

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

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

LEGER, OLEUSE M. JR.
Name (last first middle)

Oleuse M. Leger Jr.
signature

22 October 1981
date

Specific Information

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

1. Ranch Hand service: From September 1961 to March 1962. Where? VIETNAM
2. RH/C-123 training: Where/when? LANGLEY AFB, VA. 1958 thru June 1965
3. Rank while in RH? SSGT Present/retired rank? MSGT
4. Duty(s) while in Ranch? HYDRAULIC SPECIALIST dates? Sep 1961-Mar 1962
5. Other Vietnam service? Where/when? THAILAND 1965
6. If aircrew member:
 - a. Number of missions: RH _____ Other (specify) _____
 - b. Combat flying hours: RH _____ Other (specify) _____

Narrative Information

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

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

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

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

ITEM 7: I volunteer for this special assignment in Aug 1961 while station at Langley AFB, VA. I had the experience required as a Hydraulic Spec. and was willing to go where ever they were sending us. We left for Pope AFB, NC, where we fitted the 'six' C-123's with the armor plates and in flying condition, on thanksgiving day in 1961. Remained one week at Pope and then departed for the Phillipines in C-124's loaded with all our equipment and personnel. Spent X-Mass and New Years at Clark AFB pulling maintenance on our aircrafts and then departed for Vietnam, which at this time we had an idea where we were headed. There were also a crew from Pope AFB handling the cargo hauling. I can recall SSgt YALE, MESSICK, Capt Marshall, Major Robinson, who got his wallet stolen while in Clark AFB. which he got kidded about a lot, having no money. A Sgt Hawkins another Hydraulic man from another base, TSgt Rathamel from Pope, our line chief, SSgt Coghill, Eng. killed at Nam after plane crashed.

Item 8: No decoration received for that volunteer action.

Item 9: Two instances come to mind, once when we went to work at 0500 hours the Vietnam guard that was guarding our planes and work shed, had his throat cut. the other time was when we found all the flight control turnbuckles cut in half and we had to replace all the turnbuckles.

Item 10: On this particular day we had two missions in the air, one was spraying and the other plane had a group of Vietnam soldiers and Americans, when we got the word that one of our airplanes had been shot down. We did not know for a long time, a couple hours at least before the plane carrying all these people landed and then was determined it was SSgt Coghill's plane that was down. We then had to strip the downed aircraft of all useable parts and there we found the pilot and co-pilot had been layed outside the plane but SSgt Coghill had burned in the plane. Also Sgt Bill King's plane landed in the wrong field (North Vietnam field) and when they realized they had landed in the wrong field they tried to take off before they got caught but all they ended doing was to push the nose wheel strut through the cockpit just behind the pilot but through where the steps were to get in the cockpit and Bill was barely missed because he was on these steps at that moment. The aircraft was lost and had to be left and the crew made it back with no problem.

Item 12: No

Item 13: No

Item 14: I volunteer, but had no idea where we were going, except that it was overseas and that we would get \$16.00 a day, which we never got.

Item 15: Nothing at first but in Vietnam we were told it was a chemical used to kill the leaves in the trees so the north Vietnam which were hiding in them.

Item 16: When we were playing cards one night and this airman from Pope got drunk and vomit into Sgt Yale's boots and then after this kid went to bed the guys put the heavy table and chairs on top of him while he was sleeping. The saddest was when we heard SSgt Coghill's death.

17. after we found the dead guard, we had to pull our own guard duty. The first night there was myself and this black sergeant (I forget his name) pulling guard duty and of course at time you could hear the shells from a distance, well anyway every little noise he heard he was forever jumping up and pointing the rifle at me and was extremely nervous. I finally took the rifle away from

him and told him to go to sleep before he kills me. I stood guard duty the rest of the night.

18. I answered # 16, the first part should be in this sentence. So I will say the happiest memories of her was when we would all get together after work and talk of home and our families.

19. Our quarters were eight man tents, with the first week pretty bad due to not enough water for baths or washing. Almost everyone got the C's. Our day was getting up early and getting to work about 0500 - 0530 AM. get our place set up for the spraying job and making their return to do any repairs and refueling. We all worked as a team even though each one of us was a specialist in our field we all help in refueling the A/c or an electrician or anybody else. After the missions were over and everything was completed we would return to the tents. we had play cards, drank and talked about home and our families.

20. My own views are that we were unique because we were about the first military group there is now. We were all volunteers and wanted to do something for our Country and I think we helped in that war and I think all Ranch Hand personnel should have been/should be recognized for their willingness and their abilities to help in that war. The original Ranch Hands broke the way for the rest of the people that followed but we were the first. ^{Montgomery, M.L.} I do have pictures and old slides. Ranch Hand (1)