

# PHAN RANG AIR BASE, NUI DAT HILL

35th Security Police Squadron  
1967-1968

Photos © 2012 by [Van Digby](#), LM 59

I was looking thru the pictures of the Phan Rang that I have. Nui Dat was a small mountain onbase in back of the hooch area in 1967-1968, and there was another small hill used to make gravel out of nearer the flight line.

**Charlie's mountain** was a mountain full of large bolders on the right side of the beach road out the Beach Gate to Hwy-1 and the beach. On the left side of the Beach Road was the Salt Farms where salt water from the South China Sea was used.

On Nui Dat Hill was OP-1, where an Army spotlight that would cover an area 10 x 30 yards wide would come on after dark and light the area. Most of the time it would light up an SP tower, K-9 on the beach when the gate guard was not outside the wire. The tower guard, K-9 and me would scream at CSC on the radio to have the light *moved* or *turned off*. CSC did not have direct radio contact with the Army.

I made it up to OP-1 a couple of times in the area strike team jeep. I remember it was a dirt and gravel road that was steep the last 100 feet to the top, and you would be bouncing in the back of the jeep. The O-Club or NCO club was just down the hill from OP-1. The Airmans Club was near the barracks area.

There was a hill you would pass going to the bomb dump. That hill was used for the AP firing range at the time. There were several towers past the Beach Gate (OP-2?), along the road to the bomb dump, that did not get guards posted very often. There were sandbag bunkers all along the wire between the towers and under the towers. I have a map from 1970 showing gates and tower numbers. Some were different from 1967 when I was there.



1. Phan Rang AB: A Vietnamese A1 Skyraider on the taxiway. Photo by Van Digby, 1967-1968.

On the road pass the bomb dump to the golf area was the last SP tower (G-10). Sam may remember the time we had to change our M16 with someone else. Well, the area Sgt came up to G-10, my post that day, with one extra round to see if my new '16 could shoot and where the bullet would land. It was off target. Van Digby

**Van:** I do remember all of that, and going up that steep hill to posting at OP1 on the top of Nui Dat Hill . Also remember the Hill where the ROK, Korean, 105's Emplacement and that observation tower they used was. We used to sit in those towers along that perimeter road on the North end and those *fools* up on the hill would shoot their big shells right over our heads toward Charlie's Mountain, about 6 Klicks away. Every once in a while a shell would *fall short* behind us up on that hill. Talk about being scared *senseless* (I'm being nice here). I'm thinking that is the hill in the pic on this week's main page, but hey, I could be wrong and have been many times. Thanks Brother, Sam Lewis



Nui Dat, NW of Phan Rang. Steep road to the top.



2. Phan Rang AB: Searching Vietnamese workers going home from bomb dump. Photo: Van Digby, 1967-1968.



3. Phan Rang AB: Piss Tube at SP hooch area. Photo by Van Digby, 1967-1968



**Newell Swartz:** Lots of changes since I was there (1966-1967). The 101st fired 105s, there were no Koreans at all in the area, and Piss Tubes were out in the open -- no barriers around them. Check out the photo of the first bunker on Nui Dat Hill which was just an open hole that collected water during the monsoon rains and lightening would scare the bejesus out of you since you are wearing a metal helmet and surrounded by ammo cans, rifles, grenades, flares etc, on the highest point around for miles [My photos 17 and 18 in the Phu Cat/Phan Rang show the unprotected foxholes that were the posts manned in all weather, sundown to sunup.

It got really cold up there with the wind blowing, you are soaking wet and all you have is your fatigue shirt on with the poncho over you standing out there all night long. Made for a miserable time. Damn near lose your mind if you thought about the lightening and how cold and wet and how long until daylight so you could walk down the hill back the the camp.



**4. Phan Rang** A C-2 Strike Team with Lewis Grable, Van Digby, backseater Sam Lewis.  
Photo by Van Digby, 1967-1968.

*Hey! The guy in the back of the SAT Jeep who looks like he is board or asleep IS none other than "Your's Truly." Van gave me that pic about a year ago. Sam Lewis*



**5. Phan Rang AB:** OP-3, Van Digby standing guard with XM-148. Photo by Van Digby, 1967-1968.



**6. Phan Rang AB:** Shower Room -- Get there early or water would be too hot. Photo by Van Digby, 1967-1968.



**7. Phan Rang AB:** Control Tower. Photo by Van Digby, 1967-1968.



**8. Phan Rang AB:** PF or RF Outpost, north of **Thop Chan**. Photo by Van Digby, 1967-1968.



**9. Phan Rang AB:** Buddhist Temple outside PR Main Gate. Photo by Van Digby, 1967-1968.



**10. Phan Rang AB:** Salt Farms outside Beach Gate. Photo by Van Digby, 1967-1968.





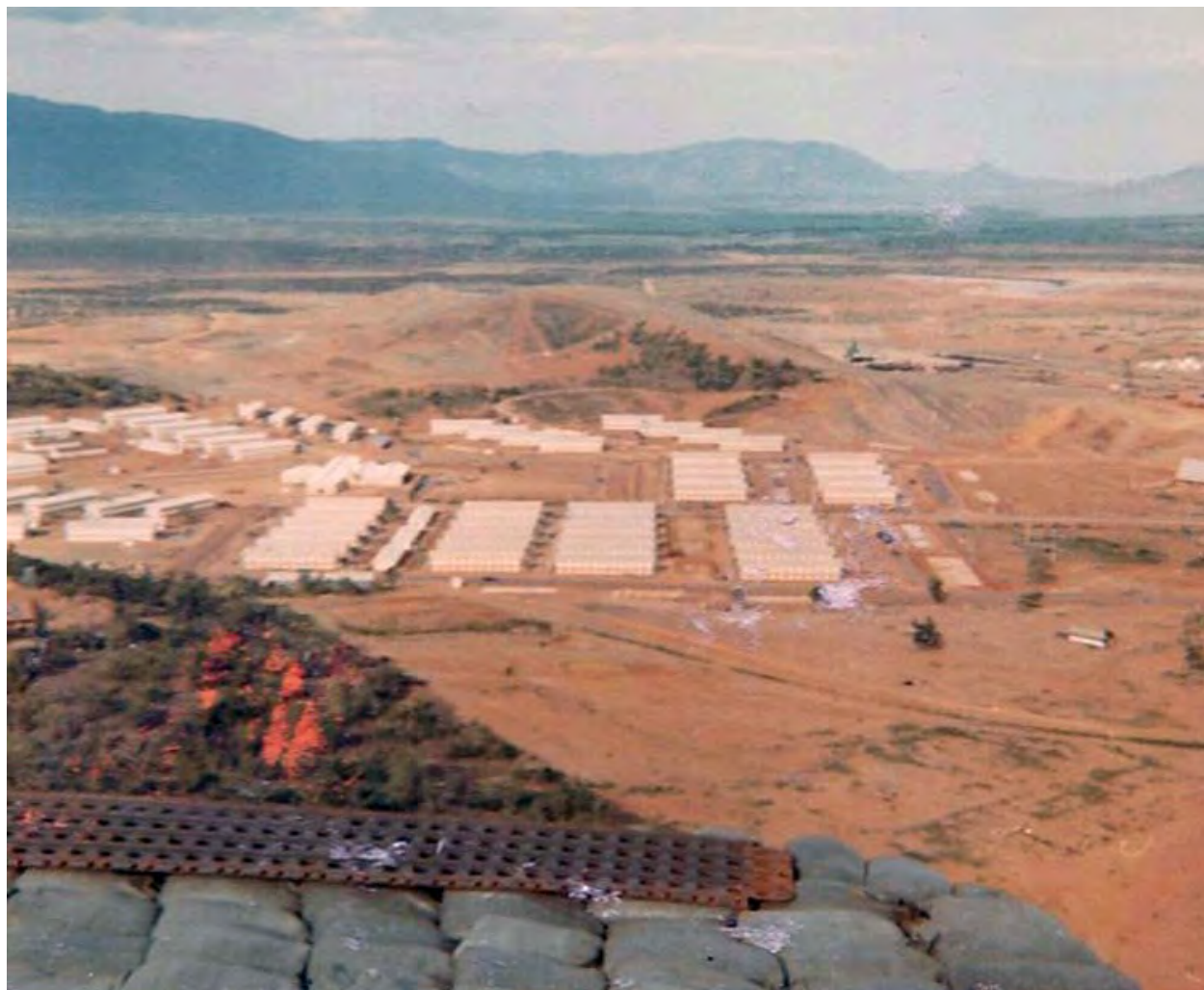
**11. Phan Rang AB: Beach.** Photo by Van Digby, 1967-1968.



**12. Phan Rang AB: F-100 Refueling Area.** Photo by Van Digby, 1967-1968.



**13. Phan Rang AB: Revetment Area.** Photo by Van Digby, 1967-1968.



**14. Phan Rang AB: Barracks Area, taken atop Nui Dat Hill at OP-1 .** Photo by Van Digby, 1967-1968.



**15. Phan Rang AB:** Photo taken atop Nui Dat Mountain at OP-1 . Photo by Van Digby, 1967-1968.



16. Phan Rang AB: Bunker Tower OP-4, A2C Hatley. Photo by Van Digby, 1967-1968.



17. Phan Rang Barracks Area under construction. Photo by Van Digby, 1968.



**18. Phan Rang AB:** Barracks Area under construction. Photo by Van Digby, 1968.



**19. Phan Rang Bunkers** under construction, A2C Digby. Photo by Van Digby, 1968.



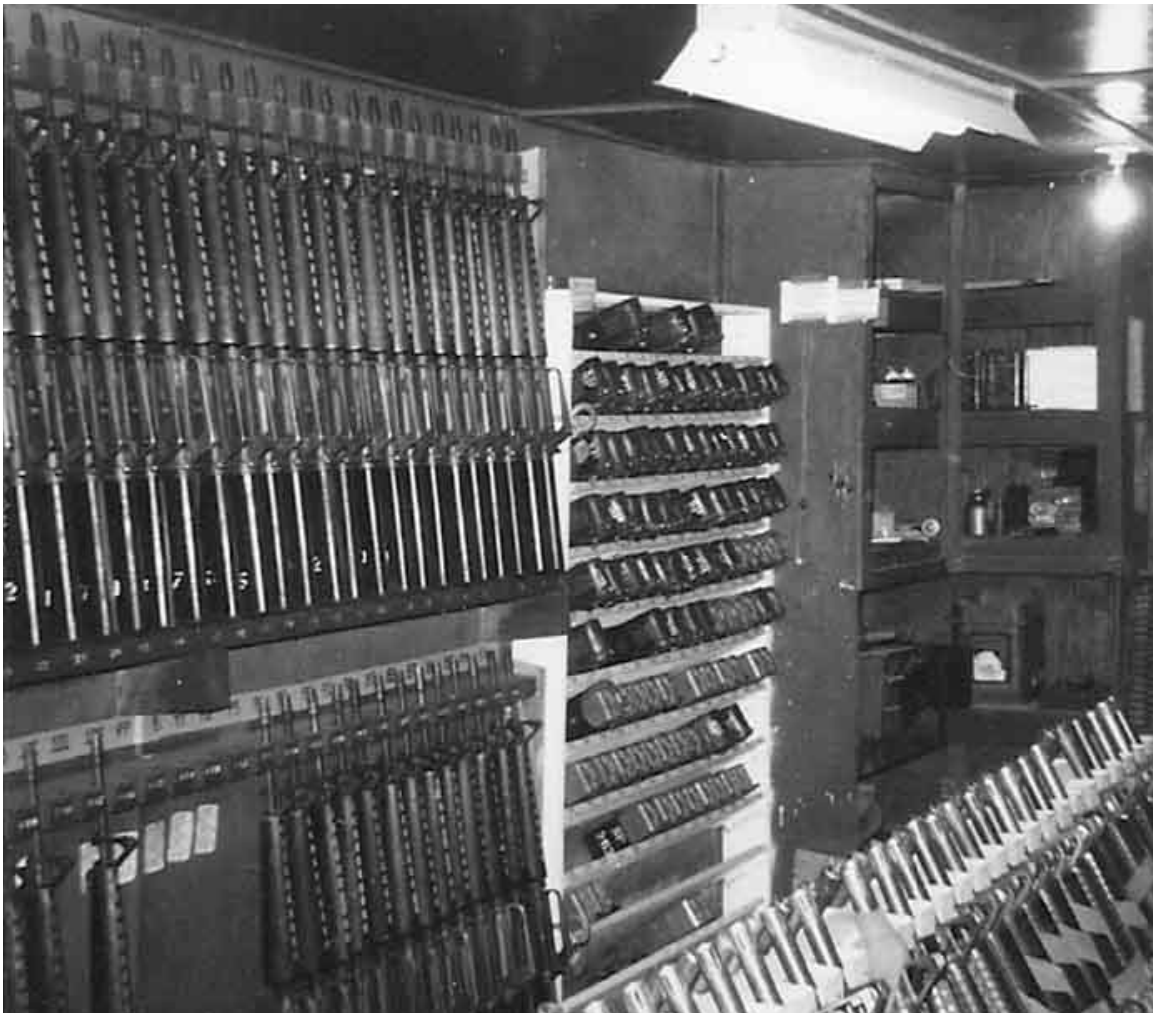
**20. Phan Rang AB: SP Barracks.** Airmen Johnston, Kinderberger, and Walker. Photo by Van Digby, 1968.



**21. Phan Rang Law and Security Weapons Room, M16's Weapons Racks.** Photo by Van Digby, 1968.



**22. Phan Rang AB:** Law and Security Weapons Room. Handguns, Shotguns and Weapons racks.  
Photo: Van Digby, 1968.



**23. Phan Rang** Law and Security Weapons Room: M16 Weapons, Radio & battery chargers racks.  
Photo by Van Digby, 1968.



**24. Phan Rang AB:** Law and Security Weapons Room: .50 Cal. arrived at Phan Rang after Tet'68. Photo by Van Digby, 1968.

eMail From: Terrell Morris [mailto:incoming@charter.net]

Subject: Re: Your Phan Rang/Nui Data hill photos

I saw Digby's pics you sent. He called it OP-1, but I always thought of it as OP-2. To my memory there was only 2 OPs that weren't towers. OP2 on Nui Dat and OP3 was on a hill overlooking the bomb dump area. No bunker. The rest were towers in 1966 except the beach. I have gobs of pics of Phan Rang, Thap Cham, and Phan Rang including one pic of three of us on top of the bunker that I mailed home.



I wrote OP2 on the back of it. Don Dinubilo was there even b4 me and may even have helped build the bunker. You could email him and test his memory. He also sent me a copy of the post assignments for Panther Flight, 23 Sept. 1966 and the Christmas menu. I've got all this stuff, but don't know how to get it to you. I gave all my slides to the WI State Veteran's Museum and they put them on CDs for me. I also have older Instamatic pics. I could write on the backs and mail to you if you want to scan some?

I also have a bunch of PR pics that a member sent me taken about 1969-1970. Give me some time here and send me your snail mail. *Terry Morris*



**25. Phan Rang AB:** Law and Security Weapons Room: Mini Gun arrived at Phan Rang after Tet'68. Photo by Van Digby, 1968.

*We Take Care of Our Own*

© Vietnam Security Police Association, Inc. (USAF) 1995-2018. All Rights Reserved.