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1st Air Cavalry Division

February 18, 1970

Pace of Ground Activity Slackens

By PFC Charlie Petit

Ground fighting plummeted to a level far below previous months during the week Jan. 24-30. Enemy forces in the Cav's area of operations that did engage in heavy contact did so primarily in War Zone C where elements of the 3rd ARVN Airborne Brigade met the enemy in several fierce fights.

During the week, a total of 97 enemy soldiers were killed by Cav units.

Much of the division's activity was in response to numerous ground-to-air firings, often incurred while flying support for ARVN contacts. In addition to the frequent anti-aircraft firings, every firebase in War Zone C was subjected to some sort of indirect fire attack, but damage and losses were light.

In providing helicopter support for an ARVN Airborne contact 19 miles north of Tay Ninh City Jan. 24, between firebases Sandra and Carolyn, the Cav employed mass formations of Blue Max Cobras from Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 20th Artillery in the attack. Fifty sorties were run, with as many as six of the ARA-firing Cobras flying abreast, firing simultaneously.

Remarked the battalion S-3, Captain Frank Kraxner, "That re-arm pad looked like an Indy pit stop." Darkness fell and the combatants broke contact, preventing an assessment of enemy losses.

The following day, Jan. 25, a platoon of Cavalrymen moving

through the jungle 11 miles east of Song Be in the 2nd Brigade AO ran into a platoon of NVA. The Skytroopers, from the 3rd platoon of Delta Company, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry laced the enemy element with their organic weapons while ducking enemy small arms, machinegun and B-40 rocket fire that came whistling back through the thick brush. Artillery and Cav helicopters poured explosives at the enemy position and the NVA broke contact and fled after 45 minutes. An assessment of the mid-day engagement found ten enemy soldiers dead, all dressed in green fatigues and wearing steel pots.

Before dawn on the same day, over War Zone C, a Nighthawk helicopter and Cobra gunships from Companies C and D, 229th Assault Helicopter Battalion, were brought under heavy .51 caliber fire while they flew support for a 1st Cav company in contact below.

The birds' crews spotted the enemy firing position immediately and blasted it into silence. The gun was destroyed and nine NVA were killed.

The Skytroopers on the ground, from Alpha Company, 2nd of the 5th, withstood two night attacks on their NDP 20 miles northeast of Tay Ninh City. One of the attacks was by mortars and hand grenades and the other by small arms.

Later in the day at 4 p.m., just north of that location, LOHs from the Cav's 1st Brigade were greeted by heavy .51 caliber machinegun fire. The small birds

called on ARA-firing Cobras of Battery A, 2nd of the 20th Artillery to eliminate the big machineguns. A short time later, two enemy heavy machineguns lay smoking and useless, their crews scattered.

On Jan. 26, in northern Phuoc Long province 18 miles east of Bu Dop, helicopter-borne Cavalrymen from Baravo Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry killed

three NVA and put a snag in the enemy food supply system by depriving it of a total of 8480 pounds of rice.

The rice was discovered in several different locations in the same general area, stacked in 220-pound sacks. The Blues were inserted to conduct reconnaissance and found a portion of the rice, the rest discovered by low-flying helicopters. Scattered re-

sistance resulted in the three NVA killed. In addition, eight bicycles, hastily left at trail-side, were destroyed.

Responding to scattered ground-to-air firing on Jan. 29 around an ARVN Airborne contact five miles from FSB Vicky northeast of Tay Ninh City, helicopters from Troop A, 1st of the 9th killed eight NVA in three afternoon contacts.

Chemical Trains ARVNs

By SP4 David Roberts

QUAN LOI — They work with the Cav.

One of the most important aspects involved in the Vietnamization of the war is the training of the ARVN forces.

The 2nd ARVN Airborne Brigade, which had worked extensively with the 1st Cavalry Division, has again sent representatives to Cav Country to train.

Four teams, composed of four men each, have been sent to each brigade for training in base defense techniques used in the Cav's fire support bases.

Working with the 184th Chemical Platoon, which has attached branches at each brigade, the ARVN soldiers are receiving their first course in Chemical operations.

Training in the deployment, operation and maintenance of Hush flares is one of the basic fundamentals. They learn to use flares, which serve as instant

"light bulbs" to light up the perimeter in case of a ground probe or sapper attack.

Despite the language barrier and the complexities of some of the operations, the ARVN troopers are quick to learn.

"They're outstanding workers and they are really interested," commented Specialist Four

Richard L. Snodgrass. "They really catch on quickly and have an outstanding attitude."

The week of training is followed by a two-week on the job training period. Upon completion the men return to their unit where they form the Chemical Platoon of the 2nd ARVN Airborne.

Medevac Crew Pays ARVNs Unusual Visit

By SP4 William K. Block, Jr.

TAY NINH — The crew of a Skytrooper MEDEVAC bird dropped in on the ARVN Airborne in action recently and were impressed by what they saw.

The MEDEVAC, from A Company, 15th Medical Battalion,

was hovering over jungle north of Fire Support Base Vicky in support of the 4th Company, 2nd Battalion, 3rd ARVN Airborne Brigade, when the chopper suddenly took heavy AK fire and went down.

"We knew we were in between the ARVNs and the NVA, but we didn't have our bearings yet," recalled Private First Class Chris Burgess, the bird's medic. "I guess we were still shaken from the 40 foot fall."

"Then someone appeared out of the bamboo and waved an M-16, signalling us to follow him quickly. We were lucky he was friendly, because the NVA weren't far behind in the race to our ship," said PFC Burgess.

The crew was taken to a nearby ARVN perimeter, from which they watched the fighting proceed, both on the ground and from the air. American support in the form of aerial rocket artillery and air strikes poured in. In very close bunker to bunker contact, the ARVNs were employing psychological warfare to chase the NVA out of their hiding places.

"One ARVN soldier stood up and blew a whistle," explained Specialist Four Daniel Smith, the MEDEVAC's crew chief, "and the others jumped up and charged the NVA-occupied bunkers, screaming as loud as they could, throwing grenades. Their strategy must have worked, because they managed to secure and cut a pad to get the wounded and us out of there."

The ARVN Airborne's bold strategy, combined with 1st Cav and Air Force support, also worked enough to kill 22 NVA and to capture seven AK47s, one .30 caliber machine gun and a considerable amount of ammunition.

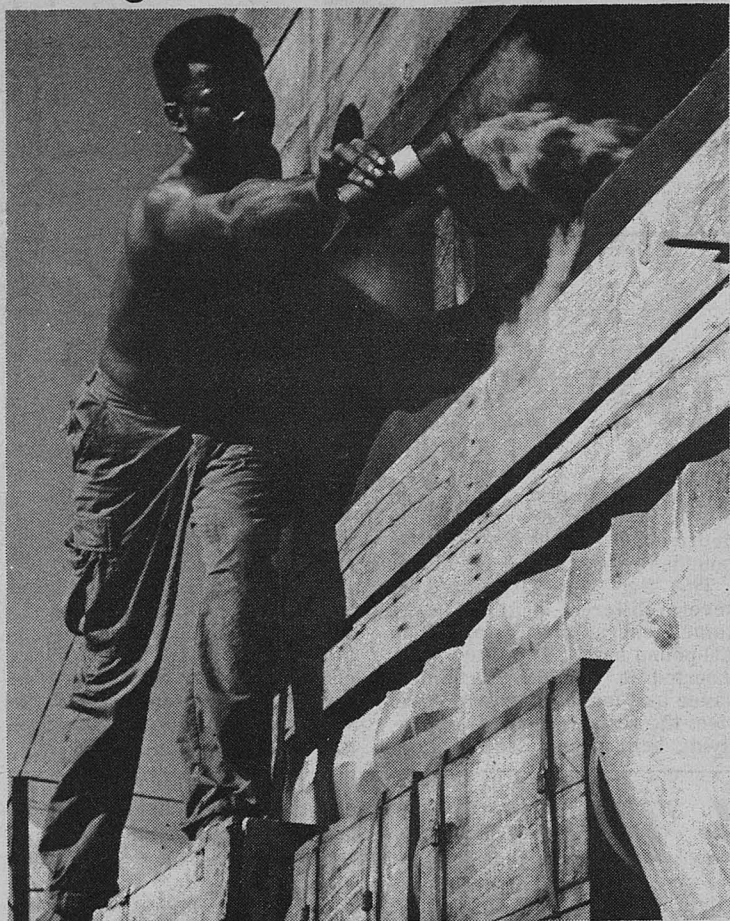
Combat Assault . . .



(U.S. Army Photo by SP4 Bob Borchester)

1st Air Cavalrymen from Company B, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry, ignoring the rotor wash of the Huey helicopters, fan out across the grassy clearing to secure the landing zone after being inserted into the jungle clearing northeast of Tay Ninh.

Bee Fighter . . .



(U.S. Army Photo by SP4 James McCabe)
An inventive Cavalryman uses smoke to drive out an army of bees that had set up their headquarters in a radar installation at Fire Support Base Buttons, home of the division's 2nd Brigade.

At Tay Ninh Center

Education, GED to College, Stressed

By SP 4 Ron Merrill
TAY NINH — Somewhere, sometime, someplace, somebody said, "The only thing that can't be taken away from a person is his education."

And to make education avail-

able to the troops of the 1st Air Cavalry Division and the 25th Division stationed at Tay Ninh base camp and surrounding fire support bases, the Education Center under the control of 1st Lieutenant James Kranzusch

now offers a wide range of educational programs.

Most of the traffic that comes in and out of the Education Center are people who are getting their high school diploma through the Army's GED Testing Program.

"Plus we have a lot of career people testing for their two-year equivalent exams," said Lieutenant Kranzusch. The two-year college equivalent exams are set up by the Army for its personnel who need the equivalent of two years of college education for career development.

"If a soldier wants to further his education while he's in country, he should come in and explain to us what education he has, his goals and what he wants to accomplish to further his education during his tour over here. We'll help him attain his goals," said Lieutenant Kranzusch.

For the people who want to review some of the courses they had in college in preparation for starting a career or graduate school, the USAFI (United States Armed Forces Institute) courses are a good investment.

"These courses — 44 different ones — can be taken two at one time for \$5 and, if successfully completed, the next courses are free," said Lieutenant Kranzusch.

He pointed out that it would be best for a person to write to the college that he plans to attend and see what USAFI courses would fit into the curriculum of the school before enrolling.

"USAFI courses are recommended by the American Council on Education, but it is best to check with the particular institution which you are planning to attend because some universities don't credit the courses, not because they aren't worthwhile, but because they don't fit into the established curriculum of the university," said Lieutenant Kranzusch.

The Education Center also has a full range of language tapes

torch, sucking in oxygen. The typical mess hall will go up in flames in 12 minutes."

The use of gasoline rather than diesel fuel in and around mess halls is the greatest source of injuries and fire safety violations. A second danger comes in the form of static electricity.

"The man who does not close the cap at the end of his Claymore wire and then unravels that wire close to a row of concertina is building the best transformer known to man," Rogers said. Similarly, an improperly grounded helicopter being refueled with JP-4 is in

danger of an explosion.

In the barracks, most fires can be prevented. "At best, we have some of the worst wiring in the world," asserted Rogers. "Ordinarily, though, it will short out before there is a fire. More often they are caused by the guy with a candle next to his bed. He hears incoming, kicks over the candle and there is a fire."

"This is the critical fire season in Vietnam," Rogers said. "Unfortunately, people handle explosives and fuels for a while and get careless. They don't believe a fire will break out until they see it."

Division's 'Memoir' Nearing Completion

PHUOC VINH — A 272 page Memoir of the 1st Air Cavalry Division is nearing completion.

The hard-bound book will highlight the activities of the Cav, concentrating on its nearly five years in Vietnam in addition to tracing memorable moments from its beginnings back in the Old West through World

War II and Korea.

Months of research and writing went into this project. After action and situation reports, newspapers, letters and interviews with persons involved in the actions provided a solid background for the compilation.

Photographs were supplied primarily by 1st Cav photographers, though some came from the Department of the Army's historical files. Cav combat artists supplied paintings and sketches.

The Memoir features every unit in the division. The finished product will contain more than 600 pictures, approximately half of them in color.

Skytroopers will be able to purchase the book for well under \$10. The price will be determined by printing costs. An announcement will be forthcoming regarding the sales.

... For God And Country

By Chaplain (Major) Eugene E. Allen

DISCOM Chaplain

Who really is the chaplain? As a minister with the First Team — I ask who really ministers to whom?

For though as a chaplain I: give communion, offer sermons, sit in counsel, lift the wounded,

kneel in prayer, I have come to feel that the men of this division minister more to me than I to them.

For in their: concern I see Godliness, endurance I see Nobility, sharing I see Holiness, sincerity I see Grace.

Who is the minister? In this war, and as God's children, we minister to each other in our own way.



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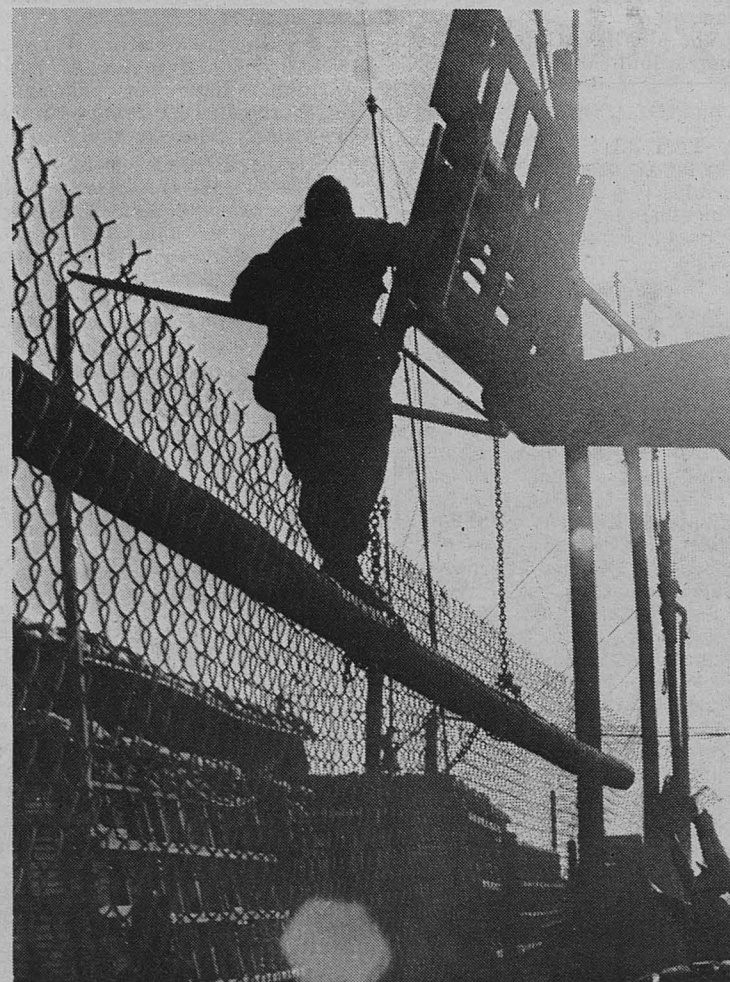
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2/8 SP5 Bob Robinson
2/8 SP4 Gerald Someday
2/8 SP4 Robert Fettes
15th Med PFC Gary Holland
2/12 SGT Dennis Harding
5/7 SP4 Jeff Crosse

Balancing Act . . .



(U.S. Army Photo by SP4 James McCabe)
Staff Sergeant Arnold Robin of Bravo Company, 8th Engineers, rides an antenna pole hanging from a forklift, balancing carefully as he directs its placement at the TOC on FS3 Buttons.

Dog's Life Okay For Jamie Five

By PFC Robert Hackney

FSB JAMIE — There is a select group at the home of the 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry that speaks a language uniquely their own, has unlimited free time and specializes in close-in fighting, especially tail biting.

Purple Haze Colors Hair

By SGT Marvin Kelly

FSB IKE — If you're ever in Tay Ninh and see a 1st Air Cavalryman with purple hair, don't laugh. He was only doing his job.

Company D, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry was moving through heavy jungle after disengaging from an enemy contact when a violet smoke grenade accidentally went off.

To prevent the billowing smoke from giving away the location, Private First Class Larry D. Copp tossed his helmet on the smoke grenade, trying to smother the dense purple smoke.

The combination of the helmet's smothering trick and a swift kick to the grenade by Private First Class David H. Scherer extinguished the smoke. The company again started to move through the jungle and PFC Copp plopped his helmet back on his head.

Soon the company stopped to set up a night position. When Sergeant Dan Gralian woke up his squad members in the morning, one of them had purple hair. PFC Copp tried to wash the purple remnants from the smoke grenade out of his normally blond hair but was unsuccessful.

The canine corps at Fire Support Base Jamie now totals five, with the recent addition of Duke, an FND (Funny New Dog) from the battalion rear at Tay Ninh. Duke, about 12 inches of brown and white spots, faces a tough three months on-the-job training before becoming an accepted member of the corps.

His tutors will be Smoky, the newest old guy; Tootsie, in the precarious position of being the only lady in the group; Heinie, currently on R&R in Tay Ninh and Doc, the senior citizen and somewhat of a loner.

Most of the dogs were gifts from Vietnamese working in Tay Ninh, where there always seems to be a new litter of pups. Self-proclaimed dogmaster is Sergeant John Zmijewski, a wireman at FSB Jamie.

"All of them are mongrels, but there is a difference between them and American dogs. All of these have their tails sticking out and one ear stands up, while the other flops down," he said.

To most people, though, a dog is a dog, and to the dogs on the firebase their new home is a playground. And whatever they do seems to amuse the Skytroopers.

Recently, Smoky was sitting outside when the skies clouded up and rain began to fall — the first time for him. He sat there momentarily, then turned toward the men watching him. His sulking face seemed to ask, "What's happening here?"

Tootsie occasionally saunters into the TOC during the nightly briefings, but Doc seems to be the only one that thinks about the war. His nightly post is on the bunker line, and as anyone who has wandered too close without identifying themselves can testify, he takes his job seriously.

Crimson Tide . . .



(U.S. Army Photo by SP4 Dean Sharp)

With former University of Illinois linebacker Major Robert E. Lanzotti calling the signals from quarterback slot, men from Company C, 228th Assault Support Helicopter Battalion show off a gift from their stateside namesake, the University of Alabama Crimson Tide.

First Team Has a Ball

Tide Pilots Catch 'Bama Pass

By SGT Rogert Ruhl

PHUOC VINH — The former University of Illinois linebacker was less than enthusiastic about taking command of a unit nicknamed the Crimson Tide, nickname of the University of Alabama.

But once overwhelmed by the football-conscious 1st Air Cavalry battalion, Major Robert E. Lanzotti, commander of Charlie Company, 228th Assault Support Helicopter Battalion, warmed to the idea.

Saturday afternoon college

football memories are revived every day by the Crimson Tide, the Wildcats (Company A, University of Kentucky), the Longhorns (Company B, University of Texas) and the Bulldogs (battalion's nickname, University of Georgia).

The whole Crimson Tide affair was started by a pair of Alabamians no longer with the unit. Major Kenneth Cline, former commander, and Chief Warrant Officer Braxton Snowden, both of Dothan, Ala., gave Charlie Company its nickname.

"I'm from Illinois and I was geared to be anti-Southern football," said Major Lanzotti. "When I first took over the company I thought about changing the name, but old Bear changed my mind."

Major Lanzotti, who played at Illinois with Ray Nitschke, Bobby Mitchell and 11 other National Football League veterans, was duly impressed. Now a 'Bama fan, he and the unit sent the company's insignia to Bryant along with their thanks.

People Key to Smooth Supply Operation



(U.S. Army Photo by SP4 James McCabe)

An eager 1st Air Cavalryman from Company D, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry wastes no time when the resupply helicopter drops off its log load. This is the final result of work by hundreds of men arranging for supplies, transporting, rigging and helping in the vast and complex supply system.

By SP4 William K. Block, Jr.

TAY NINH — The real story of 1st Air Cavalry resupply operations is people, people working together to accomplish a complicated job as efficiently as possible.

One of the VIPs is Specialist Four Eli Doerr, who handles part of the voluminous paperwork in the 1st Brigade supply office.

"This morning we had to add four sorties of ammunition for Fire Support Base Carolyn," said the specialist. "We have to call the 1st Forward Service Support Element (FSSE) and tell them to add four sorties, then call Division Operations for approval, then call FSSE back and tell them who approved it, so that the Chinook pad operator can be informed."

High in the tower overlooking the brigade aerial resupply pad, Specialist Four Stephen G. Bare directs the traffic of Chinooks and flying cranes over his radio.

"I tell the hook pilots where to land and what to pick up," explained Specialist Bare. "The object is to sling out all the sorties safely in the least possible flying time. There are many factors involved — fuel status of the birds, priorities on sorties (perishables and combat essentials first), and readiness of the sorties, to mention just a few."

Since most of the sorties to firebases are slung out underneath the birds, a key job is that

of the rigger, the man with the red hat.

Specialist Four Robert W. Rakefsky, a rigger from the 15th Supply and Service Battalion, commented: "We don't have much problem with distribution of the load. Sixty to 70 per cent of what we sling is ammunition which must be distributed evenly. Mostly we check the weight of the load and make sure that the nets are serviceable and that the proper slings are used."

Chief Warrant Officer Marwell B. Garnett of Company B, 228th Assault Support Helicopter Battalion, flies Chinooks for the Cav's 1st Brigade.

"In about nine hours of flying," he calculated, "our three or four hooks carry an average of about 40 sorties per day to the firebases. Some loads, especially light and bulky ones such as empty conexes, are much harder to take than others. They blow around in the wind and make us slow down our air speed, and that can upset schedules."

Transporting supplies from the firebase to the troops in the field is the most hazardous job of the 229th Assault Helicopter Battalion.

"The Huey pilot has to calculate how much weight his bird should carry, based on atmospheric temperature, power of the aircraft and the type of landing zone," observed 2nd Lieutenant Wilmer T. Petersen.

ARVN Get 155 mm Guns

PHUOC VINH—The 1st ARVN Airborne Division stepped beyond its 16-year-old light artillery status when the division took delivery on three 155mm medium field howitzers.

The delivery also marked the first time that ARVN Airborne soldiers handled the helicopter rigging and air movement of artillery pieces. The ARVN soldiers had gone through a week's training under the guidance of the 1st Air Cavalry's 1st Battalion, 30th Artillery.

A 1st Cav artillery spokesman said that the ARVN troops needed training in how to rig the medium guns for "sling out" helicopter transportation. The 155mm guns are considerably larger and heavier than the 150mm light howitzers which the ARVN Airborne Division has used the past 16 years.

The first ARVN move of medium artillery was made at a 1st ARVN Airborne firebase northeast of Phuoc Vinh.



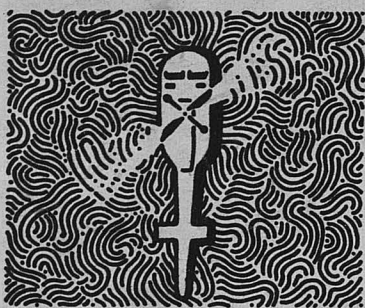
Photos by SP4 Len Fallscheer

A black hat's role in an artillery move is important as Sergeant Robert A. Burmeister of 1st Battalion, 30th Artillery shows ARVN Warrant Officer Thuv, left and interpreter Sergeant Dang Hong Tam, center of photo at left. Below an ARVN red hat, assisted by Americans, prepares to hook a howitzer to the flying crane.



1st Cav Sergeant Bart E. Owens of 1st Battalion, 30th Artillery, guides in a flying crane as ARVN Sergeant Nguyen Van Thuc gets set to hook up loads of ammunition in photos above and left. Redhat Specialist Four Rodolfo Delbosque of 15th Supply and Service Battalion supervises the rigging at right (top photo). Below, a 155 mm howitzer, part of the first battery to be used by ARVN forces, dangles from a flying crane high over the jungles enroute to another fire support base.





ROTOR WASH

Association Branch Starts

Lieutenant General George I. Forsythe, former commanding general of the 1st Air Cavalry, was elected president of the newly-organized National Capitol Chapter of the 1st Cavalry Division Association.

General Forsythe is presently head of the Army's Combat Developments Command at Ft. Belvoir, Va. In accepting leadership of the new chapter, he said, "At this time in the experience of our Army this association can do much for a bigger idea. We have something to give the Army—young and old alike—and that is the cavalry spirit."

Other elected to fill chapter positions include three vice presidents: Colonel James W. Dingeman, chief of CDC's Ground Mobility Division; Colonel Robert McDade of the Office of the Secretary of Defense; and Retired Brigadier General William J. Brodley of Falls Church, Va.

Major General William A. Becker, Chief of Legislative Liaison for the Army, was a prime mover in organizing the chapter. "Everywhere you look in the area, the yellow and black patch is in evidence. I just reasoned that there should be a chapter in the Washington area," he said.

Primary mission set by the organization is support of the First Team Scholarships to "provide education support to the children of those who made the supreme sacrifice," according to national Association president, Sherman Haight, Jr.

40,000 Hours . . .



The 228th Assault Support Helicopter Battalion's Company A was awarded a plaque in Bear Cat recently by Boeing Aircraft for flying 40,000 combat hours in Vietnam. From left are Lieutenant Colonel F.J. Toner, commander of the 228th; Jack Martinez, Boeing's Vertol Division technical representative; Major William A. Siegling, Company A commander; and Colonel Les Soucek, 11th Aviation Group commander.

Cuong Americanizes

By SP4 Ron Merrill

TAY NINH — While pacification and Vietnamization proceed at full speed, the Americanization of Le Cuong goes on an informal basis in the 1st Cav.

Sergeant First Class Le Cuong is not hard to pick out of a crowd of Vietnamese. His big cigar, collegiate horn-rimmed glasses, highly manicured flat-top haircut and "Like, wow, man" vocabulary attest to his close association with his American co-workers.

The Skytroopers at the Tay Ninh basecamp who try to test Cuong with the current slang from the world more often than not get a comeback of, "Wow, man, who're you trying to kid," or something along that line.

Cuong, like so many of his countrymen, migrated south from Hanoi in 1954 after the Geneva Agreements. Cuong remembers his native Hanoi as "much smaller than Saigon but a romantic city with parks and the two big lakes in the center."

When Sergeant Cuong gets out of the army and away from duties as interpreter, he wants to become a pharmacist and "do something good for people to remember me by."

When asked when he will DEROS, Cuong just smiles and rolls his eyes up toward the ceiling.

Heat Is On Pickup Zone

FSB JUDIE — With pre-planned artillery fire and Cobras firing ARA and miniguns into the area, infantrymen seldom enter a "hot" LZ (landing zone) or PZ (pickup zone).

But for Company A, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry, one PZ got too hot for comfort without a shot being fired.

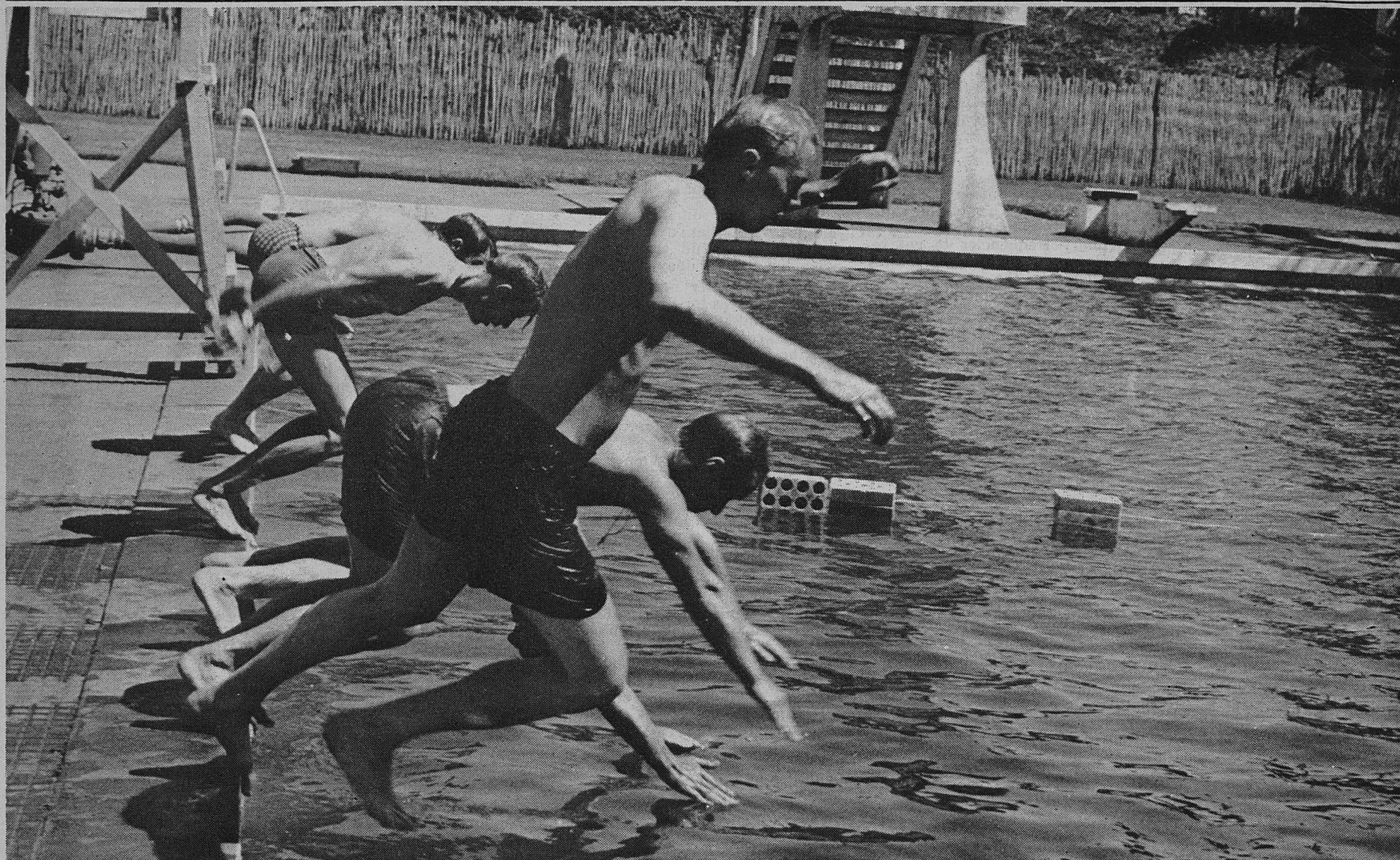
"We cut the small brush and were preparing for the first lift-off," said Specialist Four Richard MacDougall. "I popped smoke and before I knew it the area was in flames. We tried to suffocate the fire with ponchos, but with the terrific amount of wind delivered by the slicks, the fire went out of control."

The company had to move to a different location to be extracted but the men agreed that that's the only kind of hot PZ to be on.

Honorary "Skytrooper" . . .



She probably doesn't even know it, but pretty Miss Jennifer Sagar, lately of Sheffield, England, has been voted an honorary member of the combat hardened 1st Air Cavalry Division. Though she lacks that hardened look, fortunately, the honor was bestowed upon her as a result of her tawny-brown, bedroom indicative eyes, and, of course, other notable accessories. And wouldn't you agree that she wears her Cav patch with the greatest of dignity?



Pool's A Paradise For Quan Loi Men

By SP4 David Roberts

QUAN LOI—Now 1st Air Cavalrymen have their own version of the Apollo 12 "splashdown."

An Olympic-sized pool built by the French Terre Rouge Rubber Corporation has been re-opened for use by members of the 3rd Brigade.

"It's unbelievable, just like a mirage," said Private First Class Joe Smotherman. "It sure beats wading through rice paddies."

A ribbon-cutting ceremony, featuring Major General E.B. Roberts, commanding general of the 1st Air Cav, officially re-opened the Garry Owen pool.

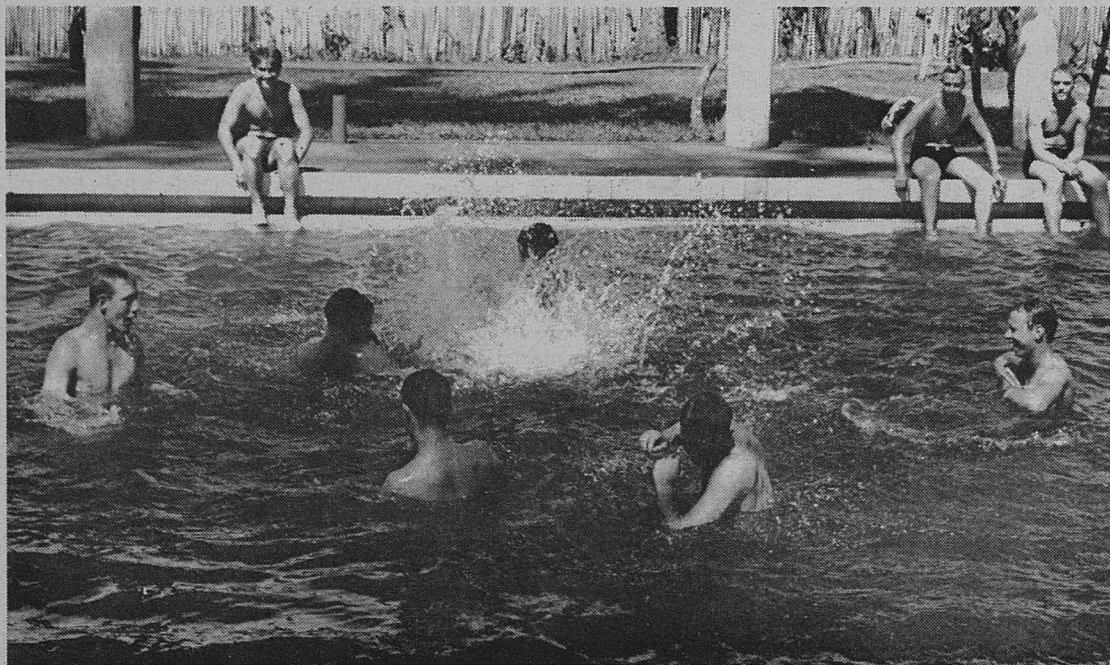
For infantrymen getting their first swim in months, the pool is an oasis in the desert of war. Passes were issued to all the companies based in Quan Loi for their personnel to use the pool.

"The French indicated that it is the most beautifully constructed pool in the Republic of Vietnam," said Colonel John P. Barker, former 3rd Brigade commander.

1st Air Cavalrymen from the 27th Maintenance Battalion, assisted by the 11th Armored Cav's heavy equipment maintenance battalion, worked for a month in their spare time repairing and rebuilding the drainage and filter systems to make the pool operational.

(U.S. Army Photos by SP4 Bill Ahrbeck)

An oasis in dusty Quan Loi? The Olympic-size swimming pool at Quan Loi is no mirage, though infantrymen find it hard to believe. Skytroopers have been splashing in the pool owned by the Terre Rouge Rubber Corporation since it was repaired and reopened for Cav use by Major General E. B. Roberts (below, left) and Colonel John P. Barker (below, center), former Third Brigade commander, about two months ago.



Bird Flies 'So Others May Live'

By SP 4 Ron Merrill

TAY NINH — A helicopter descended into the tiny clearing, ignoring the green tracers flying up at it. Two men dashed into the clearing escorting a badly wounded buddy and waved to the bird with the big red cross painted on its door.

The scene has been repeated thousands of times in the 1st Air Cavalry's area of operations and reflects the motto of the 1st Air Cavalry's 15th Medical Battalion "So that others may live."

"Sure we go in if a guy is hurt badly and it is a question of life or death. The only thing is that if the PZ (pickup zone) is hot we just fly a little differently, that's all," emphasized Specialist Four Dave Parks, a MEDEVAC door gunner.

Within three minutes of a call from a ground unit in contact, the MEDEVAC crew has hastily

scampered aboard its aircraft, quickly fastening pistol belts and pulling on shirts, and are on their way.

Aircraft commander Warrant Officer Richard Tanner is tuning the craft's radio to the variety of artillery frequencies to get reports on any artillery that may be firing in the area, then returns to the ground company's frequency to get a report on the contact.

"Between the time we leave Tay Ninh and reach the pickup site, a lot can happen — and usually does," said Specialist Five Bill Keller, the medic on board the MEDEVAC chopper. "We may get a secure pickup (indicating that contact no longer is flaring) when we leave Tay Ninh but by the time we reach the company's location they are back in contact."

Although the bird runs the risk of getting shot at every time it

flies, the most hazardous mission is the one involving the use of the jungle penetrator to hoist a wounded man out of dense, impenetrable jungles.

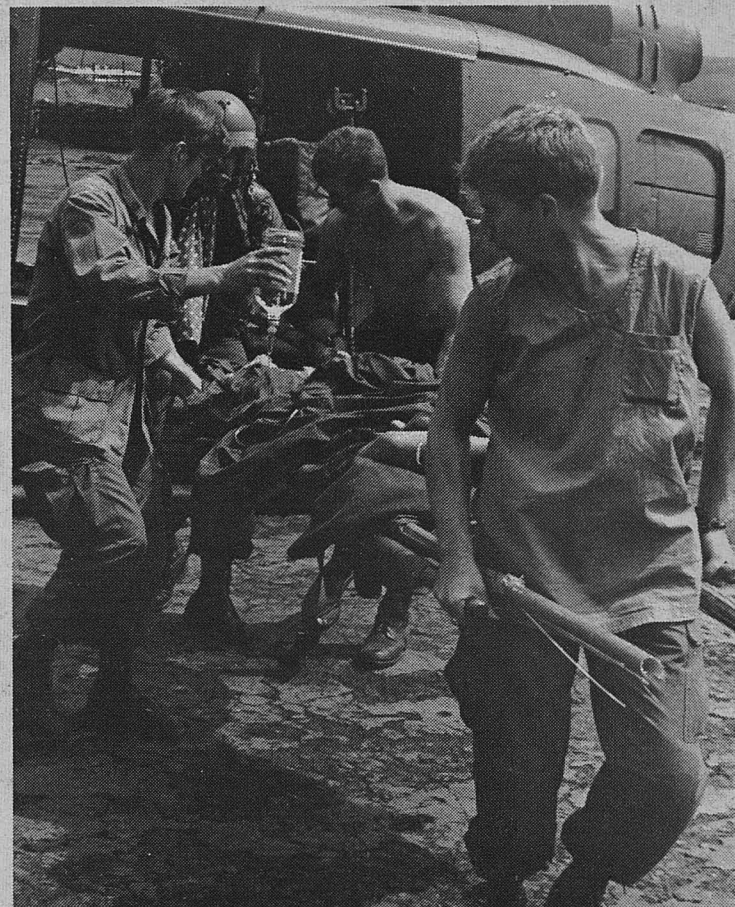
"For 10 or 15 minutes we are nothing more than a hovering, sitting target," said crew chief Specialist Five Rodney Wiley.

Specialist Keller acts as another set of eyes for the pilots on the hoist missions, guiding the patient through the foliage and into the helicopter while the pilots position the craft according to his instructions.

The 1st Cav MEDEVAC bird varies from other medical choppers in Vietnam because it carries a pair of M-60 machine guns. But the guns, according to Specialists Parks and Wiley, are primarily for the defense of their patients.

With the pickup or hoist mission complete and the patient safe inside the bird, the race begins to get the man back for medical attention immediately while Specialist Keller applies emergency first aid. He also decides in mid-flight whether to take the patient back to Tay Ninh for "stabilization" before taking him to a hospital, or to take the man immediately to 45th Surgical Hospital.

Then the mission is over as suddenly as it began. The crew stops to refill the bird with aircraft fuel and flies over to the MEDEVAC pad for a rest, ready to go again on a moment's notice, risking danger so that others may live.



(U.S. Army Photo by SP4 Bill Ahrbeck)

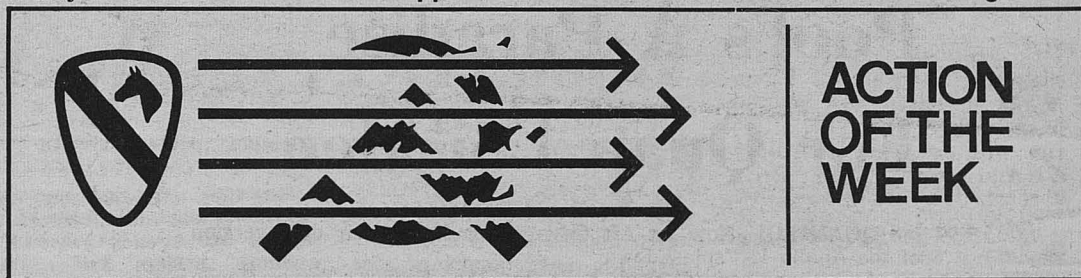
1st Air Cavalrymen from the 15th Medical Battalion at Quan Loi rush a wounded Skytrooper for initial treatment at the aid station. While the injured soldier is treated, the MEDEVAC chopper will refuel and wait for the next life-saving mission.

Swinger . . .



(U.S. Army Photo by SP4 Bill Ahrbeck)

Taking a hefty swing with a big sledge hammer, Specialist Four Carl Anderson of Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 21st Artillery anchors the baseplate of his 105 mm howitzer during the construction of firebase Fort Compton.



On their way from one mission to another, the crew members of an Alpha Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry LOH, members of a Pink (hunter-killer) Team, suddenly found their bird under small arms fire as they skimmed over the treetops northeast of Tay Ninh City.

The Jan. 21 action ultimately resulted in a total of eight of the troop's helicopters, reinforced by aerial-rocket-artillery-firing Cobras from Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 20th Artillery, weaving their way through heavy anti-aircraft fire to attack enemy positions.

"It was a helicopter trap," stated Captain Paul Bagmon as he described the opening rounds of a battle that left 15 enemy dead at day's end.

"Initially they had two or three people firing AKs at my LOH," said the young pilot. "After my observer popped smoke

over their position, they waited until the Cobra had completed its first run and was in the middle of its second, and then opened up on Lieutenant Justice."

The NVA missed their target, and the Cobra's pilot planted a 17-pound rocket square into one of the .51 caliber gun pits.

"Those guys have been shooting at helicopters for a long time and you get to know their tricks," said the Cobra pilot, 1st Lieutenant Steve Justus, "I was ready for something like that. The best thing to do is not attack on a repetitive pattern and just keep up the firepower."

When the heavy machine guns opened up only Lieutenant Justus' Cobra, he pulled pitch and gave his ship maximum acceleration, evading the deadly rounds while he prepared to attack the weapons.

As the Cobra's pilot brought the slender craft into a run on the enemy positions, the flash of small arms from at least 15 locations appeared among the area's 90-foot trees and tangled undergrowth.

With so many enemy in the area, and their own birds low on fuel, the Cavalrymen radioed for reinforcement. It came in the form of rocket-toting Blue Max Cobras and half-a-dozen of Alpha Troop's LOHs.

The Skytroopers had quickly dispatched the one heavy machine gun that the enemy had set up in the open. Overwhelming firepower neutralized the other two guns, one in a woodline and the other hidden in the bamboo. The gunships,

LOHs and Blue Max then began the methodical task of silencing the small arms fire, making run after run, while directing in tube artillery from nearby firebases.

When an assessment was made of the late-afternoon exchange, 15 NVA were counted dead and one .51 caliber machine gun had been destroyed. The "helicopter trap" had scored nary a hit on the birds.

Viet Youths Enjoying TV

By SSgt Ronald Renouf

QUAN LOI — Nearly 850 youngsters of the Quan Loi Catholic Primary School and Orphanage are now enjoying television, thanks to the combined efforts of the Sisters at the school and the staff of the 1st Cav's 3rd Brigade Civil Affairs section.

The Sisters at the school were determined that the children have a television set. They set to work to raise sufficient funds to enable them to realize that goal.

After raising the money, the Sisters asked for help from the Civil Affairs personnel in purchasing the television.

Their dream was realized recently when Specialist Four Dwight Herold delivered the long awaited "magic box" to the school.

The sound of laughter now fills what used to be long empty hours for the nearly 850 youngsters of the school.

Jamie Redlegs Test Skills

By SP 4 Ron Merrill

FSB JAMIE — As if the day to day fire missions performed by the 1st Air Cavalry artillerymen on Fire Support Base Jamie aren't practice enough to make them proficient at their trade, the 2nd Battalion, 19th Artillery, requires a Gunners' Test every four months.

The Gunners' Test, as explained by the Battery commander, Captain Mac Hennigan, "encompasses all the basic skills

required to operate the 105s here on Jamie."

The test, which is Army-wide, utilizes every type of fire mission that the "redlegs" could encounter and each exercise has rigid time requirements. "Also," emphasized Captain Hennigan, "there can be no margin for error in artillery and that holds true with this test. Every exercise has to be done perfectly — there is no tolerance."

Depending on how well the artilleryman does on the test he

may receive appointment as an Expert, 1st Class or 2nd Class gunner, but the section chiefs and main gunners must qualify as 1st Class or Expert. "We take these tests into consideration when it comes time for promotion," said Captain Hennigan.

An example of the direct fire portion of the test would be that in a period of two seconds the gunner must set up the sight reticle for the range and lean and traverse the howitzer until the gauge-line is on the target. Sound easy? Try it.