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Vietnam Center and Archive™

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Fall 2012 Vol. 19 No. 2

VNCA Partners With 50th Anniversary Commemoration



Photo Courtesy TTU Communications & Marketing

Maggie Gilchrest-Dunnam

Graduate Assistant

Arguably America's most controversial war, the Vietnam War continues to be debated by scholars, veterans and world leaders. Unlike most of America's wars, Americans on the home front were all too ready to put the Vietnam War behind them, and often that included neglecting the men and women returning home. The attitude of the nation reflected its disdain for the war, and often gave its returning veterans a cold shoulder.

On the golden anniversary of the Vietnam War, veterans and their families will receive the recognition and attention they so greatly deserve for their service sacrifices. Through an act of Congress, the Department of Defense has established the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War Commemoration program,

which seeks to honor all Vietnam veterans and their families.

The Commemoration is seeking many partners throughout the country to be a part of this important program. In October, 2012, Lieutenant General Mick Kicklighter (USA, Retired), executive director for the DoD Commemorations Program, visited Texas Tech University and designated TTU and the Vietnam Center and Archive (VNCA) as the first university-based partner to join in their efforts.

"It is an honor to be the first university selected to assist in this important project of commemoration for Vietnam veterans and their families," Dr. Stephen Maxner, director of the VNCA, said. "As a university-based partner, we plan to do all we can to help educate the public while we continue to honor all of our veterans and

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What's Inside...



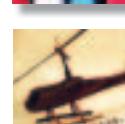
2013 VNCA Annual Conference



Celebrating our Heroes



Veteran's Day Events



2012 Donors to the Archive



Guest Lecture Series Update

2013 VNCA Annual Conference - Vietnam, 1963

The Vietnam Center and Archive is proud to announce that we will host our 2013 annual conference in partnership with the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration and the Department of Defense 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War Commemoration. The conference will take place at the McGowan Theater in the National Archives in Washington, DC, Sept. 26-28, 2013. To organize this conference, we have worked very closely in collaboration with three important scholars of the Vietnam War to include Dr. Lien-Hang Nguyen (University of Kentucky), Dr. Ed Miller (Dartmouth College) and Dr. Larry Berman (Georgia State University).

The intellectual objectives of this conference are to examine the year 1963 as it has long been viewed as a watershed in both the history of the Vietnam War and in the evolution of the United States' intervention in that conflict. The Battle of Ap Bac, the "Buddhist crisis" and the self-immolation of Thich Quang Duc, the abortive "Kennedy withdrawal" of U.S. military advisors from South Vietnam, the overthrow and death of Ngo Dinh Diem in the Saigon coup of November, the Kennedy assassination that same month, the Ninth Plenum of the Vietnam Worker's Party—all of these events and many others shaped the subsequent escalation of the Vietnam War and contributed to its transformation into a major international conflict. This conference (which will take place during the fiftieth anniversary year of these events) will highlight recent research on various aspects of 1963 in Vietnam. In addition, we expect the conference to use 1963 as a means to explore the larger themes and trends running throughout the history of the Vietnam War. This conference will bring together specialists in the history of the Vietnam War, U.S. foreign relations, international history, the Cold War, and Vietnamese studies.

Below is an outline of the various panels that will be included as well as conference participants. The event will be open to the public and we will be posting updated information on the VNCA website in the coming weeks and months. We hope you are able to join us for what we know will be one of our most important and informative conferences.

Vietnam, 1963

An International Conference being held at
McGowan Theater, National Archives and Records Administration
700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC

September 26-28, 2013

Draft list of conference panels and presenters



Keynote Speaker: Dr. George Herring, Professor Emeritus, University of Kentucky

Getting in, Getting out: Kennedy and Withdrawal from Vietnam (Organized by: Marc Selverstone)

- Marc Selverstone, University of Virginia
- Howard Jones, University of Alabama
- Timothy Naftali, New America Foundation

Regime Changes: New Perspectives on Ngo Dinh Diem and the First Republic of Vietnam (Organized by: Edward Miller)

- Edward Miller, Dartmouth College
- Nu-Anh Tran, University of California, Berkeley
- Jessica Chapman, Williams College

Revolutionary Locales: War and Social Transformation in the South Vietnamese Countryside during the early 1960s (Organized by: David Hunt)

- David Hunt, University of Massachusetts, Boston
- David Biggs, University of California, Riverside
- Oscar Salemink, University of Copenhagen

Military Matters: U.S. Military Advisors and the ARVN in 1963 (Organized by: Andy Wiest)

- Andy Wiest, University of Southern Mississippi
- Merle Pribbenow, Independent Scholar
- Andrew Birtle, U.S. Army Center of Military History

“Who are these people?”: American Responses to the Crisis of 1963 in South Vietnam (Organized by: Lien-Hang Nguyen)

- Marilyn Young, New York University
- John Prados, National Security Archive, The George Washington University
- Andrew Preston, Clare College, University of Cambridge

North Vietnam and the International Context of Communist Strategy in 1963 (Organized by: Lien-Hang Nguyen)

- Pierre Journoud, Institute for Strategic Research, French Military Academy (IRSEM)
- Lien-Hang T. Nguyen, University of Kentucky
- Sophie Quinn-Judge, Temple University

Costs and Consequences: 1963 and the History of the Vietnam War (Organized by: Mark Lawrence and Pierre Asselin)

- Mark Lawrence, University of Texas, Austin
- Fredrick Logevall, Cornell University
- Pierre Asselin, Hawai'i Pacific University
- Phillip Catton, Stephen F. Austin State University

Continued from page one

other participants who served in the Vietnam War.”

Chief of History and Education for the Commemoration program, Colonel Mark Franklin, (USA, Retired), noted that the DoD Commemorations will be working with the VNCA to help create materials that will further educate students in public schools about the Vietnam War. “We want to reach out to three audiences: the public, public and private school systems, and universities,” Franklin said.

No stranger to this education mission, the VNCA often hosts conferences and symposia that are part of the ongoing national dialogue about the Vietnam War and also creates exhibits designed to help educate the public. The VNCA is also dedicated to provide educational resources to include curriculum and other materials needed to help educate students in K-12 programs and universities. The VNCA has hosted exhibits locally, regionally, and online in an effort to honor and celebrate our local heroes and to help provide information to everyone in our community and around the nation about the Vietnam War. The VNCA recently participated in several Veterans Day programs to include providing exhibits to USAA Headquarters in San Antonio, Texas, as they became partners in the 50th Anniversary Commemoration Program. More locally, the VNCA participated in a Veterans Day program at Waters Elementary school in Lubbock, where school children from around the city learned about the service and sacrifice of all of our nation’s veterans.

“We take great pride in being the home for some remarkable historical collections, donated to us by Vietnam veterans and their families, and we think it is an essential part of our commitment to them that they are used to help educate current and future generations about the Vietnam War,” Maxner said. “Many children are just now learning about the Vietnam War, and we want to be a driving force in their education on the war’s history, not just the official history as reflected in government documents and records, but through the eyes and voices of the American men and women who served on our nation’s



Gen. Mick Kicklighter (middle-left) and Col Mark Franklin (middle-right) of the 50th Anniversary Commemoration meet with TTU Chancellor Kent Hance (right) and the VNCA's Director, Dr. Steve Maxner.

behalf.” Events commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War will take place throughout the year, every year from now until 2025. For the VNCA, this means continuing our many conferences and symposia, our guest lecture series, as well as a number of other ceremonies and activities. “It’s really about honoring and celebrating our Vietnam veterans and developing education programs that help our nation to remember them,”

Maxner said. “At the Vietnam Center and Archive we strive to work with veterans and other wartime participants to preserve their history and so we may learn all we can from the Vietnam War.”

“We believe that one of the most significant things we can do to honor these veterans and their families is to educate ourselves and our communities about their experiences and all they did for our nation.” ★

MSU Vietnam Advisory Group

The University Archive and Historical Collections department of Michigan State University has received a \$265,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to digitize records related to the University’s Vietnam Project of the 1950’s. This three year project will result in the digitization of over 100,000 pages of materials which will be available online on both the Michigan State University website and in the VNCA’s Virtual Vietnam Archive.

During the 1950’s Michigan State developed a relationship with the Republic of Vietnam to assist the country in their transition from a French colony into a stable, non-Communist government. Although ultimately unsuccessful and written off as “an experience best forgotten,” the project produced a wide variety of unique documents, images, and materials that will prove to be invaluable to researchers studying this period of change in South Vietnam.

The collection includes contracts between MSU and the U.S. Foreign Operations Administration, reports on the rural economy and society in South Vietnam, personal communications between MSU staff and the president of South Vietnam, and audio recordings and films of MSU staff assisting in police training, ceremonies, and inspection tours. This rare collection exists only at Michigan State University, and few other collections provided this unparalleled look at the South Vietnam of the 1950’s.

The addition of these materials to the Virtual Vietnam Archive will occur once a year over the three year period of the project, and will be announced through the VNCA’s News and Updates, email list-serv, and Facebook page. This collection will serve to enhance the already abundant resources available in the Virtual Vietnam Archive, and will help to promote our mission to present all aspects of the Vietnam War era. ★

Learn more about the 50th Anniversary Commemoration at www.vietnamwar50th.com

Celebrating Our Heroes, 2012

Justin Saffell

Systems Administrator

This summer, the Vietnam Center and Archive was proud to participate in "Celebrating Our Heroes," a series of events at many of the museums of Lubbock, including the Museum of Texas Tech, the Silent Wings Museum, and the Science Spectrum.

The events kicked off in June with the TTU Museum Association's USO-style gala and the opening of an exhibit of Peter Hurd's World War II Sketches. Also in June, the Silent Wings museum hosted a fly-in of a WWII airborne demonstration team and a vintage C-47, and the Science Spectrum hosted a "Rock-It! Space Race Camp" for kids ages 10-12.

The celebration events continued in July with a wide variety of activities at all of the museums, beginning with an appearance by the Vietnam Center and Archive's AH-1G HueyCobra in Lubbock's 4th on Broadway parade.

This was followed on July 15th with three events: the opening of the exhibit Vietnam: the Helicopter War, which was on display at the Silent Wings Museum through August 15th; the opening of the exhibit Experiences: U.S. Soldiers in the Vietnam War, which was on display at the Science Spectrum through August 15th; and the VNCA's Huey and Cobra helicopters on display at the Museum of Texas Tech during the Museum's Veteran's Family Picnic and the public opening of their Memories of WWII exhibit featuring photographs from the archives of the Associate Press. Guests attending the event were able to enjoy musical entertainment, documentaries, including films from the Vietnam Center and Archive's collections, and speaker Tom Czekanski, Director of Collections and Exhibits at the National World War II Museum in New Orleans.

The VNCA's exhibit Vietnam: the Helicopter War, also available online, examines the history of these unique aircraft that shaped the war in Vietnam. The helicopter was first utilized by the U.S. military during WWII at Burma in 1945 when the vaunted American glider forces were unable to reach downed American bombers. By the beginning of the



U.S. involvement in Vietnam, the uses for helicopters were being greatly expanded, and the UH-1 Huey became one of the most recognized icons of the war. This exhibit depicts the history and uses of the helicopter over the course of the war, and includes historical film footage, audio recordings, oral histories, and documents.

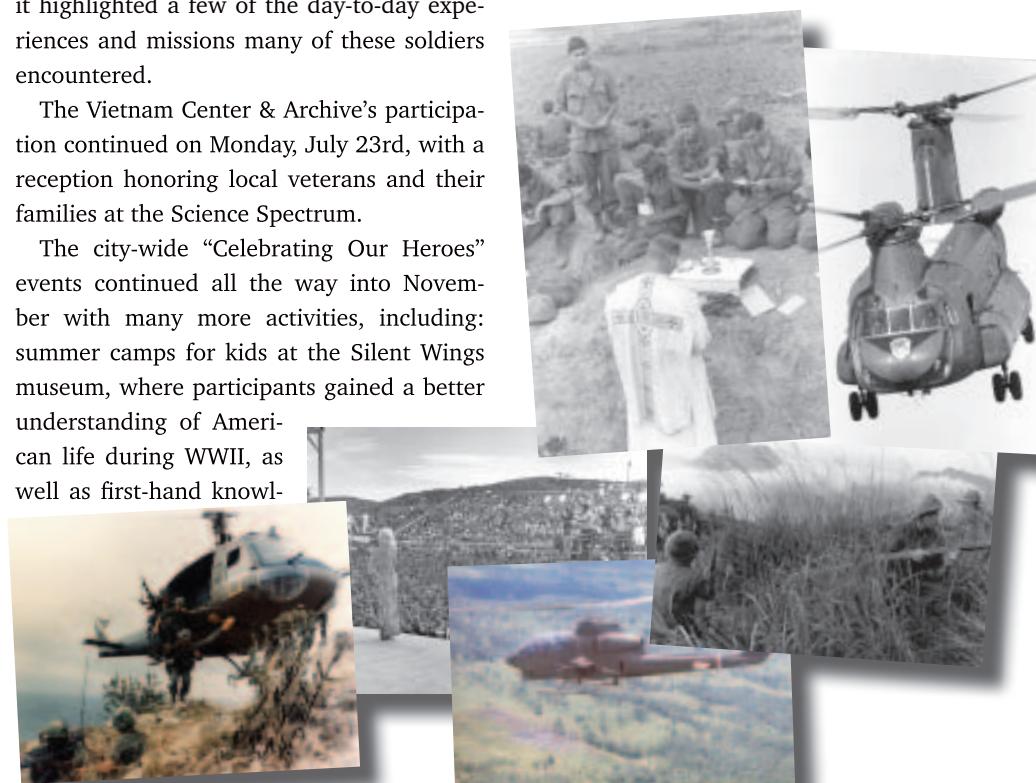
The VNCA's second exhibit, the U.S. Soldier's Experience during the Vietnam War, looked at a day-in-the-life of U.S. soldiers and support personnel in Vietnam and featured numerous historical images and artifacts from our collections. Over 3 million U.S. military personnel served in Southeast Asia between 1963 and 1975, and this exhibit highlighted a few of the day-to-day experiences and missions many of these soldiers encountered.

The Vietnam Center & Archive's participation continued on Monday, July 23rd, with a reception honoring local veterans and their families at the Science Spectrum.

The city-wide "Celebrating Our Heroes" events continued all the way into November with many more activities, including: summer camps for kids at the Silent Wings museum, where participants gained a better understanding of American life during WWII, as well as first-hand knowl-

edge about glider training from WWII veterans; a summer concert series at the Buddy Holly Center; and numerous exhibits at the TTU museum, including Civil War Era Drawings from the Becker Collection, World War II on the Southern Plains, and Black Wings: American Dreams of Flight. The Vietnam Center and Archive's participation concluded with a display at the TTU Museum featuring images and artifacts from the Archive's Department of the Army Special Photographic Office (DASPO) collections.

We are proud and honored to have been a part of these great events and activities celebrating the many military veterans in Lubbock and our surrounding communities.★



Veteran's Day at Waters Elementary

Maggie Gilchrest-Dunnam

Graduate Assistant

Veteran's Day is always a busy celebration for the Vietnam Center and Archive, and this year was no exception, as the VNCA shifted its focus to a Veteran's Day project at a local elementary school to commemorate those who served by the purest form of honor: education.

Having planned the event as early as July 2012, the VNCA hosted a two-day information session at Lubbock's Waters Elementary. Assistant Archivist Sheon Montgomery designed three informative posters for the event and worked closely with school administrators to maximize the flow of information to the students.

Montgomery, and fellow archivist Ann Mallett, described items carried by soldiers such as sleeping bags, C-ration tins, plastic first-aid kits, and dog tags, and explained their uses for servicemen. They also showed students different types of camouflage in uniforms for both servicemen and army nurses,

and explained different weaponry used by the soldiers. Each item of memorabilia came from selected collections in the archive.

Dr. Ron Milam, Vietnam veteran and professor of military history at Texas Tech, was on hand with several graduate students to discuss particulars of the Korean and Vietnam Wars, as well as female pilots in WWII. The graduate students discussed how rewarding and fun it was to teach students who were eager to learn about wars past and the men and women who had served their country.

"It was probably one of the most rewarding experiences I've had as a graduate student," doctoral student Amber Batura, said. "This was the first time many of the kids had heard of the Vietnam War and learned about the service of the men and women who served there."

Batura and other graduate students found it difficult at times to convey war experiences to children who ranged in age from 5-11 years old.

"How do you explain the sacrifices veterans made without talking about death and



Oral Historian Kelly Crager describes the Huey helicopter to a group of Waters Elementary students violence," Batura said. "Kids this age don't understand death yet."

Despite the difficulty of discussing the issues of war, most graduate students believed that children learned quite a bit about the different wars and enjoyed the many exhibits produced by the VNCA. Especially the helicopter.

On day two of the Veteran's Day celebration, director of the VNCA's oral history project, Dr. Kelly Crager brought the Archive's UH-1 Huey for the children to explore.

The project was a complete success as nearly 700 students went through the Veteran's Day exhibit. ★

Digitizing the CHECO Reports

Maggie Gilchrest-Dunnam

Graduate Assistant

The use of American air power during the Vietnam War remains an oft-debated, discussed, and studied aspect of the war. This includes the tactical versus strategic uses of airpower, the different types of missions and operations, as well as USAF policies and doctrines during the war. The Vietnam Center and Archive is adding to that rich discussion with a project to digitize the Contemporary Historical Evaluation of Combat Operations Reports (CHECO) and to make them accessible through the Virtual Vietnam Archive.

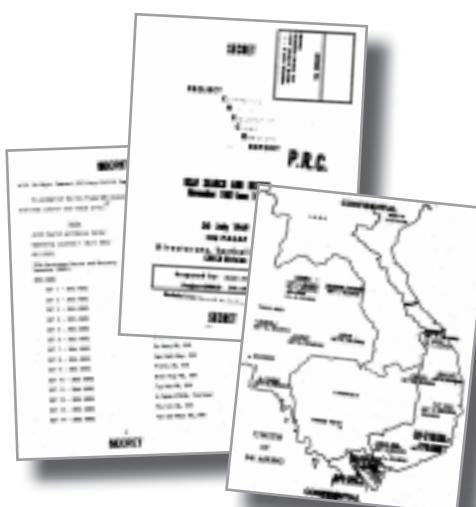
The main objective of this project is to provide digital, searchable, access to all of these reports so they may be used by scholars, students, veterans, and contemporary defense and national security strategists seeking information about aerial operations during the Vietnam War. The CHECO reports are invaluable as a resource on this topic. Initiated in

1962 as way to document and analyze aerial operations in Southeast Asia, the reports provide a wealth of detailed information to include support documentation that allows for a more comprehensive understanding of official USAF operations during the war.

Our goal is to make the CHECO reports completely accessible to the public online, and the person overseeing the completion of

this task is the VNCA's newest team member, archival assistant Jared Wims. "The CHECO project is important because it is contemporary to the time period," Wims said. "It was designed by the Air Force for the Air Force so that they could have a better understanding of their air operations including air strikes, air support missions and other things of that nature."

Wims supervises three student assistants who process the digitized microfilm and convert it to PDFs that are uploaded to the Virtual Vietnam Archive. Almost 3,500 pages of CHECO reports have been uploaded to the VVA since the project's inception in late August. That constitutes approximately 130 (of 254 total) individual reports to include support documentation. Researchers may access these now through the Virtual Vietnam Archive and new reports are added weekly. We look forward to providing another project update when we have the remainder of the CHECO reports available online. ★



2012 Vietnam Archive Donors

The Vietnam Center and Archive would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their collection contributions in 2012. For more information about the contents of any of the collections listed here visit:

www.vietnam.ttu.edu/virtualarchive

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This hand-carved wooden helicopter, donated by Jerry Harlowe, is just one of the many items donated to the Vietnam Archive in 2012. (2117museum4223)

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Guest Lecture Series Update

The Vietnam Center and Archive's 2012 Guest Lecture Series was a great success and featured five lecturers from a variety of background speaking on a wide range of topics.

Dr. Lewis "Bob" Sorley started this year's series, speaking about new his new book *Westmoreland*. The second speaker of the year was Brigadier General Tom Draude, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Marine Corps University Foundation. General Draude discussed his experiences during his three tours in Vietnam, and how those experiences affected his life and world view.

The spring portion of the lecture series concluded with Dr. Raymond Scurfield of the University of Southern Mississippi, who spoke on his experiences as an officer on a psychiatric team in Vietnam from 1968-69, and his work with people and soldiers suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

The lecture series continued in the fall with Dick Rutan. Rutan flew more than 300 combat missions over North Vietnam during the war and continued a stellar aviation career after the war, including the first non-stop, non-refueled flight around the world.

The 2012 series concluded with Rocky Bleier, a college football star who was wounded in Vietnam, but was able to overcome his injuries and return to play for the Pittsburgh Steelers during their four Super Bowl wins in the 1970s. Bleier spoke about his experiences in Vietnam and in the NFL and how those experiences affected the rest of his life.

The Vietnam Center and Archive is excited to continue the lecture series in 2013 with four new speakers (speakers are subject to change):

Karl Marlantes

Marlantes is the bestselling author of *Mountain: a Novel of the Vietnam War* and *What it is Like to Go to War*, which was called by The Washington Post "a well-crafted and forcefully argued work that contains fresh and important insights into what it's like to be in a war and what it does to the human

psyche." A graduate of Yale University and a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford, Marlantes served as a Marine in Vietnam, where he was awarded the Navy Cross, the Bronze Star, and numerous other medals.

Bob Newberry

The former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for POW/Missing Personnel Affairs and Director of the DPMO, Newberry was responsible for leading the Department of Defense worldwide commitment to the fullest possible accounting of Americans missing in action from all conflicts. Mr. Newberry served 26 years in the USAF, retiring in the rank of Colonel. During his military career he flew F-4 and A-10 fighter aircraft during three combat tours in SE Asia and three in Europe.

Socheata Poeuv

An award winning filmmaker, scholar, and social activist, Poeuv is the founder and CEO of Khmer Legacies, an organization whose mission is to create a video archive of testimonies from survivors of the Cambodian genocide. Ms. Poeuv was born in a Thai refugee camp after her parents fled Cambodia in the midst of the Pol Pot regime. They emigrated to the U.S. when she was two years old. Her 2006 film, *New Year Baby*, documents her return to Cambodia to learn what happened to her family during the terror of the Khmer Rouge. The film has won multiple awards and was broadcast nationally as part of PBS's Independent Lens series. Her presentation will include a free screening of *New Year Baby*.

Colonel Mike Mullane

A 1967 graduate of West Point, Mullane was commissioned in the USAF and served as a Weapon Systems Operator aboard an RF-4C Phantom, completing 150 combat missions in Vietnam. In 1978 he was selected as a Mission Specialist for the first group of Space Shuttle Astronauts. He completed three space missions and logged 356 hours before retiring in 1990. Mullane has been inducted into the International Space Hall of Fame and is the recipient of many awards. ★



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