

Phil Allen

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Pete,

Sorry this input is so late, but have been very distracted with Barbara's medical issues. I find myself with a little time to reflect and thought of a few things which might bring back memories and a few smiles for many of us. We had it so good and I for one didn't fully appreciate what a treasure my VC-8 tour was. Fantastic friends, "relatively" innocent high jinks, and memories for a lifetime that seemed endless at that moment.

Just a few recollections in no particular order.....

-Pueca Point JO married housing. What a great place to live! We had our own private reef and Bob could stock his aquarium right down the hill.

-Who is so lucky as to work for a Maintenance Officer who falls asleep in meetings and wasn't even allowed up on check stands? (not his fault) Walter Flanagan was a great guy and genuine character. He approached me early on to "swap" alcohol ration cards.....cases of Heineken for bottles of "Old Bushmills". No one looked more elegant in his tropical uniform shorts and knee high socks than Walter, except perhaps Pete in his pith helmet.

- Then there was the infamous jet guy road trip to San Juan.....the cause for celebration escapes me, but it had something to do with my favorite A-4 pilot....Everett M. I am sure those who participated will never forget nor admit the event and the sordid details have fogged a bit over the years. Needless to say it seemed to involve a great deal of poor headwork, an irate hotel owner, the Puerto Rican police and a large palm tree. Any further description of the events of that evening would just be additional poor headwork!

-My own personal study on why you shouldn't go to happy hour at the club or card parties at J Beaver's or M Lamberto's and then stupidly proceed home on your motorcycle. Seemed that bike was always in for repairs of the self inflicted kind. Absolute miracle it wasn't me in for repairs or even worse.

-Learned to get all squadron business done with the Chief Petty Officers BEFORE they went to lunch at the CPO Club. Afternoons could be markedly unproductive.

-Learned that diving on the channel buoys because lobsters hung out under the cement block weights was something we discovered.....but tiger sharks already knew. I have never gotten back in a boat so quickly!

-Chuck Wooten's famous beer diet. As I recall it.....no beer drinking all week long and then you could drink all the beer you wanted over the weekend. After a fairly short trial it was determined that this just didn't work and incidentally produced some historic hangovers on the weekends.

-P-2 guys were kind enough to introduce me to the famous pee tube/ internal comm setup. They were always looking to broaden a jet puke's horizons

-Lt Round / Lt Allen horticulture project. We were ahead of our time and also had our heads up and locked!

-Completed an entire tour without fully appreciating Admiral Ramage's incredible career. Not to mention the incredible career accomplishments of our O-4's and CO's. I was too busy being self absorbed, but realize it now and better late than never.

-helicopter re supply on Virgin Island sailing trips. Thank god for uncontrolled airspace.

-spending US tax dollars staging numerous unauthorized low fly by's over Foxy's on Jost Van Dyke. Never forget Foxy and Tess out on the beach along with every patron in the Bar waving brooms at us as we passed over. The picture of Redtail A-4 I gave Foxy hung behind the bar for years. Great way to finish up a hop and once again, thanks again for the uncontrolled air space

-learning the joys of me me's and mosquitoes as Scout Master on several tropical camp outs. No sleep and miserable all night. Smart enough to do it several times!

-Cocktails with the Brit's on the flight deck of the Hermes. Those dress up drunks were very enlightening events. Beautiful full dress uniforms and little kiosks all over the deck serving refreshments. They offered gin and tonic, gin and bitter lemon and gin and gin. Oh yes and you were allotted one little ice cube.

-learning the hard way to pay attention when Fred Spellman, Ron Hill or Everett briefed me on towing drones. Remember to retract the drone till the capture light come on and not till the line counter reads "0". I must have missed the part about the line stretching. Anyhow, I am sure the golfers didn't appreciate the drone buzzing the golf course and then smashing down the runway. The tower was not amused and neither was the skipper as I recall.

Given time, I am sure there is much more I could and should recall and appreciate.....but this will have to due. Hope it's in time and sorry for no pictures.

Thanks to you and Bob for doing this and sorry for not being a better participant.....next time?

Phil Allen