

ARMY TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION VIETNAM



4th Trans Cmd



5th Trans Cmd



124th Trans Cmd



125th Trans Cmd



8th Trans Grp

THE PATCHES WE WORE



48th Trans Grp



500th Trans Grp



507th Trans Grp



U.S. Army, Vietnam



1st Log Cmd

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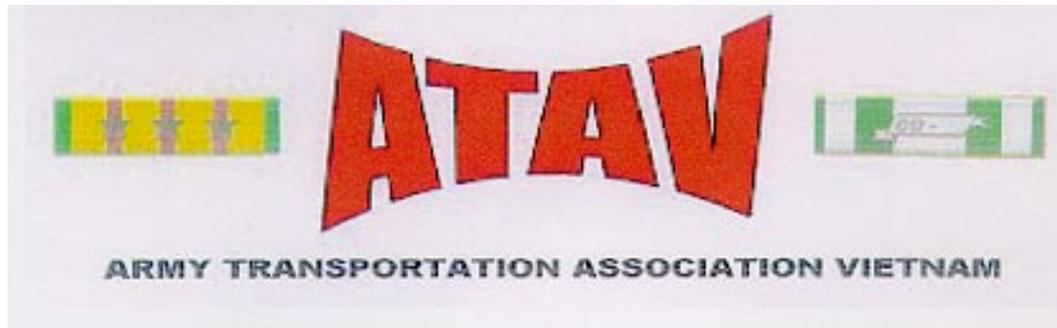
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Reunion Recap
Fall 2004



Greetings Fellow Veterans, Members, Friends, Brothers and Sisters,

First I want to thank everyone for their patience and understanding. Since being elected your President there has been a few problems to overcome and work around. Hopefully we will have those problems solved soon.

The purpose of this Association, as Rick Phillips founded it, will not change. We will always be a Reunion organization. In this newsletter there are changes that I have purposed that will help facilitate that goal. To define and refine these suggestions I have established some committees and appointed Chairmen for the committees. Some of the changes can be implemented by the board but most of them will have to be voted on and established by the membership at the Business meeting. I am looking forward to seeing everyone in Pensacola, Florida in 2006.

The Reunion in Colorado Springs was a huge success and I would like to thank everyone that had a hand in setting it up. The meetings between individuals and groups that had not seen each other in over thirty years was very moving for those of us that were observing and I know that it was moving for those who renewed old friendships.

Some of our membership live in Florida and on the east coast. They have had a hard two months and I am sure that we will offer them all of our prayers and any help that we can give them.

In the future newsletters there will be more information about what the board and the committees are doing but if there are questions and concerns I am sure that we will always be available to you. My telephone number is 281-991-1467 and my e-mail address is jhr0545@houston.rr.com. You can also go on to the web site and post those questions and concerns.

Bill Wandell, Treasurer has tendered his resignation effective 31 December 2004 due to continuing medical problems and a desire to devote more time to his retirement activities. On behalf of the ATAV we thank him for the exceptional and dedicated service he provided over the years and wish him well in the future. Thanks Bill!!

I look forward to working with all of you and since this is your association I hope that you all will get involved in the day to day activities so that we can make the best that it can be.

Take care and Welcome Home

Jim Rose, President
Army Transportation Association Vietnam

Army Transportation Association Vietnam Application for Membership

Please Print Clearly:

New _____ Renewal _____ Associate _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

Phone Number: _____ (include area code)

Email: _____ (to add or change your email)

Address please contact Webmaster Ralph Grambo at gramborw@uofs.edu)

Your unit(s) while in Vietnam:

Dates you were in Vietnam:

What is your present occupation?

Yes, _____ I want to join the ATAV for _____ years

Yes, _____ Please renew my membership for _____ years
(New memberships of two or more years will receive a complimentary ATAV pin)

Please make checks payable to: Army Transportation Association, Vietnam

Mail checks to: Bill Wandall, 307 Adair Street, H-6 Decatur, GA30030

Membership.

Rates:

1 year: \$15.00

2 years: \$23.00

3 years: \$32.00

4 years \$41.00

5 years \$50.00

Here is some additional information about me while in Vietnam

Don't forget our web site: WWW.ATAV.US

Join us on the ATAV Group on Yahoo

THE ARMY TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION, VIETNAM

2004 Business Meeting Minutes

The Business Meeting convened at 10:00 a.m. Saturday, July 10, 2004 at the Park Plaza Inn, Colorado Springs, CO. There were forty one members present and two Board members present. A quorum was declared by the President, Rick Phillips.

The President, Rick Phillips introduced the Board of Directors of the Association: Vice President - None (to be elected); Bill Wandall, Treasurer; Secretary None (to be elected); Web Master: Ralph Grambo, absent and did not attend the Reunion.

1. Rick Phillips requested that the minutes of the 2002 Reunion not be read, since all the members present at this Business meeting had a copy of the minutes. The motion was seconded and approved.

2. In the absence of Ralph Grambo, Web Master, Rick Phillips read his report. A copy of his report is attached to these minutes.

3. No Newsletter report, though comments from the members indicated that the issues published in 2004 were good and that we should consider letting members advertise in future issues of the Association Newsletter for a fee. The Newsletter Committee will look in this matter.

4. Ed Pavlick reported that \$306.00 had been received from selling T-Shirts and caps at this reunion and he had five medium T-Shirts and no caps remaining.

5. Bill Wandall presented the Treasurer's report for the period July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2004. There is \$11,913.73 in the Association Treasury as of June 30, 2004. Each member present at this meeting was given a copy of the Association's Finance Statement. Bill also passed out to members at the meeting a proposed ATAV Budget for the period July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2006. A total of \$25,000 for the two year period was proposed based on funds received and paid over the last 15 years. The Treasurers Report for 2002-2004 was approved.

6. OLD BUSINESS:

a. The President brought up giving a donation to a Vietnam Association. It was moved, seconded, and approved to donate \$500.00 to the Vietnam Memorial in New Mexico.

b. It was suggested that funds for the 2006 Reunion be moved into a separate bank account to make the receipt and payment easier. The Treasurer will look into this matter for the 2006 reunion.

7. NEW BUSINESS:

a. Selection of location and dates for the 2006 Reunion: After proposal of several sites for the next Reunion in 2006, it was decided by a majority of the members, to hold the Association 2006 Reunion in Pensacola, FL at a date in August or September 2006 to be determined by the Reunion Committee.

b. The proposed amended Association Constitution and By-Laws was tabled until the next Reunion. Copies of the proposed amended Constitution and By-Laws will be published in a future copy of the Association Newsletter for all members to read.

7. NEW BUSINESS Continued:

c. The following Board of Director officers were elected for the period 2004 - 2006:

President: James H. Rose
Vice Pres: Larry Orvis
Treasurer: Bill Wandall
Secretary: Robert Blackstone
Web-Master: Ralph Grambo

8. The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Respectively Submitted:

1 Incl
Web-Master's Report

William M. Wandall
WILLIAM M. WANDALL
Acting Secretary
Army Transportation Assn. Vietnam



Webmaster Report--2004

<http://atav.us>

The domain name atav.us was purchased by the webmaster when the .us names became available about 2 years ago. The domain name server points to 134.198.33.115/atav/default.html. This website is what you actually see when you type in atav.us. The numbers refer to a specific webserver in my office at work. The internet network there is provided by the University of Scranton, my employer, as a community service. Because of this arrangement the website has never cost the ATAV any money. There are no annoying popup ads or other annoyances that come with other free webservice elsewhere.

Statistics:

- The atav.us site has over 2194 files and 40 mb. of data.
- There are 71 main stories contributed by members with 4 in progress.
- The counter has registered 22521 hits
- The email list has 652 names provided by persons that were in transportation units. Many of these are obsolete. There is no way to keep them up to date unless the changed emails are sent to the webmaster. Members need to send an email to the webmaster to get on this list.
- There are 170 names of men KIA on our memorial list.
- There is a search facility box on the website that gets actively used and shows the webmaster what people are searching for.

ATAV Yahoo Group

Statistics:

- Over 3000 archived messages that can be searched by members
- The group now has restricted membership. The webmaster approves all new member requests. This was done to cut down on spam and degrading material.
- There is no censorship of messages.
- There are 72 photo albums using 27.45 mb of 30 mb capacity. Some pictures will have to be moved to the ATAV website picture bank which has unlimited capacity.
- The Yahoo service costs us nothing.

Ralph Grambo

ARMY TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION, VIETNAM

FINANCIAL STATUS AS OF 30 JUNE 2004

Membership as of 30 June 2004:	456	
Cash on hand in WACHOVIA Savings Account as of 30 June 2002:.....		\$ 8,211.70
Deposits from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2004:		
Dues received from current and new members:	8,473.00	
Reunion 2002 (dinners and registration):.....	300.00	
Reunion 2004 (dinners/registration/tours):	4,007.00	
T-Shirts and hat sales:	1,715.00	
Interest received from Savings Account:	40.24	
Total Deposits:		\$22,746.94
Withdrawals from Savings Account from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2004:		
Reunion 2002 (dinners and misc)	\$ 1,040.57	
Reunion 2002 (Refunds - dinner cancellation):	60.00	
Reunion 2002 (Table decorations):	31.44	
Reunion 2002 (Awards for Board of Directors):	306.96	
Reunion 2002 (Fuel for Bill Parker's Truck to and from Reunion):	500.00	
Reunion 2004 (Refunds to members for dinner cost reduction):	452.00	
Reunion 2004 (Table favors and reunion welcome packets):	111.41	
Video tape (Army tugs in Vietnam - Rick):	24.45	
Association hats and T-Shirts:	1,220.34	
Flag pins for five year membership for members: (800 each):.....	217.98	
Award for Joe Heath:	67.05	
Association signs for Association truck:	84.80	
Association hats and T-Shirt postage:	179.49	
Association Membership pins:	341.00	
Association Newsletters (copies/printing/postage):	3,148.74	
Membership dues check returned not payable:	45.00	
Savings Account service charge - returned check:	7.50	
Vietnam book for Association's library:	23.93	
\$10,000, Insurance bond for Association Board of Directors:	114.82	
Sub Total:		\$ 7,962.73
Office Supplies:		
Stamps/envelopes/copies:	265.81	
Labels for Newsletters (Rick):.....	397.55	
Computer software (Rick/Hyde):.....	461.47	
Envelopes and copies (Rick):.....	1,508.55	
Postage 2002 - 2004 (Bill):	207.28	
Telephone calls (Bill):	29.82	
Sub Total:		\$ 2,870.48
Total Withdrawals:		\$10,833.21
Cash on hand in Savings Account as of 30 June 2004:		\$11,913.73
Wachovia Bank Statement as of 30 June 2004 attached.		
Estimated expenses for Association 2004 reunion:		
Dinners:	\$ 1,575.00	
Tours:	1,960.00	
Refreshments for Hospitality Suite:.....	600.00	
Total to be paid at the Reunion:		\$ 4,135.00

PROPOSED ATAV BUDGET

July 1, 2004 - July 1, 2006

INCOME	DUES (RENEWALS)	\$ 7100.00	
	DUES (NEW MEMBERS 50 Est)	1500.00	
	REUNION, 2004 (Based on 100 members/guests)		
	REGISTRATION	1000.00	
	DINNERS	3500.00	
	TOURS 3 each (minimum 25 persons each tour)	2425.00	
	REUNION, 2006 (Based on 100 members/guests)		
	REGISTRATION	1000.00	
	DINNERS	3500.00	
	TOURS 3 each (minimum 25 persons each tour)	2425.00	
	SALES		
	TEE SHIRTS (80 est)	1510.00	
	CAPS (50 est)	1000.00	
	BANK INTEREST TOTAL	40.00	
	2004 - 6 months (Jul - Dec 04)	10.00	
	2005 - 12 months (Jan - Dec 05)	20.00	
	2006 - 6 months (Jan - Jul 06)	10.00	
	TOTAL INCOME	\$ 25,000.00	
	EXPENSES	REUNION 2004	
		DINNERS/DOOR PRIZES	3600.00
	TABLE DECORATIONS/FAVORS	320.00	
	REFUNDS	70.00	
	BEVERAGES/SNACKS/ICE	500.00	
	TOURS 3 each (minimum 25 persons each tour)	2425.00	
	REUNION 2006		
	DINNERS/DOOR PRIZES	3600.00	
	TABLE DECORATIONS/FAVORS	320.00	
	REFUNDS	70.00	
	BEVERAGES/SNACKS/ICE	500.00	
	TOURS 3 each (minimum 25 persons each tour)	2425.00	
	CAPS/TEE SHIRTS (includes postage)	800.00	
	ASSN. MEMBERSHIP PINS (200 each)	340.00	
	ASSN. NEWSLETTERS (Copies/postage)	8000.00	

EXPENSES CONT.	OFFICE SUPPLIES (July 2004 - July 2005)	
	STAMPS/COPIES/ENVELOPES/TELEPHONE	\$ 345.00
	LABELS FOR NEWSLETTERS	128.00
	COMPUTER INK CARTAGES	100.00
	MEMBERSHIP CARDS (1000 each)	140.00
	OFFICE SUPPLIES (JULY 2005 - JULY 2006)	
	STAMPS/COPIES/ENVELOPES/TELEPHONE	560.00
	LABELS FOR NEWSLETTERS	192.00
	COMPUTER INK CARTAGES	200.00
	MISC	100.00
	TOTAL EXPENSES	24665.00
	REMAINING AS OF JULY 1, 2006	335.00
	(Does not include monies remaining as of June 30, 2004)	



Going Back to Viet Nam - 2004

Tom Moon

First, anyone can make this trip if they desire. I realize some veterans wish to forget the whole business of Vietnam and just live their lives with its present day memories. I will admit the trip back to Vietnam opened up stored feelings some of which were pleasant and some of which were depressing. Only you can make the decision if that trip is in your best interest. I was lucky to have Ron Jones and Bob Ralyea along for the hardest part of the trip, arriving at Vung Ro Bay and making that drive from the bay to Phu Hiep and Tuy Hoa. So much has changed yet it was so strangely the same. We all felt something at that point of the trip, it was felt silently, We talked little during that part of the trip. If you decide to make this trip it is better to go with someone, your wife would be a perfect partner for this trip. If you take your wife or kids, stay away from the roadside car washes. A young lady tried to molest me at one of these places and I suspect they do more than just wash cars.

It will not take a lot of time to plan your trip. Two weeks for the Vietnam entrance visa is the most time you will have to wait. You can get a US passport in a week, if you expedite the process, it cost a little more for the passport. Finding a travel agent that arranges for trips to Vietnam is also a good ideal. If you are one who likes to do everything themselves, this trip requires very little effort or knowledge in world travel conditions. I would recommend trying to buy someone's travel miles so you can upgrade your ticket from economy to business class. This will give you more room to stretch those old legs. Part of the flight you will be in the air for ten to twelve hours. To me this was the hardest part of the trip. It was worth the extra cost of the comfort. So get your self comfortable and lets get started with the trip that we took once took

thirty-five years ago. Time is never wasted, but sometimes it just gets away from us.

August 1, 2004

China Airlines flight 001 from Honolulu, Hi. to Taipei, Taiwan took off at 7:55 AM as scheduled. I was surprised I was still on the flight as scheduled. That was the longest night I had endured in a long time. I couldn't sleep, my heart pounded, I sweated, and my stomach was tied in a knot. I was going to leave home and my body didn't like it at all. At this point there was no turning back. I had paid for the tickets and Ron and Bob would meet me in Saigon. This had been mostly my ideal so I had to go. I really do hate to fly. I can imagine all kinds of things going wrong. I'm always going to be on the plane that crashes. Well there I was sitting on the Airbus 340. Which has a great safety record and flying on China Airlines, which also has a great safety record. No excuses, I was probably as safe as a person could get. My mind just would not let it rest, we're going to crash it would scream. After the take off and we had reached our flying altitude, I had a few beers and finally started to relax. The flight was pleasant and uneventful. As the plane approached Taipei, I was about to experience the Taiwan mile sprint.

Most airports of the world use a oval design so passengers do not have long walks to their connecting flights. In Taipei there is no oval design, it is a long and hard walk. On one side of the airport are the arrivals and on the other side of the airport the connecting flights. In the middle for added confusion is the immigration and customs checks. I had one hour to get to my departing flight to Saigon and it took every minute of it to reach the right gate. I had several panic attacks as I ran through the terminal not

knowing exactly where I was going. Every time I asked for directions to gate 7A I got a different direction. I finally heard a language I was familiar with, Vietnamese, squeaking loudly in front of me. Seemed they were also lost and desperate to find gate 7A. I wasn't quite ready to start squeaking, but I was close. Though I had trouble keeping up, I followed them to gate 7A. I settled into my seat in a cold sweat. I heard the flight attendant say someone should get that guy some emergency water. With water in hand the flight took off and I was headed for Saigon.

August 2

The pilot announced we were beginning our descent into Tun Son Nhut Airport. After all these years it still had the old name. I noticed from my window how much Saigon had grown. What once was rice paddies and forest were now warehouses and homes. Saigon had grown in all directions by miles. Immigrations and customs was very simple, they didn't bother to have you open your luggage, they just waved you through. In what seemed like minutes, I was out on the street waiting for a taxi to take me to the Rex Hotel. The going rate for a taxi to downtown is ten US dollars. It seemed fair. On the way to the hotel I got my first look at Vietnam traffic, it was 4:00 PM, and it seemed everyone was on the road. It is estimated that there are 25 million people living in and around Saigon. I am quite sure each and everyone owns a 50 cc Honda. The smog and dust is terrible. Most of the people wear a surgical mask to keep out the pollution. I arrived at the Rex where everyone seemed to have his hand out. The man who opened the door to the taxi, the man who opened the door to the hotel, the man who carried your baggage into the hotel, and the man who carried the baggage up to your room. I had some dollar bills that I handed everyone, they seemed to appreciate the money. The room, \$60.00 US per night was nice with TV and furniture and bed. The bathroom was clean with everything you needed and plenty of clean towels. The only problem was that the bed was hard as a rock and you could not adjust the

foam pillows to any shape to fit your head. My next stop was the rooftop bar. I could see the surrounding area of Nguyen Hue and Le Loi. I had a few Tiger draft beers and watched as bats covered the evening sky. Funny, I don't remember seeing bats in Saigon before, anyway it was a surreal moments. Thirty-five years later and I was back.

August 3 & 4

Ron and Bob arrived sometime around midnight. Ron called me up to invite me for a few beers. I had managed to drift off to sleep and mumbled that I would see him in the morning. I didn't sleep for very long, I awoke about 4:00AM and turned on the TV. There were about 14 channels, CNN, MTV, and a sports network. The rest were in Vietnamese. It was too early for breakfast or coffee, the restaurant opens at 6:00 AM, so I took a stroll on the street. Nguyen Hue looked very much as it did in 1975. Only there was now a statue of Uncle Ho and more park benches to sit on. Once there was a statue of a South Vietnamese holding a gun on the corner of Nguyen Hue and Le Loi, of course the new government had it removed. A South Vietnamese police colonel committed suicide at that location in 1975 as the NVA tanks rolled into Saigon. I took a set on the bench facing the Rex hotel and drifted into my on little world of memories of failures.

I observed two gentlemen exit the hotel, with one headed in my direction. He introduced himself as Ron Jones and the other as Bob Ralyea. Ron could tell by just looking that I was a vet. The three of us had an instant bond. It was time for coffee, we would meet each morning for coffee and talk. It was a very special time to sit and talk to people you had just met, but it seemed we had known each other forever. The coffee did take a little getting used to because it is served French style, with a little tin pot of coffee on top of the cup. You pour hot water into the pot to brew the coffee. Before drinking you remove the pot from the cup. You can adjust the strength of the coffee by adding more hot

water to the coffee in the cup. Another thing that takes getting used to is the Vietnamese seem to love stairways. Even when there are elevators no large room is complete without some type of stairway. Another favorite is the 6" drop. If you pass from one room to the next there probably is the 6" drop and it is usually hidden by the carpet on both sides of the drop being the same color. So your foot unexpectedly makes that 6" drop. On my first one, I danced 20' across the room before I gained my balance. The Vietnamese are very polite and pretend they didn't not see you almost fall flat on your face.

Another thing to be aware of is the guys who hang around the outside of the hotels. They claim, and they probably can, get you anything if the price is right. They are also always trying to get you to go on some kind of tour. It is best that if you do not know anyone in Saigon, to let the hotel help you with your travel needs. The food at the Rex was not bad, do not order the filet mignon, I could have eaten my shoe and it would have been tastier and more tender. I didn't care much for the hamburger, but Ron found his to be adequate. The hotel provided each room with fresh fruit daily. No one in our group suffered diarrhea or stomach upset caused by diet during our trip. Bottled water was provided at each hotel we stayed. You can also find bottled water at most road stops. Breakfast was also provided free by the hotels we stayed. Even the Tuy Hoa hotel provided a decent breakfast. Two other points to make before moving on. You do not need a doctor's prescription to fill your medications in Vietnam and also most of the hotels in Saigon have doctors on call. A doctor can come to your room in less than 15 minutes. Cost runs about \$40.00 US. The best way we learned to estimate money change was \$100,000 Vietnamese dong equaled about \$ 7.00 US dollar.

August 5

Ron, Bob and myself decided to go for it on August 5. Tre has arranged for a car and driver. We loaded up at about 8:00 AM and we were off

like a herd of turtles. Saigon traffic is unbelievably insane. It couldn't possibly be worse outside Saigon. Well, it is worse and somewhat dangerous. QL 1 is still the only roadway linking cities along the coast of Vietnam. It is still two lanes with shoulders. Mercifully, QL 1 from Saigon to just beyond Bien Hoa is separated by a concrete divider. This keeps the traffic from passing it is also four lanes at the point. Once past Bien Hoa the dividers are gone, the highway is two lanes, and the "me first syndrome goes into effect. " The first vehicle to pull out to pass, with lights flashing and horn blowing, is supposed to have the right away. This does not stop the vehicle coming in the opposite direction from doing the same thing. So both vehicles are headed for each other with no lane to spare. It is usually well choreographed with each vehicle sliding just in front of the other vehicle to avoid a deadly head crash. The first time it happened someone in the back asked me why I didn't get a picture. I remarked that I was afraid it would be the last thing I ever did. A little advice, don't sit in the front seat. The road trip will be a lot more pleasant if you don't see what is happening. Passing this way is just the way they drive. They pass on bridges, blind curves, and blind curves on mountain roads. Nothing stops them from an attempted pass. Waiting a few minutes to get around the slower traffic never enters their minds. So be prepared, if you travel by vehicle in Vietnam, this is just the way they drive.

We had decided to go to Nha Trang and spend the night, then the next morning go to Vung Ro, Phu Hiep, and Tuy Hoa. The scenery doesn't start until you get almost to Phan Thiet. The road is lined with stores and homes from Saigon all the way thru Xuan Loc. The forest has mostly been cut down in that area, except for a few of the rubber plantations. Once you get close to Phan Thiet you start to see the mountains, rice paddies, and Vietnam as it was in 1970. People who served at Phan Thiet would still recognize the city. The road to Phan Rang is beautiful as it runs along the ocean. On our way back we found a hotel and restaurant called the Bungalows

outside of Phan Rang on the ocean. I didn't check the room prices, but it might be wise to make that stop for a night rather than go all the way to Nha Trang. You need to take these road trips a little bite at a time.

I did not recognize anything in Cam Rahn, it was completely changed. We did not attempt to enter the old base area. I doubt if it would have been permitted. Once again the road was lined with shops and homes. In fact it was like that all the way from Cam Rahn to Nha Trang. Make sure you get a hotel reservation before going to Nha Trang. We were lucky to get a room, but we could only stay for one night, it was already booked for the next day. The trip from Saigon to Nha Trang had taken approximately 8 hours. I did not recognize anything in Nha Trang it had completely changed, it was bigger and more crowded. The Vien Dong hotel was clean and had a nice decor, three swimming pools for peoples different tastes. A train schedule was posted in the lobby, a berth on the Ho Chi Minh express train left Nha Trang at 5:00 PM and arrived in Ho Chi Minh City at 4:00 AM. The price was listed as \$700,000 dong or about \$50.00 US dollars. I enjoyed something called beef barbecue with rice at the hotel restaurant and washed it all down with three very large Tiger beers. The bed was only slightly softer than the one at the Rex, but I slept like a baby.

August 6

This is the day I have waited 35 years to experience. I'm headed back to Vung Ro Bay. It is about a 2.5 hours drive and I'm anxious to get started. The day was beautiful, not a cloud in the sky. As we neared Vung Ro, driving along the mountains with the ocean below us, we could almost feel it was right around the next corner. I think I might have shouted, their it is, a few times before we finally got to the bay. Once we arrived there was no doubt, this was Vung Ro Bay. Forage made it more beautiful than before. We stopped at he junction of QL1 and the road going down into the bay. A tank farm was lo-

cated in the old barracks area, but it had not really change all that much. They had built a dock and a pier. Though, I saw very few people around there were lots of fishing boats anchored in the bay. That resort I have read they were about to build in the northern area of the bay was off to a slow start. It like they plan to dig out a part of the mountain for the resort. At that rate it will be another 35 years before it is completed. The water was beautiful and calm. In everything I saw in Vietnam, Vung Ro Bay had changed the least. I knew sometime ago that I had to return just one more time and I was here. The journey seemed a lot harder than it was the last time. If they ever get that resort built, what a great place to have a reunion. I was glad to be there, but I was also ready to leave, the unpleasant memories were starting to come back and I didn't want to spoil this moment.

We loaded up and headed to Tuy Hoa City. The ride down the mountain brought back old memories. The road had not changed that much, maybe a little wider. You could still see the small blue lake down in the valley from the top of the road. The valley seemed so much greener than in 1970. We would weave our way down the road and into the valley. The old French train station at the bottom of the mountain was gone and replaced by new buildings. Vung Ro mountain stood as defiant as ever, the large rock still in place at the top. I believe the Vietnamese refer to it as a mother and child turned to stone, waiting for their husband and father to return home from the war. Ron had lots of memories of the road, it was hard to imagine that a war had taken place in what seemed so peaceful surroundings. There was not much development until we got to the Phu Hiep turn off. The rice paddies were green with new stalks, ducks still swam around eating whatever duck eat. The old train bridge going into Tuy Hoa is still in use. A newer wider bridge crosses the river into Tuy Hoa. We cross the bridge into Tuy Hoa and check into the Tuy Hoa hotel.

The girls at the hotel desk were pretty in their

tradition dresses and the beer was cold. Other than that the hotel was not very adequate. No elevator, but a spiral stairway, no less. The air conditioner didn't work very well, blowing out semi-warm air. Evidently, Tuy Hoa doesn't have a pest control service. I shared my room with several unidentifiable species. The train tracks run behind the hotel. Trains run at all times sometimes several an hour and the noise never stops. The restaurant also serves as a karaoke bar, so forget about having a peaceful meal. Ron and Bob headed for Phu Hiep to see if they could find old friends. Their trip was successful. I stayed behind renting a taxi to explore Tuy Hoa. The taxi driver was a young surly gentlemen who refused to turn on the meter. The trip around Tuy Hoa ended up costing me \$100,000. If you have problems with anyone in Vietnam, odds are it will be with a taxi driver. Main street looks the same, just different kinds of shops..The Catholic Church was still at the same place. No one spoke English. I returned to the hotel with my room creatures and tried to sleep. I had to close the door to the restroom, it smelt so bad. We all agreed the next morning we would leave Tuy Hoa and head back to Saigon.



August 7

We got a late start that day, we stopped in Phu Hiep for a brief visit, then started for Saigon. We were almost use to the Vietnamese driving habits, but my butt would still grip the seat as we passed on a blind curve and I wondered what might be coming around the corner. Getting a late start meant driving the last two hours to Saigon in the dark. Don't ever, ever, drive on QL1 at night. Some vehicles have lights, some do not, some vehicles have break lights, some do not. And still the driver insisted on passing other vehicles. I couldn't tell if the traffic in front coming our direction was six motorcycles or three large trucks, but we motored on. It was also disconcerting that our driver had an apparent nervous breakdown fifteen minutes before we reach the hotel. He yelled and hollered in his native tongue even after arriving at the hotel and he was paid. We were finally back at the Rex hotel. It almost seemed like home. I was joined on the Roof for beers by Ron and Bob. What a trip! What an experience! What an adventure! I'm not sure if any of us would do it again, but we survived that trip. Thanks Ron and thanks Bob. You are brothers in every sense of the word.

Tom Moon



From: "LARRY FIANDT" <driver523rd@y...>

Date: Sat Oct 23, 2004 3:22 pm

Subject: HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE

I HAVE SOMETHING HERE TO ASK OF THE MEMBERSHIP, I THINK WE MAY HAVE A CHANCE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE HERE AND SPEED UP A MUCH NEEDED PIECE OF EQUIPMENT, AND THAT IS A GUN BOX AND ARMORED CAB KIT.

AWHILE BACK JAMES LYLES AND MYSELF BEGAN WORKING WITH LAWRENCE LIVERMORE NATIONAL LABORATORY AND SOME PEOPLE TO DESIGN A SIMPLE BUT EFFECTIVE GUN BOX THAT WILL FIT ON 5 TON MILITARY TRUCKS, NOW THIS TEAM WAS QUITE SUCCESSFUL IN DOING JUST THAT AND THE BOX HAS BEEN TESTED MANY WAYS AS IT WELL SHOULD BE, AND AFTER TESTING EVERYONE WAS QUITE SURPRISED AT JUST HOW WELL THIS BOX DID, RIGHT NOW I CAN'T GO INTO DESIGN, MATERIALS, OR POST PHOTOS, FOR SOME OBVIOUS REASONS BUT IT HAS BEEN OK'D TO TRY THIS—THIS PROJECT SO FAR HAS BEEN FUNDED BY DARPA (DEFENSE ADVANCED RESEARCH PROJECTS AGENCY) THEY ARE THE CENTRAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (DOD).

THIS FUNDING HAS NOW ABOUT BEEN EXHAUSTED, AND WE MUST MOVE AHEAD, SO I'M ASKING EVERYONE TO CONTACT THEIR CONGRESSMAN, SENATORS, OR ANY GOVERNMENT AGENCY YOU THINK MAY HELP, ALSO ORGANIZATIONS—LIKE THE VFW OR AMERICAN LEGION AND ASK THE COMMANDERS TO CONTACT ANYONE THEY THINK MAY LISTEN, THAT INCLUDES ENLISTEDMENS AND OFFICERS ORGANIZATIONS AND ANY OTHER SITES YOU BELONG TO.

NOW THIS IS WHAT YOU CAN TELL THEM—TELL THEM THE BOX IS TESTED AND A PROTOTYPE IS IN USE AND HAS BEEN FOR A WHILE (ITS ALSO BEEN STATED BY SOME HIGHER UPS THAT IT IS THE BEST THING ON THE ROAD IN IRAQ AND IS THE FAVORITE AMONG THE CREWS) ITS NEVER MISSED A MISSION, TELL THEM TO INQUIRE ABOUT THE LIVERMORE/HUNTER GUN BOX AND TO HELP GET FUNDING TO GET MORE OF THESE INTO THE FIELD TO PROTECT OUR CONVOYS, OUR CONVOYS ARE GETTING HIT HARD AND ITS TIME THEY HAD A STANDARD IN PROTECTION, IF THEY GO ON WITH A MISS-MASH OF HOME MADE STUFF IN THE END THERE WILL AGAIN BE NOTHING, AND IF THERES A STANDARD IT MAKES REPAIR AND ASSEMBLY MUCH EASIER, AND AS I STATED ABOVE THIS BOX IS TESTED, THERE ARE A NUMBER OF THESE KITS BEING PRODUCED BUT WE ARE GOING TO NEED MORE, EVERYTHING IS SET—WE HAVE THE PLANS, AND A PRODUCER, WE NEED FUNDING, BE IT A GOVERNMENT AGENCY AS ABOVE OR THE MILITARY TO MOVE ON IT, AND IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE IN THE MILITARY I CAN GIVE THEM INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO BEGIN A PROCESS NEEDED IN ACQUIRING MATERIAL AND PLANS, WE NEED TO GET WORD OUT THERE, BUT I ASK THAT YOU BE KIND AND APPROACH THIS ENDEAVOR IN A BUSSENESS STYLE MANNER, AND NOT RUSH IN PLACING BLAME HERE OR THERE.

I THINK IF WE GET MOVING THOUGH WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE, SO LETS BE HEARD, BUT HEARD IN A POSITIVE WAY.

THANKS——U'R DRIVER

FORMER ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT PASSES AWAY

Members and the Board of Directors of the Army Transportation Association, Vietnam were shocked to hear that SGM Richard L. Phillips passed away on Monday, October 24, 2004. Rick had renal cancer and had a kidney removed in 2003. He was the founder and President of the Association since its founding in 1992. He was instrumental in increasing the Association membership over the years to more than 500 members in 2004. Rick attended his last reunion in July 2004 at Colorado Springs, CO where he visited with many of the 85 members and spouses during the five day reunion.

After returning from Vietnam in 1968, he got the idea to form an association of Transportation Corps veterans who had been in Vietnam between 1960 and 1975. He worked tirelessly on contacting Vietnam veterans to form an association, and finally in 1992 started the Association with 50 members. The first reunion was held at fort Eustis, VA in 1994. Now Associations are held every two years. Locations have been Washington, DC, Las Vegas, NV, New Orleans, LA, Colorado Springs, CO over the past years. The next reunion is scheduled for Pensacola, FL in 2006. Rick's Army career spanned 30 years with active service in Vietnam and the Gulf War as well as the Army Reserve. In civilian life, he was employed for 35 years by the Defense Department at Dobbins Air Force Base outside Atlanta, GA.

His remains will be interred at Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors on April 11, 2005 at 1:00 p.m. He is survived by his wife, Nancy, his parents LTC Donald Phillips, USA Ret., and his mother, Betty. He is also survived by two brothers John Randall and Ted. The Association sent flowers to his wife, Nancy in Rick's memory. Donations are suggested to the Kidney Cancer Association (www.curekidneycancer.org) or a favorite personal charity.

Welcome home, Brother !