

Don Ayers
67/68
NOVEMBER 19, 1967
First Day in Viet Nam!

Departed Clark AB at 1010
Arrived Saigon at 1210
Attended CBPO briefing
Called "Ranch Hand" in Bien Hoa
Visited Ton Son Nhut O Club
Visited ton Son Nhut BX
Went to Saigon Army O Club,
had dinner and saw movie,
"Hawaii"
Walked to Air Base through
Saigon, heard artillery in distance
Returned to quarters at 1030

7131, item #1

Copy of Diary, CAPT.
Donald Ayers, 12th Air Command Sq

NOVEMBER 20 7131

SENT TO BIEN HOA "Ranch Hand!"

Attended 0730 CBPO in-processing at
Ton Son Nhut. 0745 notified I was to
catch bus to Bien Hoa. Telephone call
to Ranch Hand paid off!
Arrived B.H. and processed in
with CBPO
Called Ranch for pick ups and
met by Shippe, Haycraft, Quimby,
Topolosky
Moved into BOQ Hootch # 356
Continued in-process and
equip issue
Ranch Hands are friendliest
unit I have yet seen. Everyone
is helpful.
Dinner at Club and wrote
long letter home.

NOVEMBER 21

Getting Organized!

Awoke early and ate at Club
Began running errands to BX
tailors, cleaners, etc
Signed up for C&S correspondence
course
Al Jennings took me in tow
& spent several hours showing
me around at the Ranch. Gave
me a good briefing concerning
what to expect tomorrow.
Big champagne party tonight!
4 planes were hit by ground
fire. 3 pilots for first time: Topolosky,
Fife & C.O. Col Stewart. They
bought the champagne - 27 bottles!
Received 4th letter from Joyce.
Nothing like mail from home!

NOVEMBER 22

First Ranch Missions!

Arose at 5:00 to fly two
"strap" missions - sitting on a
box over radios between seats.
First mission was routine.
Second mission resulted in
abort just before spray-on
due to #1 eng leaking oil.
Picked up fatigue uniforms
from tailor. They look fair.
We received our air-conditioner
for the hootch today - came from
Taper. It will cool the
sitting room. Cost the 8 of us
\$15 each plus a case of beer.
Jerry Carpenter (major) calls
himself CINC Hootch.

NOVEMBER 23

Thanksgiving Day

Flew two more missions.

Big Thanksgiving Day meal at the mess hall. My eyes were bigger than my stomach. Had shrimp cocktail, salad, turkey, ham, cornbread dressing, sweet potatoes, mince meat pie with whipped cream, nuts, fruit, candy, and tea.

Worked on hootch all afternoon, insulating & installing air-conditioner.

Another champagne party. Col Stewart took his first hits a few days ago. The Ranch sang a lot of cute songs. No letters today. Wrote to Bulweiser & Millers for some electric beer signs.

NOVEMBER 24

Routine Flying

Flew two missions as copilot. I start tomorrow in the pilot's seat. That will be fun. Sent a birthday card to Mike - he's 31. Hope I get a letter from him. Worked on the hootch. We worked on the paneling. Nothing much new today. Got two letters from Joyce; one within the other. She mailed one to herself & got it back.

NOVEMBER 25

First spray mission in Pilot position

Flew two missions with 1P Doug Brown. Lots of fun flying left seat! Did real well except for single engine pattern on second left. Got two month's pay today and deposited all in 10% savings: \$1515. Built a shelf-desk for my cubicle. Front of hootch is now real cool from air-conditioner.

Another champagne party tonight - for Col Stewart's first hits. The Ranch had a big night, sang lots of clever songs.

NOVEMBER 26

Completed Flat-land Check out

Flew 2 missions in pilot seat again - I'm catching on fast. Am now qualified for flat land but will be co-pilot status until mountain checkout.

Went to Saigon after flying. Took 2 hours & 5 vehicle rides to reach Ton Son Nhut. Met Rick Rochelle at heliport. Stayed at his villa 2 miles. His dad is there too: 'Rock' Rochelle. Others are Tommy & Rick.

Rick & I went "pub hopping" in Saigon, using his jeep. Moved two English girls into his villa after they were robbed in their downtown apartment.

NOVEMBER 27

Back in Saigon

Rode into Ton Son Nhut with Rochelle's. Stopped at BX - bought a new Vohorden. Discovered Lenny Baldwin & Bill Didrich were not in Ton Son Nhut. Lenny has been transferred to Da Nang. Spent several hours at heliport with Rick. Went into Saigon by myself tonight. Ate at Steak House & saw part of movie at Ritz. M-Ps almost got me for violating curfew at Eden Roc

NOVEMBER 28

Chopper Ride to Bien Hoa

Took taxi to TSN where I had breakfast at O Club. Took short cut through heliport fence & stepped in ditch carrying bag & recorder.

Rick got me in chopper to Bien Hoa within 20 minutes. Saw Dick Morgan at TSN before I left. He's leaving A.F. for IBM sales.

Finished day with drinks and dinner at club.

Got a letter from Joque after 5 days, also letter from Janice. I think some of my mail is missing.

NOVEMBER 29

Strip Movies

Flew only one mission - a crop target. Had a VNAF observer on board. First mission was fogged out. Fighters could not take off & cover our target. Spent most of the day at the hootch. Talked with 2 FAC's. Boy the VC aren't very far from here - major battles only 3 miles away! Played Frisbie for a couple of hours & made 4 tapes: Joyce, Len, Janice, Connie. Got package in mail - 2 fight tapes from Joyce. Saw movies of stripper who was at O Club before I came. Boy that was really something! Hope she comes back!

NOVEMBER 30

Working on Hootch

Had the day off today - a real surprise and so I didn't plan anything special. Slept late: 8:30 and then began working around hootch. Built a door leading to day room. We also did a little paneling & some painting. Listened to boxing tapes while working.

After work we had a hootch party to celebrate the new door. Skipped supper and ate snacks at the party. Made a tape to Joyce while sitting in the bunker.

DECEMBER 1

New month - ASU Reunion

Flew only one mission - fogged in again for the first lift. Ev Waine was on base again and we had lunch together along with Bob Dyer and Jerry Martin - a real ASU reunion. We talked about ASU and I found out two things: Bill Dierick's whereabouts and that Ray Duffin was killed in a B66 at Takli.

DECEMBER 2

Floor show at the club

Flew two missions today - my longest day; 4:50. Second mission was near Phleber, but winds were high and we didn't spray. Had 2 near mid-air collisions, with a C-46 on way up and a caribou on way back. Big party at the club. We had a floor show. Kim & Nicole. Featured a singer, contortionist, 2 or 3 dancers (doing burlesque & girds). Closed the club & stayed out till 2 AM drinking at next door hootch. No flying tomorrow.

DECEMBER 3

Day off! (Thank goodness)

Slept until 11:00, at which time I got up and mailed a tape which I got off before the 11:30 pick up. Sat around the hootch all day. Did a little studying and reading. Actually accomplished very little. I'm considering teaching some college business courses. Pays \$400 for 10 weeks, 2 classes a week. It would be good experience and keep me away from the club. Went to the club tonight for drinks & dinner. Got a nice letter from Joyce.

DECEMBER 4

Sporty day at the Ranch!

Flew 2 missions. Second was a sporty target. Went to map room and still had to go around a mountain. Delta flight got shot up in the Delta. Shape & Almeter had to land at TSD with eng feathered. He will owe us some champagne for his 3 hits. Both Lt Col Cusenberry and Good said I did a good job today.

We had a champagne party. Dr May (DVM) was also hit for the first time. He flies with us often. He really enjoys being part of the ranch. We sang a lot of songs & shot champagne cork at each other.

DECEMBER 5

Study Day

Flew only one mission. We aborted the second due to faulty T.O.P. & flew with Jerry Harrop - an IP so I got to fly the left seat. Was lots of fun & he said I did well!

Got in lots of study on my "Dash 1" & hope to really learn this airplane.

Went to Base Education Office to apply for a teaching position. I wrote Joyce asking for lots of information required on the application.

DECEMBER 6

Work on the Hootch.

Flew only one mission again today. First lift was fogged in. We hit a canal to the West of Saigon. Fighters used CBU for pre-strike -- first I have seen. The weeds were all on fire & we had to fly through the smoke.

Worked on the hootch all afternoon. We are doing the plywood panelling.

Got a letter from Joyce with 3 pictures of Julie & Danny -- real nice. Have to be up at 4:00 tomorrow. VC hit Binh Hoa City at midnight. May have hit Base. Spent 30 min in Bunkers.

DECEMBER 7

More Hootch Work.

Flew two missions - one to Pleiku, flew 4:20 total. Flew second mission from right seat. Col Connors forgot to add power at level off & we nearly crashed into the trees.

Work on hootch for 3 hours.

Took 20 color pictures to send home. Col Avery gave me choice of flight assignments. I took Col Underhills. He's supposed to write good ops.

Col Avery likes me, I think.

Received 3 letters, one from Dad & Jeannette. Also a package & letter from Ronnie & package from Joyce. A real good night!

DECEMBER 8

Off For Baria with EV

Flew only one mission: we aborted the first due to prop oil leak. Andy Bauer let me fly second mission in left seat. It's been a while since the last!

Ev was on the phone for me when I landed. We took off for Baria in 2 hours in his O-1. Did some V-R and put in a F-5 airstrike before landing. Fun to watch the F-5s bomb & strike a mountain side. Ev is real good flying the O-1 and firing rockets. Slept in MACV compound. We saw a movie and had a few drinks that evening. Learned a lot about FAC'ing and the Army mission.

DECEMBER 9

At the Vung Tau Beach!

Got up early and we flew 2 missions in the O-1. I flew it part of the time. I got pretty good with it. We sent in another F-5 strike and we fired a few smoke rockets at a deserted house. We talked to some army troops on the ground in the hills. 2 hours later they stopped on a mine. A Lt lost a leg & a Sgt was wounded. We visited an advisory camp at Xuan Mu.

We spent afternoon at Vung Tau Beach. Not a bad place for V.N. We couldn't swim because of strong tides. One man nearly drowned.

DECEMBER 10

Back To Bien Hoa

Got up early again and we took off for Vung Tau. Did a little Visual Reconnaissance on the way. Went to MARS and Co & I made calls home. Talked to Joyce 3 min. It was 8PM Sat there.

Got a ride back to Bien Hoa in an Army U-21, 10 seat twin turbo prop. Took 20 min. Found 2 tapes from Joyce, letter from Connie, Janice, & Allison kids, package from Patty.

Had a snark- cocktail party at hootch and dinner at the club. Packed up clothes for trip to Da Nang.

DECEMBER 11

TDY to Da Nang

Flew an early spray mission and was through about 8 AM. There was no electric power at the Ranch and our take-off was delayed.

We then went to our hootches and picked up our bags, loaded on one of our planes and took off for Da Nang. Took only 2:15 to reach Da Nang but had to hold 45 for weather. There are 8 pilots, 1 navigator and 4 flight mechanics along. Also brought 4 Vietnamese.

Our quarters are real nice, air-conditioned & private or semi private rooms. Listened to Dempsey-Louis fight on tape.

DECEMBER 12

Rain! Rain! Rain!

No missions flown today. It has been raining since we arrived. Our primary target was in the DMZ, we were unable to go there due to low ceilings & rain. Our secondary target was Pleiku - high winds there.

Decorated my Christmas tree and made tape for Joyce. Went to Marine and AF exchanges. We had a cocktail party at the BOQ with crackers, sardines, etc. Met Lonnie Baldwin at CBQ. Talked with him for an hour. He thinks I will have to go back to a flying job in the U.S. Unable to find Franklin's whereabouts by telephone. Big party & sing fest at the AF & Club.

DECEMBER 13

More Rain!

Both missions canceled again because of weather. Haven't stopped raining since we arrived. Our airplanes will be in poor shape from not flying.

Took a 2 hr nap between cancellations. Went to an early movie: Audie Murphy in something about Apaches. I thought I would see some good Arizona scenery but no such luck.

Cooked a steak at the Club, returned to the BOQ early, read a while & got 8 hrs sleep.

DECEMBER 14

Bought a camera

Both missions canceled again. Didn't even show up for the second mission. Stopped by base operations and picked up some good maps. Studied maps for an hour.

Went to the BX and looked at cameras. Bought a Canon for \$47. Boy it does everything just hope it takes good pictures. It will take me a week of study to learn to use it.

Went to the movies again, saw "To Sir, With Love. Good.

Cooked a steak at the Club. The fighter pilots were having a big time in the bar, stacking beer cans, singing & playing games.

DECEMBER 15

Flying Again!

Finally got off the ground, but didn't get to spray. Didn't even get my first mountain strap ride out of the way. Flew all the way to Pleiku and was unable to spray because of high winds. Had to return at Phu Cat because we had insufficient fuel to make it back to Da Nang with the full load of herbicide. I got to fly the way back to Da Nang.

Went to China Beach to make reservations for our coming beach party.

Floor show at the Club. Skipped lunch & supper today and drank too much.

DECEMBER 16

Gaining weight: 174 lbs!

Flew one 10 min abort and two spray missions to the DMZ. Very interesting but tame targets. They counted as 2 strap rides in mountains, but the target was flat, surrounded by high mountains.

Took a short nap this afternoon. We had our usual cocktail party and then headed for the club. On the way I stopped in at a BOQ with a scale. I was amazed to see I weighed 174! That's nine lbs more than in the states before leave and about 15 lbs more than I weighed after Clark survival school. I'm going to diet and begin exercising.

DECEMBER 17

Beginning Exercises!

Flew only one mission today and did not spray on it. The ceilings were low near Phu Cat. I was to fly the second mission near DMZ but it was canceled after engine start. Bad weather is beginning to move in again.

Sent in my check today for initiation into Beta Sigma Sigma.

Spent 2 hours on lawn, reading, playing bridge and exercising. Got a little sunburn too.

Had only a little lunch today and skipped supper. I've got to lose weight.

DECEMBER 18

Losing Weight

Flew only one mission today & did manage to spray - it was a DMZ target. Jack Farris arrived to take Bill Clifton's place. He flew the strap with me.

Got back out on the lawn today, exercise & sunshine. Getting a little sore, but know that won't last. Saw movies "Bad Night at Jericho" while Jack, my new roommate, slept.

Skipped lunch & cooked steak for supper.

Bob Hope was here but I didn't see him.

DECEMBER 19

Dining In Party!

Flew two missions and sprayed both times.

Came back to BQ and was unable to get into yard - rain. Did my exercises in the room.

Big Ranch Dining In party! Started cocktails at 1700. Tried to use tape recorder but level was set too high. We had a real good dinner, lots of toasting, singing and drinking. I left early - 9:00. I was already drunk but had sense enough to get some sleep.

DECEMBER 20

Stewardesses!

What a bunch of sick, hung-over pilots this morning! I thought 3 of them wouldn't make it. I felt real good!

Our first mission was only 50 miles North. The FAC spotted 10 enemy soldiers at our spray-on point. Before we descended we all aborted because of $\frac{1}{2}$ oil leak.

4 Continental stewardesses visited the Ranch. We enjoyed talking to some American girls for a change.

We painted the Ranch Hand insignia on the nose of their plane and all over the base.

DECEMBER 21

All Kinds of mail

Flew two missions and sprayed both times. Returned to spot where enemy soldiers had been seen. Also sprayed the DMZ.

Had 5 packages, 2 tapes, and 5 letters when I returned. Made a BX run and then took all my mail out to the yard for sun & exercises. Will ship lunch every day now. Went to the Club & had chicken for lunch. Saw part of a movie - "1 million years BC" Lots of good looking women, but not very good so I left early and went to bed.

DECEMBER 22

Picnic in the Rain!

Flew the first lift only. Sprayed about 50 miles N of Hanoi.

Jack Farnio replaced me for second lift as I was in charge of the afternoon picnic. Visited mess hall, O Club and 12 ACS gathering food & materials for party at China Beach. It was a real good picnic - about 40 men except it rained most of the time. We had chicken & hamburgers. Had some left over & we fixed sandwiches for some Vietnamese. We played the enlisted men in volleyball and beat them 2-1.

DECEMBER 23

Flew to North Vietnam

Flew two missions today. First mission was planned for Dot TO - but weather was bad for there and alternate. Managed to spray target on second lift - the northern portion of DMZ, actually flew over a small portion of N. Viet Nam. Small arms fire at end of target. Number 3 - Jack Farnio took one bullet through abdomen & ice accumulator. I'm still a virgin!

Our maid brought us a Xmas cake. We gave her a few gifts and a few extra Piasters for our two week fees. She's real nice. One of the few Vietnamese women who work hard & enjoy it.

DECEMBER 24 7131

Back to Bien Hoa

Flew one mission but did not spray - WX. Second lift would have completed my qualifications but it was aborted also.

Finished packing & flew home to B.H. We made a low pass over the field & sprayed purple smoke. On touchdown we threw out a drag chute thru the rear cargo door. S.H.!

Ranch was having Xmas party in hangar when we arrived. Every hootch had an evening party - we gathered in groups from one to another, singing & drinking. Sure got drunk out! Bud Watts & Lee Shanks are here now.

DECEMBER 25

CHRISTMAS

Catching up.

Had 5 tapes, 3 packages and a dozen cards & letters waiting for me here. I laid out in the sun & listened to the tapes & read my mail. Made a tape to Joyce. Sent it, along with pictures, to Miami.

Opened my presents & mentioned them on the tape. Joyce has gotten one another ring. Must be worried about me over here. Don't know why - there's no one here except the Slopes!

DECEMBER 26

Hootch Work

Had the day off today so I slept until about 9:00. I finally got up & had two cups of coffee at the club. That's all I had until 9 PM! I worked on the hootch all day - from 10 AM until 6:30 PM. We finished all the paneling. Sure looks good & boy, is it cool in there now!

At 6:30 we stopped for showers & cocktails. Had a couple cheese & crackers & then went to Club for steak dinner. After supper Ed & I went to carpenter shop to scrounge. I returned & made tape to Joyce & birthday card to Dad.

DECEMBER 27

Another Day Off!

Woke up casually this morning about 9 after hearing several alarms go off very early in the morning.

Went to the Club for a couple cups of coffee, skipping breakfast again. Returned to the hootch where I did a little straightening & cleaning. I worked on my cubicle area for an hour, installing lamps and towel racks & other conveniences. Went to carpenter shop and returned to nail off sheeting & install a few strips. Ed & new FAC, Larry, dropped in & we had supper.

DECEMBER 28

7131

Passed the Written Exam

Was only scheduled for one mission this morning - after 3 days off! And I'm off again tomorrow. We sprayed in Ed's area. He's checking out a new FAC. Things were sort of fouled up. Police didn't work very good.

Spent the rest of the morning laying in the sun and studying for the exam. John Shippe & I went down together at 3 PM. He missed 2 and I missed 4. That cost me a beer.

We had an extended cocktail party & briefing session of the wards. What a relief!

DECEMBER 29

Another Day Off & More
Hootch Work!

Believe it or not - I'm still
off. I've only flown one lift
since I returned from Danang
on Christmas Eve!

After some coffee, Tom &
I finished stripping all the
plywood joints in our lounge.
Took 3 hours. It really looks
good now.

We got started on our bar
also - it's about 1/3 done already.
Had a big cocktail party in our
hootch - all the guys from next
door, Ship, Life, Nickolls, & Topolsky.

Made a copy of the comic
tape to send Joyce. I hope
she enjoys it with Frank & Annie Lee.

DECEMBER 30

Back Flying

Flew two missions today
with John Ship - his first as
an M/C. I flew first which
was a milk run. The second
was a 3 segment target in
the Delta with pre-strikes. A
real interesting target. We flew
from one segment to the next
about 10 feet above the river.

Got paid today \$1036 including
the new pay raise. Put all
in 10% savings. I now have around
2550 in the savings.

Did a little more work on
the bar. It's now 2/3 completed.
I'm still doing my exercises
faithfully.

DECEMBER 31, 1967

New Year's Eve

Flew two missions. The
first was back to the Delta
with a pre-strike. You should
see the CBUs go off all over
the place. I flew second
lift which was a milk run.
I think I heard a shot on the
first run. No one hit.
Big party at the club.

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

JANUARY 1, 1968

New Year!

Began 1968 by sleeping until 10 AM. Stayed in bed reading Playboy until noon. Boy, that magazine makes me wish I were home more than ever!

Wing Commanders' Call at O Club. A real dull affair.

Laid in sun a couple of hours reading and exercising. Wish I were in Saigon or somewhere. Guess I'll go my next days off.

Finished work on the base except for painting.

Stopped at the flight surgeons & weighed: 164 #. I've now lost about 9-10 lbs since I started dieting.

JANUARY 2

Another Day Off

Slept until 10:00 this morning - nothing to do today. All the work on the hootch is done now except for painting and I'm not going to do any of that.

After lunch I laid in the grass and talked with Bud for a long while.

Checked in at the flight surgeons and discovered that they had found my medical records.

Wrote my first letter of recommendation to Dr. Hill.

JANUARY 3

Still Another Day Off!

absolutely incredible! If I could have known I would have 3 straight days off, I would have gone to Bangkok or Clark or at least Saigon.

I accomplished very little today. Cleaned all the excess lumber out and wrote to Dr. Fearon. Rest of the day was spent loafing, talking, sunning, reading, exercising and drinking. I'm drinking entirely too much lately. I've been having a half-dozn or more drinks everyday. I've got to begin doing more work & less drinking. I was appointed Flight Records and Decorations Officer today.

Champagne Party

Flew only one mission today, but retroactively it was the earliest. Flew with Maj Chuck Ernie, an instructor. This was my next-to-last student ride. We had a hilly target on II Corps boundary. I learned quite a bit today. Ed Ridgeway took his first 2 hits today along with one of the new pilots. They sponsored a big champagne party to celebrate. We drank 22 bottles.

I spent several hours studying 60-1 regs and regs concerning awards & decorations. I have a package, which I was not able to pick up - too late.

JANUARY 6

Gen. McLaughlin Flies with Ranch

Flew two missions. The second was my final mountain ride. The 834th Air Div Command, Gen McLaughlin flew with our flight today. He was really impressed with the Ranch. He said we were the most professional flying outfit he has seen in Viet Nam. He presented Frank Almeter with the Silver Star.

Read some more regulations and then did some hootch work. I repainted our two doors. We had painted them white and they were getting filthy. We'll leave them their natural color or burn them with a torch.

Cheese in the mail

Flew two missions - both of them hilly targets, lots of fun. Should get final student ride & check ride sometime this weekend.

Fell asleep in the sun for an hour or so. I'm still exercising regularly and cutting down on my eating.

Stopped by P.D. & picked up package - a big piece of cheese from Joyce. Arrived in 4 days. We had a cocktail party to celebrate it.

Had dinner at Club later - seafood platter - all frozen naturally but not too bad. No letters for 3 days now.

JANUARY 7

Another Attack Alert

Flew two missions, both to same target area as last several days. Target was partly fogged in the first mission, so we sprayed on top of the fog.

After flying, I laid in the sun for a couple hours & did my exercises.

Big party at the O Club sponsored by one of the hootches in favor of several of their members who are leaving for U.S. Open bar for all of Ranch Hands.

11 P.M. the siren sounded for everyone to take cover in bunkers. We sat in there about 30 min without hearing any explosions. I later found out it was a practice alert - our first.

JANUARY 14

Joined International House

Caught a cyclo to TSN this morning. Took a few pictures along the way. Had ~~lunch~~^{coffee} first at O Club then walked to AFSC office. There I studied the Command structure and mission & determine where I should apply for. I requested procurement or contract management at Patrick J. Eglin. I then visited Bill Dieckrich at 7th AF. He will be assigned to PACAF plans at Honolulu. We may get our ~~ppa~~^{ppa} yet! Went to International House for lunch & joined membership for \$20. Had a steam bath and massage and then returned to S.H. for supper and drinks.

JANUARY 15

Returned to Bien Hoa

Got up this morning and packed my bag. Caught a cab to TSN with Rock and Ken Phillips. Went to bank where I bought a money order for \$630 - glad to get rid of that cash! Then went to O Club for lunch.

From there I went to Delipont where I talked to Rick for an hour before catching ride to B-H.

Spent an hour in the sun catching up on my correspondence.

We had a big cocktail and cheese party in our hootch and the neighboring hootch. Ate so much cheese I skipped supper. Forgot to check mail tonight, got plenty this afternoon.

JANUARY 8

Day Off - Hootch Party

No flying today, but I got a lot done. Got a haircut, laid in the sun, exercised and studied my Dash-1. Went down to the Ranch and met the Danang returnees coming back. Jack & Terry were real pleased & surprised to see the improvements on the hootch.

Went to finance & watched them process my voucher. Over \$1,000 total! Big parties at our hootch and then supper at O Club. Got a book from Ken & Virginia. Typed two of my letters to profs. A real productive day!

JANUARY 9

Ordinary Day

Flew two missions with John Shippe. I took the first lift, and flew it better perfect as far as I could tell. I'm all set for the check ride tomorrow. The second lift was a road target, W & Larry were the FMOs. We got lost & did not complete the planned mission.

Played bridge while lying in the sun. I exercised while I was dunning. John & I lost.

Dinner at the club and last minute studying for check ride tomorrow.

Terry went to Com Kehn Bay to replace Jcl.

JANUARY 10

QUALIFIED AS A/C

Flew two missions which consisted of my check rides. Saul Springer was the flight examiner, I flew the left seat on both sorties. Saul gave me bear coo emergency and systems questions. I believe I did well on all of them. He said my knowledge of systems & procedure was the best he had seen. I felt real proud. But I was sorry for Mike who didn't pass today.

Played bridge while logging in the Sam today. Got 2 tapes & letter from Carl. Also Playboys from Annede.

JANUARY 11

Party at the Jupiter

Today was a day off. I slept until 9:30 - that sure is a welcome luxury! After getting up I went to club for coffee. I then went to Education office to type one more letter to Dr. Lowe. Two more to go.

Went to club for lunch, and then bridge out in the yard. Had a real nice cocktail party at Ship's hootch. We wound up cooking steaks there. I took a plastic bag to the club & filled it up with salad. I also brought a glass full of salad dressing. We then went to the Jupiter club to hear some airman play & Mikolasy sing. Fun!

JANUARY 12

First Mission As A/C

Had only one left scheduled for today. A II Corps target was canceled and we went to a mt target in III Corps. Had another new A/C for my CO. We had a few anxious moments: we were #3 and were turning as we reached spray on point, also diving. A large hill lay ahead. We were closing rapidly on the formation but the CO added power because of the hill coming up. I had to break away & up & then lost sight of rest of formation. I turned but alright, though.

Finished writing to the ASCE Profs for recommendations. I'm going to Saigon tomorrow.

JANUARY 13

Left for Saigon

Flew two missions. I flew 2nd and did plummet turn, lost leader because of abrupt right turn.

Returned to hootch and had lunch at Club. After that I packed my bag and walked to P.O. Hitched a ride to helicopter pad. Had to wait about 2 hours for a ride to TSN. When I arrived at TSN, Rick was waiting for me. I went to his C-123 ops and checked on Systems Command.

Rented a room at Rick's apartment house - 2 rooms for 1000 p/month. Spent evening at International House. Food there is excellent!

Back Flying

Flew two missions today. The first was a mountain target West of Pleiku. The second was just 14 nm North of Bien Hoa. We had a plum tree turn and once again I was #2 behind Saul Speyer and I lost him in the second turn. Sure is hard & not much fun.

Laid in the sun and played bridge this afternoon. Also got my exercises. Managed to do a little aerobizing today also. Got hinges, light bulbs, waste basket, paint to floor mount bulb and a coffee table.

Got a nice letter from Prof Smith. He's a nice guy.

Bridge Game

Flew two missions today with Lt Col Kellogg & learned today he is going to Eglin & WRAMA next week for several weeks to coordinate maintenance on the C-123K12 which we should begin getting in the Spring. I hope we at least get to go to Clark to pick them up!

Sat in the sun & played bridge for several hours today. I have been selected to take a written standardization exam next week during our inspection. I've also been asked to coach the volleyball team for the Ranch Hands. That should be a lot of fun.

HAM SNACKS

Flew two missions with 2/Col Stewart. He flew below Vung Tau and I flew 3-2-1-67th. We had a real good up & down mountain ride there. I enjoyed it. He let me overtake #1 going downhill & tried to take me going uphill - result = 115 knots average speed.

I wrote to Connie & typed for you & Connie - Jim all caught up now except for Carl.

We ate half of the ham Joyce sent tonight. Boy, it sure is good! Real tender, everyone loved it. I ate quite a bit & skipped supper. I fly with 1/Col Connor tomorrow - that's cool!

With EV at Ba Ria

Flew two missions with 2/Col Connor. I flew the second which was 8-ship. I made two good plum trees. Attended Connor's call and then played bridge until Ev showed up. He invited me to Ba Ria so I packed up & off we went.

We flew directly there with a little Visual Reconnaissance along the way.

We had dinner at his dining hall and then sat out in the yard and had a few drinks together. Went to bed at 10 PM in a room I shared with an Army Officer.

JANUARY 20

Watched 12-Ship Formation.

Ev got me up at 0630 to fly his first mission. We were examining some bunkers in Rung stalt when we heard Ranch Hand was going to have a 12-ship formation. I took about twelve pictures and talked to the flight. "Serna Hotel."

Ev got me an a/c on the ensuing F-100 air strike. We drove to Tan & then back for a second air strike: 2 F-5s, Vietnamese. He flew me back to Binh Hoa after that. John Santomaria had been here but we missed him. We did attend a personnel briefing & Ev got a B-52 ~~reassignment~~ assignment.

JANUARY 21

Flew in 12-Ship Formation

Flew two missions. Alpha flight added on to our 8 ships to make 12 ship formation. We were #6. One aircraft took automatic weapons fire. On second lift one aircraft heard a single shot. Otherwise uneventful.

Attended standardization meeting and then target study - I'm deputy lead tomorrow, my first time.

Did real well on mail today: got a nice letter from Dr Ferson and a letter from Joyce, also packages from Joyce & Ann Lee containing movies, pictures, address labels, mustard, anchovies & oysters.

JANUARY 22

Working on Reassignment

Flew two missions - one with Maj Ernie which I flew and one with Maj Brady. We were deputy lead both times.

Bud & I had lunch together then went to personnel to study reassignment prospects. Still am not sure how I should forecast. I'd like to get AFSC at Fatuit or Elin - if unable maybe C-124 reserve duty at Homestead or C-141 at Charleston.

We played Bridge for an hour in the sun & did exercises.

We had a short cocktail party and supper at the club. Got a letter & tape from Joyce. Must study some tonight.

JANUARY 23

SHIP 2 PAGES

Christmas movies

Flew two missions today. One was messed up because my spray system would not work properly. Finally got pressure up after 1 min but then RPM stuck at 3700 and I sprayed out in 3 min or a little less.

Studied dash one all afternoon until 10 PM. At that time I tried to watch 8 mm movies of Kincaid from home. The special security projector was not working properly so I only saw the left hand part of the picture. Very frustrating. Too tired to make a tape.

A Day Off

Didn't have to fly today. Managed to sleep until 7:30 which seemed like a tremendous luxury.

Went to the club for coffee and took care of a lot of small errands which have built up over several weeks. Volleyball practice was scheduled for 1600 and I had a good group attending.

Second Day Off.

This was my second scheduled day off. Norm Nicholls had asked me to fly for him today but we had enough pilots so that I didn't have to do it for him.

Sent two rolls of film into Kodak today. Finally heard from Jack Rabbit but they have no information on my lost film. Bought a birthday card for Donnie and also a little card with a photo board for Julie. Donnie has started to walk now. Sure wish I could see him walking. I miss the family!

Standboard Exam

Flew two more missions but I didn't do a bit of good. The first mission was all the way to Tay Ninh in II Corps. The escape route out of the mountains was fogged in so we all aborted. On the second mission to Kungstakt my spray valve would not open so I rode through the target piggy-back.

Took the standboard exam and missed 2 out of 53. Griefed all the other guys on the exam. Laid on my bed to listen to Jay's tape and fell asleep. Tom woke me up and turned off my recorder.

Volleyball practice begins

Flew two missions with 1LT Bill King. First mission was on Cambodian border just North of Tay Ninh. Second was frogged for Nof Vung Tau. Ed was the FAC, but the winds were too high and we went to Dong Xoi just West of Phnom Vuth.

I was so tired I took a 2 hr nap - again falling asleep while listening to Jay's tape. I held 1 1/2 hrs volleyball practice at 1600. I had 15 men in attendance. We have at least 8 real good players. We should have a good team.

An Exhibition at Officers' Club

Back flying again. Flew two missions with Bob Korne. Both were close-by targets and were very close. John Shippe was leading.

Took care of a few errands at the Ranch & then went to the club for lunch.

Jack Farris had to build a partition at the Ranch so I helped him. Volleyball practice began at the basketball court.

Went to the Club for supper. There was an A.I.D. secretary there - sandy - dancing with an officer. She had a micro mini skirt on & just drove everybody wild. Just terrific!

Champagne Party

Flew two missions. First was a real sporting target in the Long Hai mountains near Vung Tau. Ev was the FAC - he told me he would arrive at Bien Hoa tonight.

After lunch we were playing bridge when Ev arrived, he had some errands to run so I continued the game. Met him over at the ~~Swimming~~ pool later. After a short swim I had volleyball practice.

We had cocktails at the hotel & heard that Jack Brennecke was sponsoring a champagne party. Took Ev along and had a real good time. We sang songs & drank until 2 A.M.

RED ALERT

Slept until 9:30 and woke up feeling pretty good. Had a bloody mary, two aspirin, & two vitamins for breakfast. Met Ev at the Club where we had coffee & stayed around until lunch.

After lunch we went to the pool & read the newspaper. We got Ev a volleyball to take to Bo Kora. While having supper the base was put on Red Alert (Attack imminent) Ev left right away for his airplane. All of our squadron reported to the Ranch for a briefing. Dozens of bases have been attacked including part of Long Binh only 3 miles away.

Rocket Attack!

3 A.M. - I awoke to the sound of the alert siren and exploding rockets. Most of the men had time to run for the bunkers but I decided to crawl under the bed. After about 6 or 7 minutes and 30-35 rockets I crawled from under the bed and hastily dressed. More rockets began coming in and I dove under another bed while trying to awaken Terry. It sounded as if the rockets hit right next door. When I finally made it to the bunker the rockets had stopped. Later on the Viet Cong overran several of our perimeter bunkers and five-fights broke out all up and down the runway. 2 or 3 were killed by rockets and 3 more by small arms. I took several pictures of dead and wounded VC. We expect another attack tonight.

FEBRUARY 1

FEBRUARY 2

Another night in bunker
 At 9 PM last night, right
 after I made a tape to Joyce,
 we got the order to go to the
 bunkers. Long Bien was under
 rocket & mortar attack. We spent
 the whole night in the bunkers
 finally at 5 AM the VC tried
 to overrun our main gates. The
 AC-47 & 4 helicopters stopped
 them. They did occupy part
 of Bien Hoa City today. We
 have been shooting right on
 town from our helicopters. We
 built sandbag defensive position
 at the bunker entrances today.
 We have had several snipers
 on base all day. The radio says
 we've now killed over 5,000
 VC in 54 hours. I hope we get all

Relative Calm

No flying today due to crew
 rest. Everyone was too tired
 after spending the whole night
 in the bunkers. We went on Red
 alert one time today because of
 on-base sniper fire. Most people
 were able to get a little sleep
 last night. I played bridge
 and held volleyball practice.
 We have begun to play
 bridge for .001 per point
 now and I'm enjoying it
 much more.

Our mail has not returned
 as she had planned. They
 probably won't allow her on
 base. We're hand washing our
 clothes and dishes. O Club closed.

FEBRUARY 3

FEBRUARY 4

Back Flying

Slept in my pajamas and in
 bed last night for first night
 in several. There were no
 alerts and it was fairly peace-
 ful. The spookys were digging
 flares all night to prevent a
 surprise attack. We only flew
 one mission because there
 were no FAC's available for
 second. I guess they're all
 directing air strikes. Played
 bridge & practiced volleyball.
 I took a picture of several
 hundred VC POWs who were
 at the passenger terminal.
 The service squadron went out
 to pick up VC bodies off the end
 of the runway. They saw several

Calm being restored

Flew only one mission - up to
 Cambodian border w/ of Pleiku. When
 we arrived back - the base was
 under Red Alert - we made steep
 approach. Second mission canceled
 due to being out of herbicide. We
 are also running out of food & other
 supplies. I was scheduled to
 fly POWs to a prison island
 SW of Vietnam but I was
 canceled before take off.
 We were put on standby to
 haul mail or POWs.

Played bridge again with
 Bob, Tom, & Terry. I had my
 first winning night - won
 about \$1.60.

FEBRUARY 5

Pictures Ruined

No flying today although I was again scheduled to haul POW's.

Our maid finally returned she has not been able to come on the base since the VC attack. Made a trip to the BX and also picked up my shirts at the tailors. The liquor store has not been open so the ranch bought 2 pallets of beer. I bought 40 cases for \$400 and resold them to the officers. Got my second set of pictures back - they were all blank! Something is wrong with my camera. I'm worried about my attack picture.

FEBRUARY 6

Out of Herbicide

Flew only one mission today, we are out of herbicide. No flying scheduled tomorrow. We made 2 runs to the liquor store before it finally opened.

I had volleyball practice for an hour. The team is coming along real well. We have a new team member - Fred Davis, he's a top notch setter.

Had dinner at the mess hall and then a few drinks next door. Next we organized a bridge game. Bob Pfeiff lost for the 4th consecutive time. Wrote a letter to Janice.

FEBRUARY 7

A Day Off

No flying scheduled today because we have no herbicide. We did make a couple mail runs to Saigon. We are now loading herbicide and should be ready for limited spray missions tomorrow or the next day.

Nothing much to do today. I played volleyball and bridge. Also did a little work on Kootik projects. Received some pictures in the mail from Kodak. They turned out real well, now all I have to do is sweat out the most recent roll of combat damage to Bien Hoa.

FEBRUARY 8

Last Spray Mission until ??

No flying scheduled today, but I was awoken at 8:45 for a 9:15 show. We had a 13 ship formation put together to use up herbicide which had been loaded on the aircraft. We are taking our spray gear off and beginning trash hauling tomorrow. Apparently airlift has a higher priority than defoliation at present.

Made a tape to Joyce and then had to attend a briefing at the squadron. A major OLT briefed us on procedures for cargo airlift. I'm on A/C tomorrow with a 6:30 show. We'll be at it for 12 hours tomorrow. I.A.M. either V.C. attack - hurt myself crawling under the bed. Scared to death.

FEBRUARY 9

Trash Hauling!

The Ranch began transport missions today. I had the latest show: 0630. Maj Boice was my copilot. We flew 7 sorties and 5:30 to Tan Son Nhut, Phan Rang, Cam Rahn Bay, An Khe, Cam Rahn Bay, Ben Me Thout & back to Bien Hoa. Took 12½ hr. And I fly again tomorrow with only 10.45 crew rest. It was interesting but tiring. I hope to do some trading with the enemy soon.

Received 2 tapes from Joyce and made her one. Sure hope we don't have any more attacks. Spent an hour on the bus back last night. We were hit with several rounds.

FEBRUARY 10

7131

A Night at Tan Son Nhut

I was scheduled for the same transport mission as yesterday. Lie Shanks was my copilot. We flew to Tan Son Nhut, Phan Rang, Cam Rahn Bay, An Khe, and back to Saigon. We were unable to return to Bien Hoa because of explosions in the Vietnamese ammo storage area at Bien Hoa. It was caused by a grass fire out of control. We were sorry we couldn't go to Bien Hoa but it turned out to be lucky because Bien Hoa was hit by about 25 rocket rounds that night. At least one killed & 160 wounded and about 7 aircraft destroyed. We all met at TSN & Club for supper.

FEBRUARY 11

Same mission - Received Miller's Color in Motion Sconce. We flew the same missions today only this time from TSN. Lee and I woke up just in time to dress & shave. We were able to complete the entire mission in 11 hours. We flew to same bases as yesterday plus Chu Lai and Que Pho. Lee and I enjoyed the flying. We flew from Phan Rang to CRB 500' above the water in heavy rain with no forward visibility. We fly all the legs by map reading. It's actually fun flying. Received the Milano illuminated beer sign I ordered. Color in Motion Sconce. Everyone likes it real well.

FEBRUARY 12

Day Off - Good Volleyball Practice

No flying today. I slept until 10:00. Then got up and went to the O Club for coffee. Ate 2 cups & ate lunch and then checked P.O. Got 2 letters from Joyce & tape from Dad. Joy & I acknowledged finally viewing tape from me since the attack. I'll bet she's really been worried. She hasn't heard from me for 9 days! Played bridge and practiced V.B. Our best practice yet. Our first game tomorrow. Everyone expects an attack tonight. There's all working on their bunkers. I boiled 4 dy eggs and traded off 90 for 3 bottles of booze.

FEBRUARY 13

Confused Day.

Awoke at 3 AM to the now familiar sound of rockets exploding. The siren went off shortly after. I grabbed my flight suit and ran ~~back~~ to the bunker. No more rounds landed after I reached the bunker & landed while I was in bed running to the bunker. 1 K.I.A.

By this time it was nearly 4 AM time to be up to fly. Flew 11 hrs to Song Be, Luu, Chu Lu Luu and Phan Rang.

Got home real tired after only 3 hrs of sleep. Slept two hours and got up for dinner & volleyball match. We lost first & last game after winning second & forcing this into overtime.

FEBRUARY 14

Day Off - Resting Up.

Slept this morning until about 9 AM. Sure had a good night sleep. Got up and went to the club for some coffee.

After that I returned to the workshop with the best of intentions. I planned to get a lot of paper work done. But Jed Klingensmith arrived for the day plus a couple of new Ranch Hands. I spent several hours with me helping him get his supply gear. I did bail a bunch of eggs, copy income tax report, make a tape, label all my photos and a few other odd jobs. Everyone expects a VC attack tonight. Oh ne!

FEBRUARY 15

Flying with Bud Watts

Overslept this morning. I awoke an hour late - at the time my briefing was to start. I got dressed real fast & took my razor, toothbrush, and breakfast with me - 4 boiled eggs and a can of pineapple juice. We flew to Saigon, Ban Me Thuot, Nha Trang, Pleiku, Phu Cat, Cam Ranh Bay & back. We took an NBC correspondent & camera team to Ban Me Thuot. I circled the town to allow them to take aerial movies of the burned out town. Managed to shop at the Nha Trang B.K. Bought a case of soap and case of Wink - also 4 pr athletic socks.

FEBRUARY 16

7131

Ev Arrives and we have a party

Flew another trash hauling mission with Bud Watts. We made 3 trips to Song Be and one trip to Saigon. Visibility is real poor around here. It really worries me to be flying in such weather. I'm scared to death I might collide with someone. On my first approach to Song Be I actually lined up on the helipad & had to go around. Visibility was about 1 mile max. Ev came in around 4 and we had a nice party here, next door and at the officers club. We finally got to bed around 12:30. We all thought we might be attacked. No rockets though but we shot 58 VC off the end of the runway.

FEBRUARY 17

Nice day off - catching up.

Slept 8 hours and awoke with Ev about to leave to run some errands around the base. I got up and took care of a lot of details myself. We met back here and had lunch at the officers' club. We then went to the pool for a little sunning and swimming. We had to eat early at the mess hall in order for Ev to fly home and me to play volleyball. We were out on the court when Ev flew over dipping his wings. We won two games in a row. The opponents were not too good. No mail came in today.

FEBRUARY 18

Another Rocket Attack!

Woke up at 1 AM to the sound of rocket explosions and the siren. I grabbed my flight suit and ran for the bunker. About 20 rounds came in and only one anywhere near our hootches. At 3 AM the V.C. hit the Long Binh ammo dump. We were called back to the bunker at that time. Bobbs went off in the ammo dump until late in the morning. I had to be up at 4 AM for flying. Flew only until noon, went to Phan Rang & Long Be.

After flying I got a two hr nap and went to volleyball practice. I had the Base team play the Rural Hawks. We were having a beer here when we had to run to the bunker again.

FEBRUARY 19

Tay Ninh Shuttles

Made four trips in and out of Tay Ninh West. I was co-pilot for Lee Shenko. Brenneck and Phaff took a hit while climbing out from Tay Ninh.

Got lots of mail including a letter from Mr. Mikolasy. I'm going to invest through him soon.

Lee Mar Murdo says he is moving out of our hootch. He is not compatible with our group. We hope to select the next person to move into our hootch. We will ask Bud Watts first. We plan to finish air-conditioning the remainder of the building. I have asked Bud and he will think it over. No V.C. attacks tonight.

FEBRUARY 20

DAY OFF

7131

Slept this morning until 8:30 - a real good 8 hrs sleep. The VC have been leaving us alone lately but really hitting Tan Son Nhut.

Cleaned out my locker and desk this morning and caught up a little on some overdue work.

Wrote to Joyce to have her transfer \$2000 to my account so that I can send it to Mr. Mikolasy for investment. I'd like to invest an additional \$500 per month.

Practiced volleyball with the base team. We had a real good time.

Good Bye To Saut, Chuck & Snuffy

Unbelievable! I had another day off today. I awoke at 4 AM feeling nauseous. I made it to the latrine just in time. I've had diarrhea all day too - must have been something I ate.

Got caught up in a little more work today. Sent Mr. Mikulasy a check for \$2000. Sure hope he makes some good stock purchases for me.

We played volleyball tonight. I had trouble getting a team together, but we won easily in 21 min 10-8 & 15-6. Then we went to good large cocktail party for Sail Spayer, Ch Ernie & Snuffy Smith.

Johnny Cash Tape Party

Col Avery is back from Hawaii. I was assigned to fly with him on his first truck hauling mission. I did my best to impress him with my knowledge of the aircraft, V.N. airfields and airlift procedures. I believe I succeeded.

We had a volleyball match right after flying - we picked up a forfeit and then played a scrimmage against the base team.

We dug out Bill's tape recorder and played Johnny Cash recordings for hours - until 12 midnite. I've heard some good ones. I'm going to send ^{for} better ones.

DAY OFF

Woke up this morning at 4 AM ~~to~~ to the sound of artillery which I at first thought was incoming rockets. But it wasn't, thank goodness.

Spent the day loafing around the hootch. I caught up on my taping by making a master tape and then making copies - I sent tapes to Connie, Ronnie, & Janice.

First U.S. defeat.

Flew this morning with 2nd Lt McConnell as my co-pilot. We flew for 12 1/2 hrs - completed the whole itinerary. We flew from Pleiku to Phu Cat below an overcast by flying through valleys and weaving between mountain tops.

We got back just in time to get a quick shower and get down to the volleyball court. Our match was against the supply squadron which contain most of the base team. We lost the match but we did win a game 15-2.

I'm sleeping in my flight suit tonight. Everyone expects an attack.

FEBRUARY 25

Volleyball practice.

Slept until late this morning and then went to club for coffee. I planned to have a quick cup & then go to church. But I was hungry and stayed for lunch. Never did make it for church.

Caught up on all my taping by making a master tape & copies for Connie, Ronnie, and Janice.

Had basketball volleyball practice tonight. Found out one of the team members is a procurement officer here. I hope to learn some thing from him. He recommended centralized procurement job.

FEBRUARY 26

Another Day Off!

We had a false alarm last night. Second sun. in a row. Once again it was the sound of outgoing rockets which sent us to the bunkers with the siren wailing.

Made a copy of Bob Dyer's tape to Gerry Martin. He had recorded the radio on the night of our initial attack at the beginning of Tet. It was real interesting. I sent it along to Joyce & rest of family. You could hear machine guns and bullets whistling overhead. Also wrote a letter to Allison Kilo. Sent them some souvenir V.C. leaflets.

FEBRUARY 27

Missed a night in Bunker.

At 0045 this morning all personnel were ordered to the bunkers. They failed to awaken me and I stayed in bed all night. Nearly everyone else spent most of night in the bunkers.

Crew duty day was shortened to 1300 because of loss of sleep. So I had a short day.

I was still tired and so I took a 2 hr nap in the lounge after a couple beers and a snack. I'm not sleeping well anymore. All artillery, mortar, and bomb noises wake me up. I wonder if they're coming in or going out.

FEBRUARY 28

7131

Rocket Attack & FIRE

1 A.M. I awoke to the sound of the siren. I was already dressed in my flight suit - I grabbed my shoes & ran for the bunker. I was no sooner settled when a rocket landed close by. Several more landed and within 15 min someone reported hootch 353 was on fire. The fire began to spread to 354, 5, 6. I ran to the hootch and carried most of my clothes and other items across the street. The firemen saved our hootch but 353, 4, 5 & field grade hootch burnt to the ground. 35 ran here homeless & wiped out. The bunker nearest was took a direct hit and killed 4. Miraculously none of the 12 HCS was hurt. One of our walls was burnt along with roof. Another round struck latrine & tore it up. What a day! Sleeping in the bunker tonight.

FEBRUARY 29

Recovery & Rebuilding

Finally went to bed after sunrise. We had only been to sleep a hour or so when we were ordered out of our hootch by the security police - they had to check the area for rocket duds and live ammo. The homeless ranchers have all been relocated in other hootches and the transient quarters. They got over to the BX & clothing store to buy some essentials. Many have lost unreplaceable items such as class rings, pictures, film, etc.

Civil engineering has begun repairs on our hootch, and our latrine which was half destroyed in sleeping in the bunker tonight.

MARCH 1

New month & less pressure??

March has arrived and somehow I feel real relieved. The Army has been battling the VC very near the base. We heard several tanks and armoured personnel carriers were destroyed yesterday. I don't know whose they were.

I was off today after flying with 4/col Connor yesterday. We picked up an injured vietnamese boy yesterday and flew to Da Nang at Bien Hoa.

I made some arrangements for my volleyball team today. A new Mig came today and I escorted him around the base. Will sleep in bed tonight!

MARCH 2

Beau Coup Quinine Water.

Slept peacefully in my bed last night - first night in bed for 3 nights.

Woke up at 4:30 to fly. Had maintenance problems for the first time in trash hauling. Lost ground at TSB. Fell 3 1/2 hrs behind & changed planes at Bien Hoa.

Met Ted at Cam Ranh Bay. He gave us two pint rollers and took me to BX to buy quinine water - 5 cases. Yesterday he sent us 5 other cases. We eat 3 & still have seven. Beautiful day. I got home just in time for dinner at mess hall and volleyball game. We won. Made tape to Joyce.

MARCH 3

Flying in the Delta

Another good night's sleep in bed - although I'm still wearing my flight suit.

Flew with 4/col Rucker on a shuttle to Song Be & 2 shuttles to Quan Long (Ca Mau) in the Delta. Song Be has gotten hot. A C-130 was mortared on 7/10 then a few

days ago. They managed to make a bluff pattern & crash land. A Bull doger shoved it off the runway after it blew up. No one hurt.

Had base volleyball practice after supper. Attendance was not too good, but we did get some good work done.

I'm wearing my flight suit to bed again. No mail for 3 days.

MARCH 4

Rocket Attack.

Awoke at 2 AM to the sound of rocket explosions and the siren. I grabbed my shoes and ran. Sure is scary running out into the street with the explosion. Several more landed while I was in the bunker - maybe 20 altogether. No casualties this time. Closest rocket was about 300 yds. Went back to bed after 1 1/2 hrs. Had the day off today. Got lots of things done.

We were due to have a ball in our sq. volleyball schedule so I got the base team together for a practice. Seem like everytime I do we have an attack or false alarm - I hope we don't tonight.

MARCH 5

Bunker Drills

The siren blew twice early this morning. On neither occasion did we actually come under attack. The night patrol aircraft saw rockets launched and sounded the alarm. It turned out the rockets were intended for Phan Loi & Cu Chi. I don't mind a false alarm - I love to be alerted prior to actual explosions.

I flew with 4th Col Avery again - he seems to prefer me for his pilot. We had a good mission and finished early. We won our first V.B. match tonight & picked up a forfeit on the second.

MARCH 6

Record Time On Mission

Flew passenger run today thru TSN, Phan Rang, Cap Reach Bay, An Khe, Chu Lai, Da Nang. 6:25 flying time in only 8:55 total time. Everything went well.

Returned in time to eat and play volleyball. We lost our final game of the regular season. But we finished in 4th place with a 5-3 record.

MARCH 7

Day Off - V.B. Finals Began.

I managed to do a lot of work today. Fixed up some putters to send to Joyce and also mailed off some more film to Best Photo Service.

I was so impressed with Bobby Creech's performance yesterday as my flight mechanic, I wrote a form 77A for his performance rating.

The finals began today for the volleyball intramurals. The top 6 teams are in a double elimination tournament. We have won our first game and are on our way.

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MARCH 8

Flew varied mission.

Flew today with Lt Col Fagan. We first delivered ammo to Song Be. We then delivered ammo to Ham Tam. I picked up 800 rounds of what I thought were machine gun rounds. But we configured for hauling litter of wounded from Vung Tau and Cu Chi. It was quite an experience to see the men with amputations and open abdominal wounds. We also delivered fuel to Ken Giang in the delta.

We won our second volleyball match tonight. We beat a very good team after breakfast.

MARCH 9

Low fuel & Volleyball - Fini

I overslept this morning. I was real tired when I went to bed & then, there was a party next door keeping me awake. I probably forgot to pull my alarm stem out. John Shippe woke me up 10 min prior to brief time. I shaved & brushed my teeth at squadron. I tried to run the mission today with one refueling as I have done in the past. But for some reason we used more fuel than in the past. We refueled fuel on the last leg and landed at Saigon with an indicated 300 lbs in left tank & 400 lbs in right tank. We lost 2 v.b. matches tonight & finished 3rd in tournament.

MARCH 10

Country & Western Band.

Today was a day off. I was writing letters at noon when I heard a loud explosion followed by the siren. It turned out to be ~~an~~ blasting in the rock quarry and a normal noon test of the siren. But I ran to the bunker not knowing.

We had a country band at the club today. They played for an hour and we sure enjoyed it. Not caught up on all sorts of correspondence today and still practiced volleyball for 2 hours. We played the 3rd v.b. champs. We're really getting

MARCH 11

Received First Stock Transaction

Flew with Bob Pfeiff today. We had a good time together. We were able to eat a good lunch and shop at Nha Trang Bx. On way back from TSN we flew 500' up the highway to avoid artillery. Got a letter from Marshall Lynch today: my first transaction with Mr. Mikolasy, bought

50 Kaiser Ind. @ $19\frac{1}{2}$	= 975.00 + 14.75 = 989.75
10 Teledyne @ $103\frac{3}{4}$	= 1037.50 + 15.00 = 1052.50
	total = \$2042.25
	Balance = \$57.75
	42.25

Sure hope they turn out to be good investments. I have asked Joyce to send another \$500.

MARCH 12

Rocket Attack!

Flew with Jack Farris today. We went to TSN where we stayed for $7\frac{1}{2}$ hours awaiting a brake change. We had to cut our itinerary in half & I only flew 2 legs & I didn't fly well. Sam was frustrating. We did eat at a TSN Club & shop at the BX.

I held U.B. practice for 2 hours. The Vietnamese team beat us 3 of 4 games again.

10:00 PM we were sitting in the lounge when 2 rockets impacted somewhere on the base. The sirens followed. 30 min later people were milling around & we preceded another volley. Dredge

MARCH 13

DAY OFF

No flying today so I spent most of the time catching up. I made a tape to Joyce, wrote a letter to Allison kids and also sent them some Vietnamese coins. Wrote a note to two women who donated the mustard to us. I also sent them a colored picture of a hooted party.

Ordered 10 black & white pictures of the fires & damage that occurred here on Feb 28.

My leave for Hong Kong has been approved.

I sure miss the family. I would just love to see them. I feel like I'm really missing their growing up. Sometimes that I'll never see them again.

MARCH 14

Aeromedical Evacuation again.

John Richmond was my copilot and we flew wounded & sick out of Bang Tan, Cu Chi & Binh Hoa up to Cam Ranh Bay.

We have started to work on the hooted again. The fellows who were off today scrubbed the concrete lounge floor and painted $\frac{1}{2}$ of it with deck paint.

Looks like we will be going back to spray operations again soon. There are lots of rumors floating around.

MARCH 15

Bunker Drill

Flew today with Ken Bramble. We really did a lot of work. We flew 10 sorties and hauled 39 tons. We went to some interesting places. I hijacked a case of 30 cal ammunition for a carbine. Now I have to get a carbine & get whole thing back home somehow.

We are returning to partial spray operations tomorrow. We will fly 2 lifts - total of 12 sorties. Pilots will all be 1PA and students.

1 AM - seven blew and we could hear distant explosions. Phu Loi was hit but we were not. I was so tired I fell asleep in the bunker.

MARCH 16

Received M2 Cubine &

Day off today. I was real tired & slept off & on until 10 AM. I got up, shaved, ate & had coffee & roll.

Tom & I painted another coat on the floor. Then I had engine to run. Went to Personnel where I forecasted: AFSC - procurement CONAC - Air reserve, C-124; MAC C-141. Requested Fla - S.C., & Hard Luck! Met Lu at BX, he said he had gotten one as M2 engine - in fair shape but I'm glad to get it.

Spent the day cleaning up several odd jobs and lounging around the hootch. An A-37 was shot down in Long Hain.

MARCH 17

7131

I had the duty today as taxi pilot. At 4 AM I had to go down trap to taxi an airplane to hot cargo ramp. Returned at 6 AM & resumed sleeping until 11 AM.

Jack Farris lost an engine while pulling off target today and had to land at Ban Me Thout. Fisher rescued him & brought him back to Bien Hoa.

We painted another coat on the second half of the hootch today. Two more days and we'll be through with that.

Tony has gotten our telephone installed now. It's going to be real handy.

Volleyball practice tonight but it was not well attended.

MARCH 18

Last Trash-hauling Mission

Flew last transport mission today with Andy Bauer. We really went all out to make trades.

At Tay Ninh we left our aircraft and rode in an Army truck to a special forces camp. I was apprehensive both coming and going and watched for a VC ambush at all times. I picked up 2 M-1 carbines, 6 magazines, 2 M-1 trigger housing, a new bolt and extractor. Andy got a grease gun. I gave up 40% of vodka and a promise to help them get plywood, PSP, and food on their next convoy to Bien Hoa.

On the way back to the plane we got in to the middle of a convoy and got covered with dirt & dust.

MARCH 19

Feeling sick - Ev visits.

I awoke at 9 AM feeling really very flunkish. I helped move the lounge furniture. Then Ev arrived. We checked out his R&R - in 9 PM and then to club for coffee and lunch. We then made a BX run.

I discovered that rated officers were not being allowed to apply for reserve duty, or I withdrew my letter and may a forecast. That was my second choice.

I felt worse all day long and finally went to Dr. L. may or may not fly in the morning, depending on how I feel.

Sent off pictures to get prints and also bill of \$59.75 to Merrill Lynch.

MARCH 20

Resumed Spraying

Awoke this morning at 3:15. Didn't feel any worse so I decided to fly. First lift was 3:15 long, to Pleiku. By the second mission I felt real ill.

As soon as I landed I went to flight surgeon & was grounded - 103° temp. I may have strep throat. I came back to the hootch and fell asleep on the couch, later moved to my bed. Slept 6 hours this afternoon.

After dinner at club I got caught up on some mail to Joyce, Connie, & James. I've been coming more to do tomorrow. Fine thing - I go down with a two days off scheduled!

MARCH 21

Feeling Bad

Finally got out of bed this morning around 10 AM. I didn't feel very well at all.

Went to the club to drink some hot tea. That's the only thing which seems to ease my throat. The Dr. keeps telling me it doesn't look too bad - but he doesn't know how it feels.

Went back to the flight surgeon to see if the lab test had been returned. It was apparent to me they weren't able to determine anything from the culture. I suggested I shot of penicillin & that's what I got, plus some penicillin tablets. Got a haircut & met with other awards & deers officers.

MARCH 22

Rocket Attack!

1:40 AM - I awoke to the sound of loud explosions and the hootch shaking. I was thoroughly confused - partly because of all the pills I'm taking. The siren never blew. We all crawled out to the door & ran to the bunker. I got a good stone bruise. Ed & Mick had gone to bed drunk and never even woke up. 10 or 11 rounds landed, the nearest about 200 yds away - no casualties.

Slept again until 9 AM. Then had hot tea & light lunch. I re-forecast: (1) Procurement AFSC Patrick - Eglin (2) Procurement AFSC Robbins AFB (3) C-141a Charleston. Also applied for ROTC & AFA

MARCH 23

7131

Rifle Range Shooting

Awoke at 7 AM to go to the rifle range. Took 3 carbines, m-16 & 38 pistol. Fired about 250 total rounds - sighted in all weapons at 100 yds to a very good pattern all in silhouette at 100 yds. Took all 5 weapons apart for thorough cleaning of barrels. Reloaded all magazines. Talked with Ed Bagley.

Wrote letters to Ike & Carl. Terry has gone to CRB hospital for 1 week observation. I drew helmet, gas mask, & flak vest for use at hootch. Saw movie "Bonnie & Clyde".

Big mix up in scheduling. Although PNIF, I turn up on schedule. I ran all over, called Lt Col Lundy trying to get replacement - a real mess.

MARCH 24

Back on flying status

Slept until late - seems like I've needed 12 hrs. sleep since I caught this virus.

After some coffee at the club I went to the flight surgeon. Dr. Voss put me back on flying status and I reported that to the squadron.

I had lots of award & decoration to do at the squadron. I was there for 3 hours. Came back to the hootch to make a tape to Ron. Had supper at O Club and then dressed for volleyball. I had a real good workout. Got up a good sweat and now played better. I'm feeling pretty good now. Another day off tomorrow.

MARCH 25

MEXICAN DINNER!

Awoke at 7 AM feeling real rested. First time that's happened in a week. I put on my khaki uniform to take pictures. Boy! It fits real well again! Couldn't hardly get it on when I came over here. After having picture taken we bought another \$40 worth of liquor and beer. We do that about 2 1/2 times a month! A lot of the expense is scotch - at least \$40 a month & I don't drink any of it.

Supper tonight was a real treat. We had fried tortillas, tacos & I drank several drinks. Boy was it a welcome change. I only ate 5 tacos - but I still don't have my full appetite yet.

MARCH 26

Hootch Work.

Awoke startled this morning. Tom said the guys from hootch 358 were trying to take our air conditioner in the back lot that we salvaged from the fire of the field-grade hootch. We won a temp victory - as we still have it.

Tom & I replaced 3 of the burned plywood panels in lounge. We also re-installed the 2nd overhead light.

Ed came to Ben Hoa today to settle the affairs of Larry Clinton. Larry was killed on 23rd in his O-1. A mid-air collision with another C-1. 4 children - what a shame. Practiced volleyball tonight with a basketball pickup team.

MARCH 27

Back Flying - Poker Game

Flew two lifts this morning as deputy lead. I led the second element nearly all the way to Phouk - we finally sprayed near Puching. Bob Phiff was checked out as lead today & Ed Ridge was made a P.O.

Ed visited this afternoon & we had a real nice cocktail party. After supper we had a poker game at the O Club. I lost very conservatively at first & finally began to win. I eventually won around \$8.00. Got a real cute letter from Julie tonight. She scribbled me a note, & put some stickers on it. Boy, I miss her!

Dinner Party

First lift was canceled this morning because of weather. The gave me a chance to catch up on some awards & desk work at the squadron. We flew 2nd lift up to San M. I hurt a sprain. Afternoon & evening were spent with preparations for chicken Bar-B-Q. Ed had arranged 30 lbs of chicken on a trust-healing mission. Lt Col Alay & I arranged the makings for a Bar-B-Q. and we cooked 15 lbs of chicken. We had about 12 guests. Everyone had a real good time. I filed the Civil actions report in Terry's absence. Spent an hour with Tom at the airport terminal waiting for his flight.

Arranging for leave.

Norm & I had coffee together this morning on our day off. I went to IFR center & also called Camp Alpha in Saigon to get details on my leave with Ev on 9 Apr. I also called Ev. Looks like I'll have to go on a standby basis.

Made a tape to Joyce and also viewed & sent out a tape to Connie & family.

Called Ted at CMB. Looks like he will be here on Sun the 31st. He may be coming back to Bien Hoa permanently soon. Ev & Carl are also coming on Sun. Guess we'll have to plan a Barbecue.

MARCH 30

Poor flying weather

First lift was canceled this morning because of weather. Should have canceled the second also. We made an IFR departure & OCA return. No spray in between. Jack had 2 formations neither of which was able to spray. Sent my letter of appal. for Kove to be comd for endorsement.

Read the newspaper for an hour in the sun - sure is hot.

Had dinner at the club and got a tape from Connie. I answered her the same night so she could correspond again before I leave for Hong Kong.

MARCH 31

Bar-B-Q. Dinner

First lift was again canceled due to weather. We were able to fly & spray on the second. Had lunch at the club and then Bud & I went to the pool for a dip and an hour of sun. We both had to return to the squadron for afternoon target study. Ted Klingenwith has returned. After target study I made final arrangements for our party tonight. Ev & Carl arrived and we had a real nice party. I cooked 15 lbs of chicken & french bread. We also had french fries that Norman fixed. We also had plenty to drink and talk about. I went to bed around 10:30.

APRIL 1

Champagne - HOT TARGET!!
0140 - Awoke to sound of siren. We
all ran to bunker - Ev & Carl included.
No rockets here - but Long Bien
was hit with 34 rockets.

Deputy lead for two lifts today.
Second mission was to Delta where
we had a 4 F-100 make a practice
Five of our A/C took hits. Everyone
but me! I'm the oldest 'virgin'
in the squadron now.

Ev & Carl left after supper today.
We had a champagne party
for the 4 men who took their
first hits today. Was a real
good time. After awhile Bud
Mick, & I went to the NCO
Barracks to a party there. We
played guitar & sang country
songs.

APRIL 2

First Lead Missions

I flew lead today with Lt Col
Rucker. He flew first lift & I the
second. It's a very different
experience. I believe I did OK
but I felt I made several
mistakes and wasn't satisfied
with my performance. Col Cieny
was critical of my briefed procedure
for climbing off target and my
plum tree.

We picked up the salvaged
air conditioner at C.E. today. It
works real good and is rated
at 27,000 BTUs. We gave the
refrigeration Sgt 2 cases of beer.
We had another champagne
party tonight. I got real
drunk out - I went to bed at 9 PM.

APRIL 3

Installed 2nd Air Conditioner

Day off today, but I still
got a lot of work done. I went
for coffee first. Then over to civil
engineering to arrange for oxygen.
I made a tape to Joyce & then
picked up 3 Vietnamese carpenters.
Together we installed the air cond.
and sealed it in. They also opened
the rear door.

I had target study at 3 PM.
I'm flying tomorrow with Lt Col
Cieny in lead position. I'd rather
fly with him if he has to be in my
formation.

A few celebration drinks and
then steak at the C Club. I
got a tape & envelope from Joyce.
Received passport & transcripts.

APRIL 4

Lead with Lt Col Cieny

Both our missions were fouled
up this morning. On the first,
we never got past the drop up.
On the second we flew to the
primary - too low ceilings -
then on to alternate where
we overshoot target & they
had to go back. Cieny flew
whole mission & just sat in
right & handled communication.

Ev came by & we had
supper together. They didn't
fit his plane so he spent
the night. I went to Red Horse
for plywood with no luck.
I did get bean comp tools at
supply. I made have made
an arrangement for 220 wiring.

APRIL 5

APRIL 6

Rocket Attack!

Flew two spray missions today. Weather was much better. We sprayed a V.C. camp near Song Be. We took 9 hits in 3 of 6 aircraft. I escaped unscathed again. Lee, Shanks and another are buying champagne tonight for their first hits.

Bravo & I flew an administrative flight to Saigon. I went to Camp Alpha & got on prearranged motor for Hong Kong, also visited BX (baught rum!!) and Logistics office.

10:30 23 rockets struck. 9/1 around our hootch. 1 killed & several wounded. 1 ran into bunker with explosions all around.

Day Off.

Didn't sleep very well after the attack. All of the artillery noises kept me awake and worried. That was Ev's first rocket attack.

I was so tired today I accomplished very little.

Spent most of the day laying around the hootch & doing small chores, fixed up the kids pictures in a frame.

I had target study this afternoon. Jed & I picked up a crate to make a storeroom out of. We also got a flare cases. We need 220 V electricity & plywood real bad.

I went to bed early because I was so tired.

APRIL 7

APRIL 8

FIRST HIT!

I led Alpha - Charlie today. The first target was just N of Cu Chi. We took sporadic ground fire and I got my first hit. It was a 30 cal round which struck the left side of fuselage 7 feet behind me - about 4 feet above the floor. It went through on a level plane & out the right side. I'll have to buy champagne when I return from base.

I'm leading & flying 2 left tomorrow. Still trying to figure out a way to get 220 Volt elec & plywood to finish up our hootch. We'll have to work outside official channels as usual.

LEFT FOR VUNG TAU

I led two missions today - Bravo - Delta. I got some real good experience and believe I did well.

Saw Ev right after flying and he has our transportation all set up. I packed my bags and got all set to go.

Went to refrigeration shop to see about getting our 220 V hooked up. I believe it's all arranged now. I also arranged to get a couple Vietnamese women to work for us tomorrow filling sand bags. I filled sand bags & built wall around hootch until time for Ev to come. We flew to Vung Tau in hrs 0-1. We leave tomorrow for Saigon.

APRIL 9

Tues

Off for Hong Kong!

We had coffee and toast at Co. 300-hotel in Vung Tau & then flew to Saigon. We went right to the R & R center. My name's typed on the manifest so it looks good!

We had several hours to wait so we went to the O Club for breakfast.

The pre-departure briefing ~~begin~~ began at 11:45. 200 men showed up for 165 seats - but I made it.

We took off at 1520 & landed at 1720. More briefings at arrival. Checked into Pous hotel. Wandered around hotel a little, had a few drinks, fish & chips & on to bed.

APRIL 10

Wed

Shopping begins!

I had a great night's sleep - slept until 10 AM. No artillery or rockets.

Our first order of business was a visit to the tailor & to order our clothes. I ordered a suit, 2 trousers, AF uniform & 2 pr shoes. After being measured we had lunch at King's Lodge and then took ferry to Hong Kong Island where we shopped at the China Fleet Exchange.

We shopped until 5 PM and then returned for our first fittings on our clothes. We finished the evening with more drinks and fish & chips. Only about \$5 total for food & paper.

APRIL 11

Thurs

More Shopping

Got a one hour earlier start today. Had coffee at the hotel snack bar.

We went to the ocean terminal shopping center today. I got a good bag on Joyce's wing & return. The other I had picked out. We wandered for hours in the shopping center.

For lunch we had Layenbrau, beer & werners & krant.

We had more fittings scheduled for this afternoon. I'm worried about my shoes fitting.

We finally made it to a restaurant for supper: The San Francisco steak house. Excellent food & service.

APRIL 12

Fri

Chinese Dinner.

We got a comparatively early start today: 8:30. We searched several Japanese shops & dept stores for our final shopping items.

We had a real nice lunch at Maximo's rest. Outstanding service & food.

We picked up most of our clothes today. We had real good fits except for shoes, they are too small.

Our tailor: C.C. & Richard Kank treated us to a 14 course Chinese dinner tonight. It was very good & unlike anything I've ever had. We really stuffed ourselves.

APRIL 13

Sat.

Packaging & Mailing

Began organizing and wrapping all our goods I had to go out & pick up some more albums. I've really got a stack of things.

My shoes will have to be remade. They're supposed to be ready at 10:00 PM.

Finally got all my goods together and organized. Ed helped me get them all over the ferry to the FFO. My postage bill came to \$30 for 3 boxes & 3 crates!

We had a good time our last night in HK. We spent most of the evening in an Australian bar the Hideout. Finally got to bed at 2:30 AM.

APRIL 14

Sun.

Time to leave already

Got up early - all hung over and hastily packed to leave. Checked out of the hotel and forgot to see if my shoes were ready.

We went to the terminal where Richard Kent bought us coffee. Landed at Saigon and went to helicopter. We left by 0-1 to Vung Tau and took chopper to Long Binh & motor pool to Bien Hoa. Spent most of the afternoon working in sand bagging. I got there in time to suit in the last full day of work and we finished up the job. Our hootch was first to complete.

Champagne party tonight for Emmett Jay's first kit.

APRIL 15

Mon

Day Off.

Slept late this morning & I sure needed it. The sound of artillery is something I'll have to get used to all over again.

I managed to put away all my clothes and reorganizing my hovel. I fixed a package of things remaining from HK plus a few things I had here at Bien Hoa. Mailed them off to Joyce - registered - my 7th package to her.

APRIL 16

Tue

Catching the virus

Awoke this morning feeling poorly. I ate very little breakfast but felt a little better by flying time. We had 2 good uneventful missions. I couldn't eat very much lunch either. Really off my feed.

By supper time I felt real poor. I began to develop diarrhea. I laid down in the afternoon and fell asleep on the lounge couch.

I informed the chief pilot, Fischer and scheduling officer & spare pilot, Tom Quinn that I may not be able to fly. Went to bed early, feeling bad.

APRIL 17 Wed

Sick Day.

Had a real poor night! Spent about 2 hours in bed but seemed like I was awake every 10 minutes. I made numerous trips to the latrine with stomach cramps & diarrhea. I couldn't fly in that condition so I asked Tom Quinn to fly for me.

I went to the flight surgeon who gave me a bunch of pills and placed me on it for another 24 hours.

I took my pills religiously and generally napped & took it easy all day. Sure hope I'm better tomorrow. Made a case to Joyce.

APRIL 18 Thur

Dining In and wine drunk!

Awoke feeling much better but still shaky.

Managed to do a lot of catching up today as far as completing application for AFA, mail, cleaning my hovel and other odds and ends.

I went to target study this afternoon for my lead pilot check ride tomorrow.

Big event is our Squadron Dining in. We all had a real good time. I donated \$30 worth of Rose Matheus wine. The steak wasn't good but we had a good time anyway. We gave spoof prizes in the manner of academy awards.

APRIL 19

Lead Pilot Qualification.

Flew two missions this morning with Jack Brenneke the chief of air crew standardization. I feel I did real well. At least he had no criticisms.

Spent the afternoon running around trying to scrounge flare cases for rocket insulation and plywood for enclosing the rear end. No luck.

We held our next to last volleyball practice tonight. We had a good practice session.

APRIL 20

Unexpected Flight.

I was rudely awakened this morning by the scheduling officer. 4th Col McConnell was suffering from the same 24 hr virus that I had & need the spare pilot - me.

I flew with 4th Col Lemly as deputy lead. We had two real good missions. I led the second element back into a 360° overhead pattern.

We held our final practice tonight at Bien Hoa. We had a real good session. We picked up several players to fill out a scrimmage team. I began drinking at Paul's hootch and finished late at our hut.

APRIL 21

Arrive at TSN for 7th AF Tour.

Awoke this morning at 645 after only 6 hrs sleep. We met the truck at 8:00 & drove to Saigon. Upon arrival we checked into our billets at CBPO. Not very much, but a place to stay.

We practiced at 11:00 until 1:15. We had a real good scrimmage against Nha Trang. We can beat them. Next the officer attended a movie at BX Theatre.

Attended coach's meeting at 1600. From there we had to go to our parents to change clothes. We had a cocktail hour and banquet at NCO club at 1700. I went to bed early at 8:30.

APRIL 22

WON 2 GAMES!

Slept 12 hours last night. Finally drug myself out of bed around 9:30. I felt good to take my time waking up and not have anywhere to rush off to.

Big problem was to kill time till game time at 1500. Had a cup of coffee at snack bar & then went to C Club. There I read the paper, ate lunch, and then read all the Azalea & Masters clippings. Cul sent me. Also wrote a letter to Joyce.

We won our first match 3-1 against Nha Trang. Our second was 3-0 against Bien Thuy. We celebrated at the NCO club where we drank & ate.

APRIL 23

Night in Saigon

Slept late this morning because I had nothing to do. I decided to go into Saigon for the night. I packed my pockets of my fatigues full of things like razor, toothbrush, soap, etc. I went to the C Club for coffee & then caught cyclo to gate. From there I took taxi to 669 Tru Manh Ky where Richone lived. Both he & his dad had left for states. But I saw some other fellows I knew & decided to spend night anyway. Half way through the night I awoke & wondered if I had done the right thing. I was afraid the VC may overrun the place.

APRIL 24

Eliminated from Tournament.

Awoke this morning after a restless night. I dreamed & imagined that the VC were attacking and overran the area between my room & the base. Thank God they didn't!! Went back to base & killed time by seeing a movie & visiting the BX.

We played Tuy Hoa for our third match & lost 3 straight. We were all psyched out. We had a chance to stay in the tournament by beating Nha Trang again, but we lost to them 3-0. We just couldn't get going after 48 hrs off. We finished 13th for the tournament. Not good!

APRIL 25

Back To Bien Hoa

Awoke at 7:30. Packed my bag - (left belt behind), and caught bus to base gym where I picked up my M-2 carbine. From there I had coffee at Club, & then rode Base Ops truck to helicopter pad. After a hour I took chopper to Long Binh. I caught truck from Phu to Bien Hoa. Picked up my mail & went to hootch.

I unpacked, cleaned hovel and read all my mail - 3 tapes & letters from Joyce. I finished work on luggage storage box & put first coat of paint on it. Ev arrived & we had nice evening.

APRIL 26

Squadron Picnic

I had day off today. Went to Club for coffee at 8:01 and met Bud Watts. I worked with him for 2 hours rephrasing citations for awards.

Returned to hootch to paint luggage box second coat. Went to firing range to shoot for one hour. Returned to work on air-conditioning splash pans. Finally went to picnic where I ate 2 steaks & played volleyball.

Listened to 2 tapes from Joyce & made one to her. Mailed 4 others to even up the supply.

Time for bed, I'm getting afraid to go to bed for fear that the reds may come tonight.

APRIL 27

DAY OFF

Got up this morning at 8:30. Had coffee at the club and talked with several Ranchers. Bud wanted some more help on writing citations so I helped him until Noon.

After lunch Ed and I cut all the flare cases in preparation for installation to the hootch. That took 2 hours & we got lots of sun & exercise.

I had target study in the afternoon with Col Avery - we're leading 9 ships over the Song Be road tomorrow.

We pushed 2 vehicles out of the way which persist in parking between us & the Bunker. Everyone expects an attack any night. I'm getting afraid to go to bed at night.

APRIL 28

9 Ship Formation on Song Be Road

Col Avery & I led a perfect mission over the road this morning. We had fighter prestrikes with CSU-2. We expected to really get hit but not a ~~fire~~ shot fired at us - guess they're off the area.

Joe Jarboe visited the Ranch today. He's a C-123 pilot at Phan Rang. Wish he were in the Ranch.

Spent the afternoon helping Bud write some narratives and citations for awards and decorations.

APRIL 25

Back To Bien Hoa

Awoke at 7:30. Packed my bag - (left belt behind), and caught bus to base gym where I picked up my M-2 cabin. From there I had coffee at Q Club, & then rode Base Ops truck to helicopter pad. After an hour I took chopper to Long Binh. I caught truck from Phu to Bien Hoa. Picked up my mail & went to hootch.

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Joe Jarboe visited the Ranch today. He's a C-123 pilot at Phan Rang. Wish he were in the Ranch. Spent the afternoon helping Bud write some narratives and citations for awards and decorations.

APRIL 29

RAIN!

Flew two missions today. I had planned to go to the rifle range with several other people in the squadron but it really rained today!

I went to the Ranch at 3:00 for target study. I took along 2 of my newest carbines. I planned to clean them real well and then head for the firing range. But then we had a real gully-washer. The hangar at the Ranch has a tin roof. It rained on that roof so hard we couldn't even hear ourselves talk. The monsoon rainy season has definitely arrived.

APRIL 30

Looking for a motorcycle

Flew 2 missions today. After flying I began thinking seriously about getting a motorcycle.

I looked at Andy Bauer's Honda & drove it a short ways. It's in real good condition & nearly new for \$225.

I thought it over for a few hours & decided to buy. I went back to see Andy but he had sold it to a civilian who had promised to buy some time ago. I talked with a friend of his who said he would get me a \$5 cal pistol and a jeep. I would probably give up a carbine in trade.

MAY 1

Bought Honda Motorcycle

Flew 2 missions today. After flying I went to see John Richmond & George Bye about their cycles. John's wouldn't run & I had a feeling it was a lemon. I talked with George & drove his Honda. It runs good but has not been well taken care of. But I decided to buy anyway. I'm tired of walking! He leaves in a day or two & I will take possession then. I gave him \$200. He gave me a bill of sale and we had letter of permission of sale & buy made out at the squadron. Looking forward to quit walking.

MAY 2

Picked up motorcycle.

Flew two missions today - makes 5 days in a row, boy, I'm tired!

After flying I met George Bye at Club & picked up motorcycle from him.

Heard the lead plane on Delta flight took 8 hits - 6 in the rear which were stopped by the armor plating in front of the instrument panel. Close call for Joe Maden and Phil Larsen.

Ran a few errands on the Honda today: went to Safety to take the driver's test, gassed the Honda at the squadron.

Er Warne & Bob Dyer left the base today - Lucky guys!

MAY 3

Day Off - With Transportation

No flying scheduled for me today - but I volunteered to fly a test hop with Jack Jarvis. I awoke early - around 4 AM & didn't sleep much more - finally arose about 8. Had leisure breakfast at O Club & then hopped on motorcycle for trip to Ranch, Jack & I flew 50 min test hop - 4 eng shut down, then I caught up on my flight scheduling board. Rest of the afternoon I ran around the base, had ignition lock fixed at cycle shop, picked up ranch hand photos, had sign cut at carpenter shop, picked up paint & turpentine.

Had shrimp at O Club tonight. Guess I'll make a tape to joyce.

MAY 4

7131

2nd Day Off - Nothing Accomplished

No flying for me today. I spent most of the day hanging around the hatch waiting for the plywood to be delivered. It never came. I eventually ran some errands. Picked up some photos at lab, got some gloves at P. E.

Emmett Joy & I worked on my carbines & our bikes for a couple hours.

Jack & I worked on the hatch for another hour.

Spent the evening drinking, talking, listening to tapes, reading magazines and made a tape to Joyce. We've been bombing & stuffing a target. Smiles w all day. Went into Red Alert now.

MAY 5

2 ROCKET ATTACKS!

3 AM I was half awake when I heard the sound of the siren. I yelled to wake everyone up, grabbed my shoes, flak vest & helmet. We ran to the bunker in a crouch to take advantage of the sandbags. 80 rounds of rocket & mortar fell - none near us.

We showed at the Ranch for flying. During the briefing rockets came in again, the first striking 50 yds in front of hangar. The second wounded the wing man & knocked Ed Silpaway off his feet. Bobby Crook was also knocked. I hit the floor of the briefing room & hurt my knee.

Several of our airplanes were struck. I spent all afternoon riding the Honda trying to get carbine parts and plywood. No luck! We called about 300 VC outside the base. Mexican dinner tonight.

MAY 6

Saigon & Bien Hoa attacked.

Flew two missions this morning after a peaceful night. I had WAF Sgt Tri take my Honda to Bien Hoa City to have a second key made. The key wasn't any good. I'll have him try another day.

Had lunch & took a 2 hr nap in lounge. I hit target study this afternoon. In leading a 3 ship on 2 int target near Tuy Hoa tomorrow.

Went by the liquor store & photo of on way to hatch.

I just heard the fighting in Saigon is worse than during Tet. More fires now. There is also sniper fire in Bien Hoa City.

Plywood! Rockets in daylight. Closing in Hootch.

Flew two missions this morning while taxiing out for the first we came under a rocket attack. Col Rucker left the engines running and we ran out of the airplane and laid flat in the dirt. 4 rockets hit - I saw two of them. After flying I called Lt Col Stewart at supply - he said he'd give us the plywood. I went with Sgt Stewart to pick it up at Base Supply. We're ready to close in the hootch now! And I have the next two days off besides. We have all cleared off our shelves and made ready to work tomorrow.

Got up at 8 AM, had a quick breakfast at club and returned to the hootch to work. I began by myself for the first 3-4 hours. I tore down Ed's shelves & packed in his hovel. After lunch I picked up 4 helpers and we really went to town.

We paneled in one half of the hootch in the first day. I was real pleased with the amount we got done. We had one false alarm while working in the afternoon. We all ran to the Bunker to discover a short had set off the sirens.

MAY 9

Finished paneling, 2 rocket attacks.

Got up early again this morning with Ed & had a quick breakfast. We started to work around 10 AM. At Noon we got some more work. We had just about completed the work when I had to go target study. We worked for several more hours after I returned - we're finished closing in!

Midnight - sirens blew & we ran to bunkers as rockets fell. None were near us. 3:25 AM - same procedure all over again. The hit the other side once more. Sirens went off a third time at 4:30 but it was a false alarm.

MAY 10

Shoes from Hong Kong.

I slept so good last night my alarm ran completely down with out awakening me. John Shippe got me up 15 min later. It is really cool & quiet in the hootch now.

Flew two missions - I was deputy lead.

Took care of a few errands & then had to go to target study.

Returned to the hootch to build shelves. I picked up a desk from Sgt Rains at housing supply. It's all organized now and much more comfortable than I've been before. My cordovan wing tip shoes arrived from Hong Kong & fit real good!

MAY 11

Busy day - bunker drill again

Flew two missions with Bob Fisher. I'm starting my IP check-out. We were deputy lead & became lead for a short while. After flying I cleaned up the hut a bit & made a bed for Andy.

I had several tapes to listen to & fell asleep while listening. Sure is comfortable in the hut now. I talked with Sgt Creech awhile about his APP.

I proof-read several awards & decs citations & narratives. We had sirens again around 10:30. It turned out to be mortars landing on Long Bien.

MAY 12

7131

Busy Work.

Flew two missions with Bob again. We aborted the second because our fighters were used for troops in contact.

I went to the orderly room after lunch to get clearance to write Sgt Creech's APP. From there I came back to the hut to begin studying for my coming IP check.

I helped Lee fix up his hovel for awhile & then it was time for supper. I got a tape from Joyce & package from family. Didn't have time to make a tape to Joyce again. I'm just too busy. Worked on Awards & Decs for an hour.

MAY 13

Mountain Contour Target

Flew two missions today. I led second on mt contour target near Tuy Hoa. Jack recommended me for IP. I take a check tomorrow.

I had a late lunch & then arranged to get two decks for our hut. Farris & I drove over to pick them up later.

Spent all available time today studying for my IP check tomorrow. I don't expect to be asked a lot of questions but I want to be able to answer everything correctly.

MAY 14

IP Check Ride - More sockets

Flew only one mission today due to rain at Bien Hoa and in the target area. I gave instructions to a new pilot while Ed observed. He said I did very well. I have to complete the check on Friday because we did not spray today.

I spent the rest of the day catching up on other projects: APP, Awards & decs for several people and some hut work. I fell asleep in the lounge towards the end of a cocktail party. I had to be awakened to run to the bunker for a rocket attack.

MAY 15

More hootch work. Poker

Slept until about 8:00. & then got up to begin running through a whole list of errands I had assigned myself.

I stopped all the cranks in my hotel & Terry's.

I also spent more time on paper work & was behind on. Listened to several tapes and made one to Dad. I'm caught up on listening now.

I got into a \$1 poker game for an hour. I won \$9.50 before I quit. I listened to a tape from Forge & fell asleep in middle.

MAY 16

No party for Col Awey

Didn't sleep well - the poker continued until 5 AM & I seemed to hear them all night.

I helped but 357 get started on closing in their hut. They have plywood & small air conditioner. Checked Tom out on my Honda & loaned it to him to go on some errands.

Worked on my K model dash & checklist. Picked up some gloves at supply which I gave to some army people I hope will get me a 45 pistol.

Let Col Awey leave tomorrow but he gave no party & no one gave one for him. We couldn't even find him to buy him a drink.

MAY 17

IP check completed

Flew first mission only with Ed Ridgeway. I completed my IP check.

Got some solvent soap from maintenance to clean my Honda with. I gave the Vietnamese gambler 100 piaster to clean the bike for me.

I scrounged some vegetables from the mess hall to use in our coming shuck ka Crab party - tomatoes, potatoes, onions, carrots & 4 cans of corn. I also bought some coathangers to make into skewers.

We began marinating the meat today.

Went to fixing my Honda

MAY 18

Lead with no navigator

Flew lead today on two missions with Col Parker. On the second mission I led at Ban Me Thuot with a pink navigator. Fortunately I knew the target well enough so that I needed little assistance from him.

Spent several hours working on awards & doing paperwork.

There were a lot of strange explosions to the west of the base all night. They sounded like bombs but they continued too long to be airstrikes. I expected the worse since midnight began Ho Chi Minh's birthday.

MAY 19

Shish-Ka-Bob Party

No flying for me today. I spent the entire day cleaning the hotel and preparing for the party. I cleaned the air conditioner filters, washed all the dishes, made the wire skewers, cut up the vegetables, cleaned the grill and other tasks.

The party was a big success. The food turned out excellent and everyone had a good time. I was the cook. We invited about 9 new guys in the ranch, plus the men from our hootch & 357.

I drank a little too much.

MAY 20

O-S to Da Nang

Awoke at 6 AM in order to have time to pack and write civic action reports. Also wrote a note to Bud concerning what I did with A&P job while he was gone. Took off at 10:10 and landed at 12:30. We had a briefing and then went to club for lunch. I had to hurry back for target study as I am leading tomorrow.

Spent the rest of the afternoon getting bottled & saw a movie. It's real hot here - much hotter than Bien Hoa. We're going to have some interesting targets too.

MAY 21

Motorcycle Accident

Flew two lifts this morning. I led both. We had to return without spraying on the second because of turbulence on the target. The alternate was cancelled because of high temperatures.

While leaving the BX on my way to an intelligence briefing, I ran into a Vietnamese woman on her motorbike. She pulled right out in front of me & drove on my side of the road. I hit her head on & tore up her bike pretty badly. She skinned her elbow & me my knee. No real damage to the Honda.

MAY 22

Close call with Airstrike

Flew two missions this morning. We had a close call flying up the road & valley to Khe Sanh. We were spraying uphill of a narrow valley, carrying max power when we saw explosions just ahead of us. - an airstrike right on our path! 30 seconds later & we may have been hit. We managed to make a tight 180° turn & get out of there.

No water in the barracks tonight. I got all lathered up with soap & then all the water went off. Oh - well - guess it's tough in war time.

MAY 23

A Shan Valley!

Flew two lifts this morning. The first to the DMZ and the second to A Shan valley. Boy, that place looks like the surface of the moon - thousands of bomb craters. We really had a wild spray ride also. Wish I had brought my camera.

Went to the beach with Lt Col Larsen & Les. We had a real nice time - drank lots of beer & stayed until we were ruined out. We got everything soaked.

I'm really tired here in the evenings. Too tired to write or make a tape.

MAY 24

The Ranch loses a crew

Flew two lifts this morning. The first was back to the A Shan valley. I took lots of pictures today. On the second lift we took along a newspaper reporter from the San Francisco Chronicle. He interviewed me for several hours & took lots of pictures. We took ground fire runs into.

We had bad news after the completion of our flying: alpha 2, A/c # 588 crashed just off the Mekong Delta & all 3 were killed: Lt Col. Rucker, Lee Shanks & Sgt Schmidt. It really has me upset. It makes me wonder if I'm ever going home.

Saw a movie. The Professionals made a tape & went to bed.
PS - 14 31 today - almost forgot.

MAY 25

Day Off

Day off today. The electricity was off most of the morning. I had a cup of coffee & then went to the motorcycle shop. He fixed the wiring on my front light & supplied me with 2 mirrors and a rubber footrest.

I laid in the sun & exercised during the early afternoon. I haven't regained any weight yet but I'm starting to eat & log a much.

I went on a 25 mile ride on my Honda next. Went all around the base & out to China Beach.

Made a tape to Joyce & got to bed fairly early.

MAY 26

Beach Day

Flew two lifts today - one as co-pilot for Lt Col Underhill & one as IP for Deena. We flew right into him & were blinded on first mission. On the second, #2, instead could not spray. He made no radio transmissions & flew right in front of me - later he returned & again put me in prop wash & still did not spray. When I asked him what he was doing - he cursed me out over the radio - he later apologized.

Rode the Honda to the beach for the rest of the afternoon. Ate a hamburger with three while everyone else ate prime rib at Dan Wang. Found a hand grenade lying in the middle of the road.

MAY 27

Flew two missions this morning. The first was to A Shien valley and the sun was in our eyes again so bad that we will not go there again early in the morning, even if we cancel a mission.

I came back to the room & ate a can of chicken stew, a few cookies and a beer. I then took a two hr nap & went to the BX to pick up a case of beer & 2 cases of soda to take back to Bien Hoa next week.

Had food tonight at the C (Club - spare ribs), second time we've had them in one week. I'm seeing lots of movies and reading. Sure a nice change from Bien Hoa.

MAY 28

Rockets at Da Nang

Arrived at ops to discover my a/c was out of commission & so I was cancelled for the first lift. I went back to the room, made a tape to Joyce and read. I was alerted for a second mission. We went to primary - then to alternate by then too hot on fuel so we came back with out spraying.

I bought a case of gin to take to Bien Hoa. Wrote two letters and opened 3 packages of birthday goodies. Got all kinds of mail today.

Went to club & drank 4 or 5 double martinis - skipped supper - got drunk. 11:30 AM awake to sound of siren & rolled on to the floor. 5 or 6 rockets struck, the last near enough to get me to roll under the bed.

MAY 29

X Hits! - Eng feathered.

Flew only one mission, all 3 airplanes were shot up & out of commission. We took photo near Kien Duc. One hit #2 engine & prop oil light came on. We climbed out with max power, dumped & then feathered #2. Flew 25 miles to Da Nang & landed. Joe Meadow (#3) flew under my left engine for protection.

Spent the afternoon at the beach and then came home to go to the Navy Club. They really had a good feed - all we could eat & drink for \$2.10. Shish Ka Bob & Navy Grog & Rum. Excellent. Received a beautiful tape from Joyce. Julie talked alone to me. It really brings tears to my eyes when she says I love you, won't you come home?

MAY 30

Dining In - Da Nang

Flew only one mission - first was canceled due to weather & lack of FAC. Listened to Pat's tape & took 1 hr nap before second mission. My second student has now finished all his training. Went shopping for an anniversary gift - not very much available here. Finally bought her 1 oz of Chanel #5. Should have bought something at Hong Kong for the occasion.

We had our regular 2-week dining in tonight. The dullist I've ever seen. Col Underhill ruined it by the attitude he had & the manner in which he operated it. Only half our guests showed up. We all left early.