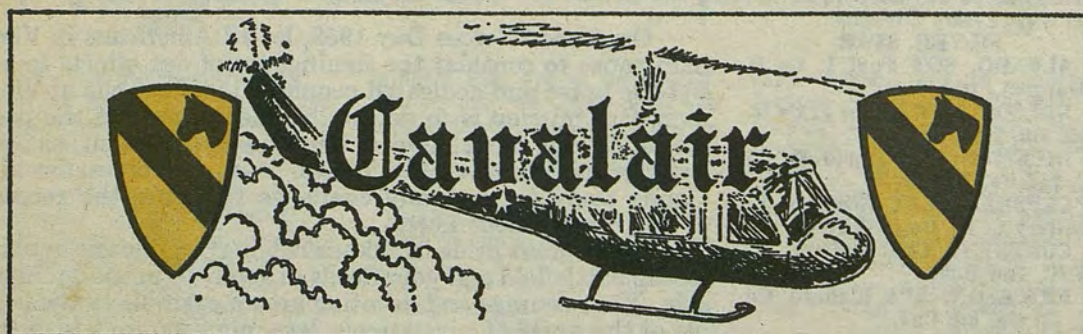


# Gen. Roberts New Cav CG



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1st Air Cavalry Division

May 21, 1969

PHUOC VINH—Major General E. B. Roberts, one of the principal architects of the airmobile concept, assumed command of the 1st Air Cavalry Division during ceremonies at Camp Gorvad May 5.

MG Roberts, who served as Chief of Staff of the experimental 11th Air Assault Division at Ft. Benning, Ga., the forerunner of the Cav, and as commander of the Cav's 1st Airborne Brigade in Vietnam, succeeds Major General George I. Forsythe, who recently relinquished command of THE FIRST TEAM to become commanding general of the Infantry Center at Ft. Benning.

The change of command became official when Command Sergeant Major Lawrence E. Kennedy, division sergeant major, passed the Cav's colors to Brigadier General Frank Mes-

zar, assistant division commander, who in turn handed them to Lieutenant General William B. Rosson, deputy commander of MACV. General Rosson then presented the colors to General Roberts, symbolizing his assumption of command.

In his speech to the officers and enlisted men assembled, MG Roberts said, "I consider it an honor, indeed, and a great privilege for me to take command of this magnificent division."

A 1943 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, General Roberts has served as Assistant Secretary of the General Staff, Washington, D.C.; Chief, Plans, Organization, and Military Assistance Program Division, Army Group, Teheran, Iran; and commander, 1st Airborne Battle Group, 506th Infantry, Ft. Campbell, Ky.

After a 1965-66 tour with the Cav in Vietnam, General Roberts served as Deputy Commanding General of the Training Center at Ft. Jackson, S.C. He later held the posts of Assistant Commander of the 9th Infantry Division, Vietnam, and Deputy Chief of Staff (Plans and Operations), USARV.

## 44 Months In Vietnam

PHUOC VINH — It's a common practice in Vietnam for soldiers to spend their year here, extending if possible for early release, and then to return to the states. Some, however, choose to reenlist or extend for longer periods of time, so they might reap the "bennies" available to them.

Two such individuals, Sergeant First Class Howard E. Lee and Staff Sergeant Nathaniel Wilson, both of the 15th Supply and Services Battalion, have chosen to remain in Vietnam.

The two soldiers arrived here in September, 1965, and have extended for a total of 44 months. When asked what motivated them to do this, both said there were several reasons, mainly financial and promotional.

They also stated they were satisfied with the work and the people with whom they are associated. "Besides," added SFC Lee jokingly, "we can't find anyone back home who will put up with us." Both men might be called confirmed bachelors.

According to SSG Wilson, the 15th S&S Bn is better prepared to serve all operations of THE FIRST TEAM. Both feel the "riggers" at forward positions make their job run much faster and smoother because less time is now being spent loading and unloading supplies.



### New CG

Major General E.B. Roberts accepts the division's colors from Lieutenant General William B. Rosson (left), deputy MACV commander, in change of command ceremonies at Camp Gorvad. Brigadier General Frank Meszar (right), assistant division commander, initiated the ceremonies by passing the Cav's colors to LTG Rosson.

## Scout Pilot Awarded DFC

By LT WILLIAM DIMASCIO  
TAY NINH — He may have been "just doing my job," but the Army apparently did not see it that way. So Brigadier General Frank Meszar, assistant division commander, presented the Distinguished Flying Cross to Warrant Officer 1 Robert J. Johnson at an impact award

ceremony held here recently.

Mr. Johnson a scout pilot with the 1st Brigade's aviation platoon, voluntarily landed his OH-6A helicopter in a narrow jungle clearing amid a hail of hostile fire, picked up a severely wounded Skytrooper and flew him to a hospital.

The 22-year-old aviator had been on a reconnaissance and security mission for an element of the 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry when that unit was engaged by an estimated 30 NVA soldiers. The unit was stranded in a bomb crater clearing and was receiving heavy small arms, rocket-propelled grenades and 60mm mortar fire from a nearby woodland.

One of the cavalymen was

severely wounded in the neck, and the company commander requested an immediate MEDEVAC. Overhearing the request, Mr. Johnson radioed the unit and offered to do the job.

"The area was too hot for a MEDEVAC ship," he said. "And I didn't think a Huey could have fit into the LZ (landing zone). It was so small."

As aerial rocket artillery and gunship helicopters blasted away at the enemy emplacements, the tiny observation chopper began its descent.

"Before going in, we had to expend half our load of ammunition," the pilot explained. "We couldn't carry that extra weight otherwise."

As one skid settled on the edge

of the crater, the infantrymen laid their wounded comrade in the vacant copilot's seat. The doorunner, seated in back, held the plasma bottle.

"The whole time we were down there, we were receiving fire," Mr. Johnson added. "I could see red and green tracers hitting right ahead of us. Then an RPG (rocket-propelled grenade) went off and sprayed shrapnel into the ship."

But the aircraft was still flyable, and the pilot took off for the 45th Surgical Hospital in Tay Ninh.

After bringing in the wounded trooper, Mr. Johnson headed back to the contact area. He was going back to finish "doing my job."

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## THE HORSE'S MOUTH



Dear Hoss:

I am fully aware of the regulations on unauthorized weapons, but I'm in the dark about some of the regulations on carrying weapons that are authorized. The other day, I was walking down the road on the way to the PX, minding my own business, when an MP pulled over beside me and gave me a DR for carrying my .45 in one of those western-style holsters. I've seen a lot of people wearing them before, so naturally I figured they were authorized. I tried to argue with the MP about this, but he wouldn't listen to me. Did he have the right to give me a DR?

F.G.

Dear "FG":

Your middle initial wouldn't be "N", would it? The MP certainly did have the right to give you a DR, and for a good reason. The western type holster may look great; as a matter of fact I like them too, but its low cut is designed for nothing more than a quick draw. You're not going to face 'Charlie' in the street at sundown are you? The Army-issued .45 holster is much better for use here in Vietnam. Its deep cut and flap protect your weapon from dust, dirt, and inclement weather and helps prevent malfunctioning. I'm sure you would rather have a weapon that functions properly than a fast draw. By the way, if you use some good ole "horse sense," you won't argue with an MP again. He could have given you a DR for that also.

HOSS

Hi Hoss:

Everyday it seems to get hotter and hotter. It gets so hot that I can hardly stand wearing boots and fatigues. I know jungle fatigues are designed for hot weather, but they just don't seem to do the trick. Everytime I show up in shorts and sandals or something like that, my NCOIC nearly blows his stack. Why can't he have any sympathy for human suffering?

Sweating Profusely

Dear "Sweating,"

I can tell you why your NCOIC blows his stack. You should have been told this when you first came in country, but I'll say it again. Whether you realize it or not, your greatest enemy in Vietnam is the mosquito. I'm sure you're aware that the reason you take the big orange pill and the little white pill in the mess hall is to prevent malaria, which can be fatal. Malaria control, though, doesn't just stop there. The best way to keep from catching malaria is to keep from getting bitten by the mosquito. The more of your body that you expose, the better chance you have of getting bitten. Keep your shirt on.

HOSS

## Cav Ass'n Plans Parley At Ft. Benning Aug. 22

Now that you're part of THE FIRST TEAM, you're eligible for membership in the 1st Cavalry Division Association. And if you're scheduled to DEROS before the last week in August, you may want to attend its 22nd annual reunion, to be held August 22-24 at Ft. Benning, Ga.

Founded in 1944 in the Admiralty Islands, the Association was incorporated in 1949 as a non-profit, fraternal veterans organization. The Association seeks to preserve friendships formed in battle and perpetuate the Cav's traditions and esprit de corps. Moreover, it is dedicated to the honor of cavalymen who have given their lives in the defense of our country.

In addition to encouraging its members to get together in local and regional chapters and publishing SABER NEWS, a quarterly newsletter, the Association provides scholarships to dependents of men killed or disabled while serving with THE FIRST TEAM.

A lifetime membership in the 1st Cavalry Division Association costs only eleven dollars (a single membership fee with no subsequent dues) and includes a lifetime subscription to SABER NEWS, a volume of the division's history and a membership directory, plus Cav decals, insignia cards and pins.

If you're interested in keeping in touch with the guys you've met in 'Nam, you'll definitely want to join the Association and participate in its activities, beginning with the August reunion.

If you'd like to join, contact your unit's Association representative or the Cav's Information Office.

Reunion at Ft. Benning  
Under the able leadership of

Brigadier General Oscar E. Davis, commanding general of the Training Center at Ft. Benning, this year's reunion committee has scheduled a series of meetings and social gatherings for cavalymen and their families.

Much of the program will be held on post. Cavalymen and their families will be able to tour its famous Infantry Museum. Many parties are scheduled this year, including one for teenagers August 22. Briefings are also on the agenda, including one on the Cav's performance in Vietnam.

Interested individuals will also be able to go on tours of Columbus, Ga., Callaway Gardens, and Warm Springs, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "Little White House."

The main social event of this year's reunion will be an outdoor barbecue-picnic-dance at Victory Lodge, a retreat on the Ft. Benning reservation. In addition, the reunion committee has assured the CAVALAIR that it has arranged for ideal weather.



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Commanding General ..... MG Elvy B. Roberts  
Information Officer ..... MAJ J.D. Coleman  
Press Officer ..... CPT Jim Ryan  
Production Editor ..... SP5 Steve Haldeman  
Layout Editor ..... SP5 Allan Schlosser

## Awards

The following awards were presented to Skytroopers of the 1st Air Cavalry Division:

### SILVER STAR

ALFARO, SGT Paul I. Co H (Ranger), 75th Inf.

BOLSON, SGT James J. Co D, 2nd Bn, 7th Cav.

DICKMAN, SGT David M. Co C, 2nd Bn, 7th Cav.

CAPSHAW, CPT William L. Battery C, 1st Bn, 77th Arty.

COATNEY, CPT Jeffery R. HHC, 2nd Bde.

ERICKSON, SP4 Richard Co C, 1st Bn, 8th Cav.

GRIFGO, SP4 Richard E. Co A, 2nd Bn, 5th Cav.

HARRISON, CPT Cecil L. Co A, 1st Bn, 5th Cav.

HOUGEN, MAJ Harvey R. HHC, 2nd Bn, 7th Cav.

JOHNSON, CPT Leland C. Co B, 5th Bn, 7th Cav.

KOUTROUBA, SSG William Co B, 5th Bn, 7th Cav.

TODD, SGT James R. Co E, 2nd Bn, 12th Cav.

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

DUNN, WO-1 James H. Troop B, 1st Sqdrn, 9th Cav.

JONES, CW-2 Edward A. HSC, 15th Med Bn.

MULFORD, 1LT Peter L. HSC, 15th Med Bn.

BRONZE STAR MEDAL FOR HEROISM

ANDERSON, SP4 Roderick L. Co B, 5th Bn, 7th Cav.

BURT, SP4 Alvin H. Co C, 2nd Bn, 12th Cav.

DEETER, SP4 James H. Co D, 2nd Bn, 7th Cav.

GUILLORY, 1LT John Co B, 2nd Bn, 7th Cav.

HEINER, PFC David L. Co C, 2nd Bn, 12th Cav.

MARCOTTE, SGT Joseph C. Co B, 2nd Bn, 12th Cav.

MC INTOSH, SP4 Carol D. Co B, 5th Bn, 7th Cav.

MITCHELL, SP4 Lawrence Co B, 2nd Bn, 12th Cav.

RODRIGUEZ, SFC Albert T. Co C, 2nd Bn, 12th Cav.

SCHERZER, SP4 Patrick Co D, 2nd Bn, 12th Cav.

SIMMONS, SP4 Richard Co B, 5th Bn, 7th Cav.

SMITH, SGT Carl E. Co B, 5th Bn, 7th Cav.

## Know Your Army Bennies

New and expanded programs of benefits and privileges appear for the first time in the newly titled "Handbook on Retirement Services for Army Personnel and Their Families," recently published by the Army.

Army retirees and other interested persons can purchase the handbook for \$1.75 from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Orders are now being processed. Here's your chance to familiarize yourself with benefits you're entitled to.

## Gen. Abrams, MG Roberts Note Armed Forces Day

On Armed Forces Day 1969, let all Americans in Vietnam pause to consider the significance of our efforts to assist the brave and dedicated people of the Republic of Vietnam. Our mission is to defeat the enemy, protect the people, and help them build a free and independent nation. Each of us, whatever his job, on land, sea or in the air, stands ready to meet any challenge to insure the success of our commitment here.

I take great pride in acknowledging your heroic actions on the battlefield and your deeds of goodwill in the countryside. Your courage and devotion are an example to the people of the world of our nation's determination to defend the institutions of freedom.

Your achievements mark you as the finest "forces for freedom" our nation has ever had. You deserve the honor, the respect and the support of all the American people... for you are America's best.

*Creighton W. Abrams*  
CREIGHTON W. ABRAMS  
General, United States Army  
Commanding

Armed Forces Day traditionally is a time for America to honor its sons and daughters serving in uniform around the globe. This occasion therefore affords me an opportunity, as your new commander, to pay tribute to the Armed Forces in general and the Skytroopers of the 1st Air Cavalry Division in particular.

As one who is currently serving his second tour of duty with THE FIRST TEAM in Vietnam, I can appreciate more fully the outstanding contribution you are making in this embattled land. Under the most difficult conditions imaginable, you have consistently distinguished yourselves both in combat and in your relations with the Vietnamese people.

I salute you for an exemplary record, one that has made you "THE FIRST TEAM" in name and in fact.

*E.B. Roberts*  
E.B. ROBERTS  
Major General, USA  
Commanding



## Lonely Vigil

Skytrooper's motto: "Vigilance pays." Stay awake on guard duty.



# Nighthawks Stymie 'Chuck'

By SP4 PHIL MANGER

**BIEN HOA** — The sun has dipped below the western horizon. Two Hueys, one loaded with flares, the other with a .50 caliber machine gun, lift off the 3rd Brigade's VIP pad at Bien Hoa.

As the tin roofs, glinting now in the pale moonlight drop behind, the choppers climb and turn toward their target area. In

minutes they are at their destination, and the Huey with the mounted .50 caliber drops to treetop level while the flare ship continues to maintain its altitude.

Behind them are the winking lights of Bien Hoa and Long Binh.

In a few minutes the commander of the flare ship, War-

rant Officer James Michael Hudson, receives word from the gunship to drop the first flare. The word is then relayed to Specialist Four Stephen Tyler, a doorgunner who drew duty as "flare popper" on this particular night, and he tosses out the 40-pound Navy aircraft parachute flare, which he had already armed and hooked up.

The flare tumbles out of the chopper and reaches the end of its static line. Its activator is yanked, and the cannister tumbles free for 10 more seconds before its parachute pops and the flare ignites.

On the gunship, .50 caliber gunner Specialist Four Robert L. Thomas catches some movement in his sights. He opens up with a long stream of four-one tracer fire, and the movement stops.

The purpose of these two-helicopter flights, known as "Nighthawk" operations, is to provide continuous surveillance.

Since infantry units on the ground are limited, in part, by the darkness, the Nighthawk missions fill the surveillance gap between dusk and dawn.

The patrol's route is selected by the 3rd Brigade commander and the brigade's Air Operations officer, Captain Michael McCannel.

"The Nighthawk mission," said CPT McCannel, "is one of many plans we devised to restrict the enemy's movement."

To accomplish this mission, Company C, 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion at Quan Loi provides Hueys each night. The choppers are mounted with .50 caliber machine guns and over 3,000 rounds of ammunition each or are loaded with 40 Navy aircraft parachute flares each.

Throughout the night, chopper

teams alternate so that patrol, and ground refueling and reloading operations are simultaneously conducted.

Normally, this means the choppers will spend two hours in the air and then two on the ground on an alternating basis until dawn.

Once a set of choppers reaches its destination, the gunship drops down close to the earth while the flare ship remains in its orbit. Once the two ships are in position, the flare ship begins to drop flares.

"When we sight a target," said WO1 Larry Linonis, aircraft commander of a gunship on a previous mission, "we fly across with our left side toward the target and engage it."

"The most common target is one or two enemy troops on a trail, but sometimes there are more."

Because some of the targets are more than a .50 caliber machine gun can handle, an artillery forward observer sometimes rides along in the flare ship. Should the need arise, he can bring in artillery in a matter of seconds.

Because the current Nighthawk operations emphasize surveillance of the waterways which cross possible enemy routes, CPT McCannel has nicknamed them a "blue recon." ("Blue" is infantry jargon referring to a body of water.)

## MARS Station Brings 'The World' Closer To Homesick Skytroopers

By SP5 Travis Holden

**LAI KHE** — At first glance there appears nothing unusual about the row upon row of GP medium tents in the Blackhorse Brigade of the 1st Cav's base camp area at Lai Khe. However, one of these tents is not only air-conditioned, but also contains \$50,000 worth of electronic equipment. It is the MARS station.

The MARS stations sprinkled throughout Vietnam give the serviceman an opportunity to talk to his family back home.

"I've used the MARS station twice and it's just great. It will never replace letters, but it is something to be able to talk to my wife for a few minutes," said Staff Sergeant Henry C. King, a member of the Headquarters and Headquarters Company Security Platoon. "This station is one of the better ones. About an hour and a half is all I've ever had to wait to get a call through."

Logging between 25 and 30 calls a day keeps the three proprietors of the station at work. Last month the station logged over 600 calls.

"With just three people working, it sometimes gets a little rough. We work 12-hour shifts — meaning one of us is up almost all day and night," said Private First Class Dennis Arnold, one of the operators of the station. "We try to get everyone's call through if at all possible, but

sometimes, if atmospheric conditions are not just right, it might take a little longer than the normal two hours."

Due to the time difference between Vietnam and the United States, getting a call through sometimes means losing a little sleep for the Skytroopers at Lai Khe. Often the men will get up at 1 a.m., go down to place their call, and then sit back and wait, wondering what to say when the call finally does go through.

"I made a call just a few days ago and the connection was real good. My mother was a little surprised and she did have a few problems catching onto the radio procedures at first, but she got the hang of it after a

minute or so," said Specialist Four Larry H. Davis, a radio operator in the 2nd Brigade tactical operations center.

"There aren't too many problems. I guess one of the biggest difficulties is the guy who logs a call, gives us a number to call him at when the call comes through, and then isn't there. Other than that, and except for the weather which we can't control, we can get any call through," said PFC Arnold.

To the troops of the Blackhorse Brigade, 11,000 miles seems like a long way. But through the facilities of the MARS station, 11,000 miles is just as close as the nearest phone.

## Home, Safety Provided In Cav Bunkers

**TAY NINH** — Necessity may well be the mother of invention, and nowhere can this statement better be proven than in a war zone.

A look around any base camp — be it a sprawling military installation or an isolated fire support base — reveals an assortment of imaginatively designed bunkers.

Excluding operations and perimeter bunkers, which are usually built by engineers, the greatest variety is seen in the small individual fortifications. With these, the only factors governing their design are the materials available, the amount of time a person can devote to construction and the individual's imagination.

Generally these bunkers are built close to billets, but in forward areas, they actually become living quarters. The amount of work done on the interior of the bunker then depends on how much time the occupant will spend inside it.

Although no two bunkers look alike, they all do the same job — a very necessary one.



The moment of contact and the faces of combat: fevered heat, the grasping tangle of jungle, and fighting out of an enemy ambush. All of this is reflected in the face of a Skytrooper from Company D, 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry.



# Dirt, Dust, Sweat And Enemy Troops: Foes of LZ Builders

TAY NINH — The helicopters circled around the area for the last time before landing near the battered air strip. Engineers from Company A, 8th Engineer Battalion piled off the Chinooks, some running for cover against the dust and dirt the Chinooks were kicking up while others walked easily, taking in the new landscape. They looked at the runway, its strips of perforated steel planking (PSP) ripped up by a hit from an enemy rocket or mortar.

For the engineers, it was nothing new. They have been called on time and again to go into an area and construct a new landing zone. This is the second landing zone they have completed within a three-week period.

The first impression the old air strip gave to the engineers was one of a ghost town. Old bunkers, some of them partially destroyed through nature and man's ways, stand as a remembrance to a once widely used air strip. Strips of PSP rusted, bent out of shape or just ripped from bunkers and thrown about leave the engineers with uneasy thoughts.

Some of the engineers walk around the new area. They step cautiously around old rocket-propelled grenades and mortars strewn around the area. They start to think of how easy it would be for 'Charlie' to walk into this place anytime, booby trap the bunkers and mine different sections of the strip since

the 5th Special Forces evacuated the area over a year ago.

For the engineers it was the same old story. Get the equipment and supplies that will need to be airlifted into the area, start building bunkers, fill sandbags until you think you'll go out of your mind, and string concertina wire and everything else needed for protection of the landing zone. All the while this is going on, the engineers can look up and see more supplies and equipment coming in on cargo helicopters.

With this landing zone it is a little different. They have to work a little more and a little harder. The strip in front of the landing zone has to be repaired and special care taken to make sure it has not been mined. Not

one fixed-wing aircraft will be allowed to land before the entire air strip is repaired and cleared of any mines.

The old bunkers, some of which are still standing, will have to be inspected, torn down and rebuilt, or they may just need a few minor adjustments. Strips of PSP, wooden timbers and other materials will have to be cleaned out from in front of the bunker line.

The old, rusted and tangled concertina wire will have to be replaced and, like any other new landing zone, it will have to have at least one triple strand of new wire before nightfall.

Like magicians, the engineers transform a ghost town into a new landing zone within a few days for fellow Skytroopers.



SP4 Juan Lopez and PFC Lawrence Carter guide a backhoe digger at LZ Carolyn.



A bulldozer scrapes an artillery position flat for an emplacement.



A fire fight was still in progress when this Flying Crane lifted the bulldozer into the LZ.

Story By SP4 Bob Smith  
Photos By SP4 Eric White



A Chinook descends into the boiling dust with a 105mm howitzer slung under its belly.



Men rush to grab their gear as a small fire is fanned by the rotor blast of a Chinook.



# Recalls Action Earning 1/8 PUC



General Creighton W. Abrams, MACV commander, presents the Presidential Unit Citation to the men of the 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry at LZ White. The award was in recognition of the unit's achievements in battle at Trung Luong in July, 1966.

## FAC Appears Docile To 'Chuck' But Has Full Power Of USAF

By SP5 Travis Holden

LAI KHE — It looks like a small plane as it swoops over the Blackhorse Brigade's area of operations, but it is armed with the full power of the United States Air Force.

When the troops on the ground are in contact, the Forward Air Controller (FAC) can call an immediate air strike, and within minutes, fighters are sweeping over the area.

The FAC's job is fivefold: visual reconnaissance, bomb damage assessment, preplanned air strikes, B-52 strikes, and immediate air strikes. To help the Air Force team assigned to the 2nd Brigade do its job even better, it is now equipped with the Air Force's newest spotter plane, the OV-10A.

The OV-10A, capable of carrying four M-60 machine guns, four rocket pods, and cruising at speeds in excess of 150 knots, has replaced the small and familiar O-1 — the "birdog."

"The fact that we can carry more rockets means that we can now spot more targets than we could before," said Major James J. Truscott, air liaison officer for the brigade.

The OV-10A has more power than the older spotter planes. With this added power they can make their rocket runs and move out of the area before the enemy can get ground weapons on target. With the capability of carrying four M-60's, the plane can keep the enemy's head down during the rocket run.

When you make your first flight in an OV-10A, there are quite a few things to be learned. First you see the survival vest and get a briefing on the equipment it carries. Next, the briefing officer mentions something about bailing out. Right away, your ears perk up. No longer do you yawn. Each word has a special meaning.

"Just before you take off," you are told, "the pilot will ask you to remove the pin from the firing device for your seat. You will arm enough explosives to blow you and your seat high enough while the plane is on the ground so your chute will open."

At this moment you begin to have faint doubts about the coming flight.

"After this, you are ready to take off," continues the briefing officer. "Oh yes, I should mention the canopy does not break off. There is a canopy penetrating device which will make room for you to go through the canopy."

Doubts are building. Maybe there is something that needs to be done in the company area, like making your bed.

"When you hit the ground, activate your radios — there are two in the survival vest. One will send out a homing signal and the other will allow you to talk to the pilot so that you can rendezvous on the ground. Remember: all you have to do is pull the ring between your legs and out you go."

At this point, you begin to hear voices calling you to return to the company area. But, you do want to fly and all this bailing out can't happen to you.

"I should mention that you probably won't have to pull the ring to eject because the pilot can eject you by pulling his ring. Are there any questions before you go to the flight line?"

The only big question is whether you want to fly at all. However, overcoming your natural anxieties and gathering up all available courage, you proceed to the flight line and meet your pilot for the day.

"Do you have any questions about bailing out? OK, climb on in."

You look at the under-sized, instrument-filled area, and think of a question: "How do I get into this thing?"

"There is no graceful way. Just climb in the best way you can."

Minutes later, you are airborne over the area of operations. You sit back watching everything that goes on from the back seat; your attention is fully devoted to the action taking place.

The pilot sees something unusual on the ground and the plane begins to circle. He asks you a question and you try to

reach the intercom button to reply. Your arm feels as if it's glued to your leg, and your chin seems to be dragging on the floor.

"Are you all right back there? Can you read me?"

Suddenly the pilot pulls out of the circle and your hands go all the way to the top of the plexiglass.

"Roger, I'm all right. I just couldn't move my arms to reach the intercom."

Later, you learn that you had over three "Gs" pulling on your body. The same three "Gs" push you against the seat as you land.

The day is over and you are safely back in the company area no bailing out, no crashing on the runway. And you wonder about the men who do this day after day after day.

The next time you see an OV-10A, your buddy says, "Boy, look at that thing go. They must be mean."

"They're not so bad; I rode in one last week," you reply.

But you know different.

## Education Level Ups For EMs

WASHINGTON, D.C. (ANF)—Between 60,000 and 80,000 college graduates are expected to enter the Army's enlisted ranks through the draft or voluntary enlistments this fiscal year, according to the Department of the Army.

If this estimate proves correct, about one of every five persons inducted will be a college graduate.

During the first five months of this fiscal year (July 1, 1968 through December 1, 1968), approximately 23,500 college grads entered the Army.

The Army's personnel staff is closely monitoring the assignment and utilization of these men, with the primary objective of deriving the maximum benefit for the Army through the most efficient use of their abilities, while maintaining equitable treatment for all Army personnel.

By SP4 Richard Craig  
TAY NINH — In the summer of 1966, when the 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry was fighting in the battle of Trung Luong, Captain Frank R. Vavrek was a platoon leader.

Recently the same man, now the intelligence officer for the battalion, witnessed another historic event—his battalion receiving the Presidential Unit Citation for that action.

"Then, I was just a young lieutenant anxious to find out what combat was all about. I wanted to see how I would stand up under the stress," said CPT Vavrek.

His platoon knew that something was up when they got their march orders during that fateful week in June, 1966.

"We were located at Kontum when the order came to move," the career officer said. "We were load-

ed into C-130s and flown to Tuy Hoa where we were immediately marshalled, briefed and sent to the vicinity of Trung Luong."

The company made its way toward the contact area, but by the time they arrived the major part of the fighting was over. In an attempt to contact and destroy the enemy, they spent the next several days conducting search-and-destroy operations throughout the Trung Luong area.

Finally, they teamed up with another company of the 1st Bn, 8th Cav to attack an enemy strongpoint near the village.

"Fighting was real close," recalled the captain. "We found an enemy bunker complex and had to use their own bunkers for protection. We were so close to the enemy that my men were using hand-grenades to hold them back."

## WHO'S FIRST ON THE FIRST TEAM

BEST AVAILABILITY RATE		BEST ACCIDENT/INCIDENT RATE	
2/20th ARA	1	228th ASHB	1
1st Bde Avn	2	2/20th ARA	2
227th AHB	3	2d Bde Avn	3
E/82d Arty	4	3d Bde Avn	4
15th TC/DISCOM	5	15th Med	5
3d Bde Avn	6	11th GS Co	6
15th Med	7	227th AHB	7
229th AHB	8	1/9th Cav	8
2d Bde Avn	9	E/82d Arty	9
11th GS Co	10	229th AHB	10
1/9th Cav	11	15th TC/DISCOM	11
228th ASHB	12	1st Bde Avn	12



Specialist Four Larry G. Gassaway, a perimeter guard in the security platoon, Headquarters Company, perches high atop the boom of a truck-mounted crane to paint the top of the flagpoles in front of the chief of staff's office.





**Mari-San**

My name is Mari Tanaka. I am *all* Japanese girl. All we can add to that is a Most Affirmative.



## After 172 Years

# Viet Village Votes

TRUNG LOI—After 172 years of existence, this Binh Long Province hamlet held its first democratic election.

Poll officials attributed its newfound freedom to successful 1st Cav operations in and around the area. The election was held to select the successor to the former hamlet chief, who was assassinated by the Viet Cong several months ago.

At 8 a.m. the polls

opened in the region's only schoolhouse, a crude, doorless, windowless white building caked with years of red dust. Early voting was slow, and officials feared a lack of response. But one by one the people dropped their work in the field and home to cast their secret ballots for the mayoral candidates. By noon, each of the 142 villagers had filed in, registered and voted.

The newly elected chief will appoint a deputy chief to replace him in the event of his death, security chief to protect the hamlet, and an information chief to coordinate with the Vietnamese Information Service in bringing the word of the legal government to the people.

The selected chief will hold office for a four-year period.

## Co. C, 1/5 Quells Ambush, Finds Hospital In Day's Work

By SP4 George Vindedzis  
QUAN LOI — An ambush, a confused enemy, and a hospital complex added up to a busy day for Company C, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry.

Company C was on a reconnaissance-in-force mission outside Landing Zone White in the 2nd Brigade area of operations. The

day's action made it clear that the enemy was in the area.

At nightfall the company dug in. Later, members of the Platoon guarding the perimeter heard sounds of movement through the night's stillness.

Suddenly a trip flare flashed over the area, revealing ten surprised NVA soldiers. The stillness vanished as a guard opened up with his M-16. One NVA fell while the others scattered and hit the ground.

Night returned as the flare burned out, but the action was not over.

A stunned NVA soldier, confused by the light and noise, apparently losing his sense of direction, stumbled into the company's perimeter. Dazed, he sat down a few feet from Sergeant First Class Raymond Clark, the platoon sergeant. The sergeant looked once, then again and realized the visitor was a hostile and immediately tackled him. During the struggle, three other members of the platoon ran and assisted their platoon sergeant in subduing the NVA and capturing his AK-47.

From interrogation in the

field, it was learned that the detainee was an NVA sergeant who had been wounded in an earlier B-52 strike. He received minor treatment, and was brought into the area for further medical care.

The next morning Company C engaged two NVA on a trail, killing one and detaining the other. The detainee was a medic who lost his way during the night while searching for a hospital somewhere in the area.

"That afternoon, while continuing our recon mission, we found a large, deserted hospital complex," said Specialist Four Harold Wykstra.

While making a thorough search of the complex, the unit found ten bunkers, VIP quarters, three operating rooms, a box of medical books, 4,000 empty penicillin bottles, three kitchens, and dining areas with flowers decorating the tables.

During the full and busy day, the company killed two enemy soldiers, detained three suspects and received valuable information which led to the discovery and destruction of an important enemy hospital.



A Skytrooper prepares to hook a load of water onto a hovering Huey 'slick.'

## Even With Base Camp Comforts War Is Hell

BY SP4 Al Persons

The golden hue of sunrise was beginning to engulf the sky and still warmth of the air forewarned of an extremely hot day to come.

Throughout the barracks, sleepy moans and groans of dissent could be heard as the CQ came around to wake everyone up.

As one of the soldiers slowly rose from his cot and put his feet on the floor, he thought to himself, "Why can't we sleep on bedsprings with mattresses and pillows. I haven't had a good night's sleep on these canvas cots since I've been here. I can't even remember when I last saw a sheet or a pillowcase."

As he started to get dressed, he stared down at his boots, still in very good condition, that had just been polished the night before, and thought, "Why do they make us polish our boots here in Vietnam the way we do back in the States? It's so senseless. Gosh, I hope someone goes and picks up the laundry today. I've been wearing these fatigues for two days now. I need a shower too. I missed it last night and there won't be any water again until late this afternoon. What a day this is going to be."

That morning started off just like every other morning. He went to formation, as usual, skipped breakfast and went straight to work behind his typewriter. As the morning moved along, the day got hotter and he began to get bored with his work. He reached up to turn on the fan. "Oh no," he said to himself, "There's no electricity! Why can't those people keep the generator operating? The heat is going to be unbearable. This metal chair is getting too hard to sit on. I wish they'd give us something padded. Thoroughly disgusted, he went outside for a break.

Noon rolled around pretty fast and as the soldier went through the chow line, he found himself taking very little. "If the food doesn't get better," he commented, "I'm going to starve to death."

The duty roster was up, so after chow he went over to check it out. "KP tomorrow!! I just had guard duty the night before last. Everytime you turn around, details. DETAILS!!!"

The heat of the afternoon was at its peak and the soldier began to get very thirsty. "Since there's no electricity, that means all my sodas are hot. Besides that I only have about two cases of them left. What a miserable way to live."

As the clock struck 1630, the normal quitting time for that organization, the soldier was asked by his NCOIC to work on an important matter until about 1700. "A whole half hour more work", he grumbled. "It just isn't right that I should be treated like this."

It began to get dark and the electricity was still not working. That meant no lights and worst of all, no TV. As the soldier sat beside a flickering candle, he said, "Man, this war is hell. If things don't get better, I think I'll go insane."

Suddenly a stranger walked in. He was a grunt fresh from the field. His clothes were torn and ragged and probably hadn't been changed in about two weeks. Neither had he had a chance to bathe for a long time. The tired, haggard, apprehensive look on his face expressed everything he had just been through, and everything he owned was in his immediate possession. He was more than happy to eat some of that "lousy" mess hall chow and sleep on a canvas cot.

The soldier who had just uttered his last complaint, started thinking. "War must be hell for some people. Thank God for small blessings."



A deadly Cav Cobra scours the area for Mr. Charles during operations in III Corps.