

**Tân Sơn Nhứt Air Base**  
**377th Security Police Squadron**  
**"C" Flight Sentry Dogs - 1966-1967**  
**Photo Journal**  
**© 2002, by Jerry Roy**

**Scrapbook of A1C Jerry Roy "Sarge A943" "Mobile K-3"**

A few years ago my family pulled out my old pictures and treasures of my days in the military and suggested I put together a scrapbook that they might share after I'm gone... as hard as it was to go back, it was more difficult to put names and faces together with dogs and stories... getting old robs you of the memories of your youth but at the same time going back through the treasures of your past reminds you of all the events and friends that make you what you are... I have great memories even if I can't remember all the faces and all the names.

The pictures were taken at the 377th SPS K-9 facility at both the old kennel and at the new kennel; the Bob Hope show and the recreation of the stories from Stars and Strips and the "C" Flight Duty Roster of my last day as Mobile K-3, prior to my leaving TSN, and returning to the US and my discharge.

I hope you enjoy the photos,

Jerry Roy

**Scrapbook of A1C Jerry Roy "Sarge A943" "Mobile K-3"**



1. Jerry Roy, Photo Journal collage, Tan Son Nhut Air Base, 1966-1967.

# "C" Flight

## SENTRY DOG SECTION DUTY

24/25 September 1967

Guardmount will be held at the Kennels at the times indicated below. All personnel will report to the Kennels (15) minutes prior to the times indicated below for the purpose of drawing proper equipment. Personnel will not consume any alcoholic beverages eight (8) hours prior to duty.

### "A" Flight 2145 hours

F/C	A1C Cassidy
K-31	A1C Marsfielder
K-22	A2C Howard
K-16	A2C Trigilio
K-19	A2C McGuire
K-13	A2C Briggs
K-4	A2C Treadwell
R/R	A1C Gary
Off	A1C Walton
Off	A2C Gillespie
Tng	A2C Bachman
Tng	A3C Koska
Tng	A1C Bothwell
Tng	A2C Sayers
Tng	A1C Paul
Tng	A2C Hedgegard
Tng	A3C Lauckner
Tng	A22C Wirth

### "B" Flight 1845 hours

F/C	A1C Thorneburg
K-14	A2C Keirse
K-2	A2C Kelly
K-8	A2C Flores
K-25	A1C Smith
K-30	A2C Cover
K-17	A2C Haro
K-19A	A2C Kropilak
K-34	A1C Senecal
K-23	A2C Hargrave
K-10	A2C Nutter
Off	A1C Biggs
Off	A2C Lightfoot
Tng	A1C Richardson
Tng	A2C Gilliland
Tng	A2C Steward
Tng	A1C Ledger
Tng	A2C Brown, J.
Tng	A2C Lentz

### "C" Flight 2045 hours

F/C	A1C Roy
K-29	A2C Donahue
K-24	A1C Holmquist
K-35	A2C Montgomery
K-32	A2C Giesbrecht
K-6	A2C Davis
K-18	A1C Barton
K-21	A2C Langley
K-15	A2C Fetters
<del>SAT</del>	<del>K-2</del> A1C White
<del>K-3</del>	<del>K-3</del> A1C Vittatoe
<del>Off</del>	<del>Off</del> A3C Lovett
<del>Off</del>	<del>Off</del> A2C Brown
Off	A2C Goozey
Tng	A2C Schifferle
Tng	A1C Knorr
Tng	A2C Hudak
Tng	A2C Helbert
Tng	A2C Roddoker
Tng	A1C Parsons
OJT	A2C McCullom

Ass't NCOIC  
SSGT Gordon

Kennel Support  
A2C Mooney - 1800 hrs (DQ)  
A2C Newberg - 1800 hrs (LD)  
A1C Keplinger - 2400 hrs (DQ)  
A1C Fenstermaker - 0700 hrs  
A1C Long - 0700 hrs

SCOTTY A. LINNEY, MSGT., USAF  
NCOIC, Sentry Dog Section

## 2. Duty Roster

2.



A.I.C. Keith Thornburn, flight supervisor of B Flight, wears protective mitt while training dogs to attack. The dogs are told by their handlers to "watch him," and then, as in this picture, to "get him." (S&S)

## 53 Sentry Dogs On Defense Line At Tan Son Nhut

By JOE MCDANIEL  
S&S Staff Correspondent

TAN SON NHUT, Vietnam — The first line of defense against Viet Cong infiltrators at this sprawling air base is a four-legged, 80-pound bundle of muscle and dynamite.

Here, keeping vigil to protect the huge war-making capability of men and machines at Tan Son Nhut, are 53 sentry dogs of the 377th Security Police Squadron.

Airman and their dogs patrol about 20 square miles of perimeter during their three flight patrols each night. Varying the posts and changing flight posting times to keep the Viet Cong from cataloguing them, the security police are ready to repel any attempted infiltration of the base.

And they have proved it.

The last attempted entry was on Dec. 4 and 5 when 28 VC were killed and 4 captured. The first alert was given by a sentry dog and the entire defensive operation was conducted mainly by airmen and dogs.

Some of those dogs are still on duty. Fritz, a 10-year-old bundle of aggression despite his age, helped his handler, now discharged Airman 2.C. Tommie C. Poole, win the Silver Star.

Normally a sentry dog is required by regulations to be retired from duty after he is 9 years old but Fritz is still physically and mentally fit for duty.

Another veteran of the December action is Nemo, who with former handler A.I.C. Robert Thornburg fought four VC. Thornburg and the dog both were wounded in the encounter. Now after many stitches, skin grafts, operations, and one eye removed, Nemo is almost ready for duty again.

Sometimes they are not so lucky.

Three dogs have been killed in action since the first arrived from the States in the spring of 1965.

Dogs and their handlers receive regular field training to prepare for the gruelling 8-hour shifts. Each day they are retaught on-and-off leash obedience, agitation, gunfire reaction, scouting and muzzle training.

A close attachment is built up between handler and dog. Each handler is responsible for the health, care, feeding and training of this animal.

The close attachment can prove hard on the dogs, according to M.Sgt. Scotty Linney, non-commissioned officer in charge of the sentry dog section.

"Whenever a handler rotates to the states," he said, "the new man may have a rough time winning the dog over. Naturally the dog misses his former handler and senses something is wrong.

"The new man may have to take as much as three weeks just to get to the dog out of his pen.

"Some have made it in just five minutes. A friend

Continued on the next page . . .

*Taken from Stars & Stripes — Date: Unknown*

3.



A.1.C Michael Cassidy gives medicine to his dog, Tramp, who was suffering from an upset stomach. (S&S)

Continued from previous page . . .

ly relationship must be built up both ways."

The 377th Sentry Dog Section has just moved into new quarters and kennels on the base. This closeness to their posts and adequate living and training space should further their combat readiness.

## TSN Dog Clinic Opens

TAN SON NHUT — The veterinary service recently assumed occupancy of their modern sentry dog clinic at Tan Son Nhut AB.

The facility provides an air-conditioned treatment room and administrative office space.

The up-to-date medical equipment enables the veterinarian to render the highest degree of veterinary professional care for the military animals at Tan Son Nhut.

Sick call for the sentry dogs is provided mornings and evenings seven days a week. Emergency medical care is available whenever needed. Six veterinary observation cages serve as the ward for animals that have to be hospitalized.

Water supply for the sentry dog compound will soon be available from their own private well that is nearing completion.

## More Men Honored For Defense of TSN

TAN SON NHUT — A Bronze Star Medal, five Purple Hearts and 28 Air Force Commendation Medals were presented recently to Tan Son Nhut men who defended the base against a Viet Cong attack in December.

Col. Grover K. Coe, commander of the 377th Combat Support Group, presented the Bronze Star Medal with "V" device (for valor) to 1st Lt. Jack S. How, 377th Air Police Squadron.

A Citation accompanying the award credited the lieutenant with distinguishing himself by heroism while engaged in ground operations against an opposing armed force on Dec. 4.

"... With complete disregard for his personal safety," the citation said, "he ran to a truck under heavy fire and secured radio communications which were desperately needed to report the attack and obtain reinforcements and aid. This courageous act greatly contributed to the needed assistance which resulted in driving off the Viet Cong attack and securing the perimeter defenses."

Col. Coe presented the Air Force Commendation Medal for "outstanding achievement" in defense of Tan Son Nhut to the following:

Master Sergeants Marcus H. Ford Jr. and Ronald G. Hollenbeck; TSgt. Thomas L. Henson; Staff Sergeants Eugene J. Cavanaugh, Barry L. Habecker, and Gerald R. Summerhays; Airmen First Class Melvin Bailey, Joseph R. Yonki and Roger A. Pederson; Airman Second Class Richard L. Bernava, Robert L. Brand, Theodore E. Collins, Beverly A. Estep, Thomas R. Handler, Thaddeus M. Janiak, Leroy E. Marsh, Robert E. Mayhugh, David E. Olden, Frank Ramirez and Russell Simmons, and Airmen Third Class Sanford Dowdell Jr. and Timothy A. Seals — all of the 377th APS.

Also receiving the AFCM were TSgt. Thomas J. Messier; Staff Sergeants Robert W. Hunt Jr., George E. Isaacs, Oscar F. Springsguth and Roger E. Stark — 377th Supply Sq.

The Purple Heart Medal, for wounds received during the action, was presented to Airman Yonki and to Airmen Second Class Walter M. Hargis, George W. Hurgins, James E. Laude and Richard G. Ottensman of the AP squadron.

*The Publisher, Date and Author of this Article are all Unknown*

*Taken from Stars & Strips — Date: Unknown*



4.

## AF Sentry Dog To Become Symbol Of Professionalism

TAN SON NHUT — Battle scarred from wounds suffered in the Vietnam war, Nemo has received first class medical care and is well on the road to recovery.

The Vietnam war is over for Nemo — an Air Force Sentry dog credited with saving his master's life during a battle with four Viet Cong in South Vietnam.

The heroic canine left Tan Son Nhut AB for retirement at the sentry dog training school, Lackland AFB, Tex. Nemo boarded an Air Force C-141 Starlifter at Tan Son Nhut with A2C Melvin W. Bryant, 21 of Port St. Joe, Fla., who is accompanying the dog to Lackland.

Returning to Lackland, Nemo will be a symbol of the professional training sentry dogs receive and job they are doing in war-torn Vietnam.

The event that altered Nemo's life began on Dec. 5, 1966. He and his handler, A1C Robert A. Throneburg of Charlotte, N.C., were on patrol at Tan Son Nhut AB. The preceding day, Tan Son Nhut had been hit by a Viet Cong mortar attack. During the attack about 60 VC swept through an opening they made in the base perimeter's barbed wire fence.

The infiltrators were stopped and turned back by the 377th Security Police Squadron's main line of defense. But four VC eluded discovery by earlier search parties and were hiding within the base's perimeter. It was the sentry dog's job to find them.

In the silence of darkness, the two sentries walked cautiously forward. Suddenly their search ended. Nemo had alerted them to a group of hidden VC. "Watch him," said Airman Throneburg. The dog's muscles tensed for action. "Get him!" — was the next command and Nemo lunged savagely forward, into the enemy's nest. Airman Throneburg followed close behind.

In the first moments of encounter, airman killed two of the VC. But, before additional security police could reach them, Airman Throneburg was wounded in the shoulder and Nemo's snout was creased by a bullet. The remaining enemy were soon killed by other security police.

Nemo was credited not only with saving the life of Airman Throneburg, but indirectly prevented further destruction of life and property at Tan Son Nhut.

The 377th SPS was awarded the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for its "heroic valor" against the Viet Cong infiltration force.

The battle was over for Airman Throneburg and Nemo. Master and dog soon parted. Airman Throneburg was airlifted from South Vietnam. Nemo remained at Tan Son Nhut for treatment by the base veterinarian, Capt. Raymond T. Huston, of Roseville, Ill.

"When Nemo was brought to me," Doctor Hus-



**CANINE HERO RETURNS TO STATES** — Nemo, a 95-pound Air Force sentry dog who served in Vietnam since January last year, is held by A2C Melvin W. Bryant of Port St. Joe, Fla., who is accompanying the dog back to the United States. The 5-year-old K-9 is returning to Lackland AFB, Tex., for retirement. (AIR FORCE PHOTO)

ton said, "he was pretty bad shape. I had to do skin grafts on his face and perform a tracheotomy to help him breathe. His right eye had to be removed, but even this didn't lessen his ability. It only made his other senses — hearing and smell — more sensitive. Now, eight months after being wounded, he is on his feet and ready to go."

The medical care Nemo received is typical of treatment given all sentry dogs serving in Vietnam. Whether it is a minor ailment or major surgery, all received first class medical care.

Most dogs used by the Air Force for sentry dog duty were former house pets. Nemo belonged to Samuel Cooks Jr., an on-base resident of K.I. Sawyer AFB, Mich. Nemo attended a special sentry dog training course at Lackland AFB, prior to coming to Vietnam.

Coincidentally, the man taking Nemo home — Melvin Bryant — has the same last name as Nemo's original handler, A3C Leonard Bryant who picked him up at Lackland and brought him to Vietnam in January 1966. Six months later, when Airman Bryant assumed other duties, Airman Throneburg became the dog's handler.

*Taken from Seventh Air Force News — Date: August 9, 1967*

5.



**HOME FROM THE BATTLEFIELD** — Nemo, a hero Air Force sentry dog, and his handler, Airman 3.C. Leonard Bryant, arrive at Norton Air Force Base near San Bernardino. Nemo alerted his unit to a Viet Cong attack in Vietnam and subsequently lost his eye in the action. The dog will be sent to Lackland Air Force Base, where he will retire with the Purple Heart and a unit citation. (AP Wirephoto)



**NEMO RETURNS** — Nemo, Air Force sentry dog, gets a hero's welcome at Norton Air Force Base, San Bernadino, Calif, on his return from Vietnam. Nemo, the first sentry dog in the Vietnam war, saved the life of his handler and possibly several others when Viet Cong troops attempted to attack Tan Son Nhut air base in December. His original handler, Airman 2nd/C Leonard Bryant, is accompanying him to Lackland Air Force Base. (UPI Telephoto)

*Taken from Seventh Air Force News — Date: August 9, 1967*

## 6. Air Police Ready To Meet, Counter Attacks By Viet Cong

(First Of Two Parts)

HQ., 7TH AF — Some where along the defense perimeter at Tan Son Nhut AB an air police machine gun post reports possible enemy activity.

A slap flare is sent aloft ... then another. The guards scan the area. Darkness returns without incident. The Viet Cong aren't there ... not now anyway.

Meanwhile, MSgt. George F. Wise, 36, of Tovey, Ill., sits in Central Security Control, the nerve center of the 377th Air Police Squadron. A veteran of 19 years, 6 months of military service — all as a policeman — Sergeant Wise is night flight commander. He works on some reports, has a cup of coffee and goes back to his work.

With him are 1st Lt. John K. Smith, 30, of Frisco City, Ala., assistant security operations officer and MSgt. Edward W. Battoe, 38, Paducah, Ky., assistant flight commander. The three men are all veterans of a previous VC attack on the base. Sergeant Battoe received the Bronze Star with "V" device for valor during the attack. The three talk — about home, the job and Vietnam.

### Quiet Evening

It's early evening now. Things should anything happen these men would be speeding to the trouble area within seconds.

In another room of the CSC building other air policemen operate a vast communication network, keeping a close watch on activities spanning the entire base.

In another base sector, A2C Leroy E. Marsh, 25, of Groton, N.Y., and his K-9 sentry dog, King, walk a distant post. A2C William H. Robbins, 20, Shoals, Ind., watches over an aircraft parking area and A2C Roy M. Mendivil, 20, Phoenix, Ariz., scan an area from a bunker position while others guard key points around the base.

It's early evening now. Things are beginning to settle down ... the start of another night of waiting to see if "Charlie" shows up. The 377th APS at Tan Son Nhut is typical of Air Force security forces used to protect large vital areas of essential materials and people.

Continued on the next page ...



ROVING TEAMS — Air Police Security Alert Teams (SAT) roam interperimeter areas at Tan Son Nhut AB 24 hours a day. Members of this team are: SSgt. Pete L. Pierce, 31, of Del Rio, Tex., SAT leader; A1C Kenneth E. Waite, 22, of Warsaw, N.Y.; and A1C Thomas J. Roberts, 21, of Brielle, N.Y. The quick-reaction teams are equipped with armored jeeps, radios, M-16 rifles, M-60 machine guns, grenades and slap flares. (AIR FORCE PHOTO)

Taken from Seventh Air Force News — Date and Author Unknown



7. Continued from previous page . . .

Similar scenes prevail at Seventh Air Force bases throughout Vietnam where air police units defend against VC attacks by employing quick reaction and mobile forces.

**No Warning**

"There is no warning when the VC strike," says Maj. Roger P. Fox, squadron operations officer. "Instant communications, quick reaction forces and close coordination between all the services is necessary to successfully repel an enemy force."

Major Fox, a soft-spoken confident man, asserts, "one man in 10 minutes is worth 1,000 in an hour." A graduate of Syracuse University, Major Fox, 42, of Cleveland, has geared his security forces to this concept . . . quick reaction. The major won the Silver Star for heroism during a VC strike late last year.

Job of the 377th APS is to meet and turn back any penetration of the base inter-perimeter. In addition, the squadron handles law enforcement, customs inspections and other related air police activities.

"The law enforcement section is a little different than State-side," says CMSgt. Luther C Latham, AP superintendent. Besides issuing tickets and handling traffic control, the section is at least 75 percent a security force in itself." Quan Canh, Vietnamese guards directly under the control of the Vietnamese Air Force, assist in law enforced air police activities.

**Hit Twice**

The VC have struck Tan Son Nhut twice in the last 11 months, the last time Dec. 4. Airman Marsh remembers that day. A sentry dog handler for two and a half years, his job for the past eight months has been walking outpost duty between the outer and inner perimeters. The night of the attack Airman Marsh turned in one of the early alarms.

"Three VC came over a knoll about 100 yards in front of me . . . they didn't see me in the shadows," he said. "They seemed to be coming right at

me but ended up going east and west along the knoll. I was scared but didn't have time to worry about it and called in the alarm to CSC."

Although law enforcement section people are primarily used for traffic management, guarding billets and general security during daylight hours, when the VC strike they are right in the thick of battle. That's the way it was last time.

A2C Wilbert B. Arrant, 19, of Murphy, N.C., works a day shift. He was in bed when the VC mortar attack began. Later, he was wounded when a grenade exploded five yards away, lodging a piece of shrapnel in his left thigh.

**Among First**

"I was among the first quick-reaction forces sent to the perimeter," said Airman Arrant. "There was a lot of shooting going on when we arrived."

About an hour later, a VC tossed a grenade behind him. "I saw the flash out of the corner of my eye," he recalls. He moved away quickly . . . the explosion knocked him down. Airman Arrant never knew of his wound until, while he was in a dazed condition, a sergeant checked him over. Airman Arrant remained on the line for at least an hour after his injury. He received the Purple Heart.

Continued on the next page . . .

**COMMUNICATIONS NERVE CENTER** — SSgt. Orvil E Willis, 36, of Des Arc, Ark., a communicator at Air Police Central Security Control (CSC), controls all communications with guard posts. CSC maintains constant radio and backup communications with outposts and roving patrols at the sprawling Tan Son Nhut AB.  
(AIR FORCE PHOTO)



*Taken from Seventh Air Force News — Date and Author Unknown*

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Continued from previous page . . .

The AP force smashed the attack. Three men received the Silver Star while 13 others were awarded the Bronze Star with "V" device for valor. Receiving the Silver Star for heroism were A2C Alvin W. Curie, Grand Rapids, Mich.; A2C Tommy C. Poole, Oklona, Miss., and Major Fox. Airman Poole has since returned to United States.

Major Fox was cited for advancing into areas under heavy fire and personally administering aid to the wounded, organizing operations, and reporting back intelligence information to the control center from the scene of the attack.

### Gun Jammed

The VC attack force attempted to gain entrance to the priority aircraft revetments where Airman Curie stood guard. When his machine gun jammed in the face of the advancing VC, Airman Curie calmly rectified the malfunction and directed highly accurate fire on the hostile force, inflicting nine casualties against superior odds. His actions prevented the attackers from gaining entrance to the revetment area.

During the attack, Airman Poole was on K-9 sentry duty when he spotted what appeared to be a mortar flash. Advancing on the position, he discovered a mortar with several VC in the process of shelling the flightline area. With complete disregard for his own personal safety Airman Poole radioed in their position and then proceeded to fire on the VC. Although wounded twice, Airman Poole continued to relay valuable information to CSC and only after the attackers had been routed did he report his own injuries.

There were others cited for bravery that day. The attack started at 1:10 a.m. with a series of mortar hits on the flight line from a weapons position about two and one half kilometers north of the base. Other rounds were launched by the enemy from a second position four kilometers west of the base. Approximately 40 rounds hit within the base perimeter, inflicting minor damage.

### On Standby

Throughout the battle, Tan Son Nhut-based U.S. Army troops and Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) forces were on standby and guarding various areas. The air police forces alone engaged and defeated the enemy penetration force.

On April 13, 1966, Communists fired 243 rounds of 82mm mortars and 75mm recoilless rifle shells onto the base.

"We're proud of the job our men did," Sergeant Latham said. "Yet, any air police unit in Vietnam or Stateside could have done the same. Remember, many of the men that did the job that night only recently arrived here from bases in the U.S."

(To be continued next week.)

## Air Police Ready To Meet, Counter Attacks By Viet Cong

(Second Of Two Parts)

Air Police are trained to do a job . . . and they do it well. Equipped with Handie Talkie radios plus other portable and mobile radio sets, air policemen manning posts around the base can contact the control center instantaneously. When an emergency call comes in, trucks loaded with quick-reaction forces are on the way to the scene.

Normally, first on the scene are security alert teams (SAT) which roam the five base defense sectors. "We move around checking posts . . . when the VC hit we're at the trouble spot in less than a minute," states TSgt. Thomas L. Henson, 33, Orlando, Fla., a SAT team leader. The team is equipped with an armor plated jeep complete with radio, weapons, grenades and slap flares. SSgt. Luther W. Boone Jr., 29, Carsville, Va., handles an M-60 machine gun mounted on the jeep. He is assisted by A1C Sam B. Lankford, 22, Whitestone, Va.

Air Police security forces use all types of defenses. A1C David P. Scott, 24, Eastlake, Ohio, and A1C Byron G. Martin, 22, Hancock, Iowa, are stationed in a key machine gun bunker. The men are armed with an M-60 machine gun, M-16 rifles, M-79 grenade launcher and slap flares.

Another position valuable in thwarting enemy infiltrations is the 40-foot tower post, one of many strategically placed. A2C Raymond O. Calhoun, 20, Texarkana, Ark., armed with special night observation equipment, keeps a constant eye searching for the enemy from one of these perches.

He was another that met the VC attack Dec. 4. "I had eight hours sleep in three days during the attack and mop-up operations," he remarked. "And I was one of the lucky ones."

"Sentry dogs are invaluable in Vietnam," states TSgt. Scotty A. Linney, 34, of Refugio, Tex., K-9 section head. Dog and handler teams are posted from dark to daylight immediately inside the air base perimeter. These teams are the first line of detection.

Dog handlers agree that the first time out walking one of these posts is "scary" . . . they never really

Continued on the next page . . .

*Taken from Seventh Air Force News — Date and Author Unknown*

## 9. Continued from previous page . . .

get used to it. But to a man they agree they'd rather be there with their highly sensitive and intelligent dogs that somewhere else. "At least we have someone to talk to" sums up the feeling of the K-9 sentry dog handlers.

Following the April attack on Tan Son Nhut, the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) made a study of the base defense of the base, Major Fox said.

Many improvements have been made since the study was completed. New perimeter lights have been installed, and key points re-fortified.

Another aid has been the spare-time project of the Air Police in clearing waist-high elephant grass along the base perimeter. The Air Police bulldozed, mowed and burned more than 700 acres of the dense reed-like growth. Destruction of the grass has robbed the VC of a place to hide and has made it easier for K-9 and post patrols to observe anyone approaching the base perimeter.

One of the busiest places in the air police are — day or night — is the armory. SSgt. William R. Adkins, 38, Pikeville, Ky., armory chief, points out the importance of the section. "The M-16 rifle and other weapons mean the difference between life and death," he said. "Each man takes much care of his weapon, including the meticulous cleaning of it. He knows that he may need it at anytime.

PRIDE ... in himself and his unit flourishes among Air Police forces in Vietnam. They work as a team. There is also still some "spit and polish" attached to being an air policeman. During guard mounts — whether it be the daytime force garbed in the normal green fatigue uniform with blue helmet or the night unit dressed traditional combat camouflage fatigues — it is the same. Flight leaders check weapons (during night guard mounts by flash light), uniforms, and pass on vital information.

One thing is certain. Air Police units in Vietnam are well trained, experienced and equipped to do the job. **AND THEY ARE TOUGH.**



**CHECKING POSTS** — A security alert team (SAT) checks a sentry dog post for possible enemy activity. The job SAT teams are quick reaction forces that roam base defense areas. Members of the team are (from left front) Airman First Class Freeman Tilden, 21, of Atlanta, Ga., Joseph A. LeBlanc, 22, of Baton Rouge, La., and Francis A. Jasinski, 21, of Buffalo, N.Y. (back seat). K-9 handler, A1C Leon E. Senecal, 22, of Easthampton, Mass., and his sentry dog, Rex, are the first line of detection of enemy attempts to infiltrate sprawling Tan Son Nhut AB.

*Taken from Seventh Air Force News — Date and Author Unknown*

10.





11.

*I believe this story was published in the Stars & Strips shortly after the December 4 & 5th attack at Tan Son Nhut but the front page portion is missing. However, the remaining portion does tell a great story and is a tribute to the men and dogs of the 377th SPS.*

## 3 Dogs Die Heroes in Defense of Airfield

### From First Page

down as the infiltrators began a rush to cross the main airport runway, maneuver past the line of sandbagged bunkers that make up the main line of defense, and penetrate the flight line where scores of jet fighters and transport aircraft are located.

Only one Viet Cong got through, testimony to the defense of 50 American air policemen who fought the guerrillas to a standstill, killing 18 and capturing four.

Airman Marsh, patrolling off the northwest end of the main 10,000-foot airstrip, was the first to notice the infiltrators.

"THEY WERE padding along 50 yards out," he said. "Rebel didn't alert me because the wind was blowing in the wrong direction. But he saw them when I did."

Marsh called urgently into his radio, unclipped Rebel's leash, and slithered back to his waist-high sandbagged bunker. A grenade blasted the silence, fragments hitting Marsh's sector leader who was driving 100 yards away.

"Then it all came in — mortars, rockets, grenades, machine gun fire," Marsh said. "I dropped to my knees and kept firing."

Half a hour mile away, another patrol sentry, Airman 2.C. Larry Laudner, from Rockford, Iowa, heard the grenade explode, and the clatter that followed.

"I DROPPED to my knees and jumped into a ditch, busting my radio," Laudner said. "I look back and I saw maybe 20 Viet Cong, but they fooled me at first. They were moving in military formation, they looked like regular Army troopers," he said.

The sentry challenged the group. "They dropped to the ground which is not so unusual. Then I told them I had a dog and that they had to identify themselves. I was still thinking they were ours," Laudner said.

When no reply came from the

group, he let his German Shepherd dog, Chubby loose.

"CHUBBY MOVED out about 20 yards, then he cut in and I knew he was on to something.

I heard a scuffle, a yell, then I saw Chubby spin out, and an automatic weapon firing. I opened up with full automatic, sweeping from the left to right. I think I killed two or three," Laudner said.

Neither Laudner nor Marsh were hit as the Viet Cong infiltrators swept past them toward the air police bunkers spaced 20 yards apart on the flight-line side of the main airstrip. Each of the bunkers held one M60 machine gun and two automatic rifles. These weapons cut the attacking Viet Cong to pieces.

THE MAIN FIGHT lasted 30 minutes, with the American force of 50 air police bearing the brunt of the action in the main line of defense. Three Americans were killed, five wounded.

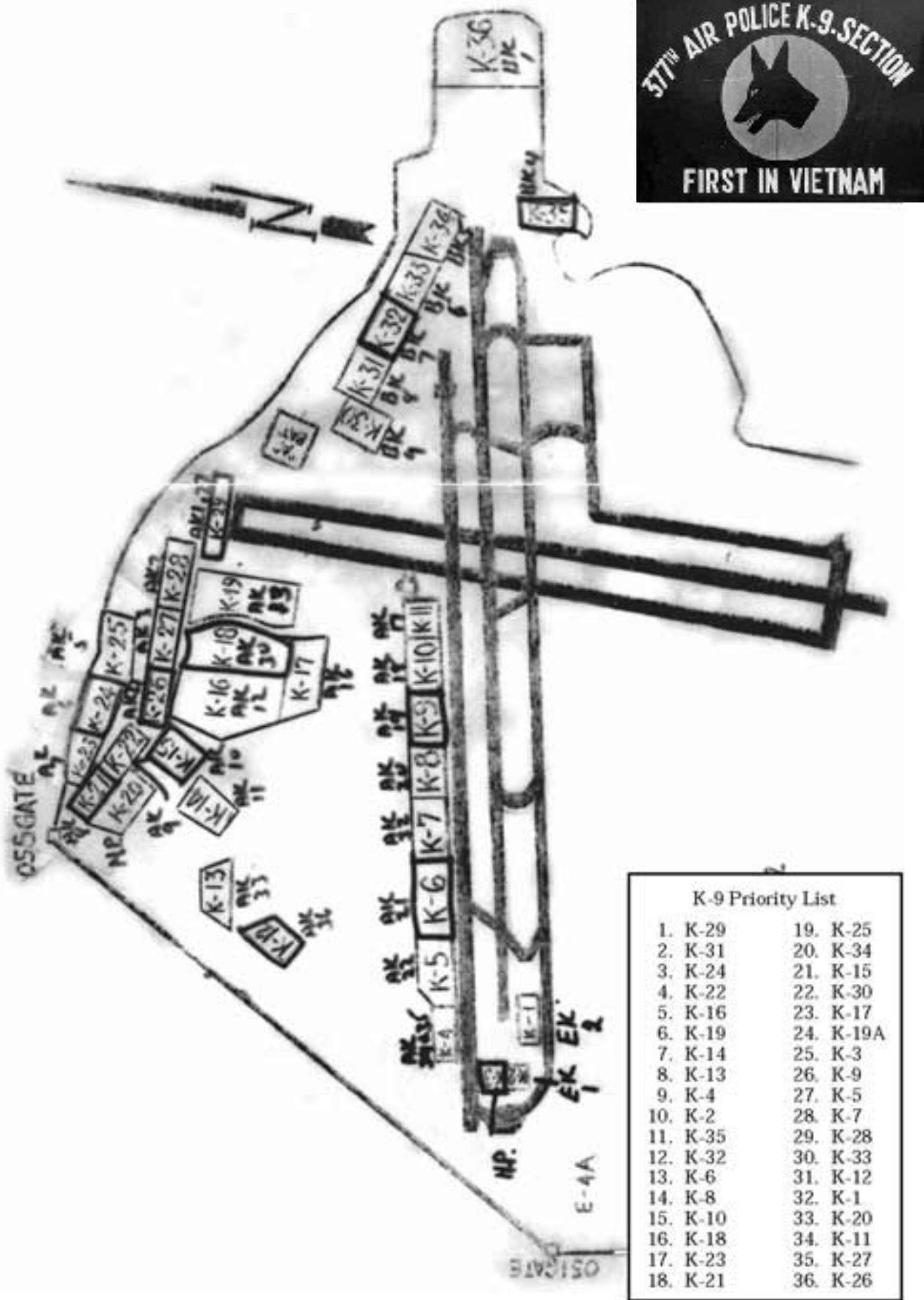
The Viet Cong left 18 dead behind them. The bullet-ridden bodies, dressed in flimsy black shorts, some without shirts, were gathered from around the bunkers at daybreak.

Amongst them were the carcasses of the three sentry dogs.





12.



13.



14.





15.

EXCHANGE PHOTO SERVICE



16.



17.





18.



19.



*We Take Care of Our Own*