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Mike Shuppert

February 1988

Dear Rancheros:

The 1987 gathering of the World's Greatest Aerial Dispensers of Dandy Defoliants was a super get-together this past October. This year we were honored to have Lt. Gen. Claudius (Bud) Watts (RM 1968), Comptroller of the Air Force, join us for the Friday evening luau. Gen. Watts saw many of his past compatriots of the Ranch and everyone sure enjoyed seeing him again.

Col. Alvin Young, Executive Office of the President, was the guest speaker Saturday night. Col. Young's immense background in herbicides, and the health effects associated with such chemicals, is well known and respected in the world's scientific community. Dr. Young outlined the great amount of study and investigation currently underway into the controversy concerning herbicide Orange, and the great importance placed on the Air Force Health Study of Ranch Hand personnel and their comparison group. The A.F. study, by all scientific measures, is the hallmark investigation seeking an answer to two extremely important questions. Did the mission of Operation Ranch Hand do harm to the health of those performing that mission? Did the mission performed by Operation Ranch Hand harm the health of those on the ground? The answer to both questions continues to be NO! And for you and me, that's good news.

Another distinguished guest, Col/Dr. William Wolf, Chief of Epidemiology, School of Aerospace Medicine, Brooks AFB, TX, briefed us on the latest results of the second morbidity study (current state of health). The current state of health of Ranch Hand veterans and the Ranch Hand morbidity rate is essentially the same as our comparison group. There is no indication that our health has been adversely affected by the mission we so proudly accomplished.

Those attending the 1987 (22nd Annual) gathering were:

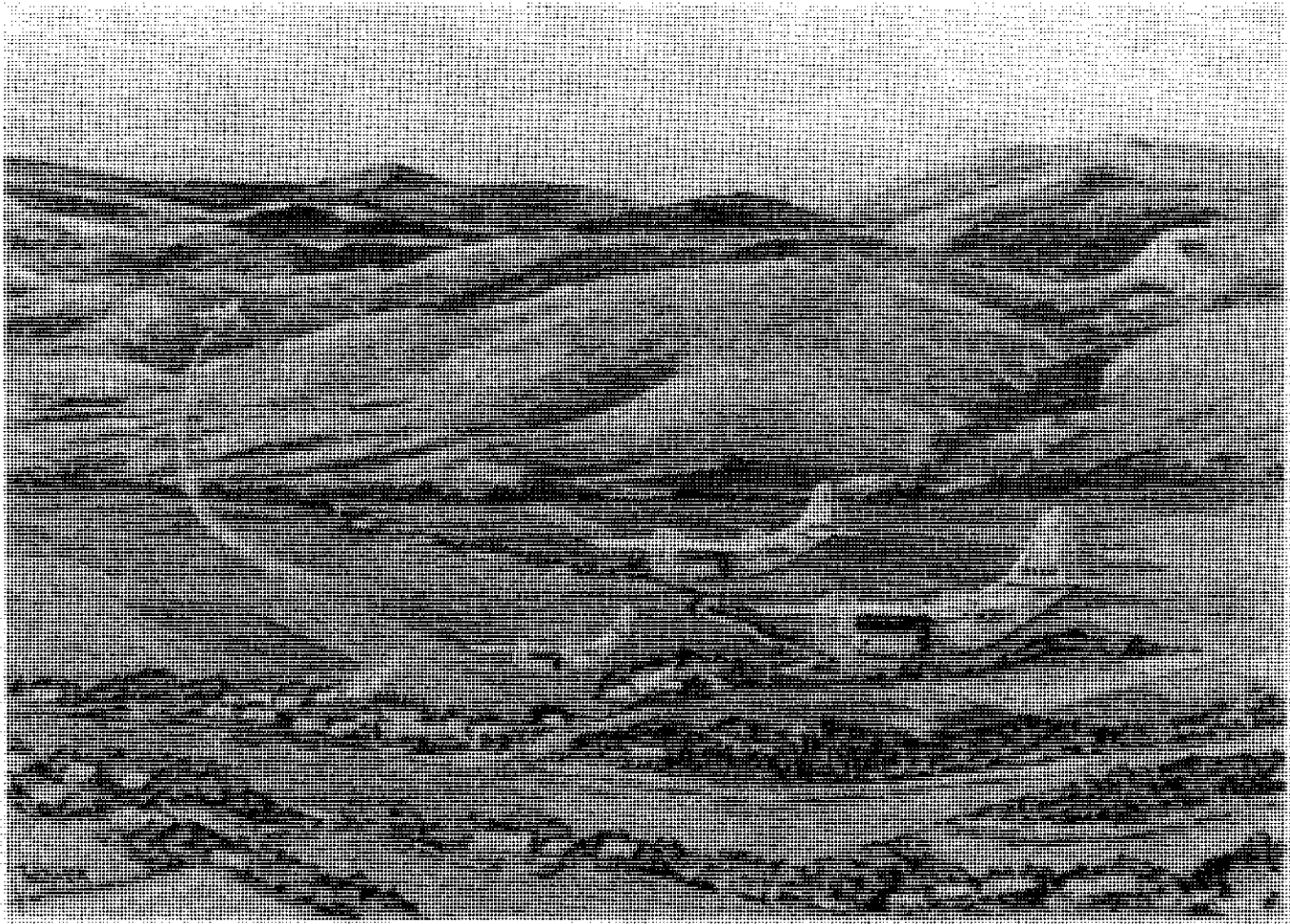
Bill Aldrich
John & Betty Brady
Jack Brennecke
Earle & Kate Briggs
Paul Cecil
Willy & Mrs. Clark
Gerald & Mrs. Cornell
Robert & Marge Dennis
Ralph & Dolly Dresser
Franklin & Mrs. Elliott
Charles & Mrs. Fisher
Jack & Bobbie Gentry
Lee & Bobbie Harrison
Charlie & Beth Hubbs
Bud & Doris Day
George & Pearl Ketzell
Bill Knothe
Ray Lemaire
Art McConnell
Ed & Louise McGee

Charles & Genevieve Meadow
Carl & Sandy Marshall
Roger & Elanore Meekins
Russ & Billie Mohny
Al & Emily Nicholas
William (Mick) Mikolasy
Clyde & Tru Picht
Jim & Patricia Pochurek
Bill & Pat Pokuda
John Richmond
Wilbur Robinson
Pappy & Moe Rothermel
Mike Shuppert
Jack & Marilyn Spey
Pete & Kathy Spivey
Dave & Margaret Stockton
Jim Umstead
Gary M. White
Marv & Mrs. Zepf

As always, there was a good group of folks not seen for a long time.

Air Force Museum:

On 16 December 1987, the United States of America accepted as a gift by the Ranch Hand Vietnam Association a painting by L/Col. Doc Weaver entitled "An Lao Valley - 1965". This magnificent acrylic measures 20" x 30" and depicts three aircraft in the final descent, just prior to "Spray On", with an F100 providing suppression fire. It is truly a beautiful work of art and captures a special moment during a Ranch Hand mission. All our thanks go to Lt. Col. R. C. Doc Weaver of Santa Fe, NM for this great work. We all look forward to seeing "An Lao Valley - 1965" in person at the Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson AFB.



Wright-Patterson AFB, OH:

Earlier this year the Association had considered a get-together at Wright-Patterson AFB for the official dedication of the new building at the Air Force Museum. It was also hoped that "Patches" (C123 #362) would be inside that building.

Due to many different circumstances the official opening will be low-key and the date of President Reagan's appearance is still to be set; and Patches will remain outside. For these reasons the Association plans no official presence at the dedication; however, those wishing to attend, please call Linda Smith, W/P Public Relations (513-255-4704 X3286) for the latest itinerary. The dedication date is currently planned for 30 April 1988.

General Fund:

The Association currently has \$1,050 in the general fund, thanks to the many who contributed so well last fall. A newsletter costs approximately \$450. Keep the contributions coming in.

Memorial Fund:

There is currently \$8,200 in the memorial fund, leaving \$1,800 still due on the construction loan for the Ranch Hand Memorial. The Association hopes to retire this debt by the year's end. Please keep this in mind.

Ranch Hand Coffee Mugs/Beer Steins:

Pete Spivey can order for us very handsome Ranch Hand mugs or steins. Write Pete at 2524 Jennifer Terrace, Palm Harbor, FL 33685 (813-784-9681). Some of us still owe Pete money from orders placed last fall. Please pay up Cowboys!

Ranch Hand Patches:

Ranch Hand patches are available at \$5.50 each. Send your money and order to yours truly. Profits will go to the Memorial Fund.

News of Cowboys Around the World:

Chris M. Doerr, Pendleton, IN: Chris had planned to attend the reunion in October but had a problem with a TREE! As in "falling out of" - resulting in compound fractures of both forearms. Bad tree! Nope all is well by now.

Eugene D. Stammer, Shiocton, WI: Gene is still flying for TWA.

Vern Uhler, Knob Noster, MO: Vern tried to make it this year but for some unknown reason did not show??

Ben King, Orland, FL: Ben could not be here in Oct. He was at the Round-Up in LaJolla.

Eugene S. Robertson, Upper Marlboro, MD: Gene is a vehicle transporter which keeps him on the road a good part of the time.

Robert E. (Gene) Marshall, Rockwall, TX: Gene's still keeping us free with his duties with the Air Force Reserve, AF Intel and SAR/IN. He and Pat will make it again soon.

Ron Peters, Nashua, NM: Thanks Ron! Ron helped crew a Ranch Mand bird across the PAC in December 1966.

John Parish, Niceville, FL: John was unable to attend the reunion this year.

Edwin C. Ross (RM '66-'67) Wichita, KS: Ed is still teaching Lear jet pilots at Flight Safety's Wichita Training Center.

Bryce C. Connor, Orlando, FL: Thanks Bryce!

Richard M. Kenny, Ft. Myers Beach, FL: Thanks Dick!

Cornelius "Rocky" Nunn - formerly of CA is now Immigration Inspector, c/o Nassau, Dept. of State, Nassau! Throw me in that briar patch Rocky!

Sanford Smith, Jr., New London, NC: Our special thanks to Sanford for a generous donation to the association. Many thanks Sanford!

Col. John E. Poast II, Camp MM Smith, MI: John, former Chief of North East Asia Plan & Policy, is now the Air Attache to Brazil. "Star" sailors get all the luck!

Roland P. Miles, Wellsville, NY: Roland is a partner in an insurance agency, married and has two sons.

Leonard Bochicchio, Napa, CA: Len continues to fly "the friendly skies" with a major airline, C-5's as L/C in the Reserves, and sips Napa "vino" during his off-time.

Robert A. Shade, Annapolis, MD: Change in address. His "last move".

Peter J. Clark, Alexandria, VA: There are many benefits, both individual and long term that result from the Air Force Health Study. In Pete's case, LaJolla discovered a tumor in his lung which was subsequently removed. For "Pete's Sake", "luck" was in his favor.

Calvin G. Bass, Tulsa, OK: Calvin has retired again. After 12 years as a FAA flight examiner and some 5,000 hours later, Cal has turned the mag switch off.

There's always Burnie Dallas, San Bernardino, CA: Thanks Burnie!

Rold Eagleson, Sacramento, CA: Rolf sends his best to the rest of those "Daring Defoliators".

Thomas O. Duff, Lexington, MA: Thanks Tom!

Raul Gamboa, Fresno, CA: Raul is still with the Postal Service in Fresno.

William McCracken, Phoenix, AZ: Bill is still pushing throttles for America West.

Ronald W. Kempfer, Melbourne, FL: We all thank Ron. He's a true Centurion. A true friend of the Ranch - Charles J. Conrad, Thousand Oaks, CA: Thanks Charlie for all your help to the Association.

No words, just kind thoughts and financial aid: Col. William Borkowski, Barksdale AFB, LA; Floyd Meffner, Smyrna, GA; Joseph Brooks, Fayetteville, NC; Patrick Cournoyer, Spearfish, SD; Gerald Martin, Fresno, CA; Lt. Col. Keith West, San Antonio, TX; R. B. Reeser, Belleville, IL; Lee MacMurdo, Odessa, TX; Virgil W. Berry, Oscoda, MI.

Howard Bowles, Newtown, CT: Howard couldn't make it last Oct. but will try soon.

M. D. Fratt, Riverside, CA: Doug is still teaching history in Riverside and sends his best to the Ranch.

Lloyd West, Everett, WA: Lloyd and Melissa have moved to the northwest and are operating a travel agency (206-775-0602). They have suggested a Ranch Travel Club. More later.

Leo Gagnon, Phoenix, AZ: No word this time, but thanks Leo!

Richard Alexander, Lynn Haven, FL: The Alexander story is a great one. Dick retires as L/C this February. His wife Lynda retired as an L/C in '87 after declining full Col. Now that would be hell - having to call your wife Mam!

Ed Blaufuss, Irving, TX: Ed, who is normally a regular at reunions, moved "up" to new equipment with American Airlines and became junior on the bidding system.

Change of address for Linwood L. Wright - to Omaha, NE.

Ed Kroft, Lancaster, PA: Ed is still Business Director of the Lancaster County Prison, but the big news is his son, Ed III. Ed III is flying B52's out of Carswell AFB, TX. Congrats to Dad and 1/Lt Ed!

Col. James Kelly, Orcutt, CA: Col. Kelly has a real estate and investment business in Orcutt and sends his best to all Rancheros. Thanks Centurion!

Dave Motowidlak, Mililani, HI: Dave and Nancy moved to Hawaii to avoid the cold of NM. Dave works on F15's and hopes to fly again if Mickham gets C135's. Thanks Dave!

M/SGT Donald W. Whitaker, APO NY 09286: Don is still working life support as he did at Bien Hoa RVM for the Ranch.

James E. Griffin, Jr., Bowie, MD: Thanks Jim!

Capt. Paul Parham, San Antonio, TX: Paul is now stationed at Kelly AFB and had a great mini-reunion at Scripps last summer.

Rick Smith, Columbus, OH: Rick was with the Ranch from March '70 until it moved to Phan Rang. Thanks Rick!

Merb Woodcock, Greenland, NM: R.M. class of '68. Merb is still in the happy-snap business and doing a great job in Greenland.

Bob Oba, Tacoma, WA: Thanks Bob!

Francis E. Griffin, Dublin, OH: (RM '68 - '69). Thanks Centurion!

L/Col. Tim B. Cafferty, St. Charles, MO: Tim retired from the USAFR and still flies with T.W.A.

Charles J. Meadow, Weslaco, TX: Joe's another Centurion!

G. Clem Lockamy, Opelousas, LA: Clem has been working for years as a helicopter mechanic in Oil Patch, LA, but unfortunately suffered a fall and fractured a hip. Clem is now going to electronics school so he can continue with benchwork. Our best of luck to Clem.

Col. Kenneth Klein, Indiatlantic Beach, FL: Thanks Ken!

L. Wright, Omaha, NE: The editor, Jack Spey, lost Mr. Wright's letter. My mistake - sorry Linwood.

Philip J. Digennaro, Sandy Hook Ct, 06482: Thanks Phil!

Willard Gorman, Brandon, FL: Thanks for the contribution for the memorial.

Rex Stoner, Southern Pines, NC: Rex had to cancel again but he promises to be in Ft. Walton Beach in October '88. We shall see if the 23rd annual reunion is the charm for Rex.

James K. McDonald, Pasadena, TX: Jim drives for Union Carbide in Houston and plans to join us in October.

Dr. George Lathrop, Boerne, TX: Thanks Doc!

Ben King, Orland, FL (RM '62): Thanks Ben!

Thomas Quinn, Fairborn, OH: Thanks Tom!

At LaJolla in Jan. '88 yours truly saw a super group of Cowboys all being poked, prodded and bled with pride: Maj. Gen. Wayne Jefferson, NATO MDQ, Brussels, Belgium; Bill Hughes, Frederick, MD; James (Jay) Bobick, Aurora, CO; "Robbie" Drayton Robinette, Meadland, AL; Richard (Smokey) Oyster, Atwater, OH; Jim Camden, Temple Mill, MD; James Reese, Pago Pago.

Well Cowboys, thats all the news to date -- keep the cards/letters coming in.

Reunion 1988:

The 23rd annual reunion will be held in Ft. Walton Beach, FL on 7, 8 and 9 October 1988. Make your plans now. Details will be in the next newsletter.

Centurions:

When the Roman Empire controlled the politics and economy of the known world, the Centurion commanded 100 good men in support of the Empire and the cause. Over the past four years, Operation Ranch Hand has had many Centurions, those contributing \$100 or more in one contribution. The Centurions are:

Jack Gentry
Ted Encke
Russ Mohny
Rolf Eagleson
Vito Longo
Bill Knothe
Francis Griffin
James Kelly
Charles Meadow
Ronald Kempfer
Peter J. Clark
Bob Cruts
Ed Blaufuss
William (Mick) Mikolasy
Delmar (Pete) Spivey
Mal Underhill
Ken Bramble
James Arthur

Ed McGee
James Hancock
Dick Peshkin
Robert Hanson
Art McConnell
George Lathrop
Mank Good
Don Rayment
Stan Nelson
Gerald Martin
Rex Stoner
Jon Dudenhoeffer
Ed Mucho
Dick Meadow
Paul Cecil
Art Ericson
Lt./Gen. Claudius E. Watts III



When you see a formation of great aircraft - "at ready" - often forgotten are the men who kept them ready! The airmen with the knowledge and the wrench made it happen. Operation Ranch Hand could not have experienced the success it achieved without the dedication and hard work of those men.

As the years go by, even Cowboys will pass on to that great round-up in the sky.

Mike Devlin, 31 August 1986
Norman Baker, 6 March 1987
Col. Marry Lemly, 1987
Mal Luke, 26 November 1987
John P. Richmond, 13 December 1987

As you all know, John Richmond had been the Association Secretary for a number of years and had attended reunions very regularly. After the 1987 reunion John was enroute home to NC when he became suddenly ill in Atlanta. After emergency surgery John suffered a massive stroke and passed away. John's funeral was with full honors at Arlington National Cemetery with many friends and family in attendance. The Association was represented by Lt. General "Bud" Watts, Comptroller of the Air Force. John will be sorely missed, as will all Rancheros who leave us. Lois Richmond sent the following: "John was so proud to be a Ranch Mand - one of many who dedicated their lives to their country. I shall always consider myself a Ranchero..."

Well Cowboys, that's all from the corral for now. Keep the cards and letters (and donations) coming in. I would like to close with words from Ted Encke of Pittsburg, PA:

"Poor is the nation that has no heroes; shameful that nation, which having them -- forgets."

To the Ranch,


Jack Spey
President

Ranch Mand Vietnam Association
850 Tarpon Dr.
Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32548
(904)243-5696



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Lt. Col. (Ret.) Pete Spivey
TSgt. (Ret.) Keith Yale
SMSgt. (Ret.) Pappy Rothermel
MSgt. (Ret.) Lee Harrison
MSgt. (Ret.) Al Nicolas
Mike Shuppert

22 August 1988

Dear Fellow Rancheros & Friends of the Ranch:

For the past 23 years, men of Operation Ranch Hand have gathered annually to stand proud -- proud of our mission in Vietnam and proud of the comradery born of that mission. We served with pride then, and today we again serve this great nation with that same dedication. Our continuing service is our participation in the Air Force Health Study. For this most recent service we have received additional praise. During the Vietnam conflict our efforts were applauded, and for the past eight years our efforts have again been applauded. Thank you Cowboys, one and all!

News from Cowboy from Around the World:

VITO LONGO, Falls Church, VA: Vito is still in the safety business and is a double Centurion. Thank you sir!

JOHN KOSTYNICK, Levittown, NY: Ranch Hand 7/68-7/69. Thanks John!

GARY RONEY, EMMANS, PA: Another Centurion. Many thanks Gary!

ARTHUR GACK moved from Waldorf, MD to Charlotte Hall, MD.

ROLF EAGLESON, Sacramento, CA: Rolf sends his "best to those 'Daring Defoliators from Danang'". He will be here in spirit in October. As a recent Centurion, Rolf will continue to practice ... "drawing his sword without falling on it". Thank you sir!

RICHARD CHARTRAIN moved from NY to Dallas, TX just in time to help the V.P.!

EDWARD FRAMBES, Cincinnati, OH: Sorry for the delay Ed.

WILBUR L. ROBINSON, Austin, TX: Robbie reports that he and his son George are in the drafting business and it's booming.

JOHN MULLINAX, Goldsboro, NC: As always, John sends his best to all.

W.O. "BILL" TURNER, JR., Roswell, GA: Thanks Bill!

MICHAEL J. CLARKE, Southbury, CT: Mrs. Clarke reports that Michael is currently working for Sikorsky Aircraft in Stratford, CT. They both hope to join a gathering in the near future.

JAMES K. McDONALD, Pasadena, TX: James reports that he is driving for Union Carbide out of Houston. James hopes to make the annual October bash in the near future.

JOHN F. MORRE, Loveland, CO: Frank and Dot hope to join us very soon.

DAVID MOTOWIDLAK, Glastonbury, CT: David and his family recently moved from Hawaii to Connecticut. Trading Aloha Land for CT. Dave is still believed to be in the ANG.

ROY BUCHANAN, Temple, TX: Nancy reports that Roy was in the Ranch on the flight line as a ALC in 67-68. Roy is a 15-year veteran and Captain in the Temple, TX Fire Department. Nancy and Roy have two boys. Nancy hopes to be a "part of October" if Roy would give up his "hunting & fishing"!

CHARLES KING, Euless, TX: Charlie reports that he has recently remarried and now has a total of five children. Charlie is a 19-year veteran as an aircraft mechanic with Delta Air Lines.

JOSE C. GONZALES, Phoenix, AZ: Jose sends his "Hello to everybody and God Bless... uno Rancheros".

L. J. (POOCH) POCHUREK, Safety Harbor, FL: Patricia reports that she and Jim (Pooch) have run aground again; this time on the shore of Tampa Bay. Their new house is surrounded by a 7 foot high fence! Inside are some of the best grapefruit trees in all of Florida!

LLOYD A. WEST, Everett, WA: Melissa and Lloyd are now in the travel agency business. Call 206-775-0602 for your travel plans. Thanks Lloyd!

ROBERT BORCHERT, Crystal Lake, IL: Bob has a minor change in address.

DWIGHT L. LA FRENIERE, Ishpeming, MI: Dwight sends his best to all.

RALPH WALKER, Slater MO: Thanks Ralph!

GEORGE BYE, Merced, CA: Just a change of address.

CALVIN BASS, Tulsa, OK: Cal has retired as an FAA flight examiner but still owns 2 A/C and teaches "Acro" as a hobby.

CHARLES WYNN has recently moved to Baltimore, MD.

No words: LINWOOD L. WRIGHT, Omaha, NE.

PHILLIP DIGENNARO, Sandy Hook, CT: Phil sent his best and a generous donation.

CLEM LOCKAMY, Opelousas, LA: Clem is still going to school and healing well.

TOM VAN HARTE, Allenwood, NJ: Tom wants to have a maintenance get-together when the next physical exam takes place. He is seeking interest from the Da Nang 68-69 Rancheros. Call Tom at 201-449-6708.

VERN UHLER, Knob Noster, MO: For many years Vern has kept in touch with the Association. He continually speaks with great pride about his many years with the Ranch, and continues to articulate his respect for the men with whom he so proudly served. Vern Uhler, indeed, served with dedication and pride.

THOMAS BARRETT, Kwajalein South PAC: Tom is transportation manager for DYN Corp. Thanks Tom!

No words, just contributions:

FLOYD HEFFNER, Smyrna, GA.

GERALD MARTIN, Fresno CA.

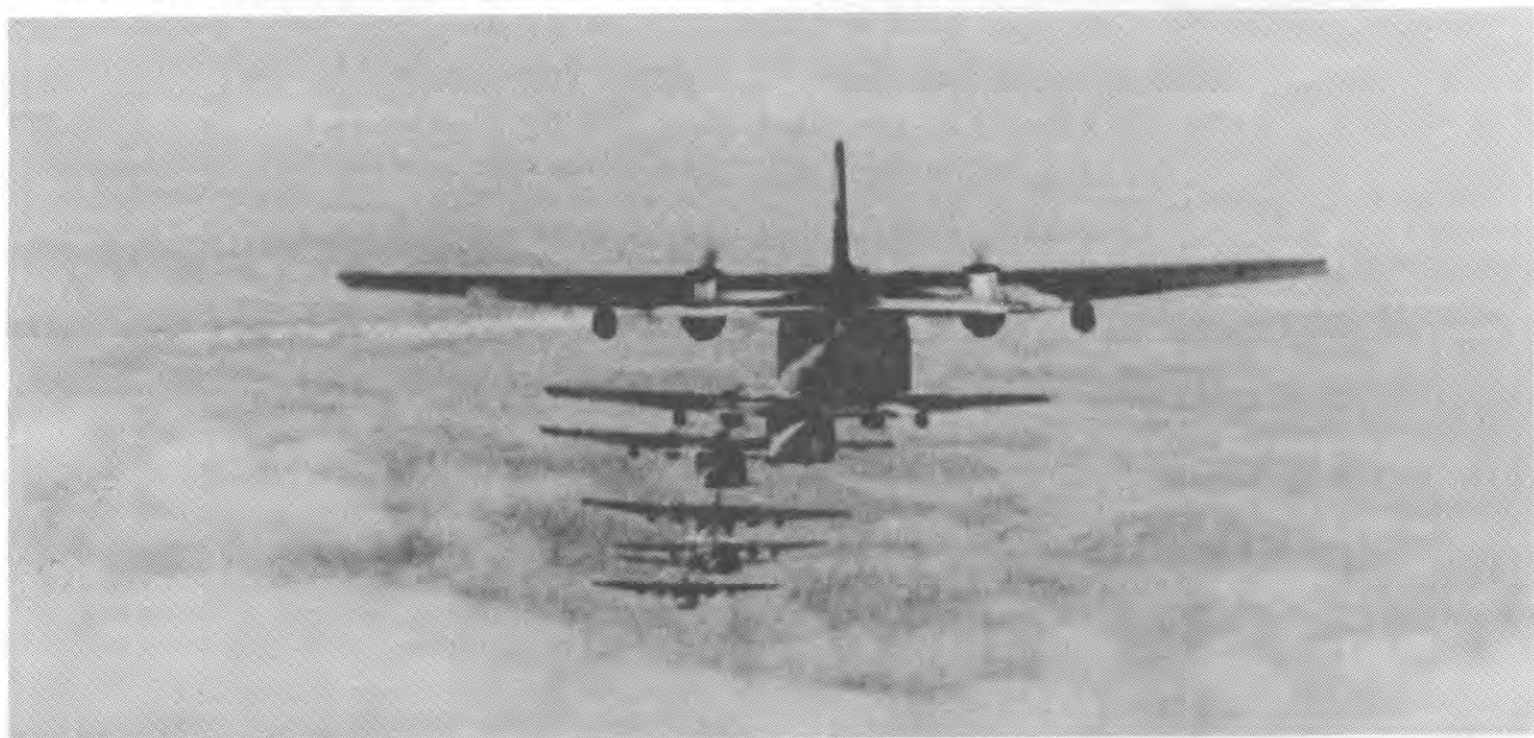
TIM B. CAFFERTY, St. Charles, MO.

CHARLES J. MEADOW, Weslaco, TX.

A Friend of the Ranch:

WATSON R. JONES, Wake Forest, NC: Watson was in the original "Operation Mule Train" VN 61-62 as NCOIC of Materiel Control. Since retirement in 1972 Watson has been with AMTRAK.

Well Cowboys, that's all the news for now.



Video Tape:

For the best video tape we've seen so far of Ranch Hand missions contact Bob Cruts, P. O. Box 954, Shalimar, FL 32569 (904-651-5277). It's a good tape!

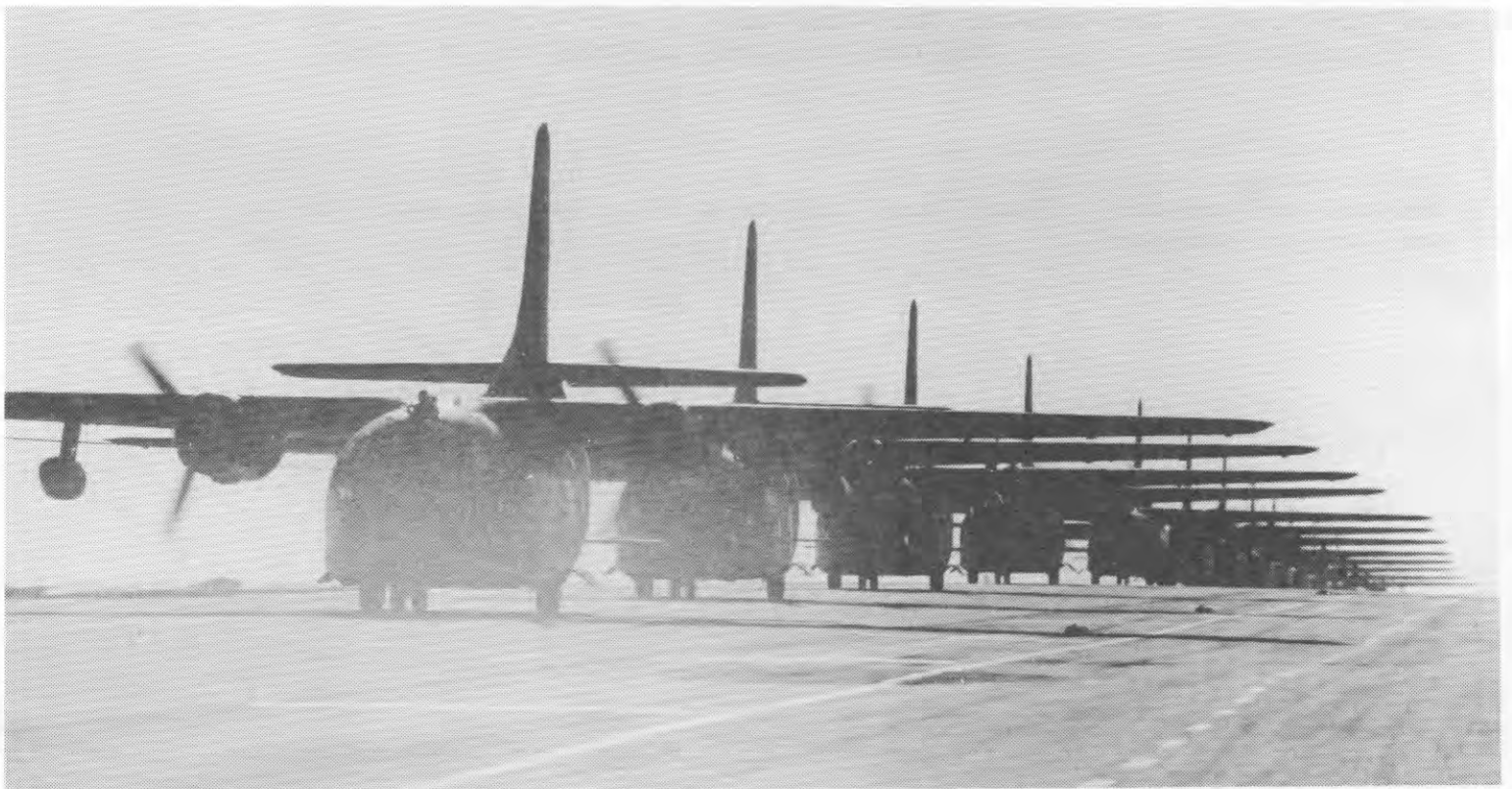
Memorial Fund:

In 1981, the Ranch Hand Vietnam Association took on a mission to have a memorial constructed to honor the men who lost their lives while conducting our mission in SEA. Thanks to the generous contributions from our group and an interest-free construction loan, the Eagle stands proudly in the Air Park at Hurlburt Field, FL, with the names of our comrades inscribed on the granite base. In 1986 the memorial was completed. And, indeed, she stands proud!



To date the Ranch Hand Memorial Fund has \$8,371.83 in its account, leaving a balance due of \$1,628.17. The Association is hopeful that this debt can be retired this year. When you remember "the Ranch", please remember the Memorial Fund.

"Poor is the nation that has no heroes -- shameful that nation which having them, forgets."
(Ted Encke)



A formation like this doesn't just happen! The often unsung men who bend the wrench and provide all the other elements to keep an airplane flying made this picture possible.

Centurions:

When the Roman Empire controlled the politics and economy of the known world, the Centurion commanded 100 good men in support of the Empire and the Cause. Over the years, Operation Ranch Hand has had many Centurions, those contributing \$100 or more in one contribution. The Centurions are:

Commander Ted Encke

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Ronald Kempfer
Peter J. Clark
Bob Cruts
Ed Blaufuss
William (Mick) Mikolasy
Delmar (Pete) Spivey
Hal Underhill
Ken Bramble
James Arthur
Ed McGee
James Hancock
Dick Peshkin

Robert Hanson
Art McConnell
George Lathrop
Hank Good
Don Rayment
Stan Nelson
Gerald Martin
Rex Stoner
Jon Dudenhoeffer
Ed Mucho
Dick Meadow
Paul Cecil
Art Ericson
Lt./Gen. Claudius E. Watts III
Dick Alexander
Gary Runey
James (Pooch) Pochurek

Reunion 1988:

The 23rd Annual Reunion of the World's Greatest Dandy Defoliators will be held in Ft. Walton Beach, FL on 7, 8 and 9 October. Quarters are being reserved at the Ramada Inn on Okaloosa Island. Friday night (the 7th) at 1900 hrs, will be the first "official get-together. A printed schedule of events will be available upon check-in at the Ramada. For our head-count purposes, do not call the Ramada. For reservations, please call Jack or Marilyn Spey at 904-243-5696. We will make your reservations and, if required, provide any special needs for your arrival. Let's make 1988 the best durn round-up yet!

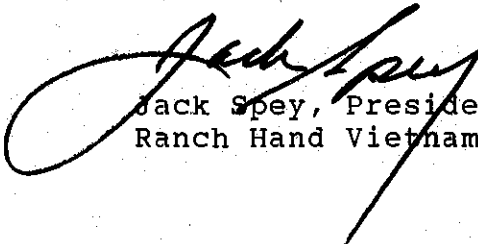
The Association has reserved a very nice charter boat for deep sea fishing on the morning of 8 October (Saturday). When you call the Speys for reservations (904-243-5696), please indicate your desire to fish on that morning (12 people maximum).

General Fund:

Currently the General Fund contains \$1,600, prior to the cost of this newsletter. Contributions continue to keep us in touch.

Well fellow Cowboys, its time to cut the mixtures. Please send your letters so they may be read by those who are able to attend the Reunion in October. And please remember the Memorial and General Funds. See you in October!

To the Ranch -


Jack Spey, President
Ranch Hand Vietnam Association

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