

Da Nang

1 July 1965 Sapper Attack...

The first Air Policeman had given his life in Vietnam...
and

4th of July, 1965

the U.S. Flag flies at Đà Nẵng's
23rd ABG/Air Police Central Security Control.

Three Days of Hell

Compiled by Don Poss.

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"We Take Care of Our Own"

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PREFACE:

Background concerning this report:



Danang
Vietnam

Since 1996, [SSgt Terance Jensen's](#) (Silver Star) story has been told and is well documented and researched at VSPA. Det-s are posted at this web site and are based on participants and witnesses statements as related to their personal perspective of the Đà

Nàng AB sapper attack of 1 July 1965. Nevertheless, to this retired detective sergeant, *something in the account did not seem right*, and the full account and truth of the story remained unknown. What were missing were the statements of SSgt Jensen (KIA) or A1C Al Handy, who was with SSgt Jensen when he was killed in action. All that was known of Al Handy was his last name, and that a quasi-official cloud of doubt and innuendo shadowed his actions -- although those *actions* remained unclear and were only partially known or alluded to.

Decades would pass until the day I received an email from Al Handy:

Sent: Thursday, August 16, 2001 6:54 PM

Subject: Đà Nẵng 1965

Hello my name is Al Handy and I was with SSgt Jensen July 1, 1965. I hear you are looking for me. MSgt Mike Bush gave a very close detail as to what my experience was. I'll be happy to give my side if you want. Sorry I couldn't make it to a dedication for Terry Jensen. I just found out 2 days ago that people were looking for me. I would be honored to be part of VSPA. Looking forward to hearing from you.

Until that date, *after action accounts* regarding Air Police response and combat actions during the 1 July 1965 sapper attack at Đà Nẵng Air Base were primarily based on the listed [sources and references](#). With Al Handy's statement, I believe the facts of this matter are now known.

Here follows the story of 1 July 1965's Đà Nẵng AB sapper attack, for which readers should draw their own conclusions as to the valor and bravery of SSgt Jensen, A1C Al Handy, the Quick Response SAT, and other Airmen and Marines who engaged the enemy during the attack. For continuity of the story-line, statements are paraphrased ([read full](#)

[accounts](#)). There are minor inconsistencies in relations to some statements, mostly based on perspective and point of views, which our membership of APS/SPS, and former law enforcement officers will recognize as representative of any collection of witnesses' statements.

FACTS:

- On the night of 1 July 1965, Đà Nẵng Air Base was attacked by a local VC sapper squad accompanied by personnel from the Third Battalion, 18th Regiment, 325th People's Army of Vietnam Division (PAVN).
- Enemy sappers attacked Đà Nẵng Air Base resulting in SSgt Terance K. Jensen being Killed In Action. SSgt Jensen was the first of one-hundred-eleven Air/Security Police to lose their lives in Vietnam and Thailand.
- Đà Nẵng AB, Stand off Attack (Mortars and Sappers), 06 rounds. Casualties: 1 KIA (USAF), 3 WIA (1 USAF, 2 USMC). Losses: 6 Destroyed USAF A/C, 3 Damaged USAF A/C. VC/NVA Losses: 1 POW. Possibly 2 KIA.
- During the attack SSgt Jensen gave directions to A1C Al Handy, who carried out his orders, and together their actions caused the Viet Cong to break off their attack, and are credited with saving the lives of 25 aircraft mechanics.
- For his action that night, SSgt Jensen was awarded the [Silver Star](#) (posthumous).
- For his action that night, A1C Albert L. Handy (TDY to Đà Nẵng AB) was the next day returned to (PCS) George AFB, without any recognition for his actions whatsoever, casting a vague shadow of doubt over him.
- Air Force Office of Special Investigations (OSI) conducted an investigation regarding A1C Handy's actions and conduct.

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