

IN TRANSIT

From Keith Phillips

Shoot low Rangers, they're ridden Shetlands!

As I contemplate the naval of the world it occurs to me that there simply is not enough time to do what is truly important, such as make all Ranger reunions. The Co H Ranger reunion has come and gone and I have yet to make a Co L Ranger reunion and that is something I hope to correct next year.

As most of you know when Co.L Rangers, attached 101st Airborne, stood down November '71, there were about thirty plus of us that went south to Co. H Rangers, attached to the 1st CAV. It all took place pretty fast. Capt. Robertson told us we had orders to the 1st Cav but he had talked to the CO of Co.H and was assured we would all be assigned to Co. H.

When we arrived at Tan Son Nhut Airbase we realized our orders stated we were to report three days later. Rangers being Rangers, we all took off for Saigon. Steve Shiflett, (died in a car wreck while at Ft Hood in 1972), myself, and a few others caught a MACV Taxi and we were on a way to one hell of a three day drunk.

We checked in at the Majestic Hotel in Saigon, as far as I know that was the hotel's name. The hotel had a bar located on the roof; we set up our perimeter and got down to business. As luck would have it, there were some young ladies at the bar that were so taken with our black berets they couldn't keep their hands off of us or maybe it was the Saigon Tea they kept having us order for them... well that's another story.

At some point Steve and I decided we needed to change our AO and caught a Saigon Taxi to a ... well let's just say a new AO. While at this new AO, we noticed all of as sudden we were the only ones sitting in the courtyard which had an eight foot wall around it. Steve and I pulled ourselves up and looked over the wall. There, big as life, were three VC (the locals called Cowboys; basically Saigon punks) walking down the middle of the street. I had a six shot 38, Steve had a 45 and between us we had two ½ 5th's of napalm the proprietor wanted us to believe was whiskey.

We decided that we might need the whiskey for medicinal purposes and would not include it in our arsenal. As we were formulating a quick ambush plan Momma Son came out with a panicked expression on her face and was talking very fast in a hushed tone. By the look on her face she was demanding we come back in the house and kept saying, "You number 10, you dinky dua (sp)". As fate would have it, during this debate and a few more pulls on the bottles the VC had disappeared. I don't remember the details but the next thing I knew we were back at the hotel and I was wishing I had used the contents of that bottle as a weapon instead of drinking it.

Somehow all of us showed up at the Replacement Center three days later just as our orders stated. We were met by Danny Svoboda and his smile. Danny put us on a military bus and we were off for Co.H. All were wishing we had some hair of the dog that had bit us, so we told this Speck 4 driving the bus to pull over at the first place we could by beer. He was foolish enough to say he could not do that and found himself detained in the rear of the bus.

We found a vendor on the side of the road that had three cases of 33 beer which was at the ambient temperature and covered with dust. We quickly purchased the beer and were off again. As we arrived at Co. H we were falling out the bus door, hanging out the windows and generally expressing our gratitude to have made it. Captain Dencker took it in stride, the bus was returned to the Spec 4 and Danny had set a record for recruits. By the next day we were in briefings on Co. H operations and back in the saddle.

Keep Your Powder Dry!