

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:

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

REESE ARTHUR GEORGE Arthur G. Reese 12 Oct. 1981  
Name (last first middle signature date)

Specific Information

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

1. Ranch Hand service: From AUG. 1966 to JULY 1967. Where? BN SONNUTE DANANG
2. RH/C-123 training: Where/when? FIELD TRAINING, AUG 1966 CLARK AFB TX PI  
AIRCRAFT TRAINING ONLY
3. Rank while in RH? MSGT Present/retired rank? MSGT
4. Duty(s) while in Ranch? A/C MECHANIC SUPERVISOR dates? AUG. 1966 TO JULY 1967
5. Other Vietnam service? Where/when? NONE
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.

ANSWERS TO SPECIFIC QUESTIONS.

7. WHILE AT BIEN HOA DEC-JAN 66-67 PARTICIPATED IN THE SPRAYING OF JUNGLE & TREES & ~~SPRAYING~~ & BOMBING WITH INCENDIARIES BY S.A.C. NO BO WOODS.
8. DECORATIONS RECIEVED WAS PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION WAS IN THE ORGANIZATION DURING THE TIME THE EXACT DATES WERE UNKNOWN. ALSO RECIEVED A.F. COMMENDATION MEDAL ON RETURN TO STATES. ALSO THE U. N. SERVICE METAL.
9. WAS AT DA NANG WHEN ROCKET ATTACK APRIL OR MAY OF 1967 ALSO WAS AT DA NANG WHEN A C-141 WAS BROADSIDED ON RUNWAY AT DANANG BY A MARINE A-6. THE C-141 WAS CARRYING A LOAD OF ACETYLENE CYLINDERIZED ALSO OXYGEN CYLINDERIZED. IT HAPPENED AT 2:00 TO 3:AM IN THE MORNING KIND OF CREEPLY. THE MARINE A-6 WAS LOADED WITH 750 LB BOMBS. THE MARINE CREW WALKED AWAY BUT EVERYONE ON BOARD THE C-141 EXCEPT THE LOADMASTER WAS KILLED THEY TOOK THE LOADMASTER BACK IN A STRAJTJACKET, TO THE STATES I MEAN.
10. WAS AROUND WHEN A C-123 WENT IN WITH 5 PEOPLE ABOARD THIS HAPPENED EARLY IN 1967 UP IN THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF U. N. NEAR THE BORDER I CANT RECALL THE PILOT'S NAME OR THE EXACT DATE. THE FLIGHT MECHANIC WAS FROM HAWAII I DO RECALL, AND WAS AIRMAN FIRST CLASS, ALL WERE KILLED. A SECOND INCIDENT WAS CRASHING OF C-123 AND I DONT RECALL EXACT DATE BUT THE PILOT'S NAME WAS MAJOR FRENCH. I DONT REMEMBER IF THERE WERE SURVIVORS SEEMS TO ME THERE WERENT ANY.

11. I WAS AT BIEN HOA WHEN A YOUNG CAPTAIN RIDING IN COPILOT'S POSITION ON A SPRAYING MISSION MUST HAVE BEEN IN JUNE OR JULY 1967 LEANED FORWARD FROM BEHIND ARMOR & WAS SHOT IN THE NECK HE DIED TO DEATH BEFORE THEY GOT HIM BACK ON THE GROUND. THIS YOUNG MAN HAD APPROX. 2 WEEKS TO GO TO GET BACK TO THE STATES. I CAN NOT REMEMBER THE NAME, BUT REMEMBER THE INCIDENT.

12. I HELPED REPAIR SOME SPAR CAP DAMAGE ONCE THEY SAID YOU CAN NOT DO THAT, AND THE BOOK SAID "NO" TOO BUT THAT AIRCRAFT FLEW QUITE A NUMBER OF MISSIONS WITH A REPAIR OF THIS NATURE.

13. "No"

14. I GOT ASSIGNED TO RANCH HAND AT TON SONHAT. I THINK I WAS INTENDED TO BE ASSIGNED TO ~~THE~~ 309<sup>TH</sup> A.C.S. BUT MY PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE I SUPPOSE WAS CONSIDERED FOR USE BY RANCH HAND. I DID NOT REALLY KNOW A DAM THING ABOUT RANCH HAND UNTIL I GOT INTO THE ORGANIZATION, BUT HAD BEEN IN SIMILAR ORGANIZATIONS PREVIOUSLY, BUT IN WHAT I CONSIDER EXOTIC "SP"!

15. I DIDN'T KNOW A DAM THING ABOUT THE CHEMICALS USED MOST OF WHAT I LEARNED I LEARNED FROM LT. COL. ROBERT DENNIS. I DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT THOSE CHEMICALS PRIOR TO VIET NAM.

16. 18.

17. THE ANSWERS TO THESE ~~TWO~~ <sup>THREE</sup> QUESTIONS CAN BE EXPLAINED BY THE NARRATIVE ATTACHED.

19. WE HAD A PARTY OR TWO AT DANANG THAT GOT PRETTY LIVELY.

20. I KNOW THE ORGANIZATION WAS UNIQUE AND WOULD NOT LIKE TO PUT ANY RESTRICTIONS ON ANY THING SAID OR DONE I'M SURE I DIDN'T GO ALONG WITH EVERYTHING DONE AT THE TIME, BUT MAYBE SOMEONE ELSE FELT THE SAME WAY ABOUT ME OR WHAT I DONE! I DON'T THINK I OFFENDED ANYONE ON WHAT I SAID MIGHT BE A LITTLE KIDDING GOING ON IS ABOUT ALL.

The Majority of my time spent with Ranch Hand Veit Nom was spent at DaNang our forward operating base of the time. As I remember I left Ton Son Nuht Air Base first part of Sept. 1966 and returned to Ton Son Nuht the latter part of November 1966. The entire organization moved from Ton Son Nuht to Bien Hoa the early part of December 1966. I remained at Bien Hoa until the latter part of January 1967, ~~and remained at~~ when I returned to DaNang and remained there until 9 June 1967, when I returned to Bien Hoa. I left Bien Hoa the latter part of July 1967 for the states.

When I first went to DaNang things were rather primitive our herbicide storage consisted of 1000 gallon tanks and pumps and engines used I presume in early aircraft. The old 1000 gallon tanks pumped the herbicide directly into the tanks installed on the spraying rigs. Later of course we received ~~5000 condensed portable~~, 5000 gallon condensed portable refueling rigs which were manifolded with 4 inch Centrifugal pumps. Herbicide was shipped from the states in 55 gallon barrels then transferred to the 5000 gallon tanks for storage prior to being pumped on the spraying rigs.

Most of the herbicide used was 24D 24D5T which was herbicide "Orange" also we used Tordon 101 a brush killer. We also used a form of liquid Atrazene, it was used for killing small bladed plants which also included rice and buffalo grass and the like plants.

I did not know much about Ranch Hand before getting into the organization in Veit Nom. A lot of what I learned about the operation I learned from Lt. Col. Robert Dennis, a graduate of Arizona University, I'm talking about about herbicides their applications. Unless you worked before with herbicides you would not really understand.

Whenever I left DaNang it was usually for the purpose of repairing battle damaged aircraft. On one occasion it included a main gear tire and wheel assy. hydraulic sys repair, an engine change and prop removal and reinstallation on the aircraft. Whenever this occurred at Phu Bai I usually got the Sea Bees stationed nearby to bring the heavy equipment to speed up the job as they would not let us work at night with lights at that location. One aircraft I recovered was from a base up in the northwest corner of Veit Nom up near the DMZ. We landed on a P. S. P. runway it was almost like riding a roller coaster. The aircraft I recovered had the prop can replenishing line severed from ground fire making it impossible to replenish from the engine oil tank and also loose oil out of the prop can. I found a replacement line recharged the aircraft but we loaded it with Marines and headed back to DaNang.

I remember I had a hard time in Veit Nom I was 40 years old at the time, there was a lot of walking being done to get from one location or the other. They finally did get us a pickup truck to drive that helped quite considerably. I remember the name "Pappy" given the older troops, so I got the name right along with another MSgt. who was on flying status. The other "Pappy" had his problems, he was preflighting his assigned aircraft one morning hit the wrong switch and started spraying the ramp, needless to say he was kidded about that for quite sometime. There was one occasion when Col Dennis hit the dump valve switch and dumped a load on a Rubber plantation this occurred in flight of course.

I remember one occasion it was in June 1967 at DaNang a couple of the crew chiefs got a bit ambitious, they acquired 2 two point seven five white phosphorous launching tubes and mounted one at the rear side doors of one of the spraying rigs. The tubes were aimed backwards and down at approximately 30 degree angle, they completed this job one afternoon and the next morning they took off on a mission they fired both of the rocket tubes as they pulled up off the spray site, I bet there were some surprised Veit Cong. We rotated back to Bien Hoa after that, and when we got back Cmsgt Penzer told the crew chief to take it off the airplane I mean the Rocket launching tubes and get A.F.L.C. approval on the idea.

When I got back to Beinhua I asked my boss CMSgt Penzer what he wanted me to do from June to the latter part of July my rotation date. He told me I not going to assign you to a job you will find something to do and I usually did there was plenty of work, and it did make the time go.

I did not get in on the C-123 K models all my work was on the C-123 B models. The design gross weight take off weight was 54,000 but a lot of the time they took off weighing in at 59000 pounds. I have got off the ground at near 62000 lbs. The aircraft got mistreated a bit. Along with these gross weights, there was one thing that had to work on our aircraft and that was the water injection systems on the engines that of course due to additional power available with water injection operational. Some of our sister organizations had water injection cannibalized off their airplanes to install on ours.

I did extensive work in trouble shooting water pumps, herbicide pumps and the spray pumps installed on the aircraft I had some experience in civilian life prior to military.

I saw a lot of things happen things like one occasion I was looking down the ramp at Danang all of a sudden it went down on one wing and ground looped the airplane was a AC-47 gunship. On one occasion at Beinhua before going home a F-100F model run off the runway rolled over upside down in a large ditch with water. One of the pilots in the F-100 drowned as he panicked and took off his oxy mask the other one survived as he kept on his oxy mask.

While at Danang we had some difficulty getting a pulley bracket it was in the controll cable section rear wing of one of our spray ships. A Mechanic from one of parent maintenance outfits volunteered to get it off a wrecked 123 at a forward operating base. When they got there special forces told him to enter the aircraft from the left rear door, and exit the aircraft the same place the mechanic forgot himself and left forward door and blew off one foot on a booby trap. Pretty expensive pulley bracket. The pulley bracket took ground fire on final at Danang.

"Patches" was around the early days at Ton Sonhut but finally left to go to IRAN which was at Taiwan Formosa at the time. When we got the airplane back she looked like the day she come from Fairchild Aircraft. We used "Patches" for spreading Malathion an insecticide to kill the mesquitos they even got the "talking birds" to help the enemy to stop shooting at "Patches" because all she was being used for is spraying the mesquitos.

The latter part of June 1967 Danang was under heavy Rocket attack four F-4 plus 2 C-130 were damaged pretty heavy. This occurred for I left Danang. In the early days at Danang we had little protection against rocket attack but by the time I left there we had lot of metal bunkers built they were filled with dirt or sand. Most all the aircraft refuelments were similar only much larger of course.

It was hard to get rest at Danang as the air conditioned trailer house type quarters that were air conditioned were reserved for the fighter bomber pilots. The runway on the East side of the base was less than a quarter of a mile from the living quarters, thus whenever a afterburner kicked in it got really hard to sleep.

When I first got to Danang we lived in tents. I remember one occasion I came back from Phu Bai and there was a large rip in the tent right over my sack and it was raining and my sack was plenty wet. I spent the rest of the day putting another tent over the existing tent in the rain. The last few months spent at Danang were spent in hootches or louvered type barracks buildings with transite type roofs.

In June or July 1967 we got some C-133's come in at Beinhua they unloaded the 133 aircraft and started to assemble AT-37's it really looked wiered that little airplane with all that hardware hanging under the wing! An F-4 with 750 cluster bombs hanging on the wing usually had less than 6 inches between the concrete and the bombs.

In March or April of 1967 a F-105 landed with one of the horizontal stabilizers missing field maintenance replaced the the stabilizer and the aircraft returned to Thailand. One item that was hard to keep on the flight

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line at DaNang was the light carts, portable generating units, that had the mercury vapor lights installed that could be elevated by hand crank on the top of the units. I remember O.S. I. Air Force looked for and found most of the units in Army and Marine outposts and they were being used for the purpose of lighting the area at night. It was an easy situation then of defending an area, however we had a heck of a time working without the portable lighting units on the flight line.

While at DaNang I stored all contaminated herbicide in the old 1000 gallon aircraft tanks, I would load the tank on a truck with a forklift and they would borrow the rig for spraying their area, they usually got pretty good kill as it usually contained 3 types of herbicide in the pure form.

It was hard to keep aircraft clean the herbicide got on the skin of the aircraft and it acted like paint remover, so it took a lot of water and soap to keep things clean. We used an old 2,500 gallon trailer formerly used for refueling for the purpose of hauling the water, which came from lake Danang at the south end of the base. We did have a hard time getting a tractor to pull the trailer with so Sgt Lacey took me to the O.I.C. of the motor pool at DaNang and said furnish us with a driver or furnish a license to my man for the purpose so I got a drivers license to drive a twin screw tractor so we could get the washing done. Things usually got done that way in Veit Nam, so much to do and so much time to get it done in. While at DaNang I worked for SMSgt Lacey and worked with Mgsst marlin Rickter and Tsgt Wilmer Byers who were Msat at DaNang. When I first got into the organization I worked for Maj Dresser Lt. Col. Robert Dennis. My N.C.o.I.C. of course most of the time was Cmsgt Phillip Penzer.