

# HAWK



MARCH 1970

# HAWK MAGAZINE salutes

## 222d Aviation Battalion (Cbt)



The 222d Aviation Battalion was organized February 1966, in Vung Tau as a fixed-wing aviation battalion. In November 1968, the "Skymasters" moved their headquarters to the present location just east of Long Binh.

In the four years of its existence the Skymasters have made the transition from a fixed-wing battalion to a rotary-wing unit comprised of three assault helicopter companies operating throughout III Corps and one Skycrane company operating in II, III, and IV Corps.

The 117th AHC, stationed at Plantation, is one of the few units in Vietnam that flies the night "Firefly" mission. The 117th ships also have infrared capabilities enabling them to take the war to the enemy in his own element: the night. The 117th AHC is also instrumental in night rescue missions.

The 195th, with headquarters at Plantation, is the only AHC operating in Vietnam with camouflaged helicopters. One of the company's primary missions is the support of long range patrol teams.

The 240th AHC was one of the first helicopter companies to work with the Thais. The company continues to work closely with the Royal Thai Army Volunteer Force flying daily missions with Thai personnel.

The 273d "Superhooks," stationed in Long Binh, is one of three Skycrane companies in Vietnam and was the first to fly 10,000 hours. The men of the 273d accomplished this feat in less than 20 months.

The crest of the 222d, three wings arranged in the form of a rotor, is symbolic of the battalion's transition from a fixed to a rotary-wing unit.

# HAWK



(2842)

- 2** 222d AVIATION BATTALION (Cbt)
- 6** 219th AVIATION COMPANY (SurvApl)
- 8** 334th AVIATION COMPANY (AsHel)
- 12** FIRE FIGHTERS IN THE SKY
- 15** VIETNAMESE-AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
- 17** 134th AVIATION COMPANY (Aerial Wpns)
- 20** COMPUTER CAPABILITIES FOR THE BRIGADE
- 22** SKYCRANE RESCUES SKYCRANE

## DEPARTMENTS

- |                     |               |
|---------------------|---------------|
| 5 Editorial         | 11 Safety     |
| 5 Chaplain's Corner | 24 Newsletter |
| 5 Career Counselor  | 25 Hawk Honey |



**6**



**8**



**15**



**17**

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**1st AVN BDE**

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Providing air cover for a LRP team north of Bien Hoa, a HueyCobra of the 334th Aviation Company (Aerial Wpns) fires a pair of 2.75 inch rockets toward VC-held positions. Photo by SP4 Art Hannum

A CH-54 "Skycrane" of the 273d Aviation Company (Hvy Hel) comes to the rescue of one of her sister ships. In a "one-of-a-kind" operation, the downed ship was secured, made ready, and air-lifted home without a mishap. Photo by 1LT Gerald W. Rudinsky

HAWK



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**The 222d CAB Continues To Be  
Among Most Versatile In RVN**

# **"Special Missions Battalion"**

**Story by**

**SP5 John C. Stewart**

Even during the early stages of the Vietnam conflict, people began to notice the contributions being made by Army Aviation and specifically its helicopters. The use of massively armed gunships, troop-carrying slicks, and larger ships such as the Chinook and the Sky-crane, soon became an everyday occurrence.

Each aviation battalion serving in Vietnam has added its own colorful page to the history of Army Aviation and each has had its distinctive missions to accomplish. One of the best known battalions in Vietnam, and also one of the most versatile, is the 222d Aviation Battalion (Combat).

Since its arrival in Vietnam early in 1966, the "Skymasters" have made a transition from a battalion composed of fixed-wing aircraft such as the "Caribu," "Otter," and "Mohawk," to a rotary-wing battalion composed of UH-1H's UH-1C's and the most powerful of all, the CH-54 Skycrane.

Few aviation battalions in Vietnam could surpass the versatility and accomplishments of the Skymasters. LTC Gerald M. Okarski, Commanding Officer of the 222d Aviation Battalion, calls his unit the "Special Missions Battalion" and its record proves him correct.

The Battalion is composed of

HAWK

three assault helicopter companies, a Skycrane company and a headquarters company. Three companies, the 117th Aviation Company (Aslt Hel), the 195th Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) and the 273d Aviation Company (Hvy Hel) are located in Long Binh and nearby Plantation.

For the six-month period from June to November 1969, the Sky-masters logged over 22,000 hours flying time, flew 166,000 sorties, killed 432 enemy and hauled over 219,000 troops.

One of the most newsworthy achievements of the battalion occurred early in January when it was picked to be the host aviation battalion in an agreement involving the Royal Thai Army Volunteer Forces and the 1st Aviation Brigade. Titled a "Memorandum of Understanding," the agreement allows qualified Thai pilots to fly with American pilots from the 195th and 240th Aviation Companies while working missions in support of Thai troops.

The Skycranes of the 273d Aviation Company, commanded by MAJ R. Silva, can be seen flying overhead everyday of the week throughout Vietnam. These massive ships and the records that they have set have earned them an admirable reputation.

The 273d is one of the most expensive company-size units in the Army and is also the largest of the three "Crane" companies serving in Vietnam. Its CH-54's represent an investment of \$40 million but the investment has proven worthwhile. In 25 months since it has been in Vietnam, the 273d has been responsible for the recovery of over \$120 million worth of aircraft, to say nothing of the supplies they have transported.

**Photos by  
SP5 Stewart  
and  
SP5 Martinaitis**



**Ships of the 240th AHC await further orders.**

**Three Thai LRP's leave chopper on an insertion.**





**A "Night Hawk" ship can provide constant illumination and massive fire power.**

The "Greyhounds" of the 240th Aviation Company, commanded by MAJ Joseph A. Lacey, have also earned a reputation of excellence in Vietnam. Maintaining a fleet of "slicks" and "gunships," the Greyhounds have become well known throughout the III and IV Corps of Vietnam.

The Greyhounds and their gun platoon, the "Mad Dogs," flew 63,800 sorties and carried over 118,000 troops during the June-November 1969 period. The Mad Dog gunships have made quite a name for themselves both with the allies and the enemy. Armed with a variety of rockets, miniguns, mounted M-60's and 40mm grenade launchers, the Mad Dogs accounted for 373 confirmed kills during the June-November period of last year and also destroyed or damaged 170 bunkers and enemy sampans.

The company has supported a number of different units but has given primary support to the 3d Battalion 9th Infantry, the Panther Division of the Royal Thai Army Volunteer Force, the 1st Division and 5th Special Forces advised Civilian Irregular Defense Groups (CIDG).

Versatility is the name of the

game in the 222d, and no where is this more obvious than in the 117th Aviation Company. The "Warlords" are commanded by MAJ Richard J. Huston.

Although they fly a number of missions during the daytime in support of units such as the 75th Infantry Brigade's long range patrols (LRP) and the 5th Special Forces, their primary and most unusual mission begins after most aviators are relaxing or are already in bed.

The "Night Hawk" mission, formerly called "Fire Fly," is flown almost every night and is an innovation in the utilization of helicopters in the Vietnam conflict. The Battalion and its commander, LTC Okarski, have been cited for broadening the scope of the Night Hawk mission from a surveillance operation to one with the capabilities of a strong tactical deterrent.

Flying in the III Corps area, the Night Hawk teams have accounted for 50 enemy kills, 111 sampans and 30 structures destroyed during one six-month period.

Types of helicopters employed include a ship mounted with a cluster of C-130 landing lights and a door-mounted minigun, gunships and a command and control ship.

These can be called upon to provide constant illumination and massive fire power should a night attack begin.

Another versatile company is the 195th Aviation Company, commanded by MAJ Cary E. Williams. The "Skychiefs" of the 195th flew over 3,300 combat and combat-support hours and over 50,000 sorties throughout the III Corps area during the June-November period.

Several ships are normally dispatched each day to assist the "Sky Cobras" of the Royal Thai Army Volunteer Force in conducting various daytime operations. Some ships are dispatched to the 25th Aviation Company to assist them in their daily missions, while other missions performed include Saigon courier runs and supporting various long range patrols.

Advancing with the war and keeping up with the needs of III Corps, the 222d continues each day to support allied troops throughout the Saigon-Bien Hoa area. Whether the job consists of salvage, resupply, combat assault, or troop movement—be it day or night—the men of the 222d play a major role in the allied effort in Vietnam.

# EDITORIAL

## AN OPPORTUNITY TO UNDERSTAND

Because of the nature of the war in which we are involved here in Vietnam, and the amount of time our duties require, it is often difficult for the average GI to meet the people of this country in any but awkward circumstances. The American serviceman sees the Vietnamese working and maybe playing, but rarely does he have an opportunity to know the people themselves.

For those servicemen who are stationed around the cities of Hue, Dalat, Can Tho, or Saigon, there are, or soon will be, cultural centers sponsored by the Vietnamese-American Association. These centers provide a meeting ground for the divergent cultures of East and West. Membership in the organization is open to any Vietnamese or American who is interested in learning more about the culture of the other.

The main branch of the Association is located at 55 MacDinh Chi Street, Saigon. In the other three cities, call the "American Cultural Center." In Hue ask for Mr. Lederer; in Dalat ask for Mr. Flood; and in Can Tho ask for Mr. Overturf.

Something of this nature is certainly worth looking into for those who desire more than a fleeting understanding of the Republic of Vietnam.

## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

**Chaplain (CPT) Daniel J. Donahue**

**7/1 Air Cav Sqdn**



Strange thing about being over here, each of us thinks that his trouble is greater than anybody else's. If you ever feel that way, a good remedy is a walk through the nearest hospital. If you do not come walking out of that hospital thanking God that you can walk, your sense of values is off center. None of us has any monopoly on trouble, there always is plenty to go around. Besides the obvious answer of prayer, the only antidote is Fortitude and Courage.

Many of our troubles stem from the fact that we are over here. A young man might kneel before God in prayer and try to choke back the thoughts that rise within him. "Forgive me God but I don't think you know what it's all about. Oh, it's easy for you up there in Heaven, but I don't live in Heaven. I live out here in a strange land and a strange place. How can you know what it means to try to be straight when everything around seems bad, to hold on to those Ten Commandments 'til your hands are raw and bleeding when so many others have let go?"

No man has ever served God or country well without courage. Courageous are those who sincerely go on striving to serve God though they sometimes fall. Courageous are those who have overcome fear, loneliness, and hardship to serve their country and assure freedom for another.

## From the CAREER COUNSELOR

The United States Army Air Defense Command (ARADCOM) carries out the United States Army's role in the air defense of our Nation's vital industrial and strategic complexes. As the Army's contribution to the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD), ARADCOM's mission is to help protect the North American continent from aggressor air attack.

To carry out the ARADCOM mission, its units are armed with Nike Hercules and Hawk surface-to-air guided missiles. Nike Hercules is the second generation of the Nike missile family and it possesses far greater range and kill power than its predecessor, the Nike Ajax. The Nike Hercules can be armed with a conventional or nuclear warhead and it has the potential of destroying an entire fleet of attacking aircraft with a single missile. The Hawk is used against low flying supersonic aircraft.

Currently, ARADCOM units are located in more than 21 metropolitan and strategic areas of the United States and you may reenlist for the one of your choice. Not all areas are open at the same time; however, there are usually several areas from which to choose.

Besides having an area of choice, plus training in guided missiles, you will be guaranteed a minimum of 12 months service in the area selected.

Get all the facts about this varied and challenging duty before you make up your mind to reenlist. If you qualify, see your career counselor today!

# HEADHUNTERS



## 219th Seeks Hiding Enemy

The O-1 "Bird Dog," like its canine counterpart, locates the quarry and guides the hunters in for the kill. In Vietnam, the quarry is Charlie. The Bird Dogs are single-engined, high-winged monoplanes, and among the men who fly them are the pilots of the 219th Aviation Company (Utility Airplane).

Pilots of the 219th, located at Camp Holloway in Pleiku, fly an estimated 1,600 missions per month, racking up an average of 2,000 air hours. The company's aviators and aircraft spend roughly 75 per cent of this air time performing visual reconnaissance (VR).

In 1966, the 219th officially a-

dopted the name "Headhunters" because of a special low-level type of VR which it originated and successfully employed to find the VC in the rugged Central Highland terrain. The technique was chillingly simple. When the pilot spotted a likely area, he pulled the nose up, dropped a wing and dived "down on the deck" for an eyeball-to-eyeball look. "At times the Bird Dogs flew so low that pilots could peer under the eaves of jungle huts," said CPT Clifford R. Ward, a 219th aviator.

If the Headhunter drew fire or observed the enemy, he marked the location with one of the aircraft's rockets and climbed to a safe altitude. "It's frustrating to be shot at

and not be able to do anything about it directly," said CPT Ward. But, the variety of responses available to a Bird Dog pilot provides some degree of compensation.

Circling from a safe altitude over the target, he can command more firepower than could ever be carried by any other aircraft. Gunships, artillery, mortars, and infantry assault forces are only as far away as the switch on his radio. CPT Ward admits that Bird Dogs are not fired on as frequently now as they were earlier in the war. Though the VC used to like shooting at the slow, low-flying aircraft, over the years they have learned the price for their brief target prac-

tice and found it too expensive.

In addition to VR, the 219th performs several other vital functions. They include flying convoy cover, assisting in radio relay, helping the artillery establish registration points and providing limited personnel transportation.

The company is divided into four platoons which support four different groups. The first platoon supports the Pleiku sector. The second platoon is detached and split into two sections supporting the Civilian Irregular Defense Group troops advised by the 5th Special Forces and Kontum Province. The 52nd Artillery Group and II Corps area are supported by the third platoon, and appropriately, the fourth platoon supports the 4th Infantry Division. With the exception of the second platoon, all the unit's aircraft are based at Camp Holloway near Pleiku.

In certain high-risk areas covered by these platoons, the pilots employ a special dual-ship technique for safety. If one aircraft goes down, the other pilot can mark the location and call for help.

Since its activation in 1965 at Ft. Hood, Tex., the company has received a Valorous Unit Award with a streamer embroidered "Plei-



A marking rocket is placed in its tube.

*Story and Photos  
by  
SP5 Richard  
M. Emerson*

Me," and a Meritorious Unit Commendation with a streamer embroidered "Vietnam 1965-1966." When the unit first landed in Vietnam in 1965, it was the largest fixed-wing aviation company in the country.

Currently commanded by MAJ David Nauman, the unit has had nearly five years to build on the tradition displayed in its colorful Headhunter patch. The Headhunter is depicted on the patch with wings denoting flight capability. He is shown armed with a telescope representing the primary duty of visual reconnaissance and a 2.75 inch rocket representing target marking capability. The green in the costume represents the lush Central Highlands over which the pilots fly.

The enemy must be found before he can be fought. Vietnam's jungles make this a difficult task, but the 219th's Bird Dogs continue to make the job easier by serving as the long range eyes of the infantry and artillery.



Long hours in the air mean long hours of maintenance.



# The 334th Aviation Company

## (Aerial Wpns)



WO Park pre-flights ship with crewchief.

Thousands of times more deadly than its namesake, "Cobra," the AH-1G gunship, freezes the hearts and shrinks the bravado of any VC or NVA force at mere sight. Their comrades have been raked by the minigun, ripped apart by the 40mm grenade launcher and blown into another existence by the various array of rockets carried by the voracious "Snake."

The enemy knows well the peculiar "whump-whump" of the Cobra's rotor blades and upon hearing the very familiar sound, will break for the nearest refuge. The sole reason for the Cobra's existence is to kill the enemy. Using the AH-1G Hueycobra as their tool, the pilots of the 334th Aviation Company (Aerial Weapons) provide that very service to all free world forces in III Corps: they kill the enemy.

The 334th is divided into three gunship platoons, the "Playboys," the "Raiders," and the "Dragons;" a maintenance platoon, the "Gun Runners," and the headquarters

platoon, the "Sabers."

MAJ Charles F. Densford, commander of the 334th, has this to say of his company. "It is a unit which has always had an excellent reputation; I was tickled pink to get this company. When a new CO takes over a unit with such high morale and has such a high level of competence as this company has, it makes his job a heck of a lot easier."

As MAJ Denford states, the 334th and its predecessors have built a solid reputation for themselves. The 334th's history in Vietnam dates back to July 25, 1962, when advanced elements of the Utility Tactical Transport Helicopter Company (UTT) arrived at Tan Son Nhut Air Base.

They were the first fully-armed helicopter unit in Vietnam, hence the slogan seen on the 334th's badge, "First With Guns." The armed helicopter was a totally new concept in its first years in the combat theater. The UTT developed tactics and techniques which are



**Their "Snakes" are ready as...**

now standard procedures throughout the world.

In its infancy, the company was the pet project of Brigadier General Joseph Stilwell Jr., who flew many combat hours as door gunner with the Saber (headquarters) fire team.

In August, 1964, the UTT designation was retired and the company was redesignated the 68th Aviation Company. Another redesignation occurred in March, 1965, when the 68th became the 197th Aviation Company. Under this name the company was honored with the first Presidential Unit Citation to be awarded since Korea.

In March of 1966, the 197th moved from Tan Son Nhut to Bien Hoa and soon thereafter was assigned to Fort Benning, Ga. Its officers, men, helicopters and reputation, however, remained in Vietnam as the new 334th Aviation Company.

The 334th has proven that it can live up to the reputation of its preceding units. It has become one of the most versatile aerial weapons companies in Vietnam. Not only do they fly the regular air cover for troop insertions, provide aerial artillery and close support for infantry, riverboats and airboats; but

the Cobras of the 334th are often called upon to assist other helicopter units in III Corps who find themselves understrength for certain missions.

"After three months, a pilot of the 334th will work with almost every unit in III Corps," says CPT Billy Tabb, Operations Officer. "As far as technique goes, we have as much or more experience than anyone in III Corps."

Probably the most important mission that the 334th has at the present time is their scramble team. This consists of Cobras fully prepared and ready to cover anyone in III Corps anytime of the day or night. Within five minutes after receiving the call for assistance, the Cobras will be in the air and on their way.

A bell rings and the standby pilots grab their gear and scramble for their ships. They receive the information of their mission after they are airborne.

"When we're sent out on a scramble it's usually because somebody out there is getting killed," says CPT Robert J. Metzger. "These scramble missions are never routine, you always have to be thinking because the same exact

conditions never occur twice."

There are additional Cobras standing by on a 30 minute notice to scramble. They automatically go



**the scramble team awaits the alarm.**

**The Cobra fights hard but is sometimes hard to fix.**





**Air cover is provided by 334th Cobras anywhere in III Corps.**

onto a five-minute notice when the first ships scramble out.

Another duty for the 334th is to provide air cover for the "Sniffer" ship. This helicopter is so designated because it carries aboard a device which can determine the presence of humans from the air and is capable of detecting hiding VC. Because it flies so low, the Sniffer ship needs gunships to discourage the VC from firing at it. No matter how juicy a target the Sniffer ship makes, Charlie has to

do some deep thinking before he exposes his position to two Huey-cobras.

"By far the most rewarding mission," says CPT Robert C. Anderson, "is being called on to get some of our 'ground pounders' out of a tight spot. Like the long range patrols—they're so small, if they are discovered they usually need us to keep Charlie off their backs 'til we can get a slick in to evacuate them."

The "Gun Runners," the main-

tenance platoon, along with the 334th's crew chiefs, take great pride in keeping the company's aircraft in excellent flying condition. Ships of an aerial weapons company are constantly undergoing strenuous flying conditions due to the missions that they are assigned. When a Cobra outfit can rack up over 12,000 hours of accident-free-flying time in approximately seven months there is definitely a reason for it. Pre-flight and post-flight checkouts by the pilots, constant vigilance by the crew chiefs and a determined effort by the maintenance personnel all make a part of the team effort by the 334th to keep their Cobras in excellent shape.

There are certain qualities which place a fighting unit among the elite. One of the more important of these qualities is intangible: pride. Without it not even the most modern-equipped unit can be considered among the finest. This pride is not to be confused with that of a braggart, but rather a pride which enables a unit to function as one. The 334th Aviation Company (Aerial Weapons) possesses such pride.

**A "Playboy" Cobra is rearmed.**



**PFC Reed repairs an instrument panel.**





# WING TIPS...

Like the proverbial one-woman-man, most Army aviators in Vietnam fly one-engine aircraft. This fact brings to bear a number of unpleasant consequences when engine failure is encountered, reminding us of that old quotation, "Birds fly—Men drink." But since Army aviation seems firmly entrenched, and men will surely continue to fly, our only recourse is to examine the alternatives available to the single-engine aircraft pilot faced with engine failure.

Elimination of unnecessary hazards is our first consideration. Plan your route with consideration given to available forced landing areas. Valleys allow more room to maneuver than mountainous terrain. When the tactical situation permits, fly higher than the highest obstacle in your projected flight path. Allow yourself the greatest amount of reaction time to lower that collective and pick a safe forced-landing site—in a word, stay high.

Operating in a combat zone means some missions will require flying low and slow over forest and jungle. Engine failure under these conditions is much more likely to produce a crash landing; this is not reason to give up the lives and well-being of our crews and aircraft. Aviation Digest makes these suggestions when a tree landing is unavoidable: "In general, the best method of emergency landing in trees is with zero or near zero ground speed and a high rather than low rotor RPM. As you enter the tops of the trees, keep the downward velocity as low as you can. Tall trees with thin tops allow too much freefall height before the aircraft reaches the cushioning branches. When faced with young or short trees, the most densely and evenly wooded areas allow the bottom of the helicopter and the rotors to create a cushioning effect at the same time as they contact the trees. Landing in a sparsely wooded area may be more difficult than a dense forest. The problem is that individual trees act more like hard obstacles than energy absorbers. A rotor on one side will strike a tree while the other side is free, this tips the chopper over to land on its side. Dead trees are dangerous. They offer little energy absorption and tend to puncture the fuselage."

During the past few months in the 1st Aviation Brigade, about 58 per cent of all engine failures resulted in successful forced landings. We would like to improve on this percentage. Engine failures do happen—be prepared.

# Brigade's Bucket Brigade

Since the earliest times, man has fought fire with water. But he has always been faced with the problem of getting enough water on the fire to effectively battle the flames.

The first fire fighters probably carried water to fires in wooden buckets, animal skin bags and other containers. During the colonial period of the United States, bucket brigades struggled to fight fires.

Until the mid 1800's, volunteers strained to pull pumps and water tanks. The pumps were activated by pushing long handles up and down, enabling the men to spray a stream of water through a hose on a fire.

Gradually, steam-operated pumps, drawn by horses and manned by career fireman, replaced the human-drawn equipment.

The gasoline-driven fire truck created a revolution in fire fighting. Firemen could dash to the fire without waiting for steam pressure to build up in the fire engine. Power to the pumps, provided by the gasoline engine, shot great quantities of water at high pressures.

Crew prepares Chinook for mission.



A nearby river is the best water source.



The methods and means for fighting fires continues to progress—it had no where to go but up.

Heliborne bucket brigades have been in use by the U.S. Forestry Service and other civilian agencies for nearly a decade. The buckets, usually lifted to the fire by the civilian equivalent of the CH-34 Choctaw, have proven successful in use against timberland and brushland fires in the Pacific Northwest and South Central United States.

Within the Republic of Vietnam, and particularly in and around the Saigon area, the heliborne buckets have been used against residential and brush fires. Building materials in this area are typically wood, cardboard and other highly flammable materials. Therefore, once a fire starts, it spreads at random with terrifying speed. The conventional fire-fighting equipment can easily be stymied in traffic congestion and poor accessibility.

The 350 gallon bucket, made of fiberglass, is conical in shape and has two electrically or hydraulically-operated butterfly doors. There are several red plastic plugs along the sides of each bucket. The plugs are used to regulate the bucket's capacity and more importantly, they act as reflectors to alert approaching aircraft of the lowslung load.

The fire bucket process is a simple operation. The pilot can fill them in approximately 15 seconds over any water source. Lowering the buckets into a river, the flight engineer operates the controls to open the doors. This sinks the buckets faster thus enabling a quicker fill. The capacity can be controlled simply by closing the doors and lifting the containers from the water when the desired amount is reached.

*Story and Photos  
by SP4 David R. Wood*



When filled, the two buckets weigh approximately 5,600 pounds. The CH-47 Chinook is used as the carrier and lifts two buckets suspended on an "X" frame. A single bucket is seldom used.

The airborne buckets are flown over the flame-engulfed area. If a high approach is made, a rain-like effect from the rotor wash is gained when the water is dropped. A low approach is more accurately directed and can thoroughly douse a confined fire.

CPT Robert B. Martin, Operations Officer of the 213th Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter), offered an example. "In November, a bunker on the perimeter at Phu Loi caught fire. Our fire buckets were able to save most of the bunker after one low-level pass."

The 213th ASHC and the 205th ASHC at Phu Loi perform fire bucket missions throughout the year. Said CPT Martin, "The busiest time is of course during the dry season between November and May, but the mission is still scheduled throughout the year."

Practice makes perfect, so the crews of the assigned aircraft make frequent trips to the nearest water hole, fill up and practice low-level accurate drops as well as high altitude spraying.

Several helicopters bearing sling-loaded buckets are able to make sortie after sortie in rotating fashion, providing an almost continuous downpour on the fire area.

Fire-fighting methods have indeed progressed, from the colonial bucket brigade to the 1st Aviation Brigade's bucket brigade.



Only when peoples of the world come to respect each other's divergent cultural backgrounds can true understanding and friendship be reached...

This is the credo of a group of Vietnamese and American residents of Saigon who joined together in 1955 to found the Vietnamese-American Association (VAA), providing an atmosphere where the cultures of the East and West can meet.

The Association places much emphasis on teaching both the English and Vietnamese languages growing from their basic belief that communication is the first step to understanding.

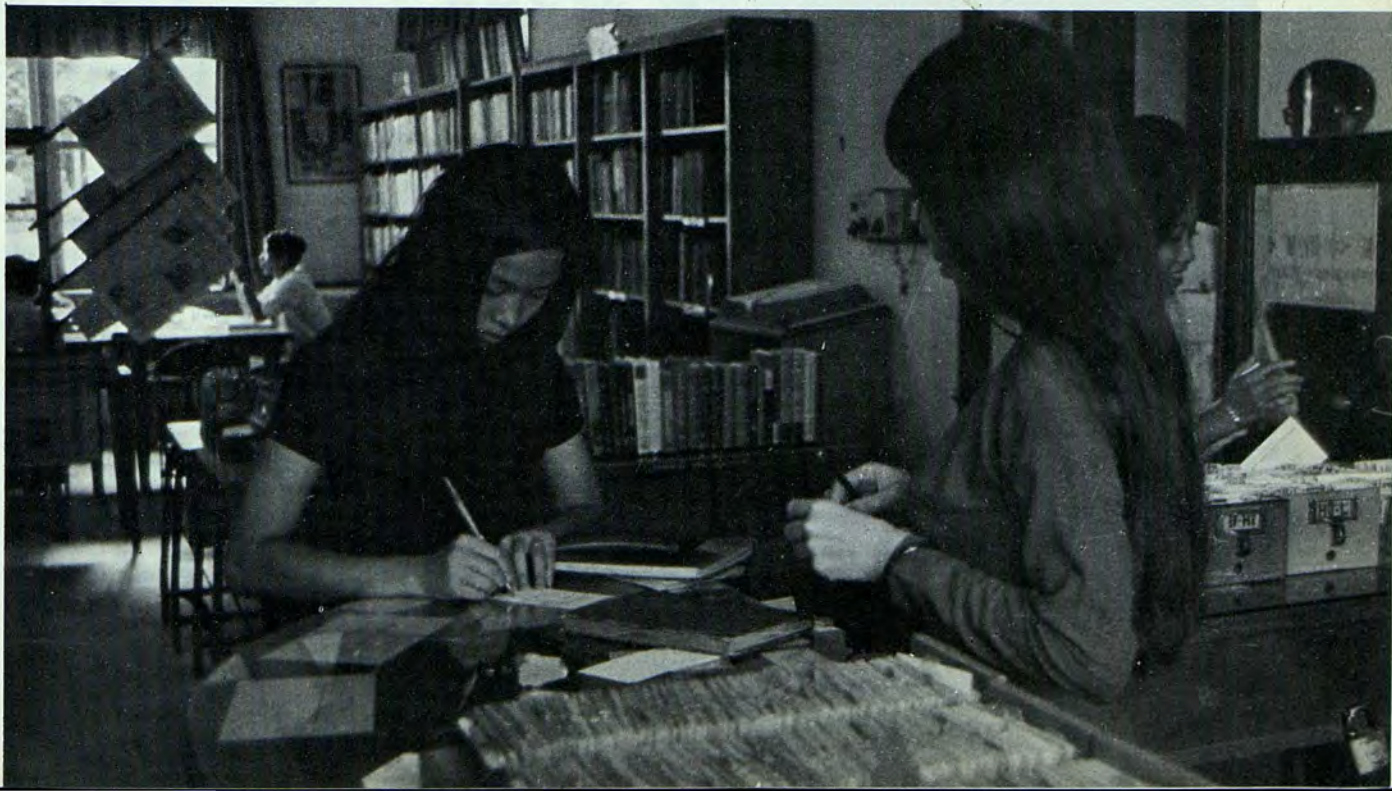
The VAA as a non-profit and non-political organization, sponsors monthly cultural and social activities including art exhibitions, concerts, variety shows and theatrical productions as well as discussion groups and weekly films.

Membership in the organization is open to any Vietnamese or American in the Saigon area who is interested in learning more about the cultures of the other. All are invited to participate in programs telling of his own cultural backgrounds and experiences. The Association charges a nominal fee of 200 piastres to cover the mailing costs of their monthly activities magazine.

Several clubs utilize the Association's facilities, which include a photolab, 14,000 volume library,

## HOI VIET-MY

A student signs for one of more than 14,000 volumes in the VAA's library.



meeting and classrooms and a spacious auditorium. Simultaneous translation through the use of an FM transmitter and miniature wireless receivers, enable persons who are not fluent in the language of the presentation to also enjoy participation in the discussions and lectures.

A motion picture club, drama club, square dance group, a choir, stamp club and the Saigon Choral Society are only a few of the groups that the VAA sponsors. Each month the photo club organizes a photo tour of some of the more scenic and picturesque parts of the city, which was once known as the Paris of the Orient.

In conjunction with the clubs, the VAA conducts six classes in art and art appreciation, as well as six courses in photography. They also offer a variety of courses in the Vietnamese classical guitar, motion picture production and theory, modern American dance, as well as square dancing and Tae Kwon Do, a form of Korean self-defense.

In November, the VAA sponsors an annual American University Day in which Vietnamese who have studied in American colleges or universities get together with American college graduates stationed in the Saigon area.

The VAA also sponsors two annual national contests; a national high school oratorical contest and

**A modern language lab offers both Vietnamese and English lessons.**



**Nearly 15,000 students attend classes taught by the VAA's 165 instructors.**

a national photography contest. During the oratorical contest the best presentation from each province is brought to Saigon, and the student competes with his contemporaries at the VAA's auditorium.

The main emphasis, however, is in teaching the English language to nearly 15,000 students attending classes each week in the VAA's classrooms at 55 Mac-dinh-Chi, near the American Embassy.

Their academic year is broken into five ten-week terms. Most of the students who enroll in the classes each term are high school students who are complementing their regular studies with the VAA's English courses. The school offers 15 levels of instruction in English and also has many students from the two universities in Saigon.

The VAA has a modern language laboratory on the top floor of their academic building, in which they have both Vietnamese and English lessons as well as shorthand dictation tapes.

The Association provides guidance for enrollment in American universities and administers the ACT (American College Test) as well as other college entrance examinations.

There are many military personnel in the Saigon area who belong to the Association. Some serve as instructors while others participate in the VAA's activities. There are other VAA's located in major cities throughout the Republic of Vietnam. Anyone interested in the Association and its activities, is invited to participate.



The 134th Aviation Company (Aslt Hel)

# Men of "Hell's Half Acre"

Located along the coast of the Republic of Vietnam between Nha Trang and Qui Nhon is a wide expanse of sandy beach. It is so dense with the grainy substance that it can trap the wheels of a two and one half ton truck in its grip. During the hot, dry season, the sun reflects its heat off the white sand scorching anything that dares rise above its level.

The monsoon season does not bring with it any relief to the occupants of this sandy beach. Storm squalls whip across the now soggy sands. This expanse of beach is known to some of its inhabitants as Phu Hiep, but to the men of the

134th Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter) it is known as "Hell's Half Acre."

The Demons, who fly the UH-1H slick in the first and second airlift platoon, and the Devils, who fly the C-model gunship in the third armed platoon, are commanded by MAJ William R. Hensley. They have made their home within the "Half Acre" since their arrival in Vietnam, Thanksgiving Day, November 24, 1967.

The mission of the 134th is to provide tactical air movement of combat troops and combat supplies and equipment within the combat zone as directed by the 268th Avia-

tion Battalion (Combat).

The Demon company is organized like any other assault helicopter company except instead of directly supporting a specific unit, they are assigned as general support to the 268th CAB. This results in the company supporting, at one time or another, every unit active in their area of operation (AO), II Corps. "We have the opportunity to work a wide variety of missions for a wide variety of terrain," said the Demon commander.

The 134th commits a good percentage of its aircraft daily for customary missions. Inserting and extracting long range patrols



(LRP), lifting troops and resupplying them are a few of the missions performed for the 22nd ARVN Division.

The 134th supports state department personnel in the Phu Yen Province with provisions, as well as senior ARVN advisors in Phu Bon, Binh Dinh and Khanh Hoa Provinces.

Probably the most important regular mission is performed for the Qui Nhon Support Command. The operation involves continual daily visual reconnaissance of the pipe-

#### An Imp decorates Demon ship.



line that runs from Vung Ro Bay to Qui Nhon and Plieku. The Demons also provide support for the 6th Battalion, 32nd Artillery at Phu Hiep and the 7th Battalion, 13th Artillery at Phu Cat.

Other free world forces within II Corps continually receive support from the men of the 134th. Other than routine support, the 134th reinforces the other companies within the 268th CAB when they are short of aircraft. They also support the "Famous Fighting Fourth" and the 173d Airborne Brigade, two U.S. units at LZ English.

The complete list of units supported is too lengthy to include here. The number of aircraft used daily by the units varies from day to day. They were used enough during 1969 to account for the approximately 185,800 sorties flown in 30,598 hours. The new year is off to a good start with 518 hours accumulated by the middle of January.

The aircraft platoon transported a conservative 152,000 troops last year. Even though the unit is not a major resupplying unit, it did account for approximately 1,300 tons of cargo hauled in 1969.

During some of their most recent action, the 134th has taken part in night combat assaults (CA)



A Devil ship has its hydraulic dampers checked.

and search and rescue (S & R) missions.

While in support of the 28th ROK Regiment, the Demons were called upon one night in January to perform a night CA. MAJ Hensley gave an account of the action.

"Two companies of the 28th Regiment were inserted in two LZs 10 miles south of Phu Hiep. Approximately 12 minutes after our operations received the call, we had

troops into their LZ under the illumination of ROK artillery and the mission completed."

Search and rescue is another operation which is performed by the 134th when called upon. During a three week period in December and January, 134th search and rescue aircraft rescued two F100 pilots. They were picked up after spending less than five minutes on the ground.

Their most recent S & R took place within their own company. It involved the snatching of three crewmen from the grasp of Charlie.

Their gunship had gone down near LZ English while escorting a "Dust-off."

This rescue exemplifies the attitude of the company. As Demon Six said, "The company attitude is not for me but for we. We look after and take care of our own. The company proudly upheld their attitude during this S & R."

Whether in regular support or general support, the Demons need aircraft to perform their mission. Demon maintenance is relied upon to keep 134th aircraft available. On the average during 1969, aircraft availability ran better than 80 percent.

"The aim of the company is to strive for professionalism," commented CW2 Davis E. Chessher, Assistant Maintenance Officer. "We not only train the pilot and aircraft commander in maintenance, but also the gunner and crew chief because they are the eyes and ears for the rear of the aircraft."

"The company works at being safe and it has paid off," added the Demon leader. "We have debriefings at the end of each day where problems of the day are discussed. Everyone must be kept informed because we fly such a large area of responsibility."

"The task of the entire company is accomplished with responsibility,

sound judgment, best equipment and the best training which has resulted in a most professional unit." These words of MAJ Hensley summarize his feelings toward the unit that he feels is the best in Vietnam.

Whether it is battling the elements of Hell's Half Acre or Charlie, the 134th is constantly in fighting trim. If Charlie ever had the choice of confronting the Demons or the devil himself, he would fare far better descending into the inferno of the underworld.

#### LRP's prepare for insertion.



Story and Photos by  
SP4 David R. Wood

# AARMS

**The Army Aviation Resource Management System provides the 1st Aviation Brigade with the capabilities of the computer age.**

Computerized warfare is the shape of the future and the 1st Aviation Brigade's Army Aviation Resource Management System (AARMS) reflects the trend.

In an age when business and industry are relying more and more on the computer to aid efficiency and operations, it was only natural that the Army should follow suit. However, like so many other revolutionary developments in warfare, the new computer system was born out of tactical need.

It has often been said that "necessity is the mother of invention," and this principle played a key role in the beginning of AARMS. In August of 1968, I Field Force was faced with a need to increase aviation support to the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN).

Preliminary feasibility studies indicated a lack of accurate data for complete evaluation of the task. Consequently, COL John A. Todd, then Commanding Officer of the 17th Aviation Group and I Field Force Aviation Officer, established a system to collect the necessary information and AARMS was born.

The magnitude of the task made a test program necessary, and 17th Group's four Chinook units were selected as an initial sample. An inter-service agreement made it possible to use the Air Force computer at Nha Trang and data was collected for a one-month period in October of 1968. Though the initial results were rough and required some "debugging," the system had proven its worth and by

March 1969, the rest of the Group's units were participating in the program.

Raw data reporting forms had been standardized for all units in the Group, and the necessary key-punch operators had been trained, but this "smooth sailing" was soon wrecked on the reef of an Air Force pull-out from Nha Trang. When the Airmen left, they took their computer with them, and AARMS was forced to search for another.

A second inter-service agreement on December 1, 1969, enabled AARMS to use the Air Force computer at Tuy Hoa, the present AARMS location, and the program was moved up to Brigade level in order to include 1st Aviation Brigade units. By this time, enough

**SP5 Bricker checks a stack of cards before feeding them thru the computer.**



**The editor-operators use a "decolator" to separate the computer's data output.**



data had been supplied to I Field Force for them to make their decision to increase ARVN air support. The current mission of AARMS had evolved.

"The AARMS program provides a data base to Combat Developments Command (CDC) and high-level staffs to assist in future planning of aviation uses, needs and requirements. The program also provides all aviation commanders and staff officers with information to assist in comparing their operations and maintenance with those of similar units," said MAJ Harry R. Culp, Jr., current officer in charge of AARMS.

MAJ Culp is assisted in accomplishing these objectives by CPT Herbert P. Adams, the computer programmer, and three enlisted editor-operators. They are: SP5 Thomas L. Bauman, SP5 Barry D. Bricker and SP5 Thomas A. Herreth.

The entire process begins when the data from each mission of each aircraft flown every day is recorded by the pilot on a "standardized" mission sheet. From the mission sheets, maintenance data is recorded by the unit maintenance personnel, and flight data is forwarded to each group headquarters where it is punched on IBM cards. Finally, punched IBM cards are forwarded to the Brigade AARMS section along with maintenance data—AARMS personnel do all the rest.

Once the data arrives at Tuy Hoa, the editor-operators check it for accuracy and completeness. Raw data is summarized and card volume reduced from approximately 60,000 cards to 5,000 cards for ease of handling. The summarized cards are processed through all the data equipment to produce 1,000 multilith mats which are the finished programs. Finally, reproduction facilities make approximately

**Story and Photos by  
SP5 Richard M. Emerson**



**SP4 Herreth runs his cards thru a sorter.**

30 copies of each mat and the 30,000 finished pages are distributed to unit level, battalion, group, brigade headquarters, CDC, major corps headquarters, support units and various staff sections throughout RVN.

When the unit commander receives his finished report, he gets the "big picture" instantly. Not only does he get summarized monthly data about his own unit, but he also gets the same information on all similar units for comparison. "This comparison enables him to pinpoint strengths, weaknesses and problem areas," said MAJ Culp. In addition, staff officers receive concise information which enables them to make decisions on unit deployment, procedures and future planning.

A recent example proved the worth of the program. The two Republic of Korea Divisions in II Corps experienced a wide difference in the efficiency of cargo aircraft utilization. The computer supplied the tabulated data which allowed the investigators to solve the problem. One unit was using primarily internal loading procedures while the other was using mainly slung loads. The computer analysed the data and showed that the sling loading procedure was more efficient. Now both units rely mostly on external loads.

Further proof of the program's effectiveness was demonstrated soon after the siege of Bu Prang from October 28 to November 30. The 1st Aviation Brigade needed to know how much ammunition was fired during that period and how much aviation support from the Air Cavalry units was given to the 23d ARVN Division. AARMS had the answers in less than a day.

The whole process keeps AARMS personnel hopping. Their 15-20 hours of computer time per month necessitates 100-150 hours of preparation and associated time on the data processing equipment. Production and distribution of the finished reports requires another 144 hours, and another 50 hours per month is spent in editing and analysing data.

"No matter how revolutionary the new AARMS program may seem," says CPT Adams, "the use of computers in warfare is still in its beginning stages." MAJ Culp foresees the day when "...the commander will be able to push a button and read the requested information on a television screen in his office."

Sound far fetched? Much of Army finance and personnel operations have already been computerized. "After all, your in-country assignment orders were a computer printout," says CPT Adams.



# SKYCRANE DOWN!

After being secured above, the ship's weight is reduced.



The "Super Hooks" of the 273d Aviation Company (Heavy Helicopter) proved that they can take care of their own. One of their giant CH-54 Skycranes was forced to land 160 miles south of Long Binh because of serious transmission problems. Repairs could not be made in the field; the 22,000 pound aircraft had to be brought back to the company's headquarters at Sanford Army Airfield.

Two hundred and sixty men from the 3d Squadron of the 9th ARVN Cavalry Regiment and the 1st Battalion of the 33d ARVN Infantry Division were immediately brought in to secure the ship while recovery plans were being formulated.

Early the next morning, LTC Gerald Okarski, Commanding Officer of the 222d Combat Aviation Battalion, and MAJ Warren Silva, Commanding Officer of the 273d, brought another Skycrane, a CH-47 Chinook from the 205th Assault Support Helicopter Company and a team of maintenance personnel to the site of the downed aircraft.

The huge rotor blades were loosened by the mechanics and the second recovery "Crane," piloted by CW4 George Gagnon and CW3 Paul Eilers, cautiously lifted the assembly off and deposited it on the ground. The blades were then dismantled and loaded into the waiting Chinook.

The disabled Skycrane was ready to be pulled out of the Delta mud. Gagnon and Eilers once again carefully brought their ship to a hover over the downed aircraft. Slings were attached to their Crane and slowly they lifted the disabled ship from its resting place.

The two pilots then flew the aircraft to Can Tho where the engines were taken off for the rest of the journey home.

They had to unsling the ship and refuel four times on the way, but just nine hours and 160 miles later, Gagnon and Eilers set the disabled aircraft down for the last time at Sanford Army Airfield.



Arrival



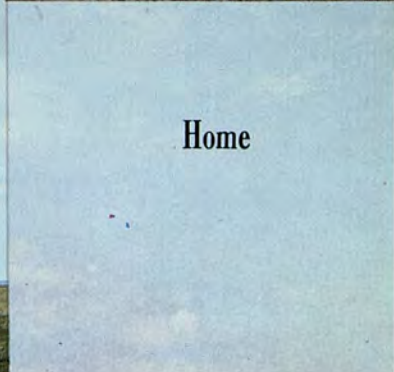
Rotor Removal



In Flight



Hooking Up



Home



HAWK



# NEWSLETTER

## **“Vulcan Gun” Arrives**

Those aviation companies of the 1st Avn Bde equipped with the AH-1G Huey Cobra have, or soon will have, a weapon capable of destroying long range weapons (e.g. a 50 Caliber Machine Gun) while remaining out of the enemy's range. The XM-35 “Vulcan Gun” resembles an oversized minigun, fires a 20mm projectile, which has an exploding warhead, at 750 rounds per minute and carries a basic load of 1100 rounds. The electrically operated, six barrelled gun is located on the inboard station of the Cobra's left wing.

## **147th ASHC Passes 50,000 Mark**

The first assault support helicopter company to be assigned to the 1st Aviation Brigade, the 147th ASHC, recorded its 50,000th in-country hour recently. The “Hillclimbers” came to Vietnam in late November of 1965 and flew their first mission on December 2 of that year. HAWK salutes the men of the 147th on their milestone.

## **Brigade Vet Goes Home After 8 Years**

Sergeant Major Cyril G. Manning, 1st Aviation Brigade, has departed for home after eight continuous years in Vietnam.

His tour began as the Army Assistant Aviation Advisor to the Vietnamese Armed Forces Field Command but he later became one of the first enlisted men assigned to the new 1st Aviation Brigade. During the course of his service in Vietnam, he was selected as the Aviation Soldier of the year by the Army Aviation Association in 1965 and received the coveted Legion of Merit.

## **HIGH FLIERS 3 JAN—16 JAN SILVER STARS**

HIGH FLIERS  
SILVER STARS  
3 JAN—16 JAN

PFC William A. Blancet, 173d Aviation Company (Aslt Hel)  
WO Arnold D. Leak, 187th Aviation Company (Aslt Hel)  
CPT William F. Ferguson, 121st Aviation Company (Aslt Hel)  
1LT Bryan D. Alloway, 3d Armored Squadron 17th Air Cavalry  
PFC Gary F. Lovell, 7th Armored Squadron, 1st Air Cavalry

A full-page photograph of a woman with long brown hair and bangs, smiling at the camera. She is wearing a red two-piece bikini with a large bow at the waist. She is kneeling on a white and red striped towel on a light-colored stone pool deck. In the background, there is a blue swimming pool and a concrete wall.

**HAWK  
HONEY**

