

# The Miami Valley Military History Museum



# SCUTTLEBUTT

First Quarter 2014

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## 178 DIE ON BABYLIFT

### Suspect Sabotage in C5A Crash

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Military sources said Friday there was a "definite possibility" that sabotage might have caused the crash of a C5A transport plane loaded with South Vietnamese orphans.

They said there is suspicion of possible sabotage because the cargo doors of C5As are so built that the pilot's controls should not be affected if the doors blow out.

A team of Air Force experts will investigate this and other possibilities when it visits the crash site probably Saturday. The team is coming from Thailand.

The report came as government officials said the airlift of Vietnamese to the United States will continue despite the tragic crash.

The Pentagon reported earlier that the pilot of the stricken C5A which crashed near the Saigon airport said he lost all elevator, rudder and flap control.

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**ANGUISH SHOWS ON THE FACES OF WOMEN CARRYING BABIES WHO SURVIVED THE CRASH.**

### Nearly 8 Mil. Jobless

## 8.7% Out of Work — Highest Since '41

**WASHINGTON (UPI)** — Unemployment hit a 34-year high of 8.7 per cent in March, with nearly 8 million persons out of work, the government reported Friday.

It said another half million persons joined the unemployment rolls in March, raising the jobless rate 0.5 per cent above the 8.2 per cent recorded in January and February.

But the official unemployment figures told only part of the hard times story and the Labor Department filled in the rest with statistics on America's "five million 'hidden unemployed'."

The report said 3.9 million jobseekers have settled for part-time work out of desperation and another 1.1 million "discouraged workers" have simply quit looking for jobs.

These do not figure in the unemployment statistics.

The monthly figures reflected the highest national unemployment rate since 1941 and confirmed President Ford's warning, issued Thursday night, that there would be some "discouraging unemployment figures" coming up.

Blue collar workers, led by those in the construction trades, suffered worst, and AFL-CIO President George Meany said the official figures had real unemployment much more severe than the official 8.7 per cent figure.

"The actual rate of unemployment is at least 9.8 per cent" if the 1.1 million "discouraged workers" are accounted for, Meany said in a statement.

"And the situation is even worse if you include the 3.9 million who have given up looking for jobs."

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**SAIGON (UPI)** — "Is my baby alive?"

Hundreds of American families waited in agonized suspense Friday to learn if their adopted Vietnam orphans had been killed in a plane crash while flying to their new homes.

The giant U.S. Air Force plane crowded with Vietnamese war orphans en route to the United States in the first flight of President Ford's Operation Babylift crashed and burned Friday in a muddy rice field near Saigon. More than half of the 305 persons aboard were killed.

The U.S. embassy said at least 178 persons, most of them orphans 8 months to 12 years old, died when the crippled C5A Galaxy transport — the world's largest plane — crashed-landed while trying to make it back to Saigon's Tan Son Nhut airport after two huge cargo doors blew off in flight.

A U.S. Embassy spokesman said at least 100 of the 245 orphans aboard and up to 20 adults survived the crash — the worst disaster in U.S. aviation history.

It was believed at least some of the victims were suddenly decompressing the plane when the cargo doors blew off, sucked out of the plane when the cargo doors blew off, strapped in, however, and the decompression tore off their clothing. A hospital doctor said almost all the dead brought in were naked.

President Ford had planned to greet the orphans when they arrived at Travis Air Force Base in California after a stopover at Clark Field in the Philippines.

Deeply saddened over the crash, President Ford said

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### Cash Needed For Refugees

**BY JIM LEA**  
*SAs Staff Writer*

**TOKYO** — American Red Cross (ARC) officials here told Pacific Stars and Stripes Friday that Red Cross offices throughout the Pacific are geared to accept donations of cash to relieve the suffering of South Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees fleeing Communist offensives in Indochina.

Eugene Burke, ARC regional director, said field offices will accept money in behalf of Red Cross refugee operations in Southeast Asia. He said donations could either be brought to field offices or could be mailed.

Burke stressed that only cash donations are being accepted.

"We just don't have the facilities for gathering, storing and

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## **CURATOR'S CORNER**

The first three months of this year have brought us some exciting artifact donations and an increase in requests for presentations, tours etc. Unfortunately in February one of our friends, Klonda Richey, was mauled to death by her neighbor's two dogs. Last year's Patriot Freedom Festival was Klonda's first time here, with a display honoring her father's World War II unit, the 30<sup>th</sup> Air Depot Group. Klonda was certainly a free spirit, with an unabashed love for "her boys" in the 30<sup>th</sup> ADG.

I hope everyone will mark the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of May on their calendars and plan to attend the 10<sup>th</sup> annual Patriot Freedom Festival! A dedicated group of volunteers is hard at work planning an event that everyone can enjoy – with a full schedule of *free* family – and kid-friendly activities.

As I previously wrote, we're very active in the local area, but there are still a lot of people who haven't heard about us. Please "talk us up" with friends and family! You can help by forwarding the newsletter to people who have an interest in our military heritage, or "Like" us on Facebook and invite your friends to do the same – the more people that know about us the better!

We're definitely on track to another successful year of honoring our veterans and their families and preserving their heritage – with your help and support we can only get better!

Respectfully,

**Mark Conrad, MSgt, USAF, RET**  
**Curator**



**DONATIONS QUARTERLY WRAP UP:**

- We received a donation of a large grouping of artifacts from two brothers; James Province enlisted in 1940 and initially served as an Infantryman with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Regiment (today's "Old Guard" Tomb Guards at Arlington National Cemetery) in Greenland before transferring to the Army Air Forces. He trained as a tail gunner on the B-17G *Flying Fortress* and was stationed with the 301<sup>st</sup> Bomb Group (H), 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force, in Italy. After completing 32 missions, he was sent back to the States to be a gunnery instructor for the remote controlled gun turrets on the B-29 *Superfortress*. His group includes a coveted A2 leather flight jacket, uniforms, medals, and extensive documentation. His brother Donald served with the 99<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in France, Belgium, and Germany; he was killed in action on March 3<sup>rd</sup> 1945. At his family's request, his remains were repatriated to Kentucky in 1947. His grouping includes the Purple Heart, Bronze Star and Combat Infantryman Badge presented to his family when he came home, as well as the associated documentation. Thanks go to Margaret Kruckemeyer for making sure these artifacts came to us – Thanks Margaret!



Pictured above is MSgt Province's A2 jacket with Italian made insignia, while the photo at right shows James at age 93 wearing the jacket and his flight suit at a veterans ceremony, a little more than a year before he passed away.



(Left to right) Purple Heart and Bronze Star medals presented to PFC Donald Dale Province's family; PFC Province; reverse of the Purple Heart showing the distinctive 'script' engraving used only in 1947.

- We received a generous donation of artifacts from retired Army Master Sergeant Leigh Smith, with items from the early Indian Wars to the present; in the group was a small - but important -group of insignia worn by Chaplain (Colonel) Holland Hope, who served in WWII, Korea, and Vietnam.



In Korea Chaplain Hope was assigned to the 11th Airborne Division, and made the first combat jump with the 187th Regimental Combat Team, fracturing his back upon landing. When a unit of the 187th was cut off by superior North Korean forces, Chaplain Hope organized a rescue party and led the assault. He was awarded the Silver Star for his valor, and more importantly, the Combat Infantryman Badge - a very unusual award for a Chaplain. Chaplain Hope went on to serve as Chaplain for several Special Forces groups, and was the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Chaplain in Vietnam. Thanks MSG Smith!

- This Adolf Hitler bust was a referral from the National WWII Museum in New Orleans. Donated by the vet's son -in-law, it was a war trophy of Captain Frank G. Rennis, who served with the 60th Engineer Combat Battalion attached to the 35th Infantry Division. They landed in Normandy in early July 1944 and were in almost non-stop action until the end of the war.

It's roughly 1/2 life sized and weights about 20 pounds. It looks like it's made from solid brass; it was likely attached to the wall of a room/building based on the size and weight.



There are two uniforms we've actively searched for - a set of Vietnam Tiger Stripes, and a Close Combat Uniform (CCU). Thanks to the generosity of Specialist Ray Aronhalt, we can cross the CCU off the Wish List. Ray was stationed at Fort Lewis, WA, with the 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division, 1st Stryker Brigade, Stryker Brigade Combat Team, and fought in Mosul Iraq in 2004-2005. Each soldier was issued only ONE of these experimental uniforms, which eventually evolved into the Army Combat Uniform worn today - consequently, they're very hard to come by. Thanks Ray!

- We received three uniforms belonging to Vice Admiral (3-Star) Lyle Bien - our first Navy Flag Officer uniforms. Admiral Bien had a distinguished career, from serving as an F-4 fighter pilot over Vietnam (where he got the nickname "Ho Chi" Bien because of the similarity of his name to North Vietnam's leader Ho Chi Minh), to being a Top Gun instructor, then being selected as the senior Navy strike planner on General Schwartzkopf's staff during Operations DESERT SHIELD and STORM, and finally as Commander of Carrier Group SEVEN aboard USS Nimitz during the 1996 Taiwan missile crisis. A veteran of more than 200 combat missions over Vietnam and 1,300 carrier landings, he retired as Deputy Commander-in-Chief, United States Space Command. Shown here is his "Chocolate Chips" worn while on General Schwartzkopf's staff.



## **DONATIONS QUARTERLY WRAP UP (Continued):**

Without the generosity of people interested in preserving our military heritage, museums like ours couldn't exist – space doesn't permit an individual listing of all the donations we've received, but we want to thank the following groups and/or individuals for helping us tell the stories of the defenders our great nation. (*an asterisk indicates multiple donations*):

Jean-Jacques Labrot (France)

Fred Profeta (New Jersey)

\*National Electronics Museum (Maryland)

Kenneth L. Vaughn (Ohio)

Sandra Tucker (Michigan)

Dennis Samic, BGen, USAF, Ret. (Ohio)

Houston Museum of Fine Arts (Texas)

Dan McGill (Ohio)

Newark Police Department (Delaware)

Robert Snow (Kentucky)

Ray Aronhalt (Ohio)

Leigh Smith, MSg, USA, Ret. (Texas)

William Hartnett (Delaware)

Freida Palmer (Florida)

Jerry Clutter, MSgt, USAF, Ret. (Ohio)

Mark and Suzanne Gibson, In Memory of PFC John Gibson (Ohio)

The Richey family in memory of Klonda Richey (Ohio / Indiana)

## **FEATURED ARTIFACT(S): Operation BABYLIFT**

April 4<sup>th</sup> was the 39<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beginning of Operation BABYLIFT and the crash of the first military transport carrying Vietnamese orphans. This display was made to honor of the courage and sacrifice of the crew of mission 80218. It includes a uniform of one of the military casualties, Sergeant Kenneth E. Nance, one of the surviving flight nurses' wings (Colonel, then 1Lt, Regina C. Aune), an original press photo, and a copy of the Stars and Stripes provided by the pilot, Colonel (then Captain) Dennis "Bud" Traynor.

We included representative example of the medals posthumously awarded to the crew members killed in the crash, a 1/400 scale model of the C-5A *Galaxy*, an original press photo, and a facsimile of the letter sent by President Ford to Sergeant Nance's family.



## ***Friends of the 30<sup>th</sup> Air Depot Group:***

I'd previously mentioned the death of my friend Klonda Richey; Klonda was the unofficial historian for the remaining veterans of the 30th Air Depot Group. At her memorial service, her family entrusted me with all the materials she's accumulated over the years. The box I was given contained an extensive collection of pictures, documents, letters, diaries etc. There was also a current mailing roster and also several letters she'd recently received from people saying they were getting things together to send her for the next Patriot Freedom Festival. I wrote each of them with the news of Klonda's death, and over the past few weeks have received three more boxes of items from Klonda's family as well as the widows of two veterans. We'll have a memorial display for heart this year's patriot Freedom Festival, and we've accepted the job of carrying on her work to preserve the history of the 30<sup>th</sup> Air Depot Group.



***Klonda with 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division reenactors***

Mrs Frieda Palmer donated a number of papers and other artifacts belonging to her husband, First Sergeant Roger Palmer, which includes several nice English-made patches, his dog tags and his medals. Another 30thADG widow, Mrs. Sandra Palmer donated the remaining artifacts of her husband, Sergeant Leo Warren Tucker, including his dog tags, medals and photos. We certainly appreciate their generosity as we assume the responsibility for safeguarding their husband's unit history.



***First Sergeant Palmer***



***Sergeant Tucker***





**FREE ENTRY - FREE PARKING!**

**May 24-25, 2014**

**11AM-6PM DAILY**

**Memorial Day Weekend**

**Dayton VA Medical Center Campus**

**4100 W. Third Street, Dayton, OH 45428**

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**Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of Ohio Charities**



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## SERVICES WE PROVIDE:

We now offer an on-line Veterans Roll of Honor, which can be found at: <http://www.mvmhm.com/vroh.htm>

To submit a veteran for the Roll of Honor, email their full name, rank, branch of service, service history and awards and decorations (these are optional), to our Curator at [curator@mvmhm.com](mailto:curator@mvmhm.com). You may submit only a name, or you can also include a picture; if no picture is available, the appropriate service emblem will be used. Note that we reserve the right to edit submissions for clarity, grammar and spelling.

During the past quarter, we've helped more than a dozen veterans or their families request their records and/or replacement medal sets – all at no cost!

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **Sunday, April 06, 2014, 2:00PM:** Presentation for the Lincoln Society of Dayton, IAMS Room at Carillon Park, Dayton.
- **Thursday, May 01, 2014, 9:30AM:** Group tour for the Ramey AFB Historical Association.
- **Saturday, May 10, 2014, 1:30PM:** Presentation for the Montgomery County Genealogical Society, 2nd floor auditorium, Dayton Metro Library.
- **May 2014:** Daughters of the Union 102nd Congress.
- **Saturday and Sunday, May 24 - 25, 2014, 11:00AM to 6:00PM:** 10th annual Patriot Freedom Festival - Call 267-7628 for more details or to participate.
- **Saturday, July 19, 2014, 6:30PM:** Presentation for the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA).
- **Tuesday, November 11, 2014, 9:00AM to 4:00PM:** Open house in conjunction with the Dayton Veterans Affairs Medical Center Veterans Day observance.
- **Tuesday, November 18, 2014, 7:00PM:** Presentation for the Centerville-Washington Township Historical Society at the Hithergreen Center, 5900 Hithergreen Drive, Dayton.

## MISCELLANEOUS:

**Elvis lives!** Sometime back, I was searching for some info about Keesler AFB (where I was stationed from 1984-1989), and stumbled upon an article about a casino restoring one of Elvis' khaki uniforms that had been washed away by Hurricane Katrina. That led me to an Elvis impersonator's picture which made me think "I can do better than that!". So, I began gathering bits and pieces, and here's the result (plus it adds a little bit of lightheartedness to the museum).



**Elvis hasn't left  
the building...  
yet!**

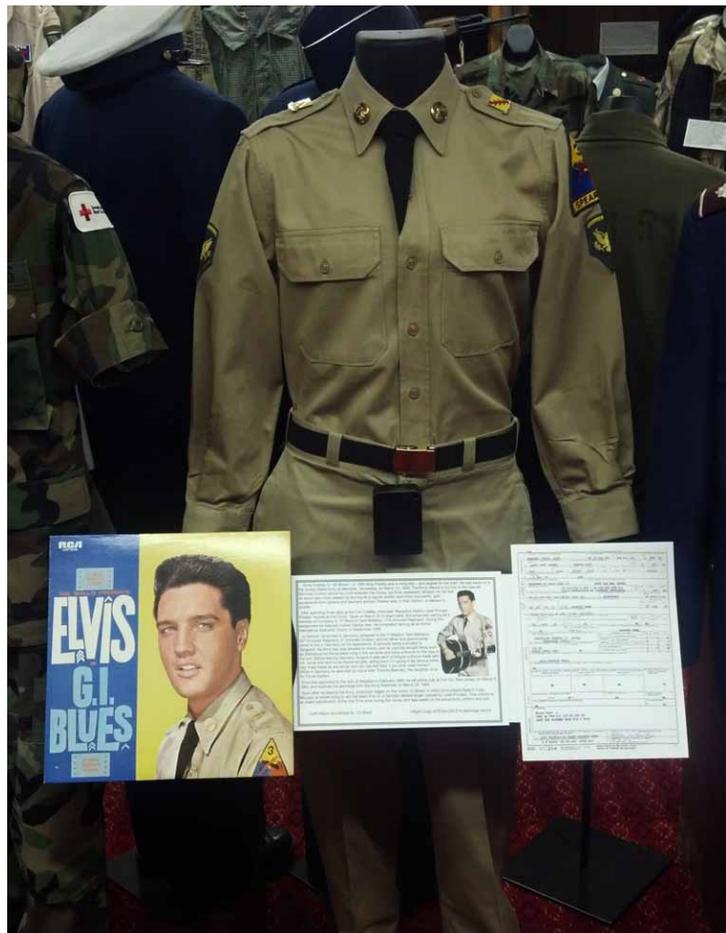
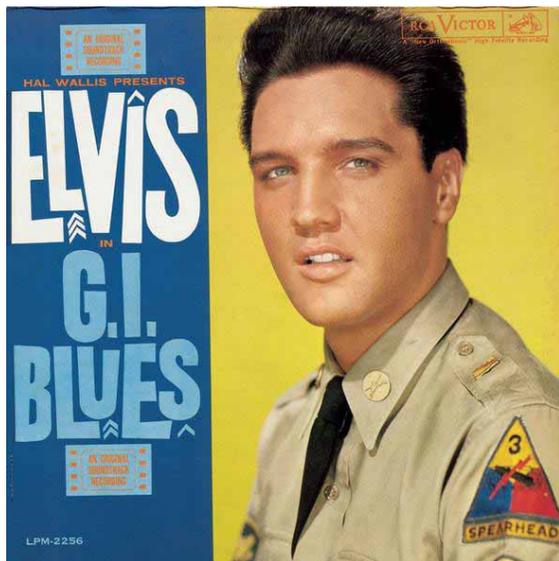
**He's at the Miami Valley  
Military History Museum!**

See a replica of the uniform  
Elvis wore in *G.I. Blues* -  
and get a free copy of  
The King's DD-214!



I wrote for a copy of Elvis' records, but because he's a "Person of Prominence", they're exempt from the Freedom Of Information Act – but the National Archives will gladly send copies for the low, low price of only \$90.00. So, I had to be content with a copy of his DD-214 – which is also available to visitors for free. Or, if you can't visit us, you can get your own copy here:

<http://www.mvmhm.com/ElvisDD214.pdf>



I used a reissue of the album so as to not damage an original. As a kid I listened to this album a lot...but my sister was stationed in Germany and had her next door neighbor's daughter (the fair Doris Heske) become a pen pal...she also liked Elvis, so I sent her my Elvis albums (originals). The black box hanging below his belt is a light-activated voice box programmed with a sound byte of Elvis saying "Thank you. Thank you very much" - which surprisingly, I've only been able to find one example of.

### ***How YOU can help preserve our veterans history***

Each day, more and more of our veterans are passing away - the last veteran from World War I passed away in February 2011, and our World War II veterans are dying at the rate of approximately 1,000 a day. Unfortunately, many times when a veteran dies all of his or her history dies with them, and the mementos they kept end up in yard sales, or worse, the garbage. We've witnessed this first hand: We were able to acquire a WWII Army Captains' footlocker with some of his souvenirs and other paperwork from his service time, along with literally hundreds of V-mails sent between him and his family. The entire lot was going to be thrown away after his widow moved into a nursing home. On another occasion, a neighbor gave us several hundred photographs and some insignia that had belonged to her neighbor's father. Again, they were going to be thrown out because no one wanted "that junk". Another time, a group of documents from a man killed in action during the Battle of the Bulge were being sold off piece by piece. Fortunately, we were able to convince the seller not to break up the group so that we could keep it together. Our veterans' history deserves a better fate than the trash heap or the auction block!



Your donation will ensure the museum's continued growth, preservation of our veteran's memories, and support exhibiting traveling displays. For many younger people, even conflicts as recent as Vietnam seem just to be "old war movies". We want to bring to life the stories of those people who served in America's wars and provide a tangible link to our veterans. All donors will be credited on the museum's web site.

What types of things can you donate? We're always seeking new and unique items to add to the museum or for use in traveling displays and educational trunks. We're also expanding the coverage of Pre-WWI conflicts. We always need items such as uniforms, insignias, medals, photographs, newspapers, captured trophies, etc. - anything that will help tell our veteran's stories, especially those from Ohio. **Nothing is too small or insignificant.** We can also use items that you may feel are too damaged or worn out, to restore other pieces.

### **THIS QUARTER IN MILITARY HISTORY:**

January 4, 1951: Seoul captured by Communist Chinese Forces (CCF).  
January 15, 2002: Operation Enduring Freedom - Philippines begins.  
January 17, 1781: Battle of Cowpens, SC.  
January 17, 1991: Operation DESERT STORM begins at 0300 Iraq time.  
January 20, 1862: General George H. Thomas defeats Confederates at Mill Springs, Kentucky.  
January 26, 1942: First American forces arrive in Great Britain.  
January 27, 1973: Official end of the Vietnam War.  
January 31, 1915: The first use of poison gas in WW1, by Germany at Bolimow, Poland.

February 3, 1917: US severs diplomatic ties with Germany.  
February 9, 1861: Jefferson Davis elected President of Confederate States of America.  
February 11, 1951: Chinese counteroffensive begins north of Hoengsong.  
February 12, 1955: President Eisenhower's administration sends the first U.S. advisers to South Vietnam to train the South Vietnamese Army.  
February 15, 1898: Submarine mine sinks U.S. Battleship *Maine* in Havana Harbor, 260 killed.  
February 19, 1944: US Marines land on Iwo Jima.  
February 24, 1991: Allied ground assault against Iraq begins.  
February 27, 1776: North Carolina militia defeat Loyalist Scots inflicting heavy casualties at Moore's Creek bridge.

March 3, 1991: Iraq accepts conditions for a permanent cease fire.  
March 7, 1945: U.S. 9th Armored Division captures the Remagen bridge intact.  
March 8, 1862: Battle of Pea Ridge, Arkansas.  
March 15, 1781: Battle at Guilford Courthouse, Guilford, NC.  
March 18, 1951: United Nations forces retake Seoul.  
March 19, 2003: Operation Iraqi Freedom begins.  
March 21, 1918: Second Battle of the Somme begins.  
March 30, 1972: North Vietnamese launch a major offensive across the DMZ.

### **TRIVIA**

Last quarter's trivia question was:

*During the Battle of the Bulge, what was General Anthony McAuliffe's response to the German demand for surrender? His answer was "Nuts!"*

This quarter's question is:

***Some of the grievances listed in the Declaration of Independence against King George III were refusing his assent to "wholesome" laws, making judges dependent on "his will alone," and bringing in foreign mercenaries to wage war on the colonies in a way "totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation". How many (total) grievances did the Declaration list?***



The Miami Valley Military History Museum is co-located with the American Veterans Heritage Center (a 501c3 organization), located in Building 120, the historic Putnam Library, in the Historic District of the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Dayton, Ohio.

***Please note that although we are located on federal property, we receive NO funding from the Veterans Administration - we operate entirely "out of our own pockets" and with the help of unpaid volunteers.***

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**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

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E-mail: [curator@mvmhm.com](mailto:curator@mvmhm.com)

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