

Tay Ninh Base Camp August 2010

I served with the 187th from May 1969 to May 1970, as a technical inspector on the night maintenance staff under (then Captain) Daniel Skinder. In 2010 I was able to obtain access to our former base at Tay Ninh West and thought many of those who served with the 187th would be interested with the changes made after all these years. I've attached some pictures that correspond to our company area. At this time I was a consultant to Vietnam Airlines and they had some military connections to allow my access. It's been over a decade since this visit so I'm sure things have changed since. I originally sent this to the 187th website in 2010 however there were some restrictions from the Vietnamese side but I don't think it matters much now.



This is still the main gate to the base. There are no visible bunkers or berms, only a wire fence.

I was accompanied by my VNA sponsors and met with the Deputy Base Commander at the headquarters which is located directly inside the West gate. The Deputy Commander was a colonel, young and very pleasant but, of course, spoke no English. He was aware that the base was formerly a U.S. base during the war but, as is the case with most of his generation, knew little else as they seem to have included the war as part of their parents' and grandparents' history.



Deputy Base Commander near what used to be our enlisted men's area

I was allowed unrestricted access to anything I wanted to look at. So much had changed that the only readily recognizable feature was the runway. It was in good shape but mid-way there was a reviewing stand so I doubt that any fixed-wing aircraft could land unless the stand was moved. There were no helicopters of any kind visible, not even a hangar. I was informed that the base was now home to a mechanized infantry division, complete with our old M113 APCs. They looked good with new paint but I didn't see any in operation.



Several of our M113s



The main runway looking west with the reviewing stand on the right and the current headquarters on the left; I'm pointing towards the 187th Company area.



At the west end of the runway on the base perimeter near where one of our bunkers was located. We're trying to orient ourselves with an old company map.



This road leads from the perimeter towards the 187th Company area. The refueling area would have been on the right ahead of the bicyclist.

I walked across the runway towards the 187th area, fully expecting to find that they would have at least used some of the concrete slabs of our buildings and hangar but

I couldn't find a single sign that I could attribute to our involvement in the area.



As it was in our time, this is the area of the current officer's quarters. Quite a change.



Looking east in the direction of the 187th enlisted men's hootches. It is still part of the enlisted men's quarters but only a small part.



Former 187th helicopter parking area; no revetments and now planted with rubber trees but Nui Ba Dinh is still there.



The flight line has been cleared and planted with rubber trees and there were no revetments remaining.



Weekends at Tay Ninh West.

We had lunch with the colonel and his wife outside the headquarters in the officer's garden. He informed us that the base was almost completely self-sufficient in that they have their own dairy, fruit and vegetable gardens and raise their own livestock. Every Sunday, the base is opened to the families of the soldiers for picnics and visits. What a change from 1969 & 1970.

If anyone has any specific questions or comments, feel free to contact me at ken.ziemer@hotmail.com.