

## Stand Off and Sapper Attack on

**Tan Son Nhut AB, December 4-5, 1966**

**First Alert ~ K-9 at Utah Ditch**

*"Really, it was just a moment ago for those who were there..."*

by [Charles Penley](#)  
[[377th SPS Association](#)]  
© 2009



*In Memory of [LTC Grove C. Johnson](#), Commander,  
377th APS/SPS, 1966-1967*

*"Proven In Combat... Leader of Men"*

The Vietnam Security Police Association, Inc., is extremely grateful to Fred Johnson, Bill Johnson and Jeff Johnson, sons of, LTC Grove C. Johnson, Commander, 377th APS/SPS, 1966-1967, who released noted photographs and information concerning the Stand Off and Sapper attack against Tan Son Nhut AB, on 4 Dec 1966.

VSPA also appreciates the [377th Tan Son Nhut Association](#) and Charles Penley (VSPA member) for sharing these PDF documents and photos with VSPA.

LTC Grove C. Johnson received the [Bronze Star w/V](#) for his actions of 4-5 Dec 1966.

### **TIME-LINE: [Stand Off and Sapper Attack on Tan Son Nhut AB, 4-5 Dec 1966](#)**

by the 14th Viet Cong Battalion, on 4 December, 1966, 0040 hours

*84-Page government document released and converted by Charles Penley to a 24-Page time-line of the base attack. (Time-Line, page 5-11. Numerous Photos and base-map highlighting attack and base defense.)*

### **TSN After Action Det-s regarding 4-5 Dec 1966**

#### **Attack, Losses, and Damage After Action Det-s**

**\*Incoming Mortar/Rockets33 [Attack Dec 4-5, TSN!](#) 1966, by Capt. Chuck Henry**

**Aircraft Destroyed00 [Silver Star, Major Fox](#) 1966, by Charles Penley**

**Aircraft Damaged20 [Shaking Hands with The Enemy!](#) 1966, by Peter Coxon**

**1 US KIA03 [Sappers and Mortars!](#) 1966, by James P. Jerome**

**US WIA15 [Attack on Tan Son Nhut!](#) 1966, by Olbert H. Hiett, 1st Sgt SPS, USAF Ret., 1944-1974.**

**RVN KIA03 "I immediately lost 11 of my 15-man Quick Reaction Team—2 were killed, and 9 wounded."**

**RVN WIA04 [My Story - K9 Kemo](#) , 1966, by William**

**NVA/VC KIA28 Trimble**

**NVA/VC POWs 04**

### Tan Son Nhut Air Base, K-9 Post Map



### The Presidential Unit Citation.

#### DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE WASHINGTON

SPECIAL ORDER  
GB- 743

14 October 1969

1. By direction of the President, \_\_\_\_\_ is awarded the Legion of Merit for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service from 17 Jul 67 to 1 Jul 69.
2. By direction of the President, each of the following units is awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for extraordinary gallantry in connection with military operations during the period indicated:

*Bombardment Sq, Tactical*  
 8th Tactical Bombardment Sq (6 Jun 67 to 18 Jan 68) (PACAF)  
 13th Tactical Bombardment Sq (6 Jun 67 to 18 Jan 68) (PACAF)  
 377th Security Police Sq (31 Jan 68 to 2 Feb 68) (MACAF)

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE



JOHN D. RYAN, General, USAF  
Chief of Staff

JOHN F. RASH, Colonel, USAF  
Director of Administration

DISTRIBUTION  
GO

- GB-743



Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Combat Valor - Special Order GB 703

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON

SPECIAL ORDER  
GB-703

9 Nov 1971

1. The 56th Combat Support Group (PACAF) is awarded the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (with Combat "V" Device) for exceptionally meritorious service in support of military operations from 1 June 1970 to 31 May 1971. The following units share in the award for the same period:

- 56th Civil Engineering Squadron
- 56th Headquarters Squadron
- 56th Security Police Squadron
- 56th Services Squadron
- 56th Transportation Squadron

2. The 377th Combat Support Group (PACAF) is awarded the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (with Combat "V" Device) for exceptionally meritorious service in support of military operations from 1 April 1969 to 31 March 1971. The following units share in the award for the same period unless otherwise indicated:

- Headquarters, 377th Combat Support Group
- 21st Aeromedical Staging Flight, 1 Jan 70 - 31 Mar 71
- 21st Casualty Staging Flight, 1 Apr 69 - 31 Dec 69
- 377th Civil Engineering Squadron
- ~~377th Security Police Squadron~~
- 377th Services Squadron
- 377th Supply Squadron
- 377th Transportation Squadron
- 377th USAF Dispensary

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE



JOHN D. RYAN, General, USAF  
Chief of Staff

DWIGHT W. COVELL, Colonel, USAF  
Director of Administration

DISTRIBUTION  
GO

GB-703

**Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Combat Valor - Special Order GB 862**

**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON**

**SPECIAL ORDER  
GB-862**

**4 December 1973**

1. The 377th Air Base Wing (PACAF) is awarded the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (with Combat V Device) for exceptionally meritorious service in support of military operations from 17 January 1972 to 28 March 1973. The following units share in the award for the same period unless otherwise indicated:

- 377th Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Sq, 17 Jan 72 - 1 Oct 72
- 377th Organizational Maintenance Sq, 1 Oct 72 - 28 Mar 73
- 377th Field Maintenance Sq, 1 Oct 72 - 28 Mar 73
- 377th Civil Engineering Sq, 17 Jan 72 - 2 Aug 72
- 377th Security Police Sq
- 377th Services Sq, 17 Jan 72 - 2 Aug 72
- 377th Supply Sq
- 377th Transportation Sq
- 377th USAF Hospital
- 8th Special Ops Sq, 8 Jul 72 - 1 Oct 72
- 9th Special Ops Sq, 17 Jan 72 - 29 Feb 72
- 21st Tactical Air Support Sq, 15 Mar 72 - 21 Feb 73
- 310th Tactical Airlift Sq, 27 Jan 72 - 15 Nov 72
- 360th Tactical Electronic Warfare Sq, 1 Feb 72 - 24 Nov 72
- 21st Aeromedical Staging Flight
- 6251st USAF Clinic

2. The 6251st Air Base Squadron is awarded the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (with Combat V Device) for exceptionally meritorious achievement in support of military operations from 1 April 1972 to 18 September 1972.

**BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE**



**GEORGE S. BROWN, General, USAF  
Chief of Staff**

**JACK R. BENSON, Colonel, USAF  
Director of Administration**

**DISTRIBUTION  
GO**

**GB-862**

#### 4-5 Dec 1966: Silver Stars / Bronze Stars w/V, Purple Hearts

**Photo Major Roger P. Fox**, courtesy of: Fred Johnson, Bill Johnson and Jeff Johnson, sons of, LTC Grove C. Johnson, Commander, 377th Air/Security Police Squadron, 1966-1967.

AWARDS: Major Roger P. Fox (right), received the nation's third highest medal, the Silver Star for his actions taken on Dec 4-5, 1966.

*Let history take you back generations ago this December ....*

It is now 1:10 A.M., December 4, 1966, Tan Son Nhut Air Base, it is quiet as usual and then a sentry dog alerts to some movement in a very large and deep ditch, known as "Utah Ditch." It is surrounded by trees, bushes and weeds, located on the north-west side of the installation.



The handler called in the situation report, of a large group of men, moving inside his position, where this ditch is located, to Central Security Control (CSC). Almost immediately other sentry dog handlers saw the same movement, and radio traffic began. Immediately enemy forces opened up with automatic weapons fire and mortars. The Air Base was under its second base attack by stand-off weapons of approximately 33 of mortar rounds.

On April 13, 1966 Tan Son Nhut AB received a Stand Off attacked with 246 Rockets and Mortars within thirteen minutes: US KIA 7, WIA 111, RVN KIA 2, and with 9 destroyed aircraft and 62 damaged.

#### **Utah Ditch, Photo right.**

The size of the Viet Cong infiltration force was estimated to have been over 75 sappers and commandos. For the first time a ground assault by sappers on Tan Son Nhut Air Base began. Once inside the perimeter, the enemy divided into smaller groups to attack their various targets. The targets were the bomb dump, flight line, and *targets of opportunity*.



The first report from the sentry dog handler provided time for the air policemen of the 377th Air Police Squadron to respond and engage the enemy. A blocking force was established and the fighting was fierce. Thanks to the quick action's of the air policemen, damage to aircraft and facilities was minimal.

There were three of us manning the Delta Sector Machine Gun Post at the time of the sapper attack on 4-5 Dec 1966. They were as follows, A/3C Alvin Currie who manned the right front side M60 Machine Gun, A/3C John P. Walker who was an M16 Rifleman covering the left



**A2C Alvin W. Curie (right), 377th APS/SPS, received the nation's third highest medal, the Silver Star, for his actions taken on Dec 4-5, 1966.**

front side and myself, Robert W. Valentine Jr. who assisted Airman Currie, maintained communication with CSC, fired slap flares to illuminate the area and also covered the center front side of the post as an M16 rifleman. Airman Currie received a Silver Star for his heroic efforts manning the machine gun and repairing it after both the M60 and his own M16 misfired upon initial use. A/3C Walker received a Bronze Star (not sure if it was with "V" device or not but in my opinion it should have been). A/2C Valentine received a Bronze Star with "V" device for his actions.



**Photo (right),** A2C Alvin W. Curie, courtesy of: Fred Johnson, Bill Johnson and Jeff Johnson, sons of, Lt Col Grove C. Johnson, Commander 377th Air/Security Police Squadron, 1966 -1967.

Additionally, it should be noted that this was A/3C Walker's first night on duty in Vietnam and that he had just arrived on post approximately 45 minutes before all hell broke loose. Personally, I cannot speak highly of both of these gallant men. In my opinion, they are true American Heroes!



Photo: A2C Robert B. Kane (left) and A2C Alvin C. Curie (right) defend their post during the sapper attack of 4 Dec 1966. Airman Kane holds a capture enemy .30 rifle, and Airman Curie mans an M60 machinegun. *[RIP Alvin C. Curie, passed from a massive heart attack on Dec 7, 1982.]*

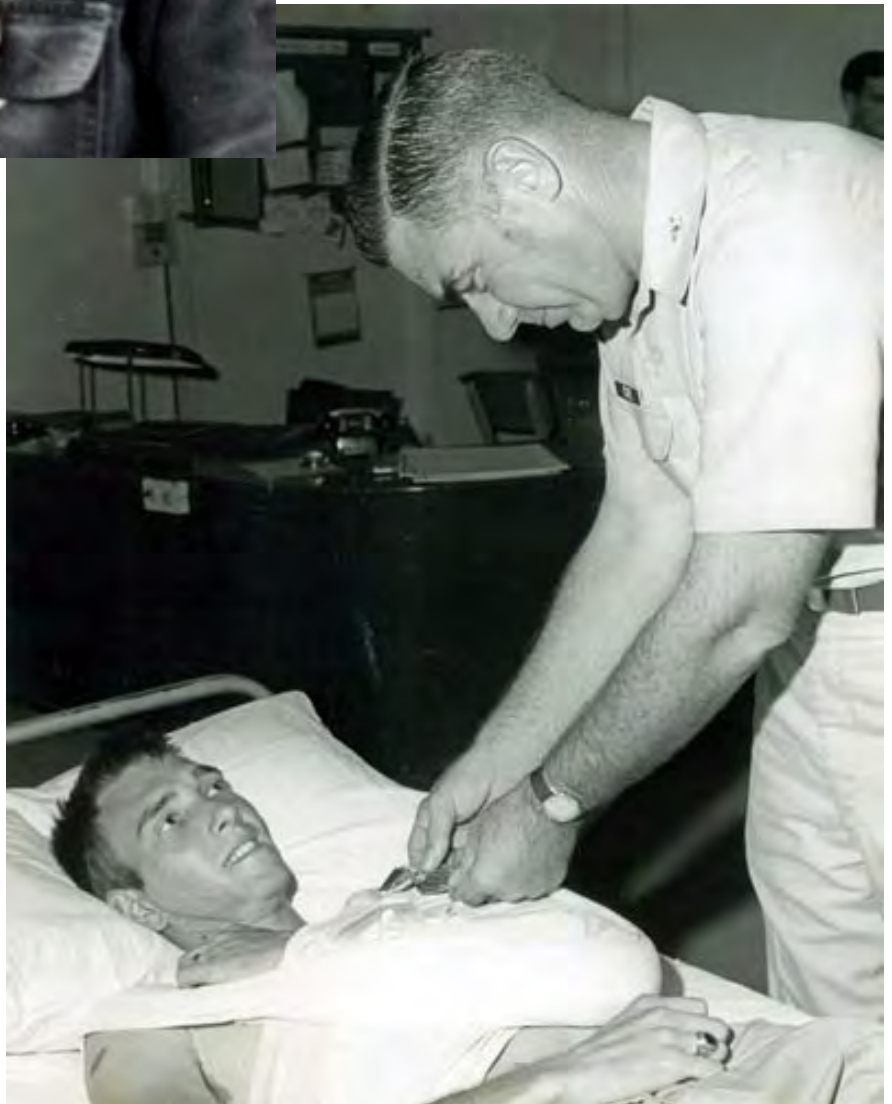


**Photo left: A2C Tommy C. Poole** a Sentry Dog handler, received the nation's third highest medal, the Silver Star and Purple Heart medals for his actions taken on Dec 4-5, 1966.

A2C Tommy C. Poole, courtesy of: Fred Johnson, Bill Johnson and Jeff Johnson, sons of, Lt Col Grove C. Johnson, Commander 377th Air/ Security Police Squadron, 1966 - 1967.

**[A2C Throneburg, Robert A.](#)** (right/bed), wounded in action on 4 Dec 1966, is being presented the [Purple Heart](#) at U. S. Army 3rd Field Hospital by Col Grover K. Coe (standing), Tan Son Nhut's Base Commander. (Dec 1966). Throneburg was also awarded the [Bronze Star w/Valor](#).

[Throneburg and K-9 Nemo in recovery.](#)







**Photo left:**  
**A2C Simmons, Russell**, wounded in action on 4 Dec 1966, is being presented the [Purple Heart](#) at U. S. Army 3rd Field Hospital by Col Grover K. Coe, Tan Son Nhut's Base Commander. (Dec 1966).

377th Air Police Squadron.  
“C Flight Security”

Photo: Fred Johnson, Bill Johnson and Jeff Johnson, sons of, Lt Col Grove C. Johnson, Commander 377th Air/Security Police Squadron, 1966 - 1967.



**Photo left:**  
**A2C Davis, Lyle K.**, wounded in action on 4 Dec 1966, is being presented the [Purple Heart](#) at U. S. Army 3rd Field Hospital by Col Grover K. Coe, Tan Son Nhut's Base Commander.

Wound chest wound, gunshot – condition fair.  
(Dec 1966).

377th Air Police Squadron.  
“C Flight Security”  
Saigon, Vietnam

Photo courtesy of: Fred Johnson, Bill Johnson and Jeff Johnson, sons of, Lt Col Grove C. Johnson, Commander 377th Air/Security Police Squadron, 1966 - 1967.

UUi v/J cdgengt.'Dctt { 'N0'CHB57683: ; ." y qwpf gf 'lp'cevqpp'qp'6'F ge'3; 88.'ku' r tguqpvf 'y g'Rxtr rg'J gctv'cv'W0U0 Cto { '5tf 'Hgrf 'J qur kcn'd { 'Eqn'I tqxgt" M0Eeqg."Vcp'Uqp'P j w'u'Dcug" Eqo o cpf gt0'F ge'3; 88+

599y 'Ck'Rqrleg'Us wcf tqp00E'Hki j v' Ugewk'ö Ucki qp.'Xlgyvco

Photo right, SSgt Barry L. Habecker," eqwtvgu{ 'qh'Hgf 'Laj puqp."Dkn'Laj puqp" cpf 'Lgh'Laj puqp.'uqpu'qh'NvEqn'I tqxg" E0Laj puqp.'Eqo o cpf gt'599y 'Ck1 Ugewk' 'Pqrleg'Us wcf tqp.'3; 88'/'3; 89.



A2C Janiak, Thaddeus M., wounded in action on 4 Dec 1966, is being presented the Purple Heart at U. S. Army 3rd Field Hospital by Col Grover K. Coe, Tan Son Nhut's Base Commander. (Dec 1966)

Air Force Commendation Medal for actions in battle on December 4, 1966. Commendation attached as follows:

"C4E'Vj cf f gwu'O 0Lcplcn'f kxkpi vkuj gf 'j ko ugrh'd { " qwuwcpf lpi 'cej kxgo gpv'cu'cp'Ck'Rqrlego cp.'Ncy " Gphqtego gpv'Ugevkqp.'599y 'CRU.'Vcp'Uqp'P j w'Ck' Dcug.'Tgr wdike'qh'Xlgyvco 'qp'6'F gego dgt'3; 880" Qp'yj cv'f evg.'Ckto cp'Lcplcn'ixcrlcpv' 'hwi j v'ci ckv' c'hqteg'qh'XlgyvEqpi 'cwcngtu'cwgo r vki "v" r gpgt'evg'yj g'dcug'r gtko gvg't'f ghgpugu0'Cmj qwi j " hceg'f'd { "c'pwo gtlecm' 'uwr gtlqt'hqteg.'Ckto cp'Lcplcn' j grf 'j ku'r qukkqp'yj tqwi j qw'yj g'gpwvki 'hkgk j v." y j lej 'tguwngf 'lp'yj g'cwcenkpi 'hqteg'dgkpi 'tgr wngf 0' Vj ku'eqwtci gqu'u'wcpf 'ci ckv'uw' gtlqt'qf f u'emugf " yj g'gpvt { lgzk'r qkp'qh'yj g'XlgyvEqpi . 'rtxgpvki " hwt'yj gt'gptcpeg'd { 'yj g'j quwk'g'hqteg'cpf 'vcr r lpi " yj qug'critgcf { 'qp'dcug0'Vj g'f kxkpevxg" ceeqo r rkuj o gpw'qh'Ckto cp'Lcplcn'ghgevetgf kv' wr qp'j ko ugrh'cpf 'yj g'Wpkyg' 'Ucvgu'Ck' 'Hqteg0



Photo (above), A2C Thaddeus M. Janiak, courtesy of: Fred Johnson, Bill Johnson and Jeff Johnson, sons of, Lt Col Grove C. Johnson, Commander 377th Air/ Security Police Squadron, 1966 -1967 Deceased – May 30, 1999, Demotte, IN

377th Air Police Squadron. "C Flight Security" Saigon, Vietnam





## Sentry Dogs

### K-9 Killed In Action, 4 Dec 1966

**KIA: US Sentry Dog, Toby, 206F** (handler, Dale E. Sidwell -Post Kilo-2)

**KIA: US Sentry Dog, Rebel, 519X** (handler, Leroy E. Marsh -Post Kilo-4)

**KIA: US Sentry Dog, Cubby, 612E** (handler, Larry G. Laudner -Post Kilo-1)

## Sentry Dogs

### Wounded In Action, 4 Dec 1966:

**RIP NEMO:** Vietnam War "K-9" Courtesy of: John "J-Cat" Griffith Oct 17 2006



**Photo: Sentry Dog NEMO A534, courtesy of: Bill Cummings, 635th Security Police Squadron U-Tapao, Thailand. 1970-1971**

**Sentry Dog NEMO A534 (left), and his handler, A2C Robert A. Throneburg (see above photo), were posted for the night.**

Just before total darkness on December 4th, 1966, and after Sentry Nemo (A534) and his handler were posted, Nemo alerted and was released to attack the Viet Cong who had evaded earlier detection. Nemo and his handler were both wounded, but not before killing two Viet Cong. Nemo's injuries included the loss of his right eye and a gunshot wounded that ripped into his nose.

A sweep of the area by the Quick Response Team (QRT) met with negative results. But using additional sentry dog teams, the USAF Security Forces located and killed four more VC.

A second sweep with the dog teams

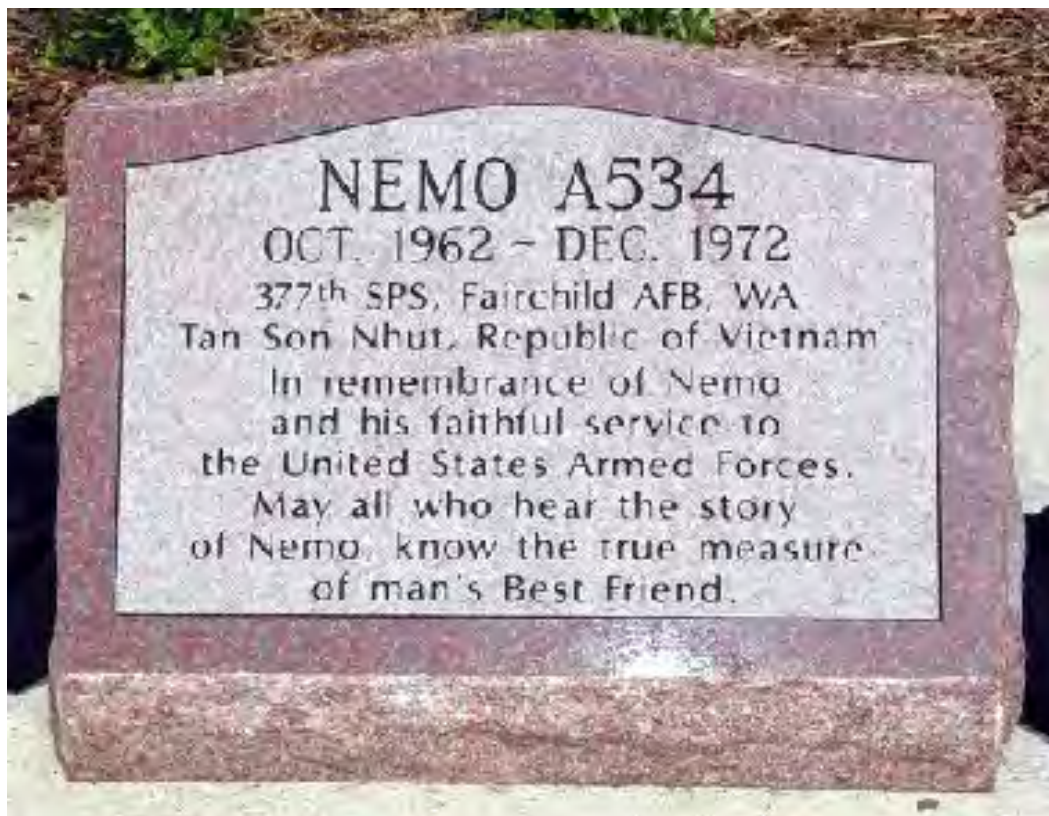
resulted in the discovery of four additional VC who were hiding underground. The remaining enemy forces were soon killed by other Security Police.

Before help could arrive, Nemo, an 85 pound German shepherd, although severely wounded, protected his handler by crawling across his body, and guarding him against anyone who dared to come near. When help arrived, they were able to convince Nemo to leave his handler, who was then given first aid. Nemo, suffering from a gunshot wound to his face, and the lost of his right eye, was relieved of sentry dog duties.

377th Air Police Squadron.  
"C Flight Security"  
Saigon, Vietnam

*In 1964, the US Air Force bought German Shepherd MWDs*





**Shepherd Nemo A534**, received sentry dog training, issued serial number A534, and sent to Vietnam in January 1966.

Nemo and his partner Airman 2nd Class Robert Thorneburg became one of the sentry dog teams of the 377th Air Police Squadron at Tan Son Nut Air Base, Saigon. On December 3, 1966, two Vietcong units tried to infiltrate the base. Thorneburg and Nemo were on duty at an old Vietnamese graveyard near the Air Base's runways. Nemo detected several VCs making an assault, his handler was wounded and Nemo was shot in the muzzle. Ignoring his serious head wound, the 85-pound dog threw himself at the four Vietcong guerrillas giving Thorneburg the time to call in backup to secure the attack. Then they rushed Thorneburg and Nemo back to the base center for emergency medical care. The base veterinarian performed surgery but Nemo lost his right eye.

In July 1967, Nemo returned to the United States as the first sentry dog officially retired from active service. His service to his country did not end. The War Department awarded Nemo full military honors as an Air Force canine hero and recruiter. He made television appearances and helped maintain an adequate supply of dogs for all the armed services. He served as mascot at the Department of Defense Dog Center, Lackland AFB, Texas until his death. A permanent grave stone with his name, serial number and details of his heroic exploit remind students just how important a dog is to the handler and the entire unit.

Birth: Oct 1962, USA

Death: Dec 1972, Bexar Couty, TX, USA

Burial: DoD Dog Center Lackland Air Base  
San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas, USA

## **377th SPS, TET Offensive Alert Blotter**

Compiled by [Charles Penley](#)

**Subject:** Tan Son Nhut Air Base, 377th SPS, TET Offensive Alert Blotter

Hello Everyone,

I have finished typing the Tan Son Nhut Air Base, [377th SPS, TET Offensive Alert Blotter](#) [Click to read the PDF file]. **SSgt Chris Godfrey**, was working as Golf-3 during that duration. Chris had the forethought to keep an onion skin copy of the Alert Blotter. He Xeroxed it and sent me a copy. I typed the 771 entries, 58 page document and am sending it to you.

During TET, I was at the intersection adjacent to CSC and Charlie-5 static post, just prior to entering the flight line.

**Charles Penley,**  
377th SPS

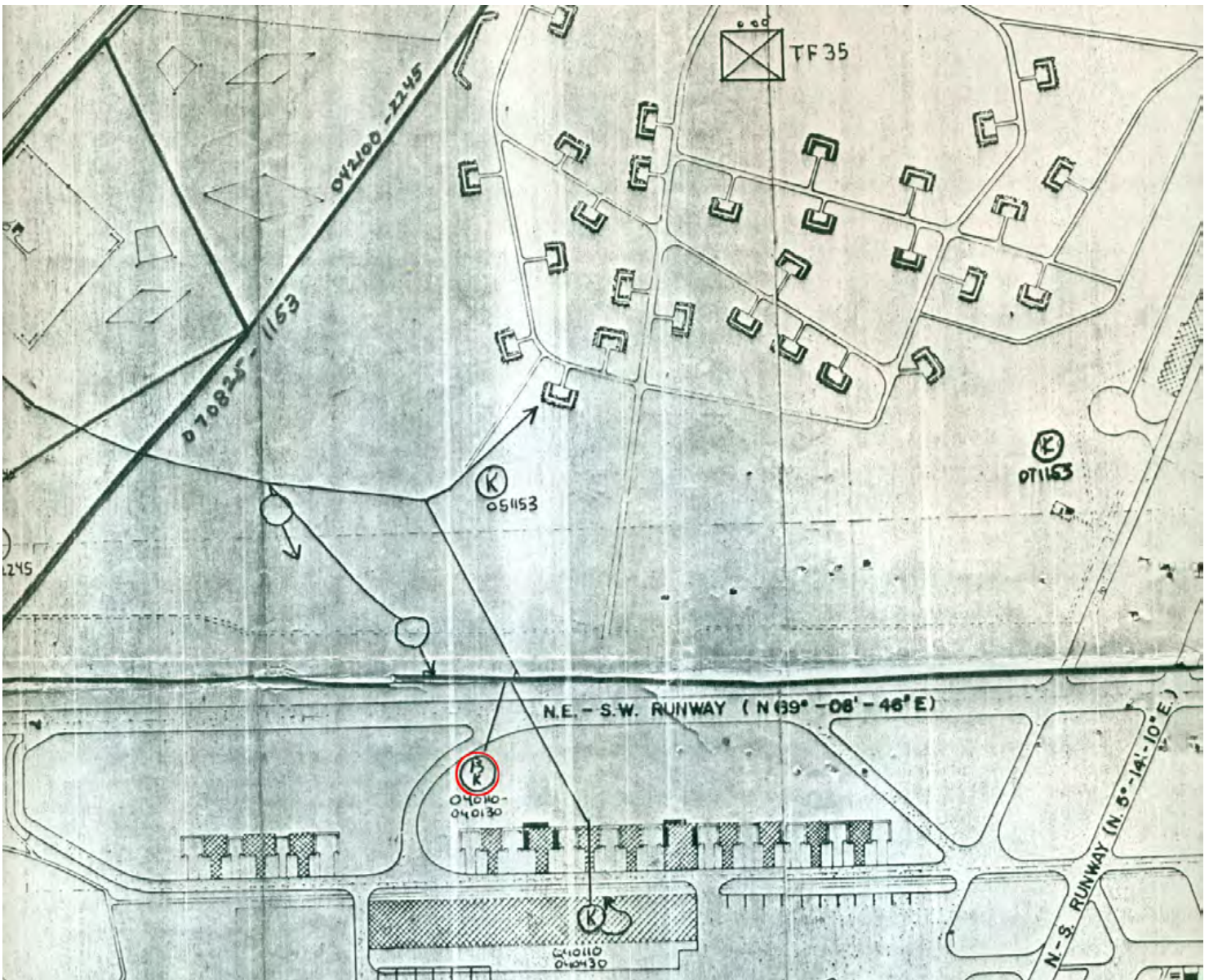
I purchased the "*Attack On Tan Son Nhut, Saigon, Vietnam, Battle Map, dated Dec 4-5, 1966*", from the National Archives.

The scan following is only a portion of that map.

Please use the “ + and - “ icons on the .pdf above and you will be able to enlarge and shrink the map a considerable amount.

Toward the bottom of the map, you will see where I placed a red circle around one of the black circles. This particular black circle has “13 and K” written inside this circle. This is the burial location of the 13 dead enemy bodies that were less than 100 feet from Delta Bunker-11.





**Delta Bunker-11**, slightly south of the red circle, was manned by:

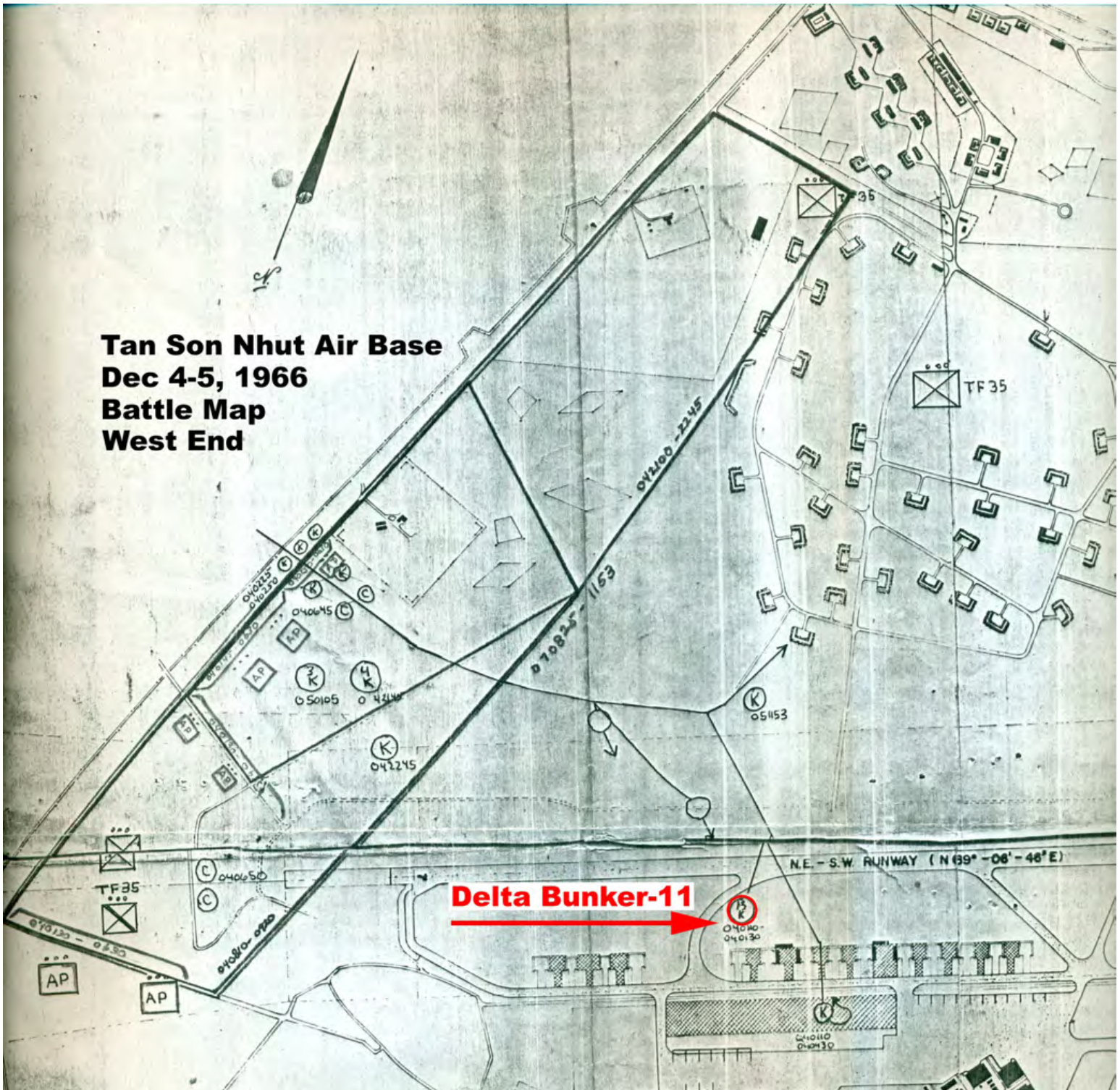
- \* **A2C Robert Valentine**, bunker NCOIC and assistant M-60 gunner, and is the holder of the **Bronze Star Medal/v** for his actions that night.
- \* **A2C Alvin W. Curie**, **M-60 gunner**, and the holder of the **Silver Star Medal** for his actions that night.
- \* **A3C John P. Walker**, **M-16 gunner**. He is the holder of the **Bronze Star Medal/v** for his actions that night.

**Below the red circle are the numbers: 040110 – 040430** (Dec 4, 1966, 0110 hours Dec 4, 1966 -- 0430 hours, Dec 5,1966).

**The lines shows you the direction of travel of the enemy.** The circles with a “K” vand inside them, is where an enemy body lies.

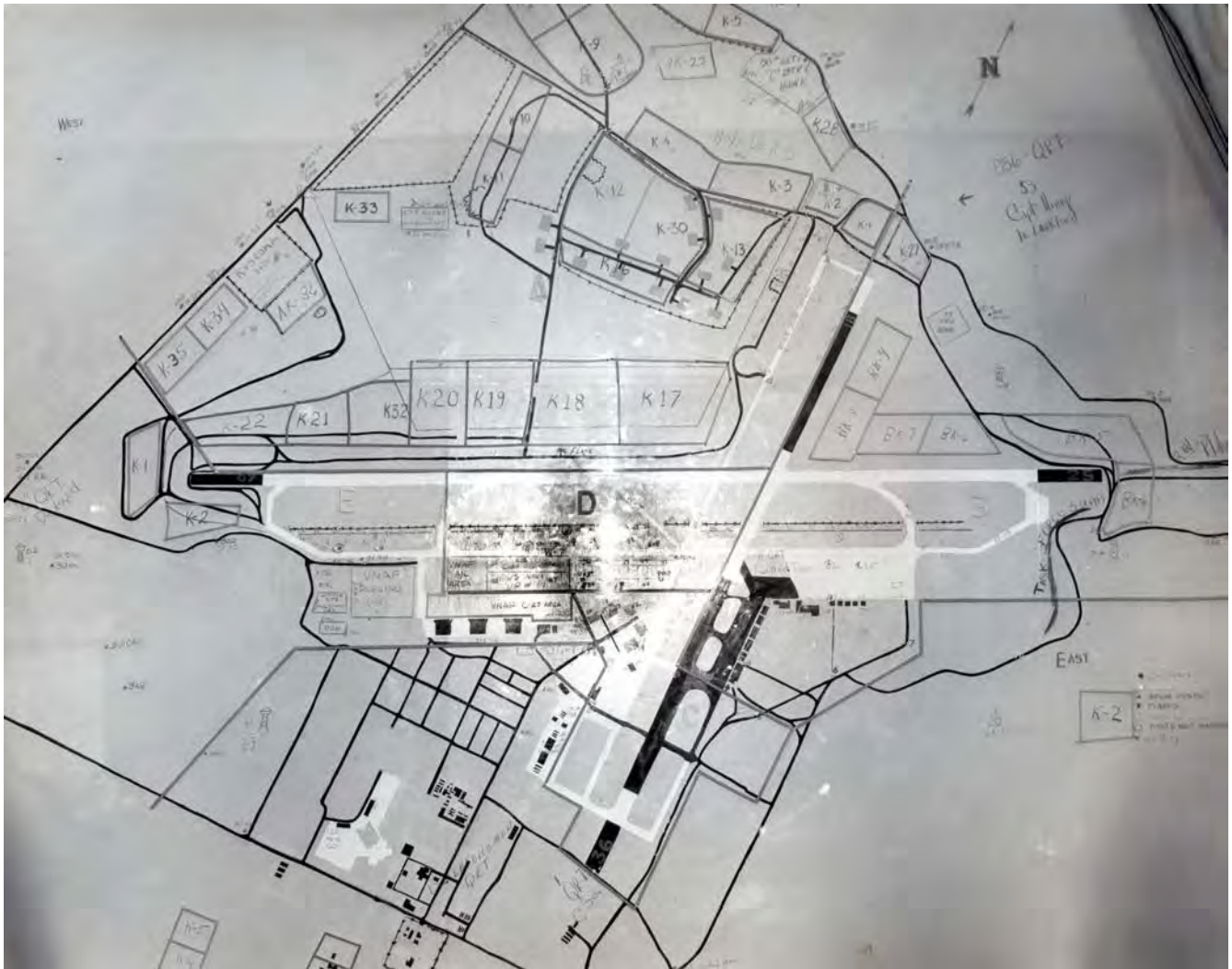
**TF-35 = Task Force-35 element.** They were positioned in four different locations.





Charles Penley scanned two portions of the Tan Son Nhut Air Base, Saigon, Vietnam, Dec 4-5, 1966 Battle Map, and married the scans together. Information shows the west end, and in red letters and a red circle is where Delta Bunker-11 is located. Circles with a number and a “ K “ inside shows were that number of the enemy was killed. 28 enemy kills on that night.





**Photograph was taken from the Lt Col Grove C. Johnson's collection.**

**Lt Col Johnson, Commander, 377<sup>th</sup> Air Police Squadron.**

**You will be able to see great detail by clicking the “ + “ symbol at the top of this .pdf**

**Especially look toward the center of the photograph and that is where Delta Bunker-11 was located. Delta Bunker-11 was manned by:**

**A2C Robert Valentine, bunker NCOIC, holder of the Bronze Star Medal.**

**A2C John P. Walker, holder of the Bronze Star Medal**

**A3C Alvin W. Curie, holder of the Silver Star Medal.**

**It is where the thirteen enemy bodies was located.**

## **TIME-LINE OF EVENTS**

### **Attack On Tan Son Nhut Air Base, December 4-5, 1966**

**Transcribed by Charles Penley from the After Action Report**

**04 Dec 1966**

**0105 - 0315 hours:** Mortar and VC penetration assault on Tan Son Nhut.

**0105 - 0630 hours:** VNAF drops 423 flares over Tan Son Nhut.

**0110 hours:** Alpha K-19, sentry dog post radios that unidentified individuals were on the north side of his post. Explosions and small arms are heard.

**0114 hours:** Delta-15, Main Line of Resistance bunker reported that VC were coming through Delta Sector MLR Reported that his weapon had jammed. VC enter taxiway West-7.

Thirteen (13) VC crossed the 07/25 runway and attempted to proceed to the aircraft parking area via taxiway West-5. This latter element moved into the field of fire of post Delta 11, one of two M-60 machine gun bunkers on the Delta Sector MLR.

The machine-gunner posted at Delta 11 is credited with nine VC dead, and two Air Policemen with him in that bunker, firing M-16, are credited with killing the remaining four, three of whom attempted to out-flank the bunker and silence it from the rear. No VC were observed successfully passing this post, it is assumed that either the entire group of VC was killed, or that any survivors fled north before being sighted by the Air Policemen on the MLR.

While proceeding toward the machine gun bunker, the VC fired at least two B-40 anti-tank grenades (Chicom type 56, USSR Model, RPG-2) at the concrete revetments. One was fired perpendicular to revetment number 10 and the other was fired at an angle at revetment number 99. Neither grenade penetrated the full thickness of the concrete, but each penetrated 1 meter into the cement.

**0118 hours:** Alpha Sector Primary SAT, notified CSC that his vehicle (M- 151 jeep) had been hit by a mortar or grenade and that he was wounded.

**0121 hours:** 377th Air Police Desk Sergeant notifies 716th MP BN, Saigon.

**0130 hours:** ARVN coming to assist Tan Son Nhut was ambushed in Vicinity of XS 789963.

**0137 hours:** Military Police alert force (26 men) in defensive positions southern perimeter near main gate.

**0137 hours:** "Falcon Red." two VNAF A1H's assault VC mortar positions, west of base at: XS 789958.

**0140 hours:** Alpha Post K-33 reported that he was in the ditch on his post, that there were VC in the ditch and he was pursuing them.



**0200 hours:** ARVN make contact with enemy at the Vinatexco Factory.

**0205 hours:** ARVN deployed outside west perimeter as a blocking force.

**0210 hours:** Air Police deployed on the west perimeter was as a blocking force. Unknown to them at this time, their position directly blocked the entry - escape route of the VC.

**0220 hours:** Alpha Post K-33 reported he was hit and wounded but was pursuing the enemy. This sentry dog handler observed a six-man mortar squad near the west side of Alpha Post K-15.

He testified later that he observed the mortar being fired toward the aircraft parking areas.

When he proceeded to within 175 meters of the mortar position he took cover and before firing on the mortar crew. The enemy returned small arms fire but ceased their activity. Despite sustaining a wound below his eye and through his ear, he maintained radio contact with CDS reporting the enemy movements.

**0230 hours:** High order detonation in the southernmost revetment of the Old Bomb Dump, located in the north central portion of the base.

Quantities of US Navy five-inch shells stored in "conex" containers were destroyed. A satchel charge with sufficient explosive capability to detonate the five inch shell was probably used.

**0235 hours:** VNAF gun truck sustained minor small arms damage that stopped the engine.

**0235 hours:** VC Fire subsided. Upon advancing in a search-and-destroy operation toward the enemy position, Air Policemen found the bodies of two Air Policemen, KIA and two wounded Air Policemen were found on or adjacent to the road.

**0305 hours:** Alpha Post K-20, advised CSC that VC were on his post. He advised that he was receiving fire and requested an ambulance for a sentry dog supervisor who was wounded. This was the last transmission from this handler.

**0315 hours:** ARVN sends reinforcement to Vinatexco Factory.

**0315 hours:** CMR unit plotted a mortar location at: XS 791985, approximately 100 meters north of the Vinatexco Textile Mill west of the base.

**0330 hours:** "Falcon Red," return to base.

**0350 hours:** Alpha K-21 encountered VC heading west on his post. He engaged them and released his dog, which was wounded by hostile fire.

**0400 hours:** It is apparent that the VC are attempting to withdraw from base.

**0400 hours:** All Air Police activities were placed in a static or "hold" status. This action was needed to prevent indiscriminate firing, to clear certain area, to accurately locate all friendly forces and to allow key personnel to regroup and reorganize as deemed necessary.

Throughout the engagement. E.O.D. personnel had been working closely with the Air Police to strip dead VC of weapons and munitions, to pick up "dud" ordnance, to check suspected booby traps, etc.

**0400 hours:** E.O.D. teams began a systematic search of the flight line, aircraft and revetments.

**0415 hours:** Alpha KiIo-21. found A1C Bevich, KIA.

**0445 hours:** The Law Enforcement Section made a comprehensive search of the cantonment area of the base.

E.O.D. made a search of all dining halls and the Airmen's Club and Officers' Club. Each found to be free of demolition.

**0520 hours:** ARVN begins sweep operation off post, west end.

**0530 hours:** No contact with VC for one hour.

**0625 hours:** Air Police located several VC inside the perimeter, in the field. VC moving north toward the Air Police blocking element.

Air Police open fire. VC returned the fire seriously wounding one Air Policeman. A cover of small-arms fire was laid down by Air Police to permit the medical evacuation of the wounded. Upon cessation of the covering fire two of the VC in the field waved their hands above the weeds indicating their desire to surrender.

Several Air Policemen moved into the field and surrounded the VC while others stood by to provide a cover fire in the event of a ruse.

Both POWs were wounded and were released to VNAF authorities. A sweep of the field in which they were captured disclosed two dead VC. A short time later two VC surrendered to Air Police near the west end of the 07/25 runway.

**0634 hours:** First light.

**0657 hours:** Sun Rise.

**0810 hours:** US Army Uh-1 a search-and-destroy operation was initiated.

**0849 hours:** The main runway(07/25) was opened for normal aircraft operation.

**0920 hours:** The total security force reverted from emergency to normal security posture.

**0920 - 2021 hours:** Normal base activities.

**0920 - 2021 hours:** Alpha Post K-34 detected a VC crossing his post and opened fire. This sentry dog post had been the scene of much of the morning's activities and one on which several VC had been killed or captured, as well as the center of the area swept after sunrise.

The combination of these factors, with a confirmed VC sighting at 2021, indicated the start of an attempt by the remaining VC to withdraw by their original route.

**2100 hours:** Search-and-destroy operation was organized.

**2145 hours:** Two VC were taken under fire and killed by Air Police QRF personnel moving southward. A third previously undetected VC opened fire and was also killed.

A lull in flare illumination at this time caused a momentary loss of contact with the VC. When flares again lighted the area, the sweep was resumed and a fourth VC was sighted and killed. This latter VC fell forward still clasping a hand grenade from which the pin had been pulled.

When his body was checked by EOD personnel, the grenade rolled from his hand, the handle released and the primer fuse activated. An EOD man immediately seized the grenade and threw it a safe distance away where it exploded.

**2245 hours:** Approximately 275 meters due south, another element of the sweep force searching a nearly impenetrable thicket detected a VC when it had approached to within 1 meter of his hiding place. Simultaneously the VC opened fire which was returned by Air Police killing the VC.

## **05 Dec 1966**

**0021 hours:** The moon was in the last quarter when it rose and thus afforded no assistance. Terrain which is extremely rough, intersected by deep drainage canals and high mounds of earth, covered in extensive areas by dense growths of brush and elephant grass.

**0029 hours:** Sentry dog team posted on Alpha K-34 detected and fired on a VC moving through that post. The VC dove into a bush pursued by the sentry dog.

A second sentry dog team moved into the bush and discovered three VC. The handler withdrew at this time and was shot three times in the shoulder before he had covered more than 5 meters.

Small arms fire was heard from the bush and Alpha K-34's dog emerged wounded. Elements of the sweep force arrived at this time and a fire fight ensued.

When, after several unsuccessful attempts, the wounded Air Policeman had been removed from the target area, three hand grenades were lobbed into the bush, killing the three VC who were concealed therein.

**0130 – 0630 hours:** Search operation continued with negative results and terminated.

A total of eight VC were killed in action and one Air Policeman was wounded in action.

**2200 hours:** A contingent of VNAF personnel entered the area of the planned sweep in front of the Air Police lines. This obstructed Air Police field of fire.



