

Item #11

RANCH HAND HISTORY PROJECT

Form No. 7774

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.

TANNER JAMES L James L Tanner 29 Nov 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 SEP 1966 to SEP 1967. Where? TON SON NHUT BIKENHUA BAN NINH
2. RH/C-123 training: Where/when? WULBERT/LANCKEY 1966
3. Rank while in RH? CDT/MAS Present/retired rank? COL
4. Duty(s) while in Ranch? P, IP, CHIEF-STONEVAL dates? P-1966 IP/STONEVAL 67
5. Other Vietnam service? Where/when? N/A
6. If aircrew member:
 - a. Number of missions: RH 413 Other (specify) _____
 - b. Combat flying hours: RH 699 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.

#7 Ashan Valley Oct 1966 - 5 ships

(b) " " April 1967

(c) First mission through DMZ Sept 1967 (Lead 19 ship formation)

(d) ~~Laos~~ Laos - HCM Trail mission throughout tour

#8. DFC 31 Jan 67 ~~Laos~~ Laos mission supposed to be first run through Ashan after October freeze. Weathered out. Flew Trail mission in Laos instead. Lead (Roy Kelley) lost during a relatively quiet mission. We developed a runway prop and could not feather. Reached Che San about the same time as ran out of altitude. I was 1P.

Bill Crocker 1st Pilot: One bullet hole - prop can.
DFC 31 Mar 67 Crop mission north of Tam Ky. Took a hit in oil cooler during mountainous run. Landed at Tam Ky.

#9. Mortar attacks at Da Nang + Bien Hoa. Attack at Bien Hoa was in early 1967 and was one of largest to that date. Ranch quarters not damaged. Several minor attacks at Da Nang - - don't remember dates.

#10. Yes (see #8 above). We had assembled at Da Nang (the entire Ranch outfit, almost) to make a large formation run through Ashan. The weather was

bad in the valley so we decided to do some training on the HCM Train in Laos. Roy Kubly, our most experienced pilot who was on his second tour, Norm Derocker (?) in #2 and I in number 3. We were the 1P2. Everyone else brought up special for the run through the valley went back to Bien Hoa. We were working southwest of Khe Sanh about 75 miles (I think) in a bowl under a fairly low overcast. We had A-12 from Pleiku (probably) as cover. After about three runs we were making a shallow approach out of a descending left hand turn when lead suddenly snapped and crashed. We had heard no gunfire but my aircraft had two holes in it when we got back to Khe Sanh. Five people were on board the crashed plane. A recovery team went in later that afternoon but I think they were driven off by ground fire. It was Roy Kubly 500th mission.

11. See above. Also, several minor wounds to many people.
12. Bruce Almeter's aircraft with over 100 entry holes in 1967. Several holes in ~~man~~ skin (usually on bottom of aircraft) from CBH dropped too close to Ranch airplane.
13. Yes. Targets were usually selected by the Army and approved through DOD + State Department channels.

Once approved, they were planned and "put on the shelf". We worked through them by priority as determined by the Army. Usually, the Ranch planned & fragged the mission through TACC as opposed to the TACC doing the planning.

14. Volunteered during C-123 upgrade at Hurlburt. Hal Luke and I were, I believe, the last of the pure volunteers. MPC made selections after us, or at least very soon after us. I knew what the mission was when I volunteered.
15. Not much before Vietnam. In Vietnam was told Orange & Purple OK, Blue & White had some toxic effects.
16. "Welcome back alive" party for Joe Dougherty, Tom Davie & crew after being shot down in October of 1966 is one of happiness. Unhappiest would have to be those lost crews with Tom Davie a single fatality just before going home being especially tough.
17. — } too many to select from.
18. — }
19. Open sided buildings at Bien Hoa & Da Nang (tents when I first got there in 1966) that became air conditioned just as I left. My last two months in country.

were in Saigon in hotel. Routine day - up early
in morning (0400-0500) - fly one or two missions,
plan next day's mission if lead, go to
club, eat dinner, drink, & go to bed.

Pastimes - heavy drinking, especially during dining
outs at De Nang. Lots of card playing &
dice at the bar.

20. Talk of pride in doing a different, difficult and
hazardous job well and providing the Army
with a safe environment to work in. I
can think of no one or no one thing you
couldn't talk about.

Jim Tanner