

28 July, 1996

Don C. Thomson
Seawolf Association.

H.T. Aldhizer III

Dear H.T.,

I am enclosing a selection of color photographs taken at the time of the UH-1B load-up at the AVCRAD in Springfield, Missouri. Please let me know if you need to borrow the negatives.

I have not begun to search for the missing gauges, cyclic grips, pilot seat and left chin bubble until I hear from you on whether this aircraft will be mounted on a pole, sit on the ground or displayed indoors. The former will require very little in these regards while the latter will require, and give us the opportunity to, fit-out the entire interior and exterior of the helicopter just exactly as they were equipped and we flew them in Vietnam.

There are, essentially, three choices in terms of how to display the aircraft out of doors:

1. Let the helo be secured directly to the ground. The advantage is that people are able to really get a close look. The disadvantage is that it doesn't attract as much attention from a distance.
2. Put the helo on a high pole. This creates considerable visibility and attention from a distance but viewers aren't able to get up really close and see inside.
3. The helo can also be mounted on four low pads which is really a combination of methods 1. and 2. Whiteman Air Force Base mounted their short frame Huey this way. It is mounted on four cylindrical reinforced concrete legs about 12 inches in diameter. They are each of a different height which tips the helo nose down and a little to one side to give it a look of motion.

3. Contd.

The helo is attached to the legs via threaded studs set in the concrete. Clamps are simply fastened over the helos skids, which are setting on top of the concrete legs. The clamps are fastened and tightened down via nuts attached to the threaded studs in the top of the concrete legs. The advantage of this system is that it is very simple and cheap, easy to construct, gets the helo just up off the ground and gives it a look of motion, is very hurricane proof, and is still low enough that viewers can get up close and see inside the aircraft.

I will try to get you some photographs of all three of the display methods.

On the Huie that we put in Freedom Park in Pensacola at the Mini-Wall we put that aircraft on a low pole. I was not too pleased with the outcome. It is definitely too high to really see into and not high enough to attract attention from afar. I did want to tell you how we secured the main rotor blades to hurricane proof them. We ran stainless steel braided cable from the tiedown eye on the end of each blade to the eylet (lifting) hole in the "Jesus" nut on the top of the rotor mast. They were tightened down with stainless turnbuckles such as found on hang gliders. This prevented the blades from flexing down. To keep the blades from flexing upward we ran a braided stainless steel cable from the aft blade straight down from the eylet on the rear blade to the 42 degree gearbox. To keep the front blade from flexing upward and to keep the rotor system from turning we ran stainless steel braided cables with stainless turnbuckles from the eylet on the end of the front rotor blade to each side of the swash plate area just above the top of the transmission. I have forgotten exactly what we secured then to in this area but we can get Con Jaburg to go by that helo and take a look for us to refresh our memory.

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(3.)

I also wanted to mention that I am not looking for any guns for this helo as Con Jaburg has his heart set on the old M60 pylon gun system. The director of the Army Aviation Museum tells me that those systems are "non existant". They claim they have the only set left and they have been saving that set since 1970. They claim that those systems were left in Vietnam when the Army went to the XM-21 Mini-gun pylon mounted gunsystem. But we do need to start to begin searching for the open tube 7 shot rocket pods as they are getting harder to find these days.

I want you to know that I will do all that I can to help but that my time is limited as I'm still on active duty and usually on the road a few days a week flying missions that require us to wear chicken plate vests. I think that my best use would be in locating cabin interior items should you require those to replace the ones that are missing.

I will also forward to you my copy of the book showing all the paint markings and colors just as soon as I can get to my storage facility to pick it up.

Good luck on this project and all that is happening at the Seal Museum. I feel proud and very fortunate that the Seals have seen fit to include the "Wolves" in their commendable and ambitious museum effort.

Best Regards,

Don C. Thomson
Seawolf Historian/Curator