



GUARD MOUNT

July, 2001



I SALUTE YOU

I recently located my former Wing Commander, then Colonel and now B/Gen (Ret) Duane (Lief) Erickson. I sent him an e-mail and discussed some of the conditions we found ourselves in just prior to closing CRB in 1972. He is without a doubt, the finest Wing Commander I ever served under. His concern for his men was obvious on a daily basis. This e-mail represents his reply to me. I think it is one for the VSPA history files and one, I hope, you will find a venue to share with other VSPA members. It points with pride to the job we SP's did in Vietnam. It is with great pride that I share it with you. By the way, Terry Lunsford, a VSPA member, and my best friend, was one of the last SP's out.

Steve,

Your thoughtful and greatly appreciated E-mail brought back a flood of memories of Cam Ranh Bay Air Base and those last few months that so many of us spent there together, with the United States Flag still proudly flying high. I particularly remember the pride that I felt for the members of the 483rd SPS when I was with a group for a small ceremony to lower Old Glory from in front of the Headquarters that last afternoon before we

headed for Saigon, on our way to various destinations.

My source of pride was doubly strong because of two events that occurred during the last few weeks, in addition to the April rocket attack with the uncertainty associated with what might follow. If I may, I would like to share some things that you, and other SPS members may not be aware of. In fact, you may have been personally involved in the double perimeter guard that last night.

As you may recall, we were really bare bones those last few days, and the only American military left after the 350 plus or minus of us departed the day we lowered the Flag, were in the Red Horse team that was dismantling some relocatable maintenance facilities.

Event One:

During the staff meeting the day before departure, we were going over the preparations for the final drawdown. When your squadron commander, Lt Col Foley, gave his brief, I asked him about the scheduling of the withdrawal of the perimeter security and the alleged backfill by RVN troops. With a great deal of pride, shared by everyone in the briefing, Col Foley announced that we would be double manned on the perimeter because the members of the next to last shift had, to an individual, volunteered to remain at their assigned post until US Air

(Continued on page 4)

VSPA POINTS OF CONTACT

President: Kevin Fitzgerald
1219 2nd Ave. S
Nashville, TN 37210
(615) 835-0004

Vice Pres: Steve Gattis
616 W. Medallion Ct.
Ontario, CA 91762
gattis@gte.net

Treasurer: Denis Cook
9974 Kika Court, #7413
San Diego, CA 92129
dcook@Fptoday.com

Membership: Terry Morris
W5148 E. Bush
Pardeeville, WI 53954
(608) 429-9090
incoming@jvl.net.com

Chaplain: Steve Janke
739 Hill Street
Carlstadt, NJ 07072
jank953208@aol.com

Guardmount: Dave Dobson
5315 Bevans Avenue
Spring Hill, FL 34608
(352) 683-2767
camranh@atlantic.net

Website *www.vspa.com*



President's Corner



I hope everyone had a wonderful 4th of July celebration - America's 225 years old. It may just be me (I don't think so) but because of service in the Air Force and especially in the Security Police, I feel extra pride in these celebrations of National Heritage. I get concerned at work when young people ask questions about Vietnam, the draft and other things I would have thought they would have read about in school. I'm even more concerned because so many of these young adults are college graduates. Recently one told me he would never go to a draft because it would be a violation his civil rights. Our era to them seems like ancient history, although I find these people eager to hear about our history and experience. Just plain makes me wonder about our education dollars.

Speaking of ancient history - as we all age and our great association get a little maturity, the question of Life Membership has come up. The officers agree this is something whose time has come and something members have asked for. I hold a Life Membership in VVA. - from time to time I am asked to give something extra for the support of the organization - I know we could do the same. Our Life Membership will be a graduated fee, based on the member's age when he joins the Life Membership offer!!! When the math is all done it makes good sense for those interested. More information forth coming!

Hope to see you at the Reunion. Those days are always filled with good and positive memories. Remember October 4 - 7, 2001 - Hampton, VA.

These Reunions give our Association the steam to move ahead and to bond, to renew old friendships, make new ones and to plan for our future with pride in our past! See you there! Till next time

God Bless

Needed!!

Your stories and inputs for the next

Issue!!!

THE WAR AFTER THE WAR: UNDERSTANDING PTSD

In the mid-19th century, survivors of traumatic railway accidents exhibited a group of symptoms --anxiety, nightmares and extreme "startle response" --that in England came to be called "railway hysteria."

Many combat veterans of the American Civil War suffered "soldier's heart," a term that arose in 1876. The symptoms included extreme startle response, rapid heartbeat and "hypervigilance."

Following World War I, it became clear that some veterans were suffering lasting psychological damage. They were "shell-shocked." In World War II, it became "combat fatigue."

In 1952, the American Psychiatric Association published its first Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Included in DSM-I was a condition called "stress response syndrome." It accounted for the psychic aftermath of trauma, but there was scant association with the nightmares, intrusive memories and social dysfunction--often followed by alcoholism and suicide--suffered by veterans of World War II and now the Korean War.

In 1968, DSM-II deleted the "stress response" diagnosis in favor of "adjustment reaction to adult life."

In the 1970s, psychiatric advances and the experiences of returning Vietnam War veterans made it clear that the trauma of war raged on in veterans' hearts and minds even decades after combat.

PTSD Codified in 1980

In 1980, "post-traumatic stress disorder" (PTSD) was added to DSM-III and the VA added PTSD to its diagnostic codes in April of that year. DSM-III was revised to DSM III-R in 1987

and again, to DSM-IV, in 1994.

According to DSM-IV, a traumatic event that can lead to PTSD involves "a threat to one's life or physical integrity and a subjective response of fear, helplessness or horror." The symptoms may include a persistent re-experiencing of the event, avoidance of things associated with the event, significant distress and increased arousal, impaired social or occupational functioning, emotional numbing (failure to process emotional information), disturbed sleep patterns and threatening nightmares.

PTSD is a "delayed stress reaction" that may surface years or decades after the initiating event.

Ken Moore, a service officer at the VET Center in Rochester, N.Y., puts it this way:

"Let's say a service officer meets a 52-year-old Vietnam combat veteran and asks him when he was in Vietnam."

"Last night," the veteran replies.

"Part of the problem is the veteran facing up to having PTSD," says Moore, who also is the hepatitis C national coordinator for Vietnam Veterans of America and national vice president of Veterans Aimed Toward Awareness. "Many veterans don't want to be labeled, don't want people to think they're crazy. But I tell them that no one needs to know other than me, or their doctor, or their brother veterans."

Moore says that dealing with PTSD might be easier if a veteran could go to a mountaintop, sit there and scream, or "just throw it all up and get it out of your system."

"But it's not that easy," he says.

Age May Trigger Symptoms

Peter Ziarnowski, Ph.D., coordinator of the PTSD program at the Canandaigua, N.Y., VA Medical Center,

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 1)

signed post until US Air Force guards were totally withdrawn. That degree of selflessness, unit pride and concern for safety of others in a thankless combat situation, on the part of so many young airmen, remains as a source of inspiration for me to this day.

The next morning, in checking on the scheduled arrival of the C-130s for our trip out, I got the disturbing news that about half of the airplanes were canceled. When I finally reached a full colonel in the operations center in Saigon, I was told that due to "priority" missions in Thailand, our full departure would be delayed at least a day.

I tried to explain to him, as calmly as I could, that we were pulling our guards off the perimeter in a few hours, that there were airmen on the perimeter that had voluntarily spent two shifts out there and that the delay was totally unacceptable from a security point of view. I was not about to leave the lives of that many Americans in the hands of RVN soldiers, even for one night, regardless of how great people in Washington thought the Vietnamization Program was. I will take his reply to me to my grave, "Colonel, don't you know that there is a war going on?"

To say that I went ballistic would be understating the facts. If I recall, from that point on it was a one-way conversation. I reminded him that he was a staff officer sitting in Saigon and that I was a field commander sitting in VC territory with over 300 American lives on the line. I said that with rocket attacks that wounded several airmen in the past few months, sapper satchel charge attacks at South Beach that killed or wounded over 25 Army troops, and with a sapper attack on the Army munitions dump next door that had us down to minimal base electrical power, one telephone line and troops who had been eating K rations for two weeks, I felt that I had a very solid knowledge base that there was a war going on. I also asked him which General officer in Saigon had approved the diversion of the airlift support from our withdrawal. I reminded him that if necessary, I would

explain to whatever General necessary including the 7th Air Force commander, why he (the staff officer) personally needed to rethink what "priority" mission really stands for. Within thirty minutes, our departure airlift was fully back on schedule.

Had it not been for the voluntary actions of the next to last perimeter security shift, my side of the argument would have been much weaker.

Event Two

As you recall, sappers hit the Army barracks; fairly close to the "White House" built for President Johnson's visit to South Beach in the late 60's; in the April/May timeframe with the results described above. I visited the wounded and dying in our clinic while they waited to be med-evacuated out.

At the time of the 2 AM attack, the Army units at South Beach were commanded by an Army one star who early on was publicly touted to be a contender for Chief of Staff of the Army--even made the front cover of Look or Life magazine. The General was living in the "White House." One of my first discussions with him was when he and his staff went swimming at the Air Force beach and did not have someone out of the water standing life guard. One of the 483rd SPS airmen called their hand and the General phoned me madder than a wet hen. Said he wanted me to put his picture in all Air Force security posts so he wouldn't be subjected to any reminders of Air Force reg violations. I reminded him of the number of military personnel who had drowned at that beach because of failure to have someone watching, and that I expected all people at the Air Force beach to obey the life saving reg regardless rank or service affiliation. If he chose to swim without a guard that was his call, not mine. I give this as a prelude to what later happened.

The morning after the sapper satchel charge attack that took the Army lives, I called the General's office at South Beach to express my regrets over the attack and the wounded/deaths associated therewith.

(Continued on page 7)

Vietnam Security Police Association Reunion!

October 4-7, 2001 ~ Hampton, Virginia

To be held at the Historic Chamberlin Hotel overlooking the majestic Chesapeake Bay.

Hotel rates are \$69 per night, single or double occupancy, plus tax

Registration is \$100 per person and will include the following:

- ❖ *Welcoming Package with name button, itinerary,
List of attendees, & local information*
- ❖ *Hospitality Room stocked everyday with snacks & beverages*
 - ❖ *Welcoming Reception Dinner on Thursday, October 4*
 - ❖ *Tour of Langley Air Force Base on Friday, October 5*
 - ❖ *Banquet Dinner on Friday, October 5*
- ❖ *Business Meeting with Refreshments on Saturday Morning, October 6*
 - ❖ *Memorial Service on Sunday Morning with Refreshments*
 - ❖ *All associated taxes and gratuities*

An optional full day tour of Colonial Williamsburg (with transportation) is being offered on Saturday after the business meeting for only \$44 per person!

Call the Chamberlin Hotel at (800) 416-1045 no later than September 4 to make your hotel reservations. Make sure to tell them you are with the Vietnam Security Police Association Reunion to receive the group rate of \$69 per night. Group Airfare is available by calling Kennewick Travel at 1-800-323-8728. This is guaranteed to be the lowest available rate!

COME JOIN US AS WE SHARE MEMORIES AND FIND OLD FRIENDS!! "WE TAKE CARE OF OUR OWN."

For More Information Contact:

Steve Gattis (Cam Ranh Bay 68-69)

Phone: (909) 986-6991

Email: gattis@gte.net

- or -

The Reunion BRAT

Phone: 509-582-9304

Email: BratEmail@aol.com

VIETNAM SECURITY POLICE ASSOCIATION
"WE TAKE CARE OF OUR OWN!"
REUNION REGISTRATION FORM
OCTOBER 4-7, 2001 HAMPTON, VIRGINIA

YES! SIGN ME UP FOR OUR REUNION!!!

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

UNIT(s) IN VIETNAM AND/OR THAILAND: _____

YEARS WERE YOU IN VIETNAM AND/OR THAILAND 19____ TO 19____

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

NAME(s) OF THOSE ACCOMPANYING YOU _____

MEAL SELECTION: BEEF_____ **CHICKEN**_____ **VEGETARIAN**_____

PLEASE LIST ANY SPECIAL NEEDS: _____

REGISTRATION FEES:

REGISTRATION # OF PERSONS_____ x \$100 = \$ _____

WILLIAMSBURG TOUR # OF PERSONS_____ x \$44 = \$ _____

TOTAL COST = \$ _____

PAYMENT IS DUE NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 4 , 2 0 0 1

PLEASE SEND PAYMENTS TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS AND MADE PAYABLE TO:

THE REUNION BRAT

4 0 0 5 S . I O N E

K E N N E W I C K , W A 9 9 3 3 7

(5 0 9) 5 8 2 - 9 3 0 4

Confirmation of Registration and Itinerary will be sent out by September 15, 2001. A \$20 per person cancellation fee will apply to all cancellations within 30 days of the reunion. Cancellations received within 10 days of the event will be non-refundable. Call The Chamberlin Hotel at 757-723-6511 or 1-800-582-8975 no later than September 4, 2001 to make your hotel reservations. Be sure to mention you are with Vietnam Security Police Reunion to receive your group rate of \$69 per night, plus tax. These prices are available 3 days prior to and after your event should you choose to extend your stay. Call 1-800-323-8728 for your Group Airfare, guaranteed to be the lowest available rate. We'll see you soon in beautiful Hampton, Virginia!

(Continued from page 4) *I Salute You*

phone said, "The General has moved his office inside the air base perimeter."

The move had apparently been made that morning. There was an Army detachment that had a few offices on the southern end of the Aerial Port side of the base, so I drove over to pay my respects to the General and welcome him to Cam Ranh Air Base. He gave some lame excuse that he was being reassigned to the Pleiku area and was in the new offices because it was easier to coordinate the pending move. I personally think he moved because he knew that we had better perimeter security than he had at South Beach!

Yes, those days in April and May of 1972 were a challenge, particularly for those of you who spent those long, lonely hours on the fence. Let's face it, when the Koreans were pulled off the mainland in the area south of Nha Trang, you brave airmen in the towers and those piddling strands of barbed wire were our only line of defense. Thank our Father in Heaven that the VC and North Vietnamese had more lucrative targets in their sights than the air base during that "Vietnamization" transition period.

Steve, thanks for your kind E-mail, the opportunity to share my side of a few things that went on at Cam Ranh Bay Air Base and to personally thank a member of the 483rd SPS for outstanding duty under very difficult circumstances.

At least we of the 483rd TAW were able to leave Vietnam with our heads held high.

Best Wishes and I SALUTE YOU!
Duane "Lief" Erickson, B/Gen USAF(Ret)

(Continued from page 3) *PTSD*

says that as Vietnam veterans age, some who had never experienced PTSD symptoms may start having them. In other words, advancing age may be a risk factor for veterans who in earlier years may have been able to cope more successfully.

Ziarnowski says that some Vietnam veterans well into their 50s are just now coming to the VET centers for the first time.

"Any stressor in life--a death in the family, a new job--may stir emotions," says Ziarnowski. "Retirement

may present a problem. PTSD may have been like a wave that--like a surfer--you could ride and stay ahead of when you were younger. But as you get older, the wave catches up to you."

According to Ziarnowski, many veterans may have unconsciously dealt with PTSD by becoming workaholics. But in retirement, having more free time means that the "wave" is more likely to catch up with you. And declining health in later years may also render a veteran more vulnerable.

"Just talking and listening to others is helpful. I tell a lot of guys they need to just come to the group sessions --don't talk, just listen. There they find out that they are not crazy, that others are experiencing the same things. As they listen for the first time, their eyes light up."

Ziarnowski says that "exposure therapy," in which patients are re-exposed to a representation of a trauma, no longer is considered credible. While returning to Vietnam as a tourist might be useful for some, visiting the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (the "Wall") in Washington, D.C., might be a better "exposure therapy" and help veterans deal with "unfinished emotional business."

PTSD and the VA

But resolving the emotional aftermath of combat may be easier than getting compensation for it from the VA.

"What makes it more difficult is what you have to go through to get a claim through the VA," says Moore, who helps veterans with claims. "It takes 370 days to adjudicate a claim. You can appeal a claim that doesn't go through, but that takes another year."

Moreover, says Moore, the VA will pay a claim only if the veteran can point to a specific event. PTSD is presumptively service-connected for holders of the Purple Heart, Bronze Star, Silver Star and Combat Infantryman's Badge. But just having been in a combat zone is not enough, no matter how horrific one's experience might have been.

"PTSD is not curable," says Ziarnowski. "But as with any chronic disease, such as diabetes, you can live with it if you manage the symptoms."

Jun 1, 2001 Randy Fillmore
Stars and Stripes Medical Correspondent

PICTURES NEEDED

The VSPA recently had a request from John Bandy, curator of the USAF Security Police Museum. John is looking for SP related photo's from the Vietnam war. The photo's that John is looking for are from Binh Thuy, 632SPS & 633SPS, U-Tapao 635SPS & 645SPS and Takli 355SPS, 366SPS & 633SPS.

These photo's will be used for a display at the museum. All original prints will be returned after being copied. I had put out a personnel request via email to a number of our members and received a good response. John is still looking for photo's of the 633SPS, 645SPS, 366SPS & 633SPS. If any of our members have photo's that they would like to contribute they can contact John directly at john.bandy@lackland.af.mil or you can contact me at tuyhoa68@att.net

In Search Of

Still trying to gather info on the 13SPS. There have been a few patches circulating on eBay and from a private collector attributed to the 13SPS while station at Vinh Long Army air field. They were supposed to have been attached to the 12SPS. Anyone with information on this squadron please contact me at tuyhoa68@att.net

*Don Graham
VSPA Historian*

I received this from Sgt Mac in Fort Worth. I edited it a little, but hope that those who put off going to the reunion till next year will give it some more thought.

"I have a friend who lives by a three-word philosophy: "Seize the moment." Just possibly, she may be the wisest woman on this planet. Too many people put off something that brings them joy just because they haven't thought about it, don't have it on their schedule, didn't know it was coming or are too rigid to depart from their routine."

"I got to thinking one day about all those women on the Titanic who passed up dessert at dinner that fateful night in an effort to cut back. From then on, I've tried to be a little more flexible."

"I cannot count the times I called my sister and

TREASURE'S REPORT

Spring has sprung and fall has fell, summer is here and the weather hasn't really changed in San Diego. It's always beautiful here.

We have the credit card payment option set up on the VSPA web page and it is working well. We had several members, including some new bees use it. I should have it working soon for the life membership program Kevin talked about.

I hope many of you are working on plans to attend the reunion. Airline fares are very low right now. Last month I priced tickets from San Diego to Baltimore at \$450.00. Last week I bought tickets for \$195.00. Not bad. So make your reservations now, and I hope to see you there.

Is there a lawyer in the house? I am looking for some free legal help for the VSPA. Please contact me by email or regular mail.

The treasury looks like this:

<i>Balance</i>	
April 1, 2001	\$ 7,101.72
Income	4,407.00
Expenses	750.81
June 30, 2001	\$10,757.91

If any VSPA members in the San Diego area would like to get together, please let me know.

*Den Cook
Secretary/Treasurer*

said, "How about going to lunch in a half hour?" She would gasp and stammer, "I can't. I have clothes on the line. My hair is dirty. I wish I had known yesterday, I had a late breakfast, It looks like rain. And my personal favorite: -"It's Monday".

"She died a few years ago. We never did have lunch together."

If you have the opportunity, "Seize the moment." Don't let this moment pass you by.

Den



VSPA BX PRODUCT SALES



Patches:

- a. VSPA Patches _____ \$ 5.00
- b. QC Patches _____ \$ 5.00
- c. SP Badge Patch _____ \$ 4.00
- d. Air Force Vietnam Vet Patch _____ \$ 4.00
- e. Tet 68 Survivor Patch _____ \$ 4.00
- f. 7th Air Force Patch _____ \$ 4.00
- g. POW/MIA Patch _____ \$ 4.00
- h. QC Back Patch (9") _____ \$15.00
- i. U.S. Air Force Back Patch (10") _____ \$15.00

Pins:

- a. QC Pin _____ \$ 4.00
- b. 7th Air Force Pin _____ \$ 4.00
- c. Air Force Vietnam Vet Pin _____ \$ 4.00
- d. Tet 68 Survivor Pin _____ \$ 4.00
- e. POW/MIA Pin _____ \$ 4.00
- f. Vietnam Base Pins (Bien Hoa, Binh Thuy, Cam Ranh Bay, Da Nang, Nha Trang, Phan Rang, Pleiku, Phu Cat, Ton Son Nhut) _____ \$ 4.00
- g. U.S. Air Force (Generic) _____ \$ 4.00
- h. Vietnam Service Ribbon Pin _____ \$ 4.00
- i. Vietnam Veteran With Ribbon Bar Pin _____ \$ 4.00
- j. New Air Force Security Forces Pin _____ \$ 4.00
- k. Pacific Air Forces (PACAF) Pin _____ \$ 4.00

Stickers:

- a. VSPA Bumper Sticker _____ \$ 1.00
- b. 7th Air Force _____ \$ 3.00
- c. POW/MIA _____ \$ 1.00
- d. Vietnam Service Ribbon _____ \$ 3.00
- e. U.S. Air Force _____ \$ 3.00

Hats: (Baseball Style Black) \$12.00

- a. VSPA Association
- b. QC
- c. Security Police Shield
- d. U.S. Air Force Vietnam Veteran With Ribbon Bar

Miscellaneous:

- a. Security Police Mini Shields (Numbered) _ \$10.00
- b. Security Police Qualification Badges _____
(Lg \$4.00 -- Sm \$2.00)
- c. 7th Air Force Coin _____ \$12.00
- d. Paper Weights
Marble with QC Patch and VSPA _ \$ 15.00
Lucite With Security Police Shield _ \$30.00
- e. VSPA Black Satin Jacket Embroidered _____ \$85.00
- f. USAF Black Laminated Wood Clock _____ \$45.00
- g. Vietnam Memorial Black Laminated Wood Clock _____ \$45.00
- h. Belt Buckels (Vietnam Veteran with Service and Campaign Ribbons) _____ \$12.00
(U.S. Air Force Generic) _____ \$12.00

Please add \$3.00 shipping and handling for all orders under \$50.00, orders over that are only \$4.50 for Shipping and Handling. Please make checks for merchandise payable to Vietnam Security Police Association (VSPA). Sorry no Credit Card Orders. Send checks and orders to Mike Daoust, 401 N. Kiesel St., Bay City, MI 48706

Membership Application (send Copy of DD 214 and \$15.00 fee)

Name _____
 Address _____
 State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____
 Unit in S.E.Asia _____
 Dates of S.E.Asia Duty _____
 Description of Duty _____
 Looking For? _____

