

Friends

of The Vietnam Center

<http://www.ttu.edu/~vietnam>

J U L Y 1 9 9 7 • V O L U M E 4 I S S U E 2

Our Logo & Philosophy

We have received some queries about the logo we use on our newsletters. The symbol used is not intended to convey any political message. It is a reproduction of the medal-ribbon of the U.S. Vietnam Service Medal. The medal was authorized by President Lyndon B. Johnson on July 8, 1965, and was awarded to members of the Armed Forces of the United States who served in Vietnam and the contiguous waters and airspace, in Thailand, Laos or Cambodia or airspace in direct support of military operations in Vietnam.

We selected this logo for our organization because it is the universally recognized symbol of American Vietnam veterans, and as such, it is a reminder that The Vietnam Center and The Vietnam Archive at Texas Tech University

are guided and very strongly supported by Vietnam veterans. Without their support, this organization would not exist. In this context, our logo, we feel, is eminently appropriate.

About our philosophy: At this stage of our development, the majority of the individuals directly involved in this project actually served in the war. Nevertheless, it is our sincere desire that the Vietnam Center provide a forum for all points of view and for all topics relating to Indochina, particularly — but not limited to — the American involvement there. We encourage papers and presentations by individuals who opposed the war as well as those who supported it. We also encourage participation by individuals representing the views of the government in Hanoi just as we encourage our former

allies from South Vietnam.

Similarly, we place equal importance upon preserving records relating to all aspects of the Vietnam War. It is as important to us to preserve the records of the antiwar movement as it is to preserve the records of those who served in Vietnam. To do otherwise would be a disservice to history.



Vietnam Center & Archive Undergo Name Change

At its May 1997 meeting, the Vietnam Center Advisory Board voted to change the names of the Center for the Study of the Vietnam Conflict and the Archive of the Vietnam Conflict to: **The Vietnam Center** and

The Vietnam Archive. The logic for this is simplicity: these are the names we actually use in day-to-day operations. Further, the new names are more inclusive, and thus will enable the Center and Archive to

support the work of researchers engaged in Vietnam research that might not be directly related to the war. The Vietnam Center will continue to use its present stationery until current stocks are depleted.



VIETNAM CENTER HONORS SUPPORTERS

This year's conference, which focused on teaching the Vietnam War in high schools and colleges, got underway on the evening of Thursday, 17 April, with a reception in the rotunda of the archive building, followed by the unveiling of a number of plaques honoring individuals and organizations that have rendered important support to the Vietnam project. After welcoming remarks by Chancellor John T. Montford, Jim Reckner outlined the nature of the services each plaque commemorated. Present to receive the plaque commemorating the service of the Hon. William E. Colby was his widow, the Hon. Sally Shelton-Colby. Colby was a founding member of the Vietnam Center's National Council and a strong supporter of the project. He delivered the keynote address at the Center's 1996 symposium just one week before his untimely death.

Others honored included Vietnam veteran and author Marshall Gene Harrison, author of **A Lonely Kind of War**, **The Delta**, and **Cadillac Flight**. Marshall was a founding member of



Jim Reckner presents plaque commemorating William Colby's contribution to The Vietnam Center to Ambassador Sally Shelton-Colby.

the Vietnam Center Advisory Board in 1989 and remained active on the board until his death in 1995. His widow, Mary Ann Harrison, who has taken over Marshall's position on the Vietnam Center Advisory Board, accepted the plaque. Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt also received a plaque, marking his continuing, important service to the Center. The Admiral has been Chairman of the Advisory Board and the National Council since the beginning of the Vietnam project in 1989, and

has been unstinting in his support. Another plaque went to Vietnam scholar Douglas Pike in recognition of his generous contribution of his extensive archival collections to Texas Tech University.

Other plaques were presented to financial supporters, including W.B. "dub" and Mozelle Rushing of Lubbock for their continuing financial support. Additionally, a plaque was presented to the King Foundation of Dallas, which granted the Vietnam Center \$52,000 for acquisition of microfilm research materials.

In presenting the plaques, Vietnam Center Director Jim Reckner noted that everyone honored had displayed their belief in the Center early on, when the Center was little more than a concept. In this sense, their support was particularly welcome. All plaques will be displayed in the Vietnam Archive office, where researchers might be reminded of those whose support and contributions have added so significantly to our project.

Future Conference/Symposium Schedule

At the close of the April 1997 conference on Teaching Vietnam in high schools and colleges, conferees recommended, among other things, that the Center consider organizing a conference exclusively for high school teachers. On reflection, that proposal was considered particularly worthwhile, and thus the Vietnam Center will host such a conference in June of 1998.

Additionally, Dr. David Marr of the Australian National University proposed conducting a conference of Vietnam archivists and researchers conducting intense research relating to Vietnam. The purpose of this conference will be to exchange information about Vietnam collections and availability of information for researchers. The Vietnam Center has accepted this proposal and has scheduled this conference for October 1998.

Currently scheduled conferences/symposia are as follows:

April 17- 18, 1998

Vietnam in Asia: An Interdisciplinary Conference on Vietnamese Culture, History and Language

June 12-13, 1998

Conference for High School Teachers

October 9-10, 1998

Conference for Vietnam Archivists

April 15-17, 1999

Third Triennial Vietnam Symposium

The Vietnam Center

The Vietnam Center office, Room 60 in Holden Hall on Texas Tech University campus, will be open from 8:00 am to Noon and 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm. (Central Time) Monday through Friday. Address all mail and enquiries to:

The Vietnam Center
Texas Tech University
Lubbock, TX 79409-1013

Phone: (806) 742-3742
or 742-3744

Fax: (806) 742-1060

E-mail: jjrec@ttacs.ttu.edu



Admiral & Mrs. Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr. (right) and Vice Admiral and Mrs. Emmett H. Tidd.



Dr. Patricia Pelley, Texas Tech's Vietnam Specialist, chats with Texas Tech Executive Director of International Affairs Idris R. Traylor and Vice Admiral Emmett H. Tidd.



Many conference participants have come to know Vietnam Center Advisory Board Member David Shelly (left), who is discussing conference details with Vietnam Board member Colonel Don McCullough, USAF (RET).



Vietnam Center Advisory Board Vice President Phil Price (center) and Major General Dudley Faver, USAF (RET) (foreground).

1997 "Teaching Vietnam" Conference April 18-19, 1997



Ambassador Sally Shelton-Colby (left) makes a point to Lt. Col. Ted Mataxis, Jr., USA (RET) and his father Brigadier General Ted Mataxis, USA (RET).

"... A Jewel in the Crown of Texas Tech"

General William B. Rosson, USA (Ret), whose many assignments in Vietnam ranged from work with the French in 1954 to a final assignment as Deputy ComUSMACV as a four-star general, visited Texas Tech, 13-16 April, in order to conduct research. During his visit, he, along with Vice Admiral and Mrs. Emmett H. Tidd, USN (Ret), was given a

tour of the Vietnam Archive. Commenting to the local media during the tour, Vice Admiral Tidd said, "I can't impress enough the respect military people and historians have for what [Texas Tech] has done in such a remarkably short period of time. The [Vietnam] Center's future is very bright. ..." Following up on the Admiral's

comments, General Rosson added, "This will be a jewel in the crown of Texas Tech."

We thank both these distinguished officers for their very kind comments. The staff of the Vietnam Center and Archive will do their best to live up to their high expectations.

Vietnam Center Hosts Panel Discussion on Opening of Archive Building

On 2 April, as a function of the formal opening of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library which houses The Vietnam Archive at Texas Tech University, the Vietnam Center hosted a panel discussion entitled, "Vietnam: Preserving the Record." Panelists were Professor Douglas Pike, then Director of the Indochina Archive at the University of California at Berkeley, Dr. Nguyen Manh Hung, Director of the Indochina Center at George Mason University, and Dr. James

Reckner, Director of The Vietnam Center at Texas Tech.

Before an audience of approximately seventy individuals, Jim Reckner outlined the development of The Vietnam Center at Texas Tech. Dr. Hung discussed the Vietnam program at George Mason University and graciously addressed the future of The Vietnam Center at Texas Tech: "I believe that the Center will play an increasingly important role in providing the American public with a

better understanding of the Vietnam Conflict," Hung said.

Professor Pike, whose humor many readers will already know, closed his presentation with the following story about the complexity of the Vietnam War. When he goes to Heaven, Pike said, he plans to ask God if there will ever be a resolution to understanding the Vietnam War. "God will say, 'Yes, but not in my lifetime.'"



Colonel Joseph V. Potter, USAF (left), Dr. Jane Hamilton-Merritt and Dr. Joe Dunn. Background: Painting by Vietnam Veteran James Collins.

Coming in the Next Edition in The Friends of the Vietnam Center Newsletter:

- Details of The Vietnam Archive
- Forthcoming Conference:
Vietnam in Asia:
An Interdisciplinary Conference
on Vietnamese Culture,
History & Language.

Vietnam Center Office & Staff

For the past eight years, the Vietnam Center has functioned without dedicated secretarial staff. This has now ended. We have hired Mrs. Rosa Garcia as the Center's first full-time staff member. Mrs. Garcia is a senior secretary, with ten years' experience working with Texas Tech, and thus possesses the skills necessary to help Jim Reckner and to relieve him of many of the tasks he has been performing. A native of Texas, Mrs. Garcia was born in O'Donnell, a distinction she shares with the late Dan Blocker, known to many as "Hoss Cartwright."

For those of you who have from time to time called The Vietnam Center and have been unable to contact anyone, we are pleased to report that our phone will be staffed from 8:00 am to Noon and 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm (Central Time) daily. Jim Reckner won't be any easier to get a hold of, as he plans to keep on the move pressing for the advancement of The Vietnam Center, but Mrs. Garcia will be able to take



your messages, and she has promised to ensure Jim will respond.

The Vietnam Center's temporary office is adjacent to Jim Reckner's teaching office in the History Department at Texas Tech. The Vietnam Center's telephone number ([806] 742-3742) and fax number ([806] 742-1060) will remain the same for the time being. It is anticipated, though, that The Vietnam Center will be assigned a suite of offices elsewhere on the campus in the not-too-distant future.

FRIENDS OF THE VIETNAM CENTER MEMBERSHIP

I enclose my check for \$ _____ for an annual membership.

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone(s): Home _____ Office _____

Please make check payable to the Texas Tech Foundation, Inc., Attn: The Vietnam Center. Contributions to The Vietnam Center are tax deductible as allowed by law. For additional information regarding membership or to donate materials to the Vietnam Archive, please call The Vietnam Center, Texas Tech University, (806) 742-3742 or 742-3744. Mail this form with your check to:

The Vietnam Center
Texas Tech University
Box 41013
Lubbock, Texas 79409-1013

Categories of Memberships

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- ☐ Sustaining Life Member \$5,000 (1,000 per year x5)

Corporate

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- ☐ Sustaining Corporate Sponsor \$5,000 (1,000 per year x5)

"Tech Vietnam Center receives praise, suggestions"

by Mike Thomas, *Lubbock Avalanche-Journal*

(Quoted from *Lubbock Avalanche-Journal*, Sunday, April 20, 1997)

To enhance its academic prestige, Texas Tech's Center for the Study of the Vietnam Conflict should publish a journal, sponsor research fellowships and conduct yearly seminars for high school teachers.

These were some of the suggestions attendees of this year's Vietnam Symposium had when asked for suggestions on how the fledgling center can grow and improve.

"A journal that would be a vehicle for putting out scholarly articles would be one of the things that really elevates an academic study center," said Joe Dunn, professor of history and politics at Converse College in South Carolina.

Also, there is a real need for an institution that can train secondary-level teachers on the Vietnam war, Dunn said.

"This is a natural place for that," he said, "The market is insatiable. High school teachers are interested in this

topic. Teachers need to get recertification and they are looking for all kinds of opportunities such as this."

Marc Gilbert, a professor of history at North Georgia College, suggested the center hire an outreach coordinator as well as a full-time archivist and then consider funding a series of semester fellowships for students who want to come to Tech to study about the Vietnam war.

"These scholars would work in the archives, debate the issues, participate in courses on Vietnam . . . in other words, use their skills to infuse Texas Tech with knowledge about the Vietnam experience," he said. "Then they could leave this institution to spread what they learn to other schools so there comes to be a fellowship of scholars with ties to Texas Tech and the center."

James Reckner, director of the Vietnam center, said he would like to pursue all the

ideas suggested at the symposium, but that funding is a constraint in some areas.

"I think it would be a great and worthy goal for our center to help the colleges and high schools around the country teach about the Vietnam war," he said. Reckner added that Tech officials are fully supportive of the center and he is optimistic that many of the suggestions can be implemented in the near future.

Dunn said that Vietnam researchers need a place that serves as the focal point of their efforts and Texas Tech is fast establishing itself as that place.

"It is like the Internet. We can come here and then we may get lines out to someplace else. But here is the center . . . the core where we can all congregate," he said. "The nice thing about this center is that people of all diverse views can come here and have spirited discussions in a free and open forum."

Admiral Zumwalt Receives Degree

Texas Tech University's Board of Regents conferred a doctorate of humane letters upon Vietnam Center National Council Chairman Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., during commencement ceremonies at Lubbock on Saturday, May 10, 1997.

In accepting the degree, Admiral Zumwalt noted "the strong support of Chancellor Montford; President Haragan; . . . and the heartwarming decision of the premier historian of the Vietnam experience, Douglas Pike, to bring his library, research, and teaching skills here — all have contributed to an impressive beginning to the understanding of events in a historical cataclysm that ended in the year most

of you of the graduating class were born." After highlighting many of the still unresolved questions relating to the American Vietnam experience, the Admiral said: "These and countless other issues remain to be analyzed. The existence here of the Center for the Study of the Vietnam Conflict will provide the resources and environment in which historians can bring us closer to understanding."

"When you members of the graduating class return to Lubbock in 2047 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of your graduation, this Vietnam Center will have made it possible for historians to approach good answers to these



issues and political leaders to benefit from them."

"Since I am only 76 years old," the Admiral concluded, "and most of you look reasonably healthy, I look forward to discussing their answers with you at that time."

"What Should We Teach About the Vietnam War?"

Bui Tin

(Following are Colonel Bui Tin's prepared remarks for the opening session of the 1997 Vietnam conference.)

The Vietnam War remains one of the great controversial issues in American life. Was it right for the U.S. to come in and support the South? Which Vietnamese side was the more national minded, acting out of pure patriotism? In the prosecution of the war, were errors made at the highest level (i.e., by the President of the United States as commander-in-chief) or at the managerial level (by the military leaders in the Pentagon or at MACV)? Was it a failure of policy as conceived by the U.S. Congress or could it be blamed on the media? Were the errors compounded by an overdose of force (too many men, an overabundance of ordnance, too rapid an escalation of the war) or was it a matter of too little, too late?

As an individual participant in the war, I have had on many occasions the opportunity to reflect on all these issues.

Now that it has been behind us for 21 years, the Vietnam War becomes a topic for teaching to the young of this nation. In this regard I propose the following:

Both hawks and doves during the time of the Vietnam War had their reasons, which were quite legitimate and which we can respect, for both sides believed that they were acting out of honorable motives, that the right was on their side, and that they were defending the freedom of the Vietnamese people.

The Cold War is now over. The situation on the ground in Vietnam is that after more than two decades the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) has implemented the Doi Moi policy in economics but retains a single-party and authoritarian regime, which is extremely repressive when it comes to political, ideological and cultural "deviations," a regime that refuses to restore basic civil rights to the people. Despite such repression (which consists of threats and arrests, indefinite detention, imprisonment and exile, not to say violent put downs of demonstrations), a movement fighting for democratic rights has taken root, which attracts followers and sympathizers in many sectors of the population, both North and South. This movement asks for such simple rights as the freedom of information and freedom of the press, freedom of opinion and religious freedoms.

My thought is that the students of today—whether they belonged to families of hawks or doves—should maintain their idealism, for one cannot go wrong for supporting the ideals of freedom, democracy and liberation in the world. The question is simply to transform such idealism into action through dialogue with and information to Vietnam. In this way they can support the budding democracy movement in my country and create

pressure (the pressure of world public opinion) on the authoritarian regime in Hanoi.

Having joined ASEAN and participated in the free trade zone of mankind, and after having received financial assistance from the World Bank, the IMF and Asian Development Bank (ADB), as well as from the Paris donors club (which is made up of democratic nations), Hanoi cannot afford to remain isolated in a corner of its own—especially after the collapse of the Soviet Bloc. Democratization is a necessary component of that integration process.

That, to my mind, is the most useful lesson that we can draw from the experience of the Vietnam War. It is exciting for youth, I believe, to work for a cause and especially for the cause of reconciliation after a war—certainly something worthy enough to fire a generation. By participating in such a movement, we will finally bring peace to the souls of more than 58,000 Americans who have laid down their lives for the cause of freedom in Vietnam, give the final justification to the sacrifices of millions of Vietnam War veterans (both Vietnamese and Americans) and fulfill the very dream of the antiwar movement—true freedom and justice and democracy for the Vietnamese people.

Your Vietnam Records Are Important. Help Us Preserve Them!

The Vietnam Archive preserves collections of written, visual, and audio material to ensure that these materials are available for research for generations to come. The Archive accepts donations as small as a single item and as large as hundreds of boxes. Donations do not have to be organized, and do not have to pertain

to a famous person, event or organization.

The kinds of materials we seek to preserve are those useful to researchers: letters, memoirs/reminiscences, diaries, photo albums, professional papers, speeches/lectures, business records, subject

files, photographs, film/video/audio tape, maps, etc.

If you have materials you wish to donate to The Vietnam Archive, we urge you to let The Archive staff know of your intent. You can contact The Archive at: The Vietnam Archive Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX 79409-1041.

The Vietnam Archive Continues Rapid Growth

Several new collections have been donated to the Vietnam Archive at Texas Tech since our last newsletter. Among the new acquisitions are:

The John Donnell Papers. (Twenty boxes) Dr. John Donnell established the first USIS office in Vietnam — in Hanoi in 1950. In subsequent years he did considerable research relating to the South Vietnamese political system. His papers include this research and related material he published or otherwise produced for official reports.

National Vietnam Veterans Coalition Papers. An additional 20 boxes of material to add to the existing collection at the Vietnam Archive.

Dr. John Heggar Collection. Photograph collection relating to his service with the 9th Medical Lab in Vietnam.

Eight other smaller collections of individuals' papers.

One of the most important functions of an archive is the processing of materials in order to make them accessible to researchers. We are pleased to report that by the time this newsletter is printed and mailed, processing of the materials donated to Texas Tech by Douglas Pike in August, 1994, will be completed and finding aids available. At the same time, the Archive staff are working on processing and developing finding aids for about 100 of the Archive's earliest accessions. This particular archival function is labor intensive; nevertheless, we hope to have all materials processed and available to researchers as rapidly as possible.

The Vietnam Archive

The Vietnam Archive is now fully operational in its new location in the archive building. Research/Reading Room hours are Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Tuesday and Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., and Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

The office of the Vietnam Archive will be open for consultation with researchers and to conduct other business from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Archive Mailing Address:

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Texas Tech University
Lubbock, TX 79409-1041
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Fax: (806) 742-0946
Email: ijag@ttacs.ttu.edu

Vietnam Center Home Page
on the Internet:
<http://www.ttu.edu/~vietnam>

1997 Vietnam Conference Brings Together Former Foes

The 1997 Vietnam conference began with a celebrity panel which included Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., former South Vietnamese Prime Minister General Nguyen Khanh, former PAVN Colonel Bui Tin, Dr. David Marr of the Australian National University, and Professor Douglas Pike, who will shortly join the Vietnam Center as Associate Director and Adjunct Professor of History. Invitations had been extended to PAVN Lieutenant General Pham Hong Son and former VC Colonel Ta Minh Kham, but these officers apparently were denied exit visas from the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and thus were unable to attend. Dr. Daniel Ellsberg also was invited, but was unable to attend due to a schedule conflict. Former South Vietnamese Vice President Air Marshal Nguyen Cao Ky

also was unable to attend.

We deeply regret that these individuals were unable to participate, and to present their particular views at our conference.

Luncheon speakers included retired Ambassador Stephen Lyne, who currently is Professor of International Relations and History at Boston University, and former Vietnam War correspondent Peter Braestrup, who currently is Director of Communications for the Library of Congress. Keynote speaker at the conference banquet

was retired Air Force Colonel Norman McDaniel, who spent six years as a prisoner of war in the Hanoi Hilton.



Opening Panel Participants included (L-R): Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., General Nguyen Khanh, Dr. David Marr, PAVN Colonel Bui Tin.

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1997 Vietnam Conference

Vietnam
Correspondent
Peter Braestrup,
now Director of
Communications at the
Library of Congress,
explains what teachers
should teach about the
media and Vietnam.



Former South Vietnamese Prime Minister
General Nguyen Khanh.



Vietnam POW Colonel Norman McDaniel USAF (Ret)
Center, discusses Vietnam with Colonel Joseph V. Potter,
USAF (RET).



Ambassador Stephen Lyne.



Dr. Marc J. Gilbert (left) of North Georgia College
"enlightens" Texas Tech graduate student
Chris Suhre.



Dr. David Marr of Australian National University.