 0700. The Hospitality Suite will be open beginning at 1000 and today lunch is on your own.

At 1830 we will depart by car pool for the lovely home of Russell and Myrt Duffin where we will have a Pizza party with beer and sodas. We will plan our return to the hotel and the Hospitality Suite between 2100 and 2130.

Saturday, October 15

We will assemble in the hotel lobby to car pool to Cannon Field, home of the Alamo Liaison Squadron where we will be joined by some of our friends from the IBDA. We will have some L-19 rides, fellowship and a few other activities.

Mid-day will find us enjoying a Texas style Bar-B-Q lunch while the activities continue. We will depart Cannon Field for the hotel at 1500 where we will have some short unit meetings.

The Formal Banquet Dinner/Dance will start with a Social Hour at 1800 with seating for the banquet at 1900. We will continue with our dining and activities until 2400.

Sunday, October 16

Our traditional Memorial Service will start at 0930 and continue until 1100 at which time folks that are departing San Antonio should begin their check out. We do request that anyone traveling on Sunday make every effort to arrange travel so that they may attend the Memorial Service.

This is just a general overview of planned activities for this year's Gathering of Eagles.

Why Reunions?

By Don Smith, Shotgun 8A, '65 - '66

Perhaps it is that low rumbling of voices as fifty different conversations are taking place, all at the same time and in the same room. Perhaps it is the proximity of a guy that shared a room with you in that "hooch" so long ago. Perhaps it is being surrounded by a group of men that all shared a common purpose, the defeat of communism in their youth. We can all think of many reasons for a reunion and each of them is justification for that annual or bi-annual get-together that draws us away from our traditional family to once again join with the military family of our youth.

Prior to our 2009 reunion our Comrade-in-Arms, Hank Collins quite eloquently described why we have reunions and I can only echo his comments as I try to answer that question, in Hank's words, "Nothing compares to the look of raw excitement and true joy on the faces of Comrades-in-Arms seeing each other again after forty years." For many of us it will be not forty years, merely two since we saw one another, but the joy is just as strong. There will be friends at the upcoming reunion that have not yet attended a reunion with us and that will renew the joy of seeing our long lost comrades and recapturing a few minutes of our youth.

I would like to share a quote with you from "These Good Men" by Michael Norman to help me express our need to pursue our reunions with fervor that those who have not served during a war are capable of understanding.

I now know why men who have been to war yearn to reunite. Not to tell stories or look at old pictures. Not to laugh or weep. Comrades gather because they long to be with the men who once acted their best, men who suffered and sacrificed, who were stripped raw, right down to their humanity.

I did not pick these men. They were delivered by fate and the But I know them in a way I know no other men. I have never given anyone such trust. They were willing to guard something more precious than my life. They would have carried my reputation, the memory of me. It was part of the bargain we all made, the reason we were so willing to die for one another.

I cannot say where we are headed. Ours are not perfect friendships; those are the province of legend and myth. A few of my comrades drift far from me now, sending back only occasional word. I know that one day even these could fall to silence. Some of the men will stay close, a couple, perhaps, always at hand.

As long as I have memory, I will think of them all, every day. I am sure that when I leave this world, my last thought will be of my family and my comrades...such good men.

As Hank mentioned in his missive two years ago, we hold membership in a very exclusive club. When we are together we feel free to talk openly about events that others cannot understand and in many cases do not want to understand. We, however, are not afraid to laugh, speak honestly and even shed a tear with our comrades.

There were those who preceded us and those who have followed. In the Spirit in which we greet each other, let us also seek to include those Brothers and Sisters in Arms, for though they did not serve with us directly, they served for us, in their places and times, and are inextricably linked to us, in Reunion.

Continued on page 6

Continued from page 5

We are rapidly becoming the "Old Soldiers" of this great country and we must share our experiences and thoughts with each other and more importantly, we have a duty to share with those young patriots that follow in our footsteps. Keep our memory alive by joining in Reunion 2011 and then, pass something on to all those young followers, Esprit de Corps.

This Month in Military

History

- AUGUST 1** **AERONAUTICAL DIVISION OF THE US ARMY SIGNAL CORPS IS ESTABLISHED IN 1907**
- PRESIDENT EISENHOWER SIGNS INTO LAW THE BILL PERMITTING THE ARMED FORCES TO INCLUDE FLIGHT INSTRUCTION IN ROTC PROGRAMS IN 1956**
- AUGUST 2** **NATIONAL AIR MUSEUM ESTABLISHED AS PART OF THE SMITHSONIAN IN 1946**
- AUGUST 4** **ARMY HELICOPTERS CONDUCT THE FIRST MEDICAL EVACUATIONS OF THE KOREAN WAR IN 1950**
- AUGUST 6** **ENOLA GAY DROPS THE FIRST OPERATIONAL ATOMIC BOMB ON THE CITY OF HIROSHIMA IN 1945**
- AUGUST 9** **SECOND ATOMIC BOMB DROPPED ON THE CITY OF NAGASAKI IN 1945.**
- AUGUST 14** **JAPAN SURRENDERS AS WORLD WAR II ENDS IN 1945.**

Dates to Remember

- AUGUST 3** **NATIONAL WATERMELON DAY**
- AUGUST 4** **US COAST GUARD DAY, ESTABLISHED 1790.**
- AUGUST 16** **ELVIS PRESLEY DIED IN 1977**
- AUGUST 18** **THE 19TH AMENDMENT TO THE US CONSTITUTION GRANTING WOMEN THE RIGHT TO VOTE WAS RATIFIED IN 1920.**
- AUGUST 19** **NATIONAL AVIATION DAY IS CELEBRATED IN HONOR OF THE BIRTHDAY OF THE AVIATOR, ORVILLE WRIGHT.**
- AUGUST 21** **NATIONAL SENIOR CITIZEN'S DAY**
- AUGUST 24** **VESUVIUS DAY, ONE OF THE LARGEST VOLCANIC EXPLOSIONS IN RECORDED HISTORY OCCURRED IN 79 AD.**

AND

FOR ALL YOU DUFFERS, AUGUST IS

NATIONAL GOLF MONTH

Jimmy and Fran that last entry is for you...

Chaplain's Corner

So many things can happen in the lives of those who fly airplanes – and many of them have common elements.

By Ned Moore, Shotgun Chaplain

Frank Allen's account of dodging Thunder-Bumpers and finding a haven at Tra Vinh brought to mind an episode – one which only God can explain to me.

² My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth. ³ He will not let your foot slip - He who watches over you will not slumber; ⁴ indeed, He who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. (Psalm 121: 2-4, NIV)

I offer this scripture quote a bit tongue-in-cheek because the event began between Midnight and 01:00, beneath clear skies and a full moon. Paddy Control had no indications of weather enroute.

I had been in Vinh Long for some reason(s) which now have escaped me, as has the actual date. I was headed back home to Tra Vinh, taking off somewhere just after midnight or so. There were some cloud-to-cloud lightning displays in evidence, but they were way West – seemingly well further than Can Tho.

About half way to Tra Vinh, Paddy Control comes on the horn to inform me that weather amounting to nearly a full squall line has formed between Tra Vinh and my current position, which I was able to confirm as being an accurate reading of his radar, because I could now see the lightning off in front of me. I told Paddy Control, "No problem, I'll just return to Vinh Long and wait till things are clear again.

After I had made my 180 – I called Paddy because I could see lightning on my new heading, and Paddy's response was that a line was newly formed and lying between Vinh Long and me.

OK, Fine! I was pretty certain I was not going to be able to find My Tho or any other place

suitable. I called Paddy Control back as I was making another 180, this time back toward Tra Vinh, and said I thought I might try to get down over the Co Chien River, low enough to stay clear of the clouds (remembering the time I was working with a USAF Husky from Binh Thuy AFB looking for a reported downed Huey, that wasn't down, and got pulled up inside – but that story is for another time) and trying (lights-off) to sneak thru the rain.

After about 5 minutes or so Paddy called back and said he thought he saw a thinning area over the river. As I drew closer to the area he described, not only was it a "thinning area" but an archway spanning the river and rising well above 1000 ft AGL had opened up and thru which I could see stars and the lights of Tra Vinh not too far distant. I proceeded thru my "Divine Doorway" with all appropriate haste. I call it that because as I cleared the distal border, I looked back to get a better look-see, only to watch it close in behind me.

Paddy called and said he did not see it any more To which I replied that it was solid storm behind me.

We both were silent for a few minutes, after which he asked if I had Tra Vinh in sight, to which I replied, "Tally Ho and many thanks." Since I had already called Adv Team 57 radio after I had departed Vinh Long to ask for my Crew Chief to meet me, to give him time to get to the airfield, I called him to say I was nearly there and to put the jeep lights on the runway. Actually, I could see it just fine in the moonlight.

Folks in the MACV house said I was really lucky. At that time in my life I did not know scripture like I do now, but I did have sense enough to reply that I knew Someone Else was running the show – not luck. One Major (I think) said, "Well, it was still a lucky coincidence."

I just smiled. And remembered one of my Dad's sayings – Coincidence is when God

Continued on page 8

Continued from page 7

chooses to remain anonymous. Not for me - not this time

¹⁹ He fulfills the desires of those who fear him; He hears their cry and saves them. ²⁰ The LORD watches over all who love him, but all the wicked He will destroy. ²¹ My mouth will speak in praise of the LORD. Let every creature praise His Holy Name for ever and ever. (Psalm 145:19-21, NIV)

Ned

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Looks like Colin Kimball might have come up with just the item. His Legacy Portraits lay out your career as you would like to be remembered and you can pass it on along with your "war" stories and personal history.

Colin will be with us in San Antonio at the start of the reunion but you don't have to wait to talk to him.

Folks, our good friend George (Corky) Cook has once again put together a deal for us on the purchase of Unit Wear and Collectable items for the upcoming get together in San Antonio. Now is the time to get your orders in to him. Check out the site for his items.

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It Wasn't All About Flying

...and I believed it when they said, "a US Army Warrant Officer has 'All the rights and privileges of a Commissioned Officer with none of the responsibilities'".

By Chuck Chase, Shotgun 21, '70 - '71

In July, 1971, I was assigned to be the sector pilot for the special sector of Phu Quoc Island, 60 miles off of the west coast of Viet Nam in the Gulf of Siam. I was a WO1 in the ninth month of my tour. In addition to the visual reconnaissance, courier, liaison, artillery adjustment and FAC missions, I would also become the airfield commander of Duong Dong AAF, (pronounced YONG DONG). I lived with the MACV team in the team house on the airfield. Two personnel would report to me, Specialist Klingman, my crew chief, and SGT Yancy. SGT Yancy was an NCO from the 7/1st Cav Squadron out of Vinh Long. He was the POL/NCO. His mission on the team was to maintain the POL and ammo depot for refueling and rearming helicopters that were flying in support of ARVN troops operating in Cambodia, (I think it's OK to say that now).

It was just about two weeks before the Vietnamese lower house elections - - the last free elections South Viet Nam would have. We had been warned about increased VC terrorist activities leading up to the election. On the night of July 17th, 1971, I was standing outside the team house talking with CPT Feeley, the Deputy District Senior Advisor. It was late, around 2100. We were getting ready to retire for the evening. Our conversation was interrupted by small arms fire coming from the city of Duong Dong. We looked at each other and simultaneously said, "AK47s". Not good!

We went into the team house and advised MAJ Turk, the District Senior Advisor, of the small arms fire. About five minutes later, the phone rang. A large family gathering had been attacked by VC terrorists. They were requesting our medic to assist with the casualties. In the past, the team area had served as an aide station for ARVN troop operations on the island. The Navy had

assigned a corpsman to the team to set up and operate the aide station. Since the troop operations had been cut back, the Navy had pulled their corpsman from the team. Specialist Klingman, my crew chief, (who had assisted the corpsman during aide station operations), volunteered to go with MAJ Turk and help the casualties.

About thirty minutes later, MAJ Turk came walking through the door. His head hanging down, he said, "This is bad, real bad. We need an Air-evac". He contacted the Navy TOC at An Thoi. Fifteen minutes later the Navy TOC called back. They had scrambled an Air force C-130 from Cam Rhan Bay, its ETA was 0230 - 0300.

We needed to prepare the runway lighting. Like most Army Airfields in Viet Nam the runway lighting was provided by burying artillery shell casings around the runway, filling the casings with jet fuel and igniting the fuel. I directed SGT Yancy to go fill the pots with jet fuel. Yancy protested, he wanted to use aviation gasoline and oil, (made a brighter fire). I told him we had been all over this. Avgas evaporates/burns too fast. Kerosene is much better. He was to fill the pots with jet fuel.

Around 0230 the radio came alive, "Duong Dong, Duong Dong this is Careflight 22". I picked up the mic and said, "Careflight 22 calling Duong Dong, this is Shotgun 24. How do you read?"

"Careflight 22, we read you loud and clear, Shotgun".

"Careflight 22, what is your location?"

"Careflight 22 is still feet wet about 30 miles east".

"Careflight 22, I suggest you plan on runway 8. The threshold is less than ½ mile from the coast with no obstacles. Wind is calm; there is no weather, visibility unlimited. "

Careflight 22, will do.

Continued on page 10

Continued from page 9

I looked at SGT Yancy. "OK. We're up.

Let's get those pots lit up". I picked up the torch we had fabricated, dunked it in jet fuel and lit it. SGT Yancy drove as we headed toward the threshold of runway 8. As I lit the first pot, I noticed it was only half full of fuel. I looked at Yancy and asked, "What did you fill the pots with?"

"Avgas and oil, sir."

I was furious. I glared at SGT Yancy slowly shaking my head...deep breath, 5-4-3-2-1. I gave SGT Yancy the torch. "You had better get these pots lit. If we can't get that plane on the ground, six people will die. Do you understand, SGT?" I got out of the jeep and paced off fifty feet from the threshold and turned on my survival strobe light, placing it on the ground on the extended centerline. SGT Yancy came back, picked me up and we moved to the side of the runway, waiting for the C-130. About half of the pots were lighted. It would have to do.

The C-130 came in too high on the first approach and missed. The second approach was low, but they nailed it. As it rolled out, SGT Yancy and I took off and chased it all the way to the departure end of RW 8. We pulled over to the side of the plane with the headlights pointed at the tail. The trucks with the patients backed up to the rear of the aircraft. After ten minutes, the loading ramp lowered. Brilliant white light spilled out of the C-130. I hopped out of the jeep to help load the patients.

Behind the C-130 was mayhem. Wind and heat from the turbine exhaust, noise so loud you couldn't hear yourself think. As I approached the first stretcher, I looked at the patient. It was a small child about the same age as my own son, about 1½ years old it had a gunshot wound to the head. I just froze. What kind of people could do this? Someone else grabbed the stretcher. MAJ Turk was yelling in my ear. I couldn't hear him. I just turned away and went back to the jeep. I slumped into the passenger seat. MAJ Turk

followed me, "Charlie, ask the pilot if the father of the child can ride along on the flight."

I picked up the mic and said, "Careflight 22, Shotgun 24."

"Shotgun 24, Careflight 22."

"Careflight 22, one of the patients is a very small child; can his father accompany him on the flight?"

"Careflight 22, sorry Shotgun, you'll have to ask the OR folks. I'm just the driver."

The father was denied and removed from the Surgical Unit. He tried several times to force his way onboard. He had to be restrained. The loading ramp closed. The C-130 sat there for another thirty minutes.

"Shotgun 24, Careflight 22, we are about to get out of here."

"Careflight 22, have a great flight. Thank you for all you do, gentlemen".

"Careflight 22, no problem".

There were eleven casualties. No fatalities. Six were classified as critical and were evacuated to Saigon. All of the patients survived. The boy was misplaced for a few days in Saigon, but was found, and eventually returned to Phu Quoc. The real hero that night was my crew chief, SPC Bill Klingman. SPC Klingman was an aircraft mechanic with no formal medical training. He was able to stabilize six critically injured casualties and keep them alive until we could get them medical care.

It took two beers to get me to sleep. I slept until noon the next day. Just another day in the life of an airfield commander.

Chuck



From the Archives of



July 13, 1971

If You Think Your Local Smog Is Bad...

Phu Quoc Island, Vietnam (UPI) – This little island in the Gulf of Thailand, an outpost of the Indochina war, stinks mightily of fish – and the natives are glad it does.

The world's finest nuoc mam is made here. Nuoc mam is the hot, salty, generously alcoholic sauce with which the Vietnamese season most of their food – and it is made of fermented fish.

The nuoc mam factories are located at An Thoi, on the southern tip of the island and at Duong Dong, halfway up the island's west coast.

There is a dispute between the 4,000 residents of An Thoi and the 11,000 who live in Duong Dong as to which village makes the better nuoc mam. So far as stench goes, there is little difference between the two.

Each community has a formidable aroma, a veritable Great Wall of China among smells which hangs in the air forming a barrier that screens out the sensitive and warns off the timid.

Virtually all the world's nuoc mam supply is consumed in Vietnam. A small amount is exported to France, a final reminder of the colonial Indochina Empire which vanished in 1954.

Superiority of Phu Quoc's nuoc mam is credited by its boosters to the anchovy-size ca com, a tiny white member of the herring family which dwells in vast schools in the clear waters off the island.

The finest quality nuoc mam is fermented from eight to 12 months. By that time it has an alcohol rating of 40 proof, about the same as fortified wine.

It tastes better than it smells, but the first try – for a non Vietnamese – provides a cyclone of sensations for the olfactory nerves and taste buds.

Editor's Note: *Unfortunately I was unable to successfully copy the original article so it became necessary to retype it for this edition of [Shotgun Blasts](#).*



Final Flight

A simple listing of our Comrades-in-Arms that have departed on their Final Flight. As confirmation is received notices will be posted.

Cleveland J. Alleman
Shotgun Crew Chief

Our Comrade-in-Arms, Cleveland, passed away on December 12, 2007, at the age of 67 of cancer. Cleveland is survived by his wife, Renalla.

Allen D. Baxley
Shotgun Pilot

Our Comrade-in Arms, Allen, passed away after a lengthy illness on April 27, 2008. Allen is survived by his wife Madge of Springtown, Texas.

William L. Beetem
Shotgun First Sergeant

Our Comrade-in-Arms, William, passed away on August 15, 1996 at the age of 71 in Ossineke, Michigan. He was tough but he taught the kids how to survive.

Kenneth W. Downes
Shotgun Maintenance Platoon Line Chief

Our Comrade-in-Arms, Kenneth, passed away on December 30, 1995 at the age of 70 in Daleville, Alabama still at home with Army Aviation. He kept things on the line in good order and was on top of everything.

Francis F. Frederick
Shotgun Maintenance Platoon Sergeant

Our Comrade-in-Arms, Francis, passed away after a lengthy illness on May 3, 2007 at the age of 75 in Chesterfield, Virginia. He loved going on test flights even with a young pilot.

Robert R. Schaffitzel
Shotgun Maintenance

Our Comrade-in-Arms, Robert, passed away on September 27, 2006 at Longdale, OK at the age of 68.

Edward S. Zimnawoda
Shotgun Maintenance

Our Comrade-in-Arms, Edward, passed away as the result of a massive heart attack on June 6, 2011 at the age of 64. Edward is survived by his loving partner, Millie Martin of Glen Burnie, MD and by his daughters, Sherry and Kim.

The Final Flight

Anonymous

Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free,
I'm following the path God laid for me.
I took his hand when I heard his call,
I turned my back and left it all.

I could not stay another day,
To laugh, to love, to work, to play.
Tasks left undone must stay that way,
I've found that peace at the end of the day.

If my parting has left a void,
Then fill it with remembered joy.
A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss,
Ah, yes, these things too I will miss.

Be not burdened with times of sorrow,
I wish you the sunshine of tomorrow.
My Life's been full, I savoured much,
Good friends, good times, a loved one's
touch.

Perhaps my time seemed all too brief,
Don't lengthen it now with undue grief.
Lift up your heart and share with me,
God wanted me now, He set me free.

www.221st.org

OK Gentlemen, you have asked for it for some time now and finally I have been able to begin work on the latest feature of **your** web site, a listing of awards and decorations that were earned by our Comrades-in-Arms.

This new section is simply entitled "**Individual Awards**" and is located under the **History** header on the web site. Those awards that were indicated on the Annual Supplements to Unit History are entered by name only; however, no information was available for 1970 or 1971 therefore we do need your input.

If you will take a moment and look at the entry for Jimmy McGraw under the heading for the Distinguished Flying Cross you will find a copy of the actual commendation. This is what I plan to do for any of you that will send me a copy of the orders or citation.

This is a continuing project that will take time

to complete and without your help it may never reach the point that we can call it complete. Our unit was one of the most decorated to serve during the Vietnam War and it is time for us to preserve the memories of the awards and honors that were bestowed upon the unit and its members.

To have your awards recorded on the web site just send an e-mail with the details to me at mecaylo@mchsi.com or telephone at (256) 851-1530.

Thanks,

Monte Caylor
Shotgun Webmaster

Editor's note: Folks if you haven't checked the web site recently I suggest that you take a few minutes to do so. There is now, on the main page, a Countdown Clock with time remaining to Reunion 2011 and a really interesting link to The Warrior Song.

Isn't this just awesome? This could be a 4th of July remembrance, our symbol standing guard. No words could say it better.

A picture from the Minneapolis Star Tribune taken on a June morning at the Minneapolis National Cemetery...
Sent to us by Bob McKenzie, Shotgun 36



Mekong Delta Vets Reunion

Once again, the 13th Combat Aviation Battalion Vietnam is sponsoring its:

Mekong Delta Reunion

Hosted by:

1-13th Aviation Regiment

1st Aviation Brigade, Fort Rucker

The reunion will be held at Fort Rucker , AL on Armed Forces Day weekend; **May 17 to 20, 2012...**

In the past our Fixed Wing units, the 221st RAC and the 199th RAC have not shown a lot of interest in this reunion due to the emphasis that was placed on the helicopter units of the battalion. It is now time that we put forth an effort to demonstrate that we were there with those Fling Wing units and carried our fair share of the load in the fight against the VC and NVA in the IV Corps region.

All of us need to return to our "home", Fort Rucker occasionally if only to view the change that has taken place in the nearly half century since we received our flight training. This may be the best opportunity we will have to do just this and to meet with friends from the helicopter units that responded so rapidly to our requests for assistance.

Please at least consider organizing as the Delta Birddogs and presenting a united front at this reunion. It would be impressive to see twenty or more Birddog pilots at this event representing all of us and telling the tales of the greatest little war bird ever built, the Cessna L-19/O-1 Birddog, to the folks gathered at Fort Rucker on this special weekend.

More information will be published in the next issue of *Shotgun Blasts...*

Links

A few more sites that you may want to check out.

74th RAC www aloft74th.org

183rd RAC www.183seahorse.org

184th RAC www.184rac.com

185th RAC www.angelfire.com

199th RAC www.swampfox199thrac.com

219th RAC www.219headhunters.com

220th RAC www.catkillers.org

221st RAC www.221st.org

And

1st Aviation Brigade

www.1stavnbde.com

OV-1 Mohawk Association

www.ov-1mohawkassociation.org

Army Otter-Caribou Association

www.otter-caribou.org

International Bird Dog Association

www.ibdaweb.com

Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association

www.vhpa.org

Army Aviation Association of America

www.quad-a.org

