



# **EDITORS CORNER**



This is the last issue of Guardmount that I will put out, after 8½ years I am giving up editing our newsletter. There is nothing in here about the last reunion because I have received nothing even though I requested it, waiting for it is why this one is late. In the last year and a half I have been late several times due to delays in receiving material, I do not like being late unless there is a good reason. Many of my requests for needed material went unanswered for weeks, causing the delays. The notification of my resignation from Guardmount has not yet been acknowledged. Part of the reason for this being so late, other than waiting for material, is my procrastination because this is the last time I will be doing this.

You will notice that most of this issue is reprints from past issues starting with my first in 1995. Most of our membership has not read this material and those who have may have forgotten about them. At times I feel it is good to look back in order to see how we have progressed.

Giving up editing the Guardmount is like giving up a faithful dog or family member. When I started with my first issue I looked for a new way to present it, thus the current format. My second goal was to make it a distinctive color so it would be easily recognized when it arrived in the mail thus the light blue color (Air Force Blue-almost). We included pictures in the first year or two

but learned that one picture too many caused more in postage because it caused the additional ink on the page added to the weight thus postage. Our first printer spent more time telling me what he could not do rather than what could be done, after a few issues we started looking for a new printer. At first our printer could not collate them without increasing the price, adding the double fold was unheard of, another cannot do. After a few weeks we found one who could do everything we wanted without any additional cost, in fact we paid less per issue with the new printer. They did not seem to know the word 'can't.' When I talk about 'we' in here it refers to my wife who took care of keeping addresses straight, posting mailing labels and stamps, and getting them in the mail. At first she was the one who did all the collating and folding them, without her I do not know how I would have done it all

The search for new material for each issue led me to meet some wonderful people, other men who had served in Vietnam as AP/SP's. I was even able to meet some people who I served with, even one that got his first cup of coffee in Vietnam from me on the northwest corner of Cam Ranh Bay AB. I have also had the unpleasant task of notifying the membership of the passing of fellow members, many were close friends. Many of the articles I read brought back some vivid memories, even got blurred as I tried to read some of them - little too much water in my eyes.

(Continued on page 2)

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I met John Langely at the Melbourne reunion here in Florida the year before we became an organization, the following year I was on a membership drive at the reunion for VSPA. I was one of the early members and have all copies of Guardmount. The first issues, in Volume I, were on white paper, staple in upper corner and with many articles that were just scanned and added to it. I am a charter member and love this organization. Many times in the past years members have tried to sway my thinking by informing me they were, "charter members," and they did not like something I had done with Guardmount. As a former Flight Chief, NCOIC, and First Sergeant I do not sway that easily. I did confer with the officers when suggestions were made and told them the reason it was being done, receiving their support I continued. For those of you who tried to pull your weight with the charter membership, remember we are all cops and were trained not to be awed by rank - just do our job.

Well I have gotten some things off my chest and given you a brief history of *Guardmount* so I will close for now. Will be looking forward to meeting you in that Guardmount in the sky some time in the future, I don't plan on going there real soon.

Welcome Home Brothers Love Ya All

David (Dave) Dobson, Msgt.USAF (Ret) 12<sup>th</sup>/483<sup>rd</sup> SPS - 2/70 -2/71 Cam Ranh Bay A.B., RVN Whiskey Delta

# & DISMOUNT



A **DISMOUNT** was a formation held at the end of the normal tour of duty for some special reason. This **DISMOUNT** is to pay final respects to those who have gone to their final well deserved resting place.

Dick McEvoy

#### **NEW LOOK**

#### **NEW EDITOR**

John has been asking if someone would help with the newsletter, in fact he has asked several times in the past. I finally decided that since he has done such a terrific job getting this organization off the ground I would do what I could by putting the *Guardmount* together. If you have any suggestions or material to be put in this publication send them to me at:

5315 Bevens Ave. Spring Hill, Fl. 34608

I am open for any ideas and material that you are able to provide. I know that there is a great deal of information out there that needs to be shared with others. It is hard to find out a lot about what happened there, most of the squadron histories and scrap books were lost after the war.

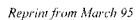
A little about my background. I was a SSgt in Nam and a career NCO. After Nam I went to Germany and that is where I spent 14 of the next 17 years. I was in Security Police for 18 of my 23 years, the last 5 was as a First Sergeant. I retired from the Air Force in 1988 and I currently live in Florida and work for the Florida Department of Corrections as a Psychological Specialist. I am a co-sponsor of a Veterans Incarcerated chapter of VVA.

I have more Bio's, letters and information that was sent to John that will appear in coming issues. There was too much for a single issue but please keep it coming so I can keep each issue full and interesting. If you want to submit one please send it to me directly.

Please help me make this the best possible information source for some of the greatest guys in Vietnam.

Dave Dobson, MSgt, (Ret) USAF 12 & 483 SPS Cam Ranh Bay 2/70 to 2/71







FROM: Captain Verna

SUBJECT: EAGLE PLATOONS

TO: All Military Fighting Men of the 3rd Security Police Squadron

- 1. PURPOSE: To provide Bien Hoa Air Base a reaction force to be deployed behind the enemy for harassment and interdiction following a mortar attack.
- 2. Concept of operation: The 57th and 58th Regional Forces will share alert standby duty on a rotating basis with the 3rd Security Police Squadron. A flight of 45 men will be stationed at the 145th Aviation Battalion each night from 2200 hours until 0400 hours. In the event a mortar attack occurs and firing positions are identified, this force will be deployed to preselected landing zones behind the enemy position to engage or harass them during their retreat.
- 3. Training: The 173rd Airborne Brigade Jungle School will provide training on tactics and maneuvers. The start date is tentatively scheduled for 11 Sept 67. It will be conducted on your off duty time. It will take three to four hours a day for five days. Attachment I is the full training schedule for the jungle school. We will receive selected subjects for our "Eagle Platoons".
- 4. Manpower Requirements and Selection: To perform this duty and to minimize the commitment, I am requesting 45 men from "A" Flt and 45 men from "B" Flt to join this program. With two groups of 45, each group will stand alert one night out of every six nights.
- a. Because of the training provided, personnel with retainability are desired. This

#### THE ABSURDITY CALLED WAR

Endless patrols that wandered aimlessly - crisscrossing ancient pathways that inevitably lead to the madness of death, we walked into the absurdity called war.

Given up to the senseless slaughter, we were sacrificed for an ideal that had no meaning for a country that had forgotten who we were and what we had become.

The fear of death strangled our memories and limited life's pleasures to a vaguely mystical dream of some forgotten bygone life that was now lost in the absurdity called war.

Where reality was punctuated by unexpected terror and the constant companion called death. A reality where confusion was God and a youthful generation aged before they were twenty. Growing older and more callous with each passing ambush and every unavenged death.

Our dreams became blurred by the nightmare of disillusionment as innocent dreams and thoughts of heroic deeds gave way to the absurdity called war. What we had thought was forever lost in the rape of childhood innocence. Where jungle trails, became classrooms that exploded in deadly combat and left us with the anguished memories of a world gone mad and the silent unseen eyes of the dead.

Our sanity held together by a loyalty to our brothers and a desire to survive, we struggled forward. The sacred "Short Timers" calendar etched into our helmets and minds were grim reminders of what we had endured and how much longer we had to face the daily ritualistic dance of death as we bowed to the absurdity called war.

For now, the silence of death still ring in our ears and in our hearts. Forever lost in the drama of war, we are unable to break the chains that bind us to that time as we struggle to forget an absurdity called war.

Michael J. Quinlivan - 17 Feb 1995



Reprint from March 95

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should not prevent "Short Timers" from signing up. With the number of personnel required "Short Timers: will be required to get us over the large loss this squadron will sustain between 1 Oct and 31 Dec 67.

- 5. Program Start Date: We are hopeful that this program will be operational before 1 Oct 67. A great amount of training, procurement, coordination and planning is still ahead of us.
- 6. Deadline: All volunteers should have their names affixed to the roster NLT 1600 hours, 1 Sept 67.
- 7. General: I have been extremely proud and honored to be associated with this squadron to date. Your daily performance has been outstanding and your support of squadron policy and mission has been the finest I have witnessed in my career. Your cooperation and backing are necessary to make this program an effective and practical weapon against the Viet Cong. It will require personal sacrifice from each man in the form of reduced free time and comfort and exposure to hostile environment. I am convinced, however, after three months in this squadron, you are prepared to make this sacrifice.

JOSEPH B. VERNA JR., Captain, USAF Security Operations Officer.

Forty plus members of the squadron volunteered and were trained by the 173d Airborne. We made a helicopter assault right before dusk, spent the night in a perimeter defense and the next day spent 6 or 7 hours patrolling through the jungle back to the base where we were net by Red Cross Donut Dollies.

To my knowledge this was the only helicopter assault behind enemy lines by an A.P. unit.

Kent Miller

Reprint from March 95



# MEMORIES OF 'NAM

633rd SPS, Pleiku, RVN - 3/67 - 3/68



I arrived in Nam through Da Nang AB on March 7, 1967 and was temporarily assigned to Phu Cat AB. Within the next two weeks I was transferred to Pleiku AB. Arriving at Pleiku I remember thinking how small the base was and how on earth could we defend it against the VC/NVA when you could almost throw a rock from one perimeter to the other. The base was the home of the A1E s (Sandy), rescue choppers and Puff the Magic Dragon, AC-47.

I was assigned to swing shifts which I You could never get your night vision focused due to the amount of time spent in sunlight during the day. Just as you were adapting it was time to be relieved. The other reason that I did not like swing shift was that when Charlie hit I was normally sound asleep and had to react to the situation and had to react to the situation in a stupor. My buddy Dan Gittens and I were always the first in line for posting or assigned to the SRT. Neither one of us could stand not knowing what was going on at the perimeter. Also, the rounds usually fell on the flight line or with in the compound. So it made since to me to head for the perimeter. There were a couple attacks that my strategy did not work and I ended up in the middle of an attempted penetration of our defenses.

During the next few months up until March of 1968 the base received numerous rocket, mortar attacks, sniper incidents and two attempts at penetrating our perimeter. These incidents were minor compared to the tragedy which occurred one quiet day. I remember a large explosion rocked the base and nearly knocked me off my feet. I ran to the bunker where I was to respond when under attack and waited for more in-coming. To my amazement there was only one explosion. Over the

radio CDC informed everyone that SPS arms room had exploded. At first it was believed that a saper attack caused the explosion, it was later proved that it was caused by careless handling of an ammo can (with grenades and hand flares) which caused the explosion. What a tragedy, we did it to ourselves. Carelessness caused death and injuries not the enemy. I always thought that I could accept it or at least understand loss of life caused by the enemy but not by stupidity. The base was left vulnerable due to the loss weapons. The only weapons we had were those left on post at the time of the explosion and those stored in the SRT lockers at the barracks. We recovered from the incident both strategically and mentally but it will always be in the back of my mind that it could have been me. It was nearly 14 years later while performing executive protection duty in Beirut and saw the Marine Barracks blown to rubble that I relived that day in Vietnam.

After leaving Vietnam, I was assigned to the 81st SPS, Bentwaters RAF and then separated from the AF in March of 1970. I married, earned my BS in Criminal Justice, worked in the pharmaceutical business and then re-enlisted in the Army in 1980 as a Military Policeman. As a military policeman I worked law enforcement, criminal investigations, executive protection and physical security. I am now a Supervising, Physical Security Specialist with the Department of Energy at the Savannah River Site (Defense Nuclear Weapons Site) in Aiken, South Carolina.

Steve Shelt, Sgt. USAF 3/66-3/70



#### LOOK WHAT WE STARTED

#### Air Force countersnipers go offensive by Tech. Sgt. Eric M. Grill 455th Evneditionary Operations Group Public

455th Expeditionary Operations Group Public Affairs

6/4/2003 - OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM (AFPN) -- Two Air Force security forces airmen deployed to Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, got what they called, "the chance of a lifetime," June 1 when they embarked on a combat patrol in eastern Afghanistan with the Army's 82nd Airborne Division

Senior Airmen Luke Allen and Rusty Youngblood, both 820th Security Forces Squadron countersnipers at Moody Air Force Base, Ga., are deployed to the 455th Expeditionary Operations Group to defend Air Force Village in the event of an attack on Bagram. They said they believe this is the first time Air Force countersnipers and the Army have paired up in a combat mission.

The two countersnipers got their chance for the offensive mission when an 82nd Airborne's patrol needed a couple of extra marksmen. The airmen had already worked with the Army on scout missions around the outskirts of the base, but not in an actual combat mission

Their mission was to provide long-range reconnaissance, target acquisition and neutralization of any al-Qaida or anti-coalition forces target of opportunity

"We were a little apprehensive at first," said Youngblood, who attended the Air Force Countersniper School at Camp Joseph T. Robinson in Arkansas in December. "Training is training, but when you're going into combat, you're always a little apprehensive. But, at the same time, I was excited and wanted to go kick some (butt)." Both airmen said that there was some of the usual banter between the two rival services, like everyone referring to the duo as "those Air Force snipers." But, when it came time to perform the mission, it was all business.

The first contact with enemy forces came June 2, when six 107 mm rockets were fired toward the patrol in the area of Takurghal, the same area where Operation Anaconda took place. In that March 2002 battle, two airmen, Tech. Sgt. John Chapman and Senior Airman Jason Cunningham, and six other Americans were killed.

"At first we saw a flash off in the distance, and we were trying to figure out what the flash was," Youngblood said. "Then we heard the incoming artillery and took cover."

One of those rockets hit the ground about 300 meters from the patrol's location.

The patrol was on a mountain peak about 11,000 feet above sea level. Allen said after the rocket attack, he ran to the end of the peak and positioned himself where he had full view of the entire area. Using night-vision goggles, he found the enemy forces about 3,000 meters away -- too far for his M-24, single-shot rifle. Close-air support was called in and provided by Danish F-16s, Air Force AC-130 gunships and Army Apache helicopters.

The patrol spotted three different groups of enemy forces, totaling about 15 people, Alien said, and chased them for a little while.

They got as close as 1,000 meters, Youngblood said, but no contact was actually made.

There was another rocket attack on the pair's patrol the next morning, where a second rocket landed within a few hundred meters of the pair's position.

"I was just hoping that those rockets wouldn't land on us," Allen said.

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Describing the experience as more surreal than a lifeand-death experience, Allen said the combat mission "felt more like a game or a training exercise," but also said he took what he was doing very seriously.

"You can never be trained enough for these missions, but the soldiers we were working with were exceptionally trained," he said.

There were no coalition injuries reported in either of the rocket attacks, Youngblood said.

"I would definitely do it again, no questions asked," Allen said. "It was a great opportunity, and I'm happy that the Army let us go along with them."

For Youngblood, this was his opportunity to use the training that Air Force and Army instructors provided.

"Between countersniper school and follow-on training, we were prepared for this mission," Youngblood said. "In security forces training, we use Army field manuals and teach Army maneuvers. To actually come over here and use the training in an offensive mission is what I was hoping for.

"I would love to do it again," he said.

The countersnipers might get that chance as they continue to do scout missions in defense of the base.

When the Air Police first went into Vietnam their resources were limited: carbines, .38's, and a few other outdated weapons. That was when security became the primary mission of the career field and new weapons began to come into the inventory. We began using heavy weapons and tactics heretofore unheard of in the field, normally left to the Army. As I read and see what the career field has grown to I wish I was young and in the new SF. This is just another example of where it has gone.

Editor



## CHAPLAIN 'S CORNER



GENESIS 1:1,
" THE FIVE PROPERTIES OF SCIENCE"

I. In the beginning- Time (in a sense)

II. God- Force

III. Created- Action

IV. The heavens- Space

V. And the earth- Matter

By Chaplain Steve Janke

#### BEACH RUN

Wardogs use to love to go to the beach when it was their turn.

It was one of their few rewards we did learn.
To run off leash on the beach and play..
No commands, watch em, heal or stay.
They seem like pups again in the South China
Sea..

Romping and roaming forever free.

But soon all to soon its time again to go back to the kennels, just me and my K-9 friend.

For a little while we both escaped in the water and sun.

And the war had turned to fond memories of happier times of fun

I've been to the ocean many times since back then.
And each time it makes me think of my old
wardog when

WE WERE BOTH YOUNG.

Steve Janke 483rd SPS, K9 Cam Ranh Bay 1971-72



## LOOKING FOR MEN FROM PLEIKU



I would like to hear from any Security Policeman who was at Pleiku AB during the 1969 Tet Offensive with the 633rd Security Police Squadron.

I DEROSed from Pleiku 2 April 67. A couple of my senior Sergeants were extending at Pleiku and should have been there. In particular, I am looking for MSgt. Billy Welch who was the Flight Commander for the night operations. Billy had been an Airborne infantryman in the Korean War and taught all of us a lot.

I was a tall, skinny 1st Lt. who smoked a pipe (kind of hard to do at night under a poncho - I owe Billy 1000 cigarettes). I made Captain the day I left Pleiku. I spent many a long dark night in a jeep with Billy checking on sentrics and responding to dog alerts and stopping the VC/NVA when they came to visit. I was a typical dumb shit Lieutenant and I was grateful to have a strong MSgt with combat experience.

The other NCO was TSgt Paul D. Salazar from California. He was NCOIC of Law Enforcement after TSgt Erskine Sexton left. I have pictures of both of them.

For years I have tried to find out what happened during Tet to the base and Security Police Squadron. I have a handful of rumors but none from a Security Policeman. In all the books on Tet including Brian Oberdorfer's legendary <u>Tet</u>, there is no reference to Pleiku.

And since I am just running off at the mouth now, for vets wanting to return to Vietnam I don't think you can get to Pleiku, etc. in that area without permission from the top of N. Vietnam. The new CD-ROM on Pleiku made by these photographers who say they were allowed to go anywhere has

nothing on the central highlands.

A couple of years ago the Washington D.C. at IA Drang Valley Association reunion, we stopped by and I met SMSgt Basil Plummley, who was Colonel Hal Moore's SM. They had just come by from the Ia Drang where ABC made the 20/20 feature on Hal Moore's book, *We Were Soldiers Once and Young* about the 1965 Ia Drang battles. He said that at An Khe they wanted to go to where their base camp was but it was totally restricted. They were with a 3 star Viet General who said he had no idea what was there. MIA's??

At Pleiku, which when I was there probably had 5000 people at the most, there were 79,000 people. All of the Yards still alive were brought there and Vietnamized to destroy their culture. They stayed in a Japanese hotel until they flew them out of the Ia Drang where they spent 2 days and one long scary ass night.

He said there was no evidence the Americans had ever been at Plciku or the Air Field. All the buildings were gone and they even dug up the runway and built an entire new runway. Base Ops used to be down next to the bomb dump and is now down on the opposite end where RMK - BRJ used to be.

Sorry to ramble - pass that on to whoever may be interested. I have a lot of pictures, mostly Black and White - plus what remains of a lot of super 8 film that just broke up it was so brittle when I had a video made.

Bob Edwards (910) 282-4065 H

Reprint from March 95





# **VSPA BX PRODUCT SALES**



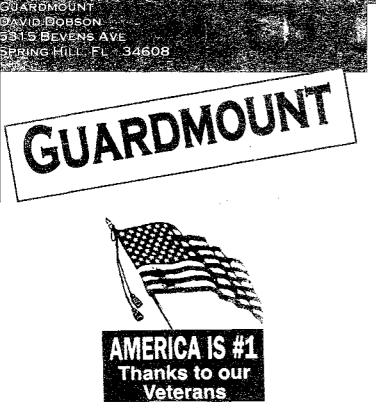
\_\_\_\$66.00

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Patches:			Stickers:	
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C.	SP Badge Patch (Out of Stock)	\$ 4.00	c.	Vietnam Service Ribbon \$3.00
đ.	Air Force Vietnam Vet Patch	\$ 4.00	d.	U.S. Air Force \$ 3.00
e.	Tet 68 Survivor Patch	\$ 4.00	e.	POW/MIA (Inside or Outside) \$ 1.00
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g.	POW/MIA Patch	\$ 4.00	Hats:	: (Baseball Style Black) \$12.00
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Send to Mike Daoust 401 N. Kiesel St. Bay City, MI 48706



#### First Class

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#### Shirts and Jackets:

- Deluxe Polo Style (Golf) Shirt w/QC Emblem on the Front (Size L, XL - \$25.00 XX1. - \$28.00)
- T-shirt w/Security Policeman and Names of those who did not return (M, L, XI., XXL, XXXL) \$12.00
- c. B-15 type Black Jacket w/VSPA logo\_\_\_\_\_\$95.00 Size XXL add \$100, XXXL add \$110
- full Zipper Fleece Jacket VSPA logo Black, Sm XL
   \$50, XXL \$53, XXL \$55, XXXXL \$58

Coming Soon A New Style Jacket and T-shirt

Undocumented Base Attacks: The Association is looking to document all attacks on our bases in Vietnam and Thailand. Please provide any information you may have on currently undocumented attacks. Contact me if you are not sure if an attack is officially documented.

We will divide these attacks into two categories. One will be for those attacks that YOU have documentation for and the other will be for those attacks that you remember but have no documentation.

We will collect this information, research it and provide the results to the Air Force History and Research Center at Maxwell AFB, AL. All information should be in by June 2004. Please contact Don Graham at tuyhoa68@att.net or 610-691-6960.