

2. Book Photographs in Color

Regrettably, my book does not do justice to the photographs in it. All photographs should have been in color to reflect terrain as well as human features. Natives who recovered bone fragments labeled them with red markings before they surrendered them to the proper local authorities. Black and white photographs do not show these markings at all. Also, many photographs are much smaller than I intended for them to be. However, I did submit some photographs as composites which made them a lot smaller. Here they are in full color and sizes to fit the pages.

Title page:



MC-130E #64-0547, call sign "Romeo Charlie" on one of its last landings. (Photo courtesy of Ron Rowe).

Chapter One: Page 6.



WW II crash site. Author is examining one of the pieces of a Russian Douglas 17 that are still available at the World War II crash site. (Photo by John Gargus).

Chapter 2: Page16.



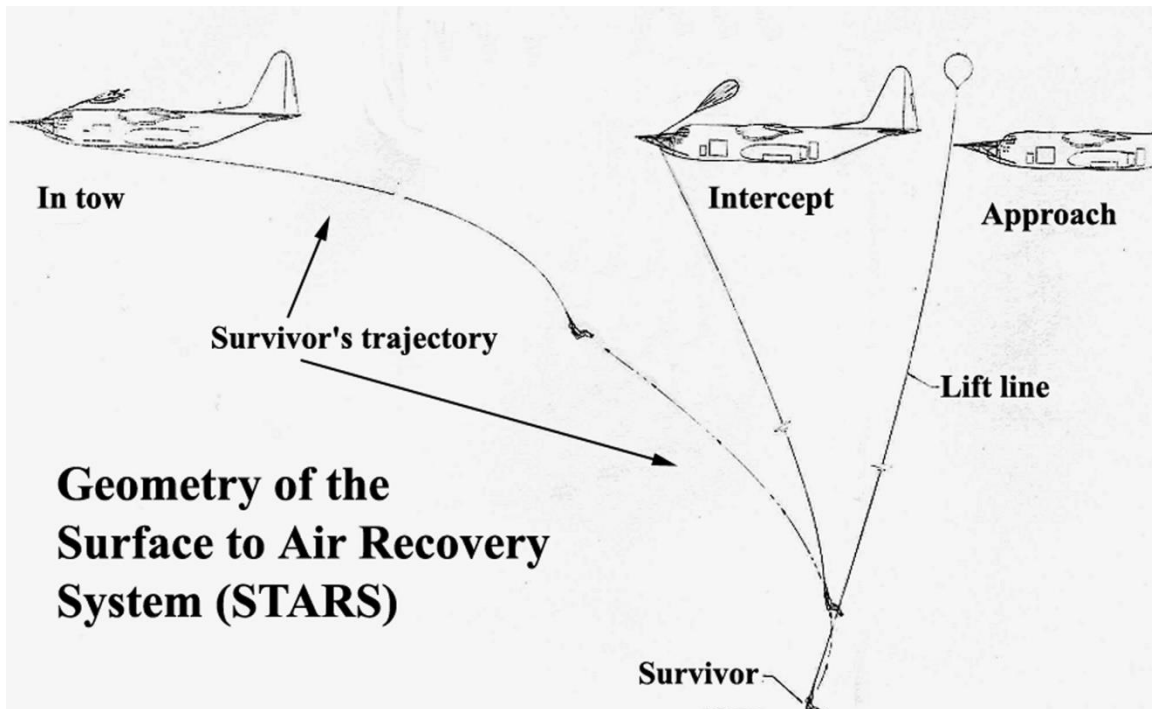
Duck Maynard has no resemblance to the stray goose on the original depiction of the first Combat Talon mascot logo. (Composite by John Gargus, photo of Maynard by David Mattingly).



Composite photo shows two Combat Talons on a low level flight. Note the successful camouflage. The shadow of the bottom aircraft is more visible than its fuselage. (USAF photo)



A view of the fly by terrain and trees that seem to pass so close to the wing tips. (USAF photo).



Sketch from Robert E. Fulton's "One Man Caravan" with overprint by John Gargus.



These simple illustrated instructions, laminated in protective plastic, were included in each Fulton Recovery kit. (Photo by John Gargus)



About to be picked up passenger gets ready for his ride. (Scanned photo from a Fulton Recovery System brochure)

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This is a close view of a Combat Talon radome with retracted yoke arms. When extended, the arms will guide the intercepted balloon tethering lift line into the sky hook locking mechanism.

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Combat Talon at the moment of lift line intercept. (7th SOS photo).

Chapter Three:

Page 40.



Five cent Military Payment Certificates (MPCs) New designs with different colors were printed every now and then to reduce the risk of counterfeiting. (Photos by Donald “Dusty” Rhodes; composites by John Gargus).

Page 41.



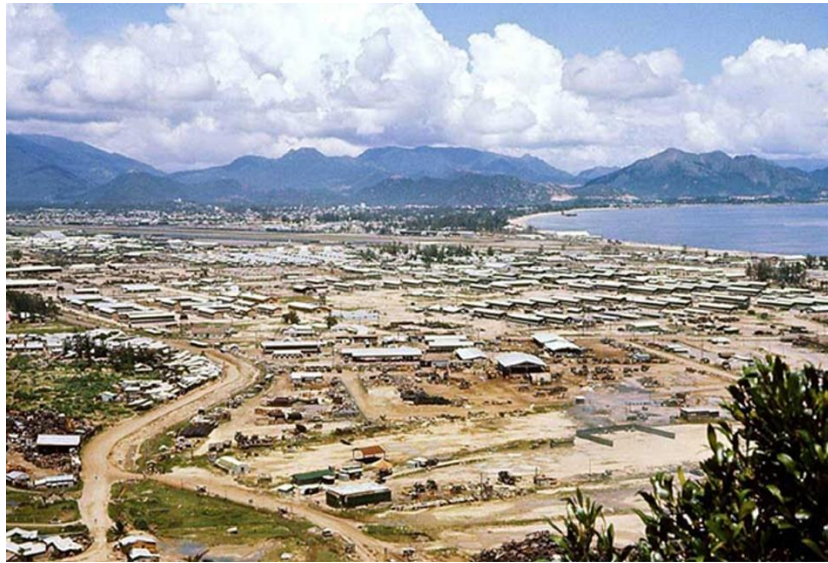
Home wing's welcome sign to the Nha Trang Air Base. (Wikipedia photo)



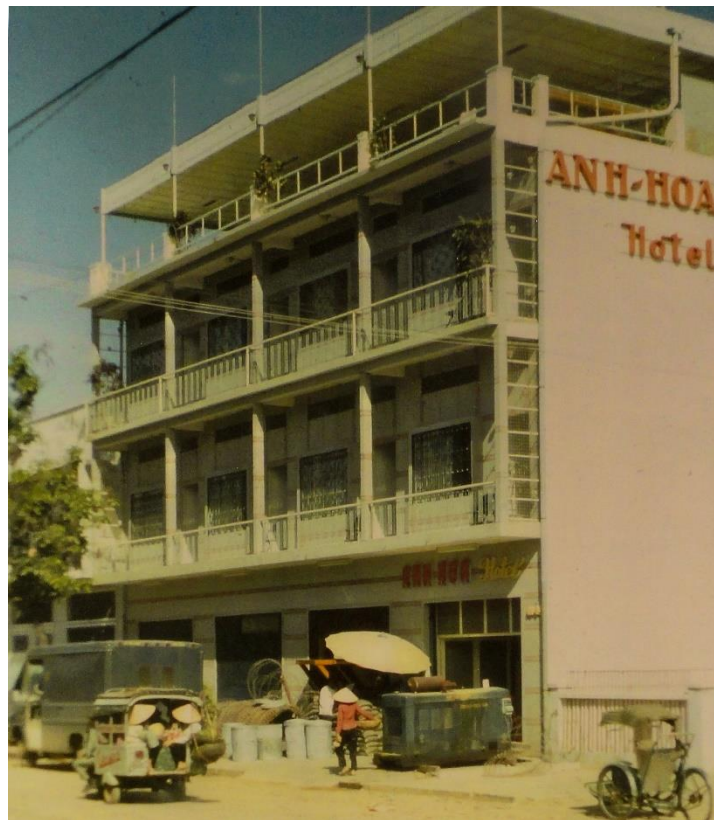
Unofficial designs for never authorized patches for the Studies and Observation Group and for two of its air assets: the Stray Goose C-130Es and the First Flight's C-123s. (Composite photo by John Gargus)



S-05 crew on the beach. Standing left to right. Butler, Vallas, McCormick, Rosser and Operations Officer Hines. In the front: Krueger, Yates, Lewis, Commander Rogers, Ellis, Claxton, and Gargus. Missing is Wiegand. (Photo by Karl Wiegand).



This 1968 photograph shows the U.S. Army Camp McDermott with the Air Base and the city of Nha Trang in the background. (Wikipedia photo)



This is how Ahn Hoa hotel looked like when it was acquired by the Detachment. One of the diesel generators is still sitting at the entrance. (Photo by James L. C. "Les" Smith)

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Two of our vigilant Nung guards are posted at their stations. Protective sand bags are stacked under the air conditioning units of the dining room. (Photo by John F. Lewis)

Page 70.



View of the Buddha hill from the hotel roof. Buildings on the side of the hill became a temporary stronghold of the Viet Cong during the Tet offensive in 1968. (Photo by James L. C. "Les" Smith)



Dining room scene with members of the S-05 crew. Left to right are: John Lewis, Charlie Claxton, Pat Watson, Hugh McCormick, waiter Mr. Tuy, Bob Rosser, John Gargus and Tom Hines. (Photo by Hugh McCormick)



Inside view of the rooftop bar at Christmas time with our two sister bar maids Ann and Sue. (Photo by Dow Rogers)



Enchilada cooks Charlie Claxton and John Gargus. (Photo by John Gargus)





*USAF photos show our destroyed Combat Talon #64-0563.
Impact point of one mortar rounds can be seen on the second photograph.*



Detachment commander Lt. Col. Dow Rogers talks to children at the orphanage. (Photo by Dow Rogers)





Operations Officer Tom Hines, Charlie Claxton as Santa Claus and a Vietnamese civil action officer at the Cathedral Christmas party. On the second photograph is the elbow to elbow crowd that crashed in on our Boy and Girl Scout party from the surrounding streets. (Photos by Dow Rogers)

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This map shows the approximate route of the December 29 mission. (Computer scan of North Vietnam's map with route overprint by John Gargus).



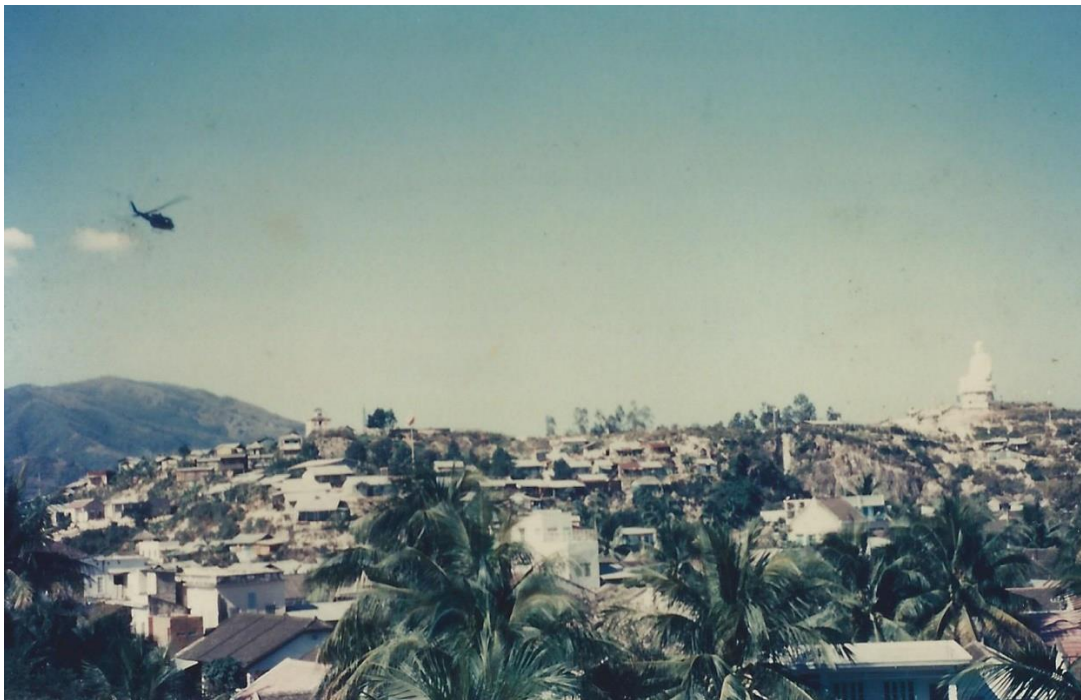
This photograph shows the sand bag protection for the dining room and Hog Heaven. Truck with the bomb that was directed to explode attempted to park in front of the void spot between the dining room and Hog Heaven. (Photo by John Lewis)





First photograph shows the holes made in the outer and inner walls of the house connected to Ahn Hoa hotel. Destroyed truck was thrown against the building wall on the other side of the narrow alley. (Photos by John Lewis).

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Helicopter gunship is firing rockets at Viet Cong position on Buddha hill. (Photo by Dow Rogers)



Rooftop observers of the attack on Buddha hill. Some are photographing the action and the fires at the base of the hill. (Photo by Dow Rogers)

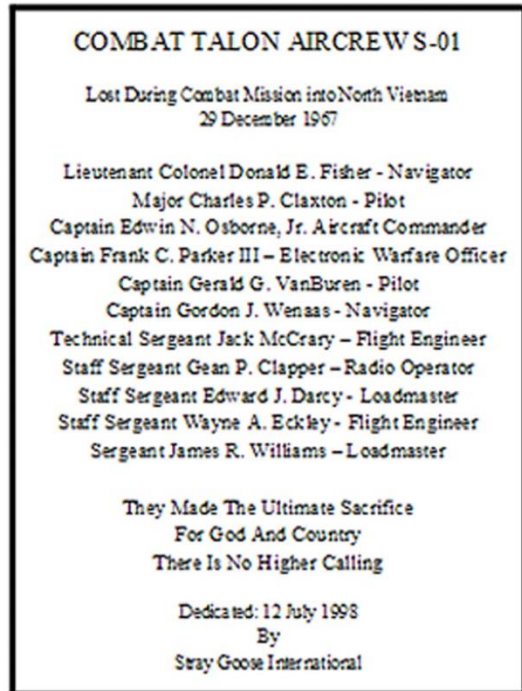
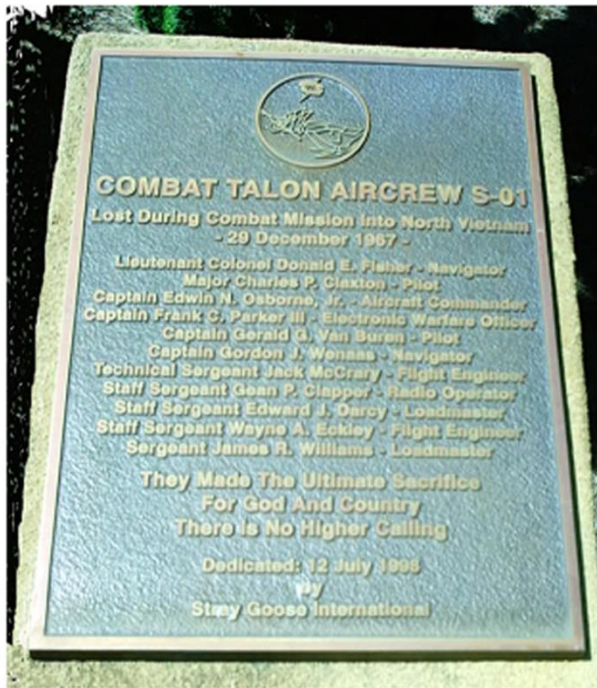


Change of command and Fulton Recovery System pick up of Tom Hines by Russ Bunn, the incoming commander of the 15th SOS. (Composite of USAF photos by John Gargus)

Chapter Six: Page 132.



Composite photo of the S-01 memorial pedestal and a flyby by a lone Combat Talon. (Photo courtesy of Lee Hess)



Memorial brass plaque mounted on a pedestal in the Hurlburt Memorial Air Park. (Photo composite by John Gargus)



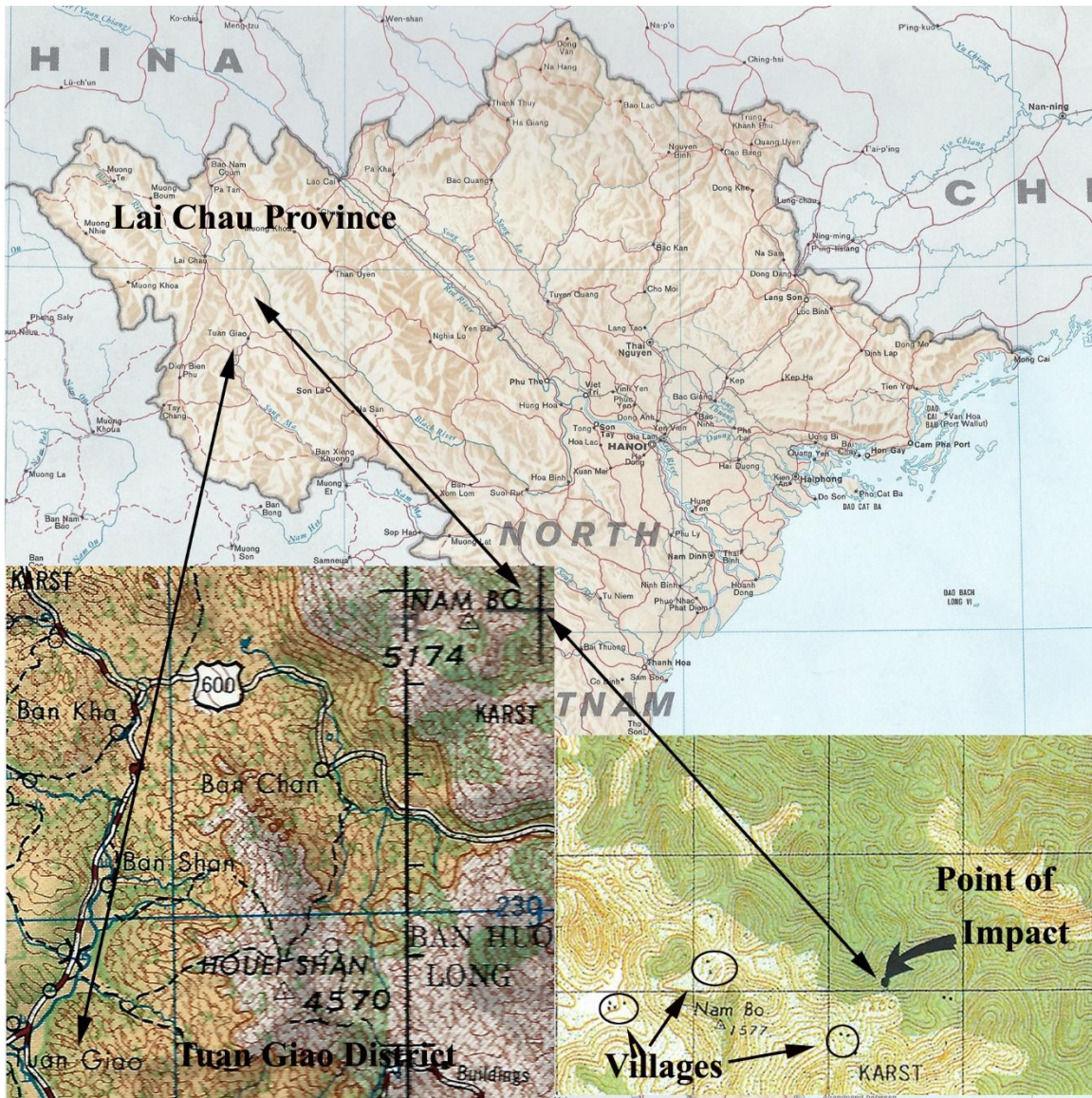
Suzanne M. Parker, wife of Frank C Parker III, lays a rose on the plaque that holds her husband's name. (Scan of a photo by Msgt Kevin Hoeth from the 16th SOWg Commando newspaper)



Patricia Claxton and her granddaughters place single white roses on the S-01 crew casket during the funeral at the Arlington National Cemetery. (Computer scan of a photo by Capt. Carol Kanode from the 16th SOWg Commando newspaper)



This is the grave stone at the common grave of the S-01 crew members at Arlington National Cemetery. (Photo by John Gargus)



North Vietnamese map with inserts that show the location of the aircraft's crash site. (Computer scanned composite and overprint by John Gargus)



Russian built MI-8 helicopter used to transport JTF-FA teams to aircraft crash sites. (Wikipedia photo)

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Survey team is on its two and a half hour trek to the crash site from the nearest available helicopter landing zone. (JPAC photo)

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Landing gear strut and an engine drive shaft are two of the few heavy pieces of aircraft remains that were not carted off by the natives. (JPAC photo)

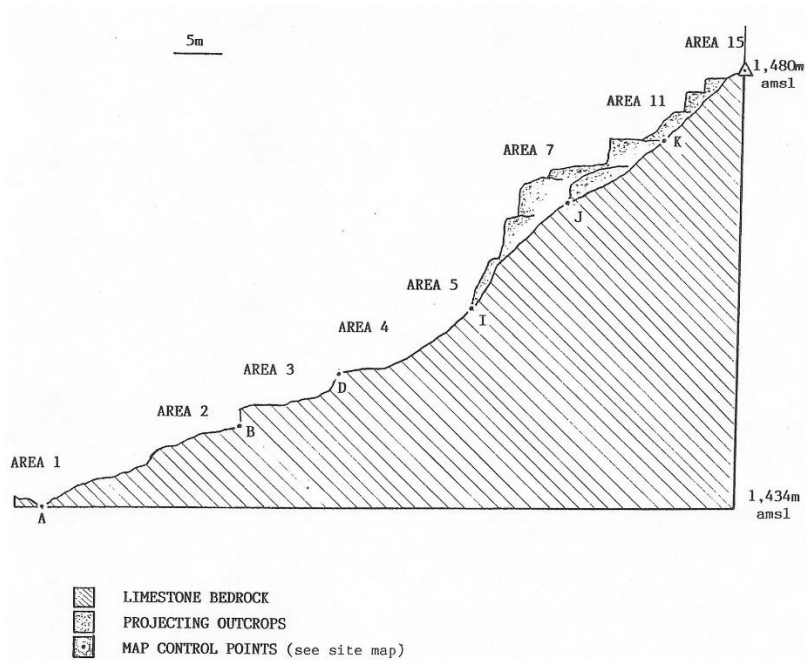
Page 154.



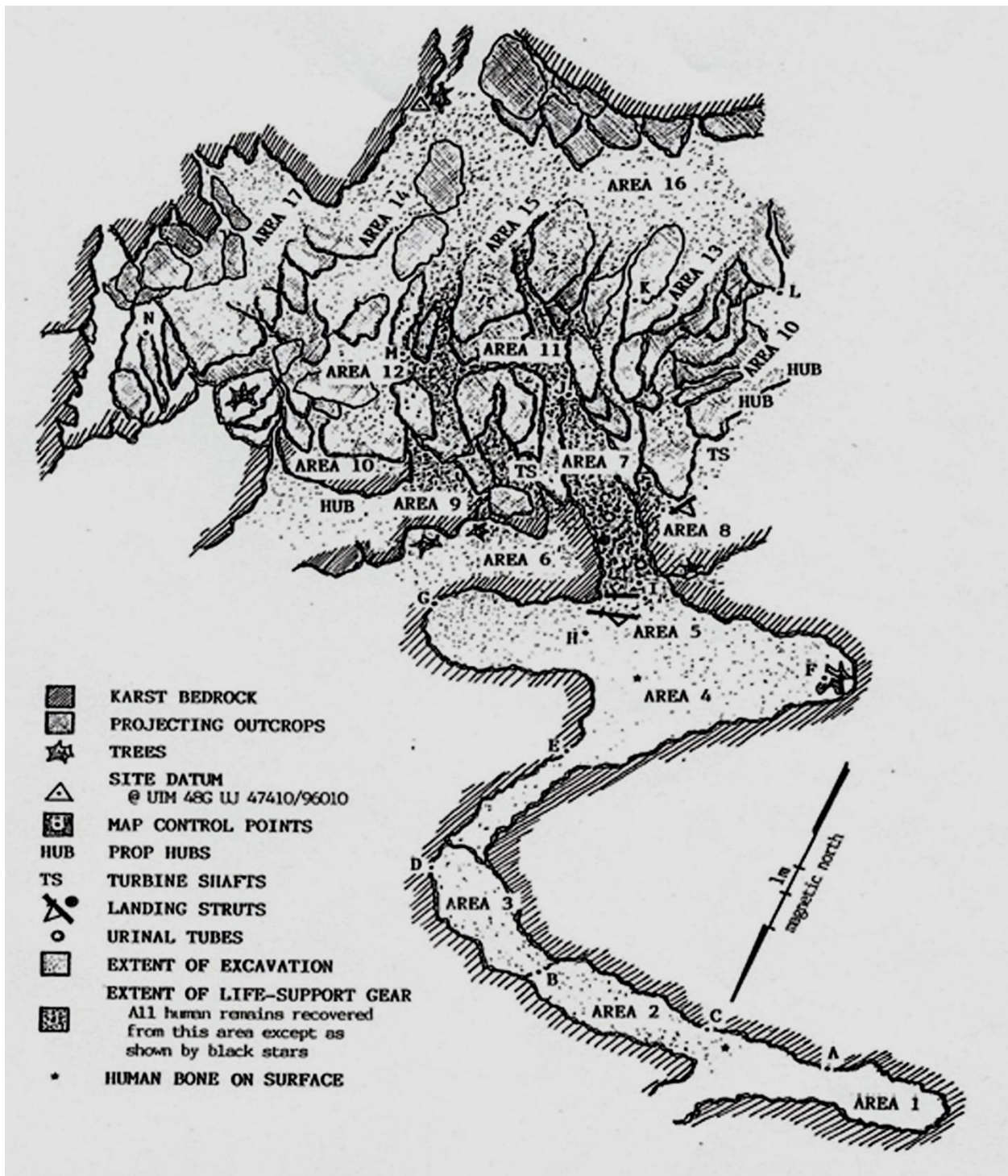


These small metallic pieces from crew life support equipment were either buried or were overlooked by the scavengers. (JPAC photo)

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Sketch of the mountain slope shows its steepness and locations of some excavation areas. (JPAC photo)



Sketch of the excavation plan shows 17 areas for excavation and location of some aircraft remains. (JPAC photo)



Photo of excavation area 11 shows one of the small areas with top soil where excavations could be accomplished. (JPAC photo)





First photograph shows the entire team resting just below the aircraft impact point. The second one shows the climbing approach to it. (JPAC photo)

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This photo of excavated personal artifacts has an insert that shows a paper rubbing of Lt. Col. Don Fisher's ID tag which was turned in to the Detachment Two in Hanoi. (JPAC photo provided to author by Mrs. Claxton)



Photograph of large remains that were of sufficient size for DNA identification with the forensic technology available in the 1990s. Top photograph shows where pieces of bone were cut out. Those cut outs show how much bone material was needed to conduct a DNA analysis. Red marks were made by the natives. (JPAC photos provided to author by Mrs. Claxton)



Top photograph shows hand and foot bone fragments that were too small for DNA analysis. Bottom photo shows spine hip and leg fragments. Red marks on bones were made by the natives for their own purposes. (JPAC photo provided to author by Mrs. Claxton)



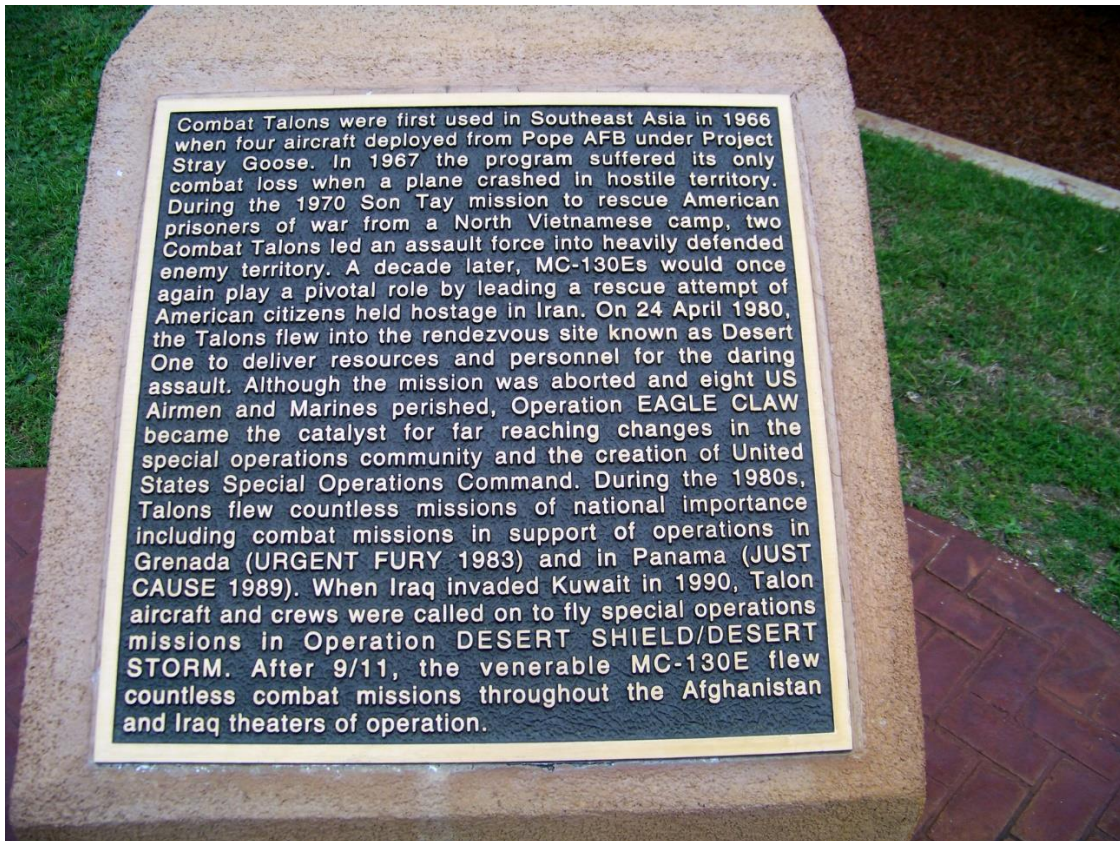
Hurlburt Field Memorial Air Park (1st SOWg photo)



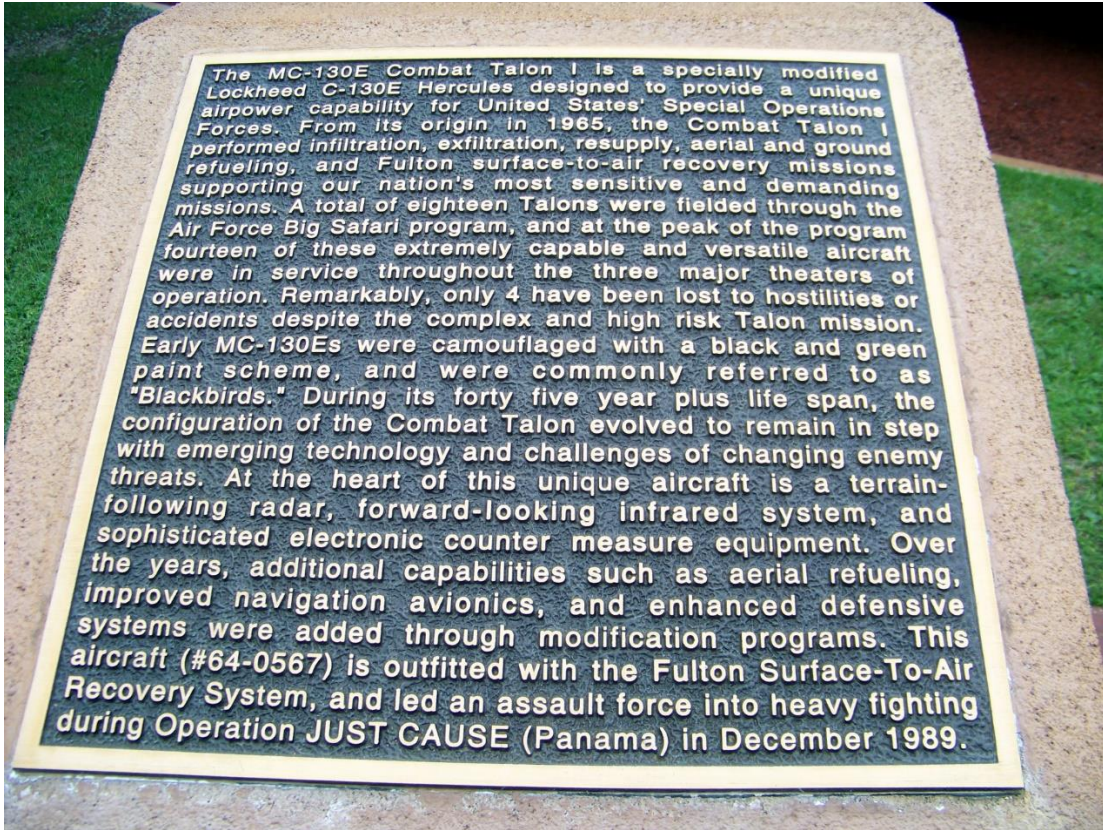
*Patches for the Air Commando Association, Stray Goose International and the 7th Air Commando Squadron / 7th Special Operations Squadron Society.
(Composite photo by John Gargus)*



Three memorial walls at the entrance to the Memorial Air Park pay tribute to the first Air Commandos. (Photo by John Gargus)



This pedestal mounted brass plaque give short history of the Combat Talon fleet. (Photo by John Gargus)



This pedestal mounted brass plaque gives short history of the first Combat Talons I that included the first ones known as Stray Goose. It features the aircraft # 64-0567 that is on display.



This is Combat Talon I # 64-0567. Note the two pedestals on the left. They hold the brass plate plaques with history of the Combat Talons.



*New Combat Talon
memorial stone installed on 24 April 2015. (Photo by Richard Howan)*

This photograph is not in the book. It shows the back side of the stone with names of all crewmembers lost in seven Combat Talons.

