

Vietnami The Second Time November 1996

As the China Airlines 747 broke through the cloud cover over Tan Son Nhut, I wondered what I would find below in Vietnam after 30 years. I remember having that exact same feeling in 1965 - wondering what was beneath those clouds. As we made our descent, that all too familiar landscape came into view. I really was back in Vietnam!

As our plane taxied toward the main terminal, the feeling of deja vu was more than overpowering, even if Tan Son Nhut looked totally different. When I arrived in '65, it was one of the world's busiest airfields, with a reported take off and landing (including helicopters) every 10 seconds or so. Now, it was early quiet.

Very few aircraft were taking off, landing, or parked on the apron.

The first time I landed at Tan Son Nhut in 1965, our plane was surrounded immediately by intense-looking young air policemen wearing camouflage fatigues, black berets with QC patches and sporting M-16's. They took up positions to protect us from terrorist attacks. As we were processed, some of us, including me, found out that we too, had been "diverted" to a place called "Cam Ranh Bay," which none of us had ever heard of. We found out why a few days later when we arrived at Cam Ranh - it hadn't really been build yet! There was just a PSP runway, a "water

buffalo," a handful of tents, an M-60 and a handful of us making up the 12th Air Police Squadron, working 12 hours on and 12 hours off. Mostly we guarded the POL and bomb dumps until the squadron of Phantoms finally arrived. Mostly I remember rain, sand and C-rations and being scared shitless in the teeming monsoon rain at night. By the time I left, of course, Cam Ranh was a "sprawling complex" and everyone now tells me how "easy" we had it there. (Right)

This time, my plane was met by several Vietnamese women, wearing white <u>ao dai's</u>, the traditional native dress, who efficiently herded us passengers onto large open-air buses for transport to the main terminal. As I stood on the flight-line, it was hard to believe that I was actually back there, as I fumbled for my camera, my mouth drooping a bit, no doubt. I recognized very little. A rusted out hanger... one of the red and white checked towers (now faded) I think the main terminal is the same building we G.I.'s were processed through in the 60's. It seemed familiar. Getting through immigration was less of a hassle then I expected, thanks, perhaps to my feeble attempts to speak some Vietnamese, which brought a smile to the faces of some of the stern-faced officials.

I stayed a week in Saigon, saw lots of sights and met many local people and had many good conversations and laughs with them. (Even now, they do not see many Americans, except for those who work there.)

I did hire a driver and attempted to get up to Cam Ranh Bay, which was quite an experience. Cam Ranh is "off limits" because it is still technically under Russian control. Even the Vietnamese Navy is not allowed into Cam Ranh Bay, I'm told. Rumor has it that the U.S.

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Regional Get Together

The Florida Vietnam Veterans 11th Annual Reunion will be held at Wickham Park, Melbourne, Florida

from April 24-26, 1998. VSPA will have a place to meet and talk with other VSPA members. We hope to see you there, maybe we can surpass our numbers meeting there in 1997. Hope to see you there.

Treasurer's Report: As of 28 Feb 1998 the VSPA account balance is \$3604.73.

Steve Ray - Secretary/Treasurer



President's Corner



I hope everyone made it through and had a happy holiday season. And now we all are trying to survive El. Nino, almost as bad as Tet. I would like to take this time to welcome all our new members. If no one has ever said it to you, Welcome Home. And to our old members that have renewed, glad to have you back. And to those of you who have not renewed, get off the couch or get away from the computer and take a minute to do so.

Plans for the reunion in Washington, D.C., are starting to fall in place, see Steve Ray's article. Want to thank Brian Thorne who lives in the D.C. area for being our point man checking out hotels and etc., it sure saved us some time. I know everyone can't make the reunion but it sure would be great to have a large turn out. We have some neat things planned. The trip to the Wall will be a special one. So mark October 18th to October 21st on your calendars.

For those of you that can make the reunion-in-Melbourne, Florida, April 24th to 26th, we will have a booth set up (CSC). It seems this is the place where we get a lot of former Security Police from all over the U.S. Also Kokomo, Indiana, in September is another good reunion, so if you are doing some traveling in these areas at that time of year, look us up. We need to continue to get the word out about our Association and these types of events are just one of the ways to do it. When you get your copy of Guardmount just don't read it and toss it aside, take it to work with you or to a meeting of other veterans organizations that you belong to. You will be surprised that someone will come up to you and say I was a Security Policeman in Vietnam or they know someone who was. It works believe me.

In closing once again if you have any questions please call me at (912) 876-4729 or E-mail skycop@clds.net, if I can't give you the answer we will find it for you.

Take care Brothers, hope to see you in October.

Mike Daoust 12th SPS Cam Ranh Bay 68-69



Bien Hoa Tet '68

Victory in battle can be measured in a variety of ways. Territory captured or defended and casualty losses verses enemy losses are probably the two most frequent measures of success in battle. Using these criteria, the battle won by the 3rd Security Police Squadron during TET, 1968, can only be measured as a stirring victory.

The battle took place in Bien Hoa Air Base, Republic of Vietnam, during the North Vietnam TET offensive, January/February 1968. The 3rd Security Police Squadron killed and captured 160 enemy while losing two of their own, for a kill/capture ratio of 80 to 1.

The battle started with a long rocket/mortar barrage. Undercover of the barrage the enemy maneuvered undetected through the mined double chain link perimeter fence line until detected by a sentry dog and his handler. The combined VC/NVA (North Vietnam Army) force fought their way on base as far as the aircraft engine build-up area, approximately 50/60 yards from the reveted F-100 aircraft with the SP's taking them under fire all the way. The enemy's initial thrust was impeded by sentry dogs and their handlers, bunkers manned by SP machine gunners and riflemen, Sabotage Alert Teams (SAT) with jeeps mounted M-60 machine guns and Quick Reaction Forces (QRF) riflemen. The enemy advance was halted at the engine build-up with a counter attack led by an NCO. Bunkers were bypassed and in some cases surrounded, but none were overrun.

One of the SP KIA's (the squadron Operations Officer), received a direct hit by a shoulder fired rocket launcher (RPG), while directing the defense of an old French bunker on the perimeter. The other SP lost was an augmentee, about 50 augmentee's had been trained by the SP's to help defend the base, KIA by a grenade during the fight at the engine build-up area. Fighting continued until dawn when the midnight flight commander formed a skirmish line and drove the enemy, not already killed or wounded, back across the base perimeter. The perimeter fence line was 10 miles in length and although the ground attack only came from the east side, sniper fire was received from other directions most notably from north perimeter which was adjacent to the city of Bien Hoa. US

Army ground force did not arrive until after day break when only enemy wounded and stragglers were left on the base. No Army of South Vietnam (ARVN) personnel were present during any part of the battle. The US Army unit pursued the enemy outside the perimeter and drove them back into the jungle.

The SP Squadron had no crew serviced weapons, the M-60 machine gun being the heaviest weapons authorized. Fortunately the Army 145th Aviation Battalion was stationed on the base and throughout the battle gave unwavering air-support to the SP's without the 145th support undoubtedly the squadron would have taken additional casualties. At one point during the battle the squadron borrowed a recoilless rifle team from the QC (South Vietnamese Security Police), to dislodge some enemy hold-up in the arming/dearming shack. In addition to no crew serviced weapons, no armored vests, no perimeter lighting, gasoline filled drums, claymore mines or searchlights to cover enemy approach routes. We had no armored vehicles, only jeeps, pick-up trucks and stake trucks borrowed from the motor pool for QRF's.

Fortunately 7th AF placed the squadron on maximum alert the afternoon prior to the attack but we were not told why so many of us thought this was just a prolonging of the many false intelligence reports received in the past.

After action reports listed the enemy forces at two battalions and a reinforced company. This meant the squadron was outnumbered 4 or 5 to one as our Present for Duty (PFD), including augmentees were around 400.

The Security Police were prohibited from operating outside the perimeter. The Army was responsible for security outside the perimeter. The official scenario was that we would never be attack by more than a platoon. On previous occasions when the Squadron had conducted night ambushes or perimeter sweeps the Squadron Commander was called in and told to halt such operations as the Army had everything outside the perimeter under control. Prior to the attack higher authorities were notified that the majority of the time no Army was securing the perimeter. The Squadron Commander was told otherwise and to keep the squadron inside the perimeter. The only official exception was that 50 squadron members were granted permission to attend the 173rd Airborne Brigade week long training they gave all of their new troops. The training climaxed with a helicopter assault

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(Continued from page 3) Bien Hoa Tet '68

into the base, a night defensive perimeter and a search mission back to the base. The 173rd main base was tied into the Airbase and was also attacked during TET. The 101st Division replaced the 173rd earlier but they only had a rifle company and MP's at their base camp and were hard pressed to defend their area.

TET was not the squadrons first encounter with the enemy. During 1967 numerous enemy sapper teams (sabotage team), were stopped at the perimeter sometimes in brisk fire fights. In August 1967, the squadron captured their first prisoner in one of these firefights.

Numerous decorations were awarded squadron personnel as a result of the TET battle, including Air Force Cross, Silver Stars, and Bronze Stars with the Valor devise. I do not know the total number of decorations awarded as I rotated prior to any being awarded. Also, I do not know the disposition of the 10 or 12 wounded as the most critical were evacuated off base immediately after the battle.

I am aware that due to the bravery, ability and devotion to duty of the Junior Officers, NCO's and Airmen the 3rd Security Police Squadron were not out fought. Although outgumed and out numbered they were ready and willing when called upon to do their duty. They thought they were the best and proved it.

Kent Miller Bien Hoa 1967-68

Pass-Ons

The 56th SFS, Luke AFB, AZ will again hold an armual Memorial Retreat for the 18 men of the 56th SPS, NKP Thailand who were killed in a helicopter crash while enroute to participate in the rescue of the container ship Mayaquez. All VSPA members and especially former 56th SPS troops are invited to attend. Contact CMSgt Charles Coles, 56th SFS at (602)856-5790.

The VSPA wishes to thank the following members for making monetary donations to the association: Danney B. Williams, Donald Ashby, John rader, James Kelly, David Bailey Jr., Sherman Arnold, James W. Bunch, James A. Stewart and Larry Breazeale. Steve Ray - Secretary/Treasurer

(Continued from page 1) Vietnam 2nd Time

Navy may return to Cam Ranh when the Russians pull out, but that's just a rumor. I got as far as Myca, which was a little fishing village on the edge of Cam Ranh AB when I was there in 65-66. It was off limits to us G.I.'s back then and was loaded with VC. But darkness had fallen and the monsoon rain made a hasty retreat back to Phan Rang advisable. How ironic, I thought. In the 60's, I couldn't enter Myca from Cam Ranh. In the 90's, it was the other way around. But, then again, this was Vietnam, so it all made sense.

I spent my 2 weeks vacation in Vietnam last November and had an incredibly positive experience. I'm not sure every body should go back, but I am glad I did. I wrote about my feelings, comparing my return from Vietnam in '96 to that of '66. I shared copies of my article from the <u>Boston Herald</u> and spoke to a large group of homeless veterans - many of them Vietnam vets - about my trip. They seemed to feel better about Vietnam, somehow, when I had finished. They gave me a standing ovation, which, I was told, was a rare sign of respect from those guys. My brothers welcomed me home - again!

Jim Murray Cam Ranh Bay, 65-66

(Jim is a free-lance writer from Boston, Massachusetts who specializes in veterans affairs, particularly Vietnam veterans. He served with the 12th Air Police Squadron at Cam Ranh Bay, Air Base, 1965-1966)

In order to complete a book about the VSPA the following is needed: 1) First hand accounts concerning the 29 actual sapper attacks that occurred in Vietnam and Thailand during the war. 2) First hand accounts of civic action projects by SP's. 3) Information on the history of the K-9. 4) Copies of after action reports/unit rosters/unit historical data, etc. 5) Copies of photo's of SP's in Vietnam, Thailand or on R & R, and photo's of AZR training. 6) Copies of Valor Medal citations if your name is not already on the list on the web site. 7) Official documents and first hand accounts on the history of the AZR course. 8) Copies of citations for those awarded the Purple Heart. 9) Historical data on the 1041st SafeSide and Combat Security Police Sq's (821st, 822nd and 823rd). 10) anything else members can think of to assist us in doing a VSPA book on our service in SEA.



Tan Son Nhut main gate in 1963



Home sweet Home, the latest accomidations.

Tan Son Nhut 1963



An unkonwn escort for the mailrun



Guardmount, participants unknown, maybe you recognize someone



Bob Anisko in the "hootch area"



The Ammo Dump



F-102 Aircraft on the flightline



← Jim Murray at Cam Ranh Bay 1966

Jim Murray in from → of Tan Son Nhut airport 1996





SSgt Weeks, AF Res. is presented the Fischer Award by CMSgt Tullgren

Recipiant of the first Sgt Louis H. Fischer Award presented by Owen Lamb, Sr. The name of the recipiant is unknown



eapt Maleey Reginald V. Ir. 38.



The wreath laid at the California Victnam Memorial. The wreath was designed by Larry Breazeale and made by Carl Olson.



Memorial services for Capt. Maisey conducted by Bill Scholtz at the California Memorial. The insert above is of Capt. Maisey's name as it is engraved in the wall.

MemorialService Jan. 31, 1998

On a cool rainy Saturday morning a group of Security Police veterans gathered to pay their respects to their fallen comrades in arms. It was January 31, 1998, a small reunion of veterans who were there, "Tet '68 Thirty Years Later." They met at the California Vietnam Memorial in Sacramento. There was a ceremony to honor all members of the armed forces, however, there was a specific tribute to Security Police. Members of the VSPA displayed memorial wreaths, recited poems and there was an account of the battle for Bunker Hill 10 at Bien Hoa AB. Captain Reginald V. Maisey was honored as the first non rated recipient of the Air Force Cross, who was a California veteran. Three local television stations covered the event and aired the event on the evening news.

After the ceremony the group met at a local restaurant for lunch. Old friends shared and new friends were made. After lunch, the group went to the California Military Museum in Old Sacramento. There they viewed the history of California military involvement from the Civil War to the Gulf War. There was a display about the Vietnam War. At the end of the day the veterans departed to their own destinations with their own thoughts of the day. Hopefully, their thoughts were of being proud to have been associated with Vietnam Security Police veterans who served with distinction, courage, and honor. All Gave Some, Some Gave All. This is the speech I read at the reunion.

JANUARY 31, 1998

Tet '68 Thirty Years Later

We are here today to honor all service men and women that served in Vietnam who gave the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of their country. We should never forget our comrade in arms or their families.

We are especially here to honor "peacekeepers" and those who died in Vietnam and specifically Capt. Reginald V. Maisey Jr., who was killed in action during Tet '68 at Bien Hoa AB.

The Tet offensive in the minds of those in Hanoi was to bring down the South Vietnam government and hoped for a general uprising from the populace. The communists had gambled and they had lost. The Tet offensive was nothing less that a shattering military disaster for Hanoi. You, who were there, know the truth of the matter, that the United States Armed Forces decimated the NVA and Viet Cong. It was during Tet '68 that Capt. Maisey distinguished himself as a SP officer and went beyond the call of duty. One must understand what made Capt. Maisey a hero. It was not just what

occurred on Jan 31, 1998 but the events that lead up to Tet '68.

Capt. Maisey was a California veteran, whose hometown of record is Sonoma, CA. Capt. Maisey entered the Air Force in 1957 and served in Korea in 1958/59. In 1960, Capt. Maisey graduated from OCS with honors and was assigned to Scott AFB. Capt. Maisey volunteered for Vietnam and was assigned to Bien Hoa. He then returned to Scott AFB and then volunteered for a second tour in Vietnam in late 1967 and was again assigned to Bien Hoa. It is interesting to note that in 1964, Capt. Maisey, his brother Terry and father CWO4 Reg Maisey were all assigned to a SPS. At that time both Capt. Maisey and his brother were lieutenants. CWO4 Maisey retired in 1966.

It was during Capt. Maisey's second tour at Bien Hoa that he distinguished himself as a professional SP officer. According to Lt. Col Kent Miller, Capt. Maisey's CO, Capt. Maisey was a great person and an outstanding officer of the highest caliber. Capt. Maisey would be out every night making rounds, visiting with the SP's. He would not only help keep morale high among the troops but he always had a ready ear for the all SP NCO's and airmen. As the operational officer and 2nd ranking person in the squadron he was primarily responsible for base defense. He had a 10-mile perimeter to defend, no crew serviced weapons, no flack jackets no armored vehicles and only about 300 or fewer men to defend the base 365 days a year. Col Miller pleas to higher headquarters that they were open to a ground attack This only made Capt. Maisey more fell on deaf ears. determined to get the job done.

On January 17th Capt. Donald J. Sheehan, AF Chaplain, road with Capt. Maisey while making rounds of the SP's on duty and wrote about Capt. Maisey in an article titled "Uncommonly Brave." Capt. Sheehan noted that while making the inspection trip the airmen were visibly reassured by seeing Capt. Maisey. At one stop Capt. Maisey climbed the ladder to visit a guard in his lonely watch on a metal roost some thirty feet above the ground. At other stops, Capt. Maisey checked the security of a bunker or the placement of an M-60. Along the road Capt. Maisey halted the jeep frequently to chat with a K-9 sentry. You could see that Capt. Maisey troubled himself for his men. He was a professional.

I spoke with John Webster who served with Capt. Maisey. John was an airman assigned to the 3rd SPS. John stated that he was impressed with Capt. Maisey's for his caring of his men. John related that at Guardmount on the evening of Jan 30th, when Capt. Maisey encouraged the men, John's thoughts were "I know that I will make it through whatever comes our way." It was this leadership that Capt.

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Maisey had, that instilled in his men confidence they needed to perform their duties. One thing John remembers about Capt. Maisey when he was encouraging the troops, Capt. Maisey did not blow smoke. Capt. Maisey was sincere and caring for his men.

The route that the enemy took to over run Bien Hoa AB was from the east. Right in the middle of this route stood an old French bunker. Bunker Hill 10 would be at the pivotal point of the battle. The fall of Bunker Hill 10 would have a devastating effect to the base. When the battle for Bunker Hill 10 started, Capt. Maisey responded from about four miles away, having to drive through the enemy's field of fire. When Capt. Maisey arrived at Bunker Hill 10, he rallied the troops and provided vital information to Col Miller at the Central Security Control (CSC). According to Col Miller, Capt. Maisey instilled confidence in the troop, made sure that supplies were brought forward, radioed information to CSC and kept this up for hours. During the battle Capt. Maisey had to expose himself many times to communicate with CSC directing the defense were an inspiration to the small force of security police, vastly outnumbered by the enemy and with a thrd of the defenders wounded. The ferocious battle continued with the enemy troops on three sides of the bunker. The enemy hurled every thing they had at Bunker Hill 10 with numerous RPG's striking the front of Bunker Hill 10. On one of Capt. Maisey's trips outside of the bunker he was hit by enemy fire but continued his report to CSC and his encouragement of his men. Capt. Maisev and his men were supported by helicopter gun ships and AC-47 Spooky, and still were imminent danger of being overrun. Some time in the morning hours before sunrise, Capt. Maisey was standing inside Bunker Hill 10 giving CSC reports on the situation when an RPG struck the front of the Bunker. The blast entered Bunker Hill 10 through the firing slots and killed Capt. Maisey instantly. The men that Capt. Maisey led so brilliantly continued to contain the enemy until Army reinforcements arrived at dawn. For leadership of the defense at the cost of his own life, Capt. Maisey was awarded the nations second highest award, the Air Force Cross posthumously. It was noted by Col. Miller that the Air Force lost two men that night and the enemy lost about 160 KIA or captured, a ratio of 80 to 1.

One can see by the actions, dedication, caring and duty of Capt. Maisey before and during the battle for Bunker Hill 10 that he was truly a hero. John Webster stated that Capt. Maisey did not have to be at Bunker 10 during the attack. It was Capt. Maisey's professionalism and duty that brought him to Bunker Hill 10. Capt. Maisey set the standard for all SP to follow and by doing so he gave his all for his country. Capt. Sheehan wrote "was Capt. Maisey a particularly religious man? I don't know. Greater love than this no man has, that



Chaplain 's Corner



Getting Backup From God

"THE LORD SHALL GUIDE THEE CONTINUALLY." Isa. 58:11

Sometimes Vietnam Vets isolate themselves from others wither intentionally or without knowledge. We all remember how important BACKUP was to us in Vietnam and how important "What is your location?" was. Every day brings its own challenges and perplexities. When we lose our way and can't find the path He will direct every step of the path, every hour of the day, every day of the year of our life if we will but be guided. This promise however is made to only those who in verse ten are helping those around them. If we show concern for them, God promises His care and guidance to us. Jesus is not the "BACKUP" for misers, or those who oppress the less fortunate, or those entrusted to us (family). So let us all endeavor to care for those around us (not isolate) so our backup (Jesus) can get to us... What is your location?

Our hopes and prayers are for a speedy recovery for Danny Williams and Howard Pough... Both have had surgery.

A Chapel Service is being planned for the Sunday morning of our next reunion in Washington D.C. We encourage your attendance if you are planning to make the reunion. During the service we will also be remembering our fellow comrades that were killed in action. If anyone plays a musical instrument and would like to help in planning the service please call me. (201-507-9038)

Chaplain Steve Janke 2 Cor 1:8-10



one lay down his own life for his friends. (Jn15:13) If Christ measures all by charity, then Capt. Maisey was too big a man to stand measuring."

It is an honor to have served in the USAF as security policemen, a "peacekeeper," and to have been associated with Capt. Reginald V. Maisey Jr.

Bill Scholtz

Mail Call

Thought the members would like to know that ABC is filming a documentary on the Vietnam war and that the 3rd SPS and 277th SPS will be featured on the defense of Bien Hoa and Tan Son Nhut. Several SP's will appear on camera to tell their story. The last I heard it will be aired on "The Learning Channel" in May 1998.

Ken Miller Bien Hoa 67-68 When we talked about terms and sayings that are particular to our field Tony Ralston remembered another one. While stationed at Pease AFB as a direct duty assigned Air Policeman he became acquainted with the Hawk and Snow Snakes (snow swirls looking like snakes coming across the taxi way and the parking ramp. He also had some more about Vietnam which will be in later issues with some pictures.

Tony Ralston 632nd SPS, Binh Thuy (67-68)

Membership Application (send Copy of DD 214 and \$10.00 fee)

Name			
Address			
State	Zip	Phone	
Unit in S.E.Asia			
Looking For?			

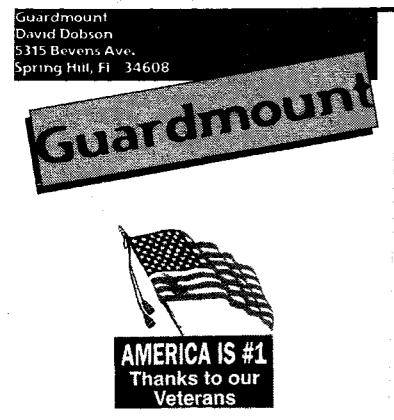


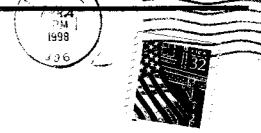
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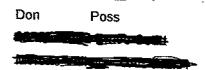
1.	Association Patch - made around a QC design	
2.	Air Force Combat Veteran Patch	\$ 4.00
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12.	7th Air Force - Pin	\$ 3.00
13.	Mini-Security Police Badges, 1 3/4" high, Official Issue	\$10.00
	Security Police Lapel Pin	\$ 6.00

Please add \$3.00 for shipping and handling. Please make checks for merchandise payable to Vietnam Security Police Association. Satisfaction Guaranteed. Send checks to 1626 Chandler Rd., Huntsville, AL 35801





First Class



Reunion 1998 - Washington D.C.

Plans have been finalized for the 1998 reunion in Washington DC. A complete agenda and details will be mailed to those who register to attend. The VSPA has selected the Double Tree Hotel in Arlington, VA. to serve as our HQ for this years reunion. Briefly, here is the reunion activities you can expect:

Thursday, Oct 8 Oct 98 - Arrival

Friday, 9 Oct 98 - Tour of the Pentagon, Picnic Lunch with the 11th SFS at Bolling AFB, Tour of Capt. Reginald V. Maisey Jr. Building, Dinner party/VSPA awards (at Hotel)

Saturday, 10 Oct 98 - Tour Arlington National Cemetery, Vietnam Memorial (VSPA ceremony and wreath laying), Site-seeing (mall, museums) Hospitality suite social.

Sunday, 11 Oct 98 - Church Service (conducted by VSPA Chaplain Steve Janke), VSPA Business meeting (hotel meeting room) Site-seeing on your own Hospitality suite social.

Reunion registration cost - \$60.00 per person for adults and \$25. Per child age 4 - 12. Children under 3 free. Your registration pays for the following activities:

Transportation to and from Bolling AFB; the cost of the picnic lunch at Bolling AFB; the cost of the dinner buffet at the hotel including all taxes and gratuities; and all your hospitality suite refreshments.

The DoubleTree Hotel rooms are \$85.00 + lodging taxes per night. To register call (703) 416-4100 and state you are with VSPA.

Door prizes worth 100's of dollars (including cash prized) will be given away at the dinner party. Winners must have a current VSPA membership on file (dues paid for 1998) and must be present to win. You don't want to miss this years reunion! Send your registration fees to Steve Ray, 1626 Chandler Rd., Huntsville, AL 35801-1488. Make checks payable of VSPA.