

# **BAN ME THUOT AIR FIELD, CAMP CORYELL**

by [Ken de Russy](#)

1969-1970

TUY, 31st SPS; BMT, 31st SPS, TDY DET 9, 619 TCS

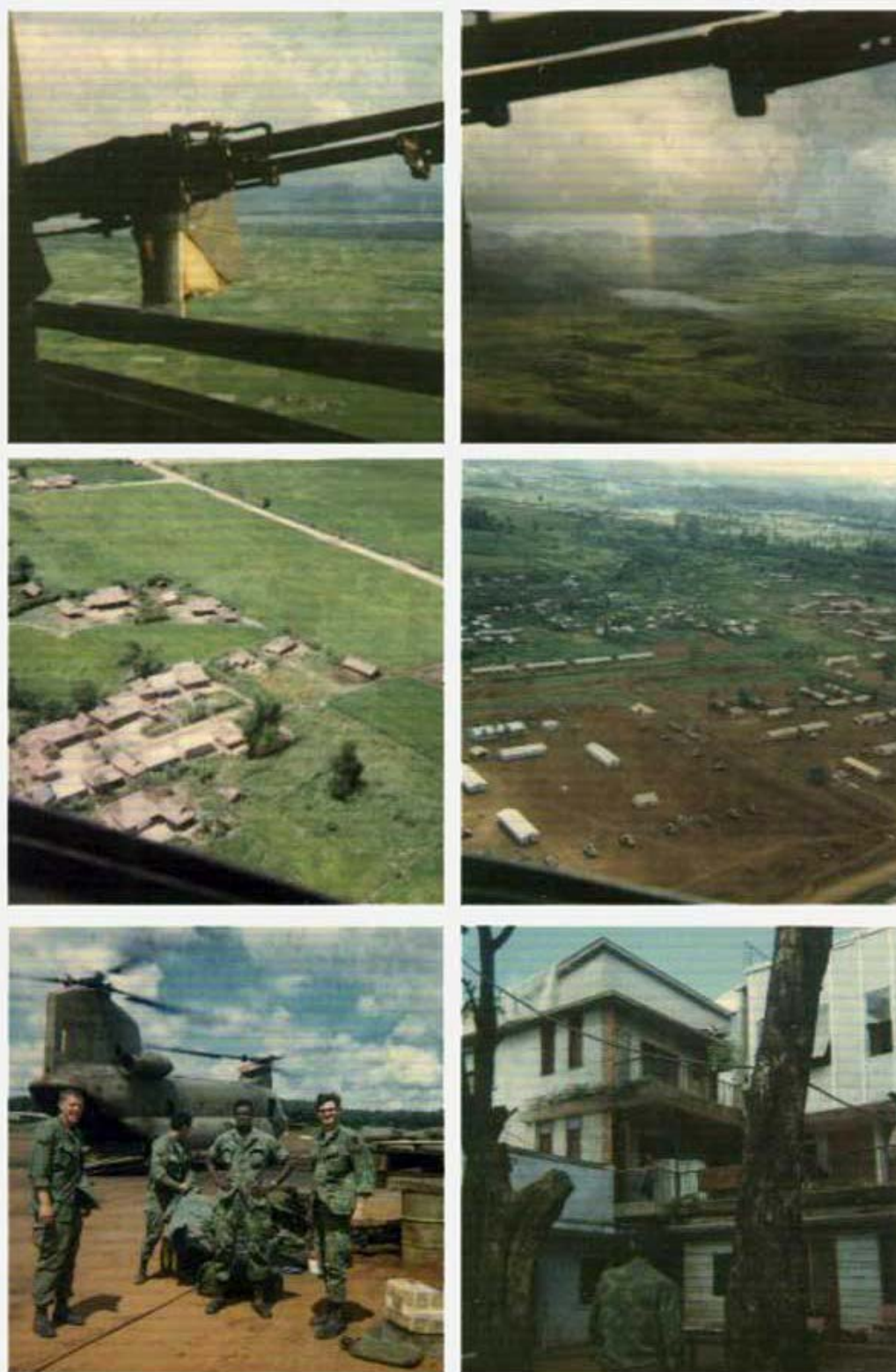
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**Ban Me Thuot, 1969-1970:** I was USAF Security Police, one of eight or so, assigned to Det 9, 619 Tactical Control Squadron, TDY from Tuy Hòa Air Base from Oct through Dec 69. Our compound, with about 50 to 70 personnel, was about half way down the runway next to where the Pterodactyl O-2s were parked. I spent my whole time there either in the gun emplacement on top of the concrete radar tower or in one of the gun emplacements in the corners of the compound. From the tower looking toward the Plantation there were gunships parked in revetments between our compound and the fence. To the left was the MP K-9 kennel and the PA&E Compound. On the night of 10 Nov 69 I had a spectacular view from the tower, the highest point on Camp Coryell, as 25 or so mortar and RPG impacted in PA&E and seemingly everywhere. I heard reports of sappers that night and there were reports circulating on our radio net that they were seen on the runway. We saw an RPG leave a launcher out in the plantation 150 meters or so out, and watched it fly straight at us. It passed the top of our tower thirty feet out at eye level and impacted at our compound's back gate. It freaks me out to this day. I can't imagine how all the choppers guys handled all the action you saw. They sure have MY respect! I have an audio recording of the action that night including radio traffic of several different radio nets if anyone is interested.

Any other USAF folks out there? I am in contact with three other Security Policeman that served there: Gary Hacker, Tom Sapio, and Dale Burkleo. Merry Christmas to all who served at Camp Coryell.

[Ken de Russy](#)



**1) Arrival at Ban Me Thuot Air Field: I volunteered for Vietnam and arrived at Tuy Hòa Air Base in late June 1969. About 25 miles away was the province capitol, central highlands, Ban Me Thuot, not far from the Cambodian border.**



**2) Ken de Russy in SP Tower.**

The Tower, and that is all I considered it but you guys might well refer to it for what was contained within. All I saw it as was an Observation Post and an important one since it was the tallest OP on Camp Coryell from the road that passed the Det 9 compound on the north side.

The sandbagged position contained a .50 caliber machine gun, a recoilless rifle, starlight scope, flares, radios and other sundry items. It was manned by an SP and if we were hit a second SP was added. There was someone else that served as a liason when we got hit and operated a radio on another non-SP net. The second photo in the image with the fuel truck driving by is looking almost due north and the 155 area is visible on the left.



**3) Camp Coryell, Detachment-9. Home of the 155 (AHC) Aviation Helicopter CO: gunships and slicks. Within that area was a detachment 9/619th Tactical Control Squadron, USAF (maintained separation in flying aircraft and artillery).**



**4) Camp Coryell. Red dust blowing everywhere!**



**5) Chi Com mortar fins and detonator, dug out of the ground.**

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