

Vietnam Then and Now

1966 to 2015

Our Places

The 174th 2015 in-country Gaggle



1966

- ▶ The “Boat people” arrived at Qui Nhon Harbor on 6 April 1966 aboard the USN Ship Upshur. They were transported to Lane Army Heliport where they supported, primarily the Korean Units and ARVN Forces in and around Qui Nhon, Phu Cat and as far west as An Khe Pass.

Qui Nhon Harbor did have some facilities then
but some deployments were less glamorous
than others in 1966



Luckily there was still a lot of French influence around the area.



Phu Cat Airfield actually had some resemblance to civilization in 1966



Now it remains an Airport with some improvements but not many



This was Qui Nhon in 1966 and then
in 1968



This is Qui Nhon Today with high rise Hotels



By the late 60s Qui Nhon had a huge US presence with a large airfield and by the early 70's one of the largest U.S. Army Hospitals in the country. Today these facilities consist mostly of a crumbled down wall, a water tower and the typical buildings that resemble current day Detroit.



Just South of Qui Nhon is a Leper colony that apparently Jeff and Mo, during their time flying Med-Evac in and out of Qui Nhon, managed to appropriate supplies for and deliver them to the French Nuns that ran the place. It is in an isolated valley with it's own beach that can not be reached from either side except by water.



While at the Leper Colony, Fred thought may have found two of his many granddaughters.



However, Phil tried to claim credit for them all.
But there's not much resemblance



We did find one of our Dolphin Comrades stuck in the 60's.



This was Lane Army Heliport in 1966 as
it began to build up



There have been many improvements at Lane AAF since we left Vietnam. This one is the Chapel that is at the center top of the next slide.



Lane Army Heliport became one of the largest logistical support bases in Vietnam by 1972 supplying all of I Corps and most of II Corps with everything from food to ammo to parts.



Lane Army Airfield looking Northwest today from the Chapel



Looking Southwest from the Chapel



As was the case throughout our tour, now titled the “174th 2015 In-Country Gaggle”, there is virtually nothing left that resembles our, the US, facilities in Vietnam. There is very little Airfield Pavement although we did manage to find some.

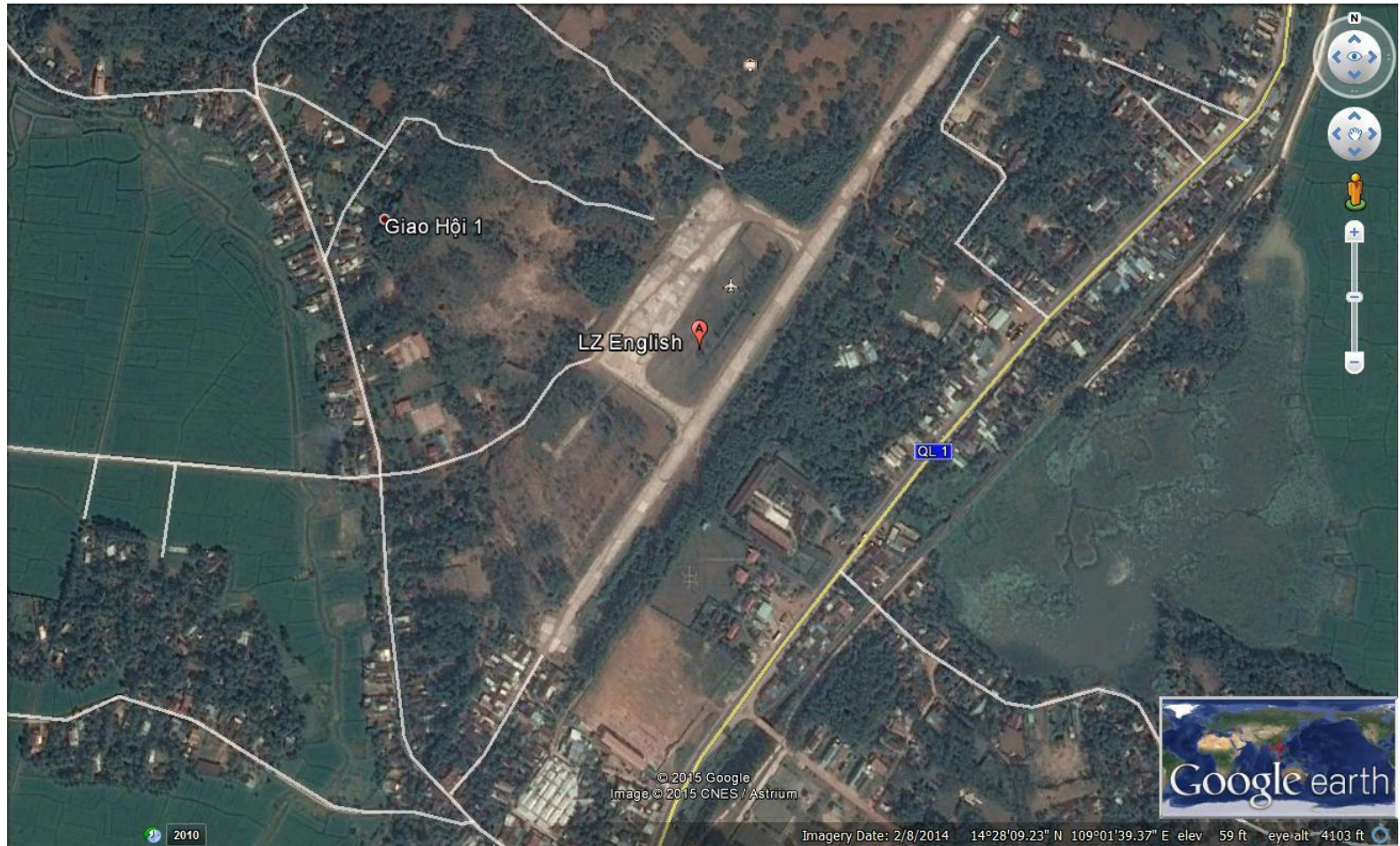
In 1966 LZ English had a paved runway and some tents but very few permanent structure within the compound.



By 1971 LZ English was no longer just a LZ but a thriving Army Complex & Airfield with QL 1 to the right of the LZ.



This is LZ English today



These days the 3,500 foot Runway at LZ English is used to cut up and dry a tuberous root to feed pigs and other livestock



We all managed to celebrate on the
runway anyway



Then Mo and Jeff took off on their own again to
search for old friends



Dennis finally found Duc Pho or at least the road sign



This is the Company Area and just to the right is an ancient cemetery although, how “ancient” can it be?
We were just there weren’t we?



More of Duc Pho and LZ Bronco looking Southeast from the Company Area



We all celebrated and raised our flag to
remember Duc Pho



And as far as we could tell, this was our runway.
Now, “downtown” Duc Pho

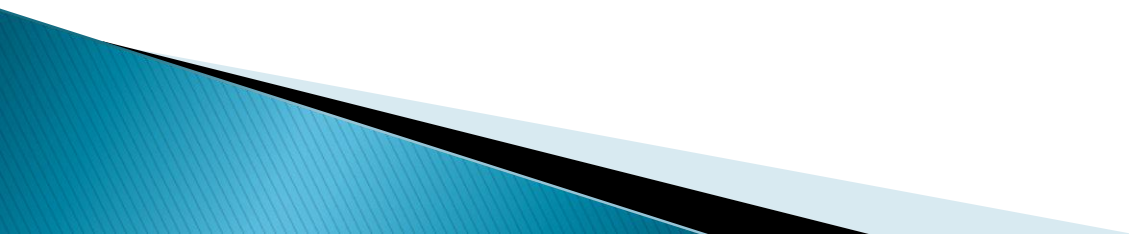


Most of you saw my request in January asking if anyone had ever seen a stone wall that was 14 feet high and 8 feet wide that ran completely through our AO from Duc Pho all the way to Quang Ngai.

Our Vietnamese tour guide contacted the “Tourist Bureau” and asked how to find it but was told there was no such thing.

We abandoned that search and continued to San Juan Hill but got side tracked when a logging truck blocked our planned route.

As we looked for another route we stopped to look up a dirt road to see if it might get us to San Juan Hill and discovered this sign.



In case you can't read it, the sign says "The Long Wall of Quang Ngai. We had parked right beside the sign and just to the right and left of us was part of the 71 mile long wall.



Mr. Fook, our Vietnamese Guide, wanted to have his picture taken at the wall so that he could take it back to the “Tourist Bureau” and say he discovered it since they knew nothing about it.



This was San Juan Hill in 1969

LZ San Juan Hill



You can see the re-supply helipad on the hill top. Picture was taken by my RTO Johnny Bradley 1969

This is the view from San Juan Hill now.



Why we went to San Juan Hill

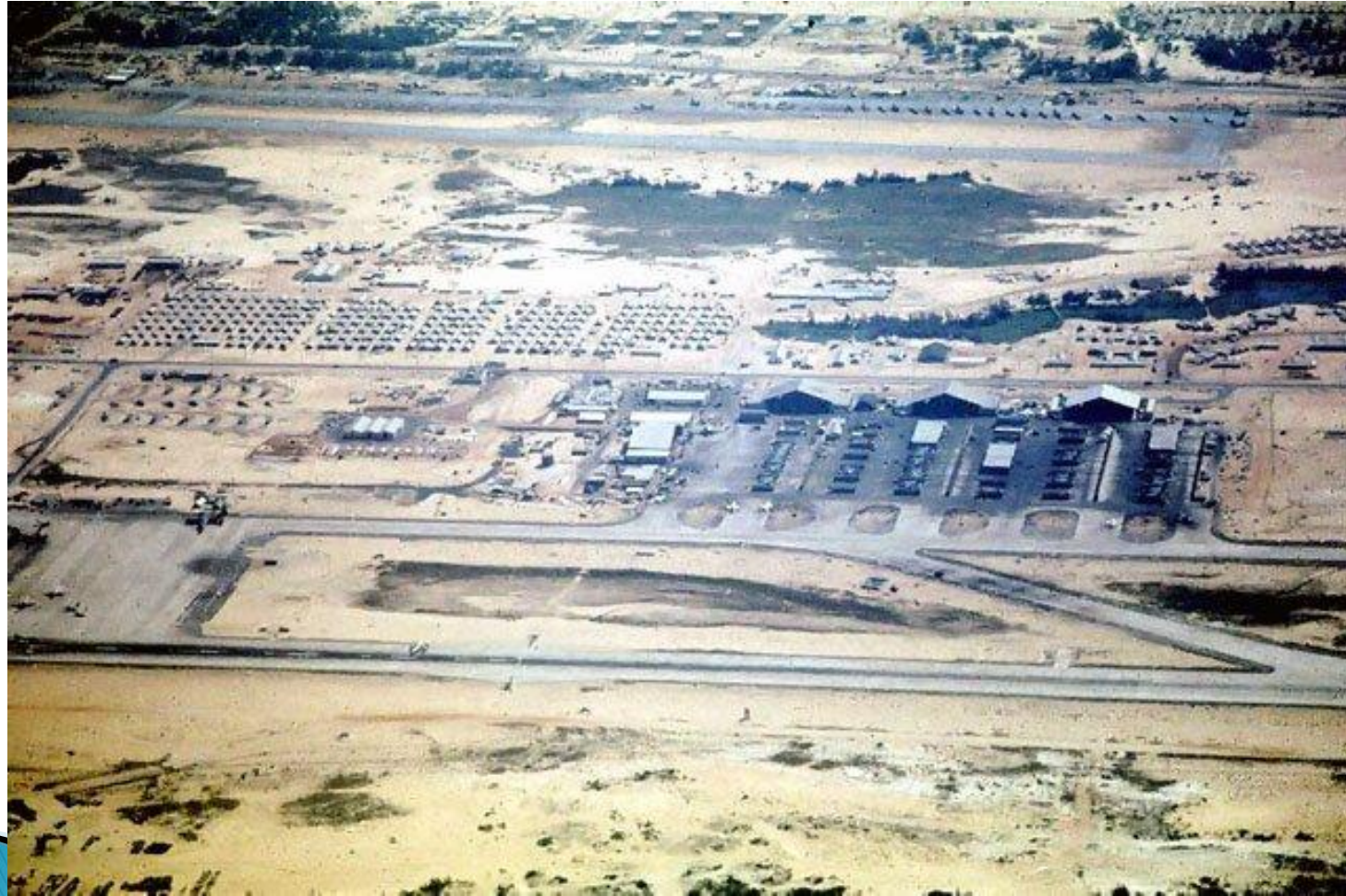
- ▶ The story

The Cross at the Crash Site.



Chu Lai Air Base

as you may remember it with it's 12,000
ft runway



Chu Lai Air Base
today is a General Aviation Airport still with 12,000
ft of runway



Chu Lai Air Base

Looking from the Beach to the Company Area



Chu Lai Air Base

For Mel and Dee, Louisiana Dirt Shirt



Lunch at Chu Lai Beach

But no Doughnut Dollies could be found.



Marble Mountain

Some might recall the stories about an
NVA Hospital inside Marble Mountain



For those who never heard the story, first of all it was true. Marble Mountain was situated at the end of the runway at Da Nang Air Base and inside a Buddhist Temple was a hospital for our enemy.



Da Nang Air Base is a crumbled wall and a few Quonset hut type aircraft revetments.



Red Beach was the site of the first troop landing as we transitioned from being just advisors to full participation in the War and once again we found a lost Dolphin.



Hai Van Pass 1966– Some should remember flying through it to get North for Lam Son 719



Hai Van Pass 2015



Quang Tri 1972

Quang Tri Combat Base



Quang Tri 2015



Vinh Moc Tunnels, 21 miles of tunnels on the North side of the DMZ where 27 babies were born underground during the War



Vinh Moc Tunnels, Maternity Ward



Vinh Moc, Jeff manned to 51 Cal and tried to shoot me down again



As we headed toward Khe Sanh, Fred thought he may have known these two girls mother.



We passed the Rockpile & Razorback



Vandergrift looks nothing like I remembered although
Dennis thought it was vaguely familiar (2015)



How he got from this to the previous slide was baffling (1971)



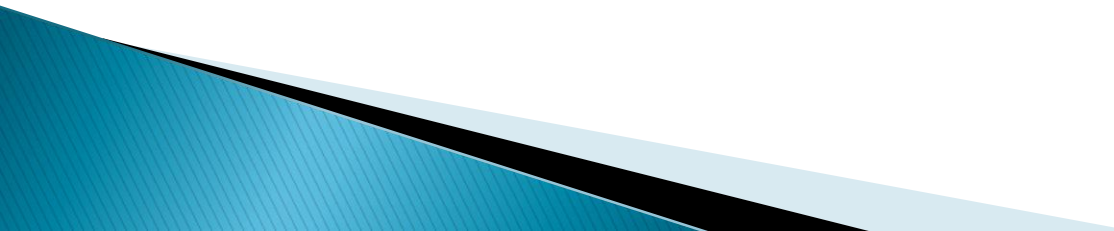
Khe Sanh 1970



Khe Sanh 2015



LZ Witch Doctor

- ▶ I had given our guide map coordinates and he translated them to GPS coordinates which got us within 50 yards of where I was shot down.
 - ▶ There were a lot bomb craters that had left a very circular patterns in the ground.
 - ▶ We knew that the 51 cal position we were looking for had a tunnel to one side so the gunner could take cover when he was under attack.
 - ▶ There was only one such place and so we filled our cups with Johnny Walker Red and toasted:
 - ▶ “All the brave soldiers, living and dead from both sides because we all thought we were doing the right thing.”
- 

LZ Witch Doctor



LZ Witch Doctor

When we got to the Laotian Border we were surprised that our Vietnamese Hotel Manager was there and then the Border Officer told us he was sending a Police Officer with us in case someone objected to us entering their property. He was to say, “they have already been there.” The Hotel Manager and Police Officer said they could not drink with us because they were on duty but when our Vietnamese guide told them what our toast was, they drank!



Ha Noi

- ▶ We went from there to Ha Noi and visited the Ha Noi Hilton and the John McCain Memorial Then boarded the Freedom Bird Once More and headed Home.