

Volume 23, Issue 2

1 December 2019



Rustic News

www.rustic.org



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This issue of the Rustic News and our annual Rustic Roster is being sent via email to every Rustic and Rustic Next-of-Kin who have a current email address on file with us. In the future, be sure to keep us posted of any changes to your address or email by contacting Lendy Edwards at lendy@cox.net or 850-651-6766.

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Laura and I hope everyone had an enjoyable Thanksgiving and wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays.

We certainly enjoyed seeing our Rustic friends again at the 2019 Reunion. For those who were unable to attend, you missed a great event. My thanks again to Shad Kimbell, Claude Newland, and Lendy Edwards for their planning another great Rustic Reunion. Planning for the next reunion in 2021 is already in progress as explained later in this newsletter.

And a reminder for all of you receiving this Newsletter...please let us know during the upcoming months how you and your family are doing and keep us posted on anything significant from your family so that we can include it in upcoming Newsletters. Just send an email to Claude Newland or me with your photos and updates.

Picture at the right is our President, Johnny Drury at the National WWII Aviation Museum, Colorado Springs, CO.



NEXT REUNION. The Rustic's next reunion will be in scenic Tucson, Arizona in Oct 2021. Dates TBA. Activities will include visits to Old Tucson (famed Hollywood western movie town), the Sonora Desert Museum, Davis-Monthan AFB, and the Air Force Boneyard. Standby for details in our June 2020 newsletter.

2019 REUNION PHOTOS REQUESTED. Jim Seibold (seiboldjim@aol.com) is collecting your photos taken at our 2019 Las Vegas reunion. He will create a reunion photo file/DVD. Please email him your photos. IF YOU'D LIKE A COPY OF THE LAS VEGAS REUNION PHOTOS, contact Jim and let him know if you'd prefer them on a DVD or thumb drive. Cost is \$5.00 for shipping. Mail your check to 313 E. Vesper Trail, San Tan Valley, AZ 85140

ROSTER UPDATES:

- Steve Brownlee*** 5685 Cascade Palmetto Hwy. Fairburn, Ga 30213, margaretb.1989@gmail.com.
- Ron Gamache** 11863 108th Court North, Seminole FL 33778
- Robt Harris** 9425 Rolater Rd, Apt 415, Frisco, TX 75035
- Steve Hopkins** 20919 W Western Dr., Buckeye, AZ 85396
- Bob Jessup** 1900 Grace Ave, # 609, Harlingen, TX 78550
- Shad Kimbell** 5724 Pikes Peak Loop NE, Rio Rancho, NM 87144
- Pierre Ligonde** 12680 SW 144 Ter, Miami, FL 33186
- Phillip Morneault** 145 Manous Dr., Holly Springs, GA 30115-8713
- Jim Reese** 5253 Wyntercreek Dr., Dunwoody, GA 30338
- Paul Riehl** 20 Calle Hermosa, Pensacola Beach, Fla 32561
- Jon Safley** 44860 Audubon Square #324, Ashburn, VA 20147

* New-found Rustic Crew Chief, Ubon 1972-73. See *Letters to the Rustics*.

REUNION REPORT. Well, another great Rustic reunion is in the books (Las Vegas, NV, 1-4 October). Our thanks go to **Shad Kimbell, Lendy Edwards, and Claude Newland** who carried the water on this one. All agreed the Tuscany Suites and Casino was an excellent choice for our reunion hotel. It was a beautiful setting and was within walking distance of several other downtown casinos. A big plus, it was not a high-rise hotel.

The first event was an early arrival’s preparty dinner at the Hofbrauhaus on Monday, 30 Sep. Approximately 25 were in attendance. A local German band provided entertainment as we celebrated Oktoberfest. *Eine Bier Bitte!*

Most of the Rustics and guests arrived on Tuesday, 1 Oct. That night we all gathered at the Bahama Breeze restaurant for dinner.

Wednesday was a full day at Nellis AFB. We hopped aboard a USAF bus at the main gate. Our first stop was an in-depth Nellis Mission briefing at the 57th Wing Headquarters by Maj Shawn McNabb. He was gracious enough to answer our multitude of questions at the end of his briefing.

The next stop was the Nellis Enemy Treat Training Facility. This is a “petting zoo” where you can get up close and personal and “hands on” with a myriad of enemy threat systems and aircraft. This was an opportune time to get your picture taken in the cockpit of a Soviet MIG. We also saw a .51 cal. anti-aircraft gun, similar to the one responsible for most of our Rustic aircraft losses in Cambodia.



Hofbrauhaus, Las Vegas



Enemy .51 cal. anti-aircraft gun.

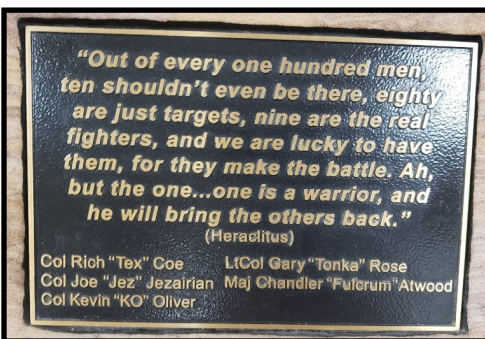
The Thunderbird Museum was our next stop. A short video explained the mission of the Thunderbirds and the team’s colorful history. We then explored all the Thunderbird memorabilia on display. Of course, we couldn’t help but get a Rustic group photo in their conference room which had a large wall mural depicting all the aircraft flown by the Thunderbirds.

Lunch was a BBQ buffet meal served in the beautiful Nellis Club. We were honored to have the commander of the 19th Weapons Squadron, **Lt Col Robyn “Tabby” Bernard**, and the commander of the 24 Tactical Air Support Squadron, **Lt Col Jesse “Axle” Breau**, in attendance. Six members of the 19 WPS and three additional members of the 24 TASS were also in attendance. This gave us a chance to socialize and get to know one another better.

The main event of the day was an afternoon visit to the 19th Weapons Squadron which has adopted our “Rustic” callsign. We thanked them for coordinating our entire Nellis visit and for being such enthusiastic and gracious hosts. **Lt Col “Tabby” Barnard** welcomed our group and gave a detailed mission briefing on the Weapon School and the 19th Weapon Squadron’ mission. The 19 WPS trains and prepares well-qualified intelligence officers to return to their respective units to train their own squadron members on the modern-day intelligence gathering and defensive tools needed to combat enemy intelligence operations. A second briefing by **Capt John G. “Blitz” Bitsko** provided an excellent update on the operations of the Nevada Test and Training Range.



The Rustics at the Thunderbird Museum, Nellis AFB, 2 Oct 2019.



Plaque at the entrance of the USAF Weapons School.



Lt Col Robyn “Tabby” Barnard briefing the Rustics, 19 WPS.



Entrance to the USAF Weapons School, Nellis AFB.

Clearly, the highlight of the afternoon was a social hour spent at “Jerry’s Place,” the 19 WPS’s Heritage Room. It is named in remembrance of Captain Jerry Auth who flew the first Rustic FAC mission into Cambodia in his 0-2A aircraft on the night of 19 June 1970. For many, this was a perfect way to cap the day’s visit to Nellis.

That night many of the Rustics joined together for an Italian dinner at the Tuscany’s Italian Garden Restaurant and ended the evening by attending the ever popular “Rat Pack is Back” show at the Tuscany’s Copa Showroom Theatre.

Thursday’s events include some morning free time, followed by an afternoon general business meeting. A memorable banquet which had 67 attendees was the highlight of the evening. Again, Lt Col “Tabby” Barnard of the 19 WPS and several members of her squadron were in attendance.



L-R: Marcia Reese, Tona Newland, & Lynne Nuber celebrate in “Jerry’s Place.”

The banquet main event began with a few words from the president of the A-37 Association, **Col Ret. Lon Holtz**, who recalled the close relationship that existed between the Rustics and the A-37 squadrons at Bien Hoa AB, RVN. He concluded his remarks by presenting the Rustics two beautiful aircraft dioramas (one OV-10 and one O-2A) that he had personally handcrafted. Exquisite!



O-2A Diorama



OV-10 Diorama

Both Diaramas were created by Lon Holtz, President of the A-37 Association.

Our banquet guest speaker was **Lt Col "Axle" Breau**, 24 TASS/CC. His F-16 squadron flies FAC-A missions on a regular basis. He enthusiastically accepted our invitation to speak to our group and he regaled us with his in-depth knowledge of FAC history and tasking. It was also obvious he had read our Rustic book beforehand as he displayed a working knowledge of the Rustics. Likewise, he concisely explained the role of today's modern FAC-A aircrews and shared several stories about the high quality of the men and women who are serving in today's Air Force. As former FACs, we greatly appreciate what is being done to ensure our troops, worldwide, are receiving close air support when they need it.

"Axle's" thoughtful presentation and professional leadership style confirms his squadron is in good hands! At the completion of his talk, the Rustics presented **Lt Col Breau** and the 24 TASS a copy of our Rustic book and a Rustic coin. Axle later relayed to us, "I'd like to keep in touch. The current 24 TASS pilots love the Rustic book... it now sits near the ops desk and is read daily. We appreciate being a part of y'all's heritage."



Lt Col Breau presenting artwork of one of the 24 TASS's F-16s to Johnny the Rustics.

REUNION ATTENDEES:

Gloria Auth & guest Nick Nichols, Don Brooks & guest Dick Quimby, Tom & Peggy Capps, Johnny & Laura Drury, Jerry & Roselyn Dufresne, Don Echelberger, Lendy & Sue Edwards, Don & Helene Ellis, Phil & Beth Frishmuth, Don Haller, Sally Gabel & sons Tim & Chris, Dick Goddard & son Rick, Lon & Barbara Holtz (Pres., A-37 Assoc.), Shad & Carol Kimbell & guests Garry & Barbara Sebring, Marcel & Denise Morneau, Claude & Tona Newland, Jim & Lynne Nuber, Kohn Om, Bob & Kathy Phillipson, Jim & Marcia Reese, Jon & Kathy Safley, Jim & Diane Seibold, Robert "Doc" Thomas, Ron & Janette Vankirk

& guests Wayne & Linda Callan (Ron's sister and husband), James Van Kirk (Ron's son), and Clay Moore (Ron's stepson), Bob & Kathy Wheeler, and Mike & Sherry Wilson.

Regrettably, **Tom & Vicki Calvanelli** had to cancel at the last minute. They were missed!

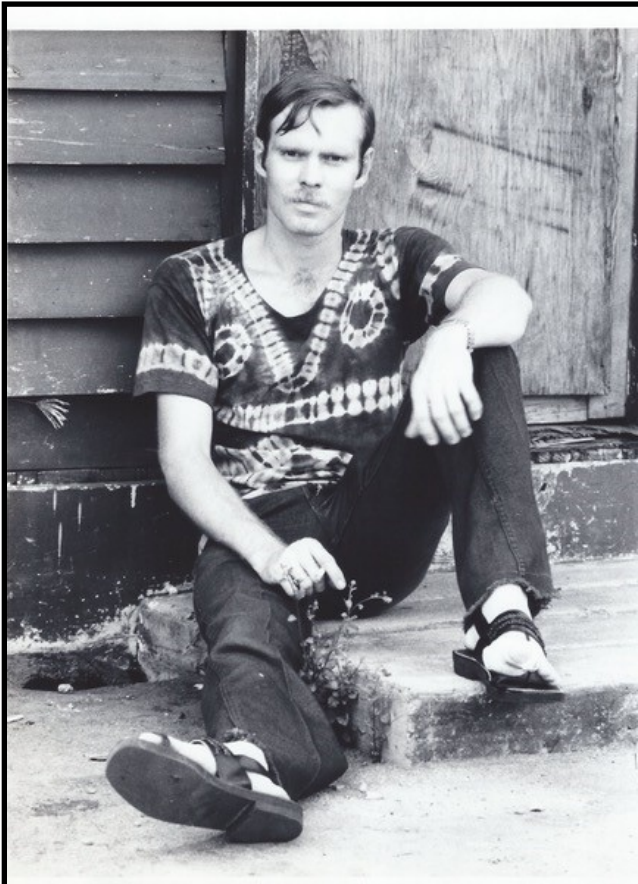
RUSTIC UBON CREW CHIEF NEEDS OUR HELP. On Sep 13, 2019, **Lendy Edwards** received the following email from a new-found Rustic crew chief:

*"Lendy, my name is **Stephen Brownlee**. I was a crew chief with the Rustics 72-73 at Ubon, Thailand. I would like to be added to the Rustic roster. I did not know of your organization until today.*

I can be contacted at 770-964-9868. Address 5685 Cascade Palmetto Hwy. Fairburn GA.30213.

The VA has been a problem because of lack of records from the Air Force. It took two years for the Air Force to change my DD214 to say I served in Thailand. Of course, they (nor I) don't have any records of my TDY "boots on the ground" in Vietnam. However, I was given the opportunity to fly backseat from Ubon to Tan Son Nhut and Tan Son Nhut back to Ubon at the end of our Rustic deployment, Nov and Dec 1972. That was a highlight of my tour. My hobby at that time was photography and I was shooting with a ASAHI PENTAX SPII. I photographed 636 on the way over or on the way back; I can't remember which.

Thanks, Stephen Brownlee"



Ubon Rustic Crew Chief, Steve Brownlee, 1972-73. He found us through our website

STEVE NEEDS OUR HELP. He deployed from Ubon to Tan Son Nhut with the Rustics but has no documentation of that TDY for the VA to verify he was "boots on the ground" in Vietnam. He now has some medical issues. Does anyone recall flying him to or from Tan Son Nhut, or serving with him at Tan Son Nhut? If you can provide Steve some statement or affidavit of support for "Boots on the Ground" please contact him direct at 770-964-9868 or margaretb.1989@gmail.com. It will be greatly appreciated.

MASSIVE BRONCO RESORATION PROJECT UNDERWAY. Jan 10, 2018. **Mike Manclark**, founder and president of The MANGIC Foundation and president of “The OV-10 Squadron,” announced they have purchased an entire squadron of six historic OV-10 Broncos from the National Vietnam War Museum in Mineral Wells, TX. They are shipping them to Chino, California for a massive restoration effort. An aviation entrepreneur and pilot himself, Manclark will spearhead the efforts alongside a team of other aviation enthusiasts so these classics can be enjoyed for generations to come at Air Shows, celebrations, and other special events.

On Jan 4, 2019, the OV-10 Squadron loaded the six decommissioned aircraft onto a convoy of trucks. The aircraft made an epic 1,300-mile road trip from Mineral Wells, TX to meet with another OV-10D in the fleet at California’s Chino Airport.

The restoration specialist in Chino are the best-of-the best in the war bird business and are some of the industry’s last remaining experts in hand-formed aluminum sheet metal fabrication, Plexiglass canopies, and rebuilding engines long out of service.

“These aircraft have supported America during some of our most pivotal moments, and we want to honor, respect, and protect that legacy by giving them a new life as a flying memorial,” said **Mike Manclark**. “This is a unique opportunity to preserve and celebrate our rich history and we welcome everyone to join us in supporting this effort.”

Known as one of the coolest and most intriguing warbirds in history, the OV-10 Bronco was originally introduced in the 1960s for close air support in Vietnam. But because of their versatility, these warbirds went on to tackle just about every mission an airplane could have for the USAF, the Marines, the Navy, SEALs and a number of other foreign countries. In fact, the Broncos they are restoring have an impressive history as well, fighting in Desert Storm, combatting cocaine in South America, and taking on ISIS in the Middle East before reaching their retirement.



OV-10s Loaded and moving to Chino A/P CA for Restoration



**HISTORIC MARINE BRONCO TAIL #493
TAKES FLIGHT, July 18, 2019**



Chino, California, July 18, 2019. The Chino skies were filled with a little piece of American history today as the first of seven OV-10 Broncos took flight after an 18 month-long restoration. Local entrepreneur **Mike Manclark**, a long-time supporter of America’s military vets and a pilot himself, undertook the groundbreaking restoration project after finding an entire squadron of the six famed warbirds wasting away in an open field in Texas.

As part of The OV10 Squadron project, two of the aircraft's original pilots, serving with the Black Ponies in Vietnam were on hand to witness the historic event, and will soon have the opportunity to fly the aircraft again for the first time in 50 years.

Mike Manclark concludes by saying, "After an incredibly long road trip, the largest OV-10 restoration project in the world is celebrating its first big win, as the first of an entire squadron of aircraft under restoration takes flight. Given my background, I can't think of a better way to honor, respect and protect the legacy of our veterans than by keeping their stories alive through flight. We're incredibly grateful for the support we've across the country and can't wait to unveil even more amazing transformations in the months and years ahead."

2019 RUSTICS REMEMBERED:



**Wayne St John
Rustic 08
Dec 5, 2018
Bien Hoa AB, RVN**



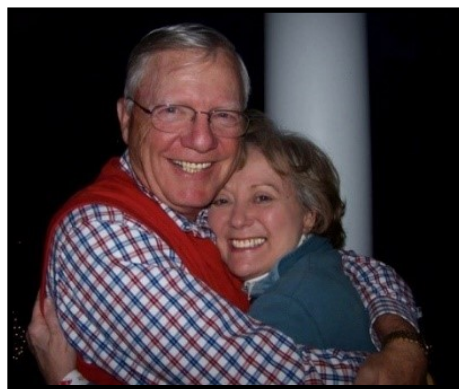
**Mary C. Haller
Dec 5, 2018
Wife of Don Haller,
Rustic 18, Bien Hoa
AB, RVN**



**Simend E. "Si" Dahle
Mar 4, 2019
Rustic 11, Rustic Commander
Ubon AB, Thailand**



**Margaret Mary Sovich
Jul 25, 2019
wife of Frank Sovich
Rustic 36, Bien Hoa
AB, RVN**



**Carol Aitken
Aug 30, 2019
wife of Doug Aitken, Rustic 16
Ubon AB, Thailand**



**Barbara Freix
Nov 4, 2019
wife of Greg Freix,
Rustic 18, Bien Hoa
AB, RVN**

ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY INTERRMENT – WAYNE ST JOHN. My father, Maj **Wayne R. St John**, Rustic 08, will be interred at Arlington National Cemetery, Washington DC on January 6th at 1pm. with a military service. If you would like to attend, please get in touch with me. Thanks so much, **Peter St John**, 10026 E Ridgerunner Dr. Scottsdale, AZ 85255-9213, C: (602) 647-7777 H: (623) 476-8605

SHORT BURSTS:

1. Hurricane Dorian. In anticipation of Hurricane Dorian hitting central Florida in August, **Claude Newland** sent out a message to the Florida Rustics offering his home as a possible get-away site for those who might need to flee the storm. Rustic **Bob Blair** immediately sent his reply...”I’ve rounded up all 100 of the homeless guys in Ft Myers, rented a bus...Be seeing ya soon...put the steaks on...LOL.

The good news...*Dorian did not affect any Rustics.*

2. Rustic Book Review. The December 2019 edition of the Daedalus Flyer magazine will include a review of our Rustic book by **Col. Francis L. Kapp**. Col Francis usually reviews six books for each Flyer edition. Our thanks go to **Doug Aiken** who suggested we have our book reviewed and to **Jim Reese** who coordinated the effort. A copy of our Rustic book is now in the Daedalian library.

“MINI” RUSTIC GET TOGETHER IN COLORADO SPRINGS

Pam Dandedeau Spires (daughter of **Ron Dandedeau**, Rustic “F”) and her family recently enjoyed a Saturday morning visiting the National Museum of WWII Aviation in Colorado Springs. **Johnny Drury** (Rustic 04) had the privilege of providing the tour of the museum’s 30+ airworthy WWII aircraft and other artifacts.

Johnny said it was a great opportunity to meet some of the Dandedeau Family. Everyone enjoyed the walk through history and the kids enjoyed flying “virtually” over Colorado Springs in the WWII Naval trainer bi-plane simulator.

Pam said, “Thank you for the awesome tour of the National WWII Aviation Museum in Colorado Springs...it was amazing!”



*Top Row, L-R: Paul Pharris (Pam’s son) and his wife, Briana; Vicki Schilinger (Brianna’s mom; Howard and Pam Spires; and Johnny Drury
Bottom Row, L-R: Cannelle, Cobin, and Declan Pharris (Pam’s grandkids and Paul’s children).*

LETTERS TO THE RUSTICS:

From: Robert Clifford, June 10, 2019

Claude and Tona: We did indeed sell both of our condos [*in the Destin, FL area*]. With a big place up on the Denmark North Coast (they call it the Danish Riviera) and a newly purchased condo in a new area of Copenhagen, we just would not have time nor energy to keep up the visits to the “Red Neck” [*Riviera in Florida*].

All the kids are now in the San Diego area and we were just blessed with twin great-grandchildren (lovely girls). I'll soon hit 83, and while I still enjoy the yard work, the long days of summer has the grass growing almost too fast to keep up. We have our big house up for sale. I believe "down-sizing" is the word. First, it was selling the Nice (France) condo (with a tidy profit due to exchange rates). So, it's visits to San Diego and some cruises that keep us active, besides keeping up the "big house".

Doc Thomas has planned and cancelled several plans to visit, so we are just on standby for him

Thanks for **Pierre Ligonde's** contact info and we both wish you the best from "happy" Denmark.

From Greg Freix, Rustic 18, August 23, 2019

Johnny and all, I have committed to remain on the faculty one more academic year both teaching and in my director role. That makes the move to a "during the week" reunion format a challenge. I have two sections of about 30 students each meeting Tuesdays and Thursdays this fall, including 1 & 3 Oct. In the past, I have been able to get out late Thursday or early Friday to join for the Friday/Saturday events. The reunion falls in the "heart" of the course, the elements students typically find most challenging. Just a tough time for a day off! They pay a good bit of money to listen to me pontificate (you all get it for free!), so my sense of responsibility makes it difficult for me to undercut their education for my convenience.

Barb was diagnosed with a pretty aggressive cancer in January. She'd just had a hysterectomy due to benign growths. The post-op pathology revealed that, while those they had biopsied were indeed benign, they had some cancerous friends, what are termed "Grade 3 serous cell carcinoma". So, the treatment has been aggressive as well. Best to all...and, of course, your ladies....Greg

Regrettably, Greg notified us that Barbara passed away Nov 4, 2019 due to complications from her treatment.

From Gene Dahle, son of Si Dahle, Rustic 11, September 5, 2019

My father, **Si Dahle**, passed away Mar 4, 2019. No services were held. You can remove his name from the Rustic mailing list. I monitor his email address and have decided to remove his name from most.

Dad always took pride that he was a Rustic. I have a lot of his memorabilia from his years in the service. 'Brings back many stories of his life. Thank you, Gene Dahle

Gene has agreed to let us keep his contact information in our Rustic Next-of-Kin roster.

From Ned Helm, Rustic 15

Si Dahle was the BEST Ops Officer I ever had in my entire stay in the AF. He could read "His" guys, and later in the tour was very effective in protecting the Rustics and Nails from the OL-1 commander who was totally unsuited for his job. He had made it his job to police the activities of the FACs as if they were in SAC or ATC. Si knew when to offer help and when to leave it alone. He was ALWAYS there at 0-dark-thirty with his patented grin behind the ops counter, and he was still there when the last go straggled in from the monsoon well after dark. I was really glad to see him at the reunions and will miss him. It was our collective pleasure and honor to have served with him. He's the little guy on the lower left in this picture of the LAST RUSTICS taken by Howie Pierson in our July 1973 Sawatdee party. Thanks again Si.



The Last Rustics, Sawatdee Party, Ubon AB, Thailand August 1973, Si Dahle is Lower Left

From Doug Aitken, Rustic 16

Sarady Tan (USAF flight surgeon and son of **Nady Tan**) recently took command of the 59th Medical Operations Group at Lackland AFB. That is where he started his life in the US as that is where Carol and I were stationed when the Tan family moved into our house.

He is a graduate of the National War College and a Flight Surgeon who has served for 24 years. Here is a link to the 59th. <https://www.59mdw.af.mil/Units/59th-Medical-Operations-Group/>

His oldest son has done two years of missionary work (LDS, but Sarady remains Buddhist) in Cambodia and one of his daughters is preparing to do the same.

I am thinking he may be a potential speaker for our 2021 reunion.

Anyway, pains me to miss Las Vegas. PLEASE pass my regrets to all and am so glad the Rustics were here this past weekend to celebrate Carol's life.

From Don Brooks, Rustic 02

Jin Hee and I have continued to travel the world. I think I told you about our trip this past spring. We flew to Singapore where we boarded a cruise ship. We went up the coast of Malaysia and Thailand to Yangon, Myanmar, then across to the west coast of India and on over to Dubai, where we caught our flight home. It was about three weeks in all. Then this past June we headed up to the Canadian Rockies where we spent another three weeks touring the various Canadian National Parks and seeing the sights. Two great trips, back to back. We're tired, think we will rest a bit. Don

From Lawn Young, Hotel KPC Ops, Aug 23, 2019, lawn.young@gmail.com

Rustic19, this is Hotel KPC-OPS. You guys mean the world to me back then, now and forever. I am very honored to be accepted as member of the Rustics. Here I am in Phnom Penh trying to settle down for a few months a year from here on out. Sorry, I have to miss this coming reunion. I am writing using Gmail account due to issue with the WIFI connection. I'll write more later and please, please keep in touch. Thanks a million to the Rustics...Respectfully yours, Lawn Lima Young

From Don Echelberger, Rustic 10, August 23, 2019

I'm returning to Ft Walton Beach, FL in two weeks from Iceland, having been here since May. Katrin will be here for a couple more months. I'm planning to attend the reunion in Las Vegas. Will also try to visit my ailing sister who's in a nursing home in LA. My daughter and her family relocated to the Eglin AFB area from Tyndall AFB last fall after the hurricane Michael hit Tyndall. My son-in-law, Chris, is the Raptor Ops Group CO. I look forward to catching up with you folks when we get together. Hope all are well and happy. Regards, Don.

From Doug Robertson. Rustic Control, FACNET posting, Sat, Aug 24, 2019

This past June I accompanied one of my granddaughters on her end-of-year (8th grade) trip to Washington D.C. and New York City. I had this brainstorm idea to take the list of Forward Air Controllers that were lost in the Vietnam conflict and catalog them on the Vietnam Wall by panel number. Originally, I had wanted to do rubbings of all the names from the All-FAC Memorial service we had at the 2018 Seattle Reunion. Unfortunately, I had not prepared with all the supplies that I would have needed to do the rubbings. However, I did create 3x5 cards, by panel number, with the names of those lost on each card. I gave the cards to the students and the chaperone's and turned them loose to go find the names on the wall.

It was a very emotional visit since it gave them a connection to the names on the wall. It took me a couple months to compile the list, but it was worth every minute I spent working on it. The kids were very into it since it made it a lot more meaningful to go find their names. I had time to seek out **Steve Bennett's** name on the Wall (FAC Medal of Honor recipient) and it didn't take long before I was standing there telling people about Steve's heroism. This drew quite an audience. The best part is I took pictures of Steve's name on the wall and, after I got home, I sent them to his daughter, **Angela Bennett-Engele**, on Father's Day which she appreciated very much.

While I was researching the names for my list from the Virtual Wall site I ran across some non-combat and other unexplained losses that sparked my curiosity. I contacted Nail FAC Darrel Whitcomb to see if he had the book and asked if he could look up some of the names for me. Again, time constraints kept me from following

up on these, but I am still curious about some of the losses. This now gives me the resources to research the losses.

Kudo's to all involved in this project, **Doug Robertson, Rustic Radio 71-72**

From Steve Peffer, Rustic Mx

Claude, I want to get back to you personally on this year's Las Vegas reunion. You might know that you'll be close to Santa Barbara, CA yet I won't be attending. **Bob Blair** can't make the trip as his closest canine friend "Bella" is getting up there in years and the trip would be too difficult. Bob and I will miss all of you guys. We are holding on to all the great memories we had at the 2017 Ft Walton Beach reunion. We wish you a great time in Las Vegas and don't get too much sun. I look forward to all the pic's and stories in the next "Rustic News". Best Regards, **Steve**

From Doug Aitken, Rustic 16, August 20, 2019

Fellow Rustics, I had a wonderful evening last night at "Night with the Authors" at Givens Memorial Library in Pinehurst, NC. Years ago, I had donated a Rustic book to this place, and they contacted me to talk about the book as well as two other fantastic authors who discussed their works.

What a respite from the events at home! I was fortunate to have Carol's sister here to be with Carol so I could make this commitment. The audience found the subject fascinating...not one admitted to knowing anything about our support of Cambodia.

So, maybe a few sales from this time last night, but it was great to spend hours in the hospital re-reading the book. What a great job we all did with that effort!

Wish I could join you guys in Vegas. Tilt a cold one for Carol. God Bless, Doug

From Nick Lewis, Rustic B, August 31, 2019

I am again working up in North Dakota. I worked up here for three years and left two years ago. My son, a Senior Project Manager here, has been begging me to return to straighten out the place, so I finally relented. Of course, his having nine of my grandchildren up here played a factor in my willingness to return. My wife, Terry, is doing well at home in Melbourne, FL. I have lots of support in my church ward but am so grateful for **Claude Newland's** kind offer of his home as a possible respite from hurricane Dorian.

Rustics will take care of each other! Always have!

From Gloria Auth, wife of Jerry Auth who flew the "first" Rustic mission into Cambodia (in his O-2A) on the night of 19 June 1970.

Dear Claude and Las Vegas reunion planning committee,

Thank you so very much for hosting such a wonderful event. It was a real privilege to visit Jerry's Place [*at the 19th Weapons Squadron, Nellis AFB*]. It would not have had the meaning for me if it weren't for you. You guys did an amazing job in your planning and Nick and I really were impressed with it all.



And I learned I am a Rustic; and O stands for observation; and V stands for visual; and I've been to two OV-10 reunions (Fort Worth and Las Vegas) without knowing it; and one O-2 reunion in San Antonio. At least that's what I remember. Please correct me if I'm wrong. I also received a brief explanation of the Rustic coin. It is a beautiful design.

I had a shock towards the end of the banquet. **Jerry Dufresne** came up to me and said he was a backseater and he had met Jerry and shook his hand and then he shook mine. I was so overwhelmed I didn't pursue the conversation. I would like to ask him how he knew Jerry.

Hope all are home, safe and sound, and you can now have some R & R time. Fondly, Gloria



Gloria Auth opening a bottle of wine at the 19th Weapons Squadron's heritage room "Jerry's Place"

From Robert Phillipson, "Blackbird", edradour05@gmail.com

Lendy/Claude, Thanks for having me at the Rustic reunion. It was great to see you guys and to participate in some of your reunion activities. Kathy and I had a great time and we really appreciated the opportunity to get to know you all after such a long time. Best regards, Bob

From Robert "Jess" Jessup, Rustic 13, Oct 18, 2019. *He and his family have moved from Georgia to Harlingen, TX.*

Claude, nothing new anywhere in our family and that's a welcome change. We like the people (65% Hispanic), the food, the weather (July & August excepted as the temps regularly exceed 100 degrees), and the very veteran-friendly environment of the Rio Grande Valley.

Interesting facts: There are over 500 RV/mobile home parks in "the valley" (as locals call it). Annually, 100,000 "Winter Texans" come from Canada and the colder mid-western states to winter here. They have at least a \$7 million impact on the local economy during the five to six months they are here. Name entertainers from Branson, MO, Nashville, TN and other such well-known places come and perform here for far less \$ than they charge elsewhere. Mexico shopping is a 30-minute drive from where we live, and it only takes 45 minutes to reach the seafood and great beaches of South Padre Island. Tough place to live, but somebody has to do it!

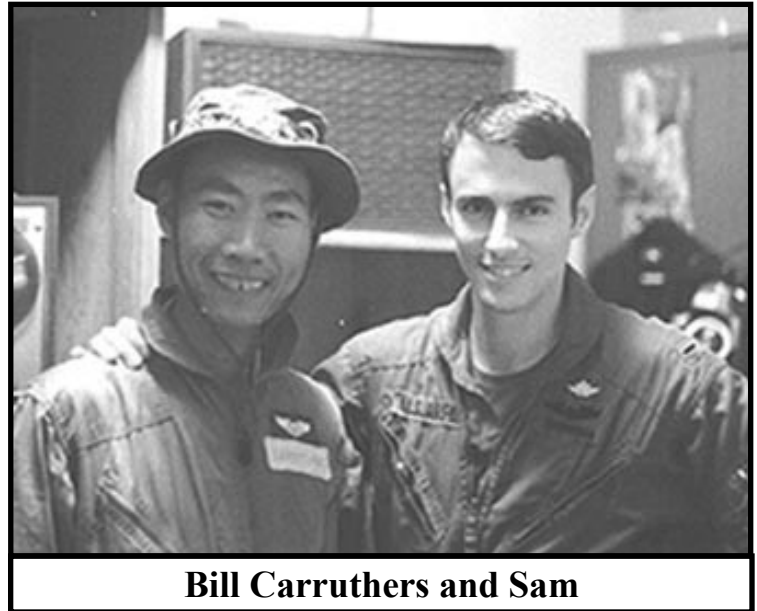
Oh, the VA clinic system and two major hospitals are just 10 minutes away from our home. A wide variety of medical and dental doctors and specialists are all within a five-mile radius of the VA and aforementioned hospitals! Enjoy the upcoming holidays! Jess

(Jess, quite an advertisement for winters in Harlingen!)

LATE BREAKING SAD NEWS

Bill Carruthers, Rustic 34, took his final flight West on Monday evening Nov 18, 2019. Bill joined the Night Rustics, flying the O-2A, in mid-1971 at Bien Hoa. When the Night Rustics dispersed in late September 1971, he moved to Ton Son Nhut with the Sundog FACs. He supported An Loc during the Easter Offensive by the NVA in April 1972 and was awarded three Distinguished Flying Crosses for his action in Southeast Asia. After separating from the Air Force, he flew with Piedmont and US Airways until being medically retired due to Parkinson's disease. During this time Bill chose to honor those involved in the 1972 Battle of An Loc, creating the historical archive anloc.org.

A celebration of Bill's life will be held on Saturday Dec. 7 at Heritage Funeral Home, 3700 Forest Lawn Drive, Matthews. Visitation will be inside from 2-3 PM with celebration following outside. More information at <https://www.heritagecares.com>. He is survived by his wife Christine Carruthers of Charlotte, NC, sons William B. Carruthers, III (Dan Yang) of Cary, NC, and Charles W. Carruthers of Charlotte. **Chris Carruthers** can be reached at billc114@gmail.com or 704, 650-7027.



WHY PILOTS PREFER AIRPLANES TO WOMEN

- * Airplanes come with a manual to explain their operation.
 - * Airplanes usually kill you quickly; a woman takes her time.
 - * Airplanes can be turned on by a flick of a switch.
 - * Airplanes don't get mad if you do a "touch and go."
 - * Airplanes don't object to a pre-flight inspection.
 - * Airplanes have strict weight and balance limitations.
 - * Airplanes can be flown at any time of the month.
 - * Airplanes don't come with in-laws.
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