

UDORN
Monthly Report
April 1962

GENERAL

Plans are underway and tentative approval for funds has been given, to provide seven new construction items in a fenced-in area at Udorn Air Base. In addition, a company provided recreation hall is planned for the same area. Completion of these projects will allow concentration of this operation in one area with expected increase of security and efficiency and reduction of costs.

Recreation activities are now all located in the old Marine area of this base. With the exception of the barber shop and shower rooms, these activities are confined to the old Marine Mess Hall, in which a Snack Bar, Bar, Supermarket and movie facilities are located. The movies are very popular and the new projector, recently received, has added much to the enjoyment of personnel attending. Purchase of new equipment for the Recreation Hall, except for minor items, is being confined to that which is movable and usable in the proposed new company building.

Relations with the customer, and local authorities have been satisfactory.

Although the majority of the employees carry out their financial responsibilities, there are entirely too many returned checks and notices of failure to pay bills. Consideration is recommended of a policy of requiring each new employee to sign a blanket agreement permitting the company to deduct amounts of returned checks and charges, and delinquent bills if such bills are authentic, from the employees' salary. It is interesting to note that financial troubles brought to official attention are almost exclusively confined to the higher paid employees.

It is of considerable benefit to this station to have home office personnel visit this activity in order that there may be understanding and background when correspondence is necessary. For example, the periodic visits of Mr. R. M. Stone, who is obviously motivated by sincere desire to help the station and possesses the knowledge and common sense necessary to realization of good results, have been of inestimable value.

May 1962

United States Marine Corps Units started to arrive on 16 May. There has been a steady flow of daytime air traffic since. We have extended assistance in all fields when asked and when such assistance would not interfere with our own operations. This has caused inconvenience in some areas but, nothing that cannot be overcome as the Marines get their feet on the ground, and their bunks off the ground.

Increased rains and road traffic combined, have placed the roads in poor condition. Continuing rains will no doubt see them in worse shape.

There has obviously been an increase in the local snake population, but no census is presently available.

The situation in Udorn as a result of the influx of Americans has changed the economic picture to a startling degree. Small businesses are sprouting everywhere. No longer is it a problem to find a restaurant to get a decent meal. The problem is to find a vacant chair in any restaurant in town. Prices are generally higher.

We are attempting to feed our own people as much as possible in the Snack Bar. A new cook has been recruited from Bangkok and seems to be working out quite well.

Relations with the customer and local authorities have been satisfactory other than has been reported by other means.

The month of May saw a new record for flight time.

June 1962

Due to the excellent and vivid descriptions included in some of the reports sent in by units of this activity the Monthly Report from time to time will include these reports unedited.

On completion of the new Supply Building estimated about 5 July 1962, the offices of Technical Services, Supply, and General Maintenance will move out of AB-2 to the Supply Building. The northeast end of AB-2 will then receive some alterations to permit Operations and Communications to move from AB-1 to AB-2. Medical Recovery Room will be installed in the vacated General Maintenance Office. Final exodus from the Old Marine camp area will be delayed until the company Recreation Hall is finished and equipped.

All recreation activities are firmly self-supporting, and except for the Supermarket, making a profit. Purchases of new equipment for Snack Bar, Bar, and Barber Shop are being confined to those items movable and usable in the new Recreation Hall. Plans are about completed for opening Madame Zaza's Beauty "Saloon". A few of Madame's cards are attached.

MANICURES	Baht 20.00
(Special introduce price 10 Baht one hand, either one)	
PEDICURES	Baht 20.00
(By appoint only. Madame can speak no dirty feets peoples)	

The drainage channel work is underway through the company area after considerable delay due to rain. A three way trade was consummated with the Marines, Contractor, and the company. The Marines get dirt they need by digging it out of the area where the ditch is supposed to go, the Contractor gets some free work, and the company gets the ditch work expedited. (The word "expedited" very loosely used).

Flying hours for June show a decrease due primarily to weather and one aircraft in overhaul; and secondarily to a pile up of Madriver supplies in Bangkok. It is curious to note how many company employees are not involved in responsibility for movement of supplies.

Relations with the Marines are excellent in general, although a few of the company employees who had become used to operations with local damsels, unworried by competition from other males, now walk about with expressions of hurt surprise.

Relations with the local populace continue satisfactory, but as noted above, in certain area may be termed "decreased". On 18 June a tape recorder was presented by the company to the Udorn Girls' Secondary School. Pictures were taken of a couple of teachers receiving the machine and it was assumed that the operation was completed. However, on 25 June, a delegation visited the Project Manager's Office to complain that the first presentation was illegal, as the proper teachers had not been on hand to receive the recorder. The whole ceremony was done over 29 June in a classroom. The teachers and the students were very enthusiastic over the machine, and the Project Manager was given a demonstration by the class of charming ten-twelve year old girls of the English they had already learned with the help of the tape recorder.

Relations with the customer appear to be excellent.

Continuing assistance is gratefully received from the office of T/C in the person of Mr. Stone, and from Security by Mr. Barrus. Valuable assistance from the offices of the President, VPBS, and VPO is routine, and heavily relied upon. Although the intentions

of some others may be the best, some of the correspondences received here is little more than written gibberish. As seen by the Udorn Air America personnel, there is still some comfort to be gained in the knowledge that:

1. The customer is pleased and thinks he is being helped by Air America operations.
2. Setting new records for rotary wing aircraft flight time and utilization is nearly routine.
3. Delegations of U.S. activities continue to try to find how the hours of utilization of aircraft are accomplished. The senior military person west of continental U.S. has referred doubters to Udorn. Doubters have gone away as believers.
4. We can probably move out of the mud and dust of the old Marine camp to the new area in a few months, cease spending a large percentage of the working day enroute from one side of the field to the other, and go into a more efficient operation.
5. We are still getting paid.

July 1962

The construction plans are well along and in some areas work is completed or nearing completion. Regardless of this it appears that the entire series of projects, including the company Recreation Building will not be finished before 1 November 1962.

Some landscaping will no doubt be needed along the slopes of the drainage canal, which runs parallel to the taxiway, in order to protect the Aircraft Work Ramp and Parking Area from erosion. OIOC JUSMAAG should accomplish this.

Miniature golf, pitch and putt course, tennis, volley ball and badminton courts are planned in the areas near the POL storage and Recreation Building. Many are those with high flown plans for plush recreation facilities, but nearly 100 per cent of the planners are too busy, too sick, or just too tired to do any of the work.

It is hoped that the correct formula for making chickens run will be discovered before the rainy season ends, so that chicken races can be held in the ready made stadium provided by the drainage canal.

Providing schools for those children who require courses taught in English, is now a topic of conversation, with definite planning just around the corner.

Prices of goods are high. Cost of housing is, and has been, high. The lucrative income to house owners brought on some building. Now, some of these new houses are unoccupied, with possible future rent reductions as a prospect.

Departure of the Marines is imminent. Their loss will be keenly felt, especially in the Snack Bar and Barber Shop receipts.

The flying hours for helicopters are less than the pace to which we had grown accustomed, due mostly to lightened requirements and bad weather. The tears of flight personnel when added to the heavy rains make vehicle traffic difficult.

Notice of loss of bus transportation, has brought forth many cries of anguish from those whose prospects include riding to and from work in the back of 6x6 trucks. Most of the other vehicle owners were finally rounded up, after diligent searching, and coerced into coming to the company offices where, without further resistance, they signed contracts to provide certain vehicles for company use. Only one owner who has not yet signed a contract is still at large. To a man, the company employees who were concerned in trying to get suitable automotive transportation, proper insurance, and signed contracts on rental vehicles, state that suicide is preferable to these endeavors in Udorn.

Relations with the local populace are generally satisfactory. (Mostly, they have been unnoticed during the Marines stay). The 4th of July party hosted by the Marines, local JUSMAAG and USIS representatives, and Air America, was a success, although somewhat uncomfortable due to the coat and tie requirement. So far the results of Thai police efforts to return the eleven motorbikes stolen from Air America personnel are zero.

There is so little visiting of this activity by the home office crowd that a "Rogues Gallery" is being considered, so that the Udorn contingent can recognize as company employees those persons whose images are now growing dim in our memories. We have lately had visits from VPO and DP, and constructive conversations resulted.

August 1962

The month of August has seen the physical appearance of this station reach a new low. Although the Supply Building and Hangar Extension, except for inside fluorescent lighting, have been completed; the torn up, half done, and thoroughly soaked status of the remainder of the area during the construction period presents a very gloomy picture. The movements of the construction company employees, never in anything but low gear anyway, now frequently delude the observer into thinking he is watching a slow motion movie, as the natives, with elephant-like care, pull one foot out of the mud and place it gingerly ahead of the other. However, we feel that from now on any change will be an improvement. In a few months, we should be driving or walking on paved roads, parking and servicing aircraft on concrete, discarding the Braille system for use while maintaining aircraft at night, and behaving like ladies and gentlemen (evening dresses and tuxedos) in the sumptuous, air-conditioned and gardenia scented interior of the new Company Recreation Building.

After a few weeks of half tennis court-half swimming pool condition, the new tennis court has been brought into sight above water. No players have been located yet, but it is expected that some employees will soon be whamed into taking a little exercise.

The proposed pitch and putt golf course is still in the jawbone stage (all talk and no work).

All the mothers, and the fathers on night shift duty, are on their toes with the news of the proposed school. Details are still to be completed - at this time the Calvert System appears to have the inside track - but discussions have pretty thoroughly covered the subject. Permission from the Thai Ministry of Education for establishing the school will be sought in the next few days.

Now that the uniforms for SEA employees include short-sleeved shirts and "bushman's" hats, most of the employees don't seem to mind wearing the previously disliked jackets and caps. The proposed blue cravat should set off the whole new uniform ensemble and satisfy the most meticulous dresser among us.

Operations and Maintenance have about exhausted themselves in pointing out the other's faults concerning flight delays and are now approaching the stage where each can see that there just might be something to what the other guy says. A little more of this and the solution of the problem would seem to be within reach.

The amount of flight time has held up well, considering weather and number of aircraft in our possession.

The first helicopter has just been returned from IRAN, leaving one still undergoing the process. The returned aircraft is undergoing a minute, rigorous inspection by our experts to learn exactly what was accomplished. It would seem that this is a waste of time, however, since all hands here had already decided before induction of the first aircraft into the rival company's plant that the job wasn't going to be any good anyway.

We were much gratified to have visits lately by the President, VPO and DP. Two more company officials nearly made it here but gave as reasons for failure to show up that they were unexpectedly detained at another station by official company business. It was later learned on good authority that actually these last two were trying to locate some lost laundry, thoroughly enjoying themselves and still bitterly complaining of overwork.

September 1962

The month of September saw some progress in the overall improvement program, although rains delayed most of the work.

With the signing of the Company Recreation Building contract on 30 September, only one more sizable project - the recently approved construction of additional offices and shops in the hangar and a fire truck shed - is not yet underway. Plans for this new work are under study at Tainan. Completion of this last project will provide a joint Operations and Maintenance training room, spaces inside the hangar for all aircraft maintenance activities not already located in new buildings, and will permit destruction of the old, inefficient, unsightly "line shack". Concentration of line crew and planning personnel side the hangar should result in increasing the efficiency of the operation.

The Recreation Building plans have made some minor changes in the American employees' conversations which normally include money, flying, women, and lack of Supermarket goods, in that order. Occasionally, remarks are heard indicating real enthusiasm for this project and interest in the outcome.

The Snack Bar is holding its own financially. Only essential replacements of equipment are being made pending the purchase of items suitable for the dining room and kitchen of the new Recreation Building. Although the Snack Bar employees continue to try to please the customers, there are interruptions in these attempts. The last was the discovery of a six foot cobra in the act of joining the gang at lunch. The customers suddenly remembered pressing business elsewhere and the newcomer was given a severe reprimand with a stick.

One of the services of the Snack Bar is the provision of free coffee. The idea is not just to hand the customer his coffee in an uninterested manner or with a scowl, but to present a package consisting of the drink itself and a pretty, well dressed example of SEA femininity serving the libation in a manner which convinces the drinker she is vitally concerned with his well being. (This is doubly important in Udorn where the coffee itself is frequently suspected of being manufactured in a cesspool and a man really needs something to redirect his thoughts). The result of this need was the hiring of a coffee girl. The girl was all right but the display could not be properly made without some help. This was provided through the kindness of Mr. Dale Holmgren who sent down a few abandoned (term used in literal sense, not referring to style of dress) uniforms. There was still some work to be done in convincing the coffee girl first, to wear the split skirt affair at all; and second, to walk in an upright fashion instead of in a half squat. Both have now been accomplished and people have nothing but praise for our coffee.

Due to less requirements, flying time for H-34 aircraft was reduced by about 45% from the peak month of May. L-20 produced about 36% less hours than their peak of July. As a result, time is hanging heavily on the hands of some flight personnel. Others have their families here and are closely watched by their wives.

A long, hard row to hoe is in prospect before a legally authorized local school for non-Thai children can be established. This information has leaked out and caused widespread rejoicing among the children concerned. The tedious steps required by Thai law will be tabulated and presented to cognizant authorities.

The hats approved as part of the SEA uniform are very popular. Close to 100% of the employees who were both eligible and solvent rushed down town and bought hats as soon as the news of the uniform change came out. There appears to be some connection between mentally playing cowboy and wearing these hats; probably a needed substitute for wearing guns, and much more useful. The cravat sample (for use in place of a tie when both shirt and jacket are worn) should be finished and enroute to the home office in a few days. Boots in proper sizes have not yet arrived. The general appearance of personnel at this activity has improved since they got into uniform and their morale has risen along with their appearance.

October 1962

The construction program is still making some progress and should be completed in January

1963. The appearance of this activity is still poor - the whole area being covered with clouds of dust, construction equipment, fast moving trucks, and slow moving construction company employees.

Although the companies engaged on our projects leave much to be desired for efficiency and speed, they do keep us alert. Such good natured mistakes as attempting to leave one foot of length off one wing of the Recreation Building and two feet of length off the other wing were smilingly acknowledged and politely corrected when discovered by Mr. C. K. Chen, of our General Maintenance Division. Mr. Chen has become quite a sprinter in keeping up with all the local building projects.

The taxiway is in poor shape after continued use by heavy equipment of construction company which built the drainage canal. Negotiations to determine what American organization must accept responsibility for repairs are about at a standstill. The people who theoretically own the airport show no interest whatever.

The school situation has changed very little - still no school, but we do have translations of the applicable parts of the Thai law on schools and teachers. Success in obtaining these is considered a great moral victory, but provides little optimism in regard to the desired result. It is rumored that company employees' children of school age are writing their friends that Udorn is the place to spend the winter. More action can be expected on this situation in the near future.

Life is full of surprises here. At times some of us have considered indigenous personnel not too well grounded in higher economics, but lately some of our employees have shown a nice capability along these lines in thinking through the difficult problem of socks. They have determined that socks are not for feet. One pair, carried in a pocket of their trousers, lasts indefinitely, does not require washing, does not tenderize their feet, and satisfies the ridiculous and childish requirement of Americans that a person own socks.

This is the snake mating season and most of the local reptiles are in an anxious and unhappy frame of mind. Employees have been advised to avoid irritating our no footed friends and most have been very considerate in attempting to avoid encounters. However, some chance meetings seem to be inevitable and apparently result in neither party getting any enjoyment out of the exchange of greetings. Although one would think the wives of employees would be somewhat sympathetic with the romantic circumstances, so far they have been even less understanding than the men, and frequently, when they find themselves face to face with members of the cobra, krait, or Russel viper families, let go with some high quality screams which are worse on bystanders' nerves than the presence of the snakes. No employee as yet has been bitten, and a number of snakes are deceased through employee effort during this mating season.

Consideration of a change in S.O.P. for persons bitten by snakes seems to be in order. Heretofore, the medical personnel have demanded that the bitten one kill and bring along with him the snake which bit him. This has caused considerable inconvenience and ill will all around, especially when a man has to go back and hunt for a snake which has very likely moved to another location. Now the medical system appears to be "keep calm, lie still, and ignore the whole thing". It is hoped that this idea works, but it seems to be psychologically untenable. Medical personnel themselves have not yet volunteered to test the new system. Neither have they agreed to treat the bitten man with antidotes for poison of all the poisonous snakes in the area, without making him bring his snake along.

These monthly reports are somewhat of a trial to produce. Notification to local employees that information for monthly reports from their respective units is due, brings forth loud wailing. Most claim they are too busy, and some forward only what they can get by with. Interest by the majority is fairly low. Many charge that the existing set-up is a one-way street. It is felt that the remedy for this is for the Home Office, also, to produce a Monthly Report. No special format need be used. With the concentration of talent in the Home Office a fine, interesting resume of head shed activities can be disseminated to all the anxious country folks.

We are gratified to have had visits lately by the President, Vice President-Operations, Vice President-Technical Services, Special Assistant to the President, Assistant for Administration & Procedures, and Internal Auditor. Useful conversations always develop from such visits and it is hoped that these individuals return soon, and bring or send some who have not been here.

November 1962

One new project, the additional hangar offices and shops, was begun during November. It should be completed around 1 January 1963. All projects, except the fire truck shed, and the additional paving around the Recreation Club, POL storage area, and the Transmitter hut, are on the home stretch.

The Recreation Club opening date cannot be determined at this time. Any desired date will be agreed to by the contractor any time he is asked. Obviously he is well drilled in Public Relations and will do his utmost, verbally, to please the customer. Company Security personnel will soon begin ~~searching~~^{striking} spaces about to be closed, in order to remove sleeping persons before the sleepers are permanently nailed in.

The roof of the Recreation Club was tested a few days ago to see if it would leak, and the test nearly caused a strike of construction company employees. The idea was to squirt water high in the air so that it would fall on the roof like rain. The indigenous employee on the end of the fire hose climbed onto a vehicle, struck a brave pose, and when the water came, aimed the stream inside the building thoroughly drenching four construction company employees who were taking a nap. These four were highly irritated at such a rude awakening, and the construction company owner saw nothing funny, either. After a hurried apology and a substitution on the end of the fire hose, the test was continued and the roof didn't leak.

Frequent discussions have been held on the interior decorating for the Club. Many likes and dislikes have been aired without a final decision. A considerable percentage of our people favor having both the lounge and dining room done in solid puce.

Although the Snack Bar and Bar are doing fairly well in general, some difficulties with the barber arise from time to time. From the very first we have had trouble trying to induce this man to bathe. (He quit once rather than submit to such indignities, but later returned, driven by hunger). The situation now appears to be cleaned up, but for a while, because of the powerful odor, only the hardiest could get a haircut without running heavy risk of swooning.

The mystery of our failure to get chickens to run so as to inaugurate chicken races, is partially solved. It is now known that Thai chickens are nocturnal creatures, crowing and making a terrific fuss all night long and next day too exhausted to do any useful work at all, let alone take part in sports.

It seems that there is a necessity of going on record about our tennis court. (This was built with free labor and cement). To still the questions and jibes concerning the lack of room between the tennis court and the Administration Building to accommodate a game of tennis, it should be known by all hands that no responsible person ever said that tennis would be played on this court. We have no tennis players; we have no tennis equipment and don't intend to buy any. The primary purpose of the court is to lead prestige and dignity to the Club, the same as American clubs whose tennis courts are unused. Our court is also available for volley ball, badminton and outdoor barbecues. Later, we intend to move one of the old rubber tanks formerly used for water treatment, to the tennis court. This we will fill with water, erect the old "Hit the trigger" game (three balls for a quarter, a ball which hits the target trips the seat and dumps the person on the seat into the water). Suitable prizes will be offered.

It must be admitted that we have gone a little too fast in our program of Americanization - at least in operation of the Supermarket. Our replenishment of supplies has been sporadic due to lack of transportation, and when a new shipment comes in, the Supermarket is jammed with customers. The resulting bedlam takes on the appearance of an old time bargain basement fight. Obviously some of our ladies are not cognizant of the rules of a contest of this sort, where use of elbows and knees on opponents is normal, and pinching, gouging and hairpulling, (but not use of hatpins) are accepted practices. Lately, each opening of the store after arrival of new supplies has been livelier than the previous one, and the last resulted in an exorbitant amount of whining by the losers in the struggle for the few boxes of soap detergents, sugar, etc. It is believed that part of the trouble is ~~caused~~^{caused} by some women (conditioned by the "togetherness" fad which swept the States a few years back) bringing their husbands along, and consequently making use of the men's longer reach to filch, over shorter customers' heads, scarce articles off the shelves. This is considered very unsportsmanlike, as this type of fight has traditionally been all female, and to this extent at least the complaints are believed justified. Supermarket procedures will be altered slightly as a result.

The taxiway was scraped and holes filled by the American construction company which built the drainage canal. It has not been thought necessary to inform the legal owners of the air base of this improvement, since they do not desire to become involved in such matters. The same construction company notified us of the proposed charge for lowering the aircraft bridge as we desired; and, against almost impossible odds, this amount coincided exactly with the bill we proposed for their use of our bulldozer. This method of doing business appears to have merit, as it saves untold paper work when credits and debits can be reduced to zero and the whole thing forgotten.

Since the flying requirements have been light the last two months, flight personnel have had plenty of spare time and have spent some of it on the front porch of the Administration Building. Although there has been no past success in getting them to contribute some effort (except verbal) in improving the base, another attempt was made lately when a group which had been carrying on some loud conversation punctuated by immoderate laughter, was asked to do some work in connection with the Recreation Building. The response was normal. "WORK?", they croaked, ashen-faced and nervous. They were told to wait a moment for a drawing, but when the drawing arrived the area had been vacated. Anyhow, it was much quieter.

The antenna farm episode has about been concluded, although some returns are still coming in. Now it is clear that electronics experts, like members of the legal, medical, and various artists' professions, have their own language, rules, etc., and are not bound by laymen's regulations. The purchases and trading of materials, rapid changes of decisions, etc., left the Project Manager in much the same situation as a boy whose cap has been grabbed by companions and gleefully tossed, just out of his reach, from one bandit to the other. As far as is known, all purchases have now been accounted for, and all material frozen to one location - at least temporarily - and communications reestablished.

During, and even before the building program here we have frequently run into the "on order" impasse. When inquiries are made about some missing equipment or material, and one is told that it is "on order", that, according to available information, is supposed to be the end of it. Further questions result in the questioner being the recipient of icy glares and muttering, evidently to convey the impression that such prying is simply not done. This infuriating procedure has caused the phrase "on order" to become, in Udorn, the most thoroughly detested in the English language. At the risk of possible accusations of lack of good breeding, respect for tradition, etc. we have already broken with the past in this respect and now, before a man at this activity says "on order" he assumes a defensive posture and rapidly recites what follow-ups or other action has been taken.

Historically, any American city worthy of the name has had some dead end streets. We have maintained our standing along these lines as we have two dead end streets, ourselves. One, which stops short at the east end of the Administration Building, will have to be redefined soon, as it will be lengthened to join the access road by the east gate of our area. The other, better planned, passes along the east side of the aircraft parking ramp and plunges into the drainage canal. The fire truck shed will now be placed near the end of this road as if it were meant to be there all the time.

Flight personnel helmets, freshly done in Air America blue paint, make a nice appearance. The recommended blue silk or nylon cravat, if approved, should set off the whole uniform to good advantage.

After a rash of motorcycle accidents, we have had a rash of loss or temporary suspension, of operators' licenses for those guilty of improper operation of a motorcycle or scooter. Both rashes seem to have decreased rapidly lately, perhaps due to the cooler weather.

December 1962

The construction program drags on, with numerous delays for various causes. Completing the Company Recreation Building is particularly exasperating, and thoroughly prepares each employee connected with this project for a visit to a psychiatrist. Opening date has luckily not been advertised, and now no Udorn employee is so foolhardy as to pick a definite time.

We have made several omissions in different project plans, and some of these have brought or probably will bring about curious results. One was the near disappearance of our fork-lift when it dug itself down into the soft gravel surface on the first attempt to transport

petroleum drums to the drum rack of the POL storage. (A hard surface area has now been constructed there). Another is the surprise appearance of small window spaces in nearly all the doors of the Recreation Building, including those of guest rooms and toilets. When questioned as to the reason for these, the company employee who instructed the construction company personnel to install them, stated that these windows had "many, many purposes. Anybody going past looking in and see if anybody inside sick or leaving light on". We are considering installing small mirrors in these spaces, and look forward to some cases of mutual astonishment when an inmate of one of the rooms opens the door suddenly and finds himself eye to eye with someone who had been deeply engrossed in the study of his own reflection. There are more, but the one which Udoorn wags seem to enjoy most is the failure of the plan to provide any outside steps to get into the Recreation Building. Many helpful corrective suggestions were received. These included use of trampolines, spring boards, vaulting poles, Jacob's ladders, etc. However, the conservatives won; and steps (courtesy of the Snack Bar) have been built.

Many difficulties keep developing in building the Recreation Club and in efforts to purchase equipment; but overall, the project looks good and all hands here (and some other places, too) are very enthusiastic about the prospects of having a nice facility like this one for their relaxation and pleasure. In fact, relations with local dignitaries have never been so good before, with numerous calls and expressions of goodwill, wishes for felicity, etc. - all boiling down to what amounts to "How about letting me come out to the new club?". We have had cards (honorary and regular) printed and will soon start sending out honorary ones to a select list. (Who wants one?)

In addition to completing the construction projects themselves we have a good sized clean-up and landscaping job to do when all the building work has been finished.

The Christmas and New Year holidays have been overcome without anybody having suffered permanent disability. Now if we can get through Chinese New Year festivities we should be good for another year.

Prospects for establishing a school have not improved perceptibly. Detailed information on this subject will be forwarded to cognizant authorities by separate correspondence.

For awhile we thought we had the first case of a non-American writing a check which was returned for insufficient funds. This man's claim that the bank made a mistake was at first brushed aside as an old, outworn excuse. However, after considerable nervous conversation the man hauled out the bank's admission of its error, and lost the opportunity to be the first of his group to join such "select" company.

It appears that the company has needlessly allowed itself to be placed on the defensive in the check cashing problem. It would seem that the first briefing of a new employee should include an explanation of the check cashing privilege, making it completely clear that it is up to the employee to make satisfactory arrangements for the check to be honored, and with the only acceptable excuses for a returned check being company fault in not depositing salary, or bank error. If the excuse is something different, after notice of the first returned check, the employee should make his own arrangements for check cashing elsewhere. On the other hand, the employee who has carried out his duties as agreed, and has proved himself a solid citizen financially, seems to have been over restricted in the present setup. A limitation for any one month to his legitimate needs, provided funds are available, seems more reasonable for such an individual. In effect, treat good men good and let the others go take care of their own problems.

Although it will probably be heatedly denied in some quarters, a few of us are convinced that at least some of the local inhabitants have the capability of making the best of adversity. A short time ago on a street in Udoorn a lad of about eight years of age was playing with a golf ball securely attached to a cord. He placed the golf ball in his mouth but the cord, hanging loose and blown by a breeze, became entangled in a wheel of a passing truck, and the golf ball was roughly yanked out of the youngster's mouth. After a few moments of dancing with rage and pain he was calmed down and the ~~loose~~^{close}-by-standers could be seen smiling and apparently congratulating the boy whose front teeth now protruded horizontally. The Americans were overcome with curiosity and pushed closer, and with the help of an interpreter were able to understand that congratulations were indeed being offered; since with his new dental arrangement the child could now easily eat an apple through a keyhole or complete tasks usually performed only by creatures, and was being so informed by his elders.

SUCH AS ANTEATERS

It is causing considerable concern among personnel at this locality who, for apparently not socially acceptable, have S.O., or for some other reason, most companies normally avoid coming here. We see messages which disclose they come nearby, and sometimes fly almost overhead; but can't seem to find the runway here. Leaves us wondering, "What's the matter with us, anyhow?". This soul searching has been going on for quite a while, but now we are really convinced we're in bad shape after we heard that Dr. Lee* was on his way to Udorn to look us over. Maybe the solution is at hand. R.H. LEE * POST MEMBER

We are pleased to have had short visits this month by Vice President Operations and Vice President Traffic & Sales. These two get gold stars for attendance.

We are in hopes that the Christmas mail rush hasn't caused any trouble at other stations as it has here. We have looked and looked, but never have found our copy of the Home Office Monthly Report.

January 1963

It appears that in spite of all the errors of omission and commission in connection with building the Recreation Club, the job is eventually going to be finished (and come of the company employees along with it) - early March, 1963, as a guess. (Personnel closely associated with this project can be identified by the spasmodic jerking of their neck muscles and inability to pronounce the letter "s"). The opening of the Club will have to be accomplished without the grass, trees, and flowers which are to follow later. Work on the landscaping is underway - mainly ground levelling, and hauling and raking the local type fertilizer. There is somewhat less than wild enthusiasm among the personnel assigned to the last two items, especially since one tour of this duty renders a person unacceptable for work in close proximity to those not so initiated, and tends to keep such people confined to the same jobs indefinitely.

After the type clothing to be worn by the new headwaiter was announced, considerable interest has been shown by the local feminine population who are somewhat irritated at our failure to provide such information as to whether he is married, tall or short, handsome, what salary, etc.

In order to get some people to help in running the Club, a board of Governors was appointed. This Board has been of considerable assistance but has a few drawbacks. Immediately after the Board was formed, an explanation of the financial status of the Snack Bar fund was given to the members. Right away criticism was voiced about what was claimed to be lending Snack Bar funds to the company without interest or security. This procedure was begun to take up the slack between exhaustion of company funds and receipt of new money to cash checks. After running out of available dollars, the accountant anxiously scans the skies in hopes of sighting an approaching aircraft with new "green" money; then retreats into his office and attempts to convince irate would-be check cashers that he is not responsible for lack of funds. After awhile, the wild eyed, baggard, and distraught accountant, with both fists beats on the wall between his and the Project Manager's clerk's offices. This noise alerts the clerk who bursts into the Project Manager's office and says "Okay \$500.00 for C. T.?". He is given an okay, gets \$500.00 Snack Bar money and runs into the accountant's office crying, "I got money, let me by, please". A path appears instantly, and the accountant signs a tab, cashes checks to a limit of \$20.00 for each person, and returns the money to the Snack Bar fund when the next shipment of company money arrives. This procedure, while not being recommended as a model for the Federal Reserve Board, has worked here, and has served to provide many (including present objectors) with eating money. However, it looks like with the possible stopping of check cashing and probable exhaustion of Snack Bar funds due to helping build the Club, in a short time the problem will have gone away.

Complaints have been voiced by families with babies, that the Supermarket did not stock baby food. After some representations to the American Commissary to stock and send cases of these items, the goods began arriving in large quantities, addressed to the Project Manager personally, which called for some explanations. This had barely quieted down when we received word that, since the baby food problem was now settled, considerable numbers of our employees were planning increased families.

The supermarket, due to ground rules of the American Commissary, now can sell to Americans only. This has caused some grumbling but, except for some pained expression on the faces

of those getting used to smoking non-American cigarettes, the disappointment has about worn off.

The L-20 pilots now appear to be relieved of the strain of waiting to find out what happens to them. They seem to feel that their cases are in the hands of the jury and a verdict can be expected soon. Chopper flight crews, after a halting start, have begun to get back in shape due to the exercise of the operations at Bangkok. Crews are rotated to spread the work. Ground school has been underway while the decreased flight operations permitted. A training room is being completed in the hangar, and when required, large ground school classes can be accommodated in the Club lounge.

The remaining missing pumps for the water distribution plant have arrived, and when these are installed we should have one of the best water systems in this part of Southeast Asia. We have failed to take advantage of many opportunities to provide water (free of charge, of course) to various activities in the area.

The old barber has been fired and a new "expert" employed. The new tonsorial artist promptly plugged a fan designed for 110 volts into a 220 volt plug, which set the fan afire. Luckily he had a customer who pulled the plug and stayed to sweat out the rest of his barber work.

It is going to be a close squeeze to get Madame Zaza's Beauty Saloon into the same room with the Barber Shop. However, the problem may not arise, since the new Madame Zaza candidate, after a few minutes conversation, announced that she would give manicures to women only. The interview was terminated forthwith, and a survey is being conducted to see if this custom is general. If so, it is probable that the Beauty Saloon will be abandoned and Madame Zaza set up as a fortune teller. It is now puzzling why we didn't go into the fortune telling business before this, as such an enterprise would have received great support by all our flight personnel who have been wondering the past four months about their futures.

Relations with the local populace have generally caused no concern lately. Items to be considered are the hot checks, and unpaid bills which turn up after some employees have been terminated. It may help to drag our collective company feet for a while in settling up with an employee being terminated, hoping that such time will bring some of these things to light. While it is admitted that there is no legal responsibility on the company's part, there is an inevitable sour taste in the mouths of those swindled.

The morale of employees appear to be good, and while some are softened up by the long "rest", they can be returned to form in a short time.

We are still looking for visitors, and haven't yet found our copy of the Home Office Monthly Report.

February 1963

The Club should open "soon"; and we have no intention of going into more detail at present. The firm date will be promulgated as soon as known.

Lately we were puzzled at the number of small dogs romping around inside the Recreation Building, even when the doors were closed. After some detective work the facts were brought to light. At first the doors to the Main Lounge would not open due to the bottoms of the doors resting on the floor. The contractor was roundly cursed and requested to correct this discrepancy. His feelings hurt, and quaking with indignation, he had so much of the door bottoms sawed off that there was sufficient space for small canines to pass under the doors and scratch their backs at the same time. Word of this delightful experience was apparently passed around in local dog circles, resulting in considerable numbers of visitors. The door lengths have since been modified.

Some grumbling is evident among certain husbands who have been informed by their wives that they (the wives) haven't a "THING to WEAR" for the Club opening, and some few incidental expenses were therefore imminent. Husbands are being advised by management (with such information deliberately leaked to the females) to buy new clothes for those wives who have made the Club window and door drapes, etc., and let the others wear what they already have. So far this has not caused the husbands of working wives to pull the

women off the job, but there is some concern that a little cogitation and financial recapitulation by these men will have this effect before the task is completed. The wives who volunteered to do this part of the interior decorating deserve a hearty vote of thanks.

Speaking of expenses, the Snack Bar seems to have gotten into a pretty fast league since it became a junior partner of the company in constructing and equipping the Recreation Building.

Business in helicopter flying is mighty skimpy. Flight crews are attending ground school and a few have been coerced into helping with landscaping the grounds.

A general cleanup of the station has been going on lately. In addition to the improved appearance of the activity, quite a bit of recovered material is now stacked in orderly fashion and available for more use. This chore is by no means complete, and won't be until we get disposition instructions on some Government property excess to our needs. Hiding these old worn-out vehicles, and material, and still keeping them from being stolen is quite a problem. There has been over a year's delay since we asked for disposition, but it is now rumored that the financial negotiations between USMC and USAF as to dollar value of the items have been completed, so we have a glimmer of hope that we may eventually be able to move some equipment and material.

Apologies to Mr. Chase and Mr. Brigida are in order for our failure to acknowledge their visits to Udorn in January. ^{of time} Their presence was enjoyed and appreciated and we hope for a repeat performance. ~~There is no good~~ passes so rapidly here, day and night is just a gray haze. During February we had a quick visit by Station Manager, Vientiane. Otherwise we scored a fat zero in the company visitor statistics.

A sizable number of man hours of our administrative personnel has been invested in searching for the Home Office Monthly Report - so far without success. Security personnel have been also thrown in to help, and the whole matter has become extremely frustrating. Any information or guidance to assist us in our problem would be greatly appreciated. More man hours were lost on 12 February when suddenly all employees working out of doors at that time, abandoned their jobs and started racing toward the hangar area shouting in the various language used here. This brought all the administrative personnel out of their offices inquiring as follows, "What goes on?". The cause of the commotion, a wild deer, was finally run down and brought, protesting all the way, to the Project Manager's Office as a gift. Since in addition to an office, this space was already being used as PM living quarters, storage for Recreation Club equipment, auditions for would-be musicians and English language candidates, etc., it appeared that a zoo was the only thing lacking to complete the place as a model of modern suburban living.

The company check cashing business here is now deceased, and a nervous breakdown by the local accountant thereby narrowly averted. During the last few weeks the accountant was so agitated that he abandoned the practice of corresponding with his family, which state of affairs led the family to request information as to whether he remained among the living or not. Things have now been smoothed out all around, and to accompany his new happiness he has been appointed to the Club Board of Governors and given the job of keeping Club accounts.

March 1963

The construction program creeps on to its end, with Fire Truck Shed about half finished, the Power Distribution System wiring nearly complete, and the Recreation Club done except for some landscaping work and settlement with the contractor. We have never before been treated to such a demonstration of piteous wailing as the performance of the Recreation Club contractor and his wife and a friend whom he brought along to assist at the closing conference.

We have all facilities including the Snack Bar (now called Dining Room) on the south side of the field, now, and are very pleased to have the nice dining room open. The pleasure has been somewhat tempered by the siege of diarrhea which accompanied the move of the eating establishment. After many months of the previous situation, our physical systems could not stand the shock of good clean food, and a little time for adjustment will be required. The company doctor is included among the sufferers, and we can now claim another first in this area - medical consultations on the run.

One of the innovations of the contractor of the Recreation Club was an original method of laying (or mislaying) sewer pipe. His method saved sewer pipe, but pressure from one group of commodes was directed toward other commodes instead of away from the building as plans specified. This was considered an extremely irritating and unacceptable state of affairs - no room for users' complacency, one had to stay alert. The sewer lines have since been changed to comply with the plans.

Another backlog of supplies awaiting shipment to Udorn has been broken and satisfactory service reestablished. A discussion by company employees of movement of supplies beats a religious argument all hollow when it comes to raising tempers. Anyone involved in one of these conferences quickly takes on a changed appearance and disposition - his face becoming a deep vermilion color, eyes bloodshot and almost popping out, and his voice reduced to a hoarse squeak. From a layman's view it seems that assigning fewer people, possibly to the extent of having only one man in town running the show, might help to do away with the arguments since talking to himself eventually becomes boring to nearly everyone.

The new cook, S. P. Hsieh, arrived at last, bringing with him his new Chef's hats. We are very much elated at his arrival and the immediate good effect he has had on the food. However, the hats are turnip shaped things about the size of a football, and not the broad, flat-topped affairs, joined to the head by long stove-pipe supports, that we had visualized.

We are still having serious electrical power problems. The Udorn city power is completely unsatisfactory, and a short time ago the 75KW generator we were using joined another 75KW generator in out-of-commission status. We borrowed a U.S. Army 60KW generator, and have received one extension on the length of time of the loan already. One 75KW generator has lately been put back in commission, but neither it nor the 60KW generator, for reasons not understood, are putting out sufficient power to take care of our needs. Further corrective action is being taken.

Once in awhile our attempts to be polite to people backfire. A short time ago we had a visitor who wanted to look over the new Club. At the time we had the Club lawn heavily covered with local type fertilizer, and this particular day was almost unbearably hot and humid. After touring the Club and starting to leave by way of the water fountain in the center of the Club grounds, the man was overcome, partly by the heat but mostly by the fumes, and sat down on the side of the fountain and began retching uncontrollably. A nearby indigenous employee, previously ordered to clean the water fountain area, with great devotion to duty and presence of mind turned a water hose on the concrete at the feet of the ailing man. The effect on the visitor's clean white pants was disastrous. After a short time the unhappy stranger regained his feet, wavered over to his car, and after three or four attempts, got in and departed. It is hoped that if he comes here again he will be more careful of his appearance, as we like visitors and employees alike to be neat and well groomed, instead of presenting an unkempt picture which trousers sodden to the knees will cause.

Some of our pilots and maintenance personnel have done an outstanding job in the landscaping work. One pilot, after much effort, had finished cleaning the pond and putting in place a small Japanese type bridge in the area on the east side of the Club Building. He left to get a drink of water and returned to find indigenous personnel cleaning paint brushes, mops, etc. in his pond. Narrowly escaping with their lives, the offenders had just departed when the pilot's wife, who is Japanese, arrived and made some very uncomplimentary and entirely uncalled-for remarks about the pond and particularly the bridge, which she said was ugly. This really set things off, and many employees plus the wife were required to restore peace. We are not out of the woods on this one yet, as the pilot departed for a much needed rest muttering about going on to South America from Bangkok.

It became clear some time ago that club entertainment will have to be provided by company employees, so rehearsals by various individuals and groups have been going on. One act required one of the club employees, at appropriate times during a song, to hit a tambourine held at arms' length above his head. (A tin pan was substituted for a tambourine until the time the tambourine should arrive). Harsh criticism, charging cruelty, was voiced at the requirement for the employee to continue holding his arms over his head during the entire song instead of just at the times the tambourine (or tin pan) was hit. The procedure of arms up and arms down had already been tried and didn't work, as once he had let his arms down he could not figure out how or when to get them up again. He knew something was wrong,

and it worried him; so the kindest thing to do was to save him the mental turmoil by allowing him to keep his arms up all the time. He not only didn't complain, but, mouth agape and eyes shining with idiocy, seemed to enjoy ^{himself} ~~hugely~~. The whole thing has since been abandoned, as the tambourine never arrived, and the man's habit of banging the tin pan at times when the feminine singer was at a soft-toned cooing part of her song, made her jump and emit raucous squawks instead of dulcet words, thus ruining the act.

We were greatly pleased to have had visits on 22 March by the Managing Director, Mr. G. Doole, accompanied by Vice President, Operations, and Regional Director, SEA; and on 26 March by the Chairman of the Board, Adm. F. B. Stump, accompanied by the Regional Director, SEA. We wish these visits could be increased in number, ^{and} lengthened, but even short visits are appreciated.

When a visit requires concentrating a station tour, a report of the status of the activity, and lunch, all within about a half-hour, some difficulties usually develop. The Project Manager must talk and eat at the same time; and the intake, compression, power, and exhaust strokes inevitably get out of phase, sometimes resulting in words being swallowed and food particles propelled into the air. This tends to make the listeners nervous and prevents a full understanding of the information being given.

In addition to the previously mentioned visits, we have had as guests Mr. Dave Hickler, Mr. Bill Barrus, Regional Chief Pilot Fred Walker, Mr. Jack Leister, Mr. Bill Hoffman, and Mr. Gordon Boyce. It has been a comparatively satisfying month in the visitor line, and somewhat restores our self esteem.

Apologies again - this time for failing in the February report to mention the welcome visit of Mr. Wyn Umbach on 7 February. (Must be brain fog).

Personal Notes:

Mrs. Bob Hitchman reports she is extremely glad to get out of the Bangkok hospital. (She stayed there with her husband while he was ill). She said she was ignored and couldn't get much conversation out of the doctors.

On 29 March, Mrs. Skip Halsey returned to her home from the Bangkok hospital where she had gone as a result of a concussion suffered in a motorcycle accident. She stated that she thought the Club opening party would be 30 March, and this forced her earlier than expected departure from the hospital.

R/Capt. Elder and R/Capt. Alston and their wives entertained at bridge in the Elders' home on 27 March.

It can now be reported that Mrs. _____ and Mrs. _____ are bosom friends again. The friendship had been terminated two weeks ago due to the first lady stating that a dress worn by the second lady looked "foolish". After considerable leg work by female intermediaries the first lady told the second lady that she had meant to say "frivolous" - meaning real cute. (How anybody could swallow that one passes all understanding, but it seems to have worked).

Mr. Abe Rivero returned to Udon on 29 March after spending his home leave in Manila.

Mr. Ben Clemente has returned to Udon from Manila after escorting the members of the family of the late P. M. Castro to their home.

On the morning of 23 March, one American wife was walking barefooted in her living room and stepped on a snake. (Name withheld by request, as the lady said people may fear to visit her if they think snakes are in her house).

April 1969

club

The Recreation was officially opened on 10 April. We were gratified to have as Guests the President, Vice President Operations, Vice President Technical Services, Director of Personnel, Regional Director SEA, Director of Public Relations, Assistant Director Aircraft Maintenance, Station Manager Vientiane and others. A group of customer personnel also showed up. We were particularly pleased by the attendance of Mrs. Grundy and Mrs. Rousselot,

she have become members of the Club.

We were favored by a visit from the Treasurer-Controller, Mr. Hietz; the Assistant for Administration and Procedures, Mr. Stone; and the Regional Accountant, Mr. Walker 12-14 April. Also a visit was made to this activity by Bryan, Assistant Director of Personnel, and Mr. Hennings, Regional Personnel Manager, on 25 April.

The construction program is practically finished and the overall result appears satisfactory. Much clean-up work and many small odd jobs remain to be done.

A considerable number of the employees who helped set records in operating helicopters and light fixed wing aircraft last year have been transferred to other locations.

May 1963

The Recreation Club, built mostly for the purpose of raising employee morale, has proved to be so popular that it is difficult to keep personnel out of the Club and on their jobs.

During the recent hot weather, entire families have made a habit of spending the whole day in the Club. We were glad to have them but this procedure has its drawbacks, as some of the childrens' manners leave much to be desired. Grown-ups approach doors with caution, fearful that at any moment they may be run over by a pack of pesky kids erupting from one place to another. Warnings for youngsters to be careful around the flower beds and to avoid snakes have been ignored, even though it is well known that a krait has taken up residence underneath the Project Manager's quarters. We have plans for building a break-out proof corral where kids can be deposited by parents on entering the base and retrieved on departure. Some wanted this enclosure raised on stilts to keep snakes out, but this idea was abandoned as a useless expenditure, since no conscientious snake or any other creature in his right mind would get himself involved with these young hoodlums.

The ladies have taken to playing bridge, etc., daily in the Club lounge, and now there is almost 100% female attendance, including bridge players and other ladies fearful of not coming and being talked about by the girls who are present. Husbands have about become reconciled to having most meals at the Club dining room. If the trend continues, we will soon have to require reservations for meals.

The substitution of Club life in place of their own housekeeping duties is causing some of the girls to pick up weight at an alarming rate (Some are alleged to be in poor shape) and we are considering making calisthenics mandatory before beginning the bridge games.

Transportation of most supply items from Bangkok to Udorn by railroad has greatly improved our logistic support.

Some of the aircraft parking ramp asphalt paving is beginning to break up. This is due to some well intentioned but poorly advised employee pouring oil on the surface of the asphalt not long after the paving was completed. Corrective action is to be taken.

Our water supply source got fairly low at the end of the long dry spell. We are not in danger of having an inadequate water supply but the degree of mud in the water taken from the source was much increased.

The usual tactics of vehicle owners' in deals, attempts to avoid proper insurance, etc., have again been experienced in our efforts to rent a vehicle for transportation of helicopter crews and maintenance personnel to Bangkok. After getting close to success in negotiations the Bangkok operation was temporarily terminated and there is no present need for the vehicle.

It is now regretted that two months ago we mentioned an incident of a bare-footed lady stepping on a snake in her living room, since the inquiries as to the results have become a nuisance. To close the affair, it can be reported that the lady was not bitten. She tips the scales at about two hundred fifty pounds, and due to her weight being placed fully on him, the snake was in no condition to do any battle and crippled off, obviously hunting for a snake doctor. The lady's husband, responding to her screams, came running into the house and on sighting his wife on top of a dining room type table, forgot all about the cause of her screams and gazed in open mouthed astonishment and wonder at the

physical feat accomplished by his spouse who normally had to be helped in arising from a chair. Neighbors, curious about the racket and hopeful of witnessing a case of wife beating, rushed in and helped the lady off the table, one man contracting a sprained back in the effort. A sympathetic neighbor mixed a drink for the lady but decided to give it to the husband who appeared to need it more. The husband, still regarding his wife with awe, drank deeply, then drank again, but uttered no word during the entire episode. The still sobbing lady related her feelings when her foot touched the horrible, scaly reptile, and maintained that, except for bathing, she would never be unshod - even in bed. Discreet leading questions later propounded to the husband have failed to disclose whether the wife actually sleeps with her shoes on, and it has been decided, in spite of wide spread curiosity, to let the matter drop.

The monthly candlelight and champagne dinner dance at the Club was held on 28 May and the ladies did a wonderful job both in the lounge decoration and getting themselves dolled up. The men were busy most of the evening complimenting the girls. This excess conversation led to raging thirsts which resulted in almost complete annihilation of our champagne supply. A number of out-of-towners including customer personnel and wives attended. Company-customer business was successfully concluded prior to the party; and this was providential, as before their departure some of the visitors appeared to have had too little sleep the night before, the eyes of a few closely resembling a couple of store display windows with the outside awnings all the way down.

Due to lack of a roller to prepare a base for laying concrete we advertised for suitable elephants for the purpose of having them walk around continuously on the base material to mash it down. After that job, we intended to replace the present indigenous security guards on a couple of posts with the elephants, expecting better results from elephants in repelling the people who like to race down the taxiway in automobiles and motor-bikes into our area. Two candidates have been interviewed but both turned out to be afraid of airplanes, and in view of this failing it was felt that if they bolted, it would be too much trouble to catch them and get them back on their jobs. More are yet to be interviewed. Not all our employees are in favor of our hiring elephants; the company doctor agreeing to give the usual pre-employment physical exams only after being spoken to rather harshly. Also it will be somewhat difficult to prepare regulation size ID cards which will show a good likeness of both face and trunk.

Visitors during May included Mr. Don Rinker, Mr. W. F. Henderson, Mr. Dave Hickler, Mr. Joe Perry, Mr. Gerald Hennings, and Mr. Tom Walker. Guest rooms were used by most during overnight stays.

June 1963

Morale continues to be generally good. A truce has been concluded (as a result of a pointed suggestion) between all local experts on helicopter mechanical discrepancies, the symptoms and cures thereof, and the methods of arriving at solutions. The thoughts of the majority have turned to such items as Recreation Club improvements, getting the ladies down to reasonable weights, marriage counselling, etc.

The Club continues to serve increasing numbers of clientele, and queues of persons waiting to get into the dining room are accepted as a way of life. Consideration is being given to adopting a program of insulting customers, overcharging, serving unordered food items, etc., with the purpose of holding down the numbers of patrons. It is curious that the bar is never bothered with queues - bar customers usually being able to fight their way in to the bar which frequently is mistaken for a cloak room by those passing by and getting a quick view of the crowded condition. It is noteworthy that good manners and breeding are observed in the bar; customers swooning from lack of oxygen and excess tobacco smoke being courteously handed out over the heads of bar customers and dumped outside the bar into main club entrance area where they usually recover unaided.

Volunteers have constructed a nice motorbike parking area and an excellent outside barbecue, and say they are ready to begin a swimming pool at any time.

Overnight guests overflow from guest rooms into the PM office, dispensary recovery room, etc. without noticeable protest, although some are startled to awake and find themselves in the midst of a conference in the PM office which maintains unorthodox working hours.

Unusual medical problems crop up from time to time. The latest resulted from a situation where a wife, too "tired" to report to the medical office, requested a proxy examination, with her husband relaying her complaints to the doctor who was supposed to make a diagnosis and prescribe a remedy. After hearing the symptoms it was clear to the doctor that the lady was suffering from an advanced case of epizootic, and a veterinarian was recommended. The husband was highly insulted, but curiously the wife received the news with great happiness, reasoning that this condition would provide her with conversation material for months.

The ladies who were supposed to be taking calisthenics and dieting, back-slid during the latter part of June, and now things are in worse shape than ever. Two who appeared to be the worst offenders were called in and an explanation demanded. It soon developed that these were pregnant, and they began whining that it was not their fault. It was patiently explained that we cannot keep up with statistics, schooling, supplies, and housing requirements in the face of such activities. Thoroughly abashed, they promised to do better.

Although none of the job description here includes a requirement for marriage counselling, there is obviously a need for such, and the program is proceeding, although results are not as satisfactory in some cases as desired, mostly due to the inexperience of the counsellors. One case, where the break up of a marriage was imminent, has caused considerable trouble. A husband got up on his hind legs and stated that he was through buying long, pointed toes shoes for his wife. His complaint is considered justified and the verdict is 100% in favor of the plaintiff, as no means are known which more completely change a small, nice looking feminine foot into the appearance of a large, awkward, ungraceful lump, than the hideous, long, modern women's shoes. Feeling about the matter is running high, with talk of using hatchets on long shoe toes, barring wearers from the Club, etc. The lady whose husband made the original complaint is still going barefooted.

No more candidates for the pachyderm police have been interviewed as all local elephants are at present busily and profitable engaged in stealing timber northeast of here.

Logistic support continues to be good enough to support our present operations.

A new tactic has been used in the battle between the local contractors and the company. The contracting firm which laid faulty asphalt paving on some of our roadways several months ago, simply dissolved and disappeared rather than stand liable for the repair of discrepancies appearing within twelve months after completion of the work, as required by the contract.

Although there is no pride in making the announcement, it can be reported that due to the reprehensible behavior of some of the children, most of our snakes have left the company area. Apparently they could no longer endure the beatings, stonings, and general lack of consideration and respect for their poisonous prowess shown by the local young wild people.

It is rumored that one wife, thoroughly briefed by her husband on legality of purchase of articles in Hongkong, spent most of one day stubbornly attempting to obtain a Certificate of Origin on some Red Chinese stamps she had bought from a sidewalk stall.

A continuing search goes on for employees possessing talents usable for Club entertainment. The latest find is a man who can play on the flute and read verses aloud with great taste. We are glad to have his assistance, although his efforts will be offered to all-female audiences only, as this type entertainment does not appear to be one which a male group would enjoy.

July 1963

A slight modification must be made to the first sentence of paragraph one of the General Section of the June Monthly Report. The words "in Udorn" should be added to the sentence "Morale continues to be generally good". Udorn based personnel quail visibly at the prospect of a journey south and becoming embroiled in the continuing Battle of Bangkok. It is war from the start - a fight to obtain transportation from Udorn, an affray in getting to town from the Bangkok airport, a duel for hotel space, meals, taxis, etc., and another Donnybrook in reversing course to return to Udorn. In some cases this running senselessly about trying to accomplish something against overwhelming odds has caused employees to forget the purpose of their trips, and have to request instructions from Udorn by message.

The situation is much the same as that which prevailed in World War II, when the highest decorations were awarded to, and richly deserved by service personnel who had to spend the whole war in Norfolk, Virginia.

Last month it was reported that a local construction company had dissolved rather than repair some faulty paving at our facility. Further investigation, besides disclosing considerable laziness on the part of a company employee, revealed that, to the owners, dissolution meant not working at the moment and not desiring to accomplish the repairs. A trip made to a high ranking political personage by one of our employees resulted in their developing enough interest to start repair work, although not to a degree which could be described as overzealous.

A few minor construction jobs are proceeding at a snail's pace, with considerable blubbering by supervisory personnel concerning the need for more men and money to get results.

Due to the number of patrons at the Rendezvous Club it is planned to move the Supermarket and Barber Shop to the Garden area adjacent to the Supply Building. The new Supermarket Building (being constructed with Club funds) is about 30 per cent complete. When the Barber Shop is relocated, a Ladies Dressing Room will be set up in the old Barber Shop area. After much nagging by the women, the Powder Room capacity has been doubled. It must be admitted that the girls had a justified complaint, as the former situation frequently resulted in a line of "Ladies-in-Waiting". In addition two doors have been installed between the shower room, men's room and Powder Room to allow ladies Day for hot showers three times a week between 1400 and 1600. (Females are required to bring own towels, soap, curlers, lotions, etc.).

People requesting use of Club guest rooms usually outnumber the available spaces. Also, during the rainy season it has become a race to get sheets and towels back from laundry in time for a new set of customers. In order to insure a more adequate supply of such articles (among others) we need more space, which in turn led to the decision to move the Supermarket, and eventually ~~the~~ Barber Shop. Later on, in the same Garden area near the Supply Building, a shopping center is to be built. No final decision has been made on the number of shops, but present needs indicate installation of a laundry, a cleaning and pressing shop, Womens Exchange (home made cakes, pies, etc.) and possibly a cobbler shop. The financing of these is to be strictly by Club funds, as Club funds are available. It is now realized that Club (Snack Bar) resources are too limited to join forces with any big boys as we did when we became uninvited partners in constructing the Rendezvous Club.

We are delighted to report that the Udon Medical Department has adopted modern, progressive methods. Realizing the psychological advantage of light hearted patients, the doctor and nurses will dispense remedies and medical advice in jingles, and for those customers with a liking for music, suitable tunes will be used in presenting the medicines and guidance. Details of the new system appear in the Medical Section of this Report.

The legitimate dog population (canines actually owned by company employees) suffered a loss during the month with the demise of little Jimmy Coble, a Cocker Spaniel belonging to Capt. and Mrs. James Coble. The dog lost his life by drowning while taking a bath in the Coble's bathroom. The accident occurred when fumes from a defective gas water heater knocked out both the dog and Mrs. Coble. Fortunately, Mrs. Coble was not taking a bath at the same time, and revived after receiving medical attention, although prostrated with grief and carbon monoxide. Capt. Coble's attempts to revive the dog by mouth to mouth resuscitation were ineffective. Interment, with Unorthodox rites being observed, took place in the klong adjacent to the Coble establishment. In addition to the owners, an expectant widow survives.

The attempted mouth to mouth resuscitation referred to above has caused heated discussion and some criticism among local dog owners. Some believe that a nose cap and a bicycle pump should be used, thus avoiding the hazard of a mouth to mouth advocate being overcome with laughter at the thought of the similarity of blowing a horn, and thus being unable to continue the rescue effort. On the other hand, it is contended that the use of a bicycle pump would not only inflate the dog's lungs, but also fill his stomach so full of air that for the rest of his life he would be afflicted with burping or flatulence, or both. The arguments have not yet abated.

We were happy to have had visits by Vice President Operations, Assistant Vice President Operation (Technical) and the Internal Auditor and his staff, Mr. King and Mr. Tsiang.

In the BC (Before the Club) era of the Udorn facility, a visitor was so much of a rarity as to be an object of curiosity to our local employees. Visits were considered news, and each one was reported in the Monthly Report and talked about for some time. We are now becoming so cityfied and blase that from now on, only on an occasion when a visitor does something newsworthy, such as falling into the water fountain in the Club front yard, will he get space in one of our Reports.

Samples of Medical Department Methods of Dispensing Remedies:

<u>Complaint</u>	<u>Remedy</u>	<u>Recommended Tune</u>
1. Foot trouble	Go home and eat some onions And get rid of your bunions <u>Yeah</u>	Rancho Grande
2. Ear Ache	Put these drops into your ear (into your ear) Pain will leave but you can't hear (you can't hear)	Rigoletto
3. Falling Hair	Eat, oh, eat this prickly pear Lose your teeth and save your hair <i>but</i>	OH (PEWEE HUNT arrangement)
4. Lice, Fleas, Etc.	Take three baths in the nearest klong 'Lice'll leave 'cause you smell so strong (Fleas)	Smile awhile or Dixie

August 1968

The ladies' weight reduction campaign is meeting with some success now. The girls are divided into three groups; one group being comprised of those who do not want or need to reduce and intend to continue their habits, one group including those who starve themselves back into the clothes they already have, and a third group, the "Strength through Joy" crowd. The last assemblage of girls was using the old Charleston dance routine to the tune of "Five Foot Two, Eyes of Blue"; but progress was poor, as they were handicapped by being watched by jeering, wisecracking males. Now the Charleston bunch is herded into the bar, and themen locked out; so the program is getting along, although some dining room customers could do without so much "Five Foot Two, Eyes of Blue" which leaks out of the bar almost continuously for an hour or so a day. The rapid, jerky movements the diners use while unconsciously keeping time to the infernal tune, and gulping their food, have caused widespread indigestion.

During the early morning hours of 14 August 1968, a fire broke out in the City of Udorn. The blaze quickly got out of control, and various officials, according to their S.O.P, came to request AAM assistance. The assistance was given, and the officials were duly grateful. However, there were parts of the episode which did no credit to any concerned. First, the orders were given for our equipment, consisting of a pick up truck, fire truck, and water truck (no water pressure in Udorn water system) to move out in company and in that order to the scene. Somewhere enroute the water truck driver went off on his own, and the truck wound up in a ditch where it remained all during the conflagration. Water for our fire truck was received from other water trucks with no objection at all from other fire truck crews who preferred a passive rather than active role. Access to a position close enough to reach the blaze with our equipment was extremely difficult at first due to the congestion caused by owners and/or looters blocking the streets with trucks being filled with goods from threatened stores. (This difficulty was due in a large measure to our lack of understanding of local etiquette and customs, and was soon resolved when we discovered that those in the way moved with alacrity and courtesy when beaten over the head with medium sized sticks). Our fire truck on the scene developed mechanical trouble and the crew leader was directed (a grievous tactical error) to return to the AAM facility, exchange his truck for the standby truck and return to the scene of the fire. After waiting over an hour, and no replacement truck having arrived, the employee giving the order, thumbed a ride to the base, and found that the problem was "too many orders". The fire crew leader had been told, and it was an established custom, to wash down and polish his truck after each use, and this was exactly opposite to the directive to get the other truck and return immediately to the fire. After due deliberation, he had decided in favor of washing down the truck. After

~~due deliberation, he had decided in favor of washing down the truck.~~ After being on the receiving end of a few seconds of rather impolite, uncouth conversation, he reconsidered and returned with the standby truck and crew to the fire and remained there assisting in the firefighting effort until about 7:30 a.m. when the blaze was extinguished.

One more building, the combined carpenter shop and packing & crating shed has been completed and filled with stores and equipment. The aircraft parts cleaning shed is about 70 per cent complete. The renovation of the Snack Bar adjacent to the Aircraft Parking Ramp has not been started yet.

Plans have been made to increase messing capability of the Rendezvous Club, by enclosing and airconditioning the front porch and moving the bar from its present position to the porch, and expanding the dining room into the present bar area.

Several delightful parties have been given lately in the Club lounge. On each occasion the lounge area has been swamped with folks, and to make room the doors to the porch have been opened and the parties allowed to overflow onto the porch. This has resulted in some real "hot time" parties due to lack of airconditioning.

A dangerous trend has lately developed in social functions. Several husbands have recently given "surprises" at the Club for their wives on wedding anniversaries. It was amazing to see the enthusiasm of the ladies in decorating and helping arrange these surprise affairs. A little sober reflection, however, has given the men a shock, as it takes no genius to see that each female figures her time will come. Each married guy is filled with consternation, and no solution is in sight.

Outdoor gatherings and barbecues are to be started soon, thanks to one of the Club members, Mrs. Hugh Grundy, who sent us a dozen luau lamps and many mosquito incense sticks to keep local mosquitoes from carrying off customers or insects getting into the food. This will greatly increase the entertainment ability of the Club.

The rule that visitors will no longer get space in our reports will be stretched to allow mention of new comers. We were delighted to have had a visit from the Assistant Managing Director, Mr. Walker Gilmer, and hope for another and longer visit from him soon.

As evaluated here, our reputation is considerably better than our actual capability to carry on increased workload, known to be imminent, due to shortage of qualified maintenance personnel. Requests for the additional required personnel have been made. Also, it is evident that the customer plans to use this facility for various odd job repair and maintenance items, and we probably will be given these jobs on short notice.

September 1963

After many, long, frustrating months of advising the ladies of the dreadful effects on one's health resulting from the abominable habit of cigarette smoking, a number of the women have finally seen the light. A dozen or so of the girls, to our great delight, have now changed to smoking cigars, and will testify that they feel much better already. In addition, wives are highly elated at the "to-getherness" feature brought about by little family groups sipping after dinner drinks, and smoking their cigars in ease and comfort after a hard day's work; and the men are no longer bothered by females who hold their noses; remark, "Pew"; and keep to windward of the smoker.

Once the gains of cigar smoking are fully realized, cuspidors will be offered and recommended as auxiliary items. An expectorating training class has begun, and it appears that this, too, is in for rough going. Initially all the girls have been found completely lacking in accuracy, and power to reach any but the shortest range target. (Some hit themselves on most attempts). Also a few simper, and deliberately pretend to be helpless and weak, thereby needlessly wasting the instructor's time. Instructors themselves are not blameless, and must understand that proper coaching includes more than positioning a target and then snarling, "G'WAN, SPIT".

In our previous failure to teach the ladies the arts of both cigar smoking and expectoration, the American male stands convicted of criminal neglect and odious behavior; and this lack of consideration for the well being of women will probably be viewed historically on a par with our treatment of the American Indian.

We now have more aircraft and more business, without the necessary personnel to accomplish our mission properly. The request for customer authorization for the required additional personnel is being made. If approved, it is hoped that the positions are filled with employees who are qualified to accomplish their jobs satisfactorily.

Lately, an invasion of dogs has become a nuisance in our area, as the canines like to overturn garbage cans and strew the contents around. To defend our territory, we have been using sling shots to good advantage. Most of the local dogs have tails which curl up over their backs, and when a mangy cur has his head down in the garbage, as viewed from his rear, a small but excellent target is presented. A direct hit results in a great display of energy and raucous vocal performance by the animal, and much hilarity and many ribald remarks among the local employees.

Plans for the expanded dining room facilities and the additional power line to the Rendezvous Club have been forwarded to cognizant authorities. Funds have been provided for these items. Swimming pool plans have been put on paper and all is in readiness to start - except for the necessary financing. We consummated a trade with a contractor, giving him a number of posts which we could not get out of the ground, in exchange for his promise to excavate for the pool. Later we discovered this contractor had no excavating equipment, but hoped to borrow some. (So far, he hasn't been able to get the posts out of the ground, either). The new Supermarket building is about 85% completed, but will have to operate without electric lights until the new power line is finished. The indigenous Snack Bar is about 20% completed.

The Security Section, not to be outdone by the Medical personnel's method of dispensing prescriptions, has tried the rather unique system of using poetry to report a missing guard and snake. Formerly, a krait lived underneath the Project Manager's quarters, but left in disgust because of his treatment by certain children. These children having departed, (MAY THE SAINTS BE PRAISED), the krait moved back in. Although this was an improvement over the previous situation, still there was room for complaint, as the krait had a habit of rising early and ^{terrifying} ~~terrorizing~~ people on their way to breakfast in the Club dining room. One night between midnight and dawn, both the krait and a Security guard disappeared, and no trace of either has yet been found. However, a newcomer, a gigantic evil tempered cobra, appeared from time to time in the krait quarters and near the guard's post. Security was requested to unravel the mystery, and the solution appears in the Security section of this report.

During the life of the Recreation Club it has been remarkable to see how different people enjoy different things. Many like the bar, some are bingo addicts; and nearly everybody likes the food. Different tastes in music are also evident. But in the matter of dancing the separation of two groups is most distinct. Some appear to be demented, dancing with wild abandon and much idiotic posturing, and on the surface at least, giving every appearance of ^{enjoying} ~~enjoy~~ this incomprehensible and fiendish practice. Others, when unable to avoid a dance, gingerly grasp their partners, and, sweating profusely and with every muscle tense, hitch heavily across the floor; each and every one of this group praying with great sincerity that he may get through the business without falling down and making an ass of himself, and that some catastrophe will assist by stopping the music and relieving him of his torture.

Early this month we received an overnight visit by the "new" VPO, who was closely chaperoned by the President, "old" VPO, and A/VPO-P. Although we were unaware of the necessity for the tight supervision, as there was no apparent intent of the newcomer's bolting; we were glad to welcome Mr. Boyd aboard, and, at the same time, to have the pleasure of the company of Messrs. Grundy, Rousselot, and Chambers. Also during September we were pleased to have as guests Messrs. Umbach and Godar, followed by Messrs. McMahon and Kirkpatrick. Persons who have not visited us in a period of one year or more will be considered newcomers and therefore eligible for notice in the Monthly Report.

Moreale here is good; and although muscles and some talents are rusty from disuse, the people who have been comparatively idle for a long time are eager to get back to work. Others, who have been in a dead run for months, are too breathless to comment.

October 1963

October has, overall, been a somewhat discouraging month - some ups and some downs, with the ups outnumbered.

Many of us are about ready to go back to the Home Office to try and find out what we missed in familiarization, since we have had the notion that messages and memos requesting information were supposed to be answered - perhaps not right away, but surely within the same calendar or fiscal year. However, we find that this is not necessarily so; and it leaves us wondering how to make our queries more interesting (singing telegrams, maybe; and memos on scented chartreuse colored stationery).

The ladies' expectorating training class has caused us great anguish and despondency. All the instructors quit, depressed because of accomplishing practically nothing, and infuriated because of being hit occasionally by wild shots of erratic, unstable students. Many of the girls, feeling themselves abused by the taunts and curses of the instructors, and ashamed at their own lack of proficiency, were reduced to tears and began cutting classes. Instead of the comradeship we intended to produce, the men and women involved in this project now regard each other with absolute loathing, and several have vowed to avoid any contact whatsoever with their despicable adversaries.

The new supermarket is completed except for outside painting, and the move from the old location to the new is underway. The indigenous Snack Bar work drags along, most people not appearing to care whether it is finished or not. Actually, the customers as well as the operator of this establishment neither asked for nor desire all the foolishness, such as screens, running water, and cleanliness, which is being imposed on them by management.

With loud huzzahs of joy we received two food freezers this month, and with much enthusiasm started making repairs and cleaning them for operation. One was placed in the Club; and one will be placed aboard a plane destined for another station, as we got word at the same time that repairs on the second freezer were about completed that we were not to keep it.

The luau lamps and anti-insect burners, donated by a Club member, were tried out with great success at the party staged on the Club lawn on 26 October, to celebrate the ground breaking for the new swimming pool. Of course, we have not financed a pool yet, but it pays to be prompt in getting the ceremonies out of the way in timely fashion. For this party, the Club provided free food, which brought out a large number of employees who attend only these Club functions which cost them nothing. These persons brought along all their relations and amazingly enormous appetites. In fact, a plague of locusts would have to take second place to these folks in regard to the speed and efficiency they demonstrate in doing away with victuals. Their staying powers were first rate, too, as they took their departures only when we started talking about donation for the swimming pool fund. Although some of the ladies remarked that the preparation and barbecuing of the pigs was an obscene, vulgar exhibition, they appeared to enjoy the result.

Infrequently, persons unusual in appearance pay us a visit. The last caller of this type was somewhat of a beatnik apparition with long hair down over his eyes, giving us the uncomfortable feeling that something evil and frightening was peering at us from behind hanging vines. Also, his speech consisted of odd noises of no marketable value. With considerable difficulty we were finally able to learn that he was from Boston, which accounted for the enunciation defects, and that he wanted a job. Not having a scarecrow slot open at the moment, we referred him to a non-existent address in South America, hoping for a respite of several years before he comes back for more information. This action on our part was accomplished in spite of an almost overwhelming urge to refer him to the Home Office.

A two year record of not losing a helicopter went by the boards with the demise of H-16 in the 27 October immolation.

We have about given up on keeping any sane statistics on the numbers of children of school age. Arrivals and departures of Filipino families, and pregnancies not authorized by management have continually caused our graphs to run off the charts both above and below the paper. Much thought has been given as to how to control this business, but the only solutions so far offered are too horrible to be seriously considered by civilized people.

Morale continues to be satisfactory, in spite of various mistakes and failures to get this operation and physical plant up to the desired standard in what we consider a reasonable time. It appears that we have some company in these matters; as "the Lord makes mistakes, too. If you don't believe it, go look in a mirror", says one Udmorn philosopher.

MSG (Missing Snake & Guard) Report:

HIS FACE, OUR KRAIT
SHOWED NOT, THIS DATE;
AND IN THE YARD
THERE WAS NO GUARD.

INSTEAD WAS SEEN
A COBRA MEAN,
WITH GREAT LONG HIPS
AND DROOLING LIPS.

THE MISSING TWO,
I'M TELLING YOU,
COULD NOT BE FOUND
UPON OUR GROUND.

BUT NOW WE KNOW
WHAT MADE THEM GO
WITHOUT A CRY
AND NO GOOD-EYE.

THE GUARD FOR FEAR
DID DISAPPEAR;
AND FOR HIS FATE,
THE KRAIT WAS ATE.

November 1963

Sometimes it appears that instead of trying to develop this facility to a point where it can aid in accomplishing the mission of the project, time so used could be more profitably spent in taking up YOGI and contemplating one's navel. At considerable expense and effort, what appeared to be a nice base expansion plan was completed. For guidance the planners relied upon needs as they appeared to be at the time the program was adopted. However, no sooner was the construction completed than we found ourselves swamped with persons, many hitherto unheard of, willing to use our facilities. So another building program is imminent - to take care of more drinkers, more eaters, more visitors requiring sleeping accommodations, and an unknown number of swimmers. No one here is now willing to bet that this secondary program will be sufficient, either, as it may well be that each new item will beget more customers which will require more building; and so on ad infinitum, ad nauseam.

To give a better "employees' eye" view of goings on at Udorn, some svesdropping in the Club dining room and elsewhere recorded the following - none of which depicts any individual living, dead, or transferred:

1. Club Dining Room

- a. First Table - occupied by three AAM pilots - the first based at Udorn, and the other two based elsewhere.

"Well, how'd you guys make out here last night", asked the Udorn pilot in a friendly manner.

"Stinkin'!" snarled one of the visitors. "How come I don't get a room here? Had to go to town to the same old rat trap we usta go to. We got in late last night and tried to get a room here and what do they tell us? 'All full up, you gys'll have to sleep in the Dispensary or go to town'. What gives? The book says Captains rate a private room and that's what I want. Boy, what a bunch of stupes thought out this place. We get sent here, and no place to stay. Taipei's gonna hear about this".

"Yeah," said the second visitor, his lower lip protruding, "and another thing, why can't I buy a few cases of beer? And where's the swimming pool you people been blabbing about?"

"Aw, it aint so bad," said the Udorn boy, getting a bit irked. "You oughta seen it a year or so ago - snakes trying to crawl up your bitches leg while you were eating. Now we got air conditioning, It's clean, good chow, and ---."

"Who you kiddin'?" broke in the first visitor, "I put in my order a good ten minutes ago and still aint got no breakfast." (sighting a waiter). "Hey! Where's my chow? What did I order?"

"It's nearly ready, sir. You ordered eggs over easy with plenty ham and potatoes and toast," replied the waiter.

"Didn't I tell you I wanted hot tea, too? Of all the dumb clucks. Gimme some French toast, rare, too. You know what that is?"

"I no speak English," said the waiter, bewildered.

"If you two characters don't like it here, what's keepin' you?" queried the Udorn defender, thoroughly irritated.

"Aw, you chopper guys all think everything you got is better," parried the first visitor, thinking more of food than conversation.

- b. Second Table - occupied by wives of four local employees.

"Guess what I heard this morning," chirped the first wife with a knowing look. "They're gonna move the Supermarket into the Club lounge, and serve free coffee and doughnuts, and get all the same things they have Stateside flown right straight here! What do you think of that?"

"Did you know the Smiths are going to be put out of the Club because of the awful way their children act?" said the second wife, not having listened to the first. She catches sight of her child hanging out of the movie projection room and screams, "BOBBY! BOBBY! Come here and sit down."

"The child pays no attention, and the mother turns back and continues, barely getting in ahead of two others trying to talk, "I heard they got a LETTER telling them to stay away. Why can't people teach their children properly? BOBBY! Oh, why can't they make these waiters protect children? Are you hurt, honey?"

The opening left by the slight distraction of the child falling out of the projection booth was quickly and dexterously seized by the third

wife who pontificated, "Well, it's about time they did something about this poor, so-called Supermarket. They don't even have cosmetics. Our contract says we are to get all the commissary privileges the military has. Fred made them put it in our contract. And they don't even know what RAIN SHAMPOO is. I'll just die if I don't have that."

The speaker meant to continue, but as she compressed her lips to make an emphatic "TCH" sound, meaning "So, there!", she delayed too long, and the fourth wife plunged in with, "I heard they caught Doris on her bingo card tricks. She just couldn't win as often as she does, and be fair. Don't dare tell anybody, but she marked the bingo cards, and always got the same ones. I always did think there was something wrong -- the clothes she wears!"

A fifth and a sixth wife approached and the fifth wife butted right in, with, "Morning girls, looks like we're gonna have another shindig to-night. Women are supposed to decorate the lounge. How about let's get going on it?"

All the first four wives paled visibly and all rushed in with statements.

"Oh, I'd just love to, but I have the nastiest headache. I can barely see."

"I've got to get Bobby home and see that he takes his nap. The poor dear is so nervous if he doesn't get a good nap."

"I would come, but I just have to do up Fred's uniforms. He'll be wild if I don't."

"Oh, I nearly forgot that we're having some people in for dinner. If we weren't, I surely would help. Well, anybody going to town?"

All the first four rose energetically and scampered out. The fifth and sixth wives sat down.

"The lazy cats!" fumed the fifth wife. "Do up Fred's uniforms, my eye! What could Fred, the poor sap, ever have seen in her? And did you get that fuchsia affair she wore to the last party? No back, and hardly any front, and ---," she leaned toward her companion, half covered her mouth with her hand, and whispered, "her with nothing to show, anyway."

A horrible thought struck her, and through clenched teeth she muttered, "If Bill dances with that dame to-night, so help me, I'll kill him."

The sixth wife, unimpressed by the threat, remarked, "And did you notice her complextion? UGH! Well come on; here we go again, same women doing the work as usual."

c. Third Table - occupied by two flight mechanics who were eating.

A young mother, with a baby in her arms, tapped the first flight mechanic on the shoulder and, bursting with pride and happiness, said, "Look what I've got."

The first flight mech glanced over his shoulder at the infant and jumped violently, spilling some of his coffee in his lap.

"Isn't he sweet?" cooed the young mother.

The flight mech made a valiant effort and was able to quaver, "Yeah, ha ha, yeah, sure, nice kid."

Highly pleased, the young mother headed toward another table. The first flight mech, still shaken and with appetite ruined, croaked, "Jees, I

t'ought it was an orang-utan."

I must be admitted that this man's behavior was admirable and worthy of the highest traditions of any service. From a quiet meal, to be suddenly brought face to face with what appeared to be a hideous and malevolent creature of Satan, was an almost unbearable shock to his nervous system. Indeed, the child's beady eyes, red with hatred, his wrinkled skin and toothless, open-mouthed countenance framed by hair which stood straight out as if pulled in all directions by enormous suction fans, combined to produce a subject which would doubtless delight a Dante.

"Maybe we better get out of here," said his partner, worriedly, "before that thing gets loose."

d. Fourth Table - occupied by the young mother's husband who wore a fatuous grin on his visage. As his wife approached he held a chair for her.

"Sit down, my sweet," he orated, "you must not exert yourself so."

She sank slowly and gracefully to a seat and, starry-eyed, murmured, "Oh, such a lovely, lovely baby! My darling, how did we manage to exist before we met? Everything, everything is so wonderful now. Dearest, will you always feel this way?"

"Yes, sweetheart," he replied, smirking in a disgusting fashion, "my heart will always ----."

He was interrupted by the Club Manager who indignantly snapped, "Say, how about holding it down a little, will ya, kids? You're running the customers off."

The husband, cut to the quick, looked slowly around the room, impaling each patron with searing, haughty glare and replied, "Very well. Come, my dear, let's leave these jerks."

She arose, holding her babe so as to protect him from the rabble, and tossed her head disdainfully. Then both swept grandly out of the dining room and into the dimly lighted bar. Immediately after their entry, shrieks of terror emanated from that previously contented area.

"Now, there goes our bar business, too," wailed the Club Manager.

2. Flight Line

Two mechanics awaited the return of a helicopter from a test hop.

"Here he comes," said the first mechanic, "I'll give yuh ten to one it's a down. I flew with that guy yesterday and the chopper was smooth as silk. A full glass of water woulda set up the whole time and never spilled a drop. And when we got in what did he say, 'Medium freq. no good.' I wonder if these guys know what a medium freq. is."

"We've changed everything but the number on that chopper and still they holler something's wrong," the second mech remarked bitterly, "Well, let's hear the bad news."

The test pilot crawled out of the parked helicopter and looked at the first mech who said, "How about it? Okay?"

"Okay?" thundered the pilot, "Down! I nearly lost every tooth in my head with all that shakin'. If you guys had to take one of these jobs out in the boon-docks, maybe you'd read up on how to work out a medium freq."

All three headed for different places, each speechless with rage.

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3. Indigenous Snack Bar Area

Two indigenous employees had been assigned jobs of chopping down weeds near the Snack Bar. Their supervisor having left, they squatted down, picked their noses thoughtfully, and considered their fates.

"I am very unhappy," said the first. "Before Air America came, I drove a samlor, lived with my wife and children, and was contented."

"But," asked the second, "do you not make more money now?"

"Yes," admitted the first, "but many relatives heard of my good fortune and came to live with me. Now, I have to sleep outside the house as it is too little for all, and there is not nearly enough food for the many mouths. I am indeed poorer now than ever before."

"How true," mused the second charitably, keeping a wary eye out for any supervisory or management personnel, "you have bad troubles but I, too, am leading a terrible life. I must hide shamefully, if I get any rest at all on this job. Always I am afraid of these crazy people who rush up and shout until we work fast. Why is it that we do not do as our countrymen in our capitol city do? It is well known that Americans are supposed to give away money, and our people there get large sums for doing nothing, while we must work."

"You are right," said his friend, "let us quit this evil place which requires work."

Finished with thinking, they continued to squat and pick their noses.

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4. Club Main Entrance. The time was 5 p.m. on a Friday afternoon. The Club Manager approached a group of employees who appeared to be waiting for something.

"What are you guys hanging around the door for?" he asked, "why don't you go in?"

"We wait for Happy Hour," replied one of the employees.

"Happy Hour starts when we ring the gong in the bar. But that doesn't stop you from drinking a beer or two before Happy Hour. Regular beer prices are only twenty cents."

"When Happy Hour was started at 5 p.m., we know when to come," stated a second employee, forcefully, "now Happy Hour starts when you hit gong. So we cannot go in until gong sounds; or we may drink beer at wrong price."

"Holy Mackerel," rasped the Club Manager. "Okay, but don't block the door trying to be first in when the gong goes."

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And so it goes .. and goes. The snail's pace at which we are able to move in preparing people and facilities for new requirements has not prevented some progress, nor squelched the high hopes for the future.

December 1963

The scorecard of the year 1963 shows this activity with some plus and some minus marks.

Among these items on the wrong side of the ledger are the decrease in April in the numbers of aircraft assigned, and the loss of one helicopter in October. Some of the good things are the completion of one building program and starting of a second, increase of numbers of helicopter in September, and assignment of some additional jobs to accomplish for our customer. We have also been fortunate this year in having the assistance of our customer in helping us get supplies needed to operate a better dining room.

To close one year and start another, we gave a New Year's Eve Party. Like all such affairs, this one had a few incidents some of which are recounted below. Fictitious names are used throughout in describing the minor triumphs and tragedies of local society.

NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY

First Incident:

Bill parked his motorcycle near the Supermarket and helped his wife, Sue, off the rear seat. She pulled her skirts down, looking quickly around to see if anyone was watching, and walked rapidly alongside her husband toward the Club.

"Wait here," she said to her spouse as she darted into the Ladies' Room, removing the large handkerchief which had protected her hair on the trip to the Club. She had worked all day on clothes, face, and hair and wanted to be sure everything was right. As she entered, she saw a woman gazing wistfully into the only mirror, trying to convince herself that the reflection didn't do her justice. She crowded up behind the woman to hurry her into leaving, thinking, "What a lousy figure - flat chest, bony wrists, big feet," and saying, "Through, honey? My, you look lovely!" The woman, recognizing the statement for a big lie, moved out.

A quick check of her face, first full view, then each profile, and then her hair, satisfied Sue and she took a look at her figure, turning this way and that. All appeared to be in apple pie order, so she tried on a few different type smiles and expressions, to choose one to use for her party entrance. Deciding on the "wide eyed, overwhelmed little girl" type, she hurried out and joined Bill and they entered the lounge.

"Oh, darling," she sighed rapturously, holding on to Bill stretching her eyes wide open and trying to form her lips into a round, kissable circle, "Isn't it simply marvellous?"

Near the entrance, Joe, a friend of Bill's, stood with his out-of-town guests, a married couple. The visiting lady could not endure the "little girl" acts such as the one Sue was demonstrating, and although the two had never met, she conceived an instantaneous hatred for the actress. Introductions were being performed by Joe, when the woman guest broke in.

"Honey!" she said to Bill, whom she had never seen before, "Where have you been since that night in Manila? You rascal, you! You said you'd be back!"

"What?" said Bill, dumbfounded.

"What's this Manila bit?" demanded Sue, now a full grown female.

"I don't know. I aint never been in Manila," stated her mate, positively.

The visiting husband caught his wife's arm and whispered hoarsely in her ear, "Knock it off! We never been to Manila, and I never see this guy. What are you up to?"

"Never mind. You stay out of this," the visiting woman said grimly to her husband, and turning back to Bill and putting her hand on his arm, cooed, "Baby, aren't you going to dance with me?"

"Oh!" exploded Sue, trying to kill her husband with looks. Then she turned and stormed out of the Lounge, with Bill scurrying after her.

"What in _____ is going on?" asked Bill.

"Of all _____! Well, I'd never have believed it! And you with a family. So this is the thanks I get for coming out here and bringing the children and trying to make a home," she sobbed, the ringlets of her carefully made curls bouncing with every step as if they were jumping up and down in anger. "I should have known when you rushed over to the Browns last year and helped her, the big fat slob, off that dining room table when she got scared and jumped up there because she stepped on a snake, and then pretended she couldn't get down. You even sprained your back, helping her, too. Would you sprain your back for me? Oh, no!"

"Listen! I tell ya I aint never been to Mainla, and I never saw that broad before, neither! You know I been in the States the whole time before I came out here, don't ya?"

"Well, yes. I suppose so."

"Then how could I have anything to do with her?" he asked, scenting victory.

"It doesn't make any difference," she replied, straddling the back seat of their motorcycle, and delivering her verdict, "you would have, if you'd been there!"

Speechless, he started the motorcycle and headed for home. As they passed through the main gate, the sentry, proud of his grasp of English, called out, "Merry Christmas."

"Aw, go to _____," snarled Bill, his evening ruined, and he'll never know why.

Second Incident:

The band was playing raggedly but frequently. During one respite from the deafening din, a wife who had received some powerful perfume as a present from her husband, and who had thoroughly drenched herself in the fragrance, got curious as to its effectiveness. She took aim on a lone, inoffensive male and sailed up to him, keeping alert for signs that she (or rather the scent) was coming on the range. Adroitly, she maneuvered to a position dead ahead of his beak and slowly closed the target. Suddenly his nostrils twitched and an expression of surprise and apprehension came over him.

"Stand back!" he cried in alarm, holding his hands out to ward her off, "I don't mind the smell o' that stuff, but it hurts mah eyes."

"Oh, don't worry, I'm not going to blind you," she retorted, crushed at the unexpected and humiliating defeat, and moved away toward another prospect. This one indicated no knowledge of the perfume, although she was close enough to establish that he had a nose, and a very large red one, at that.

"Hello," she finally offered, no action on his part appearing imminent.

"Heddo," he responded, "wads your dabe? How lög you bid id Udord?"

"Oh, my gosh!" she exclaimed in disgust, "A guy with a cold in the head."

Third Incident:

A wife could not locate her husband in the Lounge, and looked several other places, finally going into the Bar. There her husband, seated on a bar stool, with his back to the door, was gleefully telling the other bar customers some tale about race tracks and a famous race horse. The listeners, with shining eyes and cheerful grins, were evidently enjoying themselves thoroughly while the husband in a loud and happy voice, declaimed:

"The old bum set in the grandstand chair,
With filth in his boots, and lice in his hair,
And said, 'Boys, I'm pore, but if I us rich,
I'd go dead broke on that son _____'."

"Frank!" she yelled, startling the customers and stopping her husband's speech. "You ought to be ashamed! You promised me to clean up your language, and now look at you!"

"Well," he tittered, "I been gargling some stuff to clean my throat, and these citizens seem to think my language is right pretty and clear as a bell."

The citizens turned back to the bar counter, intending to continue their previous right arm calisthenics, and Frank sighed and headed back to the detested dancing from which he had so lately escaped. As soon as he had disappeared, his wife addressed herself to the bar customers.

"You're a fine bunch," she opined indignantly, "what a help you are to a man trying to improve himself!"

"Aw, dry up," the foremost citizen snapped, "you better take care of yourself. Your stockings are coming down."

She looked down quickly before she remembered she hadn't worn any stockings.

"Your nose is runnin', too," the man continued to her consternation.

She involuntarily dabbed at her nose and then, red faced, turned and fled, to the accompaniment of the bellowing laughter of the citizens.

Fourth Incident:

The usual gossip group was in session. Although there was one man present, he was mentally wandering about in other places. The female speaker was being given rapt attention by two women listeners.

"Well!" she said, "She doesn't know the first thing about housekeeping! Did you know that I was over at her house at nine o'clock yesterday morning, and she hadn't even done her dishes, and she didn't even try to hid them! I said to her, I said, 'I want want to get just one more quarter pound of butter. I'll return it right away - soon as I can go shopping! I knew she didn't have any butter, but I did want her to pay me back my sugar, and I wanted her to know that I knew she hadn't paid it back. Well! She said she didn't have any butter and completely ignored my sugar! Can you imagine? Honestly!"

The speaker had been leaning toward her listeners, and then, to emphasize her point, she slowly pulled her body erect, keeping her head turned sideways, chin down, lips compressed, and registering incredulous indignation with her eyes.

The two women listeners were all that could be asked for in an audience. To show astonishment, each gasped and opened her eyes wide. One murmured, "You don't mean it!"

No so, the male. His attention was brought back to the speaker by her physical movement, but as an appreciative audience he was a complete zero, not having registered any part of her conversation.

"What a scrawny old neck," he thought, regarding the tale bearer with lack luster eyes, "and look at them collar bones. I bet she aint nothin' but pure dee gristle. I bet she couldn't even -----"

"Jim!" his wife shrieked, knowing what he was thinking. "Stop it! Oh, you! Why don't you go on in the bar?"

He left with alacrity, and his wife, looking after him, said to herself, "Well, he has improved. He used to say it out loud."

Fifth Incident:

Two mechanics, resting their feet from the vicious dancing, were evaluating the Air America facility.

"Well, here another year's gone by and we aint no better off."

"Whadaya mean, no better off? You don't seem to remember what we had to put up with before. Who else got a hangar like we got here, with lights and all. Why it usta be so dark in there a bunch of mechs tried to put a Beaver engine on a chopper one night - couldn't see the difference. And one time two guys on the night crew laid down and slept all night, and nobody caught 'em. And dust! Jees, I usta rattle instead of talk, I had so much dirt in my craw."

"Aw, it might be a little better, but how come we don't get Saturdays and Sundays off? Everybody else does."

"I dunno. Yuh just can't figger out some of these higher ups. Yuh can't convince me they're so smart, either. One of 'em was lookin' at my chopper one day and says, 'Where's the carburetor?' He was lookin' right at it. 'Right there,' I said. I thought maybe he was blind. Then he says, 'I hear you're having trouble with medium freqs. Can't you replace them with another size?' I said, 'I got to go, now, and see the Chief Mech.' And I left. I didn't want to get in no trouble, and I couldn't figure whether he was serious or maybe makin' fun of me, and I mighta poked him. Different size freqs!"

Sixth (and last) Incident:

A gray haired lady, obviously well past middle age, was sitting alone, watching the dancers. One of our older employees noticed her and stopped to see if she needed anything.

"Good evening," he said, "You're Ed's mother, aren't you? My name is Jones. I hope you're enjoying the party. Can I get anything for you?"

"Good evening, Mr. Jones. I'm fine, thanks. I don't need a thing. I was just thinking how different it was when I was a girl. That's nearly fifty years ago!"

"Madame, I am astounded! Surely I didn't hear you correctly."

"You can save your strength on that blarney. I'm not only old, I'm glad of it, and wouldn't go through the aging process again if I could avoid it. I go to these things just to please one or the other of my children. My husband absolutely refuses to go, and I'd much rather stay home and go to bed."

"So had I. I'm so sleepy, now, I can barely keep my eyes open, and my feet are killing me. Here comes Ed."

"You want to go home, Mother?" asked Ed.

"I certainly do, Son," she replied gratefully. "Are you ready? You can come back later. Good night, Mr. Jones."

"Good night," said Mr. Jones, looking at his watch and trying to estimate whether his feet would hold out for another half hour. The previous year he had lasted, but now he concluded that seeing the old year out and new one in wasn't worth the effort. He headed for home, and, for the record, turned his head in the general direction of the party and said, "Good night, kids; Happy New Year."

January 1964

The new construction program is lurching into motion in spite of the obvious attempts of local contractors to bleed the company of all possible money. Bids of contractors on each project exceeded the available funds, with prices twenty-five to one hundred seventy-five per cent higher than similar or less expensive structures in the city of Udorn. This situation requires the work to be completed by using company supervisors, hiring local labor, and buying supplies directly from wholesalers or retailers.

The dining room expansion and swimming pool programs are progressing satisfactorily, with company pilots doing most of the work. There has been 100% helicopter pilot participation, and one helio pilot has assisted, so far. From time to time some pilots pretend to be, or really are, offended and quit temporarily when their ideas are not accepted. We have many self-admitted experts on all phases of engineering, but actually a good many are doing excellent jobs, particularly in building the new bar and cocktail lounge. Efficiency of the program is decreased due to frequent stoppages of work to permit, loud, prolonged and bitter arguments. In a few cases, individuals have become so engrossed in their work that they appear to feel that a certain project is theirs and any meddling by someone else is strongly resented, if not forbidden. Now, some flight personnel fly when ordered, but are subjected to considerable mental anguish, fearing that some ignorant person will "mess up" their work during their enforced absences.

All the employee participation in construction work has not been clear profit, however, as these activities have been vehemently denounced by a few wives who feel themselves abused and neglected by husbands not coming home promptly as expected, and when they do appear, as one worried wife put it - "My husband don't like me any more. He comes home late, dirty, sweaty, stinky, and won't talk about anything but how that dumb jerk _____ is going to ruin the new bar if somebody don't stop him".

Female resentment was temporarily abandoned to enable all the girls to get dressed up and, in admirable shape, attend the dinner dance on 25 January. The band, composed of company employees, showed much improvement since its last performance, and struggled enthusiastically with tunes, most of them recognizable, over a three hour period. This recognition of the music was aided by the band, (due either to consideration for the listeners or to its own limited repertoire) repeating songs several times. For instance, there were five renditions of "Red River Valley", four of "My Only Sunshine", and so on; and at the conclusion of the dance most of the participants had a pretty good idea of what was being played. Also, the band should be complimented on its gentlemanliness and sportsmanship in refusing to use "dirt" cards to put the audience on the right track.

Although some of us gaze askance and bewilder at some modern dances such as the twist, it must be admitted that these things have their good points, as there is obviously no connection between any music and the appalling antics of the dancers, and therefore any old tune can be used. This greatly decreases a band's burden in the number of different songs which must be mastered.

For several months access to our aircraft parking area will be restricted and will require extreme caution on the part of every pilot. At the rate of progress of construction of the new taxiway and warm-up apron on the Udorn airfield, construction company personnel and equipment will be hazards for some time to come.

It will be cause for rejoicing here when the U.S. Congress finally passes a bill to allow disposal of old vehicles we declared excess over two years ago, and six old aircraft which are parked here awaiting disposition. Some of us used to believe that such matters could be settled at lower levels, but this is apparently not true, and we and the ghostly array of carcasses of deceased equipment await the pleasure of cognizant authority.

Our ladies can now proudly claim that they evaluated the cigarette peril correctly some six months ago when some of them publicly renounced cigarettes in favor of cigars. The program is not 100% satisfactory as some of the girls backslide occasionally and also voice complaints about the bad taste of cigars. The men have grumbled, too, as many do not smoke cigars and it is embarrassing to them to have a lady ask for a cigar in public and the gentleman have to admit that he has none. In addition, the males who do smoke cigars are getting tired of having to provide for all the requests. It appears that there will shortly be a worldwide demand for a truly feminine cigar - one which is small enough to be carried in a lady's bag and be protected from being crushed by all the female hand-bag gear, which tastes and smells good, and which comes in various gay colors that will match any costume a lady may choose to wear.

Again we have discovered some unusual talents among employees. One, Mr. Boon-Apai, Thong-In, who had previously been chosen "Mr. Udorn" in a male beauty contest, has now also been crowned "Mr. Korat".

There are some indications of increased work to be assigned at this base by the customer and we are alert to grab any additional odd jobs. Discussion on the mechanics of accepting such additional work when aircraft or equipment are not already on our contract have been very satisfactory so far.

February 1964

The swimming pool is about 65 percent complete. Concrete sides are still to be poured, and tile, and underwater lights are yet to be put in place; then some prettying up and somebody can turn on the water to fill 'er up.

The school (club annex) and the four new bedrooms are about 20 percent complete. There is little enthusiasm among the children for the club annex, most of them giving the area a hard look when they pass it.

Dining Room expansion is necessarily delayed until the bar can be moved and set up for business in its new site (old front porch). The food service here results in a curious situation. Usually restaurant owners hope for increased business; here we hope for something (storm, epidemic of measles or anything) to keep some of the patrons away - at least until we get a little more room. We are about to run ourselves into early graves trying to get food supplies here in sufficient volume to keep up with the outgo. Before the club went into operation, it was reliably estimated that besides Air America and U.S. military personnel, not more than ten or twelve Americans resided in Udorn vicinity. Now, it is amazing to note the large number of strange Americans, never before seen by us, who claim long time residence in this area, great regard and friendship for Air America, and tearfully recite the ole wheeze about how all of us must stick to-gether in a foreign land. (Of course, the sticking to-gether business can, in their collective opinion, best be accomplished by giving them memberships in the Rendezvous Club). Maybe there is something to this idea of "Yankee, go home".

Most of the pilots and other employees building the swimming pool and new bar are doing outstanding work. However there has to be one who is inept, has all thumbs and no fingers, and just naturally seems to impede progress. An example of conversations concerning this individual and the work on these two projects follows:

"How about steadying this plank while I saw it, Bill?" one of the pilots who was working in the new bar asked his partner, "Git outa the way, Elmer! Okay, Bill, ready? Git your foot off the sawhorse, Elmer! You'll lose all your toes, that way. Why don't you just stand over there in the corner and watch? Okay, Bill?"

Elmer moved off a short distance and when the other two finished sawing the plank and carried it away, he came back and picked up the power saw, gazed at it with curiosity and was ready to try it out when he was noticed by the other two.

"Elmer!" yelled Bill, "dad gum it, I done told you three times to quit monkeying with that power saw! Now leave it alone! You already busted it once."

"For gosh sakes, go outside with the swimming pool bunch and leave us work awhile without taking care of you," pleaded the other worker.

With a long-faced wistful expression, Elmer proceeded to the swimming pool where two pilots were welding steel reinforcing for the sides of the pool. One of the welders looked up from his work, saw Elmer, cursed profusely and growled, "Aw right, Elmer, you come around bothering me again today, I'm gonna clobber ya! I mean it."

"Yeah," said the welder's assistant, "it's plenty hot down here in this hold and we aint got not no time to fool with you. Now clear out!"

The welders turned back to their task and Elmer absent-mindedly picked up the only remaining package of welding rods the boys had, and wandered off, muttering to himself. When the welding rod in use was expended, the welders turned around to get a fresh one, but couldn't find the package.

"Well, that's funny. My rods were right here a minute ago. _____, I mighta known it! Hey, Elmer! Where's Elmer?"

For several reasons we are trying to hurry completion of these new construction projects. One of the most vital reasons is to provide some lift to the employees' families. There is evidence that the morale of these folks is sagging, due mostly to being fed up with Udorn where the electric and water service is deplorable, and the "gyp Americans" campaign is open and infuriating. A school, a swimming pool, and a nicer place to eat and drink should help.

There are many drawbacks to living in Udorn, but once in a while we have the pleasure of meeting some very interesting people. The latest of these is known as the Snake Lady. She is now old, but still plying her trade which is, for a fee, causing snakes to infest a person's property. She also gets a fee for requiring the snakes to withdraw. This has been a very lucrative business and she is now considered a most substantial citizen. Her career was nearly ruined shortly after it was launched about 1920, when she received a fee in advance to "snake" a citizen who, unknown to the Snake Lady's client, happened to be in prison at that time. Overly anxious to do a good job and please her customer, she went ahead with her entire stable of reptiles and "snaked" the fellow in his prison cell. Her charges were not too well trained in those days, and frequently failed to concentrate on the job at hand. On this occasion, they slithered happily about all over the prison, and the inmates, in their cells and unable to proceed to another location, spent a wretched night. The prison guards departed the premises early in the event and the poor souls who were left to deal with the serpents at close quarters sent forth loud and piteous cries for help which was not forthcoming. This incident caused the Snake Lady a great deal of concern, not from fear of a fine or incarceration, as the police would not come near her, but from shame at not exercising strong control of her snakes, and not doing a job properly as a result; and she realized that the public would be aware of this. She quickly developed a more effective technique, however, and has prospered ever since, not bothered by relatives, tiresome visitors, or tax collectors. In addition, she rides trains and busses free, and bus operators seem glad to oblige her by driving rapidly and directly to her destination without regard to the established bus routes or wishes of other passengers, most of whom vacate the busses at the earliest opportunity.

Those interviewing the Snake Lady were told that, far from being easy, her profession involves such hard work, as the attrition of her snakes from all causes is quite high, and she has to spend a great deal of time catching and training the temperamental creatures. She complained that hers is a lonely existence, since there are practically no friendly human beings. Although this statement provoked considerable sympathy, her plea for membership in the Rendezvous Club has since been denied, the deceitful interviewers vowing to her that they would move Heaven and Earth to get her request approved, and then violating their oaths and fiercely opposing her proposed entry as soon as they reached the safety of the Air America compound.

Interest is high, particularly among those who have done, and intend to do, nothing to help with the work, regarding the progress of the swimming pool and new bar. The new bedrooms and club annex, for most of the employees, may as well not exist. Morale overall is satisfactory.

March 1964

After some difficulty in finding tile of the proper quantity and quality, all the required material has been purchased and delivery should be effected in a few days, so the swimming pool should be completed during April. We are somewhat embarrassed by not having opened the pool before this, as some folks, not based at Udorn, have been arriving with bathing suits and great anticipation of taking a dip, only to see the ugly cement lined puncture in the earth. This ~~appointment~~ ^{disappointment} was expressed by one disillusioned visitor as:

"How come you guys can't tell people the truth for once? I heard in Bangkok you had a blooming oasis here, with swimming pool, lounge area, dressing rooms, air conditioned bar, plenty good chow and some nice rooms to stay in. But what have you got? Actually got? A big hole in the ground with a pile of dirt beside it, and a tore up bar not near done. Naw, don't give me no excuses. Everyone of you ought to be fired right now, and let somebody else get in here and get this blame place straightened out."

We have now learned that it is better to keep target dates for completion of new projects highly classified. However, we will have to admit that, at this time, the Club area does look terrible.

The additional guest rooms, school (Club Annex), and new bar appear to be making slow but satisfactory progress and, hopefully, will all be finished during April. As a hint, those persons who desire to attend the opening party are requested to arrange their affairs for a trip here the second week in May, advise us of intentions, and keep this information from falling into the hands of unauthorized people.

The dam appears to have burst, and new hordes of Rendezvous Club users have descended upon us and are floundering happily about, mostly between the old bar and dining room, hoping to get service in either place. The new construction will ease the load, but it is almost certain that we have again undershot, and will need to take care of further increases of clientele. Solutions to this additional requirement include, but are not necessarily limited to the following:

1. Shoot the cook. It is felt that his reputation for preparing large portion of tasty food must take a good deal of the blame. He pays no attention to our requests to reduce the size of individual portions. Never mind whether we go broke or run ourselves ragged hustling back and forth on food buying trips to Bangkok - his customers are going to get nothing but plenty of good chow, and anyone attempting to interfere takes his life in his hands. Also, he seems to have usurped what was heretofore considered management's prerogative of hiring kitchen personnel. We are not quite sure how this came about, but are scared to try to change the situation, now.
2. Stop having movies and bingo in the Club lounge and use this area for serving both cocktails and food. A roofed, screened movie structure behind the Administration Building seems feasible. This would allow indigenous non-employees living in the vicinity of the Udorn airfield to view our movies through the fence, and perhaps rid us of the botheration of hundreds of ineligible kids who now try to sneak in to our movies. Some of us are on the verge of nervous breakdowns with the present problem. We know we have regulations concerning who is admitted to the Air America facility, but just can't seem to get in motion in rigid enforcement of these regulations when the violators are ragged, eagle-eyed little waifs.

Lest the facetious treatment of the problems of serving Club customers be misunderstood, it should be recorded that we are happy to have the new-comers with us; and view the situation not as a burden, but as an opportunity to provide badly needed service.

It is nice to visit other establishments and see how the other guys do things. A recent trip to the big Tainan facility has jerked us back to the reality that things can be accomplished (not as efficiently as at Udorn, of course) at other places. Those folks have practically built - not repaired, but built - a DQ-28 out of a handful of twisted metal.

We have no intention of copying all the Tainan methods, though; especially the one concerning use of the toilets. The toilet facilities there are located at a considerable distance from the offices; and, frequently, a visitor attending a conference is told that the meeting is suspended for a period of time, and all must make a journey to the toilets. It takes so long, due to the distance, that these things have to be planned ahead. Discussions of the subject of the meeting can continue enroute if desired, and if the matter being talked about is urgent. It is feared that such a sophisticated system wouldn't work here; our people wouldn't wait for such a recess. We don't have far to go, anyhow.

Except for people being sick and tired of waiting for the new building program to be finished and put to use, morale is satisfactory overall. Even the employees who participated in the cement pouring party have regained their health. This affair took place from 9:00 p.m., 5 March until 1:00 a.m. the next morning. We purchased cement from a construction company which could not deliver except at night when the huge mixing trucks were not otherwise employed. These vile behemoths drove across our pretty lawn, crunching sidewalk, grass and shrubbery, and along with these the hearts of those of us who could not forget all the work which had gone into landscaping. The huge obnoxious could not get near enough in all cases to dump their loads of cement directly into the wooden forms. This required all hands to grab wheelbarrows, buckets, and any other available vessel and run frantically on rubbery legs to the point where the cement had been dumped, to deliver it to its destination before the short truck would arrive and run over them. This resulted in our people being covered from head to foot with cement, completely exhausted, and presenting ghastly, unmitigated spectacles which caused the wives who were watching the performance to lament tearfully that their husbands would never be the same again. Curiously, and with complete unanimity, the wives blamed the Supervisor of General Maintenance, who had nothing to do with the participation of their husbands in the ordeal. This is the first time we recall that a person other than the Project Manager has been selected as the recipient of feminine wrath for something which displeases the girls. Anyway, it was a great night.

April 1964

The ominous feeling of an approaching storm stayed with us as March disintegrated and disappeared, leaving the building program unfinished. Some equipment and supplies were undelivered, some turned out to be wrong items, and, for some unknown reason, air conditioners for the school were shipped from Hongkong to Bangkok where they were shipped into Customs which declared an import duty almost the same as the price of new air conditioners. All this time our people create of "Hurry Up", sounded like lost souls crying in the wilderness.

April brought more and more people and a few more animals anxious to use our facilities. A military exercise in the area was the last straw, and we reluctantly called a halt on further new recruits and hung "sold out" signs for participants in the exercise. (We have also been attempting without success to persuade a female cat, which is now occupying the roof of the club with her newly produced brood - five frisky, fun-loving little felines -, to depart the area). Although we couldn't handle any more people, still we didn't feel particularly in returning them, and were unable to overcome a growing, guilty feeling with the reluctant fear that we will get up one morning and look in a mirror to shave and see an eye looking back at us.

For various reasons many company personnel wound up at Udon for overnight visits. We took care of thirty-seven on night, most of them in the West Boundary (Senior Club lounge).

Amidst these trials and tribulations two weddings took place; one in town and one in the Club. Several of us attended the first one which required suit and tie for gentlemen. It was frightfully hot, and countless numbers of large, mosquito, and midnight striped insects made themselves, various insects, in hot night insects on faces, necks, and ankles; this performance giving the appearance of some type of wild, insect infestation. As a gesture to assist the Americans to deal at home, the host had rigged a second player which repeated "Holy Face" over and over. On a table in front of us were placed large bottles of native beer and other refreshments. Our battle with the insects was halted momentarily to defend ourselves against the new adversary.

"No! No!" we cried with horror, We can't drink that stuff!"

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Our protests were ignored, or possibly mistaken for a beaming display of amazement at the host's generosity. The bottles increased in number; the tempo and volume of "Baby Face" seemed to be stepped up; and the insects' attack multiplied. Suddenly, we were told that we should go inside a house adjacent to the area where we sat, to take part in the wedding ceremony. Badly bug bitten, perspiring heavily, and nervous lest we foul up our parts in the ritual, we entered and beheld the bride and groom, who knelt at a little altar, and some old ladies who sat on the floor. Before we moved into the required position in front of the kneeling couple, we looked into the eyes of the old ladies and at once forgot temperature, insects and all other irritants. The calm, tolerant, and happily expectant glow with which they gazed on the wedding scene made us feel both peaceful and also a little baffled that they apparently accepted and liked what had been awarded them during a life which we would consider had used them harshly. No use trying to impress them with our gadgets, equipment, good clothes, or plumbing. They knew better.

Pressed into getting on with the rites which we had delayed, we performed acceptably and returned to our seats outdoors, intending to reflect on the old ladies some more. However, this was impossible due to the insects, frenzied because of our temporary absence, and "Baby Face", which was now turned up to full volume. Exhausted, we bade our host goodnight and took our leave, but not before one of our number turned to the operator of the record player and growled,

"For God's sake, play some'n else, will ya?"

The second wedding took place in the Club lounge which had been exquisitely decorated. Again it fell to us to officiate. Immediately before the ceremony we received an extremely poor briefing which omitted entirely the second part of the function. This required placing three dabs of some cold cream-like substance, contained in a small box, on the forehead of each of the two persons being joined. When we were obviously going to pass over this part, the bride, in English and with venom, hissed,

"The little box! On our foreheads! Foreheads! His first."

Shocked, we hastened to obey, and after stammeringly completing a "blessings on you" speech, considered our officiating terminated, got some food and repaired to the lawn to eat. Some thirty minutes later, a frantic friend of the groom hustled us back to the altar to remove from the heads of the bride and groom two connected fabric circles. This was a required part of the ceremony, otherwise the couple had to stay put. The circles removed, the enraged, sweltering pair rose and stampeded toward the rapidly vanishing food for which they were paying.

One of the worst sufferers of the present situation is the Club Manager. A typical day in his life goes about as follows:

"Hey, where you guys going?" asked the Club Manager as two strangers came in the Club front door.

"Gonna get something to drink and eat. What's it to ya, anyway?" replied one of the two.

"I'm Manager here, and this is a private club. You got membership cards?"

"Membership cards? Now, we ain't; but you can give us some if you want to. See ya later." They started toward the bar.

"Hold it," snapped the Manager and motioned to a couple of friends who came up and took station alongside him.

"No right," continued the Manager to the invaders, "you two characters are leaving, either under your own power or get thrown out. Which way you want it?"

After a few moments, one of the two non-members said, "Okay, you know what you can do with your Club. I'll get in touch with ya, believe me."

"Yeah, sure," replied the Manager, "write me a Christmas card. Now, blow."

A few minutes later, a lady seated at a Club dining room table beckoned to the Club Manager with, with an indignant sniff, said, "Why is it I can't get milk for my children? Is it taking long, long much that a restaurant keep a little fresh milk?"

"We haven't been able to get any milk in a long time," replied the harassed Manager, "lady, how about stopping your kid from pouring soda pop on the table cloth? We're about out of table cloths. I don't believe I heard your milk, an' am. Is your husband a Club member?"

"You mean I can't come in here when I want to without hanging for a membership? Well! Good, children."

"lady, LADY! You forgot one of your kids. Beat it, you little ____."

Immediately, another customer got the Manager's attention with -

"Hey! How come I don't get a knife and fork? I can't eat no steak with a spoon!"

"We're short of knives and forks. Use your fingers if you want to. Can't get that knives and forks people haven't stole from us washed fast enough."

The Manager left and the last complaining customer was grabbed by the collar by one of the other three persons at the same table.

"Listen, you! If your yapping gets us bored with here, you're gonna get the tar beat outa you! Shut up and eat. Swaller the steak whole if you want to, but shut up. We ain't members, but we're about to get a decent meal if you don't get somebody lookin' at us."

"Oh," replied the other, "I didn't know that. Guess I'm in the same fix. How'd you get in?"

"Waded through the klong and swam through them old wrecked trucks. Then walked in the door behind a guy who looked like he belonged, got down, and ordered. How'd you make it?"

"About the same. Tore my blouse on one o' them wrecks, though."

"Well, keep your head down and eat. If the Manager hadn't been thinking about the restaurant that kid made, we'd a been gone."

"Gee, sure wish I hadn't tore my blouse, though," looking ruefully at his blouse before attending his steak eating fashion.

The Club Manager was hailed at the feet of the latter leading to the movie projection booth which he located above the bar.

"I'm through," whined the movie operator. "There's no more of them guys in the bar, they done sprung them walls. The walls are all bowed out, and my whole projection booth's gonna fall right into the bar. I quit."

"I heard enough outa you," growled the Club Manager, almost nose to nose with the movie operator, "Now get up there and start the movie before I break your neck!"

There is still a lot to do on the new projects, but some which have already been done once, are going to have to be changed. One of the worst "sure things" is the old, wretched Administration Building. Looking at this old relic with its unbroken the steel and impotence of Roger Allen Fox when he poured the "House of UMM". Here lay the very essence of defeat, destruction, desolation, and apocalyptic death. Unable to endure this situation, we painted the building. But after a short while, giant cracks appeared in the paint, and the whole effect resembles an old overpainted baby whose sad attempts at facial decoration cannot hide the age and accompanying ailment of the cancer who can be seen daily through the gaps in the pitiful covering. The "House of UMM" was better than the melancholy result of the painting.

It looks like we are going to be forced into organizing a charm school. This became painfully evident as a result of the actions of our ladies during a small cocktail party we gave recently for some visiting VIPs. It must be admitted that the girls have problems in looking and feeling their best when they are notified only an hour or so prior to the time they must appear at a social function and, due to the Udon water system, are unable to get a bath. We thought it would be helpful to issue explicit instructions regarding what to do, what to wear, hairdos, etc., but it didn't work out exactly as planned. Although most of the American girls took the whole thing in stride and circulated among the guests, being decorative, witty, and charming, some of the girls tended to lose their poise completely and skulk about and congregate with other females, or hang around their husbands. All during the evening our management personnel had to drag or shove them from their refuges into circles of male guests and tell them to talk. Post-party questioning in regard to the ladies' behavior led to the information that they needed a little more notice and assistance in some matters and less advice in others. An interview with one distracted wife went as follows:

"What made you act ugly last night?"

"We didn't have any water at our house," she replied tearfully, "and I couldn't take a bath, and I didn't have time to fix my hair or fix a dress like we were told to. I was so scared; I know I looked awful. I just felt tacky."

Seems like we need a little corrective action right away.

Among some of our employees there is a feeling of claustrophobia induced by the crowds in the Club. Otherwise, although our people are mostly in a dead run from daylight till dark, morale is holding up well. Nobody is going to give up or get sick - they can't, the opening party is too near.

May 1964

The building program plunged frantically on, with little or no assistance from the weather, in an attempt to meet a 29 May opening date. Many mistakes were made, some time was wasted on unprofitable work, and weather included both too much sun and too much rain.

Not all the events were sad, though; some were hilarious. We wanted to have alternate blue and white cement squares for the sidewalk surrounding the swimming pool but the only types of cement coloring available were red, green and yellow. Of these three, we selected green, and the vivid mixture was put down, but after a few hours in the sunshine it mysteriously turned blue. Another area was to be rose colored; and a mixture of red, which according to directions should have accomplished this, was sunbaked into a blinding white.

To be different, we decided to paint the interiors and the doors of the new Guest Rooms in distinctive colors, so that we would have a Rose Room, an Orchid Room, a Blue Room and a Yellow Room. The doors were painted properly, but somehow the interior color schemes got mixed, and no interior color matched the door color. The only consistent thing was the deep red of the faces of the painters when the defect was pointed out. The interiors were repainted just before another group arrived to exchange all doors to match the interiors.

To achieve a startling and beautiful bubbling and smoking effect, we determined to put dry ice in the champagne punch, and ordered some from Bangkok. The package arrived at the desired time, but instead of going to the Club was delivered to the Supply Building. A puzzled shipping clerk, never having heard of ice which was dry, gingerly set it aside to wait until someone who could help him with his problem would arrive. No help materialized; so the dry ice reposed in the Supply Building all night instead of in a punch bowl.

In the midst of these preparations a major issue exploded in our faces. At a previous cocktail party, the costumes which the ladies were expected to wear were described in some detail. However, being pressed for time on this occasion, we published the notice of the clothing requirements for the women merely as "summer frocks".

This was a very ill considered decision, as a committee of irate, upset wives visited us immediately after publication of the notice and voiced their objections in forceful language. They claimed that we showed lack of interest, poor manners, had left them with no idea of what to wear, and probably didn't want them to come to the party. The reasoning by which they reached these conclusions was somewhat difficult to follow, but it was obvious that they had problems which had to be dealt with. Pressed for some specific details, all three, talking at the same time, stated that the term "summer frocks" was indefinite, no colors were mentioned, nothing was said about how to fix their hair, the type of shoe to wear was missing, and the bathing suit problem was ignored. (This last item turned out to be lack of information as to whether bathing suits should be worn in place of underwear so they could go swimming with no loss of time). In an attempt to make peace, we assured them that a party without them was unthinkable; that they would doubtless look lovely in any apparel, but probably it would be best if the colors selected would blend with the background of the colored plastic fence around the swimming pool. Sleeveless, cool dresses were prescribed, with high heel shoes of any type except the ones with long, pointed toes. Twenty-five per cent of the girls were to have their hair done with ears exposed. (This percentage thing was deliberately thrown in to give them something to work on until party time and so prevent a second session involving "ladies' wear"). Bathing suits in place of underwear were to be permitted, but the ladies were warned if the bathing suits started itching they would under no circumstances start scratching or ask anyone else to do so for them. Also, if they went swimming, they must not put their dresses back on over wet bathing suits, as the wet suits would soak through the dresses and make them look silly. A bit mollified they departed, yakking at great speed, and we returned to some minor problems.

In spite of all the troubles the opening gag held, and we were greatly pleased to have a considerable number of distinguished guests attend. Most of the participants appeared to have a good time. In fact, all the "good" time seemed to be used up that night - nothing was deemed particularly funny the morning after, and the dismal drizzle deepened the depression of our doleful co-morbidities.

Our maintenance load continues to increase, and the numbers of people desiring to use our Club facilities mount steadily. Various ruses have been adopted by customers to keep from going hungry. The best one so far was discovered when, at breakfast time, one man ordered not only ham and eggs but also a hamburger. When questioned, he answered that he was eating both breakfast and lunch while he had a seat, as he feared a repetition of the previous day's defeat when he couldn't get in to lunch because of the crowd.

Expansion of electrical and water output must be accomplished in order to keep us with our increasing requirements. To achieve this, three 100KW generators have been ordered, and the water plant is being operated longer hours. It appears that the present water plant will not be sufficient for our needs in another year if the present expansion of our workload continues.

School has staggered into a start, with the wife of one of the helicopter pilots acting as a temporary supervisor. Some equipment has been purchased and more is on order.

Morale seems to be very good, in spite of the fact that a large number of employees have been driven unmercifully lately on the building program. Talking over the opening party is expected to keep peoples' minds off their own troubles for a while.

-41-

June 1964

Some of the local employees who are interested in making a larger, more efficient facility at Udorn have been chanting for several months, the 1942 vintage song "Give me land, lots of land 'neath the starry skies above. Don't fence me in!". We are again about to burst with the present and prospective additional mouths to feed and work to be accomplished, and need more real estate for necessary new construction. The campaign for obtaining use of additional land adjacent to the presently occupied area still goes on, with the optimists busily drawing plans, talking about funds, more buildings, and more personnel.

Judging from the stream of visitors lately, some Public Relations expert has been bragging on Udorn as a tourist mecca. The trouble with this, is the fact that most of the strangers don't go to the City of Udorn at all. They simply relax at the Air America Rendezvous Club. We are now feeding and "watering" about four non Air America persons to each Air America employee. Gross receipts of dining room and bar have more than tripled in the past three months. Club employees have also jumped in numbers by over two hundred percent.

Hiring new employees has added gray hairs to the Club Manager's head. A few days ago, beset by his many problems, he employed as cashier, a young lady he had never seen before, thinking she was the person to whom he had already promised the job. To stop the resulting flow of tears of the distressed loser, he hired her as a waitress. Now we have a qualified waitress as cashier, and a qualified cashier as waitress. It seems to make little difference, though; and nobody has time to bother with it, anyway.

One by-product of the hectic club operation is the wear and tear on Club Manager's wives. Each of these ladies has wailed that she seldom sees her husband - he is always "enroute". Either he is going to or from Bangkok trying to buy enough groceries to keep us with the enormous local appetites, or in a dead run in and around the club.

We have plenty of maintenance business, and the prospects of further increases loom over our heads like the Sword of Damocles. Our present position is similar to that of Satchel Paige - "Never lock back; somethin' might be gainin' on yuh".

To get a full day's work out of some of the less energetic employees, we started trying to apprehend loafers. The procedure was about the same as that used in infantry infiltration - scurrying from cover to cover, trying to sneak up on the lazy ones from the rear. Although the efforts met with some success, the whole thing had to be abandoned, as each performance attracted hordes of onlookers who quit work to watch what they obviously considered the antics of a maniac.

There is always some drawback to progress. The building of the proposed new hangar will inevitably result in the destruction of some large, beautiful trees. These executions appear to be sorry repayment for the shade and comfort furnished for many years by these proud, majestic examples of plant life.

The Project Manager's Office is by no means exempt from the high pressure life we live here. Entering the office one day, we came face to face with a medium sized canine. After greetings were exchanged, the clerk was summoned, and conversation began.

"What's this dog doing in my office?"

"He does nothing."

"How did he get in?"

"A man brought him."

"What man?"

"I don't know; I am too busy - ."

"Okay, get him out. Who put the watermelon and six eggs on my desk?"

"A man said New Year's present. He forgot until to-day. There's a lady to see you."

"All right, tell her to come in. Hello, Ruby May, what's up?"

"I've about had it with Kitty Belle!"

"What's the matter with you and Kitty Belle?"

"She's been making fun of my name - my name before I was married, I mean."

"What was your name then?"

"Ruby May Snodgrass."

"Well, what about it? Why don't you quit trying to hide it? Show Kitty Belle you don't care if everybody knows your name; then you can stay friends. Now try it again. Louder, this time."

"RUBY MAY SNODGRASS," she yelled.

The door burst open and the clerk's head appeared; then was quickly withdrawn when he observed that there was no violence, such as may have been expected from the shouting he had heard.

"All right, now try it on Kitty Belle."

(Come to think of it, that name "Ruby May Snodgrass" could be used in some interesting jingles).

The clerk entered and said

"Woman to see you."

"What's she want?"

"She don't say. She just points."

"Okay, tell her to come in. Oh, for gosh sakes, her again. Well, get somebody to interpret."

An interpreter arrived and glanced with considerable distaste at the simpering visitor.

"What's ^{WANT} she want?"

"She wants ^{you} to find her husband."

"Same thing as last time. Does she still mean the same husband?"

"She lives with second husband now. Third husband is the one she wants to find. She hides from first husband."

"This is the worst tangled up thing I ever heard of! Tell her I don't know where her husband is - any of them - and don't care, either. Her third husband worked for us once, but no more. She's lucky she can't find him, anyhow, the bum. Now get her outa here!"

The interpreter and visitor left, and the clerk entered, carrying a huge bundle of correspondence.

"What's all that stuff?"

"Papers. You sign, please."

"I haven't got time to go through all that mess. I'm expecting a big batch of visitors right away."

"They already come. You were busy. They went to your living room."

"My room! It's gonna take two or three years to get the tobacco smoke stink out of that room, so many guys use it for conferences. Anything important or urgent in that bunch of papers?"

"This one."

"What's that?"

"Chinese payroll. You sign, please. Rest can wait."

Utilization of helicopters remains satisfactory - about six times as many flying hours per aircraft per month as the average military squadron usage.

Morale stays good. However, some are doing considerably more than their share in getting the job done. These will shortly be recommended for something in the way of recognition and pay increases. Separate the men from the boys, maybe; that is, if we can ever get time to write these things down. Probably one reason for the "Rumor Clubs" is lack of recognition by cognizant authority of employees' good work, leading to loose-talk attempts by such employees to convince somebody, anybody, they are good, and have knowledge (inside dope) on some situations.

-44-

UDORN

Monthly Report

July 1964

GENERAL

With great joy we report that the terror-stricken, panic-prone populace of Air America at Udorn has calmed down somewhat, and, although still shaken and suspicious, is able to carry on after a fashion. During the month of July a sudden series of epidemics befell us, causing many cases of loss of eye-sight, deafness, fainting spells, fits, and near apoplexy. Investigation by doctors and scientists began immediately, and, after taking due time to try to impress us with their wisdom, the scholars came forth with the following results:

1. Loss of eye-sight turned out to be complaints of blurred vision. However, there was nothing actually wrong with our peoples' eyes. The blurs were there all right, but were caused by the comet-like speed of employees running from one job to another, attempting to be in two places simultaneously - too fast for the human eye to register a clear picture on the brain.
2. Deafness was self administered, being utilized by persons whose names were called to notify them to work all night again. This maneuver was used very effectively by many employees, especially those who had a head start on supervisory personnel. If the evader could not be run down and held long enough for the supervisor to yell orders right in his face, he very likely got off scot-free.
3. Fainting spells, fits, and apoplectic symptoms were confined almost entirely to management and supervisory personnel, and were due mostly to assignment of new and staggering workloads without sufficient facilities or qualified personnel to accomplish the tasks, or to hearing some one ask for leave or time off. The other employees and visitors learned to recognize these maladies which usually caused the sufferers to fall prone, eyes crossed or turned upward, and feet drumming on the surface. Women and children would then take to their heels, screaming, and strong men would quail at such sights and remove themselves from the vicinity.

It seems fantastic that this time last year we were looking for new work.

The volume of Club business continues to mount, reaching its high mark (so far) on 24 July, when gross receipts were over five times the gross receipts of 24 January this year. An additional wing to contain a movie and a bingo hall, (thus freeing the lounge for more dining room space) and kitchen expansion should begin in a short time. The crowds we have attempted to serve in the Club have saturated the place. As usual, and perhaps inevitably, there are a few obnoxious people included in such a number. However, outside of a few loud-mouths and some absolutely filthy individuals, the men have generally been courteous and patient, and willing to abide by our regulations. The behavior and the appearance of the great majority of personnel using the Club speak well for U.S. military standards of conduct. This is especially true when consideration is given to the gnawing pangs of hunger assailing those who are familiar with the type of food provided by our cook, and these boys have to wait their respective turns, all the while imagining less deserving (in their collective view) persons blissfully chomping away on the offerings of the best cook in Asia. This naturally divides the group into two parts - those who have to wait and are somewhat disgruntled; and those who are eating, and, not being disgruntled, must, therefore, be considered "gruntled". This description of Club customers has met with violent opposition from Club employees who state, and with considerable justification, that the term "gruntled", to the average man, gives an impression of something distasteful, unpoetic, and somehow just not acceptable to people of the upper classes.

Plans for a new hangar and a new supply building should soon be sent to contractors for bids, and everything possible is being done to expedite these projects.

Shortage of overnight lodging here is critical. A vacancy in any of the few Club bedrooms is unheard of. Many employees and military transients wind up sleeping (or rolling and tossing) in the school classroom where cots have been set up. Additional rooms are mandatory since the City of Udorn has a very small hotel capacity, which is nearly always filled. A building, combining administration, medical, etc., and sleeping quarters, is planned for the future, but for the present problem we are reserving some hotel rooms in Udorn for the overflow.

Visiting delegations continue to pour into the base. Although it has not yet been verified, rumor has it that a few days ago a group of six visitors actually went in to the City of Udorn, instead of confining its activities to the Club as tradition seems to require.

A strip of land seven meters by one hundred thirty four meters, along the facility boundary adjacent to the school, present administration building and supply building, has been obtained from the Royal Thai Army. This can be used as a part of the area needed for additional supply warehouses, when funds for construction are made available. Other land requirements for expansion are still the subject of negotiation.

It appears that we must start making a schedule for conferences held in the Project Manager's living room. Twice during this month, groups already busily at work were evicted by slightly higher level groups. On these occasions the atmosphere became so chilly that air conditioning was not required. Much more of this and we will have to have a protocol officer, with a library containing precedence, dates of rank, etc. for all who may be participants in meetings in the North East Thailand Conference Room.

In line with everything else here, the Supermarket is too small for the number of its clientele. Stocks are quickly depleted and a new shipment is something of an event. Somehow, the wives are always the first to get the information that the little store has new items, and descend en masse on the poor, harassed storekeeper, greedily grabbing at any article which appears to be selling rapidly. They also use this buying spree as an opportunity to exchange information, gossip, threats, and outright sugar coated lies. Many males have innocently wandered into the establishment at such times for the purpose of buying one or two articles, and unable to get through the packed aisles, have departed, irritated, frustrated, and completely puzzled at the female conversation which goes about as follows:

"WELL!" said Mary, still breathing hard from running, and angry at not being the first to get in the Supermarket, "What did you do, Ruby May, stay out here all night so you could buy everything again? Heavens knows it wouldn't be the first time you stayed nearly all night at the Club."

"What do you mean?" shrieked Ruby May, furious at the deftly delivered insult, "I heard they had milk here and ---."

"MILK! Oh, my dear, I'm so glad you told me. We've been out of milk for simply ages! Thank you, darling. Say, that's a nice outfit you have on. New, isn't it?"

"Yes it is. You like it? I was so worried Bill wouldn't like me in this color. He really hates pink. You think it will be okay with him?"

"He'll simply adore it. Is there anything else exciting here besides milk?"

"Well ---, they have some cute little six packs of Libby's tomato juice. There are only a dozen packs. You think we better take them all? If that Millie Banks gets here, she'll buy every single one!"

"Of course we ought to take them, and the rest of the milk, too. Speaking of Millie, did you hear about the awful fight she and Jim had? Well. He was away, and she was to meet him at the Club when he got back; so-well, she put on a new dress he hadn't seen - maybe you've heard this? It was terrible! There was hardly anything to it. She might just as well have worn a bathing suit. Well. Jim nearly fainted. He wouldn't speak to her. And I heard they went home and fought all night long."

"They did? I heard - quiet, there's Millie! Hello, Millie! My, you look MON-derful, today! How about getting to-gether for coffee at the Club when you finish shopping? Okay? Well, ready, Mary?"

"All right, I'm ready. See you later, Millie. Now, how do they expect us to get our groceries home? Don't they know a woman can't carry three cases of milk?"

-46-

U D O R N

Monthly Report

August 1964

GENERAL

The frantic pace of activity at this facility continues, with more work, more personnel increases approved, and more buildings to construct. Additional work loads are just around the corner, too; so we must continue at a faster rate of travel to keep even with the treadmill on which we run.

The request for additional land for this facility has been approved. This was cause for rejoicing and breaking a bottle of champagne on one of the fence posts to be demolished soon. However, the celebration had a hollow ring, as we were also informed that, except for what had already been approved, funds would not be granted for other proposed projects. (Somebody else got to the bank first). Since it may be that some time the program will be reinstated, and since we had already set forth our intentions, the following is given as a picture of what we had in mind:

It seems best that we start at dawn at the northern tip of the facility on an imaginary trip to mental view of what we want the facility to be when completed. Here we can see the Operations building, a gleaming white, fifty by seventy-five foot based structure, with an asphalt transient aircraft parking area between the Operation building and the concrete taxiway which stretches to the west some 2,200 feet from the service runway. The Operations building includes Communications, Message Center, Operations and Operation Manager's Office, three Offices for Chief Pilots (helicopter, etc.), Baggage Counter, Waiting Room for fifty persons, Pilots' Lounge, and Combination Conference and Training Room. Neatly painted white strips designate parking spaces for vehicles in the area between the Operations building and the drainage canal. Green, well tended grass and shrubbery cover all non-hard top surfaces.

A vehicle bridge provides access to an asphalt roadway connecting Operations and the Administration/Club area. On each side of the road lie the carpet-like, grass covered lawns with many flower beds, shrubs and flame trees. In place of ordinary street lights, the road is lined with miniature trees which are treated with special fluid. At night, black light shining on these little trees makes them glow red, orange, blue, green, gold, and lavender, thus outlining the road. So as not to ruin the color effect and to prevent headlights shining into the eyes of pilots of taxiing aircraft, parking lights only are used by vehicles on this road.

As we continue down the road, we see the Combination Administration and VIP quarters Building on the right, and a small barracks type Building on the left. On the ground floor the Administration Building provides a dispensary, offices for Project Manager, Secretary for PM and APM, Personnel, Security, Accounting, Visitors, and a large Conference Room. VIP quarters, including two suites (living room, bedroom and bath), and ten one-man rooms with each two rooms sharing a bath, occupy the second floor. All offices and rooms of this building are air conditioned. The barracks building is a two-story structure with community toilets, and individually air conditioned rooms, each with a capacity for two persons. Neatly painted vehicle parking areas adjoin both buildings.

Passing on to the Club the new movie and bingo hall is seen on the north side. The projection booth, the toilets and the central air conditioning unit which serves the entire Club movie, dining room and cocktail lounge area, are located in the east end; and the movie screen is located in the west. A service bar is set up in the northeast corner of the lounge. The new addition on the east end of the dining room has a curved, tinted glass wall following the contour of the adjacent road. The expanded kitchen area covers all the remaining space to the east between the old kitchen limits and the road, and to the south up to the shade trees.

While at the Club we may as well eat breakfast, for this meal the Club is faced with taking care of at least two types of customers - the younger people, who violently resent having to get out of bed at all and start the day in a foul mood; and the older ones, who are glad to have made it through another night and welcome the opportunity to see a new day. To please and pamper both groups, soft, soothing music flows gently into the dining room ("Beautiful Dreamer", etc.). Neatly uniformed waiters and waitresses

serve delectable food. At regular intervals, chimes tinkle, and three of the waitresses cease serving food and scurry to a position near the kitchen door, from which vantage point, with arms about each others' waists, in their little, thin voices, they pipe,

"Good Morning to YOU, good morning to YOU,
We're all in our places, with sunny faces,
On, this is the WAY, to start a new day."

On finishing the ditty, the chimes send them scurrying back to their serving. A different song is rendered on each occasion. In addition, separate menus are used for the younger and older groups with different "poems" attached. Examples are:

Younger Group

For your raw nerves,
Try our preserves
The waitress serves
Just like hors d'oeuvres.

Older Group

Like poor old crones,
Please rest your bones,
And hear the tones
The singer owns.

The swimming pool area is mostly unchanged except for an aluminum rail around the outside of the sidewalk which surrounds the pool, and the addition of little flags and pennants snapping briskly in the breeze from positions at regular intervals on top of the colored plastic fence. Also the "colored" cement squares are painted with paints which will retain their colors. Attractively attired ladies can be seen in the area surrounding the pool, contentedly smoking gaily colored, scented cigars. Medium sized spittoons, decorated in fetching designs, are thoughtfully provided, since the ladies have long since achieved reasonable accuracy in expectorating.

Passing from the Club area we come to the School (Club Annex) which has been relieved of its emergency duty of "East Dormitory", has a room divider in the one classroom, and an efficient teacher who has tape recorders, etc. to assist in the job of seeing that the children "Calvert" their way to an education.

To the southwest of the school there is a parking area, formerly occupied by the old Administration building. Then to the west are the four completed increments of the Supply Department.

Just to the north of the second Supply increment, (Building 170), are the expanded Supermarket, Cleaning and Pressing, Laundry, and Women's Exchange facilities. (The latter for the purpose of a sales outlet for homemade bread, pies, cakes, etc.). Overnight laundry and "Press While You Wait" service is provided by cheerful young ladies who wear a different uniform for each day of the week, to aid the customer in deciding when to retrieve his laundry.

Proceeding past the old hangar, we see the General Maintenance building largely unchanged except for the addition of three 100 KW generators already in place, with space provided for an additional 300 KW capacity.

The Water Plant expansion to the west now provides triple capacity settling tanks so that there is a daily 200,000 gallons total industrial and drinking water available when the plant is operated twenty-four hours a day.

Crossing the road to the north we enter the new hangar with its modern equipment for use in most types of aircraft maintenance. Good lighting allows full twenty-four hour operation and adequate shop and office spaces between the old and new hangars serve both buildings. Employees proudly insist on showing all details of each shop. A tour of this building takes about four hours.

Continuing north we find the entire area north to the drainage canal and west to the fence, covered by concrete for an aircraft parking ramp, part of which is used for an equipment (tow tugs, etc.) parking area.

north of the drainage canal and to the west, another aircraft parking ramp covers the area between the canal and the concrete taxiway. A squadron office, operations and supply building and two aircraft nose docks occupy a portion of this area, and a second vehicle bridge spans the drainage canal about halfway between the aircraft bridge and the squadron area.

Across the concrete taxiway another strip of hard top aircraft parking space is available

Back to the POL area, we find it doubled in size by taking over the former Open Storage which has been moved to the north. Another shed to house an additional fire truck has been constructed between the POL area and the first Fire Truck Shed.

A greatly enlarged flood lighting system has been added to the entire facility area, and the aircraft bridge has been widened.

This completes the tour of the area as it should have looked on completion of the program

Since the tour has consumed the entire day except for a lunch break, and it is now almost cocktail hour, all hands rush back to their lodgings and clean up for a sociable evening. For those who have not brought along appropriate attire, the local Orphans Club provides slacks, sport shirts, clean "stretchy" underwear and socks, and complete toilet set including tooth brush, shaving gear, and underarm deodorant. The touring delegation then has the choice of procuring refreshments in the pool area, bar, or cocktail lounge. Then on to dinner, a la candle light, with an extensive menu of the best of steaks, roasts, fish, fowl, etc. and all types of excellent wines and ~~liquors~~, liqueurs.

On finishing dinner, most of the guests seem to feel that they are also "finished", forego movie, and return to their rooms where they discover that during their absence, their clothes have been pressed and shoes shined. Then they are wafted into a good night's rest, floating away into dreamland or the strains of Brahms' "lullaby" which comes sleepily through the music system.

All this effort and expense is not for laughs. When completed, the facility will be able to do more for the national interest, and do it more efficiently, more economically, and with greater speed and flexibility. It is a good investment.

Well, it was a nice dream, anyway.

Morale of a few individuals has to withstand some blows once in a while. This usually happens when some of us get mixed up with experts in various fields - law, finance, medicine, etc. Recently we were accosted by an accounting/financial expert and the attack and defense went as follows:

"I want to talk with you about the problem of your overhead rate."

"Well, go ahead. I didn't know we had such a problem, but have at it."

"Thank you. I have made a very exhaustive research and would like to present my data for your comments and concurrence. So that there can be no chance of misunderstanding, I would appreciate your writing down the figures and see if you don't agree wholeheartedly that the picture is completely clear."

"Okay. Shoot."

"First, total gross ground personnel 524,000."

"Why, we have only a little over 300 people, and very few of them are gross; mostly, they are skinny."

"That's man hours - not people. Next, subtract skilled man hours of 212,000, then subtract supervision and inspection 84,000, ---"

"Wait a minute. Slow down. I'm getting behind."

"All right. Hold on! What's that \$24,17?"

"That's my bank balance. I haven't got any more paper."

"Well, okay. Now subtract 75,000 slots, then add 61,000 expense ---."

"Wait a minute! Take it a little easier, will you?"

"Very well. Now. You can easily see that this figure divided by gross billing, times slots, less the experience balance factor, plus the projected resultant equates to \$2.57. Right?"

"How did you get to dollars from man hours? Was anything else used?"

"Of course not. Man hours are all that are ever used."

"Well, I can see now why it's so tough for a woman to get a job. If every company had to go through the same thing with woman hours it sure would be complicated. Let's see how that \$2.57 came out again."

"\$4,024,821 less \$3,600,173, divided by 1,867, plus 47 squared ----."

"Wait a minute!! You're tearing up the inside of my head with all those numbers!"

"Why?"

"Well, the eights and zeros are rounded and smooth, and are no trouble; but those jagged sevens, ones, and fours whirling around are painful."

"I don't understand. It's the very same formula you used in the cost estimates for the last building constructed here."

"I did?"

"Certainly. I was pleased to see my formula applied so satisfactorily in a practical way."

"I never heard of it. I wanted to build that building, and was asked how much money it would take, and said what I thought was a reasonable amount. The conversation was on the phone, and if I'd stopped to go through all that rigamarole we wouldn't have gotten any money at all."

"If that's true, how were you able to complete the building with exactly the amount of the funds appropriated without requirements being mathematically proved beforehand?"

"Told our people to build the building for that many dollars, and no more. Now, about that \$2.57. How about I give you \$2.57 and we forget the whole thing?"

"Of course not."

"Match you, double or nothing."

"No, I guess we'd better sleep on the problem and try it again to-morrow. Okay?"

September 1964

Several new building projects are under way, and being all torn up again, our facility looks terrible. Rain and more rain has been coming down almost continuously, filling the excavations where the new building foundations are to be placed, and in general, helping everybody get the "drearies".

Judging from past experience, the rains should cease in a short time, and the dust from the laterite taxiway will be with us again. This dust has caused our employees to initiate something unique - the art of walking backwards. This technique was a necessary development to enable people to keep the dust out of their eyes. Although awkward for many to master, once perfected, this ability is very useful, particularly for those who don't care where they are going as much as where they have been. Correct arm movements are a must, the most successful being that which includes a sharp backward thrust of the right arm as the right leg goes backward, and left arm back with the left leg. There are two schools of thought on leg movements; one believes in raising the knee high and stepping back smartly in a military fashion, and the other holds that the foot should be raised only enough to clear the ground. Both have drawbacks, as the first induces many "charley horses", and the second causes many a tumble over obstacles which catch the heel.

Not content with mere walking, quite a few tried marching songs to assist. Each song was chosen by an individual to suit his own taste; thus many different melodies, delivered in cracked, raucous voices, were heard at the same time. This resulted in people getting their legs entangled due to one leg attempting to march to one tune (perhaps a hot gavotte), and the other leg to another (maybe a fandango), with victims consequently sprawling on the ground. This, in turn, led to many fisticuffs, with charges of deliberate interference flying thick and fast. This marching backward to music requires thinking backwards, too; and since many of our people were adept at this mental procedure (many did it habitually from early childhood) quite a few got along famously, and excited great admiration among the onlookers.

Gradually employees became more co-operative, and more tolerant of methods other than their own. Many tried to help newcomers, some of whom were so ashamed of their poor sense of direction and so stubborn that they would accept no assistance from well-wishers who were only trying to correct their headings (or rather, "tailings"), and walked backwards right off into the drainage canal. A few of these obstinate, hardy souls stayed backwards, and staggered and jerked themselves up the opposite side of the canal to the cheers of all hands who came running to witness a truly remarkable feat, as in addition to the handicap of scaling the canal bank backwards, these men had the additional burden of being thickly and odoriferously covered with the slime of the filthy ditch. There is no record of anyone continuing to sing while negotiating the canal.

Although the phenomenon was fairly well publicized, still there were a large number of visitors who were unaware of what was in store. These were so astonished at seeing many people in reverse, that quite a few considered themselves sufferers of some hitherto unknown malady which causes objects to appear to move hindwards in the same manner as a movie reel the wrong way, and maintained that they were fit subjects for the psychiatrist's couch. Several were shocked into forgetting the purposes of their respective journeys to Udorn, so climbed back into their aircraft and returned to their points of origin, with resulting confusion to scheduled conferences.

School has started, bringing on additional problems. All overnight tenants who formerly used the school as sleeping quarters had to vacate. Some of the equipment didn't arrive on time. The teacher was ailing the first two days (rumor has it that the kids were sick, but recovered as soon as they learned the teacher was ill). Then we discovered that all the students weren't children. Some wives have enrolled, too, and are attending with the rest, and some right attractive pupils we have, now. (Naturally these, as well as the teacher, have been restricted from the Club bar). Also, school has caused a change in the Project Manager's office hours. From 0855 until 0905, from 1200 to 1300, and from 1455 until 1515, the Project Manager's office is closed. Innumerable requests from the teacher for equipment, services, and supplies, and for settling vexatious issues, led the Project Manager to run down behind the hangar and hide during the above mentioned times, until the teacher was known to be safely on her way home or in school, and unable to heap more demands on this harassed, weakening person.