

Guide to MS-234:

Richard Buchter, Class of 1954, Papers



Gettysburg College, Musselman Library
Special Collections and College Archives

Joy Zanghi, Class of 2021

October 2018

MS-234: Richard Buchter, Class of 1954, Papers

Processed by Jo Zanghi, Class of 2021
October 2018

Size

1 box, 0.25 cubic feet

Location

Special Collections

Dates

Inclusive: 1943-1971
Bulk: 1971

Provenance

Items in this collection were donated to Special Collections by Richard Buchter '54 in September 2018.

Biographical Note

Richard Buchter '54 was born in 1933. He lived in Copiague, New York before he attended Gettysburg College from 1951-1954. During his time in Gettysburg, Buchter was a member of the fraternity Sigma Chi and majored in Biology. After graduating in 1954, Buchter joined the Air Force by 1956 and he later served in the Vietnam War.

In the Vietnam War, Richard Buchter served in the United States Air Force as the Base Operations Officer at the Da Nang Air Base. His duties during the war consisted of running Gunfighter Airlines for the 366th Tactical Fighter Wing which worked as a humanitarian airlift support. They would transport blood from Bangkok to Da Nang to German hospital ship for wounded civilians on both sides of the war.¹ He also worked to keep the Da Nang Air Base, nicknamed "Rocket City" for the frequent Viet Cong rocket attacks, operational. The Da Nang Air Base included the 366th Tactical Fighter Wing, the 20th Tactical Air Support Squadron which ran PSYOPS, H-53 Helicopter Search and Rescue operations, Air America Operations, and various other air squadrons, all of which Buchter had the responsibility to maintain during his service in Vietnam.²

Historical Note

The Da Nang Air Base was a base in which Psychological Operations in Vietnam (PSYOPS) took place from. PSYOPS consisted of American aircrafts flying over the Vietnamese countryside with leaflets and

¹ Steve Conaway, "Floating German Hospital Brightens Viet," *Pacific Stars & Stripes*, March 18, 1971.

² Information Courtesy of Richard Buchter.

loudspeakers spreading propaganda that encouraged Vietnamese civilians to oppose the Viet Cong.³ Leaflets from PSYOPS can be seen in this collection.

Buchter's duty running "Gunfighter Airlines" brought blood to the German hospital ship, the Helgoland. A German airline, Lufthansa, would transport the blood to Bangkok for it to be flown to the ship in Da Nang.⁴ Converted from a German ferry to a hospital in 1966, the Helgoland was sent to Vietnam to provide aid. By 1971, eight medical staff members provided services on the ship for the 170-bed hospital, giving support to wounded Vietnamese citizens who would not otherwise have it.⁵

Scope and Content Note

This collection includes newspaper clippings, photographs, Vietnamese leaflets relating to the Psychological Operations of the Vietnam War, other military-related documents, and Vietnamese paraphernalia Buchter gathered during his service as the Base Operations Officer in Da Nang during the Vietnam War. Possible research interests lie in the Vietnam War, specifically PSYOPs and the Air Force.

Subjects

Vietnam War

U.S Air Force

Series Description

This collection is divided into three Series. **Series 1:** Vietnamese Documents, **Series 2:** Newspaper Clippings, **Series 3:** Military Documents.

Box List

Box 1

1-0 Finding Aid and Biographical Information

Series 1: Vietnamese Documents

1-1 Vietnamese Documents

- 4 Vietnamese Leaflets with English Translations
- 57 Vietnamese Leaflets without Translations
- Packet of Vietnamese Leaflets with English Translations
- Vietnamese Leaflet with Photo
- 5 Vietnamese Dong

³ Robert J Kodosky, "Leaflets, Loudspeakers, and Radios, Oh My!", *Air Power History* 64, no. 3 (Fall 2017): 5-12.

⁴ Information courtesy of Richard Buchter.

⁵ Steve Conaway, "Floating German Hospital Brightens Viet," *Pacific Stars & Stripes*, March 18, 1971.

Series 2: Newspapers

1-2 Newspapers

- Pacific Stars & Stripes Clipping – June 5, 1971
- Pacific Stars & Stripes Clipping – April 21, 1971
- Pacific Stars & Stripes Clipping – March 18, 1971
- Pacific Stars & Stripes Clipping – Date Unknown

Series 3: Military Documents

1-3 Military Documents

- Gunfighters From Da Nang Military Business Card
- 4 Military Payment Certificates
- Department of the Army Document – Assessment of the Results of Lam Son 719 – March 31, 1971
- 8"x10" "Gunfighter Country" Collage – May 1971
- B-17F Flight Log – 8th Air Force, 385th Bomb Wing – September 5, 1943 - February 21, 1944 (Included in the donation for unknown reasons)

Related Collections

MS-051: The Letters of Richard A. Moore to his Wife during the Vietnam War

MS-044: Stephen H. Warner Collection

MS-069: The papers of John W. Vannorsdall

MS-221: Captain Robert L. Morris '66 Papers

MS-222: Lt. John M. Colestock '65 Papers

Contact Information

Special Collections and College Archives

Musselman Library, Gettysburg College

717-337-7014

special_collections@gettysburg.edu

www.gettysburg.edu/special-collections