

A 4-Man Crew of Carters

By SPEC. 5
HOWARD LAYICK
S&S Staff Correspondent

QUANG TRI, Vietnam — Standard operating procedure calls for four men to launch a twin-engine OV10 Bronco on a forward air control (FAC) mission. Nothing in the manual says they must have the same name.

But at Quang Tri four men named Carter, though unrelated, have been trained in the four jobs necessary to put a Bronco in the air, and they are temporarily assigned to the same unit. First Lt. William R. Carter is a pilot, and S. Sgt. Michael R. Carter is an aerial observer. Airman 1.C. Arlin V. Carter is a radioman, and M. Sgt. Marlin D. Carter is the OV10 line chief. All are on temporary duty with the 505th Tactical Control Group at Quang Tri.

"It's really remarkable, considering the influx of personnel and the chance of being trained in the four jobs and then being assigned to the same unit at the same time," said Marlin Carter.

The pilot, aerial observer and line chief are all TDY from the 23rd Tactical Support Sq. The radio operator is TDY from the 20th Tactical Support Sq., in Da Nang.

"We are practically a four-man tactical air squadron," Marlin Carter said. "On any given sortie, we four Carters are involved in the planning, launching, control and recovery of an entire FAC mission."

Pvt. Beats Draft— Joins U.S.

CAMP H. M. SMITH, Hawaii (Special) — Marine Pvt. Carl A. S. Klem, a Vietnam veteran, has avoided being drafted by becoming a U.S. citizen.

Klem was serving with Marine Observation Sq. (VMO-2) at Da Nang recently when he received a draft notice from his native Norway. Although of Norse descent, he hasn't seen his homeland since he and his parents emigrated from there to the U.S. when he was three.

When immediate naturalization became urgent, Hq., Fleet Marine Force, Pacific in Hawaii assisted in having him flown to Hawaii where he received the oath of citizenship from Judge C. Nils.

Klem enlisted in the Marines in December 1968 and was discharged shortly after the Hawaii ceremony.

Viet Press Fined For Violations

SAIGON (S&S) — A Saigon court levied fines ranging from \$0,000 to 500,000 piasters in 35 convictions of violations of the National Press Code, the government news agency said Monday.

Eleven newspaper issues, including issues of Saigon's three English-language newspapers, were acquitted of similar charges for lack of evidence, the Vietnam Press said.

Goodwin Takes Over

DONG HA COMBAT BASE, Vietnam (Special) — Col. Warner S. Goodwin Jr. took command of the 11th Inf. Brigade "Jungle Warriors" from Col. John L. Insani in ceremony here recently.

Ask a Cobra Jockey

Loaches? Slicks? You Get to Luv 'Em

By SGT. JOHN MUELLER
S&S Staff Correspondent

QUANG TRI, Vietnam — "Big Al" ambled down the metal plank taxiway past the Loaches and Slicks parked in their stalls and stopped beside Snake 822.

On the pilot's side of the Cobra gunship were stenciled a gray truck, a tank and three .51-cal. machine guns. The tank was his. Someone else had knocked out the others.

Behind his seat were three fresh patches on the Snake's metal skin where AK47 rounds and a .51 had ripped through.

"This one's had two sets of blades on it now," he said. Two mechanics climbing over the chopper joked with him about the wiring.

For "Big Al" — CWO Lawrence Marciniak — it would be one of his last looks at "Eight Double Deuce." It was one of the Cobras he had flown during the last year in Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos. "Big Al" was going home.

Marciniak is a Cobra pilot with C Troop, 7/17 Air Cav., a unit that has been flying in Laos since the beginning of the South Vietnamese operation.

Everybody liked "Big Al." He was modest and somewhat shy and didn't especially like talking to reporters unmercifully. "They just don't understand that we don't go looking for publicity."

Technically 822 was Al's ship. But because it had taken so many hits, it was often

laid up for repairs and he would have to fly someone else's ship.

He was ready to go home to his wife and year-old son he had seen only a few weeks before coming here.

His 688 combat hours had been racked up in a month and a half in Cambodia, seven months in Vietnam and "just about every day" for a month and half in Laos.

"I don't feel like telling people what it's like to be here or in Laos," he said. "Most of 'em know what it's like anyway."

His hairiest day in Laos came about the middle of February when he and his wingman knocked out two of three gun positions. "We rolled in on them and I took one out and broke right. The other gun opened up on me and my wingman took him out. We got back and we had seven or eight holes in the chopper."

He said a favorite tactic of the North Vietnamese was to let the helicopters fly into Laos without firing a shot, but open up on the choppers from behind when they turned back toward Vietnam.

Compared to Laos, Cambodia was a picnic, he said. Before Laos, he had never faced such stiff antiaircraft fire.

What was he thinking about when he was flying over Laos?

"I don't know how to explain it. Everyone feels his own thing. Scared, I guess. But when it starts to happen, you do your job."

When it's all over and done with, you think 'wow, that could have been me.'"

Al's lost eight friends in the Laotian war. He's glad he's not going back to Laos.

Several Huey slicks clattered by "Snake" 822 as he slumped on the open turret door. He looked older than his 21 years.

"Down there we used to sit and read the papers and say 'wow, that's what the war's like,'" he said. "Down there" was Qui Nhon where his unit was based before being moved up north and into Laos. "Down there we had to go out and beat guys over the head to get them to shoot at us. It got so boring and routine. But we kept telling ourselves not to let it get to us. One of these days the routine would kill us."

He said his unit is one of the best, and that the routine hadn't gotten to them when they moved up north.

"We're good. That's why they chose us for the job."

"It was a different type war up here," he said. "We're proud of our record here. But we don't go around bragging or saying, 'Hey, want to see my plane?'"

Al isn't concerned about the medals he's received for his bravery under fire. "The Army says we think you're doing a good job so we'll give you a medal. Well it doesn't really mean anything. Coffee is still a dime. I'm here to do my job."

For him the thrill of flying is enough reward. He will be back in the United States soon, flying he hopes.



GI in a Jam

An American trooper struggles to unjam a machinegun atop a tank during an ambush on Route 9 in northern South Vietnam. He finally gave up on the machinegun and picked up a rifle to use in the fight.

(AP Radiophoto)

On the Job Training Halts a Red Attack

PHAN RANG AB, Vietnam (Special) — The Vietnam war saw another first as a "school-room" went into combat.

Republic of Vietnam Air Force (VNAF) personnel training with U.S. advisors here in the AC119 gunship program, recently responded to an emergency call by Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) ground forces who were in combat with Communist troops five miles southwest of Dakto. The ARVN unit had lost its interpreter and the U.S. Air Force crews supporting them could not understand Vietnamese. An emergency call was placed to the 14th Special Operations Wing Headquarters here, where the decision was made to divert the VNAF crew and their American instructors, complete with their AC119 classroom.

Arriving on the scene of the fighting, the VNAF crew found the ARVN unit surrounded by

Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army forces. With the enemy about 800 meters away from the camp and closing in, the VNAF crew positioned their gunship and opened fire on the enemy, keeping them off guard long enough for their ARVN counterparts to regroup.

Maj. Donald D. Fraker, a USAF instructor flying on the gunship, stated, "Even though the VNAF crew members were only halfway through their training, they did an A plus job. They also had an opportunity to see what goes on during an actual mission which should help them greatly."

The VNAF crew, one of those that compose the first class training in the AC119, was commanded by Maj. Dang Van Duc. Duc acted as interpreter for the crew during the mission over the base camp and aided greatly in insuring his crew worked smoothly.

5 Armorers Build 30-Seat Act of Faith

CHU LAI, Vietnam (Special) — Take five able-bodied men, give them some time, a little working material and what do you get? Another company club? A roof for their outdoor theater? A volleyball court? A chapel?

A chapel? Unlikely as it may seem, in what many people consider an age of materialism, five men of Hq. and A Co., 723rd Maintenance Bn., pooled their off-hour resources and built a company chapel.

Under the direction of Sgt. 1.C. John G. Saldivar the men volunteered their services to construct the 30 seat inter-denominational chapel.

"The chapel we used to go to was too far away from the company," Saldivar explained, "and with this chapel we don't have to be away from our work area for so long."

It took the men two months to

complete the stained, wood-paneled chapel. The chapel is one of but a handful of air-conditioned religious facilities for American troops in the Republic of Vietnam.

In addition to working together on the chapel, the five men — Spec. 5 Alfred Jones, Spec. 4 Daniel Oviedo, Spec. 4 William Rockford, Spec. 4 James Williams, and Spec. 5 James Winn, are in close contact on their regular job. They all are employed in the armament section of the 723rd Maintenance Bn.

Whether it is due to a sudden influx of religious spirit on the part of the men in the company, the chapel's strategic location — directly across from the company mess hall — or the air-conditioner, the fact remains that church attendance is up.