

Crashed on Tan Son Nhut

1966 Oct 01 - Skyraider Crash - <http://www.chui101.com/crash.html>

(Comments from Chuck Henry) I was a Security Police officer there at the time, had been down to the Jamboree and took a lot of photos on 35 mm. slides of the Scouts, left and got the radio report of the crash and went back.

Got there while the crash site was still burning.

American and Vietnamese responders and all kinds of military personnel (many of whom had no business running around in the wreckage amidst scorched ammo from the aircraft, which was loaded for a combat mission when it went in, yes, inverted, after hitting the top of a concrete guard tower in front of Gen Ky's walled compound on the main drag), came from everywhere.

I ended up involved in the Air Police efforts to control news photographers and sightseers from the base who were trying to get around the people we and the 33rd VNAF Quan Cahn tried to post around the perimeter, but the crash site was in Vietnamese housing, and there were too many approaches for us to seal them all off.

American TV cameramen were trying to get pictures of the dead Vietnamese dependents, some of whom were children, and it made us madder than hell that they would not respect the Air Police trying to keep them out for their own safety, and would not respect Vietnamese sensitivities about the dead dependents not being filmed.

(Bill Price remembrance of Oct 1, 1966) I never did see the VNAF Letter of Commendation. I almost forgot that day.

It happened about 2 or 3 PM on a regular Base duty day. I heard was a large explosion from the Base proper and elements "B" Flight Security headed towards the scene.

We were the initial response force, setting up the Entry Point and On-Scene CP on the main drag across from VNAF HQ. Our task was to get the emergency vehicles, ambulances and fire trucks, in and out, and maintain a tight perimeter to keep unauthorized personnel out.

That was a major problem in itself and didn't make much difference, if they Vietnamese or American Forces. There was a VNAF Officer on-scene which worked with us and allowed us to control the situation, which was the smartest thing he ever did.

We ran a bunch of news folks off and that didn't go over so well, but so what. We were there three or four hours. I do know that the A1E had came in too low and pancaked on top of a RVN Gate Bunker at VNAF HQ and it rolled into the RVN Housing Area, burning as she went.

It was very messy. I couldn't have been more proud of our guys on that operation, as, in fact, I was every day.

The US AF/Army folks should have received a unit decoration from VNAF for that day,

because the 377th plus others and the Emergency Forces came out of the woodwork to help.

I am thankful that the aircraft missed the Boy Scout Jamboree. Actually, I never did know how many were killed/injured that day.

Regards,

Bill Price

"B" Flight and On-Scene Cmdr.

PS: I left 32 days later on Nov 2, 1966

