

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.

RHODES BILLY DEAN Billy D. Rhodes 10/27/81
Name (last first middle signature date)

Specific Information

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

1. Ranch Hand service: From DEC-1967 to DEC-1968. Where? BIEN HOA & DANANG
2. RH/C-123 training: Where/when? HULBERT FIELD FLAM ⁵⁶⁰⁷ OCT 1967
3. Rank while in RH? S/SGT (E-5) Present/retired rank? T/SGT (E-6)
4. Duty(s) while in Ranch? FLIGHT ENGINEER dates? DEC-1967 - DEC 1968
5. Other Vietnam service? Where/when? NONE
6. If aircrew member:
 - a. Number of missions: RH 470 SORTIES (COMBAT) Other (specify) _____
 - b. Combat flying hours: RH 574.8 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.

**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
THE DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
TO
BILLY D. RHODES**

Staff Sergeant Billy D. Rhodes distinguished himself by extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight as a UC-125 Flight Engineer near Ca Mau, Republic of Vietnam, on 2 July 1968. On that date, Sergeant Rhodes' unarmed aircraft was engaged in a low-level defoliation mission against a heavily defended hostile supply area, when it was struck and seriously damaged by intense ground fire. With complete disregard for his personal safety, Sergeant Rhodes rose from his armored position in order to mark hostile firing positions with smoke grenades and to assess aircraft battle damage. By so doing, and by accurately reporting this information to the pilots, he greatly assisted the crew in their decision to stay on target and successfully complete their mission. The professional competence, aerial skill, and devotion to duty displayed by Sergeant Rhodes reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS SEVENTH AIR FORCE PACAF
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96307

SPECIAL ORDER
G-1458

17 MAY 1968

BY DIRECTION OF THE PRESIDENT, EACH OF THE FOLLOWING IS AWARDED THE AIR MEDAL FOR MERITORIOUS ACHIEVEMENT WHILE PARTICIPATING IN AERIAL FLIGHT. DURING THE PERIOD INDICATED, OUTSTANDING AIRMANSHIP AND COURAGE WERE EXHIBITED IN THE SUCCESSFUL ACCOMPLISHMENT OF IMPORTANT MISSIONS UNDER EXTREMELY HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS. THE HIGHLY PROFESSIONAL EFFORTS OF EACH INDIVIDUAL CITED CONTRIBUTED MATERIALLY TO THE MISSION OF THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.

MASTER SERGEANT

AFSN	NAME	FROM	TO	PAS
18618822	DEULLEY KENNETH D	100168	070368	

TECHNICAL SERGEANT

14437776	MOSELEY WILLIAM L	211167	270168	
11194637	WILKINSON JAY E	291267	240368	KZRPLV

STAFF SERGEANT

14610665	ADAIR WILLIAM P	240268	050568	KZRPLV
15456563	CANTU EUSEBIO B JR	261267	150368	NARKNR
17497591	FINKENBINDER REX E	180268	240468	PRRC07
19359605	FLORES VICTOR L	050268	110468	PRRC07
18457461	LOMELI FELIX C	030268	020568	PRRC07
14343133	MCGINTY JAMES E	100368	170468	NMRMTV
17382900	RHODES BILLY D	281267	290168	BKRNMNR
18429218	SMITH GLEN T	271267	120368	NARKNR
14497720	SMITH LEONARD	220368	260468	BKRNMNR
18658166	STRACENER NORMAN T	020368	110468	NMRMTV
13455337	TOY HARRY C	200967	080368	NARQC6

SERGEANT

17631009	MEYING LEON F	130268	160468	CPUMTY
12763779	RIVERA FIGUEROA LEO	231267	190268	PRRC08

G-1458

SO G-1458, HQ 7TH AIR FORCE, APO SAN FRANCISCO 96307, 17 MAY 68

15725357 SMITH RONALD K

010667 231267

BKRJ2G

AIRMAN FIRST CLASS

16882261 EGGERMANN DANIEL F

120368 170468

CPUMTY

15896133 LAFLUER WILLIAM C

171167 170268

NARKNR

16852497 LAUTENBACH DALE N

230168 180468

KZRPLV

12756686 OSBORNE REGINALD

231267 120268

18950579 PHILAPY STEVEN K

250168 230468

KZRPLV

14967192 TAMORIA GLEN G

290268 030568

KZRPLV

FOR THE COMMANDER


DONALD L. MCCABE, CAPTAIN, USAF
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

DISTRIBUTION

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RHODES
Form # 7670

#7 NONE OTHER THEN SPRAY & DURING THE 1968 TECT OFFENSIVE THE RANCH CONVERTED OVERNIGHT FROM SPRAY TO CARGO, AND I'M VERY PROUD TO SAY THE OUTFIT TRANSPORTED MORE TONNAGE OF CARGO THEN ANY C-123 OUTFIT IN VIETNAM AND FOR ONLY ONE REASON COULD WE DO THIS AND THAT WAS BECAUSE WE WERE LAUGHED AT BY THE REGULAR TRASH HAULERS SO WE HAD TO PROVE WE WERE THE BEST IN NAM AND BY DAM WE DID IT.

#8 D.F.C. SEE ATTACHED NARRATIVE, ALSO AIR MEDALS ~~WH~~ I THINK I GOT 11 AIR MEDALS THE YEAR I WAS IN NAM WE WERE AWARDED ONE FOR SO MANY COMBAT MISSIONS AND OF COURSE SOMETHING MOST AIR CREW MEMBERS WERE PROUD TO GET WAS THE VIETNAM FLIGHT ENGINEER'S WINGS WHICH IT TOOK AN ACT OF CONGRESS I THINK TO WEAR THEM WHEN WE RETURNED TO THE STATES.

#9 YES ACCORDING TO MY NOTES THEY WERE 58 ROCKET ATTACKS AT BIEN HOA & DANANG THAT YEAR, AND LET ME TELL YOU ONLY ABOUT THE TWO WORST ONE'S WHICH WAS AT BIEN HOA. I DON'T REMEMBER THE DATE I THINK IT WAS THE FIRST OF FEB. 68

THOSE DARN 122 mm. ROCKETS STARTED HITTING BIEN HOA ABOUT ONE A.M. AND VERY FEW OF US GOT TO THE BUNKER BUT WE SURE HUGED THAT FLOOR I CAN TELL YOU, AND IF YOU HAVE NEVER BEEN ~~UNDER~~ UNDER A BUNKER WITH ANOTHER GUY THERE SURE ISN'T MUCH ROOM UNDER THERE BUT YOU DON'T NOTICE IT UNTIL YOU TRY TO GET OUT.

#10 WELL I WAS IN THE RANCH AT THE TIME, BUT I DID NOT WITNESS IT, BUT IT WILL BE A DAY I WILL NEVER FORGET WE LOST THE WHOLE CREW IT SURE WAS A BLACK DAY FOR THE RANCH.

#11 YES AND I REMEMBERED THE DAY & DATE VERY WELL. BUT I WILL START THIS ONE THE NIGHT BEFORE, ~~THE~~ IT WAS MAY 7TH 1968 AIRMAN SCHMIT CAME TO ME AND ASK ME IF I WOULD MAKE A TRADE WITH HIM HE HAD DUTY DRIVER AND I HAD A FLIGHT DOWN IN THE DELTA SO WE BOTH WENT TO SEE SGT RIPLEY WHO WAS CHIEF ENGINEER IF WE COULD TRADE BECAUSE AIRMAN SCHMIT HAD A DENTAL APPOINTMENT AND HE WOULD ~~would~~ NOT FEEL LIKE DRIVING ALL DAY SO HE SAID IF WE TRADED HE WOULD BE BACK IN TIME FOR THE DENTAL CLINIC AND HAVE THE REST OF THE

DAY TO REST AND NURSE HIS PULLED TOOTH.
BUT IT DIDN'T HAPPEN THAT WAY. ON
MAY 8TH I WAS UP AT ABOUT 4 AM TO START
DRIVING THE CREWS TO THE FLIGHT LINE.
WHEN ALL CREWS WERE READY TO GO I
WAS REPLACED BY AIRMAN ~~SCHMIT~~ SCHMIT
AND I BELIEVE IT WAS ABOUT 9 AM WE
WERE NOTIFIED OF THE AIRCRAFT HAD BEEN
SHOOT DOWN AND THERE WAS NO SIGN OF
LIFE WHEN THE REST OF THE FORMATION
CAME HOME MINUS ONE AND THAT ONE IS
THE ONE I WAS SUPPOSE TO BE ON. I
WILL NEVER FORGET THAT DATE ARE AIRMAN
SCHMIT. I REMEMBER HE HAD BOUGHT A NEW
WATCH AND HE HAD EVEN ASK ME TO KEEP IT
FOR HIM TILL HE COME BACK THAT DAY.
SORRY I DON'T RECALL THE REST OF THE CREW

#12 NO I HELPED REPAIR AN ENGINE BUT
IT WASN'T DUE TO BATTLE DAMAGE.

#13 NO I SET IN ON ALL MISSION
BRIEFINGS BUT NOT THE PLANNING

#14 I DON'T REALLY KNOW I WAS STATIONED AT
TINKER AFB OKLA. WHEN THE ORDERS CAME
DOWN I HAD NO IDEAL WHAT IT WOULD BE
ARE WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE, BUT ONCE
I GOT INTO IT, BUT I WOULD NOT HAVE TRADED

IT FOR ANY OUTFIT IN NAM. NOT EVEN
THE LAST OUTFIT I WAS IN WHEN I
RETIRED AND IT WAS ARE I SHOULD SAY
IS THE MOST ELITE IN THE AIR FORCE
WHICH IS THE 99TH AIRLIFT WING WHICH IS
THE PRESIDENTIAL AT ANDREWS AFB.

#15. NOTHING I KNEW NO ONE THING ABOUT
THEM UNTIL I GOT INTO SPRAY TRAINING
IN FLA. THEN IT WAS VERY LITTLE.

#16 WELL THE HAPPIEST WAS THE RANCH PARTY
AT BIEN HOA. BOY WHAT A PARTY I WAS
WITH THE TDY DETACHMENT AT DANANG
WE MADE OUR MISSION THAT MORNING AND
WENT TO BIEN HOA, AND THAT NIGHT WE
PARTIED ALL NIGHT, I DON'T KNOW HOW MANY
TIMES SOME OF US GOT THROWN OUT OF
THE OFFICERS CLUB, BUT THE OFFICERS
KEPT DRAGGING US IN FOR A DRINK AND
THEY GAVE UP ON THROWING US OUT ANY
MORE SO WE SET RIGHT THERE WITH THE
BRASS AND DRINK, (SADDEST I DON'T
KNOW OTHER THEN THE LOSS OF A CREW
THAT WAS DISCUSSED ABOVE.

#17 I GUESS IT WOULD BE AT DANANG WHEN
US ENLISTED MEN WERE TO GO TO COL
LARSON THE COMMANDER AND ASK HIM

IF we could BORROW HIS CAR (Jeep) To Go over To The ARMY Base To The Club AND one NIGHT we RAN INTO something AND we COULD NOT use ANY more.

#18 I DON'T HAVE ANY FOR THIS ONE

#19 OUR QUARTERS WERE HOT DUSTY BUT we MADE THEM LIVEABLE BY KEEPING THEM CLEAN AND we GOT HONOR BARRACKS QUIT a FEW TIMES, we ALL WORKED TOGETHER AS WELL AS PLAYED TOGETHER NO ONE WAS WITHOUT A HOUSEHOLD CHORE SO TO SPEAK SOME WASHED DISHES SOME SWEEP. SHOOK OUT RUGS MADE BEDS SOME EVEN HELPED MAMA-SAN TO KEEP IT AS MUCH A HOME AS POSSIBLE.

#20 THE RANCH WAS UNIQUE BECAUSE OF THE CALIBER OF men IT HAD IN IT, we ALL HAD DIFFERENT MILITARY BACKGROUNDS SOME WERE OLD WHEN I SAY OLD I MEAN TO STANDARDS WHEN IT COMES TO FLYING THE TYPE OF MISSIONS we WERE FLYING, SOME WERE YOUNG HAD NO IDEA WHAT TO DO ARE HOW TO COPE WITH SOME OF THE CONDITIONS we HAD TO COPE WITH. BUT THE REAL UNIQUE THING WAS we WERE VERY CLOSE TO OUR OFFICERS AND THEY WITH

us we Helped one ANOTHER we PLAYED
TOGETHER, WE WORKED TOGETHER EVERYTHING
WAS TOGETHERNESS DON'T GET ME WRONG WE
HAD THE BEST OF RESPECT FOR OUR OFFICERS
AS MEN AND THEIR RANK, AND THEY HAD
RESPECT FOR US AS MEN AND THE JOB WE
DID. THEY DEPENDED ON US IT WAS ONE
BIG ~~FAMILY~~ FAMILY WHO HAD A JOB TO DO.

I DON'T THINK THERE ARE ANYTHING
ARE ANYBODY YOU CAINT TALK ABOUT THAT
HAS TO DO WITH THE RANCH.

RHODES

Form # 7670

PAUL I HAVE SOME PICTURES AND
A FEW NOTES YOU MAY BE INTERESTED IN
LET ME KNOW WHEN TO SEND THEM BUT
I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THEM BACK
WHEN YOU FINISH WITH THEM.

Billy D. Rhodes
R.R. #2 Box 231A
Gua. Ill. 62407