

PAUL BRUBAKER

Post Office Box [REDACTED]
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15 June 2000

DETRA, Richard

Brisbane, CA [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dear Dick,

Thanks for your recent note, and payment for the FOB#4 patch.

As mentioned last time, SOG related insignia has moved from the early post-war phase of ready and affordable access to very expensive and mostly fraudulent. I urge you to acquire Harry Pugh's book, both for your own reference as well as a resource for your unit history. Harry did reproduce some SOG patches, but he has very few left, and none of them are the most prominent specimens.

If you'd like to search for the LLDB or LO patches, you can try the major catalogues (eg: Lancer, Boyer, Battle Zone, Saunderson's Us Militaria); or check their websites. You can also check collector and military exchange websites, but be extremely careful in your purchases.

I strongly recommend that you consult the standard histories on Special Forces in Vietnam (ie: Kelly, Stanton, Sutherland), and on SOG (ie: Saal, Sherman, Plaster) for details on the creation and evolution of the various camps. The changes instituted under Singlaub, from FOB to C&C, from Shining Brass to Prairie Fire, from Daniel Boone to Salem House, were more than administrative; but related to the tactical situation in country ... including Khe Sanh and Lang Vei. The Mai Loc launch site was not developed until the camps at Kham Duc and Lang Vei were closed by enemy action, and FOB#3 assets were disbanded into CCN/FOB#4 and CCC/FOB#2. The launch site at Phu Bai was converted from a combined FOB, using USMC assets, for CCN. To obtain exact dates and confirmation of transition sequences, you need to consult the extant histories.

Finally, it has been my experience that oral history is unreliable, for a variety of reasons. In the case of SOG, because the operations were so compartmentalized that only rumor and disinformation got out. The SOG archives have been declassified, so you may want to consider some original research, under the FOIA, in the National Archives.

Hope that this has been somewhat helpful to you, in that you now have some definite direction to pursue. Something Steve Sherman has found is that vets won't help, but as soon as you publish, they'll criticize; at which time you can make corrections and expand contents. You may want to circulate drafts before the "final" version. Good luck!

Fraternally,

Paul [Signature]
Brubaker

PAUL BRUBAKER

Post Office Box [REDACTED] Circleville, WV [REDACTED]

2 December 1997

Dick Detra

Brisbane, CA [REDACTED]

Dear Dick,

Thanks for your inquiry, but it looks like I'm not going to be of much assistance.

My stock list of unusual replica insignia from the Vietnam-era is enclosed for your consideration. They are few and specific, due to my need to acquire some for display projects. If any of them meet your needs, please don't hesitate to contact me again. They are, of course, guaranteed for your satisfaction.

Without doing some research, I don't know what the ARVN Abn Task Force insignia looks like. Advisory Team 162 had a few unofficial pocket patches, which I've not seen offered in reproduction, but the ARVN JSD is available from several sources, such as D&G, Hoover, or Battle Zone. The ARVN Abn Div SSI is also available in reproduction. However, I think I'm the only source for the ARVN Abn Bde SSI, which preceded the Divisional organization. The Bde SSI existed in various colors to designate which Brigade it signified, but I've only replicated the red background as the first and most common.

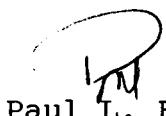
If you absolutely MUST have original and period patches, then you will have a hard time finding them and will spend a lot of money obtaining them. Some of the elite unit patches are going for absurdly high prices, which is why I decided to replicate the ones I have done. The best source I know for honest and reliable ARVN insignia is:

Viet Nam Military Collectibles
% Dai Le Duy
P.O. Box 683, Station B
Montreal, Quebec
H3B 3K3 Canada

[REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
You may wish to ask him to search his contacts for you. You may mention my recommendation of him to you.

Best of luck in your endeavors. Keep the faith!

Sincerely,


Paul L. Brubaker