

Please type or use pen to provide the requested information. This data will be used for the Ranch Hand History Project and then placed in the Archives at Texas A&M. It is your information. If you wish to restrict any part of this material, please indicate so:

I hereby authorize the scholarly use of the following information, except as indicated.

Name (last) ALDRICH first WILLIAM middle B. signature William B. Aldrich date 10-28-81

Specific Information

Please answer the following questions in the spaces provided. Be specific.

1. Ranch Hand service: From 8-30-68 to 7-10-69. Where? BINH HOA, DANANG, PHAN RANG
2. RH/C-123 training: Where/when? MAY-JULY '68 - HURLBURT FIELD
3. Rank while in RH? MAJOR Present/retired rank? MAJOR/RET.
4. Duty(s) while in Ranch? AC-3/5 SDW CHIEF, SAFETY dates? SAME AS #1
5. Other Vietnam service? Where/when? KADENA/UTAPAO. 1/8/67 - 3/13/67
6. If aircrew member:
 - a. Number of missions: RH 22 Other (specify) 30 - KC-135 TANKER
 - b. Combat flying hours: RH 76:00 Other (specify) 200:00 - AIRLIFT 110:00 - TANKER

Narrative Information

On a separate sheet(s) of paper, please answer the following questions with as much detail as possible. Write too much, rather than too little. Use names and dates, if possible. If you want a name "blacked out" before this goes in the archives, just circle the name. On the sheets, indicate the number of the question you are answering, and put your last name and the form number in the upper right-hand corner of each sheet.

7. Special missions/operations participated in? (name, when, where, what, who else)
8. Decorations? (If Purple Heart, DFC, or above, give date and details of the act. If you have a copy of the narrative justifying the medal, please attach a copy.)
9. Were you present during an attack against the base, Ranch site, or quarters? Explain.
10. Were you present when a Ranch aircraft was shot down or crashed? Give all details.
11. Were you present when a Ranch crew member was killed or wounded? Give as much data as possible, even if you didn't directly observe it or are not sure of date or names.
12. Did you ever see or repair unusual battle damage (more than routine skin holes)?
13. Did you ever help plan RH missions? If so, what was the procedure?
14. How did you get into the Ranch? What did you know about the mission beforehand?
15. What were you told about the chemicals used? In Vietnam? Before Vietnam?
16. Other than something already discussed (or going home), what is your happiest memory of the Ranch (or Vietnam)? What is your unhappiest (saddest)?
17. What unusual, odd-ball, weird, funny, etc., thing happened to you in VN or training?
18. Same as question 17, but you saw it happen to another person(s).
19. What were your quarters like? Your routine day? Your parties? Anything else?
20. We know that the Ranch was unique. What should I tell the reader that will help him understand why this was a special outfit of special people? What or who should I not talk about?

Other data: Do you have any good pictures (especially of RH members), any journals, notes, diaries, letters, briefing notes, maps, etc., that I could copy? If so, DO NOT SEND THEM with this form. Repeat...DO NOT SEND THEM!!!! Describe the items on a separate piece of paper, with your name and form number on it. I will write and give you instructions on when to send them, or how to get them copied, at a later date. All materials will be protected and returned to you!!! Thank you for your help and time.

Please return this form and the narrative sheets in the enclosed envelope to Texas A&M.

WILLIAM B. ALDRICH

#7. NOTHING REAL SPECIAL. WAS ON 2 HEAVY SUPPRESSION MISSIONS IN THE DELTA, AND ONE IN HAPPY VALLEY OUT OF DANANG. DID FLY ONE TAC EMERGENCY TRASH MISSION INTO A SNEAKY FORCES CAMP NORTH OF TAY NINH ON HIWAY 13, JUST SOUTH OF THE CAMBODIAN BORDER. WE LANDED AFTER DARK; THE STRIP WAS LIT BY JEEP HEADLIGHTS. SPORRY. (309TH SOS BIRD + CREW, OUT OF BIEN HOA, SOMETIME IN SEPT '68.)

#8. DFC-HEROISM. WAS CO-PILOT ON A TRASH MISSION OUT OF BIEN HOA TO KATUM (V-287). THEY HAD A FAC AND FIGHTERS UP, 'CAUSE VC WERE MORTARING HELL OUT OF THE SPECIAL FORCES CAMP FROM SPIDER HOLES. FAC HAD 'EM SPOTTED, BUT COULDN'T GET FIRE CLEARANCE FROM THE PROVINCE CHIEF. COUPLE OF AF COMBAT CONTROL TEAM NCO'S HAD BEEN HIT, AND THE GROUND GUY'S ASKED IF WE COULD GET IN TO HAUL 'EM OUT. WE WENT IN, OFFLOADED (HAD TO. HAD 11,000 LBS. OF AMMO AND 3,000 FT. OF RUNWAY), LOADED WOUNDED, AND GOT THE HELL OUT OF THERE, WHILE UNDER CONSTANT, HEAVY AND ACCURATE MORTAR FIRE. TOOK 20 MINUTES AFTER WE GOT OFF BEFORE ANYBODY'S HANDS QUIT SHAKING ENOUGH TO LIGHT A CIGARETTE. DATE WAS \approx 22 SEPT '68.

#9. YES, BIEN HOA; ABOUT 10 122 ROCKET ATTACKS IN THE 2 MOS. I WAS THERE. WE HAD TO LEAVE THE AIRCRAFT ON THE TAXIWAY TWICE (EARLY MORNING LAUNCH.)

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#9. (CONT'D) THIS WAS SEPT. OCT '68. DA NANG - OCT. DEC '68. SAME THING. 122'S VIRTUALLY EVERY NIGHT. WE DIDN'T HAVE ANY BUNKERS CLOSE BY, SO WE JUST GOT UNDER OUR BEDS. WASTE OF TIME. PHAN RANG; DEC '68 - JUL '79. ABOUT 25 MORTAR ATTACKS AND 4 107 ROCKET ATTACKS. PERIMETER WAS PENETRATED BY SAPPERS (NVA?) ONCE, APPARENTLY AIMING FOR 123 ARGA. THEY DIDN'T MAKE IT. 17 KIA, 3 CAPTURED (ONE WAS OFFICERS CLUB BARBER)

#14. WAS TDY TO TORREJON AB, SPAIN, FLYING SAC TANKERS. GOT A CALL FROM HOME STATION, TELLING ME I WAS GOING TO RVN TO SOME OUTFIT CALLED 12TH ACS. NOBODY AT THE BASE KNEW WHAT IT WAS OR WHAT IT DID. I DIDN'T KNOW MUCH AT ALL ABOUT THE MISSION UNTIL I GOT TO HURLBURT.

#15. VERY LITTLE BEFOREHAND. WAS TOLD AT HURLBURT THAT ORANGE WAS REASONABLY SAFE, BUT TO BE CAREFUL AROUND THE MALATHION. NOT TOLD MUCH MORE IN COUNTRY. HEARD THAT SOME OF THE GUYS WOULD GO OUT TO OUTLYING VILLAGES AND DRINK A GLASS, TO SHOW THAT IT WASN'T HARMFUL, BUT NEVER SAW OR CONFIRMED IT.

#16. THE CAMRAADERIE. I WAS ONLY IN THE RANCH FOR 4 MONTHS, THEN WENT TO PHAN RANG AS WING SAFETY WEENIE, BUT I SURE ENJOYED THOSE MONTHS. SADDEST WAS FLYING KIA RUNS FROM THE DMZ.

#19. QUARTERS AT BIEN HOA WERE QUONSETS. WE HAD ONE END OF OURS PARTITIONED OFF FOR A BART & LOUNGE, AND THE REST OF IT WAS MORE OR LESS OPEN BAY. OURS WAS AIR CONDITIONED, COURTESY OF TWO AIR CONDITIONERS STOLEN FROM PHAN RANG. NOT SUCH A BAD PLACE TO LIVE, EXCEPT LATRINE & WASHING FACILITIES WERE A BLOCK AWAY. WE KEPT A GOOD STOCK OF BOOZE, AND OUR BAR WAS GENERALLY MORE ACTIVE THAN THE CLUB. THE ROUTINE DAY, IF FLYING, WAS A 2:30-3:00 AM GET UP, LAUNCH @ 4:30-5:30, OVER 1ST TARGET AT SUNRISE, RETURN, REFUEL & REHERBIE, FLY 2ND MISSION, AND BE DE-BRIEFED AND DONE BY AROUND NOON. SLEEP OR GET SOME RAYS AT THE POOL IN THE P.M., EAT, PARTY & BED. IF FLYING THE NEXT DAY, WOULD BRIEF AFTER LAST MISSION. DAYS OFF WERE A LATE SLEEP, EAT, LAY AROUND IN QUARTERS OR AT POOL. NOT A HELL OF A LOT TO DO.

#20. TELL THEM THAT WE WERE A DAMNED GOOD BUNCH OF PROFESSIONALS DOING A UNIQUE, DEMANDING AND DAMNED DANGEROUS JOB OF EXTREME PRECISION FLYING UNDER CONDITIONS THAT COULD TURN YOUR HAIR GREY OVERNIGHT. WE FELT THE JOB WAS NECESSARY, AND WE DID IT THE BEST WE COULD. I HAVE NEVER IN MY LIFE BEEN AS PROUD TO BE A MEMBER OF A UNIT, AND WILL NEVER FORGET MY DAYS IN IT.

TO THE RANCH !!

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WILLIAM B. ALDRICH

HAVE A MODERATE NUMBER OF SLIDES OF RANCH
QUARTERS AT BIEN HOA, SOME OF RANCH HANDS,
AND A FAIR AMOUNT OF MISSION PICTURES, BOTH
FLATLAND AND MOUNTAIN.