

HELICOPTER ATTACK (LIGHT) SQUADRON THREE (HA(L)-3)

WOLFGRAM

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COMMANDING OFFICER

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CO'S NOTE  
CAPT MUNSON

It gives me great pride and pleasure to announce that the Secretary of the Navy has approved the Navy Unit Commendation for Helicopter Attack (Light) Squadron THREE for service as set forth in the following citation:

"For exceptionally meritorious service from 1 July 1967 through 1 January 1968 while based in the Republic of Vietnam in direct participation in combat operations against Communist insurgent (Viet Cong) forces. During this period, the units of Helicopter Attack (Light) Squadron THREE were continuously present to provide close air support to the elements of Operation Game Warden and allied forces engaged in combat. Despite the unique problems inherent in the manning and utilization of the United States Navy's first attack-helicopter squadron while actively engaged in combat, the Squadron maintained a high level of availability which provided virtually the only effective close air support for Operation Game Warden. In the field of aerial operations, without precedent in the annals of Naval warfare, the personnel of Helicopter Attack (Light) Squadron THREE developed a new doctrine of close air support that proved to be a decisive factor in the application of Riverine operations to the United States Navy counterinsurgency effort. The Squadron units operated from non-aviation ships, as well as land based staging areas and developed unique tactics covering a multiplicity of missions. In the face of their vulnerability to enemy anti-aircraft fire, the Units of the Squadron continuously sought out and attacked the enemy throughout the Mekong Delta area. The courage, skill, and devotion to duty displayed by the officers and men of Helicopter Attack (Light) Squadron THREE reflect great credit upon themselves and the United States Naval Service."

The commendation was presented to the Squadron on 26 October 1968. On that day the squadron along with other Navy units in Vung Tau commemorated Navy Day.

DET ONE (USS HARNETT COUNTY)

During October, Det ONE had a rather heavy personnel exchange. We greeted two pilots; LT Tom DOYLE from HS-4 and LTJG Pat (Fantasmo) BRIDGES of Det SEVEN and CTF117 fame. Tom apparently will be with us only a short while as he is to go to Det SEVEN eventually. Fantasmo is still up in the air as to whether he will return to Det SEVEN or will remain with the "Pacifiers of the Lower Bassac". We wish to welcome both aboard. It was hail to some and farewell to others as LTJG Dave MINAHAN, that young purveyor of wit and wisdom and LTJG Dave CRANOR, Indiana's gift to the Far East departed. Dave MINAHAN will soon be leaving for some place called CONUS and after a well deserved rest will report to HS-5 at Quonset Point. Dave CRANOR is still awaiting his railroad tracks and will spend his remaining months at Vung Tau - in case BUPERS is looking for him. Both will be greatly missed by the Det and we wish them the very best.

HARNETT COUNTY was recently honored to have VADM ZUMWALT and SECNAV IGNATIUS aboard for a short while. The Boss, LCDR HARKER stole the show by presenting both with Det ONE scarves. Mr. HARKER has been active in other areas also and recently (with his partner in crime LTJG MINAHAN) led the ship down the south river to Coastal Group 36 for some of Milwaukee's finest. They, of course, were driving their beloved SWAB. While at 36 Mr. HARKER arranged deep sea fishing expeditions aboard the Yabuta junks. All Det personnel are being outfitted with black pajamas for their days in the South China Sea.

LT Jim BEEM recently arranged a couple of nights at his old home in Binh Thuy. "Bad Weather" unfortunately delayed his return the second night so he was forced to remain in those evil surroundings.

LT "Sumo" SOTO continues in his role of JO control and thus far is doing an excellent job. When not involved with his previously mentioned duty he acts as hatchet man in the wardroom during all movies. LTJG "Wild Bill" WALLEN recently made landing number 4,000 aboard HARNETT COUNTY. "Sumo" was the AHAC, but for some unknown reason gave Bill the landing. Maybe old Sumo has a heart of gold after all.

LTJG Noel CAMPBELL continues to harass "Wild Bill" daily. Noel's behavior seems to stem directly from the IFAR system for which he has never expressed great pleasure.

LTJG Chuck BAGLEY has been useless all month as leave at Taipei was nearing. He has been heard to mutter something in his sleep about beer without formaldehyde.

There were new faces in the crews ranks also. AN Bill GIBSON returned from R&R to Australia to find that he was on his way to Vung Tau. AMS3 Fred RECORD was "same same" and after his down under trek returned to Vung Tau. ADJ3 Tom OLEZESKI was the third man to be called back. Yet another Australia returnee was ATN3 Lyle NIMMO, who at this writing remains with us. All of the Australia returnees heartily endorsed it and were all smiles after their brief return to "The World". The new face was that of ADJ1 HUNT who comes to us from Vung Tau. We extend a hearty welcome aboard to him.

Chief WALSH continues to lead our crew to greater heights and

"occassional" unheard of mechanical feats.

AE2 SEARLE is usually the hatchet man for the aforementioned feats with AOAN Ron McALLISTER, AOAN Jim McGOWAN, AN Dan KELLY and AN Dom BASILE assisting. This outstanding crew recently replaced an entire rotor blade on the deck of the HARNETT COUNTY, by no means a small feat.

That concludes the mentionable activities on the Lower Bassac for the month of October. We'll write you folks back in the land of turn-pikes and drive-in movies once again next month.

#### DET TWO (NHA BE)

Greetings from Sandy Point Naval Air Station. As was the case in all the other Dets, the highlite of the month was the enlisted advancements. Topping the list was our enlisted crew leader, Larry (Shorty) TAYLOR, who was advanced to ADJ1. Too bad that with all that know-how and experience he can't figure out how to fire a M-60 machine gun from a helo. Speaking of firing a machine gun, ATR2 "Tweets" ARNOLD has had his troubles hanging onto the .50 caliber. As long as the target is bigger than a football field, he has no trouble hitting it. What the Rung Sat needs is more big barns for "Tweets" to shoot at. Our short-timer in the outfit, Morriss "Tar-Heel" PENDLETON, rates a double contratulation. Firstly, for his advancement to AO2 and, secondly, for his upcoming marriage to his county seat sweetheart. ATN3 Ben SMITH, one of our brand new petty officers, sighed with relief when he delivered his last mail call and handed the job down to AN Glen "Hawkeye" SMITHEN. "Hawkeye" has spent the month of October behind the Acey-Ducey board, but the latest word is he hasn't learned how to hold the dice in order to roll those magic numbers. Anyone want to show him? By the time this goes to press, all of us in the Det hope that Ed "Grape Juice" WELSH will have his hard hat back in operation. We haven't heard a word from him in the Helo in the last half dozen duty days. AN Chuck "Pork" GIER has gone "whole hog" in the photography game. He recently purchased a telephoto lens that is eighteen inches long and weighs ten pounds. It takes great pictures but he has one problem - it takes both his hands to lift the lens!

This month, we welcomed YN3 Bob "Early Bird" HUNT to our Det. Two weeks later we had to congratulate him for making YN2. Bob has been a God-send to our det. Paperwork that once took two weeks, he now does in two hours. But, he hasn't adapted to life in the barracks. Can you imagine anyone going to sleep in the "Wolvesden" at 2100!? Speaking of welcoming people into the Det, we gained two Ordnancemen during the month, AO3 Jack "the Comedian" CARTER and newly promoted AO3 Bob "Skinny" RYAN. Jack CARTER, who will sew on another stripe on Dec 16th celebrated a little early by putting four rounds from his M-60 thru and into the flex guns - thereby buying the Det four cases of beer. Nice celebrating, Jack! Between Jack CARTER and Bob RYAN, the Det has not only gained two new gunners, we also gained 13 feet and 500 pounds! And the skipper wonders why we can't get the birds off the ground! Another addition to the petty officer ranks in Det TWO is ADJ3 Jim "Money Bags" ROBINSON. Jim has also taken over the running of the Det's coke mess. We all hope he

makes enough money from it to finance the purchase of a set of beads to go along with his long hair. Jim "Sparky" EVANS was so excited about his 16 Oct advancement to AE2 that he absentmindedly walked out to the helo smoking a cigarette. The pilot was quick in reminding him that the Det has a standing rule of no smoking for 24 hours prior to flight and no drinking within 50 feet of the helo. George "Dog catcher" HEADY has the Det officers a bit upset. Seems he serves his dog better meals in the Ready Room than they get in the Officers' Mess. Last but not least, we said "farewell" to an outstanding petty officer during October. AO2 Gary NOYD left us for a short stay at Vung Tau before leaving for the land of the big PX.

Sorry to say that none of our Det officers were promoted this month. But, considering the fact that none were up for it, we weren't too disappointed. We did, however, blot the ink on the Attack Helicopter Aircraft Commander papers for two more of our pilots - LTJG Brian "Stereo" CUDDEBACK and LTJG Tim "Honeymooner" HAYES. Since the Det is a little top heavy with AHAC's now, LCDR Mike "Clean Sweep" RETZ has been relaxing in the left seat of the wingship with nothing to do but surprise the new AHAC's with an occasional simulated tail rotor failure or hydraulics-off. Brian has set up a tape recording studio in his room and, much to the dismay of his neighbors, shakes the bulkheads with his pair of 50 watt speakers. But we hear that LTJG George "Fast Break" PIEL is not going to take it lying down. He is shopping for a pair of 60 watt speakers with which to retaliate. "Stereo" CUDDEBACK spent a week in Vung Tau during the month and returned to us a bona-fide test pilot and cram-full of knowledge about the UH-1B helicopter. Maybe some of it will rub off on the rest of the pilots. Our fearless leader, LCDR Ron "Mr. Universe" PENNINGTON has been busy setting up a physical fitness program for himself. He has to find a way to combat the calories of the the "goodies" his better half keeps sending him. Ron has spent all month preparing his fitness program and, with luck, he may start on it within the next month or two. Time is getting short before LTJG Wil "Stache" DAVIS and LTJG Al "The Diplomat" BILLINGS leave on their well earned Hawaii vacations. Al is happy to hear that he doesn't have to wear a hat on R&R. The poor guy buys and loses more hats per week than anyone else in Vietnam. However, his latest is a one-of-a-kind and he shouldn't have too much trouble finding it - no one else would wear it on a bet! The big Hawaiian question is - how long will Wil DAVIS be with his frau before the mustache comes off. Someone better remind Wil to remove his tape recorder's earplug before he leaves. Or is it growing out of his ear? LT John "The Ambassador" CONNOLLY has a new pastime - paint by numbers. His only problem was the canvas board required a two foot square area on his desk before he could paint. It took six hours, but John finally moved enough junk to handle the painting. Nice going, John. Can anyone tell LTJG Tim HAYES how to keep the batteries in his new electric movie camera from going dead with each roll of film? Wonder if Cecil B. DeMille had that problem? Finally, all of us in the Det were sorry to see LTJG Derek BROWN leave us for duty in the Paper Palace at Vung Tau. He has taken over as Squadron Awards Officer. Good luck, Derek.