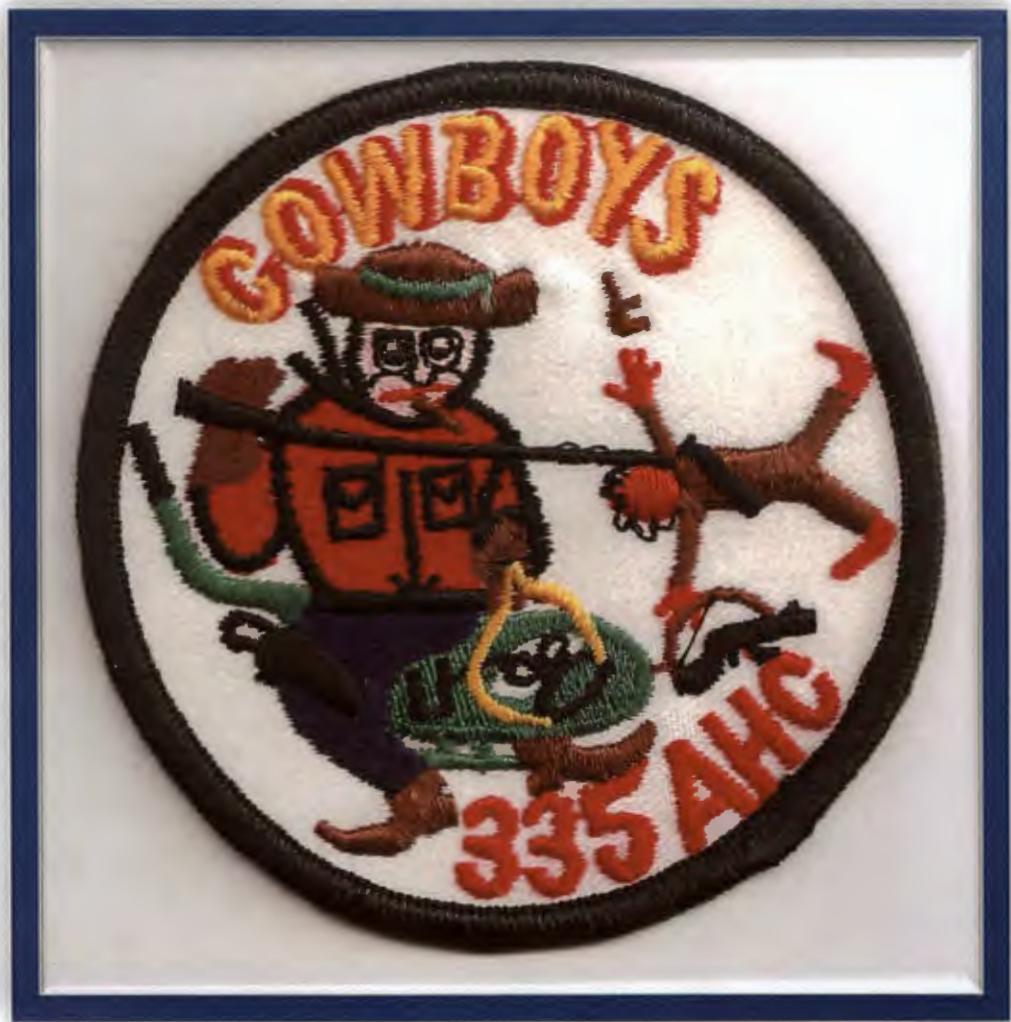


# UNIT HISTORY

## 335TH ASSAULT

### HELICOPTER COMPANY



1965 THROUGH 1976

Revised as of 11/13/2017

## INTRODUCTION

The Cowboys arrived in Vietnam in April 1965 and officially stood down on 4 October 1971 when they made their last move to Fort Riley Kansas. During their stay in Vietnam, the Cowboys made several moves, which are captured in the following pages.

Most of the information contained in this book was gathered at the National Archives at 4205 Suitland Road, in Suitland Maryland, which is just outside Washington, D.C. Other information was gathered through constant probing of former members of the 335th A.H.C. who managed to retain small portions of Cowboy history over the years. The overview of the Cowboys / Caspers was assembled by John Hoza and provides an accurate and concise summary of the early years.

The intent of this book is to show those who served in the 335th A.H.C. how certain events occurred and tie them to actual dates, times, and places. If read from beginning to end, the reader will certainly see that the common theme throughout the book is that the Cowboys were indeed one of the best Aviation Companies to serve in Vietnam, if not the best. Their ability to do a job well under very hazardous conditions is an absolutely outstanding credit to their determination and willingness to make the 335th worthy of such high praise. It also will allow those who never served in the 335th A.H.C. to experience the historical achievements of a great Assault Helicopter Company.

A glossary of abbreviations and definitions is located in the back of the book so the reader can understand the terminology and acronyms used at the time. I have made every effort to include all of the abbreviations used in the text. However, one or two may have been missed.

Although the text contained in this book has been retyped from copies of the original documents, some edits were made to correct spelling and grammar. These changes to the original text were necessary to make the book as accurate as possible in grammatical terms only. The pure historical facts contained in this book have not been altered in any way. Sometimes the abbreviations in the original text were changed to the full text descriptions to make the words flow more easily for the reader. Lastly, some portions of the original text were impossible to read due to there poor condition. When a word or words are not decipherable, I used a series of pound signs (###) to denote the unreadable text.

I sincerely hope that you enjoy this historical document and only ask that you take a moment to remember the names of the fine Cowboys listed on the next two pages that made the ultimate sacrifice.

Dominic P. Fino, Jr.  
335TH A.H.C.  
Crew Chief, 3rd Platoon  
1969-1971 Falcons

IN MEMORY OF THE FOLLOWING COWBOYSCOMPANY "A," 82ND AVN. BN. & 335TH A.H.C. KIA/MIA LIST

FIRST	MID	LAST	CAUSE	CITY	ST	DOD	WALL_LOC	TOUR	RANK	STATUS
William	R.	Batchelder	KIA	Springvale	ME	06/10/65	02E 006	65-65	PFC	CREW
Raymond	C.	Galbraith	KIA	North Braddock	PA	06/10/65	02E 004	65-65	CWO	PILOT
Walter	R.	Gray	KIA	Big Clifty	KY	06/10/65	02E 003	65-65	PFC	CREW
Zoltan	A.	Kovacs	KIA	Berkley	CA	06/10/65	02E 006	65-65	WO	PILOT
Billy	G.	Hammer	KIA	Enterprise	AL	06/12/65	02E 009	64-65	CWO	PILOT
Kenneth	L.	Reed	KIA	Indianapolis	IN	06/12/65	02E 009	65-65	SSG	CREW
Donald	L.	Baker	KIA	Energy	IL	06/12/65	02E 009	64-65	SP5	CREW
Michael	L.	Wildes	KIA	Callahan	FL	06/12/65	02E 010	65-65	WO	PILOT
William	F.	Covey, Jr.	KIA	Willimantic	CT	06/30/65	02E 025	65-65	PFC	CREW
James	A.	Gruezke	KIA	Newberry	MI	12/23/65	04E 035	65-65	WO	PILOT
Billy	E.	Gipson	KIA	Indianapolis	IN	06/05/66	08E 010	65-66	SGT	CREW
Rutherford	J.	Welsh	KIA	Canada		07/27/66	09E 082	66-66	WO	PILOT
Joseph	C.	Sampson, Jr	KIA	Xenia	OH	07/27/66	09E 082	66-66	WO	PILOT
James	W.	Collins	KIA	Union City	TN	07/27/66	09E 079	66-66	PFC	CREW
Harold	W.	Reinbott, Jr.	KIA	Parma	MO	07/27/66	09E 081	66-66	SP5	CREW
Douglas	L.	Jones	KIA	Erwin	TN	10/12/66	11E 068	66-66	1LT	PILOT
Coley	L.	Andrews	KIA	Mobile	AL	12/19/66	13E 060	65-66	SGT	CREW
Gordon	O.	Walsh	KIA	Johnson City	TN	04/16/67	18E 037	66-67	CPT	PILOT
Pedro		Ortiz	KIA	Selma	CA	05/01/67	19E 007	67-67	SP4	CREW
Robert	F.	Quinn	KIA	Greenville	MS	05/01/67	19E 007	67-67	SP4	CREW
Ewell	E	Acord	KIA	Lester	WV	05/01/67	19E 002	66-67	SSG	CREW
John	M.	Andrews	KIA	Dayton	OH	05/01/67	19E 004	67-67	WO	PILOT
Leyburn	W.	Brockwell, Jr.	KIA	Spartanburg	SC	05/01/67	19E 003	66-67	LTC	PILOT
Lewis	J.	Fogler	KIA	Glen Burnie	MD	05/01/67	19E 005	67-67	PFC	CREW
Charles	C.	Jones	KIA	San Antonio	TX	05/01/67	19E 006	67-67	MAJ	PILOT
John	D.	Legg	KIA	Chickasaw	AL	05/01/67	19E 006	66-67	2LT	PILOT
Carl	F.	Louvring	KIA	Lowell	OR	05/13/67	19E 109	66-67	PFC	CREW
Dewey	A.	Midgett	KIA	Chesapeake	VA	11/25/67	30E 086	67-67	PVT	CREW
Terry	D.	Finch	KIA	Portland	OR	01/26/68	35E 039	67-68	CPL	CREW
Carl	L.	West *	KIA	Nashville	TN	02/02/68	37E 003	67-68	CPT	PILOT
Christopher	M.	Daniels	KIA	Gloucester	NJ	02/03/68	37E 005	67-68	SGT	CREW
Donny	R.	Kidd	KIA	Sioux Falls	SD	03/04/68	42E 067	67-68	CWO	PILOT
Richard	W.	Joles	KIA	New Orleans	LA	04/12/68	49E 033	67-68	SP5	CREW
Jerome	E.	Jacobs	KIA	Bayonne	NJ	05/05/68	55E 018	68-68	PFC	CREW
Richard	G.	Lewis	KIA	Westfield	NJ	05/05/68	55E 021	68-68	WO	PILOT
Glenn	T.	Fey	KIA	Ashley	PA	05/05/68	55E 012	67-68	SP5	CREW
Bobby	R.	Williams	KIA	Spearman	TX	05/05/68	55E 035	67-68	CWO	PILOT
Thomas	F.	Smith	KIA	Roy	NM	12/13/68	36W 017	68-68	SP4	CREW
Robert	A.	Baetzel	KIA	Chicago Heights	IL	03/21/69	29W 095	68-69	WO	PILOT
Albert	O.	Krausser	KIA	Takoma Park	MD	03/21/69	29W 101	67-69	SP4	CREW

FIRST	MID	LAST	CAUSE	CITY	ST	DOD	WALL_LOC	TOUR	RANK	STATUS
Ted	D.	Mills	KIA	Culver City	CA	03/21/69	29W 103	68-69	SGT	CREW
Thomas	M.	Newman	KIA	Saddle River	NJ	03/21/69	29W 104	68-69	1LT	PILOT
Robert	E.	Pierson	KIA	Chatham	NJ	03/21/69	28W 001	69-69	PFC	CREW
Franklin	D.	Ashley, II	KIA	Amma	WV	03/21/69	29W 094	68-69	SP4	CREW
Harry	H.	Gibson	KIA	Lumberton	NC	03/21/69	29W 098	68-69	1LT	PILOT
Thomas	E.	Jones, Jr.	KIA	Beltsville	MD	03/21/69	29W 100	68-69	1LT	PILOT
Thomas	H.	Furnish	KIA	Miami	FL	02/19/70	13W 032	69-70	SP4	CREW
Truman	D.	Norris	KIA	Richmond	VA	03/17/70	12W 014	69-70	CWO	PILOT
Kimball	H.	Sheldon	KIA	Boca Raton	FL	03/31/70	12W 063	70-70	SP4	CREW
Donald	A.	Krumrei	KIA	Enid	OK	07/16/70	08W 022	70-70	WO	PILOT
Robert	L	Shriner	KIA	Hawaiian Gardens	CA	11/20/70	06W 074	70-70	SP5	CREW
Johnie	K.	Woodard	KIA	Pulaski	TN	04/25/71	03W 012	70-71	SP5	CREW
Gerald	F.	Vilas	KIA	Yale	MI	09/19/71	02W 020	71-71	WO	PILOT
Fredrick	A.	Thacker	KIA	Rison	AR	09/19/71	02W 020	71-71	SP5	CREW
Lynn		Jones	KIA	Remerton	GA	09/19/71	02W 020	71-71	SP5	CREW
Donald	J.	Hanning **	KIA	Rockwood	MI	09/03/72	01W 071	72-72	CPT	PILOT

\* Capt Carl Lynn West was in the 235th AWC flying a UH-1H when he crashed with his crew. All were KIA. His tour was 13 Nov 67 – 2 Feb 68. Carl West was a Falcon on an earlier tour.

\*\* Capt. Donald Jerry Hanning was in the 60th AHC flying an AH-1G (cobra) #AH-1G 67-15801 when he crashed in heavy weather. ALSO, KIA was Capt Frank Oliver. Hanning's second tour lasted 3 Mar 72 – 3 Sep 72. Don Hanning was the Cowboy Ramrod platoon leader most of his first tour from Aug '68-Aug '69.

### "The Cowboys" 1966-1971

The 335th came into existence in September 1966 with the deactivation of Co. A 82nd Aviation Battalion. Co. A arrived in Vietnam in April 1965 to support the 173rd Airborne Brigade in III Corps. They continued the mission until the 335th Aviation Co. was formed at Bien Ho. In early 1967 the 335th was renamed the 335th Assault Helicopter Company.

In May 1967 the 335th moved to Pleiku in II Corps with the 173rd Airborne. In August 1967 they relocated to Phu Hiep (also in II Corps). From this base they supported the 173rd Airborne in its desperate fighting against the NVA and VC around Dak To that November. In December 1968 the 335th relocated to III Corps at Bear Cat. In August 1970 they moved to Dong Tam in IV Corps (the Delta). In November 1971 they stood down and returned to the US.

### Locations of 335th AHC bases



## CODE OF THE COW COUNTRY

IT DON'T TAKE SUCH A LOT OF LAWS  
TO KEEP THE RANGELAND STRAIGHT,  
NOR BOOKS TO WRITE'EM IN, BECAUSE  
THERE'S ONLY SIX OR EIGHT.  
FIRST ONE IS THE WELCOME SIGN,  
TRUE BRAND OF WESTERN HEARTS:  
"MY CAMP IS YOURS AND YOURS IS MINE"  
IN ALL COW COUNTRY PARTS.

TREAT WITH RESPECT ALL WOMANKIND  
SAME AS YOU WOULD YOUR SISTER.  
TAKE CARE OF NEIGHBORS' STRAYS YOU FIND,  
AND DON'T CALL COWBOYS "MISTER".  
SHUT PASTURE GATES WHEN PASSING THRU,  
AND TAKIN' ALL IN ALL,  
BE JUST AS ROUGH AS PLEASES YOU,  
BUT NEVER MEAN OR SMALL.

TALK STRAIGHT, SHOOT STRAIGHT, AND NEVER BREAK  
YOUR WORD TO MAN NOR BOSS.  
PLUMB ALWAYS KILL A RATTLESNAKE,  
DON'T RIDE A SOREBACKED HOSS.  
IT DON'T TAKE LAW NOR PEDIGREE  
TO LIVE THE BEST YOU CAN,  
THESE FEW IS ALL IT TAKES TO BE  
A COWBOY -----AND A MAN!

S OMAR BARKER

**THE FOLLOWING COWBOY HISTORY WAS PREPARED BY JOHN HOZA****GENERAL BACKGROUND AND PARENT UNIT ASSIGNMENTS OF THE COWBOYS**

The 82d Aviation Company was activated at Fort Bragg NC in 1957.

The Company was expanded and redesignated the 82d Aviation Battalion on 1 July 1960 with a total of three (3) Companies and 60 aircraft.

The 82d Aviation Battalion minus Company A deployed to the Dominican Republic in April 1965.

Company A deployed to Vietnam that same month. The Advance Party by plane, from Oakland California, arriving in VN on or about 12 April 1965. The main body of Company A, along with its 3 support units, the 166<sup>th</sup> Transportation Detachment (Aircraft Maintenance), the 234<sup>th</sup> Signal Detachment and the 25<sup>th</sup> Medical Detachment departed San Diego California on 12 April aboard the Helicopter Carrier USS Iwo Jima, bringing with them the first UH – 1 D model helicopters to enter service in Vietnam. (There were a total of three Avn Companies, with their support units and aircraft and equipment that sailed to Vietnam on the Iwo Jima on 12 April 1965:

- A Company, 82d Aviation Battalion, 82d Airborne Division
- A Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Aviation Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division
- A Company, 101<sup>st</sup> Aviation Battalion, 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division
- There were a total of 75 new helicopters aboard the ship. Each company was assigned 9 UH – 1 B and 16 UH – 1D helicopters. These were the first “D” model Hueys to enter service in Vietnam.

The Iwo Jima arrived off the coast of Vung Tau Vietnam on 1 May 1965. The ship docked approximately 30 miles off shore and the aircraft were flown from the ship to Vung Tau with limited crews on board. The majority of the company personnel and equipment was taken a shore aboard LSTs.

The company was based at Vung Tau and assigned to the 145<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion. They were given the Call sign “Dallas Cowboys” by Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) SOI. The Company dropped the word: “Dallas” and changed the Call sign to “Cowboys.”

The Cowboys of A/82d were assigned to the 173d Airborne Brigade on 19 October 1965 and co-located with the Brigade at Bien Hoa. As an integral part of the Brigade, Company A provided Direct Support to the 173d Abn Bde from October 1965 until 1 September 1966.

The Cowboys were redesignated to the 335th Assault Helicopter Company on 1 September 1966 and remained assigned to the 173d Abn Bde where they continued to provide Direct Support to the Brigade. NOTE: The initial designation was: 335<sup>th</sup> Airmobile Company. It was changed to the 335<sup>th</sup> Assault Helicopter Company by the 1sr Aviation Brigade.

### **Cowboy Company Commanders**

Note1: The 82d Aviation Battalion was activated on 1 July 1960 at Fort Bragg NC. Commanders of Company A, at Fort Bragg NC prior to Major Champlin taking command are unknown at this time. Major Donald A. Champlin commanded the unit at Fort Bragg prior to their deployment to Vietnam. (He assumed command of the unit in January 1965).

Note 2: The Advance Party of A/82d arrived in Vietnam on 12 or 13 April 1965. The main body of the Company arrived in Vietnam on 1 May 1965.

Note 3: Company A/82d Aviation Battalion was redesignated the 335<sup>th</sup> Assault Helicopter Company on 1 September 1966.

Note 4: The 335<sup>th</sup> Assault Helicopter Company was reassigned to the 1<sup>st</sup> Aviation Brigade on 1 January 1967.

Note 5: The 335<sup>th</sup> stood down and departed Vietnam in November 1971. The 335<sup>th</sup> was assigned to Fort Riley Kansas with the mission of supporting the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division and 5<sup>th</sup> Army.

### **Company A/82d Aviation Battalion**

Major Donald A. Champlin	1 May 1965 – 27 March 1966
Major Larry Baughman	27 March 1966 – 29 June 1966
Major Ernest H. Johnson	29 June 1966 – 1 September 1966

### **335th Assault Helicopter Company**

Major Ernest H. Johnson	1 September 1966 – 20 January 1967
LTC Leyburn W. Brockwell Jr.	20 January 1967 – 1 May 1967 (KIA 1 May 1967)
Major Walter H. Huth	1 May 1967 – 10 June 1967
LTC Charles D. Utzman	10 June 1967 – 1 October 1967
Major Donald R. Drumm	1 October 1967 – 31 December 1967
Major Frank M. Powell	31 December 1967 – 20 June 1968
Major Carl L. Cramer	20 June 1968 – 23 November 1968
Major Paul R. Riley Jr.	23 November 1968 – 25 May 1969
Major Howard J. Stiles	25 May 1969 – 8 November 1969
Major Vance S. Gammons	8 November 1969 – 30 May 1970

Captain Thomas A. Teasdale	30 May 1970 – 19 September 1970
Major Henry J. Raymond	19 September 1970 - ?
Major Harold L. Bowen	? - 11 July 1971
Major Marvin W. Schwern	11 July 1971 – 26 November 1971

### The 335th Departed Vietnam 5 November 1971

Major Jerry Black	26 Nov 1971 – 11 Apr 1973
Major David A. Measels	11 Apr 1973 – 22 Feb 1974
Major Myron D. Davis	22 Feb 1974 – 07 Jan 1975
Major Stephen D. Ballard	07 Jan 1975 – 00 Jun 1976 ****
Major Barry H. Adams	00 Jun 1976 –?

\*\*\*\*These dates may not be correct. History shows dates as 27 May 75 – June 76. If the dates listed in the Unit History were correct it would mean that there was another Unit Commander for 4 months from January 75 to May 75. None is listed in the History.

**Unit Awards****Presidential Unit Citation: DAGO 43 dated 9 November 1966**

for the period 10 June 1965 to 13 June 1965 for actions during the Battle for Dong Xoai.

**Presidential Unit Citation: DAGO 5, 79 Amended DAGO 42, 69**

for the period 6 November 1967 to 23 November 1967 for actions during the Battle for Hill 875.

**US NAVY Presidential Unit Citation: DAGO 32 dated 24 September 1973**

for the period 7 October 1966 to 4 December 1966 awarded to a three (3) aircraft detachment from the Cowboys, 335<sup>th</sup> AHC and to the two (2) aircraft detachment from the Caspers, 173d Abd Bde.

**Meritorious Unit Citation: DAGO 42, dated 1969**

for the period May 1965 to July 1966

**Meritorious Unit Citation: DAGO 70, 69 Amended DAGO 48, 68**

for the period 1 February 1967 to 31 December 1967

**Meritorious Unit Citation: HQ 335<sup>th</sup> AMB CO, GO 48, dated 1968****Meritorious Unit Citation: HQUSARV GO 904, dated 2 March 1967**

for the period 1 August 1966 to 31 January 1967

**Meritorious Unit Citation: HQ 173d Abn Bde, GO 17, dated 1968****Valorous Unit Citation: HQ 145<sup>th</sup> Avn Bn, GO 17, dated 1968****Distinguished Unit Citation:**

for the period 10 June 1965 to 13 June 1965 for actions in the Battle for Dong Xoai

**Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry w/Palm: GO 162 dated November 1965**

for the period 29 December 1964 to 4 November 1965

**Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry w/Palm: GO 22 HQ 335<sup>th</sup> Avn, 1968**

for the period May 1965 to July 1966

**Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry w/Palm: DAGO 22, dated 1968**

for the period 1 March 1966 to 26 March 1967

**Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry w/Palm: DAGO 46,69 Amended DAGO 21 Sec III, dtd 8 April 1969**

for the period 27 March 1967 to 17 May 1968

**Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry w/Palm: DAGO 52, dated 1971**

for the period 15 December 1969 to 10 October 1970

**Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry w/Palm: DAGO 8, dtd 19 March 1974**

Awarded to MAACV units for the period 8 February 1962 to 28 March 1973

Awarded to US ARMY Vietnam Units for the period 20 July 1965 to 28 March 1973

**Vietnam Campaigns**

Vietnam Defense	8 March 1965 to 24 December 1965
Vietnam Counter Offensive	25 December 1965 to 30 June 1966
Vietnam Counter Offensive Phase II	1 July 1966 to 31 May 1967
Vietnam Counter Offensive Phase III	1 June 1967 to 29 January 1968
TET Counter Offensive	30 January 1968 to 1 April 1968
Vietnam Counter Offensive Phase IV	2 April 1968 to 30 June 1968
Vietnam Counter Offensive Phase V	1 July 1968 to 1 November 1968
Vietnam Counter Offensive Phase VI	2 November 1968 to 22 February 1969
TET 69 Counter Offensive	23 February 1969 to 8 June 1969
Vietnam Summer-Fall 1969	9 June 1969 to 31 October 1969
Vietnam Winter-Spring 1970	1 November 1969 to 30 April 1970
DA Sanctuary Counter Offensive	1 May 1970 to 30 June 1970
Vietnam Counter Offensive Phase VII	1 July 1970 to 30 June 1971
Consolidation I	1 July 1971 to 30 November 1971
Consolidation II	1 December 1971 to 29 March 1972
Vietnam Cease Fire	30 March 1972 to 28 January 1973

**Note:** The following is written in DA PAM 672-3: "The Arrowhead device is authorized only for members of the 173d Abn Bde who actually participated in a landing in the vicinity of Latum RVN between the hours of 0900 – 0907 inclusive on 27 February 1967."

I assume it is being authorized for those who made the actual parachute jump in Opn Junction City. If so – the date is incorrect. Jump was made on 22 February 1967.

### **CASPERS', AVIATION PLATOON 173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)**

The 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep) was formed on the island of Okinawa on 26 March 1963. (Some sources list the activation date as: 25 June 1963).

The 173d Abn Bde deployed to Vietnam, arriving on 5 May 1965, becoming the first U.S. Army ground combat unit to be committed to the Vietnam War.

The 173d Aviation Platoon was a part of the MTOE of Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC) of the 173d Abn Bde (Sep) under the operational control (OPCON) of the Brigade S-3, Operations Officer. The aviation platoon deployed to Vietnam along with the rest of the 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep) in May of 1965.

Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC) 173D Abn Bde (Sep), along with several other companies, including Company A/82d Aviation Battalion, was assigned to the (Composite) Special Troops Battalion, 173d Abn Bde (Sep), which was created at some later unknown date (Most probably in the mid - late 1966 time frame).

### **173D AVIATION PLATOON COMPOSITION**

The 173d Aviation Platoon consisted of seven (7) Aviators and four (4) Enlisted personnel at the time of its deployment from Okinawa to Vietnam.

The MTOE authorized the platoon eight (8) Utility Helicopters and no other aircraft. The aircraft assigned to the platoon in Okinawa were: Two (2) U-6A fixed wing aircraft, 'Beavers', Four (4) OH - 23D Observation Helicopters, 'Ravens', and one (1) UH-1A Utility Helicopter 'Huey'.

Promised they would receive UH-1s when they arrived in Vietnam, they left the helicopters and took the two U-6A fixed wing aircraft with them. According to Don Bliss, the 173d Aviation Platoon Leader at this time, they flew to Vietnam aboard a C-124 and arrived at the Bien Hoa Airbase at almost exactly 12:00 noon on 5 May 1965.

Don said: "We disembarked in full combat gear (steel pots, personal weapons and all), and were greeted by a chorus of teenage Vietnamese girls singing their welcome to us. What a sight."

On or about 7 November 1965, the two (2) U-6A fixed wing aircraft, tail numbers: 757 and 771, and one of the two (2) fixed wing only aviators, Captain Jesse W. (Bob) Watson were transferred to the 74th Aviation Company (SAL), Callsign: "ALOFT", which was part of the 145th Aviation Battalion. The 74th was in Direct Support of the 10th ARVN Infantry Division at Xuan Loc. (The other fixed wing only aviator: Cpt. Rodney S. Beasley returned to CONUS to attend the Advanced Course.)

The 'Casper' platoon was issued two (2) UH-1Bs, tail numbers: 63-13911 and 64-13919. At some point, aircraft #919 was replaced in the Casper Platoon by another B model whose tail number is presently unknown. Aircraft #13919 was transferred to the Falcons armed helicopter platoon and became a 'Heavy' gunship armed with the XM-3 and XM-5 weapons systems. (It is believed, but not yet confirmed, that this aircraft exchange took place in May 1966 to replace the loss of another Falcon 'Heavy' gunship #63-12918, which was shot down and destroyed on 3 May 1966.

At some point during this initial time frame, the Casper Aviation Platoon also received two UH-1D models, tail numbers 64-13611 and 65-10121 (There are indications that acft 64-13610 was initially assigned to the Casper platoon along with 611 and was later replaced by 65-10121. Time frame and reason for this exchange are unknown at this time)

The platoon also received 6 OH-13S Observation Helicopters, 'Sioux'. (Specific date they were assigned is unknown at this time). Tail Numbers were: 64-15416, 64-15419, 64-15421, 64-15426, 64-15427, (64-15428 is believed to be the tail number of the 6th acft but this has not been confirmed as yet).

The OH-13s were equipped with wire basket litters (Stokes Litters) giving them the ability to perform Med-Evac missions if necessary. The OH-13s did, on several occasions, perform Med-Evac missions, however, the wounded rode inside the aircraft and, at this time, there are no known Med-Evac missions that were performed utilizing these litters.

#### **ORIGIN OF THE 'CASPER' PLATOON NAME AND CALLSIGN:**

According to the 1965 Casper Platoon Commander, Don Bliss, it was during the Aviation Platoons preparation for deployment from Okinawa to Vietnam that the name first arose. On numerous occasions during this critical preparation period, Captain Leonard Small, the Aviation Maintenance Officer from the Brigade Support Battalion was often not readily available to provide the needed assistance to the platoon. Considerable time was frequently spent by platoon members trying to locate him.

On one particular day during preparation, Captain Bob Watson, one of the fixed wing pilots, referred to Captain Small as: 'The Ghost' - someone that you couldn't see but on occasion felt his presence. The name stuck and it wasn't long before others in the platoon began referring to him as 'The Ghost'.

Don said after they arrived in Vietnam and discovered that everybody had a callsign, the platoon members sat down and discussed various callsigns for the platoon. Bob Watson suggested 'Casper the Ghost' as a platoon name and callsign, adding that even though difficult to see, 'Casper the Ghost' had an impact on various peoples lives during this period in time. They decided to shorten the name to 'Casper' and accepted that as the platoon nickname and callsign.

It is believed that Warrant Officer Don McGregor, who joined the platoon after it arrived in Vietnam, was the one most responsible for the original design of the 'Casper' pocket patch. This has yet to be confirmed.

Captain Don Bachali, one of the original Caspers from Okinawa, painted the 'Casper the Ghost' image on the cowlings of the U-6As, doors of the UH-1s they picked up in Vietnam, and on all of the pilots helmets. The Casper image was also painted on the front of the bubble of the OH-13s. (Who painted it on the OH-13s is unknown).

In late September 1966, the Casper OH-13s were equipped with the XM -1 Kit, (later designated as the M1), which consisted of two (2) Browning M37C .30 Cal Machine Guns. In keeping with the 'Casper the Ghost' theme, these Armed OH-13s used the callsign: 'HOT STUFF'. During this early time period, the armed OH-13s were flown mainly by 1/LT Gus Bell ('Hot Stuff Lead') and WO Bill Reynolds ('Hot Stuff Chase'). The armed OH-13s continued to retain the Casper image on the bubble. The 'Hot Stuff' image was painted on the pilots helmets by Captain John Hoza, a former Casper pilot who had transferred to the Falcons armed helicopter platoon

The remainder of the platoon aircraft continued to use the 'CASPER' callsign with the exception of the brigade commanders aircraft which used the brigade commanders individual callsign, and the Mortar Aerial Delivery System (MADS) aircraft which used the callsigns: "MAD BOMBER" and "12 O'CLOCK HIGH".

#### **TYPICAL CASPER PLATOON MISSIONS:**

- Command and Control
- Psychological Operations: Loudspeaker Missions and Leaflet Drops)
- Mortar Aerial Delivery System: (Bombing Missions)
- Aero Scout Missions: (Reconnaissance, Observation and Surveillance Missions)
- Artillery Fire Adjustment Missions
- Artillery and Bomb Damage Assessment
- Convoy Control Missions
- Resupply Missions
- Med-Evac Missions as necessary
- Troop Lifts/Combat Assaults on a limited basis

Casper Pocket Patches: There are at least 3 different types of Casper Pocket patches that were worn between 1965 and 1971. According to Ned Costa and Bob White, Caspers, 1968 - 69, there was an additional patch that the 1968 - 71 Aero Scout crews wore on their survival vests. Bob did not think any of the pilots wore it. A modified version of the patch was also painted on both sides of the LOH 6 main rotor cowling. Bob thinks SP/5 Richard Canning, a Casper Aero Scout, either designed or was involved in the design of the patch.

#### **Early 1965-67 Casper Platoon Commanders:**

- Donald Bliss, 1965
- Duane Ingram, 1965-66
- Bruce Cochran, 1966-66
- Thomas J. Terry, 1966-67
- Calvin Gibson, 1967-67

## **BACKGROUND OF 173d AIRBORNE BRIGADE (Sep) COWBOY AVIATION SUPPORT:**

### **General background and parent unit assignments of the Cowboys**

The 82d Aviation Company was activated at Fort Bragg NC in 1957. The Company was expanded and redesignated the 82d Aviation Battalion on 1 July 1960 with a total of three (3) Companies and 60 aircraft. The 82d Aviation Battalion minus Company A deployed to the Dominican Republic in April 1965. Company A deployed to Vietnam that same month. The Advance Party departed by plane, from Oakland California, and arrived in VN on or about 12 April 1965. The main body of Company A, along with its 3 support units: 166th Transportation Detachment (Aircraft Maintenance) 234th Signal Detachment (Avionics) 25th Medical Detachment departed San Diego California on 12 April aboard the Helicopter Carrier USS Iwo Jima,

There were a total of three Avn Companies, with their support units and aircraft and equipment that sailed to Vietnam on the Iwo Jima on 12 April 1965:

- A Company, 82d Aviation Battalion 82d Airborne Division
- A Company, 1st Aviation Battalion 1st Infantry Division
- A Company, 101st Aviation Battalion 101st Airborne Division

There were a total of 75 new helicopters aboard the ship. Each company was assigned: 9 UH-1B and 16 UH-1D helicopters. These were the first D model Hueys to enter service in Vietnam.

The USS Iwo Jima arrived off the coast of Vung Tau, Vietnam on 1 May 1965. The ship docked approximately 30 miles off shore and the aircraft were flown from the ship to Vung Tau with limited crews on board.

The majority of the company personnel and equipment was taken ashore aboard LSTs. The company was based at Vung Tau and assigned to the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion.

They were given the Callsign: 'Dallas Cowboys' by Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) SOI. The Company dropped the word: 'Dallas' and changed the Callsign to 'Cowboys'.

The 'Cowboys' of Company A/82d Aviation Battalion, consisting of two lift platoons and one armed helicopter platoon arrived in Vietnam on 1 May 1965.

- 1st Lift Platoon: 'Ramrods' (Originally named: 'Peacemakers'. Reason for change is unknown)
- 2d Lift Platoon: 'Mustangs'
- Armed Helicopter Platoon: 'Falcons'

The A/82d 'Cowboys' were assigned to the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion with the mission of providing General Support to the III Corps Tactical Area.

From May 1965 thru October 1965, the 173d Airborne Brigade received its major aviation support for combat assaults, armed helicopter support and resupply, from the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion. As part of the 145th CAB, the 'Cowboys' of Company A/82d were actively involved in providing this aviation support to the 173d during this time period. Requested by BG Williamson, 173d Abn Bde Commander, Company A/82d was assigned to the 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep) on 19 October 1965 and

their mission changed to Direct Support of the 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep). (Don Bliss, who was instrumental in this action, said he thought the order read: "Attachment For All Purposes.")

The 'Cowboys' continued to fly operational missions for the 173d while simultaneously preparing for and moving to Bien Hoa. They were released from operational missions on 27 October 1965 to complete the move, which required 53 sorties. The "Cowboys" again began flying operational missions for the 173d early the following day.

Company A/82 was redesignated the 335th Assault Helicopter Company (AHC) 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep) on 1 September 1966. Note: The initial designation was: 335th Aviation Company Airmobile Light (AML) The designation was changed to 335th Assault Helicopter Company by the 1st Aviation Brigade that same month.

The company continued to be assigned to the 173d Abn Bde until January 1967 when it was reassigned to the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion, 1st Aviation Brigade.

After this reassignment, its mission was changed to General Support of III Corps, like all of the other 145th CAB aviation units in Military Region Three.

Through the direct intervention of BG John Deane Jr., 173d Airborne Brigade Commander, at that time; the 335th. 'Cowboys', were placed under the Operational Control (OPCON) of the 173d Abn Bde and their mission was changed to Direct Support of the 173d. The 335th deployed to the Dak To, Kontum, Pleiku area with the 173d Brigade in May 1967.

On 31 December 1967, the 335th AHC was reassigned to the: 268th Combat Aviation Battalion 17th Combat Aviation Group 1st Aviation Brigade and their base camp moved to Tuy Hoa.

The Cowboys mission remained Direct Support of the 173d Airborne Brigade.

The Cowboys were released from the Operational Control (OPCON) of the 173d Airborne Brigade in March 1968, when their mission was changed from providing Direct Support to the 173d Airborne Brigade to providing General Support to the II Corps Tactical Area. The 335th was attached to the: 214th Combat Aviation Battalion 164th Combat Aviation Group 1st Aviation Brigade and moved their base camp to Bear Cat in the Third Corps Tactical Region in December 1968. Their mission was to provide support to the 9th US Infantry Division and the 7th and 9th Vietnamese Divisions.

The 335th was assigned to the 214th CAB in July 1969. The Cowboys were moved to Dong Tam on 31 August 1970 and provided support to ARVN units operating in the Fourth Corps Tactical Region. The 335th stood down and redeployed to Fort Riley Kansas on: 5 November 1971

The 335th was assigned to the 1st Aviation Battalion (Provisional) with the mission of providing support to the 1st Infantry Division and 5th US Army. The 335th was deactivated in 1976

## CASPER / COWBOY RELATIONSHIP:

Shortly after the assignment of Company A/82 Avn Bn, to the 173d Abn Bde on 19 October 1965, the decision was made to consolidate all of the brigade's aviation assets.

The 173d Aviation Platoon, 'Caspers', and the 161st Reconnaissance Flight (RECCE Flight) of the Royal Australian Army, who used the callsign: 'Possier', were placed under the Operational Control (OPCON) of the Company A/82d Avn Bn Commander, Major Donald A. Champlin.

The 161st RECCE Flight, along with the: 1st Battalion Royal Australian Regiment, the Royal Australian Artillery Battery, the Prince of Whales Light Horse Troop and the 161st Royal New Zealand Artillery, was detached from the 173d Brigade in June of 1966. Note: After their release from attachment from the 173d Abn Bde, the Australians ("Diggers") and the New Zealanders ("Kiwis") formed the: 1st Australian Task Force (Separate)

The Caspers remained OPCON to the Cowboy Company Commanders from October 1965 to March of 1968 when the mission of the Cowboys changed and the 335th AHC was released from the 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep).

The 173d Aviation Platoon Caspers were the organic brigade aviation support unit and remained in the brigade and reverted back to the Operational Control of the Brigade S-3. The platoon increased in size and upgraded their aircraft. The Casper Platoon UH-1 fleet was increased to eight (8), and in March or April 1968, the OH-13s were exchanged for six (6) LOH-6s, which were armed with miniguns and were utilized in the Aero Scout role. The aero scouts used the callsign: 'Inferno'. The remainder of the platoon continued to use the 'Casper' callsign. At some point in mid to late 1970, the LOHs were replaced by OH-58s.

The Casper Platoon remained with and continued to provide aviation support to the 173d Abn Bde (Sep) throughout the remainder of its service. The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) departed Vietnam in August of 1971. It was stationed at Fort Campbell, Kentucky until its deactivation on 14 January 1972.

After the 335th, Cowboys (gunships: Falcons), were released from brigade control, the Combat Assault, and Combat Support missions for the 173d were provided by the 61st and 117th Avn Companies: 1st Aviation Company: Lift Plts: Lucky Stars, Gunships: Star Blazers, 117th Aviation Company: Lift Plts: Warlords, Gunships: Sidewinders

Additional aviation support was provided by Troop C 7/17th Cavalry (Ruthless Charlie, Yellow Scarf), which had been placed under the Operational Control (OPCON) of the 173d Abn Bde (Sep)

I want to thank the following named individuals for all of their efforts and assistance in retrieving this information about the Cowboys and the Casper Platoon enabling his summary fact sheet to be compiled –  
***John Hoza***

- Don Bliss: 173d Avn Platoon Ldr, (Casper) / 173d Airborne Brigade, Avn Officer, 1965/66)
- Don Champlin: Company Commander, Company A/82d Avn Bn 'Cowboy 6', 1965/66)
- Chuck Utzman: Company Commander, 335th Assault Helicopter Company, 'Cowboy 6' 173d Abn Bde, Avn Officer, 1967/68)
- Duane Ingram (Casper 6, 1965/66)
- Betty Lou Watson (widow of Jessie Bob Watson, Casper 1965)
- John Tyler (173d Abn Bde S-3, 1965)
- Gus Bell (Casper, Hot Stuff – Lead, 1966/1967)
- Ken Jones (Casper / 166th Maint., 1966/67)
- Bruce Silvey (Casper / 173d Airborne Brigade, Brigade Aviation Officer 1968/69)
- Cliff White (Casper, 1968)
- Steven Spencer (Casper, 1969)
- Sam Keith (Casper, 1971)
- Ned Costa (Casper, 1968/69)
- Bob White (Casper / 'Inferno', 1968/69)
- Don Charlton (Casper, 1968/69)
- Don Bachali, Casper, 1965
- Del McConnel, (1965/66), Commander, 166th Transportation Detachment ('Horsethief')
- Kurt Schultz, Falcon 1965/66

# **COWBOYS**

## **UNIT HISTORY**

### **5 MAY 1965 – 31 DECEMBER 1965**

**History of  
173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate)**

**Prepared by  
LT. James B. Channon**

**Researched by  
LT. George A. Russill**

**BIEN HOA, REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM**

The following history was taken from the book *The Fists Three Years*, a pictorial history of the 173D Airborne Brigade (Separate). It was the only history that could be found that describes the activities of **Company "A," 82nd Aviation Battalion**. Although the history below is directed more toward the 173d Airborne Brigade, it does describe some of the Cowboys activities upon their arrival in Vietnam.

### **ORGANIZATION:**

The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) was activated 25 June 1963 and was formed around the nucleus of the 2nd Airborne Battle Group 503d Infantry, a lineal descendent of the World War II 503d Parachute Infantry Regiment of Corregidor fame. It was organized as a balanced airborne combat force consisting of two infantry battalions, an artillery battalion, a support battalion, an engineer company, a cavalry troop, an armor company, and a headquarters company.

Upon activation, it became the first and only separate airborne brigade in the United States Army. This was the beginning of a long series of "Firsts" for the Brigade. It underwent extensive jungle training on Okinawa and made mass parachuted jumps on the Island of Taiwan, in Thailand and on the Island of Mindoro in the Philippines. Through such training, the men of the Brigade were honed to razor sharpness and prepared for deployment to any trouble spot in Southeast Asia.

On 5 May 1965, it became the first U.S. Army ground combat unit committed to the war in South Vietnam, where further organizational changes were to take place. Attached to the Brigade were: 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment and support troops, the Prince of Wales Light Horse Troop, a Royal Australian Artillery Battery, 161st Royal New Zealand Artillery Battery, **Company "A," 82nd Aviation Battalion**, plus special intelligence, transportation, chemical and signal detachments.

The Brigade and attached units distinguished themselves as fierce fighters on the battlefield against the Viet Cong (VC). They have smashed the VC whenever and wherever they found him, and, when not doing battle, they have conducted extensive civic action programs to assist the South Vietnamese people in the attainment of a better life and to bolster their hope for a future of peace and progress.

These programs included medical assistance, support of orphanages, distribution of food and clothing and repair of churches, schools, roads and construction of wells.

The shoulder insignia (patch) worn by the men of the Brigade came into being with the activation of the Brigade in June 1963. The red bayonet signifies a strike force borne by a white wing denoting that the strike force can be flown by transport aircraft and dropped by parachute onto any assigned objective. The tab reading "AIRBORNE" above the shoulder patch indicates that the men are paratroopers and all equipment of the Brigade is air transportable. The patches' colors, red, white and blue are our national colors.

"All the Way" is the traditional motto of the paratroopers and was born out of the annals of World War II. It reflects the spirit, drive and resoluteness of the paratroopers to carry out any assigned task or mission, no matter how difficult, to a successful conclusion.

The paratroopers of the Brigade are called "Sky Soldiers." This nickname was given to the troopers by the people of the Republic of Nationalist China (Taiwan) because of a series of mass parachute jumps conducted on the Island of Taiwan in conjunction with the Chinese airborne forces. The people of Taiwan began calling the paratroopers "Tien Bing" which is Chinese for "Sky Soldier." The name stuck and has since been made the official nickname of the paratroopers of the 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep).

## **COMBAT SUPPORT:**

Within the 173d Support Battalion are three companies without which the Brigade could not function. "B" Company (Medical) provides teams of doctors and aidmen to operate the Brigade Clearing Station. "C" Company (Supply and Transport) hauls and stores the Brigade's supplies and its Aerial Equipment Support Platoon furnishes parachute support. Third echelon maintenance of all equipment is accomplished by "D" Company (Maintenance). Formerly part of support battalion but now separate Company "A" (Administration) handles all the personnel services for the Brigade including Special Services and the post office. The 1st Australian Logistical Support Company provides special support for the Australian troops.

Whether it's a shower point being built or a Viet Cong mine destroyed, the 173d Engineer Company does it. Attached to them is a special detachment of the Third Field Troop of the Royal Australian Engineers. Charged with the responsibility of housing and providing for all the personnel of Brigade headquarters are Headquarters and Headquarters Company.

The two troopship platoons and one gunship platoon of **Company "A," of the 82nd Aviation Battalion** furnished the much needed independence for the Brigade. With the Hueys of its own helicopter company the Brigade is now certain that its helicopter support will be available as needed. Part of the aviation company are three specialized detachments designed to supplement the company's support platoons. The 166th Transportation Detachment and the 234th Signal Detachment provide the critical third echelon maintenance on the helicopters and signal equipment, while the 25th Medical Detachment provides aidmen and a flight surgeon.

The Brigade's smallest unit is the 51st Chemical Detachment which provides the chemical support needed in clearing tunnel complexes.

## **THE TROOP LIFT:**

To the Brigade's **Company "A," 82nd Aviation Battalion** goes the dangerous job of transporting the "Sky Soldiers" to the objective area. At the staging area, whether Bien Hoa or the field, the units to be lifted are broken down into a series of "lifts." The size of the lift depends upon the number of helicopters available, the size of the objective landing zone (LZ), and the number of troops to be lifted. Generally, about 12 Hueys are used in a lift. For each lift, the troops are separated and prepositioned on the LZ within a few feet of where their helicopter will land.

In just a few well-coordinated seconds, the helicopters will land, the troops pile aboard, and the entire lift will rise from the departure LZ at once and head for the objective area.

As the helicopters approach the LZ, the gunships fan out, circling the LZ waiting to suppress any hostile fire. On board the troopships, the door-gunners are alert for any enemy activity in the surrounding tree line. As the troopships land, the Sky Soldiers spring from the Hueys and quickly take up defensive positions around the LZ or move out immediately into the thick jungles and the troop ships return to the departure LZ for another lift.

A variation of the planned lift employed by the Brigade is an "Eagle Flight" consisting of a reinforced company or less which moves by helicopter to an LZ that generally has not received preparatory fires. Such a flight is made in reaction to a hot intelligence report. During the operations around Pleiku the Brigade employed many eagle flights to deposit quickly platoon-size patrols around the countryside.

**HEAVY FIRE TEAM -- LIGHT FIRE TEAM:**

The major innovation in this conflict has been the use of the armed Army helicopter. Originally armed for defensive purposes, the four man UH-1B (Hueys) have evolved into a sophisticated aerial fire support system.

A gunship platoon such as the **Falcons of "A," Company 82nd Aviation Battalion**, attached to the Brigade, has eight UH-1B's heavily armed with 2.75" rockets and 7.62mm machine flexguns with a total of 6,000 rounds. Six of the ships mount four M-6 kits 7.62 machine flexguns, two pods with seven rockets each and two door mounted M-60 machine guns with 1,500 rounds each.

The heavy ships, nicknamed "Frog" and "Hog," provide the saturation fire. The Frog has two 12 shot rocket pods, the door mounted M-60's, and a nose mounted M-5 grenade launcher containing 150 40mm grenades. The beast, the Hog, bears two pods containing 24 rockets each plus the standard door guns. Firing the rockets in pairs, salvo or individually, the heavy ships augment a light gunship fire team, furnishing tremendous suppressive fire against an LZ, a trench system, or an ambush site.

At 80 knots air speed, the Hueys are able to spot targets of opportunity, provide aerial reconnaissance, and protect a long motor convoy all during its one and a half hour flying time, and its ability to refuel and rearm wherever it lands drastically shortens its down time.

The employment of the gunships and their aerial tactics have been under constant revision as new techniques are devised and tried. Like the fighter pilots of W.W.II, the **Falcons** represent the daredevils of modern aerial warfare.

**COMBAT:**

The 173d's first mission was to secure and defend the Bien Hoa Air Base. When asked the morning of his Sky Soldiers' arrival at the base on 5 May 1965, how soon he expected to initiate action against the Viet Cong (VC), General Williamson replied, "Tonight." And that night the Brigade set its first ambush patrols and the security and defense of Bien Hoa Air Base began.

Areas of responsibility were immediately assigned to subordinate units, defensive fires were planned, barriers erected and check points established. But rather than sit and wait for the VC to attack, the Brigade moved out to secure the area by continual, thorough and aggressive patrolling. Twenty-four hours a day, the Bien Hoa area was saturated by the "Sky Soldiers," and in support, the howitzer crewmen of 3/319th Artillery remained on alert. Ranging in size from a rifle squad to a company, patrols combed the area, examining trails for recent use, investigating likely assembly and ambush sites and recording every new trail and clearing. Usually each patrol had a mortar or artillery forward observer with it, and when needed, specially trained demolition's men were included. In addition, Vietnamese policemen accompanied the patrols as interpreters and to interrogate suspected VC.

While securing the immediate area, the troopers simultaneously moved into adjacent areas, patrolling and clearing a series of zones extending in radials out to 15 kilometers from the air base. Once cleared, a "measle" approach was used extensively in conjunction with other tactical concepts to maintain the security of the Tactical Area of Responsibility (TAOR).

This approach entailed the selection of numerous helicopter landing zones and patrol base positions throughout the TAOR out to 105mm artillery range. These areas were coded and plotted on the Brigade's immediate defense map, which became commonly known as the "Measle Sheet." Eagle flights and motor and foot moves were employed in positioning elements up to company size in these preselected areas. The exact areas to be occupied were arbitrarily selected, but when possible, the selection was based on available

intelligence. Several areas were selected for occupation at a time and the units occupying them would remain there from one to three days. In this way the VC was kept guessing. He never knew where the "Sky Soldiers" would show next and was caught by surprise time and time again by the fast moving resolute troopers.

While the infantry battalions were employing eagle flights and foot patrols, E/17th Cavalry and D/16th Armor were making a show of force, scouting the road networks, selecting fording sites and checking the banks of the Dong Nai Rivers, or conducting a reconnaissance in force in the TAOR. By varying the time, type and manner of patrols, the Brigade was able to secure the roads. Once secure, the roads sprang alive with bicycles, ox carts, Lambretta scooters, buses and trucks as the grateful Vietnamese people journeyed to visit long abandoned markets, friends and families.

In conjunction with the securing of Bien Hoa Air Base, the Brigade perfected techniques in airmobile operations such as the movement of artillery by helicopter and establishment of a fire support base prior to the introduction of the infantry into objective areas by helicopters. Outmoded procedures were revamped and the Brigade began preparation for battalion and larger size operations.

In less than two weeks after its arrival in Vietnam, the first battalion size operation was conducted. The 2/503d Infantry was heli-lifted into an LZ in the extreme eastern sector of the Brigade TAOR, and conducted an overnight sweep through the thick jungles, emerging the next day in the adjoining rice paddies. The 3/319th Artillery with E/17th Cavalry and D/16th Armor attached moved out by convoy to a location from which it could support the operation and was in position well before the first heliborne troops of the 2/503d Infantry was landed in the selected LZ. Very light enemy resistance was encountered.

One week later, the 1/503d Infantry with C/3/319th Artillery struck out from Vung Tau against the VC. The battalion task force swept through an area near the resort, meeting only sporadic sniper fire from the VC.

At the end of May 1965, the Brigade committed almost all its combat assets in an airmobile operation for the first time as the 1/503d Infantry and 2/503d Infantry swept through an area just south of the junction of the Song Be and Dong Nai Rivers. The four day operation included airmobile assaults on three different objectives and security of a fourth. It was the largest and most unusual airmobile operation ever conducted in Vietnam.

Brigade elements were organized into three task forces (TF): Task Force SURUT, composed of 3/319th Artillery (less two batteries), reinforced by E/17th Cavalry, one platoon of Brigade engineers and one composite platoon made up of volunteers of the administrative, supply and maintenance personnel of the Support Battalion; Task Force DEXTER, consisting of 2/503d infantry, plus attached Brigade engineers.

All individuals in TF SURUT, even the artillery gun crews, made an Infantry type airmobile assault to secure LZ BLUE. The TF landing area was pounded by U.S. Air Force and U.S. Army Aviation 25 minutes prior to the first touch down of troops. As soon as the area was secured, H-37 helicopters brought in six 105mm howitzers with their ammunition. The howitzers were promptly laid and fires for the landing of TF DEXTER on LZ RED were initiated.

Three hours after the landing of TF SURUT, TF DEXTER began landing on LZ RED. Its landings were protected by a twenty minute artillery preparation, a fifteen minute air strike and five minutes of reconnaissance and suppressive fires from the armed helicopters. The initial assault was supported by fire from armed helicopters and all door gunners of the personnel carrying UH-1B and D's (Hueys).

While landings were going on in objective BLUE and RED, TF BOLAND was being flown by C-130 and C-123 aircraft from Vung Tau to Bien Hoa Air Base. Bien Hoa served as the staging field for all helicopter lifts.

The next day at first light, fire support from objectives BLUE and RED were used to support landings of TF BOLAND on objective WHITE. After support from ground weapons, the U.S. Air Force again assisted in paving the way with a high volume of bombs, rockets and machine-gun fire. Again under the protective fires of helicopters, the TF landing was accomplished against light opposition.

A total of 7 VC were killed as the swift moving "Sky Soldiers" encountered light resistance. They uncovered and destroyed many VC camps and bunkers, but found the VC unwilling to stand and fight.

Thus the mold was cast. Many of the techniques and procedures employed in this operation would be used again in later operations. The "Sky Soldiers" were now ready to press the "offensive defense" of the Bien Hoa area, and began planning for thrusts into infamous War Zone "D" which lay just across the Dong Nai River to the north of the Brigade TAOR.

On 31 May 1965, the 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, arrived in country and was attached to the Brigade. Many of the men of this experienced and highly trained battalion were veterans of the Malayan counterguerrilla campaign and were eager to show their mettle in battle against the VC.

Early in the morning of 13 June 1965, the Brigade was alerted for possible movement to assist ARVN forces heavily engaged in a fierce battle with the VC near the town of Dong Xoai north of War Zone "D." The decision was made to send a battalion task force. Within hours the 1/503d Infantry and A/3/319th Artillery were lifted from Vung Tau and Bien Hoa to the vicinity of Phuoc Vinh on the northern edge of War Zone "D." By dusk, the battalion task force had set up blocking positions and secured the town and vital airstrip there.

In spite of aggressive patrolling, TF 1/503d had no VC contact as the enemy chose again to avoid the "Sky Soldiers." After four days, ARVN forces had secured the Dong Xoai area and TF 1/503d returned. The Brigade had successfully demonstrated its ability to respond to combat operational requirements on a moment's notice and had proved to all its eagerness to carry the battle to the VC.

On 19 June, the 1/503d and attachments were moved permanently from Vung Tau to rejoin the Brigade at Bien Hoa.

In late June, the Brigade penetrated War Zone "D" for the first time. Long a VC stronghold and formerly used as a redoubt by the Vietminh and Vietnamese bandits, War Zone "D" reportedly was an impregnable VC fortress. Here the VC trained, treated their sick, stored supplies and relaxed.

Preceded by artillery, air and armed helicopter strikes, the 2/503d assaulted War Zone "D" by helicopters on the morning of 23 June. Their mission was to search and destroy, and the fast moving troopers fanned out quickly from their LZ. With the artillery support based just south of the Dong Nai River, the men of the 2/503d Infantry were assured of continuous fire support. Again, the VC chose not to fight as the troopers swept through the area. Hot chow and glowing fires were abandoned by the VC. Bunkers, camps and supplies were destroyed by the "Sky Soldiers" and tons of rice rendered useless. A few VC suspects were detained but no significant contact was made with the enemy. But the "Sky Soldiers" proved that War Zone "D" was not an impregnable VC position.

As American troop strength in Vietnam increased, the Brigade was assigned the responsibility for clearing and securing the base areas for incoming units. The first mission was to secure the base area for

the 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division. On 25-26 June, the newly arrived 1/RAR, on its first major operation, cleared an area southeast of Highway 1A. The Aussies found only a few VC camps and made no contact with the VC. Within days' elements of the 2nd Brigade moved into the area without a shot being fired at them.

On 27 June, the Brigade participated in the largest troop lift and its first joint American-Vietnamese combat operation of the war. In all, nine battalions were involved: five infantry, one artillery, one support and a composite battalion of cavalry, armor and engineers. The targets were objectives deep inside War Zone "D." With the 3/319th fire support base established north of TAN UYEN in War Zone "D" and secured by the 1/RAR, D/16 Armor, with E/17th screening, the 1/503d Infantry and 2/503d Infantry were heli-lifted to the west of TAN UYEN deep into the VC redoubt--farther than any sizable friendly force had ventured in over one year. The two infantry battalions swept south while two battalions of ARVN airborne troops, who landed south of the "Sky Soldiers," swept north in an adjacent zone of operation. The operation lasted for four days and was the first time the newly arrived 1/RAR had taken their place with the Brigade as part of its combat formation. Killing 25 VC and destroying or capturing over 200 tons of rice and food stuff plus three trucks, the "Sky Soldiers" mapped enemy installations for future actions and proved again that the enemy redoubt was not impenetrable.

From 6 to 9 July, the Brigade again attacked into "D" Zone. With the fire support base (3/319th, D/16th, and 173d Eng. Co.) south of the Dong Nai River, the 1/503d, 2/503d with E/17th attached and 1/RAR, conducted successive heliborne assaults north of the Dong Nai River just south of the combined operation of 27-30 June. They swept south to trap the enemy against the river. On the west flank, the ARVN 48th Regiment blocked enemy escape routes and coordinated their movements with the Brigade. The ARVN 3d Battalion, 43d Regiment was attached to the Brigade on the second day of the operation and blocked VC escape routes to the east along the Dong Nai River. This was the first time that an ARVN combat unit had been attached and under the direct command of the U.S. commander. This thrust into War Zone "D" was the most complex yet most successful operation to date and resulted in over 400 VC casualties (later intelligence indicated, in fact, over 600 casualties), 28 VC captives, the destruction of over 300 VC buildings, 100 tons of rice and many domestic animals, and the recovery of a ton of documents, thirty weapons and four radios.

In the first major engagement with the VC, the men of the Brigade had the satisfaction that they emerged eminently victorious. The hard core VC battalion they encountered had been decimated. The enemy had proved no match for the tough, hard driving "Sky Soldiers" in spite of their well-prepared entrenchments and booby trapped facilities.

During the period 10 to 27 July, the Brigade conducted patrols up to two companies in size in its TAOR at Bien Hoa as shows of force and in conjunction with the Measle Sheet. The 161st Field Battery of the Royal New Zealand Army (RNZA) arrived in country on 17 July and was attached to the Brigade.

The Brigade's next major operation from 28 July to 2 August was in Phuoc Tuy Province where a VC supply route was believed located. Task Force 6A (3/319th, E/17th, D/16th, and elements of the Engineers and Support Battalion moved by convoy down Highway 15 to Position NICKEL in Phuoc Tuy Province on 28 July (D-1) and in the process cleared the highway for the first time in months which allowed the ARVN to resupply their Binh Gia garrison near Vung Tau. The 1/503d moved by C-130 aircraft to Vung Tau early in the morning of 29 July.

The airmobile assault on 29 July was preceded by a massive B-52 strike. Following this, the normal Air Force and artillery fires prepared the LZ for the landing of the first troop lift of the 2/503d from Bien Hoa. The seventy-five Hueys used to lift the battalion then moved on to Vung Tau and in two lifts placed the 1/503d on the LZ. Then the helicopters returned to Bien Hoa and picked up the rest of the 2/503d. In

this manner, the 145th Aviation Battalion was able to complete the entire troop lift with only two refueling stops.

On 30 July the 2/18th Infantry, 1st Division relieved E/17th and D/16th from their security mission of Position NICKEL and allowed the cavalry and armor units to establish blocking positions for the infantry's push through the valley. D/16th mounted patrols with composite platoons of the Support Battalion and Engineers to check out reported VC locations and caches.

The Brigade logistics operation center operated out of Vung Tau throughout the operation. For the first time in Vietnam, the Brigade used parachutes for the delivery of supplies. Low Level Extraction (Lolex) was used partially to supply TF 6A at Position NICKEL.

This complicated operation was conducted smoothly and effectively. The Brigade showed its flexibility and proved that it was not tied to the Bien Hoa area, and the "Sky Soldiers" dispelled the myth that this Phuoc Tuy area was a heavily fortified VC fortress and encouraged the ARVN military forces to conduct bolder and more ambitious operations in the area.

During the period 7 to 11 August, the Brigade again invaded "D" zone as the 1/RAR supported by B/3/319th moved through on another search and destroy operation. Only light contact was made with the VC, but the Aussies killed 4 snipers and destroyed numerous VC camps and installations.

On the morning of 10 August, the Brigade received a warning order to move to the Pleiku area for possible airmobile operations. Minutes later came the movement order and within hours the first elements of the Brigade were landing by C-130 and C-123 aircraft in the Montagnard country in central Vietnam.

Under siege was the Special Forces CIDG camp at Du Co, only 5 kilometers from the Cambodian border. With the VC strength estimated at more than regimental size, immediate reinforcements in the Pleiku area were necessary to allow the ARVN II Corps Commander to commit his reserves to relieve the VC pressure at Duc Co. The 173d provided the reserve and secured the strategic Thanh Binh pass, allowing ARVN relief forces to pass through to Duc Co. While securing the pass, the Brigade conducted numerous eagle flights and patrols throughout the area seeking out the VC.

A total of 43 company, 116 platoon and 22 squad size operations were conducted in the area, thoroughly saturating every hill and valley with "Sky Soldiers," but the enemy again chose to run rather than fight. After the VC siege of Duc Co had been broken, the ARVN relief column was ordered to return to the Pleiku area. The Brigade was given the mission to secure the passage of the relief force back to Pleiku. This force returned through the Brigade secured area without a shot being fired at them. Brigade planning and coordination for the security of the ARVN forces served as an outstanding example as to how this type mission should be carried out. The ARVN Task Force Commander was so impressed that he told his staff to learn the technique employed by the Brigade. Having mastered the technique the favor was later returned in kind when the same ARVN task force secured the return of Brigade elements from Kontum.

The Brigade returned to Pleiku and was immediately alerted for commitment to the Kontum area. A VC buildup there was in progress and an attack at any time was feared. The Brigade dispatched 1/503d, C/3/319th and E/17 to Kontum, opening the Pleiku-Kontum road for the first time in five weeks. At Kontum, the VC again chose not to fight the "Sky Soldiers."

During the Brigade's presence in the highlands, VC activity decreased to its lowest rate in 18 months. Consequently, most of the Brigade's efforts there were directed towards civic action. Over 50 villages were visited by medics who treated over 5,000 patients. A leprosarium was refurbished, and many

schools were repaired, painted and cleaned. After 28 days, the "Sky Soldiers" moved back to Bien Hoa from the highlands.

One week later, 14 September 1965, War Zone "D" was penetrated again as the Brigade moved into the Ben Cat sector north of the Iron Triangle and conducted search and destroy operations until 28 September. Saturation patrolling was employed utilizing squad and platoon size units from battalion patrol bases.

An impressive list of accomplishments marked this operation. In order to extend the fire support base, A/3/319th and the 161st RNZA Battery were moved into the center of the TAOR with the indispensable help of the APC's of the Prince of Wales Light Horse Troop. Acting on intelligence garnered from a VC, the 1/503d was heli-lifted into the northern operational area. In four days the swift moving "Sky Soldiers" destroyed two hospitals, a signal school, several large training camps and numerous VC buildings. C/1/503d captured 62 Russian sniper rifles with telescopic sights and 36 military radios plus 4,500 Chinese hand grenades and 91 Bangalore torpedoes. One of the sniper rifles was to later be permanently displayed in the Presidential Library in Washington, D.C.

In all, the VC lost 46 killed and 80 captured. Over 9,000 documents and 500 pounds of medical supplies were captured and twenty-three VC camps were located for future air strikes or destroyed as found.

Concurrent with combat operations, an extensive civic action program was conducted. Seventeen village chiefs who had not ventured out of Ben Cat in over a year returned to their villages, elections were held and Mass was said for the first time in a year. The roads sprung alive as long abandoned markets were supplied with fresh produce. Tons of foodstuffs were distributed along with 900 magazines for the now starved villagers.

During September 1965, the 1/RAR was reinforced by the 105 Field Battery, Royal Australian Artillery (RAA), the 3d Field Engineer Troop, the 161st Reconnaissance Flight and the 1st Australian Logistical Support Company (ALSC).

From 4 to 6 October, the 1/503d supported by 3/319th conducted another search and destroy operation into "D" Zone. On this rapidly moving three day operation, the battalion killed 15 VC, destroyed numerous VC camps and bunkers and captured many documents.

Two days later, the Brigade returned to the Ben Cat area but met only light and scattered VC resistance northwest of Ben Cat. The Brigade then turned south to challenge the "Iron Triangle"--a VC physical, psychological and military bastion. Many stories had been told about the Triangle and it was believed by the Vietnamese that the area was impenetrable.

Employing all three infantry battalions and the first B-52 strike of the war in direct support of ground troops, the "Sky Soldiers" and Aussies moved into the Iron Triangle and cracked it wide open. The fast moving Brigade elements killed 106 VC, destroyed numerous camps, a VC hospital and sank 7 sampans. The fifty square kilometers of the unknown no longer existed. The few VC installations that could not be destroyed were pinpointed for destruction at will by air attacks. As Brigadier General Williamson stated succinctly to his troops after the operation, "The Iron Triangle is no more." Another myth of VC invincibility was laid to rest.

On 19 October, the Brigade received its own aviation company, **Company "A," 82nd Aviation Battalion**. This was to be a most valuable addition to the Brigade for it provided much needed mobility and greatly enhanced the operational capability of the Brigade.

From 21 to 27 October, the 2/503d and B/3/319th cleared the Phu Loi-Di An area, a future location for elements of the U.S. 1st Infantry Division. The seven day operation resulted in slight contact and only two VC were killed. At the same time the 1/RAR supported by the RAA and RNZA batteries combed War Zone "D" again, encountering only occasional sniper fire from the VC. Three VC were killed.

From 5 to 9 November, the Brigade again invaded "D" Zone in Operation HUMP, which resulted in the biggest single U.S. ground engagement of the war to date. The 1/RAR entered south of the Dong Nai River while the 1/503d was heli-lifted in northwest of the river. The first three days of the operation were quiet with most of the action occurring in the Australian sector where two enemy were killed and one captured.

On the fourth day, the 1/503d, acting on an intelligence report, moved westerly and immediately encountered a large enemy force. The lead elements of C/1/503d made contact first and soon Charlie Company was enveloped by the larger force. B/1/503d moved up to secure Charlie Company's flank and quickly had to fight to secure its own flanks. With this, A/1/503d was committed, attacking the enemy's left flank. The 1/503d was now engaged with a regiment of hard core VC and the battle raged for four hours.

Shortly past noon Bravo and Charlie Companies were able to consolidate and readjust their lines to allow heavy artillery and air strikes to pound the entrenched enemy. As the "Sky Soldiers" moved back in to attack, the enemy, leaving their trenches and blowing bugles, counterattacked. Combat raged at close quarters throughout the afternoon and when the VC withdrew at dusk they left behind 403 dead, most of whom were killed by small arms fire. Hundreds of VC were killed and carried away and many wounded escaped on their own. Later reports indicated that the three companies of "Sky Soldiers" had decimated a front line regiment, armed with the latest Communist bloc automatic weapons and clothed in standard uniforms with steel helmets. The "Sky Soldiers," though seriously outnumbered and in the enemy's home ground, had routed and destroyed a major VC force.

Operation NEW LIFE in the La Nga River valley north of Vo Dat commenced on the morning of 21 November. Moving by helicopter, C-130, CV-2 and C-123 aircraft, within a few hours three infantry battalions, four artillery batteries, the cavalry troop and command sections had landed on the Vo Dat airstrip.

The mission of the Brigade was to prevent the rice harvest in the rich Rice Bowl from falling into the enemy's hands and to return the valley to government control.

Moving south on the road to Gia Ray the 2/503d cleared the area, eventually joining up with the overland elements consisting of two infantry battalions and two artillery batteries of the 1st Infantry Division, and brigade armor, logistical and engineer elements. With the road cleared, 600 troop-filled vehicles of the ARVN 10th Division passed through the Brigade to the eastern part of the Rice Bowl and began operations.

The 1/503d with C/3/319th was heli-lifted across the unfordable La Nga River into the northwest corner of the Rice Bowl. Through close cooperation with the village chief of Phuong Lam and acting on intelligence received, a series of highly successful night attacks were employed, proving to the startled villagers that the night did not belong to the VC.

All units carried out saturation patrolling, and the constant activity with supporting artillery and air strikes coupled with the active civil affairs program resulted in 207 VC ralliers to the government side and 63 weapons turned in.

Used extensively for the first time were the Long Range Patrols (LRP) of the Cavalry Troop who conducted a river patrol on the La Nga River. Twice the LRP swam rivers to get into their patrol areas and some patrols ranged out as far as 12 miles in their intelligence efforts.

The intensive civic action program resulted in the relocation of the people of entire villages to safer areas, and cultivated a friendly attitude among the people throughout the area. Soon the villagers assisted Brigade elements in locating VC caches of rice, weapons, and ammunition and were volunteering to tape broadcasts for psychological warfare missions.

From Operation NEW LIFE, the Brigade moved on the morning of 17 December directly to Operation SMASH in the Courtenay Rubber Plantation area 35 miles southeast of Bien Hoa. Intelligence sources indicated a sizable VC buildup there.

The 1/503d, 2/503d and 1/RAR were moved into three LZ's and immediately began saturation patrolling to find the enemy. On the next day the 2/503d ran into a strongly defended VC trench system manned with heavy machine guns. First encountered by the reconnaissance platoon and then C/2/503d, the battalion size VC force stubbornly held on. As B/2/503d came forward to reinforce the reconnaissance platoon, it smashed and overran an enemy position.

In the late afternoon, both Bravo and Charlie Companies 2/503d assaulted the trench system and the enemy chose to pull out rather than fight. The heavy firepower brought to bear on the enemy cost him 62 dead.

On 22 December, the Brigade returned to the Bien Hoa area to celebrate Christmas, host the Army Chief of Staff and watch the Bob Hope Show.

The Brigade launched the New Year with a swift move into the Mekong Delta and the notorious "Plain of Reeds." Operation MARAUDER I marked the first time American ground combat troops had fought in the Delta. The Brigade's mission was to cut the VC Oriental River supply route and seek out and find a hard core VC battalion long known to operate in the area.

With the fire support base and logistical and command elements set up at Bao Trai air strip 30 miles west of Saigon, the 1/503d and 1/RAR were heli-lifted into two LZ's west and east of the Oriental River. With the employment of these two battalions the Oriental River was effectively cut.

The next morning the 2/503d landed east of the Oriental River and immediately the "Sky Soldiers" met strong resistance between the LZ and the river. The battalion fought through a series of fortified positions and employed tear gas, and air and artillery strikes to dislodge the enemy. Late in the afternoon, a strong coordinated assault by the battalion routed the VC and they fled under the cover of darkness leaving behind 93 of their dead and machine-gun tripods and mortar base plates.

Meanwhile the 1/503d continued the mop-up on the west side of the river with numerous platoon size patrols. The 1st Battalion "Sky Soldiers" found extensive fortifications brought back 326 VC suspects and destroyed quantities of VC equipment and supplies. On the east side of the river the 1/RAR also found numerous enemy positions and heavy entrenchments while encountering only light resistance.

E/17th and D/16th conducted search operations around the support base area. They made a systematic search of a 4,000 meter radius of Boa Trai accompanied by Vietnamese National Policemen. In one operation, E/17th conducted a search of a 22,000 meter area on the eastern edge of the Brigade TAOR. Attached to E/17th was D/16th, two companies of the 38th ARVN Ranger Battalion, a light fire team, and one HO-13 helicopter for command and control. This was the Brigade's first experience with controlling

all ground elements entirely from the OH-13. This technique proved very successful and was used on subsequent operations. Twenty-one VC were captured and two VC killed.

In another instance D/16th, with two companies of ARVN Rangers attached rapidly surrounded a village into which personnel were observed fleeing. A number of military age suspects were captured and one, who had a powder burn on his cheek, proved to be a sniper who admitted that he had been firing on aircraft in the Bao Trai area.

The effectiveness of E/17th and D/16th efforts was such that the province Chief informed the Brigade commander that the VC had issued orders to cease firing upon aircraft in the area because it had become too costly in personnel and equipment.

During this operation, a further exploitation of the helicopter's mobility produced a variation of eagle flight tactics termed "Hopscotch." As an eagle flight of company size or smaller touched down on an LZ another eagle flight was airborne, ready to react to reinforce the first flight if needed. If not, it landed on a second LZ while a third eagle flight was airborne serving as its reaction force. In this manner, a large area could be rapidly saturated with troops and quickly covered and all of the troops could be within fire support range. In one day, the Hopscotch tactics enabled the Brigade to cover an area that would normally take two or three days to cover with the same size force.

When Operation MARAUDER terminated early in the morning of 8 January the Brigade had killed over 111 VC and literally torn up the VC 267th Battalion and headquarters of the VC 506th Battalion. Many important documents were taken, including the roster of the 506th personnel who lived by day in the villages and on the farms and fought at night as guerrillas. With proper follow-up, this spelled the end of the 506th.

The 173d, the first allied unit to operate in the Mekong Delta, proved again that the Brigade could go anywhere, anytime, and decisively defeat the enemy whenever contact was made.

At 0630 hours, 8 January, the Brigade swung immediately into Operation CRIMP, the largest U.S. operation conducted in the war to date.

The mission was to drive through the Ho Bo Woods region in Binh Duong Province and to destroy the political-military headquarters of the VC Military Region 4 that controlled enemy activities in the greater Saigon area.

The 1/RAR moved in first, initially encountering light resistance, but a few hours later a VC company engaged them in a vicious fight that continued into the night with the Australians overrunning successive bunker and trench systems. As the operation progressed, the Aussies and "Sky Soldiers" uncovered a multilevel labyrinth of underground tunnels. The Aussies captured dozens of weapons, including four new 12.7mm anti-aircraft machine-guns and more than 100,000 pages of important documents.

In all, 128 VC were confirmed killed, 91 captured and 509 suspects detained. The enemy lost 90 weapons, 22,000 rounds of small arms ammunition, grenades, 9 sampans, 57 tons of rice and various items as diverse as tape recorders, a duplication machine, and four typewriters.

The headquarters of the VC Military Region 4 was found, fixed and destroyed by the Brigade, thus causing the enemy untold damage by destroying one of his most secure base areas in Vietnam and taking from him many of his weapons and capturing thousands of documents and records which revealed his organization, plans, and much of his past activity.

To make sure use was not made of the tunnel complexes again, crystallized CS tear gas was placed on detonation cord and exploded throughout the system.

From 4 to 7 February the 1/RAR and E/17th supported by B/3/319th, the RAA and RNZA, conducted Operation ROUNDHOUSE in the vicinity of Phuoc Loc. It was a costly one for the VC as three VC were killed with a possible 17 more, and captured were 235 tons of rice, 5,250 pounds of salt, 700 lbs of peanuts, seven 5 ton and one 1/4 ton trucks, 9 bicycles, 2 typewriters and a quantity of weapons, ammunition and documents.

Throughout the Brigade's ten months in Vietnam, it and its attached units have proved themselves time and time again in battle. They beat the VC at his own game in his own back yard, and through their courage and drive, the VC have suffered heavy losses of personnel and equipment. To date, Brigade has killed enough guerrillas and hard core enemy to form a regiment, and over two battalions of VC surrendered rather than face the Brigade in battle.

# **COWBOYS**

## **UNIT HISTORY**

**1 JANUARY 1966 – 31 DECEMBER 1966**

**History of**

**335th Assault Helicopter Company  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco, Calif., 96227**

**Prepared by  
Cpt. John L. Wood  
&  
Cpt. Troy Reeves Jr.**

**Approved by  
Leyburn W. Brockwell Jr.  
LTC Infantry  
Commanding**

**Headquarters  
335 Assault Helicopter Company  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco, Calif. 96227**

From 1 January until 31 August 1966 the COWBOYS of the 335th were members of Company "A," 82nd Aviation Battalion. As of 1 September 1966, the COWBOYS were redesignated. The 335th Aviation Company (Airmobile Light) came into being. Subsequently, this designation was changed to the 335th Assault Helicopter Company (AML).

Throughout the year the mission of the unit, regardless of designation, was the same--to provide the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) with the best, most professional airmobile support available anywhere in the world.

To provide this close support, the 335th was attached to the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

The organization of the company with its attached units remained the same. That is, internally the 335th consisted of two airlift platoons, known as the Ramrods and the Mustangs, an armed helicopter platoon, known as the Falcons, and the service platoon that owned the well-known recovery ship, Horsethief. Attached to the 335th were the 25th Medical Detachment, the 166th Transportation Detachment and the 234th Signal Detachment. Additionally, the 173rd Aviation Platoon, the organic aviation element of the 173rd Airborne Brigade, was under the operational control of the company, and Casper was their name.

The area of operation for the company, in support of the Brigade, was the entire III Corps tactical area of the Republic of Vietnam. Within this III Corps there were some sectors that caused anxiety in the hearts of the aviators such as War Zone "D," the area around Song Be, and around Xuan Loc. But wherever the Brigade went, the COWBOYS of the 335th were always present.

To speak of the deeds of the COWBOYS in an adequate manner, a short summary of the various operations and occurrences must be made.

1966 began in the appropriate manner -- a combat lift on New Years Day to open Operation "Marauder" in the Bao Trai area. Then becoming Operation "Crimp," the COWBOYS entered the Hobo Woods, just South of War Zone "C." The greater part of January was spent in crushing the Viet Cong in the Hobo Woods. Miss Jo Collins, of Playmate fame, visited the COWBOYS. Subsequent mention of this was made in Playboy magazine.

The majority of February involved supporting the Brigade in its TAOR (Tactical Area of Responsibility) at Bien Hoa. Code named "Uniontown," this TAOR work was continued by elements of the Brigade during the remainder of the year. Additional support was provided the 1st Infantry Division at Di An.

Possibly one of the finest hours, to date, of the COWBOYS occurred during Operation "Silver City," in March, in War Zone "D." Specifically, on the evening of 15 March a force of two thousand VC encircled the 2/503rd Infantry, a Battalion of the 173rd Airborne Brigade. Throughout the night the VC remained silent, but as the first resupply helicopter arrived just after sunrise, the attack began. The resupply helicopter was shot down, ammunition was critical. The COWBOYS, responding to the emergency, sling-loaded ammunition into the LZ under withering hostile fire. At the time the first sling load of ammunition arrived, the Battalion was using the last that it had on-hand. When the VC broke contact after a day-long battle, they left behind four hundred of their dead. To say that the COWBOYS saved the day would be an understatement.

On 27 March Major Larry J. Baughman took command of the company from Major Donald A. Champlin who returned to CONUS.

April was the start of Operation "Denver" in the Song Be area. For this, the company moved in its entirety to the Special Forces camp at Song Be. Numerous Combat Assaults were performed throughout the heavily jungled area. Very few hits were taken on this operation.

Operation "Dexter," during May, took place in an area East of Bien Hoa, yet West of Xuan Loc. A search and clear operation, it was of short duration. Following this was Operation "Hardihood," by Xa Binh Gia, just North of Vung Tau. The purpose was to secure a base camp position for the newly arrived Royal Australian Regiment. Many long range patrol missions were accomplished, to include the first recorded emergency night extraction of the LRRP under fire.

On 9 June Operation "Hardihood" became "Hollandia," a search and destroy mission in the mountains on the seacoast just North of Vung Tau. Another first for the COWBOYS -- the first night Combat Assault in the III Corps area of RVN ever -- was the assault to begin the operation. 29 June saw Major Ernest H. Johnson take command of the company from Major Larry J. Baughman. After "Hollandia," Operation "Yorktown" commenced. Again it was a search and destroy mission. It was during this operation that six hundred and forty U.S. troopers were heli-lifted from the area of operation, just South of Xuan Loc, to a shower point located near the Xuan Loc airfield. This proved the COWBOYS flexibility.

In the second week of July, "Yorktown" was completed and Operation "Aurora I" began. Both a road clearing and search and destroy operation, its interest was highway 20, from Xuan Loc North to Da Hoa just inside the II Corps Area. The highway was being used rather heavily by the VC. In addition, the rich rice country around Vo Dat was feeding the VC. As the Brigade cleared the highway and moved into the Vo Dat area, the operation became "Aurora II." The COWBOYS then garrisoned themselves at the Vo Dat airfield. The event most probably remembered is the flood that swept everything into the nearby wooded area. But a very tragic occurrence was the crash of a troop-carrying COWBOY and the attendant ten (10) fatalities.

Xuan Loc was the base of operations for the COWBOYS in the month of August during Operation "Toledo." The Brigade, with ARVN units attached, combed the area East of Xuan Loc. Extensive use was made of the long range patrols. Most notable was the rescue, in the fog and rain, of the lone-surviving crewman of a downed medevac aircraft.

The Brigade returned in Operation "Sioux City" to its stamping ground, War Zone "D," during September and early October. The Casper platoon employed its armed OH-13 aircraft for the first time. The VC seemed to stay out of sight during this operation, probably remembering vividly their defeat in March during "Silver City."

Operation "Robin" began on 10 October. Elements of the 4th Infantry Division were arriving at Vung Tau from CONUS and were to garrison at Bear Cat, about ten miles Southeast of Bien Hoa. The operation was then a road security mission, keeping open highway 15 between Vung Tau and Bear Cat. Concurrently, the COWBOYS provided three (3) UH-1D's and two (2) OH-13's from the Caspers for Operation "Winchester" at Da Nang Airbase in the I Corps area. It was also during October that the VC sabotaged the Falcon helicopter parking area at Bien Hoa. Before the helicopters could be evacuated, one (1) gunship was destroyed and another severely damaged.

With ARVN units attached, the Brigade began Operation "Meridian" in November. The area was War Zone "C" above Tay Ninh. Making numerous Combat Assaults and Eagle Flights, it was soon discovered that the VC were in the area in force. Thus Operation "Attleboro," a multi-divisional operation was born. Despite the terrible terrain, over one thousand VC were killed. There were almost constant Combat Assaults by the COWBOYS throughout the period.

Upon the completion of "Attleboro" on 20 November the COWBOYS reverted to their continual mission of supporting Brigade elements in the TAOR at Bien Hoa. An eventual operation, "Waco," developed from the TAOR mission in late November. A search and destroy mission, it covered the area between Bien Hoa and Xuan Loc.

The COWBOY element that was supporting the 4/503rd Infantry at Da Nang returned in early December to Bien Hoa. Operation "Canary/Duck," again a mission of securing highway 15 between Vung Tau and Bear Cat, began on 7 December. This time the road was secured for elements of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade and the 9th Infantry Division that were arriving from CONUS. Activities during the operation were normal until 23 December when the 4/503rd Infantry was to be withdrawn from PZ "Stump" because of the forthcoming Christmas truce. The Battalion had minor contact with unknown enemy forces, and no particular problems were expected during the extraction. However, a surprise was in store. During the extraction a large enemy force made its presence felt by ruthlessly attacking both the troops on the PZ and the COWBOYS who were making the extraction lifts. After thirteen lifts by the COWBOYS under extremely heavy fire the extraction was complete. The COWBOY aircraft were riddled with holes and two (2) crewmen were injured. This sort of action by the COWBOYS was indicative of their skill and their valor.

After the Christmas truce, Operation "Canary/Duck" continued. And the COWBOYS were there. The year closed on that note.

An example of the tremendous efforts expended by the 335th Assault Helicopter Company in the accomplishment of its mission is evidenced by the following statistical data accumulated during the period 1 January -- 31 December 1966.

Company size Combat Assaults	1,560
Flying Hours	25,671
Sorties	66,329
Cargo (Tons)	3,486
Passengers	95,577
Aircraft Hit by Hostile Fire	184
Aircraft Destroyed	7
Major Aircraft Accidents	9
Personnel Killed in Action	6
Personnel Wounded In Action	29

The following awards were presented to members of the company during the period, 1 January -- 31 December 1966.

Legion of Merit	2
Distinguished Flying Cross	52
Bronze Star for Valor	4
Bronze Star	60
Air Medal for Valor	180
Air Medal	4,865
Army Commendation Medal	74
Purple Heart	32

Company "A," 82nd Aviation Battalion was awarded the Meritorious Unit Commendation for Achievement in the performance of outstanding service in the Republic of Vietnam for the period May 1965--July 1966.

**History of  
COMPANY "A," 82ND AVIATION BATTALION  
173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate)  
APO 96250 San Francisco, California**

**1 January 1966 through 28 February 1966**

**Prepared by  
1/Lt. GEORGE W. MURRAY**

**Approved by  
ERNEST H. JOHNSON  
Major Infantry  
Commanding**

**For  
DONALD A. CHAMPLIN  
Major Armor  
Commanding**

**Headquarters  
335 AVIATION COMPANY (AML)  
173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate)**

**APO 96250 San Francisco, California**  
**COMPANY "A," 82ND AVIATION BATTALION**  
**173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate)**

**APO San Francisco 96250**

AVBE-AM

4 November 1966

Subject: Monthly History for Company "A," 82nd Aviation Battalion

To: Commanding Officer  
335th Aviation Company (AML)  
173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate)  
APO San Francisco 96250

**1 January 1966 through 31 January 1966**

**I. OPERATIONS:**

- a. The year 1966, began with the lifting of 700 troops on New Years Day, into Bao Trai, an airstrip Northwest of Saigon. The Company set up operations with the Brigade at Bao Trai and supported the Brigade on Operation Marauder.
- b. 2 January 1966-normal support missions for the Brigade were flown. Captain Alfred L. Dovre was hit by enemy ground fire. The wound in the foot, kept him out of action for several days.
- c. Normal support of the Brigade continued through 6 January, with a 324-troop lift on the 6th.
- d. Operation Marauder ended on 7 January 1966.
- e. The 173rd Airborne Brigade moved into Hobo Woods on 8 January to begin Operation Crimp. The COWBOYS led by Major Champlin lifted 420 troops to secure the Brigade CP. Two (2) aircraft were damaged by ground fire.
- f. An assault in the Hobo Woods on 9 January cost the COWBOYS three (3) aircraft damaged by ground fire.
- g. On 11 January 1966, normal support of the Brigade's Operation Crimp continued. One (1) UH-1D was assigned the pleasant mission of transporting Miss Jo Collins, the Playmate of the Year, who was in Vietnam visiting the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

WO James Hunter and WO Ronald Basney were WIA. WO Hunter was evacuated to the States with a .30 Caliber round through his shin. WO Basney was flying again after medical treatment for shrapnel wounds.

h. 12, 13, and 14 January, were the final days of Operation Crimp. The COWBOYS lifted 748 troops of the 173rd Airborne and 1st Infantry Division during these three days. The COWBOYS moved back into Bien Hoa as Operation Crimp terminated on 14 January 1966.

i. The COWBOYS flew normal support of the Brigade from the "Corral" at Bien Hoa from January 15th through the 18th.

j. 356 troops of the Brigade's 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry were lifted on 19 January by the COWBOYS with Falcon cover.

k. The COWBOYS lifted 100 troops of 2/503 from Phu Loi to Bien Hoa, and the Falcons flew overhead cover for the Battalion's road convoy that traveled from Phu Loi to Bien Hoa on 20 January.

l. January 21, 22, and 23, were normal support of the Brigade.

m. On January 24th Major Gibbons led a lift moving 99 1st Division troops. Major Champlin led a 10-ship lift to move 140 troops of the 173rd Airborne.

n. 25, 26, and 27 January, were in normal support of the 173rd Airborne.

o. 28 through 31 January, saw the COWBOYS lift 1606 troops with one ship being damaged by enemy fire.

## **II. MONTHLY STATISTICS:**

	OH-13	UH-1B	UH-1B(A)	UH-1D	TOTAL
<b>Sorties</b>	1	250	445	3556	4252
<b>Hours</b>	1	86	493	1120	1700
<b>Pax</b>					8228
<b>Cargo (tons)</b>					257
<b>Aircraft Hits</b>					17

## 1 February 1966 through 28 February 1966

### **I. OPERATIONS:**

- a. The COWBOYS and Falcons began February with normal Brigade support missions.
- b. The 3rd of the month found the COWBOYS and Falcons attached to the 1st Aviation Battalion for a Combat Assault. Major Champlin led the 226 troop lift mission.
- c. The 145th Aviation Battalion at Bien Hoa requested help from the COWBOYS on the 4th day of February. The COWBOYS used ten (10) UH-1D's to lift 215 troops, while the Falcons supplied two (2) Light Fire Teams as escorts for the "Slicks."
- d. The 4th through the 8th of February found the COWBOYS in normal support of the 173rd Airborne.
- e. Again on February 9th, the COWBOYS with Falcon cover aided the 145th Aviation Battalion.
- f. Nine (9) COWBOYS on 10 February 1966 participated in a flyby for the 173rd.
- g. Training was the order of the day for 11 February. "Peeping Tom" techniques were practiced by a UH-1D and a Falcon Light Fire team. Decca navigation training was conducted by two (2) UH-1D's.
- h. February 12th - 15th brought only normal Brigade Support missions.
- i. 16 February brought several lifts for the COWBOYS. Three ships put a 20-man patrol of the 2/503 into an LZ. Three ten (10) ship lifts moved A/2/503. Five (5) ships extracted the 4.2 mortar platoon of the 1/503. Ten (10) "Slicks" in eight (8) lifts moved the 1/503.
- j. 17, 18 February -- normal Airborne Brigade missions.
- k. On 19 February five (5) UH-1D's lifted 70 troops from Di An to Lai Khe. Eight (8) COWBOYS lifted a 96-man reaction force of 1/RAR (1st Battalion/Royal Australian Regiment) into Phuoc Vinh, a town North of Bien Hoa in the notorious "War Zone Delta."
- l. On 20 February a Light Fire Team from the Falcons provided air cover for E Troop, 17th Cavalry as they convoyed from Bien Hoa to Phu Loi.
- m. The COWBOYS, demonstrating their ability to support any combat unit, lifted 113 troops for the "Big Red One" and delivered 23.5 tons of cargo for the Division. A COWBOY aircraft, 610 on an R&R flight from Dalat to Bien Hoa stooped at Phan Thiet to refuel. Receiving an emergency call for a medevac, the crew voluntarily evacuated 16 wounded ARVN's from a raging ambush site. Aircraft Commander 1/Lt. Fred G. Zabarsky and Flight Surgeon Captain Lonnie Hammargren received the Air Medal with the "V" device for valor as a result of this action.
- n. On 22 February 300 troops were lifted in conjunction with the 145th Aviation Battalion.
- o. February 23rd and 24th are spent in normal support of the 173rd Airborne
- p. 306 troops of the 1st Infantry Division were lifted by 10 COWBOYS and 5 Falcons.
- q. 518 troops of the 173rd were lifted by the COWBOYS on 26 February.

r. The month of February closed with the COWBOYS and Falcons supporting the paratroopers of the 173rd and the aviation units of the 145th Aviation Battalion.

**II. MONTHLY STATISTICS:**

	OH-13	UH-1B	UH-1B(A)	UH-1D	TOTAL
<b>Sorties</b>	734	147	442	2936	4259
<b>Hours</b>	315	85	357	926	1683
<b>Pax</b>					5705
<b>Cargo</b>					247
<b>Aircraft Hits</b>					23

**History of  
COMPANY "A," 82ND AVIATION BATTALION  
1 MARCH -- 31 MARCH 1966**

**Prepared by  
Capt. Francis C. Bennett  
Unit Historian**

**Approved by  
Larry J. Baughman  
Major, Infantry  
Commanding**

**Headquarters  
173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate)  
San Francisco, California 96250**

**COMPANY "A" 82D AVIATION BATTALION  
APO 96250  
San Francisco, California**

1 April 1966

Subject: Monthly History for Company "A," 82d Aviation Battalion  
1 March through 31 March 1966

To: Commanding Officer  
Company "A," 82d Aviation Battalion  
173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate)  
APO San Francisco 96250

**I. Mission:**

The mission of Company "A," 82d Aviation Battalion for the entire month of March 1966 was to augment the aviation capabilities of the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) by providing support in combat operations and providing tactical and administrative air mobility.

**II. Operations:**

a. Company "A" is capable of providing continuous (day and night) operations during visual weather conditions and limited operations under minimum visual weather conditions. It can provide airlift support for one infantry or dismounted mechanized infantry company. The unit during the month of March, was involved in supporting only the 173rd Airborne Brigade. Company A's UH-1D's performed air landed assaults (ALA) air landed resupply (ALR) and command and liaison (CL) missions, while the UH-1B's-Falcons, performed visual recon (VR), and escort helicopter (EH) missions.

b. 1 March 1966 Company "A" extracted 2/503rd Infantry (156 troops) from field locations and transported them to the Brigade Base Camp Area at Bien Hoa. Major Addiss flew lead for this extraction. All other missions for this day were normal administrative types.

c. 2 March 1966 All missions were normal administrative support for the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

d. 3 March 1966 Company "A" participated in a troop lift for 300 ARVN troops. Major Champlin flew lead.

e. 4 March 1966 All missions were normal administrative support for the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

f. 5 March 1966 Company "A" participated in a troop lift for the 1st Bd., 1st Inf. Div. Ten (10) UH-1D's transported 140 troops from a location South of Tay Ninh to a field location. Major Champlin flew lead. During this lift one of the Falcon gunships was shot down with no casualties.

g. 6 March 1966 Company "A" was attached to the 145th Aviation Battalion to lift elements of the 15th ARVN Division. 10 UH-1D's and 5 UH-1B's flew in this operation and 2 separate lifts were made. A total of 264 ARVN Troops were transported. Major Champlin flew lead.

h. 7 & 8 March 1966 All missions were normal administrative support of the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

i. 9 March 1966 Company "A" was attached to the 145th Aviation Battalion for a lift involving 400 troops. Ten (10) UH-1D's and five (5) UH-1B's flew on this lift. Major Champlin flew lead. This lift was the start of operation "Silver City" in War Zone "D" involving the entire 173rd Airborne Brigade. The troops were located at LZ #12, 083426, which became the base for support of the extensive operation. The first lift of the day was at 0730 hours and the move was completed at 1130 hours. The remainder of the day involved logistical resupply for the elements of the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

j. 10 March 1966 Company "A" supported the 173rd Airborne Brigade with six (6) UH-1D's flying logistical resupply during all daylight hours to various tactical locations in War Zone "D."

k. 11 March 1966 In addition to supporting the 173rd Airborne Brigade on operation Silver City, Company "A" was attached to the 145th Avn. Bn. for a Combat Assault that required ten (10) UH-1D's and five (5) UH-1B's. The lift involved 140 ARVN troops. Major Champlin flew lead. Logistical resupply to the 173rd Airborne Brigade maintained from sunup to sundown.

l. 12 March 1966 Continued logistical support for the 173rd Airborne Brigade in War Zone "D" requiring six (6) UH-1D's during daylight hours.

m. 13 March 1966 Operation "Silver City" continued requiring six (6) UH-1D's from "A" Company for resupply to all elements of the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

n. 14 March 1966 Company "A" continued to support the 173rd Airborne Brigade in War Zone "D" with six (6) UH-1D's performing logistical resupply from Phuoc Vinh. One (1) UH-1B suffered a hard landing while on a training flight.

o. 15 March 1966 Company "A" provided six (6) UH-1D's for logistical support during daylight hours in War Zone "D" in tall, dense jungle terrain requiring maximum performance of the aircraft.

p. 16 March 1966 This day was the most significant of all during operation "Silver City." During the night 2000 Viet Cong troops encircled the 2/503rd Infantry in a tight area 50 meters in diameter the center of which was the resupply LZ. Their plan of attack was to wait until the first resupply helicopter of the day arrived and then to attack from all directions. The first UH-1D was to be flown by Lt. Roush and Cpt. Bennett, but generator trouble delayed the takeoff. UH-1D 737, flown by CWO Geishauser and WO McHenry made the first approach to the LZ with A/rations for the 2/503rd. Upon approach to the LZ the helicopter tail rotor gear box was shot off and the main transmission was hit by an estimated four 50 caliber bullets. The helicopter crashed in the trees on the Northeast side of the LZ. The gunner suffered an injured back, while the remainder of the crew suffered only minor cuts and bruises. The VC attack lasted for four hours, with the crew of UH-1D 737 trapped in the middle of the fire fight. As the fight between the VC and the 2/503rd progressed an urgent request for resupply of ammunition went out to Company "A" and only through the determined efforts of four crews dropping sling loads of small arms ammunition into this small LZ was the 2/503 able to beat back the VC attack with light casualties, while the VC suffered 400 killed 1000 wounded.

At the end of this day 7 UH-1D's had suffered combat damage from this resupply effort. Another gunner was wounded by ground fire, and UH-1D 737 was completely destroyed. Several aviators from Company "A" were recommended for combat decorations following this action.

q. 17 March 1966 Following the battle of the previous day Company "A" had an increased resupply and extraction requirement from 2/503 Infantry in order to remove large numbers of captured weapons and fly in personnel replacements, as well as to maintain the normal logistical resupply of rations and ammunition. The Viet Cong broke contact for the remainder of the operation.

r. 18 March 1966 Company "A" continued to provide logistical support to operation "Silver City."

s. 19 March 1966 Elements of the 173rd Airborne Brigade moved to various tactical locations in War Zone "D," and established many new resupply LZ's requiring maximum performance from aircraft.

t. 20 March 1966 Company "A" provided the logistical needs of the 173rd Airborne Brigade, still operating in War Zone "D."

u. 21 March 1966 In addition to providing continued logistical support for the 173rd Airborne Brigade on operation "Silver City," Company "A" lifted 100 ARVN troops with ten (10) UH-1D's in a Combat Assault. Following this lift of ARVN troops, the first extraction of troops from War Zone "D" was made by Company "A." Eight UH-1D's lifted 261 troops of the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

v. 22 March 1966 Extraction of troops from War Zone "D" continued with Company "A" lifting 260 troops of the Royal Australian Regiment from LZ 12 back to Bien Hoa. This extraction concluded operation "Silver City."

w. 23 March 1966 All missions were normal administrative support of the 173rd Airborne Brigade. Repair of combat damaged aircraft continued.

x. 24, 25, 26, March 1966 All missions were normal administrative support of the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

y. 27 and 28 March 1966 All missions were normal administrative support of the 173rd Airborne Brigade. Ten (10) UH-1D's and five (5) UH-1B's were placed on 30 minute's standby for operation Mohawk.

**III. MONTHLY STATISTICS:**

	OH-13	UH-1B	UH-1B(A)	UH-1D	TOTAL
Sorties	627	237	330	3561	4755
Hours	302	84	463	1098	1947
Pax					5826
Cargo (tons)					508
Aircraft Hits					28

**HISTORY OF  
COMPANY "A," 82ND AVIATION BATTALION  
173RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
APO SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 96250  
1 APRIL – 30 APRIL 1966**

**Prepared by  
CPT. TROY REEVES JR.**

**Approved by  
LEYBURN W. BROCKWELL, JR.  
LTC Infantry  
Commanding**

**For  
LARRY J. BAUGHMAN  
Major Infantry  
Commanding**

**HEADQUARTERS  
335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY (AML)  
145TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION  
APO SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 96227**

**COMPANY "A" 82D AVIATION BATTALION  
173RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
APO SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 96250**

AVBE-AM

12 March 1967

Subject: Monthly History for Company "A," 82d Aviation Battalion  
1 April 1966 through 30 April 1966

To: Commanding Officer  
335th Aviation Company (AML LT)  
173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate)  
APO San Francisco, Calif. 96250

**I. OPERATIONS:**

- a. The month of April opened with the COWBOYS lifting 180 troops from the Brigade into the local TAOR. All other missions were in normal support of the 173rd Abn. Bde.
- b. On the 2nd of April the 335th began the day by airlifting two (2) ARVN companies, 220 ARVN troops, into a landing zone near Saigon. After these two (2) lifts the company returned to the TAOR and extracted 180 U.S. troops into the Brigade base at Bien Hoa in three (3) lifts. All other missions were in normal support of the 173rd Abn. Bde.
- c. All mission flown 3 April were in normal administrative support of the 173rd Abn. Bde.
- d. Two (2) UH-1D's escorted by one (1) Light Fire Team began 4 April at 0530 hours by infiltrating a DELTA team into the Mangrove Swamp South of Saigon. This team was extracted that afternoon, under enemy automatic weapons fire, by the same COWBOY crews. In the afternoon 190 troops of the 1/503 were lifted from the Brigade Pad to the TAOR. All other missions were in normal administrative support of the 173rd Abn. Bde.
- e. On 5 April the COWBOYS lifted 520 173rd Abn. Bde. troops in nine (9) ten (10) ship lifts within the 173rd Abn. Bde. TAOR. All other missions were in support of these troops.
- f. The 173rd Abn. Bde. was still moving troops within the TAOR as the COWBOYS repositioned 310 U.S. troops in five (5) ten ship (10) lifts. All other missions were in support of these troops within the TAOR.
- g. On 7 April from 0100 to 0300 hours' one (1) UH-1D with the MAD system and one (1) Light Fire Team flew a reconnaissance for Field Artillery Control in the Northern part of War Zone "D." One (1) Light Fire Team was supporting the 25th Infantry Division on a sweep operation when Falcon 601 was shot down and destroyed. All personnel were rescued with only minor injuries. Falcon 928 received several hits, but was flown safely to Cu Chi with no injuries received. One platoon of the 2/503, 35 U.S. troops, was repositioned within the 173rd Abn. Bde. within the TAOR.

h. All missions flown on 8 April were in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. in preparation for Operation Austin. In the late afternoon, the 173rd Abn. Bde. received word that they had no commitment for Operation Austin but to initiate tentative plans for air loading all equipment for an airlift. Company "A," 82nd Aviation Battalion began to make preparations for an airlift.

i. All missions flown on 9 April were in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. in preparation for Operation Denver to be conducted in the Song Be area. The company continued planning and loading preparation for movement to Song Be for troop insertion.

j. On 10 April ten (10) UH-1D's and one (1) Light Fire Team were attached to the 11th Aviation Battalion to move 140 U.S. troops of the 173rd Abn. Bde. from the Snake Pit to the Song Be airstrip to secure the airfield. All other missions were in normal support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. Preparation and loading continued for movement in support of Operation Denver.

k. On 11 April the COWBOYS began movement by UH-1D's to Song Be in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. during Operation Denver. After closing at Song Be nine (9) UH-1D's and one (1) Light Fire Team returned to Bien Hoa and lifted 54 173rd Abn. Bde. troops to Song Be. Two (2) missions were flown for B/34th Special Forces. All other Missions were in normal support of the 173rd Abn. Bde's. Operation Denver.

l. On 12 April eight (8) UH-1D's and one (1) Light Fire Team extracted six (6) patrols and 300 U.S. troops, for the 173rd Abn. Bde. in six (6) separate lifts. All other missions were in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. Operation Denver and B/34th Special Forces compound at Song Be.

m. Four (4) Combat Assaults were flown by the COWBOYS on 13 April for the 173rd Abn. Bde. lifting 360 troops in support of Operation Denver. Five (5) UH-1D's carried three (3) tons of rice from the city strip in Song Be to Be Dung for B/34th Special Forces at Song Be. All other missions were in support of the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

n. Three (3) Combat Assaults and eight (8) extraction's were flown by ten (10) COWBOYS for the 173rd Abn. Bde. on 14 April lifting 840 U.S. troops in support of Operation Denver. All other missions were in support of the same Operation.

o. One (1) dummy extraction and seven (7) Combat Assault, lifting 480 troops for the 173rd Abn. Bde. were flown on 15 April in support of Operation Denver. All other missions were normal support for the Brigade.

p. At dawn on 16 April, 162 Royal Australian Regiment troops were lifted in two (2) Combat Assaults in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. Operation Denver. Nine (9) "Slicks" and two (2) Light Fire Teams repositioned 162 U.S. troops for the 173rd Abn. Bde. Aircraft 556 crashed on takeoff from Song Be city strip due to power failure. All other missions were in normal support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. Operation Denver.

q. On 17 April, eight (8) "Slicks" and two (2) Light Fire Teams repositioned 259 RAR troops in support of Operation Denver. Six (6) COWBOYS and two (2) Light Fire Teams lifted 72 U.S. troops of the 1/503 in Operation Denver. All other missions were normal support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. Operation Denver.

r. Ten (10) UH-1D's and two (2) Light Fire Teams lifted 120 troops from E/17th Cav. Eleven (11) Combat Assaults with these fourteen (14) aircraft was performed moving 710 U.S. troops into a new

location in the Denver Operational area. All other missions were normal support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. operation.

s. On 19 April nine (9) "Slicks" and two (2) Light Fire Teams repositioned 107 E/17th Cav. troops. One gunner was wounded during the repositioning. All other missions were in normal support of the 173rd Abn. Bde.

t. On 20 April all missions were in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde's. Operation Denver. Nine (9) UH-1D's and four (4) gunships stood-by for the Chief of Staff (Army) at Song Be.

u. On 21 April all missions were in normal support of Operation Denver.

v. Ten (10) extraction's were made by ten (10) "Slicks" and two (2) Light Fire Teams on 22 April. 620 U.S. troops of the 173rd Abn. Bde. were moved to Song Be airfield for shipment back to Bien Hoa. All other missions were in direct support of Operation Denver.

w. At 1005 hours on 23 April the COWBOYS closed at Bien Hoa from Operation Denver near Song Be. All missions flown were in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde's. move from Operation Denver to Bien Hoa.

x. All missions flown on 24 April were of the administrative type in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde.

y. On 25 April two (2) UH-1D's took part in a demonstration of the MAD system and Chemical spray system for representatives of the Commercial Research and Development Board. All other missions were in normal support of the 173rd Abn. Bde.

z. On 26 April all missions were in normal support of the 173rd Abn. Bde.

aa. The COWBOYS were attached to the 11th Aviation Battalion for a lift on 27 April. Nine (9) "Slicks" and two (2) Light Fire Teams lifted 252 U.S. troops in support of the 11th Aviation Battalion.

bb. All missions flown on 28 April were administrative flights in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. except four (4) Combat Assaults flown in support of the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion lifting 360 ARVN troops with ten (10) "Slicks" and two (2) Light Fire Teams.

cc. On 29 April nine (9) "Slicks" and two (2) Light Fire Teams lifted 382 U.S. troops in three (3) Combat Assaults in support of the 11th Aviation Battalion in the Tay Ninh area. Three (3) aircraft were hit by enemy ground fire but all aircraft were recovered with no injuries received.

dd. All missions on 30 April were in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde.

**II. MONTHLY STATISTICS:**

	OH-13	UH-1B	UH-1B(A)	UH-1D	TOTAL
Sorties	407	162	976	3957	5502
Hours	319	78	498	1274	2169
Pax					9158
Cargo (tons)					210
Aircraft Hits					27

**III. TRAINING:**

a. On 1 April a two-hour helicopter troop loading class was conducted for Brigade elements. On 5 April the MAD system, developed and proved effective by this unit, was sent to the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion for support and training. The emphasis this month was placed on inclement weather and operational hazards during the coming wet weather season.

**IV. COMPANY AREA:**

Improvements during the month of April were made in the Company area in the form of new buildings.

**V. CIVIL AFFAIRS:**

a. The school in Ngu Phouc is ready for the roof to be placed over parts of the building

b. The 25th Med-Cap team treated over 1200 Vietnamese.

**HISTORY OF  
COMPANY "A," 82ND AVIATION BATTALION  
1 MAY THROUGH 31 MAY 1966  
173RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
APO 96250 SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.**

**Prepared by  
Captain Donald L. Peters**

**Approved by  
LARRY J. BAUGHMAN  
Major Infantry**

**HEADQUARTERS  
173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate)  
APO San Francisco, Calif. 96250**

**COMPANY "A," 82ND AVIATION BATTALION  
173RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
APO SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 96250**

AVAB-AM

1 June 1966

Subject: Monthly History for Company "A," 82d Aviation Battalion  
1 May through 31 May 1966

To: Commanding Officer  
Company "A," 82nd Aviation Battalion  
173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate)  
APO San Francisco 96250

**I. OPERATIONS:**

a. Company "A," 82nd Aviation Battalion started the month of May by supporting the 1st Infantry Division at Tay Ninh on operation "Birmingham." Eight (8) UH-1D's and one (1) Light Fire Team, after performing six (6) extraction's while attached to the 11th Aviation Battalion at Tay Ninh, remained over night at a forward area, South of Tay Ninh, to prepare for one of the largest heliborne assaults in Vietnam up to that date.

b. On 3 May 1966, Company "A" was planning for Operation "Dexter," a search and clear operation Northeast of Bien Hoa. The next day Company "A," attached to the 145th Aviation Battalion, air lifted 457 troops from the Snake Pit to the operational area. On this day aircraft number 614 received two (2) hits on an approach into LZ "Diamond" in the heart of the operational area -- there were no injuries. Also on this day A/C #918, Falcon 87, was hit while making a firing pass on a target that had been firing at aircraft all that day. The aircraft caught fire on the way down but was landed successfully in a rice paddy despite the intense flames. The aircraft burned and became a total loss -- there were no injuries. At 1600 hours on 5 May 1966, an alert was called. The COWBOYS plus attachments were combat ready by 1615 hours. A briefing for all detachments and platoon leaders was given on the physical security plan for the Company. On 6 May 1966, Operation "Dexter" ended with the COWBOYS attached to the 145th Aviation Battalion. Seven (7) lifts were made out of LZ "Diamond." Six COWBOY Aircraft were hit by enemy ground fire during the extraction's. One man was wounded by shrapnel.

c. From the period 6 May 66 to 9 May 66, the COWBOYS were attached to the 11th Aviation Battalion on Operation "Birmingham" at Tay Ninh. On 9 May, the COWBOYS completed their part in Operation "Birmingham" by resupplying elements of the 1st Infantry Division. At 1500 the COWBOYS started their logistical task. The last ship came back to the corral at 2030 hours. The COWBOYS carried 65 passengers, 32 tons of cargo, and flew 268 sorties in that short span of time.

d. The next day the COWBOYS were alerted to be ready to bring a security force from the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) to a point Northwest of Vung Tau where a CH-47 helicopter had crashed. The security Force never had to go because the Chinook was destroyed by fire. At 2200 hours that evening the CO was notified to be ready to move to the Song Be area in support of the 2/503. Intelligence reports stated

that elements of the 101st had pushed a badly beaten force of VC to a point between Song Be and an area about 25K's to the North. The 2/503 was called upon to prevent the VC from moving any farther South and to squeeze them in between the 101st and themselves. After preparation was made, the COWBOYS moved out early the next morning. A part of the COWBOYS was left behind to participate in Operation "Hardihood," a 173rd Airborne Brigade effort to the Northeast of Vung Tau. On the first Combat Assault at Song Be the COWBOYS received automatic weapons fire from a tree line while on short final to an LZ in a mountain village. A crew chief, Sp4 Woodrum, was hit in the chest from enemy ground fire. He was quickly evacuated to the rear area at Bien Hoa. The bullet punctured a small portion (5%) of his lung and went completely through his spleen. He is now recuperating and is expected to be back within a few months. On 12 May 1966, three (3) UH-1D's and one (1) Light Fire Team deployed a long range patrol into a dense jungle area to the Northwest of Song Be, near the Cambodian border. Three separate locations were chosen and at sunset the three (3) UH-1D's completed their mission. The next day the COWBOYS returned from Song Be and prepared for Operation "Hardihood."

e. On 15 May 1966, Falcon 81 and 82 fire teams were scrambled to a location North of Tan Uyen. VC were reported in a rubber plantation. The Falcons struck the area and three (3) confirmed VC were found dead.

f. 17 May 1966 saw the start of Operation "Hardihood" for the COWBOYS. On the initial Combat Assault one Falcon ship was hit twice in the main rotor blades. On a resupply mission on the 19th of May 1966, Aircraft number 609 was hit four (4) times forcing it down into an LZ. It had been hit in the transmission twice and was barely flyable. WO Harrell elected to fly the aircraft to Vung Tau because the unit in the LZ had to move on thereby leaving an aircraft in an unsecured area. He made the flight without incident. The gunner on the aircraft received minor wounds from shrapnel. On the 19th of May A/C #945 took 5 hits while escorting a "Dust Off" medevac ship into a forward area. There were no injuries.

g. On 25 May 1966 two (2) UH-1D's conducted Long Range Patrol (LRP) Recovery Techniques in conjunction with E Troop 17th Cav. Some of the techniques used were: rappelling from a 50-foot rope, using a rope ladder to climb out of an inaccessible area and using two 125 feet ropes to lift 2 personnel at one time out of a simulated unimproved area where a helicopter could not land and speed would be essential in recovering the personnel to keep them from falling into enemy hands.

h. On 30 May 1966, A/C #421, an OH-13, crashed in the forward Brigade CP area. Investigation is still underway at the time of this writing.

i. On 31 May 1966, an orientation class was given to newly arrived personnel into the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate). Approximately 200 people participated in the Airmobile Class. After the class, a demonstration ride was given to familiarize the new troops with loading and unloading during a Combat Assault.

**II. MONTHLY STATISTICS:**

	OH-13	UH-1(A)	UH-1B	UH-1D	TOTAL
Sorties	827	1539	184	4306	6856
Hours	354	417	125	1404	2300
Pax					9257
Cargo (tons)					363
Aircraft Hits					28

**III. TRAINING:**

a. The emphasis this month was placed on Command Information Classes. Classes were given on security, Code of Conduct, survival, Escape and evasion, and CBR. A class on the .45 cal. pistol was given to all officers before they went out on the range for their annual familiarization firing. The Company and its attachments then fired their TO&E weapon for familiarization.

b. The Inspector General's team had their annual inspection during the latter part of May. The inspection ended in favorable results for Company "A."

**IV. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:**

CWO Lerner	Air Medal W/ "V" device
Maj. Addis	Basic Air Medal
Maj. Gibbons	Basic Air Medal
Capt. West	Basic Air Medal
CWO Waters	Basic Air Medal
Sgt. Casey	Basic Air Medal
Sgt. Witcher	Basic Air Medal
Sp/5 Nahon	Basic Air Medal
Sp/5 Rushin	Basic Air Medal
Sp/4 Davis	Basic Air Medal
Sp/4 Partch	Basic Air Medal
Sp/4 Fettig	Purple Heart
WO Rasney	Purple Heart

**V. COMPANY AREA:**

a. Improvements during the month of May were as follows: a new permanent latrine with porcelain urinals, completion of a new arms room adjoining a new supply room, a movie screen placed where it was best suited for the Company. Other small improvements were made to individual billets. A beautification project was started when Doctor (Capt.) Hammagren planted the first tree outside his new office.

**VI. CIVIL AFFAIRS:**

a. The school house in Ngu Phouc is now 85% completed with the roof being put in place over the 1st classroom.

b. The 25th Med-Cap team again treated over 1200 Vietnamese. They performed first aid and administered shots to the people.

**HISTORY OF  
COMPANY "A," 82ND AVIATION BATTALION  
1 June -- 30 June MAY 1966**

**Prepared by  
Capt. Donald L. Peters  
Unit Historian**

**Approved by  
Ernest H. Johnson  
Major Infantry  
Commanding**

**HEADQUARTERS  
173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate)  
APO San Francisco 96250**

**I. OPERATIONS:**

a. Co. "A," 82nd Aviation Battalion began the month of June by continuing to support the 173rd Abn. Bde. (Separate) in operation "Hardihood." During this period E/17th Cav. with its attached Long Range Patrol, performed many reconnaissance type missions. The Long Range Patrol Teams are usually sent out in six (6) man elements. They are infiltrated at dusk by helicopter so that they may not be seen by the enemy. Two (2) teams have been put in previously during this operation and were extracted on the second of June. At 1430 hours on the 2nd of June 66, one patrol was extracted from a PZ under fire. The LRP left three (3) dead VC in the PZ. That evening aircraft number 736 with Capt. Peters as aircraft commander and 1st Lt. Roush as pilot made an emergency extraction of an LRP at night under fire from a hole in the woods, about seventeen (17) Kilometers North of the Fire Support Base. This marked the first successful completion of an LRP extraction at night.

b. On 9 June 66 at 0400 hours' eight (8) UH-1D and two (2) Light Fire Teams left the corral at Bien Hoa enroute to a forward area about eight (8) kilometers Northeast of Vung Tau. The COWBOYS lifted one hundred ninety-eight (198) troops in three (3) LZ's. Two of the LZ's were unsecured. Under moonlight the COWBOYS skillfully placed the troops into these LZ's making another "first" for "A" Co., 82nd Avn. Bn. This was the first night Combat Assault in the III Corps area in the history of Vietnam. This also initiated operation "Hollandia," a search and destroy mission, in the mountain range East of Vung Tau.

c. On 15 June 66 a scramble was called about 1545 hours to have the COWBOYS report to the forward area. Ten (10) UH-1D's and two (2) Light Fire Teams quickly reacted to the situation. The COWBOYS heli-lifted two hundred twenty-two (222) troops into an LZ to the South of a Fire Support Base. This only proved the readiness of the COWBOYS to react to any situation at any time. Operation "Hollandia" ended on the 18th of June 1966.

d. For the next four days the COWBOYS supported the 173rd Abn. Bde. (Separate) on operation "Uniontown." This operation took place in Bde. TAOR.

e. On the 20th of June 1966 the COWBOYS supported the 13th Avn. Bn. at Soc Trang. The United States Navy had run aground a VC vessel full of weapons and ammunition. The COWBOYS heli-lifted 390 ARVN troops to that location so that they could secure the area and keep the VC from obtaining the ammo and weapons. It was a very successful day for the United States Army in that they confiscated many tons of ammo and numerous Chinese and Russian weapons.

f. 21 June 1966 saw the start of operation "Yorktown," a search and destroy mission approximately seven (7) kilometers South of Xuan Loc. The remaining days of the month were spent in numerous Combat Assaults in the Yorktown TAOR.

**II. MONTHLY STATISTICS:**

	<b>OH-13</b>	<b>UH-1B(A)</b>	<b>UH-1B</b>	<b>UH-1D</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Sorties</b>	502	622	298	3721	5143
<b>Hours</b>	297	391	215	1352	2238
<b>Pax</b>					8985
<b>Cargo (tons)</b>					316
<b>Aircraft Hits</b>					20

**III. TRAINING:**

- a. During the month of June Company "A" was engaged in numerous training activities. The 2nd Platoon "Mustangs" flew a night training mission landing to various fields and lighting systems
- b. The "Falcons," 3rd Platoon, conducted a night firing exercise along with the "MAD" (Mortar Aerial Delivery) ship.
- c. The Casper Platoon participated in a night exercise using five (5) UH-1D's.
- d. Elements of Company "A" dropped troops of E/17th Cav. (Approx. 40) in a simulated parachute assault in the Brigade TAOR.

**IV. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>RANK</b>	<b>AWARD</b>
Richardson	CWO	Air Medal with "V" Device
Waters	CWO	Air Medal with "V" Device
Patterson	WO	Air Medal with "V" Device
Dorf	CWO	Basic Air Medal
Lind	WO	Basic Air Medal
Jones	WO	Basic Air Medal
McHenry	WO	Basic Air Medal
		Purple Heart
Tilley	SSG	Basic Air Medal
Usher	SP/5	Basic Air Medal
Priest	SP/4	Basic Air Medal
Bowen	SP/4	Basic Air Medal

Shultz	SP/4	Basic Air Medal
Mangram	MAJ.	Purple Heart
Dumas	WO	Purple Heart
Geishauser	WO	Purple Heart
Boliver	SGT.	Purple Heart
Spires	SP/4	Purple Heart
Eaton	PFC	Purple Heart

## **V. COMPANY AREA:**

- a. During the month of June a few invocations were made in the company area. Porcelain sinks were installed in the shower-wash room complex thereby alleviating the problem of leaking faucets and wasted water.
- b. June also saw the start of new officer's semi-permanent type quarters to accommodate the newly arrived officers. Cement pads were laid by the officers of the Company.
- c. A pad was laid for the new "All American Club." This complex will house an EM and NCO club, Bar, Tailor Shop, Barber Shop, and Laundry Shop.
- d. On 30 June Maj. Baughman was replaced by Maj. Johnson as the new Commanding Officer of Company "A."

## **VI. CIVIL AFFAIRS:**

- a. The Company Project, a three-room school in Ngu Phuc, is nearly completed. It is expected to be finished within two weeks.
- b. The 25th Med. Detachment's Med-Cap team treated over 1000 people in the Duc Tu Province this month. They performed first aid treatments in addition to giving medical advice to the people.

**HISTORY OF  
COMPANY "A," 82ND AVIATION BATTALION  
173RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
APO SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 96250**

**1 July -- 31 July 1966**

**Prepared by  
CPT. TROY REEVES, JR.**

**Approved by  
LEYBURN W. BROCKWELL JR.  
LTC Infantry  
Commanding**

**FOR  
ERNEST H. JOHNSON  
Major Infantry  
Commanding**

**HEADQUARTERS  
335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY (AML)  
APO SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 96227**

**335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
173RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
APO SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 96250**

AVBE-AM

12 March 1967

Subject: Monthly History for Company "A," 82d Aviation Battalion  
1 July through 31 July 1966

To: Commanding Officer  
335th Assault Helicopter Company  
173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate)  
APO San Francisco, Calif. 96250

**I. OPERATIONS:**

- a. This month began with the COWBOYS in normal support of the 173rd Airborne Brigade's Operation "Yorktown."
- b. On 2 July, all missions were in normal support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. in Operation "Yorktown." One Falcon ship received a hole in the main rotor blade when a rocket prematurely exploded after it was fired. There were no crew injuries.
- c. Early on the 3rd of July all aircraft were dispatched to the Yorktown area for a possible lift of a reaction force. Ten (10) UH-1D's and two (2) Light Fire Teams lifted 360 U.S. troops in six (6) Combat Assaults in support of Operation Yorktown. Aircraft 935 received one round of small fire through the pilot's compartment. All other missions were in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. operation Yorktown.
- d. On the 4th of July all missions flown were in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. Operation Yorktown.
- e. Ten (10) UH-1D's and two (2) Light Fire Teams airlifted 180 U.S. troops, on the 5th of July, for the 173rd Abn. Bde. in three (3) Combat Assaults. All other missions were in support of Operation Yorktown.
- f. On 6 July, ten (10) "Slicks" and two (2) Light Fire Teams lifted 180 troops as the COWBOYS repositioned units of the 173rd Abn. Bde. Six (6) UH-1D's carried 640 173rd troops from field positions in the Yorktown operational area to a Xuan Loc shower point and return them to their field positions. All other missions flown were in support of 173rd Abn. Bde. Operation Yorktown.
- g. All missions were in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. Operation Yorktown.
- h. On the 8th of July six (6) UH-1D's lifted 120 ARVN troops in support of a 173rd Abn. Bde. Med-Cap Operation South of Xuan Loc. All other missions were in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde.

i. Ten (10) UH-1D's and two (2) Light Fire Teams supported the 173rd Abn. Bde. in six (6) Combat Assaults for the beginning of Operation Aurora, on the 9th of July. All other missions flown were in support of Operation Aurora.

j. On July 10, ten (10) "Slicks" and two (2) Light Fire Teams lifted 180 U.S. troops in three (3) Combat Assaults in support of Operation Aurora. Six (6) UH-1D's and one (1) Light Fire Team extracted 190 U.S. troops of the 4/503 from their company training area in the TAOR into the Brigade forward area. All other missions were in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. Operation Aurora.

k. All missions flown on the 11th of July were in normal support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. Operation Aurora.

l. On the 12th of July five (5) UH-1D's and two (2) Light Fire Teams lifted 210 U.S. troops in six (6) Combat Assaults in support of Operation Aurora. All other missions were in support of the same Operation.

m. Ten (10) UH-1D's and two (2) Light Fire Teams lifted 640 173rd Abn. Bde. troops in several Combat Assaults in support of Operation Aurora on 13 July. One gunship received a hit that wounded the gunner in the leg, knocked out the hydraulics and punctured a fuel line. The aircraft was landed at the Brigade Command Post without further damage. All other missions were in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde.

n. On 14 July ten (10) UH-1D's and two (2) Light Fire Teams lifted 690 U.S. troops in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. Operation Aurora. All other missions were in support of the same operation.

o. Ten (10) UH-1D's and two (2) Light Fire Teams flew (9) Combat Assaults repositioning 476 troops for the 173rd Abn. Bde. in support of Operation Aurora, on the 15th of July. All other missions were in support of Operation Aurora.

p. On 16 July all missions were in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. in support of Operation Aurora.

q. Aurora II began on 17 July with the COWBOYS attached to the 145th Aviation Battalion for movement of the 173rd Abn. Bde. into the Vo Dat area. Ten (10) UH-1D's and two (2) Light Fire Teams made six (6) Combat Assaults in the area of operation carrying 360 U.S. troops. All other missions were in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. Operation.

r. Early on the 18th of July an advance party from the company moved to the Aurora II area of operation. After five (5) Combat Assaults with the "Slicks" (ten) and two (2) Light Fire Teams, moving 300 173rd Abn. Bde. troops, all elements of the company were moved to Vo Dat. All other missions were in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde.

s. Ten (10) UH-1D's and two (2) Light Fire Teams made one (1) Combat Assault in support of operation Aurora II, on 19 July. The COWBOYS moved 60 173rd Abn. Bde. troops in the Combat Assault and supported the Brigade by flying normal missions after the Combat Assault.

t. Nine (9) "Slicks" and two (2) Light Fire Teams made three (3) lifts in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. on 20 July, moving 162 U.S. troops. All other missions were in support of Operation Aurora II.

u. On the 21st of July, the COWBOYS using nine (9) "Slicks" and two (2) Light Fire Teams repositioned 360 173rd Abn. Bde. troops in four (4) lifts in support of Operation Aurora II. All other missions were in normal support of the operation.

v. Eight (8) "Slicks" and two (2) Light Fire Teams conducted fourteen (14) Combat Assaults, carrying 642 173rd Abn. Bde. Troops, on the 22nd of July. Aircraft 735 crashed in one of the LZ's. The aircraft was a total loss; the crew was evacuated with only minor injuries. All other missions were in support of Operation Aurora II.

w. All missions flown on the 23rd of July were in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. Operation Aurora II. The Falcon Fire Team sank thirteen (13) sampans and were credited with two (2) KIA's. A slick on a medical evacuation mission received one hit while aiding "Dust Off" aircraft in the evacuation of 173rd Abn. Bde. Troops.

x. On 24 July all missions flown were in support of Operation Aurora II. COWBOY 884 received one round while delivering supplies to the forward 173rd Abn. Bde. element. The pilot was slightly wounded and the aircraft was evacuated to Bien Hoa for repairs. The Falcons sank sixteen sampans and received credit for one (1) KIA.

y. Nine (9) "Slicks" and two (2) Light Fire Teams made three (3) lifts while repositioning 162 173rd Abn. Bde. troops in support of Operation Aurora II on July 25. All other missions were in support of this operation.

z. On the 26th of July ten (10) "Slicks" and two (2) Light Fire Teams made four (4) Combat Assaults carrying 240 U.S. troops in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. Operation Aurora II. All other missions were in support of this operation.

aa. Ten (10) UH-1D's and two (2) Light Fire Teams repositioned the 4/503 in four (4) Combat Assaults in support of Operation Aurora II, on 27 July. On the first lift aircraft 571 crashed with a load of six (6) 173rd Abn. Bde. Troops. There were ten (10) fatalities in the accident. A security platoon was lifted to the crash site. All other missions were in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. Operation.

bb. On 28 July all missions flown were in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. in Operation Aurora II.

cc. All Missions flown on the 29th of July were in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. Operation Aurora II. Five (5) UH-1D's and one (1) Light Fire Team lifted a large security force into the crash site of 571 to secure the area so that a CH-47 could recover parts of the wreckage. Aircraft 557 received one round during this lift.

dd. Nine (9) UH-1D's and one (1) Light Fire Team made one Combat Assault on 30 July repositioning 94 173rd Abn. Bde. troops in Operation Aurora II. Ten (10) "Slicks" and two (2) Light Fire Teams lifted 240 troops of the 1/503 to the Brigade area in four (4) lifts. All other missions were in normal support of the 173rd Abn. Bde.

ee. The COWBOYS were attached to the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion on 31 July for movement of the 173rd Abn. Bde. back to Bien Hoa. Six (6) extraction's were flown moving 360 troops back to their base camp.

## **II. TRAINING:**

a. Due to the operational commitment of this month very little training was accomplished other than training new pilots and crew members reporting into the unit.

**III. COMPANY AREA:**

Construction began on the officers lounge during this month and work continued on individual living quarters.

**IV. CIVIL AFFAIRS:**

The 25th Med. Detachment's continued Med-Cap operations in the Duc To District.

**HISTORY OF  
COMPANY "A," 82ND AVIATION BATTALION  
1 August -- 31 August 1966**

**Prepared by  
Cpt. Donald L. Peters  
Unit Historian**

**Approved by  
ERNEST H. JOHNSON  
Major Infantry  
Commanding**

**HEADQUARTERS  
173rd AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96250**

**335TH AVIATION COMPANY (AIRMOBILE LIGHT)  
173RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
APO 96250 SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA**

ARAV-AM

1 September 1966

Subject: Monthly History for Company "A," 82d Aviation Battalion  
1 August 1966 through 31 August 1966

To: Commanding Officer  
335th Aviation Company (Airmobile Light)  
173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate)  
APO San Francisco, Calif. 96250

**I. OPERATIONS:**

- a. 1 August 1966, found Co. "A," 82nd Aviation Battalion in Bien Hoa after terminating support of the 173rd Airborne Brigade's Operation Aurora II on 31 July. Extensive post-operation aircraft maintenance was in process, and recovered parts of the company's crashed COWBOY 571 were flown to Cam Ranh Bay for inspection to determine the cause of the fatal accident of 27 July 1966.
- b. On 2 August 1966, Company "A" held an Awards and Decorations Ceremony in the company area. The Company Commander, Major Johnson, pinned awards on 26 members of the company. In the afternoon the COWBOYS, with Falcon cover, lifted troops of 4th Battalion, 503rd Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade into the local TAOR in support of Operation Uniontown. Later in the afternoon pilots flew to Vung Tau to ferry UH-1D's 902 and 910 to Bien Hoa as replacements for UH-1D's 735 and 571 destroyed on Operation Aurora II.
- c. From 3 August 1966 until 9 August 1966, Company "A" continued to support the Brigade in Operation Uniontown and Provided aircraft for Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol Training. Training of the LRRP's consisted of practice in methods of infiltrating and exfiltrating patrols in enemy territory. The new "Palmer Snatch," rappelling and rope ladder methods were practiced. On the afternoon of 5 August the Falcons with a 173rd Aviation Platoon put on a fire power demonstration in War Zone "D" for the new unit commanders within the Brigade.
- d. On 10 August, the 173rd Airborne Brigade opened a search and destroy operation East of Xuan Loc. Labeling the operation, Toledo, the Brigade Headquarters moved into position Castle at the base of Gia Ray Mountain, with the COWBOYS supporting from Xuan Loc airfield.
- e. The COWBOYS on 13 August with elements of the 145th Aviation Battalion lifted 1/503 and 4/503 into LZ Grenada in support of Operation Toledo. At approximately 2000 hours, COWBOY operations at Xuan Loc received a call that a "Dust Off" helicopter was missing near LZ Grenada. Captain Wayne Davis and Lt. Fred Zabarsky took COWBOY 674 on a rescue mission through darkness and marginal weather. The crew chief of the "Dust Off" was found and rescued and elements of 2/503 were directed to the crash site.

f. On 14 August, the COWBOYS lifted an ARVN unit from An Loc to a position East of Castle in support of Operation Toledo.

g. On 16 August Falcon 86, Major William MacPhail, flying a UH-1B armed with a new chemical dispersing unit made a CS run on a location suspected to be harboring large VC units. The CS was effective as Falcon 86 took four (4) hits. Immediately after spraying, the Falcons struck the area with their machine guns, rockets and grenades.

h. In the late afternoon of 17 August, an OH-13S, Casper 419, lost power and settled into the trees in a small LZ near position Granada. There were no injuries and the aircraft was repaired and flown to Bien Hoa on 18 August.

i. On 20 August 1966, Falcon 86 was slightly wounded on another successful CS mission. COWBOY 567 was forced down by an engine compartment fire at position Castle. Several crew chiefs in the LZ quickly extinguished the fire saving the aircraft and preventing injury to the crew.

j. On 21 August, Major Clark and Captain Reeves made an emergency extraction of an LRRP being chased by the Viet Cong. There was not a suitable LZ available. The "Palmer Snatch" was employed for the first time by the COWBOYS under combat conditions.

k. On 22 August, the COWBOYS with Falcon cover lifted 360 U.S. and 180 ARVN troops in support of Operation Toledo. The MAD System (Mortar Aerial Delivery) deployed from a UH-1B of the 173rd Aviation Platoon attacked positions in "War Zone D" where Viet Cong elements had been sighted.

l. During the morning of 23 August, the Company working with the 145th Aviation Battalion, lifted elements of the 173rd Airborne Brigade as Operation Toledo turns to the Southeast in pursuit of the Viet Cong. Just past noon the COWBOYS were beginning resupply of elements of the Brigade. COWBOY 674 had an engine failure and was autorotated by Captain Troy Reeves into an open field two miles South of Xuan Loc. There were no injuries and the aircraft was lifted to Bien Hoa by CH-47.

m. On 24 August 1966, 356 trooper of the 173rd Abn. Bde. were lifted in support of Toledo. The COWBOYS are alerted for overnight standby to lift a reaction force for the Brigade.

n. On 29 August, a UH-1B received one hit in support of Operation Toledo. There were no injuries and only incidental damage to the aircraft.

o. The month of August closed with the COWBOYS continuing to support Operation Toledo in the dense jungle South of Xuan Loc.

**II. MONTHLY STATISTICS:**

	OH-13	UH-1B(A)	UH-1B	UH-1D	TOTAL
<b>Sorties</b>	396	431	309	3021	4157
<b>Hours</b>	292	398	187	1228	2105
<b>Pax</b>					4355
<b>Cargo (tons)</b>					242
<b>Aircraft Hits</b>					7

**III. TRAINING:**

The training time this month was devoted to familiarizing the pilots and crews of the UH-1D's with the Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol infiltration and exfiltration tactics. Often these patrols are placed in or removed from locations requiring rappelling, use of rope ladders or use of the "Palmer Snatch." The "Palmer Snatch" is an emergency exfiltration method operated from a helicopter hovering over the jungle. A length of rope is lowered from the helicopter to the troops on the jungle floor. The troops are hooked onto the rope by a Swiss Seat and a Chest Harness. The helicopter hovers straight up until the troops are clear of the trees, and flies to the nearest secure landing area. All the methods were practiced and studied.

**IV. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS: (PREPARED BY Sp/4 Michael A. De Marco)**

RANK	NAME	AWARD
Major	Gibbons, Bruce H.	D. F. C.
Captain	Overholser, William H.	B.S. ACM "V"
Captain	Pitchard, Donald G.	B.S. BAM
SSGT	Tilley, Rosco C.	B.S.
Sp/4	Koziol, Theophil J.	AM "V"
Sp/4	Platt, Richard W.	AM "V" BAM
Major	Cochran, Bruce S.	BAM
Major	Victor, Henry J.	BAM
Captain	Reeves, Troy Jr.	BAM
Captain	Albrecht, Richard D.	BAM
1/Lt.	Beasley, Lonnie S.	BAM
1/Lt.	Murray, George W. Jr.	BAM
CWO	Dorf, Harold A.	BAM
CWO	Richardson, Harold F.	BAM

RANK	NAME	AWARD
WO	Jones, Kenneth R.	BAM
WO	McCormac II, Gordon	BAM
WO	Norton, Daniel S.	BAM
WO	Stoudt, Charles F.	BAM ACM "V"
WO	Lind, Clarence R.	BAM
WO	Sanders, Gary G.	BAM
WO	Basney, Ronald A.	BAM
SSG	Renmey, James	BAM
Sp/5	Pete, Davis S.	BAM
Sp/5	Lucas, Delbert G.	BAM
Sp/5	Emerick, Thomas J.	BAM
Sp/5	Cooper, Homer A.	BAM
Sp/5	Ferrall, Frank V.	BAM
Sp/5	Roberts, Curtis	BAM
Sp/5	Payne, Melvin L.	BAM
Sp/5	Lampman, Richard R.	BAM
Sp/5	Larson, Larry	BAM
Sp/4	Nelson, Gary M.	BAM
Sp/4	Brecht, William C.	BAM
Sp/4	Bell, Philip G.	BAM
Sp/4	Tippett, Jerry W.	BAM
Sp/4	Patterson, Richard G.	BAM
Sp/4	Ingles, Michael J.	BAM
Sp/4	Luneckas, Peter T.	BAM
Sp/4	Norris, Mickel J.	BAM
Pfc.	Keil, David A.	BAM
Pfc.	Price, Larry D.	BAM
Pfc.	Epstein, Lewis D.	BAM

RANK	NAME	AWARD
Pfc.	Anthony, Everett	BAM
Pfc.	Kinkella, Alan J.	BAM
Pfc.	Pike, John V.	BAM
Pfc.	Jackson, Walter C.	BAM
Pfc.	Eby, Benny E.	BAM
Pfc.	Hanshaw, David L.	BAM ACM
Pfc.	French, Ray	BAM
Sp/5	Schultz, Kurt E.	ACM
Sp/5	Shatzer, John R.	ACM
WO	Dumas, Robert E.	P.H.
WO	Geishauser, Anthony J.	P.H.

#### V. COMPANY AREA:

Construction and beautification projects continued in the Company area. The Officers, under the close supervision of Major Victor, put the finishing touches on a COWBOY-Falcon-Casper Lounge joining the patios of the BOQ. The lounge will have a bar, TV, a hand painted helicopter aerial combat mural designed by 1/Lt. John Hoza and a Company Officers DEROSS snapshot sequence.

The All-American club had its grand opening and is serving the Enlisted Men with a bar, Lounge and day room. The club building also houses a barber shop and a laundry that serves the entire Company.

#### VI. CIVIL AFFAIRS:

a. On 19 August 1966 Company "A," 82nd Aviation Battalion, working hand in hand with the 38th Artillery Battalion, ARVN, completed construction of a three classroom school in Duc Tu District of Ngu Phuc area, Republic of Vietnam. The school, now being used by the Vietnamese people, was completed under direction of First Lieutenants Guillot and Zabarsky with many hours of hard, voluntary work by the men of the Company.

The Vietnamese orphanage directly across the street from the school project in Duc Tu was treated to a party by the COWBOYS. Food and drinks were provided for the children and staff of the orphanage. Major Johnson, Commander of the COWBOYS, with Major Victor and 1/Lt. Zabarsky attended the big party to represent the Company and reported that the party was a tremendous success.

The 25th Medical Detachment of Company "A" continued MED-CAP operations in Duc Tu District. In conjunction with the medical work, articles of food, milk and clothing were distributed to needy Vietnamese people.

**HISTORY OF  
335TH AVIATION COMPANY (AIRMOBILE LIGHT)  
173RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
APO 96250 SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA**

**1 September – 30 September 1966**

**Prepared by  
1/Lt. GEORGE W. MURRAY**

**Approved by  
ERNEST H. JOHNSON  
Major Infantry  
Commanding**

**HEADQUARTERS  
173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate)  
APO 96250 SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA**

**335TH AVIATION COMPANY (AML-LT)  
173RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
APO 96250 SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA**

AVBE-AM

1 October 1966

Subject: Monthly History for Company "A," 82d Aviation Battalion  
1 September through 30 September 1966

To: Commanding Officer  
335th Aviation Company (Aml-Lt)  
173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate)  
APO 96250 San Francisco, California

**I. OPERATIONS:**

- a. The 335th Aviation Company (Aml-Lt) continued to support into September the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) on a search and destroy operation labeled Toledo being conducted near Xuan Loc, Republic of Vietnam. Eight (8) COWBOYS with Falcon support flew four (4) Combat Assaults as the Paratroops searched-out the Viet Cong.
- b. The second of September found the COWBOYS and Falcons with elements of the 145th Aviation Battalion lifting 354 troops of the Brigade in a massive heliborne assault. COWBOY 902 loaded with troops lost power on departure from LZ Washington and was autorotated. Damage was suffered to the tail boom and tail rotor. 902 was evacuated to CH-47.
- c. The COWBOYS, Falcons, and Caspers from 3 through 6 September supported the 173rd Airborne with resupply, courier service, reconnaissance, command and liaison and aerial fire support.
- d. The 7th of September marked the termination of Operation Toledo as the 335th led three airmobile companies in lifting the paratroopers from the operations area into the "Snake Pit" at Bien Hoa.
- e. Early morning the 8th of September found the COWBOYS and Falcons winging Westward to support the 1st Infantry Division in the Phu Loi -- Lai Khe area. 216 members of the "Big Red One" were Eagle Flighted into a rough, brush landing zone. The proud COWBOYS shamed 1st Infantry Airmobile Companies with their tight, exact formation flying and the deadly Falcons put on an impressive demonstration of aerial fire support.
- f. Operation Uniontown underway in the 173rd local TAOR was supported on 9 September by the 335th. Vietnamese National Elections are approaching and alertness is the word, for all allied intelligence sources expect maximum Viet Cong interference with the elections.
- g. The period of 10 September through 14 September was quiet for the 335th. The Battalions operating in the local TAOR were provided hot "A" rations and other supplies each morning and evening by the UH-1D's.

h. On 15 September 4th Battalion moved Northwest to secure an airstrip at Dau Tieng for an operation by the 1st Infantry Division. The security operation was labeled Operation Atlantic City. A "Slick" pulled an injured man from the jungles on the end of a rope, took three (3) bullet hits, and flew a scary night emergency resupply of damaged radio parts to the 4th Battalion.

i. September 16th at 1015 hours CWO Dorf and WO Gregg working out of Dau Tieng in support of the 4/503 received three (3) rounds of light automatic weapons fire as they were on short final to medevac wounded Americans. The hits ruptured the fuel cells, and by the time CWO Dorf nursed the crippled 701 into Dau Tieng, JP-4 was flowing ankle deep through the cargo compartment. A survival kit under the crew chief's seat caught one enemy round headed for Sp5 Meredith. 701 was finally repaired by the maintenance crew on "Horsethief" and was flown to Bien Hoa.

At noon the COWBOYS and Falcons lifted elements of the Brigade into a loading zone in the TAOR. COWBOY 738 in formation at tree top altitude experienced an engine failure. WO Ron Jones, aircraft commander, and Captain John Wood, who was on his first heliborne assault in Vietnam, made a perfect zero airspeed autorotation into dense jungle. There were no injuries, but the jungle was so dense that a landing to rescue the crew was impossible. An emergency message was relayed to the Brigade Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol to prepare their rescue rope ladders for use. The LRRP responded instantly with the entire unit trying to climb on helicopters to rescue the COWBOYS from the hands of the Viet Cong. However, the LRRP was finally convinced that only a rope ladder was needed to rescue the crew. A few nervous moments after plunging into the jungle, the crew scrambled up the rope ladders into the hovering rescue helicopter. Later in the afternoon 738 was evacuated to Bien Hoa by CH-47.

j. At 0800 on 17 September 1966 an Awards and Decorations Ceremony was held. Major Johnson, Commander of the COWBOYS, decorated ten (10) officers and enlisted men for acts of valor and periods of meritorious service. The Company received notice that the COWBOYS, as of 1 September 1966, are redesignated the 335th Aviation Company (Airmobile-Light). Company "A" will be returned to its parent 82nd Aviation Battalion at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. This return to the United States involves only our name, a disappointment to every COWBOY.

k. The period of 15 September to 23 September was a period of training and experimentation with a new item of equipment. Col. Parmeter introduced us to a system deployed on the roof of the jungle by a UH-1D. This system was labeled the jungle canopy and CWO N. Dorf and WO R. Jones worked with Col. Parmeter in preparation for a demonstration to show how troops and equipment could be placed on this canopy by helicopter, then lowered to the otherwise inaccessible jungle floor.

l. At last light on the afternoon of 20 September five (5) LRRP teams were infiltrated by UH-1D's into the hostile area North of Bien Hoa known notoriously as War Zone "D." Two (2) Light Fire Teams from the Falcons provided cover for the operation; there was negative enemy contact.

m. The COWBOYS and Falcons spent the day of 21 September on extraction stand-by for the LRRP teams working in "D" Zone. Three of the teams made contact with the Viet Cong and three times the COWBOYS scrambled to snatch the patrols from the hands of the Viet Cong.

n. On 22 September, Light Fire Teams from the Falcons were called upon to provide aerial fire support for LRRP's in contact with the Viet Cong. At 1030 COWBOYS reacted to an urgent request for a patrol extraction, pulling the patrol in without incident. Again at last light two (2) LRRP's were scheduled for infiltration into "D" Zone. The first COWBOY approaching his LZ spotted VC on the edge of the woods. A quick drawing COWBOY crew chief beat a VC with an automatic weapon to the draw. Partners of the dead VC opened fire and the LRRP mission was aborted. The second COWBOY began his approach and received fire, a hot gun battle ensued as the COWBOYS pulled out of the approach and the Falcons

rolled in with their guns blazing. Both LRRP's missions were aborted and returned to Bien Hoa because of the VC presence in primary and alternate LZ's.

The Casper's OH-13's armed with machine-guns went out for a test fire of their new systems. The OH-13's are to be utilized as scout units to detect Viet Cong concentrations for destruction by quick reaction COWBOY - Falcon Eagle Flights.

o. At 0800 on the 23rd of September, CWO Harold Dorf and WO Ronald Jones flew the jungle canopy demonstration for the Brigade staff. Col. Parmeter gave the staff members an initial briefing on the uses and operation of the canopy. The net became fouled in the jungle and the demonstration was terminated with observers skeptical of the feasibility of the jungle canopy system.

At 1300 two (2) UH-1D's conducted training with pathfinders from E/17 Cav.

The last light of day saw three (3) COWBOYS spiral down into the jungles of War Zone "D" with LRRP's to search for Viet Cong. WO Charles F. Stoudt and WO William M. Manker placed their patrol in a small rough jungle clearing. Immediately after the helicopter departed the LRRP engaged a platoon size VC force; an immediate extraction was requested. WO Stoudt and WO Manker went back into the LZ and picked up the patrol under fire. A rotor blade was damaged, but the aircraft returned safely to Bien Hoa.

p. LRRP's called for help at 1300 hours on 25 September. The COWBOYS and Falcons snatched the patrols from the jungle and assaulted a reaction force into the area where the LRRP's had discovered the Viet Cong.

The 173rd Airborne Brigade began Operation Sioux City, aiming at the Viet Cong elements the LRRP had made contact with in "D" Zone.

q. 0800 hours, 26 September 1966 the COWBOYS delivered 120 paratroopers into "D" Zone LZ's. The Falcons shot white phosphorous into a position that was directing ground fire at the COWBOYS. Two (2) VC with their clothes in flames sprinted into the open and were cut down by the "Saber" gunships.

r. Three (3) assaults put 170 paratroopers into LZ's in support of Sioux City on the morning of 27 September.

s. On 28 September Eagle Flights were conducted in War Zone "D" as the 173rd Airborne continued to search for the elusive Viet Cong. OH-13's armed with their side arms conducted Aero-Scout Training with E/17 Cavalry. Three (3) LRRP's were placed in the Brigade operational area in "D" Zone. Thirty minutes after infiltration one team was calling for help. Captain Troy Reeves and Captain Don Moss made a daring extraction of the team under intense automatic weapons fire. The Falcon fire team led by Captain Vance Gammons provided ravaging fire support for the extraction. The LRRP's reported that Falcon fire was providing close-in support against VC only 20 meters from their position.

t. The COWBOYS, Falcons, and Casper's continued on September 29 and 30 to provide the Brigade with aviation support for Operation Sioux City. Eagle Flights and assaults were made, supplies were delivered, LRRP's were supported and CS gas was showered on suspected Viet Cong targets. The month of September closed with the following monthly statistics:

	OH-13	UH-1B(A)	UH-1B	UH-1D	TOTAL
<b>Sorties</b>	225	642	325	2552	3744
<b>Hours</b>	127	450	162	964	1703
<b>Pax</b>					4381
<b>Cargo (tons)</b>					206
<b>Aircraft Hits</b>					3

## **II. TRAINING:**

Training during the month of September was devoted to new pilots and crew members. Pilots were given the usual unit aircraft checkout and the area orientation. New gunners and crew chiefs were given the weapon checkout and briefed on crew procedures and responsibilities.

## **III. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS: Prepared by Sp/4 Michael De Marco.**

MacPhail, William Jr.	Major	DFC, Bronze Star,
		AM w/ "V," Purple Heart
Addiss, Daniel A.	Major	Bronze Star
Bell, Glenn B.	1/Lt.	AM w/ "V"
Kuhblank, Richard C.	1/Lt.	AM w/ "V"
Sanders, Gary G.	WO	AM w/ "V"
Peters, Donald L.	Captain	AM
Ferrall, Frank V. Jr.	Sp/5	AM
Klinefelter, John W.	Sp/4	AM
Houchin, Zelner M. Jr.	Pfc.	AM
McHugh, Leo P.	Pfc.	AM

**IV. COMPANY AREA:**

Construction work in individual rooms continues at an enthusiastic pace. CWO Bill Easton persists in his running water project. A large water tower has been constructed and piping to deliver running water to the company area is being laid.

**V. CIVIL AFFAIRS:**

MED-CAP and food distribution projects in the Bien Hoa area were carried out to aid the sick and needy Vietnamese people.

**HISTORY OF  
335TH AVIATION COMPANY (AIRMOBILE LIGHT)  
173RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
APO 96250 SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA**

**1 October – 30 October 1966**

**Prepared by  
1/Lt. GEORGE W. MURRAY**

**Approved by  
Leyburn W. Brockwell, Jr.  
LTC Infantry  
Commanding**

**For  
Ernest H. Johnson  
Major Infantry  
Commanding**

**HEADQUARTERS  
173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate)  
APO 96250 SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA**

**335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
173RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96250**

AVBE-AM

12 March 1967

Subject: Monthly History for 335th Aviation Company  
1 October 1966 through 30 October 1966

**I. OPERATIONS:**

- a. The month of October began with the COWBOYS, Falcons and Caspers continuing to provide the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) with dependable aviation support as the "Sky Soldiers" carried on Operations Sioux City and Uniontown. A Casper OH-13S darting across the operations area near position Fox picked up two rounds of small arms fire. The pilot was able to reach a secure area, where he found minor damage to his ship. The company made two (2) small lifts to reposition the paratroopers as their unrelenting pursuit of the crafty Viet Cong in "War Zone D" continued.
- b. On the 2nd of October two (2) OH-13's armed with machine guns provided overhead cover for E/17 Cav. The Viet Cong chose not to interfere with the Cavalry and thus avoided incurring the wrath of the Aero Scouts.
- c. One hundred and sixty U.S. troops were lifted by seven (7) COWBOYS with cover from a Falcon Light Fire Team on 4 October. Light contact was made but "Charlie" avoided major contact with the paratroopers of the 173rd.
- d. The COWBOYS moved two hundred troops of the Brigade as Operation Sioux City continued on 6 October.
- e. On 7 October, ten (10) COWBOYS with cover from two (2) Falcon Light Fire Teams repositioned 120 U.S. troops in War Zone "D."
- f. On 8 October 1966, paratroopers of the 173rd began to withdrawn from the area of Operation Sioux City. 360 troops were extracted by the COWBOYS. As the COWBOYS approached the Song Deng Nai River, the Southern boundary of "War Zone D," the Viet Cong opened fire on the formation. Four ships were damaged. The COWBOYS, in formation, returned the fire and the hungry Falcons rolled in to remind "Charlie" that the luxury of firing at the COWBOYS can cost dearly. Later in the day, 5 COWBOYS moved 60 cavalry men into position to secure the route of travel for the Brigade convoy moving out of "D" Zone.
- g. On 9 October, the COWBOYS cleaned up the Sioux City area with an extraction of 92 U.S. troops in 4 lifts. Aerial reconnaissance for Operation Robin began as 5 aircraft checked Route #15 from Bien Hoa to Vung Tau to prepare for road clearing operations.
- h. 10 October 1966 was the opening day of Operation Robin as the "Sky Soldiers" provided security for elements of the 4th Infantry Division moving from Vung Tau to Bear Cat.
- i. The morning of 11 October the COWBOYS lifted troops of the 173rd into an LZ in the vicinity of the Brigade CP on Highway #15 South of Bien Hoa, Operation Robin continued as the 335th provided a Light Fire Team, a courier ship and resupply ships used to supplement the road supply convoy.

j. On 12 October four (4) UH-1D's and a Light Fire Team infiltrated two (2) LRRP's into suspected Viet Cong areas South of the Brigade CP. At approximately 1805 Casper #416, an OH-13S piloted by 1/Lt. Douglas L. Jones, departed the Brigade CP enroute to Bien Hoa. At approximately 1815, #416 fell 50 feet to the ground and burst into flames. 1/Lt. Jones and his passenger S/Sgt. E-6 Freeman were killed instantly. The accident investigation board was appointed and began its investigation at first light on the 13th of October.

At 1830 hours on the 12th five (5) UH-1D's with a Light Fire Team conducted night training. They landed in formation at Bear Cat, Vung Tau and the Snake Pit in Bien Hoa.

k. Early on the morning of 13 October 1966 two (2) OH-13S were carried by Air Force C-130 to Da Nang. Two (2) UH-1D's flew to Da Nang via the coastal route. These four helicopters were placed in support of the 173rd Airborne Brigade's 4/503 Infantry on Operation Winchester supporting allied operations in I Corps near the Demilitarized Zone. At 1700 hours' three (3) UH-1D's extracted a LRRP that had made contact with a Viet Cong force. The extraction was made without any enemy interference.

l. Again on 14 October a LRRP called for extraction at 1700 hours. The extraction was made with no enemy fire received. At 1800 hours a flight of six (6) UH-1D's (the Mustangs) with a Light Fire Team made a night formation training flight to Vung Tau, the Snake Pit, and then back into the CORRAL.

m. At 0900 hours on 15 October, UH-1D's covered by a Light Fire Team extracted 42 U.S. paratroopers from a pick-up zone in A/O Robin. A second Light Fire Team came on station at 0900 hours to provide convoy cover for Brigade vehicles traveling Highway 15 in the Robin area.

n. 16 October 1966 dawned with a Falcon fire team making a reconnaissance, which was repeated at last light of day. This was a daily chore to observe any Viet Cong activity near the Crucial highway.

o. Termination of the 173rd Airborne Brigade's road runner operation on Highway #15 began at 0730 hours on 17 October as seven (7) COWBOYS and two (2) "Falcon" Light Fire Teams extracted 126 U.S. paratroopers from the Robin area. A convoy began moving toward Bien Hoa with a "Falcon" team providing overhead cover. By the afternoon Operation Robin was terminated. The 335th Aviation counts Operation Robin a loss because of the tragic accidental death of 1/Lt. Douglas L. Jones.

p. At 0730 hours on 18 October two (2) UH-1D's began airborne refresher training with elements of E Troop, 17th Cav. At 0900 hours' one (1) UH-1D departed the CORRAL for Da Nang to provide additional support for 4/503 in Operation Winchester. At 2245 hours a Viet Cong unit attacked the armed helicopter parking area at the South boundary of the Brigade perimeter. A Claymore mine or fragmentation grenade was detonated under UH-1B #932. The resulting fire, and fuel-ammunition explosion completely destroyed #932 and severely damaged #930. Captain Vance Gammons and Sp4 Lyle Travis saved #930 from destruction by flying it off the pad. Both were later presented the Bronze Star with "V" Device for heroism by Major General Paul Smith, Commanding General of the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate). Falcon aircraft #919 parked next to #932 also was in danger and was evacuated by 1/Lt. Willoughby Goin; Lt. Goin received the Air Medal with a "V" Device for heroism.

q. At 0700 hours on 19 October 1966, seven (7) COWBOYS and two (2) Light Fire Teams departed Bien Hoa to support the 25th Infantry Division in the Cu Chi-Duc Hoa area. Combat Assaults moved 150 ARVN and U.S. troops during the day. On the last extraction of the day the "COWBOYS," on short final to an open rice field pick-up zone, were ambushed by heavy small arms and automatic weapons fire. COWBOY door gunners whipped out white smoke to mark for the Falcons and opened fire with their own M-60's. The Falcons rolled in and the supposedly "Secure LZ" was engulfed in a wild fire fight. Airborne again, the COWBOYS found five of seven ships carrying combat damage--no crew members wounded.

Two of the ARVN's extracted were seriously wounded by enemy fire and were flown to 7th Surgical Hospital at Cu Chi.

One (1) Light Fire Team at Bien Hoa conducted reconnaissance of the Brigade TAOR (Tactical Area of Operational Responsibility) at 0730 and 1830. These recons provide more security for the Brigade perimeter, which is obviously not as secure as everyone had previously hoped.

r. Before daylight on the morning of 20 October, seven (7) "COWBOY" and two (2) "Falcon" fire teams pulled pitch and headed into the Delta South of Saigon. Arriving at Ben Tri, the company joined the "Outlaws" and "Knights" of the Delta Aviation Battalion (13th Aviation Battalion) and lifted 280 ARVN in four (4) assaults. On an extraction toward the end of the afternoon, the "Falcons" detected Viet Cong on a landing zone about to be assaulted. Rolling in, the guns put CS gas, machine-gun fire, and rockets on the enemy elements and successfully upset any plans the enemy had of firing on the incoming "Slicks."

The company returned to the CORRAL happy, as the units visited in the Delta expressed amazement at the excellent formation flying by the COWBOYS and the spirited aggressiveness of the bloodthirsty "Falcons."

s. October 21 and 22 were spent in normal support of the 173rd Airborne in Bien Hoa and Da Nang. A number of recons were conducted in the TAOR and one recon covered Highway #15 from Bien Hoa to Vung Tau.

t. On 23 October 1966 Light Fire Teams conducted recons in the TAOR. At 1300 a fire team from the Falcons went out to cover CH-47's (Chinooks) flying out of Xom Cat Special Forces Camp on the North bank of the Song Deng Nai River Northeast of Bien Hoa.

At 1800, three (3) UH-1D's covered by a fire team positioned two (2) LRRP teams in the Brigade TAOR.

u. At 1120 hours on 24 October three (3) UH-1D's and a "Falcon" fire team scrambled to extract a LRRP team that had been compromised. The extraction was successful with no combat damage received.

At 1800 hours another LRRP was positioned by the "COWBOYS."

v. Just after day break on 25 October 1966, the COWBOYS and "Falcons" received request for an emergency extraction of a LRRP team. The LRRP had made contact with a small Viet Cong element and had captured two of the enemy. The extraction was successful, and the two VC were delivered to Brigade Headquarters for interrogation. On departure from the pick up, the "Falcons" spotted sampans in the area and rolled in on firing passes. When the smoke cleared there were two (2) positively destroyed enemy boats.

In the afternoon one (1) UH-1D flew a reconnaissance in the vicinity of Tanh Linh for possible operations on the 26th of October.

w. 26 October was spent in normal support of the 173rd Airborne in Bien Hoa and the Brigade's 4/503 at Da Nang.

x. On 27 October 1966 at 1045 hours' seven (7) UH-1D's escorted by two (2) Light Fire Teams lifted 180 paratroopers of the 1/503. At 1500 hours' four (4) UH-1D's (Mustangs) and a team of "Falcons" repositioned 72 troops of the 1/503 in the TAOR. Two (2) UH-1D's received hits and one gunner suffered minor neck wounds. Operation Trojan Horse (Joplin) began today for the 1/503.

y. At 0700 hours on 28 October, seven (7) COWBOYS supplemented by three (3) UH-1D's from the 145th Aviation Battalion and two (2) "Falcon" fire teams lifted 600 ARVN troops into the Tanh Linh area to aid the 1/503 in Operation Joplin. One (1) "Falcon" received a small arms hit in the main rotor blade and one (1) of the "Falcon" door gunners was hit in the leg by ground fire. The gunner was taken to the 93rd Medical Evacuation Hospital at Bien Hoa for treatment. A week later he returned to duty.

z. 29 October 1966, the COWBOYS with four (4) 145th Aviation UH-1D and a "Falcon" fire team in four (4) lifts moved 219 troops in the Operation Joplin area. At 1400 hours, UH-1D #614 commanded by WO Ronald G. Jones showed fluctuations of transmission gages and was landed safely near Dong Xoai Special Forces with a failing transmission. The ship was returned to Bien Hoa by Chinook.

aa. On 30 October 1966 1/503 terminated Operation Joplin as Chinooks lifted the troops from Tanh Linh to Bien Hoa.

bb. The month of October ended with three (3) UH-1D's and two (2) OH-13's supporting 4/503 on Operation Winchester in I Corps Area. The remainder of the "COWBOYS - Falcons - Caspers" continued to provide the main force of the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) in Bien Hoa with the FINEST COMBAT AIRMOBILE SUPPORT IN THE WORLD!

**II. MONTHLY STATISTICS:**

	OH-13	UH-1B(A)	UH-1B	UH-1D	TOTAL
Sorties	543	571	571	3238	4923
Hours	204	250	307	1387	2148
Pax					7045
Cargo (tons)					206
Aircraft Hits					12

**III. TRAINING:**

Training time during October, in addition to the normal transition and initial new pilot briefings, included a night formation flight by each lift platoon escorted by the "Falcons." A new program of Officers Call was set up on a bi-monthly basis. This conference session is designed to emphasize to pilot's information pertinent to maintenance, operations, aviation safety, intelligence, company administration and any information that the Commander chooses to emphasize.

**IV. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:**

An awards ceremony was not held during the month of October because of the heavy operational commitment of the "COWBOYS." However, this month has produced many Air Medals as the Company participated in several Combat Assaults. Also, General Smith, Commanding General of the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) decorated Captain Gammons and Sp4 Lyle Travis with Bronze Stars with "V" Devices for the evacuation of the "Falcon" gunship from its parking area during a Viet Cong attack.

**V. COMPANY AREA:**

The living area of the company improves each day as the Officers and men develop "Green Thumbs." Grass is growing and trees have been set out. Soon the area will look so much like home, that except for the VC, the men of the COWBOYS will think they are back in the United States.

**VI. CIVIL AFFAIRS:**

Following the theory that the war will be won by diligent civil affairs work as well as by hot pursuit of the Viet Cong guerrilla, the 335th Aviation Company continued an active program of MED-CAP through the 25th Medical Detachment.

**HISTORY OF**  
**335TH AVIATION COMPANY (AIRMOBILE LIGHT)**  
**173RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)**  
**APO 96250 SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA**  
**1 November – 30 November 1966**

**Prepared by**  
**1/Lt. GEORGE W. MURRAY**

**Approved by**  
**HENRY J. VICTOR**  
**Major Artillery**  
**Commanding**

**PROVIDING THE 173RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
WITH THE MOST PROFESSIONAL AIRMOBILE SUPPORT  
AVAILABLE ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD**

**HEADQUARTERS**  
**335TH Aviation Company (Airmobile Light)**  
**173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate)**  
**APO 96250 SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA**

**335TH AVIATION COMPANY (AIRMOBILE LIGHT)  
173RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
APO 96250 SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA**

1 December 1966

Subject: Monthly History for 335th Aviation Company (Airmobile Light)  
1 November 1966 through 30 November 1966

To: Commanding Officer  
335th Aviation Company (Airmobile Light)  
173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate)  
APO 96250 San Francisco, California

**I. ORGANIZATION AND DESIGNATION:**

(A) Airlift Platoons: COWBOYS -- 20 UH-1D "Slicks"

1st Airlift Platoon -- Ramrods  
2nd Airlift Platoon -- Mustangs

(B) Armed Helicopter Platoon: Falcons -- 8 UH-1B "Armed" Helicopters)

(C) 173rd Aviation Platoon: Caspers  
2 UH-1D Command & Control  
1 UH-1B Command & Control  
1 UH-1B "12 O'clock High" MAD System  
6 OH-13S "Hot Stuff" Aero Scouts

(D) Maintenance:  
1 UH-1B Horsethief

**II. OPERATIONS:**

a. The month of November began as the longed for dry season seems never to be coming. Rain, thunder storms and poor visibility continued to be a nuisance, but the 335th continues to support the "SKY SOLDIERS" on Operation Uniontown. Three (3) UH-1D's and two (2) OH-13's continue support at Da Nang.

At 1030 hours a Light Fire Team was scrambled to provide the 120th Aviation Company with fire support in the Saigon area.

Five (5) UH-1D's and a Light Fire Team move 145 U.S. troops in three (3) Combat Assaults.

b. At 0945 on the 2nd of November, seven (7) UH-1D's with a Light Fire Team conduct seven (7) Combat Assaults in the Bear Cat area. In support of the 4/25 Infantry, 306 American troops are lifted into the landing zones in the Bear Cat area of operation.

c. From 0730 to 1800 on the 3rd of November, seven (7) UH-1D's, a Light Fire Team and a UH-1B Command and Control ship from the CASPERS conducted seventeen (17) Combat Assaults for 453 troops of the 4/25 Infantry. The troops are resupplied by 8.9 tons of cargo by the COWBOYS.

d. At 0800 hours on the 4th of November, four (4) UH-1D's conduct Combat Assault training with the ARVN. Training was extended to 480 Vietnamese during sixteen (16) practice assaults.

At 0800 hours, Maj. Johnson decorated ten (10) members of his command in ceremony. Other individuals were due awards, but were flying -- they will be decorated at a later date.

At 1030 hours' one (1) COWBOY conducted a Psy War leaflet drop in support of Brigade S-5.

At 1630 hours' five (5) UH-1D's covered by a Light Fire Team in three (3) CA's placed 90 paratroopers into ambush sites.

e. 300 troops of the 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division were deployed by the COWBOYS in ten (10) CA's on 5 November 1966. At 1600 hours, the 90 troops of ambush patrol were extracted from local TAOR after twenty-four hours of negative contact. Also at 1600 hours' four (4) UH-1D's in three (3) lifts placed 54 paratroopers of the 1/503 in the TAOR. At dusk four (4) UH-1D's and a Light Fire Team infiltrated two (2) Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols into the local TAOR.

f. At 1700 hours on the 6th of November, one of the LRRP working just East of the TAOR placed a call for an emergency extraction to escape a Viet Cong trap that had surrounded them. Three (3) UH-1D's and a Light Fire Team scrambled to aid the LRRP and found the patrol in an area that did not offer a suitable LZ. The three (3) UH-1D's employed the emergency rope rescue system, lowering ropes 120 feet to the jungle floor and lifting the patrol members clear of the jungle. There were no injuries and no aircraft damaged as the six (6) man patrol was evacuated to the safety of the Bien Hoa Compound.

g. 0700 hours, 7 November 1966: Five (5) UH-1D's and a Light Fire Team supported the 3/4th Division at Bear Cat lifting 260 American troops. At 1000, two (2) UH-1D's and a Light Fire Team extracted 57 ambush patrol members from sites in the TAOR.

h. At 0730 on 8 November six (6) COWBOYS and a Falcon Light Fire Team arrived at Bear Cat to support 3/4 Infantry Division. Twelve (12) assaults were conducted as 455 troops were moved; resupply was conducted at conclusion of the lift. In the TAOR, three (3) LRRP teams were extracted at the conclusion of their mission. Operation Meridian was initiated by 2/503 today.

i. 9 November was devoted to Eagle Flights as eight (8) UH-1D's and a Light Fire Team supported the 1/503 Infantry.

j. 10 November 1966: Operation Meridian in the Tay Ninh - Dau Tieng - Minh Thanh area North of Saigon near the Cambodian boarder has the COWBOYS, Falcons, and CASPERS working hard. Supplemented by two (2) UH-1D's from the 145th Aviation Battalion from Bien Hoa, 700 ARVN and 180 U.S. troops are lifted in the area of Operation Meridian.

k. On 11 November, all company aircraft are working at the Minh Thanh Special Forces Compound in support of Operation Meridian. With the two (2) UH-1D's from the 145th, the COWBOYS conducted six (6) assaults to deploy 460 American troops.

l. On 12 November, four (4) UH-1D's in the Minh Thanh area reposition 50 U.S. troops. The company is now regulated to stand-by status at Minh Thanh through the 13th. Everyone is squirming for action as American units to the West of Minh Thanh are killing VC at a phenomenal rate. All 335th Action is limited to the Falcons making reconnaissance flights into the area of Operation.

m. 14 November 1966 finds Operation Meridian renamed Operation Attleboro; as it becomes clear that this Operation is rapidly becoming the biggest operation to date in the Vietnam War. On this day the COWBOYS and Falcons transported 486 American and Vietnamese troops to search for the enemy.

n. Early in the morning on the 15th of November, a fake assault of two (2) lifts follow the TAC Air into an LZ North of Minh Thanh. The plan is a block to contain the VC in an area where he can be destroyed. No fire received, but chalk 4 tries to chop down a tree with his main rotor -- slight blade damage, and the tree is still standing. Later in the morning two (2) assaults received fire going into an LZ -- negative hits.

o. 16, 17, & 18 November 1966 again find the company on stand by at Minh Thanh. Over the three day period only 239 U.S. and ARVN troops are lifted.

p. On the 19th of November, the COWBOYS in seven (7) assaults moved 384 U.S. and ARVN troops in support of Operation Attleboro. At 0830 hours the CASPERS employed Psy Warfare against Viet Cong in the Minh Thanh area. A UH-1 with the MAD system aboard delivered a cargo of death dealing 81mm mortar rounds on an area suspected to harbor enemy elements.

q. The 20th of November 1966 concluded the 173rd Airborne Brigades participation in Operation Attleboro. The Brigade moved from Minh Thanh to Bien Hoa by road. The Falcons flew over head cover, and the COWBOYS and CASPERS provided ready reaction and C&C.

r. At 1400 on the 21st of November, three (3) assaults lifted 144 paratroopers of the 1/503 into an LZ at TAOR. At 1700 hours the Brigade Aviation Officer alerted the company the 3rd Brigade of the 4th Infantry Division was heavily engaged with enemy elements in the Rung Sat Special Zone Southeast of Saigon. Five (5) UH-1D's scrambled to the aid of the unit working from Nha Bhe Naval Base on the Song Dong Nai River. The COWBOYS breaking a cardinal rule by working without the Falcons, all UH-1B's were down for maintenance, moved 78 troops into reinforced positions in three (3) assaults. A gun team from the 145th Aviation Battalion covered the COWBOYS. Major Johnson flying lead drew fire and his ship, 884, took a hit in the left underside. The round stopped against the armor plate on which SP/5 Davis Trice was sitting. Major Johnson flew 884 safely back to Bien Hoa, but Rice was visibly shaken as he had only a few days to completion of his Vietnam tour. The COWBOYS flight returned to corral at 2200 hours.

s. On 22 November 1966, three (3) UH-1D's and a Light Fire Team support 3/4th Infantry Divisions as 126 U.S. troops and a large quantity of supplies were moved.

t. 23 November 1966 was spent on LRRP stand-by, with several recons for Operation Waco being conducted. The COWBOYS - CASPERS elements supporting the 4/503 at Da Nang was alerted for return to Bien Hoa.

u. 24 November 1966: The Falcons conducted morning and evening recons in the Brigade TAOR. One LRRP team in the TAOR was extracted without incident.

v. At 0800 hours on the 25th of November, eight (8) UH-1D's and a Light Fire Team made five (5) assaults into the LZ's in the Operation Waco area, North of Highway #1 between Bien Hoa and Xuan Loc. At 1800 hours' two (2) LRRP teams were emplaced South of Bear Cat. Enemy fire was received, but there were no casualties or aircraft damage. Two (2) OH-13's returned by Air Force C-130 from Da Nang.

w. 26 November was devoted in support of the 1/503 in Operation Waco and 4/503 at Da Nang.

x. On 27 November normal support of Waco and LRRP was performed. Training was conducted by all flyable ships not committed to operational missions. (NOTE: See item IV Training)

y. At 0800 hours on the 28th of November the company lifted 282 ARVN and U.S. troops in support of Operation Waco. The landing zone being utilized was a roughly cultivated field with stumps and rocks. As the lift approached, rotor wash stirred up dense clouds of dust and COWBOY 614, caught in the turbulence, ran out of power causing loss of directional control. The ship turned to the right approximately 270 degrees, struck a stump shearing part of one tail rotor blade. The pilot cut the power and 614 remained upright. The tail rotor was repaired on the spot by Horsethief and flown back to Bien Hoa. Major frame damage from the accident sent the ship to Depot Maintenance for overhaul.

At 1100 hours' two (2) LRRP teams were extracted from the Waco area without incident.

z. The closing days of November were spent in support of Operation Uniontown in the Brigade TAOR, Operation Waco East of Bien Hoa and the 4/503 at Da Nang.

### **III. MONTHLY STATISTICS:**

	<b>OH-13</b>	<b>UH-1B(A)</b>	<b>UH-1B</b>	<b>UH-1D</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Sorties</b>	631	1086	540	5219	7476
<b>Hours</b>	206	475	171	1297	2149
<b>Pax</b>					11464
<b>Cargo (tons)</b>					243
<b>Aircraft Hits</b>					2

#### **IV. TRAINING:**

The training highlights for November was the on-the-job type of training conducted as the COWBOYS and Falcons supported the 3rd Brigade of the 4th Infantry Division. The Unit, just arrived in country, was conducting operations to the Southwest of Bear Cat as they prepared themselves for the demanding environment of the war in Vietnam. The 335th, provided academic introduction to helicopter operations and utilization and then provided the 3rd Brigade with the capability of conducting airmobile operations, resupplying by aircraft and using armed helicopters in support of ground operations.

Training with the LRRP's was conducted providing refresher training for aircraft crews and for patrol members. Finally, normal training of new pilots and standardization training for veteran pilots continued as a large number of hours were logged in extensive cross-country training. The cowboys ranged to Phan Thiet, Can Tho, and Vung Tau logging training time.

#### **V. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:**

A ceremony was held at 0800 hours on 4 November 1966 in the company area as Maj. Johnson decorated ten (10) members of the unit.

NAME	RANK	AWARD
Kuhblank, Richard C.	Captain	Distinguished Flying Cross
Zabarsky, Frederick G.	Captain	Distinguished Flying Cross
		Air Medal W/ "V"
		Bronze Star
Sanders, Gary G.	WO1	Distinguished Flying Cross
Hammargren, Lonnie L.	Captain	Air Medal W/ "V"
		Bronze Star
Vance, John D.	1/Lt.	Army Commendation W/ "V"
Lovgren, Paul W.	Captain	Basic Air Medal
Payne, Melvin L.	SGT.	Basic Air Medal
Hancock, William A.	PFC	Basic Air Medal
Lucas, Delbert G.	SP/5	Purple Heart

**HISTORY OF  
335TH AVIATION COMPANY (AIRMOBILE LIGHT)  
173RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
Bien Hoa, Republic of Vietnam  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96250, CALIFORNIA  
1 December – 31 December 1966**

**ERNEST H. JOHNSON  
Major Infantry  
Commanding**

**PROVIDING THE 173RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
WITH THE MOST PROFESSIONAL AIRMOBILE SUPPORT  
AVAILABLE ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD**

**Prepared by  
GEORGE W. MURRAY  
1/Lt. Armor  
Unit Historian**

**HEADQUARTERS  
335TH Aviation Company (Airmobile Light)  
173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate)  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96250**

**335TH AVIATION COMPANY (AIRMOBILE LIGHT)  
APO 96250 SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA**

1 January 1967

Subject: Monthly History for 335th Aviation Company (Airmobile Light)  
1 December 1966 through 31 December 1966

To: Commanding Officer  
335th Aviation Company (Airmobile Light)  
173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate)  
APO San Francisco 96250

**I. ORGANIZATION AND DESIGNATION:**

(A) Airlift Platoons: COWBOYS

20 UH-1D "Slicks"  
1st Airlift Platoon -- Ramrods  
2nd Airlift Platoon -- Mustangs

(B) Armed Helicopter Platoon: Falcons

8 UH-1B "Armed" Helicopters)

(C) 173rd Aviation Platoon: Caspers

2 UH-1D Command & Control, 1 UH-1B Command & Control  
1 UH-1B "12 O'clock High" MAD System  
6 OH-13S "Hot Stuff" Aero Scouts

(D) Maintenance 166th Transportation Detachment

1 UH-1B Horsethief

(E) 25th Medical Detachment

(F) 234th Signal Detachment

**II. OPERATIONS:**

a. December began with the COWBOYS, Falcons and Caspers providing the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) with Army Aviation support on Operation Uniontown and Waco II. Three (3) UH-1D's continued to support the Brigade's 4th Battalion 503rd Infantry operation out of Da Nang in the I Corps area.

Everyone feels that the month of December will be a slow flying month with very little enemy action. However, these optimistic predictions will by New Year's have proved very inaccurate.

b. At 0700 hours on 2 December, a message from the element at Da Nang reported that COWBOY 902, a UH-1D, supporting the 4/503rd sustained extensive combat damage when a booby trap was detonated against it. WO Ted H. Bingham and WO Basil D. Freeman were resupplying an element in a secure landing zone. As the ship came to a hover on a rough PSP helipad, a scrap of paper on the pad was swirled up through the air by the rotor turbulence. This paper was attached to a wire that pulled the pin on a

fragmentation grenade. The resulting explosion damaged the skids, fuselage and rotor blades. The pilots, although badly shaken, got the ship on the ground safely. One passenger had shrapnel in his leg, and the gunner, Sp4 Mark Seabury, had minor wounds in one leg. Investigation revealed that one of the Vietnamese boys playing near the landing zone had been trained and paid by the Viet Cong to set the booby trap.

This incident was a costly reminder that the Viet Cong are determined to destroy aircraft and are extremely crafty and skillful in their methods. The landing area had been checked by the infantry for mines and traps, but the metal in the PSP disguised the grenade from mine detectors and the human eye was deceived by the ingenious camouflage and innocent firing method.

At 0800, ten (10) UH-1D's and a Light Fire Team lifted 260 ARVN and U.S. troops to Bien Hoa in termination of Operation Waco II. Additional support for the move was provided by ten (10) UH-1D's and fire teams from the Warriors, an airmobile company based at Soc Trang as a member of the 13th "Delta" Aviation Battalion.

c. At 0800 on 3 December, an awards ceremony was held in the Company area. Major Johnson decorated 19 officers and 23 enlisted men (NOTE: Item V). Six (6) UH-1D's and a Light Fire Team worked out of Saigon transporting a 59 man security force ready to react to any trouble connected with a speech being made in Saigon by South Vietnamese Premier Nguyen Cao Ky. No trouble was encountered.

Two (2) UH-1D's returned to Bien Hoa after supporting the 4/503rd at Da Nang.

d. December 4th and 5th were spent in support of the 173rd Airborne Brigade on Operation Uniontown. On 5 December, five (5) UH-1D's supported FF VII in the III Corps area.

e. At 1400 hours on 6 December, a Falcon Light Fire Team flew convoy cover as the 4/503rd moved from Bien Hoa to Position Lark (YS 173868) on Highway 15 South of Bien Hoa. This move opened the Brigade's Operation Canary/Duck, a road runner operation designed to secure the highway from Vung Tau to Bien Hoa for new combat units arriving in Vietnam.

f. At 0800 on 7 December, ten (10) UH-1D's and a Light Fire Team moved 162 paratroopers into positions around Lark. At 1600 hours, three (3) UH-1D's and a Light Fire Team infiltrated two (2) LRRP teams into landing zones in the Canary/Duck area. All other missions on 7 and 8 December were in support of Brigade Operations Uniontown and Canary/Duck.

g. On 9 December normal support was flown with 62 troops repositioned in the Canary/Duck area. One (1) UH-1D supported Field Forces VII.

h. On 10 December, 140 paratroopers were lifted in three (3) assaults in the Canary/Duck area. At 0800, Major Johnson decorated fourteen (14) members of the Company. 98 troops were repositioned in three (3) CA's on 11 December.

i. Ten (10) UH-1D's and a fire team conducted four (4) assaults from Bear Cat to Position Lark, moving 269 paratroopers. On one landing at Lark COWBOY 674 lost power on approach, turned 90 degrees to the right, slammed into the road and struck his fast moving main rotor blades into the spinning tail rotor of COWBOY 557. Damage was sustained by both ships, but a little green tape in the right places and a change of tail rotors made them safe for maintenance flights to Bien Hoa. At approximately 1500 hours, a Falcon Light Fire Team testing weapon systems over War Zone "D" received a call from an Air Force FAC who had spotted men in black pajamas fleeing into a wood line. The fire team scrambled to the spot and put rockets and machine-gun fire on the target with unknown results.

j. At 0930 on 13 December, UH-1D 738 was hit in the tail boom by small arms fire while involved in a repositioning of troops in the Canary/Duck area.

k. December 14th and 15th were normal support days. However, on the night of the 15th, two (2) UH-1D's and a Light Fire Team conducted a night observation mission over the Rung Sat Special Zone to the Southwest of the Canary/Duck area. Sampans had been operating on the waterways at night, and with the aid of artillery and PUFF THE MAGIC DRAGON thorough surveillance of the area was conducted. The results were not spectacular, the VC would not venture from hiding with the blood thirsty Falcons prowling overhead.

l. At 1300 hours on 16 December, the Falcon 87 fire team was scrambled to support a platoon of E Troop, 17th Cavalry in contact with the Viet Cong at Coordinates YS 305863. The fire team put in rocket and machine-gun strikes. The Air Force fighters hit the area, then 12 O'clock High brought smoke on the VC. "Dust Off" 104 came in to medevac the wounded. Falcon 87 covered as 104 did an outstanding job with a hoist and jungle penetrator. Contact apparently broken, Falcon 87 went to Lark to refuel as "Dust Off" headed to the 93rd Evac hospital at Long Binh. TONTO II, an Air Force FAC, called that the Cavalry was in contact again and had more wounded. The Cavalry was now reinforced as six (6) UH-1D's rushed 36 Horse Soldiers into an LZ 200 meters South of the embattled force. "Dust Off" 104 came back on station and pulled three more wounded to safety. 104 put on an outstanding exhibition of flying skill as he hovered at the top of the jungle hoisting the wounded to safety. His skill was a tribute to Army Aviation and an example of the immeasurable aid these pilots provide to the American fighting man. The 335th Aviation Company (Airmobile Light) tips its hat to "Dust Off" 104 of the 254th Medical Detachment, (Helicopter Ambulance) Long Binh, Republic of Vietnam.

The harassed platoon of E/17th Cavalry finally was extracted from the battle as the COWBOYS pulled them from a rough jungle landing zone.

m. All missions on 17 and 18 December were in normal support of the Brigade on Operations Canary/Duck and Uniontown. Ten (10) UH-1D's lifted 420 troops in seven (7) assaults.

n. Early on the morning of 19 December 1966, five (5) UH-1D's from the Ramrods with a Falcon Light Fire Team began an Aero Rifle problem with E/17 Cavalry. The Ramrods worked in the open, wet marsh land East of Bear Cat along the Dong Nai River. Placing troops into positions and reinforcing when contact was made, several Viet Cong were killed or captured. COWBOY 849 landed to pick up a prisoner and an automatic weapon opened up from a concealed position. Sgt. Coley L. Andrews, 849's door gunner, mortally wounded by the fire was rushed to the 93rd Medical Evacuation Hospital where he died several hours later. The aircraft had extensive damage to the fuel system.

Casper 611, a UH-1D C&C ship, later in the day landed near the spot 849 had been hit. Surprise!! the Viet Cong shot him too, slight damage and no injuries.

333 troops of the 4/503rd were extracted in the afternoon by ten (10) COWBOYS with Falcon cover. Viet Cong were in the area, but there was negative fire. As the final extraction was made the infantry fired Claymore mines on four sides of the PZ toward the wood line.

o. On 20 December at 0800 hours, seven (7) UH-1D's repositioned 143 paratroopers in support of Operation Uniontown.

p. At 0800 on 21 December 1966, the 335th Aviation Company (Airmobile Light) opened the Battle of Stump, a campaign that was to entail two (2) assaults and two (2) extraction's from the same Landing Zone. The landing zone was an opening in dense jungle South of Bear Cat at YS 308857. The

area was approximately the size of a football field with 200 foot trees surrounding it; inside this hole, trees of various heights were scattered about and a thick carpet of underground covered fallen trees, stumps, ditches and pits. Running from North to South in the LZ was a belt of trees and brush 10 meters wide that cut the LZ in half. This LZ had been used by three COWBOYS in an emergency extraction of two (2) elements of E/17th Cavalry on 16 December 1966.

The COWBOYS using ten (10) ships in two (2) flights of five (5) ships each, stormed into "Stump" at 0800 hours with paratroopers of 4th Battalion, 503rd Infantry. Alpha flight cleared the LZ under the leadership of COWBOY 6, Major Ernest H. Johnson. Bravo Flight, led by COWBOY 5, Major Henry J. Victor, hit the LZ and the troops were leaping off from five to ten feet hovers. As Bravo flight lifted off, the radio cracked "Lead this is trail, we just lost our tail rotor and gear box." Horsethief roared in from his eagle eye position above the flight, and the battle was under way. The COWBOYS poured troops onto the LZ to secure the aircraft under repair, and the Viet Cong, coming alive around the LZ sprayed automatic weapon and small arms fire up through the jungle at the COWBOYS and Falcons. The gunships rolled in on firing passes as the "Slicks" marked with smoke and suppressed. The Air Force sent in fighters to strike the enemy positions, and artillery hammered the approach and departure paths from the landing zone. However, the VC proved to be extremely tenacious as each lift received fire. UH-1D 910, commanded by WO Rodney G. Heckerman, took seven (7) hits. One round exploded a smoke grenade in the gunner's compartment, burning Pfc. Thomas A. Sanchez's eyes and burning Mr. Heckerman on the arm.

At the first fueling stop, Major Victor with several hits and suffering violent in-flight vibrations shut down 701, jumped into 674 and continued to lead his flight. Finally, after eleven lifts there were 563 paratroopers in Stump looking for Charlie, and 799 had been repaired to the point of being safe to fly to Bien Hoa.

q. An OH-13S, Casper 419, flown by WO Bill Reynolds received two (2) hits in the vicinity of LZ Stump while marking enemy structures for ground troops. Mr. Reynolds made a precautionary landing at position Lark. A Chinook was called in, and 419 was sling loaded to Bien Hoa for repairs.

r. On 23 December 1966, the COWBOYS began the day with ten (10) UH-1D's and two (2) Light Fire Teams lifting 772 troops of the 1/503 Infantry and the 199th Infantry Brigade into LZ's South of Bien Hoa. At noon the COWBOYS returned to the "Corral" for a briefing and change of some aircraft commanders.

At approximately 1300, ten (10) UH-1D and four (4) UH-1B's departed Bien Hoa for Pick up zone Stump (YS 308857). The 4th Battalion, 503rd Infantry was operating in the area of Stump and was to be extracted to Bien Hoa prior to night fall in order to be out of enemy contact prior to the beginning of the Christmas Truce at 0700 24 December. The pick up zone was entered five (5) ships at a time, and because of the extremely high barriers on all four sides the PZ, limited fuel loads and five (5) troops per aircraft were scheduled. Two (2) extraction's by each flight were accomplished before any fire was received. On the third approach Alpha Flight began receiving intense automatic weapons fire. Flight routes, approaches and departures, were altered every possible way to avoid the intense ground fire, by Major Johnson in COWBOY lead. Shutting down for fuel after eight (8) lifts from Stump, Captain Tucker and WO Danitz found a 50 caliber hole in one blade of the main rotor. Captain Wood and 1/Lt. Steed found fuel draining from a wound in the belly of their aircraft and a bullet hole in the fuselage behind Lt. Steed's head. Both crews made quick repairs and were ready for the next lift. On take off Major Cochran and WO Legg lost power and put their ship back on the refueling field. Sp4 Paul White, their Crew chief, made a rapid survey and found the engine intake clogged with grass and dirt. After a rapid cleaning job, the ship was back in the flight.

The afternoon wore rapidly on as lift after lift brought the paratroopers out of the PZ. As the troops in the 4th Battalion area dwindled, the Viet Cong, in spite of TAC Air, Artillery and the armed helicopters, were closing into the very edges of all four sides of the PZ. Each lift into the PZ found the Falcons pouring tremendous suppressive fire under the COWBOYS, suppressing several .50 caliber positions. The Falcon pilots flew suicide runs on the positions to draw fire away from the vulnerable "slick" aircraft. Many of these passes were made with little or no ammunition, one pilot flying and one pilot firing pistols out the cockpit windows.

On the last refueling stop, Pfc. Newsome, accidentally was thrown from the Crew chief seat of his aircraft at 5 feet. He was evacuated to the 93rd Evac Hospital at Long Binh with a back injury. Lt. Stribling, now had only one door gunner and was told to fly his ship to Bien Hoa for repair -- it was not capable of further flight. Lt. Stribling, however, knowing that if he left the area the troop helicopters would be hurting for cover, explained the situation to his crew and then led his fire team back on station.

Rain was now falling in the area of the operation, and as the time passed it became obvious that the Viet Cong were doing their utmost to delay the extraction so that a small group of Americans would be trapped in the PZ overnight. The ground fire grew intense with each lift, the rain made visibility poor and the approaches and departures to the obstacle-studded pickup zone became a horrible nightmare. But the COWBOYS and Falcons, following Major Johnson to the last man, were not to be denied the accomplishment of their mission. With sixty (60) paratroopers remaining on "Stump," Major Johnson asked the COWBOYS if there was a ship that could not lift six (6) troops on the last lift. There was no reply to his question, the tense silence indicating that maximum effort was going to be expended on this last load, even though some of the weaker ships with only five (5) troops had been barely staggering over the 200 foot trees around the PZ on previous lifts. As the two flights came in very close together, the Viet Cong fire was returned with marked violence. The troops on the ground, now forming a tight perimeter around the small rise the COWBOYS were using as a pickup point and placing M-79 fire behind them, attested to the deadly dream that was being played out in the jungle PZ. The last COWBOY cleared the trees safely, and the two flights joined for the trip to Bien Hoa. Heavy rain showers blocked the path home, Major Johnson, talking to the COWBOYS all the way, led the flight through a light spot in the storm. Just out of the storm, Lt. Beasley and WO Heckerman reported an electrical fire aboard their ship. Making a precautionary landing in a Cavalry position South of Bien Hoa, the crew extinguished the fire and determined that the ship was safe to fly to Bien Hoa.

At final assessment, the COWBOYS had transported a total of 772 troops during the relatively quiet morning lifts and extracted approximately 700 troops from PZ Stump. The Falcons and COWBOYS with the Air Force's nine F-100's and two (2) F-5's and the artillery's 105mm and 8 inch weapons expended: twenty (20) 500 lb. bombs, twelve (12) 750 lb. bombs (napalm), six (6) CBU's, 100 Rockets, 4,400 rounds of 40mm ammunition, 420 2.75 rockets, 457 rounds of 105mm ammunition, and 8 rounds of 8 inch ammunition.

s. At 0700 hours on 24 December 1966, the 48 hour Christmas truce went into effect. Liaison, logistical and reconnaissance missions were flown on the 24th with no enemy initiated incidents reported.

Christmas Day was a quiet day as the truce continued with only light missions.

t. The Christmas Truce ended at 0600 on 26 December 1966. Six (6) UH-1D's repositioned 131 paratroopers in support of Operation Canary/Duck. Three (3) UH-1D's covered by a Light Fire Team lifted 30 troops in support of the 1/503rd conducting operations in the Brigade TAOR.

u. Normal support of the Brigade was flown during the day of 27 December.

v. At 1430 hours the Mustang element was supporting E/17th Cavalry in the open rice paddies West of Bear Cat. UH-1D 567 received sniper fire while unloading troops in a LZ, one round struck the engine combustion section. WO John Legg lifted off to approximately 10 feet, but put his ship on the ground as the engine failed. Horsethief came in to begin recovery work and a sniper hit one of the maintenance personnel in the hand. A Chinook was called to the rescue, and the ship was lofted to Bien Hoa.

At 1815 hours a LRRP extraction was called for in an area to the Southwest of Bear Cat. Three (3) UH-1D's covered by a Light Fire Team moved in to make a routine pick up. As a COWBOY set down to make the extraction, Viet Cong opened fire from positions around the pick up zone. The Falcon 81 fire team rolled in to suppress the enemy fire. As Falcon 82, flown by CWO Dan Norton and WO Gary Peyton, broke from his firing pass a heavy automatic weapon shot the engine away and destroyed the cyclic controls. CWO Dan Norton entered autorotation at treetop level and plunged into a small, rough clearing, whipping off a pair of rockets as he crashed through the trees. WO Peyton, on the flex-machine-guns, fired the weapons until the ship finally came to rest. All crew members were alive, but the crew chief, Sp4 Luther, was severely burned and had to be helped away from the wreckage. SSGT Kilgore, the S-2 aerial observer aboard the ship, made two (2) trips into the burning wreckage to obtain weapons for defense. Viet Cong in the area were firing at the downed crew, but a UH-1D flown by WO Ralph Hicks and WO William Hunker, swooped down and snatched the downed crew from the hands of the Viet Cong.

The aircraft was destroyed and totally consumed by fire. The crew was flown to the 93rd Evac Hospital, all returned to duty except the crew chief who was sent to the United States.

w. On 29 December 1966, 300 troops of the 1/503 were lifted in five (5) CA's in support of Operation Uniontown. Ten (10) UH-1D's and two (2) Light Fire Teams lifted 545 troops of the 2/503 in support of Canary/Duck and the Battle of LZ "Stump." The 2/503 was sweeping the area around LZ Stump.

x. On 30 December at 1630 hours an assault was made on a tax collection point South of Bear Cat. No resistance was encountered. After this lift an LRRP was extracted, and elements of E/17th were extracted from positions West of Bear Cat. Small units were left in place as ambush patrols.

y. The year of 1966 ended quietly as the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) continued to operate South of Bear Cat. The COWBOYS, Falcons and Caspers continued to provide the 173rd with the finest Army Aviation support available in the world. Paratroopers of the Brigade continued to search the area around the notorious position Stump. Very little enemy contact was made, however, the Viet Cong continue to snipe, booby trap and ambush. Promise of the COWBOYS returning to LZ Stump was strong and every man expects to encounter heavy resistance.

**III. MONTHLY STATISTICS:**

	<b>OH-13</b>	<b>UH-1B(A)</b>	<b>UH-1B</b>	<b>UH-1D</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Sorties</b>	577	1206	591	5956	8330
<b>Hours</b>	259	554	219	1650	2682
<b>Pax</b>					12031
<b>Cargo (tons)</b>					177
<b>Aircraft Hits</b>					16

**IV. TRAINING:**

Training during December was restricted by the extreme operational commitments. The month recorded an exceptional number of flying hours plus many hours not logged while LRRP, Eagle Flight and Fire Teams stood by for any missions the Brigade might have. Normal standardization and orientation was conducted for new pilots arriving in the unit.

**V. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:**

- a. At 0800 on 3 December 1966, Major Johnson decorated CWO Daniel S. Norton with a Distinguished Flying Cross for actions in March of 1966. Captain Paul W. Lovgren was presented a Bronze Star for meritorious service as Aircraft Commander of the Brigade Commanding General's UH-1D. Eighty-two (82) other officers and enlisted men were presented Basic Air Medals in the Company.
- b. At 0800 on 10 December 1966, Major Johnson decorated fourteen (14) members of the Company. Included was an Air Medal with "V" device for heroism presented to 1/Lt. Willoughby S. Goin III for his bravery in flying a fully armed UH-1B out of a parking area, at night, when the Viet Cong had sabotaged another armed helicopter.
- c. Colonel Robert C. Shaw, acting Brigade Commander, decorated sixty-four COWBOYS and Falcons for their action on 23 December 1966 at the Battle of "Stump." Crew chiefs and gunners were decorated with Army Commendation Medals with "V" devices. Major Johnson and Captain Wood are being recommended for the DFC as flight leaders on the mission. 1/Lt. Stribling is pending a Silver Star for exceptional gallantry demonstrated while flying a battle-damaged gunship through heavy enemy fire.

**PROVIDING THE 173RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
WITH THE MOST PROFESSIONAL AIRMOBILE SUPPORT  
AVAILABLE ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD**

### 173rd Pilot Awarded DFC For Heroic Flying

**BIEN HOA, (173rd-IO)** -- Warrant Officer Richard F. Landrum, A Co, 82nd Aviation Bn, shook hands with Brig. Gen. Ellis W. Williamson as the commander of the 173rd Airborne Brigade presented him with the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Landrum won his cross for his heroic flying during a 173rd operation in the "Iron Triangle." As commander of a rocket and machine gun armed helicopter, Landrum flew reconnaissance for the paratroopers.

Flying at treetop level, he exposed his helicopter to enemy groundfire. When fired at, he dived into action, attacking the position, scattering and killing many of the enemy.

As the paratroopers penetrated further into the jungle, enemy resistance grew and Landrum stayed on station, above the ground troops for more than eight hours, landing only to rearm and refuel. A medical evacuation helicopter, attempting to land and aid the wounded, drew so much enemy groundfire that a landing was impossible.

The pilot of the medevac chopper called for support, and Landrum raced to the scene. Circling the area, the 20-year-old Texan located the VC positions and charged in, pouring out a hail of bullets. As the VC abandoned the area, the ambulance chopper landed, carrying the wounded away without further harassment.

Holder of the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry, more than 30 air medals, and a Presidential Unit Citation, Landrum has finished his one year tour in Vietnam. First assigned to flying troop carrying helicopters when he arrived last year, Landrum soon transferred to jockeying the gunships on a voluntary basis. "You get to do a lot more flying in the gunships," he said, "and see a good deal more action."

The following article was originally printed in *The Army Reporter* newspaper on July 16, 1966. It was contributed to the Cowboy History by Billy R. Childs.

## No Mission Too Tough For 82nd 'Cowboys'

**BIEN HOA, (173d ABN-IO)**--Shortly after arrival in Vietnam in April 1965, A Company of the 82nd Aviation Battalion took their name from an equally tough group of football heroes from Dallas, Texas, and became the "Cowboys."

Formerly a subordinate unit of the "All American" 82nd company attached to the 173rd Airborne Division the Cowboys are an airmobile light helicopter company attached to the 173rd Airborne Brigade. Their job is to carry troops into combat, bring them back and to provide all the supplies and combat aviation support while the troopers are engaged with the enemy.

The Cowboys are a hard-flying, hard-fighting team, interdependent on themselves, with their goal being the successful accomplishment of each mission. Each Cowboy is essential to the team's success.

The quarterback for this team is the company commander, Maj. Larry J. Baughman. He calls the plays based on established procedures, the enemy situation, and his wealth of personal experience. The fullback, is the armed helicopter platoon leader Maj. Abb W. Mangram. It's his job to smash through the enemy and clear the way for the ball carrying halfbacks. The halfbacks are the platoon leaders of the troop carrying helicopters. These platoons are the work horses of the company and take the ball over the goal line after the other Cowboys have done their jobs. The Cowboys' center is the operation officer, Maj. Bruce Gibbons. He receives word of pending mission and passes it to the commander. The "play" is started and the operation is complete after the goal has been reached and the mission is accomplished.

The Cowboys line consists of all the officers and warrant officers who fly the helicopters and the crew-chiefs and gunners that complete each crew. These are the men who bring the food, water, and ammunition to the ground soldiers, fly him to medical aid in minutes after he is wounded, act as his eyes above the ground, and get him out of tight spots when nothing but the helicopter can do the job.

The Cowboys have a combat record and professional team would be proud to display. After one year and some 400 airmobile combat operations in Vietnam, A Company of the 82nd Aviation Battalion has transported 85,000 combat troops, carried 2500 tons of supplies, and has flown 22,500 hours on over 85,000 combat sorties.

This rough and ready "All American" unit stand always ready to do whatever task is asked of them. Dallas, as well as the 82nd Airborne Division, is justly proud of their representation in Vietnam, the "All American" Cowboys.

# **COWBOYS**

## **UNIT HISTORY**

**1 JANUARY 1967 – 31 DECEMBER 1967**

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
268th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96316**

**FORWARD**

The 335th Assault Helicopter Company (COWBOYS) began the new year, 1967, with a new parent organization. Released from the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) and reassigned to the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion, 1st Aviation Brigade, the COWBOYS continued their familiar role of direct support for the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate), better known as the "Sky Soldiers."

Regardless of their parent organization, the 335th Assault Helicopter Company has become closely identified with the 173rd Airborne Brigade, and the "Sky Soldier's" many successful operations and major battles. This identification has been made by the "Sky Soldiers" as well as the COWBOYS themselves; the history of the COWBOYS closely parallels that of the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate).

During the year 1967, the highest decoration to be awarded to a COWBOY, was the award of the Silver Star to First Lieutenant Arville W. Stead, 054-18-581, Infantry, United States Army, for his heroic extraction of a Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol on the 3rd of March 1967.

On the 22nd of June 1967, fifty-seven COWBOYS were cited and decorated for heroic actions in support of A 2/503rd Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade near Dak To, Republic of Vietnam. Twelve of the fifty-seven were awarded Distinguished Flying Crosses.

In November 1967, COWBOYS were again in the thick of things, supporting the 173rd Airborne Brigade during Operation McArthur, which included the famous Battle of Dak To and the Assault of Hill 875. Thirty-two COWBOYS were recommended for Air Medals for heroism during this action and one COWBOY was recommended for the Distinguished Service Cross. The 335th Assault Helicopter Company was commended by General Westmoreland in a letter to the unit, and unofficial word was received that the COWBOYS were recommended for a Valorous Unit Award.

The following statistics concerning decorations awarded individuals indicates total numbers of the decorations received. A breakdown by name is included in each monthly history.

SILVER STAR	1	AIR MEDAL W/V	89
DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS	25	AIR MEDAL*	12
BRONZE STAR W/V	2	ARMY COMMENDATION W/V	17
BRONZE STAR	21	ARMY COMMENDATION	29
PURPLE HEART	13		

\* Basic Air Medals only. Clusters were not counted.

January 1967 found the COWBOYS in their base camp located at Bien Hoa, Republic of Vietnam. In May, the Company was moved to Pleiku to support the 173rd Brigade in combat operations there. Flight Operations shifted to Dak To early in June and the COWBOYS found themselves operating in three areas; a situation that would continue for the remainder of the calendar year and longer. A critical shortage of senior non-commissioned officers hampered many phases of the Company's operation, and incredibly adverse weather, working and living conditions became the lot of the COWBOYS. Despite these obstacles, aircraft availability and unit spirit remained outstanding.

In August, Flight Operations of the Company shifted from Dak To to Phu Hiep, near Tuy Hoa, on the South China Seacoast, and COWBOYS were billeted in buildings for the first time since the company's departure from Bien Hoa.

In September, the COWBOY element located at Pleiku convoyed to Phu Hiep, and the company seethed with rumors of an impending return to Bien Hoa.

A lightning move in November, shifted the COWBOY Flight Operations to Kontum and COWBOYS commenced their heroic participation in Operation McArthur, which included the Battle of Dak To and the Assault on Hill 875.

Returning to Phu Hiep on the 5th of December, COWBOYS were confronted with the fact that the base camp they had built at Bien Hoa was to be cleared and turned over to the 101st Airborne Division.

The company became a hotbed of rumor once more. Rumor and counter rumor flew as from day to day evidence of a reassignment to another Battalion was refuted by the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion.

On the 31st of December 1967, Official word was received of the reassignment of the 335th Assault Helicopter Company to the 17th Combat Aviation Group and the 268th Combat Aviation Battalion located at Phu Hiep, Republic of Vietnam. Year's end found the COWBOYS at home.

During the year 1967 the following statistical evidence of operational ability and accomplishment accumulated:

TOTAL SORTIES		66,959
	UH-1B	8,468
	UH-1D	58,491
TOTAL COMBAT SORTIES		55,149
	UH-1B	7,302
	UH-1D	47,847
TOTAL FLYING HOURS		22,075
	UH-1B	4,456
	UH-1D	17,619
TOTAL PASSENGERS		86,045
TOTAL CARGO (TONS)		5,772

**HISTORY OF THE  
335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227**

**1 January 1967 through 31 January 1967**

**Prepared by**

**CPT. GEORGE W. MURRAY**

**Approved by**

**LEYBURN W. BROCKWELL JR.  
LTC Infantry  
Commanding**

**335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227**

1 February 1967

Subject: Monthly History of the 335th Assault Helicopter Company for the period  
1 January through 31 January 1967

To: Commanding Officer  
335th Assault Helicopter Company  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227

NOTE: The 335th Aviation Company (Airmobile Light), 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) became the 335th Assault Helicopter Company, 145th Combat Aviation Battalion in compliance with USARV Order #102 on 15 January 1967.

**I. ORGANIZATION AND DESIGNATION:**

- A. Flight Platoons (2) -- COWBOYS
  - (1) First Airlift Platoon -- Ramrods  
Platoon Commander: Major Wayne Davis  
Aircraft: 10 UH-1D "Slicks" -- Troop Carriers.
  - (2) Second Airlift Platoon -- Mustangs  
Platoon Commander: Captain John L. Wood  
Aircraft: 10 UH-1D "Slicks" -- Troop Carriers.
  - (3) Armed Helicopter Platoon -- Falcons  
Platoon Commander: Major Vance Gammons  
Aircraft: 8 UH-1B "Guns" -- Armed Escort.
- B. 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) Aviation Platoon - Caspers  
Platoon Commander: Captain Thomas J. Terry  
Aircraft: 3 UH-1 Command & Control  
1 UH-1B Mortar Aerial Delivery System -- 12 O'clock high  
6 OH-13S (A) Aero Scouts - Hot Stuff.
- C. 166th Transportation Detachment.
  - (1) Commander: Captain Paul Lovgren.
  - (2) 1 UH-1B recovery helicopter -- Horsethief.
- D. 25th Medical Detachment.
- E. 234th Signal Detachment.

**II. OPERATIONS:**

a. The New year came in with a bang as the COWBOYS, on normal support missions for the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate), had two (2) ships in position Stump when the Viet Cong decided to lob a few mortar rounds into the area. Both ships scrambled out of the LZ in a hurry, and only one gunner received a slight leg wound.

b. 2 January found continued support being provided to the paratroopers engaged in Operation Uniontown in the Brigade TAOR and Operation Canary/Duck along Highway 15 from Bien Hoa to Vung Tau.

c. On 3 January 1967, the battle crazy COWBOYS crashed back into PZ Stump to extract the 2/503rd Infantry who had probably decided we were crazy, for they could find very little sign of the Viet Cong who had shot at us a few days before. Surprise!! The Viet Cong opened up on the COWBOYS with automatic weapons. Two (2) flights of six (6) UH-1D's each extracted 542 troops under constant fire. The six (6) UH-1B gunships from the Falcons got a wild work-out as they attempted to suppress the Viet Cong. Only one COWBOY, 561, took hits and that caused only minuet damage.

d. On 4 January 1967, the 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) kicked-off Niagara Falls in the Phu Loi area. This area is highly classified and promises plenty of action.

e. The morning of 5 January found four (4) CA's assaulting the 35th Ranger Battalion (ARVN) into landing zones South of Ben Cat, RVN. Speculation has a big push aimed at the notorious Iron Triangle.

f. Operation Niagara Falls became Operation Cedar Falls on 6 January as the American and ARVN units aimed a killing blow at the Viet Cong bastion used to terrorize III Corps and the Saigon area. The mighty Iron Triangle was the target of the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate), 1st Infantry Division, 25th Infantry Division, 199th Light Infantry Brigade, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment and the 35th ARVN Ranger Battalion.

Two (2) OH-13S helicopters from Casper on a Scout Mission on the Southeast side of the Triangle engaged several Viet Cong in open rice fields. Aircraft #426 took a hit in the fuel tank and the aerial observer aboard from E/17th Cavalry had four machine-gun rounds laced up the side of his right ankle.

g. On 7 January 1967 normal mission support was provided to the paratroopers. At 1530 Hot Stuff lead called two minute final for the corral. Trail was limping home with a hot engine. The smell of smoke got things up tight over the old French mine fields one minute out of the corral. Daring not abandon ship in a mine field, WO Bill Reynolds screamed into the Unit maintenance pad, unsaddled and shut down his potential fire bomb. There was a lot of scrambling before the situation was under control, and the broken fan belt was discovered.

h. 8 January began early as the COWBOYS and Falcons joined six (6) other airmobile companies on the airfield at Dau Tieng for an assault. Lifting a Battalion of the "Big Red One," the seventy (70) ship troop armada was so frightening that Charlie fired not a shot as allied elements continued to drive forward into the Iron Triangle.

At 1230 the Company moved over to support the paratroopers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade (separate) in seven (7) lifts in the Cedar Falls Operation Area.

i. At dawn on the morning of 9 January, ten (10) UH-1D's and a Light Fire Team arrived at Lai Kai to participate in a large airmobile operation. Elements of the 1st Division and the 173rd Airborne were moved into blocking positions North of the Iron Triangle. Armor and engineer units were moving in areas

around the Triangle preparing to wreck Viet Cong installations. The allied plan appears to be centered around crushing all cover and concealment, storage areas and tunnel systems available in the Triangle.

j. Missions in normal support of the 173rd included resupply, C&C and courier service on 10 January 1967.

k. On 11 January from 0900 to 1100 eight (8) UH-1D's and a Light Fire Team supported the 35th ARVN Ranger Battalion, moving 362 troops into the operation area. No enemy contact was involved.

l. The bright, sunny morning of 12 January found the COWBOYS, Falcons and Caspers working with E/17th Cavalry in Eagle Flights in the rice paddy area on the Southwest edge of the Iron Triangle. The Hot Stuff team, two (2) OH-13S were down on the tree tops hunting Viet Cong. Using their skid mounted 7.62 machine-guns and hand held M-79 grenade launchers the team destroyed fifteen (15) structures, damaged four (4) structures, sunk two (2) sampans, zapped two (2) VC and wounded three (3) bad guys. Finding things hot, as aircraft #427 took a light hit in the stabilizer bar, the Hot Stuff team shared their targets with the Falcons who came screaming on target like their blood thirsty namesakes. Spraying machine-gun and rocket fire over the area the armed Hueys ripped apart four (4) enemy structures. Close on the heels of the hunters, the UH-1D "Slicks" assaulted crack Horse Soldiers of E/17 Cavalry into the target areas to police up stray personnel and burn Viet Cong structures and supplies.

m. 13 January 1967 brought more Eagle Flights into the Viet Cong infested rice paddies. As two (2) UH-1D's screamed into an open rice paddy to pick up fourteen (14) troops, COWBOY 570 decided to find out what effect a fast spinning tail rotor had on standing water. Surprise! The tail rotor slowed down, the aircraft did a 180 degree right turn and smacked into the mud. The main rotor clipped the tail rotor drive shaft in half, came on around and wiped out the top of the right cockpit and slapped WO R. Sims on top of his head. The crew came out safe with WO Sims a bit dazed. The second COWBOY told the Cavalry platoon leader to secure the wreckage and rushed the crew to medical attention. The wreck was extracted by a CH-47 later in the day.

Casper 911 on approach to a secure area received a minuet hit. Nothing is "secure" when the Viet Cong are alive. No injuries, thus the old lesson is emphasized free of charge.

n. 14 January 1967 came and went with normal support being provided to the 173rd Airborne Brigade as the paratroopers aggressively rip into the Viet Cong stronghold in the Iron Triangle. Missions for the day consist of 2 C&C, 9 C 7 L, 1 FAD, 1 Light Fire Team, 4 resupply and 1 Hot Stuff mission. Two VC die, 2 enemy sampans are demolished and 13 structures are flattened as the COWBOYS, Falcons and Caspers support the infantry in their favorite way -- Killing VC.

o. Eagle Flights are the program for 15 January. The Company is enjoying this work as we can see the results of our support as the Viet Cong are driven from hiding and captured or killed. Two (2) huts and a bridge were destroyed and the always blood thirsty Falcons become much more accurate as they are presented moving targets in the form of running guerrillas.

By General Order No. 102, Headquarters USARV, the 335th Aviation Company is assigned to the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion as of 15 January 1967. We did not hear about this until several days later.

p. On 16 January 1967, the deadly Eagle Flights hit the open, wet rice fields at the Southwest corner of the Triangle again. Two (2) VC are killed by an observer aboard one of the OH-13 Hot Stuff ships. Five (5) structures are destroyed with one secondary explosion.

q. Operation Cedar Falls in the Iron Triangle continues. Normal resupply and C&C missions together with the Eagle Flights continue to keep the COWBOYS busy.

r. Normal support continues in the Iron Triangle on the 18th. COWBOY 736 on a routine mission to Vung Tau experienced a partial engine failure on take off to the South. Captains' Lonnie Beasley and Bill Jones whipped their crippled ship back toward dry land and set it down just off the main runway. There were no injuries and a CH-47 brought the ship to the Corral for an engine change.

s. Normal support of Cedar Falls continued. Today, 19 January, the orders assigning us to the 145th Finally arrive. It is with mixed emotions that the Company reads these orders. We have been highly independent as we supported the gung-ho paratroopers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate). We have learned to work with these people, giving them the maximum support we were capable of giving. We had come to recognize their problems, and there isn't a COWBOY who wouldn't fly through a Viet Cong Division to help a paratrooper. However, the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion is a crack aviation unit, and we are honored to be considered qualified for membership in so excellent an outfit. Without a doubt, our toughest problem will be the loss of our independence that we prize so highly.

t. On 20 January 1967, our new Commander, Lieutenant Colonel Leyburn W. Brockwell, Jr., takes actual control of the Company. The Company staff sections receive their initial briefing from the 145th staff in the morning and by afternoon we are convinced that the 145th shuffles paper rather than flies.

u. On 21 January 1967, five (5) UH-1D's with a Light Fire Team made twelve (12) eagle flight CA's moving 148 troops of E/17 Cavalry in the Southwest of the Iron Triangle. Sixty-six (66) of these troops were removed later in the day and the remainder conducted a night ambush.

At 1130 hours, COWBOY 610, flown by Captain William O. Jones and 1/Lt. A. W. Steed, approached the Bien Hoa base camp of the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) to make a passenger drop. At short final to a small helipad at the 2nd Battalion perimeter, a command detonated Claymore exploded within ten yards of the ships left side. Thirty to forty deadly scraps of steel ripped into the aircraft, wounding both pilots, one crew member, and one passenger. The pilots, realizing that the passenger was bleeding profusely from a head wound, flew the badly damaged helicopter to the pad at 3rd Surgical Hospital. All wounded recovered in time to wear their Purple Hearts.

v. 22 January was spent in normal resupply support of the paratroopers. A small eagle flight conducted moving 24 Cavalrymen.

At 1430 hours a brief ceremony was held in the Company area officially marking the 335th membership in the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion.

w. Resupply and administrative air support was provided to the 173rd Airborne on 23 January.

x. Nine (9) "Slicks" a Light Fire Team and a C&C supported a Battalion of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade in operations in the Nha Be area on 24 January, 425 troops were moved in 140 sorties. The Falcons were turned loose to support a unit in contact. They shot up everything in sight, giving the infantry unit superb support.

At approximately 1430, COWBOY 674 in trail formation (Chalk #7) on approach to a road with a load of troops got stacked in the formation by a steep approach. Losing RPM on termination, control of the aircraft was lost. The ship bounced off the road and rolled on its side. No injuries; the ship was evacuated to Saigon.

y. 25 January was spent in III Corps General Support. Six (6) UH-1D's flew resupply for the 1st Infantry Division. Five (5) UH-1D's flew General Support for the 173rd Airborne Brigade. Two (2) Light Fire Teams supported the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

z. General support of the 9th Division was flown on 26 January.

aa. On 27 January, the 25th Infantry Division received General Support from the COWBOYS.

bb. 28 January 1967: Resupply and General Support was provided to the 25th Infantry Division.

cc. Ten (10) UH-1D's and a Light Fire Team worked for the 25th Division and the 196th Light Infantry Brigade on 29 January.

dd. On 30 January, WO Roger Aveni and 1/Lt. Tom Anderson, supporting the 173rd Airborne Recon Patrols, experienced an engine failure at 100 feet in UH-1D 609. An outstanding autorotation was performed with little aircraft damage.

LRP teams were introduced and extracted. One American was wounded and three (3) VC Killed.

ee. The month of January closed as the COWBOYS supported the 173rd Airborne Brigade and the 9th Infantry Division with resupply and long range patrol aircraft.

**III. MONTHLY STATISTICS:**

	<b>UH-1B</b>	<b>UH-1D</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>TOTAL SORTIES</b>	1983	8926	11410
<b>COMBAT SORTIES</b>	1778	8339	10578
<b>HOURS</b>	628	1722	2350
<b>PAX</b>			17299
<b>CARGO (TONS)</b>			596

**IV. TRAINING:**

Normal standardization and new pilot training was conducted while the Company was heavily committed to support missions.

**V. AWARDS RECEIVED DURING THE MONTH OF JANUARY 1967**

CPT. REEVES	DFC
WO1 PEYTON	AM "V"
CPT. ALBRECHT	AM "V"
WO1 AVEN	AM "V"
WO1 DRAKE	AM "V"
WO1 HECKERMAN	AM "V"
WO1 TEMEYER	AM "V"
CPT. GAMMONS	AM "V"
CPT. KUHBLANK	AM "V"
CPT. TUCKER	AM "V"
WO1 VILLAREAL	AM "V"
MAJ. DAVIS	AM "V"
WO1 GREGG	AM "V"
WO1 LEGG	AM "V"
CPT. FINEGAN	AM "V"
WO1 HAMVAI	AM "V"
1 Lt. GOIN	AM "V"
CPT. VANCE	AM "V"
CWO NORTON	AM "V"
CPT. JONES	AM "V"
1 Lt. STEED	AM "V"
WO1 DANITZ	AM "V"
WO1 FREEMAN	AM "V"
CPT. HOZA	AM "V"
WO1 SANDERS	AM "V"
CPT. ALBRECHT	AM "V"
CPT. MOSS	AM "V"
SP5 SHOOK	AM "V"
SP4 CURTIS	AM "V"

CPT. ZABARSKY	AM "V"
CWO NORTON	BS
SSG SELLERS	BS
SP5 ZACK	BAM
SP5 COOPER	BAM
SP5 PENNINGTON	BAM
SP4 EASTMAN	BAM
PFC MCDONALD	BAM
CWO NORTON	PH
WO1 PEYTON	PH
WO1 CROTEAU	PH
SP4 SNYDER	PH
SP5 WATERS	GCM

**HISTORY OF THE  
335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227**

**1 February 1967 through 28 February 1967**

**Prepared by**  
**CPT. BILLY D. TUCKER**

**Approved by**  
**LEYBURN W. BROCKWELL JR.**  
**LTC Infantry**  
**Commanding**

**335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227**

1 March 1967

Subject: Monthly History of the 335th Assault Helicopter Company for the period  
1 February through 28 February 1967

To: Commanding Officer  
335th Assault Helicopter Company  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227

**I. ORGANIZATION AND DESIGNATION:**

- A. Flight Platoons (2) -- COWBOYS
  - (1) First Airlift Platoon -- Ramrods  
Platoon Commander: Major Wayne Davis  
Aircraft: 10 UH-1D "Slicks" -- Troop Carriers.
  - (2) Second Airlift Platoon -- Mustangs  
Platoon Commander: Major Daniel Stefanowich  
Aircraft: 10 UH-1D "Slicks" -- Troop Carriers.
  - (3) Armed Helicopter Platoon -- Falcons  
Platoon Commander: Major Vance Gammons  
Aircraft: 8 UH-1B "Guns" -- Armed Escort.
- B. 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) Aviation Platoon - Caspers  
Platoon Commander: Captain Thomas J. Terry  
Aircraft: 3 UH-1 Command & Control  
1 UH-1B Mortar Aerial Delivery System -- 12 O'clock high  
6 OH-13S (A) Aero Scouts - Hot Stuff.
- C. 166th Transportation Detachment.
  - (1) Commander: Major Robert A. Lawson
  - (2) 1 UH-1B recovery helicopter -- Horsethief.
- D. 25th Medical Detachment.
- E. 234th Signal Detachment.

**II. OPERATIONS:**

a. February's dawn again found the COWBOYS supporting the "Sky Soldiers" of the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate), starting a new operation "Big Spring" in War Zone "D," North of Bien Hoa. "D" Zone is expected to be hot and this operation was to show all expectations lived up to. COWBOYS on the move lifted 753 airborne troops and legs of the 9th Infantry Division to battle from the Snake Pit, Bear Cat and Xom Cat. Ten (10) LZ's were used with fire received in many of them. Resupply missions began when Combat Assaults were completed. One (1) UH-1D aircraft was hit six (6) times making a Med Evac. No injuries were received and the mission was completed with a shook pilot.

b. 2 February 1967 found continued support being provided to the Paratroopers in "D" Zone. A total of 239 sorties of "Beans and Bullets" missions moved 39 tons of cargo and 296 troops to forward areas from the Corral and BSOC. It was a relatively quiet day as far as fire being received. However, the COWBOYS saw the birth of a new problem, finding flight routes to forward areas through the vast maze of artillery.

c. On 3 February the COWBOYS introduced LRRP's of E/17 Cav. and again found it necessary to extract them under fire. Captain Conger and Captain Moss, both exposing their aircraft to enemy fire, did excellent jobs of saving the Brown Beret boys. Both were suggested for awards. No hits received but anxious moments were passed. Also UH-1D's flew 116 resupply sorties carrying 86 troops and 31 tons of cargo. Fire again was received sporadically during the day.

d. Direct support of the 173rd Airborne was again on 4 February the mission of the day for COWBOYS. Ten (10) "Slicks" and two (2) Light Fire Teams were committed to lift 169 troops and six tons of cargo in a Combat Assault. Other missions were normal if anything can be considered normal in Vietnam. COWBOYS received fire again and returned it again as usual -- no hits.

e. On 5 February the days' activities were started with a Combat Assault from position "Chevy" occupied by the 173rd Airborne Brigade, to forward areas in "D" Zone. Eight (8) "Slicks" were involved moving 165 troops and eight (8) tons of cargo. The remainder of the day was devoted to moving chow to the troopers, approximately 31 tons of it this day. The COWBOYS were called out again after dark to resupply the 9th Division. We also were called on for medical evacuation and cover of medical evacuation, indicating the upswing in shooting on this operation.

f. 6 February Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols were again installed in the "D" Zone jungle by COWBOYS. They didn't stay long before they fell into bad problems. They got out again with both sides shooting.

g. On 7 February COWBOYS conducted five (5) ship lift with a Light Fire Team, but most of the flying of the day could be considered Command and Logistical missions. Captain Beasley went to the free fire area to test the guns on 868 and got shot at for his troubles. He received one hit but the Falcons took care of him--very little damage and no injuries. The Company promoted thirteen brand new SP/4's.

h. Platoon missions were normal for the day. Six (6) "Slicks" carried 44 tons of cargo and 283 passengers. The Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol's of the 173rd Airborne also had normal missions. Two (2) teams were introduced in "D" Zone. Both lasted less than a day before the going became too hot. The Falcons got the target of every gunship pilot's desires, trucks in the open. COWBOY 879 reported receiving fire from them and called the Falcons who came in a hurry and wiped them out. COWBOY 879 got a hit.

i. 10 February: Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols and resupply again today. General support for the 173rd. No action.

j. 11 February: The COWBOYS get a long needed rest both to the pilots and to the equipment. Only two (2) UH-1D's were committed and they were loaned to the 68th Aviation Company. Only maintenance flights were flown by the unit.

k. 11 February: Apparently we are growing up in the world. We got a new name today -- 335th Assault Helicopter Company of the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion. The mission remained the same and was demonstrated. Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols, Combat Assault, and resupply missions all in one day. Aircraft 738, on loan to the 71st Assault Helicopter Company was laced down by Charlie. It was hit nine (9) times and down it went. A crew chief was wounded and the aircraft went to Saigon via good nature.

l. The days' activities on 13 February 1967 were considered normal most of the day with direct support missions for the 173rd Airborne Brigade. Resupply aircraft carried 41 tons of food and ammunition to troopers in the field. As luck would have it LRRP's again changed the day from normal to one of those better forgotten. It all started when Captain Wecas had an engine failure on short final to a confined area that he was attempting to land in to introduce the LRRP team. He got the aircraft down in a very fine manner hitting only a few stumps. The trouble came when a security force had to be lifted into the area. Probably no country has ever seen such a dark night as that. The COWBOYS proved that they can respond in a fine manner to any situation though. They completed the job with very little damage to the other aircraft. They were very happy to return to the Corral, nevertheless. We have a new platoon leader today, Major Stefanowich took the reins of the Mustangs.

m. The COWBOYS worked hard again today for the "Sky Soldiers" of the 173rd Airborne Brigade. Most of the support was in the form of small Combat Assaults and resupply. A force of approximately 20 VC was spotted just outside the Brigade Perimeter and the Falcons were called on to search for them. When they got back from the fruitless chase they blamed the whole incident on a nervous guard.

n. On 15 February 1967 the COWBOYS lifted the 4th Bn 39th Infantry 9th Division from their field position above Xom Cat to the Snake Pit in six (6) lifts. Almost 350 troops were moved. Operation Big Springs was actually a training exercise for elements of the 9th Inf. Div. Rumor has it that they will be going to the Delta to make a few changes there. The day was quite with no reports of fire.

o. 16 February 1967: More troops of the 9th Infantry were extracted today. A total of 728 troops were moved with only light fire being received. The Falcons ran into some real fun at Duc Hoa. A Light Fire Team flying support for the 199th Infantry Brigade opened up on a VC in the open. They got credit for eight (8) enemy KIA's. At times they reported that they were flying cover for TAC Jets as they made their runs. At 1945 the COWBOYS received alert for a possible lift after dark, and at 2000 received confirmation. At 2035 ten (10) "Slicks," one (1) Light Fire Team, and one (1) C&C ship were off to support ARVN units in the Delta. A Battalion of 338 troops were lifted from Boa Tri to Duc Hoa. Fire was received at both places and returned. There were some bad feelings when the COWBOYS accidentally shot up Duc Hoa, even if they were shooting at us. We had three (3) ships hit.

p. On 17 February 1967 the COWBOYS realized that the tide was slowly turning from the direct support role to General Support role toward the 173rd Airborne. COWBOYS flew all day but this time in support of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade.

q. Slicks moved 486 ARVN's and members of the 25th Inf. Div. on 18 February 1967. The day was patie time for tired COWBOYS. Another welcome rest in the form of a maintenance stand down grounded the Company.

r. On 19, 20 and 21 February 1967 the 335th provided helicopter support again for the Inf. Division at Cu Chi. Only a little fire was received.

s. On 22 February 1967 one of the biggest if not the biggest operations of the Vietnam conflict started. Operation Junction City began with a flair. COWBOYS flew over eleven hours without let up lifting the 173rd Airborne to attack from Quan Loi to the Cambodian border Northeast of Tay Ninh. Strangely enough the day was quite as fire goes. Only after the day's exercise was over and the flight was enroute home did we get any fire. The 173rd Airborne Brigade also made the first combat jump of the war. The Falcons attacked with unknown results, but it became very quiet down there. Sp/5 Meehan was wounded in the leg when his M-60 exploded and was submitted for a Purple Heart. Major Van Wert flew his new "Horsethief" today for the first time. Old Horsethief ran into dust and beat herself to death, Rest in Peace. Captain Conger also bounced one in at Quan Loi due to dust problems.

t. On 23 February 1967, the 335th flew General Support again with the 173rd Airborne. The shooting started early on this day. Aircraft 567 received one hit but the COWBOYS completed all missions including resupply missions that moved 110 troops and 10 tons of cargo. The Falcons fired over 7000 rounds of 7.62 ammo.

u. Normal activities were conducted on 24 and 25 February 1967. Again the COWBOYS supported the 173rd Airborne Brigade with resupply and small troop lifts.

v. On 26 February 1967 the 335th Assault Helicopter Company worked with the "Big Red One." Two (2) Combat Assaults moved 112 soldiers of the 1st Infantry Division to a blocking position Northwest of Phu Chong to stop the VC movement across the Saigon River from the Iron Triangle. Another LRRP team was introduced near the Cambodian Border. Falcon 978 received a single hit when light small arms fire was received. Most of the COWBOYS spent the better part of the day in support of the 173rd Airborne.

w. Operation Junction City continues on 27 February 1967. The COWBOYS flew resupply and troop lifts for the 1st Infantry Division and the 173rd Airborne Brigade. Falcons continue to standby for quick reaction taking on the enemy whenever and wherever the opportunity arises.

x. Some days are good days, a few are bad. On 28 February 1967 the COWBOYS ended a long hard month with a very bad day. COWBOYS in support of the 1st Infantry Division were called on to make an emergency assault into an LZ Northeast of Soui Da late in the afternoon. The first lift in was met with a hail of enemy fire that cost the COWBOYS several hits in six (6) different aircraft. Warrant Officer Jackson, the pilot of 736, received a bullet hit in the leg that ended the war for him. He was evacuated to Tay Ninh and will eventually go home. If it was bad for the COWBOYS it was worse for the "Big Red One." Of the 172 troop's air lifted into the heat of battle 24 were killed and 22 wounded. They cleaned the VC's clock though, killing 142 by body count in just a few hours. Most of the pilots say that the count would have been higher if only the Falcons had been there.

**III. MONTHLY STATISTICS:**

a. Total sorties by type aircraft for combat missions:

	ARMED HELO	COMBAT ASSAULT	RE- SUPPLY	CMD & CNT	RECON	MED EVAC	MIS	TOTAL
<b>UH-1B</b>	859				12		33	904
<b>UH-1D</b>		2714	4020	305	16	13	993	8065
<b>TOTAL</b>	859	2714	4020	305	28	13	1026	8969

b. Monthly Summary of Performance:

	UH-1B	UH-1D	TOTAL
<b>TOTAL SORTIES</b>	1005	8639	9644
<b>COMBAT SORTIES</b>	904	8061	8965
<b>HOURS</b>	503	1845	2348
<b>PASSENGERS</b>			10341
<b>CARGO (TONS)</b>			753

c.	Troop Lifts:		
	Combat Assault	92	
	Extraction's	9	
	Repositioning	59	
d.	Armed Helicopter Missions	141	
e.	Average Aircraft Hours	87.0	
	UH-1B	71.9	
	UH-1D	92.3	
f.	Average Aviator Hours	89.6	
	High Aviator	WO John D. Legg	155.9
	Low Aviator	Cpt Willoughby S. Goin	5.9
g.	Ammunition Expenditures		340,000
	7.62		857
	2.75in		4,890
40mm			
h.	Med Evacs Carried	6	
i.	VC KBA	3	
j.	Total Aircraft Hit	UH-1D	10
		UH-1B	4
k.	U.S. Wounded	3	
l.	Total Accidents	1	
m.	Forced to Land, but Recovered	1	

#### IV. AWARDS RECEIVED DURING THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 1967

SSG BERGMAN	BAM
PFC CARTER	BAM
PFC CORMIER	BAM
WO1 JACKSON	BAM
SP4 KOOP	BAM
SP4 BLODGETT	BAM
WO1 HOLLINGSWORTH	BAM
SP5 MENCER	BAM
SP5 WARREN	BAM
WO1 MAGONIGAL	ACM

SP5 PETE	ACM
SP4 EPSTEIN	PH
PFC TRAVIS	PH
PFC LAWLER	PH

**HISTORY OF THE  
335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227**

**1 March 1967 through 31 March 1967**

**Prepared by**

**1 Lt. PAUL C. HOWELL**

**Approved by**

**LEYBURN W. BROCKWELL JR.  
LTC Infantry  
Commanding**

**335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227**

1 April 1967

Subject: Monthly History of the 335th Assault Helicopter Company for the period  
1 March through 31 March 1967

To: Commanding Officer  
335th Assault Helicopter Company  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227

**I. ORGANIZATION AND DESIGNATION:**

- A. Flight Platoons (2) -- COWBOYS
  - (1) First Airlift Platoon -- Ramrods  
Platoon Commander: Captain Ronald Wecas  
Aircraft: 10 UH-1D "Slicks" -- Troop Carriers.
  - (2) Second Airlift Platoon -- Mustangs  
Platoon Commander: Major Daniel Stefanowich  
Aircraft: 10 UH-1D "Slicks" -- Troop Carriers.
  - (3) Armed Helicopter Platoon -- Falcons  
Platoon Commander: Major Vance Gammons  
Aircraft: 8 UH-1B "Guns" -- Armed Escort.
- B. 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) Aviation Platoon - Caspers  
Platoon Commander: Captain Thomas J. Terry  
Aircraft: 3 UH-1 Command & Control  
1 UH-1B Mortar Aerial Delivery System -- 12 O'clock high  
6 OH-13S (A) Aero Scouts - Hot Stuff.
- C. 166th Transportation Detachment.
  - (1) Commander: Major Robert A. Lawson
  - (2) 1 UH-1B recovery helicopter -- Horsethief.
- D. 25th Medical Detachment.
- E. 234th Signal Detachment.

## **II. OPERATIONS:**

a. March began with a little excitement for some of the COWBOYS, shortly after takeoff WO's Legg and Andrews experienced hydraulics failure and made a successful landing at the corral. The COWBOYS again found themselves supporting the "Sky Soldiers" of the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) and also the 1st Infantry Division. They flew a total of 215 sorties, carrying 42 tons of cargo, 235 troops, and extracting 7 tons of captured rice.

b. 2 March 1967 found continued support being provided to the paratroopers in "C" Zone. Two (2) CA's were conducted carrying 97 troops into an LZ with no enemy resistance. A total of 254 sorties, 35 tons of cargo and 325 passengers were carried for resupply of the 173rd and 1st Division. The LRRP's of E/17 Cav. again made the day a little interesting for the COWBOYS. They had to be extracted under small arms fire. Eight (8) VC were killed and one was wounded and captured.

c. 3 March was a rather quiet day for the COWBOYS. Two (2) LRRP teams were introduced and later extracted. UH-1D's flew 105 sorties carrying 15 tons of cargo and 192 passengers.

d. 4 March found the COWBOYS supporting the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) in seven (7) CA's. They lifted 120 troops in an LZ and extracting 76 troops from another LZ. 111 Sorties were conducted carrying 18 tons of cargo and 191 passengers. Fire was received during the day with one hit being taken, no injuries and only slight damage.

e. 5 March the COWBOYS flew resupply and General Support for the 173rd and 1st Div. 206 Sorties were flown carrying 345 passengers and 29 tons of cargo. Fire again was received -- no hits.

f. 6 March 1967 began by the COWBOYS supporting the 173rd in eleven (11) CA's carrying 579 troops. Moderate automatic weapons and small arms fire was received. Three (3) gunships took hits and PFC Dubin, gunner on a slick, received a bullet wound in the leg and was evacuated to Tay Ninh. The rest of the day was rather calm flying 109 Sorties and carrying 114 troops and 18 tons of cargo.

g. Three (3) CA's were flown in support of the 1st Div. from Phu Loi, on 7 March. 57 troops were carried. 315 troops and 37 tons of cargo were carried for the 173rd Airborne Brigade and the 1st Div. in 218 Sorties. One (1) UH-1D received one hit of automatic weapons fire while on a resupply mission. No injuries received and only slight damage to the aircraft.

h. 8 March found the COWBOYS in resupply and General Support missions for the 173rd and 1st Div.

i. 9 March began seeing the COWBOYS doing what they like to do most. Four (4) CA's were flown in support of the 1st Div. five (5) CA's were for repositioning were flown for the 173rd. Resupply and General Support mission completed the rest of the days' activities in support of the 1st Div. No fire was reported. Several new aviators were given stan rides and check rides were also flown by other aviators.

j. On 10 March the 335th provided support for the "Sky Soldiers" and the "Big Red One."

k. 11 March began as a rather quiet peaceful day. At 1100 hours the stillness of the day was broken. A/C 569 flown by Lt. Anderson and WO Hollingsworth were carrying a sling load into an LZ, which they had been in several times earlier in the day. This time they were greeted with Heavy Automatic Weapons fire and upon dropping their load made a hasty retreat. The aircraft took six (6) hits and WO Hollingsworth took one in the leg. The A/C was flown back to Soui Da and WO Hollingsworth was evacuated to Tay Ninh.

l. 12 March was found to be a good day. Resupply and General Support missions were flown for the 173rd and 1st Div. Light automatic weapons fire was received with no hits reported.

m. On 13, 14, 15, and 16 March the 335th was mostly engaged in General Support missions of III Corps, II FFV, 145th. No fire was reported during these days.

n. St. Patrick's Day found the COWBOYS flying for the paratroopers of the 173rd and also adding some support to the 25th Infantry. An Emergency Standby Light Fire Team, was scrambled to the aid of a Cozy Cabin Unit near Bear Cat. Another Light Fire Team flying the Dong Nai Recon received fire with one (1) gunship taking one (1) hit. Slight damage and no injuries. All of the COWBOYS showed their interest in St. Patrick's Day. They all wore green to help commemorate the day.

o. The 18th of March found the COWBOYS doing what they like to do most. They flew six (6) CA's in support of the 25th and 4th Inf. Divisions. Resupply and LRRP training completed the day's operation. No fire was received and none was reported.

p. 19 March began the move of the COWBOYS from Bien Hoa to their new home for a 2 week RON at Tay Ninh, RVN. An operation was established by the time the COWBOYS arrived in force at 1800 hours.

q. The first full operational day at Tay Ninh started in a big way. The COWBOYS flew four (4) CA's in support of the 173rd and 25th Inf. The remainder of the day was spent in resupply and General Support of the 25th Inf. Div. Fire was received and returned as per usual. No hits.

r. 21 March found the COWBOYS flying five (5) CA's for the 173rd, 196th and 1st Div. The LRRP created two (2) extraction's for the COWBOYS no fire was received during these, however some fire was received during the day and the Falcons found their mark and estimated ten (10) VC KBA. No hits taken.

s. The 22nd found the COWBOYS flying resupply and General Support. The Falcons reported receiving fire several times and returned same.

t. 23 March found the COWBOYS supporting the 173rd in nine (9) CA's lifting 486 troops and 2 tons of cargo. Fire was received and returned today per COWBOY tradition.

u. 24 March again saw the 335th in active support of the 173rd participating in six (6) CA's. A Falcon Light Fire Team was called to support a unit that was under attack N.E. of Tay Ninh. They responded with unknown results.

v. 25 March found the COWBOYS receiving fire frequently during the day and always returning some. On one occasion the gunner of 884 had his M-60 jam and in his excitement to continue engaging the enemy he grabbed his M-16 and fired three (3) holes in the floor of the aircraft.

w. 26 March proved to be what has lately seemed like a common day for the aircraft Commanders. Fire again was received and returned. At approximately 1300 hour's tragedy struck the COWBOYS. Aircraft 609 had a forced landing on T/O from Tay Ninh and crashed, killing the pilot, Captain Kirby of the 71st Avn. Co.

x. 27 and 28 March the COWBOYS flew resupply and General Support for the troops participating in Junction City. Fire was received and returned with negative results.

y. 29 March started out in a bad way with 2 shook up pilots. They saw 50 cal tracer fire going by the aircraft lighting up the morning sky. They took one hit in the sync elevator but didn't return it due to the close proximity of the fire to friendly positions. A Light Fire Team on counter mortar standby were called on. They tallied fifteen (15) VC confirmed and one (1) structure destroyed.

z. 30 March the COWBOYS participated in two (2) CA's and one (1) repositioning for the 1st Div. A little fire was received but none returned.

aa. March ended in what could be considered on normal COWBOY missions. Two (2) CA's were flown for the 1st Division and the remainder of the day was spent on resupply and General Support. Again fire was received. No hits. The 31st of March ended in what could be considered the biggest and best month in the COWBOY'S history.

### **III. MONTHLY STATISTICS:**

a. Total sorties by type aircraft for combat missions:

	ARMED HELO	COMBAT ASSAULT	RE- SUPPLY	CMD & CNT	RECON	MED EVAC	MIS	TOTAL
<b>UH-1B</b>	706				31			737
<b>UH-1D</b>		1280	4680	325	113	9	1152	7561
<b>TOTAL</b>	706	1280	4680	325	144	9	1152	8298

b. Monthly Summary of Performance:

	UH-1B	UH-1D	TOTAL
<b>TOTAL SORTIES</b>	901	8080	8981
<b>COMBAT SORTIES</b>	737	7561	8298
<b>HOURS</b>	354	2516	2870
<b>PASSENGERS</b>		11867	11867
<b>CARGO (TONS)</b>		988	988

c.	Troop Lifts:		
	Combat Assault	50	
	Extraction's	8	
	Repositioning	18	
d.	Armed Helicopter Missions	100	
e.	Average Aircraft Hours	102.5	
	UH-1B	44.3	
	UH-1D	125.8	
f.	Average Aviator Hours	92.1	
	High Aviator	WO William O. Idell	206.6
	Low Aviator	WO Ted H. Bingham	5.0
g.	Ammunition Expenditures	7.62 2.75in 40mm	137,000 458 1,045
h.	Med Evacs Carried	11	
i.	VC KBA	33	
j.	Total Aircraft Hit	UH-1D UH-1B	6 4
k.	U.S. Wounded	2	
l.	U.S. Killed	1	
m.	Total Accidents	1	
n.	Forced to Land, but Recovered	0	

#### IV. AWARDS RECEIVED DURING THE MONTH OF MARCH 1967

MAJ. VICTOR	BS
CWO EASTON	BS
SP4 DEMARCO	BS
MAJ. JONES	BAM
CPT. OWENS	BAM
WO1 ANDREWS	BAM
WO1 BROAD	BAM
WO1 HOOKS	BAM

**HISTORY OF THE  
335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227**

**1 April 1967 through 30 April 1967**

**Prepared by**

**1 Lt. PAUL C. HOWELL**

**Approved by**

**LEYBURN W. BROCKWELL JR.  
LTC Infantry  
Commanding**

**335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227**

1 May 1967

Subject: Monthly History of the 335th Assault Helicopter Company for the period  
1 April through 30 April 1967

To: Commanding Officer  
335th Assault Helicopter Company  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227

**I. ORGANIZATION AND DESIGNATION:**

- A. Flight Platoons (2) -- COWBOYS
  - (1) First Airlift Platoon -- Ramrods  
Platoon Commander: Major Charles Jones  
Aircraft: 10 UH-1D "Slicks" -- Troop Carriers.
  - (2) Second Airlift Platoon -- Mustangs  
Platoon Commander: Major Daniel Stefanowich  
Aircraft: 10 UH-1D "Slicks" -- Troop Carriers.
  - (3) Armed Helicopter Platoon -- Falcons  
Platoon Commander: Captain Claude Stults  
Aircraft: 8 UH-1B "Guns" -- Armed Escort.
- B. 166th Transportation Detachment.
  - (1) Commander: Major Robert A. Lawson
  - (2) 1 UH-1B recovery helicopter -- Horsethief.
- C. 25th Medical Detachment.
- D. 234th Signal Detachment.

**II. OPERATIONS:**

- a. The dawn of April found the COWBOYS of the 335th Assault Helicopter Company supporting the 1st Infantry Division and the "Sky Soldiers" of the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate), in resupply and General Support missions. They lifted 314 troops in 363 sorties and also performed two (2) Med. Evacs missions.
- b. 2 April the 1st Infantry Division and the 173rd Airborne Brigade again found the COWBOYS waiting to support them. Five (5) "Slicks" flew CA's for the 1st Infantry Division, carrying 588 troops in 254 sorties. Lt. Tarr and WO Quiberg were flying a resupply mission for the 173rd Airborne Brigade when their aircraft received a heavy volume of fire, taking five (5) hits. WO Quiberg was wounded in the leg and Lt. Tarr skillfully took over the controls and guided the ship into the LZ.
- c. 3 April turned out to be a bad day for the Falcons. Two (2) Falcon aircraft took a total of fourteen (14) hits, while covering resupply ships, for the 173rd Airborne Brigade, but no injuries were incurred. The remainder of the day was spent flying administrative missions.
- d. 4 April found the COWBOYS flying a five (5) ship lift for the soldiers of the 1st Infantry Division. After the lift, the COWBOYS flew resupply for the 1st Infantry Division and the "Sky Soldiers" of the 173rd Airborne Brigade, lifting a total of 394 troops and performing 252 sorties.
- e. 5 April was a rather slow day for the COWBOYS. The day was spent flying resupply for the 9th Infantry Division and General Support for the Navy out of Nha Be.
- f. Aircraft 567 crashed due to an engine failure on 6 April. The aircraft commander, Major Jones, received a minor back injury, but the pilot, WO Hooks was not as fortunate receiving a compression fracture of the lower vertebra. The gunner received facial cuts as a result of the crash. Later in the day Aircraft 557 went down in the Quan Loi area; no injuries incurred by the crew. The COWBOYS flew a total of 257 sorties and carried 380 passengers.
- g. A Combat Assault began the day of 7 April for the COWBOYS, followed by an extraction of the "Sky Soldiers." The COWBOYS rounded out the day, by flying resupply missions for the 173rd Airborne Brigade and the Falcons flew General Support -- type missions for the 173rd. No fire was reported or received during the day.
- h. The COWBOYS flew six (6) Combat Assault Missions on the 8th in support of the 25th Inf. Div. 350 troops were lifted in 120 sorties. Following the lift, the remainder of the day was spent flying resupply and General support missions for the 25th Inf. Div., and the "Sky Soldiers." It was a relatively quiet day, until aircraft 868 received fire and took one (1) hit, no injuries were received.
- i. On 9 April, the COWBOYS found themselves doing what they enjoyed doing most; flying Combat Assaults for the 173rd Airborne Brigade. Major Huth, Executive Officer of the 335th, received a minor wound while flying as pilot of the lead ship. The day became hectic before it was over; Artillery and Air Strikes delayed, and mingled with the lifts on numerous occasions. A total of 270 troops were lifted and 198 were extracted.
- j. Early in the morning of the 10th the Falcons had to scramble a Light Fire Team to support the Rung Sat river backup. Later that afternoon, eight (8) "Slicks" and a Light Fire Team were scrambled to Tan An, for a lift in support of the 9th Infantry Division. Fire was reported being received, but no aircraft were reported hit.

k. April 11th again found the COWBOYS lifting troops of the 9th Inf. Div. Aircraft 868 went down due to engine failure. No damage was done to the aircraft and no injuries were incurred by any members of the crew or the passengers. Aircraft 561 took one (1) round while placing troops into the area to secure 868. An ammunition box flew up and out of Aircraft 610, and struck the main rotor blade, with the lid of the box flying into the exhaust stack of 569. The Falcons had a busy and productive day destroying fourteen (14) huts!

l. On 12 April, twelve (12) extraction's and five (5) repositionings were flown for the "Sky Soldiers" of the 173rd Airborne Brigade. Aircraft 610 crashed on takeoff during the Combat Assault and had to be destroyed in the field. WO Broad received numerous cuts and a sprained wrist, and the gunner, Specialist Retterer, had one of his toes crushed. During the day, fire was received and returned in typical COWBOY fashion. No hits were reported by any ship.

m. The 13th of April was a relatively quiet day for the COWBOYS. Six (6) UH-1D's flew General Support Missions. Aircraft 569 was being flown on a test flight when it developed hydraulic failure. A successful landing was performed on the Bien Hoa airstrip by WO Villerreal with no further damage incurred by the aircraft. April 13th terminated Operation Junction City II. The COWBOYS extracted the last troops of the 173rd out of their operational area on the 12th.

n. Eleven (11) UH-1D's and a Heavy Fire Team flew three (3) Combat Assault Missions, and two (2) repositionings on the 14th for the 9th Inf. Div. Automatic and semi-automatic weapons fire was received during the day and was returned, per COWBOY and Falcon fashion, destroying five (5) houses and killing four (4) VC (Confirmed). A total of 224 sorties were flown carrying 554 troops.

o. The COWBOYS had a rather uneventful day on the 15th of April. The morning was spent flying four (4) lifts for the "Sky Soldiers" of the 173rd, Carrying 236 troops.

p. The morning of the 16th found the COWBOYS flying seven (7) CA's for the 9th Inf. Div. at Tan An, in the afternoon four (4) extraction's were flown for the 1st Australian Task Force at Nu Dat. The COWBOYS said that the 1st Australian Task Force is, by far, the best organized and most cooperative unit for Airmobile operations that they have ever worked for. Fire was reported during the day, but no hits were taken.

q. A relatively quiet day was spent by the COWBOYS on the 17th, flying General Support and resupply missions for USAID, II FFV and the 1st ATF. The Falcons were credited with one (1) sampan destroyed during the day.

r. The 18th and 19th again found the COWBOYS flying Combat Assaults. A total of 684 troops were air lifted and 16 tons of cargo was carried. One (1) VC was confirmed killed. The 18th began operation Newark for the 173rd Airborne Brigade in "D" Zone North of Bien Hoa.

s. On 20 April the COWBOYS flew one (1) Combat Assault and ten (10) repositionings lifts for the "Sky Soldiers." The remainder of the day was spent flying resupply and General Support missions for the 173rd and USAID. No fire was reported or received during the day.

t. On the 21st a LRRP team was inserted, and discovered, and later extracted. The rest of the day was devoted to flying resupply and General Support Missions for the 173rd and USAID. 179 troops and 35 tons of cargo were carried.

u. The 22nd saw a very welcome and well-deserved rest for the COWBOYS. In the morning one (1) ship was called upon to make an R&R run leaving the rest of the ships on standby. They were never called. The Falcons were kept busy on the Dong Nai Recon and escorting Med-Evacs ships.

v. After a day of rest 486 passengers, 12 tons of cargo and 215 sorties were flown in support of the 25th Inf. Div. and the III Corps. No enemy activity was noted and no fire was received.

w. On April 24th the COWBOYS resumed their support of the 173rd LRRP's with four (4) UH-1D's and a Light Fire Team. Three (3) UH-1D's flew resupply for the "Sky Soldiers." 177 sorties were flown carrying 202 troops and 25 tons of cargo. COWBOY 916 received fire, taking two (2) hits in the tail boom. No injuries were sustained and the aircraft proceeded back to the corral, for repair, without further damage. The Falcons got in a few licks themselves when they received light automatic weapons fire and returned same, results unknown. No Falcons were hit.

x. On the 25th the COWBOYS supported the 173rd with six (6) ships, three (3) for the LRRP's and three (3) for resupply of the troops in the field. Three (3) other UH-1D's were placed in support of the II FFV for their General Support.

y. The morning of the 26th found the COWBOYS in familiar sky's. They carried 178 troops of the 173rd into Combat during the morning hours. The afternoon found the COWBOYS standing by on one hour alert. They were not called and they rested up for tomorrow's missions.

z. The 27th and 28th of April found the COWBOYS supporting the 173rd in LRRP missions, Eagle Flights, and resupply. II FFV and III Corps were both supported by General Support missions. No enemy resistance was met.

aa. On April 29th the Falcons on emergency standby were called out to investigate some possible enemy activity. When they arrived over the area in question they began receiving small arms fire from two (2) hooches. No Falcons were hit, but both hooches were destroyed.

bb. On 30 April, eleven (11) COWBOYS and a Falcon Light Fire Team were involved in an extraction of the "Sky Soldiers." In the afternoon the COWBOYS, with the aid of a Heavy Fire Team, could be found in the sky supporting the 36th ARVN Ranger Battalion in a Combat Assault. Another successful month in the history of the COWBOYS came to a close while supporting the 173rd Airborne Brigade and the 25th Infantry Division with resupply missions. Operation Newark was brought to an end by the extraction of the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

**III. AWARDS RECEIVED DURING THE MONTH OF APRIL 1967**

WO1 JONES	BS
1SG KEMP	BS
SP4 LOCKWOOD	BAM
PFC SAMMONS	BAM
SP4 VICK	BAM
WO1 BASS	BAM
SP5 BRIGGANS	BAM
WO1 NIELSEN	BAM
WO1 OSTERMAN	BAM
WO1 QUIBERG	BAM
SP4 SCOTT	BAM
PFC TOLLIVER	BAM
PFC MILLARD	BAM
SP4 ORTIZ	BAM
PFC TAYLOR	BAM
WO1 JEFFREY	BAM

**HISTORY OF THE  
335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227**

**1 May 1967 through 31 May 1967**

**Prepared by**

**1 Lt. PAUL C. HOWELL**

**Approved by**

**WALTER H. HUTH  
MAJ. Artillery  
Commanding**

**335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227**

1 June 1967

Subject: Monthly History of the 335th Assault Helicopter Company for the period  
1 May through 31 May 1967

To: Commanding Officer  
335th Assault Helicopter Company  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227

**I. ORGANIZATION AND DESIGNATION:**

- A. Flight Platoons (2) -- COWBOYS
  - (1) First Airlift Platoon -- Ramrods  
Platoon Commander: Captain Ronald Wecas  
Aircraft: 10 UH-1D "Slicks" -- Troop Carriers.
  - (2) Second Airlift Platoon -- Mustangs  
Platoon Commander: Major Jon Dickerson  
Aircraft: 10 UH-1D "Slicks" -- Troop Carriers.
  - (3) Armed Helicopter Platoon -- Falcons  
Platoon Commander: Captain Claude Stults  
Aircraft: 8 UH-1B "Guns" -- Armed Escort.
- B. 166th Transportation Detachment.
  - (1) Commander: Major Robert A. Lawson
  - (2) 1 UH-1B recovery helicopter -- Horsethief.
- C. 25th Medical Detachment.
- D. 234th Signal Detachment.

**II. OPERATIONS:**

a. 1 May 1967 began as a normal and productive day in the life of the COWBOY'S, 335th Assault Helicopter Company, by lifting the "Sky Soldiers" of the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate), during the morning. In route to Bear Cat to begin a Combat Assault early in the afternoon for the 9th Inf. Div., tragedy struck in one quick and forceful blow. Chalks one (1) and two (2) exploded in air, tumbling to and burning on the ground, fatally wounding all personnel on board. In one short minute the company lost eight (8) of its best and most respected personnel. The Company Commander, Lieutenant Colonel Leyburn W. Brockwell; 1st Platoon Leader, Major Charles C. Jones; 1st Platoon Sergeant, SSG Ewell E. Acord; CW2 John D. Legg, WO John M. Andrews; Crew Chief, SP4 Pedro Ortiz, and PFC Lewis J. Fogler; and Gunner SP4 Robert F. Quinn.

b. With the tragedy of the first still turning in their hearts the COWBOY'S were awakened early in the morning of the second to support the 9th Infantry Div. on a tactical emergency in the Delta near Tan An. The emergency was covered in COWBOY fashion and then the days normal missions were undertaken.

c. On 3 and 4 May Eagle Flights were flown in support of the 173rd Airborne Brigade General Support missions for II FF Artillery and USAID rounded out the remainder of the days' agendas. No significant enemy activity was noted.

d. The 5th of May found the COWBOY'S supporting the "Sky Soldiers" in a Combat Assault carrying 466 troops in eleven (11) lifts. Two (2) aircraft were damaged when they had hard landings at the pickup zone at Black Horse Strip, RVN. No injuries resulted in either mishap.

e. The COWBOY'S were again supporting the 173rd Abn. Bde. on 6 May, with all available aircraft. Fire was received twice during the day and returned both times, no hits were taken. 125 - 40mm and 42 - 2.75mm rocket rounds were expended during the day.

f. Resupply of the forward troops of the 173rd Abn. Bde. took up most of the 7th and 8th of May for the COWBOYS. The 8th also found five (5) COWBOY ships supporting the II Field Forces Artillery and Engineers and USAID in the General Support role. Small arms fire was received on the 8th and returned in the COWBOY tradition.

g. The 9th found the COWBOYS supporting LRRP's of the 173rd Abn. Bde. in its normal fashion. One of the teams called for an emergency extraction and they were extracted without injuries involved, under fire, causing a few anxious moments for some of the pilots. II Corps Field Forces Artillery is now finding out without question what a superior job of support the COWBOY'S will do for you.

h. Five (5) ships were committed today on the 10th to support the 173rd Abn. Bde. for resupply and LRRP standby. They performed one (1) LRRP extraction and carried 96 troops and 26 tons of cargo for resupply. Another five (5) ships supported the II Field Forces and MACV in General Support. No significant enemy activity was noted.

i. The 11th began with the COWBOY'S supporting the 173rd Abn. Bde. in ten (10) lifts of a Combat Assault; eleven (11) "Slicks" and four (4) Falcons were utilized for the assaults. 500 "Sky Soldiers" participated in the assault. Fire was received and returned during the day. No aircraft were hit and negative results were available on the outcome of fire returned.

j. 12 May, five (5) ships were used in resupply of the forward elements of the 173rd Abn. Bde. with 110 troops and 29 tons of cargo being the totals for the day. Four (4) ships were utilized by the 173rd and II FF in the General Support role. One (1) ship was also used by the 335th for training to help keep standardization up to date.

k. 13 May, found the COWBOYS supporting the 173rd Abn. Bde. in various types of missions. Fire was received during a Combat Assault with no hits reported. During a resupply mission, in the afternoon, Warrant Officer Osterman took a load to a kickout resupply point. After about half of the load was dropped, the aircraft began to lose power and settled into the trees. The crew came out unscathed but not as much can be said for the aircraft.

l. The morning of the 14th found the COWBOYS of the 335th Assault Helicopter Company in relatively unfamiliar sky supporting the 9th Inf. Div. in a Tactical Emergency with ten (10) "Slicks" and a Heavy Fire Team. The only major problem arose after the COWBOYS arrived on the scene. The 9th Inf. Div. decided that there no longer was an emergency and had no further use that day for the COWBOYS. All ships were then diverted to there originally scheduled missions of resupply and General Support of the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

m. On May 15th the COWBOYS supported the 173rd using four (4) "Slicks" and a Light Fire Team for an extraction of two (2) LRRP teams. Eight (8) "Slicks" carried 300 troops and 25 tons of cargo to help resupply the forward units of the 173rd. One (1) Light Fire Team was used on the III Corps emergency standby light arms fire was received during the day, no hits were taken.

n. The 16th was used entirely to support the 173rd and its forward elements. With resupply and General Support 282 troops and 41 tons of cargo were carried making the day a very quiet one.

o. On the 17th of May the 173rd Airborne Brigade terminated Operation Dayton in the area Southeast of Black Horse and commenced Operation Cincinnati as a training operation for the Brigade and as a security force for the Bien Hoa areas. On final approach into a pickup zone, light automatic weapons fire was received with aircraft 849 taking two (2) hits. The Falcons assaulted the area of reported fire with results unknown. With four (4) Chinooks for support, a total of 1700 troops were lifted from the area. Mortar fire was received in the pickup zone with no hits being taken.

p. On the 18th of May again found the COWBOYS on a Combat Assault for the 173rd Abn. Bde. (Separate) as they were lifted in "D" Zone and the surrounding area due to bad weather the days' operations were delayed 3 hours and 30 minutes. 700 "Sky Soldiers" of the Brigade were lifted into the area. Light to moderate Automatic weapons fire was received with aircraft 456 and 201 each taking one (1) hit in the tail boom. After the lift was completed the COWBOYS had the remainder of the afternoon to rest up.

q. On 19 and 20 May five (5) "Slicks" and two (2) gunships for Eagle Flights, the troops were lifted into an area of suspected enemy locations, sweeping through the area and then being extracted upon completion of their sweep. One (1) LRRP team was also inserted during the 19th. Resupply for the 173rd and General Support missions for II FFV, III Corps and MACV constituted the remainder of the days' activities. No fire was received on either day.

r. On 21 May a LRRP team was extracted without incident. Resupply missions were flown for both the 199th Light Infantry Brigade and the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate), carrying 152 troops and 30 tons of cargo in 35 sorties. General Support missions were flown for the II FFV and 79th Engineers. The Falcons were on emergency standby. Fire was received on numerous occasions and was returned. Approximately 10,000 rounds of 7.62 and 48 rockets were expended. Falcon ship 934 flew its last mission today, covering a Medical Evacuation ship. On its orbit to cover the "Dust Off" low level the ship lost power and settled into the trees, completely destroying itself. Neither WO Gregg, WO Quiberg, the pilots, nor the crew were injured.

s. 22 May found seven (7) COWBOYS supporting the 173rd by moving 126 "Sky Soldiers." The remainder of the day found the COWBOYS supporting the 199th Light Infantry Brigade with eight (8)

"Slicks" for resupply. 200 troops and 27 tons of cargo were carried in support of the 199th. One (1) slick for General Support for II FFV. One (1) ship was used, each for badly needed training and maintenance flights. Fire was again received and returned COWBOY fashion.

t. 23 May five (5) "Slicks" and two (2) gunships supported the 173rd Abn. Bde. in extracting the remainder of their personnel from war Zone "D" terminating Operation Cincinnati. The remainder of the day found the COWBOYS supporting the 199th Light Infantry Brigade with resupply in 140 sorties and the II FFV Artillery in the General Support role with 41 sorties. No fire was reported or received during the day.

u. 24 May started with the COWBOYS supporting the 9th Inf. Div. in the Delta, near Ra Khiem, RVN. 300 troops were lifted in 128 sorties. At approximately 1100 hours the COWBOYS received a call from higher headquarters and told to return to home station when the mornings' activities were over. At 1630 hours we were notified that we were to be a member of Operation Winchester (Code name for deployment to vicinity of Pleiku). We were also informed that we were to be under Operational Control of the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) in their operation in the Pleiku area. Commenced immediately by Operation Francis Marion.

v. Minor maintenance and administrative flights were all that were flown on the 25th, 26th, and 27th in preparation for the move. The movement of equipment from the company area began by Air Force C-130 at approximately 0400 hours on the morning of the 26th.

w. 28 May 1967. Briefing was held at 0700 hours. Twenty-one (21) UH-1D, six (6) UH-1B gunships, and one (1) CH-47, chase ship, departed Bien Hoa in route to Pleiku at 0800 hours. The light of twenty-seven (27) UH-1 type aircraft and one (1) CH-47 arrived at Hensel AAF, Camp Enari home of the 4th Inf. Div., at approximately 1630 hours on the day of the 28th. Two (2) minor maintenance errors were encountered in route, but all ships were able to close on Hensel at the same time.

x. No missions were flown on the 29th of May. On 30 May a minimum of missions were flown. A LRRP team was inserted and later extracted and one (1) recon mission was flown in support of the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

y. No missions were flown on the 31st. All members of the 335th continued to work on getting their tents erected and make living quarters for everyone. All personnel waited in eager anticipation for a new month and a new chapter to unfold in the history of the COWBOYS.

**III. AWARDS RECEIVED DURING THE MONTH OF MAY 1967**

LTC BROCKWELL	DFC
CWO LEGG	DFC
CPT. HOZA	BS
CPT. KUHBLANK	BS
CPT. JONES	ACM "V"
1Lt. STEED	ACM "V"
PFC ERICKSON	BAM
SP4 HATTON	BAM
PFC MILLS	BAM
SP4 TRACE	BAM
SP4 MOSLEY	BAM
SP4 AUMACK	BAM
WO1 GRAHAM	BAM
PFC GRANT	BAM
SP4 KNOX	BAM
PFC WILLIAMS	BAM

**HISTORY OF THE  
335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227**

**1 June 1967 through 30 June 1967**

**Prepared by**

**1 Lt. PAUL C. HOWELL**

**Approved by**

**CHARLES D. UTZMAN  
LTC Infantry  
Commanding**

**335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227**

10 January 1968

Subject: Monthly History of the 335th Assault Helicopter Company for the period  
1 June through 30 June 1967

To: Commanding Officer  
335th Assault Helicopter Company  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227

**I. ORGANIZATION AND DESIGNATION:**

A. Flight Platoons (2) -- COWBOYS

- (1) First Airlift Platoon -- Ramrods  
Platoon Commander: Captain Ronald N. Wecas  
Aircraft: 10 UH-1D "Slicks" -- Troop Carriers.
- (2) Second Airlift Platoon -- Mustangs  
Platoon Commander: Major Jon R. Dickerson  
Aircraft: 10 UH-1D "Slicks" -- Troop Carriers.
- (3) Armed Helicopter Platoon -- Falcons  
Platoon Commander: Captain Donald N. Moss  
Aircraft: 8 UH-1B "Guns" -- Armed Escort.

B. 166th Transportation Detachment.

- (1) Commander: Major Robert A. Lawson
- (2) 1 UH-1B recovery helicopter -- Horsethief.

C. 25th Medical Detachment.

D. 234th Signal Detachment.

**II. OPERATIONS:**

a. June began by the COWBOYS beginning their work in the new operational area of Pleiku. Four (4) slick ships were committed to LRRP missions. One (1) team was placed in and later extracted without incident. Two (2) ships were used on resupply carrying 14 troops and 12 tons of cargo. Everything went fairly smooth, however, the COWBOYS were beginning to find out what was meant by the Pleiku Monsoon season. Everyone is looking forward to a good and productive month at their new location.

b. 2nd and 3rd of June were both relatively quiet days for the COWBOYS of the 335th Assault Helicopter Company and the "Sky Soldiers" of the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) two (2) LRRP Combat Assaults, and one (1) extraction took place. Three (3) ships were committed to resupply on both days flying a total of 44 hours and carrying 114 passengers and 37 tons of cargo. On 3 June an Eagle Flight was performed. No enemy contact was noted during the days' activities.

c. On 4 June 1967 the COWBOYS and the 173rd Airborne Brigade had their first Combat Assault in the new area. 125 troops were lifted into an area with no enemy contact received on the initial lifts. One (1) LRRP team was extracted. The remainder of the day was spent on resupply and General Support missions for the Brigade.

d. On 5 and 6 June one (1) insertion was made and no extraction's were needed. Resupply missions were beginning to pickup intensity as 66 hours were flown carrying 223 passengers and 68 tons of cargo. Fire was received on 5 June and returned. Warrant Officer Allen R. Johnson had approximately 10 hours in country when he was wounded in the legs when the aircraft he was flying resupply in received fire.

e. On 7 June the COWBOYS participated in a repositioning for the Mortar Platoon of the 2/503 Inf. 173rd Abn. Bde. carrying 50 passengers and 13 tons of Cargo. Five (5) "Slicks" supported the Brigade the remainder of the day carrying 103 troops and 19 tons of cargo. Fire was received during the day, but was not returned. No hits were taken.

f. 8 June began with the COWBOYS flying an extraction for the 173rd. The extraction was delayed 3 hours due to weather. 240 troops were extracted in the 3 hour operation. Two (2) LRRP teams were inserted with negative resistance. Six (6) ships flew resupply for forward elements of the Brigade carrying 45 passengers and 27 tons of cargo during the remainder of the afternoon.

g. On 9 and 10 June the COWBOYS supported E/17th Cav. of the 173rd in LRRP missions placing two (2) teams and extracting one (1) team. A total of ten (10) ships supported the Brigade for the two days in resupply missions. Almost 40 tons of cargo was carried during the two days. No fire was reported, during the days' activities. The morning of the 10th, missions were delayed for approximately 2 1/2 hours because of the change of Command ceremonies. Major Walter H. Huth turned the Company over to Major Charles D. Utzman. Major Huth was also presented with his BAM and 5 clusters to the Air Medal, a Purple Heart for wounds received in action on 9 April 1967 and a Bronze Star Medal for Service.

h. Fire was received and returned today, 11 June, while extracting an LRRP team. It looks as if the LRRP's are getting back into the action again, putting the COWBOYS also in the center of it. Another LRRP team was placed in later in the afternoon without incident. Six (6) COWBOYS flying resupply filled the remainder of the days' activities. Fire was also received and returned during these flights.

i. Weather is becoming more and more a determining factor in the missions. This morning 12 June 1967 the mission a repositioning of E Troop 17th Cavalry from the home base of the 173rd at Caticka to the Special Forces Camp at Plei Me. During the three (3) lifts the best weather at Plei Me was approximately 200 feet with light rain and haze. LRRP teams again kept four (4) ships busy for the remainder of the day. Placing one (1) team in, extracting them and staying in the air for radio relay. Six (6) ships also aided the

Brigade by flying 132 sorties of resupply to its forward elements. Fire was received by the resupply ships and reported to control as Heavy Automatic Weapons.

j. The LRRP's placed a patrol in on the morning of the 13th and extracted them later in the evening. Five (5) ships flew resupply and one (1) ship flew in the General Support role. Negative enemy contact was made.

k. 14 June saw ten (10) "Slicks" and two (2) Falcons supporting the 173rd on the extraction of the 2 Battalions of the 503rd Infantry in seven (7) lifts. Approximately 260 troops were extracted from two (2) separate locations. No fire was received and the extraction's were made with no enemy incidents. Some troops of the 4th Infantry Division "Ivy Division" were placed in one of the pickup zones by accident. They were also picked up by the ships that placed them in the area when they noticed their error. Resupply and General Support missions rounded out the remainder of the day.

l. 15 June began with COWBOY ships supporting the LRRP's with a CA and an extraction. No enemy resistance was met in either instance. All COWBOY aircraft were then called upon to extract 230 "Sky Soldiers" from a forward location. Resupply and General Support were again placed on today's agenda.

m. On 16 June the COWBOYS again made an extraction for the 173rd. 182 troops in 98 sorties were lifted. Four (4) ships were again used for LRRP extracting two (2) teams without incident. Resupply and General Support missions rounded out the day of flying. Word was received today that one (1) platoon of Slick ships and a Light Fire Team will be going up to Dak To to support a Battalion size operation in that vicinity for a period of approximately 30 days. The 2nd Platoon was selected.

n. 17 June found the COWBOYS supporting the 173rd again in extraction of their troops for preparation of the movement to Dak To. 11 tons of cargo and 65 passengers were carried during resupply. An advanced party of one was sent up to Dak To to lay claim to an area for the COWBOYS to bed down and build hitching racks. The advanced party came back the same day and made final coordination for the move. The second platoon spent the afternoon preparing for the move.

Major Utzman took his advanced party back up to Dak To to check out the area and then went back to Hensel. It was learned that over night Dak To had received a total of over 250 rockets and mortars. One tent was set up and one very deep foxhole was dug. No incidents were received during the night.

On 18 June Major Utzman and Captain Wecas flew up in advance of the Second Platoon to further check out the area and discuss further movement plans with the Battalion. They were informed upon arrival that a lift was to take place and notified the Company at Hensel to send up a total of ten (10) "Slicks" and a Light Fire Team. The COWBOYS arrived in force early in the afternoon and placed 160 "Sky Soldier" on a pinnacle for their first Combat Assault at Dak To in Operation Greeley. The COWBOYS found out the first day that flying at Dak To in its mountainous terrain was going to be a big change from the flying they had been used to. The COWBOYS went back to Hensel to bed down for the night.

o. On 19 June the COWBOYS arrived at Dak To as early as the weather would permit. When they arrived they were informed that they would again have to perform for the Brigade by making another Combat Assault. 270 troops were lifted in eight (8) lifts. Fire was received and returned, no ships were hit and no results were obtained for the returned fire. The Second Platoon and one (1) Light Fire Team were notified that they would begin to RON at this time. Minimum resupply was carried to the troops in the field.

p. The Brigade has continued to move troops out into the underbrush. Today they again called on the COWBOYS to haul "Sky Soldiers" out in another Combat Assault. 230 troops were lifted. The Brigade is continually moving more of their elements up to Dak To. Rumors are going around that the operation will last more than 30 days and also that the entire Company will have to move up. Only time will tell. After the Assault most of the personnel were used within the Company area to build bunkers and make their home more habitable. All reports tend to point to another mortar attack soon.

q. A Combat Assault for E Troop 17 Cav. and an extraction for the 1st Battalion 503rd Infantry took up most of the day's time for the COWBOYS on the 21st of June. No fire was received during the day. The Falcons put in a good pre strike for the Combat Assault. The 52nd Combat Aviation Battalion has given us the PSP necessary to build all of our revetments. The 173rd Airborne Brigades Engineers are making good time at getting them up for us. Almost every day now the weather is holding us up for a couple of hours at least on the days Operations.

r. "A" Company 2nd Battalion 503rd Infantry was walking down a mountainside early the morning of the 22nd when they met a Battalion size unit of an NVA Regiment. They immediately became engaged in a running battle. The Falcons were called upon immediately to give vitally needed air support to the Company. Even though bad weather prevailed at the dawn of the day the Falcons flew continuous cover for the Company, hampered frequently by A1E "Sky Soldiers," airstrikes, artillery and the ever present threat of rain and low cloud cover. The COWBOYS were called upon to give the Company support in other ways also. Resupply of Ammo was badly needed and eventually a Combat Assault was placed in within 200 meters of the heaviest fighting to attempt to reinforce the surrounded Company. The Falcons and COWBOYS braved the enemy's fire and successfully accomplished their mission in protecting and preventing the possible annihilation of the company. The Falcons in covering the company expended over 230 rockets and 36,000 rounds of 7.62 ammunition. As the COWBOYS returned at the end of the day everyone turned and looked solemnly to the scared face of the mountain less than three miles South where fierce and ferocious hand to hand Combat had been fought earlier that day.

s. On 23 June the COWBOYS supported the 4th Battalion in a Combat Assault lifting 168 troops onto a field location. Suppression was placed in on the initial lift, no enemy resistance was met. Three (3) slick ships were utilized to support the forward elements of the Brigade in resupply carrying 18 troops and 2 tons of cargo. An additional ship was used for a recon mission.

t. Three (3) ships were utilized to support the forward elements of the Brigade in Recon for the LRRP missions. No teams were placed in or extracted. Four (4) "Slicks" were utilized for resupply carrying 23 troops and 16 ton of cargo. No enemy resistance was met during the day by the COWBOYS. Two (2) Gunships were used on training missions to further their ability and precision.

u. The COWBOYS kept themselves busy on the 25th by flying formation most of the day. A repositioning began the day for the COWBOYS by moving 46 troops of the 4th Battalion 503rd Infantry. Early in the afternoon elements of the 1st Cav. Division got to see first hand some of the flying capabilities of the COWBOYS when their troopers were moved during Combat Assault. In the late afternoon the COWBOYS performed an extraction for the 1st Battalion 503rd Infantry 173rd Airborne Brigade when 80 "Sky Soldiers" were lifted from a forward area back to their base camp. Seven (7) "Slicks" supported the Brigade for the remainder of the day with resupply. 16 tons of cargo were lifted, although numerous flights were made throughout the days' activities and no fire was received.

v. The COWBOYS began the 26th of June with resupply and General Support of the 173rd Airborne Brigade. 66 "Sky Soldiers" and 9 tons of cargo were carried. The afternoon became a busy day for the COWBOYS as 190 troopers were extracted for the 1st Battalion, back to the vicinity of Dak To for a day or so of rest.

w. The 27th and the 28th were relatively quiet days for the Brigade and ultimately for the COWBOYS. General Support and resupply absorbed most of the day's activities. 42 hours were flown for resupply, carrying 170 "Sky Soldiers" and 26 tons of cargo.

x. Five (5) UH-1D "Slick" helicopters and a Heavy Fire Team extracted 330 "Sky Soldiers" for the 173rd. No enemy resistance was met on the extraction. One (1) LRRP team was infiltrated into a suspected enemy infested area. Three (3) "Slick" ships performed resupply while the additional six (6) ships completed the days' activities with General Support and administration missions for the 173rd and the 335th.

y. 151 troops were lifted on a Combat Assault into a forward area of the Brigade. An extraction was made of 24 troopers from a forward element to the vicinity of Dak To. Eight (8) Ships rounded out the day and the month with resupply for the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate).

### III. MONTHLY STATISTICS:

	<b>UH-1B</b>	<b>UH-1D</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>TOTAL SORTIES</b>	706	5096	5802
<b>COMBAT SORTIES</b>	612	4480	5092
<b>HOURS</b>	273	1515	1788
<b>PAX</b>		5966	5966
<b>CARGO (TONS)</b>		645	645
<b>AMMO - 2.75</b>	269		269
<b>7.62</b>	60,300		60,300
<b>40MM</b>	253		253
<b>MEDIVACS-VC/KBA</b>	55		55
<b>AIRCRAFT HITS</b>	1		1
<b>U.S./WIA/KIA</b>	1 WIA		1 WIA
<b>UH-1B MISSIONS</b>	115		115
<b>AVG. ACFT HOURS</b>	17	88	105
<b>CA'S</b>	25		25
<b>EXTRACTION'S</b>		18	18
<b>REPOSITIONING</b>		4	4
<b>HIGH AVIATOR</b>			175.3
<b>LOW AVIATOR</b>			4.1
<b>AVG. AVIATOR HRS</b>			81.3

**IV. AWARDS RECEIVED DURING THE MONTH OF JUNE 1967**

1Lt. STRIBLING	SILVER STAR
MAJ. JOHNSON	DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
CPT. SPANJERS	DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
CPT. WOOD	DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
CPT. STULTS	BRONZE STAR
CPT. WOOD	BRONZE STAR
SP4 BONACORDA	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
PFC WALLER	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
PFC GRANT	BASIC AIR MEDAL
WO1 BRYAN	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 CLARK	BASIC AIR MEDAL
PFC CODY	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 GRODES	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 MIDGET	BASIC AIR MEDAL
PFC ALLEN	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 OLSON	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SSG ROSES	BASIC AIR MEDAL
CPT. TARR	ARMY COMMENDATION W/ "V"
MAJ. DAVIS	ARMY COMMENDATION
WO1 MANKER	ARMY COMMENDATION
SSG WOOD	ARMY COMMENDATION
SP5 GAMBOA	ARMY COMMENDATION
SP4 GALUEN	ARMY COMMENDATION
SP4 EATON	ARMY COMMENDATION
SP4 SAMUELSON	ARMY COMMENDATION

## BATTLE OF THE SLOPES

### Hill 1338

173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
APO San Francisco 96250

**Subject:**

Combat Operations After Action Report - Battle of The Slopes, Hill 1338

**Task Organization:**

Companies A and C, 2nd Battalion; Company B, (Reserve) 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade

**Date of Operations:**

18 - 22 June 1967.

**Location:**

YB 988153, ZB 001171, Map Series L7015, Sheet 6538 III.

**Sources, Excerpts:**

SKY SOLDIERS, BATTLES OF DAK-TO

Copyright 1988 By Lawrence D. Okendo.

ISBN: 0-9620333-0-8

DAK TO, America's Sky Soldiers in South Vietnam's Central Highlands

Copyright 1993 By Edward F. Murphy

ISBN: 0-671-52268-X

**Background Information:**

Arriving early June in Dak-To proper, the Sky Soldiers of the 2/503rd Airborne Infantry were briefed. Intelligence reported an unknown enemy force had attacked U.S. and CIDG installations in the Dak-To area with mortar and rocket fire during the period of June 17-21, 1967. The enemy was estimated to be within the 2/503rd AO.

**Mission: Search and Destroy:**

The 2/503rd Infantry was to conduct search and destroy operations against possible enemy forces and installations south of the Dak-To Special Forces Camp. The concept was to deploy the A/2/503rd and C/2/503rd Infantry by helicopter and assault the area on 18th and 20th of June, respectively. B/2/503rd Infantry was to remain as the reaction force, and rotate with the line units when instructed.

From 18th, through 21st, June, both Companies had negative contact, and on 211700H (June 21st, at 5 p.m.), A Company received orders to return overland to Dak-To proper (Base Camp). The Commander of A Company chose a route that would allow him to close not later than 221500H.

Many are the facts of war that darkens the path of history. The Battle of the Slopes (dubbed by the Sky Soldiers) in Dak-To, Kontum Province on June 22, 1967, is no exception. John L. Leppelman of C/2/503rd made this report, "We moved through the hills of Dak-To, not keeping track of time. It was an endless search for Charlie and occasionally taking sniper fire with no head on contact" These hills were

actually mountains, steep, muddy and leech infested. We were usually under triple canopy jungles which made it appear dark and dreary."

Intelligence information indicated that the enemy situation prior to the operation were elements of the 24th NVA Regiment, 304th VC Battalion, 200th VC artillery Battalion and H-15 LF Battalion. The enemy had the capability to attack in up to regimental strength, to defend and reinforce with above mentioned elements, and to withdraw at the time and place of his choosing.

The Sky Soldiers arrived in the Dak-To area with little or no knowledge of the North Vietnamese Regular Army or their capabilities. In early June, there was a solid indication that the B-3 front was moving the bulk of its regiments from Laos and Cambodia into the Central Highlands under the control of the 1st NVA Division. These were well-trained and seasoned soldiers.

On June 21, A and C Company made their laager site in one common perimeter on a ridge extending perpendicular to Dak-To proper about 2,000 meter away. As they were setting up their positions, both Companies sent out their clearing and reconnaissance patrols in front and around their respective areas. The patrols were an insurance that the area was clear of enemy activity prior to the Sky Soldiers digging in for the night. Shortly after the patrols returned, SP4 Cook of C/2/503rd accidentally strayed outside the safety of the perimeter and was cut down by friendly fire.

Some of the tragedies of war are at times unexplainable and much less justifiable. Some of the tragedies are leadership foul-ups, troops being jumpy from prior actions, or troops being tired and weary. There are many other factors that can be a major cause for such accidents. The well-trained Sky Soldiers kept accidents to the minimum.

The morning of June 22, the Commanders got together for their briefing of respective AO's and final instructions for the mission ahead. C Company was to continue their search and destroy mission and A Company was to return to base camp by overland. Captain Milton commanding A Company had selected his route so that his Company could close at Dak-To base camp NLT 1500 hours. The night before, the men were told they would be returning to Dak To via the same trail they had been monitoring for the past few days. It was gospel among the grunts to avoid repeat use of trails. The crafty enemy frequently booby-trapped them or set up ambushes along their length. Actually, Captain Milton had little choice in his Company's route of march. The ridge finger they were on had such steep sides, covered with the typical dense jungle growth, that any other route would have taken several days to traverse. He gave his Officers and NCO's their final instructions prior to moving out.

Milton assigned Lieutenant Judd's 2d Platoon to the point position. Next came 3d Platoon led by Lieutenant Hood. Milton's CP group would follow, and behind them would come Weapons Platoon. Lieutenant Sexton's 1st Platoon was given the task of spreading the CS crystals over the LZ and laager site before falling in at the column's rear.

At 0625, Lieutenant Judd started off. As the tail end of his platoon disappeared downhill into the jungle, Hood started his platoon forward. The Weapons Platoon members, all eighteen of them, squatted along the trail waiting their turn to move. Lieutenant Sexton's platoon had donned their gas masks and were spreading the tear gas around the LZ.

As the Companies moved out from their night laager site, SP4 John L. Leppelman became the point man for C/2/503rd. As his Squad moved out, he reported, "As we moved and wound our way through A Company's positions we greeted our buddies with idle guff and chatter, many of whom we went to jump school with or came to Nam (Vietnam) with.

We continued our search and destroy mission from ridge to ridge, while A Company moved down the slope towards base camp at Dak-To, some 2,000 meters away. A few hours into our mission, the point element started taking sniper fire and within a 20-minute period, we had 3 WIA's. One was serious; he was hit through the neck.

The area was triple canopy jungles and the lower ground area was heavy brush and foliage, just too thick to cut out an LZ so we had to transport him (the WIA) on a make shift stretcher. We made the stretcher by cutting two poles long enough to carry a person then rolling both poles around the edge of a poncho till it was wide enough for a person. We continued to move on our AO, then suddenly we got a radio call from A Company that they were in heavy contact with an entrenched NVA force. Shortly after we got another call from Colonel James Stevenson, Commander of the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry, to move out to assist A Company."

A Company's Point Squad moved down near a well-used trail, shortly after they walked into five or six NVA soldiers crossing the trail, the startled NVA's opened fire. Contact was established with an estimated 5-6 NVA's at 0658 hours.

The area was steep with single to triple canopy jungles, thick bamboo, and heavy low foliage. The sun was just breaking through the tops of the jungles sending flowing eloquent rays of light down to the jungle floor. The peacefulness of the jungle turned into a chorus of automatic weapons firing, the sound sending vibrations throughout the Dak-To mountains.

Captain Milton radioed Judd. The young lieutenant reported that his point squad had walked smack into ten to fifteen NVA coming toward them on the same trail. The NVA had opened up first, hitting some of Judd's men. He didn't know how many, or how badly. Judd had put his remaining men into a defensive perimeter.

After getting off the radio with Judd, Milton radioed the battalion TOC. He reported the contact to Capt Ken Smith.

Colonel Partain and his executive officer, Maj. H. Glenn Watson, were also present in the TOC. While Partain and Smith plotted the coordinates in order to bring in supporting artillery fire, Watson stayed on the radio with Milton.

Major Watson was not overly concerned. Alpha seemed to have the situation under control. He advised Captain Milton to "develop the fight and keep us informed."

A Company's Point Squad was in the middle of a firefight, and the startled NVA's fire was ineffective at the moment, Capt. Milton ordered the 2nd Platoon to assist. As the remainder of the 2nd Platoon moved down to assist, they in turn came under heavy fire from the front and both flanks.

After a brief period, and sizing up the situation, Capt. Milton ordered the 2nd Platoon to withdraw, requesting heavy artillery fire to cover their movement back up the ridge. The artillery fire initiated, gave only minimum results, since the enemy was at close proximity with the Sky Soldiers. The 3rd Platoon was ordered to link up with the 2nd Platoon and assist them to move up the ridge to a more defendable area.

Then both elements began moving back up hill approximately seventy five (75) meters and forming a common perimeter along the ridgeline, with 2nd Platoon on the west and 3rd Platoon on the east.

At 0810 hours, the elements of the 2nd and 3rd Platoon came under attack from the north by an estimated reinforced NVA Platoon. The attack was repulsed, but renewed with increased intensity. As the attack continued for the next half hour. Captain Milton reported to Battalion that his two lead elements were in heavy contact.

Based on the information he had, Partain called in an air strike. In order to bring in the jets, or fast movers, the artillery had to be shifted while the planes were in the area. Not everyone thought air strikes should be used. Because air strikes were less accurate than artillery, the NVA knew that the closer they moved to an allied unit, the safer they were.

Major Watson knew this, too. When the order for use of the fast movers came to him, he thought it was a mistake. "Negative," he responded to the order to shift the artillery.

General Deane, who had arrived in the area, came up on the Battalion net. "Shift the artillery," Deane ordered, overriding Watson.

From 0820 to 0825, the jets dropped their bombs along the east side of the ridge. At 0835, Huey gunships arrived on the scene. To help mark their Platoons' perimeter for the close-in support from the gunships' weapons systems, Lieutenants Judd and Hood had their men toss out smoke grenades, or "pop smoke" in the grunts' jargon.

Another reality about fighting in the highlands became apparent. The thick jungle dispersed the smoke so widely that the gunships couldn't get an accurate fix on the Paratroopers' location.

On the ground, the effects were disastrous. The rising columns of smoke told the NVA right where the Americans were. Specialist Patterson noticed the increase in small-arms fire immediately. Seconds later NVA mortar rounds began crashing into the perimeter, tearing American flesh. Amid the renewed cries of "Medic!" Paratroopers were yelling, "No more smoke. No more smoke." But it was too late. The NVA now had an accurate fix on their positions.

Even while the gunships were firing blindly into the jungle around them, the NVA were massing for another ground attack. At 0850 Lieutenant Judd radioed back to Milton, "Six, we're bracing for an all-out attack. We're laid out well. About a hundred gooks are getting ready to hit us."

Before Milton could respond the roar of M16, fire filled the handset. He was starting to wonder if the two platoons would make it. They had been in contact for almost two hours.

The attack was repulsed with heavy casualties to the Sky Soldiers, despite the fact that the Sky Soldiers inflicted heavy casualties on the NVA's. The NVA's kept moving through their own dead and wounded in a frenzied attack.

Air, artillery and gun-ships strikes continued throughout the firefight, to include napalm to the north side of the perimeter. At 0900 hours, Captain Milton committed his 1st Platoon to relieve the pressure on the besieged 2nd and 3rd Platoons, at the same time Capt. Milton had his Weapons Platoon assist in evacuating the wounded back up the hill to his CP (command post).

The 1st Platoon had to assault through the NVA's lines to get to the embattled 2nd and 3rd Platoons perimeter. The Weapons Platoon carrying party was unable to reach the battle area. By this time the NVA had the area surrounded and continued their attack on the perimeter despite heavy losses to themselves.

As the battle progressed with A Company's Rifle Platoons being surrounded with no resupply of ammunition or ground support, Capt. Milton reported that his units were in a desperate situation requiring immediate assistance.

General Deane had arrived at the Brigade TOC by this time. Based on reports from Milton and from Partain's aerial observation, General Deane surmised that Alpha Company had not fallen into a prepared ambush but had stumbled into a moving NVA column of indeterminate size. Deane figured the main body of the NVA unit would continue its movement while holding Alpha at bay. He looked over his maps, identifying likely routes of movement, and then barked off the coordinates to the artillery liaison officer. The latter relayed those figures to 3/319th's fire direction center. The 105's poured howitzer shells into those areas, hoping to catch the fleeing NVA.

Colonel Partain reported his findings to General Deane. When Deane learned that Partain had had two choppers shot out from underneath him, he gave Partain his own chopper and crew and sent him back into the air. Before Partain departed, he ordered his remaining company, Bravo, to vacate its base security positions and chopper into an LZ north of where Alpha's three Platoons were fighting for their lives.

The Commander of C Company was reporting heavy movements to their front and flanks, and were carrying dead and wounded with them, were thought to be moving too slow. Battalion ordered C Company to ignore the movements to his front and flanks and to proceed rapidly to the assistance of A Company.

Col. Stevenson had alerted Bravo Company 2/503rd who was the Battalion reserve unit, back at Dak-To proper. They were making preparations and planning for their movement, since the contact area was not approachable by helicopter, nor were there any good landing zones close up to the embattled area.

At approximately 1000 hours, the forward elements of Alpha in contact with the NVA, reported they were in heavy contact and their elements were down to fifteen effective. All Platoon Leaders were killed; all Platoon Sergeants were wounded, some several times.

The 2nd Platoon Sergeant and ranking survivor directed that the wounded and the effective be moved back to the ridge, towards the Company's CP. Before action could be initiated on the request, radio contact was broken, and at 1034 hours, Captain Milton reported that he had lost radio contact with his forward elements. At the same time, he requested that Battalion terminate the airstrikes that were pounding the western approaches to the forward positions with napalm and rockets and to use artillery instead. At this time, Captain Milton's CP was not under fire but all available personnel were helping to evacuate the wounded.

Company B 2/503rd Airborne Infantry was inserted into a one ship LZ. The process of this insertion was complicated by a fire in the high kunai grass (caused by smoke grenade). The lead elements (2nd Platoon B/2/503rd) moved out of the LZ towards the battle area about 300 meters south. They received small arms fire with no casualties. Other elements of Bravo Company landed, they moved to join their 2nd Platoon, which was now directing artillery fire against the NVA's.

Members of A Company reported to the CO that heavy movements were noted on the northwest portion of the perimeter. At 1030 and 1100 hours, Capt. Milton made this report to Battalion and requested supporting fire in that area. He then dispatched a guide element back up the ridge to the old laager site to assist C Company 2/503rd back into A Company's perimeter. There was intermittent radio

contact with the forward element of A Company and shortly after 1100 hours, radio contact was permanently lost. While trying to make radio contact with his forward element, a group of survivors, led by the 2nd Platoon Sergeant reached the Company's CP.

The disposition of A Company 2/503rd was now about thirty-five wounded and thirty effective, a hasty perimeter was made around the wounded. Then at 1140 hours, Capt. Milton decided to move the Company further up the ridge to a better defendable position. With ~~heavy artillery~~ cover fire, he moved all his wounded and personnel back to a more secure position.

The new position was assaulted from the northwest at 1220 hour and again on 1245 hours, then continued with sporadic small arms fire. As some defended others were feverishly cutting out an LZ as the situation permitted, Captain Milton was wounded during this action. A medical and ammunition resupply was made into the partially completed LZ.

As Captain Willoughby's Bravo Company 2/503rd completed their insertion into their LZ the Company was ready to move out at 1205 hours and at 1240 hours, they made contact with an estimated NVA Platoon, small-arms fire erupted around them before they had covered much ground. Calling artillery support on the enemy, Willoughby also detected the NVA moving around his left, or east, flank and formed a defensive perimeter.

Airstrikes were called in, at 1335 to 1440 hours the A-1E Skyraiders pounded the suspected enemy area with 500-pound bombs, CBU (Cluster bomb units), napalm and strafing runs were directed against the NVA.

At about the same time the air strikes began for Bravo, Charlie Company reached Alpha's earlier LZ. The CS crystals sown by Sexton's platoon had a disastrous effect on Leonard's Paratroopers. They donned their gas masks, but most found the mask's filters had become wet in all the downpours and were no good. Soon, half the Company were on their knees, retching and with snot running from their noses and tears pouring from their eyes.

Company C finally made it to the old laager site where the B Company party met them, then led them back to the besieged perimeter of A Company 2/503rd. Company C 2/503rd was burdened with 2 KIA's from the night before and this made their progress to assist A Company more difficult. The link up with A and C Companies were effected at 1420 hours, and immediate attention was directed towards the completion of the LZ.

A team from Company C was sent out to the battle area to locate WIA's and to gain information on the enemy's situation. Their retrieval attempt was met with heavy sniper fire from the trees and surrounding area. C Company secured the area and got all WIA's and the remainder of A Company 2/503rd extracted to the Brigade main base camp, and the extraction was completed at 1850 hours.

Company C 2/503rd laagered on the ridge in A Company's perimeter with one Platoon placed on ambush. And B Company laagered in their area with one Platoon in ambush. Throughout the night, artillery was directed against potential NVA routes of withdrawal.

On June 23, 1967, both B and C companies 2/503rd linked up to clear the battlefield, police the area for all members of their units, WIA's, KIA's, and MIA's. They discovered a horrendous situation committed by the NVA's, over half the KIA's (43 personnel) had suffered head wounds inflicted at close range, indicating that the NVA had executed the wounded during the night. One MIA who was recovered

alive had survived the ordeal. The coup de grace had merely stunned him, however his head was split open exposing the skull. The Sky Soldiers that were never in a firefight were sick and horrified.

Search and destroy missions conducted on June 24th through 28th, by B and C Company, the Recon Platoon 2/503rd and augmented by E/17th Calvary, produced substantial evidence of the NVA losses. Much NVA equipment was captured and U.S. equipment recovered. Intelligence findings produced documents and three NVA POW's captured by E/17th Calvary. The enemy unit was identified as the K-6 Battalion, subordinate to B-3 Front (this unit was formerly the 6th NVA Battalion, 24th NVA Regiment and detached to the B-3 Front in August 1966).

**HISTORY OF THE  
335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227**

**1 July 1967 through 31 July 1967**

**Prepared by**

**1 Lt. PAUL C. HOWELL**

**Approved by**

**CHARLES D. UTZMAN  
LTC Infantry  
Commanding**

**335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227**

18 January 1968

Subject: Monthly History of the 335th Assault Helicopter Company for the period  
1 July through 31 July 1967

To: Commanding Officer  
335th Assault Helicopter Company  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227

**I. ORGANIZATION AND DESIGNATION:**

- A. Flight Platoons (2) -- COWBOYS
  - (1) First Airlift Platoon -- Ramrods  
Platoon Commander: Captain Ronald N. Wecas  
Aircraft: 10 UH-1D "Slicks" -- Troop Carriers.
  - (2) Second Airlift Platoon -- Mustangs  
Platoon Commander: Major Jon R. Dickerson  
Aircraft: 10 UH-1D "Slicks" -- Troop Carriers.
  - (3) Armed Helicopter Platoon -- Falcons  
Platoon Commander: Captain Donald N. Moss  
Aircraft: 8 UH-1B "Guns" -- Armed Escort.
- B. 166th Transportation Detachment.
  - (1) Commander: Major Robert A. Lawson
  - (2) 1 UH-1B recovery helicopter -- Horsethief.
- C. 25th Medical Detachment.
- D. 234th Signal Detachment.

**II. OPERATIONS:**

a. July 1st opened another calendar month in the history of the COWBOYS, supporting the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) at Dak To. Seven (7) ships were utilized during the day's activities. Four (4) ships were flown on a lift in the morning, lifting 108 "Sky Soldiers" of the Brigade, and were then released to fly Brigade missions, and were then released to fly resupply missions for the completion of the day, 13 tons of cargo was carried. The three (3) remaining ships were used on LRRP standby, being called on later in the day to extract a team. The morning of the 1st was a quiet day and all personnel had high hopes that this was an indication for the tone of the entire months' activities. At 1615 all hopes were shattered as news arrived to operations that aircraft 900 had crashed on a resupply mission. Warrant Officer Bobby Manning was flying at the time, luckily no one was injured. Material failure was the cause of the accident.

b. On 2 July the COWBOYS started the day with a Combat Assault of "Sky Soldiers" of the Brigade. An LRRP extraction and resupply took up most of the remainder of the days' activities. The troops that were lifted in the morning were all extracted in the late afternoon upon completion of their search and destroy mission.

c. On 3 July the COWBOYS supported the 173rd Airborne Brigade with five (5) ships for resupply. Because of a delay of weather in the morning 26 hours was all that they were able to fly. The Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol also called on three (3) COWBOY aircraft and a Falcon Light Fire Team. A team was placed in and later extracted under fire, this gave the Falcons a good chance to practice with their weapons. A recon was made for a Combat Assault and an extraction that is scheduled to take place tomorrow, weather permitting.

d. July 4th. The Combat Assault that was planned yesterday went off as scheduled. No real problems with the weather however fire was received and returned per COWBOY fashion. An extraction was also made, removing 192 "Sky Soldiers" from the field to the rear location for a needed rest from the rigors of the forward Combat elements. One LRRP team was extracted with negative contact. Six (6) ships completed the days' activities with resupply missions. 23 tons of cargo and 60 passengers were carried. The 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) helped the COWBOYS celebrate the 4th of July Holiday at the Special Forces Camp of Dak To in Kontum Providence. The Brigade Artillery Battalion put out for all to see, a fireworks, Artillery display.

e. 5, 6, and 7 July were fairly routine operations in support of the paratroopers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade. Resupply missions took up most of the days' activities, over 70 tons of cargo and 100 passengers. Two (2) Combat Assaults, Reconnaissance and General Support missions comprised the remainder of the activities. Sporadic enemy fire was received during the completion of the missions. No hits were sustained by any of our aircraft.

f. The morning of 8 July began with a five (5) ship Combat Assault. The remainder of the day was spent in resupplying the forward elements of the Brigade. Fire was received and returned and negative results available, no ships were hit.

g. 9 July began with ten (10) UH-1D's, a Light Fire Team and the C&C ship, supporting the Brigade in a Combat Assault. Five (5) lifts were made into an area in the vicinity of Dak Seang. No enemy contact was made during the lifts. Resupply took up most of the days' activities with the exception of the infiltration of one LRRP team.

h. LRRP missions took up the major portions of the days' activities. One (1) team was lifted in and another was extracted. Two (2) ships were called up to haul resupply and a Light Fire Team was used to cover a "Dust Off" on its mission to extract wounded personnel.

i. 11 through 14 July all missions were flown in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. Operation Greeley. 12 July aircraft 201 on a kick-out resupply mission lost power and settled into the trees. No injuries resulted.

j. 15 July. 90 "Sky Soldiers" of E/17 Cav., 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) were lifted into an LZ for the purpose of sweeping a suspected area of enemy concentration and were extracted in the late afternoon. Light small arms fire was received, on the initial assault into the area and the Falcons suppressed, driving the enemy from the area.

k. On 16 July 1967 we supplied four (4) ships for resupply of the 173rd. They carried 20 tons of cargo and 122 passengers. One (1) slick and three (3) Falcons were able to accomplish some training and standardization rides which they were in need of.

l. 17 and 18 July found the company supporting the 173rd Abn. Bde. with aircraft to reposition and extract some of their paratroopers. Resupply, training and General Support took up most of the days' activities. The Falcons got to test out their weapons systems when they received permission for suppression on the last lifts out of the areas.

m. Five (5) UH-1D troop carriers from the company performed an extraction of 86 troopers from a forward location to the airfield at Dak To. Ten (10) UH-1D "Slicks" and two (2) Falcons supported the Brigade for the remainder of the day in resupply and General Support missions. No fire was reported or received during the day. Warrant Officer Manker and Warrant Officer Burton were flying a resupply mission. Upon taking off from the feed bag, POL point, they lost RPM rapidly, and aircraft 884 crashed from 4 feet and rolled on its left calf. Specialist Four Daniel Trace sustained a bruised left knee and was taken to the 173rd Airborne Brigade, "B" medical facilities for treatment, he was returned to the company later in the day.

n. The COWBOYS with the aid of five (5) UH-1H's from the 189th AHC, at Holloway, and a Casper UH-1D from the 173rd Abn. Bde. flight platoon as a smoke ship rappelled cavalry and engineer troops of the Brigade into a crater formed during a B-52 strike. With the smoke used as screening during the rappelling operations, no enemy contact was made. It took the engineers over seven hours to improve a suitable site to accept a UH-1 helicopter for a single ship assault.

o. E Troop 17th Cav., 173rd Abn. Bde. was lifted into Combat Assault by the COWBOYS with the aid of three (3) UH-1H (Ghost Riders) and CH-47's. The entire lift was hampered frequently by low clouds, short turn around and artillery blocking fire. A total of five (5) lifts on behalf of the COWBOYS was required. Pathfinders were used at the pickup zone and the landing zone to help expedite the flow of traffic.

p. The LRRP teams have again begun to get back into the action. On the 22nd Recon's were made for the possible infiltration of troops. For the three day period 22 July through 24 July LRRP teams were infiltrated and later extracted under fire. No ships were hit. General support and resupply took up the remainder of the days' activities in support of the Brigade. 49 tons of cargo and 360 passengers were transported.

q. At approximately 2000 hours in the evening of 25 July word was received that the Special Forces Camp at Dak Seang was under an intense attack by mortar and recoilless rifle. Less than 20 minutes later a Falcon Light Fire Team led by Lieutenant Thomas L. Anderson and wing ship piloted by Lieutenant Charles F. Jackson had fought their way through the intense low cloud cover and ground fog. They received a situation briefing and began suppressing identified targets by their muzzle flashes. After completely expending their ammo they returned to Dak To, rearmed, refueled and returned to the area of Dak Seang, although they had to fly through steady deteriorating weather. The Falcons showed to all their extremely

superior courage and bravery tonight by flying to the aid of the Dak Seang Special Forces camp and lifting the siege when other Light Fire Teams were forced to turn back due to the extremely poor weather conditions.

r. The low cloud cover that affected the Falcons flying the evening of the 25th hung in around Dak To late into the mornings through the 28th causing as much as five hours delay in order for the ships to begin their daily missions. LRRP teams were placed in with negative contact, resupply was the major mission for this period. Over 52 tons of cargo and 230 passengers were carried during the weather shortened and interrupted working days.

s. The Falcons got a lot of practice on the 29th of July as they were called upon to put suppressive fire into a landing zone awaiting the COWBOYS and also to attack several other likely targets of enemy resistance or strength. Over 128 rockets and 11,000 rounds of 7.62 ammo were expended.

t. Two (2) LRRP teams and an ARVN Mike, ten man, force team were extracted on the 30th without enemy resistance on contact. Two (2) COWBOYS were used for resupply and another slick with gunships escort was used for General Support.

u. The COWBOYS completed another month with the aid of CH-47's in the extraction of a forward fire support base. The CH-47's lifted out all the large equipment and many of the personnel, leaving for the COWBOYS the 64 man security force remaining in the area. The pathfinders were utilized in both the pickup zone and landing zone. Neither weather nor the enemy effected the extraction of the personnel or equipment. The month of July ended with another well-run operation.

**III. MONTHLY STATISTICS:**

	<b>UH-1B</b>	<b>UH-1D</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>TOTAL SORTIES</b>	829	4967	5796
<b>COMBAT SORTIES</b>	717	4503	5210
<b>HOURS</b>	721	1291	2012
<b>PAX</b>		6571	6571
<b>CARGO (TONS)</b>		591	591
<b>AMMO - 2.75</b>	890		890
<b>7.62</b>	183,200		183,200
<b>40MM</b>	42		42
<b>MEDIVACS-VC/KBA</b>	33		33
<b>AIRCRAFT HITS</b>			
<b>U.S./WIA/KIA</b>			
<b>UH-1B MISSIONS</b>	205		205
<b>AVG. ACFT HOURS</b>	20	12	32
<b>CA'S</b>	19		19
<b>EXTRACTION'S</b>		21	21
<b>REPOSITIONING</b>		11	11
<b>HIGH AVIATOR</b>			141.6
<b>LOW AVIATOR</b>			4.2

**IV. AWARDS RECEIVED DURING THE MONTH OF JULY 1967**

PFC DELMONACO	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 ASHE BACK	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 CARITHERS	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 BROWN	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 BYNUM	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 CLEGG	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 FOSSETT	BASIC AIR MEDAL
PFC GIBSON	BASIC AIR MEDAL
PVT GRODE	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 KING	BASIC AIR MEDAL
WO1 KORTH	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SSG MORI	BASIC AIR MEDAL
PFC PRATER	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP5 ROOK	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 STORSTEEN	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 TUPPER	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 MULLEN	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP5 FRELAK	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SSG EPSTEIN	ARMY COMMENDATION
SSG WITCHER	ARMY COMMENDATION
SP5 FRELAK	PURPLE HEART
SSG MEEHAN	PURPLE HEART

**HISTORY OF THE  
335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227**

**1 August 1967 through 31 August 1967**

**Prepared by**

**1 Lt. PAUL C. HOWELL**

**Approved by**

**CHARLES D. UTZMAN  
LTC Infantry  
Commanding**

**335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227**

20 January 1968

Subject: Monthly History of the 335th Assault Helicopter Company for the period  
1 August through 31 August 1967

To: Commanding Officer  
335th Assault Helicopter Company  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227

**I. ORGANIZATION AND DESIGNATION:**

- A. Flight Platoons (2) -- COWBOYS
  - (1) First Airlift Platoon -- Ramrods  
Platoon Commander: Captain Ronald N. Wecas  
Aircraft: 10 UH-1D "Slicks" -- Troop Carriers.
  - (2) Second Airlift Platoon -- Mustangs  
Platoon Commander: Captain William O. Jones  
Aircraft: 10 UH-1D "Slicks" -- Troop Carriers.
  - (3) Armed Helicopter Platoon -- Falcons  
Platoon Commander: Captain Phillip P. Osterli  
Aircraft: 8 UH-1B "Guns" -- Armed Escort.
- B. 166th Transportation Detachment.
  - (1) Commander: Major Robert A. Lawson
  - (2) 1 UH-1B recovery helicopter -- Horsethief.
- C. 25th Medical Detachment.
- D. 234th Signal Detachment.

**II. OPERATIONS:**

a. Another month, that of August, is beginning to unfold for the COWBOYS at the 335th Assault Helicopter Company. The month began with a Combat Assault in support of the 4th Battalion 503rd Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate). The operation was initially delayed for four hours due to the bad weather. Once the operation commenced it moved rapidly as two (2) troop carriers and a Light Fire Team assaulted a pinnacle at 1245 with full suppression by all concerned. 125 passengers in all were lifted onto the pinnacle.

b. Perhaps 3 August will be best remembered as the day the COWBOYS supported everyone with every type of conceivable mission. General Support and resupply missions began the days' operations. At 1320 hours the 1/42 Inf. (ARVN) were air lifted into a Combat Assault. 180 ARVN soldiers were lifted. Artillery preparation by the ARVN units was excellent. At 1530 hours the company swiftly extracted "A" Co. 1/503rd Abn. Bde. from a one (1) ship pinnacle pickup zone. At 1604 hours 60 ARVN's of the 8/11 Abn Inf. were repositioned on a very short notice, at 1837 hours' two (2) lifts were completed for "C" Co. 4/503rd Inf. to complete their extraction. Fire was received and returned on several occasions today. One (1) gunship received three (3) hits but continued to fly. The Falcons received credit for ten (10) confirmed NVA KIA by body count.

c. On 4 August the COWBOYS conducted a repositioning of troops and cargo from Dak To to two (2) landing zones adjacent to the Special Forces camp at Dak Pek. Due to weather the first lift was forced to return to Dak To after being enroute. The Falcons were not utilized for the lift. 238 troops were lifted in six (6) separate assaults. The Falcons and their marksmanship were called upon to place suppression around the ARVN troops that were placed in the day before West of Dak Seang. They were given credit for five (5) confirmed KIA's and several more possible. The ARVN's are in tough contact and putting up a good fight for it.

d. The ARVN troops remained in contact with the NVA West of Dak Seang. The Ramrods, led by Lieutenant Arville Steed, furnished the ARVN's by means of sling loads the necessary ammunition, food and medical supplies to sustain them. Fire was received by all ships going into the area. Late in the evening of the 6th Warrant Officer Garry Bass took a sling load in and dropped it on target even though his ship 701, commonly called "Magnet Ass," received several rounds and was forced to land at Dak Seang to be evacuated. Because of the darkness and poor weather conditions no more supplies or assistance could be offered to them until the morning of the 7th.

On the 7th as soon as the weather broke the COWBOYS once again were out supporting the ARVN's that were in contact. The Ramrods under the supervision of Lt. Steed and the cover of the Falcons immediately began resupply. Warrant Officer Garry Wong was in charge of the Falcon Fire Team, on one of his breaks after his firing pass he received fire and sustained a bullet wound in the calf of his right leg. Warrant Officer Tillman Jefferey flying with, Warrant Officer Wong, he flew the ship back to Dak To and landed without the assistance of hydraulics. It was a good landing and Warrant Officer Wong was taken to "B" Med for treatment.

Lieutenant Steed was later awarded the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Bronze Star, for heroism in this action. Lieutenant Steed accepted his in person while Warrant Officer Jefferey accepted Warrant Officer Wong's for him since he was in the hospital at that time.

e. August 8th, the missions today were all delayed due to weather. The weather broke only long enough for the company to perform three (3) lifts in a Combat Assault and one (1) lift in an extraction in support of the 173rd Airborne Brigade during Operation Greeley.

f. The COWBOYS began 9 August by repositioning 181 troops for the Brigade. They were placed into two (2) separate locations to hopefully capture someone while closing on each other. Heavy automatic weapons fire was received during the day, and was returned in routine Falcon suppression. No results were available for the Falcon strikes. One (1) LRRP team was extracted, this was done without enemy contact.

g. The 10th found the COWBOYS supporting the LRRP's with Combat Assaults (infiltration's) of two (2) teams. No enemy resistance was met making it a relatively quiet peaceful day. Four (4) "Slicks" supported the Brigade the rest of the day with resupply hauling 5 tons of cargo and 31 "Sky Soldiers."

Word came up today from Bien Hoa that we were going to be getting in "H" model Hueys to replace the old "D" models we are using. No one up North at either Pleiku or Dak To believed it. Perhaps they should have as it turns out the ships or at least a couple of them awaiting us at Saigon and Vung Tau already.

h. 11 August began with eight (8) "Slicks" of the 335th Assault Helicopter Company, COWBOYS, repositioning 219 "Sky Soldiers" of the 173rd Airborne Brigade to a fire support base from the forward area. Resupply was then carried on by four (4) of the ships while the additional four (4) were placed on LRRP standby for possible extraction. At approximately 1630 hours' one (1) team requested extraction. The extraction was performed in the usual superior manner of the COWBOYS. Light small arms fire was received and returned in what is now considered COWBOY fashion and excellence by the forward troops in the field that they support.

i. At 0849 on the 12th the COWBOYS began a repositioning of the 1st Abn Task Force (ARVN) from the Special Forces airstrip at Dak Seang to the airstrip at Dak To I. It was a routine move and all went smoothly. The COWBOYS lifted 285 troops with CH-47's lifting the remaining troopers. Upon completion of the move the COWBOYS gave a well done to the ARVN soldiers for the job that they performed in the hills West of Dak Seang. In the late afternoon the COWBOYS were requested for an emergency extraction of an LRRP team in the field that was under heavy contact. Immediately responding to the call they removed the team under an intensive volume of enemy automatic weapons fire. No ships were hit and the Falcons got in a few punches of their own for attempting to interfere with the mission of the LRRP and the COWBOYS.

j. On 13 August at 1440 hours the COWBOYS began the cleaning operation on a pickup zone that the CH-47's had started. They lifted out 106 passengers and then proceeded back to their normal missions of resupply and General Support. At 1630 hours while flying resupply Lieutenant Hallinam's ship (736) lost power and crashed. The crew was evacuated and the ship was surrounded with security until the next morning when recovery operations were completed.

k. Weather caused a 2 1/2 hour delay in the scheduled lift consisting of both a Combat Assault and an extraction. Artillery and gunships plus radar bombing were the pre-strike on the landing zone. A total of 308 "Sky Soldiers" were moved during the lifts. Light automatic weapons fire was received during the lift and consequently assaulted by the gunships. No results were available on the Falcon suppression. Today the first of the companies new "H" models was flown in from Bien Hoa. We are supposed to receive a total of 23 within the near future and turn in all of our "D" models.

l. The 16th to 18th found most of the ships in support of the 2/503rd Inf., 173rd Airborne Brigade. Several extraction's were performed in the days' activities 270 "Sky Soldiers" were extracted and one (1) Combat Assault also for the 2nd Battalion was performed in which 130 troopers were assaulted.

On the 18th during a resupply mission heavy automatic weapons fire was received and returned. One round was taken, but the ship was able to continue to fly and complete its mission. No injuries resulted

from the incident. The second flight of "H" models flew in today. Were getting the numbers built up fast. They reported having several more waiting for us at Bien Hoa on the pads in the COWBOY corral.

m. 19 August began was a normal support day for the 335th Aslt Hel Co., while supporting the 173rd Airborne Brigade in operation Greeley.

n. 20 August began with a Combat Assault of 200 paratroopers of the 2nd Battalion at 0935. Low level flight was required on the assault into the landing zone due to the low ceilings and poor visibility enroute. The Falcons placed a pre-strike into the area.

At 1100 hours an extraction for the 4th Battalion was commenced. 180 paratroopers were extracted from Dak Pek back to Dak To. Five (5) Ghost Riders were utilized to help expedite the move. Fire was received by one of the COWBOYS new "H" models that was being used on its first Combat Assault, fortunately no hits were taken.

At 1600 hours the paratroopers of the 2nd Battalion that were assaulted during the morning were extracted. The unit had completed its sweep of the area and had negative enemy contact.

o. At 0836, nine (9) COWBOYS, five (5) Alligators and a CH-47 left Dak To for Dak Pek to begin an extraction of the 1st Battalion 173rd Airborne Brigade, as scheduled. One turn around was accomplished when weather moved in and delayed the operation. After a six hour delay it was again commenced and then proceeded without further delay. No enemy resistance was met and the operation was terminated at 1910 hours upon touchdown at Dak To with the last troopers. 270 "Sky Soldiers" were extracted on the COWBOY ships.

p. Eight (8) COWBOYS began a Combat Assault at 0900 hours for the 4th Battalion. 130 troopers were carried on the assault into the tall grassy landing zone.

At 1130 hours' eight (8) COWBOYS and five (5) Ghost Riders extracted a mike force from a 4500 foot pinnacle. The pickup zone was only large enough to accommodate one aircraft at a time. Weather was marginal with rain showers causing low visibility during the extraction.

q. 23 through 26 August were routine days for the COWBOYS in support of the 173rd Airborne Brigade participation in operation Greeley. Missions in support of the LRRP -- none emergency, and resupply with several small, short Combat Assaults and extraction's took up most of the time on hand for the COWBOYS. Weather frequently interfered with the rapid accomplishment of the missions and frequently delayed them.

r. 27 August was a busy day for the COWBOYS in support of the 173rd LRRP teams. Two (2) teams were placed into separate locations. Almost immediately after the second team was placed in they made heavy contact with the enemy and requested immediate emergency extraction. The COWBOYS and Falcons responded and removed the team under a heavy volume of small arms and automatic weapons fire. The Falcons showed their excellence by placing in closely concentrated fire around the area to protect the team and the ship. All had a busy day all together, being called on several times for their support. 82 rockets, 200-40mm rounds, and 20,000-7.62 rounds were expended during the day.

s. On 28 August the COWBOYS repositioned 200 "Sky Soldiers" for the Brigade. They also carried 28 tons of cargo and 121 passengers, while on the missions of resupply.

Major Lawson went to Quin Nhon to pickup the last three (3) "H" models for the company. As it turned out when he arrived he found out that the 335th Transportation Company had received the word of

the aircraft for them, and came down from Chu Lai the day before and picked them up. The discrepancy was settled and Major Lawson made arrangements to go to Chu Lai and pick them up on the 30th.

t. Normal support of the Brigade took place, on the 29th and 30th, in the 335th participation of operation Greeley.

The weather at Pleiku caused the cancellation of the trip to Chu Lai to pick up the aircraft for at least another day.

u. On 31 August the COWBOYS participated in a Combat Assault, an extraction, a repositioning and resupply missions. All in support of the 173rd Airborne Brigade. 450 troopers and 28 tons of cargo were carried. No enemy contact was noted by the COWBOYS.

Major Lawson and crews were able to get to Chu Lai and pick up the remaining three (3) "H" models. The COWBOYS now have a total of 23 new "H's," with high expectations of what is too, and can be done. The Falcons have now got that gleam in their eye that perhaps the new Huey Cobra will not be far from the grasps of the COWBOYS. Only time will tell for sure. Maybe next month!

### **III. MONTHLY STATISTICS:**

	<b>UH-1B</b>	<b>UH-1D</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>TOTAL SORTIES</b>	813	5873	6686
<b>COMBAT SORTIES</b>	729	5345	6074
<b>HOURS</b>	341	1211	1552
<b>PAX</b>	5939		5939
<b>CARGO (TONS)</b>	257		257

**IV. AWARDS RECEIVED DURING THE MONTH OF AUGUST 1967**

1Lt. LUNGARELLA	DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
WO1 MAGONIGAL	DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
CPT. STULTS	DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
WO1 TEMEYER	DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
MAJ. DAVIS	DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
LTC UTZMAN	BRONZE STAR
CPT. GOIN	BRONZE STAR
SFC WARREN	BRONZE STAR
PVT MIDGETT	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
MAJ. GAMMONS	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
WO1 HAMNAI	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
2Lt. MUSCI	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
CPT. STULTS	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SP4 LOCKWOOD	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SP5 BOUTIA	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
CPT. WECAS	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
WO1 GREGG	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
WO1 AVONI	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SP4 SADDLER	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SP4 CHANDLER	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SP5 MERIDETH	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SP4 HICKEY	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SP4 NELSON	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
WO1 FREEMAN	AIR MEDAL
MAJ. DICKERSON	ARMY COMMENDATION
CPT. CONGER	ARMY COMMENDATION
SP4 HICKEY	ARMY COMMENDATION
PVT MIDGETT	PURPLE HEART
WO1 QUIBERG	PURPLE HEART
SSG NOVALLIS	GOOD CONDUCT

**HISTORY OF THE  
335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227**

**1 September 1967 through 30 September 1967**

**Prepared by**

**1 Lt. PAUL C. HOWELL**

**Approved by**

**CHARLES D. UTZMAN  
LTC Infantry  
Commanding**

**335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227**

22 January 1968

Subject: Monthly History of the 335th Assault Helicopter Company for the period  
1 September through 30 September 1967

To: Commanding Officer  
335th Assault Helicopter Company  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227

**I. ORGANIZATION AND DESIGNATION:**

- A. Flight Platoons (2) -- COWBOYS
  - (1) First Airlift Platoon -- Ramrods  
Platoon Commander: Captain Ronald N. Wecas  
Aircraft: 11 UH-1H "Slicks" -- Troop Carriers.
  - (2) Second Airlift Platoon -- Mustangs  
Platoon Commander: Captain William O. Jones  
Aircraft: 11 UH-1H "Slicks" -- Troop Carriers.
  - (3) Armed Helicopter Platoon -- Falcons  
Platoon Commander: Captain Phillip P. Osterli  
Aircraft: 8 UH-1B "Guns" -- Armed Escort.
- B. 166th Transportation Detachment.
  - (1) Commander: Major Robert A. Lawson
  - (2) 1 UH-1H recovery helicopter -- Horsethief.
- C. 25th Medical Detachment.
- D. 234th Signal Detachment.

**II. OPERATIONS:**

a. September 1st began as a new day in a new month in the history of the COWBOYS. The COWBOYS arose to the realization that they were still supporting the 173rd Airborne Brigade out of Dak To in Operation Greeley.

Ten (10) "Slicks" and a Heavy Fire Team were called on at 0800 hours to move a company of the 1st Battalion. No enemy contact was made and the operation went off smoothly. Five (5) ships hauled LOC (resupply) and four (4) ships plus a Light Fire Team remained on LRRP standby the remainder of the day.

Word has come down that the COWBOYS will be moving sometime soon. All hopes are focused on the possibility that the move may be back to Bien Hoa. Time will tell that these hopes were later destroyed.

b. 2, 3, and 4 September found the COWBOYS supporting the 173rd Airborne Brigade with General Support, LRRP standby, and an occasional movement of personnel. No enemy contact was met while moving 80 tons of cargo, 750 "Sky Soldiers" of the Brigade.

c. On 5 September 260 paratroopers were extracted from a forward position and placed back at a fire support base.

In the late afternoon the LRRP called on the COWBOYS for an emergency extraction of one team that was in contact and unable to lose the enemy force in the jungle. The team was extracted safely while the Falcons placed rockets and suppressive fires into the positions. No hits were received by any of the ships.

d. The morning of the 6th began with the COWBOYS repositioning 315 paratroopers of the Brigade from two forward elements back to a fire support base. The repositioning was done smoothly and without incident. The remainder of the day consisted of resupply missions carrying 18 tons of cargo and 77 passengers.

e. On 7 September 1967 LRRP standby and resupply were the missions for the day. Mid afternoon a call was received for emergency extraction of a team. The extraction was accomplished in a rather exemplary manner with light small arms fire received and returned.

f. 8 September found the COWBOYS performing numerous Combat Assaults. An LRRP team was placed in without incident. 386 "Sky Soldiers" were lifted in by five (5) COWBOY aircraft on a Combat Assault with a small turn around time. Late in the afternoon 76 troopers of the 42 ARVN were heli-lifted on a Combat Assault. The COWBOYS kept themselves busy today, but did not notice any enemy movement.

g. Today the COWBOYS seem to have located the enemy. While flying resupply fire was received on several occasions. One (1) Ship was hit and the gunner, PFC Waller, was wounded in the leg and taken to "B" Med, 173rd Abn. Bde. for treatment.

h. Again on the tenth the COWBOYS seem to have stirred up a hornet nest frequently throughout the day fire was received. On one occasion the pilots reported that they had received rocket fire that was directed at their ship. Fire was returned, but with negative results available.

i. Rumors are beginning to spread around a lot faster now about the COWBOYS moving. The COWBOYS as versatile as they are, are about ready for a change now and are really beginning to expect

one. On the 11th the COWBOYS supported the 173rd Abn. Bde. with LRRP, resupply and General Support. No fire was received and no enemy movement was noted.

j. On 12 September 220 "Sky Soldiers" were placed into a landing zone on a Combat Assault. 116 troopers of E/17 Cav. were extracted back to the rear area of Dak To. 24 tons of cargo were also extracted. No enemy contact was met.

k. On 13 September the COWBOYS with the aid of four (4) CH-47's extracted the 3rd ARVN Abn Bn from Dak Seang back to their home base at Dak To I. Lack of coordination slowed the extraction at first, but it then proceeded as scheduled without any further complications.

l. On 14 and 15 September the COWBOYS performed extraction's for the 1st and 4th Battalions, 503rd Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade (separate). The troopers were all lifted without incident. The COWBOYS have received word to move on the 17th to a place called Phu Hiep on the coast, just South of Tuy Hoa. An advanced party of Major Spanjers and Lt. Anderson have been sent ahead to reconnoiter the area and plan for the company's arrival.

m. On the 16th the COWBOYS supported the Brigade with two (2) "Slicks" and a Light Fire Team. Most of the day was used for packing and preparing for the move to Phu Hiep. Everyone kept themselves busy preparing the area for the move.

n. At 1300 hours on the afternoon of the 17th the COWBOYS departed Dak To enroute to Phu Hiep. They closed at Phu Hiep at approximately 1600 hours with the delightful surprise of discovering that they would not have to stay in tents, but would be moving into already constructed buildings. The detachment at Pleiku will remain at that location until arrangements can be made to transport them to Phu Hiep.

o.. The 18th was a free day for the COWBOYS to set up in the new area, awaiting the arrival of the 173rd Abn. Bde. to close tomorrow and commence Operation Bolling.

p. On 19 September the COWBOYS organized lead Combat Assaults for the 173rd Airborne Brigade with the units of the 268th Combat Aviation Battalion forming a lift of 60 ships in support of the Brigade. Minor difficulties occurred in the lifts, but all problems were worked out without much of a delay. No enemy resistance was met in today's operation the first in the Tuy Hoa area for the Brigade and the COWBOYS of the 173rd. Operation Bolling has begun.

q. The 20th through the 22nd of September found the COWBOYS in direct support of the Brigade. Numerous small lifts were intermingled with LRRP and resupply in support of the Brigade. No significant enemy contact was made, no fire was received by any of the COWBOY ships.

r. On 23 September the COWBOYS supported the 4th Battalion and E/17 Cav. on two separate Combat Assaults. 512 "Sky Soldiers" were lifted in the first assault in support of the 4th Battalion. 60 troops of the Cav. were lifted. Poor planning on the part of the supported units caused a slower operation and made the requirement necessary for an additional refueling stop. No enemy resistance was met.

s. On 24 September three (3) separate lifts were performed to reposition units of the 1st and 4th Battalions. No difficulties resulted with the units moving as scheduled. 290 "Sky Soldiers" were carried in all. The remainder of the day was spent in General Support and resupply of the Brigade. 133 passengers were carried along with 28 tons of cargo.

t. The 25th and 26th of September found the COWBOYS in normal support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. (Separate). One (1) small Combat Assault took place on the 25th. Resupply and General Support took up most of the days' operations carrying 360 passengers and 32 tons of cargo.

u. On 27 September 1967, ten (10) UH-1H's and two (2) Light Fire Team's lifted 420 "Sky Soldiers" of the 4th Battalion into a total of six (6) separate landing zones. All landing zones were five (5) ship rice paddy areas. 116 troops and 24 tons of cargo were lifted in support of the forward elements of the 173rd Abn. Bde. No fire or enemy contact was noted during the day.

v. Today's missions of the COWBOYS were in normal support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. (Separate) and its units in the field on Operation Bolling.

w. 29 September found the COWBOYS and four (4) Falcons gunships in support of the Brigade by lifting 489 "Sky Soldiers" in a Combat Assault. An LRRP team was extracted under fire when they came under heavy contact and were unable to break contact. All members of the team were extracted and none of the aircraft received any hits. 63 passengers and 15 tons of cargo were carried during resupply and 177 passengers were carried on General Support of the Brigade. The Falcons had a good day while logging 21 hours and expending 107 -- 2.75 rockets and 10,000 -- rounds of 7.62 ammunition.

x. September came to an end with the COWBOYS supporting the 173rd Abn. Bde. out of Phu Hiep. Resupply, LRRP, General Support and a short lift concluded the months' activities. The company is still divided among three locations, one at Bien Hoa for coordination with the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion and its logistical support. The remainder, majority -- all flight elements, are located at Phu Hiep in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. Perhaps October will find the COWBOYS all back together again at one location.

### **III. MONTHLY STATISTICS:**

	<b>UH-1B</b>	<b>UH-1D</b>	<b>UH-1H</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>TOTAL SORTIES</b>	300	105	2,000	2405
<b>COMBAT SORTIES</b>	300	64	910	1274
<b>HOURS</b>	231	128	950	1309
<b>PAX</b>		148	4300	4448
<b>CARGO (TONS)</b>		28	230	258

**IV. AWARDS RECEIVED DURING THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 1967**

1Lt. STEED	SILVER STAR
WO1 PEYTON	DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
MAJ. WOOD	DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
WO1 QUIBERG	DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
1Lt. ANDERSON	DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
WO1 WONG	DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
CPT. WECAS	DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
WO1 ANDERSON	DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
1Lt. JACKSON	DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
CPT. MOSS	DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
WO1 JEFFEREY	DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
LTC UTZMAN	DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
MAJ. DICKERSON	BRONZE STAR
CPT. CONGER	BRONZE STAR
WO1 SIMS	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
WO1 BRYAN	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SP4 MERITT	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SP4 SEABURY	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SP4 FOSSETT	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
1Lt. HALLINAN	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SP4 BROWN	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
WO1 FREEMAN	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
PFC ALLEN	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SP4 BYNUM	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SP5 FRELAND	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SP4 GOSSETT	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
WO1 BARLY	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
WO1 BURKS	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
WO1 BURTON	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SP4 KNOX	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
WO1 GRAHAM	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SP4 CODY	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SP4 EASTMAN	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
WO1 BRUAD	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
WO1 CAMPBELL	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
WO1 NIELSON	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
PFC BENNETT	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
MAJ. DICKERSON	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SP4 HAVENS	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
WO1 OSTERMAN	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
PFC SIMMONS	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
WO1 BASS	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
WO1 FOGLE	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"

PFC SWAUZE	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SP4 TRACE	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SP4 WILLIAMS	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
WO1 IDELL	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SP4 HATTON	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SP4 MARCHBANKS	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SP5 MERIDETH	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SP4 FULLER	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SSG LYON	BASIC AIR MEDAL

**AWARDS RECEIVED DURING THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 1967**

WO1 SAXTON	BASIC AIR MEDAL
WO1 SHELSTAD	BASIC AIR MEDAL
PFC SMITH	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 STACEY	BASIC AIR MEDAL
CPT. STEWART	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 TORRES	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 WATSON	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 CARROL	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 CHAMBERS	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP5 CORBETT	BASIC AIR MEDAL
PFC CORLISS	BASIC AIR MEDAL
WO1 DIBBLE	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP5 DRIVER	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 KIRKMAN	BASIC AIR MEDAL
WO1 MACHIN	BASIC AIR MEDAL
WO1 MCLAUGHLIN	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 MICHEL	BASIC AIR MEDAL
WO1 MILLS	BASIC AIR MEDAL
WO1 MORRIS	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 O'DELL	BASIC AIR MEDAL
WO1 OLLIFF	BASIC AIR MEDAL
WO1 REZNAK	BASIC AIR MEDAL
WO1 ENRIGHT	BASIC AIR MEDAL
1Lt. FLETT	BASIC AIR MEDAL
PFC LOESCH	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 GOSSETT	BASIC AIR MEDAL
PFC BENNETT	BASIC AIR MEDAL
WO1 HOWARD	BASIC AIR MEDAL
PFC WISE	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 BROWN	ARMY COMMENDATION W/ "V"
PFC ALLEN	ARMY COMMENDATION W/ "V"
SP4 BYNUM	ARMY COMMENDATION W/ "V"
SP5 FRELAK	ARMY COMMENDATION W/ "V"

SP4 GOSSETT	ARMY COMMENDATION W/ "V"
SP5 OLSON	ARMY COMMENDATION W/ "V"
SP4 CARITHERS	ARMY COMMENDATION W/ "V"
SP4 CHANDLER	ARMY COMMENDATION W/ "V"
PFC ERICKSON	ARMY COMMENDATION W/ "V"
SP4 MULLEN	ARMY COMMENDATION W/ "V"
CPT. JONES	ARMY COMMENDATION W/ "V"
1Lt. STEED	ARMY COMMENDATION W/ "V"
CPT. CONGER	ARMY COMMENDATION
SP5 BAKER	GOOD CONDUCT

**HISTORY OF THE  
335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227**

**1 October 1967 through 31 October 1967**

**Prepared by**

**1 Lt. PAUL C. HOWELL**

**Approved by**

**DONALD R. DRUMM  
Major, Artillery  
Commanding**

**335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227**

22 January 1968

Subject: Monthly History of the 335th Assault Helicopter Company for the period  
1 October through 31 October 1967

To: Commanding Officer  
335th Assault Helicopter Company  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227

**I. ORGANIZATION AND DESIGNATION:**

- A. Flight Platoons (2) -- COWBOYS
  - (1) First Airlift Platoon -- Ramrods  
Platoon Commander: 1Lt. Thomas L. Anderson  
Aircraft: 11 UH-1H "Slicks" -- Troop Carriers.
  - (2) Second Airlift Platoon -- Mustangs  
Platoon Commander: Captain Albert R. Stewart  
Aircraft: 11 UH-1H "Slicks" -- Troop Carriers.
  - (3) Armed Helicopter Platoon -- Falcons  
Platoon Commander: Captain Phillip P. Osterli  
Aircraft: 8 UH-1B "Guns" -- Armed Escort.
- B. 166th Transportation Detachment.
  - (1) Commander: Major Robert A. Lawson
  - (2) 1 UH-1H recovery helicopter -- Horsethief.
- C. 25th Medical Detachment.
- D. 234th Signal Detachment.

**II. OPERATIONS:**

a. October began with the COWBOYS at Phu Hiep supporting the 173rd Abn. Bde. A change of faces took place in the COWBOYS this morning, Lt. Col. Charles D. Utzman turned over command of the company to Major Donald R. Drumm. Col. Utzman is assuming the duties as the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion Executive Officer. The first activity of the new month for the COWBOYS and its new commander was a Combat Assault of the 4th Battalion. 275 "Sky Soldiers" were transported on the assault. ARA -- aerial rocket artillery, and Falcon gunships placed in the pre-strike on the landing area just prior to the COWBOYS arrival.

b. On 2 October the COWBOYS conducted a Combat Assault with the Recon Platoon of the 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry to secure a fire support base site. ARA and gunships assisted in the assault. For the remainder of the day 164 troopers and 22 tons of cargo were hauled to the forward area on resupply.

c. On 3 October the COWBOYS were called off their normal missions at 1030 hours to make an assault with a company of the 1st Battalion into an area where an LRRP team was in contact earlier in the day. No enemy contact was made as the Falcons placed in the accurate preparatory suppressive fires.

d. Three (3) lifts in support of E Troop 17 Cav. commenced the operation for 4 October. A 90 minute delay was incurred to delay the operation at first, due to weather. Once the operation started it was completed without delay. 192 passengers and 8 tons of cargo were carried on resupply and General Support.

e. 5 October was spent in normal support of the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Operation Bolling.

f. On 6 October the COWBOYS assaulted "A" 1/503rd Infantry into LZ Basin. The remainder of the Battalion was repositioned into LZ Care that had been secured by a CIDG force. ARA played a slightly different role today as it was used in place of the Falcons. The Falcons had been sent to Dalat yesterday on a reaction mission and were weathered in and unable to return in time for the lift.

g. On 7 October the COWBOYS, supporting the 4th Battalion conducted six (6) lifts into LZ Saddle. Artillery and gunships supported the assault. The COWBOYS were then called upon to clean up Fire Support Base Goose, lifting nine (9) sorties to LZ Basin and three (3) to LZ Saddle.

h. Combat Assaults were becoming a consistent diet for the COWBOYS. The 8th through the 10th at least one (1) lift per day was thrown in to keep the COWBOYS flexible and the Brigade maneuverable. Over 1000 "Sky Soldiers" were lifted during the period included. Rumors are starting to fly, that the COWBOYS will be getting their administration back with them from their Pleiku location.

i. The COWBOYS supported the Brigade with normal missions on the 11th of October in support of Operation Bolling.

At 1000 hours on the morning of the 11th many hard days of work and planning on the part of Major Lawson and 1Lt. Howell paid off as a convoy of 67 vehicles departed Camp Enari, Pleiku, for Phu Hiep. The night of the 11th, was spent at Quin Nhon and they arrived Phu Hiep the evening of the 12th.

j. On 13 October the COWBOYS supported the Brigade with a Combat Assault by lifting 361 "Sky Soldiers" in the assault. No enemy resistance was met.

k. Five (5) ships were put up on both resupply and General Support for the Brigade on the 14th. COWBOY 3 went on a recon late in the afternoon to plan for tomorrow's operation.

l. The lift went off as scheduled on the mooring of the 15th. Ten (10) COWBOY "Slicks" and a Falcon Light Fire Team made the lift. A total of 835 "Sky Soldiers" of the Brigade were placed into three (3) separate landing zones. The Falcons placed pre-strikes into the LZ's using 155 rockets, and 24,000 rounds of 7.62 ammunition. No enemy resistance was met.

m. On the 16th a small lift began the day with almost every conceivable mission performed during the days period.

n. On the 17th, 5 COWBOYS were called off their normally assigned missions at 1030 hours to participate in a Combat Assault of 70 "Sky Soldiers" into a suspected enemy infested area. All reports seemed incorrect as no resistance was met. Two (2) LRRP teams were placed in, to attempt to gather information and to capture a prisoner if possible.

o. At 1245 on the 18th, four (4) COWBOYS were called off their normal missions to place elements of E/17 Cav. in on a Search and Cordon of the village of Phu Sen. At 1640 the COWBOYS returned and extracted the recon team.

p. On 19 October the 335th Aslt Hel Co. continued their support of Operation Bolling. One (1) Combat Assault was conducted for the 4th Battalion and one for E Troop 17th Cav. Multiple LZ's were used for the E Troop mission that was a continued Cordon and Search of the village of Phu Sen. Over 400 troopers and 45 tons of cargo were carried in resupply and the General Support role of the 173rd Abn. Bde.

q. On 20 October the COWBOYS repositioned 412 "Sky Soldiers" of the Brigade. The 1st Battalion was repositioned from FSB Canoe to AO Gander and B Company, 4th Battalion was moved from LZ Sen to FSB Peak. All missions went as scheduled with the assistance of six (6) CH-47's in moving the larger equipment from Canoe.

r. At 1500 hours on the 21st the COWBOYS were called out of a TAC "E" by the 173rd. Troops were placed in an LZ near a unit of the 4th Battalion that was in contact.

s. 22 and 23 October found the COWBOYS in normal support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. in Operation Bolling.

t. On 24 October at 0800 hours a Falcon Light Fire Team departed to support the 48th Assault Helicopter Company and the ROK Division at Ninh Hoa who were in heavy contact. The Light Fire Team returned at 1900 hours, both ships were grounded with multiple hits received. No injuries were sustained and the Falcons were credited with two (2) structures destroyed and several possible VC killed.

u. 25 and 26 October -- normal missions in support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. during Operation Bolling.

v. Routine missions were flown to provide continued support of the 173rd Abn. Bde. on Operation Bolling.

w. On the 28th the COWBOYS participated in an artillery raid with the 173rd. A B-52 strike was conducted on a suspected NVA headquarters, followed by artillery and then a reconnaissance of damage by fire of the Falcons. The mission appeared to be very successful.

x. On 29 October 135 troopers were lifted in an assault for the 4th Battalion of the 173rd Airborne Brigade. The Falcons placed in suppressive fire prior to the COWBOYS arrival. 280 passengers and 30 tons of cargo were carried on resupply and General Support.

y. Five (5) "Slicks" and a Light Fire Team supported the 4/503rd Infantry in their Combat Assaults. 187 troopers were assaulted. The Falcons placed in a pre-strike and suppressive fires on the landing zone as the COWBOYS assaulted.

z. Warrant Officer Machin closed the mission with a long day. It all began when he departed at 0630 to support the 281st out of Cam Ranh Bay. He ended up traveling over the entire III, Corps area and returning to Phu Hiep at 2030 hours.

### **III. MONTHLY STATISTICS:**

	UH-1B	UH-1H	TOTAL
<b>TOTAL SORTIES</b>	470	5544	6014
<b>COMBAT SORTIES</b>	470	2328	2798
<b>HOURS</b>	466	1986	2452
<b>PAX</b>		11,262	11,262
<b>CARGO (TONS)</b>		776	776

### **IV. AWARDS RECEIVED DURING THE MONTH OF OCTOBER 1967**

MAJ. LAWSON	DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
PFC MARCHBANKS	BRONZE STAR W/ "V"
SP5 SELF	BRONZE STAR W/ "V"
SP5 BAKER	BRONZE STAR
1SG ORR	BRONZE STAR
CPT. TUCKER	BRONZE STAR
PFC PRATER	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
PFC ERICKSON	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
WO1 UNGERER	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
SP4 FULLER	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
PFC KITCHING	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
WO1 BURKE	AIR MEDAL W/ "V"
WO1 ARCHER	ARMY COMMENDATION
SP4 RUTTERBUSH	ARMY COMMENDATION
SP5 CLARK	ARMY COMMENDATION

**HISTORY OF THE  
335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227**

**1 November 1967 through 30 November 1967**

**Prepared by**

**1 Lt. PAUL C. HOWELL**

**Approved by**

**DONALD R. DRUMM  
Major, Artillery  
Commanding**

**335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227**

26 January 1968

Subject: Monthly History of the 335th Assault Helicopter Company for the period  
1 November through 30 November 1967

To: Commanding Officer  
335th Assault Helicopter Company  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227

**I. ORGANIZATION AND DESIGNATION:**

- A. Flight Platoons (2) -- COWBOYS
  - (1) First Airlift Platoon -- Ramrods  
Platoon Commander: 1Lt. Thomas L. Anderson  
Aircraft: 10 UH-1H "Slicks" -- Troop Carriers.
  - (2) Second Airlift Platoon -- Mustangs  
Platoon Commander: Captain Albert R. Stewart  
Aircraft: 10 UH-1H "Slicks" -- Troop Carriers.
  - (3) Armed Helicopter Platoon -- Falcons  
Platoon Commander: Captain Phillip P. Osterli  
Aircraft: 8 UH-1B "Guns" -- Armed Escort.
- B. 166th Transportation Detachment.
  - (1) Commander: Major Robert A. Lawson
  - (2) 1 UH-1H recovery helicopter -- Horsethief.
- C. 25th Medical Detachment.
- D. 234th Signal Detachment.

**II. OPERATIONS:**

- a. The month of November started with the 335th Assault Helicopter Company supporting the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) in Operation Bolling in the Tuy Hoa area. 337 troopers were lifted in the morning when a change of mission was called in at 0600 hours. The lift commenced at 0700 hours and terminated at 1100 hours.
- b. On the 2nd and the 5th of November the COWBOYS were in General Support of the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Operation Bolling. Falcon 612 was flying on a General Support mission for the Brigade when fire was received and the ship took a hit. No injuries resulted from the incident.
- c. On the 4th of November the extraction's scheduled for the morning were delayed for over an hour due to the weather. Once the lift was started, problems arose when previous unscheduled lifts were required. No fire was received and no enemy movements were observed.
- d. On the 5th of November after returning to Phu Hiep with half of the proposed extraction completed, five (5) UH-1H's and a Light Fire Team were ordered to prepare for and close on Kontum today. Captain Stewart and the appropriate aircraft departed this area at 1400. At 2130 word was received that all aircraft arrived at Kontum and were setting up to stay.
- e. No missions were scheduled at Phu Hiep today. One (1) small lift was performed at Kontum to support the Brigade's participation in Operation McArthur. A Light Fire Team was called out of Phu Hiep to attempt to assist the Special Forces Camp, 57 rockets and 1000 7.62 rounds were fired.
- f. On the 7th of November the remainder of the flyable aircraft departed Phu Hiep for Kontum, and all arrived safely. Aircraft 648 crashed while flying resupply and had to be destroyed in place. All persons escaped without injury.
- g. On the 8th of November ten (10) "Slicks" and three (3) Falcons departed Kontum for support of the Brigade at Dak To. 171 troops were carried on the assault and then the ships reverted to their normal missions. At 0630 aircraft 643 reported receiving fire, but no hits were received.
- h. On November 9th, ten (10) UH-1H's and three (3) Falcon gunships departed Kontum for Dak To to support the 173rd Abn. Bde. with a Combat Assault. At 0730 hour's aircraft 620 and 704 reported receiving fire, but no hits were taken. 640 passengers and 8 tons of cargo were carried during the assault.
- i. On the 10th and the 11th of November Combat Assaults were performed for the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 173rd. 470 "Sky Soldiers" and 12 tons of cargo were carried on the assaults. The remainder of the days' activities were in General Support of the Brigade.
- j. A short lift on the morning of the 12th placed 257 troops and 20 tons of cargo for the LRRP and the 1st Battalion. General support of the Brigade in Operation McArthur comprised the remainder of the days' operations.
- k. On November 13th, Warrant Officer Gary Bass while on an emergency resupply mission received fire and took three (3) hits. The ship was flown back to Kontum and Warrant Officer Bass took out another ship. No injuries resulted from the incident.
- l. November 14th through the 17th the COWBOYS supported the 173rd Abn. Bde. with normal General Support missions in support of their participation in Operation McArthur.

On the 17th, WO Bryan flying a Falcon gunship was forced to autorotate when he had an engine failure. The heavily loaded gunship was landed on an unsecured road with no further damage and no injuries resulting.

m. On the 18th the COWBOYS flew General Support and resupply missions for the Brigade. 207 "Sky Soldiers" and 31 tons of cargo were carried.

n. On the 19th of November the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry, 173rd Abn. Bde. (Separate) ran into heavy contact while assaulting Hill 875, to the Southwest of Dak To. No landing zone was available for ships to land with supplies and to pickup the wounded, so "sling loads" and "kick-outs" were required. Ship after ship attempted to get the loads into the area. All ships were covered with gunships, artillery and airstrikes. All ships received heavy automatic weapons and small arms fire. Five (5) ships were shot up and forced to set down at a fire support base. Warrant Officer Jerry B. Freeman received a scalp wound, completely destroying his helmet. Specialist Five Paul E. Rennie was wounded with a round through his shoulder.

On the 20th the COWBOYS continued to support the 2nd Battalion with all available flyable aircraft. Two (2) more aircraft were shot up and forced to land at a fire support base to await evacuation. One load that was dropped in was a landing zone kit so that the unit on the ground would be able to make an area large enough for our ships to land to resupply and carry out casualties.

Two (2) more aircraft were hit today while resupplying the 2nd Battalion on Hill 875. The battle is still raging. 11 tons of cargo was carried into the landing zone and 111 MEDIVACS were carried out.

On the 23rd Of November, Thanksgiving Day, the big assault for the Hill was made. The hilltop was taken in the afternoon by members of the 2nd and 4th Battalions, 173rd Abn. Bde.

The COWBOYS participation in the battle consisted of Combat Assaults and resupply missions under the most hazardous conditions of hostile fire. There were a total of nine (9) helicopters that received extensive combat damage during the period 19 November to 21 November and over ten (10) COWBOYS were wounded during the action.

o. On the 24th of November the COWBOYS performed an extraction for the 2nd and 4th Battalions, 173rd Airborne Brigade. Over 400 "Sky Soldiers" were extracted from the vicinity of Hill 875. In the General Support and resupply roles 240 passengers and 17 tons of cargo were carried. No significant enemy resistance was met during the day.

On the 25th and 26th of November the COWBOYS performed normal support missions for the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Operation McArthur.

p. 32 tons of cargo and 350 troopers were carried on the 27th and 28th of November in Operation McArthur Southwest of Dak To, Kontum Providence, RVN.

q. On the 29th of November the COWBOYS were delayed from their missions for almost an hour and a half due to the heavy layer of ground fog. Normal missions were performed during the day with no enemy resistance met.

r. On the 30th of November the COWBOYS supported the 1st Battalion with the extraction of 171 troopers. November has drawn to a close. What started as a quiet month for the COWBOYS ended up as one of the fastest moving and active months in some time.

**III. MONTHLY STATISTICS:**

	<b>UH-1B</b>	<b>UH-1H</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>TOTAL SORTIES</b>	807	4176	4983
<b>COMBAT SORTIES</b>	472	1487	1959
<b>HOURS</b>	596	1776	2372
<b>PAX</b>		7079	7079
<b>CARGO (TONS)</b>		422	422
<b>AMMO - 2.75</b>	1351		1351
<b>7.62</b>	200,000		200,000
<b>40MM</b>	490		490
<b>MEDIVACS-VC/KBA</b>			0
<b>AIRCRAFT HITS</b>	3	9	12
<b>U.S./WIA/KIA</b>			7 WIA
<b>UH-1B MISSIONS</b>	111		111
<b>AVG. ACFT HOURS</b>	596	1776	2372
<b>CA'S</b>			13
<b>EXTRACTION'S</b>			8
<b>REPOSITIONING</b>			5
<b>HIGH AVIATOR</b>			143.8
<b>LOW AVIATOR</b>			0.0
<b>AVG. AVIATOR HRS.</b>			81.4

**IV. AWARDS RECEIVED DURING THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER 1967**

1Lt. LOWELL	BRONZE STAR
WO1 ANDERSON	BRONZE STAR
SP4 RHODES	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 SCHIERS	BASIC AIR MEDAL
WO1 SWANSON	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 BARTLETT	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 DICKEY	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 FERNANDEZ	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 FUNK	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 GRESHAM	BASIC AIR MEDAL
WO1 NORRIS	BASIC AIR MEDAL
PFC MUNOZ	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 KOSCHMAN	BASIC AIR MEDAL
WO1 HOPKINS	BASIC AIR MEDAL
WO1 PICKLESIMER	BASIC AIR MEDAL
WO1 HILLIKER	BASIC AIR MEDAL
WO1 CZAPLICKI	BASIC AIR MEDAL
WO1 FERRARA	BASIC AIR MEDAL
WO1 REDDING	BASIC AIR MEDAL
PFC SCHMIDT	BASIC AIR MEDAL
WO1 SITZER	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 ZARAGOZA	BASIC AIR MEDAL
PFC FREE	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 HANSON	BASIC AIR MEDAL
SP4 TOLLEY	BASIC AIR MEDAL
MAJ. DICKERSON	ARMY COMMENDATION W/ "V"
SP4 THOMPSON	ARMY COMMENDATION W/ "V"
WO1 DANITZ	ARMY COMMENDATION
WO1 TEMEYER	ARMY COMMENDATION

SP4 WATSON	ARMY COMMENDATION
SSG BAKER	ARMY COMMENDATION
SP5 COSTILOU	ARMY COMMENDATION
SP5 DRIVER	ARMY COMMENDATION
SP5 HUFFMAN	ARMY COMMENDATION
CPT. OSTERLI	ARMY COMMENDATION
SP4 BREIT	ARMY COMMENDATION
SP5 CHEEK	ARMY COMMENDATION
WO1 IDELL	PURPLE HEART
SGT. RENNIE	PURPLE HEART
SP4 CHAMBERS	PURPLE HEART

**HISTORY OF THE  
335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227**

**1 December 1967 through 31 December 1967**

**Prepared by**

**1 Lt. PAUL C. HOWELL**

**Approved by**

**DONALD R. DRUMM  
Major, Artillery  
Commanding**

**335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227**

30 January 1968

**Subject:** Monthly History of the 335th Assault Helicopter Company for the period  
1 December through 31 December 1967

**To:** Commanding Officer  
335th Assault Helicopter Company  
145th Combat Aviation Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96227

**I. ORGANIZATION AND DESIGNATION:**

**A. Flight Platoons (2) -- COWBOYS**

- (1) First Airlift Platoon -- Ramrods  
Platoon Commander: 1Lt. David C. Flett  
Aircraft: 10 UH-1H "Slicks" -- Troop Carriers.
- (2) Second Airlift Platoon -- Mustangs  
Platoon Commander: Captain Albert R. Stewart  
Aircraft: 10 UH-1H "Slicks" -- Troop Carriers.
- (3) Armed Helicopter Platoon -- Falcons  
Platoon Commander: Captain Ivol C. Kenner  
Aircraft: 8 UH-1B "Guns" -- Armed Escort.

**B. 166th Transportation Detachment.**

- (1) Commander: Major Robert A. Lawson
- (2) 1 UH-1H recovery helicopter -- Horsethief.

**C. 25th Medical Detachment.**

**D. 234th Signal Detachment.**