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EARLY YACHTING - 04
Correspondence & Photo
mainly about boat & general

rcp3rd

From: <ejy30@webtv.net>
To: "rcp3rd" <rcp3rd@cox.net>
Sent: Friday, September 02, 2005 6:25 PM
Subject: Re: your medical experience

Rufe:

First, the DVD just arrived...many thanks.

I am working with photo lab to try and determine why their DVD's won't "play" via a computer. I would like to send copies to friends in Europe, and since film is on US TV system, only computer viewing will be possible. Please confirm when VCR arrives.

On medical care...wow!

Phu Bon had one tiny dispensary (French style) staffed by two Vietnamese Catholic Nuns. and one non-resident Viet M.D. (The US Special Forces Team had their own medic, of course).

Then, Dr. Voulgarouplis from USAID Saigon came up to check out the possibilities of conducting a full-scale medical study of one of our Montagnard villages --subsequently completed and published--I have a copy--he checked out the dispensary...

The result was that on his next trip, he brought me a MERCK manual, a medical bag with basic items, and an official Vietnamese license for me to practice medicine in Phu Bon (now hanging on my wall). He said that will protect me legally.

I accompanied him to the "study" village and while examining various people, he would show me how to check for malaria, eye infections, etc. Dr V. did not stay in Phu Bon, got the study started, and returned on fly-in, fly-out visits. A fine man. His wife sent along ice cream in a refrigerated chest-- the tent thing got her sympathy too-- Bob Day, our IVS lad, agreed to be his full-time rep for the study.

I reminded Dr. V. my lack of experience in treating serious medical problems (we had snake bite, burns, even a lady chewed by a tiger) but he said "do your best, there is no one here who can do any better". I assume that meant he did not have confidence in the French style medicine at the two room dispensary. He obviously did not think of the Special Forces Medic; but the A-Team guy focused on their Strike Force's aliments.

The US Army Advisory Team Sgt asked me to help him conduct some "civic action" medical

sessions for the Jarai; that, I think, is the occasion in the photo. He too was a self-appointed medic, so it was the blind leading the deaf and dumb. But we had lots of pills and bandages, so everyone was happy.

There was also an itinerant American Protestant minister who came by from time to time-- medical skills about equalled mine-- he happened to arrive during one of Dr. V's visits, and when he professed to be able to identify leprosy by sticking a pin in the patient's ear, Dr. V. really lost his cool, and ripped him up one side and down the other.

Anyway, I digress. Such was life in Phu Bon.

Let me know if you think you have contracted any strange tropical disease, I still have a MERCK manual and the license...

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From: <ejy30@webtv.net>
To: "rcp3rd" <rcp3rd@cox.net>
Sent: Friday, September 02, 2005 6:44 PM
Subject: P.S.

Rufe:
Forgot to answer your well-drilling question.

Yes. He did come up, and spent some time with the percussion rig
punching a hole inside
Jarai village. (I have photo of me helping on rig) He was a very
good-hearted and dedicated man. A clever use of jeep axle and a tripod.

The second of Major Will's Sergeants
had taken a keen interest in the project, and helped us to explain to
village chief our well drilling project. Since it turned out the Sgt
was from Louisiana and spoke about the same level of French as the
Chief--It was interesting that the Chief was still receiving a monthly
pension from French Army for his service--

Remember that the death of Group Mobile 100 in 1954 happened in Phu
Bon, as detailed
in Fall's book?

In final stages, we hit bedrock, and Sarge volunteered to go down the
enlarged
shaft and set demolition charge. He came out of hole with great
rapidity, the explosion reached water table.