

Memorial Service
California Vietnam Memorial in Sacramento,
Tet 1968 Thirty Years Later
Jan. 31, 1998

by Bill Scholtz, AKA: "Feet"
37th SPS, Phù Cát
1968

On a cool rainy Saturday morning a group of Security Police veterans gathered to pay their respects to their fallen comrades in arms. It was January 31, 1998, a small reunion of veterans who were there, "Tet 1968 Thirty Years Later." They met at the California Vietnam Memorial in Sacramento. There was a ceremony to honor all members of the armed forces, however, there was a specific tribute to Security Police. Members of the VSPA displayed memorial wreaths, recited poems and there was an account of the battle for Bunker Hill-10 at Biên Hòa AB. Captain Reginald V. Maisey was honored as the first non rated recipient of the [Air Force Cross](#), who was a California veteran. Three local television stations covered the event and aired the event on the evening news.

*After the ceremony the group met at a local restaurant for lunch. Old friends shared and new friends were made. After lunch, the group went to the California Military Museum in Old Sacramento. There they viewed the history of California military involvement from the Civil War to the Gulf War. There was a display about the Vietnam War. At the end of the day the veterans departed to their own destinations with their own thoughts of the day. Hopefully, their thoughts were of being proud to have been associated with Vietnam Security Police veterans who served with distinction, courage, and honor. **All Gave Some, Some Gave All.***

This is the speech I read at the reunion:

JANUARY 31,1998
Tet 1968 Thirty Years Later

We are here today to honor all service men and women that served in Vietnam who gave the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of their country. We should never forget our comrade in arms or their families.

We are especially here to honor "*Peace Keepers*" and those who died in Vietnam and specifically Capt. Reginald V. Maisey Jr., who was killed in action during Tet 1968 at Biên Hòa AB.

The Tet offensive in the minds of those in Hanoi was to bring down the South Vietnam government and hoped for a general uprising from the Populace. The communists had gambled and they had lost. The Tet offensive was nothing less that a shattering military disaster for Hanoi. You, who were there, know the truth of the matter, that the United States Armed Forces decimated the NVA and Viet Cong. It was during Tet 1968 that Capt. Maisey distinguished himself as a SP Officer and went beyond the call of duty. One must understand what made Capt. Maisey a hero. It was not just what occurred on Jan 31, 1998 but the events that lead up to Tet 1968.

Capt. Maisey was a California veteran, whose hometown of record is Sonoma, CA. Capt. Maisey entered the Air Force in 1957 and served in Korea in 1958/59. In 1960, Capt. Maisey graduated from OCS with honors and was assigned to Scott AFB. Capt. Maisey volunteered for Vietnam and was assigned to Biên Hòa. He then returned to Scott AFB and then volunteered for a second tour in Vietnam in late 1967 and was again assigned to Biên Hòa. It is interesting to note that in 1964, Capt. Maisey, his brother Terry and father CW04 Reg Maisey were all assigned to a Security Police Squadron. At that time both Capt. Maisey and his brother were lieutenants. CW04 Maisey retired in 1966.

It was during Capt. Maisey's second tour at Biên Hòa that he distinguished himself as a professional SP officer. According to Lt. Col Kent Miller, Capt. Maisey's CO, Capt. Maisey was a great person and an outstanding officer of the highest caliber. Capt. Maisey would be out every night making rounds, visiting with the SPs. He would not only help keep morale high among the troops but he always had a ready ear for the all SP NCO's and airmen. As the operational officer and 2nd ranking person in the squadron he was primarily responsible for base defense. He had a 10-mile perimeter to defend, no crew serviced weapons, no flack jackets, no armored vehicles and only about 300 or fewer men to defend the base 365 days a year. Col Miller's pleas to higher headquarters that they were open to a ground attack fell on deaf ears. This only made Capt. Maisey more determined to get the job done.

On January 17th, **Capt. Donald J. Sheehan, AF Chaplain**, rode with Capt. Maisey while making rounds of the SP's on duty and wrote about Capt. Maisey in an article titled "Uncommonly Brave." Capt. Sheehan noted that while making the inspection trip the airmen were visibly reassured by seeing Capt. Maisey. At one stop Capt. Maisey climbed the ladder to visit a guard in his lonely watch on a metal roost some thirty feet above the ground. At other stops, Capt. Maisey checked the security of a bunker or the placement of an M60. Along the road Capt. Maisey halted the jeep frequently to chat with a K-9 sentry. You could see that Capt. Maisey troubled himself for

his men. He was a Professional.

I spoke with John A. Webster who served with Capt. Maisey. John was an airman assigned to the 3d SPS . John stated that he was impressed with Capt. Maisey for his caring of his men. John related that at Guardmount on the evening of Jan 30th, when Capt. Maisey encouraged the men, John's thoughts were, "I know that I will make it through whatever comes our way." It was this leadership that Capt. Maisey had, that instilled in his men confidence they needed to perform their duties. One thing John remembers about Capt. Maisey when he was encouraging the troops, Capt. Maisey did not blow smoke, Capt. Maisey was sincere and caring for his men.

The route that the enemy took to over run Biên Hòa AB was from the east. Right in the middle of this route stood an old French bunker. Bunker Hill-10 would be at the pivotal point of the battle. The fall of Bunker Hill-10 would have a devastating effect to the base. When the battle for Bunker Hill-10 started, Capt. Maisey responded from about four miles away, having to drive through the enemy's field of fire. When Capt. Maisey arrived at Bunker Hill-10, he rallied the troops and provided vital information to Col Miller at the Central Security Control (CSC). According to Col Miller, Capt. Maisey instilled confidence in the troop, made sure that supplies were brought forward, radioed information to CSC and kept this up for hours. During the battle Capt. Maisey had to expose himself many times to communicate with CSC and encourage the troops. Capt. Maisey's bravery and skill in directing the defense were an inspiration to the small force of security police, vastly outnumbered by the enemy and with a third of the defenders wounded. The ferocious battle continued with the enemy troops on three sides of the bunker. The enemy hurled every thing they had at Bunker Hill-10 with numerous RPG's striking the front of Bunker Hill-10. On one of Capt. Maisey's trips outside of the bunker he was hit by enemy fire but continued his report to CSC and his encouragement of his men. Capt. Maisey and his men were supported by helicopter gun ships and AC-47 Spooky, and still were in imminent danger of being overrun. Some time in the morning hours before sunrise, Capt. Maisey was standing inside Bunker Hill-10 giving CSC reports on the situation when an RPG struck the front of the Bunker. The blast entered Bunker Hill-10 through the firing slots and killed Capt. Maisey instantly. The men that Capt. Maisey led so brilliantly continued to contain the enemy until Army reinforcements arrived at dawn. For leadership of the defense at the cost of his own life, Capt. Maisey was awarded the nations second highest award, the Air Force Cross posthumously. It was noted by Col. Miller that the Air Force lost two men that night and the enemy lost about 160 KIA or captured--a ratio of 80 to 1.

One can see by the actions, dedication, caring and duty of Capt. Maisey before and during the battle for Bunker Hill-10 that he was truly a hero. John A. Webster stated that Capt, Maisey did not have to be at Bunker 10 during the attack. It was Capt. Maisey's professionalism and duty that brought him to Bunker Hill-10. Capt. Maisey set the standard for all SP to follow and by doing so he gave his all for his country. Capt, Sheehan wrote, "Was Capt. Maisey a particularly religious man? I don't know. Greater love than this no man has, that one lay down his own life for his friends. (John 15: 13) If Christ measures all by charity, then Capt. Maisey was too big a man to stand measuring."

It is an honor to have served in the USAF as security policemen, a "*Peace Keeper*," and to have been associated with Capt. Reginald V. Maisey Jr.

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