

HAWK

MAY 1968



1966 1ST AVIATION BRIGADE 1968



1ST AVIATION BRIGADE

HAWK

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FRONT COVER: A Montage of Brigade Aircraft in celebration of the Brigade's Second Anniversary.
BACK COVER: A Brigade Group Supports Each Corps Area in Vietnam.

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Feature stories, photographs and art work of general interest to 1st Aviation Brigade personnel are invited. Write HAWK Magazine, Information Office, 1st Aviation Brigade, APO 96384. HAWK is published at Dai Nippon Printing Co., Ltd., Tokyo, Japan.



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APO SAN FRANCISCO 96375



AVHIO

Major General Robert R. Williams
Commanding General
1st Aviation Brigade
APO 96384

Dear Bob,

On behalf of the officers and men of the United States Army, Vietnam, I extend best wishes to the members of the 1st Aviation Brigade on your Organization Day.

The role of the 1st Aviation Brigade has expanded greatly during the past year and its strength has kept pace. With more than 2,000 fixed and rotary wing aircraft, the brigade is a key element of our war efforts in Vietnam. Your tactical missions cover combat air assaults, aerial fire and maneuver, and reconnaissance and surveillance, as well as resupply, medical evacuation and troop lift. The brigade is truly indispensable to our ground commanders in Vietnam as evidenced by the nearly three million sorties flown in support of operations during the past year.

The brigade added the AH-1G 'HueyCobra' gunship, the CH-54 'Skycrane' heavy lift helicopter and the U-21 command aircraft to its inventory during the year. The employment of the HueyCobra, designed solely as an attack helicopter, has added new dimensions to rotary wing firepower, speed, maneuverability and range. The brigade's direct combat results of its own actions for the year have been impressive: 10,556 enemy killed; nearly 10,000 supply sampans sunk; and more than 10,400 structures and fortifications destroyed. This tells only a small part of the story, however, as elements of the brigade are involved in virtually every operation conducted in RVN, whether US, RVNAF, or other Free World contingents.

You and your command are to be congratulated on the gallant manner in which the challenges of the past have been met. Your sustained battle performance through the early months of 1968 as a result of the enemy's Tet offensive will go down in history. Surely the coming year will see the 1st Aviation Brigade continue its distinguished record of achievements.

Warm regards,

BRUCE PALMER, JR.
Lieutenant General, US Army
Deputy Commanding General

HAWK

HAWK WANTS YOUR IDEAS

Beginning next month, the 10th edition of HAWK, we are planning to add a number of special interest columns. In order to do this, we need your help.

One of the features will be a safety feature, titled "Are You Next?" By describing an aircraft accident, other aviators will be able to see how to avoid having this accident happen to them. For this feature we need a minimum of 500 words (about two pages) plus pictures. When published, we will delete all names and unit identification, in the story and photos.

"What's New" will be a series of short items, 150 words minimum, which will deal with any new equipment, a modification of existing equipment, a new technique, or a new method of accomplishing the unit's mission. A photograph would probably help explain the story.

"Hawk's Roost" will be a column designed to permit individuals to publicize their ideas, suggestions or innovations.

If you have any ideas for any of the proposed columns and features, type it up and send it to: Editor, HAWK Magazine, HQ 1st Aviation Brigade, APO SF 96384.

If you need help, your unit IO or one of us at the Brigade Information Office will be glad to help you. Credit lines will be given for all stories printed in the magazine.

HAWK's staff will be looking for your help, and story, in HAWK.



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Chaplain (LTC) Joe Ellison
1st Aviation Brigade

The April 1959 issue of *Reader's Digest* featured a story entitled "From Darkness, Light," which recorded some of the things about which a blind twelve-year-old boy wonders and believes. In the story, the boy tells his counselor: "I decided the worst thing that can happen to a person isn't being blind or being paralyzed. The worst thing is to lose all sense of direction in your life, and feel that you haven't any place to go."

How then, does one go about finding direction?

1. *Maximum development of talents and abilities:* One's best credentials are not what others say about him, but what they see in him.

2. *Active effort to help others:* One must realize that half the world goes to bed hungry every night, much of the world can neither read nor write, millions have never even heard of physicians, and a vast majority do not understand the meaning of the word "home."

3. *Daily worship of Jehovah God:* A young woman, who died after a brief period of mission service, had written these words in her Bible before leaving America: "Send me anywhere, only go with me. Put a burden on me, only sustain me. Sever any earthly ties, save that which binds my heart to Thee." Her faith in God enabled her to choose the best direction in life.

The Bible reads: "SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD, AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS: AND ALL THESE THINGS SHALL BE ADDED UNTO YOU."

CAREER COUNSELOR

If your DEROS is approaching, probably one of the questions that is on your mind is: "What and where will my next duty assignment be?"

If you would like to be stationed in the 5th Army area in a challenging job, here is one opportunity worth looking into.

The United States Army Recruiting Main Station in Des Moines has an urgent need for more recruiters in Iowa, Nebraska, and South Dakota.

Some advantages of recruiting duty are a stabilized two-year tour, and a chance for the recruiter to show what he can do in "selling" the Army while operating mainly on his own, with only minimum supervision.

Since all vacancies are in grades E-6 and E-7, there is an opportunity for advancement.

A few prerequisites to consider before applying are:

A. G. T. score of 110 or better. (may be waived)

B. Rank of E-5 (NCO or SP) or higher.

C. Minimum six years service. (may be waived)

D. High School Graduate or equivalent.

See your unit career counselor for further details.

If you are interested, but already have an assignment, see the Army recruiting team at Oakland or Seattle when you arrive in the States, or contact the Sergeant Major, United States Army Recruiting Main Station, Building 63, Gruber Street, Des Moines, Iowa, 50315.

HAWK

NEWSLETTER

U.S. ARMY WARRANT OFFICERS SOON will have the opportunity to apply for appointment to the Regular Army. The new program is scheduled to become effective July 1, 1968.

The selection and subsequent appointments will be on a best qualified basis. To be eligible, an individual must have served on active duty as an Army Warrant Officer for at least three years, with at least one of those years spent in the Military Occupational Speciality (MOS) in which the Regular Army appointment is sought.

It appears now that appointments will be authorized in nearly all Warrant Officer specialties. The program is aimed at a strength of 9,000. Details will be announced soon in AR 601-101 and DA Circular 601-25.

CAPTAIN PAUL E. BISHOP OF THE 225TH Surveillance Airplane Company, 223rd Combat Support Aviation Battalion, recently received the Gruman Aircraft and Engineering Award for compiling more than one-thousand hours as a command pilot in the OV-1 Mohawk. The award was presented by George DeOstiguy, Grumman Service Representative.

Captain Bishop compiled his one-thousand hours while serving with the 101st Aviation Battalion of the 101st Airborne Division, the 73rd Surveillance Airplane Company and the 225th.

COLONEL EUGENE B. CONRAD, DEPUTY Brigade Commander for Administration, was recently presented the Legion of Merit by Major General Robert R. Williams, the Brigade Commanding General.

Colonel Conrad received the award for his outstanding services as Chief of the Aviation Division in the office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations and Training, and as Aviation Advisor to the Commanding General of the Third Army at Fort McPherson, Ga., from June 1965, to October 1967.

The citation states, "Particularly noteworthy was his contribution during activation, training, and deployment of 73 Aviation units to Vietnam."

Colonel Conrad developed an Army Training Program for airmobile companies which was later adopted by USCONARC as a training doctrine.

The citation commends Colonel Conrad for his work in the Army Aviation safety program, stating, "Significant improvements within the Third United States Army have been made and policies emanating from his office have influenced to a great extent the Department of the Army and USCONARC aviation accident preventive controls."



ARMY AVIATION MAGAZINE HAS NOMINATED a former member of the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion for the AVCO-AWA Helicopter Heroism Award for 1967.

Sp/4 Larry W. Mackey, a crew chief with the 187th Assault Helicopter Company earned the nomination for his actions on July 2, 1967.

Sp/4 Mackey's ship had just taken off from an LZ north of Saigon when a burst of automatic weapons fire raked the ship, wounding both the pilot and the aircraft commander.

As the pilot struggled to keep the chopper in the air, Sp/4 Mackey and the door gunner removed the AC from his seat and administered first aid. Sp/4 Mackey climbed into the vacant seat, and although he had no flying instruction, began to fly the ship back to Cu Chi.

The pilot soon weakened from loss of blood. Sp/4 Mackey then flew the aircraft with his left hand as he applied direct pressure on one of the pilot's leg wounds in an effort to stop the bleeding.

Receiving advice over the radio from other pilots in the area, he landed the chopper on the small helipad at the evacuation hospital.

For his actions that day, Sp/4 Mackey was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

THE NEW CH-47B "CHINOOK" HELICOPTER is now in use in Vietnam. The "B" model Chinook carries a larger payload at a faster speed than the older CH-47A. (ARMY DIGEST)

General Cao Van Vien,

THE BRIGADE'S HONORARY AVIATOR

As Chief of the Joint General Staff, General Cao Van Vien has more than enough to keep him busy 24 hours a day. None the less, General Vien manages to find time to pursue one of his favorite interests—flying. Rated to fly UH-1B and UH-1D helicopters, the General received honorary aviator wings last year from the Commander, United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, General William C. Westmoreland. General Vien has also been an honorary member of the 1st Aviation Brigade for almost a year now.

General Vien first became interested in flying as an airborne officer.

He had always been interested in the planes which transported him around the country, but for years this interest had been that of an experienced paratrooper without any opportunity to take command of an aircraft.

About six years ago while General Vien was commanding the Vietnamese Airborne Brigade, he received numerous visits from Colonel John B. Stockton, who was with the U. S. Support Group. On one of the many trips that they took together in Colonel Stockton's H-13, the Colonel offered General Vien the stick. After that, Colonel Stockton frequently took General

Vien up and guided him through his first steps in flying.

As time went on, the General received continued unofficial training from Captain Cebe Habersky in an L-19. After about a dozen hours, the General was able to take off and land smoothly.

But it was not until 1965 that General Vien began a full orientation course under the guidance of Lieutenant Colonel H.E. Stewart of the 118th Aviation Company. By that time, General Vien had risen to the position of Commander of the III Corps based at Bien Hoa. Then in early 1967 General Vien underwent a full 50 hour training

Gen. Vien became an honorary 1st Brigade aviator when Gen. Westmoreland presented him a set of Army Aviator wings.



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Gen. Vien is now a fully qualified pilot in the "Huey."

course on UH-1Bs and UH-1Ds at the suggestion of General Westmoreland. This course was administered by pilots of the 1st Aviation Brigade, in particular CWOs Martin P. Mertz, Linwood Packard, and Harry L. Conyers.

"To them and to Generals Westmoreland and Seneff, and Seneff's successor, General Robert R. Williams, I am most grateful for making flying such a rewarding experience," wrote General Vien.

Because of the General's high position in the Vietnamese government, he is unable to fly combat assault missions. But he does spend time flying in connection with

training and inspections.

At present, allied aircraft are providing a large portion of the aviation support to Vietnamese ground forces. In General Vien's opinion, the Vietnamese armed forces should one day possess full-fledged aviation. Speculating about the future, General Vien conjectured that the time would not be far away "when the Vietnamese Air Force would be able to replace its H-34 helicopters by the more modern UH-1D type."

General Vien is of the opinion that helicopter pilots ought to be picked from and trained by Army personnel with combat experience

for only these men "understand the tactics of ground warfare and are in a better position to support ground troops." Concluded the General: "I am happy that my chopper pilots are presently being trained by U.S. Army Aviation units."

And the aviation units that make up the 1st Aviation Brigade are proud to be able to work with the armed forces of the Republic of Vietnam.

On March 1, the 17th CAG celebrated

TWO YEARS IN VIETNAM

"I can't imagine that any other aviation group has seen as much action as the 17th. You people are always in the thick of it." These were the words of Major General William R. Peers, Commanding General of I Field Force Vietnam on March 1st during the second anniversary ceremonies for the 17th Combat Aviation Group of the 1st Aviation Brigade.

The anniversary celebrations centered around a presentation of awards to 21 members of the 17th Group by General Peers, a Korean "Tae-Kwan" (Karate) demonstration, and a dinner for visiting dignitaries.

The 17th Group, with its five aviation battalions is one of the largest aviation groups in Vietnam. Under its control are the 10th, 52nd, and 268th Combat Aviation Battalions, the 223rd Combat Support Aviation Battalion, and the 7th of the 17th Air Cavalry Squadron. The Group, with its headquarters at Nha Trang, has its units stationed over 48% of the land area of Vietnam and supports ground units throughout the II Corps Tactical Zone. Though a 1st Aviation Brigade unit, the 17th comes under operational control of I Field Force Vietnam. A glance at the record shows that the Group has participated in every major operation in the II Corps area since its creation two years ago.

On March 1, 1966 the 17th Group became operational and in its first two years of existence has amassed more than 1 million fly-

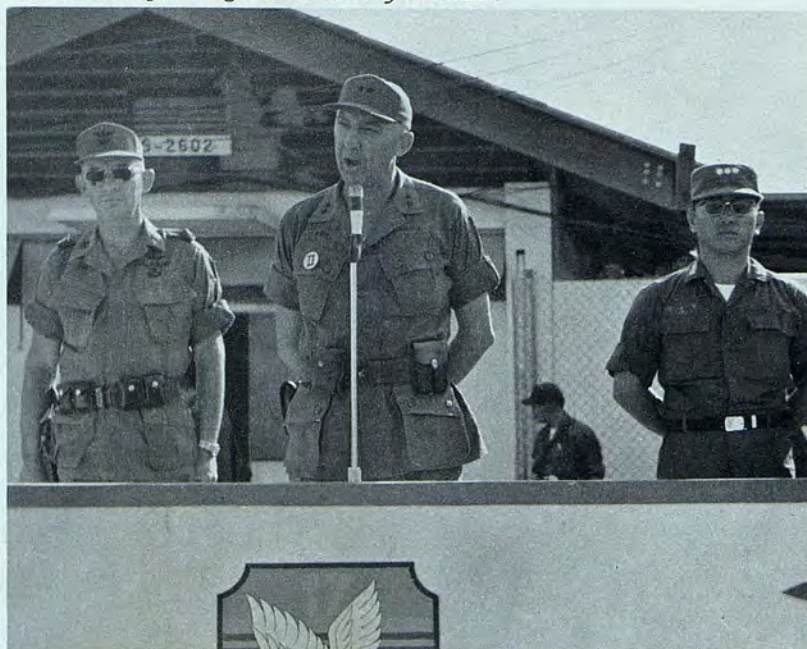
ing hours and transported 3½ million passengers, most of this under combat conditions.

First under command of Colonel Gerald Shea, then Colonel John Marr, and at present commanded by Colonel Bill G. Smith, the 17th has grown to such massive proportions that it became necessary on January 23 of this year to form a new separate aviation group from its northernmost battalions. At that time, the 17th had seven battalions, nearly 11,000 men, more than 600 aircraft and was responsible for supporting troops in both the I and II Corps zones, 68% of the land

area in Vietnam.

In its capacity as a supporting force, the 17th Group lends its assets to American, South Vietnamese and Korean ground forces. Among those units relying on the Group for aerial support are the Capital ROK and White Horse ROK Infantry Divisions, the 2nd Brigade of the 1st Cavalry Division, the 4th Infantry Division, the 173rd Airborne Brigade, elements of 5th Special Forces, and ARVN forces all over II Corps. In support of these units, the 17th has participated in more than 80 significant operations since March of 1966.

MG William R. Peers, Commander IFFV, flanked by Col. Smith and Col. Ra, 9th ROK Infantry Division, speaks to members of the 17th Group at Organizational Day activities.



HAWK

A black and white photograph of a woman, Rita Thiel, kneeling on a sandy beach. She is wearing a two-piece bikini with a dark and light geometric pattern. She has long, dark hair and is smiling at the camera. The background shows a beach with some driftwood and a thatched umbrella in the distance.

HAWK HONEY

Rita Thiel

Photo by Bruno Bernard Ent.

ABOUT VIETNAM:

Profile of an Era, Part II:

FRENCH RULE

A walk down the streets of Saigon or any other large city in the Republic of Vietnam will provide graphic evidence of the extent French influence has had on the Vietnamese way of life. Many restaurants specialize in French cuisine, the cities are laid out following French patterns, road signs use the European kilometer system and French is the second language of the nation. In fact, Saigon, the capitol city of South Vietnam has often been referred to as "the Paris of the Orient."

Vietnam first came in contact with France during the 19th century expansion of the West into Asia. Hostilities broke out between France and Vietnam under the Nguyen Dynasties during the latter part of the 19th century. The French soon overwhelmed the Vietnamese, and forced them to yield the southern provinces of Cochinchina in 1862 and 1867 to become French colonies. Annam and Tonkin soon followed and were placed under the status of a French Protectorate.

It had taken the French until 1884 to gain control of Vietnam, twenty-eight years from the initial seizure of the port of Tourane (now Da Nang). But even then, the Vietnamese people were not about to sit still. There were frequent revolts, and a large number of ex-

tremist organizations sprang up. Among the most important were those led by Emperor Ham-Nghi, nationalist leaders Phan Ding Phung, and Hoang Hoa Tham, but the most noteworthy being one formed in 1925 led by a young Moscow-trained Communist named Nguyen Ai Quoc—later known as Ho Chi Minh.

In spite of Vietnamese unrest the French made many significant contributions to the small nation during its fifty years of rule. France initiated extensive programs of public works, public health and sanitation. A network of roads was built to connect separated parts of the country, and many new crops were fostered and vast areas of land were irrigated.

With the fall of France to Germany in 1940, Vietnam became occupied by Japan, Germany's ally. Though the Japanese stayed until the end of the war in 1945 the Vichy French continued to administer the country until 1944 when Japan removed all French controls. When the Japanese evacuated the country they left Vietnam in a state of turmoil and without most public services. In the vacuum, a government was formed by Tran Trong Kin on April 16 1945, in an effort to restore law and order and to bring the nation under Vietnamese self-rule. The new government de-

clared itself an independent nation, but due to the lack of assistance from the Allies, soon collapsed. Civil disorder and revolution began to spread.

Ho Chi Minh, now leader of the nationalist Viet Minh, was quick to move and take advantage of the chaos. He seized Hanoi and established the "Democratic Republic of Vietnam" with himself as President without firing a shot. It was then, that the world first realized that "Uncle Ho" had led a Communist coup.

In 1946 France entered into negotiations with the Viet Minh to determine the new status of Vietnam. The negotiations were unsuccessful, and war between the two broke out. French then reinstalled the Emperor Bao Dai and declared Vietnam within the French Union.

The war lasted seven and a half years, culminating with the French disaster at Dien Bien Phu in 1954. The people of Vietnam had won the battle, but lost the war. They merely replaced the rule of the French with that of the Communists in the north. At the Geneva Conference that followed, an agreement was reached in which the Communists were to occupy the area north of the 17th Parallel, with the non-Communists south of it.

(Next month—Part III)

This Month the Brigade Celebrates its

SECOND ANNIVERSARY

A time honored ceremony took place on May 23, 1966 at Tan Son Nhut Airbase. The ceremony came to its silent climax as Lieutenant General Jean E. Engler, Deputy Commanding General, United States Army, Vietnam, presented the colors of the 1st Aviation Brigade to then Brigadier General George P. Seneff. The activation of the Brigade, according to its first commander, General Seneff, "marked a significant milestone in the growth of Army Aviation."

The growth of Army Aviation in Vietnam was rapid indeed. In the four years from 1961 to 1965, the

number of aviation units in Vietnam increased from one to 48 companies. Due to this rapid increase of aircraft and personnel, the formation of the new Aviation Brigade became necessary for purposes of command and control.

The mission of the Brigade is to provide aviation support to Free World Forces in the areas of combat, logistics and counterinsurgency operations in Vietnam.

Although the Brigade is officially only two years old, it is almost impossible to separate the history of the 1st Aviation Brigade from that of Army Aviation in Vietnam. The

first Army Aviation units in Vietnam, the 8th and 57th Transportation Light Helicopter Companies, arrived at Tan Son Nhut airport in mid-December 1961. The 8th, later redesignated the 117th Assault Helicopter Company, and the 57th, now the 120th Assault Helicopter Company, were equipped with H-21 "Flying Banana" helicopters and were placed in direct support of the III ARVN Corps. After a brief in-country training period, the two units flew their first support mission on December 23, 1961, lifting 360 Vietnamese Paratroopers on a search and destroy mission.

By June 1962, Army Aviation strength in Vietnam had grown to one battalion of four aviation companies. On June 1, the U.S. Army Support Group Vietnam, was formed to provide administrative and logistical support to the aviation units and the other Army organizations in the country. Except for MACV advisors and Special Forces teams, the bulk of the Army's effort in Vietnam from 1962 through 1964 was centered on Army Aviation. This was the great testing ground for the helicopter, as well as for the Army's surveillance aircraft, the OV-1 Mohawk and the old but reliable observation aircraft, the O-1 Bird Dog.

By late 1964 the proud but battered "Flying Bananas" had been retired and the famous UH-1 "Hueys" had taken their place. Then in November 1965, the first CH-47 "Chinook" companies ar-

The Brigade added greater punch, on land as well as air, with the addition of three Air Cav squadrons.





Infantry troops take a break by "Top Tiger" slicks during Operation "Cedar Falls."

rived in Vietnam.

In April 1965, there were 13 aviation companies in Vietnam, and by the end of the year, the number rose to 48. During the same period,

the number of aircraft increased from 430 to more than 1,600.

In order to provide a command structure for this 400 percent increase, the Aviation Group (Provi-

1st Brigade choppers perpare for take off during "Junction City."

(Photo by Maj. Masters, IIFV)

... No major operation

sional) was formed. Later the same year this provisional group was officially activated and it became the 12th Aviation Group, controlling several non-divisional aviation battalions and companies.

In the months that followed, many new units arrived, and Army Aviation in Vietnam reached new dimensions. Four months had barely passed when it was realized that the number of arriving units were outgrowing the control capabilities of the new group. To ease the administrative problem, a second group was formed with a mission similar to that of the 12th. With the formation of the new 17th Aviation Group, only divisional organic aviation and a few special aviation support units remained outside the command of the two groups.

With the reorganization of the old Army Support Group into the United States Army, Vietnam, it became apparent that a single subordinate aviation headquarters was necessary. This headquarters would be charged with the command, staff planning and administrative supervision of the two groups. Thus, the Aviation Brigade was conceived. It was activated on a provisional basis on March 1, 1966, and on May 23, the Brigade was officially designated the 1st Aviation Brigade.

At the time of its formation, the Brigade consisted of more than 11,000 officers and men and 850 aircraft. It was the first aviation brigade in the Army's history and the largest operational Army Aviation command. At the time of its activation, the Brigade consisted of the 12th and 17th Groups, with a total of eight battalions. The Brigade's 43 companies were located throughout the country, from Hue in the north to Soc Trang in the Mekong Delta.



was without the Brigade's support...

With the Army's role in Vietnam increasing daily, the new Brigade had plenty of work to keep it busy. In its first few months, Brigade units supported the 1st, 4th and 25th Infantry Divisions and the 196th Light Infantry Brigade in operations Attleboro and Paul Revere.

No major combat operation was without support in one form or another from the 1st Aviation Brigade. Although Army Aviation and the 1st Aviation Brigade were changing the face of the war, it was not until the early morning hours of February 22, 1967, that the full capabilities and flexibility of Army Aviation was apparent. The largest commitment of helicopters in the entire Vietnam conflict filled the sky over the embattled War Zone C near the Cambodian Border as "Operation Junction City" began.

In the first stage of the operation, the 12th Group, augmented by the 10th and 13th Aviation Battalions, plus aviation units from the 1st and 25th Infantry Divisions, airlifted three complete infantry brigades in less than eight hours. Two hundred-forty-nine helicopters from 15 assault helicopter companies flew hundreds of sorties, delivering more than 5,100 combat loaded troops from the 1st, 4th and 25th Infantry Divisions, the 173rd Airborne Brigade and 198th Light Infantry Brigade into the combat zone. With gunships providing cover, the helicopters airlifted the infantrymen into eight different landing zones throughout the day.

Other capabilities of the Brigade were also in striking evidence. Observation aircraft provided ground commanders with the "eyes and ears" so vital for control of an operation as large as "Junction City." Chinooks airlifted hundreds of tons of cargo into the landing

zones to sustain the multi-divisional force. Colonel Raymond P. Campbell, the commanding officer of the 12th Group and air mission commander for the multi-battalion engagement, proudly noted Operation Junction City as "a demonstration of the flexibility and magnitude that Army Aviation is capable of in support of ground units."

Brigade units supported all but a few of the major operations in II, III and IV Corps during 1967, to include Malheur, Wheeler, Coronado and Hawthorne. In connection with these operations, Brigade resupply aircraft lifted a total of more than 564,000 tons of cargo.

In September 1967, Major General Seneff turned over the green tabs of leadership to Major General Robert R. Williams. The first army aviator to be designated Master Army Aviator, General Williams brought his vast wealth of knowledge and experience to bear upon the task of not only maintaining, but increasing the Brigade's capabilities. Under his guidance and direction, the Brigade has continued to grow in strength and responsibility.

The new commander was no

Gen. Westmoreland, MG Williams and Lt. Gen. Palmer listen as MG Seneff says farewell to the Brigade.



A 179th ASHC Chinook prepares to lift a 105mm howitzer and "piggy back" a load of ammo during Operation "Francis Marion."

(Photo by CW3 Don Joyce)

stranger to the 1st Aviation Brigade when he took command. Prior to assuming command of the Brigade, he had served as the Director of Army Aviation. From his office in Washington, General Williams guided the training and organiza-



tion of the many new units sent to Vietnam to fill the Brigade's expanding needs. Development of new equipment, and training doctrines to be employed, were also his responsibility.

The past two years have seen the Brigade double in size. Two years ago, Brigade strength was about 11,000 officers and men in two groups with a total of eight battalions. Today, the Brigade has more than 25,000 men in four groups of 16 battalions and three Air Cavalry Squadrons.

In order to better accomplish its mission, the Brigade has added new equipment that, only two years ago, could only be found in the blueprints of the aircraft designers. The AH-1G "HueyCobra" has added tremendous firepower to the Brigade's arsenal. Designed as an assault helicopter, the Cobra carries more ordnance, and can fly farther, longer and faster than the

older UH-1C gunship. A greater cargo lifting capability was acquired with the CH-54 "Skycrane" which can carry a maximum load of 10 tons. The newer aircraft in the Brigade's inventory also include the U-21 "Ute" utility airplane and the record holding OH-6A "Cayuse" scout helicopter.

During 1967, the Brigade's more than 2,000 fixed and rotary winged aircraft lifted more than five million troops—the equivalent of 313 infantry divisions in more than 2.9 million sorties. Brigade aircraft flew more than 1.2 million hours—the equivalent of 137 years—during 1967. The majority of the troops carried were combat infantrymen inserted into tactical landing zones in the three southern corps areas. Gunships and troop carrying "slick" door gunners, providing cover for the insertions and extractions and many other special missions, accounted for 10,556 Viet Cong kill-

ed, nearly 10,000 supply sampans sunk and more than 10,400 enemy structures and fortifications destroyed.

The Cobras and the UH-1C gunships demonstrated their massive firepower and effectiveness while handing the Viet Cong a stunning defeat during the February Tet Offensive. The gunships of the 1st Aviation Brigade were credited by many ground commanders as being the deciding factor in a number of battles, particularly in the Saigon-Long Binh area.

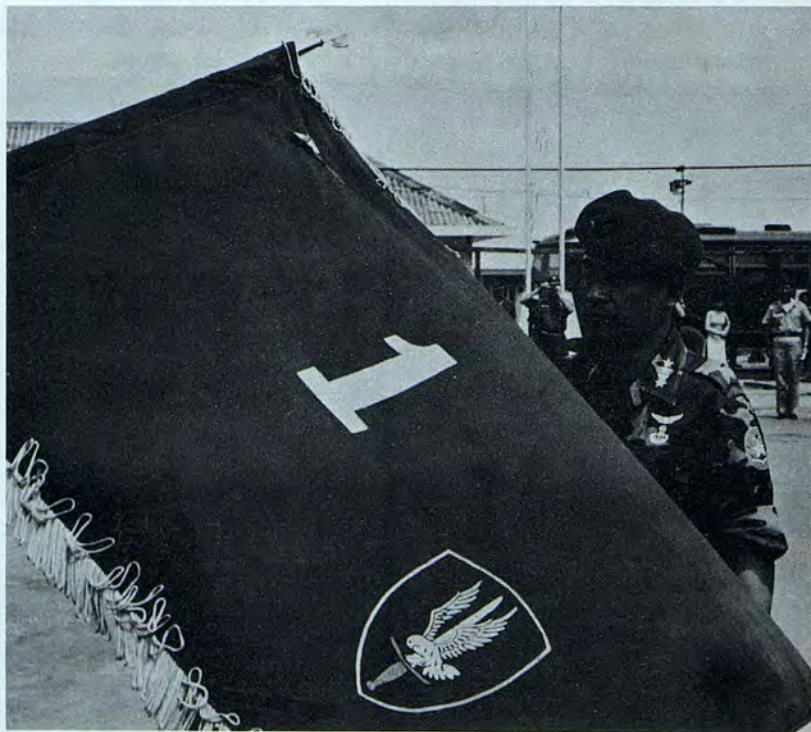
However, gunships were not the only aircraft that participated in the Tet Offensive. During Tet, as in every other operation, the Brigade's combat support aircraft worked long and hard at their equally important, but less dramatic, jobs of reconnaissance, observation and resupply.

During its two years of operation, the 1st Aviation Brigade has flown the length and breadth of Vietnam 24 hours a day. From the mountains in the north to the Mekong Delta in the south, the wide variety of the Brigade's aircraft have given the ground commander the firepower and mobility he needs to defeat a highly elusive enemy.

The dedication and efforts of the 1st Aviation Brigade have not gone unnoticed or unrewarded. In May 1967, General Cao Van Vien, Chief of the Joint General Staff, presented the Brigade with Vietnam's highest award, the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with palm. And in 1967 the Brigade received the honor of being chosen as America's Aviation Unit of the Year by the Army Aviation Association.

In the two years since its formation, the 1st Aviation Brigade has set many new aviation records. This was not accomplished by great numbers of aircraft alone. The aviation record book was rewritten because the personnel of the 1st Aviation Brigade knew they had a job to do, and, with courage and determination, they did it well.

Gen. Vien presents the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm to the Brigade.



A Flag for the

“FLYING DRAGONS”

The place—Pleiku. Early morning. “Revellie” sounded and the national colors were swiftly raised.

It was not the usual battalion flag, but one that had traveled half way around the world. It was a flag that expressed the thanks and support of many thousand Americans back home.

A few short months before, the same flag had flown in front of the Alabama State Capitol. The people of Alabama had sent it as a token of their appreciation. At a ceremony opening a recent successful Savings Bond drive, Hugh Maddox, the legal aide to the Governor of Alabama, lowered the flag in front of the Capitol building and presented it to Chief Warrant Officer Perry C. Hopkins, an instructor at Fort Rucker, Alabama.

CWO Hopkins had just come to Fort Rucker after completing a tour with the 1st Aviation Brigade in Vietnam. He received the flag as a representative of the Brigade.

CWO Hopkins forwarded the flag to Major General Robert R. Williams, Commanding General of the 1st Aviation Brigade. The 52nd Combat Aviation Battalion was designated as the final recipient due to its outstanding all around record.

General Williams presented the flag to LTC Edward P. Luckert, the commander of the 52nd at

Gen. Williams presents the flag to LTC Lukert, then commander.



SP4 Gil Stanley raises the flag in front of the Battalion Headquarters.

the official ceremonies. Colonel Luckert in turn gave the flag to the color guard who raised it in front of Battalion headquarters.

The 52nd had been chosen for this honor due to their impressive record. The “Flying Dragons” are one of the oldest aviation units in Vietnam, arriving in February 1963. With more than 2,500 men, it is the largest battalion in the Brigade.

The “Flying Dragons” have participated in almost every large operation in Vietnam’s central highlands, including Ia Drang Valley and Operation MacArthur. Since 1963, the battalion flew 316,449 hours in 874,951 sorties. It transported 830,538 passengers and carried 59,042 tons of cargo.

At the same time that the battalion was creating aviation records, it maintained an impressive safety record. One company in the battalion, the 179th Assault Helicopter Company has not had an accident in 16,209 hours since arriving in Vietnam.

It seems that the 52nd Combat Aviation Battalion is indeed worthy to fly the flag that came half way around the world. To the people of Alabama, the 52nd Battalion and the 1st Aviation Brigade give their thanks. The flag will long be a symbol to remind we are supported at home.

from muskets to airmobility...

7th SQUADRON, 1st AIRCAVALRY

Photos by SP/4 Steve Kopels

This month the 1st Aviation Brigade celebrates its second anniversary, and it is proud to welcome its third Air Cavalry Squadron. Though one of the Brigade's newest units it is one of the oldest units in the Army.

When the main body of the 7th Squadron, 1st Air Cavalry Regiment, stepped off of the U.S.S. General Upshure at Vung Tau barely two months ago, they became the Brigade's newest unit in Vietnam. But the 7th Squadron brought with them a unit flag with more than 70 battle streamers and a history that dates back to 1833.

The 7/1st "Black Hawks" trace their history back to March 2, 1833, when Company G, United States Regiment of Dragoons (cavalry) was formed. Company G picked the nickname "Black Hawks" since most of the men assigned to the original company fought in the Black Hawk Indian wars of 1830-1832.

Company G fought in the Mexican War and in Indian wars throughout the West. The unit participated in the Civil War battles of Antietam and Gettysburg, and in World War II the company fought in Algeria, Naples and Anzio.

Today the soldiers of the 7th Squadron carry M-16s instead of muskets and the horse has been replaced by the UH-1H.

The unit was redesignated the 7th Squadron on April 25, 1967, at Fort Knox, when it was reorganized under an airmobile TO&E. After reorganization and months of unit and field training, the Squadron

was ready to embark on the long voyage to meet an enemy as elusive as any that Company G met since the Indians.

The 7/1st is the third Air Cavalry Squadron in the Brigade (there are only four in Vietnam) and is assigned to the 12th Combat Aviation Group. Its mission is "To perform reconnaissance and security for major subordinate combat elements, to engage in combat as an economy-of-force unit, and to provide a limited air and ground anti-tank capability, if equipped."

As Lieutenant Colonel Robert W. Mills, Squadron executive of-

ficer, explains it, "Our primary role is reconnaissance and security. Since we are under the operational control of II Field Force, Vietnam, they will decide what brigade or division we will support. It's our job to provide reconnaissance and perimeter security for this larger unit."

In order to accomplish this mission, the squadron—roughly equivalent to a battalion—is organized into four "Troops," each a well-balanced combination of infantry and aviation. "A", "B" and "C" Troops are organized as Air Cavalry units, while "D" Troop is a

OH-6A "Cayuse" looks for enemy activity.



HAWK



"D" Troop moves out to set up a night ambush.

Ground Reconnaissance unit. Each Troop is capable of functioning independently, with any other Troop, or in a squadron sized operation.

Representative of the Air Cavalry Troops is "Charlie" Troop. The unit is divided into three platoons, each with its own specialized mission to perform. The Scout Platoon finds the enemy, the Aero-Weapons Platoon destroys him, and the Aero-Rifle Platoon provides additional reconnaissance.

The Scout Platoon is equipped with 10 OH-6A "Cayuse" Light Observation Helicopters. Since the Scout often draws ground fire, it must be well equipped to protect itself. The "Cayuse" carries a crew of three, and each crewman is well armed. The pilot controls a mini-gun with 2,000 rounds of ammunition, the observer usually carries an M-79 grenade launcher, and the crew chief, who sits in the back seat, is equipped with either an M-16 or M-60 machine gun.

The Aero-Weapons Platoon is comprised of nine AH-1G "Huey-Cobras" and one UH-1C gunship, and the Aero-Rifle Platoon is com-

posed of 43 infantrymen.

Captain Matthew M. Serletic, "C" Troop operations officer, explained how the three different platoons work together to accomplish the unit's mission.

"The Scouts, working in two ship teams, fly at tree-top level, looking for the enemy. They actually get down in the trees and rattle the bushes. When something suspicious is spotted, the Cobras are called in.

"The Aero-Rifle Platoon," he explained, "is used to augment our reconnaissance capability. When the observer spots something that he feels needs closer reconnaissance, the Rifle Platoon is airlifted in by their six UH-1Hs."

"With the armed Cayuse, the Huey Cobra and the Rifle Platoon, we are capable of going out and initiating an attack."

While the three Air Cavalry Troops do most of their reconnaissance from the air, "D" Troop's environment is on the ground.

"D" Troop, commanded by Major Richard A. Thompson, is divided into three mounted, ground reconnaissance platoons. Each platoon contains a scout section, an anti-tank section, a rifle squad and a mortar squad.

"Our mission," said Major Thompson, "is to perform ground and route reconnaissance, convoy escort, perimeter defense, route security and search and destroy operations. Sometimes we operate as an independent unit, but most of the time, we work with the rest of the squadron."

Each platoon's anti-tank squad consists of two one-quarter ton trucks with a 106mm recoilless rifle mounted on the back. The crew that operates each rifle use high

The HueyCobras attack when the scouts spot the enemy.



explosive rounds when on perimeter defense or providing cover for a convoy.

"The Scout sections do most of the work," Major Thompson said, "and they are supported by the rest of the platoon. Each platoon has four trucks equipped with an M-60 machine gun.

"The Scouts lead the platoon and locate the enemy and then send back reports on the enemy's position. Since they are ahead of the rest of the platoon, it's up to them to adjust mortar and artillery fire on the enemy locations."

In addition to these missions, the infantrymen of "D" Troop go on long range reconnaissance patrols, establish themselves as a blocking force against enemy retreats and set up night ambushes.

During the two months that the 7th Squadron has been in country, the "D" Troop has set many night ambushes, conducted a sweep around their base camp at Di-An and have gone on dismounted search and destroy missions.

Like the other three Troops in the Squadron, "D" Troop can work independently or in a squadron sized operation.

When the whole squadron operates together, the Aero-Scout teams



Although equipped with Cobras, the Squadron still finds the "C-model" gunship effective.

search their pre-assigned areas while the HueyCobras circle nearby. If the Scouts discover enemy activity, the Cobras are ready to strike with minimum delay. If the enemy force is such that the Cobras cannot flush them out, the infantrymen of "Delta" Troop are airlifted in.

Due to its organization and mission, the 7th Squadron is basically a ready reaction force and not designed for long, sustained battles. If the enemy resistance is so strong that it appears that the squadron could not win an immediate victory, then help is called from the larger infantry unit that the Squad-

ron is supporting.

The 7th Squadron arrived in Vietnam in late February, and became completely operational on March 23. The Squadron underwent some changes during this period. When the Squadron left the United States, its Aero-Weapons platoons were equipped with UH-1C gunships, but on arrival in Vietnam, these were replaced by the much faster and more powerful HueyCobra.

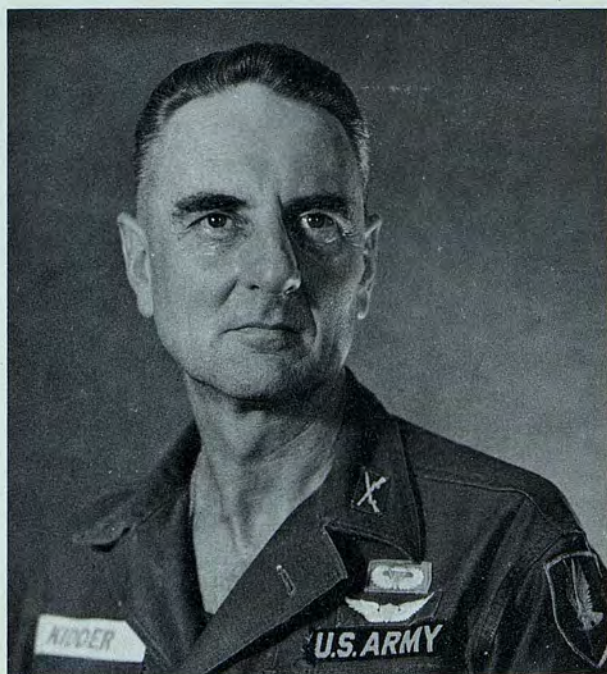
The infantry units gained in-country training in operations with the 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, and the aviators of the 7/1st received their first taste of combat in Vietnam on their first night in Di-An when their "Charlie" model gunships were engaged in a fire-fight.

During the past two years, the 1st Aviation Brigade has employed many new units to perform many different missions. With the addition of the 7/1st, the Brigade has increased its capability to hit hard, not only from the air, but from the ground as well.

After the Cobras attack, the Cayuse checks the results.



The Brigade Bids Farewell to...



COLONEL JAMES D. KIDDER

After having served with the 1st Aviation Brigade since May of last year, Colonel James B. Kidder is currently bringing his tour of duty in Vietnam to an end. Colonel Kidder, Chief of Staff of the Brigade since July 16, 1967, is departing to take the position of Director of Advanced Rotary Wing Training Aviation School at Hunter Army Airfield, Savannah, Georgia.

Colonel Kidder has been awarded the Legion of Merit for his services while Chief of Staff for the Brigade. Colonel Kidder has served the Brigade well and will be missed by all.

COLONEL WILLIAM G. SMITH

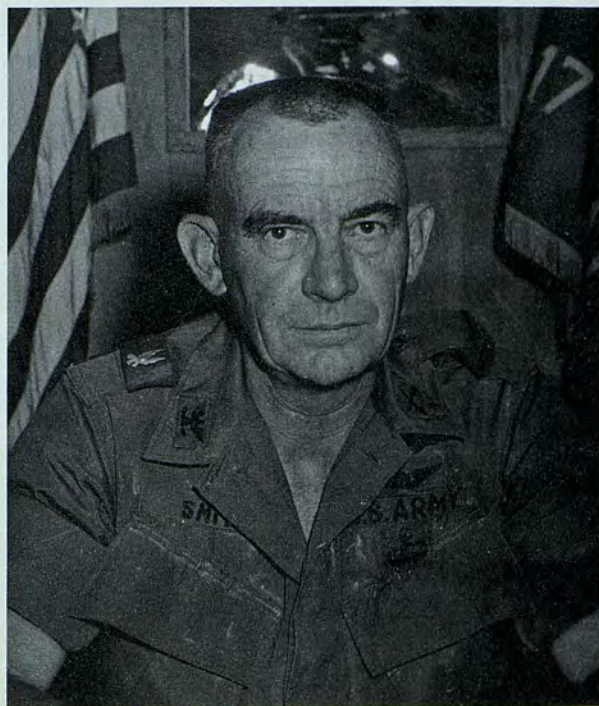
Colonel William G. Smith leaves Vietnam this month after serving as the Commanding Officer of the 17th Combat Aviation Group for the past year.

Many new battalions and companies were assigned to the Group while Colonel Smith was in command. None of these units had in-country experience. Most had only a small cadre with previous Vietnam experience. Realizing the urgent need for highly effective operational units, Colonel Smith had each of the new incoming units fully operational within 25 days.

In addition to being a Group commander, Colonel Smith also served as the Aviation Officer for I Field Force, Vietnam.

17th Group units provided the major portion of the Army Aviation assets in every major operation conducted by the U.S. 4th Infantry Division, 173rd Airborne Brigade, Korean Field Force, and II Corps Vietnamese Forces.

HAWK





HAWK

ROTARY WING MECHANIC

"Just give me a ship that will produce when I need it," is the plea of every Army aviator. Flying a helicopter can be a dangerous business, especially over the jungles of Vietnam, where pilot and crew alike are continually subjected to sniper or heavy enemy fire.

It takes a lot to bring an Army helicopter down, and it takes even more to keep it down. Try as he might, "Charlie" is having little success in combating today's modern Army helicopters. Despite the fragile appearance of these craft, they have proven themselves capable of sustaining multiple small arms hits and still complete their missions.

The chopper's ability to keep flying depends primarily on its design and continual maintenance. Modern safety features such as the self-sealing fuel tank and the increased strength of the airframe, add to the overall durability of the craft, but only proper maintenance assures its reliability.

Every time a chopper pilot pulls pitch, he is aware of the possible dangers ahead. He has been trained to handle any emergency and hopes that the maintenance crew has done their job. The aviator, his life, ship and crew, depends on his ship's performance in any situation. It is the pilot's need and his right to have only the best flying equipment. Keeping the helicopters flying is the man with the wrench—the Rotary

Wing Mechanic.

Every helicopter unit has its own transportation detachment capable of repairing and maintaining their own ships. One such unit is the 240th Assault Helicopter Company "Greyhounds" located at Bear Cat. The 240th repairs and replaces parts of troop-carrying slicks and Huey gunships.

The Rotary Wing Mechanic's job is to "Support our Men" and to give them confidence in their equipment, and only through a good maintenance program can an aviator gain this confidence. The crews carry out two major programs—the periodical inspection, and the field maintenance.

The periodical inspection, commonly called the PE, is the maintenance required after 100 and 1,100 hours of actual flying time. After 100 flying hours, the chopper is flown into the shop where the mechanic gives it a minor overhaul. The maintenance experts check the entire craft, and if there are any deficiencies, they report and repair them. It takes them approximately 100 man-hours to overhaul a minor PE. The 1,100 hour inspection is the major overhaul, and this time the mechanic replaces all major parts. After the PE, major or minor, the helicopter is then returned to the line for immediate use.

The mechanic also deals with field damage which is actual damage requiring sheet metal repair.

Performing its mission, the helicopter is often subject to heavy enemy fire. If the ship is downed, and does not require extensive repair, a maintenance team is flown to the site and the necessary repairs are made. If, on the other hand, the damage is extensive, a huge heavy duty Chinook or Skycrane is called to "sling-load" the downed craft and bring it to maintenance. A chopper which is not extensively or vitally hit will fly itself to the maintenance section, where the damage is inspected and repaired. If the damage is too extensive for the unit mechanic to handle, the ship is then sent to other repair facilities. At the conclusion of the repairs, the craft is then test flown to assure the maintenance section of a job well done.

Sometimes it takes long hours to do the job right, but it is worth it, according to Staff Sergeant Leroy Johnson, Supervisor of a PE team at the 240th. "If it takes long hours to repair our aircraft, we love to do it to get our men flying again with confidence." With this attitude, the maintenance crews just keep the choppers flying. The Army helicopter's rugged construction coupled with skilled personnel and an effective program of recovery and maintenance make it a difficult bird to bring down and keep down.

Safety is a State of Mind

by LTC Peavy

Brigade Safety Officer

Considerable emphasis is placed on aviation safety and the prevention of aircraft accidents. Without all the fancy embroidery of philosophy, let's get down to some plain (pardon the pun) talk about the business of accident prevention.

The prevention of accidents is nothing more than good personal management. There is nothing mystical about it and there certainly is no secret formula to follow in order to arrive at the desired goal.

Let's take a mental trip back to the "good old days" of flight school. While you were struggling through primary flight school, you were fortunate to gather flying tips from the older, more experienced hands in the business — your instructors. Their job was not only to teach you how to fly the bird efficiently, but also to control it with safety as well.

So, your personal aviation accident prevention program started right there in primary flight school. And when your instructor finally climbed out of the craft and allowed you to solo, chances are you made a rapid inventory of that prevention program, all of a sudden it was indeed a very personal one. At this point you certainly hoped you had retained those words of wisdom. That momentous solo accomplished, you went on to bigger and better things—but think back—in each phase of your training you were given more tips, and more

guidance, all safety oriented. In short, a lot of people spent a lot of time and money teaching you to be an efficient, safe aviator.

The great day finally dawned and you graduated and found yourself among an elite group of professionals—aviators.

The next step—the Republic of Vietnam and combat flying, accompanied with more words of wisdom and more sage advice.

Now the point—all of these experienced people were trying to mold you into a good, safe aviator. At no time did any of them say that you had completed the aviation safety portion of your training, and certainly not after you arrived in Vietnam. If anyone here tells you that, you had better seek a better source of information, for chances are that that source will not be around too long.

Boiled down, all this means that those basic rules you learned eons ago in primary and those that were stressed as you progressed in your training are just as applicable now as they were then—no, that's not true, they are even *more* applicable here. Here you have to be quicker but smoother, more alert yet more relaxed, and fly longer periods with more demanding accuracy. In short, you must be a professional.

Someone might refer to you as "Peter Pilot" or as a "Wobbly-one," but it is not intended as a reflection

on your ability. Your "rich uncle" has seen fit to trust you with a half million dollar flying machine and a number of lives.

Along with the evaluation of your mechanical aptitude to pilot the aircraft has gone an evaluation regarding your maturity and judgment. It is gratifying to note that the cases which prove not worthy of the title "professional" are few and that in almost all cases the trust has been well placed.

The best way to fortify that trust is to prove that you have not left your good habits behind at flight school—that you brought them right along with you and that you apply them daily.

Don't throw the good advice away on the pretense that this is combat and anything goes. The "old hand" that gave you that good advice had, in all probability, flown in combat also. And he knew its value or would not have bothered to pass it on.

We will not maintain the prestige we enjoy by destroying our equipment and injuring our passengers in needless, senseless accidents. Each time that happens, all of our wings grow a little tarnished.

We do not have to sell ourselves as the heroes of Army Aviation—we just have to be what we have been trained to be—professionals.

HAWK

FAREWELL TO COLONEL HEMINGWAY



DEPUTY BRIGADE COMMANDER

Colonel Jack W. Hemingway departs this month for an assignment with the Department of the Army after serving as Deputy Brigade Commander for the past six months. Previously, he had served as Deputy Senior advisor to the Commander of the IV Vietnamese Army Corps from May 1967 to late October.

During his tenure as Deputy Brigade Commander, Colonel Hemingway has guided the Brigade through its recent expansion and reorganization.

Throughout the now famous Tet Offensive, Colonel

Hemingway traveled throughout Vietnam to many Brigade units gathering first hand information on the overall aviation situation and providing guidance and assistance. This was but one of many examples of his dedication and determination to accomplish the Brigade's mission with maximum efficiency. For a "job well done" Colonel Hemingway has been presented the Legion of Merit.

The Brigade will miss Colonel Hemingway.

1st AVIATION BRIGADE...

**ARMY AVIATION
THROUGHOUT
VIETNAM**



**1st AVIATION
BRIGADE**



**THIRD MARINE
AMPHIBIOUS FORCE**

16th COMBAT AVIATION GROUP



1 FIELD FORCE

17th COMBAT AVIATION GROUP



11 FIELD FORCE

12th COMBAT AVIATION GROUP



IV CORPS SENIOR ADVISORY GROUP

164th COMBAT AVIATION GROUP

