

From: [glogan](#)  
To: [Latham Rice](#)

Sent: Saturday, November 29, 2008 9:22:50 PM  
Subject: Re: Rivers Updates

Bernie:... or do you go by Latham.... the [group picture](#) is I believe a photo taken in your Air Supply course... I do recognize many of the faces, and could probably help with the names as I sent a photo to the CJATC web site of all the Airborne School instructors during 1955-56, the reason I say it is Air Supply course is because of a few things, one we started our jump course with 58 people and when it was all finished we were cut down to around 40.... the other thing is on the jump course we didn't wear battledress tunics, web belts, or ties, and didn't have a name tag, as I remember we wore coveralls, boots and putties and always a harness..., our course began on a Tuesday morning after the Thanksgiving day long weekend as Rivers was lucky enough to have a freak snowstorm the day before, we had about 6 or 7 inches of snow on the ground, however when we did the 5 mile run on the Friday morning the snow was gone and the temp was up around 80 degrees, we had reasonably good weather right up until the last day that we were at the high tower in Shilo, it snowed a bit through the day and they were trying to get us finished at night but a storm was coming up fast and the winds were pretty high for the tower, especially doing a night drop, I know when it came to my turn they called it off so we went back to Rivers, you and I were living in quarters so we didn't travel with the rest of the course and you drove us back to Rivers that night, we managed to get our first 2 jumps in, then the weather turned bad and we spent a good 2 weeks trying to finish up with the required jumps, our course took about 6 weeks when it should have been over and done with in 4..

The fellow that you took the photo of landing at the High Tower was Pte Cottnam, he was with the RCRs, however most of the infantry on our course was a bunch of PPCLI Germans, I remembered when we did the 5 mile run they all ran together and did everything in cadance...

Here are a couple of names for your memory bank, if you can remember these guys, Alex Clark, former apprentice soldier, came to Rivers in the fall of 1956 and was with Air Supply school, another former apprentice soldier, Ken Dillen came with Alex Clark the same time, and Norm VanTassel, Norm was a tall thin Cpl from the QOR of C, he was in the beginning a runner at GTW, then got his Gp I Clerk Adm, and was sent to Airborne School, he was not a jumper... Norm was in Rivers from 1956 to 1962... Alex was in Rivers for a good period of time, he passed away about 10 years ago that I know of, Ken Dillen got out of the Army around 1960 as I ran into him at a militia unit in Brandon around 1961, he went on to become a MLA for the Saskatchewan Government, I believe he was a representative for the natives, as Ken was an Indian, he is now living somewhere out in Saskatchewan in a retirement home but I can never get in touch with him. As for Norm VanTassel, he took his discharge from the Army around 1963 but always kept himself active with the Legion and was at one time the President of the Korean Veteran's Association, he was living in Winnipeg, unfortunately Norm died on the operating table last Dec 3, when he was having a tumour removed from his Pancreas.... I tried to talk him into leaving the operation until at least after

Christmas just for his family's sake but he went ahead and they ran into a problem with keeping his heart going, they tried to implant a pacemaker but they couldn't get his heart restarted...

Here is the email address for [Bill and Sue-On Hillman](mailto:hillmans@westman.wave.ca) <[hillmans@westman.wave.ca](mailto:hillmans@westman.wave.ca)> when you and I were in Rivers Bill was a young Sgt in the Airforce Cadets, and hung around with the sons of one of your old officers Col Saul. Bill was into music and had or has a [small band](#), but I believe he did some of the dances in Rivers as well but I'm not sure if it was as early as the mid 50s. *[Editor's Note: the 1960s]* If you want to have him add some photos to his CJATC web site you could either send them to him, or to me, try to be as descriptive as you can.... if you have had the opportunity to check out all of the photos you may recognize some of the guys that were in the Signal group in Rivers, the one picture that I told you about a buddy of mine from the Apprentice soldiers, Rheel Cote on the left and myself standing with one foot on the fender... notice in the background they were building a new hanger at the time to house C119s... great time, this photo was taken in August 1956 I still had the stickers in my windshield waiting for my Manitoba plates....

for now,  
Gerry Logan



### **First C-130 to Land at Rivers**

**The first arrival was a US Air Force C-130 flown by a RCAF exchange officer. It was parked at the Air Supply School hanger and we took advantage of putting stuff into the cargo bay, lashing it down, taking pictures and taking it out again. As far as I can remember, we didn't fly any of the loads. Those I can remember**