

**Wanted: Willie Albright, son of 1968-69 Covey FAC Lt Col Ralph Albright,** is looking for any service information about his father (who died in Tucson, AZ in 2011). I've attached his obit, a Stars and Stripes article about an exploit on the ground for which he was awarded a Bronze Star with V, and a photo of him and others with Martha Raye. Willie also provided citations to accompany awards of several DFCs, which confirm his activities around the Thuong Duc and Tien Phuoc Special Forces Camps.

Anyone who knew Col Albright or served with him, please respond directly to Willie at <mailto:Willie Albright <albrightwillie0@gmail.com>>

Cheers,

Gary Willis  
Red Marker 18

Obituary

Lt. Col. Ralph Neal Albright, USAF

Born: March 5, 1922, Tipton, Indiana. Deceased: January 25, 2011, Tucson, Ar.

In 1942, Ralph Albright turned down a basketball scholarship at the University of Indiana, enlisting instead in the Army Air Corps to become a fighter pilot. In 1944, he was stationed in the Aleutian Islands flying P-38s. He logged 172 combat hours and 56 combat missions there and was awarded several medals for heroism before cessation of hostilities. From 1946 to 1949, he was stationed in Japan doing intelligence work

He served throughout the Korean War as a combat pilot flying P-51s on 21 ground attack and reconnaissance missions. He received several more medals and citations for heroism and for his ground-breaking work in developing close support techniques. After that conflict, he was stationed in Formosa engaged once again in intelligence work.

Albright returned stateside in 1956 to study liaison and staff work with an eye toward service in Europe. He became fluent in Russian and was assigned as an air attaché to the U.S. Embassy in Moscow. He was a noted host and effective gatherer of intelligence who was cited at the highest levels for his contributions to preparedness during the Cold War. By age 46, he was a Lt. Col. with 244 combat hours and 87 combat missions to his credit as well as numerous awards and citations. He was qualified to fly numerous aircraft in service including jet and multi-engine aircraft.

Notwithstanding his relatively advanced age, in 1968 he transferred to Vietnam for combat flight duty. He flew O-1 Birddogs out of Da Nang and Thuong Doc mostly in support of army special forces units working with the Montagnards. Over the next two years, Albright racked up an astounding number of awards including the Air Medal with clusters, the Bronze Star with

clusters, the Distinguished Flying Cross with several clusters and many others too numerous to mention here. Some were awarded for ground combat.

Due to his work with the Montagnards, Albright began to question the purpose and conduct of the war in Vietnam and left the service in 1970. He retired to Tucson where he was an avid fly fisherman to the end of his days.



Photo in Vietnam with  
Martha Raye

19Jan69-

Spotter-Plane Pilot, GIs Take 'Nasty Toy' From Reds

DA NANG, Vietnam (Special)

- "One of these days I'm going to get that clown", muttered Lt. Col. Ralph N. Albright, Hampton, Va., as he pulled his O1 Bird Dog into a left turn away from the stream of anti aircraft fire streaking up at him from the hills north of the Thuong Duc Special Forces CIDG camp.

As the light observation pulled around in a tight climbing turn he rolled into twisting dive making the little ship a difficult target.

Albright flying in his third war, is no exception when it comes to seeking revenge.

The quiet-spoken fighter pilot, who flew P-38s in World War II, is attached to C Co., 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne) at DaNang. Together with another forward air controller (FAC), they form a team flying for the Special Forces CIDG camps in I Corps.

Albright has introduced some innovations which have proved successful. He believes in getting out to the camps and on the ground with the teams to better understand their problems. It was because of this that he happened to be on the operation that netted the 1.27mm AA gun that had plagued him earlier.

While flying spotter-type missions, Albright had noted enemy activity in the area north of the camp and the camp decided to send out a company-sized patrol to investigate, accompanied by the FAC temporarily turned infantryman.

One of the two companies temporarily assigned to Thuong Duc from Tien Phuoc CIDG camp moved out at 04500 in a steadily falling rain. The senior adviser was the team sergeant from Tien Phuoc, Sgt. Ramon Mori, Fayetteville, N.C. With him in addition to Col. Albright was another member of his team, Spec. 4 David J. Klancer, Dunkirk, N.J. and Thuong Duc's team sergeant, Sgt 1.C. Richard W. Hall, Fayetteville, N.C., an expert on the terrain.