



Mekong Express Mail

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THE THAILAND LAOS CAMBODIA BROTHERHOOD, INC.

www.TLC-Brotherhood.org

ACA funds, TLCB implements, Ban Phosy school upgrade

By Mac Thomson

It took three days of rain-soaked mud and truck-caused ruts to cut short Mac and Sunee's 4-wheel drive attempt to get to Thathom District in Laos to meet local officials to discuss possible future projects.

Sunee and I drove from Thailand up to Nong Khai in about eight hours, including a couple pit stops and a lunch break, via the four to twelve lane Friendship Highway. This is surely a change from what that road was like back in the '60s and '70s, and indeed, up through the mid '90s when the upgrades started. It's almost a pleasure to drive these days. This being the rainy season, all was



green along the route, a whole lot nicer than the browns of the dry season. Art Crisfield, TLCB member, joined us in Vientiane; in Phonsavanh, our contact with the Provincial Education Service, Mr. Soudeuan, climbed aboard.

It's an eight-hour drive from Vientiane on up to Phonsavanh via thirteen and seven, lots of curves and ups and downs once you pass by Moug Kassy. The road is all two-lane and paved, which is nice, but it also has a lot of bus travel and eight-

See Phosy, **continued on page 2.**

No one goes hungry when Lao officials pay their respects to TLCB. Photo by Art Crisfield.

teen to twenty-four wheel trucks and trailers. This is the main access road from Vientiane north to China and northeast to the roads to North Vietnam, and a busy route it is. That's why I opt NOT to drive myself. It's much better and safer all around, to have an experienced Lao driver handle that task.

At Phonsavanh, we ROned at the Nice Guest House, as is normal. It's a Hmong-run place, clean, hot water, and a "sitter" for a toilet (that's for me), plus color TV with access to the Thai channels (that's for Sunee). We usually eat at the Craters Restaurant, a smallish place, Vietnamese-run, pretty good farang food. There are also a lot of other eateries around town for Thai, Lao, Chinese, or Vietnamese.

The first item on our checklist was to look at Chom Thong Primary School, which is an hour drive east to Moug Kham, aka Ban Ban. This project was to rehab an existing building, reframe windows and doors, divide a portion of it into two rooms for special activities for training and meetings, and provide some furniture. The work was completed satisfactorily.

We drove back to Phonsavanh in the early afternoon and went to Mr. Soundeuan's house where Art handed over a Canon inkjet printer that I had picked up at the mall down the road from our place near Bangkok, Thailand. Art Crisfield had some external funding for this and the notebook PC he had previously provided to Soundeuan. Last year, Art and I split the

cost of a digital camera for Soundeuan, who has been a real supporter of our programs up in Xieng Khoung. This equipment will enable him to be more productive in his regular job too. That evening we had a good Lao dinner, and Lao of course, at Soundeuan's house with his family.

Our next stop on day four of our trip, was to Ban Phosy, just a bit south of Moug Khoune, aka Xieng Khoung Ville, and aka L-03, the old capital of the province pre '75. The TLCB had previously funded a building rehab for this school, which was quite well done. Refer to the report at the TLCB Web site for the December 2008 visit. This follow-on project was for another building at the school, a concrete floor and roof replacement with new tin sheets. Note that this project was 100% funded by the ACA, with implementation by the TLCB. Thanks, ACA! The villagers did a very good job on this project, and even talked the cement and roofing supplier into providing new hardwood posts for the front porch. In addition, we got some mileage out of the Sony digital camera we had given to Soundeuan. He got down to the school while the work was on-going and took some good photos. We do like these "in process" photos, as they well illustrate the aspects of where our funds are going. The real problem, though, is that cameras, digital or 35 mm, seem to be rare to non-existent in the areas we have been

See **Phosy**, continued on page 4.

Below, Art and Sunee look at reason for stream diversion: dangerous erosion. Photos by Mac.



The distinguished history of RED HORSE

On March 8, 2009, the 560th Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron (RED HORSE) was activated at Charleston AFB, SC. Col Daniel J. Leveille, USAFR, Commander of the 560th, presided over the stand-up ceremony.

This observance marked a new stage in the extraordinary story of the RED HORSE concept, which came about because of a May 10, 1965 memo from Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara, sent to Air Force Secretary Harold Brown. The memo said, "I understand the Marines will move from a Viet Cong-controlled undeveloped land area at Chou Lai to a 4 squadron operational field in 28 days, during which they will construct an 8000 foot runway. Does the Air Force have a similar capability? If not, what can be done to develop it?"

That memo resulted in Maj Gen Robert H. Curtin, USAF Director of Civil Engineering, launching a study to find out how best to develop such a capability, according to Dr. Ronald B. Hartzler, official historian of RED HORSE. Although the Air Force had a mobile capability, it did not have heavy equipment and skills to back up base engineer forces dealing with heavy bomb damage or disasters. The study called for the Air Force to form two Heavy Repair squadrons, called Prime BEEF. They were to be able to give the Air Force a mobile civil engineering unit able to make heavy repairs, upgrade airfields, and support weapon systems deployed to a theater of operations. Training for the 555th and the 554th began at Cannon AFB, New Mexico in November 1965.

The 555th deployed to Phan Rang AB in February 1966. The 554th deployed to Cam Ranh Bay shortly after that. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) decided to restrict contractor tasks to airfield pavement construction, roads, utilities, POL facilities, ammunition storage facilities, and control towers. Needing more support facilities, MACV and MACTHAI

assigned construction projects to RED HORSE squadrons. By late 1966, six RED HORSE units had been deployed to SEA. The 556th was sent to U Tapao AB in Thailand in July 1966 to build construction facilities. This squadron later carried out similar work at five more Thailand bases. Other squadrons were deployed to Phu Cat, Tuy Hoa AB, and Bien Hoa AB. Early in 1967, more units were deployed to Tan Son Nhut, Vung Tao, Da Nang, and Pleiku.

Some RED Horse units were inactivated or redeployed in 1969. By late 1971, the 554th was the last squadron in Vietnam and was deployed to Da Nang, then to U Tapao AB in 1972. In 1974 it was sent to Korea, where it stayed until 1995 when it was deactivated. In 1980, the 819th removed and re-installed seven bells and a bell cage in an 11th century church in Finchingfield, UK. That community, one mile from RAF Wethersfield, showed their gratitude to Air Force personnel by providing community support and helping them to obtain off-base housing.

In the following years RED HORSE personnel deployed to Somalia, Jamaica, and Belize. They deployed to Hurricane Agnes-damaged Pennsylvania, and in 1974, to Xenia, Ohio to clear up the aftermath of several tornadoes. RED HORSE units deployed to the Arabian desert after the invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, bringing equipment from Aviano AB, Italy. Later, they built facilities in Saudi Arabia and, after the cease-fire, damaged runway and taxiway surfaces and destroyed hardened aircraft shelters and other facilities at two Iraqi bases in southern Iraq, on the orders of USCENTAF Commander Lt Gen Charles A. Horner. RED HORSE units helped out in the Balkans, Hungary, Albania, Turkey, Southwest Asia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Afghanistan, and Oman.

Dr. Hartzler completes his history of RED HORSE with the following summation: "From the jungles of Southeast Asia to the desert of Iraq, RED HORSE personnel have carried on their proud tradition of service to the Air Force and the United States for nearly four decades. They have shown that their unique capabilities and skills are indispensable in both war and peace."

MEM thanks Dr. Ronald B. Hartzler, Colonel Daniel J. Leveille, and James W. Closs for their help in making this account of the history of RED HORSE possible.



Left, today's Red Horse in action in Iraq. Official USAF photo.



Phosy, continued from page 2.

visiting. I reckon the villagers just have other priorities for their money. I do take prints back to the villages if we happen to make a subsequent visit.

I also wanted to check out the school's stream diversion effort, which was an obvious problem for the earlier project here. It looked like the stream would collapse the bank in the next couple of years and undermine the building we were asked to rehab. The villagers did a lot of work to create a new bed for the stream, which is still in good shape now, and this is the rainy season with lots more water flowing. There was a good, fun baci ceremony after our walk-around and short speeches, food, and lao Lao.

We departed Ban Phosy to head south about 70 km (40+ miles) to Thathom District where Soundeuan had arranged for us to have several meetings with the local officials and to RON. This area is on the old road between the PDJ, on south



Ban Phosy school showing the results of Air Commando Association and TLC Brotherhood teamwork. Photo by Mac Thompson.



Above and below, Mac's photos illustrate why they did not reach Thathom on this trip!



to Paksane on the Mekong River. Sunee and I had been down this way in December 2008. The road is being reconstructed by a Vietnamese company, but they had not progressed too far on that trip. We hoped for a decent run this time, but no such luck. It had been raining in the area for three days which turned the early portion of the reconstructed road to a sea of mud. We got 2-3 km down the road, slipping and sliding in our Ford Ranger 4x4 pickup with knobby mud tires and almost high-centered a couple of times over the deep ruts caused by large trucks heading down that way. Intrepid travelers that we are, fearing nothing, but thinking about the 60+ km to go and not knowing the road conditions on ahead, we gave it a miss; did a 180, and reluctantly headed back to Phonsavanh. This was a disappointment as we were looking forward to this trip and the meeting to see if there were opportunities for TLCB funding in the area. I expect there are, and we will try again when the rains stop. This is the only district of Xieng Khouang Province that we have not yet visited or planned a TLCB project. The Assistance Committee had allocated \$500 for expenditures at Thathom if we ran into anything needful. Since we didn't make it there, the funds were not drawn down.

Day five found us heading about 45 minutes NE of Phonsavanh to the Ban Naxaythong Primary School, Phou Kout District, where the TLCB and ACA had co-funded a concrete floor for the main building at the school. We did note that the fixit job we had done on the school's well pump for \$17 back in January was appreciated and still working fine. It is amazing what just a little bit will accomplish. This project was for a concrete floor for the main school building, and as with Ban Phosy, it was well done. They used local materials, and in place of rebar, they used bamboo. It works; I've used it too in the long

See Phosy, continued on page 6.

Memorial Library Project Wraps Up

By Gerry Frazier

Two recent events have brought about the 'close of business' for the TLC project originally established to build a monument at Nakhon Phanom Thailand, which evolved over time into an effort to improve some impoverished school libraries in that Province. The first of these events was spending the last of the money in the Monument/Library account. John Middlewood requested the remaining balance, slightly over \$500, to purchase good school dictionaries and a selection of more advanced books, literature rather than primers, for a few of the schools. As committee chairman, I approved the expenditure, and TLCB treasurer, Bill Tilton, released the funds. This project remained distinct from the TLCB Assistance Committee efforts because of the original purpose of the committee (building a monument), and because, unlike Assistance, a majority of the \$23,000 raised for this project came from sources outside the TLC Brotherhood membership. Original donors were notified when the intended purpose was changed, and although there were a few expressions of disappointment, no donors requested return of their gifts.

The second related event was an initiative from Ed Miller, former TLCB vice president, now living in Nakhon Phanom Province. Ed accompanied John Middlewood as John revisited schools that had received library materials, including basic English language readers with which some students have learned to sight read in a difficult foreign language—English. Ed filmed as John encouraged a few readers at about a dozen separate schools to tackle such English masterpieces as “The

Three Little Pigs,” and the classic “A Is For Apple.” With coordination from Board President Frank Marsh, Ed Stein, Floyd McGurk, and John Schillo, the effort took shape as a potential promotional video for overall TLCB Assistance projects that can reach a very large audience through YouTube, the TLCB Web site, or other potential outlets. The video may not make the Sundance Film Festival, but it is really not bad, and it is nice to see and hear these Thai youngsters as they use materials that were contributed as a living memorial. Pending final approval by the board of directors, you can view the ten-minute video on YouTube, at:

<http://www.youtube.com/v/r2h5WDsSX70?hl=en&fs=1>

Auld Lang Syne

This issue is the December 2010 Mekong Express Mail, which normally would have reached TLCB members in mid December. Owing to a computer disaster in the layout department, this issue had to be rebuilt from scratch after three weeks of computer repair and restoration.

As a result, this issue was being re-assembled on New Year's Day, 2011. Very appropriately, the thoughts of our traditional English-language New Year's song expressed what we Brothers are all about. We Brothers and Sisters give a thought to those we knew before, both living and dead, and renew our pledge never to forget them. To those, "...we'll raise a cup of kindness yet." And still we are Brothers and Sisters to each other, "And there's a hand, my trusty friend, and give a hand of thine..."

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Make all payments of *any kind*, as listed below, payable to **The TLC Brotherhood, Inc.** Mail them to the treasurer, at:

TLC Brotherhood
P.O. Box 343
Locust Grove, GA 30248

Always write payment purpose and your member number on the memo line.

Dues (\$25 per year)	Student Assistance Fund
Assistance donation	BX purchase
Monument donation	Medical Fund.....etc.

Reunion 2011: Washington, DC

TLCB tax return and board minutes: On web site, in *members only* section. Password (2/1/11): Opera

Phosy, continued from page 4.

past. We also had a good visit with the school and local officials and several villagers, listened to some speeches, ate food, enjoyed a baci ceremony, and of course some Lao Lao just to finish things off. I still get goose pimples from that stuff, which gave a chuckle to the Lao attendees when I showed them my arm. One of the woman teachers at the school asked about my sister Anne, also a TLCB member, who was along on our January visit. She had walked around with Anne doing a lot of smiling and sign language. The teacher disappeared for a bit, but just as we were departing, she brought a nice, homemade



Above, roof framework under construction. Left, cement mixing Lao back-country style. Bridge on page 7 not built this way!



ing, hiking, rafting, and whatever the “world traveler” types do. There are lots of good guest houses in town. This was also a fairly large USAID office back pre 1975.

The last day of our trip was Friday. Art split off and got a van back to Vientiane because he wanted to catch the weekend with his 10-year old son, Woody, before school started on Monday. Sunee and I backtracked about 45 minutes north to Ban Xang, just

Phosy is continued on next page.

Below, freshly poured concrete porch finishes the Phosy school project. Photos by Mac.



umbrella for me to pass on to Anne.

We departed the school about noon and headed back west about three hours on Rt 7 to the junction with Rt 13 at Sala Phou Khoun, and then headed south two hours to Vang Vieng for an RON. On the way, we stopped briefly in Moug Soui, L-108, known these days at Nong Tang, so I could cut off a few sprigs of pine tree branches. I figured they would last long enough to still be a bit green and smelling nice to hand out at the TLCB reunion in September. This didn't happen, though; I even stuck them in water when we got home. Sorry. Vang Vieng has a pretty large number of tourists, especially the younger types who go caving, tub-





Above, Art, Mac, Sunee, and a local official conduct business. Control of TLCB fund use demands careful accountability and inspection visits. Right, Sunee Thompson poses by school sign acknowledging the TLCB contributions to their school.



below Moug Kassy, LS-249, and headed south towards Moug Met, LS-158, where I had lived off and on back in '67-'68, helping out to complete a seven-room school. As with the Thathom road, there had been rain here, but the sun had been out for two days so we had hopes for the road. Actually, it was not too bad but we did run into a few minor landslides and mud patches. We made it through to Moug Met in a couple of hours with an average speed of fifteen mph, somewhat less than on the highway. It is a nice town, ten times larger than it was back then, with several schools, government buildings, a small hotel, a few noodle shops, and some mechanics. It is a busy place, and is the largest town on that stretch of road on down to the Mekong River at Sanakham, which we had also hoped to visit. We inquired about the continuing



Above, an old US "Bailey Bridge," temporary combat engineer structures that are widely used in Laos and still serving very well. Bottom left, modern roads and bridges are slowly replacing scenes such as the one above. Photos by Mac



road conditions to Sanakham, but the teachers said "no way, forget it," since it had rained recently. In any case, we found the old school area after asking around. The old one is gone, torn down about three years ago! It was 40 years old by then, and was replaced by a Lao government-funded building of cement block and brick, which looks good.

We also had a \$500 allocation from the Assistance Committee for use if we saw a need in Moug Met. We didn't, so we returned it to the TLCB Assistance Fund. So, out of the three schools I worked on from '66-'68, two are gone, Moug Met & Hong Sa, and one, a bit worn, remains in active use at Xieng Lom.

See Phosy continued on page 8.

Phosy, continued from page 7.

After the Moug Met visit, we headed back to Rt 13, then about four hours down to Vientiane. We ROned at the Asian Pavilion Hotel, the old Constellation from pre '75. It's a bit nicer than it was in those days, if a tad musty. Hey, for baht 600 a night, about \$20, we get hot water, a sitter, fridge, sat-TV, and air conditioning if needed. What more would you ask for?



Above right, the Brotherhood banner comes out at every occasion. Above, Sunee, Mac, and Art are treated to the traditional bacsi party. Below, this is all the compensation Mac needs!



Sunee did some shopping around the morning market on Saturday, and then we headed back across the river to Nong Khai. We picked up our van and drove down to Nam Phong where we ROned at a Thai friend's place. Sunday was an easy, six-hour drive back home with the trip finished, a done deal, and interesting. The task remaining is to get back to Thathom in the dry season for discussions, perhaps later this year or early next.



So they don't have to write in the mud

By Jeff Hudgens

I first went to the area in October 2002 after being introduced to TLCB members during a SEA Reunion. We were in the area near the Mu Gia pass where my father's A1 was shot down during the Wolf 06 SAR on March 21, 1970. We visited a poor school, and I decided I wanted to return and make a difference in the area.

This was our sixth team trip. The eleven-day trip to South-east Asia, from which I and a team of five recently returned, featured an unexpected and dramatic event where we were able to help a seriously ill young woman, named Noi. When I saw her, she looked as if she had lost a lot of weight, maybe 20



Lao villagers preparing dinner. Photo Mac Thompson.

pounds, but I didn't want to say anything because you never discuss a woman's weight. The next day, I was told that Noi was not feeling well, had been sick for a month, and had lost a lot of weight.

It seems that people of this area get liver flukes, or parasitic flatworms, from a raw fish dish they create. This can be a serious illness. Area natives take raw fish, chop it up, add ingredients, and put the concoction in the ground for about three months. I don't recall exactly how this fish dish medley is prepared, but after the allotted time, they pull it out and eat it. They just love the stuff.

Concerned locals asked if we would be willing to get Noi to a hospital. One of the Lao nationals we work with suggested that we send her to a good hospital in Nong Kai, Thailand, because they would be better able to help her than those in Lao facilities. I said yes, we would absolutely want to help.

The Lao National told me that they would need to get passports and paperwork done for the family. I said "no problem," and told him we would cover those costs as well. Her husband, Pon, left the next day to get their passports, a trip that involved crossing four rivers. He returned and said that they needed photographs. Fortunately, we had printers with us that we had used to print the school kids' pictures. Luckily, one would be suitable to print passport photos, which we took and printed.

Pon left the next day, crossing the four rivers again, returning with the completed passports later that same day.

Our next challenge was getting the family up to Vientiane. We were going to have them ride with us to Thakek, stay the night at our hotel, and then ride with us to Vientiane. The only problem was that there were no rooms at the hotel. We offered them bus fare to make the straight shot from the village to Vientiane and they decided that they would ride with us to Thakek and take the bus to Vientiane from there. Some friends were able to take them across the border to the Nong Kai hospital where Noi was quickly diagnosed and treated.

The Lao national's daughter-in-law was very sick and I am certain that Noi would have died had we not been there to help. We later learned that she was in fact suffer-



Team medic checking Noi's vital signs enroute to Nong Kai hospital. Photo Jeff Hudgens

See **Mud**, continued on page 10.

ing from liver flukes and chronic gastritis and enteritis. These illnesses are easily cured in the United States, but are life threatening in the villages. It was very satisfying knowing that we had a hand in saving her life. It was a gratifying experience to be able to provide them the means, transportation, and expenses to get passports and cross to Thailand for better medical care.

As to more usual projects, we planned this year's visit to include a new school floor for the local kindergarten, 25 new student desks, 2 new teachers' desks, school supplies for 285 students and sports equipment—all funded by TLCB Assistance. We also took student photos for picture frames that the kids enjoyed decorating. The girls got their hair done and decorated with beautiful adornments for the pictures. The splash of pinks and blues was a great contrast to the



Above, Jeff tries driving an "iron buffalo." Below, left, pouring a concrete school floor over bamboo rebar. Bottom left, benches and student desk funded by the TLCB. Bottom right, games included an old-fashioned tug-o-war. Photos by Jeff Hudgens.



browns, grays, and greens of the area. On the last night, we had a dinner party for which we provided a cow and rice for over 200 villagers. We also did a slide show of all the pictures taken during the past few days. This is always a highlight for everyone. On our next trip, we would like to add a new floor for the local high school. Last year TLCB funded the roof for this school room. They also need school supplies.

On my first trip to Ban Nahom, I walked into a dirt floor school room. I asked why one area of the floor was wet. The answer surprised me. They replied that the village is very poor and the parents cannot afford school supplies, so the kids learn to write in the mud. Need sometimes brings out unusual innovation, doesn't it? Of course, we hope to continue to solve these types of deficiencies and challenges in future visits.



Assistance wraps up a banner year with memorial to B/G “Heinie” Aderholt

by John Schillo, Assistance Committee chairman

In June of this year, the Assistance Committee approved an expenditure of \$1,500 for a memorial project for the late B/G Aderholt. John Middlewood recommended a kitchen and dining facility project located at the Chok Amnuay School, which is located between NKP and Sakon Nakhon. The TLCB had been helping this school and the Aderholt memorial project would allow us to go a long way toward finishing the project and providing the students with a clean, comfortable dining facility.

The project is finished and a dedication ceremony was held on November 5th. John Middlewood and Ed Miller were present, representing the TLC Brotherhood. In addition, there were several Thai dignitaries from the provincial school district. Khun Phom Phan, a local TV and Radio personality and good friend of the TLCB, was the guest speaker and provided the opening remarks. He also gave a video presentation of the memorial dedication that aired

on Thai television.

It was a very positive event for the kids who now enjoy the new dining facility and for preserving General Aderholt’s memory, since he did so much to aid Thailand. It also generated good will for the TLC Brotherhood and our work in the area.

We owe a great deal of gratitude to John Middlewood and Ed Miller who were our boots on the ground helping to bring the project to fruition. We also owe a big thank you to the donors who support the Assistance Program making this memorial undertaking and all of the other projects possible. It has been a tough year. Donations are down but the project requests continue to grow. 2011 will be an even bigger challenge. Because of the economy, money is going to be tight, which is understandable. We will have to scrutinized and prioritize projects, and we may actually have to pass on some requests, something we have never had to do in the past.

Going into the reunion in Atlanta, our yearly donations were not keeping up with our projects. In other words, we were running a deficit and drawing down previous years’ reserves. Thanks to a generous transfer of funds to the Assistance Program by the board of directors, coupled with receipts from Rosie’s quilt and Bob’s Air Tran raffle, we were put on a sound fiscal footing. Some expert arm twisting by our auctioneers put us into the black for the rest of the year. How good are they? I recently asked my wife where a 1975 BX Catalog came from. Her reply, “You bought it at the auction.”

As the end of the year and the holidays approach, I hope you will keep the Assistance Program in mind. When it comes time to write out your dues check for 2011, it would be great if you could add a few bucks to help the kids in Thailand and Laos. Your donation is tax deductible and 100% goes to its designation. No other charity can make that statement. Also, no other charity will post on their web site where “all” of the money is spent. We do. It is there for everyone to see. If you have not been there recently, check it out <http://www.tlc-brotherhood.org/thare.html>. I think you will be impressed with what your donations have accomplished over the past 11 years. We hope you will want the program to continue and you will make another generous donation.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the Assistance Committee.

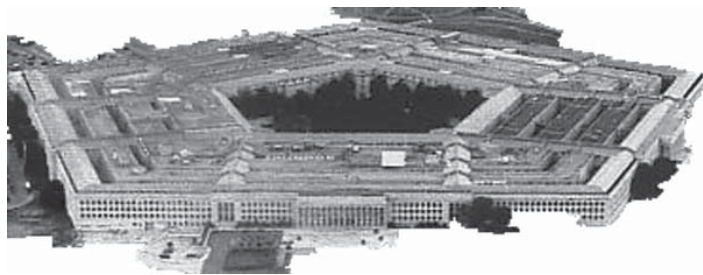


2011 Reunion: Back to D.C.!

Planning is under way for the 2011 TLC Brotherhood Reunion in Washington, DC. The dates are not yet firm but planning is focused on the second half of August. This will be the first DC Reunion since 2005.

The 2011 program will include our traditional visit to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and will also feature visits to some attractions never before included in a DC program. Firm dates, details of the reunion hotel, and further details of the schedule of events will be announced as soon as the details are certain. Subject to security considerations, we hope to include a guided tour of the Pentagon as one highlight of the program.

Try to keep the latter half of August open on your calendar so you can join us for the 2011 TLC Brotherhood annual reunion.



Keep your record current—

If you change your address or email address, we need to know about it. Please send an email to Membership chairman Mike Vale, at Mevale762@gmail.com, or a card or letter to TLCB, PO Box 343, Locust Grove GA 30248 and tell us so we can update your record.

Dick Anderson: TLC Brotherhood founder

April 28, 1947 – December 15, 2010

by Paul Lee



Above, Dick Anderson at Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai Air Force Base, 1969. Photo from Paul Lee.

Dick Anderson was born in Canton, Ohio. After his time in the Air Force, he settled close by in Massillon with his family. He leaves behind his wife, Cheryl, and daughters, Becky and Angie. Dick was a dedicated family man, and was an active member of the Central Presbyterian Church where he was a member of the choir. His two favorite pastimes were spending time in his wood working shop and going to the pistol range to “kill cardboard.”

Most of you know that Dick was a founding member of the TLCB. But actually, he was the first member even though that number has never been used. If Dick had not begun looking for his old friends from NKP back in 1996 teh TLCB would not exist today. I truly believe that.

I made my initial contact with Dick by mail after I saw his ad in the Air Commando Newsletter in June 1996. He was looking for 23rd TASS veterans. Shortly after that we found Jim Young, Kermit Wilkins, and Jimmie Butler. Wow, five guys—we felt great. We also felt an immediate bond. We had shared something that no one else we knew at the time would or could understand. When Dick and I finally met face to face in October 1996, we knew we were indeed brothers.

As I sit here thinking of my friend I am having trouble getting my thoughts to paper. I have spent the morning going through sixteen years of photos, mail, and most of all, memories. I still find it hard to believe my friend is gone. I have an email folder labeled “Dick’s Mail” and I still find myself checking it. But so far, nothing has come in.

Five days before his death, Dick sent an email to our Chaplain Debbie Stein. The title was, “Where’s the line to see Jesus?”

I will never forget Dick Anderson. I miss you my friend.

NOTE: Dick and I always kidded each other because of how often we misspelled “the” as “teh” in our emails. So I have left one misspelling in this tribute for Dick to find.



Left to right, Dick Anderson, Paul Lee, and Jim Young met in Morgantown, West Virginia on March 8, 1997. With Kermit Wilkins and Col Jimmie Butler, they decided to call themselves the Thailand, Laos, Cambodia Brotherhood. Photo provided by Paul Lee.

