

31 DEC 68

Box # 1

Hi — These are the results of my first attempt at photography. Some are missing because of poor development or duplication. Most were taken the day we moved to An Khe, flying up the coast. Chronological explanation follows:

#2 & 3 — for your benefit, Mom. This is what I carry each time I fly — L to R: helmet, briefcase; .38 special (note "John Wayne" holster and rounds); jungle knife (the most action it's seen has been as a letter opener and ~~sugar~~ orange-slicer); M-16 (ugly/beautiful); and finally my million-pound chest protector (it will stop most small arms fire). Bed is early Osgood with original antique colour.

#5 Our gun rack on home-made room divider. The lockers provide a foyer; the entrance is about four feet behind the left two lockers. Roof (eg, ceiling) has since been added. Let me say here that Dad's early and continual instruction in Basic Carpentry One proved useful!

#6-16 Too many pictures of the South China Sea and coast. The hour was early and the day murky. Unfortunately these slides don't adequately reproduce the grandeur and depth of the clouds and sun. But you can get some idea.

#10, 11, & 15 are my favorite, showing the rays of sunlight. Most pictures taken around 2,000 feet above sea level. Number

Room divider

17 was a good example of typical terrain here - about.

Box #2

- #1 One of our ships with our Deamon emblem on the nose.
2. Hon Kong mountain - just out my back door. All these pictures, incidentally, were taken at An Khe.
3. Proud of this shot! With my fancy camera I set a 10-second shutter delay. Set up on the apt synchronized elevator, I lined it up, focused, tripped the timer and ran up to the machine gun, feeling like a fool smiling at a clicking machine. Note my outfit - jungle fatigues are in this year. The enclosure is a three-sided revetment, made of the steel retainer wall and filled with concrete/sandbags, for protecting aircraft from mortar fire. Very effective.
- 4-10 random shots of countryside ~~not~~ while flying, obviously. This is a beautiful country; too bad there's a war going on.
11. Our company Dogs. The light puppy is Ethel, an inveterate flier. She sits right behind my seat very often, and has an Air Metal with Oak Leaf Cluster for having logged over 25 hours of combat assault missions. Dark dog in back ground is Clyde, Ethel's father, with Rat, the mother, paws up in the ditch.
12. A bit of doggerel. Ethel and Rat mess it up in a US Army Corps of Engineers storm sewage drain.
13. 14 Other pups of the litter (as yet unnamed) engaged in puppy play.

15. I was trying to catch Ethel eating, but her lack of composure coupled with my necessarily slow shutter speed caused the blur. At least one gets the feeling of her quick movements.
- #16 Some deal - Ethel refused to cooperate.
17. Me, of course, with friend, am sitting on the dogs sun porch. Barracks building in the background is typical of what we live in.
18. An exciting closeup of a tank. Wow
19. Defunct shrine of some sort in the town of Ankhe.
20. A typical Montagnard tribesman down from the hills to sell his pipe. I gave him five cents for posing and he was ~~static~~ ecstatic.
24. Action shot of our hero defending his title. The ball, incidentally, made it over the net, bringing on an overwhelming victory. I'm not really as skinny as the slide portrays, it's just the shadows.

Box #3

Hello, folks!

Yet another series of slides. Herein follows a picture-by-picture account:

- #1 Ethel and Puppy dining.
- 2 Puppy ~~resents~~ photographer at dinner.
3. "Hulkers" Army trucks in An Khe.
4. Typical taxi-cab.
- 6 ~~7~~ Hagglng with owner over price of laundry.
- 8 ~~7~~ poor photography - this little girl sells me a small bag of peanuts for 5¢.
9. Picture snapped at the precise moment a mortar round exploded behind house. Bad nerves...
10. Friend Tommy - possibly the shrewdest, most inscrutable Oriental I met. Age: 9.
11. This structure is a decent home. Typical children.
13. More friends - Osgood spreads happiness about the countryside. Here he checks a local well.
15. local populace of An Khe. Bunch of hams.
16. "The Boys." Myself (with ~~less~~ sunglasses) C. Bemis (gunship pilot) & LT Jones (gunship) Were watching a front-loader protect our bunker. More to come.
17. Favorite pastime. This is a friend from Calif.
18. Aforementioned front-loader piling dirt on top of small bunker. Note their rapt attention as they sit ~~at~~ atop rocket cases.
19. This is a blurry picture of my room up in An Khe. Same guy as in frame #17. That's my stereo equipment & gun. Note patriotic American flag and Bodurtha supplied Christmas decorations.

Box #4

1. An Khe, Vietnam. Contemplating night warfare.
2. First in a series of pictures taken on Christmas Day. We flew a Santa Clause out to a Korean artillery firebase to treat the local kids. Also brought a doctor and medic to heal. Santa, obviously injured.
3. We land for more pictures.
4. Same thing - note Command personnel carrier.
5. Well to do Vietnamese country home.
6. Ford pick-up truck. Typical Ford product.
7. incongruous! the only Santa wearing combat boots.
8. Doc treating people. The Colonel is second from left, next to localite awaiting skin treatment.
9. The doc, with uniformed interpreter. My favorite is the old man with wispy goatee.
10. Santa and head reindeer. Note rakish pistol.
11. Back to reality - We were bringing a PFC in from the bush to go home. This is what's left.
13. The colonel - using radio-telephone. He was sitting 18 inches from the PFC.
14. He was sitting directly behind me. In spite of our emergency procedures, he died.
17. The result of another day's flying. If you remember, the freexting washer is just to the right of my seat.
18. An Khe again. A CH-47 is hauling a Huey that was shot down.
19. Hello, folks! Note the company symbol, I'm alive and well, with my trusty .38 Special.
20. For you, Mom. The door to our room. A painted sign.

19 JAN 69

Box #5

These are some strange shots, but somewhat interesting.

- #4. Tape recorder ~~starts~~ reels at night.
5. Red flashlight being waved in front of open shutter.
6. Colored cubes & candle, purposely out of focus.
7. A Bhudda (Buddha; Buddah??) in Ra Trang.
8. We fly closer — just an average flying day.
11. Moon behind cloud
12. Sunset at Qui Nhon, Vietnam. (pronounced "quinn yon")
- comes before 13
→ 14. The lineup for a combat assault at golf course airstrip in An Khê. We were trail ship, hence the coverage. Local dog inspects the troops.
- after 14 → 13. After lift off, enroute to the LZ. The weather was marginal, as you can see.
15. Forming up in trail. The weather fluctuated violently.
16. Closer — 17. even closer.
18. Immediately after a hot mention. We are attempting to reform the flight after dropping off the troops.
19. As you can see, we're having some difficulty getting together. In the lower right quadrant is a gunship pounding the L.Z. with rockets and machine guns.
20. Now we're getting together, although everyone is so frazzled we pay little regard to the precision of the formation.
21. Sister ship flying my wing. A long day is over, and we're descending to land.

Box 5 continued.

I'd just like to explain that pictures taking in the LZ ~~was~~^{was} quite impossible. We were mildly busy; So, these were all I had time for. Sometime I'll try to catch some machine gun rounds on film.

This was quite an operation, although my coverage on film is minimal. But, it should bring you closer to the war, and help explain what I do here. All the pictures should help a little, I hope.

If this form of explanation is adequate, tell me so and I'll continue to write these "25 cent towns." Anyway, I enjoy doing it. It's time to stop and mail these off before more boxes accumulate and I bog down. A normal letter will follow.

Love,
Jon