

NOVEMBER, 2007

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A Memorial to the American Experience  
In Vietnam

"All included, none excluded"

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# REVETMENTS

The Official Journal of The Tan Son Nhut Association

## VETERAN'S DAY

By Wayne Salisbury  
TSNA President-Emeritus

World War I – known at the time as "The Great War" - officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, in the Palace of Versailles outside the town of Versailles, France. However, fighting ceased seven months earlier when an armistice, or temporary cessation of hostilities, between the Allied nations and Germany went into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. For that reason, November 11, 1918, is generally regarded as the end of "the war to end all wars."

In November 1919, President Wilson proclaimed November 11 as the first commemoration of Armistice Day with the following words: "To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations..."

The original concept for the celebration was for a day ob-

served with parades and public meetings and a brief suspension of business beginning at 11 a.m.

The United States Congress officially recognized the end of World War I when it passed a concurrent resolution on June 4, 1926, with these words:

*Whereas* the 11th of November 1918, marked the cessation of the most destructive, sanguinary, and far reaching war in human annals and the resumption by the people of the United States of peaceful relations with other nations, which we hope may never again be severed, and

*Whereas* it is fitting that the recurring anniversary of this date should be commemorated with thanksgiving and prayer and exercises designed to perpetuate peace through good will and mutual understanding between nations; and

*Whereas* the legislatures of twenty-seven of our States have already declared November 11 to be a legal holiday: Therefore be it Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), that the President

of the United States is requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the officials to display the flag of the United States on all Government buildings on November 11 and inviting the people of the United States to observe the day in schools and churches, or other suitable places, with appropriate ceremonies of friendly relations with all other peoples.

An Act (52 Stat. 351; 5 U. S. Code, Sec. 87a) approved May 13, 1938, made the 11th of November in each year a legal holiday - a day to be dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be thereafter celebrated and known as "Armistice Day." Armistice Day was primarily a day set aside to honor veterans of World War I, but in 1954, after World War II had required the greatest mobilization of soldiers, sailors,



Marines and airmen in the Nation's history; after American forces had fought aggression in Korea, the 83rd Congress, at the urging of the veterans service organizations, amended the Act of 1938 by striking out the word "Armistice" and inserting in its place the word "Veterans." With the approval of this legislation (Public Law 380) on June 1, 1954, November 11th became a day to honor American veterans of all wars.

Later that same year, on October 8th, President Dwight D. Eisenhower issued the first "Veterans Day Proclamation" which stated: "In order to insure proper and widespread observance of this anniversary, all veterans, all veterans' organizations, and the entire citizenry will wish to join hands in the common purpose. Toward this end, I am designating the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs as Chairman of a Veterans Day National Committee, which shall include such other persons as the Chairman may select, and which will coordinate at the national level necessary planning for the observance. I am also requesting the heads of all departments and agencies of the Executive branch of the Government to assist the National Committee in every way possible."

On that same day, the President sent a letter to the Honorable Harvey V. Higley, Administrator of Veterans' Affairs (VA), designating him as Chairman of the Veterans Day National Committee.

In 1958, the White House advised VA's General Counsel that the 1954 designation of the VA Administrator as Chairman of the Veterans Day National Committee applied to all subsequent

VA Administrators. Since March 1989 when VA was elevated to a cabinet level department, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs has served as the committee's chairman.

The Uniforms Holiday Bill (Public Law 90-363 (82 Stat. 250)) was signed on June 28, 1968, and was intended to insure three-day weekends for Federal employees by celebrating four national holidays on Mondays: Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Columbus Day. It was thought that these extended weekends would encourage travel, recreational and cultural activities and stimulate greater industrial and commercial production. Many states did not agree with this decision and continued to celebrate the holidays on their original dates.

The first Veterans Day under the new law was observed with much confusion on October 25, 1971. It was quite apparent that the commemoration of this day was a matter of historic and patriotic significance to a great number of our citizens, and so on September 20th, 1975, President Gerald R. Ford signed Public Law 94-97 (89 Stat. 479), which returned the annual observance of Veterans Day to its original date of November 11, beginning in 1978. This action supported the desires of the overwhelming majority of state legislatures, all major veterans service organizations and the American people.

Veterans Day continues to be observed on November 11, regardless of what day of the week on which it falls. The restoration of the observance of Veterans Day to November 11 not only preserves the historical

significance of the date, but helps focus attention on the important purpose of Veterans Day: A celebration to honor America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.

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## HOW TO BUILD A REVETMENT

I'm not really sure how they were built at Tan Son Nhut to protect the planes, but let's just say they were built out of steel ribs welded to a metal skin.

In the case of the REVETMENT you are reading, YOU are the "ribs" with your stories and anecdotes, and I am the "welder".

And guess what? If I don't have any "ribs", I can't do a lot of welding!

I think you get the point. As the old military saying goes, "Keep those cards and letters coming".

Larry Fry  
www.lfry2@dejazzd.com



The "original" Revetments!

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## DELIVERED SPECIAL

Harold Boone  
460th TRW

My mother told me this story after I returned from Vietnam. In our small hometown, we had a letter carrier named Jack. And, there was an Army foot soldier in Vietnam named Bill. For whatever the reason, it had been a long time since Bill sent a letter to his mother. While sorting his daily mail for delivery, Jack found a letter from Bill to his mother. Here is the warmth of the story: instead of putting the letter into his bag for the usual home delivery, Jack personally carried the letter to where she worked and put the letter directly into her hands. He then proceeded to deliver mail as usual on his route.

Just weeks ago, I attended Jack's funeral service. Over the years, we had become separated due to jobs, but that never caused me to forget an old friend. While at the service, I recalled in my mind that story and similar stories where he defined by action what a friend was.

To my knowledge Jack never served in the military. He did, however, serve a Vietnam soldier and his family in a warm, special, and caring way. He probably violated several rules and regulations by his action but for this one moment, he followed his heart and not his head.

[illegible]

## Favorite Sayings

“To make a long story short, there’s nothing like the boss walking in.”

## THOUGHTS ON TET 68

Tom Rosinski  
7th Air Force Plans

I was stationed at Tan Son Nhut AB from 15 Jan 68 to 9 Dec 68. My duties were as NCOIC, Headquarters 7<sup>th</sup> Air Force Plans. I lived in Ellis compound down from the R & R Center and the Heliport.

On the night that the 68 TET Offensive started me and my hooch buddies spent several hours in a bunker adjacent to our quarters. We could hear the incoming 122's and gun fire all around us. The flashes from gunships and helicopters lighted the night. It was a scary time for a support troop not anticipating any action.

When the All Clear came we headed for the main road to walk to the 7<sup>th</sup> Air Force compound where we worked. I recall that all the way up were tanks lined along the roadside. We could see damage all around us. During a tour of the base later I recall that the Base Chapel had taken a hit.

Of course, the week following that night the rockets continued and we spent several nights under our cots when the siren went off. Some of us got so concerned we decided to take our blankets and just sleep in the office.

I have included 3 pictures that show one of our hooch's that got hit on Feb 18, 1968 at about 3:30 PM. Two airmen were killed in this attack. The picture of the casing is that one which was dug out of the hooch that killed the two airmen. I lived 3 hooch's down from the hooch that was hit.

I am glad I found the site because I had a lot of things confirmed that I had heard about that horrible night in 68.



Tom Rosinski photo.  
Old BX building, hit on  
Feb. 18, 1968

[illegible]

David E. Koopman  
460th FMS

I remember being sacked out in my bunk when I heard a bunch of load explosions and then the base attack siren began to howl. I jumped up and started running with a number of other airmen along the hall way heading for the door and the stairs down to my bunker. Suddenly I tripped over a trash can someone had left sticking out in the hallway. As I started to fall, out of the corner of my eye, I noticed an explosion of sparks fan skyward. I don't remember the sound of the explosion, possibly because I hit the floor and was trampled by several airmen behind me. But I have a vivid memory of the sky lighting up and the fire caused by the explosion. I picked myself up and ran for the bunker just barely behind the airmen who tried to trample me into the floor. After the all clear sounded I walked out behind the latrine next to my hooch to look at what was left of the storage shed that had been hit by the rocket. There wasn't much left of it. But at least no one was hurt.

**TDY TO TSN**

George Plunkett  
1961st Communications Group

I was TDY to the 1961st Communications Group at Tan Son Nhut from the 1st Mobile Communications Group (1st Mob) at Clark AB, PI from July 62 to Jan 63 and Feb 63 to August 63 as a ground radio operator. From TSN I redeployed to Ban Me Thout, Sox Trang and Pittsanuluk, Thailand. Then, on to the Thailand swing - Bangkok, Ubon and Udorn. Was part of the 1st Mob team that opened Udorn for the regular Air Force in mid 1964. The flight line was loaded with WWII birds - C-46's, T-28's and H-34's - all in aluminum finish with no markings. This was the home of Air America and the Air Commandos. . These folks did such an amazing job with so little support that the war in Laos was all going our way in 1964. Then, we took our eyes off the ball and concentrated on Vietnam. The predictable happened and the North Vietnamese regained control of most of it. And we all know what happened next...



George Plunkett reading  
names from The Moving  
Wall

## THE MOVING WALL

George Plunkett  
TSNA Director  
Membership Development

Last year the Moving Vietnam Wall was on display in Columbia, SC. Volunteers were needed for a variety of jobs, so I volunteered to do anything. The first and second display days I was in charge of keeping the port-a-johns clean and stocked with toilet paper. Obviously someone recognized my hidden talents. An additional call went out for more volunteers to read names, as it was feared that we would not complete reading the entire 58,000+ names on the list. Once again, I stepped forward accompanied by dozens of fellow Vets who were determined to get the job done. The third day, Saturday, I read for 20 minutes from 10:40PM to 11PM. I read again Sunday morning from midnight to 12:20AM and 12:40AM to 1AM. All reading was done under a large tent. A table and chair were provided, as was a table lamp. The temperature was in the high thirties and it rained constantly. There was a steady stream of visitors, family members and friends arriving to hear the names of their loved ones read. You could not study the names ahead of time because it was not known where the previous reader would end. Additionally, the names truly represented a cross section of our great country. English, Russian, Irish, Hispanic, Greek, Italian, whatever, they were all there. The determination to read all names correctly, maintaining a steady cadence and reverence for our fallen comrades was overwhelming. Reading for 60 minutes total was one of the most intense things that I have

ever done in my life, but it was immensely gratifying. The picture was taken by my wife, accompanied by her sister and sister's husband - an Army W-5 helicopter pilot who celebrates 41 years of military service in July, 2007. From South Carolina, where the Doolittle Raiders trained, where victory begins at Fort Jackson and where the F-35 will be based at McEntire National Guard Station.



## SCHEDULE

**“A”**

**11/01 - 11/05 Slidell, LA**

## 11/08 - 11/12 Minden, LA

**"C"**

**11/01 - 11/05 Myrtle  
Beach, SC**

**11/08 - 11/12 Daytona  
Beach, FL**

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## “NOTATIONS FROM APPLICATIONS”

From new member :  
Terry G. Moore  
460th AE

I was there for TET 68. I lived on base near the 2 radar domes . . . . Great web site—I ordered a CD also.

[illegible]**BX/PX**

Don't forget to take care of your Christmas Wish List by making a copy of the Order Form at [www.tsna.org](http://www.tsna.org).



## **Attack On Tan Son Nhut Air Base December 4-5, 1966**

By: Charles Penley, TSNA Webmaster

A sentry dog handler, working on Alpha K-19, radioed that unidentified individuals were on the north side of his post. Over the air police radio system, explosions and small arms could be heard. The enemy had come through the perimeter wire, undetected, on the north-west end of the installation. Enemy penetration had been confirmed.

Soon the rest of the installation personnel heard the sounds for themselves. Numerous enemy mortars were fired onto the installation. Thousands of enemy rounds were expended, both on post and off. The tracer fire that the VC were using are green and the tracer fire that the Americans fired were red.

For the next thirty-five (35) hours, the 377th Air Police Squadron will be fighting numerous deadly fire fights.

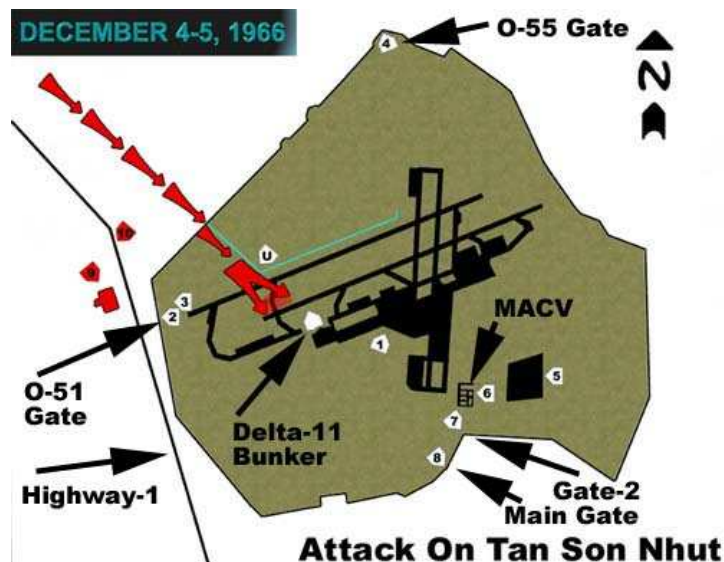
Delta-15 bunker, adjacent to the flight line, reported that the VC were coming through Delta Sector Main Line of Resistance (MLR).

Delta-11 bunker, a machine gun position, was manned by A2C Robert Valentine, A3C Walker and A3C Alvin Currie. The three air policemen observed numerous enemy coming directly at them and they literally fought for their lives. They killed a total of thirteen (13) VC during that first night. A2C Alvin Currie would receive the Silver Star for his gallant actions.

The VC carried, in addition to their weapons, grenades, claymore mines and bungalow explosive devices. They came to do whatever damage that they could accomplish.

By the end of the battle the results were:

1. 33 mortars fired by the enemy
2. 20 Aircraft damaged
3. 03 USAF 377th Air Policemen Killed In Action
4. 15 USAF personnel Wounded In Action
5. 03 ARVN personnel Killed In Action
6. 04 ARVN personnel Wounded In Action
7. 28 Viet Cong Killed In Action
8. 04 Viet Cong Wounded In Action and captured



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**Revetments** is an official publication of the Tan Son Nhut Association, Inc.  
 P.O. Box 236, Penryn, PA 17564-0236  
 The Association is a non-profit fraternal organization chartered under the appropriate statutes and law.

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 Membership Information:  
 Annual Membership: \$20.00  
 Five Year Membership: \$80.00  
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From the Officers and Directors of  
 The Tan Son Nhut Association:



**FILL 'ER UP TIME!**

(Or—I don't have anything else to put in here!)

Below is your TSNA VP in Saigon,  
 January, 1962

