



Mekong Express Mail

Volume 3, Issue 1

The Thailand Laos Cambodia Brotherhood, Inc.

www.TLC-Brotherhood.org

Secret War Rules of Engagement

By Tom Lee

The Assignment:

In May 1968, I departed the United Kingdom where I was the wing Chief of Targets of the 20th Tactical Fighter Wing. I had six years in the Air Force, two years as a Weapons Controller controlling air defense fighters, and four years as an Intelligence Officer specializing in targeting. I was about to disappear into the mists of the Secret War in Laos. *Captain Lee* was to soon become *Mr. Lee*.

The new assignment was to the USAF 1131st Special Activity Group at Bolling AFB, D.C. It was a paper holding organization for people on weird assignments worldwide. The orders further read “with assignment to Deputy Chief, US Military Assistance Command, Thailand (DEPCHIEF MACTHAI) with duty to Project 404.” Report in civilian clothes (no military uniforms authorized) to the Capitol Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand. When I left Travis AFB, I had no clue what that all meant. The metamorphosis to a “civilian” had begun.

Upon arrival in Bangkok I learned that Project 404 was the classified Department of Defense program of augmentee personnel for the US Attaché Office of the US Embassy Laos, and DEPCHIEF was Military Assistance Command Laos (in Exile and in Mufti). But I was to be one of the “up-country” guys referred to as the Mekong Mafia.

In briefings at the US Embassy in Vientiane, I learned that my posting was to Savannakhet, in the panhandle of South Laos,

Is this your last issue of MEM?

Look on your label. If it still shows “2001” your 2002 dues must be paid this month. See page 5 for information.

as the resident intelligence officer. One of my primary jobs was to provide target validation support to US air forces operating over Laos. The final civilian transformation came with new Lao and US government identification. Military ID was used only in emergencies.

Oh, by the way. Here is the Rules of Engagement document; read it, memorize it, apply it and don't screw up. Have a good tour!

As I settled into the web seat aboard the Air America C46 enroute to my new home, I thought - Tomas, what have you gotten yourself into? Even for a guy who experienced his first overseas revolution at age 10, this was really different. Let me

get this straight, I am an American military officer impersonating a civilian in a country that legally I cannot be in according to international treaty, going to a location where I will be validating air strike targets for air operations that the United States says are not happening. Boy, would I like my former Columbia University International Law professor to explain this one!

See ROE, page 9

Kham Just Hates Durian

by Kham Manivanh

Note: Durian is a pungent and intensely fragrant fruit that is very popular—or not—in Southeast Asia.

I could not stand durian! It would give me severe and chronic headaches even when it was mixed in ice cream, but that's my wife's favorite. I remember that they had durian in Paksong. On most of my flights down to L-11, or Pakse, passengers would love to bring durians with them, since it was very expensive in Vientiane. Before leaving Pakse, I would warn the passengers to either eat them before boarding or give them away to relatives or friends, because they would jeopardize my flight. But they seemed to ignore my advice.

The C-123K would be all loaded up, and I would fire up the engines. Then as soon as I taxied, with the ramp still open, sure

See DURIAN, page 2

Stand Tall at the Wall

TLCB Plans for the 2002 Annual Meeting and Reunion at Washington, D.C. Don't miss this chance to put faces to those names, visit some national historic sites, and honor our buddies who did not return. See page 12 for details!



Durian, continued from page 1

enough the rotten smell of durian would flow thru my open cockpit windows, drawn by the suction effect from the propellers. With the plane stopped and engines shut down, I ordered my crewmembers (load masters and flight engineer) to search for the durians and throw them down behind the ramp. And to avoid further delay, I said that passengers should cooperate by bringing them out or I would take off empty. Many of my friends (T-28 jocks) would love to gather around my bird waiting with smiles for the durians, and enjoyed eating them!

Now my problem was, when I was just married for half a year, my pregnant wife wanted damned durians. I finally figured out how to bring them. By carrying a couple of 7.62 minigun ammo cases or cans, saved from Spooky [AC-47 gunship] flights, and having some of my crewmembers help choose the ones that fit in the cases and still allow them to close airtight, I could do it. My wife was very happy, but she had to eat the durian with my sister outside the house or while I was out of the house. Even now I still cannot eat durian. Since the ones imported to the US are frozen, we buy them and put them in a cooler in the trunk so they don't smell as bad as ripe and unfrozen durian.



Confusion at Arc Light's Launch

by Bill Tilton

Those who have been "SACumcized" and those who know SAC only by reputation, generally regard the former Strategic Air Command as a well-oiled machine of superb efficiency and organization. But the beginnings of the KC-135 tanker support program for the Vietnam war was nearly a disaster. And the first "Arc Light" refueling of B-52s was a disaster.

Imagine yourself at Kadena AFB, Okinawa, at the beginning of 1965. Fighter refuelings out of your new forward base (FOB) at Don Muang (Bangkok) have been increasing for two reasons:

1. American participation in the war in Vietnam is expanding, and,
2. TAC's corroding Far East-based KB-50 tankers are grounded ever since one crashed while climbing out of Tahkli. (They were cleared for one-time flight to the "Boneyard" at Davis Monthan AFB, Arizona.)

For ten years SAC had based B-47s at Andersen AFB, Guam. Recently those had been replaced by B-52s. These bombers have a classified (and out of date) conventional bombing contingency plan you have never heard of, called "Arc Light."

In January you were activated as a new tanker wing at Kadena, to support the increasing air strikes in Laos and Vietnam. Your new commander, Col Tyler, is in Omaha trying to process his PCS to Okinawa, and your new chief of maintenance is in Thailand trying to set up Don Muang as an FOB. At this moment, only 35% of your PCS staff has arrived, just as an unexpected stream of tankers suddenly starts arriving from the

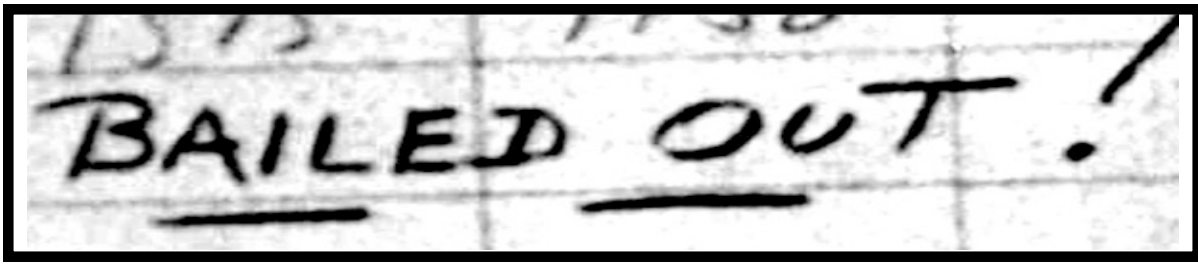
States, as part of this mysterious Arc Light contingency plan. (President Johnson ordered SAC to execute Arc Light on February 11th. Tankers were essential for the 12-hour mission out of Guam to Vietnam, but the new tanker wing was not in the plan and only inherited Arc Light because it happened to be there.) The 3rd Air Division commander (BG Ohlke) is on the horn from Guam, asking you why those tankers have not generated in the four hours allowed for in "the plan." Although you don't know it yet, the hurriedly-deleted B-47 portion of the plan included critical skills that were cut at the same time, and will not be coming. After 24 hours of sleepless struggle to receive and generate the mysterious KC-135s, you have crewmembers living aboard their aircraft. Only then are you handed a copy of the Arc Light plan to study. The host base at Kadena had known of the plan, but, never expecting it to be executed, neglected it. They are broadly unprepared to support the plan, and you are too groggy to comprehend it. You are spiralling out of control.

This was the experience of the deputy commander. When General Ohlke, already angry about the way Arc Light was going, discovered next day that the tanker sorties were not generating fast enough to execute Arc Light, and that crews were still living on board, he exploded. He was interviewed some years after he retired, and explained that when he called the "temporary deputy commander" to tell him he was fired, "This guy went ape! He really went completely off his rocker!" Ohlke said he was trying to bring the affected personnel around to understanding that by-the-book peacetime procedures did not apply; that they needed to generate the sorties, for instance, and *then* do whatever maintenance needed to be done, a suggestion that was heresy in stateside SAC.

Tyler's deputy was hospitalized with a nervous breakdown. Meanwhile the sky kept on spewing tankers, until there were 32 crowding the ramp at Kadena (two were needed for mission support and to carry supplies). And even though some sorties were getting generated, the command post was not always notified, leaving 3rd Air Division and SAC thinking they were still down. When Col Tyler arrived on his hasty return from Offutt, the situation was chaos. That the unit was somehow ready to provide full Arc Light support after 5 days is a great testament to the airmen and NCOs who made up the deployment forces.

The first Arc Light bombing mission was finally launched on June 18th, in 1965. It is said that the bombing was a great success, as predicted by tests done on Eglin AFB ranges. But the mission was hopelessly marred by a disaster in the aerial refueling area north of the Philippines Islands, which lie halfway between Guam and Vietnam. Five parallel refueling tracks had been negotiated in that area, designed to avoid commercial airspace. The tracks were all at the same altitude and separated by 20 nautical miles, entered from a common point. 20 miles is a lot if you are hiking, but at 500 knots it is less than three minutes. Since refueling requires precise rendezvous when the tankers are not together, most tracks incorporate a pair of turns called a "timing triangle," to allow navigators a chance to adjust their arrival time. These tracks lacked such triangles. One cell of bombers arrived too early to rendezvous with the Kadena tankers, and needed to adjust. In order to take up the slack they

See *Arc Light*, page 11



By Kham P. Manivanh

My bailout occurred on April 6, 1966, during my training days at Udorn. While I was on my solo flight, my T-28 developed a rough engine. I tried to nurse it back to T-08 but the darn bird gave up 15 miles east of T-08 and forced me to abandon it.

I was at 4,500 feet when I bailed out. My weight was not more than 100 pounds and it took forever to reach the ground (close to 10 minutes). In the history of the Royal Lao Air Force (RLAF), I was the fifth pilot to bail out of a T-28 and the first one to succeed and survive. The other four guys before me did not have such luck.

The funny part was that I did not know how to turn the parachute around and the wind was blowing me away from the rice paddies towards the jungle, which I did not want to happen. I tried to pull on the cords on the front side but it accelerated me forward, so I pulled the cords at the back and it swung me back to the rice field. My plane hit the ground in a big ball of fire more than two miles away, burning up all the gas, leaving only the engine still burning (probably the oil) with me still hanging in the air only half way to the ground.

As I got close to my landing point I noticed all the villagers from Savang Daendin, with about 50 kids, were watching. Eventually I made a really smooth touch down and landed in a standing position. I still wonder how I did that, since it was my first and only jump. Now the problem was that my chute was down and the wind was dragging me. I had to run after the chute, but luckily all those kids jumped on the chute and saved me.

While I was surrounded by the villagers and the kids, an elderly man introduced himself as the village chief or Pho Ban and invited me to his house, which was just next to the rice paddy. By the time we got to the house one police officer and three policemen had arrived in a pickup truck to guard me. The head of the village gave me an unexpected impromptu Baci (tied my wrist with white cotton thread and wished me luck and health) and told his wife to bring out the food. But I was still too excited about my survival and could only drink some water.

The police officer offered to escort me back to Udorn Air Force Base and I told him that I had already radioed the tower before I bailed out. If, however, there was no response and no rescue I would let them take me back to Udorn. It kind of amazed them when they asked for my age and I told them I had just become 18 four days ago.

By that time I heard some airplanes screaming overhead, so

I said we needed to go out to the rice field, because they were looking for me. Most of the planes saw my burning wrecked plane but failed to see me under their nose. First, a pair of F-4s passed over the wreckage and headed to Udorn. Then another pair did the same thing. Then came my classmates and their instructors. A flight of two was circling the crash site. A few minutes later another pair did the same thing and failed to see me just over two miles away. I told the police and the villagers to build a fire and put wet or green grass on it to make some smoke. At that time we did not carry any survival kit or radio, only our checklist and maps. I told the kids to spread out the chute with the orange side up. They did it with a lot of laughter and fun. Now four A-1s arrived, made low passes and circled the crash site. One of the A-1s made a low pass from the opposite direction and headed toward us and saw the smoke. He dipped down to our position, pulled up and rocked his wings. I stood by the chute holding my helmet and waved at him. Then the rest made low passes over me and headed back to Udorn.

Less than five minutes from the time the first A-1 saw me I heard the very familiar sound of the HH-43 Pedro. I had seen them take off and chase wounded birds on the runway all the time during run up and waiting for take off. It came over just above tree top and landed in the field. Again the kids had to jump on the chute when the downwash kicked it up. Two of the rescue crews jumped off the

ramp. One ran to the chute to collect it while the other ran to pick me up. He put me on his shoulder and ran up the ramp. I had to slap his back and tell him to put me down, because I wanted to go back and thank the village chief and the police. As I bowed and prayed before the Chief to thank him I could see his tears running down and he wished me "Good luck sonny."

I turned to the police, saluted, then shook their hands to thank them for guarding me. Lastly, I turned to all the villagers, bowed and prayed, and waved goodbye. As I turned back to the Pedro the rescue guy was right behind me all the time.

After a short hop we landed in front of the Tower. Major Bill Cox, my instructor who was duty officer that day, and other I/Ps, were waiting with the rest of my class. He put me on his shoulder and ran around the chopper three times before putting me down.

We got back to Det-1 Operations and briefing room for my debrief. Only then did I learn that General Thao Ma, RLAF

Bailout, next page



Bailout, continued from page 3

Commander, was on his way from Savannakhet, or L-39, to congratulate me on my success.

That experience made me and the other RLA pilots more confident about bailing out and trusting the chute. All in all, thanks to the “PEDRO” and the rescue crews for quick reaction and their readiness. After that incident we were issued radios, pen gun flares, a smoke grenade, a reflector mirror and a red/orange signal panel. My I/P gave me an extra battery and told me to eat more (to put on more weight) and told me that if it had happened in enemy territory I would have been a “Floating Duck.”



Rescue of a Baby

by Jim Michener

Jim Michener, Asia Editor of the MEM, and our only member in Laos, is writing a novel about a young man very much like himself, experiencing Vietnam and an uncomfortable return home. Many of us found that our uniform was not respected and our service was not of interest to those back home. We think many readers will identify with this account of things that happened to Jim in Vietnam and afterward. Jim was an Army UH-1 pilot in 1966 and 1967, assigned some of the time to carry a Korean general. On this occasion he was dispatched to find survivors of a destroyed village. Ed.

Vietnam

After reversing my course to dupe Charlie, I dropped like a stone to tree-top level, then circled back to my original heading and made a run for it. Having been there before was an advantage, an ace up my sleeve. Droning through smoke, heat and fire-fed wind, I pushed the Huey beyond 100 knots.

The crew remained silent. Silence was the characteristic rule in such exacting situations: let everybody concentrate; let everybody think; let everybody and the machine become like one. Our lives depended on this uncanny alliance of God-given ability, finely honed skills, and hurtling metal.

“OK, guys,” I said, “this is it. We’re about to go in. The PZ is two miles ahead. I’m gonna all but stand this bird on its tail and land as close as I can to the dime. Brace yourselves. We’re gonna drop in on Charlie like it’s a surprise party, make the pick up, then run. Nobody gets out.” I spoke to the port-side gunner next. “Schwab, tell me when all the Vietnamese are on board so we can lift off. Got that?” He said he did.

We were in the approach slot and began a rapid deceleration. Nose pitched high, tail plunged low, the whole length of the aircraft shuddered violently. I held the flare until the air-speed zeroed out, then lowered the nose and maneuvered the aircraft forward, leveling the fuselage as two tons of metal came to a roaring hover above the PZ’s scorched floor. The laboring bird was soon on the ground, and its screeching engine was throttled back. Obdurate rotor blades decelerated, settling into

a slow cadence of swooshish whomps.

Hunched and gaunt, a teenaged girl ran from the bushes. She clutched a new-born infant that was wrapped in rags. From the magnesium and Plexiglas cockpit, I looked down at her dispirited face as she passed in front of the aircraft’s nose. Fiery cinders, a result of the preceding artillery fusillade, had burned holes in her clothes, which were disheveled. I wondered what she was thinking. Behind her, row upon row of longhouses burned. Flames incised the thick smoke, some of which drifted over and into the chopper.

As she approached the open cargo door, the teenager looked up. Our eyes connected and locked. Terror met stupefaction. Eventually she looked back. Half shuffling, half trotting behind her came an emaciated family garbed in black silk. Much of the cloth was rent and blood-stained. Women’s hands grasped beat-up pots and pans. Men’s shoulders bore reed baskets, some filled with hand tools and crude implements while others held rice. Sisters and brothers, mothers and fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers climbed awkwardly aboard and knelt on the deck.

“Okay to lift off,” said Schwab.

I rolled the throttle to takeoff speed. With N2 at 6,600 RPM, the 1,100 horsepower engine shrieked a high-pitched wail. Outstretched rotor blades roared, losing their earthward dip, flattening into a halo-like disk. Rotorwash pummeled the ground. Whipped up ash and fluorescent embers forayed to every point of the compass, causing that transitory world to glow in hues of rouge and gray.

Finally the skids left the ground. I pulled more pitch and the bird, simultaneously moving forward, began to rise. Through the Plexiglas chin-bubble, I saw the scorched scrub and underbrush. The incinerated timbers of the longhouses appeared next. Afterwards came a forest of cremated date-palms. Observed from the air, the grisly tableau represented a picture of heartless inhumanity.

The aircraft scaled a thousand feet of smoke, and several more after that. Below, uncounted miles of scoured Central

As she approached the open cargo door, the teenager looked up. Our eyes connected and locked. Terror met stupefaction.

Highlands lie suffocating in purgatory darkness. As had happened on other occasions, the bosom of the sky embraced our escape. And the mechanical pulse and whirling rhythm of the machine provided reassuring counterpoint to us all.

“Villages, even large ones, were fragile, a village could disappear in an afternoon, and the countryside was either blasted over cold or already back in Charles’ hands,” wrote Michael Herr in *Dispatches*. “It was axiomatic that [the war] was about ideological space, we were there to bring them the choice, bringing it to them like Sherman bringing the Jubilee through Georgia, clean through it, wall to wall with pacified indigenous and scorched earth.”

Pennsylvania

Seven years later they gave me a medal for the rescue. Nobody knew what to think, including the reserve unit I now stood

See **BABY**, Part 2; page 7

Life at NKP's INVERT in 1965

Editor's note: Vernon Rice was in the radar site at Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai Air Force Base during the early years.

MEM: Do you remember how you learned you were going to NKP?

Vernon: When I got notified that I had been selected for overseas deployment, I was told that it could be Viet Nam, Thailand or whatever—it would be at the government's choice. I went to the personnel office and they cut orders for Bangkok, Thailand. I said to myself, "That is a wonderful area." I studied up on the city. The hook here was I had only 11 days to get there. They told me it was critical duty.

MEM: Well, now we know that "critical duty" turned out to be at Invert, call sign of the radar site at NKP. What were you doing at the time that made them pick you for this duty?

In 1965 I worked at the 26th Air Division Headquarters, a NORAD installation at Duluth AFB in Duluth, Minnesota. We were a "S.A.G.E." center. S.A.G.E. stood for "Semi Automatic Ground Environment" It was a large solid concrete structure filled with state-of-the-art computers of that day and age. We took in radar information from a huge area, processed it and identified aircraft and such. We were hooked into the DEW LINE system (Distant Early Warning), looking for missiles from Russia coming over the North Pole.

MEM: OK, we get it. Now tell us about getting to NKP

I hand-carried my orders around the base, signed off every-

where, did the shots and the dental thing and jumped in my car and drove for 3 days from northern Minnesota to Portland, Oregon, where I was living. Spent 2 days at home and then on to Travis for my flight. I spent 9 hours at Travis and was on a Flying Tiger CL44 4 engine turboprop to Anchorage. We stopped to refuel and 200 guys got off the plane and hit the bar. After 2 hours in the bar we got ourselves ready for a 16 hour ride. Just beyond the halfway point we had a little trouble with one of the engines. We then hit the edge of a typhoon and diverted to Misawa, Japan, where we laid over for a day and a half. They fixed the motor, and back on the plane to Clark Field at Angeles City in the Philippine Islands. Stayed there for about 3 days. Got on a C-130 to Okinawa and then on to Bangkok. That was another long ride. Good thing I love to fly.

We landed in Bangkok and I was escorted to a "Reception Area." I said, "This is nice." Looking around the base a little, I said, "This is not bad." At the reception area we were told that in less than one hour we were being reassigned elsewhere. I said, "Where in the hell is elsewhere?" The man said, "A brand new base at Nakhon Phanom, a little north of Bangkok." He got that right. I thought, "brand new is good, right?"

We got on another Herc [C-130] and proceeded to this brand new base. The crew said we were about to land so get ready. Looking outside, there was nothing but jungle. Then there it was, a postage stamp sized clearing in the boonies with a weird

see INVERT, next page

Still Owe Dues?

Dues for the TLC Brotherhood, Inc., are assessed at \$25 per year per member, and are due on January 1st. After March 31st membership is suspended. If dues are not remitted by the end of that year, membership lapses. A donated fund exists to pay the dues for members who cannot afford to pay. To inquire, contact the TLCB president, in private.

Send dues payments to: TLCB, c/o Tilton; 7813 New London Drive, Springfield, VA 22153.

Mekong Express Mail

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(dues payment: See above)

looking runway, couple of buildings, and not much more. There was the radar system and a junky looking building next to it. All of a sudden, me and about 140 other guys were subjected to the landing of a C-130 on PSP [steel mat runway]. What a noise.

MEM: *Tell us your first impressions of the base.*

Stepping off the plane, it seemed to be about 150 degrees and 1000% humidity. I remember to this day that the jet fuel exhaust was the best smelling thing I enjoyed for about a year. I was 20 years old and had traveled a little bit in my life, but as an Oregon farm boy I had never seen anything like this.

There were a few hootches built and a few tents without floors. We took wooden freight pallets and used them for floors. No bathrooms, just charcoal burners. Showers were a 200-yard walk to the water well, and stand under a piece of fire hose at the standpipe they used to fill the water buffalos. The water was about 45 degrees, because the well was very deep.

MEM: *You were among the pioneers all right. What was it like to live there then?*

I was totally overwhelmed with it all. We all hung together and it became more tolerable. Finally the Sea Bees finished more hootches and we moved in. It was a couple of months before the bathrooms were done. That is something everybody enjoyed, and we treated the Sea Bees to a beer bust.

The available laundry service in the early days was very interesting. Whatever gave those people the idea that you starched your socks and underwear? They used a boiling pot of Mekong river water and banana peels. You would have to spend 20 minutes trying to get your leg to go down thru your pants. One sock would always be 3 feet long and the mate was normal size. The long sock is the sock they put the rock in to beat the rest of your clothes. You can imagine what you smelled like, with banana starch and Mekong river water. I still have an old fatigue shirt that has been washed hundreds of times since and I swear that I can still smell the NKP gumbo as I call it.

We enjoyed a lot of work without days off and a lot of alerts with guns in hand and in the bunkers with who knows what. We found a few snakes there, but we found a few snakes inside Invert Control also. The radar repairmen really enjoyed the snakes that would get on the equipment to warm themselves. Anyone remember cobras and banded kraits? How about those little vipers (I don't mean Dodges)? They were fun.

MEM: *And then there was your job. What was that like?*

We went to work at Invert Control. We were very committed to doing a good job. We did everything from tanker control for the airplane drivers on their way to target, to assisting civilian aircraft around bad weather, putting other aircraft on to targets, and running air rescue control. A few months later we got a SAC piece of equipment in. It was the SKYSPOT trailer. There are a few people out there who know what that was. This thing was like watching TV; it was so impressive.

Some funny things happened in that place. One time we had a request from a flight of 6 F-4 Phantoms who were heading north for a *Bubble Check*. That's where the fighters come over the field at about 100 feet off the ground and you visually check their bomb loads as they go by. There was a [Thai] local who worked for the Sea Bees, who was on a grader between the park-

ing ramp and the runway plowing brush. With the sound of the grader and him concentrating on what he was doing he never saw or heard the 6 fully-loaded-with-bombs Phantoms. Just as they approached the end of the runway, he saw those big, fire breathing machines coming right at him, black smoke pouring out the back ends and right down on the deck. He proceeded to leave the grader in one giant leap, not bothering to stop it or shut it down and took off on a high run for the jungle on the far side of the runway and he must have kept right on going, because no one ever saw him again. The grader might still be pushing brush except it caught the edge of the PSP runway and stalled. It moved the runway about a foot.

Then there was the time that a Navy pilot in an A-4 Skyhawk declared an emergency and wanted to recover at NKP. We advised him we had a PSP runway and that he might want to reconsider. "Maybe you can make it to Udorn," we told him. He said "Hell no!" he was coming in. It was raining that day and we advised him again that we had PSP and it was *wet* PSP, knowing that aircraft has small landing gear. He insisted that he had to land, so we gave him clearance. We asked him to make sure he did not drop his tail hook, as that could be a really bigger problem than landing on wet PSP! He set the bird down and at once began to fishtail and slide all over the runway. Later at Invert control during debriefing, he admitted to us that he really was not scared until he landed, and that is when he peed in his flight suit. "I was lucky," he said, "I could have eaten before my flight, and then there would be a really big mess to clean out of this flight suit."

MEM: *We have a horrible image, if he had dropped that tailhook and rolled up some PSP! What about the town of Nakhon Phanom? You probably went there sometimes.*

We were always pretty careful about going to town. We would always go in groups at first. We thought it would be safer and all. We did ride "THE ROAD" a few times. Cough and choke on the dust one time and slip and slide in the mud the next time. Some of the changes that I witnessed were a bowl of soup at the little cafe went from 1 baht to 5 baht. A bath then was exactly 5 cents, so that was a killer. Another change was the bottles of Leaping Deer and Mekong [Thai whiskey] went from being aged for 3 days before sale to distilled, bottled and sold on the same day. If you remember, you held the bottle up to the light and looked on the back of the label, the date was stamped on it.

MEM: *How was the cost of living in 1965?*

When I first got there a silk shirt made up was about \$1.50 and a pair of cowboy boots, hand made of course from a picture out of a Sears catalog, sold for \$6.00. The price doubled before I left, but in the early days prices for the things in life were reasonable. Beer was 5 cents a can. A 40 oz. jug was \$1.10. A carton of butts was 90 cents. A dollar sure could make life different for you if you wanted.

MEM: *There was lots of irregular air traffic in those days, right?*

We were very aware of the missions going on in Laos. We had nightly visits from the "Gray Ghost Airlines," what we called the CIA. They would stop and pick up orders for flights in and out of Cambodia and Laos. We would have briefings with them

and give them special routes in and out of Laos and special call signs where they would not get shot down by our own guys. I can recall some of those guys were really spooky looking. There was a look in their eyes that would melt ice. Yes we all got direct orders to say nothing whatsoever about anything to do with Laos and Cambodia. We even went so far as not to record in our logs the Gray Ghost flights. No paper trail whatsoever.

The radar we used had a range of 250 to 300 miles. We would monitor air traffic all the way to Hanoi. We would alert our guys when a MiG popped its head up and usually someone would make a run at the MiG and smoke him. Were you aware of the hot rod C-130 that was stripped down to its lightest weight, that would usually have 2 F-4s and 2 F-104s escorting it? The F-4s would go low and '104s would go high and try to get a MiG or two to scramble the C-130. A stripped down '130 can out-fly and maneuver a MiG. If they could sucker in the MiGs, the boys from down low and from up high would blow the MiGs out of the sky. It was always a good feeling when it worked.

MEM: *No, we never heard of that decoy C-130. Amazing! Did you ever get to go on any missions while you were there?*

During the really early days, you could sign up to go with Jolly Green on rescue missions. After a few times the guys really started trusting you and would give you a gun if you wanted to help protect the mission. It was something I did twice. It really got the adrenalin pumping. Thank goodness Sandy [A-1 rescue escorts] was with you on those outings. I should say something nice here about the FACS [forward air controllers]. You did one hell of a job over there. At Invert Control we could get boys to the target area, but you put them on the target with a lot of brave flying and a sharp set of eyes. (Anyone want to admit to having to clean his flight suit?)

MEM: *Yes, we know of some FACs who had to clean poop out of their flight suits, but it was not from a scary mission, it was from something they ate! Did you ever get any special food, other than in town?*

Early on in the tour at NKP, we were really struggling for some type of recreation. We came up with the idea that we would send a man or two down to Bangkok to the big Navy exchange. After taking up a collection from as many guys as we could, the boys would hit the exchange/commissary and buy up some steaks, real potatoes, corn and such with what money they had and head for the airport and catch the next C-130 north. After landing we would take the goodies and store them for a day or so. This was long enough to plan a beer bust. What we called the baseball field, down the hill from Invert Control and across the road from the hootches, would get soaked down with water to make a mud pit. We would BBQ the steaks and extra goodies, drink a little beer and play tug of war at the mud pit. Our BBQ was some barrels cut in half (no *not* the charcoal burners from the old latrines) and some expanded steel across them. We did use the local charcoal that became famous over there. It was always a great time, and relieved a lot of tension and such.

We had a radar repairman at that early time that everyone knew. He had been a cook for many years and cross-trained into radar repair. His name was Sgt. Moody. Maybe some other TLCB members remember him? He always did all the cooking for us at the BBQ. If we were all at the club late into the night

and got hungry, Moody would invite us to the chow hall and whip up some chow at 2:00 A.M. He was a great guy and a great cook, but only a fair radar repairman.

At NKP the buildings remained the same, the people remained the same, the weather remained the same, but a lot of the guys I knew changed.



Baby, continued from page 4

before, its ranks overflowing with draft-aged males who had escaped Vietnam by enlisting in it. Somebody read the citation. "By the order of the President of the United States," it began. A Reserve general pinned the decoration on my blazer. My wife Chris and I were separated by that time. I went home and wept in an empty apartment.

It was the loneliest day in my life and it remained conspicuous by its contradictions. I could clearly see the look of horror in that young girl's face. I particularly saw her eyes as she looked up at me. From the cockpit, I stared down at her in disbelief. Mere hours old, the infant was wrapped in a rag. She held it tight to her chest. The fire raged around us all. It seemed like the end of the world. Looking back, it was. It was the end of the world that I had been raised in and was familiar with. Something cut the puppeteer's strings the instant my eyes met the girl's, which stared back in terror. Nothing would ever be the same.

I was honored by the medal on my blazer yet it was an empty gesture. Vietnam veterans were not respected. The religious left was into tar and feathers. My parents all but ignored me. Sometimes I overheard my mother say that I was not the same after Vietnam. The pretend soldiers at the awards and decoration ceremony were a volunteer force that would never use force. I arrived anonymously. I stood at attention anonymously. I left anonymously. But I did indeed remember that day in Vietnam, the young girl, the look of horror in her eyes, and the newborn infant that she clutched. It was so small that it would have fit inside a shoe box.

I asked myself why my fate was what it was. I had the notion that the answer might not come for decades. I continued wondering what had happened to that young girl and infant. As luck would have it, there came an embarrassing moment for everyone but myself. DOD, several weeks after the award had been presented, circulated a press release that included the citation. It was published in several newspapers. To my surprise, I received a phone call from one of the most invisible members of a local church who had had a rough time of it in WWI—he had been gassed. "Thank you," Eugene said in a raspy voice not much louder than a whisper, "for doing your duty and much, much more." He died within days of making the call. There were no other calls.



**DON'T MISS THE NEXT ISSUE:
JUNE, 2002.
SUBMIT CHANGE OF ADDRESS ASAP.**



After the enemy attacked the strip and killed Captain Bush, a U.S. military aide (reported in TIME/Newsweek), the U.S. Air Force blew up the place. Note the extensive damage. After the enemy was gone I flew into Muong Suoi to reclaim the strip and order a cleanup of the area

There was only several hundred feet of usable strip left when I landed at Muong Suoi in a Pilatus Porter STOL. Within 3 days we were ready to receive C-123Ks and C-130s.



Although the USAF attacked only the strip, the enemy burned down the village of Muong Suoi, as can be seen in this photo.

HISTORY COMMITTEE PAGE: MUONG SUOI

Muong Suoi on the western part of the Plain of Jars in northern Laos was the headquarters of the Lao Neutralist Armed Forces. In 1969 it was under pressure from the People's Army of Vietnam and changed hands more than once. During a time when it was in Neutralist hands, History Committee chairman Ed Ulrich, then Air American chief pilot in Laos, landed on its battle-damaged airstrip in a Pilatus Porter, the short take-off and landing plane that Gerry Frazier showed rare film of at the DC 99 TLCB Reunion. Ed's job was to examine the damage to the strip and get it back in operation as soon as possible. On the ground, he, a case officer and several local Lao men walked in line abreast down the strip, noting holes, big pieces of debris and other damage. They also looked out for land mines. Inspection completed, Ed put together a labor force and had the strip ready for C-123s and C-130s in three days. He took these pictures during that visit.



Destroyed fuel dump at Muong Suoi. All fuel had to be flown in in drums or large rubber bladders.



Bomb Damage at Muong Suoi. Note damaged "farm wagon" used to receive cargo from C-123Ks and C-130s.

Photographs by Ed Ulrich

Rules of Engagement 101:

ROE were not new for me. I used them in Air Defense (fighters intercepting unknown aircraft and during exercises with SAC) and more recently in NATO nuclear operations planning. Fundamentally, ROE are a good thing. In theory at least, they do a number of positive things such as:

- Focusing on the desired objectives;
- Providing order to aerial warfare and delimiting the conflict scope;
- Promoting safety and limiting our casualties;
- Protecting the good guys from friendly attack;

In the case of Laos:

- Providing plausible denial of US military activities.

On the down side, too often they are prepared by folks at very high levels that never will be required to interpret or implement them or who have different agendas from the people they affect. Often they are written in language requiring great interpretation in the context of the conflict. Conversely some ROE are so precise as to be unrealistic during operations.

Nevertheless, the Lao ROE was well intentioned but created many of its own impediments to fighting the war. Although the document was Top Secret, the enemy very quickly knew when a change was implemented because we did things differently. So they made adjustments to take advantage of the new conditions.

Operational Laos Realities 101:

Here are just a few to mull over.

- Traditional western descriptors do not describe the Laotian environment. Towns, villages and roads mean different things in a local context.
- Laos is a very lonely place particularly when flying aircraft with sick radios or navigation aids (not that there were that many nav aids to use).
- "It all looks the same" - ergo you can get disoriented or lost very quickly. (I know pilots don't get lost but the Laotian malady was usually more than momentary disorientation).
- Maps of Laos don't look like the ground they are meant to depict.
- The US leadership did not like casualties, especially casualties where we were not supposed to be.
- The US leaders often did not believe the bad guys were doing what they were doing, such as "there are no tanks in Laos". (But General, how did they get to Lang Vei in 1968?)
- Jet aircraft cover a lot of ground in a very short time. At 360 knots an aircraft is moving at about 600 ft per second (the same distance as the 200-yard ROE).
- Short rounds (friendly fire on friendlies) were anathema. For the Laos in-country guys the quickest way out of town was to be involved in a short round situation.
- Both sides did not play by the same rules.
- Many of the terms used were double speak - such as armed reconnaissance areas (bombing regions) or WBLC water borne logistics craft (canoes)

Laos Rules of Engagement Development:

The following is a very cavalier rendition of Rules of Engagement development and approval. It applies mainly to the time I was there.

The ROE were sometimes developed and always approved at very high levels of US political and military circles. ROE changes could be top down (dreamed up in Washington all the way up to the Johnson White House) or bottom up (crafted and engineered in the theater). Most changes required White House approval. The US Ambassador to Laos (William Sullivan during most of my tenure) was the key player in getting ROE changes approved by the Royal Lao Government (RLG) through the Prime Minister. Changes developed between the US Embassy Vientiane and MACV were forwarded up a parallel chain to the Department of State and CINCPAC for formal approval. Changes were officially recommended to Department of State by the JCS using JCS Memoranda. Once approved their contents went by message to CINCPAC and MACV for implementation.

(See the Department of State Foreign Relations of the United States 1964-1968 Vol. XXVII on Laos to see some of this process unfold.)

What were the Laos ROE?

In January 1967, seven sectors, identified by the letters A through G, were established as armed reconnaissance areas in Laos. These areas were primarily in the area of eastern Laos identified as STEEL TIGER. In these areas as well as BARREL ROLL (North Laos) and TIGER HOUND (extreme south-east Laos), the following attack rules were permitted.

US aircraft were allowed to conduct strikes outside of villages, against targets of opportunity. Any target of opportunity could be struck, day or night, provided it was located within 200 yards of a motorable road.

Provisions were in force to strike other types of targets. Fixed targets, targets of opportunity outside the armed reconnaissance areas, or targets of opportunity within the armed reconnaissance area, but more than 200 yards from a motorable road or trail, could also be attacked. However one of the following stipulations had to be met:

- The target had to be a validated Royal Lao Air Force (RLAF) "A" or "B" target.
- Approval had to be obtained from Air Attache (AIRA) Vientiane, AIRA Savannakhet, or an AIRA Forward Air Controller (FAC).
- Gunfire had been received from the target.

What I did to implement the ROE

The above ROE were the basic bombing ground rules for South during my tour. There were other exceptions but I will focus this article on the above provisions.

I was the AIRA target approval person in Savannakhet. Therefore, according to the ROE, within certain geographic areas any potential bombing target beyond 200 yards of a motorable road or trail that was outside the boundaries of a village had to receive my validation before strike by US air assets, unless gunfire had been received from the target. Then an

See ROE, next page

“unvalidated” reaction strike was permitted.

Most routine target approval responsibilities in Laos had been assigned to the Air Attaché Office of the US Embassy by 1968. But even these were monitored closely by Embassy overseers. High priority decisions went to the Ambassador. There were accredited (legal) air attaches in Vientiane and Savannakhet. To my knowledge, these were the only two AIRA locations doing formal validation. All target validation was done in the name of the Ambassador as the senior US representative. Therefore, we were validating for the US government. The intelligence sections at both locations handled the detailed work. As the intelligence section of one in Savannakhet, I handled the responsibilities in South Laos for US tactical aircraft. All B52 ARCLIGHT strikes were approved in Vientiane. Although technically responsible for all of South Laos, operationally I worked only the central Panhandle from about Thaket in the North (opposite NKP) to the Se Bang Fei (River) in the south. This roughly equated to the Royal Lao Army’s Military Region III. I did not have a clue what was going on further south and was reluctant to validate anything in that area. The only time I did I got into a potential short round situation that was painful until resolved.

By 1968, RLAFA targets were a thing of the past. This program had begun about 1964 as a method of identifying fixed targets in Laos for limited bombing, similar to the JCS 94 target list in

North Vietnam. In South Laos air attack approval had moved from a fixed target base to a more flexible approach, particularly in the mobile interdiction campaign along the Ho Chi Minh Trail. The common denominator became a linear motorable road.

In 1968 an AIRA FAC or forward air controller was a USAF pilot located in Laos qualified to conduct forward air control missions in Laos with the call sign RAVEN. Raven FACs were stationed at a number of sites in North Laos and two in the South - Savannakhet and Pakse. We normally had two Ravens operating from Savannakhet. Generally they flew with a Lao back seater when operating west of the armed reconnaissance area line supporting regional military activities. When Ravens went east of the line it was usually on a reconnaissance flight checking out a particular area for bad guy activity. Often I flew back seat on these flights as recce systems operator, navigator, gunner, and most importantly the second set of eyes.

In either case there was sufficient expertise to permit ROE approved strikes.

Attacks must not take place on villages according to the ROE. This was in response to the Royal Lao government’s strong concern for protecting their population from friendly bombing. And it was in keeping with the accepted Laws of War concerning not attacking non-combatants. Contrary to the allegations of many former and current critics of US bombing in Laos, Laos was not a “free fire” zone. Unquestionably, massive amounts of ordnance were dropped over the decade, but it was a very managed (and often over managed) activity. Ambassador Sullivan was highly vocal on the issue of not bombing the

friendlies. Unfortunately, the American air warriors did not help their cause by inadvertently bombing friendly villages. For example, the South Laos village of Muong Phalane was accidentally bombed eight times in about four years much to the chagrin of the US Embassy, the Royal Lao government and especially the residents. Were the crews lost when it happened? - YES. Did they positively identify the target before dropping? - YES, except they did not know where they were. Unfortunately, a bridge is a bridge is a bridge when going 400 knots in crummy weather.

The seeming innocuous requirement concerning villages caused great consternation to those of us that had to implement (interpret) the ROE in the operational context. First, there is a definitional issue as what is a village. Southeast Asian villages are a far cry from the traditional American New England village. Laotian villages may be only a cluster of huts made of bamboo and reeds. Identification of a village was often difficult, as was the determination of what constituted a village in ROE terms. At what point did a group of huts become a village? There were times that a single inhabited hut was considered a village (just to be on the safe side). And that inhabitation was probably a bad guy. Activity within “populated” areas was even

Did I tell you that every Laotian road had parallel red lines running on each side of it precisely 200 yards from its centerline and those lines even glowed in the dark at night?

more difficult to discern. Note that the ROE did not mention anything about activity only the existence of a “village”. One of the sec-

ondary rules concerning village identification for ROE purposes was that a village was any place identified on a current Joint Operations Graphic (JOG) 1:250,000 scale chart. Unfortunately these charts were usually several years old and represented the cartographer’s best interpretation of the existence of a functioning village at the time of map compilation. Sometimes the cartographer would assist by indicating on the chart that the village was abandoned. Unfortunately the ROE said nothing about “abandoned villages” so they too were generally off limits. It did not take the bad guys long to realize that the US did not bomb villages, occupied or not. Thus, many of the abandoned locations served as enemy troop billets, storage areas or even anti-aircraft sites. The latter was always dicey for the bad guys because of the “attack the shooter” provision. However, the Pathet Lao and the PAVN knew the US reluctance to strike anything that looked like an inhabited area and took advantage of it.

Early in my tenure I took substantial grief from the 56th Tactical Unit Operations Center (TUOC), and Task Force Alpha (TFA), both located at Nakhon Phanom, concerning the abandoned village issue and my refusal to permit strikes near obviously abandoned locations. Equally vocal were the ABCCCs, the airborne command and control aircraft that orbited over Laos day and night. Through 7/13AF intelligence at Udorn where there was a Laos support cell, I obtained photo coverage along major road routes where villages existed on the JOGs. I did the photo interpretation to ascertain village activity. Most were indeed abandoned. The next step was to make it official. I sent a message to AIRA Vientiane outlining my project and providing the names of about 50 or so villages that should be deemed aban-

done and outside the ROE. I recommended dissemination to the appropriate planning and operational organizations. I was going to be the hero of the week. Almost immediately, I received a cold message back from AIRA with kudos for the good work but with VERY clear instructions that under no circumstances would such a list leave AIRA. End of Message. I had unwittingly ventured into the political minefield of what parts of Laos were still under viable Royal Lao control. If

I had unwittingly ventured into the political minefield of what parts of Laos were still under viable Royal Lao control.

these villages were acknowledged to be abandoned, there was no RLG control and that was not acceptable to the Royal Lao Government. The fact there was no RLG control was irrelevant, as was the fact that the baddies often were using the real estate for their purposes. Unofficially, I was told I was permitted to use the list with discretion since I held photo confirmation. What was not said but clearly communicated was that you are on your own on this one and if any incident occurs that embroils the RLG and the US Embassy, you take the fall. But they would be happy to sing songs of praise for my diligence at my hanging. Such was the life of a Laos target validator.

Another ROE dilemma was what is a motorable road or trail? Even the thickest 7th Air Force staffer would tell you that that was where the trucks were. And if you found trucks then that was a motorable road. That kind of circular thinking contributed to losing the war. During a late night discussion with a bunch of drunken TFA Intel guys we agreed that you could put a truck on top of a pinnacle of karst and by ROE definition that was a motorable road because of the existence of the truck. Therefore, it was a valid target. This admission probably confirms the suspicion of the ops guys that all intellies have loose screws, but it illustrates the issue.

Did I tell you that every Laotian road had parallel red lines running on each side of it precisely 200 yards from its centerline and those lines even glowed in the dark at night? That way you knew whether you had to get validation or not. Don't we all wish. However, the bad guys knew exactly where those 200 yard lines were as if there were lines drawn on the ground. And just beyond them was where they built their truck parks and storage areas.

I don't know the origins of the 200 yards from a motorable road or trail. It is lost in the mists of time unless some reader is aware of its origin. I have tried to tie it to weapons effects radius, circular error probable of weapons and delivery accuracy's to no avail. However, I suspect that the motorable road relates to the obsession that the US military, and especially the Air Force, had with truck kills as a measure of bombing effectiveness. Then in 1971 this assessment collapsed when the CIA calculated we had killed more trucks than the North Vietnamese possessed. Damage assessment is beyond the scope of this writing. However, too often it became a self-licking ice cream cone to a leadership searching for measures of success.

In the case of the Trail, truck kills assumed that the truck was the most cost-effective method of carrying military materials from North to South Vietnam. Remember this was the period of Mr. McNamara's whiz kids quantitative analysis. How-

ever, only counting trucks failed to account for other ways the PAVN moved goods down the Trail such as porters and pack bicycles. One assumes that the ROE writers believed that these alternative movement methods were unimportant or would also be hindered by destroyed roads. They were not. It never fails to amaze me how little we really knew about our enemy or failed to incorporate what we knew into our counter operations. Was it American arrogance or innocence, planning ineptness or do we know so much more now than we did then?

Most Laotian roads were natural surface—dirt, laterite or gravel. Along the Trail, many of the roads ran under jungle or tree canopy so they were hidden from the air except at very low altitudes. Others were cleverly camouflaged from view, forcing an oblique look from low level even to see them. Task Force Alpha had a section that tracked the road network and built road plots to support their sensor operations. The use of road watch teams and the development of airborne and ground sensors were in response to locating activity along the Trail network.



Arc Light, continued from page2

executed some turns off the assigned refueling track and crossed into the track of another cell. Two B-52s collided.

Arc Light routes were changed, and timing triangles were added, after that mishap. The routine was for tankers to leave Kadena about one and one half hours after the bombers had departed Guam. Adjusting their arrival slightly ahead of the bombers, rendezvous was on-track. The main refueling track was 140 miles long, but there were various top-off routes and some tankers stayed with the bombers in case fuel was needed coming off the targets. Most of the tankers went straight back to Kadena.

The *first combat use* of aerial refueling tankers in the U.S. Air Force occurred on the 9th of June, 1964. The receivers were eight F-100s, refueled by four KC-135 tankers, flying as "Yankee Team." Although there already had been a great deal of aerial refueling there and in other hotspots around the globe, none before had been combat missions with live airstrikes on hostile targets. From that day, Southeast Asia refueling was to continue almost constantly for nine years and two months, accumulating nearly a million hookups and passing 1.4 billion gallons of fuel. Coincidentally, Boeing's KC-135 deliveries were completed in 1964, after nine years of production.

Watch for *Operation Young Tiger*, about the origins and day-to-day operation of SAC refueling in SEA, in a future issue.

[Most of the material for this article is drawn from a Strategic Air Command (SAC) history of air refueling in Southeast Asia, written by Charles K. Hopkins of SAC's Office of the Historian, in 1979. A copy of this unpublished work was furnished to me by Jim Harrod, of Colorado Springs. Jim was a Viking radar operator at Mukdahan in 1966 and '67, and occasionally saw the tankers and receivers orbiting overhead.]





Stand Tall at the Wall

It's finally time to register for the reunion. The form is enclosed with each copy of MEM.

The Three Days of Remembrance

Friday, July 12th. This day will begin with a special in-hotel presentation, with two uniformed reenactors, of the famous battles of Manassas (or Bull Run), by Civil War expert Jim Quinlan. In the afternoon we will start with a bus tour of Arlington National Cemetery and proceed to the outstanding Navy and Marine Corps museums at Washington Navy Yard. There may be an option to visit the National Cathedral, a true classic cathedral on the highest point in this area. In the evening we will make our visit to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, "the Wall." This will be a particularly meaningful event, as the sun sets behind the Lincoln Memorial and the evening crowd reverently strolls along that hallowed path. We will provide a guide to names of TLC lost and missing.

Saturday, July 13th. This is the morning for our TLCB, Inc., Annual Meeting, including the board election and reports from board members and committee chairman on where we've gone and what we plan. After a cookout picnic we will board buses to the Smithsonian museums. We will start at the most popular museum in the world, Air and Space. But the National Gallery, Natural History, American History, etc., are right there! In the

evening we will have our banquet at the hotel, followed by the ever-popular and grossly informal auction of donated memorabilia to raise funds for Assistance.

Sunday, July 14th. Better stay for this! In the morning we will travel by bus to the Manassas Battlefield for our Memorial Service, on hallowed ground of another war. From there we will ride to Wat Lao, a real operating Buddhist temple in Virginia, to offer the customary food and greetings to the monks. For the afternoon we have an optional package deal that will take us to the Flying Circus for lunch and great biplane stunts and fun. Those who attended in '99 will tell you—don't miss it!

Watch our website for more information as it develops. But register NOW!

Basic Reunion Details

Dates: July 12, 13, and 14, 2002.

Place: Manassas, Virginia and Washington, D.C.

Nearest Airport: Washington Dulles (IAD)

Hotel: Comfort Suites Manassas (703) 686-1100.

Hotel Registration: Contact hotel *directly* to reserve rooms. Mention TLCB to get special reunion rate.

DON'T DELAY IN MAKING RESERVATIONS.

Reunion Registration: Send enclosed form, with \$60 per person, to TLCB Reunion, c/o Tom Lee, PO Box 331, Dunn Loring, VA 22027. Checks: "TLCB Reunion 2002"

To inquire about your registration, email tlee@erols.com (Tom Lee, registrar).

Assistance Activity Report for 2001

John Sweet has recently reported the Assistance Committee's activities for 2001. Their work has expanded wonderfully, and the donations that have been coming in with dues payments this year confirm the confidence of our membership that these funds are going to a good purpose. Here are some highlights from John's report—

Our work in Asia would not be possible without the dedication and hard work of some very special people. At Udorn, Thailand, we have Vichit Mingrachata working with the leadership of VFW Post 10249. At Nakhon Phanom, John Middlewood (2nd from left, in photo). In Vientiane, Laos, Jim Michener. Here are some things they did in 2001:

- Provided direct aid to the many hundreds of children at the Nongkhai Home for Boys, Udorn Home for Girls, Udorn Home for Hearing Impaired Children, Udorn Poor Children's Home, Ban Pha Sing School, Ban Yang Law School, Udorn Northeastern Mentally Ill Relief Center, and Bahn Non Sawan School. *Contributions in the Udorn area cost TLCB 258,390 Baht, or \$5,742.*
- Provided over 538 jackets to the children in various villages in Nakhon Phanom Province.
- Delivered over 100 school uniforms, 80 sleeping mats, repairs to playground equipment, computer and sound lab repairs, notebooks and pencils, sports equipment, and educational toys.

- Provided 14 new sound lab stations.
- Conducted monthly food programs at several schools,
- Delivered a bicycle and sports equipment to a secondary school located at Takhet, Laos. *Contributions in the Nakhon Phanom area amounted to \$5,725.*

Jim Michener planned and delivered our first assistance project within the People's Democratic Republic of Laos, working with the Disaster Management Office to aid flooded villages in Kasi District. Over \$1,700 worth of aid in supplies and rice were provided.



And YOU: For the year 2001, *help worth \$13,167 was provided*, thanks to the generosity of members of the TLC Brotherhood and Sisterhood. *Thank you!*