

Aircraft Recovery Dangerous but Profitable

Story and Photos by

TUY HOA, (USARV-IO)—Aircraft recovery is big business. It saves the Army millions of dollars in instruments and armament that might be abandoned.

In one swift and bold operation, the 141st Maintenance Company of the 339th Maintenance Battalion lifted a quad-engine CV-2 Caribou cargo plane from the lap of the Viet Cong.

Working for three days under fire, the team loaded out by an Army CH-54 Skycrane helicopter removed. Then the powerful Skycrane carried the plane to safety.

In a year's time, the 339th, commanded by Maj. Thomas Small, has recovered some 90 aircraft.



April 18, 1966

very— t Profitable

SSgt Russ Anderson

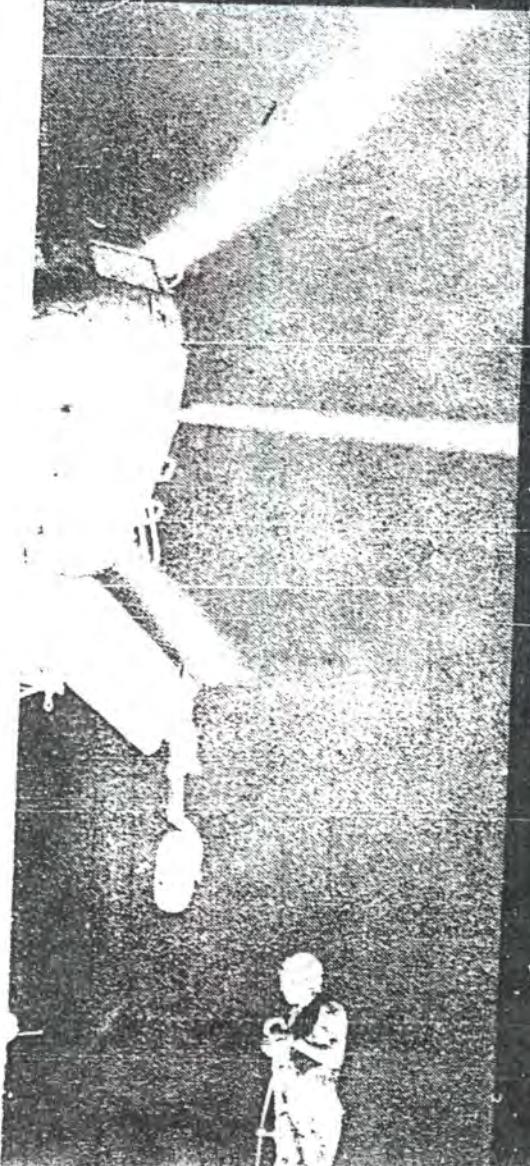
covery in Vietnam is a hard and dangerous business. It saves the Army millions of dollars and deprives the Viet Cong of the instruments and armament that might be abandoned.

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recoverymen prepared the plane to be transported by helicopter. Engines, wings and empennage were removed. The bruised body was transported by truck to Qui Nhon for repair.

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Cobra Will Replace Iroquois

WASHINGTON (ANP) — The streamlined, high speed UH-1H HUEY COBRA helicopter will soon replace the five-year-old UH-1B IROQUOIS as the Army's workhorse armed helicopter, according to an Army announcement.

It will do the job of its predecessor — escort troop-carrying helicopters and provide suppressive fire on landing zones — until the Advanced Aerial Fire Support System becomes operational.

The COBRA was developed by the Bell Helicopter Co. to meet the Army's needs for an interim weapons ship fitted with an improved armament system and available for immediate, low cost deployment.

Its high-performance fuselage gives the COBRA greater range, speed, maneuverability, and weapons payload than the UH-1B, also made by Bell. It uses, however, the same transmission, engine, and rotor system to provide similar operational characteristics and parts interchangeability. Little pilot and mechanic retraining and few supply changes will be needed.

The COBRA has a crew of two; the gunner sits directly forward of the pilot and mans a General Electric Minigun mounted in a turret beneath the nose of the fuselage. Short wings permit the mountings of grenade launchers, rockets, and other weapons.

First deliveries of the COBRA are scheduled for mid-1967. They will be deployed as soon as possible, gradually replacing the UH-1B.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

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- 24. Fondle
- 25. Three banded armadillo
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- 27. Baker's product
- 28. One who marches
- 29. Boxed
- 30. Memoranda

Solution Will Be Shown Next Week



12 FOOT HOUSE PET — Captain Robert L. Dodge handles one of three pythons which are mascots of Det. 3, 58th Sig. Co. Captain Dodge states that they are no danger to humans as long as they are kept well fed, meaning two chickens a week. (Photo by IV Corps-IO)

New Tactics Rout Viet Cong

BUON BRIENG, (25th INF-IO) — It was an old, unhappy story with an unfamiliar, happy ending. It happened in Darlac Province, about 50 miles south of Pleiku, where the 25th Infantry Division's 3rd Brigade is conducting Operation Garfield.

Lieutenant Pat Lenz was leading the 3rd platoon of A Company, 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry. In pursuit of a mortar party, which had shelled the battalion base camp earlier that day.

About noon, one of the men in the platoon found some telephone wire running up a stream bed. Lenz took his men up the stream. Carefully following the wire, it

was not until too late that the platoon detected the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) company. The platoon found itself choked and heavily outnumbered in the middle of an ambush.

Lieutenant Lenz, who had already been shot in the thigh, and his platoon sergeant, SSGT. Warren Jones, immediately led a counterattack on the entrenched communists.

Checking his map — for a good landing zone for evacuation helicopters, the platoon leader called for assistance. But the platoon had to fight its way through enemy positions to get the 200 yards to the LZ.

As the fighting raged on the ground, an Air Force forward air controller arrived on the scene in his small "Birddog" observation plane. He had no communication with the platoon but soon had Air Force A-1E Skyraiders bombing the communists, forcing them to fall back. So close was the fighting that the Skyraiders were dropping their bomb loads and rockets within 75 yards of the Americans. Despite the air attack, the

wounds.

One of the men, his right hand wrapped in bandages and bleeding from shrapnel wounds, crawled up to any enemy bunker and threw in a grenade, with his good left hand.

The main body of the communists, realizing that the odds had changed, broke and ran for the jungle, leaving a small holding force behind. Two hours later, A Company troops finished wiping out the holding force, which had returned to the enemy's previously prepared positions.

Into the fight moved B Company, 1/35th Inf., which set up blocking positions in front of the retreating NVA company. Although the communists had scattered in all directions, several small groups ran directly into B Company's waiting traps.

When the dust cleared, the Americans found 38 dead left behind. A captured North Vietnamese soldier later said that more than 100 of his comrades had been wounded in the exchange.

Cav OH-13 Attacks VC Unit

AN KHE, (1st CAV-IO) — "There's a '13' down out there!" The man at LZ "Dog" had been watching the little OH-13 observation helicopters from the 1st Cavalry Division's 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry as they strafed a company of Viet Cong they had caught planning an ambush.

An enemy anti-aircraft gun began to shoot back and one of the little helicopters spun to earth and crashed as if someone had dosed it with a bug-bomb.

Lieutenant Robert S. Young, pilot of the helicopter, and his observer, PFC William C. Geis, crawled from the wreckage and waved to the other helicopter that circled above them.

The Viet Cong were closing fast when CWO Gerald J. Toman, flying the other OH-13 of the team, flew in on repeated gun runs driving them away and leaving nearly 30 dead Viet Cong on the ground. As he fired, he called desperately for help on his radio.

The cavalry squadron quickly responded. Rocket and machine-gun firing UH-1B helicopters were over the area in minutes strafing positions and driving the survivors into the hills.

As the gunships plastered the surrounding area, one Huey slipped in and picked up Geis and Young, then sped off again.

Geis, who was awarded the Air Medal with "V" for Valor (posthumously), died later in the hospital. Young, who also received the Air Medal with "V" was hospitalized, but later returned to his unit and duty as a flyer.

Toman was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his courageous action in making repeated gun passes at low levels to protect the downed flier.

The 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry, for whom the VC had been planning the ambush, had double-timed from more than 1000 yards away and later killed and captured most of the survivors of the aerial attack.

hey will erect a white picket

and crayons to put their mark of ownership on its sides.

Buddhist priest, they are trying to honor the deceased. They want, too, honor the dead.

en call it "Graham's Tomb."

Capt. Edward S. Graham,

Phu Loi-Artillery

mortar locations.

The attack, which occurred at 2 a.m., lasted only 20 minutes and only 16 enemy mortar rounds landed in the Army compound at Phu Loi.

When the first round came in, division artillery units opened up on pre-selected locations based on likely positions for VC to set up mortars.

By the time counter-mortar radar produced exact coordinates for the enemy mortar locations, the artillery had already fired concentrations on three of the Viet Cong positions.

The 2nd Battalion, 13th Artillery of the 23rd Artillery Group fired a total of 285 rounds of 105mm in support of the action, while the 8th Battalion, 6th Artillery of the 1st Infantry Division fired 158 rounds of 155mm shells.

Reconnaissance at first light showed the entire enemy area plastered by the artillery shells.

Stinger In Its Tail

VUNG TAU, (1st LOG-IO)—A machinegun mount has been designed and built by two 1st Logistical-Command-soldiers—to provide a stinger in the tail of the Chinook helicopter.

After the M-60 machinegun mounts were field-tested by Army airmen and officially approved by them for use, the two soldiers, SSgt. Howard E. Haines, 553rd Ordnance Company, and Sp5 Calvin Augustine, 504th Engineer Detachment, were asked to make 25 mounts for the 147th Aviation Company.

Heretofore the Chinook was vulnerable from the rear since its weaponry is side-mounted. The enemy has become accustomed of late to using the unarmed tail for a target.

During cargo loading and unloading, the weapon can be quickly removed from the low-profile mount by disengaging a disconnect pin.

The design has been submitted to the Army Materiel-Command for possible Army-wide adoption.

April 8, 1966

SIDE AS AMERICA



I Corps Avn Supports ARVN Opn

HUE CITADEL, (14th AVN-PIO)—Army UH-1B (Huey) helicopters from I Corps Aviation Company, 14th Aviation Battalion supported two ARVN regiments in an operation here recently.

Two Hueys were used to conduct command control flights, emergency medical evacuations and resupply of critical items for both regiments.

This was accomplished only by the crew's refusal to take any rest or lunch breaks. The choppers were on the ground only for additional fuel and a quick can of C-rations during the maintenance stops.

In fulfilling their mission, the helicopters flew ARVN commanders to the combat areas, dropped them off and hurried away on emergency medical evacuations or resupply of highly critical material.

The commanders were continuously afforded the opportunity to observe the problems of the ground troops. Because of this, they were able to direct artillery and air strikes on critical areas of resistance.

Late in the afternoon Vietnam Air Force and U.S. Marine helicopters arrived in the area of operations to relieve the two Army helicopters of the medical evacuation and resupply mission.

Vietnam last transportation 400,000 miles he "Cav" in t operations, ate of 100,000 ix divisions— cargo.

men have not ents of 541st every U. S. vietnam have with drivers

unit. In cases where a unit hasn't been involved in operations in the Quil Nhon-An Khe area which the 541st calls home, the truckers have sent personnel to work with the newly arrived outfits.

Whether it's a large convoy, flanked by armed helicopters, carrying a company of sky troopers into action at Phu Cat or Bong Son, or a single truck carrying rations for the next few days to a squad ~~on~~ patrol, the men of the 541st travel through the same enemy territory, and face the same snipers, booby traps and ambushes as the Infantrymen they support.

Sometimes the truckers even beat the "Cav's" famed choppers to the scene of an operation. The first reinforcements to arrive at the besieged camp at Plei Me rode there on 541st troop transport trucks.

Here at An Khe, the Cav's sprawling base camp, the truckers stand "boot to boof" with the sky soldiers in defensive positions surrounding the camp.

When they are supporting a major combat operation, the truckers hitch their 3/4-ton trailer homes to the back of their trucks and move into the field with the Infantrymen. This mobility allows the driver to move to a new area or even to another unit as the tactical situation demands.

The "Cav" has been impressed with the highly professional support it has received from the 1st Loggers. "They continue to do a great job," Maj. Alvin Brewer, 1st Cav Transportation Officer claims.

Capt. Franklin Matthews, commander of the 541st, is justly proud of his men and their record. "These men do jobs they never dreamed were possible," he said.

do anything with nothing, the 62nd Engineer Battalion has served its country during World War II, Korea, and the Berlin crisis, and has been awarded 13 campaign streamers. *Dpi 8, 1966*

'Little Raven' Finds Friend

CU CHI, (25th INF-IO) — The 25th Infantry Division's 2nd Brigade is considering pressing charges for alienation of affection.

"Little Raven" was a fearless flier with sharp eyes and a keen, twitching nose. Unfortunately, heart trouble has caused her to be grounded.

She joined Capt. John W. Kearns and Sgt. John W. Kelly almost daily in their OH-23G helicopter to give the 1st Battalion, 8th Artillery observation support.

So much did she fly after her arrival and subsequent adoption at Cu Chi, 20 miles northwest of Saigon, that she had accumulated almost 25 combat hours in the air. "She's not quite eligible for an air medal," Captain Kearns said. "But we're keeping a record on her."

A couple of weeks ago, while Raven, who happens to be a dog, was waiting to take off from Bien Hoa, a canine friend ran up to the helicopter and jumped in.

"She prefers to stay back now," the captain lamented. "She's gotten used to having another dog around. She's a female. He's a male."

Raven now stays at the fire direction center, where she has a comfortable home. She still comes out occasionally to greet Kearns and Kelly when they return from a flight, but the thrill is gone.

Anyone need a flying puppy?