

RANCH HAND NEWSLETTER  
JUNE 1975

RANCH HANDS,

The 9th annual symposium of superbly intelligent, sophisticated much decorated, suave, debonaire and highly motivated folks (otherwise known as the 9th annual Ranch Hand reunion) was an outstanding success.

A great round of applause for the exemplary job done by our hosts of the Langley Flight. I have only missed one reunion (I was in SEA during the first one) and this was one of our finest extravaganzas. In fact, a significant number of wives participated in all the events and I think we all agreed they can liven up the business of reunions as well as we can. The accommodations, the hors d'ouerves, the service and the supper were par excellence. The Sheraton had everything we needed and began swinging with us once they got the hang of Cowboy operations.

Jack Gentry and I were met at the airport Friday by Pete Spivey, Dick Peshkin and a case of cold beer. During our baggage retrieval drill a really bad scene hippy type with a long ratty beard and a mop of wild hair tried to start up a conversation with us. Pete finally figured out it was really Marv Zepf in his new "retired" look he's adopted while attending college on the GI bill.

The Ranch reunion committee had liberated the 8th floor of the Sheraton in true Commando fashion and had a hospitality room going full blast. They gave me a bedroom attached to the hospitality suite. A real honor, but I never got to use it since the hospitality suite never shut down from Friday noon till Sunday noon. I could sleep through outgoing barrages in "Nam, but you just don't sleep next door to a Ranch reunion. I never got my bag unpacked either so what the heck!

Friday's "practice party" lasted all night so it was only natural that the Saturday business meeting was postponed till Saturday night and the fishing trip was definitely out. Who really wanted to sit on a rocking boat after an all night bash? As for skeet shooting - no way - far too noisy so we scrubbed that also. Later in the morning as things improved (the bloody mary influence) we cancelled the Busch gardens program since we could easily see there was no way Busch could improve on comradeship and glow found in the hospitality room.

Saturday afternoon some of our superior NCO's (Yale, Coates, McCabe etc) surrounded a long shuffleboard in a super friendly bar nearby where the 8 year never ending shuffleboard contest was renewed. The Zepf-Hubbs combination was too much for the folks who have quit hanging out in those places since returning to the CONUS.

Meanwhile back at the Operations center at the Sheraton, John Mesic, Lee Inman, Ray Lemaire (and other nefarious types) had made a noontime requisition of the Hotel's \$6,000 electronic tennis machine. How they ever got that oversized monster up to the 8th floor and into the room is a mystery the Sheraton will never solve. The manager is probably still trying to figure out how to get it back down to the main bar.

That machine was played continuously all day all night and was still on at 0830 Sunday AM. Burk Mucho established himself as the Maitre D' of that operation. Burk's uniform consisted solely of a pair of purple shorts. You read that right, he discarded his purple flight suit and damned if he wasn't wearing matching skivvies. Now that's class!

Some of the other highlights of Saturday evening was the refreshing dip some of our folks enjoyed in the indoor heated pool in the lobby area. For those of you who participated and may wonder what kind of an image you project while skinny dipping, the hotel management made video tapes with their security cameras and I'm the Southwest distributor of the tapes at varying prices depending on whether at the time you were married, single, male or female.

Another vignette is the lost wallet caper which resolved itself when one of our aquatic stars found all items intact in the room from which he made his famous streak to the pool. It was his streak back (in the wrong direction) that confused him as to where he had left his wallet.

To keep the record straight it must be pointed out that a great deal of editing (censoring) and outright overlooking of certain events of 2-4 May were necessary to get any commercial printer to print this thing.

A sobering note to those cowboys who said they would attend but did not, and did not let us know. 13 folks who did not advise us they wouldn't make it cost us some \$\$\$\$\$. All meals and some rooms were based on your showing up. The rest of us and the Ranch kitty had to come up with \$150.00 for no shows and other items. For you folks who did advise us you couldn't make it - Thanks.

1. Len Bochicchio airlifted in a contingent in his Reserve C-123, Bud Fisher and Burke Mucho in from WPAFB, John Richmond driving from McGuire. Other colorful cowboys we shared toddys with were Roger Meekins, Carol Hughes, Al Jennings, Bob Phieff and Bud Watts. Joe Dougherty and Tom Duff sipping a cool one with Pooch Pochurek of Reunion committee fame. Ed Searles with the rest of the swinging

NCO's rehashing the good old days with Mr Carver (TAC entomologist).

We missed Williams, Mitchell, Ritter, Uhler, Saunders, Mead, Marnell, Womack, Wesley, Clanton, Selk, Zemple, Kidd, Bobick, Hutchings, Taylor, Curtis and Brown who couldn't make it for various reasons.

For all you aother cowboys we had one (or more) for you and your ears must have been ringing as everyone was mentioned sooner or later. It was an outstanding affair and our most sincere thanks to the Langley Flight for the great amount of planning and effort that resulted in a superior job.

We were sorry our old standbys Russ Mohny, Rex Stoner and Ralph Dresser were tied up far away.

Saturday night we held our formal business meeting as required by our recent incorporation and the minutes are as follows:

1975 Business meeting convened at  
2030 Hrs, 3 May 75, Sheraton-Colosseum  
Hotel, Hampton, Virginia

1. All attending members were briefed on and concurred with the status of:
  - a. Minutes of last meeting
  - b. Ranch funds report
  - c. Wear of Vietnamese Wings  
Our appeal to the AF Uniform Board was denied. We will seek a waiver to AFM 35-10. (open)
  - d. Lack of MPC locator support in obtaining missing cowboy addresses. Paul Clanton and Lowell Thomas still working this (open)
  - e. Site of 1976 (10th) reunion. Two possibilities were discussed, Hurlburt and Langley. Langley was a strong contender based on number of cowboys in the NE US area, a cadre of retired in the area who have demonstrated they can throw a wing ding and the Sheraton's invitation to return. A final decision was not made. (open)
2. It was proposed that the current roster of Officers would continue in office as elected at last years reunion indefinitely unless major changes were deemed necessary. (unanimous and closed)
3. A \$500 educational support scholarship or assistance fund was authorized for the use of one of our KIA NCOs dependents. The selection will be made on the most needy basis. (unanimous - open)
4. It was recommended that we advertise in more publications for former Ranch Hands. Examples were the Retired Officers Association, The NCOA and any other nationally distributed media. (Unanimous - closed)
5. It was recommended that information on the Purple Heart Club (a national organization) be made available to interested former Ranch Hands. (Unanimous - open)
6. Lee Inman proposed a letter be sent to President Ford and all members of Congress which generally addressed the events leading up to the fall of South Vietnam and US commitments to foreign countries. This letter could not be endorsed at the business meeting without the Board of Directors Approval. Copies will be sent to each Board member. Discussion on this item was spirited with no clear decision reached. (open)
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NOTES FROM THE FIELD

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Dr. Major Ted Encke keeping his hand in as a FS with a Penn. A-7 unit. Personal for Major Ed Kraft - No, Frank Almeter is not sick I was just bugging him about having Diane answer all his Ranch Hand mail. TSgt Bill McCabe performing in his usual outstanding manner at McGuire and finding 5 lost Ranch Hands for me - many thanks. If each cowboy found just one missing address we'd have them all.

Major Joe O'Connor at Mather still supporting us vigorously. Captain Larry Hanfland really coming through for the Ranch from Pease AFB. Larry not only keeps the kitty purring, but finds Ranchers and sends orders, photos etc. TGreat work. Lt Col John Richmond doing the same for us at McGuire. Merlin Ripley is really SMSgt and not a SSGT as I've carried him on the roster for the last 9 years. Which reminds me of the same story on SMSgt (ret) Ray Lemaire who I did the same disservice to. I think I called Roy Coates Don the last part of the reunion weekend. Forgive me for I knew not of what I was doing. Must be the Virginia water that causes that. Sorry Rip, Ray and Roy.

Major Tex Ritter harrassing the 682nd DASC at Shaw AFB. Major Rod Saunders retired and living in Plattsburgh, NY. MSgt Vern Uhler still participating in skydiving jumpfests. He and I must be the two oldest active jumpers left in the Ranch. I've got more sense than him since I only jump from Helos into calm, warm bay waters with not less than four of my recovery boats waiting for me.

Captain Dick Wagoner in Riverside, CA ably assisting the Ranch fund and tracking down missing cowboys. AF Times ads paid off by finding Bob Wesley in New Jersey, MSgt Raul Gamboa in Fort Worth as many others. Lt Col Larry Youngren retired and working for FAA in the DC area. Marvelous Marvin Zepf retired in Utah and going to school where he contemplates his flowing beard. I hear he is majoring in GURU. May the fleas of a thousand camels nestle in your beard.

What can you say when Colonel Vito Longo sends in a check for \$100? That donation assured us of meeting our scholarship or educational assistance goal for this year. Vito writes "Your latest newsletter was the most informative yet and I must congratulate you and all other Ranchers that have done so much to keep the Ranch and its members alive. You have done absolute wonders. I enclose my contribution to continue this most historic and for me nostalgically interesting part of my Air Force career." Vito is currently at Norton AFB. Thanks for the kind words, even Ranch Hand Presidents like compliments.

LT Enrique Otero fattening the Ranch kitty from Loring AFB. Captain Wayne Chandler on the move from Plattsburg to the 916th ARFS at Travis. Lt Col Frank Moore retired on 1 April. Lt Col George Miller Still doing the State Personnel work in Tennessee. Lt Col Clyde Picht (who I have tried to track down for 3 or 4 years) is commander of a Comm Gp in Germany, on his way to Carswell in July. Lt Col Jim Marnell (same story as Clyde- I tried to find him for last few years) seems the comm people are the last to comm. Jim's recently retired, knocked around Europe, then settled in Cape Cod. Says he tried both work and liesure but that work is grossly overrated. If you run into him don't be surprised that he grew his hair and his waistline.

Colonel Larry McCarthy tracking down cowboys in Germany and aiding the Ranch education fund. Elaine Norcross writes that Captain Al Norcross and she left Hawaii for Bangkok and have been enjoying the tour. She said Al had been spending a good deal of time in Phnom Penh - not now I suspect. Lt Col Joe Fox at WPAFB and helping me find cowboys I never knew about by sending me old orders. Thanks Joe - hope you are feeling better.

Major Gene Marshall working in Dallas for Texas Instruments as a Contract Administrator and negotiator. Tells me that Lt Col Tom Durdin is Chief of Defense Contracts with Texas Instruments. Lt Col Charlie Crawford retired 28 Feb 75 and opened a trans-former repair shop in Anniston, Alabama. He'll be at the next reunion if we hold it in Fort Walton Beach. Lt Col Wayne (repeat Wayne) Jefferson in Colo Springs finding cowboys for us. If I send Wayne one more letter starting out t"Dear Bill" he'll smash me. Does anyone know where Lt Col William H Jefferson is or if there ever was one?

Walt Cunningham working for U.S. Aviation Underwriters and attending school in Los Angeles. Major Jack Spey still in SEA (12 plus years) and flying the C-123. Must have found a home over there. Congratulations on the new bride. Frank Almeter putting a busted Beech Bonanza back together to fly to future reunions. Bill King married, finishing Vet Med school in Colo. Colonel Al "Buck" Trott new VC of MAC Wing at McChord. Lt Col Dan Hejde assigned from Colorado to the 18th MAS at McGuire says he runs into Bob Fischer who flies with the Reserve Wing. Bruce Colvin was taking finals during the reunion but says we will have our own legal eagle next year to bail us out. Could have used you on three known occasions this year (or wasn't I supposed to mention that?).

Captain Jeff Britton flying in same squadron at Lubbock as Jerry Davis. Dan Phillipi separated and doing well in Sacto, CA. Major Ron Mead with much help from lovely wife finding me many missing Ranch addresses in FWB area. Good work, thank your frau. Major Paul Mitchell finally rediscovered in 2nd Aerial Delivery Group at Dobbins AFB. Lt Col Bob McCollester tracked down in USAFE HQS/XP00.

Major John Pietenpol retired in Destin so he can make all the future reunions in FWB. Ron Mead is interested in getting a model of the Spray C-123 built since no one in the business of building mass produced models has come out with one. He thinks he can get it done if enough folks show an interest. Anyone interested in this worthwhile endeavor should contact Ron and with enough interest and orders we can get a producer to come up with "PATCHES". Write to Ron at:

Major Ron Mead  
608 Ferretti Ave  
Ft Walton Bch, FL  
32548

\*Sign me up Ron, I want  
one - Charlie

Along these lines for any cowboys who missed it, Pete Spivey had Ranch Hand Beer mugs and Coffee mugs made up with names on them and Mike Topolosky had 3" metal Ranch insignia made up that make dandy plaques. Mike also handled the Ranch lapel pins which are 5 color beauties. Contact them for details.

I received, in the name of all Ranch Hands,  
the most beautiful Xmas card we could ask for.  
It could have been written on the back of a  
post card and it still would have been first  
cabin because it was signed..

Heine Aderholt  
BRIGADIER GENERAL

Also the Air Commando Association continuing to give outstanding support to the Ranch. Our mutual cooperation is of utmost importance to every Special Ops person. Thanks ACA.

Absolutely fantastic news for Rancheros at Dyess AFB, Colonel Russ Mohny new airlift Wing Commander. Maj Sid Weiner doesn't answer Ranch mail but we know he moved from HQ AFSC to Pentagon. Sgt Gerry Hutchings back from Europe and living in Hampton, VA with a large group of ecowboys there. Got some old time Ranchers Sgts Roy Coates, Keith Yale and John Mesic off the missing list when they all turned up at Langley or the local area. Also found Sgt James L Taylor at Langley. If everybody will advise me of those folks I don't have listed, I'll find 'em sooner or later.

Lt Col Bill Knothe hanging in in spite of Parkinson's disease in FWB. Says he seems to be doing a bit better. Brad Eliot says he couldn't stretch a 3 day pass from Europe to make the reunion. He's at Shape HQ.

Still getting my Lt Col W. Robinsons mixed up (sounds like the Jefferson story) anyway Wilbur L is at Austin TX and William F is in Hockley TX. Retired Sgt Bob Wesley very much in contact with me from Camden, NJ. Lt Col Clarence Vanderwey at APO 96553. I found Floyd Millis retired in Smyrna, Gawga. MSgt Bob Oba transferred from Mather to Yokota. Major Duane Weston retired in La Jolla, CA. MSgt Cary Lahmon retired in Columbus, Ohio. He and Jim Perialas can rehash old times there. TSgt Lloyd Hammerstrom retired in Colo Springs sent me a great poem titled "Last Mission" which I will include later in this newsletter. Wish I had it sooner, beautiful!

USA Colonel Bill Shade retired and going Mach 1 conserving energy in his new job as energy conservation director, Boise Cascade Corp, Idaho. From defoliation to Director of energy conservation - wow! TSgt Art Gack back on our mailing list and serving with the VIP flight at Andrews. Lt Col Les Easton upholding the Ranch image in Weisbaden. Says he still wears his V-N wings and will see us at next years reunion.

Captain Murray Green at Fairchild AFB and of great help in finding lost cowboys for me. Gene Stammer passed Hugh Shirley's address to us from the Crystal Lake, Illinois area where all the outstanding airline pilots live. Wow! I finally got some really original Ranch Hand orders. TSgt (ret) John Mesic, Hampton VA, sent me copies of orders from 1961, 1962 & 1963! I kept finding Keith Yale's name on them and other old timers like Mike Devlin, Al Kidd, Dick Haupt, Carl Marshall, Hughie Blankenship, Roy Coates, Ed Fitzpatrick, John Giles, Jim Kahl, Lloyd Atkins, Ed Carlson, Jerry Cornwall, Frank Dowell, Jerry Hutchings, Ben King and Bill (F) Robinson. Would you believe most were Captains or Lt's and Staff or ofess. Just proves you don't need a lot of rank to get

the job done. Now if I could just get a handle on the '63-70 time frame. Thanks John.

Lt Col Hank Good retired and living the "Good" life at Seeley Lake, Montana. Hank says its 80 miles to the General store in Kalispell and 80 miles to the General store in Missoula. However, the deer and elk hunting keep the larder filled in the 2600 sq ft, 2 fireplace \$ bar home they've built on the lake. He says his extra guest house/office/study is almost finished so stop by. Hank, I'm still holding your signed pledge.

Colonel Joe Dougherty working on SECDEF staff in DC. Lt Col (ret) Stan Nelson flying Gulfstreams for the NASA Space Center at Cape Canaveral and has a 33' sailboat he lives on. Finally really found MSgt Bill Selk at McGuire AFB. Sent his mail to the 6th MAS mailroom and they returned it "addressee unknown". Bill McCabe finally got me his home address and we are connected now. Damn Postal Service!

Received a very nice letter from USA Captain Ted Eisenman, Army Cobra pilot and Brother-in-law of Ranch Hand Captain Howie Barden (KIA 31 Jan 67). Ted saw our Ranch Reunion ad in Times and wished us the best. He added "...regardless of where we fly and fight, the missions we have flown and the comrades we've known will never be lost."

Here's a greatly edited version of a letter from one of our remote assignees. The editing was necessary to maintain diplomatic relations.

"I am currently on a one year remote with Mil Tng Mission in flying C-118's all over the frappin' country hauling everything from hershey bars to toilet paper. The job reminds me of a similar operation I was associated with in SEA in '61 except for a few minor differences. I guess it is the local custom to chain the women up in some unknown place cuz you rarely see any out on the street and when you do they are covered from head to toe. I never thought I'd see the day that I'd get horny seeing a sheet walking down the street. What few dogs you find here are all going nuts trying to find a tree. Hang loose, keep the faith, wish you were here so I could be there. As they say here, Please be assured of my continuing high esteem." Smutty George Adams

## GENERAL INFO

We now have 650 names of former Ranch Hands. Of this number we are in direct contact with and being supported by 360. We still have 290 names with no addresses. How many times have you casually met a former Ranch Hand who either had lost contact with us or who had never received a letter from us? Did you think to write his name and address down and stick it in your wallet? Are you still writing Xmas cards to an old Ranch buddy who isn't listed or is among the missing?

If each of you found one, we'd have them all and probably a couple of hundred more. I only know of two cowboys who don't answer their mail. The Ranch long ago proved it was one of the most unique units to fly in combat, had more esprit de corps than any unit in modern times, and has remained closer in spirit and real world communication than any unit of comparable size. WE ARE SOME KIND OF SPECIAL AND DON'T YOU FORGET IT!

The postal service is still our worst enemy. They will not forward mail to you from a military address after six months from a move. And your home address is a definite maybe for periods from 6 to 12 months, depending on the energy level of the local postal weenies.

I think you can see why I need a permanent address on each of you. If you want to make that 20th reunion let alone the 10th next year, I've got to be able to find you.

Now for finances. There are no dues. Won't be any. Our funding comes from the dollar here, dollar there that shows up in our returns. (Vito Longo excluded) That is what makes us far enough in the green this year to offer a scholarship. We are broke now, but we never had enough to even pay for the newsletter until this year. Keep the freebies coming and if you don't have a buck in your pocket, we don't care - rather hear from you in any manner than worry about the small stuff. COWBOYS TAKE CARE OF THEIR OWN!

TEAR ON LINE BELOW TO SAVE POEM ON BACK

NAME

SOC SECURITY NUMBER

RANK (RETIRED?)

CURRENT ADDRESS

PERMANENT ADDRESS

REMARKS: USE BOTH SIDES IF NECESSARY.

TO THE RANCH!

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What can you say when Colonel Vito Longo sends in a check for \$100? That donation assured us of meeting our scholarship or educational assistance goal for this year. Vito writes "Your latest newsletter was the most informative yet and I must congratulate you and all other Ranchers that have done so much to keep the Ranch and its members alive. You have done absolute wonders. I enclose my contribution to continue this most historic and for me nostalgically interesting part of my Air Force career." Vito is currently at Norton AFB. Thanks for the kind words, even Ranch Hand Presidents like compliments.

LT Enrique Otero fattening the Ranch kitty from Loring AFB. Captain Wayne Chandler on the move from Plattsburg to the 916th ARFS at Travis. Lt Col Frank Moore retired; on 1 April. Lt Col George Miller still doing the State Personnel work in Tennessee. Lt Col Clyde Picht (who I have tried to track down for 3 or 4 years) is commander of a Comm Gp in Germany, on his way to Carswell in July. Lt Col Jim Garnell (same story as Clyde- I tried to find him for last few years) seems the comm people are the last to comm. Jim's recently retired, knocked around Europe, then settled in Cape Cod. Says he tried both work and leisure but that work is grossly overrated. If you run into him don't be surprised that he grew his hair and his waistline.

Colonel Larry McCarthy tracking down cowboys in Germany and aiding the Ranch education fund. Elaine Norcross writes that Captain Al Norcross and she left Hawaii for Bangkok and have been enjoying the tour. She said Al had been spending a good deal of time in Phnom Penh - not now I suspect. Lt Col Joe Fox at WPAFB and helping me find cowboys I never knew about by sending me old orders. Thanks Joe - hope you are feeling better.

Major Gene Marshall working in Dallas for Texas Instruments as a Contract Administrator and negotiator. Tells me that Lt Col Tom Durdin is Chief of Defense Contracts with Texas Instruments. Lt Col Charlie Crawford retired 28 Feb 75 and opened a transformer repair shop in Anniston, Alabama. He'll be at the next reunion if we hold it in Fort Walton Beach. Lt Col Wayne (repeat Wayne) Jefferson in Colo Springs finding cowboys for us. If I send Wayne one more letter starting out "Dear Bill" he'll smash me. Does anyone know where Lt Col William H Jefferson is or if there ever was one?

Walt Cunningham working for U.S. Aviation Underwriters and attending school in Los Angeles. Major Jack Spey still in SEA (12 plus years) and flying the C-123. Must have found a home over there. Congratulations on the new bride. Frank Almeter putting a busted Koosh Bonanza back together to fly to future reunions. Bill King married, finishing Vet Med school in Colo. Colonel Al "Buck" Trott now VC of MAC Wing at McChord. Lt Col Dan Hejda assigned from Colorado to the 18th MAS at McGuire says he runs into Bob Fletcher who flies with the Reserve Wing. Bruce Colvin was taking finals during the reunion but says we will have our own loyal eagle next year to bail us out. Could have used you on three known occasions this year (or wasn't I supposed to mention that?).

Captain Jeff Britton flying in same squadron at Lubbock as Jerry Davis. Dan Phillipi separated and doing well in Sacto, CA. Major Ron Mead with much help from lovely wife finding me many missing Ranch addresses in FWH area. Good work, thank your frau. Major Paul Mitchell finally rediscovered in 2nd Aerial Delivery Group at Dobbins AFB. Lt Col Bob McColister tracked down in USAF HQS/XPOO.

Major John Pietenpol retired in Destin so he can make all the future reunions in FWH. Ron Mead is interested in getting a model of the Spray C-123 built since no one in the business of building mass produced models has come out with one. He thinks he can get it done if enough folks show an interest. Anyone interested in this worthwhile endeavor should contact Ron and with enough interest and orders we can get a producer to come up with "PATCHES". Write to Ron at:

Major Ron Mead  
608 Ferretti Ave  
Ft Walton Bch, FL  
32548

\*Sign me up Ron, I want  
one - Charlie

Along these lines for any cowboys who missed it, Pete Spivey had Ranch Hand Beer mugs and Coffee mugs made up with names on them and Mike Topolosky had 3" metal Ranch insignia made up that make dandy plaques. Mike also handled the Ranch lapel pins which are 5 color beauties. Contact them for details.

I received, in the name of all Ranch Hands, the most beautiful Xmas card we could ask for. It could have been written on the back of a post card and it still would have been first cabin because it was signed..

Heine Aderholt  
BRIGADIER GENERAL

Also the Air Commando Association continuing to give outstanding support to the Ranch. Our mutual cooperation is of utmost importance to every Special Ops person. Thanks ACA.

Absolutely fantastic news for Rancheros at Dyess AFB, Colonel Russ Mohney new airlift Wing Commander. Maj Sid Weiner doesn't answer Ranch mail but we know he moved from HQ AFSC to Pentagon. Sgt Gerry Hutchings back from Europe and living in Hampton, VA with a large group of cowboys there. Got some old time Ranchers Sgts Roy Coates, Keith Yale and John Mesic off the missing list when they all turned up at Langley on the local area. Also found Sgt James L Taylor at Langley. If everybody will advise me of those folks I don't have listed, I'll find 'em sooner or later.

Lt Col Bill Knothe hanging in in spite of Parkinson's disease in FWH. Says he seems to be doing a bit better. Brad Elliot says he couldn't stretch a 3 day pass from Europe to make the reunion. He's at Shape HQ.

Still getting my Lt Col W. Robinsons mixed up (sounds like the Jefferson story) anyway Wilbur L is at Austin TX and William F is in Hockley TX. Retired Sgt Bob Wesley very much in contact with me from Camden, NJ. Lt Col Clarence Vanderwey at APO 96553. I found Floyd Millis retired in Smyrna, Ga. MSgt Bob Oba transferred from Mather to Yokota. Major Duane Weston retired in La Jolla, CA. MSgt Cary Lamon retired in Columbus, Ohio. He and Jim Perialas can rehash old times there. TSgt Lloyd Hammerstrom retired in Colo Springs sent me a great poem titled "Last Mission" which I will include later in this newsletter. Wish I had it sooner, beautiful!

USA Colonel Bill Shade retired and going Mach 1 conserving energy in his new job as energy conservation director, Boise Cascade Corp, Idaho. From defoliation to Director of energy conservation - wow! TSgt Art Gack back on our mailing list and serving with the VIP flight at Andrews. Lt Col Les Easton upholding the Ranch image in Weisbaden. Says he still wears his V-N wings and will see us at next years reunion.

Captain Murray Green at Fairchild AFB and of great help in finding lost cowboys for me. Gene Stanner passed Hugh Shirley's address to us from the Crystal Lake, Illinois area where all the outstanding airline pilots live. Wow! I finally got some really original Ranch Hand orders. TSgt (ret) John Mesic, Hampton VA, sent me copies of orders from 1961, 1962 & 1963! I kept finding Keith Yale's name on them and other old timers like Mike Devlin, Al Kiki, Dick Haupt, Carl Marshall, Hughie Blankenship, Roy Coates, Ed Fitzpatrick, John Gley, Jim Kuhl, Lloyd Atkins, Ed Carlson, Jerry Cornwall, Frank Daxell, Jerry Hutchings, Ben King and Bill (P) Robinson. Would you believe next were Captain or Lt's and Staff or Tech. Just proves you don't need a lot of rank to get



the job done. Now if I could just get a handle on the '63-70 time frame. Thanks John.

1st Col Hank Good retired and living the "Good" life at Seeley Lake, Montana. Hank says its 80 miles to the General store in Kalispell and 80 miles to the General store in Missoula. However, the deer and elk hunting keep the larder filled in the 2600 sq ft, 2 fireplace \$ bar home they've built on the lake. He says his extra guest house/office/study is almost finished so stop by. Hank, I'm still holding your signed pledge.

Colonel Joe Dougherty working on SECDEF staff in DC. 1st Col (ret) Stan Nelson flying Gulfstreams for the NASA Space Center at Cape Canaveral and has a 33' sailboat he lives on. Finally really found MSGT Bill Selk at McGuire AFB. Sent his mail to the 6th MAS mailroom and they returned it "addressee unknown". Bill McCabe finally got me his home address and we are connected now. Damn Postal Service!

Received a very nice letter from USA Captain Ted Eisenman, Army Cobra pilot and Brother-in-law of Ranch Hand Captain Howie Barden (KIA 31 Jan 67). Ted saw our Ranch Reunion ad in Times and wished us the best. He added "...regardless of where we fly and fight, the missions we have flown and the comrades we've known will never be lost."

Here's a greatly edited version of a letter from one of our remote assignees. The editing was necessary to maintain diplomatic relations.

"I am currently on a one year remote with Mil Tng Mission in flying C-118's all over the frappin' country hauling everything from hershey bars to toilet paper. The job reminds me of a similar operation I was associated with in SEA in '61 except for a few minor differences. I guess it is the local custom to chain the women up in some unknown place cuz you rarely see any out on the street and when you do they are covered from head to toe. I never thought I'd see the day that I'd get horny seeing a sheet walking down the street. What few dogs you find here are all going nuts trying to find a tree. Hang loose, keep the faith, wish you were here so I could be there. As they say here, Please be assured of my continuing high esteem." Snutty George Adams

## GENERAL INFO

We now have 650 names of former Ranch Hands. Of this number we are in direct contact with and being supported by 360. We still have 290 names with no addresses. How many times have you casually met a former Ranch Hand who either had lost contact with us or who had never received a letter from us? Did you think to write his name and address down and stick it in your wallet? Are you still writing Xmas cards to an old Ranch buddy who isn't listed or is among the missing?

If each of you found one, we'd have them all and probably a couple of hundred more. I only know of two cowboys who don't answer their mail. The Ranch long ago proved it was one of the most unique units to fly in combat, had more esprit de corps than any unit in modern times, and has remained closer in spirit and real world communication than any unit of comparable size. WE ARE SOME KIND OF SPECIAL AND DON'T YOU FORGET IT!

The postal service is still our worst enemy. They will not forward mail to you from a military address after six months from a move. And your home address is a definite maybe for periods from 6 to 12 months, depending on the energy level of the local postal weenies.

I think you can see why I need a permanent address on each of you. If you want to make that 20th reunion let alone the 10th next year, I've got to be able to find you.

Now for finances. There are no dues. Won't be any. Our funding comes from the dollar here, dollar there that shows up in our returns. (Vito Longo excluded) That is what makes us far enough in the green this year to offer a scholarship. We are broke now, but we never had enough to even pay for the newsletter until this year. Keep the freebies coming and if you don't have a buck in your pocket, we don't care - rather hear from you in any manner than worry about the small stuff. COWBOYS TAKE CARE OF THEIR OWN!

TEAR ON LINE BELOW TO SAVE POEM ON BACK

NAME

SOC SECURITY NUMBER

RANK (RETIRED?)

CURRENT ADDRESS

PERMANENT ADDRESS

REMARKS: USE BOTH SIDES IF NECESSARY.

TO THE RANCH!

That damned alarm clanged in my ear-  
Ruined my sleep, that stuff so dear,  
Gotta fly three lifts, Oh wall!  
That's O.K....I'm short as Hell.

THE LAST MISSION  
by IKE SOWLES

No time to eat in that old mess hall,  
Lots of booze last night... sure had a ball!  
Down to the Ranch, make out THE FORM,  
Gulp down some coffee, brief up a storm.

Scurry off to PE, and get my gear,  
Damn, I could sure use a beer!  
Drag my Rifle, belt on my gun,  
Shoulder the Vest...Hell, gonna have to run.

Jumped into a "Beast", threw the checklist to the floor,  
Hell...I'm FIGMO, Don't need THAT anymore!  
Flipped a few switches and turned to the Chief-  
Hey! This thing preflighted? That's a relief!

Turned on the radio, heard someone say...  
Where in Hell is everybody...Oh miserable day!  
Dailed "Button 2", This is Lead..Check in TWO.  
Are we Charlie? Who in Hell are you?

Cowboys! if you hear this Transmission,  
Get the lead out, we might lose this mission!  
Mixtures, Cowl Flaps and all that crap...  
Damn it Nav, Get off my strap!

Hey Flt. Mech, Have you seen my book?  
Take the flash and take a quick look.  
Number one engine seems a wee sick....  
While you are back there, Give the radio a kick!

Got a good Hack? Are we ready to roll?  
Whew...Those Hi-balls are taking their toll!  
Five, Four, Three, Tooooo give her the gun,  
In the damn prop wash, this ought to be fun!

I got the yoke, the power is yours,  
What ya say Mech! We lost both doors?  
Gear up, and Memo if you please,  
Oh God... Feel that nice cool breeze!

Climb out on the Needle, The damn thing won't move,  
Slip over to the right ...get back in the groove.  
Can't climb in this old dog,  
Special VFR! Hell thats pure FOQ!

Take Five now! We're not even close!  
Say Co- Did she really give you a dose?  
Spray pump Running? Max decent, 26 eet?  
Gonna be a Lulu, With CBU yet!

No Ground Fire, I think we're O.K.  
Whats that? Fifties ya say?  
Where in the <sup>N</sup> is that Dump?  
Got hit whore? OH, just in the Pump!

Put it low and fast on the deck,  
Shot us where? Take a look Flt. Mech!  
Got altitude, no knots to spare...  
Thats why our Pilots! have no hair!

Channel 77 and R T B, better look us over what ya see?  
Holes all over the Hell ya say, Hows No. Three?  
He'll make it back and will call pretty soon,  
Bogie at 1 oclock, hell it's only a Goon!

Fire Crew standing by and ready for us,  
Glad to see 'em, even if its a fuss!  
Straight down the center and no Flaps for me  
Cause I'm a Ranch Pilot, Yessiree!

Made it back, to the old Corral...  
Glad that ones over, huh, old Pal?  
Say! Any Cherries on our crew?  
Sorry about that...the Champagnes on you!

No spare air machines...all are out you see  
We'll scrub the next one, bad weather it be!  
De-brief and argue, give lead all kinds of, sass,  
Leap on the old Honda, gonna drag ass.

Now to get some sack time a Sient and tonight...  
Won't drink too many, not gonna get tight!  
A Party! Well let's give it a go,  
Might as well, cause I'm still FIGMO!

FINI