

HEADQUARTERS
Marine Aircraft Group 36
1st Marine Aircraft Wing, FMFPac
FPO San Francisco 96601

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13 January 1966
003A01366
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From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding General, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing (Attn: ACoFS, G-3)

Subj: Command Chronology (u)

Ref: (a) Wing Order 3750.1B

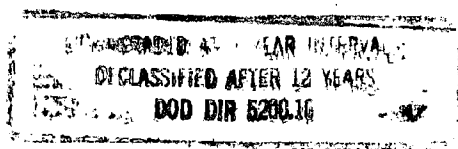
Encl: ☒ (1) Part One - Organizational Data
☒ (2) Part Two - Narrative Summary
☒ (3) Part Three - Significant Events
☒ (4) Part Four - Supporting Documents

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1) thru (4) are submitted for the month of December 1965.

William G. Johnson
WILLIAM G. JOHNSON

Copies to:
CG, 1stMAW (Copy 1 of 6 plus enclosures)
CG, 1stMAW (Copies 2 thru 5 of 6 less enclosure (4))
File (Copy 6 less enclosure (4))

1st MAW S&C No.	Copy No.
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MAG-36

CMD CHRON

Dec 1965

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PART I

1. Organizational Data - Period 1 to 31 December 1965

a. Commanding Officer and Staff of MAG-36:

CO	JOHNSON, William G.	COL
XO	ARMAGOST, William I.	LTCOL
ADJ	AMBROSE, Raymond H.	2NDLT
S-1	TOUCHTON, Elbert R.	MAJOR
S-2	SCHULER, John L.	CAPT
S-3	COSTELLO, Keith W.	LTCOL
S-4	SOMERVILLE, Daniel A.	LTCOL
Chaplain	HOWARD, Marvin	LCDR
Flt Surgeon	SCHENK, Thomas	LT (USN)
MTO	MOFFETT, Forrest L.	CAPT
EMB	EVANS, Kenneth B.	CAPT
ORD	PARKER, George R.	CWO-2
MAINT	GARDINER, Joseph C. Jr.	MAJOR
LEGAL	TROYER, Paul D.	1STLT
COMM	MEEKS, Clarence I.	CAPT
CIVIL AFFAIRS	TOUCHTON, Elbert R.	MAJOR
AVN SAFETY	GOODSELL, William	MAJOR
NATOPS	VOBORA, George	MAJOR
SECURITY	JESSEN, Thomas F.	CAPT
GROUND SAFETY	ETCHEVERRY, Louis P.	CAPT

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b. Commanders and Staff of attached units:

H&MS-36

CO	MOONEY, Thomas G.	LTCOL
XO	NAVORSKA, Donald R.	MAJOR
ADMIN	CUTCOMB, David H.	CAPT

MABS-36

CO	KENNEDY, Jack A.	MAJOR
XO	MICHEELS, H. M.	MAJOR
ADMIN	EGAN, James	1STLT

HMM-362

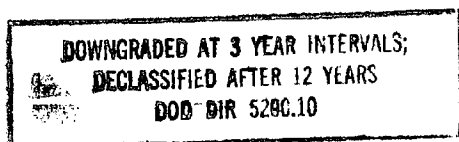
CO	ALDWORTH, James	LTCOL
XO	DUVALL, Robert L.	MAJOR
OPS	SMITH, William W.	MAJOR

HMM-364

CO	LUCAS, William R.	LTCOL
XO	HATCH, Robert D.	MAJOR
OPS	NEEDHAM, Michell, J.	MAJOR

VMO-6

CO	ZITNIK, Robert J.	LTCOL
XO	PRESSON, Robert E.	MAJOR
OPS	PURCELL, Robert D.	MAJOR

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2. Task Organization and Unit Location:

Unit Designation	Location	Date
H&MS-36	KY HA	1-31 Dec 65
MABS-36	KY HA	1-31 Dec 65
HMM-261	S.L.F. aboard U.S.S. Valley Forge	1-31 Dec 65
HMM-362	KY HA	1-31 Dec 65
HMM-363	QUI NHON	1-31 Dec 65
HMM-364	KY HA	1-31 Dec 65
VMO-6	KY HA	1-31 Dec 65

3. Average monthly strength: December 1965

Unit	Mar. Off.	Mar. Enl.	Navy Off.	Navy Enl.
H&MS-36	34	307		
MAB S-36	15	335	4	27
HMM-362	53	167	1	
HMM-364	54	149	1	
VMO-6	26	149		

Average monthly strength of MAG-36 was 1322 officers and men.

4. Important visitors to the command:

1 December - Admiral SHARPE and party.

7 December - LtGen KRULAK and party.

20 December - Congressman REZNIK and BGen PLATT.

23 December - RAdm KELLY and party.

25 December - BGen PLATT and Francis Cardinal SPELLMAN.

26 December - Congressman MCGRATH.

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Enclosure (1)

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PART II

1. Narrative Summary:

The construction of the camp was of significance in that with the good weather experienced during the month of December ten new tin-roofed structures were added and the finishing touches of bracing were added to all of the structures in the camp.

The requirement for M-2 Matting by MAG-12 necessitated the removal of 250 feet of this matting from the South Mat and replacing it with M-9 Matting. This was accomplished in six days and flight operations continued throughout the construction period.

On Christmas Day, 25 December it is of special note to mention that the day's highlight was the superlative dinner provided by the Mess Hall.

The war continued to take its toll during the month of December resulting in 5 KIA and 4 WIA. Despite this and the loneliness of Christmas separated from families the spirit and morale of all continued and a "can do" attitude prevails.

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Enclosure (2)

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PART III

1. Significant Events:

1 Dec: Captain W. L. WATERS of HMM-362 returned with his flight of two UH-34D helicopters after completing a night med evac to carry an Army Special Forces sergeant to the QUI NHON Hospital. The Sergeant had been wounded in the left eye by shrapnel, and the night flight was made with the hope of saving his sight.

Two HMM-364 aircraft and flight crews were maintained on a Condition 3 Med Evac Standby from 0530 to 1400. This flight was scrambled to search for a swimmer from the 4th Marines who was reported lost in the surf. The search produced negative results.

Five HMM-364 aircraft, each on separate flights, escorted VMO-6 aircraft on aerial reconnaissance flights of the TAOR in support of the 4th Marines.

Ten HMM-364 aircraft supported the 7th Marines on a Strike/Troop lift from KY HA to coordinates BT 658011; from BT 966020 to BT 664045; and from BT 565041 to BT 664045. Enemy small arms fire was encountered in the landing zones located at coordinates BT 664045 and BT 658011 and one aircraft received a hit in the latter zone. Return fire accounted for one VC KBA.

Two HMM-364 aircraft supported ARVN forces by carrying two ARVN WIA from "B" Med to the ARVN hospital at DANANG.

Ten HMM-364 aircraft supported the 7th Marines on a troop retraction from coordinates BT 658011 to LZ PANTHER (BT 553018) and from BT 664045 to LZ JAGUAR (BT 566021).

VMO-6 continued operating from KY HA Airfield with the same staff officers as the previous month with one exception. Lieutenant D. J. OVERFELD was assigned the billet of Administration Officer, replacing Lieutenant G. D. MANN who was killed in action of 23 November. At 0915, Captain PETTIGREW launched in the "Hollerin Huey" to sweep the missile range seaward out to 22 miles. Colonel LUPTON flew as Co-Pilot and Vietnamese Sergeant SE did the broadcasting over the loud speaker system. This was the first time VMO-6 used this system.

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A flight of VMO-6 Hueys led by Major HARKEY provided transportation for Admiral SHARPE and party for a tour of the CHU LAI Enclave.

2 Dec: Six HMM-364 aircraft and flight crews were maintained on a Condition 3 Standby from 0700 to 1800 and on a Condition 4 Standby from 1800 to 030700 Dec. Two of the Condition 3 Standby aircraft were scrambled to support ARVN forces on a Med Evac flight carrying eight ARVN KIA and two WIA from coordinates BS 386654 to the ARVN Hospital at QUANG NGAI. The flight was again utilized on another Med Evac mission to carry seven ARVN WIA and one KIA from coordinates BS 766831 to the ARVN Hospital at QUANG NGAI.

Two HMM-364 aircraft in support of the 4th Marines made an aerial reconnaissance flight of the area in the vicinity of coordinates BT 410110.

Five HMM-364 aircraft, each on separate flights, escorted VMO-6 aircraft on aerial reconnaissance flights of the TAOR in support of the 4th Marines.

At 1310 the VMO-6 Med Evac crew led by Major PURCELL was scrambled on an unusual evacuation mission. A Marine suffering from a suspected heart attack was deep in the mountain jungles west of CHU LAI. While hovering over the trees with his rotor blades in the clouds, Major PURCELL lowered HM3 KNOWLES to the ground with the rescue hoist. KNOWLES rendered medical assistance and prepared the patient for his hoist lift to safety and medical aid. Within 25 minutes the flight was inbound to "B" Med.

3 Dec: Major R. L. DUVALL OF HMM-362 led a flight of 10 UH-34D's to resupply HIEP DUC with nearly 9000 pounds of cargo and 13 passengers.

Ten HMM-364 aircraft supported ARVN forces on a resupply mission from QUANG NGAI to NUI DAU (BS 874325). Two of the aircraft in the flight were utilized to carry 12 VC prisoners from BINH SON (BS 605918) to QUANG NGAI. After completing the resupply mission, the flight returned to KY HA. Eight of the aircraft were immediately launched on a non-scheduled ARVN resupply mission from QUANG TIN (BT 292229) to HIEP DUC (AT 916246). One of the aircraft was hit by what was believed to be .50 caliber automatic weapons fire from coordinates BT 0327.

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The aircraft caught fire, went out of control and exploded on impact with the ground. In addition to the four crewmembers, there were nine ARVN troops aboard the aircraft. There were no survivors. Neither the bodies or the aircraft were recovered.

Five HMM-364 aircraft, each on separate flights, escorted VMO-6 aircraft on aerial reconnaissance flights of the TAOR in support of the 4th Marines.

4 Dec: Six HMM-364 aircraft and flight crews were maintained on a Condition 3 Standby from 0700 to 1800 and on a Condition 4 Standby from 1800 to 050700 Dec. The Condition 3 Standby flight and two additional aircraft were scrambled to support ARVN forces on an emergency resupply mission from QUANG NGAI to DUC PHO (BS 845395) and a priority Troop Lift from QUANG NGAI to DUC PHO. Small arms fire was encountered by the flight at coordinates BS 855355 and one aircraft received a hit. One of the escort aircraft, UH-1E damaged its tail rotor while attempting to pick up a wounded Australian Special Forces Advisor at coordinates BS 789419. The pilot of the lead aircraft was notified of the mishap and immediately flew into the zone, planning his approach to avoid small arms fire which was being received from coordinates BS 778424. The lead aircraft landed, picked up the UH-1E crew, the wounded Army advisor, another Army advisor, two ARVN troops and the machine guns from the downed aircraft. The uninjured advisor and the ARVN troops were brought to QUANG NGAI, the wounded advisor to "B" Med and the UH-1E crew was returned to KY HA.

Four HMM-364 aircraft supported the 4th Marines on a troop lift from QUANG NGAI to coordinates BT 565042.

Five HMM-364 aircraft, each on separate flights, escorted VMO-6 aircraft on aerial reconnaissance flights of the TAOR in support of the 4th Marines.

At 1235 two VMO-6 Hueys escorted a flight of UH-34D's on an ARVN lift from QUANG NGAI to AN THO 36 miles south of CHU LAI. On the second flight into the LZ the flight encountered heavy enemy fire and one of the Hueys was hit with negligible skin damage resulting. The flight led by Major PURCELL took the enemy position under fire. On the third trip into the LZ the Klondike flight was requested to pick up a wounded Army advisor who had been

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laying in a ditch since the preceding day. The first approach into the zone was waved off due to enemy automatic weapons fire, but on the second pass the plane landed. Under heavy enemy fire, Captain PETTIGREW the Co-Pilot made his way to the casualty, carried him back to the plane and administered medical aid to him throughout the trip to "B" Med.

At 1700 two VMO-6 Hueys were scrambled on a false report of a downed helo. After becoming airborne, the flight was diverted to the AN THO area to pick up another wounded Army advisor. Upon landing in the zone the aircraft piloted by Major HARKEY and Co-Piloted by Colonel JOHNSON (CO MAG-36) was mobbed by PF and ARVN soldiers hysterically trying to evacuate the area. The pilot attempted to take off but the plane was too overloaded with men hanging onto the skids, and it settled to the ground with the tail rotor contacting a tree and disengaging from the aircraft. The plane became uncontrollable and violently contacted the ground. The crew was unharmed. After removing all weapons from the aircraft they made their way to a White Gold UH-34D piloted by Captain GLEASON, and under heavy enemy fire which had existed throughout the event, took off safely. During this time Major PURCELL's flight joined Major HARKEY's escort, Captain SHIELDS, and provided cover for the downed bird, returning and suppressing fire around and in the village of MY THUAN. The gunships left 10 buildings burning and destroyed.

5 Dec: A flight of HMM-362 aircraft spent the day attempting to place a security force around the crashed UH-1E which Colonel JOHNSON had been piloting when it went down the previous day. The Marine security force was finally landed at dusk.

Seven HMM-364 aircraft lifted a 7th Marine reaction force to coordinates BS 789419 to set up a perimeter defense around the UH-1E which was disabled on 4 Dec. The flight encountered small arms fire at coordinates BS 792419 and one of the aircraft received a hit.

Two HMM-364 aircraft in support of the 4th Marines, made an aerial reconnaissance flight of the area between coordinates BT 6403 and BS 5803.

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6 Dec: Ten HMM-364 aircraft lifted ARVN troops from coordinates BS 760430 to BS 785428 (the vicinity of the UH-1E which was disabled on 4 Dec.). The same flight retracted the 7th Marines reaction force which was inserted in the area on 5 Dec and returned them to coordinates BT 537075.

One HMM-364 aircraft and crew were maintained on a Condition 3 Standby to serve as an escort for VMO-6 Med Evac Standby aircraft. The aircraft and crew were scrambled for two Med Evac flights. One from BINH SON (BS 605918) to the ARVN Hospital at QUANG NGAI; and another from coordinates BS 577944 to "B" Med.

Two aircraft of HMM-364 in support of the 7th Marines made a reconnaissance insertion from coordinates BT 536023 to BS 3388. The same aircraft later in the day retracted the reconnaissance force and returned it to coordinates BT 536023.

Two HMM-364 aircraft on a Med Evac mission in support of "B" Med, carried eight U. S. Military WIA from "B" Med to the 8th Aerial Port at DANANG.

Two HMM-364 aircraft on a routine resupply mission in support of the 7th Marines encountered small arms fire from coordinates BT 536938. Not a hit was received.

Two HMM-364 aircraft in support of the 4th Marines carried a Vietnamese civilian KIA from coordinates BT 6504 to "B" Med.

At 0314 the VMO-6 Med Evac crew launched to DONG QUONG, 38 miles south of CHU LAI. The flight was led by Captain PERRYMAN and Lt OVERFIELD, and chased by Captain WRIGHT and Lt BRACHA. Heavy .30 and .50 caliber machine gun, as well as small arms fire was received throughout the area. However, Captain PERRYMAN succeeded in evacuating four U. S. WIA's. Captain WRIGHT's aircraft took one .50 caliber hit with minor damage resulting.

7 Dec: Major J. W. PERSONS of HMM-362 led a flight of seven UH-34D's from QUANG TIN to HIEP DUC, carrying 24,250 pounds of cargo and 115 passengers.

Six HMM-364 aircraft supported ARVN forces on a resupply mission from DANANG to QUE SON (BT 045350).

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Six HMM-364 aircraft supported ARVN forces on a troop lift/resupply mission from QUANG NGAI to NUI DOU (BS 874325).

Five HMM-364 aircraft, each on separate flights, escorted VMO-6 aircraft on aerial reconnaissance flights of the TAOR in support of the 4th Marines.

A VMO-6 Huey was climbing out from a low pass after investigating a new trench on an island 5 miles north of KY HA; Lt AVILLO, the AO was shot in the leg.

LtCol ZITNIK, CO, VMO-6 led a flight of three Hueys conducting a tour of the CHU LAI Enclave for LtGen KRULAK and his party.

8 Dec: Six HMM-364 aircraft and flight crews were maintained on a Condition 3 Standby from 0700 to 1800 and on a Condition 4 Standby from 1800 to 090700 Dec. The Condition 3 Standby was scrambled for an emergency troop lift of a 7th Marine force located at QUANG TIN (BT 292229). This emergency lift was to have been, in effect, an unscheduled preliminary to Operation "Harvest Moon". Upon arrival at QUANG TIN, the six aircraft were shut down in anticipation of a briefing by someone in command. After a three hour delay, HMM-362 and MAG-16 arrived at QUANG TIN. Later a U.S.A Colonel arrived who assumed command of all the MAG-16 and MAG-36 aircraft at QUANG TIN and led them as a flight on an ARVN troop lift from QUANG TIN to coordinates BT 122355. Prior to take off, a two minute briefing was held by the Colonel for all aviators. The flight encountered enemy small arms fire at coordinates BT 110360 on three occasions, but no hits were received.

One HMM-364 aircraft, participating in a three aircraft administrative flight from DANANG to CHU LAI, suffered an engine failure at coordinates BT 225550. The pilot made an autorotation into the surf. Upon landing, large waves tipped the aircraft forward into an inverted position. All four crewmembers were seen exiting the downed aircraft by one of the pilots of the other aircraft. These aircraft proceeded to rescue the two pilots first because they were in the heaviest surf. The lead aircraft by this time was in a position to rescue the crew chief (the gunner was not seen again

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after his exit from the aircraft), but was unable to lift the man out of the water due to an inoperative rescue hoist. In a heroic, desperate and successful attempt to save the man, the gunner in the aircraft hung by his legs from the landing gear and held the man partially out of the water until the wing aircraft was in position for a hoist pick up. As the hoist was being commenced by the other aircraft, the rescue sling broke. The man was able to hold fast to the sling while the pilot air taxied to the beach. Both aircraft landed on the beach and the crew chief was rescued from the surf and placed aboard the lead aircraft. During this entire rescue operation, enemy small arms fire was received from a nearby tree line. The pilot and the crew chief of the lead aircraft removed its mounted M-60 machine guns, set them up on the beach and returned the fire. The pilot of the wing aircraft turned its tail toward the tree line and thus allowed both his crew chief and gunner to utilize their M-60's for return fire without removing them from the aircraft. After the enemy fire was suppressed, both aircraft proceeded to search for the lost gunner. However, a low fuel state forced them to return to KY HA with negative results. Two aircraft committed to MAG-12 for SAR duty were later utilized to search for the gunner but were forced to abandon the search when intense enemy small arms fire was again encountered. One of the aircraft received a hit as a result of this fire.

The HMM-364 SAR aircraft were again utilized when a C-130 crashed at night on the CHU LAI Airstrip. Two survivors, a Vietnamese civilian and a U. S. Marine were brought from the crash site to "B" Med.

VMO-6 was first involved in Operation "Harvest Moon" on 8 December when a convoy escort was provided to recon Highway #1 and to escort a convoy enroute to TAM KY. At 1445, a flight of two armed Hueys were launched as helo escort on an emergency troop insertion to a LZ at BT 122351 for the purpose of providing reinforcements for the ARVN Rangers who had been badly hit.

9 Dec: Operation Harvest Moon commenced with a 40 plane air-lift assault, carrying 2/7 to BT 015350. The lift led by Major W. R. SMITH of HMM-362 and a flight of 14 aircraft. Light fire was received in the zone, but no aircraft were hit. YL-40 lost its tail rotor in

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the landing zone, but no injuries were suffered. The squadron's field maintenance crew was dispatched to disassemble the aircraft after it was determined to be irreparable, in preparation for a CH-37 to lift it from the zone. A platoon was inserted to protect the aircraft overnight.

Fourteen HMM-364 aircraft participated in Operation "Harvest Moon" on a Strike/Troop lift of a 7th Marines force from QUANG TIN (BT 292229) to coordinates BT 017325. Small arms fire was encountered in the landing zone. No hits were received.

Two HMM-364 aircraft conducted a search for the gunner who was presumed drowned on 8 December at coordinates BT 225550, with negative results.

Two HMM-364 aircraft committed to MAG-12 for SAR duty were utilized to carry a MAG-12 pilot, who had ejected from his aircraft, from CHU LAI to "B" Med.

A flight of two armed Hueys of VMO-6, led by Major PURCELL escorted a multitude of UH-34D's into LZ's located at BT 015323 and BT 145305 when automatic weapons fire was received from BT 001279. OXWOOD aircraft were called in immediately with napalm and the hostile fire was silenced. Major PRESSON, leading another flight of Hueys on an escort mission from QUANG TIN, was called on to deliver suppressive fire on entry into two LZ's located at BT 015323 and BT 145305. The UH-34D's recorded zero hits on this flight. LtCol ZITNIK picked up Pinchhitter 6 and escorted a truck convoy up Route 1 with Pinchhitter 6 acting as Convoy Commander. The flight spent more than 13 hours over convoys along Route 1 this day.

10 Dec: Captain J. J. MCMENAMIN OF HMM-362 carried the engine of YL-40 externally to KY HA and the maintenance crew continued stripping the aircraft. No CH-37 was available to lift the fuselage, so late in the day, the security force was withdrawn inasmuch as their position was considered untenable for another night.

Eight HMM-364 aircraft and two Condition 3 Standby aircraft departed KY HA for LZ OAK (BT 154450) to participate in Operation "Harvest Moon". At LZ OAK, the flight was divided into a flight of six aircraft

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and a division of four aircraft. The six aircraft flight flew an emergency resupply mission from LZ OAK TO coordinates BT 113317 and then joined MAG-16 aircraft on a Strike/Troop lift from the USS Valley Forge (located offshore about 15 miles southeast of LZ OAK) to coordinates BT 081229. Intense enemy small arms fire was encountered on the first lift into the LZ and four out of the six aircraft received hits. There were no injuries to the crew members or the troops. Two of the aircraft which were hit were consequently disabled and were forced to shut down for repairs (one aircraft at LZ OAK and the other on the USS Valley Forge). The four remaining aircraft in the flight continued in the lift without further incident and upon completion, carried a Marine WIA from coordinates BT 055297 to the USS Valley Forge; a Marine WIA from BT 048299 to the USS Valley Forge; and a wounded Vietnamese civilian from BT 048299 to LZ OAK.

The four HMM-364 aircraft division from the original flight made resupply flights from HOI AN to DIA LOC (AT 915581) and from coordinates AT 983743 to QUE SON (BT 043350). Enemy small arms fire was encountered at DIA LOC. No hits were received. The division was also utilized to carry three Marine WIA from LZ OAK to "C" Med at DANANG.

One HMM-364 aircraft escorted a VMO-6 aircraft on an aerial reconnaissance flight of the TAOR. This flight was made in support of the 4th Marines.

One HMM-364 aircraft escorted a VMO-6 aircraft on a Med Evac of a Marine WIA from coordinates BT 398050 to "B" Med.

Convoy escort was also provided on the morning of 10 December when a flight of two VMO-6 Hueys were once again provided as Command Ships for Murphy 6 (Pinchhitter 6). Two additional Hueys were also assigned to the DASC for helo escort missions throughout the day. Major PURCELL with 1stLt INGOLDSTAD as co-pilot, and Captain PETTIGREW with 1stLt BRACHA as co-pilot, escorted UH-34D's landing the SLF into a LZ located at BT 074293. After the first wave was landed, Colonel YUNCH, who was acting as TAC(A) was wounded and the TAC(A) was switched to Major PURCELL. Heavy automatic weapons fire and mortars were being received by the ground

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unit and at this time, Major PURCELL shifted the LZ to BT 046298 in an attempt to prevent further casualties. VA/VF aircraft were called in on enemy positions for approximately four hours. During one period of about an hour, no VA/VF aircraft were available and the only CAS the ground units had were UH-1E gunships. The Hueys, directed by Major PURCELL, made repeated runs at the enemy positions and a secondary explosion on a mortar's position was observed following an attack by one of the Hueys. When all ordnance was expended, Major PURCELL kept the Hueys on station in gunnery runs with the gunners firing from the internal guns only. Besides controlling the air portion of the operation, Major PURCELL was in constant contact with the ground units, guiding the Marines from the new LZ to those that were pinned down in the first LZ. After a full day's work, the flight then picked up Colonel PETROSS and performed a route recon. The flight then returned to KY HA that night under instrument conditions.

11 Dec: LtCol J. ALDWORTH, CO HMM-362 returned to KY HA after being forced by bad weather to spend the night at the Harvest Moon Command Post with his flight of six UH-34D aircraft.

Four HMM-364 aircraft participated in Operation Harvest Moon performing the following missions: A Med Evac of six Marine WIA from the USS Valley Forge to "B" Med; a lift of three Vietnamese civilians from coordinates BT 082294 to LZ OAK; a lift of three VC prisoners from coordinates AT 078301 to QUE SON (BT 043350); a Med Evac of eight Marine WIA from coordinates Bt 6535 to the USS Valley Forge; a lift of twenty two VC prisoners from coordinates BT 105143 to LZ OAK; a resupply from LZ OAK to coordinates BT 083313; a resupply from LZ OAK to coordinates BT 077301; and a convoy escort from LZ OAK to coordinates AT 995720.

Four HMM-364 aircraft participated in Operation Harvest Moon by remaining overnight in LZ OAK and performing the following missions on the night of 11 December and the morning of 12 December: A resupply from LZ OAK to coordinates BT 082298; and a Med Evac of two Marine WIA from coordinates BT 082298 to LZ OAK. While enroute to LZ OAK from KY HA, the flight encountered .50 caliber automatic weapons fire at coordinates BT 263398. No hits were received.

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A total of eight VMO-6 Hueys participated in Harvest Moon. A flight of two Hueys was furnished for Colonel PETROSS's use, another flight for helo escort, a third flight acted as Command Ship for BGen PLATT and a fourth flight was sent to LZ OAK for night escort missions.

12 Dec: A flight of twelve HMM-362 aircraft, led by Major W. R. SMITH, participated in a "Harvest Moon" airlift assault from BT 085326 to BT 145297, a distance of about three miles. In all, 40 helicopters were involved, and the entire operation was conducted in Marginal IFR weather. The troops were not ready to be picked up, the radio traffic was so heavy as to be a serious hindrance to the mission and the weather was so bad that it was indeed a minor miracle to believe that all squadron aircraft returned safely. At dusk, YL-45 suffered an engine failure approximately five miles north of KY HA, and an emergency landing was made on the beach. Six helicopters were airborne within twenty minutes to carry in a reactionary platoon to provide security. However the aircraft were required to wait 30 minutes for the troops, and the Viet Cong blew up YL-45 as the security force was being landed. The aircraft was a total loss.

Six HMM-364 aircraft were maintained on a Condition 3 Standby for utilization in Operation Harvest Moon. The aircraft were scrambled and performed the following missions: A troop lift from LZ OAK to coordinates BT 083268; a reconnaissance insertion from QUE SON (BT 043350) to coordinates BT 043350 to coordinates BT 083326; and a troop lift from coordinates BT 083336 to BT 077301. The flight encountered enemy small arms fire at coordinates BT 1745. No hits received.

Four HMM-364 aircraft participated in Operation Harvest Moon performing the following missions: A troop lift from LZ OAK to coordinates BT 043342, BT 082298, BT 075305 and BT 069305; a resupply from LZ OAK to QUE SON (BT 043350); a Med Evac of a sick Marine from coordinates BT 070295 to LZ OAK; and a troop lift from coordinates BT 082298 to BT 072916. The flight encountered enemy small arms fire at coordinates BT 122348, BT 305105 and BT 038368. No hits were received.

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Three HMM-364 aircraft supported the 7th Marines on a reconnaissance insertion from coordinates BT 552052 to BT 498997. The same flight later retracted the reconnaissance unit from coordinates BT 456022 and returned them to BT 552051.

Two aircraft of HMM-364 supported the 4th Marines by making an aerial reconnaissance flight of the area in the vicinity of coordinates BT 402089.

One HMM-364 aircraft escorted a VMO-6 aircraft on an aerial reconnaissance flight of the TAOR. This flight was made in support of the 4th Marines.

VMO-6 provided two Hueys as Command Ships for Gen PLATT and this flight, led by Major PRESSON, performed various missions throughout the day, such as emergency resupply, transfer of POW's, Med Evac, etc.. Two more Hueys were also provided for convoy escort from LZ ROBIN to LZ OAK. This flight logged 15.5 hours prior to leaving the convoy at LZ OAK. Another flight of Hueys, led by Major KOHANOWICH was assigned helo escort missions periodically throughout the day. Hostile fire was received around most of the LZ's that day and the Hueys were called on for suppressive fire in every LZ.

- 13 Dec: YL-54 of HMM-362 participating in an operation supporting Operation Harvest Moon was forced down in the battle area with a loss of transmission oil pressure. The field maintenance crew, working under sniper fire, enabled the aircraft to be flown out after a quick replacement of the transmission oil pump. However, in the process of recovering YL-54, YL-47 received a .50 caliber round in the magneto, causing an immediate engine failure and an emergency landing about one mile east of the Harvest Moon Command Post. Working again under sniper fire, the maintenance crew determined the problem and returned to YL-54 at the CP to remove its magneto in order to repair YL-47. When the maintenance crew returned to replace the magneto, the zone was under heavy fire from a nearby tree line. Supported by F4 and A4 strikes and UH-1E strafing, the crew fought off the enemy and was able to complete the necessary repairs. Captain D. L. CLASEN, still under heavy fire then started the aircraft, engaged the rotors, and flew it back to the CP. 1stLt WILLEUMIER picked up the maintenance

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crew, completing the successful operation with no casualties. YL-47 received approximately fifty hits from enemy small arms fire while it was being repaired. About this time, two Army CH-47 "Chinooks", borrowed from the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), became available for salvage operations. One was used to lift out YL-40, which had by then been mutilated by VC vandals, but was still somewhat intact.

Six HMM-364 aircraft participated in Operation Harvest Moon by lifting a 4th Marines reactionary force to coordinates BT 267385, the site of a downed HMM-362 aircraft. The reactionary force set up a perimeter defense around the aircraft. Later five aircraft lifted the above mentioned reactionary force from coordinates BT 267385 to BT 197467, the site of another downed HMM-362 aircraft. The reactionary force again set up a perimeter defense around the aircraft. Enemy small arms fire and mortars were encountered in an area immediately west of the zone located at BT 267385. No hits were received and return fire accounted for one VC KBA.

Three HMM-364 aircraft supporting the 4th Marines made a reconnaissance insertion from RLT-4 (BT 533095) to coordinates BT 381068. Enemy small arms fire was received from coordinates BT 385067 and BT 365066. No hits were received. While departing the LZ, the flight leader sighted a lost 4th Marines reconnaissance patrol. The flight retracted the patrol and returned them to RLT-4.

Two HMM-364 aircraft on a routine administrative flight in support of the 4th Marines, encountered enemy small arms fire one mile north of QUANG NGAI. No hits were received.

Four HMM-364 aircraft supported the ARVN forces on a resupply mission from HOI AN to THUONG DUC (ZC 145535). Intense enemy small arms fire was encountered at THUONG DUC, and though no hits were received, the flight leader was forced to discontinue the lift because of inadequate air cover.

Two HMM-364 aircraft participated in Operation Harvest Moon by remaining overnight at LZ OAK on a Med Evac Standby. The aircraft were utilized for an emergency

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resupply from LZ OAK to coordinates GC 245048 and for another emergency resupply from LZ OAK to GC 013277. Enemy small arms fire was encountered at coordinates GC 035245 and GC 055355. No hits were received.

Six HMM-364 aircraft were maintained on a Condition 3 Standby from 1130 to 1800 for utilization in Operation Harvest Moon. Two of the aircraft were scrambled and performed the following missions: A lift of eight VC prisoners from coordinates BT 140293 to LZ OAK; a troop lift/resupply from LZ OAK to coordinates BT 138286; a Med Evac of two Marine WIA from coordinates BT 096274 to LZ OAK; and a retraction of an ARVN reconnaissance force from coordinates BT 043350 to BT 100270.

Two VMO-6 Hueys were provided for BGen PLATT's use on this date again with the section flying a total of 16 hours. The helo escort aircraft on this day were led by Captain CONNER, and were called on to cover a downed UH-34D. Armed VC were observed approaching the aircraft and were quickly discouraged when a burst of M-60 fire delivered by Captain CONNER fell at their feet. When the reaction force was inserted at the downed UH-34D, automatic weapons fire was received along with mortars from a nearby village. The UH-1E's returned the fire and called in VA aircraft to help silence the enemy fire. The Village of AN THAN (1) BT 215460 was almost entirely destroyed by the confined air strikes. Two additional aircraft were sent to LZ OAK to assume Condition 3 Standby for the night.

14 Dec: All HMM-364 flights on this date were in support of Operation Harvest Moon.

Two HMM-364 aircraft performed the following missions: a lift of three newsmen from VIET AN (BT 020269) to LZ OAK; a resupply from LZ OAK to QUE SON (043350); a Med Evac of a Marine WIA from LZ OAK to "B" Med; and a lift of five ARVN interpreters from RLT-4 (BT 533095) to QUE SON.

Two HMM-364 aircraft performed the following missions: Resupplies from LZ OAK to coordinates BT 077276, AT 934835 and BT 128276; and a Med Evac of eight Marine WIA from LZ OAK to "B" Med.

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Two HMM-364 aircraft performed the following missions: A resupply from LZ OAK to coordinates GC 103277; a troop lift from coordinates GC 103277 to GC 099266; and a Med Evac of eleven Marine WIA from coordinates GC 103277 to LZ OAK. Enemy small arms fire was encountered at coordinates BT 119368. No hits were received.

Three HMM-364 aircraft performed the following missions: A resupply from LZ OAK to QUE SON (BT 043350); a troop lift/resupply from QUE SON to coordinates BT 018269; and a Med Evac of six Marine WIA from Landing Zone OAK to "B" Med.

Three aircraft of HMM-364 performed the following Missions: A resupply from LZ OAK to coordinates BT 077276; a resupply from LZ OAK to coordinates AT 934835; and a Med Evac of two Marine WIA from LZ OAK to "B" Med. The flight encountered enemy small arms fire at coordinates BT 077276 and one aircraft received a hit. There were no injuries to the crew members.

Two HMM-364 aircraft performed the following missions: A resupply from LZ OAK to coordinates BT 129286; a troop lift from LZ OAK to VIET AN (BT 018272); and a lift of five VC prisoners from coordinates BT 115270 to LZ OAK.

This was a relatively quiet day for VMO-6, but four Hueys were assigned missions as Command Ships and helo escorts.

15 Dec: All HMM-364 flights on this date were in support of Operation Harvest Moon except the MAG-12 SAR.

Two HMM-364 aircraft performed two resupply missions from LZ OAK to QUE SON (BT 034350). One of the aircraft experienced an engine failure and was forced to land at coordinates BT 092391. Two aircraft carrying a maintenance crew to the site of the downed aircraft encountered enemy small arms fire at coordinates BT 1331. No hits were received. The maintenance crew dismantled the downed aircraft in 3½ hours and a CH-37 lifted it to the LZ OAK.

Two HMM-364 aircraft flew a resupply mission from LZ OAK to coordinates BT 074244.

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Two HMM-364 aircraft flew a resupply mission from LZ OAK to coordinates BT 000230.

Two HMM-364 aircraft performed the following missions: A resupply from LZ OAK to QUE SON (BT 045350); a Med Evac of three ARVN WIA from LZ OAK to "B" Med.

Major PURCELL and Captain DOWNEY of VMO-6 piloted the Command Ships for BGen PLATT flying a total of 14 hours. The flight flew four ABC newsmen into the battle area, hauled C Rations and evacuated two U. S. WIA's. Captain SHIELDS led a flight of two to QUE SON and received fire enroute, however no hits were taken. This flight also provided transportation for BGen PLATT and evacuated two ARVN WIA's. Two Hueys were also provided for convoy escort. The flight escorted a convoy to LZ OAK and a convoy from LZ OAK to CHU LAI.

16 Dec: All HMM-364 flights, except MAG-12 SAR, on this date were in support of Operation Harvest Moon.

Two HMM-364 aircraft performed the following missions: A Med Evac of five Marine WIA from LZ OAK to "C" Med at DANANG; and a fire direction mission for VMO-6 aircraft. The flight leader directed the VMO-6 aircraft to a VC unit located at coordinates BT 119295.

Two HMM-364 aircraft performed the following missions: A troop/supply lift from QUE SON (BT 043350) to LZ OAK; and a Med Evac of one Marine WIA from LZ OAK to "C" Med at DANANG. Enemy small arms fire was encountered at coordinates BT 0534. No hits were received.

Two HMM-364 aircraft performed the following missions: A resupply from coordinates BT 130286 to BT 135285 and BT 137275; a lift on one VC prisoner and assorted VC documents from coordinates BT 130286 to LZ OAK. Enemy .50 caliber automatic weapons fire was encountered at coordinates BT 119352. No hits were received.

Two HMM-364 aircraft participated in a troop/supply lift from coordinates BT 150455 to BT 039328. Enemy small arms fire (automatic) was encountered at coordinates BT 088388. No hits were received.

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Two HMM-364 aircraft remained overnight at LZ OAK on SAR Standby. These aircraft were utilized on 17 Dec for a resupply mission from LZ OAK to QUE SON (BT 045350).

Captain SHIELDS of VMO-6 piloted the Command Ship for BGen PLATT and was escorted by Lieutenants BUCHANAN and BRACHA. The flight picked up BGen PLATT and his battalion commanders and made recon flights of the area. The wingman received two hits when enemy fire was encountered at BT 117226. The fire was returned and no damage assessments made. Two med evac missions were accomplished by the flight during the day. The second evac mission was an emergency evacuation of 11 WIA's. 14 UH-34D's were called in by Captain SHIELDS to make the pick up. On arrival at the scene, a fire fight was in progress and the helos had to wait twenty minutes before the zone was secure enough to get the aircraft in. Captain SHIELDS wingman received his third hit while escorting the aircraft in. After the evacuees had been dropped at LZ OAK, Captain SHIELDS then led a flight of UH-34D's on a retraction of a company of 2/1. The flight then directed, and escorted, a resupply mission for 2/7.

17 Dec: All HMM-364 flights, except SAR at MAG-12, on this date were in support of Operation Harvest Moon.

Two HMM-364 aircraft performed the following missions: A resupply from LZ OAK to coordinates BT 138277; a Med Evac of five Marine WIA from coordinates BT 132271 to LZ OAK; and a Med Evac of thirteen Marine WIA from LZ OAK to "C" Med at DANANG.

Two HMM-364 aircraft performed the following missions: A resupply from LZ OAK to coordinates BT 138277; a Med Evac of nine Marine WIA from coordinates BT 130272 to LZ OAK; a Med Evac of fourteen Marine WIA from coordinates BT 130272 to LZ OAK; a resupply from LZ OAK to coordinates BT 130272; and a Med Evac of nine Marine WIA from coordinates BT 130272 to LZ OAK. Enemy small arms fire was encountered at coordinates BT 4315. No hits were received.

At 1055 Captain SHIELDS of VMO-6 led the evac crew to BATO. The weather conditions were most severe, heavy rains, 30-40 knot winds, and a ceiling varying between 1000 and 200 feet. At one time the flight received about 20 rounds of small arms fire, but no hits were taken. One ARVN and three Marines were evacuated to QUANG NGAI Hospital and "B" Med respectively.

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18 Dec: Major PURCELL led a flight of two VMO-6 Hueys that had been furnished for BGen PLATT's use. Major PURCELL organized and acted at TAC(A) for helo retraction of Hotel Company 2/7. The flight then resupplied the company with "C" rations and batteries and made numerous Med Evacs for 2/1. Major PURCELL then organized an emergency lift to 2/7 when that unit was ambushed by the VC between BT 212224 and BT 219225. The aircraft were fired upon in this area, nevertheless, Major PURCELL continued to direct the emergency re-supply lift, marked the LZ for Med Evacs, picked up eleven WIA's himself and then detached his wingman, Lt SHOEMAKER to a VMO-2 flight to escort the UH-34D's into the LZ. Lt SHOEMAKER also provided cover for LZ OAK when the VC fired on the LSA. The flight then joined with another VMO-6 aircraft and made a road recon for a truck convoy enroute to DANANG. Two additional Hueys were also furnished for convoy cover throughout the day. For the duration of the operation, VMO-6 continued to furnish aircraft for the Command Ships and convoy cover with no unusual activity occurring, however, one note of interest did occur. Captain PERRYMAN launched with a flight of two at 1935 on the night of 19 December, and proceeded to LZ OAK, with the help of MACS-7, under night actual instrument conditions. The flight was uneventful, as VFR weather was encountered just prior to reaching their destination.

19 Dec: All HMM-364 flights of any significance on this date were insupport of Operation Harvest Moon.

Two HMM-364 aircraft performed the following missions: A lift of artillery from QUE SON to LZ OAK; a lift of radio equipment to coordinates BT 218226 and a lift of captured VC arms from BT 218226 to LZ OAK; a lift of seven ARVN troops from QUE SON to LZ OAK; and a Med Evac on nine Marine WIA from coordinates BT 218226 to LZ OAK. Enemy small arms fire was encountered at coordinates BT 218205 and BT 222240. One aircraft received a hit from the fire at coordinates BT 218205. There were no injuries to the crew members.

Two HMM-364 aircraft performed the following missions: A troop/supply retraction from QUE SON to LZ OAK; and a Med Evac of fourteen Marines suffering from immersion foot to the 2/7 Command Post.

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Two HMM-364 aircraft remained overnight at LZ OAK for SAR Standby. These aircraft were utilized on 20 Dec, for a lift of supplies from LZ OAK to coordinates BT 525055, and a Med Evac of a Marine WIA from LZ OAK to "C" Med at DANANG.

Two HMM-364 aircraft performed the following missions: A troop retraction from LZ OAK to coordinates BT 517041; a troop retraction from QUE SON to LZ OAK; and a lift of bridge beams and engineers from LZ OAK to coordinates BT 260255. Enemy small arms fire was encountered at coordinates BT 260255. No hits were received.

20 Dec: Operation Harvest Moon was complete, as far as HMM-362's participation was concerned. HMM-362 flew 445.9 hours, 1359 sorties and carried 228,575 pounds of cargo, 3338 passengers and 76 Med Evacs during the operation. The last flight was completed in a three week series of missile range sweeps and drone recoveries in support of the 1st LAAM Bn. 1stLt's R. A. MILLER and F. VISCONTI, and Cpl's T. E. DOUGLAS and V. J. PIRKER were transferred by Service Record to Missing and Captured Persons Unit, Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps. Their aircraft has been missing since 22 November 1965.

Two HMM-364 aircraft supported Operation Harvest Moon by escorting a convoy from coordinates BT 2333 to DANANG.

Two HMM-364 aircraft carried three Marine WIA from coordinates BT 620008 to "B" Med.

One HMM-364 aircraft escorted a VMO-6 aircraft on a VIP flight within the TAOR.

LtCol ZITNIK, VMO-6 piloted Congressman RESNIK and BGen PLATT on a tour of the CHU LAI enclave.

21 Dec: Two HMM-364 aircraft supported the 4th Marines by making an aerial reconnaissance flight of the TAOR. Midway through the flight, the aircraft were diverted to pick up a VC prisoner and documents from coordinates BS 505958 and deliver them to LZ ROBIN (BT 536023). The aircraft then returned to the original reconnaissance mission and completed it.

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Two HMM-364 aircraft supported the 4th Marines by making an aerial reconnaissance flight of the TAOR.

Two HMM-364 aircraft supported the 4th Marines on a troop lift/resupply from coordinates BT 537075 to BT 455042.

Two HMM-364 aircraft supported the 4th Marines by making an aerial reconnaissance flight of the TAOR.

Two HMM-364 aircraft supported the 4th Marines by making an aerial reconnaissance flight of the TAOR. Midway through the flight, the aircraft were diverted to pick up a Marine WIA from coordinates BT 612061 and deliver him to "B" Med. The aircraft then returned to the original mission and completed it.

22 Dec: HMM-362 received three UH-34D's from HMM-163.

Two HMM-364 aircraft carried Special Forces KIA from coordinates BS 606322 to "B" Med.

Two aircraft of HMM-364 supported the 4th Marines by carrying sixteen VC prisoners from coordinates BT 532095 to QUANG NGAI.

One HMM-364 aircraft on a routine resupply flight in support of the 4th Marines, carried a Marine WIA from coordinates BT 511125 to "B" Med.

One HMM-364 aircraft escorted a VMO-6 aircraft on an aerial reconnaissance flight of the TAOR in support of the 4th Marines.

Two HMM-364 aircraft supported the 7th Marines by delivering a VC prisoner from coordinates BS 490590 to BT 536023.

23 Dec: Two HMM-364 aircraft supported the 4th Marines by making an aerial reconnaissance flight of the TAOR. The lead aircraft also served to direct MAG-12 aircraft on an air strike at coordinates BS 710862.

Two HMM-364 aircraft supported the 7th Marines by making an aerial reconnaissance flight of their various outposts.

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Two HMM-364 aircraft supported the 7th Marines on a troop retraction from coordinates BS 454946 to LZ QUAIL.

One HMM-364 aircraft escorted a VMO-6 aircraft on an aerial reconnaissance flight of the TAOR in support of the 4th Marines. Enemy small arms fire was encountered at coordinates BT 3108. No hits were received.

LtCol ZITNIK of VMO-6 led a flight of VIP aircraft to DANANG and picked up RAdm KELLY. The Admiral and his party were dropped at MAG-12 helo pad, then taken back to DANANG later in the day.

24 Dec: A flight of four HMM-362 aircraft received fire from a sampan at BT 480180. An air burst was observed, but no hits were received. YL-51 was hit and forced down by six rounds of small arms fire at BT 620005. No injuries were suffered and the aircraft was recovered.

Six HMM-364 aircraft and flight crews were maintained on a Condition 3 Standby from 1300 to 1600.

25 Dec: A flight of two HMM-362 Ugly Angels carried hot chow, mail and gifts from HMM-362 to the Marines at the Hill 76 outpost. The squadron flew 144 sorties this date, including 15 Med Evacs and much hot chow to the outposts.

Two HMM-364 aircraft supported the U. S. Army Special Forces on an Administrative/Resupply mission from TAM KY to THANG BIN (BT 175420). Small arms fire was encountered at coordinates BT 375165. No hits were received.

One VMO-6 Huey took BGen PLATT on a Christmas visit to all the outposts in the CHU LAI enclave. The aircraft later took Francis Cardinal SPELLMAN from MAG-12 To "B" Med. At 1400 a flight took 3 hits while performing a visual recon mission. Major LUCKETT the AO and Cpl AMESQUITA the gunner were taken to "B" Med where they were treated for minor shrapnel injuries.

26 Dec: At 0855 a VMO-6 Huey was provided for Congressman McGRATH for a tour of the CHU LAI enclave.

27 Dec: All VMO-6 aircraft were "downed" because a portion of the transmission on one of the aircraft was found to be broken.

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LtCol J. ALDWORTH of HMM-362 led a flight of sixteen aircraft into two landing zones near BINH SON on an airlift attack. Although small arms and mortar fire were received in one of the zones, no casualties were received and the mission was completed. For this operation, a feint toward another zone was utilized to confuse the enemy. This is the first time this squadron has used such a tactic.

Two HMM-364 aircraft supported the 7th Marines on a troop lift/resupply from LZ BOECAT (BT 565042) to coordinates BT 624991.

Two HMM-364 aircraft supported the 7th Marines by carrying 27 VC prisoners from coordinates BS 579918 to BT 558048. The same aircraft also carried a sick Marine from LZ ROBIN (BT 536023) to "B" Med.

Six HMM-364 aircraft supported ARVN forces and the 7th Marines on a lift of ARVN troops and 7th Marine advisors from coordinates BT 558048 to BS 809379. Small arms fire was encountered enroute to and in the approach to the landing zones. One aircraft received a hit. There were no injuries to the crew members or the troops.

Six HMM-364 aircraft supported ARVN forces on a troop lift from QANG NGAI to coordinates BS 809379. Small arms fire was encountered at coordinates BS 769466. No hits were received.

Two aircraft of HMM-364 joined with HMM-362 aircraft on a 7th Marine troop lift from LZ ROBIN to coordinates BS 558919.

Three HMM-364 aircraft supported ARVN forces on a troop lift/resupply from QUANG TIN to coordinates BT 328082 and BT 072061. Small arms fire was encountered at coordinates BT 328015 and one aircraft received a hit. There were no injuries to the crewmembers.

28 Dec: Six HMM-364 aircraft and flight crews were maintained on a Condition 3 Standby, from 0700 to 1800 and on a Condition 4 Standby from 1800 to 290700 Dec. Two of the Condition 3 Standby aircraft were utilized for

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Med Evac Standby. The Med Evac aircraft were utilized to support the 7th Marines by carrying two Marine WIA from coordinates BS 520941 to "B" Med. Enemy small arms fire was encountered in the pick up zone. No hits were received. One of the Condition 4 Standby aircraft was utilized for Med Evac Standby at the VMO-6 line. This aircraft and a VMO-6 "Gunship" were scrambled to support the 7th Marines by carrying a Marine WIA from coordinates BS 503977 to "B" Med.

Two HMM-364 aircraft supported the 4th Marines by making an aerial reconnaissance of the TAOR.

Two aircraft supported the 4th Marines (HMM-364) by making an aerial reconnaissance flight of the TAOR. Enemy small arms fire was encountered at coordinates BS 640960. No hits were received.

Two HMM-364 aircraft supported the 7th Marines on a routine administrative flight from coordinates BT 529087 to BT 311218. Enemy fire (small arms) was encountered at coordinates BT 323233. No hits were received.

The VMO-6 maintenance crew worked most of the night to bring the planes back to an "up" status. Two planes were launched at 1000 to keep the bad guys away from the BOB HOPE show while "Operation Big Cheer" was being conducted. The flight returned at 1350 and evidently did a splendid job, because it was promptly launched to DANANG to cover the same show in that area.

One VMO-6 Huey provided transportation for Senator Stuart SYMINGTON in the DANANG area.

29 Dec: Six HMM-362 aircraft resupplied MINH LONG and AN HOA with 17,300 pounds of cargo from QUANG NAI. Fire was received and returned at BS 620535. Approximately 25% of the squadron attended the fabulous BOB HOPE show at CHU LAI.

Six HMM-364 aircraft and flight crews were maintained on a Condition 4 Standby from 0700 to 300700 Dec. One of the aircraft was utilized for Med Evac Standby at the VMO-6 line. This aircraft and a VMO-6 Gunship were scrambled to support the 7th Marines on a night Med Evac of six Marine WIA from coordinates BS 508926 to "B" Med.

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Five HMM-364 aircraft supported the ARVN forces on a resupply from QUANG NGAI to coordinates BS 526503. Intense enemy .50 caliber and small arms fire was encountered at the landing zone and the lead aircraft was hit by a .30 caliber round. There were no injuries to the crewmembers. A support aircraft from MAG-12 was shot down while making a napalm drop on the enemy positions. The flight leader discontinued the lift at this point and spread his flight into a scouting line to search for the pilot of the MAG-12 aircraft. The search produced negative results.

Two HMM-364 aircraft supported the 4th Marines by carrying four VC prisoners from coordinates BT 509941 to BT 535025.

Four HMM-364 aircraft supported the 4th and 7th Marines by carrying fifty-three VC prisoners from the CHU LAI prisoner compound and LZ ROBIN to QUANG NGAI. Two of the aircraft were later utilized to make an aerial reconnaissance flight of the area in the vicinity of coordinates BT 435065, in support of the 4th Marines. Enemy small arms fire was encountered in this area. No hits were received.

Two aircraft of HMM-364 supported ARVN forces on a troop lift/resupply mission from QUANG NGAI to DUC PHUO (BS 845395).

30 Dec: The HMM-362 SAR crew at CHU LAI launched to the site of a crashed A4 northeast of QUANG NGAI at dusk. No sign of a parachute or the pilot was found.

Two HMM-364 aircraft supported the 7th Marines by carrying two VC prisoners from coordinates BS 528940 to LZ ROBIN.

Two HMM-364 aircraft supported the 7th Marines by carrying three VC prisoners from the CHU LAI prisoners compound to BING SON and four VC prisoners to QUANG NGAI.

Two HMM-364 aircraft supported the 7th Marines by carrying a Marine KIA from coordinates BS 624991 to "B" Med.

31 Dec: 12 HMM-364 aircraft supported the 7th Marines on a troop retraction from coordinates BS 553903 to LZ ROBIN.

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PART IV

1. Supporting Documents (Newspaper Clippings)

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Enclosure (4)

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STAND OFF — While a crewman dismantles the helicopter's machineguns to be used for perimeter defense, Cpl. Kenneth A. Smith begins to climb up to the engine to find out what caused the crash landing. A little later, two armed groups ringed the plane. They were identified as Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) soldiers only after long minutes of a stand off. The chopper was repaired and flown back to Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron (HMM)-362, at Chu Lai, the next day.

Marines and ARVN Have Anxious Moments

By: Sgt. C. B. Simmons

It was a suspenseful day for Cpl. Kenneth A. Smith. First, there were the agonizing minutes while his helicopter was crash landing. Then, a machinegun stand-off with an unidentified, but armed, force of infantrymen.

It began with the pungent smell of burning air as Smith's Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron (HMM)-362 plane was heading for an assault landing zone. The engine was on fire; black, hot smoke billowing from the cowlings.

The Massillon, Ohio, helicopter braced his eight passengers for a crash, as the pilot flipped into auto-rotate (switching into neutral so rotor blades can swing freely, using the air as a cushion during the fall). Rapidly at first, then more slowly as the rotors bit air, the 'copter tumbled to the ground.

It was unknown countryside, somewhere near Trach Tru, the outpost near Quang Ngai that was under Viet Cong attack. The Marines being carried by the HMM-362 chopper were part of the reinforcements.

The descent put out the fire, but the threat of uncleared territory galvanized the men even before the plane fully stopped. The infantry Marines leaped out, fanning both sides of the zone with defensive positions. Smith and his assistant grappled the 'copter's machineguns off their mounts and added them to the perimeter. Pilot and co-pilot

scrambled from the cockpit and manned the two guns as Smith pulled himself up to the engine platform and opened the engine hood.

The crew chief found that a new transmission was needed, which meant the aircraft couldn't move until parts were flown in, when he heard:

"There they are."
About 30 men were standing on a ridgeline, just within rifle range, to the right. They stood like the Indian tribe in a Western, gazing down at the Marines. Smith made the 10-foot drop to the ground in one motion, his legs churning for the defense perimeter even before his body hit.

Every Marine around the helicopter had a target in his weapon's sight. For 10 minutes, it was a stand-off. Then, one of the infantry Marines who had maneuvered closer to the groups identified them as Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) soldiers.

Tension eased out of the crash zone like water draining from a dam. The soldiers, it turned out later, wouldn't come closer until they'd been identified by the Marines. Professionals, they knew what rapid movements under such circumstances would trigger.

Normally, it takes three days to repair the type of damage the 'copter sustained. But, even with parts and tools being airlifted, the bird was back at Ky Ha, its home base, 14 days later.

Appendix 1 to
Enclosure (4)

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30:LPE:ran

'Copter Groups Work Together

There are two Marine helicopter groups (MAGs) in the Republic of Vietnam; MAG-16 at the Marble Mountain Air Facility, Da Nang, and MAG-36, flying from the Ky Ha heli-pad, Chu Lai. Their flight areas sometimes entwine and, often, they fly a combined mission.

Recently, a MAG-16 helicopter roared into Ky Ha, its crew chief leaping from the side hatch even before the plane stopped rolling. He shouted, "one of our birds is down in the zone!"

Even as he spoke, radio confirmation was coming from Da Nang: "Bird down. Republic of Vietnam Special Forces standing by to be picked up."

Running feet clanged steel matting as MAG-36 flight crews headed for their 'copters.

The downed bird had been helicopter reinforcements to Hiep Duc, a Republic of Vietnam outpost 35 miles northwest of Chu Lai. Trailing smoke, it chugged to Tin Phouc, four miles from the besieged outpost, before it had to set down, or crash. Its crew and armament were removed by a companion 'copter.

The race was to get to it before the Viet Cong did.

Capt. Larry L. Bagwell (Oklahoma City, Okla.), had his flight section in the air and on the way to Da Nang, 50 miles to the north, almost immediately. The MAG-36 choppers loaded 40 of the Vietnamese Special Forces and just as quickly flew them back to Tin Phouc.

The first leg of the race was won. The crippled 'copter now infantry protection.

Hardly without stopping, Capt. Bagwell flew to the government stronghold of Quant Tin, 20 miles away, and set down long enough to interview the rescued crew. They told him just what would be needed to repair the troop carrier.

He headed for Da Nang again, to be sure a maintenance crew with the proper tools got to the site. But, enroute, Capt. Bagwell passed a two MAG-16 maintenance 'copters, already heading for the set-down zone. The captain practically pivoted his bird, caught up and, by radio, passed on repair tips which would cut time considerably once the maintenance men got to the cripple.

Round two successful. The 'copter would be repaired.

Capt. Bagwell, however, never saw the successful finish of the rescue. As soon as he'd assured the 'copter's recovery, he flew to the MAG-16 armada which was still airlifting troops into Hiep Duc and filled in for the lost

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Appendix 2 to
Enclosure (4)



30: LPE: ran

ACROSS AND ABOVE—While an amphibious tractor hits the beach, a Marine Aircraft Group (MAG)-36 helicopter lifts off with assault forces to be carried inland. Three MAG-36 squadrons recently supported the first U.S. Marine/Republic of Vietnam Marine operation 20 miles north of Chu Lai.

'Copters on Job Twice As Long

The average search-and-clear operation takes three days, while riflemen sweep through a given area to hopefully engage the Viet Cong or, barring a fight, neutralize whatever military fortifications the VC might have erected.

The helicopters which support them fly four times as long. As a case in point, take the landing 20 miles north of here which three squadrons of Marine Aircraft Group (MAG)-36 supported.

It was history's first combined U.S. Marine-Republic of Vietnam Marine amphibious assault. Most of the initial action was amphibious, but once the forces were ashore, the 'copters hardly had a chance to touch ground.

First, more than 600 Vietnamese Marines were relocated from the landing beaches to a blocking position against which the inland-thrusting U.S. Marines could push the enemy. The troop lift was made with aircraft from Marine Medium Helicopter Squadrons (HMM)-362 and -364.

Then, 37 Viet Cong suspects were ferried to an interrogation point.

Before this was finished, ships offshore were radioing that they had emergency resupplies for the attacking Marines. A flight of HMM-362 helos flew the ammo and supplies in to a landing zone near the rifleman.

Late the second day the 'copters became messengers, delivering runners from small, heavily engaged units which were without communications to command posts, then back.

Throughout the three days, some missions were constant. The hauling of rations, water and ammunition; the continual lifting of troops for replacement or repositioning as the sweep uncovered new flanks; the recovery of wounded men or prisoner of war and the ever-present Marine Observation Squadron (VMO) with its armed Hueys prowling overhead, protecting ground Marines or other 'copters.

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Appendix 3 to
Enclosure (4)

30:LPE:ran



POSTHUMOUS AWARD—Ambassador to Thailand Graham A. Martin accepts the Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross, with Palm, on behalf of his foster son, 1stLt. Glenn Dill Mann, a Marine helicopter pilot who was killed in action. The award was given by Col. Pham Van Phu, assistant commander of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) 2nd Army Division.

Thailand's Ambassador Gets Foster Son's Medal

Ambassador to Thailand Graham A. Martin traveled from Bangkok to the battlefield of Chu Lai to attend memorial services for his foster son, 1stLt. Glenn Dill Mann, who was killed in action at Chu Lai.

A Marine Observation Squadron (VMO)-6 pilot, 1stLt. Mann was hit with machinegun fire while flying an armed Huey helicopter trying to smash a Viet Cong attack on Trach Tru, a government outpost 35 miles south of Chu Lai.

His was one of four Hueys credited with smashing two heavy machinegun emplacements which were pivots of the action.

After the memorial services, conducted in the tent-chapel of Marine Aircraft Group (MAG)-36, Ambassador Martin was given his foster son's Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross, with Palm. Awarded for the lieutenant's valor during the strike, the medal was presented to the Ambassador by Col. Pham Van Phu, assistant commander of the 2nd Army Division, Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), which were on the battlefield.

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Appendix 4 to
Enclosure (4)

30:LPE:ran

Marine Ordnance Men Compare Arming Hueys To California Freeways

Chu Lai (USMC-10)—

to the men in Marine Observation Squadron 6, arming a Huey helicopter is like driving on a California freeway without brakes — the difference between life and instant death depending on instinctive skill transmitted through nerveless fingers.

The eight Marines in the squadron's ordnance section are the ones who put the bite into the flying scorpions known as Hueys, the machine gun and rocket-toting helicopters which escort troop-carrying choppers into assault landing zones.

Hooking 1,000 pounds of rockets into firing pods beneath the Hueys is a risky business. Electrical circuits have to be connected and should these be contaminated by stray voltage, the ordnance men would get the rocket explosions intended for the Viet Cong.

It has never happened, though the men have "strung" Hueys in blinding rain in the middle of the night to ready escorts for medical evacuations.

The reason an accidental explosion has never occurred is wrapped up by the unit commander's terse explanation.

"These men are professionals."

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Appendix 5 to
Enclosure (4)

30:LPE:ran



FINISHING TOUCHES—Cpl. William H. Wood outlines the first of many "Ugly Angels" that he'll paint on the choppers of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron (HMM)-362. The Chu Lai-based squadron never had a nickname until its members decided on "Ugly" for the sight of the ungainly UH34D helicopters, and "Angels" for the hundreds of mercy missions which are flown in addition to combat assaults.

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Appendix 6 to
Enclosure (4)

30:LPE:ran

Metalsmiths Busy Patching, Guarding Shot-Up Choppers

Chu Lai (USMC-10) — It poured for an entire week—a monsoon-driven, bone-aching rain that brought misery to everyone but Cpl. James E. Grancovitz, who was sunshine-happy about the whole thing.

"We couldn't fly in that kind of weather," he explained, "so I had time to work on the birds."

The "birds" Cpl. Grancovitz refers to are the helicopters of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 362. He and three other Marines are the metalsmiths—the fuselage doctors of the choppers assigned to 362.

Ordinarily, the four Marines rotate three choppers a week into their tent-shop for routine maintenance checks. Each such inspection requires eight hours, plus whatever time it takes to correct defects.

That's the routine. It's a small part of the job. More important are the daily spot inspections, often after dark when the planes return from day-long missions. Most of them have landed in rough zones and must be minutely inspected before the next day's flight. If there are structural

weaknesses, the metal shop may be open all night.

"Any way you bend the iron, it's a 14-to-16-hour day every day," say the metalsmiths.

Occasionally, there are 'copters with bullet holes to repair. "One or two holes do not take long to patch, but once in a while the 'copter is zigging when the bullet's zagging and a structural beam is hit. Brother, do we get busy then," said the corporal.

Metalsmithing isn't the only requirement put on the four Marines. Like everyone else, they take their turns on the perimeter, spending all night guarding the helicopters they've patched, reinforced and otherwise repaired all day.

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Appendix 7 to
Enclosure (4)

SECRET

30:LPE:ran

Charlie Is Common With Marines In War

By: Sgt. C.B. Simmons

Every war develops its own vocabulary and it looks as if the veterans of Marine Aircraft Group (MAG)-36 will be sprinkling the years to come with one prominent word . . . Charlie.

Because of the multitude of definitions of the word, Charlie is accompanied with emphatic facial expressions.

Scorn and deep disdain is expressed when referring to Charlie, the Viet Cong. All references to the VC are condensed into Charlie. The "V" becomes a verbal "Victor" denoting VC for Viet Cong.

In the air, when operating with the U.S. Air Force planes, Charlie is said flippantly and often smilingly. It's the MAG-36 equivalent of "OK" or "Roger" and radio talks often sound like this:

"This is Air Force One-Five. How do you read (understand) me? Over."

"Air Force One-Five, this is Marine One-Six. I read you loud and clear. Are you ready to start your bombing? Over."

"That's a Roger, Marine One-Six. Will you follow with troops in the zone? Over."

"That's a Charlie, Air Force One-Five. Over and out."

On one occasion, a 'copter pilot realized almost too late that he was communicating with a general in the other plane. His use of the word was wreathed in belated formality.

"That's a Charlie . . . Sir!"

And when you see a 'copter crew loping towards their plane, faces screwed up in concern, you know they've become "Tailend Charlies." They've been assigned the last slot in the formation, the spot which Charlie tries to shoot up because there aren't any choppers behind to retaliate with machinegun fire.

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Appendix 8 to
Enclosure (4)

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30:LPE:ran

Ugly Angels Proper Name For Sqdn.

To call an oil-burning, grease-smelling, rotor-clattering 8500-pounds of flying machinery an "angel" would seem to be stretching a definition. But "angels" are what the choppers of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron (HMM)-362 have become.

The designation is the result of a squadron campaign to pick a suitable nickname. "All squadrons have tags," exclaimed Cpl. William H. Wood (Millbrae, Calif.). "It's traditional and we didn't have one."

HMM-362 has one now. The Ugly Angels. And Cpl. Wood was designated to paint the accepted design on the unit's UH34D helos. The insignia is the face of a demon, topped with a halo, and its scarlet and gold grimace will adorn all the squadron aircraft.

The why of the "angel" half of the title is apparent. Last month, '362 flew more than 6,000 sorties, carrying 487 tons of supplies to military outposts and remote civilian hamlets. To the people on the other end of the supply chain, the choppers became angels.

HMM-362 also evacuated 63 wounded or sick soldiers or civilians to field hospitals. These patients would certainly agree with the angel monicker.

Furthermore, angels are endowed with divine luck. . . of the type depicted in the total of 12,211 passengers carried by the squadron last month, only one of whom was wounded by enemy fire. He was a crewman, whose wound was treated with a band aid.

So, "angels" . . . yes. But why "Ugly Angels"?

"It's the aircraft. The UH34D is really an ugly looking plane," explained Cpl. Wood, and "any similarity between the first word of the title and the men of HMM-362 is purely coincidental."

Appendix 9 to
Enclosure (4)

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30:LPE:ran

Vietnam Weather Takes Its Toll

Being an avionics man in Vietnam is like having a dozen wives; every time a man turns around there's trouble.

Avionics is the jet-age term for electrical-electronics combined in one trade, tailored specifically for aviation. Like many other speciality shops, without the avionics crew, planes wouldn't fly, as the 18 men in ~~Marine~~

Medium Helicopter Squadron (HMM)-364's shop will readily tell you. With little or no prompting, they'll also point out that:

When it rains excessively, circuits corrode and short out. When it's too dry, dust clogs electronic and electrical systems, also causing failure.

At Ky Ha, home of HMM-364, it's either raining excessively or dust is swirling constantly.

But Cpl. David E. Wilson (Greenville, Pa.) claims that's why avionics men are specialists. They're trained to whip nature as well as complex systems. It's the little difficulties that are hard to explain to flight crews who are left out of heli-assaults because their 'copters are electrically-

electronically down.

Under ideal conditions, it may take days to track circuit trouble in order to perform a 15-minute repair job. But, when most of the investigation must be done at night, with red-lensed flashlights because of Viet Cong snipers, it just might take an hour longer.

Excuses aren't Cpl. Wilson's trademark. Repaired helicopters are. So during the six hours a day when he and other avionics NCOs are relatively free, they hold briefings to acquaint junior men with past problems and the solutions that were applied.

The avionics shop can save time, in the long run, through the symposiums. And time saved means helicopters flying.

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Appendix 10 to
Enclosure (4)

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