



REPORT ON THE 2012 REUNION



The 1st Signal Brigade Association hosted its 2012 Reunion at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Colorado Springs, CO on September 6 – 9, 2012. This was the 8th reunion held by the Association since 1995.

While the Association has hosted many great reunions in various places throughout the USA, attendees said this 2012 reunion in Colorado Springs surpassed all reunions to date. Here are some highlights of the 2012 reunion:

- Eighty-two members of the 1st Signal Brigade participated, including vets from both Vietnam and Korea. Including the spouses and guests, we had a total of 151 attend the Saturday evening banquet dinner at the Crown Plaza Hotel.
- Each attendee received a Welcome Packet, which included a welcome letter from John Hickenlooper, Governor of Colorado, and letters from the City of Colorado Springs and the Colorado Springs Visitor Information Center.
- The Association conducted 5 optional tours during the reunion period to popular Colorado Springs' sites including the USAF Academy, the US Olympic Training Facility, Pikes Peak, and Garden of the Gods, the M Lazy C Ranch, and the Edelweiss Restaurant.
- At Friday's Business Meeting/Dinner, 120 members and guests heard **Lt. General**

Peter Kind (US Army – Ret.), Chairman of the Association discuss the many activities of the Association, its charitable giving and benefits of membership. Rich Lindekens, a Brigade vet and member of the Association, briefed attendees on the Association's September 2013 trip to Vietnam and Korea. Rich helped organize the upcoming trip based on his five trips to Vietnam over the past few years.

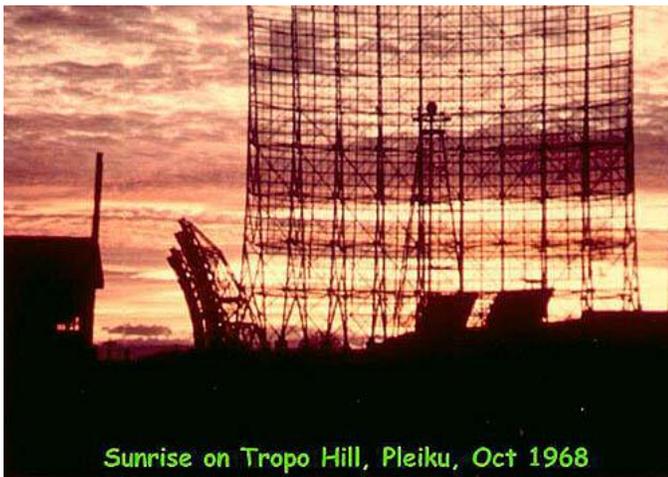
- Our guest speaker for the banquet dinner on Saturday, September 8, 2012 was **Colonel E. Deedrick, US Army**, the Commanding Officer of the 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne). He addressed some of the unique challenges in preparing Special Forces soldiers and units for mission deployment.
- In addition, **Colorado State Representative Mark Waller** welcomed attendees and introduced the guest speaker. The University of Colorado at Colorado Springs Army ROTC Mountain Ranger Battalion provided the Color Guard for the event. **Colonel Gaylord E. Hatler (US Army – Ret.)**, a resident of Colorado Springs, was the Chaplain for the dinner.





THE 2013 VIETNAM – KOREA TOUR SEPTEMBER 2013

Members of the 1st Signal Brigade Association are planning to visit Vietnam and Korea. This trip will visit many places in Vietnam where the 1st Signal Brigade provided telecommunications support for the U.S. forces. While the actual sites may no longer exist, the general locations may still be identified. Some of these sites may now be occupied by the Vietnamese military or other government activities and those sites may not be accessible. In addition, the trip will provide a view of the current Vietnamese culture, its history and landscape.



Sunrise on Tropo Hill, Pleiku, Oct 1968

In addition to the main trip program to Vietnam, several members have requested an Advance Group program designed to visit Korea prior to the Vietnam portion of the event. The Korea group will leave the USA several days prior to the Vietnam

group. The Korea group will be visiting the site of the present day 1st Signal Brigade in Korea. This portion of trip to Korea is being developed by the trip participants and the 1st Signal Brigade.

VIETNAM - KOREA TOUR SCHEDULE & DETAILS

- Sept. 10, 2013: Advance Korea Group leaves San Francisco for 2 nights in Korea.
- Sept. 12, 2013: The Main Vietnam Group leaves San Francisco, stops in Korea to pick up the Advance Group and then all travel to Vietnam, arriving in Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) on September 13, 2013.
- Sept. 24, 2013: All tour participants leave Vietnam, arriving in San Francisco on September 25, 2013.
- The itinerary and cost details of the Tour can be located at this website:

<http://1sba.wildapricot.org/resources/VietnamTrip/2013at-2nov.pdf>

TOUR TRAVEL AGENCY

- Professional Travel Services, Inc. (PTS), based in Kirkland, Washington has organized this trip. In addition to booking the San Francisco to Asia flights (and return) PTS coordinates with its partner company in Vietnam for the in-country trip, which includes all hotels, some meals and all land and air travel, and English speaking guide.



- The PTS travel agent organizing the program is a former USAID Vietnam veteran, **Ray Meisgeier**, who knows the country well. In addition, **Rich Lindekens** from Santa Barbara, CA is the Association's lead coordinator for the Vietnam portion of this trip. Rich was a Huey pilot for the 21st Signal Group – 1st Signal Brigade in Nha Trang. Rich has returned to Vietnam five times since his original tour of duty in 1968. Rich is also planning on being a participant on our 2013 trip.

set to begin at 9:00 a.m. Thursday September 11, 2014 to Sunday September 14, 2014. A hotel contract is being negotiated as this newsletter goes to print. The Association Board will get full details to you as soon as approved.

PERSONAL STORIES FROM FELLOW SIGNAL CORP VETERANS . . .

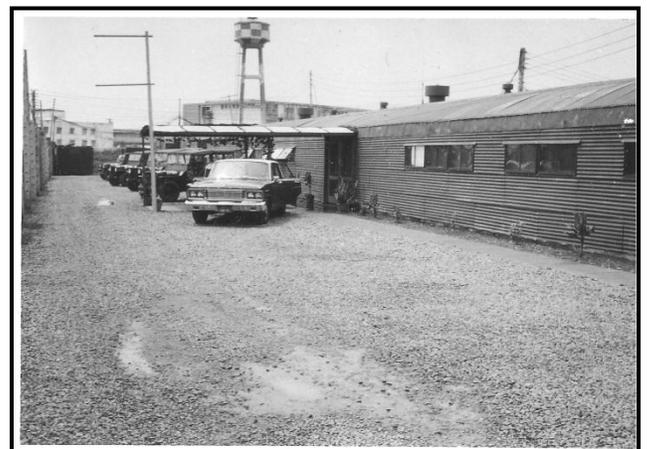
My Viet Nam Memories with pictures, by Monroe J. "Doc" Taranto, Colonel US Army (Ret.)

During my first tour in Viet Nam as a young captain I was with the 39th Signal Battalion at Tan Son Nhut Airbase. We covered the III and IV Corp areas in addition to Saigon area communications. I travelled throughout the Delta almost daily. We had our own Aviation unit with Hueys, and we also had access to Army Caribou fixed wing (before the USAF took them). The 2nd Signal Group was also headquartered at TSN in these metal Quonset-type buildings, below:



ADVANCE NOTICE OF OUR 2014 REUNION

Please pencil in the following dates on your personal calendar for the 1st Signal Brigade Reunion of 2014. The Association Board has approved the site of the Reunion to be located in Williamsburg, VA. The dates for the reunion are





Half way through my tour, it was decided to bring in the 69th Signal Battalion to handle the Saigon area. The 69th was headquartered at Camp Gaylor near Tan Son Nhut Airbase and the unit was commanded by LTC Bob Myer.

CPT Taranto standing next to the Gaylor Memorial.



It was decided to “exile” the 39th Signal BN to Vung Tau (Cap St Jacques) a former French vacation town on the South China Sea. My job was to take an advance party to locate a place for the Headquarters building and billets. As you can see on the photo below the HQ building was not too shabby.



Bill Comrey

The previous tenants of the HQ building were “ladies-of-the-night” who had to be evicted before the 39th Signal BN moved in.

The villa rented as the BOQ for the officers of the 39th Signal BN weren’t too shabby either. See below.



Vung Tau had a fine airfield and in those days yet there were few American troops there. The Aussies were based there. A wing of Caribou aircraft were also at the airbase. The Caribou airplane was of immense help in moving supplies around the Delta. The 39th Signal troops operated a tropo link to Thailand’s Green Hill, the longest tropo link in the world and part of the IWCS.



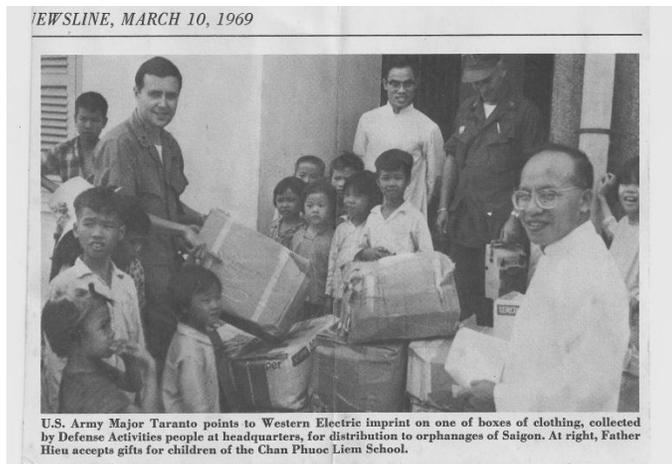


My second tour in Viet Nam started in January 1968 with DCA-SEA and just in time for the Tet offensive. Prior to Tet, Saigon was quite peaceful; few carried weapons and travelled around the city with ease.

During this tour, a group of us from DCA-SEA including our WECO engineers sponsored an orphanage in Gia Dinh near TSN. With the help of shipments from WECO back in the states, we were able to provide food, clothing and building supplies to the Catholic priests who managed the orphanage.



The Repair of a ¾ Ton U.S. Army Truck ... On the fly from Pleiku to Qui Nhon On RVN Route QL-19 6 March 1969 By Loren Kindler Co. A, 43rd Signal BN



NEWSLINE, MARCH 10, 1969
U.S. Army Major Taranto points to Western Electric imprint on one of boxes of clothing, collected by Defense Activities people at headquarters, for distribution to orphanages of Saigon. At right, Father Hieu accepts gifts for children of the Chan Phuoc Liem School.

I have many other memories from my two tours in South Vietnam. One vivid memory was teaching English to eager Vietnamese adults at the Hoi Viet My, the Vietnam – American Association. I admired their eagerness to learn the English language. These memories and photos are not from the tough and challenging events during the war, but the variety of things that I experienced during my years in-country.

M. J. “Doc” Taranto, COL US Army (ret.)

I was with A Company of the 43rd Signal Battalion in Pleiku and the 278th Signal Company at Camp Enari from 12 January 1968 until 21 August 1969. One of my more memorable events began on 6 March 1969, when we were asked to take some worn and badly damaged electronic equipment from Company A to our U.S. Military “junkyard” in Qui Nhon. We gathered up the large load of electronic gear, loaded it in Company ¾ ton pickup truck and joined a convoy near Camp Holloway going from Pleiku to Qui Nhon on QL19.

The electronic gear was to be turned over to the salvage depot in Qui Nhon. The convoy had at least 10 vehicles when it started out around 1:00 in the afternoon. I didn’t have a military driver’s license so I was riding along in the “shotgun” seat. We were about 2/3 of the way back from the lead truck. The 6 cylinder engine in our truck was running on 5, maybe 6 cylinders as we headed down the highway and it was not getting any



better as we traveled. The truck was running so slowly that everyone else had passed us up and we were on our own.

About 5 miles North West of An Khe, the half-way point of the planned trip, a whining noise developed in the rear axle and the driver asked me, "What do we do?" I said to keep driving, what other choice did we have? A few minutes later there was a loud clank from the rear end and the truck slowed to a stop.

That is when the panic set in because we had no radio to call for help and no idea if anyone would be coming down the road including "Charlie."

I thought about it for a minute, and then I told the driver to try putting the truck into 4-wheel drive. That worked and the front wheels got us to An Khe. Once there, I crawled under our truck and spotted a missing drain plug on the differential housing. The loss of gear lube had destroyed it out on the highway.

Our sister company in An Khe, the 586th Signal Company, called back to A Company for another truck which never arrived after a day long wait. We borrowed a truck from 586th Signal Company, went on to Qui Nhon and delivered our load.

Qui Nhon had a huge "junk yard" of damaged military equipment including ¾ ton pickup trucks. Seeing that, I had an idea to get a differential from them and take it back to An Khe the next day. Having grown up in the 1960s I was an old Hot Rod enthusiast from those days; so changing a differential was not a challenge, even for a 31E20 Field Radio Repairman. I replaced the damaged differential, found some new spark plugs and that beat-up old Army ¾ truck engine was humming much better than when we departed Pleiku.

Bill Comrey

We planned to head back to Pleiku but got orders to go back to Qui Nhon to pick up some more items for A Company. We completed our tasks then went nonstop from Qui Nhon to Pleiku at a good speed with the engine running on all 6 cylinders.

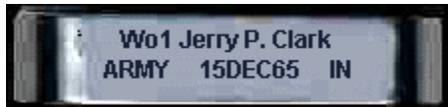
Those two days were an episode that I will never forget..!!

Loren Kindler, SP5 Field Radio Repairman, A Company, 43rd Signal BN, 1969, is showing where shrapnel from a 122mm rocket entered his hooch on a rare daylight morning VC hit in March of 1969.





Pilot Jerry P. Clark's story....



Jerry Prosper Clark Is on the Memorial Wall
Panel 04E Line 16

Name: **Jerry Prosper Clark**

Rank/Branch: WO 3rd Class/US Army

Unit: 568th Signal Company,
41st Signal BN

Date of Birth: 08 Aug 1940 (Pine Bluff, AR)

Home of Record: Davenport, IA

Date of Loss: 15 December 1965

Country of Loss: South Vietnam

Loss Coordinates: 133834N 1091351E
(CR087088)

Status in 1973: Missing In Action
Category: 2 (high probability enemy has knowledge of his fate) Aircraft, Vehicle, Ground:
O1D "Bird Dog" Other Personnel in Incident:
(None known to be missing)



SYNOPSIS:

Because the Cessna O1D Bird Dog was built to withstand a great deal of punishment and suited to conduct a wide variety of tasks, it was used virtually throughout the entire war. The US Army used the Bird Dog primarily as a liaison and observation aircraft. It brought not only an aerial method of locating targets, but the rudiments of a system of strike coordination between different types of aircraft employed in the air war, as well as coordination between different branches of the service that were operating in the same area. The Bird Dog was also used very successfully as a Forward Air Controller (FAC) since it could fly low and slow carrying marker rounds of ammunition to identify enemy positions for the attack aircraft.

On 15 December 1965, then **WO1 Jerry P. Clark** was the pilot of an O1D aircraft (serial #55-4686) conducting a reconnaissance mission over jungle covered mountains south of the major port city of Qui Nhon, Khanh Hoa Province, South Vietnam. During the flight WO1 Clark experienced an in-flight emergency and radioed Qui Nhon Airfield stating his engine battery exploded and he was low on fuel.

1st Lt. Robert L. Taylor, the pilot of a UH1B helicopter operating nearby, heard WO1 Clark's



emergency call and tried to intercept Clark to provide him with whatever assistance he might need in his attempt to return to Qui Nhon airfield. Shortly thereafter, Jerry Clark transmitted again reporting that the Bird Dog's engine "quit" and he was heading for the beach.

Within a short time, 1st Lt. Taylor flew over the beach. He had no trouble in locating the Bird Dog's fuselage in shallow water near the hamlet of Tuy Phong approximately 8 miles due south of Qui Nhon Airfield. Additional search and rescue (SAR) ground personnel, aircraft and vessels were dispatched to the area.

When search teams examined the crash site, they did not find Jerry Clark's survival gear in or around the crash site. Further, they found no blood in the aircraft or signs of an enemy attack upon it. Under the circumstances, even though the US Army believed there was an excellent chance he had been captured by communist forces known to be operating in the area, Jerry Clark was listed as Missing in Action.

During the search, villages in the surrounding area were canvassed for information about the missing pilot. Stories compiled from villagers about his fate differ. One indicated WO1 Clark safely evacuated the aircraft, swam to shore, and then swam back to the aircraft to get a weapon. He then returned to shore and fled into the hills without incident. Another villager's report claimed that Jerry Clark swam ashore, returned to the aircraft, but before returning to land once again was shot by a sniper and fell into the water as though mortally wounded. In this version there was no indication that the Vietnamese made an attempt to capture him if he were only wounded, or to recover his remains if he had been killed. Likewise, no

additional information surfaced about his fate. May he rest in peace!

Below is an example of a US Army Cessna Bird Dog airplane (not the one that was lost by 41st Signal Bn)





Membership Status



Our Association's membership continues to grow. We now have over **480** members, and growing. Our goal is to have **550** of our great

vets be members of the Association by the end of 2013. So, please help get the word out to the vets you know and ask them to become members.

Continual renewal of membership is vital to the life of the Association.

If you are not a current member of the Association, go to this website: www.1sba.wildapricot.org and click on the "Join Us" tab to join the Association. If possible, use our new on-line credit card system for payment.

Stickers.

One Cup of Coffee per Month



What is the annual cost of one cup of coffee? At \$1.25 each that is \$15.00.

Don't you think that being a member of our growing Association is worth the cost of a one cup of coffee each month?

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Merchandise Sale Status



The Association's merchandise available on the new Web site continues to grow. Go to the Sales Items in the Members Section of our Web page for a detailed display of our merchandise, as well as on-line and mail purchasing forms. We have Vietnam, Korea and Association Ball Caps, Polo Shirts, a brand new Association Coin, and Bumper Bill Comrey