

James O. MacIntosh

Here was a long running working, non-working relationship of sorts, that spanned nearly six years. The knowing of James O. MacIntosh spanned the Army Pictorial Center (APC), (DASPO) Dept of the Army Special Photo Office and the MACV Army "A" Photo Team. In all respects James MacIntosh was an enigma, an absolute riddle to figure out. One never knew exactly what was real or truthful and what was fake and lies. Rumor, hearsay and gossip abounded about this man. James O. MacIntosh was a likeable personable guy that everyone was attracted to. His speech and conversational topic range for discussion was diverse, yet readily understandable by the college graduate, as well as the high school drop-out, making him a natural talkative person contributing constructive commentary to nearly any discussion.

I first laid eyes on SP5 James O. MacIntosh in the fall of 1962, while in Army Photo School at Ft. Monmouth, N.J. Part of the curriculum was to tour the Army Pictorial Center (APC). In 1942, the Army bought Paramount's New York studio, when the movie giant consolidated on the West Coast. The Army hired any talent that refused to abandon their East Coast family and friends. Many editors, cameramen, producers, directors, photo lab personnel and script writers opted to stay in New York, providing the Army an instant fully operational movie studio. Over the years APC produced hundreds of training films for WWII, the Korean War and remained operational until August 1969.

It can't be forgotten, the war time draft was fully implemented. Many of Hollywood's stars and movie production talents were drafted. Out of national patriotism many other volunteered to join the military. A lot of this pool of Hollywood talent worked at APC. Camera Branch walls were covered with photos of famous people, that worked for the Army studio. Watching the History Channel while drafting this story, they showed a segment of then actor, later President Reagan, starring in a WWII Army Air Corp movie on how to shoot down Jap Zeros. James Stewart was a bomber pilot, that eventually became a general in the Air Force reserves. Martha Raye entered service and stayed in the reserves, making frequent trips to Vietman (for details see VIP's Bombard MACV at this website.) A young director Frank Capra worked for the Army directing movies. The war effort extended into every capillary of American society.

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Our class work was to film the action, then a few times tinker with editing the processed film. The instruction didn't include sound editing, background music, animation or special effects that the (DAC) Dept of the Army Civilian work force retained by the Army handled, to produce a finished complete movie. The APC snack bar was full of DAC's and military alike, when the class bus arrived. Until then the few DACs I saw were lawn care or building maintenance people. The class tour had to find seating any where available. Several classmates found chairs at Mac Intosh's table. Several others found room at the table of Army celebrity Master Sergeant Stewart S. Queen, the decade long host of the Army's "The Big Picture" T.V. series. On the bus back to school, the conversation centered on the coup the Army pulled off. Those who sat at MacIntosh's table questioned how the Army was able to get a \$600.00 a week Hollywood union cinematographer for less than \$150.00 a month??

Returning from Korea as a PFC, I was assigned to APC's Field Photo, where SP5 MacIntosh was also assigned. James MacIntosh was frequently missing from Field Photo, while working in Special Effects or on a sound stage for Camera Branch. This added an aura of mystic to James MacIntosh. Field Photo had Sergeant First Class including Jim Downey, Tom Shiro, Jack Yamaguchi, Paul Moulton and Brooks, with many Staff Sergeants, Why was someone equal to a buck sergeant working on stage, when the more senior sergeants weren't? Unless MacIntosh had some outstanding credentials to work with the Hollywood cameras, the 35mm Mitchell Standard, NC and BNC models used by Camera Branch.

When James Mac Intosh was at Field Photo, his friendly congenial social disposition was effervescent. He sat reading at least one newspaper from cover to cover daily. He read not only the news and sports sections, Mac read the comics, scanned the financial pages, read Dear Abby and pursued working the crossword puzzle until completed. This diverse daily input of knowledge aided James to conduct himself admirably in any conversation, These traits supported his notoriety. His charismatic personality often captivated voluminous audiences.

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I heard rumors from other Field Photo members, that MacIntosh had been the cameraman that filmed the bedroom scenes for the movie "Cat On A Hot Tin Roof" and another Liz Taylor film of the era. I heard this from several people in the 40 photographer Field Photo. That added to the mystic of James MacIntosh. If true, why was he in the Army?

I was in awe by this revelation. If it were true, than Mac Intosh probably had forgotten more about movie making then I could ever hope to learn. Hollywood was a peculiar place to work. Internationally renowned stars could and did make outrageous demands on producers and directos. Some stars had favorite cameraman, make-up or hair dressers etc. Yet it seemed inconceivable that even in Hollywood, they would have one cameraman for the exteriors and a different cameraman for each room in the house.

Even at APC we heard tales of New York members of the American Society of Cinematographers union unable to find work in Hollywood. While in photo school, the instructor told the class, union members were voted into the union, not just pay union dues and receive a union card. Their technical proficiency and expertise over a broad range of film topics and lighting conditions were among the judging to enter the union membership. Thus in this writers mind, it was out of the question to have a special camera man for just the bedroom scenes.

Hollywood productions frequently listed technical photographic skills beyond normal standards. They include sequences as under-water, animation, high speed camera or aerials (See DASPO buys Tyler Mounts at this web-site.) These distinguished contributions outside the purview of normal filming include; Ray Harryhausen's animation of live actors sword fighting with skeletons. High speed cameras of pyrotechnics being detonated and countless under water scenes. These all require special technical skills and equipment outside the perimeters of normal filming qualifications.

Another widely spread rumor about MacInosh was that his wife and child had been killed in a South American plane crash. The loss of the family turned James to hitting the bottle. This eventually affected his work, forcing him from Hollywood. These factors may have contributed to James being in the Army. What little I saw of MacIntosh doing crossword puzzles, he didn't have shakey hands.

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There were several motives as to why I didn't simply ask Mac Intosh, if the rumors about him were true. The military has a magnificent term "FRATERNAZATION". It means officers couldn't socialize with NCOs, and NCOs didn't associate with privates. A PFC could ask superiors questions concerning the Army or work related matters, but not personal background questions. That was a NO-NO. The sergeants gave orders to privates, not the reverse. If the NCO volunteered personal information that was a different story.

The second element was though a dieing era, but in 1964 some judges at sentencing , gave the convicted person the option of going to jail or joining the armed forces. Thus there were some troops in the Army with secluded backgrounds, that didn't want public and would be inappropriate to ask. I well recall one trouble marker in the 221st Signal Company, that bragged of spending most of his teen years in a Utah Reform School.

Field Photo wasn't all somber and business like of course, there was some kidding. I remember one Monday morning when SSG Leroy Massey arrived, I over heard several guys ask Massey if he had intergraded the Coney Island Beach over the weekend? The good natured SSG Massey, knowing he was being teased, just dropped his head knodding "NO", raising his head with a grin saying you guys! In all, each rank more or less clustered by themselves with little interchangeability amongst the ranks

From 1964-66 SP5 Mac Intosh and I were never teamed up on a filming assignment as a team. During General Of The Army Mac Arthur's funeral, everyone in Field Photo worked that story. Field Photo was assigned outside the armory filming the thousands of VIP's and dignitaries arriving and entering the building. Mac Intosh was on the Camera Branch team filming the endless procession passing the casket, from an elevated position using one of the studio Mitchell cameras.

Coming back from a multi month filming job, Field Photo was nearly deserted of people. The only NCOs left were SFC Jim Downey and SSG Frank Labrams. The reason for so few people was the Dept. Of The Army Special Photo Office (DASPO) had become it's own entity, taking much of Field Photo's talent. Gone were CPT Penney and Lt. Friend among the officers. Missing were SFC Tom Shiro, Jack Yamaguchi, Paul Moulton, SSG Massey, SP5 Marty Stienbus, Kit Kramer, Mac Intosh, Kermit Yoho, Mike Lealey were now DASPO members. There may be others that I have forgotten.

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Besides DASPO draining Field Photo personnel, other members got transferred to other bases or retired. SFC Brooks retired, he was a sergeant of the old school. He had a footlocker filled with photo related Army Regulations, TM's and FM's. He could quote the regulations verbatim. Many officers regretted telling SFC Brooks how to do things. Another retiree was SSG Guytano Failace. He took young troops, including myself under his wing, instructing us right from wrong in the Army. He confided to us, that he was Mr. America of 1928 or 1929. He also stated that he had been Mac Arthur's personal photographer during World War II, holding the rank of major. After the war he had a choice of getting out of the Army, or reverting to sergeant. I recall he retired as a major.

The first time I layed eyes on SFC Tom Shiro, he was mighty intimidating. He looked exactly like a New York mob hit man in uniform. He was a big burly serg, that could have been a football linebacker. He chewed on an unlit cigar most of the day, and had a scar from eye level to chin. Yet most of the time he was jovial grinning without animosity.

While most of DASPO's people headed out to form the Pacific Detachment at Ft. Shafter, HI and the South American Detachment at Ft. Clayton, The Canal Zone, a hand full remained in New York. They were housed on the upper level of a WWII barracks, that served as APC's security guard house on the lower tier. The barracks sat right inside the parking lot gate behind the main stage. It seemed the Pentagon wasn't sure what base they wanted the state side detachment to be located at, so they stayed at APC until Ft. Bragg, N.C. was selected.

I recall one project I needed to use the Arriflex BL Camera. APC did not possess this equipment. They were going to rent the camera gear, but DASPO did own the Arri BL Camera. I spent two days above the guard shack learning how to operate the Arriflex BL. Most of the time was spent learning how to load and unload the 400 foot magazine, using a changing bag in less than three minutes.

DASPO was barely six months old, when word filtered back to APC that Yoho had paid the ultimate sacrifice. He looked like he should be in 10th grade, not the Army. He sported some peach fuzz for a beard, now he was gone, Man it hit me hard. Over the years Kermit Yoho was the only person that I personnally knew that was killed in Vietnam. We heard the truck he was riding in hit a mine decades later I heard conflicting data.

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I met up with MacIntosh again in August, 1966 when I was transferred from APC to DASPO Hawaii. Things were a lot different there. At APC the supply room retained all the camera equipment and the photographers were a pool of people. As an assignment arose a team was chosen. The NCOIC would sign for all the equipment needed for that particular job. With DASPO everyone was assigned a team, and the team had the basic equipment for most assignments. The team consisted of a officer, NCOIC, cameraman, asst. cameraman, soundman and still photographer. As soon as a person was put on a team, he was issued his equipment. DASPO was a quick response concept nearly on alert status. Another distinct trait was APC filmed nearly entirely on U.S. soil, while DASPO was an international operation requiring a passport on many jobs. Within a day or two of arriving in Hawaii, I was off to the passport office to apply for mine.

Mac Intosh was on a different team than I. For the team I was on the pace was slow at first, but quickly built up. First I headed to Tyler Mount school. A month later chased LBJ and Lady Bird Johnson across the Pacific for nearly a month, and filmed what was left of WWII on Wake Island and Guam before the holidays (All three stories are available at this website.) The team Mac Intosh was on had its own agenda of similar obligations, including filming the First Family six nation Pacific tour.

I received my Sp4 E-4 promotion orders in the fall of 1964, while in Pago Pago, American Samoa, and about a year later became Sp5, I think while in Vietnam. I was now the same rank as MacIntosh. The normal time in grade for promotion to staff sergeant was about two years, yet Mac Intosh far exceeded that requirement he seemed to be stagnet. By 1966, the rumors of Mac Intosh were years old and nearly forgotten. When I did see him, the rumors were the furthest thing from my mind. Thus even when I saw him I never thought to even ask him about working in Hollywood.

The DASPO Vietnam Team in essence required duel teams. One to film the MACV stories of Vietnam nation building and pacification projects, and an entire other team to cover the Army's combat operations and the Army's roll in Vietnam; including the Long Binh Detox facility and USARV Data processing unit. (Both stories are available at this website).

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The day after Christmas 1966 MacIntosh and I were part of the team headed to Vietnam for 90 days. MacIntosh however, had been assigned to the team to film the MACV Photo Team Projects. I was with the combat operation team. As such, again the two of us did not work as a team. I can't even say for sure that we shared the same sleeping area. I would be at the DASPO Villa, while the MACV team was out filming. They in turn were at the villa, when I was on assignment away from Saigon. Truly our paths seldom crossed while in Vietnam.

Early into the 90 day team tour in Vietnam, rumors arose that some DASPO personnel might be transferred to Vietnam to cover the MACV assignments. There is no telling how elaborate the MACV and Pentagon brass stated the case, but the simple word us troops got was that DASPO wanted compensation for travel and per-diem, and loss of use of the MACV team, while in Vietnam, plus film and sound tape costs used for the MACV projects. MACV countered, having ten troops and two officer transferred to the newly formed 221st Photo company, due to arrive in Vietnam in May of 1967.

The original 12 were further cut. Cpt Gilmore upon hearing he was being transferred to Vietnam resigned his commission. The other unnamed officer never materialized either. MACV had no use for still photographers. That cut the enlisted to eight. They were SSG Kramer and Gentry, SP5 Foulke, MacIntosh, Baker, Garvey, Owens and Lohr. What seemed like a smooth transition on paper became a very bumpy road ahead.

Many DASPO people took varing amounts of leave time. SP5 Baker was hospitalized, so that each of us headed to the 221st as individuals, not a team. SSG Kramer and SP5 Bob Lohr were the first to head to Long Binh. When they arrived, it's questionable if the 221st had arrived yet. The 90th Replacement Unit figured there was a mistake in the orders and sent the pair off to the 221st Service and supply unit, North of Nha Trang. They eventually found their way to Long Binh a week later. I arrived on the 17th of May, 1967. The 90th Replacement Unit still didn't know the 221st Sig. Co. (Pictorial) was in country. I had a good streak of luck. The 18th MP Brigade was the 221st Photo Company's next door neighbor. They had stopped by to check out the new unit. After performing my morning detail (See The Khaki Mafia at this website), the MPs stopped by the replacement unit. Sometime later, I was called to put my bags in the MP jeep. They would take me to my new home.

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Likewise the 221st Photo Company didn't come to Vietnam as a company intact. They arrived in increments, by platoon. In country were the still photographers, but their cameras were still back at Ft. Monmouth, N.J. The motion picture platoon wasn't due until late July. The only vehicle the 221st had was the supply sergeant's jeep whenever they could borrow, marauder the jeep for a few hours, Kramer and Gentry would drive to Saigon and inform MACV what was happening. MACV was bent out of shape at the concept that the manpower to film the MACV stories were here in May, but no cameras until August. This was totally unacceptable.

MACV asked DASPO if they would loan the two teams cameras for 90 days, but DASPO said only 60 days. On May 31st the Pacific commander Maj. O' Conner?, 1st Sgt Ken Bridgham and SP5 MacIntosh arrived with two complete Arri BL systems, a filmo and Nagra tape recorder. I have no recollection how Gentry and Kramer scrapped up two vehicles for the teams to use, but they did somehow.

There was a lot of hurt feelings among the 221st people. They had been in country nearly a month and had been converted into construction workers, preparing concrete pads for metal buildings to replace the tents used for living quarters, the supply room and orderly room. Extra buildings were needed for the incoming motion picture platoon also. Here we were the late comers, the EX DASPO people, some only in country a few days and we were going out on filming jobs. Hatred and contempt ran very deep.

Now that the MACV Army Photo Teams had the manpower, transportation and cameras, things still weren't placid. A group of field grade officers decided they wanted to be empire builders. They concocted the idea of a South East Asia Pictorial Agency (SEAPA) and they would control all photo activities in Vietnam, if not Thailand too. SEAPA would be intermediaries. They would get the two Army Photo Teams assignments from MACV and tell us the data. Upon completion of the story, the two MACV Photo Teams would hand over to SEAPA, the exposed film and sound tape plus captions. They then would carry the finish job to MACV HQS. They gave us a direct order to never set foot inside MACV HQS again.

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The DASPO Villa being in close vicinity to MACV HQS, SSG Gentry and Kramer would stop by visiting with old friends. We were told that SEAPA tried the same thing with DASPO, but DASPO told SEAPA where to go in a hurry. When neither MACV Army Photo Team was seen or heard from in a week, MACV I.O. called out to Long Binh. Either Kramer or Gentry informed MACV I.O. of the new situation. MACV HQS went nuts over the news that we were barred from setting foot in MACV HQS, and some empire builders were going to have operational control over their photo teams. For several days, we EX-DASPO people didn't know if the Army would have a MACV Photo Teams. We weren't sure if the EX-DASPO members would operate the teams. After about 48 hours of suspense, word came to Long Binh that MACV wanted to see both teams in their office that afternoon. They made it clear to all of us that we were under operational control of MACV I.O. and nobody else, and that we were welcome in their office anytime

While Kramer and Gentry fought the maze of problems, getting the teams transportation, cameras, extra film and sound tape, getting the teams moved to Saigon, SEAPA and a host of other barriers that cropped up at each and every turn. Every time I would see either NCO, I would ask if anything had changed for the better or worst? I forsaw myself in another year or so in their position, having to make simular decisions. You might say I was playing a game, just checking out how many ideas of mine worked against how many didn't, in comparison to the two staff sergeants ideas. Most of all I gave them morale support to what they were attempting to accomplish for the teams.

What was the most senior Spec Five of the group doing? Nothing! Mac Intosh was begining to show his true colors. I never saw Mac ask either staff sergeant, what was the next plan of action? How can I help. Mac Intosh was complacent and satisfied to collect his pay check and lend no aid in surcoming our teams problems. He was exhibiting no management skills nor resources. Come meal time everyone walked the two blocks to the consolidated mess hall to eat. Mac walked that distance, but diverted himself to the club, for canned meals of beer. During construction jobs, Mac began the work, but soon excused himself for the latrine or some other reason to leave work. Hours later he re-surfaced for the next mandatory formation. Mac Intosh was displaying no leadership traits, plus sneaking off from routine work details, like a person not to be trusted.

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221st platoon had constructed a break area next to a Lister bag. A 28 foot parachute suspended by 4X4 posts provided shade. Picnic tables and other seating arrangements were available, and the hub of activity when not working on construction. (See Glides 1-10) Under the shade canopy Mac Intosh often played cribbage and other games. He carried a miniature wooden fold up multiple game board for checkers and chess. I never heard him brag of his past attributes. In this respect he was an introvert about himself. Yet in other matters Mac was an extrovert. His wit and nearly homely style crossed the age barrier. He possessed a fatherly image open to all. Many teenagers were lonely and far from home for an extended period, for the first time. Mac Intosh was an older higher ranking more worldly person, yet a technician equal to a sergeant, but not an order shouting sergeant, was exactly what endeared the lower enlisted to Mac. He filled a vacuum in their young lives. Mac Intosh and I were now both the same rank, however Mac Intosh was about 40 years old and I was in the Mid 20's. I too looked up to James for advice and tapped his experiences.

Mac Intosh provided myself excellent advice several times. During one conversion, the question arose of the prospects of another airborne combat jump in Vietnam? I was in country in 1965, when the 173rd Airborne Brigade conducted a parachute assault into combat. Mac stated that there had been three airborne assaults. Using Mac Intosh's figures, I wrote one story for this web-site Mac Intosh's information was confirmed recently, when the History Channel showed the "MIKE FORCE" of the 5th Special Forces had conducted two parachute combat jumps.

In another conversation Mac in explicit detail told a group of us how to drink a "MEASURE" of Montgnard wine from a crock. In great detail, he explained what a measure was, the reed straw used to drink the measure, and told us the pit-falls to avoid. From experience he said, don't try to drink immediately after the water is added to the fermented fruits. The yeast and fermentation will expand for up to a half hour, after the water is added. He said let the crock overflow. When the crock stops overflowing, then drink. Adding, if you drink while the wine is still expanding, you'll never finish the measure. Like an idiot, I didn't heed Mac's advice and drank right away, as detailed in (MACV Army "A" Films Montgnards available at this website.)

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By the first few days of June, 1967, the two Army MACV Photo teams were ready to start working. The teams comprised of Team "A" of SSG Kramer, SP5 Mac Intosh, Garvy and SP5 Foulke. Team "B" was headed by SSG Gentry, SP5 Lohr, SP5 Owens and SP5 Baker. We had temporary cameras, vehicles to get around and a minimum supply of film and sound tape to last the two months the cameras were on loan.

The work load was heavy. Except for the Marines who controlled the Northern part of Vietnam, the Army had virtually taken over the combat operations all over the country. The Army units had a myriad of NATION BUILDING projects; not the least was road construction jobs and moving entire hamlets from enemy infested territory to safer locations. Other U.S. sponsored projects taught farmers better utilization of land, crop rotation and greatly increase crop yeilds.

On the PACIFICATION side; leaflets were dropped inducing enemy troops to defect. Medical and dental assistance or MEDCAPS for the vast majority of the 17 million South Vietnamese people helped forge heart and mind resolve toward the Saigon Government. The construction of one room schools and issuing millions of simple school kits, by the U.S. troops to Vietnamese children. The kits contained a folder or backpack which held notebook paper, pencils, crayons and coloring book and a few other supplies. The Army MACV Photo Teams had countless jobs to film, attempting to counter the networks nightly news of blood, gut and gore coming out of Vietnam.

However within a month fully 37% of the personnel would be gone. The first to leave was SP5 Garvey. The nearly completed new MACV HQS sent out a call for an audio technician to build and install a sound system in Gen. Westmoreland's conference/briefing room. Sp5 Garvey got the job. He hoped upon completion that he would get the job of operating the system. When that didn't happen, Garvey used a Secondary MOS of PSYOPS and was immediately grabbed by the Psychological Warfare people.

SSG Kramer had reenlisted in Vietnam and the first week of July took a month long Special Leave back to his family. Upon his coming back to the 221st, he was assigned a different photo team. The same week Kramer took leave, SSG Gentry had a family problem and granted Emergency Leave back to the states. When he returned he was put in SEAPA Operations.

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The last of June or first of July, the two NCO's told the rest of the team members to pack their belongings and turn in their bedding. We were moving to Saigon. I never saw written orders for the move. It undoubtedly came from MACV in the form of "VOCO" (Verbal Orders of the Commanding Officer). By mid-morning we signed out of the 221st, heading to MACV HQS. We were told to go to the housing office and pick up the keys for room #100 and #200 of the Brinks Hotel. Team "A" got room #100 and "B" Team #200. The rooms or offices were stark bare, just four walls, not even a bathroom, but we had an office, no phone, no furniture nothing. Dropping off the camera equipment, it was back to the housing office, to get individual beds in some BEQ/hotel room scattered all over Saigon. No two of us were put up in the same hotel. I got the Metropole Hotel.

The next morning the two teams ventured upstairs to introduce ourselves to our sister service counter-parts, the Navy, Air Force and Marine MACV Photo Teams. situated in room #300, #400 and #500 of the Brinks Hotel. They had offices. Some had wooden desks sofas and cloth chairs. They had phones and refrigerators to store film. Most importantly, they had window size air conditioners to keep cool. It was back to the housing office, to see what in the way of office furniture we might get. At the warehouse all "A" Team got was a five drawer file cabinet, a wooden fold up field desk, a typewriter and several metal fold up chairs. "B" Team didn't fare much better.

After all these years Mac Intosh and I would work together on the same team. I was looking forward to see what I could learn from this myth of a cameraman. However all that radically changed with the departure of SSG Kramer. Those out-witting games I played against the two NCOs would become the vanguard of the team's survival. Mac Intosh with his 60 months or more time in grade was the undisputed next in command to lead the team. His apathy, in-attitude toward command, his refusal to accept responsibility, or more precisely incompetence and dereliction of duty and total indifference was cause for major concern. The team was now two cameramen and no soundman. I recount a conversation the two of us had. Mac stated that he knew how to operate the Nagra recorder. I had always had a soundman, and never actually operated the machine myself. To get us out of the stalemate of stagnation and do nothing, I conducted an uncontested mutiny, by taking charge and booking us on a flight to the next job.

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About this time, the 221st sent SP4 Charles Nash to replace SP5 Garvey as the team's soundman. He like us, was happy to be working our job, rather than being engineers and construction workers, levelling the ground, pouring concrete and erecting metal building. As the three man team continued to film jobs, critiques of the footage started coming back, stating that Mac's film was too shakey to be useable.

In this time frame Mac Intosh's actions clearly showed that I would learn nothing from him pictorially. He was becoming a liability, rather than a team asset. When the team was in Saigon, Mac showed up for work late. While on assignment when I woke him up, he was hung over, barely able to get out of bed and dressed. Several times he passed out driving to the actual filming site. Mac Intosh was detrimental to the team.

I had no idea how to handle the situation. I blundered by not keeping records and documenting Mac's conduct. I had no record saying on this date Mac showed up 90 minutes late for work. On that day he passed out driving to the work site. I doubt if the MPs carried breathalizers or balloons to blow up as proof of drunkeness. I had generalities, not specifics to charge him with. I pondered charging Mac with insubordination, but he out ranked me by years. Maybe "FAILURE TO REPAIR", not being at the proper place at the appointed time? Or just plain drunk on duty? While I had seized control of the team, I loathed the concept of writing up a superior on formal charges, but something had to be done.

At the end of July the use of DASPO's Arri BL's and Nagras had expired. The teams turned them back to DASPO. The 221st cameras hadn't arrived yet. MACV asked the Air Force, Navy and Marine teams, if they could scrap up any extra equipment for the Army teams to use temporarily. Somehow out of the goodness of their hearts, the three teams found two filmos and a pair of Uher tape recorders, for the Army teams to use. I remember the first job "B" Team did, was go to Vung Tau for a job, and somehow dunked the borrowed Uher in the South China Sea.

It was a good thing emergency back up equipment was found, for Army procurement people went to some Audio/Visual show and bought 16 Beckman & Whitley cameras for the 221st to use. The B&W's were in the development stage, and never field tested, much less combat tested. When the cameras arrived, I assembled five B&W's, before one actually worked. It lasted about 1500 feet of film, before it too broke. According to John Glunt, who spent a year with the 221st, they never got the Beckman & whitley cameras operational. There were just too many problems with the camera.

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MACV had its own problems with the Beckman & Whitley Camera. The B&W was supposed to be a technically advanced plastic and composite material, light weight version of the standard metal body T.V. news camera, the Aricon sound on film system. Since the advent of TV news in the 1950's, the mode of operation for TV news hasn't changed and is still used today. Having an announcer and cameraman. The announcer standing in front of the camera telling the camera the who, what and where of the news event. The cameraman zooms or pans in for a close up of the event and cuts. The news crew moves closer and interviews an eyewitness or official, or the announcer gives the how, when or why of the news event. Finally the camera zooms in to get screaming and crying from people at the news event. The entire story, edited in the camera, ready for TV broadcast could be accomplished in 80 to 120 seconds of screen time or 56 to 72 feet of film.

The heart of the sound on film system was instead of double sprocket holes between frames of film, the sound on film system had one sprocket hole. A magnetic sound strip was located on the film where the other sprocket holes would have been.. The sound was not at the camera or projector aperture, but leading the actual picture by 26 frames of film, making it impossible to edit the film, without extracting and transferring the sound to 16mm tape before editing could begin. This extra work was not in the contract MACV had with Hearst Metrotone News Agency, and the source of disdrain for the Beckman and Whitley camera by MACV.

The military preferred the Hollywood system of sound and picture independent, but synchronized by the traditional clap stick slate. This system allowed the editor unlimited options in editing the film. We military photographers were always taught to film for the editor, and provide more film than needed, so the editor could make choices of film to be used.

When Lt. (Pappy) Paterson took command of the team, I informed him of Mac's drinking. I believe our next job was the Philippino Barrio Festival in Tay Ninh. The team took the convoy to Tay Ninh a day early. We met with the CORDS people sponsoring the festival to learn more details of the event (Story at the website). The team found overnight living acommendations with some Army unit in Tay Ninh.

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The next morning when I went to wake Mac up, he was so passed out he didn't move. When I told Lt. Paterson about Mac, he wanted to see his condition for himself. I told Lt. Paterson, Mac was useless to us, Sp4 Nash and I could film the ceremony and activities without him. After the filming, we headed directly to the convoy formation point. Lt Paterson questioned if we weren't going back for Mac? I informed the Lt., that Mac had been in country long enough. He knows how to get around on his own. He'll hitch a ride with some convoy truck back to Saigon, when he sober's up.

About three days later, Mac wandered into the Brink Hotel office. Lt Paterson told Sp4 Nash to get the truck ready. The Lt. was taking Mac back to his hotel room, to pack his stuff and taking him directly back to Long Binh. At that point in time, Mac still had about eight months left on his tour of duty in Vietnam. I was interested in what was happening to this age old acquaintance. I personnally loathed the 221st, but there were times we had to go back there for supplies, such as film, caption books for motion picture and sound, and of course, batteries for the tape recorder.

Over the months we heard all sorts of tales about Mac Intosh. I long ago lost the sequence of events. At one point we heard that Mac had been busted to Sp4. Another time Mac was a PFC. I don't know if Mac was busted once or twice. Another time we were told Mac was hospitalized, near death with cirrhosis of the liver. We were informed they used a stomach pump on him. We heard that only Mac's heart, brain and lungs were functioning. His kidneys and other organs ceased to work. In retrospect, we heard that Mac had been in the hospital twice during those months at Long Binh. I never heard what hospital he was cared for. I wasn't aware of a hospital on Long Binh, only dispensaries, so was Mac on Bien Hoa Air Base hospital, Saigon or where?

I had extended in Vietnam for eight months to stay on the MACV Photo Team, and had a back seat to Mac's outrageous shenanigans. Two or three times Mac had been booked on a flight back to the states. He either wandered away from the 90th Replacement Unit, or the terminal at Bien Hoa Airbase. Several days later, Mac was located wandering around Long Binh or the air base. On one occasion, he was found roaming the streets of Bien Hoa City.

James O. Mac Intosh

How the Army finally got Mac out of Vietnam was just as comical and amusing. I was told the MPs picked up Mac and detained him the day of his flight. After everyone else had boarded the plane, the MPs drove the jeep onto the tarmac and escorted Mac up the steps to the plane. Once inside, the flight crew closed the door, and the gangway step were pulled away. For a docile person, that I never heard raise his voice nor show a fit of anger, this was a travesty.

A number of years later, I was talking shop with someone. I don't even recall who I was talking with or where the conversation took place. Out of total obscurity, I asked the person if they ever heard of a James Mac Intosh? To my amazement and astonishment, the person replied yes, he was a private E-1 working at the Ft. Lewis Film Library.

EPILOGUE: Some months later, both Army Teams were called to MACV HQS. There sat two Arri BL's and Nagra Recorders. Who, how and where this equipment derived from, I never asked. I suspect the used equipment came from a West Coast commercial camera shop, through the procurement agency, by U.S. Army Vietnam, at MACV's request, since the 221st had no working motion picture cameras. I was happy to sign the hand receipt. We could return the borrowed gear to the other sister service teams.

P.S. Screening the film "CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF" Mac Intosh (was) (was not) listed in the screen credits.

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