

Reginald Victor Maisey, Jr

Captain
3RD SECURITY POLICE SQDN, 3RD TFW (BIEN HOA AB),
7TH AF United States Air Force
17 November 1934 - 31 January 1968
Sonoma, California
Panel 36E Line 023



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01 Jun 2002

**I do not fear an army of lions, if they are led by a lamb.
I do fear an army of sheep, if they are led by a lion.**

-- Alexander the Great --

Captain Reginald Victor Maisey was a lion.

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Notes from The Virtual Wall

One major objective in the Tet Offensive of 1968 was the capture of Saigon. In order to have any chance of attaining this objective, the Communist forces had to neutralize the US and ARVN bases which surrounded the city, particularly the major air bases at Bien Hoa and Tan Son Nhut.

Bien Hoa [Airbase] was not protected by Army troops, but by the 3rd Security Police Squadron - a force of about 300 men, without crew-served weapons or organic artillery. However, the base was home to armed aircraft, both helicopters and C-47 gunships.

The enemy attack on Bien Hoa began at 3 AM, 31 January 1968, with a preliminary [Rocket] barrage to open the way for an assault force approaching from the eastern side of the base. A concrete blockhouse, manned by the 3rd SPS, was the key blocking fortification and was subjected to the attentions of two infantry battalions and a reinforced infantry company, largely made up of North Vietnamese Army regulars.

Captain Maisey was on the western side of the base, about five miles from the blockhouse, when the attack began. As second in command of the 3rd SPS, he proceeded to the blockhouse to direct the defenses in that area. He was able to rally his available forces and withstand near-continuous assaults from three directions. Captain Maisey repeatedly left the relative safety of the blockhouse to direct his troops, maintain radio communications with the base command center, and coordinate support from the air. Although wounded during his excursions, he continued to direct an effective defense.

At about 4:30 AM, Captain Maisey was killed by an RPG explosion. Staff Sergeant William Piazza, who earlier had driven a truck-load of ammunition through the attacking forces, took command of the security policemen and continued the defense until Army reinforcements arrived at dawn.

The enemy could not neutralize Bien Hoa without capturing Blockhouse 10. Saigon could not be held without neutralizing Bien Hoa. The blockhouse held, Bien Hoa remained operational, and the Tet attack on Saigon failed.

Five men are known to have died as a result of the attack:

- **Capt Reginald V. Maisey, USAF, Sonoma, CA (3rd Sec Police Sqdn) (Air Force Cross)**
- **SSgt Ralph T. Berry, USAF, Escondido, CA (303rd Munitions Sqdn)**
- **Sgt James B. Des Rochers, USAF, Chicago, IL (19th TASS)**
- **[SP5 William J. Steffes](#), Army, St Cloud, MN (520th Personnel Services Co)**
- **A1C Edward G. Muse, USAF, Tutwiler, MS; 3rd Cbt Spt Grp/3rd SPS**

Captain Reginald V. Maisey received a posthumous Air Force Cross for gallantry in action:

The President of the United States
takes pride in presenting the

AIR FORCE CROSS

posthumously to

REGINALD VICTOR MAISEY, JR.
Captain
United States Air Force

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

The Air Force Cross is presented to Reginald Victor Maisey, Jr., Captain, U.S. Air Force, for extraordinary heroism in military operations against an opposing armed force, as a Security Police Officer in Southeast Asia on 31 January 1968. On that date, an intense night rocket and ground attack was launched by massed hostile forces against Bien Hoa Air Base. With the brunt of the ground penetration concentrated at a key bunker position on the east end of the installation, Captain Maisey drove from the west end of this runway to the beleaguered bunker and directed the actions of his men in defending the position. Captain Maisey exhibited an unrelenting stamina that rallied his men in countering the hostile assault. He persisted in his gallant campaign against the attacking force until an exploding rocket took his life. His supreme courage and undaunted leadership inspired his men to hold the position, thus thwarting the westward progress of the infiltrators across the installation and saving untold numbers of lives and millions of dollars worth of aircraft and other material. Through his extraordinary

heroism, superb airmanship, and aggressiveness in the face of hostile forces, Captain Maisey reflected the highest credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

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With all respect
Jim Schueckler, former CW2, US Army
Ken Davis, Commander, United States Navy (Ret)
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