

# HAWK



OCTOBER 1967

4750<sup>2</sup>

RETURN  
LIBRARY  
OF TORONTO





## 1ST AVIATION BRIGADE

# HAWK

OCTOBER 1967

VOLUME 1

NUMBER 2

COMMANDING GENERAL  
MG George P. Seneff Jr.

DEPUTY BRIGADE COMMANDER  
COL Daniel G. Gust

COMMANDER, 12TH COMBAT AVIATION  
GROUP  
COL Nicholas G. Psaki Jr.

COMMANDER, 17TH COMBAT AVIATION  
GROUP  
COL Bill G. Smith

COMMANDER, 13TH COMBAT AVIATION  
BATTALION  
LTC Robert D. McDaniel

COMMANDER, 210TH COMBAT AVIATION  
BATTALION  
LTC Wilbur A. Sidney

INFORMATION OFFICER  
MAJ James F. Foster

ADVISING EDITOR  
CPT Frank A. Mariano

EDITOR  
1LT James J. Driscoll Jr.

REPORTER  
SP4 William J. Guffey

All photographs appearing in this publication are U.S. Army photos unless otherwise credited and may not be reproduced without the express approval of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs or the MACV Office of Information.

### THIS MONTH

NEWSLETTER	1
Editorial: 10% Money	2
Chaplain's Corner	2
Career Counselor	2
VIETNAM: Profile of an Era, Part 1	3
AVIATION'S MOST DECORATED WARRANT	4
Perspective: 17TH COMBAT AVIATION GROUP	5
PLACES OF WORSHIP	8
MOS Spotlight: AMMUNITION SPECIALIST	10
HAWK HONEY: Heather Hewitt	12
THE AVIATION GUIDON	13
THE SECOND TIME AROUND	
CPT Frank A. Mariano	14

Photo Credits: Cover, 1LT J.J. Driscoll; P.1, ANF (AH-56A);  
P.8-9, LTC F.A. Knight;  
P.12, Ashley Famous Agency

HAWK, an authorized Army publication, is published monthly by the Information Office, 1st Aviation Brigade. Opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. HAWK uses the facilities of Armed Forces News Bureau (AFNB), Army News Features (ANF), and others where credited. Contributions are welcome and should be submitted to: Editor, HAWK Magazine, Information Office, Headquarters, 1st Aviation Brigade, APO San Francisco 96384. HAWK is printed at Tiger Printing Service, Okinawa.

# NEWSLETTER



AH-56A "CHEYENNE" ROLLED OUT—The first model of a helicopter designed to fly nearly twice the speed of combat helicopters now in Vietnam was rolled out of the Lockheed-California plant at Van Nuys. The AH-56A "Cheyenne" will have a two-man crew protected from ground fire by armorplate. It is designed to escort troop carrying helicopters in airmobile operations and provide direct fire support in combat landing zones. It will be able to carry wire-guided anti-tank guided missiles, a grenade launcher, rockets, and camchine gun with a 360-degree field of fire. The Cheyenne will have a top speed in excess of 250 miles an hour. (ANF)

DOD HAS MODIFIED policy for special leave from Vietnam to permit leave to begin up to 60 days after normal rotation date under circumstances where individuals were unable to take leave due to operational commitments. Previous policy stated leave had to be taken within 30 days after normal rotation date. Leave may still begin not more than 90 days before normal rotation date. Current plans do not call for any 60-day leaves for those serving extended tours in Vietnam.

ALL SERVICEMEN ARRIVING in the United States who wish to use commercial aircraft on a military standby basis must now possess a new form DD Form 1580. The form will be issued at the request of servicemen departing Vietnam. It may be used for leave, delay enroute to a new assignment, pass or discharge. Besides authorizing standby travel, the form identifies servicemen who are on official absence.

HAWK

## UNIT ANNIVERSARIES

### Activations:

174th Assault Helicopter Co.—October 1, 1965  
281st Assault Helicopter Co.—October 7, 1965

### Arrivals in-country:

131st Surveillance Airplane Co.—October 1, 1965  
14th Combat Aviation Headquarters—  
October 14, 1965  
180th Assault Support Helicopter Co.—October 17,  
1966  
116th Assault Helicopter Co.—October 20, 1965  
128th Assault Helicopter Co.—October 20, 1965  
10th Combat Aviation Battalion Headquarters—  
October 28, 1965

ARMY AVIATION MATERIEL Command has awarded Sikorsky Aircraft Division, United Aircraft Corp., a \$2.9 million contract for production of 22 detachable compartments, "People Pods," for CH-54A Flying Cranes.

ARMY LIGHTWEIGHT INDIVIDUAL survival kits are scheduled to become standard items by October, 1968. The compact kits weigh 7 pounds and contain all the necessary survival equipment, including a survival knife, distress marker-light and firstaid items. The kits may be worn over the shoulder or on the leg. The 1st Aviation Brigade has received many of the kits and they have been issued to Birddog and helicopter companies.



# 10% MONEY

## CAREER COUNSELOR

While you are overseas, your money can earn 10 per cent interest for you. The Uniformed Services Savings Deposit Program pays 10 per cent interest, compounded quarterly, on money you deposit during your overseas tour. That's the highest rate of interest your money can earn in any savings program.

You may deposit any amount of your unallotted pay and allowances under the program. This includes basic pay, special pay, proficiency pay, incentive pay, Family Separation Allowance, hostile fire pay, and reenlistment bonus.

Deposits can be by cash or allotment and will continue to draw interest up to 90 days after you return from overseas. All deposits plus interest will be paid to you immediately upon your written request at your port of debarkation, new duty station, or upon separation from active duty.

Your personal affairs or finance officer has full details.

Chaplain's Corner:

### GOD IS WHERE YOU LOOK FOR HIM

Chap (CPT) N.C. Giannattasio



It happened in Chicago. A crowd had gathered about one of those sidewalk astronomers as they invariably will. He had one of the customary telescopes mounted on a tripod and was offering a close-up look at the stars for a small fee.

Along came a lively four year old boy, restrained only by the firm grasp of his father. The lad was not big enough to see by himself so the father put him on his shoulder. He watched attentively. "What are they doing, daddy?" "Why son, they are looking at the stars," his father replied. "Oh," the child remarked with evident disappointment, "I thought they were looking for God up there!"

Over the centuries there were men of astronomy who found God up there and brought him into their own lives. Overwhelmed by the great galaxy of heavenly bodies, the tremendous distances between them, the orderliness of their course, they could only admit that some intelligent Being must be directing the heavens.

Other men of science found God inside the earth...down deep in the depths of a diamond mine. The tiny formation of a hunk of carbon into a brilliant and beautiful stone which captivates the eye and indicates that there must be some Intelligent Directive Power.

Another found the traces of God's intelligence in a simple bug. The intricacies discovered in the makeup of an insect sets a biologist off to pondering the 'why' behind the beauty of structure. And the more questions he asks, the more he is forced to admit that only intelligence could have done this.

Strange, isn't it, that the creature of God in which He is often hardest to see is man. And man is the only creature on earth made in the image and likeness of God.

Chances are, as a youngster, you worked with erector sets. Then you graduated to dismantling and reassembling bikes and cars. Now, as you look toward a career, why not try your hand at aircraft maintenance? The Army can give your mechanical abilities a good workout.

There are several areas in which you could work. As an Aircraft mechanic you'd work on single and tandem rotor helicopters and fixed wing aircraft. Inspection, trouble-shooting, maintenance and repair would be your responsibility; testing, servicing and replacing engine components and parts.

As an Aircraft Repair Supervisor/Inspector, your duties would include inspection of aircraft engines, components, systems and instruments, and to coordinate the work of maintenance sections, teams, detachments, platoons and aircraft shops.

Your training will consist of one or more formal courses in the maintenance of rotary and fixed wing aircraft.

These are just a few of the skills you can learn in Army Aviation Maintenance: aircraft engine mechanic; aircraft welder; airframe repairman; airplane electrician; and service and flight inspector.

If you qualify, you can be assured of the service school of your choice in Aviation Maintenance before you reenlist. Get all the facts from your unit or battalion career counselor.

# Vietnam: PROFILE OF AN ERA

42 The history of Vietnam and its people is one of a struggle for freedom; a struggle which continues today. Due to its fertile lands, which are some of the most productive in Asia, its rich natural resources, and accessibility to trade routes, the small nation has always been considered a prize by larger nations.

The earliest recorded history of Vietnam goes back to 213 B.C., when the forces of the Chinese Empire invaded what is now North Vietnam and began a slow but systematic advance to the south. The people, scattered and disorganized, could offer only token resistance, and by 186 A.D. the Chinese had completed their conquest. They gave the newly conquered people the name "Viet Nam", which means "the Southern People", and the land was called "An-nam"—the Pacified South.

15 The Chinese rule lasted more than 750 years. During that period, the Vietnamese absorbed much of the Chinese culture, an influence that is still evident. But they were restive under Chinese rule, and rebelled frequently. One of the most famous revolts was led by two sisters, Trung Trac and Trung Nhi. The fact that they succeeded in defeating the Chinese and ruled briefly is marked by anniversary celebrations to this day.

But independence was only

21 temporary. The Chinese returned with a powerful army, led by one of their oldest and best generals, and regained control. It was not until 939, after several more unsuccessful attempts, that the Chinese were finally overthrown. Under the leadership of a Vietnamese general, Ngo Quyen, the Vietnamese defeated the Chinese forces and ran them back up north. For only a few years during the 15th century were the Chinese able to reoccupy the country. From then until the mid-19th century, Vietnam enjoyed virtual freedom and independence.

It was also during this period, from 1428-1865, that Vietnamese cultural life went through

21 its most brilliant development. Under the dynasty founded by Emporer Le, a code of law was written and remained in effect until the late 19th century. Arts and crafts, agriculture, and commerce were encouraged and grew.

The country became strong enough to expand and push further south, conquering the once great kingdom of Champa. The Khmers, or Cambodians as they are now known, were also defeated and forced to retreat to their present boundaries. By 1780, the Vietnamese occupied all of the territory which today comprises Vietnam.

(Next month: from French rule to present.)

Statue of Ngo Quyen in Saigon



# AVIATION'S MOST DECORATED WARRANT

Chief Warrant Officer Jerome Daly received the Distinguished Service Cross, the nation's second highest award for gallantry in action, in ceremonies at Soc Trang August 4. The award makes him the Army's most decorated warrant officer aviator.

Army Chief of Staff Harold K. Johnson presented the DSC to the 121st Assault Helicopter Company aviator at 13th Combat Aviation Battalion Headquarters. Daly was cited for his actions on Easter Sunday—referred to as "Black Sunday" by the men of the 13th Battalion.

Three helicopters had been shot down in a contested landing zone near Vinh Long, and were threatened by an estimated two Viet Cong battalions. All rescue attempts had been thwarted by intense enemy fire from fortified emplacements in a treeline 100 meters from the downed aircraft. Although it was imperative to rescue them before nightfall, ground armor reinforcing units would be unable to reach the besieged men in time.

It was decided that Daly's aircraft would place a smoke screen between the insurgents and the rescue aircraft. Although he knew that he would be required to fly less than 100 meters from a treeline which contained a heavy concentration of enemy firepower, he readily gave his consent to the plan.

With the pickup aircraft right behind him, Daly descended to 10 feet above ground, flying in front of Viet Cong automatic weapons and concealing the rescue operation with thick smoke. Although the pickup operations were expected to last only a short time, the downed men were spread throughout the landing area and more evacuation aircraft were needed.

Daly circled the area 11 more times, laying smoke while under a hail of enemy fire. He gained

valuable time for the extra ships to arrive, and provided the necessary cover for the rescue ships to recover the downed crewmen.

Although no one on Daly's helicopter was wounded, the ship took so many hits that it was judged beyond repair.

The DSC, added to his other awards, including the Silver Star, two Bronze Stars for valor, one Army Commendation Medal, two Purple Hearts and two Vietnamese decorations for gallantry, makes Mr. Daly the Army's most decorated warrant officer aviator, and one of the most decorated soldiers in the Vietnamese war. (At this writing Daly had earned 67 air medals).

*CWO Daly received DSC from General Harold K. Johnson*



**Perspective:**

# 17TH COMBAT AVIATION GROUP

In the command post of the 17th Combat Aviation Group stands a brightly polished tree stump with engraved metal plates showing the names of the major combat operations fought in Viet Nam Since February 1966. The combined names form a total picture of the war as waged by I Field Force Vietnam.

Colonel Bill. G. Smith, commanding the 17th CAG, is an Army aviator, charged with providing airmobility—the transport—to victory for the two brigades and

three divisions of US and Korean infantry that, in combination with his own command and the 1st Cavalry Division, form the I FFORCE V starting lineup. The 17th Combat Aviation Group is the only one of these units to have done battle in every major operation undertaken by one of the others.

Also tacked to the campaign tree are plates engraved "Attleboro" and "Junction City"—operations conducted by II Field Force Vietnam in the III Corps

Tactical Zone, outside the 17th's normal operational area. There are plates labeling operations conducted by the 5th Special Forces Group, and other operations which, except for aviation support, were strictly ARVN affairs.

And even the plate-patched stump fails to tell the whole story, for the 17th CAG has a whole battalion of airplanes and two chopper companies which receive their orders through more indirect channels. Their ex-

*Group helicopters participated in Operation Junction City*





*4th Infantry Division is among the units supported by 17th*

ploys support the overall war effort.

A 17th CAG Mohawk surveillance airplane company tracks enemy movements on film and radar, and reports directly to MACV. Group owned spotter pilots supporting I FFORCE V, the 3d Marine Amphibious Force and the RVN Army blanket the northern two corps areas with visual reconnaissance. They aim air-strikes, armed helicopters, artillery, and Navy guns at the enemy in support of ground combat.

Few tactical commands short of MACV are so widely committed. Group output figures suggest the size of the load it carries.

In the 17th CAG's first year of operation, ending March 1, 1967, its aircraft amassed 400,000 flying hours—enough hours to span 46 years—and carried a million passengers—at the staggering clip of more than 114 people moved every hour for a full year.

To pick up and deliver their passengers—mostly infantry troops

on combat missions—crewmen often had to surpass or try to ignore the fire of enemy small arms, machine guns and anti-aircraft weapons. Much of their flight time was accumulated in the anxiety of overloaded ships at outlandish density altitudes—or at night—or in miserable weather—or in all three. They were combat hours, fought and died in by a breed of soldier whose debut in close combat has emblazoned his name in the annals of battlefield audacity—the Army aviator.

The 17th CAG has more than a thousand of them, in six battalions, scattered over 65 per cent of the land mass of South Vietnam. It has over four thousand other members who aren't aviators, but nearly half are flight crewmen, and the rest form a supporting base of mechanics, POL specialists, security forces, clerks, cooks, and medics, who in various ways help to keep the group's approximately 450 birds flying.

It is a purely tactical aviation command, on a scale unknown to the Army just a few years ago—a child of necessity, sired by the massive buildup of American infantry in Vietnam and born of the decision to make our combat forces here airmobile.

In 1965, the year the United States became actively committed to the conflict in Vietnam, the mounting number of aviation platoons and companies in the war zone had been grouped into battalions for control. In April of that year a new non-divisional aviation group headquarters was scratched together from existing assets in Vietnam and offered to Department of the Army as the USA Aviation Group (provisional)—later the 12th Combat Aviation Group. Its boss, Colonel Raymond G. Jones, assumed command of five aviation battalions, a company and a section, sprawled over the entire Republic, and was asked to provide helicopters and irplanes to everybody who hacn't brought his own.

As the number of ground troops continued to increase, the number of helicopters required to support them grew accordingly. The nagging need to keep the troops flying was pumping chopper units into the 12th Group beyond its capacity to manage them.

Thus the 17th Combat Aviation Group was born. Its first commander, Colonel Gerald Shea, was reassigned from a job as USARV Staff Aviation Officer, and most of the rest of the group's lean initial assets were pulled from the overladen 12th Group.

The new headquarters, code named "Eagle", settled in Nha Trang to co-locate with I FFORCE V. There it further staffed and prepared itself, until with a minimum of men and equipment Colonel Shea proclaimed his shop ready to open. On March 1 he was handed the reins of the 12th Group's northern three battalions, and another major combat command had entered the arena.

A combat command. A tactical fighting unit. ~~Those terms~~ applied to the 17th Combat Aviation Group have been hard for some non-aviators to accept, particularly those who haven't ridden to battle in a low-level chopper formation, or have been forced to cover by a torrent of enemy lead and had the pressure relieved by a gunship's awesome power—or been pulled from a hopelessly surrounded position by a chopper crew whose ship was being raked by gunfire on the approach, but kept on coming.

But for all that, Army aviation is still considered a supporting force. And of course it is a supporting force, in the sense that its worth hangs on what it can do for the infantryman; but its value to him is comparable to armor's relationship to infantry in WW II. Army aviation is firepower,

mobility, and even shock effect. Like tanks, its gunships offer the rifleman covering and assault fire from a mobile platform. More effective than armed carriers, its machine gun-toting "slicks" speed the troops across uncontested ground to the terrain they must occupy.

The similarities stop there.

And in the end there is no comparison, no precedent for the work of Army aviation in Vietnam, no description more telling than the words of greatful ground commanders.

Lieutenant General Stanley Larsen, Commanding General, I Field Force Vietnam, said in an interview in February of this year: "The helicopter was developed at a time when we absolutely had to have it—and the men who fly it are nothing but courageous. Most infantrymen think the average pilot sticks his neck out more than they themselves do. To me, infantry, artillery, armor and Army aviation should be said in the same breath, along with signal and engineers, of course; because as far as I'm concerned, it's a combat arm. We couldn't be winning here without it—or perhaps even holding our own."

Brigadier General Willard Pearson, Commanding General, 101st Airborne Division, wrote

to then 17th CAG commander, Colonel Shea, in March 1966: "I feel the tremendous contribuition of your units is best summed up by the remarks of one of my battalion commanders who described the performance of the individual pilot as 'magnificent'. We on the ground salute him for his valor. The chopper pilot is a new breed of soldier; and we welcome him...as an essential partner in the combined arms team, to whom falls the ultimate task of closing with the enemy and destroying him."

Colonel John Austin, Commanding Officor, 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, in a letter to the group's 10th Combat Aviation Battalion last January, said: "We are highly mobile—but you have been our mobility; you have been food for hungry men, munitions for vital weapons, water for dry throats, and mail from home. Your gunships are the arm that can hit at the far distance. To us you are not a supporting force but a part of the total force. We are winning on the battlefield because of you."

This winning war effort in Vietnam comes from just such "Supporting" contributions as those made to I Field Force Vietnam by the 17th Combat Aviation Group.

52d Battalion is headquartered at Camp Holloway, Pleiku

## HEADQUARTERS 52D COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION

PLEIKU

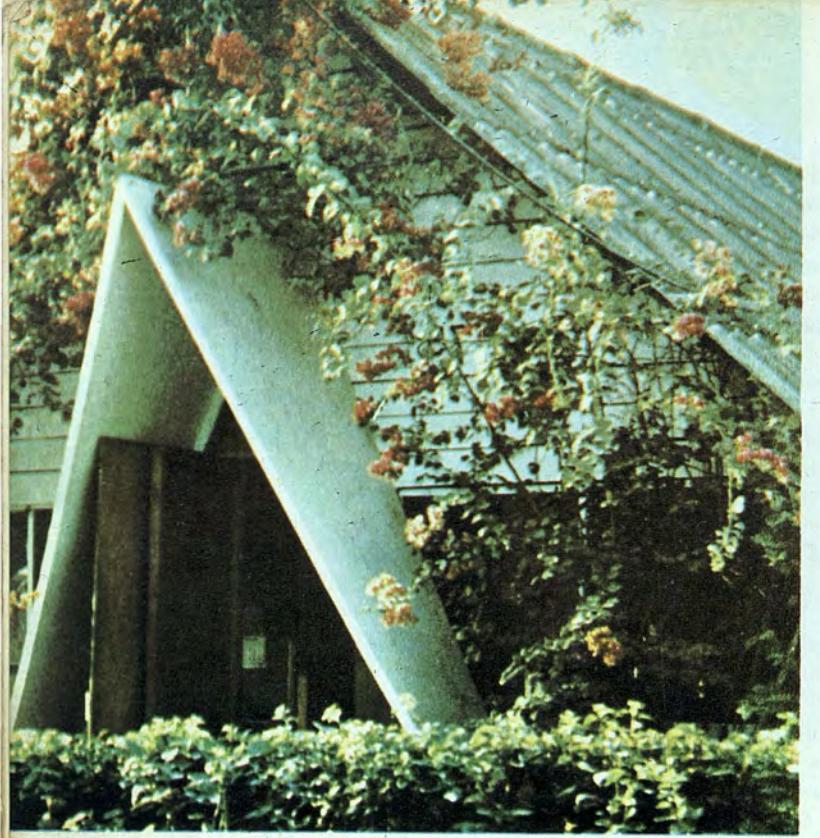
VIETNAM



LTC PAUL C. SMITH  
SGM E. J. WINTERS

COMMANDING  
SERGEANT MAJOR

HAWK



*Oldest Army chapel in Vietnam, 210th Combat Aviation Battalion, Tan Son Nhut*



*Vinh Long chapel serves Delta troops*

# PLACES OF WORSHIP

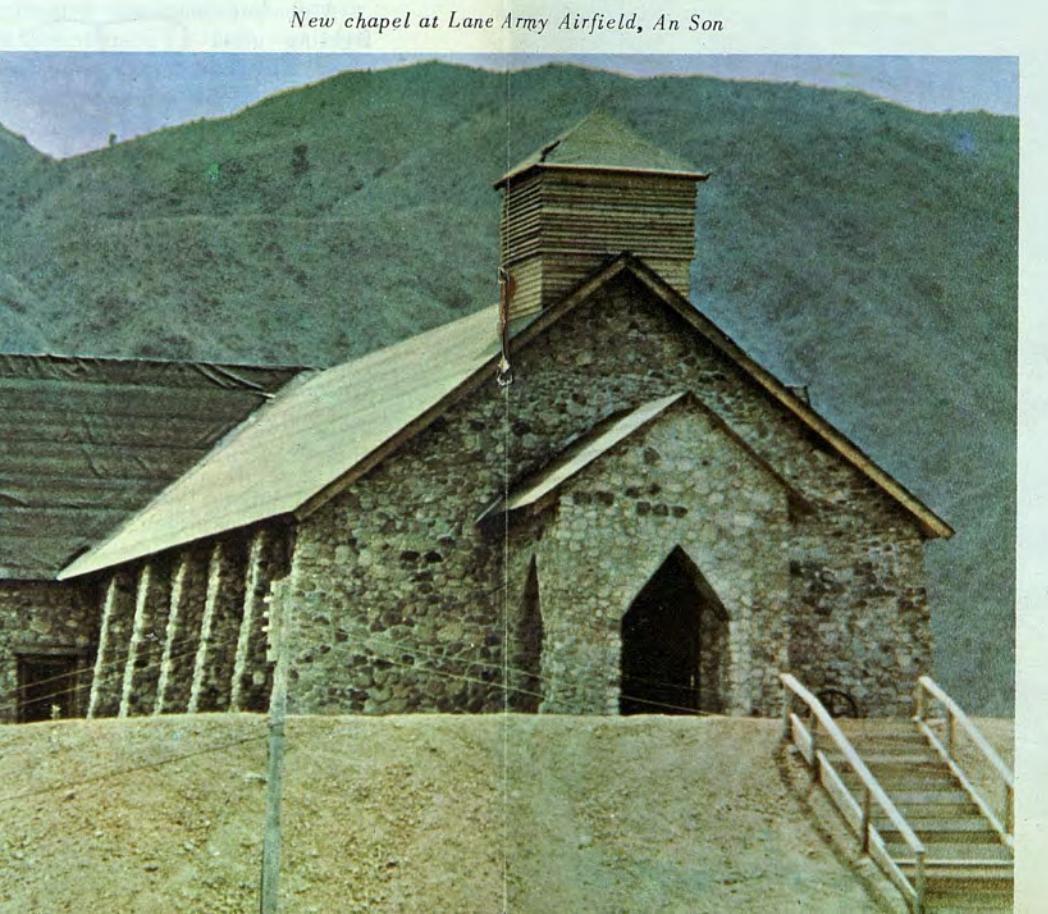
## BRIGADE CHAPELS

PHOTOS BY CHAP (LTC) FRANCIS KNIGHT

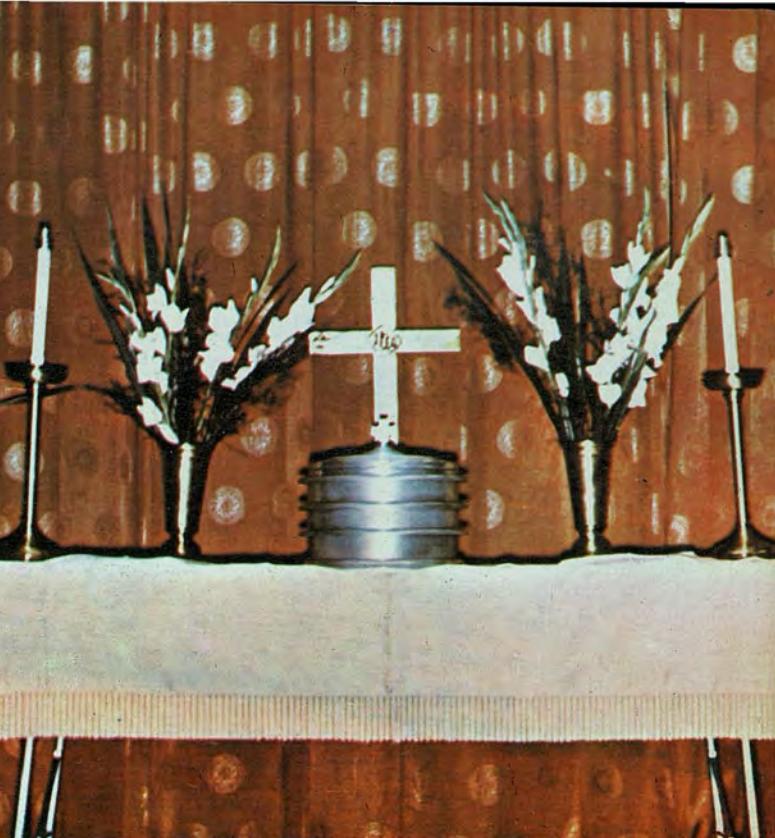
Since time immemorial man has built alters, chapels and churches to provide a place to worship his God. Vietnam today is no exception. Infantry divisions and separate brigades here have many people whose help, labor and funds can assist in building their few chapels. The units of the 1st Aviation

Brigade are different. With a total of eight chapels in the brigade, many of them serving only one or two companies, labor and funds are limited. Nonetheless the men of the brigade have responded wonderfully building or helping to build some of the most beautiful chapels in the country—lasting tributes to their devotion to country and to God.

CHAPLAIN KNIGHT is Staff Chaplain, Headquarters 1st Aviation Brigade

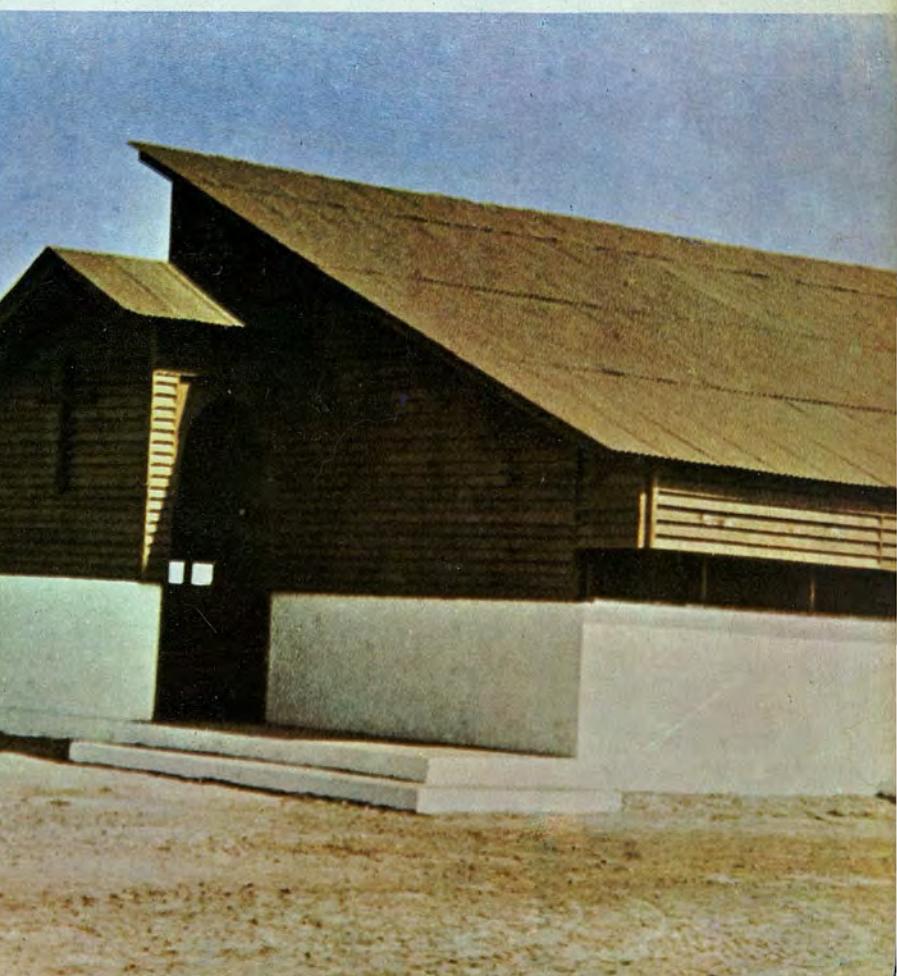


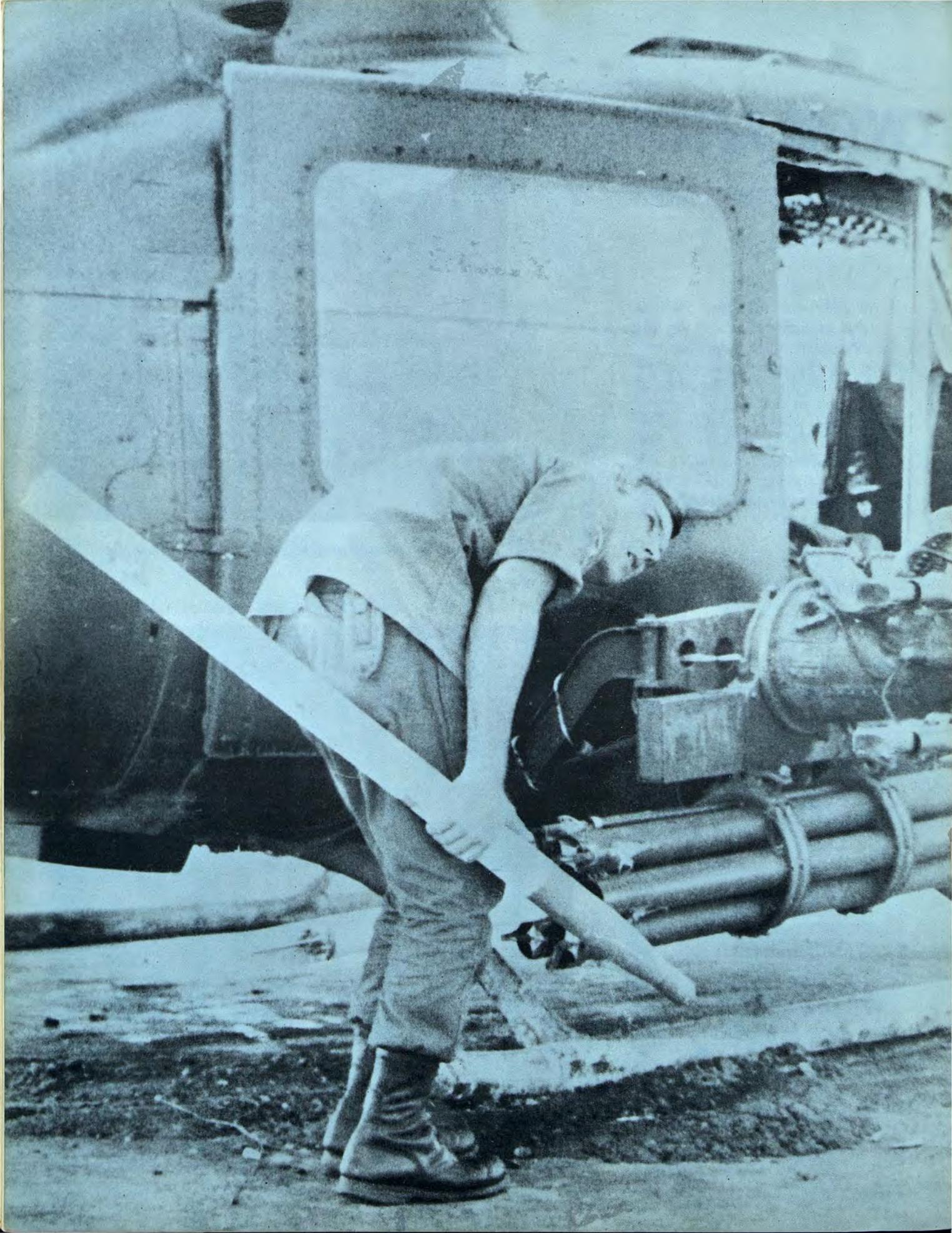
*New chapel at Lane Army Airfield, An Son*



*Portable altar used at brigade headquarters*

*11th Combat Aviation Battalion chapel, Phu Loi*





## MOS SPOTLIGHT:

# AMMUNITION SPECIALIST

As the "slick" comes into the landing zone, it is greeted by heavy enemy fire. A bullet shatters the windshield, narrowly missing the pilot. The gunner and crew chief open up on the treelines with their M-60 machine guns, spraying the area with suppressive fire. The enemy guns become silent.

An infantry platoon, completely surrounded and pinned down by Viet Cong, radios for help. Help comes within minutes—a Huey gunship. The ship circles, and spots Charlie. A hollow sounding explosion, a puff of smoke, and two glowing slivers of metal cut a trail toward their target. The infantrymen are no longer pinned down.

An O-1 "Bird Dog" reconnaissance airplane flies almost leisurely above the jungles. Suddenly the small plane goes into a steep bank and comes around. The pilot has spotted enemy activity. He speaks briefly into the radio, and gunships are on the way. Making another pass over the enemy position, he fires one, then another of his target-marking rockets, pinpointing the enemy for the more lethal gunships.

Each of these aircraft was performing a different function under different circumstances. But all three had one thing in common—the success of their missions was dependent on the effectiveness of their firepower.

For every man who goes into combat and pulls the trigger, there are several behind the lines who contribute to his success. One of the most important of these is the ammunition specialist. He is responsible for making sure that the combatant gets enough of the right kind of ammunition, and that he gets it when and where he needs it most.

Each facet of his job requires a specialized skill. In order to insure that the proper amounts of ammunition get to where they are most needed, he must have clerical talents—he must know the channels of distribution from supply points and depots to using points. He must also be familiar with the procedures involved in the sometime complicated paperwork necessary for ordering the ammunition.

Each type of ammunition is designed for a specific purpose. To make sure that the right kind of ammunition gets into the right weapon for the right purpose, the ammunition specialist must know all the characteristics and identifying markings of ammunition supplies such as color, code symbols, construction and type of explosive or chemical filler.

The amount of facts and figures he must have at his command for this purpose is appreciated when the scope of the ammunition he works with is considered. The ammunition specialist handles an

average of ten basic types of ammunition, from the small 5.56 mm M-16 round to the 2.75 inch rocket. This variety of ammunition is broken down still further according to purpose—target-marking, armor-piercing, tracer, etc.—and each has an identifying mark that he must recognize at a glance.

Although the ammunition specialist doesn't encounter the same dangers as the man he supplies, by virtue of his job he is sitting on top of a "bomb" every workday. Without proper precautions, that bomb could easily go off.

Specialist Four James B. Carroll, of the 334th Armed Helicopter Company at Bien Hoa, puts it simply: "Any kind of ammunition is dangerous if not handled properly."

Specialist Four Michael J. Schultz, with the 191st Assault Helicopter Company at Bear Cat, is even more graphic. "Most of the exploding types of ammo are not armed until fired. But it doesn't take much to fire them. It takes  $\frac{1}{2}$  volt of static electricity to arm to rockets."

The ammunition specialist therefore know the safety precautions for each type of ammunition he handles. This includes proper methods of storage and layout.

The scope of his job makes the ammunition specialist an important part of the Army aviation team in Vietnam.

HAWK HONEY



Heather Hewitt



# THE AVIATION GUIDON

Picture a helicopter going into battle with a guidon flying from its nose.

A little facetious? True. But the concept of carrying a guidon has played an important role in the morale and esprit-de-corp of troops. The individual soldier was reassured by the sight of his unit flag still flying in the heat of battle. If the guidon bearer fell, another soldier would pick up the guidon.

In modern times, the guidon isn't used in battle. Up to date technology and communications tell the modern fighting man what the guidon was designed to tell his predecessor—that all goes well with the unit.

But the guidon is still an important symbol of unit pride. And now, for the first time since the Army Air Corps, Army aviation has its own guidon.

The idea for the first official Army aviation guidon was conceived by members of the 1st Aviation Brigade. Because of the increasingly large

role being played by Army aviation in Vietnam, it was felt that a separate unit symbol was needed.

Fourteen proposals for a design were submitted and a final selection was made under the guidance of Major General George P. Seneff Jr., brigade commanding general.

The design selected—golden Army aviator wings on a blue background—was submitted to the Department of the Army in November 1966. The design was forwarded to the Institute of Heraldry and approved. By December, the guidon was in use at the brigade headquarters.

The use of the guidon quickly spread to brigade units. Many companies now have their own guidons using the official Army aviation colors of blue and gold.

Even though aircraft crews going into battle can't see their guidon, its spirit is there. And that's what counts.

# THE SECOND TIME AROUND

Captain F. Mariano

The late Nat "King" Cole cut a disc a few years back called "The Second Time Around". He velvetized the air-waves for many years with this very singable tune. Of course King Cole was crooning about "love" being better the second time around. I'm crooning a tune about how you second-crossers of the pond will find things changed here in Vietnam.

If you DEROSED from the shores of RVN as early as 24 months or so ago you're in for a complete surprise when you return. Your jet joy ride terminates at either of several huge air-dromes. It's nothing like you remembered a short two years ago. If Bien Hoa is your fate you'll immediately see that it's bigger, busier, dustier, drabber.

The bus ride, to a place called Long Binh, which probably never before rang in your ears, is a quiet, contemplative one for the returnee as you motor along the bar and laundry-enshrouded dirt roads to what is to become

Vietnam's most expansive military sprawl. A complex so large it is served by heliports, airfield, river, highway—you name it.

The sign which reads "money exchange" finds you queued for the turn in of all that hard earned green for funnier-than-before money. Your wallet now bulges with two coins of the realm; one familiar from your last trip, the other called MPC. For you younger second trippers, Military Payment Certificates.

And the briefing! Of course, directed at the FNG's (Fancy New Guys). You absorb only the new terms, like "Charlies", the new "p" rate of exchange, "up tight", a brand new APO number and, best of all, the instructions to legibly scribble the word most of us love, 'FREE', in the upper right corner of your envelopes back to the land of no pedicabs.

Naturally, you arrive unassigned. The Replacement Battalion (can you imagine such a monstrous thing as a replacement



*Traffic is heavier*

battalion?) provides you with a bunk and a short two day stay before your assignment has been verified. Your sense of recall works overtime eking out the memories of your first step onto RVN soil. It was much more of a personal greeting then; there were fewer to be greeted and far fewer doing the greeting.

Your assignment is verified to somewhere you've never heard the likes of. Try these for unfamiliarity: Camp Alpha, Cu Chi, Phu Loi, Bear Cat, Tent City, Rung Sat, Hotel 3 USARV, Iron Triangle, blah blah. "What ever happened to the US Army Support Group", you wonder? This flashback elicits the thought of three years before when there were 15-18,000 American personnel from all the services. Today's 480,000 figure is totally inconceivable, but it's a very short time before you are cognizant of their presence, as you crawl along the truck and bicycle choked road to Saigon for air shipment to your new and pro-

# "It's a revelation alright. The first timers don't miss what they've never experienced"

bably uncompleted surroundings.

If you are selected to go the central highlands route your aircraft passes over bomb-cratered plantations, new roads, new hamlets, scores of airstrips, an air strike here and there, artillery barrages. Then there's Cam Rahn, the world's largest growing port—just think, there was only a long, peaceful-looking pier jutting out from a sleepy village the last time you saw it; Nha Trang, where the white stretches of sand once were a sight to behold. Now, its beautiful shoreline is peppered with ships, tankers, destroyers, landing barges, hospital ships—you name it. Where lobster was 80 Piasters for the biggest and juiciest you'd ever feasted upon. Four times that amount will see you rubbing elbows with other Americans in an attempt to eat today.

Who can remember the 18 Piaster ride from the gate at Tan

Son Nhut to downtown Tu Do Street? Twelve Piasters in a Lambretta even; or Ba Me Ba for 15 Piasters! How about 500 Piasters a month for a housegirl—double, triple, and quadruple these figures and you've got the going tab. Even Saigon Tea was less than 100 Piasters.

It's a revelation, alright. The first timers don't miss what they've never experienced. They didn't know Tan Son Nhut when it was a rather docile, Syracuse, New York, type airport sans the screams of the jet fighters which now serve around the clock. Nor could they recall a night without the crack of artillery almost within the city limits of Saigon.

"Change makes noise", a sage once said. Changed it has, and noisy it is. The convoys of trucks add their blaring horns to the already resounding sirens, fast back Hondas and Suzukis beeping as a matter of habit.

Resembling fads of by-gone wars, one will find nicknames for airplanes, helicopters, fork lifts, weapons and all configurations of vehicles, as well as for barracks, tents and beer stands. Fly over Bien Hoa and see the sign on a roof blaring skyward which reads, "See Rock City".

If you're around the APO at Tan Son Nhut, you'll sooner or later witness a 3/4-ton truck on whose front is emblazoned "Dear John Express". Pass the Tan Son Nhut athletic field and you'll chuckle at its name of "Nuoc Mam Bowl". A Chaplain's jeep passes and you'll know it because on the front, under the windshield, large white letters spell out "Soul Merchant". A Catholic Chaplain's jeep reads a bit lighter—"Bringing up Father". Still another clergyman's chariot says "Vietnam Angel Numbah II". "Goldwater '68" on the front of another vehicle tells you that vehicle nicknaming is in vogue. There's "Dufus", "Sally Anne", even Credibility Gap", "Toya Rose", "The Hooligan" and "FIJFI" (Forget it, just forget it) and more. There is "Charlie" on yet another jeep—even "Wop" and "FIGMO" (Finally I got my orders).

Store fronts in the larger towns reflect westernizing in that some no longer advertise in the language of the land. "The World's Most Satisfactory Tailor Shop" as well as "American Ice Cream Here", even "Pizzaria", "Hamburgers", let alone the eye-catching new names for the bars; "Eden Roc", "Whisky A-go-go",

*Cyclos are everywhere*





*Night life is bigger than ever*

## Organization is the order of the day

"Unique", and untold numbers of others.

The once docile and well-stocked post and base exchanges are no more. The hectic pace in attempt to buy before "they run out" leaves the sea of green sweat-soaked fatigue shirts lined up for a hard-to-get item. The ration cards reveal the changes more than any one item. It's pulled out of a wallet so frequently for so many things that it soon takes on a battered and dog-eared look. The letter "X" is marked in on items such as beer, liquor, T.V. sets, stereo equipment, cameras and, of course, cigarettes. Cigarette smokers descend when the alert goes out, "They've got Salems at the PX!"

R&R, once a matter of fact, is now a mad scramble for quotas. In your day Hong Kong and Bangkok were the attraction. Would you believe Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Tokyo, and in the not-too-distant-future, the "Gold Coast of Australia" will find itself invaded by thousands of "down under" seekers.

Even the enemy has taken to change, if in his attire alone. Two or three years ago he was a black pajama-clad guerilla with a conical straw hat, his shoulder adorned with a belt of ammo. Depending where you hang your

helmet, you're now likely to run into the uniformed and helmeted soldier with modern automatic weapons.

Organization is the order of the day. Companies and battalions have huddled into groups, brigades, divisions, even field force and Army headquarters. You second timers will stand in awe at the masses wearing every conceivable patch and pin on shoulders, epaulets and breast pockets.

Troops, tanks, choking convoys, APC's, artillery, television (you gotta be kiddin' me!),

all night radio blaring, shaking you out of the sack in the wee hours with "g-o-o-o-o-d morning Vietnam". Chris Noel babbling "like, hi love", skeet ranges, drama clubs, golf courses, riding clubs, Saturday morning inspections, parades, American beer, long haired native hippies emulating the Supremes, Belafonte, and, of course, Nat "King" Cole.

Come on over to the Chieu Hoi side—come see the metamorphosis for yourselves. The second time around is a revelation at least. How about the third, hmmmmm?

*German hospital ship at Saigon port*



**SO WHAT HAPPENED  
WHEN YOU TOLD  
THE SERGEANT  
HE COULDN'T MAKE  
YOU A TUNNEL  
RAT?**

