

From: Richard Holmes
To: Norm Hahn
Sent: Thursday, January 23, 2020, 12:01:55 PM CST
Subject: Dick Holmes-1970 SF MCB62 detachment

Norm,

Here's the information on the 1970 tour with MCB 62 about the detachment that worked on airstrips at Special Forces airstrips. We put down metal matting on two (Ha Thanh and Tra Bong, repaired one at Kham Duc and looked at two at Ba To and Gia Vuc. The Kham Duc camp was overrun in May 68 with many KIAs. An Air Force pilot got the Medal of Honor there for evacuating survivors. The camp was abandoned and we went in July 1970 and reopened it. The strip was bombed so we had to get it in good shape again. We found mortar shells buried on the strip but none exploded.

Dick

Third Class Petty Officer, Dick Holmes was attached to MCB 62, H Company (Seabees) which conducted out maintenance work/upgrades to SF camps in the Central Highlands. Dick worked on the Ha Thanh airfield in the summer of 1970. The Seabees laid down a tar composite as a base for the metal decking to make the airstrip more useable during the rainy season. They also got metal decking on the strip at Tra Bong at about the same time and were looking to do the same at Gia Vuc and Ba To. The cratered Kham Duc strip was also repaired by them.

Photos bellow are thanks to Petty Officer D Holmes and are from Ha Thanh, Kham Duc and Tra Bong, see photo narrations.



July 1970 at Kham Duc SF camp. Cheek Cataldo in front and George Grogan back right.



July 1970. MCB 62 detachment equipment being air lifted to Kham Duc SF camp. Think this is Chu Lai. Note air lift rigging on equipment.



July 1970 Staging area for Seabee and Army equipment etc to be airlifted to Kham Duc. Think this is Chu Lai. Not rigging on equipment for airlifting.



July 1979 Kham Duc SF camp airstrip being repaired. We bombed it after camp was overrun in May 1968.



Kham Duc July 1970 airstrip. Helicopter was shot down by NVA in May 1968. Cheek Cataldo, H Company, MCB 62 shown.



Me, Dick Holmes, H Company, MCB 62 at Kham Duc July 1970 standing in bomb crater. We bombed strip after camp was overrun in May 1968.



Kham Duc July 1970. C123 shot down in May 68 when camp was overrun. An Air Force pilot got Medal of Honor evacuating survivors.



Kham Duc July 1970. C130 landing on repaired airstrip.



July 1970 airlifting dozer to Kham Duc SF Camp. MCB 62 detachment repaired air strip.



Tra Bong Special Forces camp. Mechanics and operators from MCB 62 A Company. We put down metal matting on the strip. Sept 70

Left to right: Grogan, O'Brien, Meveret, Sickles and Haught



Ha Thanh Special Forces camp airstrip getting ready for metal matting. MCB 62 detachment of about 9-10 fellows, July 70



Special Forces A team members at Ha Thanh camp (A-104). 12 member team but only 7 here. Sept 70.



Ha Thanh Special Forces Camp A-104. Typical looking SF camp. You can see airstrip at top that Seabee detachment was working on. Looks like it might have some metal matting laid. I took the photo in a Huey. Strip was closed so only way in or out was by helicopter. There were US Army SF team, us Seabees, a few ARVN and about 200 Montagnards at the camp.



C-7 Caribou resupplying Ha Thanh Special Forces Camp. Sept 70



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