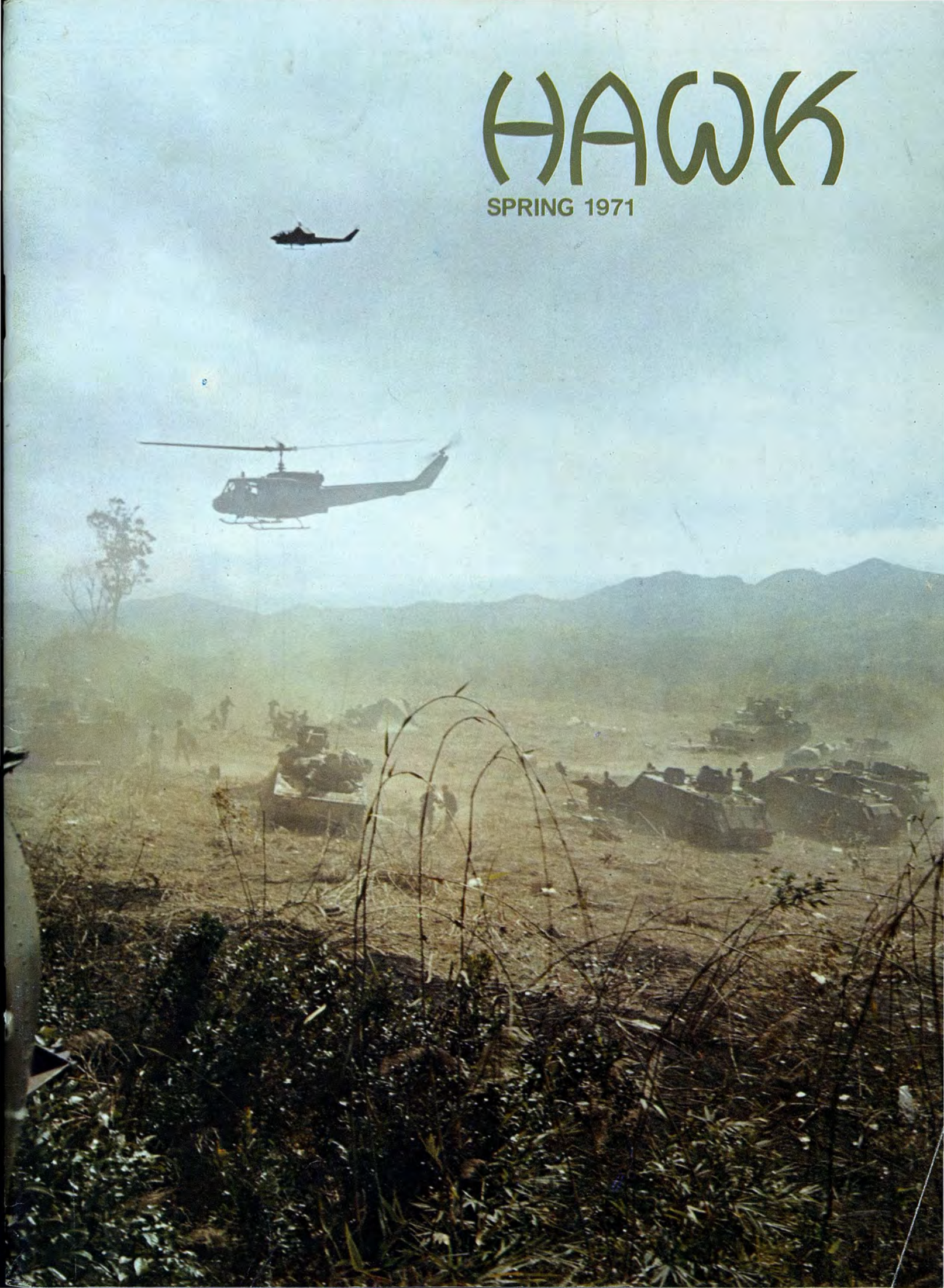
HAWK

SPRING 1971



HAWK

SPRING, 1971 Vol. V No. 1
1st Aviation Brigade

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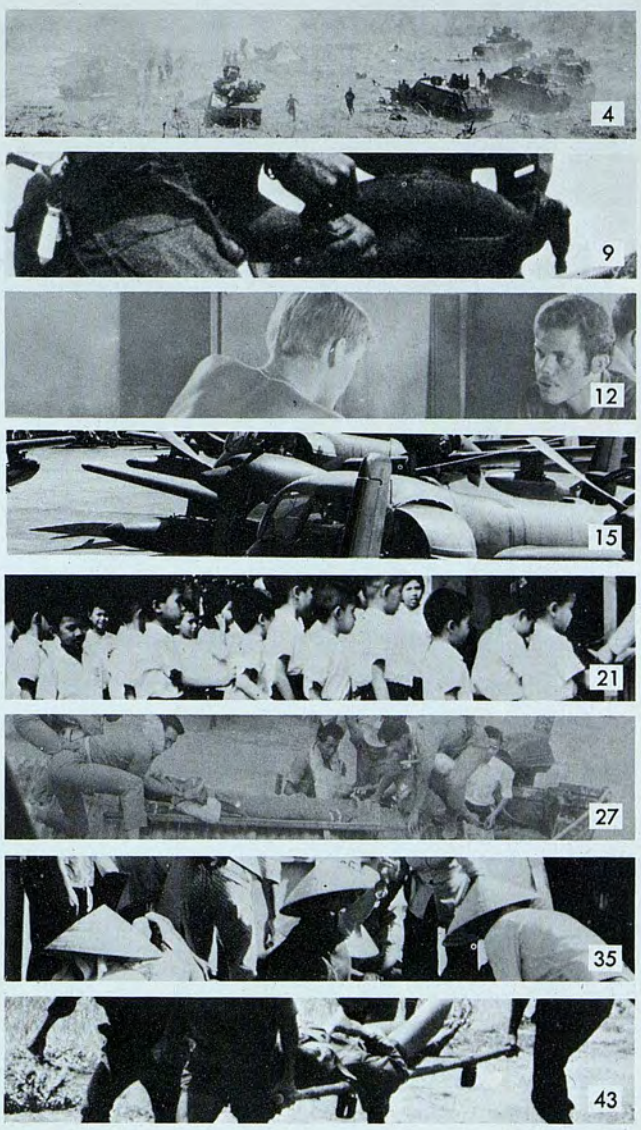

FRONT COVER: Mobility and maneuverability are keys to a successful operation at Khe Sanh. Photo by SP4 Roger Mattingly, USARV Information Office. Story on page 4.

INSIDE COVER: Waiting for its next mission, a Cobra gunship is armed and ready. SP5 Allen Rockoff, SEAPC photographer, took this photo at Khe Sanh.

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BG Jack W. Hemingway, Commanding General

COL John A. Todd, Deputy Brigade Commander

CPT Robert P. Dunleavy, Information Officer

MSG George N. Fox, Editor, Layout

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS 1ST AVIATION BRIGADE
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96384

TO THE OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE 1ST AVIATION BRIGADE:

As we mark the fifth anniversary of the 1st Aviation Brigade, all present and former Golden Hawks can take pride in the many achievements recorded in the annals of history by this command since its activation on 25 May 1966.

With virtually every mission flown, the 1st Aviation Brigade has demonstrated the great value of airmobility. Our Hueys have inserted fresh, combat-ready troops into areas of operation which would have required hours and even days to reach on foot. Rapid air evacuation has saved the lives of thousands of wounded U.S. and allied soldiers and Vietnamese civilians. Armed helicopters have provided "instant" support night and day. There has been virtually no place for the enemy to hide from the ubiquitous LOH. Cargo helicopters have moved "mountains" of material. Fixed wing aircraft have helped to tie the far flung command together and have kept a watchful eye on the enemy day and night.

The Brigade's contribution toward enabling the Vietnamese people to stand alone has been equally impressive. Civic action programs have, among other things, furthered education, improved health, and given a present and future to the displaced and homeless. Assistance to the Vietnamese Air Force in developing helicopter squadrons has been given with pride and professionalism.

During these five years the Brigade has flown over 18 million sorties, carried some 28 million passengers, and logged over seven million hours of flight time. The struggle for the freedom of self-determination for the people of South Vietnam has not been without cost. To those men of the Brigade who have made the supreme sacrifice we owe our highest respect.

I extend congratulations to all who now serve and have served as members of the 1st Aviation Brigade.

JACK W. HEMINGWAY
Brigadier General, USA
Commanding


U.S. ARMY

LAM SON 719

Story by SP5 Terry Ogle

MATTINGLY

During the second week of February 1971, the world's press abounded with reports of a "mysterious" operation in the northernmost province of the Republic of Vietnam, known then as "Operation Dewey Canyon II." Neither the name of the operation nor the concept behind it were new. An earlier allied operation had been called "Operation Dewey Canyon" for the mist-filled valleys of Quang Tri Province. The spelling became corrupted and was carried over in the naming of the current operation.

Allied commanders had long supported the theory of an incursion into Laos to half the flow of supplies down the Ho Chi Minh Trail, but not until the Cambodian thrust of 1970 was this concept given much credence in political circles. Actually, "Dewey Canyon II" was the American designation for the Vietnamese "Lam Son 719," since it was basically an ARVN operation with tactical support from American forces. ARVN troops were supported by helicopters from the Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF), the U.S. Marines, the 101st Airborne Division, 1st of the 5th Mechanized Infantry Division and the 1st Aviation Brigade.

The 1st Aviation Brigade was represented by the 223d Combat Aviation Battalion, commanded by LTC Gerald W. Kirklighter of Elimra, N. Y. Originally located in Qui Nhon, the 223d was reconstituted specifically for this operation. In a time when American units are being inactivated frequently, it was rather unusual to have a unit actually gaining men and equipment. The units were drawn from battalions throughout the 1st Aviation Brigade. Initially, five units made up the 223d, with two companies being added later.

The 17th Group furnished three units: the 48th Assault Helicopter Company (10th Battalion), the 238th Aerial Weapons Company (268th Battalion) and C Troop, 7/17th Cavalry. Four other units—the 173d Assault Helicopter Company (11th Battalion, 12th Group), B Troop, 7/1st Air Cavalry (164th Group), 179th Assault Support Helicopter Company (52nd CAB) and 235th Aerial Weapons Company (307th CAB)—were also added.

These seven units and their 1,300 men were assigned to the new 223d Battalion Headquarters at Dong Ha, north of Quang Tri. On February 2, the forward elements of these units left Dong Ha to begin Lam Son 719. For these men, this meant the return of U. S. forces to Khe Sanh, the base camp given up by the Marines after a bloody seige in 1968. Khe Sanh is a strategically important base because of its proximity to Laos and its accessibility by air. It is also equally susceptible to enemy artillery bombardment, as the men of the 223d found out.

WILDER

After the Americans arrived, Khe Sanh was quickly turned into a major forward supply base and command headquarters. Actually, there are two "Khe Sanhs." One, Khe Sanh proper, has an airstrip for cargo-carrying C-130s, and is run by the Marines and 101st Airborne. A few kilometers away is LZ Kilo, which served as ARVN and U.S. command headquarters and base for the bulk of VNAF and 1st Aviation Brigade helicopters.

The first few days at Kilo were filled with frenzied, 'round-the-clock efforts to prepare the base for operation. Sandbags were filled, bunkers were built, and the area soon took on the impression of permanence. With the arrival of artillery and a fixed communication center, activity around the base fell into as much of a routine as is possible in a forward base camp. Reflecting on those first few days, PFC Dalton Hooks, a Pathfinder from the 223d who helped coordinate the initial air traffic at Kilo, called it ". . . hard work, man. One night there'd be

MATTINGLY

WILDER

nothing, and next morning a command bunker."

This hard work was necessary, though, to enable the base to handle the tremendous volume of air traffic in the ensuing weeks. If a person had doubted that Vietnam was truly "the helicopter war," a look at LZ Kilo during Operation Dewey Canyon II would have made a believer of him. The hills which make up the base were dotted with helicopters of all types. Present in the largest numbers were the UH-1 "Hueys," belonging to the VNAF and the 1st Aviation Brigade units: the 48th and 173d Assault Helicopter Companies and C/7/17th and B/7/1st Air Cavalry Squadrons.

The lethal AG-1 "Cobra" gunships of the 235th Aerial Weapons Company became a common sight at Kilo, often surrounded by tiny OH-6 "loaches" and OH-58 "Kiowas." A variety of cargo helicopters took part in the operation as well: Army CH-47 "Chinooks" and CH-54 "Cranes" and Marine CH-53 "Jolly Green Giants."

Life at LZ Kilo was not easy by any means for the men of the 223d. They were forced to set up semi-permanent residence in what had been an abandoned, crater-potted wasteland. Discomfort was the rule, not the exception. One day, they would be trying unsuccessfully to keep out the icy wind with long-unused field jackets; the next might find them drenched with sweat. When it rained, the choking dust would be transformed into thick, treacherous mud which oozed over boots and tripped the unwary.

Artillery bombardments became common, and so did well-constructed bunkers. It was difficult to construct anything of a permanent nature because of the danger of having it destroyed. Concertina wire was strung around the base, although on some sides it would have taken a human fly to reach the base. Constant vigilance was necessary.

Things were tough for the men on

WILDER

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MATTINGLY

the ground, but the men in the skies had it infinitely tougher. Flack from enemy antiaircraft batteries was murderous, forming a blanketlike cloud of destruction below the helicopters. Completion of the mission often exacted a heavy price, as many ships were downed by the heavy enemy firepower. MAJ Willis Bunting, commanding officer of the 48th AHC, described the resistance that U.S. helicopters were encountering in Laos: "It's no picnic over there. We just lost a ship, and the pilot's hurt. We're trying to get him out now."

Insertion and extraction of ARVN troops left the ships exposed to heavy enemy small arms fire, but Brigade helicopters continued to fly their missions.

At this writing, Operation Lam Son 719 was not yet completed. Consequently, HAWK has not attempted to give any final assessment in terms of hours or sorties flown, enemy killed or supplies captured. Lam Son 719 struck a devastating blow at the enemy, but its toll was heavy on American forces, too. Many Brigade aviators and crewmen lost their lives in the support of ARVN troops, but to recount the heroics of each individual would be impossible. At Dong Ha on March 29, 35 Brigade aviators were given awards for valor for their actions in Lam Son 719. LTG James L. Sutherland, commander of XXIV Corps, presented the awards, which included 14 Silver Stars and 20 Distinguished Flying Crosses.

The fighting still continues in the for-shrouded valleys imprisoned by rugged, tree-covered hills. Grunts slog through the mud while helicopter crews anxiously scan the mist below for the blossoming explosions of antiaircraft fire. It brings to mind earlier wars. A crew chief remarked,

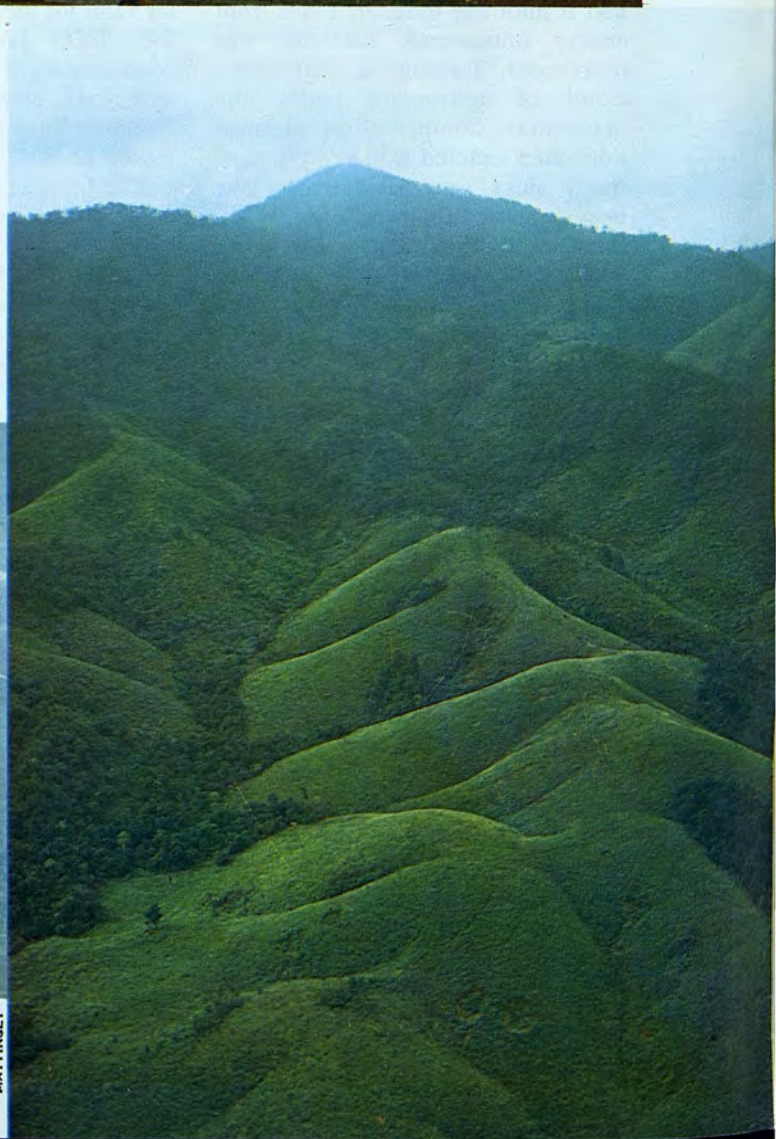
WILDER

WILDER

"This country looks like Korea or Germany in the old war movies, not Vietnam." The resemblance is remarkable. One almost expects to see Patton's tanks rumbling by in a headlong thrust at the enemy's heart. There are no cheering townspeople, though, welcoming the American liberators.

There are no people at all, save a few who work on the large allied camps. It is as if no one wants this land. Few Americans serving in the north would disagree with such a statement, yet there is a certain beauty in the rugged green hills. Perhaps, when the mists of war have been lifted from the land, this beauty and the promise it holds will become visible to all.

WILDER

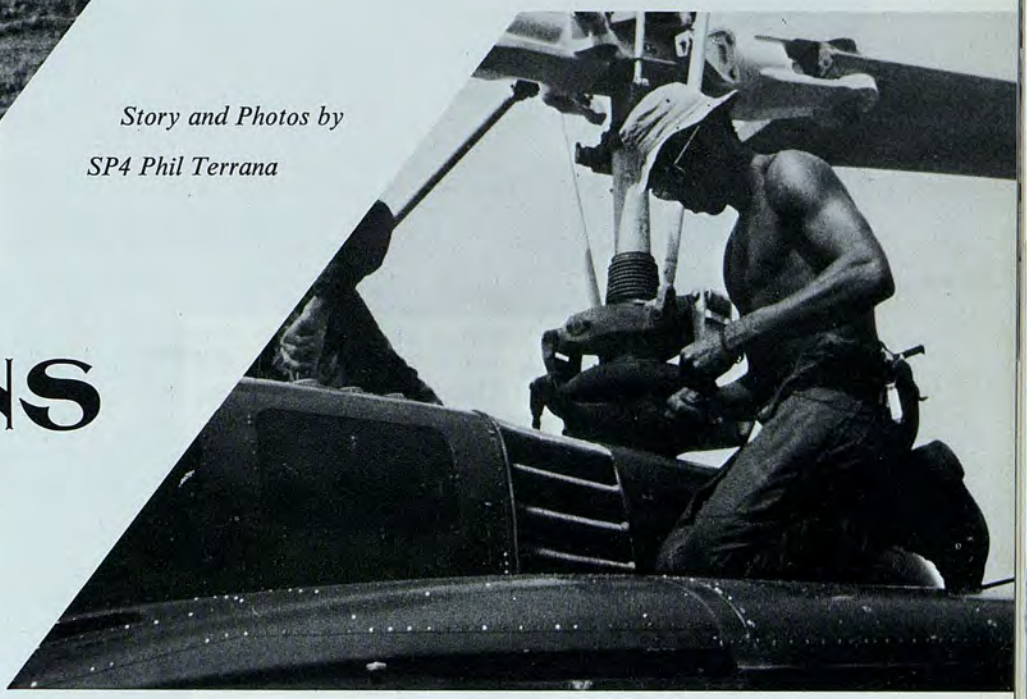


MATTINGLY

USA + RAN = EMU

Story and Photos by

SP4 Phil Terrana



TAIPANS of the DELTA

"Listen mate, we'll help you if we can. Just nime the way."

"Well, we're an Army unit, you understand. And you're Navy. The two are very different, you know."

"Right mate, but there must be some way we can get together. I reckon we can do it. Whadda you reckon?"

"Well, we can't bring the Army out to sea, and I don't suppose you Navy boys want to put your ships in dry dock and follow us out into the rice paddies. No, we'll have to find some common ground between us."

"'Ere sport, if it's common ground ya want, we've got no real problem at all. Ya see, the one thing common to both the land and the sea happens to be the air above us, mate. We've got chopper pilots and bloody good ones, I might say. We'd be more than happy to join up with you fellas."

"Then that settles it. We'll have your Navy pilots join up with our Army pilots and form the 135th Assault Helicopter Company. And since we'll be the only unit of this nature fighting here, we'll call ourselves the Experimental Military Unit. We'll be the EMUs."

"My oath mate—that sounds pretty good. Nime of an Aussie bird—big wings and not really built for flying, ya see. Could say it's got a bit in common with the Army and the Navy."

Obviously this conversation never really took place, and the actual joining of the Royal Australian Navy with the United States Army was just a bit more detailed than it appears here. Essentially, though, since Australian helicopter pilots serve in their Navy, and since it was helicopter pilots that we needed, it was this aviation aspect which brought the two organizations together.

"We were originally attached to the 135th," explained Lieutenant Commander Winston P. James, the company's executive officer, "but we have since become a totally integrated unit."

The influence of the Australians on the unit is evident everywhere. The beards are perhaps the most obvious sign, as is the Australian beer and the wombats hanging in the Club. And for anyone who has been to Australia on R & R, the scenic posters in the mess hall serve as a welcome reminder of the land down under.

There are other not so obvious but very real signs of the Australian influence. "We feel very strongly that one of the reasons for our fine record," comments LTCDR James, "is the competitive atmosphere that exists in this unique unit. We both have our own ideas on how certain things should be done, and by work-

ing together a synthesis has occurred, and what we think of as the best possible procedures have evolved."

Since 1967, the 135th has put its fine record, which includes two separate 10,000 accident-free-hour periods, on the line in the day-in, day-out struggle of the Delta. Combat assault missions in the IV Corps area have carried its crews over the vast stretch of diverse and communist-infested land ranging from the Gulf of Thailand through the U Minh Forest and into the rice paddies of the Mekong Delta.

"Because of Vietnamization, there has been a noted decrease in the amount of combat assault missions," explained MAJ Fred G. Dunaway, company commander. "We are primarily involved in combat support missions now where we work very closely with the 7th, 9th, and 21st ARVN Divisions."

Combat support can be meant to—and usually does—include taking part in every type of activity which might occur on any given day of fighting.

A typical day had ship 682 flying trail slick. For this mission, 1LT Colin P. Collins was aircraft commander and WO1 Jack T. Bradley was pilot. The crew chief was SP4 Anthony Anderson and the right door gunner was Leading Air Crewman Barry Musch. Flying Charlie-Charlie (Command and Control) was LT James C. Buchanan (RAN).

The mission began smoothly enough with the eight ships lifting off the Dong Tam airfield at 8 a.m. The gentle mist which had covered the city of My Tho and the neighboring rice paddies was slowly lifting and going into hiding for the day, much as the enemy was doing.

Flying in formation across the My Tho river, the ships arrived shortly at the Ben Tre airstrip, where they set down to load the first group of troops. Moments later they were in the air looking for the smoke markers designating various drop-off points.

It does not take long to appraise the security of the area. Immediately upon setting foot on the ground the ARVNs set up their perimeter guards around the aircraft. When they are alone on the ground, they know the gunships will be protecting them from the sky. They value this protection very highly and realize only too well how important it is to return this protection while these ships are on the ground. No more than 30 seconds after they had first set down, the ships were airborne and spraying a volley of machinegun fire into the adjoining treeline. Although only a short time is spent on the ground, both the helicopter crews and the ARVN ground troops know it is a very critical time if enemy snipers are in the area. The teamwork displayed for this short period insures that the drop will be executed successfully.

Commenting on this particular region, LACM Musch explains, "At one time this was one of the communist strongholds. The families and villages were thoroughly immersed in the communist ideology. Many areas are still over 50 per cent communist, making the region very insecure."

Following the drop, the formation flew to Tan Phu in the Vinh Binh Province. "This airstrip dates back to the Japanese and World War II," notes LACM Musch, adding that this is true of most of the airfields and the towns which have been built alongside them—just a small indication of how long the people in this area have watched aircraft from many foreign lands carry their soldiers off to battle.

Two similar drops that morning and the crews were going back to Dong Tam for lunch. But it was not a very long stop at all and they were soon back in the air.

For the afternoon the ships were pretty much flying their own missions, merely reporting back to C & C periodically. Their flight plans were now more diversified and the area they were working in more widespread.

The first mission for ship 682 was a medevac. The small outpost was so immersed in the brush and bamboo plants that even with the smoke it was difficult to locate the people below. A man on the ground waved frantically as the ship made two passes, until finally they spotted him and set down in the little clearing.

"In spite of the attempts they had made to cut open a clearing, we still were not able to get any closer than four or five feet off the ground," explained 1LT Collins. "The brush is just too thick, and from the looks of some of those bamboo stalks, the plants must have been 20 feet high before they cut them."

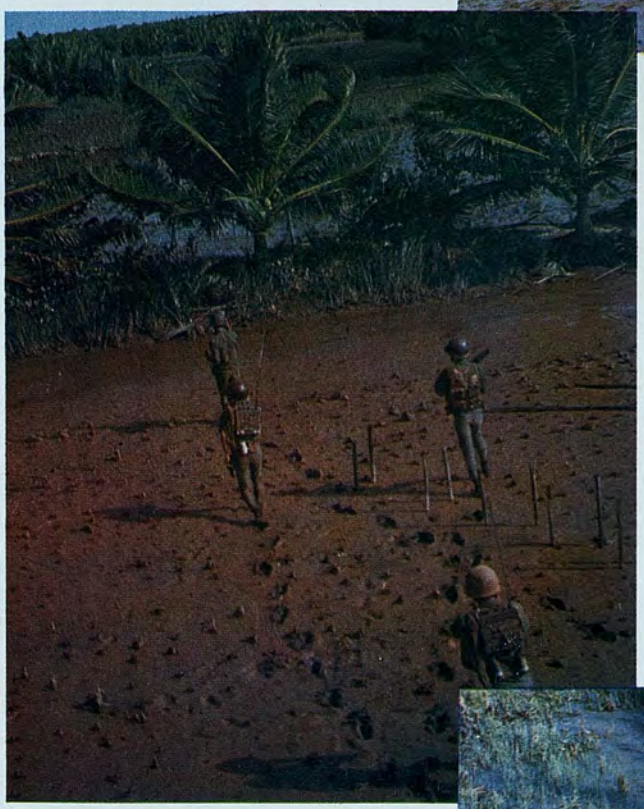
The slightly injured were helped onto the ship while attempting to help their more seriously wounded buddies. There was little noise aboard the aircraft as it flew to the ARVN hospital at My Tho. Conversation consisted only of solemn inquiries as to the identity of the bandaged soldiers. Although the ship was crowded and most of the wounded uncomfortably packed in, there was no complaining. They merely stared out the doors, concerned about their wounds and wondering whether the doctors would bring them good news or bad.

An ambulance was already waiting at the landing point and the wounded were swiftly transferred from the aircraft. On the other side of the barbed wire, no more than 50 feet away, a mother sat on her porch preparing a meal while children rode up and down the streets on their bikes. They appeared not to notice what was happening—more evidence of how accustomed the people have become to the harsh realities of war.

Flying supplies in is as important as flying the wounded out, and with the medevac mission completed, the ship was flown to the nearby 10th Regiment Command Post. In seconds the ship was filled from bottom to top with rice, clothing, medical supplies and reading material for distribution in the Kien Hoa Province. For most of these outposts, this supply run is their only contact with the outside, and even this is all too short. As the ship was preparing to lift off, an American ran up and handed the gunner a letter which was quickly stuffed into a pocket to be mailed at a later time. Several more of these missions were flown before the ship returned home in the late afternoon.

Once back in the company, the crew members had pushed the varied activities of the day aside. Naval Airman Malcolm E. Goss was teaching a newbee the rules to a dart game. Others were just listening to the music and taking it easy.

The experiment which began in October of 1967 has long since been termed a success. It has gone through the testing period, which has seen the Royal Australian Navy and the American Army successfully join forces in the everyday fight against Communism in the Delta.



ARVN troops wait expectantly as the gunship hovers over the landing zone (above). Once on the ground, they seek the cover of the nearby treeline (left) while several fall back to set up a temporary guard around the aircraft (right).

Houses Made of Tears

Story and Photos by SP4 Jim Woolsey

The Golden Gate barracks at Phu Loi maintain a clean appearance inside, despite large gaps in the wall where boards are set at angles to each other. There are no distinguishable odors, pleasant or otherwise. Sounds of magazine pages turning slowly and regularly and a television set playing low are the only sounds in the room. Painfully absent is the sound of conversation.

There is nothing your senses can tell you about The Golden Gate. If you dig beyond your senses, however, you realize the two to 20 men in the room are crumbling inside and trying to find something—both in themselves and in the world—to cement their torn and battered lives together.

These men are making an attempt to rip themselves from the miasmic womb of heroin addiction.

The Golden Gate is one of many "halfway houses" which came into being as a result of the Army's amnesty/rehabilitation program last fall. Under this program, soldiers using drugs may turn themselves in for treatment and whatever rehabilitation is available amid the unique circumstances of Vietnam. To enter, the soldier must (1) not be under investigation or facing prosecution for drug abuse, and (2) "honestly seek rehabilitation." No punishment for drug abuse will

"Rap sessions" are a major part of rehabilitation. SP4 Michael Fortuin (left) and SP4 William Serpa, counselors at the Golden Gate halfway house, try to ease the pains of withdrawal and make the patients feel natural without a needle.

follow his admittance to the program, provided he is not found to be using drugs after his release.

Dangerous drugs are a serious problem in Vietnam, particularly heroin, because of its plentiful supply, high degree of purity and extremely low cost to the American soldier. According to the Steinberg Report (see Editor's Note), the heroin procured in Vietnam is 95 per cent pure, and an ounce sells for less than $20. The same amount of pure heroin may be worth up to $40,000 in the United States.

A GI accustomed to spending only $2 a day for heroin here will return to Chicago, New York or Muskogee and face the likelihood of spending 50 times that amount for "skag" which will be only 4 to 8 per cent pure.

Fortunately, the prospect of returning to one's home and family is one of the major factors leading a user to the amnesty/rehabilitation program.

"The man on drugs can circumscribe the whole thing in time and geography," said LTC William G. Caput, 1st Aviation Brigade surgeon. "He can rationalize his drug use in relation to his tour in Vietnam. A termination goal, the DEROS, becomes a very real factor in his effort to get off drugs. So to speak, the user can isolate this period in time and can make a cleaner break with it than can a user in the States who lives in his drug environment."

Speaking along the same lines was SP4 Michael Fortuin, head counselor at The Golden Gate and known as "Dutchy" to the men. "They're worried about getting back to their families," he said. "They try to recapture the image they left with—little boy, adult or whatever."

The amnesty/rehabilitation program begins with the company commander. He is the one who must make sure a wooden box labeled "Amnesty Program" is located outside the orderly room, and he must check it to see who in his company wants out of the expensive, degrading shell of heroin addiction. In addition, he must "spread the word," educate his men to the consequences of drug abuse. He and his NCOs are the ones who can start an addict on the road to recovery.

To point up the destructive powers of drugs usually involves sending a graduate of The Golden Gate among the men he used to associate with, the "dopers," as SP4 Fortuin occasionally refers to them, although without contempt. This is a rugged job for a man just released from a non-drug environment, because "skag freaks see things in themselves that are unpleasant and tend to downgrade the cured user for regaining his pride."

This, incidentally, is one method by which SP4 Fortuin and other counselors are able to check on a man's progress after he's left the halfway house.

"The friends he had when he was on skag were other skag freaks," he said. "It isn't hard to find out who they are. If I ask them how the expatient is doing and they start running him down, I know he's making out okay."

What actually happens to an individual at The Golden Gate? What takes place during those cru-

MAJ Fred Frederick, 12th Aviation Group surgeon, offers encouragement and concern for this man, a patient at the Golden Gate.

For four days a halfway house patient must stay around the barracks. Magazines help to ease this immobility—and draw his mind to other matters that don't need mainlining.

cial five to 10 days without heroin, without pressure to "get a good high" —and with someone trying to understand the user as a human being, convincing him of his worth?

For the first four days, the drug user stays around the barracks, away from any temptation to continue his habit. This is also a good chance for the counselors to screen out "shammers," who waste valuable time that might be spent helping a sincere man return to society.

"When he's high, it's a drug user's nature to lie," SP4 Fortuin said. "But when he's going through withdrawal, he can't help but tell the truth."

During the latter part of his stay, the user is permitted to sign out and go to the PX, usually with a counselor. Evening "rap sessions" are held four times a week, in addition to countless periods of conversation between counselor and patient whenever the patient feels like talking.

The amnesty/rehabilitation program, despite limitations inherent in the fact that this is Vietnam, has been generally viewed as a step forward by the counselors and doctors. The most urgent requirement is the need for educational materials that are credible and which deemphasize the punitive aspect of drug abuse.

At present, most halfway houses throughout Vietnam operate on separate schedules, with each separate headquarters establishing its own program.

LTC Caput said, "For every unit that maintains a rehabilitation program, you have a different operation. There's nothing definite yet, although there seems to be a move towards greater centralization."

An improvement to the program, according to SP4 Fortuin, would be greater emphasis upon each patient as an individual. Every attempt should be made to bring the positive forces within the person to the surface.

"That's the way I work it," SP4 Fortuin said. "And guys'll come back to The Golden Gate and say, 'Dutchy, you've really done a lot for me. How much can I pay you?' I tell them, 'You can offer me as much as you want, but the only pay I'll accept is a thank you.'"

Editor's Note: John Michael Steinberg, an investigator for the Senate Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency, presented his report on the illegal use of drugs in Vietnam in October 1970.

DOUBLE EXPOSURE

He hated the Americans. The destruction of the village was extensive. It was a bad scene for Nguyen Hi Minh. The earth of his birthplace was marked and gouged with bomb craters. Twenty feet of ground in some spots could not be found without the pock mark of bombs. Off the road, some new homes were going up next to some older dwellings. A young boy in a gray jacket watched the truck pass by.

A martial spirit overwhelmed Hi as he looked at his home. Meet the Americans, meet the Americans and vindicate this ruination! The Russian-made truck was crammed with 20 young men. Some, like Hi, wanted to kill as many Americans as possible.

Friends from the north had been in the army, some had been killed in the war, although no one could be sure of how many. Apprehension struck Hi six months ago when the draft notice came. Leaving home, thought Hi, would be a sad experience. Now, the trepidation had disappeared, replaced with the heat of excitement and vindictiveness of a man's initiation to war.

The man looked puzzled at the question. Is Mohawk flying exciting? Those two concepts didn't mesh. MAJ David G. Hendricks commands the 225th Surveillance

DESTEFANO

Aided by a light table, SGT John Carooza scans infrared imagery for signs of enemy activity.

Story by SP5 Tony DeStefano

Being one of the more sophisticated of Army aircraft, the Mohawks can be aheadache to work with.

GREENE

DESTEFANO

Bathed in the warmth of hanger lights, a Mohawk waits for maintainance.

Airplane Company (SAC). Essentially the Mohawks in the 225th do what the secrecy-shrouded Air Force spy planes do. They take pictures. In addition, the Mohawks have infrared sensors and radar sensors that detect heat and movement. It sounds exciting and sophisticated, but it really isn't all that great.

"Mohawk flying is not a thrilling thing," reflects MAJ Hendricks. "It calls for a great deal of levelheadedness and straight-line flying. The head must be kept in the cockpit."

The nature of the surveillance equipment dictates the necessity for straight, level flying. Certain photography—mosaic photography—can't be made with altitude deviations of more than 10 feet. Infrared sensors and the SLAR (side looking airborne radar) mechanism must be flown right on line so the intelligence people can plot the findings without much trouble. Abrupt turns cause distortion in the imagery, which makes intelligence work difficult, if not impossible.

Straight line flying is what is needed. Fly through holes in clouds on your way home, but stay straight during the mission.

One hundred and twenty days had passed since the truck went by the bombed village. One hundred and twenty days and 50 men less. Malaria had taken some of Hi's friends, a B-52 strike snuffed some more. Still, Hi had made the demanding trip alive.

With the 528th Rear Service Group, he was constantly on the go. Working as a transporter, Hi helped move three, maybe five tons of supplies a week.

They moved constantly to avoid detection. So far they had been successful. The meals were cooked in the daytime. No fires at night. Airplanes, they were warned, could see the fires warmth at night.

The mission of the 528th would take it to some rich rice area west of Tuy Hoa. Agents would buy the rice; later Hi and others would make the pick-up. Two armed guards would cover the trip. Normally assault rifles, grenades, and RPG rounds would be taken. This trip a 60mm mortar would be toted.

DESTEFANO

Following a mid-morning coffee break, spiced with a sweet roll, MAJ Hendricks thought about the job of the 225th. Did it seem impersonal? Yes, it did. Those little black dots, it seemed, were pumped into the field units and digested by the intelligence staffs with a lot of other minutiae. The rumination of this data results in bomb and bullet expenditures at "suspected enemy positions."

Seldom do we hear about it, reflected MAJ Hendricks. It is all quite antiseptic; all distant.

"You can't raise the flag for, say, 25 kills. In a combat assault you can see the results." The MAJ gestured with his hands to show an explosion. Feedback for the 225th is rare.

"The most you see of blood in the war," reflected one intelligence specialist, "is on the side of your neck when shaving."

"Occasionally," said MAJ Hendricks, "you would have to remind yourself and the men that you're doing something."

A night ambush near Tuy Hoa. The Americans were outnumbered. Hi had fired the mortar before and took over when the other man fled. The sky showed bright with flares. The ground was sliced with orange tracers. A rocket grenade slammed into the dirt. A fusillade of metal and rock splinters scattered.

Hi pumped the first round down the tube. It dropped 100 meters away. They gauged the fire on tiny muzzle flashes in distance. The fight continued for three hours. A plane circled overhead. It never dipped close to the action.

A flash, followed by the lancing action of metal fragments, stung Hi's face and chest. He was knocked backwards into some grass. The fighting continued around him.

"What have we spotted?" SGT John Carozza had to think about that. The field units who receive imagery readouts from the 225th rarely tell anything. The 173d Airborne sometimes inserts troops on infrared emissions phoned in by SGT Carozza's image interpreters. Some elephants had been spotted with people and supplies near Cambodia. Actually, it is difficult to predict what happens to the intelligence from the 225th.

One night, though, C Company of the 75th Rangers met an enemy force of undetermined size in the lowlands west of Tuy Hoa. The area is rice-cultivated.

"We got a call," remembers SGT Carozza, "from the Rangers about the contact, and we immediately briefed their people as to our capabilities. In about an hour we diverted four ships to scan the ambush site."

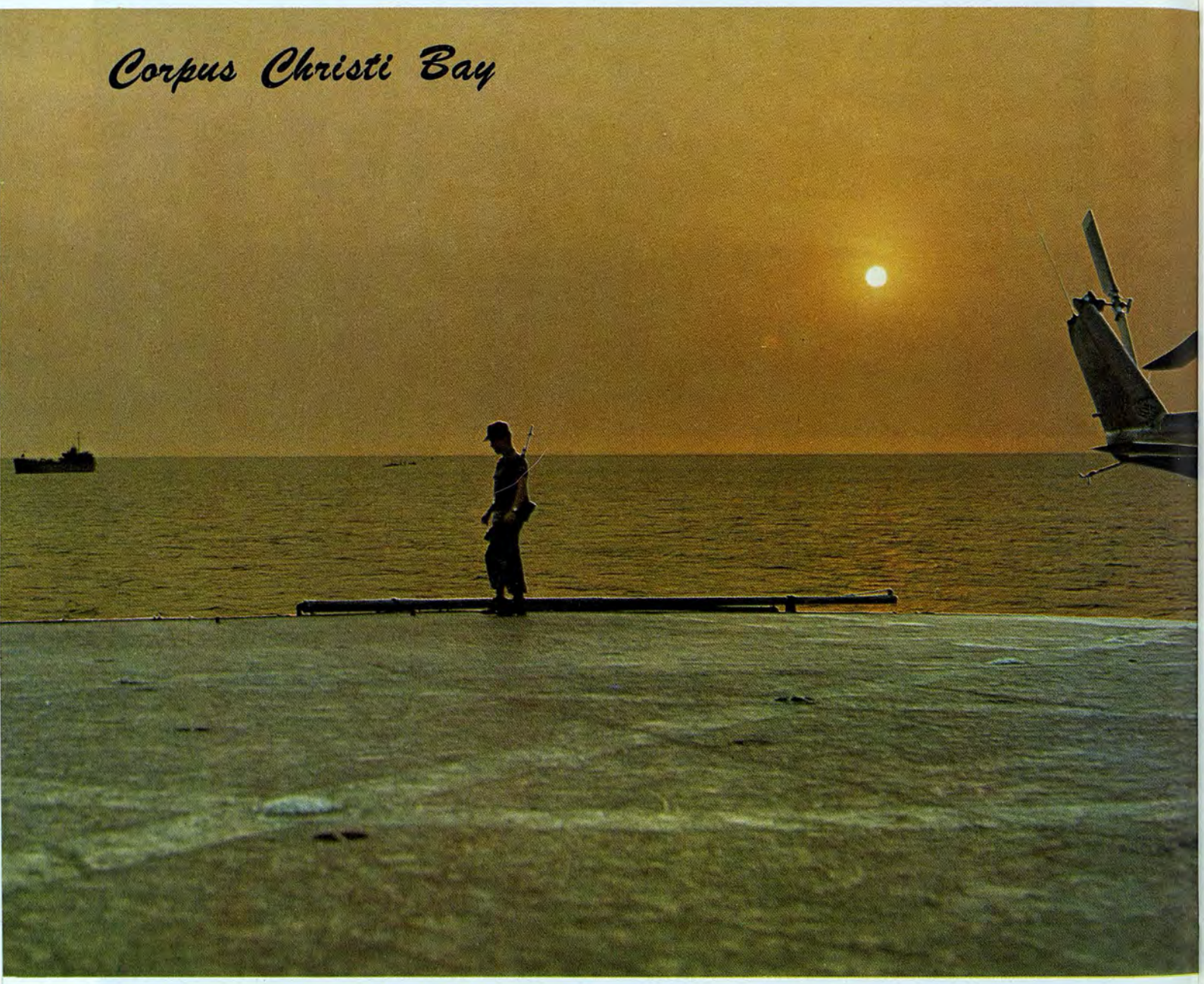
From the air the Mohawk TOs (Tactical Observers) relayed in-flight spotting of movement. Mortar tube flashes were called in and the position plotted. Allied fire was directed to what the Mohawks saw.

"No, we didn't get a body count," recalls SGT Carozza. "The Commanding General of I Field Force did send us a congratualtory letter."

But SGT Carozza couldn't tell you for sure what had happened. You'd have to dig through the files of the combat units for something factual. Back into the shop want SGT Carozza, the shop with the wall-high maps and colored lines, to plan another night's work.

A night engagement near Tuy Hoa found Mohawks from the 225th making visual and electronic surveillance of the flight.

FACTORY AT SEA



Story and Photos by SP4 Phil Terrana

As surely as he is going to stand in line for his chow or pick up cigarette butts on police call, the enlisted man serving in Vietnam can count on pulling guard duty. Those perimeter lines have to be secure and those bunkers have to be manned. But who ever heard of Army personnel checking to see that the flood gates are locked or being on the lookout for small craft sailing in the vicinity? What kind of guard duty is this?

In short, it is the type of guard an enlisted man is required to perform when he is assigned to the 1st T.C. Battalion (Aircraft Maintenance Depot) (Seaborne), serving on board the USNS Corpus Christi Bay. The battalion has been on the ship since her arrival in Vietnam in 1966 as the Floating Aircraft Maintenance Facility (FAMF). Its primary mission is to provide depot maintenance on Army aircraft components, avionics equipment, aircraft armament systems and parachutes.

The personnel performing this maintenance are Army mechanics, Army electrical engineers and Army lab technicians, and yet they are unique in that from the time they leave basic they are trained for eventual duty on board ship. This training does not apply solely to the maintenance people, but rather, to the whole battalion.

"As a photographer coming out of AIT, I knew I would be serving on the Corpus Christi," commented SP5 Robert W. Easton. "I was assigned to our sister battalion in Corpus Christi, Texas, where the emphasis was placed on my performing in my MOS aboard ship with a maintenance unit. It does have its advantages," he went on, "to know right away how your three-year tour will be spent. It really bothered a lot of people on the flight over here that I knew exactly where I would be stationed and what I would be doing while they knew nothing of what was in store for them."

"It is with this thought in mind that we try to have our men assigned to the Army Aeronautical Depot in Texas for at least a year," adds CSM Rudolph E. Seely. "It makes for an easier adjustment once they arrive here."

Nevertheless, there will still be a few obstacles for the newly assigned records clerk or supply clerk to overcome when he actually begins his "sea tour." While he won't be called upon to map any unknown trails through strange regions, he may well feel the need for a map when first confronted by the three dimensional maze of corridors and stairways. There will also be little things, such as bolted-down tables and chairs, to which he will have to become accustomed to in the mess hall.

While in the mess hall he will notice that there are no military personnel working in the kitchen—either as KPs or as cooks. "We have a civilian crew of 130 men belonging to the Military Sealift Command (MSC) who operate and maintain the vessel," comments the Executive Officer, MAJ Patty E. Brown. "This enables our unit to devote most of its time to repair work."

And just what is the extent of the repair work, and why is it performed on board a ship? "The basic thinking behind FAMF," explains MAJ Brown, "is to have the means of providing maintenance capabilities in any location under any given situation. Also, unlike a land based operation, when we leave an area we take one hundred per cent of our assets with us. With talk of our eventual pullout from Vietnam, the true value of the Corpus Christi becomes more apparent every day.

A tugboat pulls away from the dock to begin another day af transporting people and supplies to the many ships anchored off the coast.

"Another advantage that we have on the ship is we don't have to order supplies from the usual channels," he continued. "Although we are under the operational control of the 34th General Support Group, we are under the administrative control of Material Group No. 1 in Corpus Christi, Texas. We order right from them and by-pass a lot of red tape."

As to the extent of the operations, one merely has to follow the repairable items from where they are unloaded on the landing pad to the hangar below. Here, and in the adjoining shops, the engine components, electrical equipment and intricate instruments are repaired and restored to new or near-new specifications. Once repaired, the items can be taken to various shops where the finishing touches are added. They may require calibration or testing or merely a simple paint job. Whatever the case may be, the facilities are provided for on ship. The finished product is then sent to the packing room, where it is prepared for shipment to the Aviation Maintenance Management Center (AMMC) in Saigon. On the average, a monthly total of over 7,000 components having an acquisitional value of $4 million were returned to helicopter units in 1970.

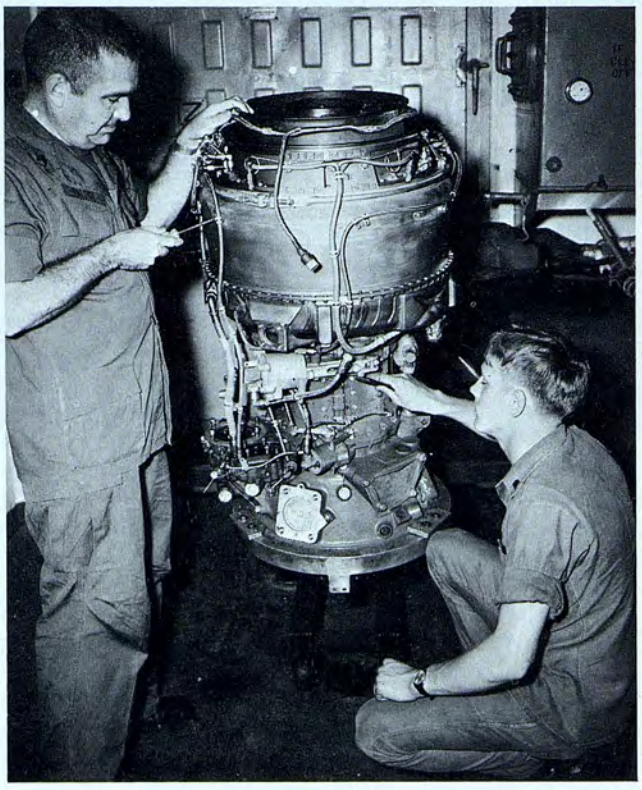
To enable the men to handle such a large work load, the ship is equipped with the third largest tech data library in the world. "It's really the hub of the whole operation," commented SSG John W. Prowers in reference to the 135,000 engineering drawings which are kept on file in the form of 35mm aperture cards. With several types of duplicating machines available, the

A helicopter sets down on one of the ship's two landing pads (above). Below the deck, these two mechanics finish work on a turbo engine.

library is capable of providing the shops with any information they might need to perform their jobs.

The crash analysis program—the only one of its type outside the United States—enables the crew to determine if the components either caused or contributed to an aircraft accident. It is an invaluable aid in preventing future mechanical failures.

Also aboard ship are chemical, metallurgy and heat treating labs, as well as transmission shops, rotor head shops and sheet metal shops—all combining to give the ship what would appear to be the capability of building a new aircraft from scratch.



"Actually we do manufacture certain items which are requested through the 34th Group," added MAJ Brown. "One of the major items coming out of our fabrication shop is the heavy-duty skid shoes used on Huey gunships."

Although permenently stationed in the South China Sea off the Vung Tau coast, the ship periodically travels up the coast to service other regions directly. This is about the only time the ship is not working at a full production level, as many of the delicate instruments do not function properly when the ship is in motion. When the ship does go into dry dock the crew tries to maintain a full production schedule.

"We are really kept busy," said SP5 Easton, "and many days you find yourself working from morning to night without catching the first glimpse of the sun until it is setting. If you happen to work down in the second or third deck you will have to get used to spending most of your time under a fluorescent light.

"Of course, when your day off comes around, you can get that morning barge back to the shore and get all the sun you want on the beach," he added, implying that Navy life may be appealing to a soldier.

Concerning the men's attitude toward the Navy life, CSM Seely observed, "Although the complaint 'I joined the Army to get away from the Navy in the first place' is frequently heard, the atmosphere on board the ship is basically not very different from that on land. We still operate as an Army unit performing an Army mission."

And the mission is an important one. In the midst of the M.A.S.H.-like intercom system and in spite of the many bruised shins resulting from walking through the hatchways, the men on the Corpus Christi are supplying the helicopter units in Vietnam with the machinery they need to continue their work.

A Brighter Smile...
...A Healthy Future

Story by 1Lt M. L. Shafer

SHAFER

Elementary school girl participating in fluoride treatment.

Dr. Nghiem Thi Hoa of the Ministry of Health and one of two doctors of dental science in Vietnam (standing) briefs health and education officials at Tay Ninh. Dr. Nguyen Con Ty, Tay Ninh Province medical chief, listens receptively.

In keeping with its goal of supplementing combat operations with an intensified civic actions program, the 12th Combat Aviation Group (CAG) has extended such activity to include a revolutionary preventive dentistry program.

Noted results of this program include a National Children's Dental Health Week, dental hygiene instruction to elementary school teachers and the eventual distribution of 182,860 toothbrushes to elementary school children.

CPT Michael Mullalley, former civic actions officer and now special projects officer for the preventive dentistry program of 12th CAG, said the program began as a provincial pilot project and mushroomed to include a large portion of Military Region III. The project was concieved last July and put into effect in mid-August. "We had, from the beginning, incorporated a dental civic action program into our activities. Our efforts in this area were directed toward extracting badly decayed teeth to immediately relieve intense pain. Because of limited time and large numbers of people visited, we could do little more," he explained.

It was through contact with the DENTCAP programs and observing the poor condition of so many teeth that the 12th CAG decided to form a program which might result in preventing or retarding tooth decay in early stages. The dental hygiene began to evolve.

CPT Mullalley explained that the team's first concern was to make the children aware of the importance of

LTC Joseph L. Konzelman, USARV preventive dentistry officer, instructs elementary school students in proper brushing technique as they participate in fluoride treatment.

dental hygiene. "We thought that the distribution of toothbrushes and instructional packets on proper brushing techniques would be one way of accomplishing this objective. We researched the idea thoroughly before we took action. I was particularly interested in determining if similar programs had been conducted and if they had been successful."

CPT Mullalley said that after his team decided to go with the project, there were many obstacles to overcome. "For one thing, we had to come up with toothbrushes. Our first idea was to buy them. However, our budget wouldn't allow us to do that. We were then informed that we might be able to use toothbrushes distributed for fluoride treatments at the replacement battalions."

The replacement battalions at Long Binh and Cam Ranh Bay were contacted, and they agreed to supply excess toothbrushes to the program until other sources could be found.

Bien Hoa Province was picked as the project area for distribution. The province medical chief and the Director of Elementary Education were contacted. They assisted in the preparation and directed the execution of the program.

Civic actions teams then visited the various schools in the province, distributing toothbrushes and educational material. Distribution was made to school administrators and teachers, who in turn distributed them to the indidual children.

The program was completed with the distribution of 28,500 toothbrushes and educational packets. CPT Mullalley's team then realized that the program was only a pilot project for things to come.

Shortly after completing the first project, a 12th CAG DENTCAP team visited a school that had been distributed toothbrushes in the early stages of the program. Of the 65 children treated by the team dentists, only four reported they were brushing their teeth. This and other similar incidents prompted CPT Mullalley and his team to continue and revamp their program, placing more emphasis on the proper application of individual dental hygiene.

It was decided that the teachers of elementary classes could be most effective in the instruction of dental hygiene, and the civic actions officer promptly solicited their help.

CPT Mullalley called on LTC Joseph L. Konzelman, USARV preventive dentistry officer, for aid. LTC Konzelman was aware of the groups efforts in dental hygiene programs and had been instrumental in obtaining toothbrushes from replacement battalions. Together they contacted medical chiefs and directors of elementary education for Bien Hoa, Tay Ninh and Bien Duong provinces. Arrangements were made for detal hygiene presentations to teachers' conferences. The teachers were briefed on the program, given educational packets and teaching plans to be used in their classrooms and were asked to participate in a fluoride treatment.

Elementary school children line-up to receive toothbrushes and educational packets.

School children participating in fluoride treatment and receiving instruction on proper brushing technique.

They were informed that they would be receiving toothbrushes to be distributed to their classes. Rather than use Americans to brief the elementary teachers, CPT Mullalley and LTC Konzelman enlisted the aid of Dr. Nghiem Thi Hoa of the Ministry of Health and one of two doctors of dental science in Vietnam.

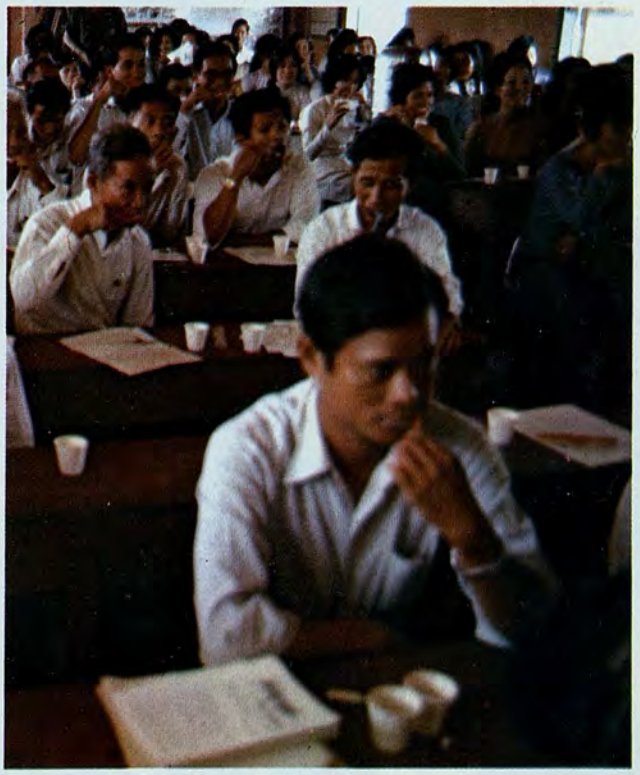
The 12th CAP provided transportation for Dr. Hoa and her staff as they visited 13 teachers' conferences and briefed 3,500 elementary school teachers in the three provinces.

In a more recent phase of the program, the team provided oral health orientation classes to teachers of day care centers, boarding schools and orphanages in the Xuan Loc Diocese (comprising three provinces) and Vung Tau City. This phase included oral health orientations to 162 teachers at 23 institutions; 6,986 children received preventive dentistry (fluoride) treatment.

CPT Mullalley is optimistic about the eventual results of the teacher conference briefings. "The teachers were interested in our program. I believe they will distribute the toothbrushes we give them and will insure the students use them frequently and properly. We have had reports of teachers assigning brushes to students and teaching dental hygiene by having the children brush their teeth in class."

In addition to the distribution of toothbrushes and promotion of dental hygiene programs in the elementary schools, CPT Mullalley and LTC Konzelman have initiated other programs to promote increased awareness of dental hygiene among the Vietnamese.

Elementary school teachers participate in fluoride treatment, emphasizing proper brushing technique.



When neither their property nor their honor is touched, the majority of men live content.

Machiavelli

DESTEFANO

DESTEFANO

DESTEFANO

Much more happiness is to be found in the world than gloomy eyes discover.

Nietzsche

DESTEFANO

That Island Called Man

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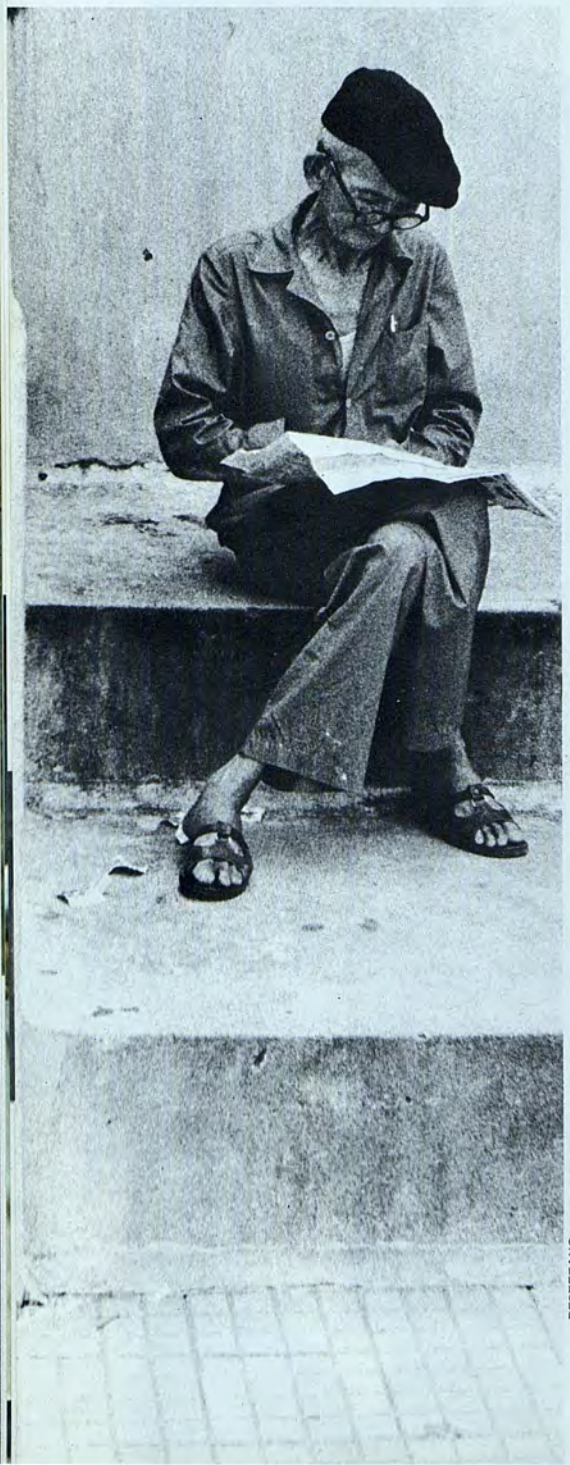
DESTEFANO

TERRANA



DESTEFANO

When I can look life in the eyes,
Grown calm and very coldly wise,
Life will have given me the Truth,
And taken in exchange—
My Youth

Teasdale

DESTEFANO

MALAYSIA

Stories and Photos by SP5 Tony DeStefano

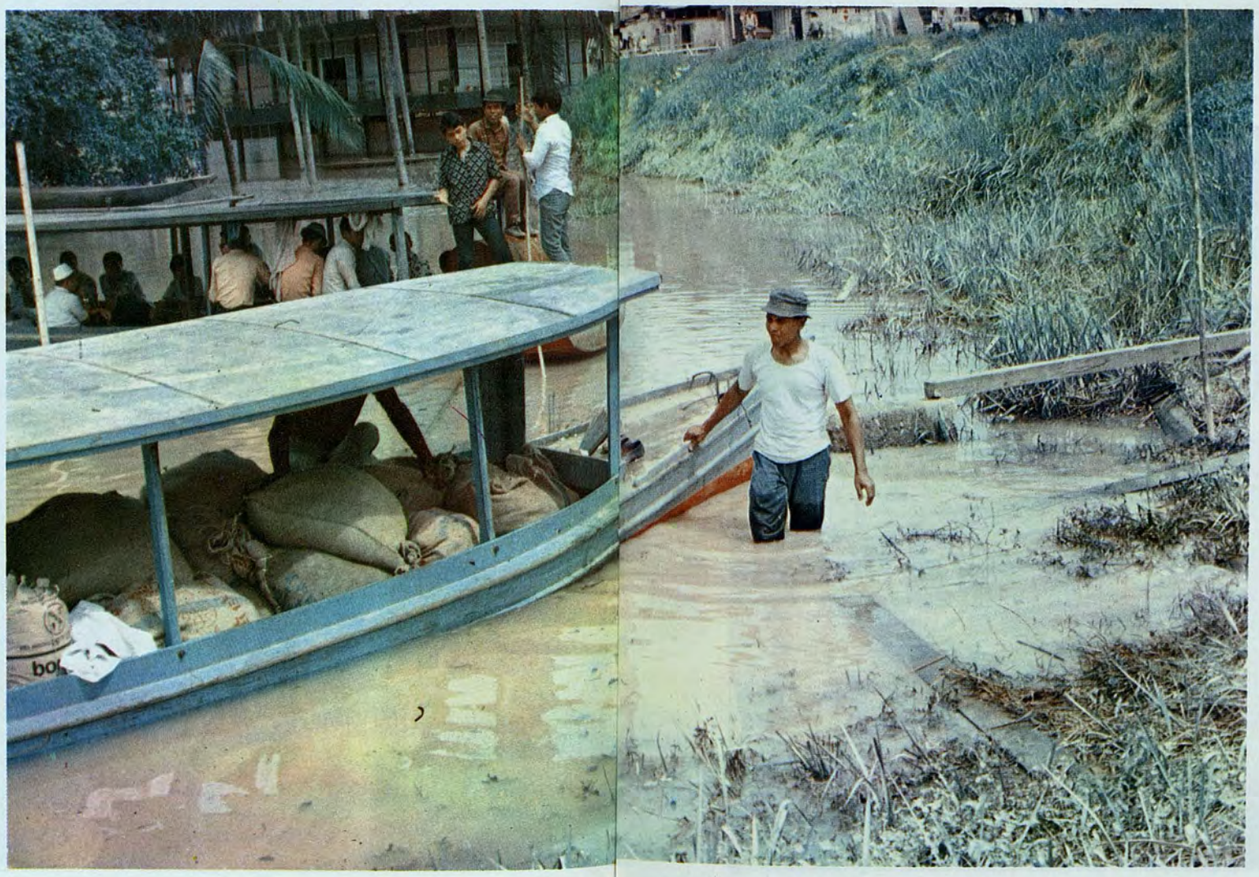
When torrential monsoon rains crippled the country of Malaysia, a special mercy mission was rushed by the United States Army, Vietnam (USARV), to assist the Malaysians in one of their gravest moments. The rain, miraculously, claimed less than 70 lives with the initial flooding. But the most severe test remained; the problem of moving tons of food, fuel, and medical supplies to thousands of stranded people. Disease and starvation had the potential to make the flood situation catastrophic. Actually, perseverance and haste by the Malaysians, the British, the Singaporians and the Americans hurdled the disaster.

Task Force "Golden Hawk," an amalgam of men and helicopters from the 1st Aviation Brigade, the 45th Medical Company and the 34th General Support Group moved 155 tons of supplies, food and medical items around Malaysia's Kuantan State. LTC Arthur Dalone, commanding officer of the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion, led Task Force "Golden Hawk" throughout the Malaysian operation. LTC Dalone had six UH-1 helicopters at his disposal, with ships from the 117th, 118th, 173d and 187th Assault Helicopter Companies, and the 45th Medical Company flying 415 sorties in support of the Malaysians.

To say that the Malaysian flood was an experience for the Americans involved is, of course, trite. It was a relief from the strains of war. It was an effort that gave evidence—a great deal of tangible evidence—that the work was doing the people so much good. It was a lot of things to the men of the task force, and in the four sections that follow we hope to communicate some interesting and diverse episodes from Task Force "Golden Hawk."

The first mission for the Proud Mary found Ray Kassim tossing off the first food to the hungry Malaysians, two of whom were of Indian descent.

LTC Arthur Dalone, commander of Task Force "Golden Hawk" is thanked by Malaysia's Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak for their support during the flood.



From a soccer field, "Proud Mary" lifted off. She was a helicopter. In her cargo compartment she held rice and canned pork. This was the first flood mission, and it gave the Americans a close look at the Malaysian flood and its toll on the people.

The sight was predictable, but it still quickened the pulse. It seemed like a moment from some World War II newsreel. The liberation of Paris. Scrambling out from behind a building, which was surrounded by water on a tiny spot of high ground, a dozen Malaysians rushed to meet the aircraft. The wind from the blades, like an invisible shield, kept the people several yards away from the hovering ship. Delight was clearly visible on their faces. Some had not eaten properly in a week. Men tore open sacks which were dumped, their faces lighting up as the rice spilled and blew from the sacks. A woman beckoned thanks to the ship with open arms. If she could have embraced the flying machine, she would have.

Ray Kassim was from India and traveled to the United States. He was a student and then met the conscription phenomenon. The encounter resulted in Ray's becoming a crew chief with the 118th Assault Helicopter Company.

It was next to impossible to appear inconspicuous on the streets of Malaysia. The first night the American task force traveled to their quarters along the streets of the town of Kuantan, a fishing center near the South China Sea, 160 miles east of Kuala Lumpur. The people stared, whispered and managed shy, weak smiles. One American, a lanky, wiry, blondhaired West Virginian, wore a floppy bush hat. In one hand he toted a bulbous flight helmet.

As the West Virginian walked to his hotel, a small, old Malaysian woman approached him.

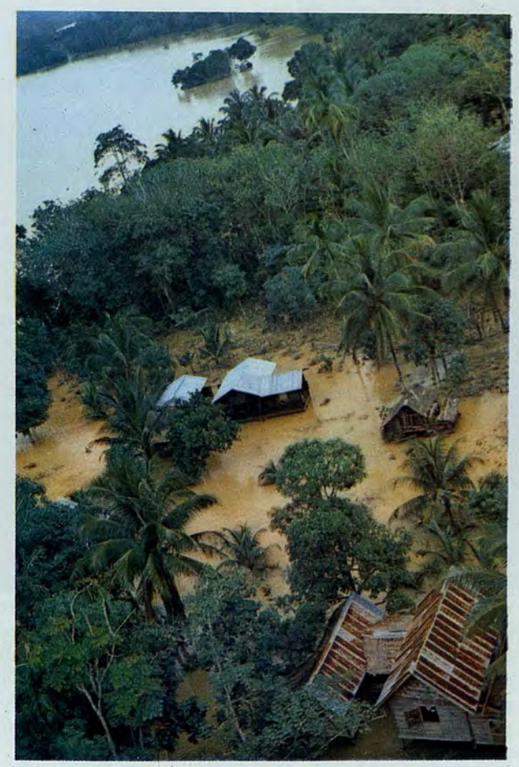
"Where do you come from?" she asked in rather competent English. The British domination of the country in the past makes the language popular.

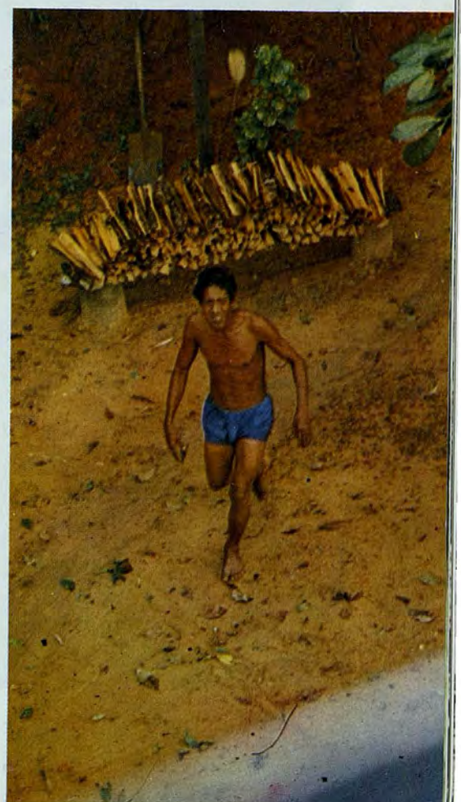
"Vietnam," said the American.

"Are you here to help out in the flood?" Things were still quite bad at the time.

"Yes, we are," he answered.

"Well, thank you," said the old woman. She turned and walked on.





The flood water was still very high at Pekan, bad luck city on Malaya's east coast. Heavy monsoons had dumped so much water on the land that the rivers choked and overflowed with the torrent as it rushed to the sea from the interior. The ocean, the South China Sea, the final receptacle of the flood, regurgitated the silt water back to the land. An ocean that couldn't accept the water. Pekan, near the sea and the river, was flooded.

Skimming over the water of the Pahang River, which had caused so much of the flooding at Pekan, a helicopter from the 118th Assault Helicopter Company looked for a sick woman. That day there were more than one. Finding a sick, pregant woman was not easy, as the land was a puzzle. Crisscrossed with brown water, the terrain was an indecipherable geography.

A speed boat was below. On board was the woman. The crew chief motioned the boat to head for what was assumed to be the river bank. You had to assume the river bank was there at some point, as the flood had obliterated the river's edge. Pulling next to a flooded hut, the boat crew wondered if the pilot expected them to mount the metal roof which hung about a foot and a half above the water. The pilot did expect it. He also expected the metal roof to withstand the rotor wash which had lifted the roof of a nearby house. These were great expectations. The tin flapped and stretched against the nails. The aircraft was maneuvered just right. The roof held. It seemed very textbook-like. The pilot had flown combat assault and seemed about as worked up over the job as if he were buying a bottle of aspirin. It was a day's work.

To the sick woman and her husband, being swept away from home by a noisy, windy machine, it made for quite a day. But neither the woman nor the crew would see each other again. Tomorrow the soldiers were going home to Vietnam.


OSWALD

Her obsidian-like eyes were mute and glazed as the rotor wash swept across her face. Lifted on the litter into the helicopter, she showed no awareness. She had the look of a somnambulist, a sleep walker on the fringe of death.

The doctor seized the needle and grabbed one arm, then the other arm. He shook his head and gave a puzzled look at the medic. They found no veins on her arms. The medic motioned to her left ankle. The skin was quickly cut with a lancet.

The buffeting helicopter forced every move to be deliberate. The girl was dying. Her newborn child was miles away, swaddled in his grandmother's arms in a grass hut. The young mother was hemorrhaging. After having brought forth a life, her womb was spilling her blood incessantly. A precious trickle of blood moved from her ankle to the floor. The intravenous device refused to work. The doctor wrestled with the plastic tubing. Glucose solution sprayed the interior of the helicopter. The trickle of blood fell to the floor. As the helicopter landed, a tear welled in the corner of her left eye. She died. Her husband gathered her clothes into a colorful scarf.

Days later, the American medic returned to the flood-locked village. No one knew if the people were aware of the girl's death. "I sensed the villagers pointing and staring," recalled the medic later. He had come once before, those dark eyes seemed to say. He took away the girl. And he didn't bring her back.

EDITORIAL

Get Some

That economics is dominating the news today cannot come as too great a surprise. Unemployment has reached more than five per cent, and new jobs are daily becoming more scarce. This does not really seem important to us in Vietnam, protected as we are by the c alendar and ocean. But days melt into months, and "short" means not only going home; it also may mean a discharge from active duty. At this time, those abstract figures of unemployment will become frighteningly relevant. Considering this, we ask that you make an objective appraisal of yourself as to what you have to offer a potential employer that other applicants lack. In most situations, experience and education are the only valid answers. Without either, your chances for a job, much less a good job, are negligible.

Fortunately, the Government and the Army have provided means for you to receive formal education and experience, both during and after your service obligation. While in the Army, you may take advantage of the undergraduate program offered by the University of Maryland. In Vietnam alone, the university has classes at more than 20 locations. Stateside, most posts have liaison with local colleges and universities and will provide transportation for the soldier desiring to attend classes. Also available at home or abroad are Army correspondence courses ranging the spectrum of technical fields.

Obviously, that which is most desired by a potential employer is a combination of formal training and experience. In most cases, for as little as a three-year re-enlistment, the Army will guarantee you training in any school for which you qualify. Three years is not a long time, considering this training may mean the difference between a wellpaying profession with a future and the unemployment line between menial, degrading jobs.

Upon your honorable release from active duty, the Veterans Administration offers financial assistance to help obtain schooling resulting in high school diplomas or doctorates of philosophy.

These are but a few of the benefits available to you. You owe it to yourself to become more familiar with the total scope of what the Army is willing to do for you. See your career counselor and education officer soon.

from the chaplain

Chaplain (LTC) Reginald J. Huebner
1st Aviation Brigade

Anniversaries are not only times of celebration, but also occasions to reflect upon the past. Much has happened during the 1st Aviation Brigade's five years of existence. Countless individuals have seen duty in Vietnam with the Brigade and other units, many for their second and third tours. Gratitude and appreciation are due to all of them, past and present.

In viewing the past, it is only proper and fitting that we recall the sacrifices made by many members of the Brigade, the sacrifice of life. What memorials can we erect to their memory? I suggest that each of us can become a living memorial by dedicating ourselves to the maintenance of freedom-loving principles and ideals.

God has given each of us a life to live. This life ought to be lived fully, but most important, it ought to be lived well. In our lives we are not strictly on our own, unless that is the way we want it. God does not force Himself upon anyone. But if we want help, the God of love and life will give us help. We need only to ask.

With the help of God we can build a better tomorrow for ourselves, our loved ones and our country. That tomorrow, however, begins today. The spiritual values and deeds that germinate today will grow into those values worth remembering and emulating by a world tomorrow. Today we can build upon the past for the future.


HAWK
HONEY

BUNKER 5

Story by SP4 Jim Woolsey

Walk through any barracks, and two things you're certain to spot are cameras and music-playing devices. One records the new and unfamiliar; the other does precisely the opposite. By bringing tunes and lyrics of more familiar surroundings, tape players and radios help the GIs get over the "what-the-heck-am-I-doing-here" sensation.

Music is probably the only commodity, outside of his own personality, which identifies the GI with his background. This generation of fighting men is recruited from a widely diverse collection of young people who are marked by a commitment to musical expression. Everyone switches on the radio and listens to certain songs. Some make the music themselves.

At 1st Aviation Brigade, five enterprising young men got together to form The Bunker Five. The idea came from BG Jack W. Hemingway, brigade commander, who was thinking of a 1st Aviation chorus. He contacted the chaplain, who sent out feelers to men, who while processing through his office, had indicated an interest in music.

SP4 Frank D'Angiolini, leader of The Bunker Five, wasn't sure the chorus idea would work. He suggested music geared for a small group to Chaplain (LTC) R. J. Huebner.

As it turned out, BG Hemingway was "very receptive," according to SP4 D'Angiolini, and The Bunker Five was on the way.

The other members of the group are SP5 Clarence Rossi of Pittsburgh; SP4 Dwight Borel of Houston; SP4 David McAloon of Claremont, Calif., and SP4 John Henkel of Cascade, Wisc. SP4 D'Angiolini, who hails from Philadelphia, and SP4 McAloon are the guitar players for the vocal group.

"Something for everyone" is the key phrase of The Bunker Five. Songs range from "Bye, Bye, Blackbird" to "Amazing Grace." Members of the Commanding General's mess as well as patients at the 24th Evacuation Hospital have heard the group. After one performance the members of The Bunker Five were introduced to Deputy CORDS Ambassador and Mrs. Richard Funkhauser, who had been among the listeners. When they performed for the 135th Assault Helicopter Company, the Australians were so overjoyed they donated $50 for shirts, "so we could look more like a group."

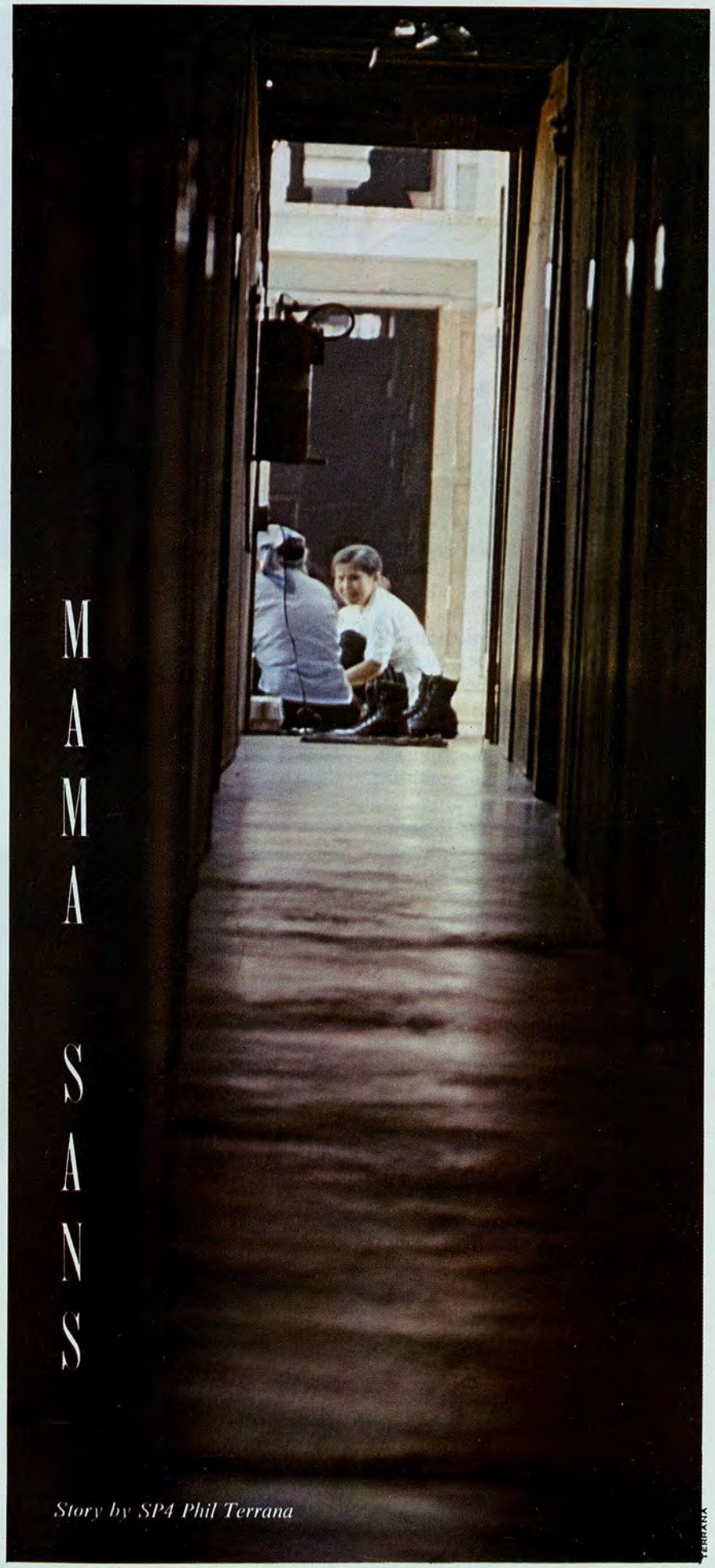
Hospitality and fun, however, are the usual paychecks for the band's performances. "We usually sing for our supper," SP4 D'Angiolini said, recalling "gigs" at Dong Tam, Bearcat, Vinh Long and various spots around Long Binh. Chaplain Huebner, the group's manager, agreed, saying, "They're doing it for fun."

The Bunker Five takes their fun seriously. Two nights a week they rehearse, totalling at least six hours. Each performance lasts between 30 minutes and an hour.

Men, instruments, creativity. Not unlike Sloopy, The Bunker Five keeps hangin' on.

Left to right: SP5 Clarence Rossi, SP4 Dwight Borel, SP4 David McAloon, SP4 Frank D'Angiolini and SP4 John Henkel.

DESTEFANO



"Mama mia! Yous-a no give me no shoe polish. Manaja da!"

"Oowa! Mama san no have enough shoe polish, Numbah ten shoes!"

GIs have heard this complaint and ones similiar to it spoken in practically every language for as long as American soldiers have been serving in foreign countries. It is spoken by the women who wash the clothes, cook the food, clean the barracks and still find time occasionally to bicker with any GI who has managed to learn a phrase or two and argue back.

Done half in earnest and half in jest, this continual badgering back and forth has become the game of war behind the real war. It is this continuing conflict which sends the GI home at the end of his tour with a very basic insight into the people and the culture. While the knowledge of such phrases as "Khong co chi," "Di di mau" and "Lam on beer" indicate a superficial understanding of the language, a much more in depth understanding may be arrived by just observing the mama sans go about their everyday chores.

As they go about their work they will reflect both the humor of the Vietnamese people and at times the tragedies of living a lifetime in a war-torn country. This gamut of knowledge will all be reflected within the guidelines of age-old customs which have influenced the people for centuries. In many cases it is evident that changes are occuring. At any rate the story of the mama sans—or in general any of the women who have worked behind the scenes, whether it be in Sicily in '44, Korea in in '52 or Tuy Hoa in '71—cannot be conveyed completely by the simple, almost primitive dialogue between the GI and his hootchmaid.

"Fall in" is the command of the first sergeant as the first light of the new day falls upon the company area.

In the true tradition of the western culture, the men are moving slowly, and it will most likely be an hour or two before they are performing at anything resembling a normal pace. It is an accepted fact that western society is geared to a slow start in the morning—a cup of coffee and a morning newspaper being necessities to get it going.

In striking contrast to this scene are the 12 mama sans gathered at the water taps barely 15 feet in front of the first platoon. They've picked

up their Tide from the supply room and are hard at work scrubbing the dirt and sweat out of yesterday's fatigues. The soap is modern—Triple X with super cleaning enzymes—and the taps are an obvious improvement over the river bank as a source of water, but the method has not changed much through the years. Like her mother and grandmother before her, she must either scrub by hand or stomp the dirt out with her feet.

By the time formation is over, the first stacks of clothes are being carried to the lines and hung up. In an hour's time there will be clothes hanging from the bunkers, the gutters, and the railings; and when this space is used up, they will be laid out on the grass. The clothes of 200 men will occupy virtually every inch of available space in the company by 9 a. m.

While this is all taking place, duty drivers are making the rounds of the neighboring villages to pick up still more mama sans. Unlike the mass arrival of the hootchmaids earlier, this second group will disperse in small groups with considerable less noise. Possibly it just seems like less noise because it is not happening at 7 a.m. These mama sans (notably younger than the hootchmaids) are the clerks, barbers, bank tellers and waitresses who run the many post facilities. Some are secretaries, while many will be found working outside manning the heavy road equipment or driving the taxis.

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By 10 a.m. all facilities will be in full swing, and the hectic pace which will continue throughout the day will have begun.

In the company area it is a different story for the hootchmaids. The clothes are all hung and the last sheets are being drawn tight on the beds. The hectic part of their day is now behind them. Although there still remains much to be done, they will work at a leisurely pace for the rest of the day. They have accomplished their main objective of getting the clothes out to dry as quickly as possible.

For much of the year the mama san must contend with the midday rainshower, and so she has learned to schedule her activities accordingly. This is the same rain which dictates to her husband and sons how, when and where the war willbe fought. And so from the northern province of Quang Tri to the southernmost points in An Xuyen, these women proceed with their daily chores.

Sitting between two barracks on Long Binh Post, three women and a young girl are filling sandbags by a bunker. They are not entirely alike, however—either in their appearance or in their method of working.

The women are old—their sun-dried, wrinkled skin making them appear to be even older than they really are. The many years of war and a lifetime of hard labor shows on their faces and tired bodies. After performing menial labor for so many years, squatting in the dirt does not bother them. Neither does the beetle nut that they chew on, which in the course of years has slowly rotted their teeth. This is also something they have done too long, and they know it is too late to change their ways now. The clothes they wear are ragged—held together by safety pins or string or whatever else they have been able to find. The fact that they aren't able to afford better is not so striking as the fact that they don't seem to really care. Their life has been too hard, and they now appear content to live it from one sandbag to another without regard to appearance or personal welfare or anything else a westerner would expect to matter.

This is not true of the young girl, though. For Minh Ha, the future in many respects appears to be brighter than it was for the old women when they were her age. She is attractive and to complement this, she dresses attractively. In many respects she resembles the club girls, who are only a few years older than her. Minh Ha represents the intermediate stage in the changing Vietnamese culture. Unlike the bar girls, she is very shy and speaks only a minimum of English. However, unlike the women she works with, she is not turned off to change and in all her behaviors she demonstrates that she does care.

The gloves that she wears prevent

her hands from becoming the coarse, calloused hands of her co-workers. The tiny stool she sits on will keep her clothes clean, and the book she brings to work will give her a worthwhile activity while the old women shrivel into the corner of the bunkers during a break. With the little English she does know, she has already become the spokesman for the group. It becomes very apparent that although the young and the old often work together, the young are very definitely breaking away from old traditions. Life for them means more than just working all day to pay for tomorrow's meal.

Still another interesting aspect of the mama sans' everyday activities is highlighted at mealtime. For the majority of mama sans, lunchtime presents them with the first real opportunity to rest up after a busy morning. Once the meals are completed, they are more than content to just lie down and take it easy. There are always a few, though, who just cannot quit. Exhibiting the stamina of a Saigon cyclo driver or a Pleiku money exchanger, a small contingent of traders go from room to room selling handmade Vietnamese shirts, boonie hats and even a few items which could be gotten free

of charge at supply. As easily as they carry a three-foot-high pile of clothes to the wash rack in the morning, they lug the duffel bag around displaying the type of salesmanship that would indicate when all the stock was diminished the bag too would go for sale.

The GI's return to work also sends the mama sans back to their duties. Three hundred miles north of Long Binh, three women are cutting grass around the area of the 52d CAB orderly room. Stooping in the typical Asian fashion, they inch their way across the grass, their only tools

TERRANA

being a razor blade or a sharp rock.

Farther north in Kontum, a mama san sits on an Army blanket and with the help of an iron and a water-filled scotch bottle, she puts the finishing touches to the morning's wash.

Both of these tasks help illustrate the patience for which the orientals are noted. This is the same patience which is often used to explain how the Asian people can persist in so long a struggle without ever visibly losing hope. Whereas westerners have at times become obsessed with the idea of instant success, the Asians have continued throughout the years to place very little value on deadlines; and the failure to attain victory in the course of a lifelong struggle does not in itself suggest a wasted lifetime. This same line of thinking is applied to such tasks as ironing a stack of maybe fifteen or more fatigues or cutting the grass with a rock. Whereas a westerner would look upon it as being too tedious to even attempt the Asian merely completes it with no question asked. The fact that a job which needed to be done is being done is justification enough.

And so the work continues through the afternoon. Towards the end of the day, the GIs will be returning and the primitive dialogue will once again strike up. Just as he has done every day since he arrived in country, he will complain about the job she did on his boots, and she will counter with the standard complaint that she does not have enough supplies. At this time of the day the bickering does not carry on too long. She is more interested in returning home, where she still has much work to do for her own family. For the GI, there are thoughts of the night ahead. He will probably be spending some time at the "Club", where he will talk with the girls most influenced by the American presence. Like many of the young secretaries, the bar maids have retained few of the old traditions. They often wear western clothes and speak English quite well. They talk of school and work and boyfriends. In most cases they are quick to point out the differences between them and the mama sans, lest the GI get the two confused. They very difinitely represent a change in the Vietnamese society.

But these young girls can only present a glimpse of the future seen in the realm of a changing present. The mama san story, on the other hand, is a story of the past. They tell it on their faces and by their actions. Very simply, it is a story of the women who have spent most of their lives in a war zone atmosphere caring for the needs of the soldiers they only half get to know but will always remember.

TERRANA

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE 1ST AVIATION BRIGADE

In my departing remarks to the assembled commanders of the Brigade on 14 September 1967 I made a statement substantially as follows:

> "You, and all the members of the Brigade are the finest group of people I have ever been associated with - the aircrews, day in and day out, have shown skill and heights of courage that I have sometimes found unbelievable. The maintenance crews have performed the impossible, in keeping the birds flying under the most difficult conceivable conditions. All support personnel, whether cooks, clerks or bottle washers, have given their utmost to enable the flying job to be done. In the past year and a half I have really never heard your performance criticized, I have heard you praised in highest terms by the Infantry many times from one end of this country to the other.
>
> Regardless of what may happen to me in the future you will remain in my heart my favorite command . . ."

I have followed your progress with keen interest since the day I made those remarks, and I know that you have continued to perform in the same superb manner that you did during my time in Vietnam. I can report that my final prophecy was true. You have remained my most favored assignment, not alone because of what you did and have done since, but more because of my fine personal association with a great bunch of people doing a great job in my time, and the knowledge that equally great people have been doing an equally great job ever since.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY - - NGUY HIEM ! !

G. P. SENEFF, Jr.
Major General, USA

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 1ST CAVALRY DIVISION (AIRMOBILE)
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96490

IN REPLY REFER TO

AVDACG

Brigadier General Jack W. Hemingway
1st Aviation Brigade
APO San Francisco 96384

Dear General Hemingway:

On behalf of all the Skytroopers of the 1st Air Cavalry Division, I extend congratulations and best wishes to the members of the 1st Aviation Brigade on the occasion of the Brigade's fifth anniversary of dedicated combat service in the Republic of Vietnam.

As a former commander of the 1st Aviation Brigade, I am well aware of the complexities of the broad spectrum of aviation support provided by the Brigade and the tremendous contributions of the Brigade to every aspect of our war effort. The outstanding success of the 1st Aviation Brigade is conclusive evidence of the courage, determination, and professionalism of its members.

The First Team salutes the Golden Hawks.

GEORGE W. PUTNAM, JR.
Major General, USA
Commanding

The 18 months I spent as commander of the 1st Aviation Brigade was the most inspiring period of my military service. The 1st Aviation Brigade with over 2000 aircraft was by far not only the largest Army Aviation unit ever formed by also, in my opinion, the most competent and spirited aviation unit in history. If the task to precisely program the events that would generate a superb aviation unit for the late 60's had been given to a farsighted group of individuals years ago they couldn't have improved on the 1st Aviation Brigade. The ingredients were:

—A challenge to provide support in a war that is predominantly a helicopter war.

—A fleet of the finest helicopters in the world plus old but dependable and loved fixed wing aircraft.

—Commanders, senior staff officers and CWO 3 and 4's who were truly "professional" pilots and soldiers most of whom had served a previous tour in Vietnam.

—A large group of young, eager, well trained pilots with remarkably good judgement, courage, stamina, skill and dedication.

—A limited number of "old time" maintenance personnel that could keep anything flying under any condition of battle or elements.

—Young and very bright crew chiefs, mechanics and door gunners with seemingly unlimited energy, endurance and courage who were undaunted by the triple task of flying and fighting all day, maintaining the aircraft and defending their bases at night.

—Support personnel who didn't wait for parts and supplies but who always got them by some means and kept the operation rolling.

—A first commander, General Seneff, with the imagination to develop, standardize and carry out new and effective doctrine and tactics and the leadership to forge the above ingredients into a bold, proud and spirited fighting force.

The 1st Aviation Brigade was a magnificent organization when I assumed command in September of 1967. On 25 May 1968 General Vien decorated the Brigade for the second time with the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with palm. This was the first time any U.S. unit above battalion size was given this honor for a second time and authorized to fly the streamer on its colors. At the ceremony General Abrams spoke. He paid the brigade the highest of compliments then he said that Army Aviation had earned its full acceptance by the infantry in the fraternity of fighting men.

I will always be extremely proud of having commanded the 1st Aviation Brigade—respected and admired by the combat arms of the Army as a member of their fraternity and respected and admired as true professionals by the Aviation fraternity.

Sincerely,

ROBERT R. WILLIAMS
Lieutenant General, GS
Assistant Chief of Staff
for Force Development

SKYCRANE

Story by CPT Robert Dunleavy

"We had three entire 155mm batteries to move for the 1st Air Cav last week. With two Cranes flying, the whole operation took just over four hours to complete." The speaker is MAJ William Miller, commanding officer of the 1st Aviation Bridade's only Heavy Helicopter Company, the 273d, located at Long Binh. The Crane is the 9,000-horsepower CH-54 helicopter designed to carry loads of 10 tons. "Because of the added weight of armor plating and the high density altitudes in Vietnam, we restrict ourselves to 16,500 pounds," adds MAJ Miller. "Even with this restriction, we are able to lift any aircraft in the Army's inventory and some from the Air Force."

The 273d has been in Vietnam since December 1967, operating originally from facilities at Vung Tau until November 1968, at which time they moved to their present location. During this time, the company has built an impressive record of 26 consecutive accident-free months of flying. This is attributed to several factors. The most obvious is the experience level of the pilots. The company's average flight time is 2,050 hours with a high of 4,500 rotary-wing hours held by CW4 Clarence Gatewood. Mr. Gatewood, incidently, is the first full-blooded Navajo Indian to become an Army aviator.

The second factor, equally impor-

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tant, although not as obvious, is the emphasis placed on maturity and good judgment. "We stress the importance of not over-estimating the capabilities of the aircraft. The new Skycrane pilot particularly has to be reminded that a CH-54 does not have the flight characteristics of a "slick" or "loach," commented CW1 Philip Coats, the 273d safety officer. "And because of the size and cost of a Crane, I think we are more safety conscious than the average pilot."

Commenting on the inherent dangers of working near this $2.5 million aircraft, Mr. Coats discussed the 110 miles per hour gale caused by the six 350-pound main rotor blades. "At one fire support base, the POL point was located atop a small hill. As we hovered toward the PSP, everything was blown down the hill: the fuel bladder, the pump, and finally the POL specialist. No one was hurt in this incident, but the pilots have to be aware of this force and particularly of foreign objects (FOD) being blown into the engines or blades."

Equally dangerous to the unwary man preparing a sling load is the static electricity that builds on the aircraft in flight. "If the hook under the ship is not properly grounded, the loadmaster will experience a tremendous shock when he tries to attach the cargo. This can be precluded if an insulated metal rod is attached to a grounding wire and touched to the hook before operations begin," adds Mr. Coats.

Dispelling stories that "Superhook" pilots are hard to understand on the radio because of distortion caused by oxygen masks, Executive Officer CPT Charles Reed explained that normally the Cranes fly below 5,000 feet. "The mission and weather dictate the altitudes that we fly. At times, we have had to fly below 1,500 feet en route. When this happens, we request and receive gunship cover."

Obviously, the Army's most sophisticated helicopter is also the most difficult to maintain. The burden of keeping the giant Cranes aloft lies with CPT T. D. Moon. CPT Moon credits much of the success of the maintenance program to the drive, perseverence and knowledge of his NCOs. "Their problems are compounded by the fact that although many of our enlisted men are school trained, few have had prior practical experience with a CH-54. Right after school, they are sent here where their training really begins."

The long hours and precision handling of tons of cargo throughout three of the four tactical military regions of Vietnam makes for a demanding job, but the men of the 273d Heavy Helicopter Company have no complaints. They consider their assignements to be the most prestigious in Army Aviation. Few will dispute this claim.

Outpost to Outpatient

Story and Photos by SP4 Phil Terrana

The scene is the Can Tho Soccer Field. The silence of an empty grandstand replaces the cheering crowd, and two rows of metal landing pads run along where the sidelines would normally appear. At the far end, two men sit inside their Red Cross ambulance in an effort to escape the afternoon heat.

The silence is quickly broken when a helicopter sets down no more than 30 feet away. The large red cross and the ship's unit insignia indicate it is from the 57th Medical Detachment—one of two units based near Can Tho to perform dustoff missions in the Delta.

The sick and wounded are quickly removed from the chopper and place in the ambulance which will take them to the Phan Thanh Gian Hospital. There a staff of approximately 15 doctors, 102 nurses and 200 administrative personnel will tend to their needs as they do for the other 800 patients who keep the hospital constantly filled to overcapacity.

"The hospital has a maximum capacity of 711," explained CPT James A. Good, hospital administrative advisor assigned to the Corps Medical Advisory Group in Saigon, "but like all ARVN hospitals it is always overfilled. This is not unusual under present conditions, and the Vietnamese have been successful in coping with the problem." He noted that, "While in the United States there are normally seven hospital personnel for every patient, the case is just the opposite in Vietnam. Taking into account that only two of the 102 nurses are the equivalent of a registered nurse in the States, while the remainder are the equivalent of a medic, the problem of being understaffed becomes all the more acute."

To ease the problem, the majority of patients are kept in bay-like wards.

There are no semi-private or private rooms. "They go even further in their attempt to utilize all available space," explained CPT Good, "by placing two beds next to each other down the line. It is not unusual at all to see three and even four patients lying across two beds which under normal conditions would accommodate only two patients."

Another method of easing the strain on the small and overworked staff is to allow friends and relatives to care for the patients. Two-visiout MAJ (MC) Phan Van Duong Lam, commanding officer of the 33rd Surgical Section. Although spoken jokingly, it was nevertheless a very accurate assessment of the situation.

"We have been provided with a great deal of modern equipment ranging from dental chairs to incubators," he added, "but in many cases we have to build the walls which will house the equipment. The compound had been abandoned by the U.S. Army's 36th Evacuation Hospital about a year before we moved in, and many of the 33 buildings have deteriorated. Many have no electricity to run the equipment inside them."

When it is fully operational, the Nguyen Van Nhut Hospital—named for a Vietnamese doctor killed in combat—can accommodate 200 outpatients and 400 inpatients, but it too followed the path of all ARVN hospitals and quickly reached overcapacity. As a result of the extended operations in Laos and Cambodia and the strain placed on the field hospitals in the north, many hundreds of patients have been sent to Nguyen Van Nhut in recent weeks.

Like other ARVN hospitals, the staff is composed of military personnel only. They have been civilian trained—seven years of college—but have entered the military upon completion of their schooling. "All the young doctors serve in the military," observed CPT Huynh Phuoc Dinh, executive officer at Nguyen Van Nhut. "Most civilian doctors are over 50."

Under the present hospital system operating in the Delta, the Phan Thanh Gian facilities at Can Tho represent a major installation. There are three other such hospitals, located in the cities of Soc Trang, Long Xuyen and My Tho. Twelve smaller sector hospitals, ranging in size from the Nguyen Van Nhut to others having only 50 to 100 beds, serve the rest of the Delta.

Many of the sick are transported to the hospital by conventional means most available to them—essentially by sampans across the intricate water system of the Delta. The vast majority of injured and wounded however, are brought in by the Medevac helicopter.

The 57th and 82d Medical Detachments—both operating out of Biny Thuy—conduct most of the tors-only rules are nonexistent here and in most cases finding the whole family around a bed is not unusual. A casual walk around the grounds will bring into view as many visitors as there are patients. When they are not helping with the feeding or cleaning, they can be found tending to the small gardens growing between each of the buildings. Since most of the people of the Delta are already self-supporting for their food supplies, it is only natural to find them using the available land to grow more crops.

"Many of their techniques for running a hospital would seem strange to an American and did, in fact, present certain problems when we first came over here as medical advisors," said CPT Good. "Originally we brought their doctors and medics to American hospitals and taught them American methods, but when they went back to their hospitals they continued to use their own methods."

"In many instances," he went on, "we were not necessarily teaching them a better method but merely a different one. We too have had to do some adjusting. We realize that in spite of the different techniques, the Vietnamese doctors are entirely capable of performing their jobs, and in their own country, within their own system, the hospitals are run well. It is in the area of specialization—heart treatment, brain surgery and the like—where Americans can be of the most assistance."

"As a result," he concluded, "we now go to the Vietnamese hospital, observe its existing operating procedures and its needs, and then assist the personnel from within their own framework of operations."

The task of remodeling an American hospital to suit Vietnamese needs is another area where much work remains to be done. Take for instance the Nguyen Van Nhut

Hospital at Vung Tau, where earlier this year a new staff of five doctors and 100 hospital personnel could be found administering to the needs of approximately 100 patients from the Phuoc Tuy district. Since the hospital had been in operation only a few months, the medical duties were compounded by the vast amount of building and repairs which were also taking place.

"My staff must be carpenters before they can be medics," pointed Medevacs performed by American aircraft in the Delta. From a small control room, SP4 Frank J. Mirrop monitors the calls coming in from the Army Aviation Element (AA-E) at Can Tho. His job is to record all pertinent information about the patients and landing zones which has been channeled through district and province tactical operations centers (TOC).

"Before I send a ship into an area, I have to know how the landing zone will be marked, whether or not it is secure, the status of the patients and the number of patients," observed SP4 Mirrop. "Once I know this I can relay it to either of the two ships we have in the air or to a VNAF ship. All missions in direct support of the 21st and 9th ARVN Divisions are handled by the VNAFs unless there is an American involved."

One of the two American crews flying that afternoon was barely in the air when a mission was called in on the radio. Once informed of the various locations for the dustoffs, Aircraft Commander WO1 Richard G. Miller scheduled his route accordingly. Since there were no American personnel at any of the locations, the ship had to make a preliminary stop in a nearby village. Here the crew was joined by an American and a Vietnamese, both of whom were familiar with the area. Known as the "back seat," these two men coordinated the activities on the ground with those of the aircraft.

When the smoke was spotted in a clearing, the ship darted toward the small group of waving ARVNs. The ship set down and four men struggled to overcome the force of the rotor blade as they carried a stretcher through a foot and a half of water and high grass. As soon as the wounded man was safely on board, the ship was moving, 20 feet off the ground and speeding to the next LZ. The fact that the area was classified secure did not put the crew very much at ease. "I've been shot at before in secure zones," commented WO1 Miller, "so I don't take anything for granted."

Neither does SP5 Timothy E. Peterson, a medic pointing an M-16 out the door in the direction of a nearby treeline. "The Geneva Convention prohibits the carrying of any armament on ships bearing the Red Cross insignia," he explained, "so all we're really allowed to bring with us is a personal weapon. If an area is insecure we will call in for gunships, but even then it is kind of risky."

While the ship proceeded to the next location, SP5 Peterson was kept busy in the back applying new dressings and administering shots and various other medication. The crew chief, SP4 Kit R. Drake assisted him in their small, makeshift emergency room. The remaining missions took them into heavily wooded areas as well as more marshland and even to small hamlets and villages. The ship was now becoming quite crowded, with three tiers of stretchers and many patients sitting on the floor.

At the last stop, an isolated hamlet, a wounded soldier and a young girl were carried on board. The girl's mother quickly jumped into the gunner's well so that she could accompany her daughter to the hospital. The soldier's wife also wanted to come aboard, but there was just no room. She had to be content to wave good-by as the ship rose and headed for the hospital.

When the crew set down in the soccer field, no less than nine people were transferred to the ambulance. This represented four pickups in just an hour's time. "We are trying to get the VNAFs to operate as efficiently," said SP4 Drake. "When they first began flying medevacs, they would respond to the first call, and fly back tothe hospital only to find there was another patient waiting only a few miles from the first. As pilots, they were daring enough and there was no problem getting them into a zone. The only difficulty was getting the ground coordinators to plan more efficiently."

"Assigning a mission with a certain status rating is our best method of effective scheduling," added SP5 Peterson, "and this is what we are now teaching the VNAFs. If a patient's condition is described as either urgent (meaning he is seriously or critically injured) or operational urgent (meaning a mission is being delayed because of the man's injury), then a ship will be sent immediately to his aid. If it is merely a priority or routine pickup, we can afford to wait awhile and schedule several pickups together."

Another means of training the VNAFs is to integrate the crews. Such crews will consist of a Vietnamese aircraft commander, medic and crew chief, as well as an American pilot and medic. The Americans are able to assist in the treatment of patients as well as instruct the VNAF aviators in approach techniques and aerial observation.

In an average day, the 57th and 82d Detachments fly about 40 missions. These, along with the many VNAF missions, combine with the ever-improving hospital system to provide both the civilians and the soldiers in the Delta with an invaluable service.

Next to the gunships, which provide air cover throughout the day, nothing can be more reassuring to an ARVN stomping through the rice paddies than to know that should he be seriously wounded, he is no more than a few moments away from receiving specialized medical attention. The helicopter which turns this wounded soldiers' dream into a reality carries no M-60s, no miniguns, and no rocket pods. It bears only a large red cross.

COMBAT ART

Dear Charlie:

Peek-a-Boo!

Story by SP4 Jim Woolsey

The Vietnamese Communist is not one to keep still. His leaders have mapped out the objective—this hamlet, that airstrip, those minds and lives—and he is charged to stop at nothing till the job is done.

His job requires movement—traveling from Point A to Point B, constructing hootches and bunkers, setting up contacts with fellow VC or NVA.

And his movements are what kill him. Throughout the Republic of Vietnam the U.S. Army has men trained in the art of observation. The slightest change in the terrain's appearance registers in the minds of two men who fly daily over a particular sector of ground. When the change is definitely identified as the enemy, the information is passed over the plane's radio.

The answer arrives: "You've got clearance out there all night if you need it."

The plane circles the area and climbs 1,000 feet. The throttle eases back, nearing the "Closed" marking and leaving the plane almost cataleptic over the enemy's position. Angling to one side, the craft gives back the 1,000 feet, faster this time, heading nose-first and sending white phosphorous rockets (Willie Petes) on the enemy's head to mark his

1LT Thomas Henson makes the quick nose dive with his Bird Dog, preparing to send Willie Petes onto a VC bunker. The Navy's "Black Ponies" later dumped lead on the target.

WOOLSEY

position for the arriving combat units.

There are several companies in 1st Aviation Brigade designated as reconnaissance airplane. To understand their mission, this magazine observed the pattern of the 221st Reconnaissance Airplane Company, which serves the Mekong Delta. By extending the knowledge gained from the 221st, HAWK is able to pay tribute in this special anniversary issue to the contributions made by all such companies.

Commanded by MAJ Burnum E. Melton, the 221st is known as the "Shotguns" because of the devastating, short-range impact of the 0–1 Bird Dog, the principal reconnaissance aircraft. The Shotguns were activated in March 1965 at Ft. Bragg, N.C., and sent to Soc Trang in July of that year to take over the duties of the 4th Platoon of the 74th Aviation Company. Their mission: to become the "Eyes Over the Delta."

Headquartered at Vinh Long, the command is divided into four platoons: 1st at Vinh Long, 2d at Can Tho, 3d at Cao Lanh and 4th at Bac Lieu. These platoons are responsbile for a total of 15 sectors, with one pilot patrolling his sector for approximately three hours a day.

The Bird Dog has been used since

the Korean War, and pilots find its maneuverability the chief advantage for making reconnaissance runs. Weighing between 2,300 and 2,800 pounds, the plane is a fundamentally constructed craft, without fancy trimmings and specialized equipment. This gives the pilot less bulk to push through the air, allowing him to take it where needed and at the same time giving him more freedom to observe the ground passing underneath. Speed is between 40 and 80 knots, with the plane traveling at the ideal altitude of 1,500 feet—low enough for good visibility and high enough to avoid most small arms fire.

"Strong and rugged and simple—that's it!" said CPT Alfred J. Davis, maintenance officer for the Shotguns.

On an average day, the Bird Dog pilot is in the air three and one half hours, 15 minutes each way between base and sector and three hours of systematic observation. At the end of this period, the Bird Dog pilot's job is finished for the day. He has fired no heavy explosives, sent no troops parachuting to the ground. Yes when he climbs out of his aircraft at Bac Lieu, Chi Lang or wherever, drained of energy by the twin tasks of aviation and observation, his face will be split by the grin of a man who knows he has made his contribution.

The importance of that contribution is instilled in the new Shotgun, even before the VIP briefing by MAJ Melton. The wings, cat's eye and crossed shotguns with exaggerrated barrels, all against the lush green Delta background, welcome him, and he finds his company's symbols everywhere. Above the oversized patch is the statement of his significance: "Eyes Over the Delta."

"The men think and act like a team," MAJ Melton said. "And the worst thing a man in the 221st can hear is 'Son, you've let the Shotgun down.'"

Not everone in the company is a sector pilot, of course. The crew chiefs, who sometimes occupy the back seat on reconnaissance flights, the mechanics, control tower personnel—all have been given their parts in the mission. And, in a step to make man and mission intertwine, they have been given the reasons behind their orders. They are the 600 of the Light Brigade, but they will need no Tennyson to interpret their actions. They already know the WHY? of the Shotguns, and that knowledge adds speed, precision and willingness to their movements.

To the outsider, the surface actions of a visual reconaissance (VR) team might appear rather simple. "Look," he will say, "you take 15 minutes to get to your sector, fly around for three hours, fly back and that's it. What's so tough?"

In addition to encountering enemy fire, the enormity of communication and dedication merge to make shreds of any Shotgun's complacence. Not only must the pilot and observer know what each is doing, they must, in fact, communicate with the sector assigned to them. No signs of VC or NVA, fine; the men in the Bird Dog reply by doing nothing to damage the terrain. But when Charlie makes a move, communication to the ground is indirect. Shotgun talks to control, who in turn talks to gunships, infantry, artillery. The loud, lashing voices of these people relay the message of the Bird Dog to the land and the enemy who is using it.

Bird Dogs have other missions besides VR. They direct Naval gunifire from off the coast, drop C-rations to soldiers in the field and conduct psychological warfare.

The overriding and resounding call, however, is that of reconnaissance, and it is in this field that Vietnamization leaps into sharpest focus.

The man in the observer's seat on many occasions is a member of the Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF), and he knows the countryside. SP5 Allen Cacy, crew chief at Chi Lang, said "You've got to memorize the sector once in the wet season, and then you've got to do the same thing when it's dry." The masquerade games the climate plays with the country are all too familiar to the VNAF. Small irregularities twist and burn inside the VNAF's mind. His finger jabs frantically at the pilot's shoulder. The change is indicated and once again it is time for communication between lead and earth.

When the duel has ended and the Bird Dog is again resting, the smiles of accomplishment will crack two faces, one American and one Oriental—brothers in freedom.

PVT Patrick Blake loads a white phosphorous rocket into the tube.

WOOLSEY

HISTORY

(As of March 15, 1971)

The Vietnam Conflict has no designated battlefield. Neither does it have any real perimeters nor any real line of defense. There is no territory completely secure from the enemy. The soldier who carries the war to the people during the night is free to mingle undetected with the same people during the day.

Because he moves in small groups, he must be tracked down and fought by equally small groups. This has created a demand for a mobility which has been uncalled for in previous wars. The helicopter has satisfied this demand. It has, in fact, become the symbol of this war, and the 1st Aviation Brigade has become the main conveyor of this symbol to the enemy.

Organized on March 1, 1966, as the U.S. Army Aviation Brigade (Provisional), it joined the ranks of the Army's official force structure on May 25, 1966, when LTG Jean E. Engler, deputy commanding general, U.S. Army Vietnam, formally presented the 1st Aviation Brigade colors to BG George P. Seneff Jr., the first brigade commander.

The mission of the 1st Aviation Brigade is to provide command (less operational control) to its organic units; to provide command for those other aviation units that may be attached or assigned by CG, USARV; and to provide aviation support, as directed, to the Free World Military Assistance Forces (FWMAF) for the conduct of tactical operations throughout the Republic of Vietnam. This statement understates the complexity of the brigade's mission, for over 50 per cent of the Army's aircraft in Vietnam are in the 1st Aviation Brigade's widely located units.

The more than 60 companies which make up the 1st Aviation Brigade are organized into four combat aviation groups and two separate combat aviation battalions. The 12th Combat Aviation Group, headquartered at Plantation and under the operational control of II Field Force Vietnam, commands three battalions and one air cavalry squadron, providing helicopter and fixed wing support withing the ARVN Military Region III. The 17th Combat Aviation Group, headquartered at Tuy Hoa and under the operational control of I Field Force Vietnam, commands three battalions, one air cavalry squadron and the 201st Corps Aviation Company supporting operations within the ARVN Military Region II. The 164th Combat Aviation Group, headquartered at Can Tho and under the operational control of the Delta Military Assistance Command, commands three battalions and one air cavalry squadron, supporting combined operations in the Mekong Delta region. The 212th Combat Aviation Battalion at Dong Ha is under the operational control of Headquarters, XXIV Corps, supporting operations in the ARVN Military Region I. The 165th Combat Aviation Group, headquartered at Long Binh, commands one battalion and provides aviation support, fixed and rotary wing, for USARV and MACV headquarters. The 165th also provides the Army Flight Following System, terminal air traffic control and tactical air traffic control throughout Vietnam.

The story of the 1st Aviation Brigade is the story of 20,000 officers and enlisted men who fly and maintain the more than 2,000 aircraft that make up the Army's non-divisional aviation fleet in Vietnam, performing the myriad administrative and logistical tasks that go hand-

Review

in-hand with operational missions. Aircraft of the 1st Aviation Brigade are in the skies over Vietnam 24 hours a day, providing troop lift, aerial weapons support, tactical fixed wing transportation, surveillance, reconnaissance and administrative and liaison support for the ground force.

A glance at the 1969 operational statistics reveals the extensive capability of the bridade to perform a wide variety of tasks. During that year, aircraft of the brigade transported 6,693,222 passengers, most of whom were troops on combat assault. In this same period 670,616 tons of cargo were air-transported. In its combat role during this period the brigade accounted for 21,679 enemy killed by air action, 16,381 sampans destroyed, 1,973 sampans damaged, 35,357 military structures destroyed and 15,857 military structures damaged. In order to carry out these missions the brigade flew a total of 4,280,944 sorties, accumulating 1,745,637 flying hours.

If one aircraft flew the total number of hours that the men of the 1st Aviation Brigade have logged during the five years they have been in Vietnam, it would have to fly nonstop for almost 800 years. Members of the 1st Aviation Brigade "Golden Hawks" have built an impressive record during their short tenure as a unit and as a fighting force in Vietnam. Aviators from the brigade have flown more than 18 million sorties carrying more than 28 million passengers.

The history of the brigade began in October 1961, with the arrival of the 18th Aviation Detachment, equipped with U-1 "Otters," and in December 1961, with the arrival of the 8th and 57th Transportation Companies equipped with CH-21 "Flying Bananas." After intensive periods of training, both companies flew their first missions in late December. These units, later redesignated the 117th and 120th Aviation Companies (airmobile light), are the oldest active units within the brigade. In the beginning of 1962, the 8th Transportation Company began receiving its first armed UH-1 helicopters.

By June 1962, Army aviation strength in Vietnam had grown to one battalion—the 45th Transportation Battalion, later redesignated the 145th Aviation Battalion (Combat)—and four companies. On June 1, 1962, the U.S. Army Support Group, Vitenam (USASG-V), which was to become the United States Army Vietnam (USARV), was activated to provide administrative and logistical support to the aviation units and other Army organizations then located throughout the Republic.

By late 1964, all the CH-21s had been replaced by the famous UH-1 "Hueys." This turbojet-powered helicopter, an omnipresent sight in the skies over Vietnam, probably symbolizes more than any other item of equipment, vehicle or aircraft, the war in Vitenam. As a troop-carrying aircraft, as a gunship or as a command and control aircraft, the Huey is the workhorse of the 1st Aviation Brigade.

The first of the brigade's many CH-47 "Chinook" companies arrived in Vietnam in November 1965.

In June 1967, a CH-54 "Skycrane" detachment was assigned to the 12th Group. The 10-ton payload of the CH-54 Skycrane enables the brigade to air-transport items such as bridges, boats, road-graders, bulldozers, trucks and 105mm howitzers. In addition, the Skycrane has the capability not only of recovering any aircraft in the brigade, but also aircraft of other services, such as C-123s, F-100s and C-46s.

Introduction of the AH-1 "Cobra" gunship in August 1967, added still another dimension to the many-faceted brigade. The Cobra was the world's first helicopter designed for use primarily as an armed assault gunship and thus gave the brigade an effective offensive helicopter to carry the war to the enemy.

On September 16, 1967, MG Robert R. Williams assumed command of the 1st Aviation Brigade, succeeding George P. Seneff Jr., who was advanced to the rank of major general.

Brigade capabilities were again broadened with the

Cross of Gallantry w/ Palm

arrival of the first of three air cavalry squadrons starting in October 1967. The aviation groups to which these units were assigned were able to provide a hard-hitting, airmobile, combined arms reconnaissance element for the field commanders. These units introduced the OH-6 "Cayuse" observation helicopter to the Vietnam battlefield. This highly maneuverable aircraft was designed to eventually perform all Army aviation observation and visual reconnaissance missions.

In recognition of its exemplary accomplishments since activation, the 1st Aviation Brigade was selected as the Army Aviation Association Outstanding Aviation Unit in 1967. In May 1967, General Cao Van Vien, then Minister of Defense, Republic of Vietnam, presented the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm to the 1st Aviation Brigade and an individual award to the Brigade Commander, BG Seneff.

During May 1968, the government of the Republic of Vietnam awarded a second Cross of Gallantry to the bridade and an individual award to the Brigade Commander, MG Williams.

On March 20, 1969, BG Allen Burdett Jr. assumed command of the 1st Aviation Brigade, succeeding MG Williams.

BG Burdett was succeeded on January 6, 1970, by BG George W. Putnam Jr., during whose command the brigade received the OH-58 "Kiowa," also known as the Bell Jet Ranger. This versatile helicopter has enhanced the brigade's capability of command and control, observation and target detection.

On August 12, 1970, the present commander, BG Jack W. Hemingway, assumed command.

Aside from the areas of military support, the brigade has channeled some of its energy and time towards civic actions programs. The groups, battalions and companies have engaged in economic, educational social welfare, transportation, medical and construction projects throughout the past years. According to one civic actions officer, the ingredients for a successful civil actions program are a substantial quantity of man hours and materials and a desire to assist the people of a struggling nation. An example of the type of work done by the brigade is the 12th Combat Aviation Group's program for the year ending May 1970. During this time the 12th CAG expended more than 75,000 man-hours and over $600,000 (materials and direct monetary assistance) in support of civic actions activities. The program involved 53 individual projects to include Medical Civic Actions Programs (MEDCAP), agrarian

Turnover-VNAF

Change of Command

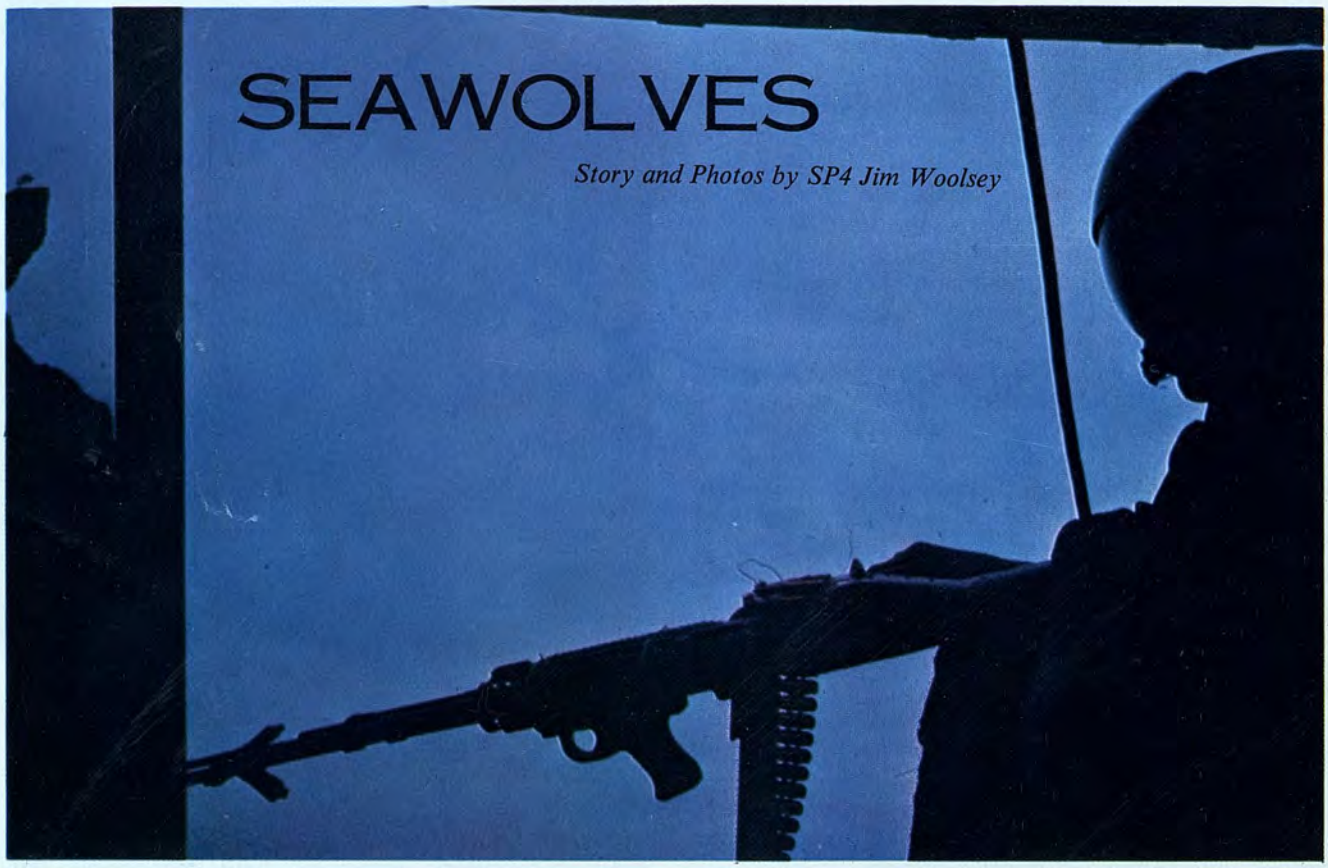
projects, school and market construction, repair of roads, homes and hospitals, and the donation of school supplies and books. Initiated in May 1969, in conjucntion with the pacification program, it was designed to utilize available military resources, both manpower and materiel, to improve the life, comfort, security and future of the Vietnamese citizens, and thereby strengthen their support of and identification with the government of the Republic of Vietnam.

Under the civic actions program, we have economic development, which includes all agriculture, fisheries, markets and cottage industries, and other activities involving production and distribution of products. Educational programs include all activities involving the increase and improvement of school facilities, and classroom or other group instruction. Social welfare programs include all assistance to hospitals, refugees, orphanages, religious organizations, among others. Transportation programs include all activities that improve or increase methods of transportation, e.g., roads, bridges and waterways. These are just a few of the many projects now in effect in the units throughout the brigade.

During this same period, Phase II of President Nixon's Vietnamization Program, initiated in April of 1969, was also taking place behind the scenes. Under the title of Improvement and Modernization (I&M), it entailed the turnover of air, artillery and logistical support to the forces of South Vietnam.

Vietnamese pilots were at first trained at flight schools in the States, but as time progressed, facilities were also set up in Vietnam. Training was extended to the mechanics and maintenance personnel who would be caring for the aircraft.

On September 2, 1970, the first tangible results of Phase II were realized when the assets of the 190th Assault Helicopter Company were turned over to the Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF) and the unit was redesignated the 223d Squadron (Tactical Helicopter). This was soon followed by other turnovers, and by the end of 1970, the VNAFs were operating their own helicopter units in three of the four military regions of Vietnam.



SEAWOLVES

Story and Photos by SP4 Jim Woolsey

"Chicken Legs" was recalling past contacts with the Viet Cong. "Wild Bill" was telling a lieutenant (junior grade) about a slick wristwatch trade he'd made in Tokyo. "Gup" and "The Kid" were reminiscing about Luke, the dear, departed monkey Detachment 9 had kept for a pet. "Guam" sipped his soda and watched benignly as the others talked and gestured. Sol was taking advantage of his day off and getting a full night's sleep. The sound of concussion grenades, tossed overboard at intervals to deter mine-bearing swimmers, punctuated but didn't interrupt the various conversations.

The door to the bunk room opened. Lieutenant (junior grade) Tom Davis entered and walked to the wall map. He was to be attack helicopter aircraft commander (AHAC) for a strike 25 miles to the east.

"The strike's been postponed," he said. "It's awfully dark out there, and we can't take any chances of hitting friendlies in the area."

The officer told the men the attack would be made the following morning. After trading shop talk for a few minutes, he left.

These men were "Seawolves," members of the U.S. Navy's Helicopter Attack (Light) Squadron 3 [HA(L)-3], providing close air support for river craft in the Mekong Delta and stifling communist infiltration from Cambodia. The prime vehicle in their missions is the UH-1 Huey," on loan from the Army.

The next morning Detachment 9's two Hueys were ready when the horn sounded four times: SCRAMBLE! As the pilots rushed into the operations center for last-minute checks, the copilots ran to the birds and started their engines. On the lead helicopter, the two crewmen adjusted the minigun, a .50- caliber machinegun, a door-mounted M-60 and rocket pods on either side of the craft. The trail bird's armaments were essentially the same; however, in place of the .50-caliber,

This Huey is having skid trouble, but not for long. Navy mechanics know their stuff.

a minigun was set in the door.

The helicopter carrying Lieutenant Commander Dick Strand, the fire team leader, lifted first. Ltjg Davis's chopper followed and soon both aircraft were heading for their target to the east. An Army Bird Dog, operating from the "Shotgun" base at My An, had reported heavy automatic fire in that area the day before. Military Assistance Team (MAT) 32 had granted clearance for a shooting strike.

When they reached the area the two planes made a quick check, first up one side of the canal, then down the other. They began to circle the target area, forming a wagon wheel and remaining 180 degrees from each other.

Cutting a ferocious circle, the fire team dumped seven hundred .50-caliber rounds, five thousand 7.62-mm rounds from miniguns and M-60 machineguns, and 19 rockets.

The detachment stopped at their advanced base at Phuoc Xuyen to refuel and rearm, then returned to what they called home—a Yard Repair Berthing and Messing (YRBM) craft anchored in the Mekong River near My An.

The attack had cut into their lunch hour, so the pilots and crew headed for the galley. After their meal, the crewmen began maintenance work on the aircraft while the pilots and copilots gathered to analyze the morning's strike. While officers were calculating ammunition expenditures, the crewmen stripped off their one-piece flight suits and worked in shorts or jeans, some of them taking an opportunity to pick up a suntan. At 1 p.m. the four honks sounded again. Viet Cong terrorists had struck. Quickly but efficiently the helicopters' guns, parts of which had been removed for cleaning, were restored to working order. Wash water, which lay on the backs of the Hueys, streamed through the open doors as the birds took off.

Because of weight limitations—and because Navy gunners are relentless when they have a target cornered—the Seawolves must stop frequently to restore their ammo supply.

Four enemy sampans were spotted southwest of Phuoc Xuyen. Clearance was received, and again rockets and lead became the helicopters' deadly tongues. A command that didn't sound like one was uttered: "If those sampans look good to you, Simpson, let 'em have it." Wild Bill's .50- caliber was already lined up. The bullets carved a thin, deadly path to the boats and laid them waste.

"It isn't often we get to see results like that," Wild Bill said. "Usually we pour the lead down and wait for someone else to tell us if we've hurt Charlie."

The helicopters returned to the ship, and the maintenance work continued. At 11: 30 p.m. the men and planes left their vessel for the nightly trip to their Phuoc Xuyen base, conveniently located in the middle of the area of operations, so they could get to any trouble with a minimum of time.

On this night, Muc Hoa was having problems. Detachment 9's men went out and hammered away at the target area. They later learned it was a ruse; a light had been planted and a lone Cong left behind with a rifle to create a disturbance.

Results were more tangible the next night. Phuoc Xuyen reported Cong movement in a nearby field. With the aid of the base's towere and a fire lighted at an ARVN outpost, the Seawolves were able to zero in.

During the first few minutes after the firing began, Ltjg Davis, again driving the trailing bird, thought aloud, "Come on, Charlie, be a nice guy and fire back." The Seawolves aren't masochists. Return fire positively identifies the enemy's location and "it shows we're hurting him."

The Seawolves did receive fire. And, they later learned, their bullets had found Viet Cong guerillas. A Vietnamese civilian appeared at Phuoc Xuyen the next day with a bullet wound. He changed his story several times and was held for interrogation as a suspected Viet Cong.

HA(L)-3 is the only helicopter attack squadron commissioned by the Navy. Using UH-1s, they cover Military Region (MR) IV and the southern part of MR III. With headquarters at Binh Thuy, the squadron expanded coverage by establishing nine detachments throughout the Delta.

The Seawolves began operations in 1966 to protect U.S. river patrol boats (PBRS), the "brown water Navy" that guarded the waterways of the Republic of Vietnam. Now the rivers are watched over by the Vietnamese Navy, and the mission—close air support—has changed a little.

PBRs are no longer the major recipients of the Seawolves' protection. Convoys and Vietnamese ground troops—both have breathed a prayer of relief to see a HA(L)-3 fire team overhead.

The Seawolves pride themselves on knowing intimately their areas of operation. By combining reconnaissance with strike missions, they can determine when Charlie is on the move and what plans fester in his mind.

Some detachments find assistance in this by taking a Vietnamese "back seat" aboard, especially when supporting ARVNs and regional-popular forces ("Ruff Puffs") on the ground. He establishes radio contact between the Seawolves and ground forces, which enables both to complement each other's work. Ltjg Tom Phillips of Detachment 9 said of their interpreter, "He's been with us long enough so he can practically run the strike. He knows how we operate and what our capabilities are. He'll be a big asset when this is turned over to the Vietnamese."

LCdr Strand commented on the effect an interpreter has on the ARVNs and Ruff Puffs: "Now that they're getting used to calling on the Seawolves when they need help, they're really rolling."

Since the Navy received its gunships from the Army, certain modifications had to be made to the aircraft, although alterations were slight.

"The Huey is a tough old bird," said Lt. Roger Ek, quality assurance officer and chief test pilot for the squadron. "You put in a radar altimeter, paint NAVY on the tail and fly it."

The radar altimeter was installed because of the great amount of right flying done by the Seawolves. Thus, during a night strike, if the pilot wishes to break off at 500 feet, an amber light flashes when he has reached the pre-set altitude.

Weight is a crucial factor in a gunship, particularly one that operates from a vessel. Hovering above the deck is impossible when landing, as insufficient power would send the bird crashing into the sea.

Cooperation between the U.S. Army and Navy has been undertaken with enough healthy, good-natured kidding to dull the seriousness of battle, but not the seriousness with which both services approach their task. The difference in insignia and uniforms means virtually nothing, and understandably so. Men from both services are working for the same boss, using the same equipment, taking the same risks and working towards the same goal of liberty for a tortured people.

Doorgunners know their weapons thoroughly. They're well versed in firing and, when the need arises, in mid-flight repair.

FIREFIGHTERS from the SKY

Story by SP4 Irwin Polls

Extinguishing a raging fire in Saigon, putting out grass fires in mine fields, and even releasing water on a fire on top of Nui Ba Din (Black Virgin Mountain) have become routine jobs for pilots of the 213th Assault Support Helicopter Company.

The company is responsible for a CH-47 "Chinook" heliborne water bucket (firefighting) mission which is on call for use throughout Military Region III.

Recently, the "Black Cats," part of the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion, flew one such mission in which they battled a raging fire in the Cholon area of Saigon. The fire, described as Saigon's largest since the Tet offensive of 1968, burned out of control for nearly two hours before the 213th firebuckets were called in.

Refilling the water buckets in the nearby Saigon River, the helicopter made 30 sorties in 30 minutes and dumped 12,000 gallons of water before the fire was finally brought under control.

Despite their success in Vietnam, the idea of helibuckets was not born here. The idea was originally developed by the U.S. Forest Service to fight fires in the Pacific Northwest.

During a test conducted by the Forest Service in the summer of 1967, a number of helicopters dropped more than 400,000 gallons of water and chemical retardants and carried more than 50,000 firefighters and 1,000,000 tons of supplies.

Spectators view of Blackjack 546 as helibucket doors open and 700 gallons of water plunge downward to the raging fire.

Spectators view of Blackjack 546 as helibucket doors open and 700 gallons of water plunge downward to the raging fire.

Following Tet of 1968, the U.S. Army began to fly firebucket missions in combat situations in Vietnam. The CH-47 Chinook was employed to carry the two water buckets, rather than a smaller helicopter which the Forest Service had formerly used.

Located in Phu Loi, the 213th is the only company flying helibucket missions in the Republic of Vietnam. "We fly helibucket missions throughout III Corps and have gone as far as Song Be to fight a fire," commented CPT James C. Hendricks, the operations officer at the 213th.

Each morning before the sun rises, a Chinook from the 213th is taxied into position next to the firebuckets, which lie near the runway of the Phu Loi Airfield. The firebuckets are then attached to the Chinook as an external sling load, and the 24-hour vigil by the crew begins.

Almost everyone at the 213th on flight status, excluding maintenance personnel, fly helibucket missions. Every day, five crew members are put on alert status. One pilot, CW2 Lawrence L. Snyder, commented, "Each aircraft commander pulls it about every five days. We fly about six actual missions a month."

During daylight hours, the firebucket crew remains on a five minute standby. At night, the aircraft is moved back into the revetment, and the crew goes on 30 minute standby.

The 350-gallon firebuckets, made of fiberglass, are conical in shape and have two hydraulically operated butterfly doors. These specially constructed doors allow for easy filling and instant release of the water from the buckets. There are three sets of fire buckets on hand at the 213th.

Hovering over any river, pond or even a shell crater deep enough to accomodate them, the buckets are filled by lowering them into the water with the doors open. When the desired amount is attained, the flight engineer closes the doors, and the Chinook lifts it out of the water. It takes approximately 15 seconds to fill both buckets. This natural filling method is one of the biggest advantages of helibuckets. There is no need for pumps or ground crews. This is especially important in a combat situation.

Officials at the 213th explained that firebucket missions are flown throughout the year. Their busiest time, however, is during the dry season between November and May.

CPT Hendricks said a helibucket mission is not called unless the need is extremely urgent, such as extinguishing grass fires in mine fields, fires in POL points, fires in ammunition bunkers or fires which threaten injury to personnel or cause extensive property damage.

The mission of dropping water on a fire, though seemingly a very simple one, is extremely dangerous and requires the utmost in skill and courage on the part of the pilots and crew members.

New pilots who have never flown a helibucket mission are given a practice run before they go on an actual alert. WO1 Charles R. Foist explains, "They take the ship out to the local Phu Chong River and practice filling and unloading the buckets with water."

Helibucket missions also pose several problems for pilots. CW2 Snyder said, "One such problem is hovering over a water source at night in order to fill the firebuckets.

EARHART

Blackcat 546 with filled firebuckets enroute to the blazing fire with desperately needed water.

EARHART

Chinook opens bucket doors and drops water onto fire as it flies through dense smoke from fire below.

It is extremely difficult to judge how far the buckets are from the water. It takes good coordination between the flight engineer in the hole and the pilot."

Another problem he mentioned was converging winds. The velocity of the winds have a direct effect on the water being dropped and can cause the water to miss the target entirely. "This is why we use the first drop as a test run. In this way, we can compensate for the wind on the next drops."

Added to the ever present danger of the actual fire is the possible occurrence of exploding ammunition, fuel and gasoline.

The Chinook drops the water from 50 to 300 feet depending on the type of fire. "On a grass fire you can drop the water from as low as 50 feet, but in a mine field you have to fly much higher. The water was released from 200 feet in the Saigon-Cholon fire," WO1 Foist explained.

Once the pilots have chosen the safest route over the fire, they must then hold the aircraft steady while the flight engineer releases the water. The flight engineer becomes the so-called eyes for the pilot while the Chinook approaches the fire.

He lies on his stomach, looking down through the cargo hole, and selects the exact place to unload the water. Exposing his head and shoulders to the intense heat, he then guides the pilot over the target and releases the water.

A firebucket mission requires the faultless coordination of the entire crew, and once a mission has been completed, it gives the crew a deep sense of satisfaction and accomplishment.

Thus, it is easy to understand the double thrill of anticipation and, sometimes, the fear that the waiting pilots and crew members experience when the word comes down from the 213th's Battalion Operation Center (BOC): "Firebuckets, we have a mission for you!"

Hover check complete, Blackcat 546 starts for the raging fire as hundreds of spectators look on in amazement and admiration.

EARHART

Dear Editor:

On August 17, 1970, I returned to RVN, and one of the first things I found was your publication, HAWK.

I thought your might be interested in how the 1st Aviation Brigade patch and the "Hawks" originated.

In March of 1966, BG George P. Seneff was forming the 1st Aviation Brigade. I had been in I Corps for nine months commanding an O-1 company, the 220th "Catkillers." I was ordered to Saigon to help form the 1st Aviation Brigade and was assigned as S-2.

One day, shortly after I arrived in Saigon, I was attending a staff meeting. The 1st Aviation Brigade Deputy Brigade Commander, COL John Stockton, announced that General Seneff wanted a patch designed for the 1stt Aviation Brigade.

Not knowing COL Stockton's penchant for immediate action and positive fixing of staff responsibility, I spoke up and asked what color scheme he had in mind.

He fixed me with a glare and said, "MAJ Curry, you will design the patch. Include in it General Seneff's Maltese Falcon, something from the support command patch and that aviation color—some kind of blue—I think it's called teal blue, and do it by the end of next week." Having firmly fixed that responsibility, he turned to other subjects and I sat there in a daze.

At the conclusion of the meeting I groped my way back to the S-2 shop and started thinking. I selected the sword from the support command patch as the central theme and then tried various falcon shapes and poses. One had the falcon speared by the sword, another had it above, one below, one off to the side, but none seemed to look right. I kept coming back to a falcon about to land on the sword guard or hilt.

Next came the teal blue. I tried coloring the sword blue, then the falcon blue and finally the background. It looked good, so I stuck with that.

The shape presented quite a challenge and I tried every one imaginable, but since the 1st Aviation Brigade grew out of support command, I decided to stick with the shape of the support command patch. Originally, I outlined the patch in white, but it was changed to gold on someone's suggestion. The gold looks much better than my original white.

The next step was to go to S-3, where MAJ Mather let me have his draftsman. I had him make a color sample about three feet high.

A few days passed, and COL Stockton collared me one day and threatened, "I thought I ordered you to design a patch for the 1st Aviation Brigade."

"I did," I replied, pulling my collar out of his first. "The draftsman is painting a sample now."
"What! You mean you went final without getting my approval first?"
"Well, yes sir. Would you like to see it!"
"Yes!"

I wasn't sure it was ready, but I was hoping. The draftsman smiled at my anxiety and told me he had finished it the day before. I carried it downstairs, and COL Stockton broke into a grin and screamed, "That's it, by God! That's it!"

He snatched it out of my hands and promptly forgot about me. But everyone who came into the headquarters that day was duly ushered into Stockton's office to admire the finished product.

The "Hawks" that became the shoulder crests are a different story. COL Stockton knew just what he wanted, but couldn't decide on the metal or color.

It naturally fell to me to solve these twin problems. I had several colors, sizes and metals rejected by COL Stockton. The tin ones were too "tinny" and the silver was not silver enough and the color would not take on the silver, so you couldn't see the outline of the falcon's wings.

We finally settled on a brass falcon. The limited first edition went to BG Seneff, COL Stockton, Dwight Lorenz (the S-1), Doc Hertzog (the surgeon), and myself.

Best regards,
LTC Jerry R. Curry
165–22–9599
MACV Adv Tm 22 (41st ARVN Regt)
LZ Crystal
APO 96492

High School Degree? College Diploma? Why Wait?

Story by 1Lt David P. Nehf

University of Maryland students: that co-ed touch.

He'll soon be going back to the World! Just a few more months in country and he'll be boarding that "freedom bird" for home.

He knows exactly how it's going to be. There will be the reunion with Mom and Dad, and Mom won't be able to stop crying. His girl will be there too, and 365 days of loneliness and anxiety will culminate in a crushing embrace and a kiss that lingers. He's definitely going to marry that girl.

There will be the old gang to see, old hangouts to visit, and new clothes to buy—nothing green, thank you. And after about three weeks of getting back into the swing of things, he's going to go right out and get himself a good job. Or he may have decided to enroll in the college in his hometown. He foresees no problems. He has everything mapped out.

But wait. What's this he reads in the paper? The job market back in the States has been extremely tight, and unemployment among Vietnam veterans has been running especially high. College applications have increased tremendously—and so have the rejections. Tuition rates at public as well as private institutions have skyrocketed.

Our GI friend's bubble has burst. Or has it? He can still do something right here in Vietnam to improve his prospects for landing a job or getting a degree. The USARV Education Program, with centers on principal Army installations throughout the Republic of Vietnam, has programs to offer any GI who is concerned about his future—whether he never completed the sixth grade or has already framed his college diploma.

The high school graduate can begin his college education by enrolling in any of the numerous courses offered by the Far East Division of the University of Maryland, which has facilities at most USARV education centers. By devoting several hours a week to subjects ranging from English composition to accounting, he can earn full residence credit toward a bachelor's degree from the University of Maryland. If he wishes, he can later transfer this undergraduate credit to another accredited college or university.

The soldier who dropped out of high school can earn his diploma through the U.S. Armed Forces Institute's Core-GED (General Educational Development) Program, a self-teaching, tuition-free program which allows the student to progress at his own rate until he has prepared himself sufficiently to pass his final high school level examinations. This program was introduced to Vietnam during fall of 1970 and already has some 600 participants at Long Binh and several other centers. According to USARV education director Dr. Louis H. Strehlow, plans call for implementation of Core instruction at all of the main USARV education centers in the near future.

A visit to several of the classes in session at the Long Binh Education Center on any given evening during the University of Maryland's five academic terms reminds the inquisitive intruder of those cherished days at his own small college in Pennsylvania. The dress is casual; some of the students and instructors have come to class directly from their duty sections and are still wearing their fatigues. Several young women, including an attractive lady instructor, add the distinctive co-ed touch to the environment. The visitor may have never before attended a college lecture inside a trailer, but then he never enjoyed the luxury of air-conditioned classrooms either.

In an American literature class the students and their instructor rap about the poetry of Walt Whitman. In another class a military judge of general courts martial conveys the intricacies of business law to his engrossed students. The visitor strolls into another trailer and is surprised to discover a modern, well-equipped language laboratory with console facilities for no less than 20 students and programmed tapes available in eight languages.

Most of the instructors are military personnel assigned to units on Long Binh Post. Each has at least a master's degree in his field of instruction and has been approved by his respective Far East Division department head.

The Far East Division's academic year consists of five eight-week terms. Military personnel may enroll in one or two courses each term. Each course is worth three semester-hours and meets twice weekly in three-hour sessions.

The military student pays only a quarter of the $66 tutiton for each course, with the government picking up the rest of the tab. The student must purchase his text books, and upon initial registration with the University of Maryland must pay a $10 matriculation fee.

The university offers the student a substantial selection of basic liberal arts courses, such as Western civilization and economics. Completion of these courses will satisfy freshman and sophomore requirements at most accredited institutions. Students with some college background often choose such upper level courses as 20th Century Europe or educational psychology. Some of those enrolled at the university already possess a degree and are branching out to other fields of study.

Miss Maude Burris, Long Binh Education Center director, and Bob Emery, an education advisor for the center, were quite pleased with the March 29—May 22 enrollment in Maryland classes. "We had a total of 470 students enroll in courses here and at our sub-centers at Long Thanh and Phu Loi," commented Mr. Emery. "That's our highest term enrollment in the four years the program has been in operation." He added, "We're offering 20 courses this term and we've introduced two new subjects, law enforcement and Afro-American history."

Mr. Emery credited the increase in enrollment primarily to student appreciation for the quality of the Maryland program. "The students themselves are our biggest boosters. They feel the university has a lot to offer and they pass the word around."

The U.S. Armed Forces Institute's Core-GED Program is also growing in popularity. It aims at advancing each participant as far as possible in the time available and instilling in each student the desire to continue his education. Currently Long Binh's program is meeting the needs of over 100 GIs with educational deficiencies.

The student entering the program is given an initial battery of tests to determine at which of three course levels—beginning, pre-high school, or high school—he will begin study. Except for the beginning level, the Core approach forgoes the traditional teacher-class relationship, implementing instead a self-teaching program under the supervision of a tutor who can assist the student and monitor his progress. Though each student progresses at his own rate, participants are encouraged to help each other.

The General Educational Development tests comprise the final phase of the Core program. These five tests—in English grammar, social studies, literary materials, natural sciences and mathematics—measure the student's ability on the high school level. If his scores satisfy the minimum requirements for a high school diploma set by the department of education in his home state, the results are forwarded to the department, and his diploma, often referred to as an equivalency certificate, is forthcoming.

In addition to Maryland classes and the Core-GED Program, USARV education centers offer a variety of group study programs by which students can prepare themselves for college level courses. The classes are small, and a competent instructor guides the student through subject matter in which he is weak. Group study courses are tuition-free; however, they generally do not carry college credit.

Many military personnel are unaware that their service experience can qualify them for college credits under a growing number of degree completion programs, such as the "Bootstrap" Program offered by the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Personnel who have completed a year of active duty are elibible for military science credits under the Bootstrap Program. High college Level Examination Program (CLEP) test scores, as well as service school completions guarantee the individual additional credits. A maximum of 65 such "military" credits will be accepted toward either of two degrees from the University of Nebraska at Omaha: the bachelor of general studies, or the bachelor of science in law enforcement and corrections.

Counselors at USARV education centers can furnish the GI with information and guidance regarding the Bootstrap and other degree completion programs.

Another function of the education centers is the periodic administration of such pre-requisite tests as the College Entrance and Graduate Record examinations, the Admissions Test for Graduate Study in Business, and the Law School Admission Test.

Assessing the overall role of the USARV Education Program, its director, Dr. Strehlow, remarked, "We are responsible for pointing a soldier in a certain direction. As the U.S. combat role winds down we hope to point more and more young men in the direction best suited to their particular capabilities and preferences."

Long Binh's Core-GED director A. D. Williams put it more simply: "I want to see people leave the Army better educated than when they came in."

So if our GI friend has the time—we all have a little more spare time than we like to admit—and the sincere desire to improve his chances for a better future, he might well consider checking into the opportunities available at his nearest USARV education center. It may have just the program for him.

A little more education is never a bad idea.

Maryland instructor: How did Whitman's poetry reflect the national mood?

NEWSLETTER

RECENT CHANGES AT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS

NEW DBC

COL John A. Todd became the new Deputy Brigade Commander of the 1st Aviation Brigade on March 13, 1971, succeeding COL Samuel G. Cockerham. COL Todd's last assignment was Chief, Plans and Program Division, Army Aviation Director, OACSFOR, Washington, D.C.

NEW CHIEF OF STAFF

COL Arthur W. Pence, Jr. succeeded COL Charles R. Smith as Chief of Staff on March 5, 1971. COL Pence, a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy, West Point, served as Senior Airborne Advisor Detachment Commander, MACV, prior to coming to the Brigade.

NEW COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR

Rounding out the recent changes, CSM Gerald F. Ellis assumed the duties of Command Sergeant Major on February 8, 1971. The 21-year veteran succeeded CSM James A. Scott. Prior to coming to Brigade, CSM Ellis was assigned to the U.S. Infantry Center Troop Command at Ft. Benning, Ga.

SERVICEMEN'S GROUP LIFE INSURANCE

Fifteen thousand dollars worth of protection for $3 per month? If you've bought insurance as a civilian, you know what a bargin that is. Yet, many soldiers elect not to be insured under the Servicemen's Group Life Insurance (SGLI) program. Three dollars deducted from your pay each month will hardly be missed; think about it. Besides giving you protection while you are in uniform, this policy can be converted to permanent insurance after you leave the service without a physical examination.

CIVILIAN LEGAL SERVICE

Henry Aronson, in cooperation with Ramsey Clark and other distinguished legal personages, maintains a legal office in Saigon to give American servicemen the option of civilian counsel. The Lawyers Military Defense Committee (LMDC) has an office at 203 Tu Do Street in Saigon, Room 14. The office can be telephoned by calling TIGER and asking for PTT 24154.

REVISIONS IN MILITARY COURTESY

Some aspects of military courtesy have been revised to eliminate some of the unnecessary formalities which cause complaints from officers and EM alike. The days of saluting whenever a staff car passes are gone. Accordingly, those riding in vehicles are no longer required to render salutes, either. You are no longer required to salute a superior if either of you are in civilian attire. Finally, military headgear is no longer required if you are riding in a private or commercial vehicle.

DEADLINE EXTENDED

If you missed the April deadline for filing your Federal Income Tax Return, don't panic. Military personnel serving in Vietnam do not have to file a return until 180 days after return to the States. Also you don't have to pay any interest on taxes due until the extention is ended. When you file a return after DEROS, include the inclusive dates of service in Vietnam and the date the tax return is due as a result of the 180 day extension.

If your wife is filing a joint return while you are in Vietnam, have her indicate in the space for your signature that you are serving in a combat zone.

SILVER STARS

CW2 Stanley A. Steenbock
CPT Anthony Thompson III
*SP5 William J. Johnson
*CW2 Keith M. Jackson
SP5 Geoffrey C. Jones
SSG William B. Lemley
WO1 Louis M. Seeger
CPT James C. Williams, Jr.
*CPT David N. Fox
*1LT Joseph H. Marshall
PFC Denis C. Samson
MAJ James E. Brayboy
MAJ John A. G. Klose
CPT Kent V. Hufford
*CPT Robert E. Decelle
CW2 Daniel Grossman
*POSTHUMOUS

WING TIPS...

From the fledgling neophytes of the past the "Golden Hawks" have progressed to the aviators of today. The progression has been painful in the respect of lost lives and resources. It has been satisfying in the respect of the lives and resources that are now being saved due to the lessons of the past.

The helicopter war was entered with new concepts and new techniques for a war in a different environment. Different in both the nature of the country and the nature of the enemy. There were no precedents for what we were doing. Close support, combat assaults, and re-supply had never been done on a large scale with the helicopter. We came, we learned, and we progressed. Our knowledge was fed back to the flight schools and the new aviators were given the basic training needed for the aviation. The Army aviator was the new pioneer, the new hero.

Today's aviator is carrying on with the knowledge gained from his predecessors. He is doing that and working on still newer techniques with newer aircraft. His safety record is better now than ever before, but still needs improving. We have aviators back for a second or third tour which provides a nucleus of experience and professionalism.

The future, as always, is uncertain. There are certain to be assesments of the role of aviation in the Vietnam conflict. Army aviation will have to make requests for the future based on the records of the past. The salvation of Army aviation in the future rests in the aviator. He must look on safety from a Machiavellian viewpoint. By maintaining an outstanding record of safety, in addition to mission performance, he can perpetuate the aviation program. Without the safety record the future must be looked at through a rather black cloud. Aviation safety can help remove those clouds and guarantee the future. Thus, aviation safety is a means to an end. Only you can determine if the end is desirable.

CPT. Dick Hooper


The fittest place where man can die
is where he dies for men
michael joseph barry