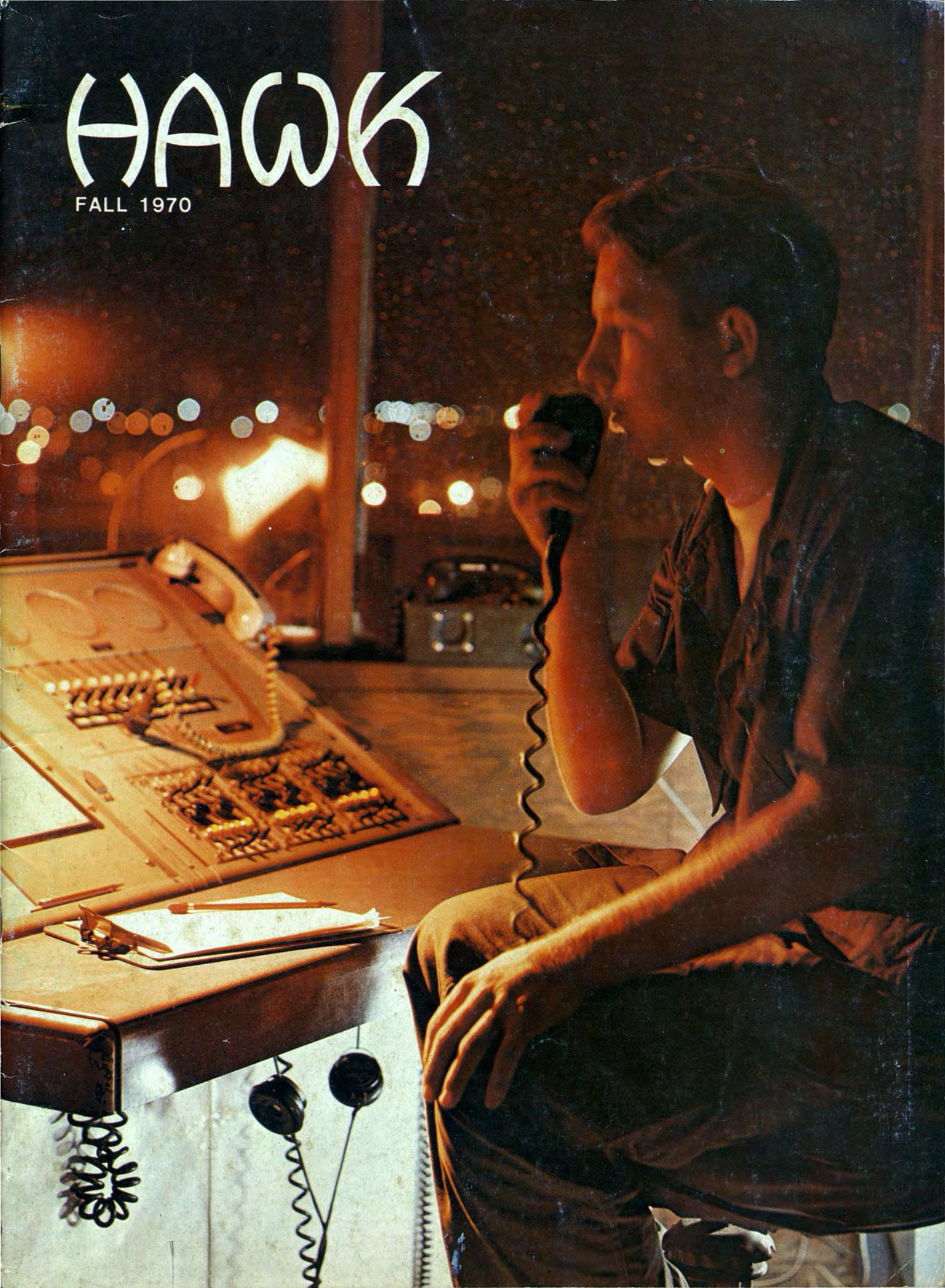
HAWK

FALL 1970



HAWK

Fall, 1970 Vol IV No. 3

1st Aviation Brigade

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FRONT COVER: Through hectic days and often lonely nights the traffic controller performs his behind-the-scene duties. His split-second decisions leave no room for error. Photo by CWO Michael S. Lopez.

BACK COVER: No need to tell these youngsters to smile. They'd been waiting all morning for this picture. Photo by SP4 Phil Terrana.

INSIDE COVER: The shell casings and scorched ground are but a few of the many signs of war which this helicopter crew will see in its travels today. Photo by 1LT Tom Turner.

HAWK is an authorized Army publication published quarterly by the Information Office, 1st Aviation Brigade. Opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. 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 SF 96384.

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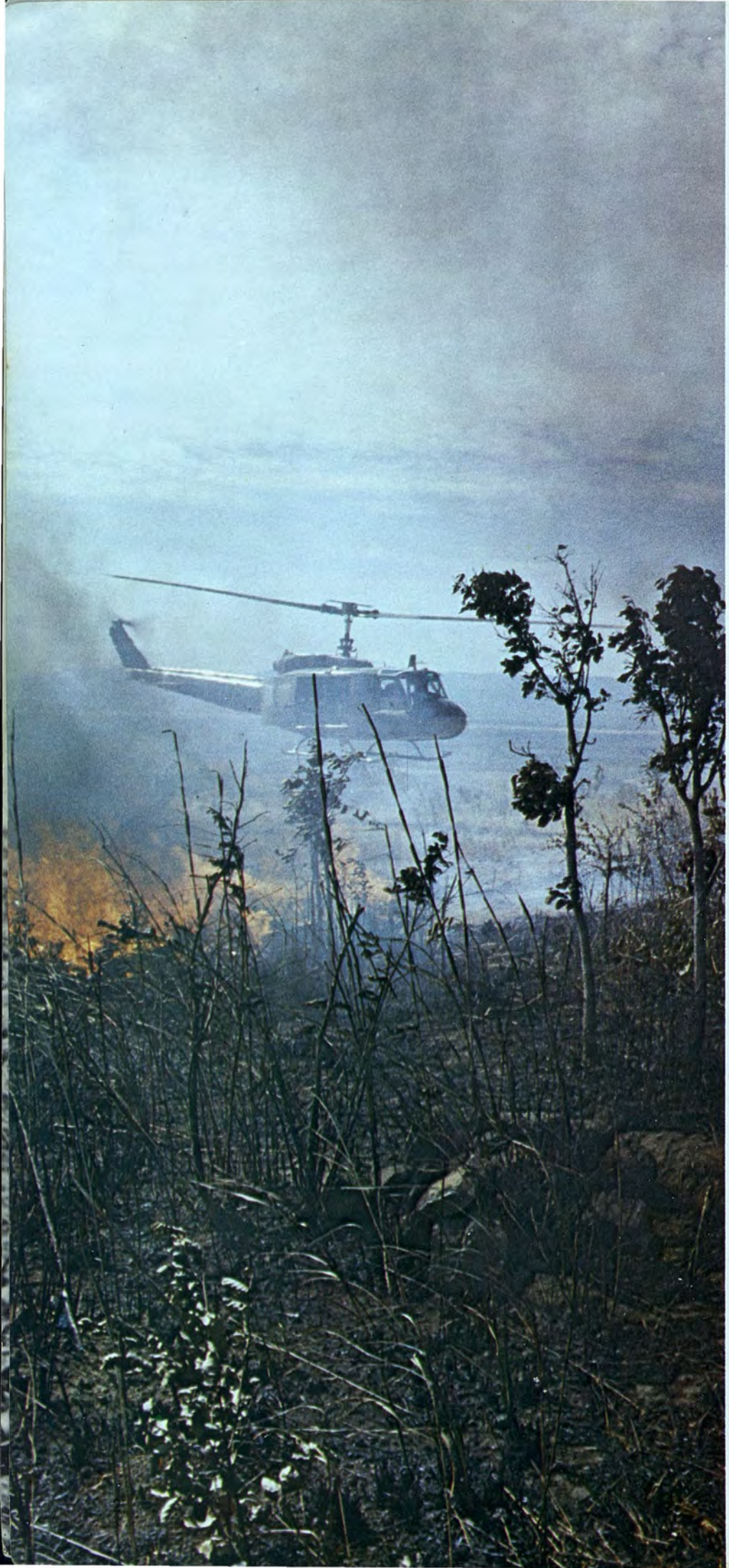


TURNER

Jokers & Deuces are Wild

Story by ILT Tom Turner

Shifflett and Newton were flying one gunship this morning. Hammal and Christman were in another. The mission was loaded with experience.

Sneed and Hoenig were crew chief and gunner on one ship and they had more than 52 months in country between them. MAJ Willis Bunting, commanding officer of the 48th Assault Helicopter Company (AHC), had given the final few instructions at the 7 a.m. briefing. CPT Jim Jenkins was climbing into his co-pilot seat aboard one of the 10 troop-carrying slicks necessary for today's mission.

He felt safe. Of the 14 enlisted men serving with the "Jokers" gunship platoon, 11 had more than one year in Nam. Five of the eleven officers could make the same claim. Charlie Rounds and Anthony Terrana of the "Wild Deuces" platoon, would be alongside the M-60s in Jenkins' H-model and both were excellent men.

"Crank-up and refuel—then take off," had been the order.

"We're yellow flight, going to PZ1," hollered Jenkins at his crew chief, "Any problems—dustoff at Tuy Hoa."

There were two flights, of five slicks and two guns each, to extract 750 Republic of Korea (ROK) infantrymen to their home base. It would take about 10 sorties for each ship.

Forty-five minutes later the Command and Control (C&C) ship was encircling PZ1 (pick-up zone) on a hill somewhere west of Tuy Hoa.

What were those last words... "Charlie's tactics are hit you when you're weakest? Be careful late in the extraction—watch it." They would!

Okay, here we go.

There they are!

There's the smoke!

Two slicks hit the ground at once. About a dozen ROKs piled on board and off they flew toward their company area.

Back and forth, helicopters came and went. Slowly the area began clearing out, as word reached those that were left—Charlie was throwing B-40 rockets into the valley at the bottom of the hill.

The roar of M-60 machine gun fire and the "thump" of an M-79 grenade launcher started up immediately. Tracers streamed off the top of the hill into the woods below, showing where the rounds fell. The heavy fire drowned out the noise of the choppers as they continued to steadily extract the troops. There was almost no incoming fire now and the mission continued right on schedule.

By 11 a.m. the troops were completely extracted and it was time for lunch. All this had been a fairly routine morning for the 48th Assault Helicopter Company from Ninh Hoa.

Their job of supporting the ROK troops is similar to that of other companies, but with a few distinctions.

SOMMERS

Early each morning the briefing is held concerning the day's operations.

In 1967, the Koreans requested the 48th AHC as their permanent supporting company. They have worked for them ever since.

"They think of us as their own unit," explained MAJ Bunting, "and we try to keep them happy."

"We work with them constantly and they take good care of us," pointed out CPT Ron Lance, liaison officer with the Koreans. "Other units you only work with once in awhile, but since we are with these guys all the time, it allows more familiarity with each other's operations and abilities. Now the job is even easier, because the ROKs are performing some of their own resupply."

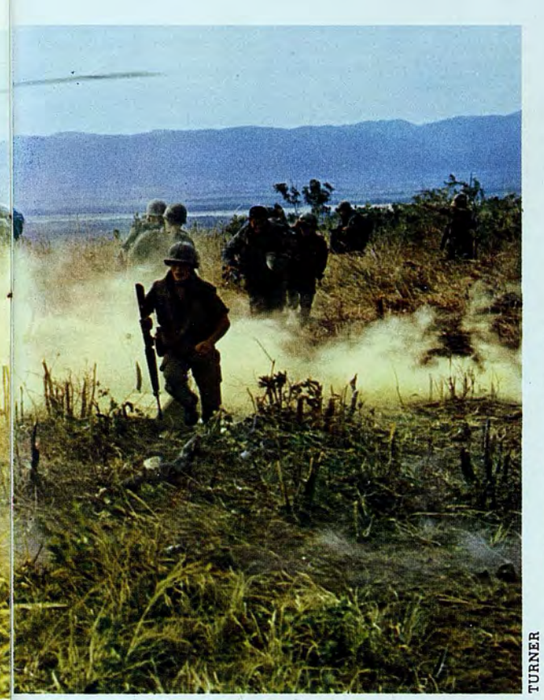
Everyone also agrees that the ROKs are good security. They pull all the base perimeter guard and are highly respected in their area.

With afternoon came an entirely different job for the 48th's slicks. The mission was resupplying firebases and troops in the field. It could be rough or routine, depend-

Two pilots of the 48th head toward their ships to take off for Tuy Hoa.

SOMMERS

TURNER

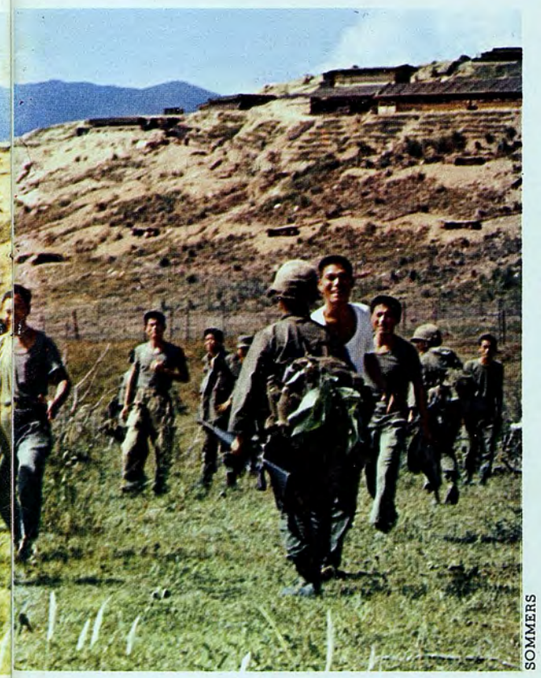


TURNER

SP5 Charles Rounds keeps an alert eye on the ground below (upper far left). Tired ROK infantrymen relax on the way back to base camp (lower far left). Korean troops fill up one slick and rush to the other (upper middle). Successful troops are greeted by their comrades as they return to camp (lower middle). Each gunship's ammunition is carefully checked before it flies (far right).

TURNER

SOMMERS



SOMMERS

ing on the extent of enemy activity.

The 28th ROK Regiment works the area from north of Tuy Hoa down to Vung Rho Bay. Second Battalion's base camp in Phu Bang hamlet was the center of operations this afternoon.

Each sortie was different. The first one was delivery of ammunition to ROK troops in a valley several miles inland from the South China Sea. It would have to be performed flawlessly. The troops there had been in contact, so the slick must sweep in low, down the valley floor, and make the drop fast and clean. It was. Fifteen minutes later, they were back at the base camp to pick up another load of ammo.

This time it went to a forward firebase atop one of the many green hills several miles southwest of Tuy Hoa. There was no trouble, and after circling the base once, the load was dropped off.

The remainder of the day was spent this way—delivery of ammunition and other supplies to ROK troops in the II Military Region.

Back at the 2nd Battalion's base camp MAJ J. H. Yoon, assistant battalion commander, noted that the 48th's support was always timely and thorough. "They have never let us down," he said, "and we're happy to have them."

"They're nice guys, but they're tough," chimed in CPT Son, the headquarters company commander.

Meanwhile, as the Hueys were transporting supplies, the Charlie model gunships of the "Jokers" were resting in Ninh Hoa. . . temporarily.

At 2 p.m., operations called a "scramble". In a matter of minutes, two gunships were airborne and taking coordinates for a nearby area. A ROK squad on the ground was under fire. In almost no time, M-60s, mini-guns, and rockets were bleaching the field with smoke and fire. Charlie was in real trouble.

The Koreans had broken contact long enough to get out of the area and these two gunners really poured fire on "Chuck." In a few minutes the entire area was saturated with hot lead. Whoever might have been there certainly was not a threat anymore.

Back to the revetments, maintenance, showers, chow and a cold beer. It had been a relatively normal day.

1LT Mike Martin, of the "Jokers", commented later about the gun platoon, "This is my second tour over here and these guys are the best I've ever seen. Flying with them is great. And there's one more thing that stands out—good maintenance."

The record backs him up. Availability of H model ships has been around 90 percent with the C models about 83 percent. It's an enviable record.

As 1LT John Gates pointed out, "It makes our job easier, because with extra ships available the push for hurry-up maintenance isn't so great. Of course, the safety factor increases too."

The "Blue Stars" of the 48th have quite a job—support of the 9th ROK Division. Their area of operations extends from north of Tuy Hoa to Phan Rang, and on occasion they are called in to assist the ARVNs also.

It could be an exceptionally difficult task, but, due to mutual respect, it's a job enjoyed and made easier by both sides. When the 48th has a good show at their club, the Korean troops are always welcome to attend. U.S. soldiers attend the Korean Chapel on Sunday and the trading of new recipes is an everyday occurrence at the base.

There is a constant exchange of ideas and on-the-job training. The foundation of their relationship is old and strong, hardened by mutual assistance and sweetened by interchange of language and services. The 48th and the ROKs. . . they make a good team.

SOMMERS

TURNER

The dust blows furiously as the skid descends toward the ground (top). After a successful pickup at a distant outpost, the chopper is on its way (bottom).

EDITORIAL

The Battle of Boredom

A big fight that many GIs are presently engaged in throughout Vietnam is not against the VC or the NVA. It is a fight against boredom. Unfortunately, an increasing number of soldiers are confronted with this battle every day. The reasons for the situation are obvious. With less enemy contact there is more time to sit around thinking about home and family instead of "Charlie." Also, only some people work in their civilian qualified jobs while in the Army. Thus it is easy to become disenchanted and apathetic. The Army understands the problem and has taken steps to remedy it.

One way to fight boredom is through education. Presently there are extensive educational programs in Vietnam that are available to all GIs. One such program has been set up by the University of Maryland. The University offers courses leading to a Bachelor of Arts degree in General Studies. This curriculum provides an opportunity for the qualified student to enroll in and complete a degree program with concentration principally in the social sciences and humanities. Principal concentrations of study are limited to Commerce (Business Administration), Economics, English, Government and Politics, History, Philosophy, Psychology, and Sociology. With permission, a student may elect concentration in other areas.

All courses are fully accredited and taught by qualified military personnel. Each instructor has a minimum of a Masters degree in the subject he is teaching. The cost, $66.00 per course, should not discourage you, since the Army pays $49.50 of that amount. Over 1,000 soldiers are now taking advantage of this opportunity to increase their knowledge. University of Maryland courses are given at Da Nang, Chu Lai, An Khe, Qui Nhon, Pleiku, Nha Trang, Cam Ranh Bay, Phouc Vinh Long Binh, Saigon, Can Tho and Cu Chi.

There are 22 Army Education Centers in Vietnam ready to assist you. Each center provides free testing services to help you determine the best program for your needs. If you haven't completed high school, the center can help you get that diploma before you DEROS. Information on USAFI (United States Armed Forces Institute) courses is available at the center, along with information on over 600 correspondence courses.

Whether you are taking a class for pleasure or to fulfill requirements for a degree, the Army Education Center affords an opportunity to remove yourself from the static military environment and expand your knowledge in an area of particular interest.

If you are looking for an escape from the boredom of Vietnam, why not wander over to your Army Education Center and see what they have to offer?

from the chaplain:

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

Very often one hears complaints about the insignificance of one's duty or job within the military. Many feel that what they do from day to day is not important. The task seems small and insignificant.

But little things are important. There is the story of an experimental aircraft which had cost about half a billion dollars. During one of its flights there was thought of destroying the plane because the landing gear was stuck fast. In the emergency, however, technicians on the ground studied the charts of the wiring system. They finally concluded that if a connection could be made between two contact points on a wiring panel, the short-circuit would enable the landing gear to be freed and lowered. This information was radioed to the crew in the plane, and one of them used a simple ten-cent metal file clip to make the right contact, thus enabling the crew to get the landing gear in place for a safe landing. With one small, cheap, insignificant clip, an investment of half a billion dollars was saved.

Little things are important—they are significant.

When we think of the majesty, almightiness and glory of God, we are reminded of the words of the Psalmist:

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained: What is man that thou art mindful of him?

We are significant in the eyes of God, and what we do for God, country, fellowman and self should not be considered insignificant.

BIG GUNS FROM DOWN UNDER

Story by CPT Leonard Schodowski

Photos by LAPhot Geoff Herrin (RAN)

The hushed silence of the dimly-lit operations room was broken by the electric crackle of a radio.

"Pacific Ocean, this is Aloft 20, fire mission."

Like a finely tuned machine, the wheels began turning and the cogs started to fall into place. Plotters and computers commenced to work; ammunition was readied and transported to the firing battery; guns were laid, checked and rechecked. Everything waited in readiness for the command to commence firing.

Sound like a typical mission at a remote fire support base in the jungles of Vietnam? Wrong! This is the start of a routine fire mission aboard a floating firebase —a destroyer with the U.S. Seventh Fleet, three miles off the coast of Vietnam's III Military Region, in the South China Sea.

Riding the tides a comfortable distance out to sea, this nautical fire support base has the advantage of minimal interference from enemy counter attacks and a self-contained mobility that can transport its deadly 5″/54 guns, with their deadly firepower, 300 miles in any 24-hour period. Their ordnance can be brought to bear on an enemy force a considerable distance inland from the beach.

The ship answering this particular fire request is a little different from other destroyers on the gun line. By outward appearances alone, she stands out because her hull is painted a light green instead of the more conventional battleship-grey that covers her sister ships "on the line." On closer inspection, one notices that the flag she flies is not the familiar Stars and Stripes. When the radio call is returned from her, all doubts are removed because "The Queen's English" can not be mistaken.

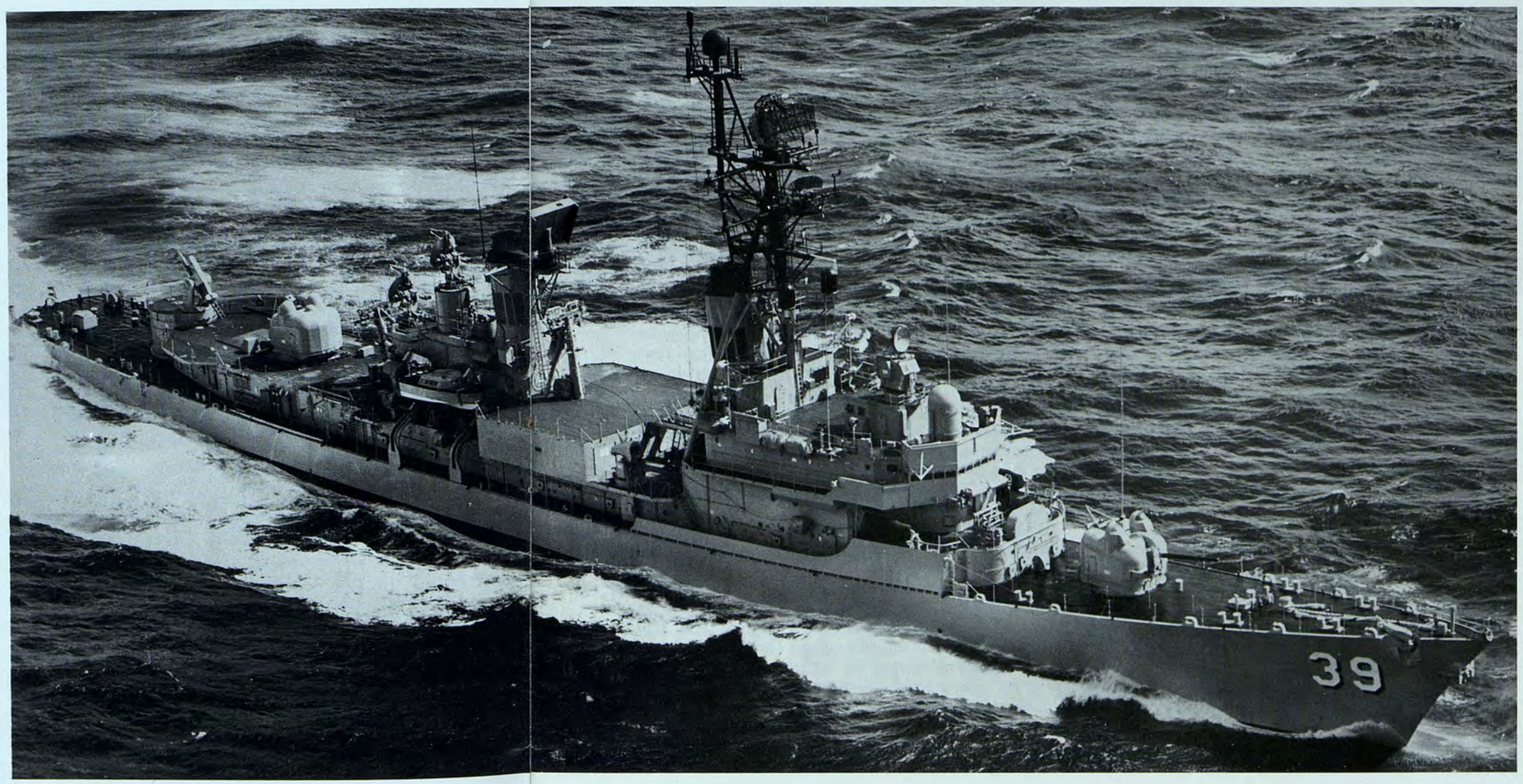
Her Majesty's Australian Ship HOBART (D-39) is the destroyer in topic. Serving as an integrated unit of the Seventh Fleet, HMAS HOBART provides naval gunfire support for allied operations from the Demilitarized Zone in the north, around the southern tip of Vietnam, and into the Gulf of Thailand in concert with the other ships of the U.S. Navy. She is Australia's naval contribution to the Free World Forces' effort in Southeast Asia.

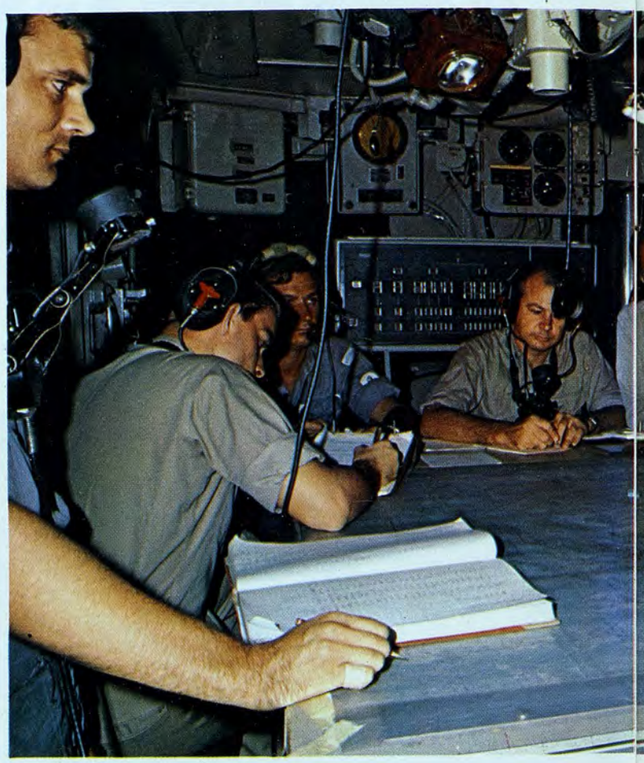
Since March 1967, the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) has maintained one of its destroyers, on a rotating basis, in Vietnamese waters under the operational control of Seventh Fleet. This is the HOBART's third deployment since 1967 and she has accumulated over 18 months service off the Vietnamese coast. With her sister ships, HMAS BRISBANE and HMAS PERTH, she has insured that the Australian "punch" is clearly heard in support of Free World Forces.

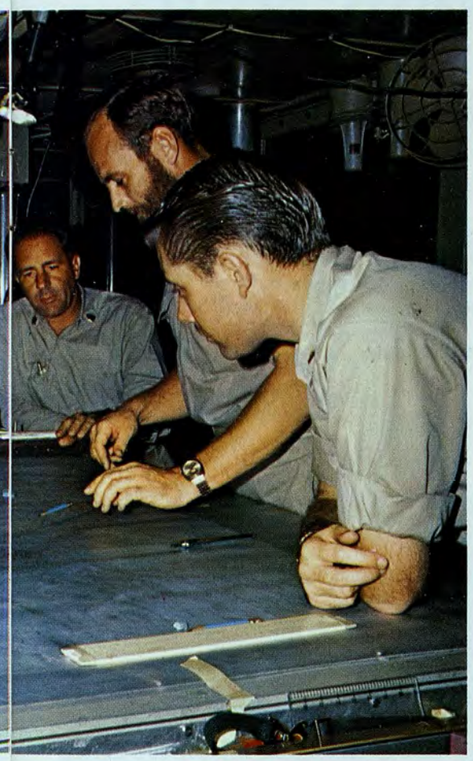
She didn't officially join the rolls of the Royal Australian Navy until December 18, 1965, when she was commissioned in ceremonies at Boston, Massachusetts, and set sail for her new home, Sydney, Australia.

This sleek 4,500-ton destroyer is one of the most modern warships afloat today. Designed primarily for the anti-aircraft defense of the fleet, she is equally at ease

HMAS HOBART (D-39) steams along the gunline off Vietnam's coast.







Ordinary Seaman Ian McCormick loads another seventy pound projectile into the automatic feed assembly in the forward magazine (left). Target plot control tables—the nerve center of the naval gunfire mission (center). POElect Max Jeffrey, the gun plot officer, operates the trigger, while Seaman Rod Davidson continues to monitor the gun plot computer (right).

in her secondary roles of anti-submarine warfare (ASW) and shore bombardment. HOBART's armament includes the TARTAR medium range anti-aircraft missile system, two 5-inch automatic rapid-fire guns, the IKARA anti-submarine missile system, plus two sets of anti-submarine homing torpedoes.

It is the 5-inch gun capability that has been the mainstay of her efforts off the Vietnamese coast. These guns can pump out a remarkable rate of fire and their accuracy, even at their range limit, is still equal to our best ground artillery.

Occasionally, she is tasked with the job of providing anti-submarine and anti-aircraft cover for the U.S. Navy's carrier task forces, but most of her effort is devoted to the gunfire support of the Allied infantrymen on the ground in the coastal regions of South Vietnam.

HMAS HOBART is equal to the challenge and performs this duty in an outstanding manner. When she is in port, she proudly displays the green, red, yellow, and blue burgee that signifies that the ship has been awarded the United States Navy Unit Commendation for her service. That was during her first Vietnam deployment, March-September, 1967. Her present crew is justly proud of this honor and are in every way equal to the crew that won the award.

During the Gulf of Tonkin operation in 1967, HMAS HOBART was taken under fire by North Vietnamese shore batteries on 10 separate occasions. Twice her decks were sprayed with exploding shrapnel from near-misses, but miraculously, her crew did not sustain any casualties.

On her present mission off the coast of the III Military Region, HMAS HOBART is taking part in a truly international and interservice operation. She is firing her guns in support of her own countrymen in the 1st Australian Task Force (1ATF) and also in support of soldiers of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN). The spotting and directions to her gun crews come from U.S. Marine aerial observers (AOs), flown by Army aviators in 0–1 Bird Dogs.

The 74th Reconnaissance Airplane Company's 2nd Platoon has the primary mission of transporting the Marine AOs in the III Military Region. This unit, operating from the airfield at Xuan Loc, 35 miles northeast of Saigon, has nothing but praise for this mission and for the professionalism exhibited by all persons connected with it.

According to CPT Richard Larson, the 74th RAC's operations officer, "This is one of the better missions that we get. The people on the ground there are really coordinated and the gunfire accuracy is excellent. Normally, after a one round adjustment, the shells fall right on the money."

The pilots who fly this mission are also happy with the cooperation that they get at Nui Dat, the 1st ATF base camp. "The Australians sure take care of us when we show up there for a mission. There is no wasted time. If the mission calls for a 0900 show time, you can be sure that the first rounds will be on their way by 0910. Those guys there have got it all in a row." These comments came from CW2 Gene Spivey, who flies this mission on a regular basis and flew the mission mentioned in this article. A second tour aviator, he has over 2,000 hours of flight time. Recently transitioned into the Bird Dog, he said that he enjoys flying this type of mission better than the more familiar troop transporting that he did as a chopper pilot.

The biggest advantage an aviator has with naval gunfire adjustment is being able to adjust from the gun-target (G-T) line. With the destroyer sitting off the coast, she is a lot easier to spot than an artillery battery hidden in the jungle. According to Spivey, "The HOBART is at least 50 per cent more accurate than ground artillery. With this kind of accuracy, I can fly a close-in, horseshoe pattern around my target and adjust those rounds right from the G-T line. Normally, it only takes her one or two rounds to get on target, then she just pours it on."

Firing into the Lang Hai Hills, 11 miles northeast of Vung Tau, the HOBART was supporting the ground operation interdicting enemy base camps, supply trails and gardens.

"If we can destroy the enemy's supplies in those hills, he'll have to come down into the village for more. Once he does that, he's in our element and these Aussies and the ARVN can mop him up," observed Marine CPT Ken Phipps, the naval gunfire coordinator at 1st ATF headquarters. He ought to know what he is talking about too. This North Carolinian has been in Vietnam since 1965, with the exception of a one year break when he went back to Camp Lejeune.

The Aussies had 10 targets on this particular mission, for Spivey and Phipps to handle. As soon as the 0–1 was in the area, the mission got under way.

The first call to the ship signaled the beginning of the mission. Radio operators got the call for fire and

immediately relayed their information to the operations room where the firing party was waiting for the data. This party and two plotters converted the data into a fire mission and passed the required commands to the computer room to align one of the two gun mounts on the target.

The bridge officer, working independent of the operations room, also plots the mission and must confirm the data before the mission goes.

Still another check takes place on the gun mounts where the gun director verifies the data on the guns. This may seem repetitious and unnecessary, but it insures that rounds don't land where they weren't intended. The entire check process probably doesn't add thirty seconds to the start of the mission and it gives everybody a little safer feeling about where that round is going to impact.

With the gyro-stabalized gun mounts and the ability to use radar in firmly establishing the ship's position at any given time, very few rounds ever impact more than a hundred meters from the intended target, even on the first shot. This enables a rapid shift and is extremely effective against a target of opportunity.

Once the target is locked in, the 5-inch guns can turn out an incredible rate of fire. With a rapid-feed system to load them, they can place in excess of 30 rounds-per-minute down range from each of the HOBART's two guns. That is a lot of steel falling on the enemy in a short period of time.

The HOBART rarely has to repeat a target after she first engages one. The explosive power in her projectiles can rip through all but the most hardened targets. Even these targets are not immune, however, for she is capable of pounding them into submission as well, because of her ability to place round upon round in the same place.

The crew of HMAS HOBART exhibits a real professional touch in any mission she undertakes and has a mission completion rate of over 98 per cent. She has only had to cancel three missions in the past six months, because of some difficulties in her systems that prevented her from firing. Any unit, military or naval, could be justly proud of that OR rate.

The Free World Forces in Vietnam can be proud of HMAS HOBART's contribution here, and to the big assist the Allies get from her big guns from "Down Under."

EDITOR'S NOTE: Since this story was written, HMAS HOBART has returned to her home port of Sydney, Australia, completing her third deployment with the Seventh Fleet. She has been replaced on the gun line by HMAS PERTH. On this deployment the HOBART steamed over 36,780 miles and spent 103 days on the line in support of Allied ground operations. Her two 5-inch guns fired 16,900 rounds in support of 393 missions.

"Rounds On The Way"

Low, Slow and Reliable

Story and Photos by SP4 David A. Keough

An Otter looks a little like the last place finisher in an aircraft beauty contest. It does not move as gracefully as a Huey, nor is it as sleek as a Cobra gunship. It is not as sophisticated as a Mohawk, nor is it as trim as a Bird Dog.

Crew chiefs and mechanics curse when they push them out of the hanger or take them apart for their regular periodic inspection (P.E.).

The pilots who fly them occasionally dream of other, faster aircraft and refer to the U-1As as "Bufs" or "Big Ugly Friends," among other translations.

And yet, beyond the curses and the nicknames, there is a real appreciation for what the plane and the 18th Utility Airplane Company, 223d Combat Aviation Battalion, have done and continue to do.

The Otter is unique among fixed-wing aircraft in the Army inventory because of its short takeoff and landing capabilities, originally having been designed for the dirt airstrips in the remote regions of Canada. It flies slowly, but has the endurance to spend long hours in the air, and it requires relatively little ground maintenance time and money to keep it airborne.

Some of the men of the 18th, who have worked in Otter companies for years, feel a keen attachment for the plane and its qualities.

One grizzled staff sergeant, a veteran of eight years of Otter service and 18 years in the Army, swears by the plane. "For a single-engine airplane, it's the best in the Army. For all the time I've worked with them, I haven't had one let me down yet."

Small wonder that the motto of the 18th is "Low, Slow and Reliable."

When the Army began to adapt itself to the realities of brush fire wars, it looked for an aircraft to operate out of short fields which had been cleared out of the wilderness, and so it turned to the Otter. This decision was directly responsible for the creation of the 18th Aviation Company at Ft. Riley, Kansas, in 1959. When the effort of the Special Forces and MACV advisory teams in Vietnam began to increase, the unit was sent here in 1962, making it one of the first Army aviation companies to come to the Republic.

The company's initial operations were not unlike the bush pilot activities for which the planes were designed. In supporting the advisors and Special Forces, the 18th carried ammunition, medical supplies, weapons, wounded and reinforcements, not to mention such unusual cargo as pigs and goats to Montagnard villages.

During the first year or so of operations, the 18th bore the brunt of the hauling of freight and passengers in and out of air strips hacked out of the triple canopied hills and valleys of the central highlands. They were the only unit providing this service until the arrival of the Army's CV-2 Caribou.

Later in the war, when events called for the introduction of major U.S. ground forces into the conflict, the company entered a new phase of operations, providing support for the Third Marine Amphibious Force, serving as radio relay ships for scattered elements and making courier runs for the new commands being formed.

In the north, ships were placed on call for whatever was needed by the Marines and Special Forces, and there was enough to keep the Ottermen busy.

When Khe Sanh was besieged by the NVA and fog shrouded the mountain valley approaches to the strip of that camp, the Otters, guided by Marine radar units, often flew there in near-zero visibility when no one else would fly.

Why? Because they were needed, both to serve as carriers of food and supplies to the embattled camp, and to provide radio relay connection for the reconnaissance teams in the hills beyond.

Other missions called for flying ammunition to artillery bases such as Con Thien, beyond the safe operating limits of USAF C-130s, and evacuation of Marines who had been wounded in savage fighting along the DMZ, from Dong Ha to the greater safety of Phu Bai.

It was support like this, in the campaigns along the DMZ and again in Chu Lai, which earned the unit the Naval Presidential Unit Citation, a rare honor for an

Army unit.

The radio relay missions, which were carried out over the rugged hills of both I and II Military Regions, provided an airborne link in a stretched communications net between patrols in the field and their main bases. These flights fell to the 18th because the slow cruising speed and low fuel consumption of its planes allowed them to remain suspended as flying antennas.

The relay flights were challenging, for they tested the endurance of pilots, planes and maintenance teams alike. The planes were on station "round the clock," stopping only for fuel, oil and a change of crew. The sturdy Otters often carried three pilots so that one might rest while the others flew. The mission called for dedicated ground personnel and the men responded by working late into the night without coaxing, sometimes continuing into the morning in order to keep the planes in the air.

When other, more specialized aircraft took over the radio relay missions, the 18th settled down to the business of hauling passengers and cargo and supporting the units that needed them.

While that work might not seem demanding, it depends entirely on the circumstances. When the Special Forces Camp at Ha Thanh had its 4.2 inch mortar knocked out while under attack in 1966, an Otter flew in a replacement to the 1,100 foot strip, landing over a Caribou and unloading at one end of the runway to make its delivery. All the while the camp had been under fire and the strip began to get the attention of an enemy mortar, with one round landing 100 feet from the Caribou before both planes took off. The delivered mortar later proved instrumental in breaking up the enemy attack.

While the pioneering adventure of the early years has gone and the savage action of the days of massive operations has passed, the company continues to provide a needed transportation and communications link throughout the expanse of II Military Region (MR) and beyond its borders to the whole of the Republic.

Regular flights leave Da Nang on daily courier missions from Quang Ngai to Hue Citadel and points in between. The planes of the "Phoenix" section of the 18th, the only 17th Combat Aviation Group unit supporting the northern provinces, also fly special missions as required which take them within a few miles of the DMZ.

At Pleiku the "Eagle" section of the Otter company continues the role that brought the unit to 'Nam, direct support of the Special Forces "A" camps. In addition, this section also provides courier and airlift service for the headquarters and advisory personnel of II MR at Pleiku.

To the south, a "Seagull" section at Nha Trang works with a variety of commands, including the Green Beret Headquarters and I Field Force, Vietnam. Their missions carry them throughout the length of the country and help explain the 18th's proud claim that their planes fly from the "Delta to the DMZ."

Those who belittle the relatively small payload of its planes probably would be surprised to learn that since the company's arrival in Vietnam, the "Low, Slow and Reliable" ships have carried 26.5 million pounds of cargo and 425,000 passengers while flying 110,000 hours over a distance of 10.5 million miles.

Yes, the bulky, single-engine planes look awkward at their lumbering pace, and when a pilot has to drop unceremoniously to land on a short and difficult field, it might even look downright ridiculous, but give the plane with its circular 18th Otter emblem a little breathing room and it sails in gently and lands as stately as a queen taking her throne.

The planes of the 18th may be big and ugly to some, but not to all. Not to the Marines and the Green Berets the company has served so faithfully in the past, for to them the planes were as welcome as guardian angels.

The Otters were there in the clutch when it mattered and they could be relied upon to deliver the goods.

The 18th Aviation Company bears that part of its motto proudly and accepts the responsibility it implies —Reliable.

A New Play In The Delta

Story by SP4 M. E Fitzgerald

From our first exposure to drama in literature and the stage, we have learned that the dank and dark elements often foreshadow impending disaster.

As the weather beaten jeep approached the Vinh Long flight line, the early morning's troubled, black sky unleashed a late September monsoon which was danker and darker than any literary tempest.

The slowly building whine of the turbine in the UH-1D slick brought silence to the jeep's bundled passengers. Then, still in silence, the slick was boarded.

Three days earlier, near the village of Cao Lanh in Kien Phong Province, a group of American advisors met with provincial forces in devising new methods of fighting Communist insurgents.

The group was headed by CPT James Lucas, Company Commander of Delta Troop and a member of the 7/1 Air Cavalry in Vinh Long. With CPT Lucas were several members of his company who were to act as advisors during the program and help with instruction sessions.

The U.S. advisors were to be working with elements of ARVN Lien-Doi 28, with direct aerial support from the 7/1 Air Cavalry.

The program had two basic steps that were repeated over the five day period. The first, third and fifth days were used for class instruction while the second and fourth days were used for actual battlefield application, using both day and night teams.

This was the fourth day.

Tension was a little high because the second day's activities had not been as productive as hoped. The day team had trouble making contact.

The lights of Vinh Long spread below like stars set against a black sky. The rain was still coming in torrents, but the spinning rotor acted as an umbrella, affording protection from the rain, but not the chilling wind.

As the morning's fingers of light reached across the pock-marked land below, the rain eased and then stopped. Ahead was the area known as Base Area 470.

It is in the southeastern corner of Kien Phong Province and, for the past several years, has been used by VC and NVA forces as a base camp.

Hours earlier, activity had been reported in the area by the "Swamp Foxes", 0–1 Bird Dogs of the 119th Reconnaissance Airplane Company. Flying high over the area, the small observation planes had spotted an early morning breakfast fire used by insurgents for cooking rice.

The synchronization was perfect. The LOHs, Cobras, and troop-lift-

ing slicks had just arrived as the Command and Control (C&C) ship approached.

It was all like some sort of panorama, seen from above, with all sizes diminished by the height of the C&C ship. Recurrent shock waves rocked that dream world as the Cobras began unleashing their deadly arsenal.

Their rotor blades slapping the air, the Cobras raked the area with 2.75 inch rockets and 7.62mm miniguns.

The day team was split into two groups with the first inserted on the east bank, just to the south of the Cobra strikes.

The second team entered on the west bank, also to the south.

The grass flattened out from the backwash of the chopper's prop as it hovered inches above the water, ready to cough up its load.

It takes just a few seconds for the water to soak through jungle boots and socks, but by then it is already around the knees of the troops as they rush to get clear of the slick.

With three to five meters between them, the ARVNs and U.S. advisors advanced on the base area's perimeter following a snake-like pattern. The point men carefully probed the grass and still water.

Wearing the magenta scarfs of Lien-Doi 28, ARVNs uncovered deadly booby-traps one by one until the team had entered the confines of the camp.

Clasping hands and warning of deep holes, the team members assisted each other through deep water and over shaky logs. All around were trees, stripped of their bark and branches, twisted and broken. Uprooted and shredded grass lay tangled on the ground and in the trees.

Close by were several large pools of water. Fashioned in perfect circles, the holes in the center of the mutilated foliage were the work of the Cobra's fusillade of rockets.

The camp's hootches were very small, maybe six feet by eight or nine feet, and were nothing more than covered platforms. Built on stilts above the water, each hut was constructed with bamboo and thatched with palm and banana leaves. They were impossible to see from the air.

Close to each hootch were sturdy clay bunkers. With small openings, too small for a large man to enter, the bunkers were built low to the ground, out of heavy logs and clay. Once the muddy clay dries, it takes on the properties of concrete and can easily withstand a direct hit by a 2.75 inch aerial rocket.

Inside one of the hootches was a pot of rice that had been overturned as the occupant fled. Several articles of clothing lay deserted in the hootches and along the trail, most of them black shirts.

Moving out of the hootches, the ARVN scouts led the way down a clay covered trail. The water still dripping from wet uniforms made the trail slick, while noses still twitched at the smell of burnt powder in the air.

Crack, crack, crack! Everyone went sprawling, trying to find his own personal hole to crawl in.

Even if you have never heard the sound of an AK-47, the moment the sharp cracking reaches your ears, your knees immediately buckle as the adrenalin surges through your body. All eyes are wide and ears alert.

About 25 meters up the trail, the ARVNs engaged the VC snipers and were busily exchanging fire. The ricochets whizzed their way through the trees overhead, changing their tune with each tree hit. After what could not have been more than 30 or 40 seconds a couple of M-79 grenades ended the fight.

No one said a word as they moved cautiously closer to where the snipers had been hidden. There, in a small area cleared of grass by the grenades, were two VC lying in a small pool of water.

The silence was finally broken by an excited ARVN who had obviously been in the fire fight. He ran up with a grin from ear to ear, his gold-capped teeth shining, "See, see, three VC, three VC!" A third was found a few feet up the trail beside a hootch.

The last bunker to be searched revealed a fourth dead Viet Cong. Apparently he had sought shelter during the air raid but the Cobras had found him in his hideout. The count climbed to four.

During the rest of the morning the ARVN-U.S. task force searched Base Area 470 but failed to uncover more opposition. Just before noon, the two teams met at the north end of the camp—the canal still between them.

The team on the east bank was resting in a deserted campsite that contained several hootches and a few bunkers. A few ARVNs stripped down and entered the muddy waters of the canal, among the water plants. There they searched for hidden weapons buried below the surface or VC who might be under water breathing through reeds.

Satisfied that the canal was safe, the ARVNs busied themselves with a cool bath before returning to shore and their clothes.

A few moments later, a remaining sampan was sent to her watery grave with a flurry of M-16 fire. At that same time, several pounds of documents found on the east bank were being loaded aboard the C&C ship for transport to local intelligence officials.

The small drama ended as the teams formed in three groups on each bank. The waiting slicks descended in tight formations. With backs turned, eyes were shielded from the stinging wind and whirling grass kicked-up by the hovering choppers. Then in almost one motion, everyone turned toward the ships, heads kept low, and jumped aboard.

Within seconds, Base Area 470 was far below and temporarily out of mind. It was no longer raining and the sun was now shining brightly, pointing the way back to Vinh Long—an ending even Ernest Hemingway would approve.


HAWK HONEY

With the nature of the Vietnam war continually changing, the helicopter faces new challenges and missions. Meeting these challenges with dedication and expertise has become the trademark of the

War Lords

Story by SP5 Christopher H. Molloy

On November 7, 1961 the 8th Transportation Company left Fort Bragg for the long trek to Vietnam, a country then as unknown to most Americans as it was far away. For the past nine years, the history of that company, now known as the 117th Assault Helicopter Company, has reflected the history of South Vietnam. For the War Lords of the 117th those years have been hard, but productive.

Their mission in 1961 was to increase the strike capability of the ARVNs, struggling in a then discouraging effort against the VC. When they arrived in-country, the men of the 8th set up their tents in the Tan Son Nhut area and prepared their H-21C "Shawnee Banana" helicopters for a bold new military strategy. On December 23, the "bananas" of the 8th lifted ARVN infantrymen for the first heliborne combat assault, against an elusive VC radio station that had been plaguing the Saigon government.

In the following challenging and formative months the men of the 8th developed the "airmobile" concept. Their first missions provided lessons for expansion of the airmobile strategy.

In 1962 the 8th began a rapid turnover of personnel to provide experienced instructors for helicopter training back in America. They were, by then, fully engaged in combat assaults, combat support, and medevacs for the ARVN infantry. During these same years the 8th frequently moved throughout most of South Vietnam pursuing the elusive and unpredictable enemy.

The 8th was reorganized as the 117th Aviation Company (Airmobile Light) in June, 1963. Their reorganization by no means marked the end of their contribution to airmobile development. In 1964, while working in II Military Region (MR), the 117th experimented with a "smoke ship" to provide cover for insertions—a technique which has since been widely incorporated. As the war expanded to major proportions the War Lords continually met the challenge.

A black moment for the men of the 117th came in early 1968. While engaged in support of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade and the 9th Infantry Division in the Delta, the 117th was staggered by a heavy loss of ships. By March 21st, with only two ships still in the air, they were unable to fulfill their mission. The War Lords had to cease operations for the first time, and they moved to Plantation to rebuild.

Their years at Plantation since then have seen a great reduction of military activity and their duties are different today, as is the war. In the comparative quiet, the men of the 117th have built themselves solid wooden barracks, their first since coming to Vietnam, and they have had time to compile a consistently outstanding availability record.

A man whose tour with the 117th has bridged the change from their heavy action in the Delta to their more quiet activity at Plantation is SGT Leonard F. Cox. SGT Cox was a "grunt" in the Delta until he reupped for an aviation MOS. Like many infantrymen, he had not been particularly aware of who was providing his air support, but when he arrived at the 117th he immediately recognized the Playboy "Annie Fanny" emblem on the platoon ships. "That was the platoon's original Annie Fanny emblem," recalled SGT Cox. "Since then we have painted over those emblems with more presentable ones."

SGT Cox feels the change from the Delta to Plantation has been a good one and sights the high morale of the company to prove his point. And the relatively slow activity seems to have had no adverse affect on the men; they have spent their time industriously and respect their work and leadership.

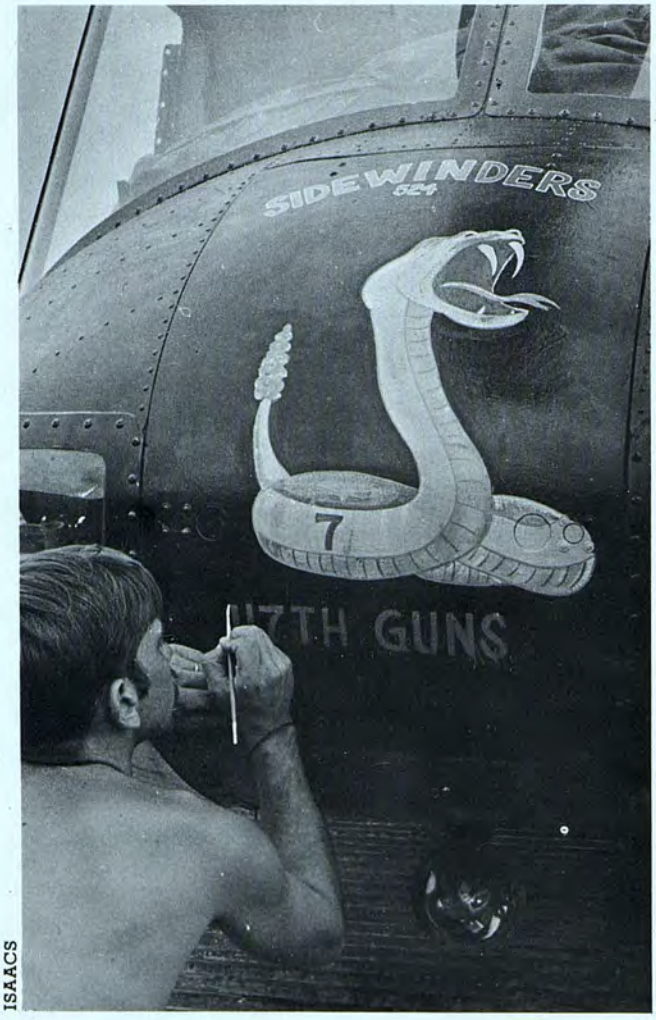
While it is true there is much less combat activity than there was, the War Lords are by no means idle. Every day they provide several helicopters for support of Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS), which is helping the citizens in III MR to adjust to the comparative peace in the area.

Currently the War Lords' heaviest commitment of ships is to the nightly Fire Fly missions they conduct throughout III MR. Their light and gunships provide regular night security around the Long Binh Post area and they are on call for any night activity throughout the MR.

In addition to the CORDS and Fire Fly missions, the War Lords provide ships for visual reconnaissance and, when necessary, for insertion in the Rung Sat Special

ISAACS

A War Lord uses his mini-gun over the Rung Sat Special Zone (top). No detail is too insignificant for a unit with as much pride as the War Lords (bottom).



ISAACS

Zone, down the river from Saigon. The Provincial Reconnaissance Unit (PRU), which is directly under the Gia Dinh civilian province chief, derives much of its strike mobility from the War Lords.

Said one PRU, "The helicopters and pilots have special abilities and skills to aid in capturing the enemy alive. We can strike too fast for them even to get out of their underground hiding places." Frequently the same ships which perform the visual reconnaissance and insertions later provide taxi service to take prisoners to interrogation points.

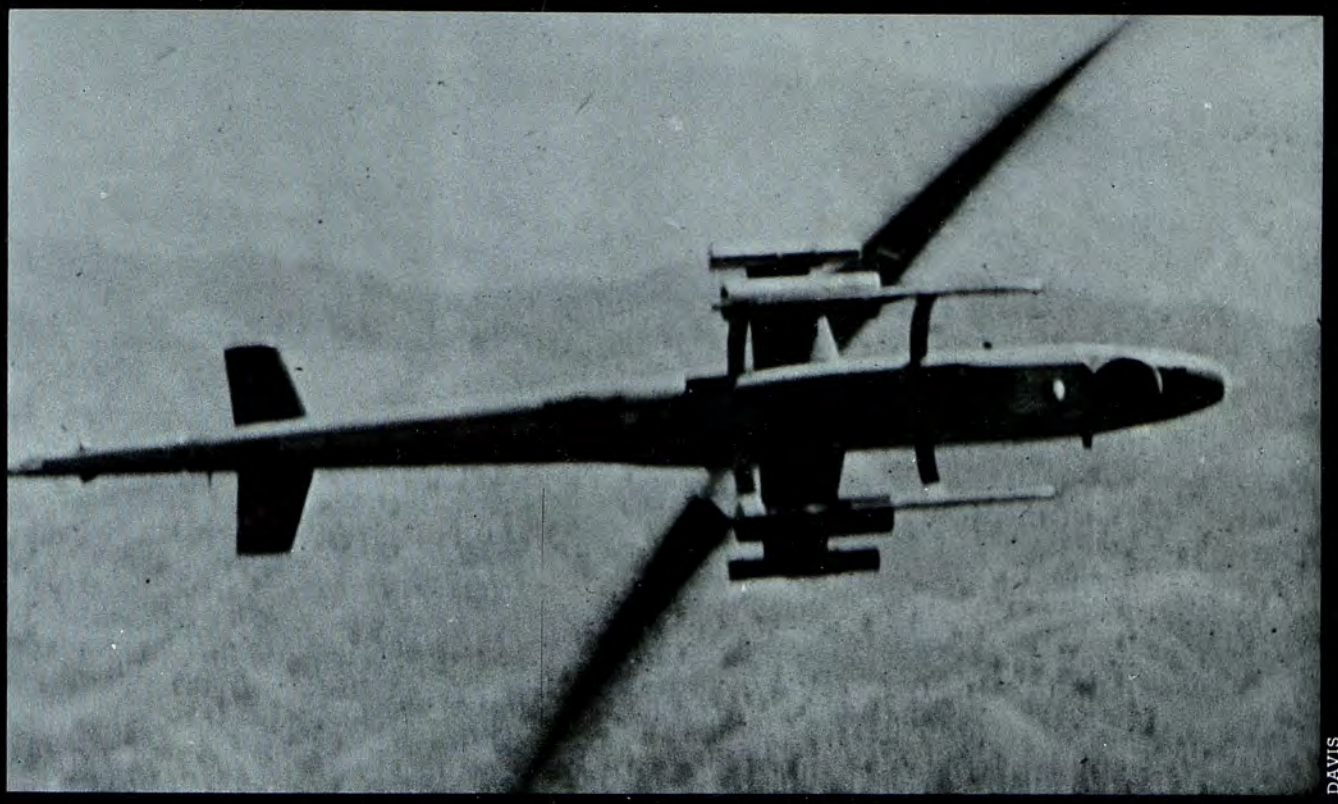
So far the War Lords and the PRUs have taken a lot of satisfaction in their effective teamwork in policing residual Communist activity. For example, the PRUs were quick to take advantage of ignorance in the enemy ranks. "The VC were told," commented one PRU, "that Americans had blue eyes and could not see well. Many believed that helicopter pilots could not see them moving on the ground. In some cases, recognizing this has made it easy for pilots to pin them down."

As satisfying as their work in the Rung Sat Special Zone is for the War Lords, nearly half of their missions are currently "ash and trash"."We are really just like a VIP company now," observed SP/4 William A. Petry. "I don't feel as though our mission is really combat any more."

The course the War Lords' history has taken during nine years in-country has brought them back to inserting Vietnamese soldiers in quick strike attacks against mobile VC units. After countless moves around Vietnam they have returned to make their permanent company area barely ten miles from their original encampment at Tan Son Nhut.

Aside from the "Annie Fanny" platoon, the 117th boasts a"Pink Panther" platoon, the"Sidewinder"gunship platoon, and a maintenance platoon, all hardworking and professional, and ready to respond to the changing requirements of the Allied effort.

charliehorse



DAVIS

An enemy bunker is spotted and "Charliehorse" does its thing.

Story by
SP4 John Hoober

They can be found sitting around, relaxing and joking in a carefree way, seemingly oblivious to the situation in which they find themselves. But let them hear the siren go off or get wind of a scramble mission and all frivolity ceases. Within minutes the company area is deserted and Quang Tri base camp comes alive with the sound of helicopter engines and whirring rotor blades. Moments later the surrounding sky is filled with choppers.

These are the pilots, observers, crew chiefs and aero-riflemen of "C" Troop, 3rd Squadron of the 17th Cavalry, known around the I Military Region (MR) as simply "Charliehorse". Operating in one of the hot spots of the war—South Vietnam's northernmost province—they constantly fly into the face of enemy fire during their daily aerial patrolling of the countryside.

"Let's see, this is the 20th of the month. Of the 18 days I've flown, my aircraft has taken fire on 15 of them," remarked SP5 Michael Greiner, crew chief on one of the troop's OH-58A "Kiowa" scout ships.

The heavily-wooded mountains and river valleys, surrounding the fabled Khe Sanh plain, provide excellent coverage for enemy .51-caliber gun emplacements, which play havoc with all approaching aircraft. But "Charliehorse" has no choice

CPT David Coker, operations officer, (standing) and SP4 Hudson Norris team up to direct a "scramble."

HOOBER

but to seek out and destroy all signs of enemy activity. During the night, rockets hidden under the clumps of underbrush could well find their way into Fuller, Sarge, Alpha Four or any of the other firebases that guard the DMZ.

"We have no choice but to go out and look for trouble," commented one veteran scout pilot. "What we don't find could mean disaster for the ground troops in our area of operation."

The "troubleseekers" consist of OH-58A "Kiowas", AH-1G "Cobra" gunships, and UH-1H "Huey" aircraft, capable of carrying nine infantrymen on a mission. For practically all their hunter-killer missions, the outfit uses a "heavy" team—a scout ship, two Cobras (orbiting high and low) and a Huey, as a chase ship.

Although most of their missions are the routine, but nevertheless important, visual reconnaissance checks, there are times, such as a scramble, when all the troop's aircraft must be airborne immediately.

Frequently "Charliehorse" will be called on to make troop insertions involving the deployment of their aero-rifle element (ARPs).

"Primarily they are inserted as a security force for downed aircraft," explained 1SG Paul Meyers, top enlisted man in the troop. "They orbit in a Huey and if a ship goes down, in they go." The ARPs also are used for ground reconnaissance, especially if the low-flying scouts, the eyes and ears of the platoon, spot a network of enemy bunkers or caches.

It is the scouts upon which the success of each mission hinges. Flying at tree-top level and nosing in and out of possible ambush sites, it is upon their observation that higher channels decide whether to call in anything from artillery to B-52 bomb strikes.

"It's just like in the days of Custer when he sent Indian scouts out ahead to look for enemy signs, except, instead of broken twigs and moccasin tracks, we search for high speed trails, bunker complexes and

Khe Sanh valley dead ahead.

HOOBER

tire tracks," said CPT Nicky Riviezzo, a veteran scout pilot.

"We try to go out and stir something up. If it's more than we can handle, then we call in Big Brother," added his observer.

Big Brother is one of the two Cobras that shadow the scout on each mission. Blazing away with either 20mm cannon, 40mm grenades, or 2.75-inch rockets, the menacing gunships discourage efforts of the NVA to reach downed ships or ground troops. While it is the scouts who bear the brunt of enemy fire, the hovering Cobras also are never out of the range of .51 caliber fire.

All the men who ride in the scout ships are volunteers. What is it that makes a person want to fly into the midst of the enemy and, in the words of one crew chief, "duke it out" with M-60 machine guns?

"It's a matter of pride," said SP5 Fred Tompkins. "I got bored sitting on my can behind a desk when I knew other guys were getting shot at."

"I just got tired humping on the ground, and I didn't want to fly at 3,000 feet," added SGT Jesse Thigpen, a veteran of 11 months in-country who knows how it feels to be shot down. He holds four Distinguished Flying Crosses.

The learning process for a person starting to fly scouts is most important. As an observer, the newcomer must learn what to look for, how to mark positions and, most important, when and when not to open fire.

"A scout can't go out with only one certain thing on his mind that he is going to look for, such as hootches or bunkers. He has to keep his eyes open for anything that pops up out there. When something does happen, he has no time to think, just time to react," advised one trooper.

Most of the men of "Charliehorse" are veterans of last spring's Cambodian offensive. It has only been since August 1 that the troop has been operating in I MR. Before that, their base of operations was Di An, supporting the 199th Light Infantry Brigade in III MR.

"The terrain is much more mountainous and the enemy is smarter up here," said PFC Edwin E. Pitts, an ARP. "The troops we ran across in Cambodia seemed pretty green. When the Cobras rolled in, they almost ran into each other trying to get out of the way."

The pilots generally tend to agree. "The enemy seemed not to be as aggressive down south as up here," remarked WO Ralph Weber, a Cobra pilot with more than 1,000 hours flying time in Vietnam. "They were not as willing to come out in the open and battle it out with you. Here they're very aggressive, well-trained and well-equipped, or at least they seem to be."

"We've found our tactics must change to compensate for this extra aggressiveness on the enemy's part and to minimize our losses due to conflict," Weber went on.

By change in tactics, "Charliehorse" most of all had to get used to the new environment. Sweeping mountain ranges replaced thick jungle, and observers had to train their eyes to look for tunnels and trench lines, as well as bunker complexes and clusters of enemy troops. The increased enemy activity in the area dictated the use of another gunship so "heavy" hunter-killer teams became the rule rather than the exception.

It has not been easy. Ships have been shot down and troops lost. But "Charliehorse" has dealt out damaging blows in return, smashing the enemy's concentrated effort to overrun the northern provinces. Respecting the keen eyes of the scouts and the deadly fire of the ever-present Cobras, NVA troops rarely show themselves in the daytime. Much of their work also has gone for naught. Bunkers and trench lines dug overnight are usually discovered by the early morning visual reconnaissance team and subsequently destroyed by an air strike.

Back at Quang Tri, morale remains high. Officers and enlisted men still crowd around the company's makeshift tower on their off days to sunbathe. From the top, on a clear day, one can see both the coast and the rugged mountains which border the Laotian border and the DMZ.

"Charliehorse" troopers hit some of the same spots as cavalry troops of old must have run into... the "Badlands", "Hole in the Wall", and "Down the Alley". At the end of each mission they stop at the "watering trough" for refueling. Then the day usually ends with a stop at the "saloon" (the club) and then to the "Dodge House" (BOQ) for a well-deserved rest.

Aerobatics above the DMZ.

DAVIS

Teeny Weeny Airlines

Story by SP4 Phil Terrana

I was only joking when I said the Command Airplane Company resembled a miniature TWA, but MAJ Nickita Krivorchuk wasn't about to let the remark go unnoticed.

"That's exactly what we are," said the major, "a teeny weeny airlines."

No one could argue with him because pound for pound, the twenty-five U-21 aircraft of the Command Airplane Company (CAC) are doing a job in Vietnam that is comparable to what TWA is doing internationally. The statistics don't lie and in the twelve month period ending this past June, 75,000 passengers, including nearly 9,000 VIPs, were provided transportation by the company. When these figures are presented in terms of the 15,735,509 accident-free passenger miles, one can understand that this was a very busy period.

These twelve months were hardly the exception however. Since arriving in Vietnam in 1962, CAC has been busy taking the people where they want to go. Whether it is one of the four plush airplanes used for ambassadors, senators and high-ranking generals or one of the 21 standard airplanes used for baseball players, Miss Americas and just about everyone else, one can expect to see a U-21 landing at any one of 57 different landing strips regularly in use throughout the Republic of Vietnam.

Because of the large and diverse area in which the company operates and because of the uniqueness of their mission, the pilots of CAC must be especially skilled in certain proficiencies not called for in normal, everyday air travel.

"Instead of allowing the seasons to come to us, we fly to them," comments CW3 Kenneth Dumas, the unit standardization officer. "Since they are not confined to one particular region in Vietnam, our pilots can expect to fly under any and every imaginable weather condition—often in the same day. Because of this, there is a greater emphasis on instrument procedures."

Instrument flying accounts for approximately 224 hours per month and an average of 716 approaches. Two-thirds of these approaches are conducted to obtain proficiency while the remaining third are necessitated by actual weather conditions.

There is an added complication in that many of the passengers and circumstances are unique compared to normal air travel and must be handled accordingly.

For LT Edward Muhler, transporting a 12-foot boa constrictor belonging to the Air Force was a very unusual experience. "Wonder why the Air Force didn't handle it? It had the whole airplane to itself," said LT Muhler. "No one wanted to ride in back with it."

A more congenial passenger would be Susan Oliver, the movie actress. "You couldn't really classify her as a passenger," said MAJ Mike Michelson, operations officer, "as she has her own pilot's license and even flew across the Atlantic shortly after leaving us.

The pilots all seem to echo the same comments concerning the people they fly. All agree that civilian personnel have no qualms about flying over Vietnam and are usually the first to hop on the plane. The worst passengers, they say, are a load of other pilots, but that is an expected comment in any profession. They all seem amazed at how few people actually know what 25-pounds of baggage is, but even the big TWA has

baggage problems.

The trait most apparant when these pilots get together, even if they are just "hangar flying", is their professionalism. "It is very pleasing to see people leaving our aircraft with nothing but admiration for the professionalism of the pilots," said CPT Don Ricks.

"This professionalism is no accident and in many ways it must be accredited to the men who have been assigned here in the past," said CW3 Dumas, "since many of them became instructor pilots at our U-21 flight school at Ft. Rucker, upon returning to the States." He added that, "The newly assigned pilots begin as co-pilots and work with the older and more experienced ones. After a minimum of 100 hours, these co-pilots are required to take a standardization ride in order to qualify in the handling of VIPs and other passengers. All pilots are required to take a standardization check ride every 90 days."

The professionalism has not gone unrewarded as MAJ Michelson points out. "Army Aviation has won the respect of the Air Force and much of the credit is attributed to our U-21 flights throughout the country. In the same vein, CAC success is directly assisted by the flight-following services received and by the Air Force controllers. The company is also indebted to the Special Forces who provide ground protection in some of the unsecure landing areas such as Duc Lap."

The unit has been the recipient of the 1st Aviation Brigade's Safety Award for the past two years and the Saigon Center and the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) have recently given a banquet in recognition of the fine job being performed by the company.

The professionalism shows right through to the end and as I was hopping off one of their planes, the pilot apologized for what he said was a rough landing. I hadn't noticed, but then again, he was expecting perfection. That is the mark of a professional.

The motto of the Company is—" Don't write your Congressman; wait and someday you'll fly him", but given a choice, most pilots would rather fly the likes of Miss Oregon and Miss California.

GRUBB

A large percentage of the Company's maintenance work is done at night, but the task of refueling is always a round-the-clock job. TERRANA

ASIDES

Aside from heavy fat slicks heat
long days counting through
insects buzz nights flash and roar—
Aside from that and flat jungle tops
spitting tracer tugging at your load
air thinner and harder to fly through—
scanning the bumps for detectable suspicions
or just hunching at your radio searching the lost
bird wrestling a load of shells against shifting air
beneath camouflaged belly; aside from these things
are small cameos framed in dark hair
wrapped in silk; the prettier side of things.

SP4 William Ward

The Prettier Side of Things

DALAT

City With A Future

Story and Photos by SP4 Phil Terrana

The valley is surrounded by a high mountain range which for centuries has secluded it from the rest of Vietnam. Entrance is by air and through a seemingly mystic corridor—a gateway fortified by flowing green mountain ranges below and puffy, white cloud cover above.

Once over the mountains, the city of Dalat comes into view. First impression is one of surprise at how spread out the city appears to be. Even from the air, there seems to be room to breathe, unlike Saigon and many other Vietnamese cities.

The valley surrounding Dalat is covered by a man-made quilt; a patchwork of vegetable and fruit farms systematically scattered, but held together by the river system winding its way through lakes and over rock-clustered waterfalls.

Riding by jeep from Cam Ly Airfield down the bumpy, twisting highway to the city below provides a somewhat contrasting picture of Dalat. In the midst of all this beauty are the ever-present signs of war, bunkers positioned all along the streets, guards patrolling the city and seemingly everyone carries a weapon. In the distance, artillery fire can be heard.

Nevertheless, for some reason, the obvious signs of war appear to be overlooked by the people. They seem to realize that their city is somehow different from the others. Although obviously affected by the war, the people are trying not to be hindered by it. The merchants in the market place, the farmers in their fields, the students in the university and even the honeymooners strolling along the waterfront are all looking further ahead, past the war and into a bright future—for themselves and for Dalat. The real beauty of the city is found in the hearts of the people, who in spite of a war are working hard to make Dalat as prosperous as it is scenic.

Its citizens are proud of their agricultural endowment. It is reflected in the market place, a bustling hub of activity and vitality. In the shadow of the large Peace Theater, countless fruit and vegetable merchants prepare for the long and busy day ahead, their stands mingled with many flower displays which add color to the market place. Behind them, bakers prepare their products for display and meat counters are being amply stocked for business. On the street surrounding this open-air supermarket are the tailor and craft shops, drug stores and restaurants which complete the picture of a thriving, successful, economically secure city.

Two seminarians relax in front of the Pontifical College; one of the more modern additions to the college community of Dalat.

Pretty young girls, wearing "Ao Dais" of all imaginable colors and design, brighten up the streets. Mama sans, with their shop-weary children, go from stand to stand in search of a bargain. Occasionally children break away from their mothers to frolic, but return to beg for an orange or a piece of candy. This is a market scene which could be found anywhere in the world.

The sidewalk cafes provide a relaxed resting place for tired shoppers to get away from the noise and confusion of the market place, as well as a peaceful meeting place for local merchants to get together over a few "bom-d-boms" and discuss the day's activities.

A short ride down the road leading from the noisy market place brings another part of Dalat into view. Interspersed among the many farms which encompass the city are the quiet, secluded campuses of nine colleges and universities.

When the French withdrew from Vietnam in 1955, they left behind a building complex which had housed French war orphans. Citizens of Dalat, realizing the potential value of the buildings, seized the opportunity to convert the orphanage into a much needed education center. The buildings were originally used as a high school, but in 1962 were converted into the University of Dalat. It has since been expanded to forty buildings and can accommodate 2,500 students.

The university, like the people of Dalat, is geared to the future. In an address by the university President several years ago, he used this ancient proverb to describe the goal of the institution:

"For a one-year plan it is best to grow rice
For a ten-year plan it is best to grow trees
For a hundred-year plan it is best to grow people"

This is where Dalat places her investment in the future—her people and all the people of Vietnam. The student body is a representative cross-section of the country. Approximately half the students are from the Saigon and Delta region. The other half is almost evenly divided between the Dalat vicinity and larger cities of the coast.

The most sought-after courses of instruction are in the areas of government and business. This is indicative of the young peoples' concern for their future needs.

Although a few professors are from the United States, coming through aid programs like the Fulbright Exchange, a majority of them are Vietnamese who have received their education in Vietnam. On many occasions, men from the 125th Aviation Company (ATC) and the 326th Aviation Detachment (Divisional), both stationed at Cam Ly Airfield, have volunteered to assist the instructors in teaching English. It has been a rewarding experience for the men as well as the students.

The market place also attracts students, who try to decide which flower display will best suit their needs.

They realize that their education will be of little value if they are not living in a free society. Thus, they actively perform their military responsibilities too.

"For about five weeks during summer recess, the students train at military camps," commented one of the instructors. "This is a heavy burden on those who must also earn money for their education during these recesses. But they recognize that it is a necessity. We have no war protestors on our campus," he boasted.

Dalat's contribution to the future of Vietnam are the businessmen and industrial leaders, the scientists and

Stretching across the hills on the outskirts of Dalat are the modern classrooms of the Vietnamese Military Academy.

Like all shopping districts, the market place of Dalat is also a meeting place for exchanging a few words with friends.

professional people, and the educators who have received their training at the University.

War is a hard experience on a small country and a long one can cause much despair. Religion can often be the means of bringing back to the people a hope for the future which may at times seem lost. The people of Vietnam are very religious but they need spiritual leaders to guide them.

While the University helps solve the country's material needs, the Pontifical College, situated down the road, endeavors to train priests who in the future will provide the people with spiritual guidance and counseling. A truly universal faculty representing such countries as Germany, Ireland, Hungary, and Italy assist the Jesuit priests who run the college. Many of the priests come for only a few months to lecture the seminarians.

There are presently 215 seminarians attending the two four-year schools which make up the college. They live and attend classes in a large building located in the center of the campus, which also houses the library and a very simple, yet picturesque, chapel. The chapel is the most revered place in the building and the priest and students are most eager for visitors to see it. On the rooftop is a terrace where students can relax in the afternoons.

"The buildings are simple," observed one instructor, "as are the grounds, but they are very beautiful and provide the students with a pleasant atmosphere in which to work. The climate of the Dalat area, which is cool and very comfortable, was a major reason for building the school here," he added. "It is more conducive to studying than the hot, humid climate found elsewhere in the country."

Like the University, the College has learned to live with war. This past Memorial Day, it was occupied, for a brief period, by Communist forces. However, like the University and all the people of Dalat, the students show little concern over the hardships caused by the war.

"We are more concerned now with the expansion of our library," said one of the students. "We have 40,000 volumes with a capacity for 100,000."

Both the University and the College are actively involved in community programs to improve the social and living conditions of the people. Many students from both institutions teach in the high schools during their free hours. At least once every month, the seminarians organize the people for a clean-up campaign within the city.

"This is a very worthwhile activity which cannot be overlooked when admiring the city," said SP5 Larry Augenhofer, of the 125th. "Dalat is by far the cleanest city in Vietnam because the people take a real pride in its appearance."

Because of its location in a temperate climate and the accommodation facilities, the University is often the meeting place for conventions, seminars and conferences. In the summer of 1967, the University organized a seminar on "National Objectives" in which a large number of professors, politicians, economists, businessmen, press reporters and students participated.

Besides spiritual and civic leadership, the future of Vietnam depends heavily on her military leaders. The caliber of her officers will, in fact, be the final word on whether or not the country has the freedom to enjoy the prosperity which it is capable of attaining. For this reason, there is another college located in Dalat which

"For a one-year plan it is best to grow rice
For a ten-year plan it is best to grow trees
For a hundred-year plan it is best to grow people"

is most important to all Vietnamese. It is the Vietnamese Military Academy—the West Point of Vietnam. Here the future officers of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) go through four years of vigorous training so they may some day assume a leadership role in their country's military endeavors. Instructions are conducted entirely by the Vietnamese, with Americans acting only as advisors. Sunday afternoon often finds the cadets relaxing in town with their families and friends, their uniforms adding even more color to the already bright market place.

The presence of many universities in a community will most always have beneficial side effects on that community. Dalat is no exception. The many schools seem to be a drawing card for other educational facilities. Located within sight of the University is the Pasteur Institute, a research center engaged in discovering new and better means of treating the many diseases which still afflict mankind.

The city is also fortunate to have a nuclear research center located within the valley. This will be a stepping stone enabling Vietnam to accomplish the technical achievements which can guarantee a place for her in the technologically-geared world of tomorrow.

"Dalat is a very important city for the future of Vietnam," adds SP5 Augenhofer, "and it appears that even the VC realize this. To destroy these institutions would gain them very little in the war effort, but would have a great effect on the future of the country, which may involve them too."

Most striking about Dalat are the homes and small villas scattered throughout the city. The people don't live in crowded, makeshift houses constructed of straw, scrap wood and sheet metal. They are not the dreary shacks so often seen, which suggest only places to sleep in and nothing more.

The French influence is very evident in the stylish, adobe homes with their multi-colored exteriors and beautifully designed landscapes. The homes and property are not allowed to deteriorate, perhaps the most convincing example of the people's confidence in the future.

"Were it not for the war, Dalat would definitely be a tourist attraction," observes SFC Steven Elder of the 326th. "The city has so much to offer the people who are looking for peace and quiet in a beautiful setting."

Dalat is fortunate to have so much and very fortunate to have been largely untouched by the war. In many ways, however, Dalat is what the war is all about. Even though it is being fought somewhere else, it is for this city that it is being fought. This city with its schools, its agriculture, its scenic beauty and most of all its people—whose drive and ambition will continue to lead the way towards a prosperous and rewarding future.

Away from the noise and confusion of the market place two young men begin another day in the field.

Two small girls stand ready to assist their mother, if she should need any help in picking out the right material.

NEWSLETTER

NEW DBC/A & CHIEF OF STAFF

COL Francis McCullar became the new Deputy Brigade Commander/Administration of the 1st Aviation Brigade on October 5, 1970, succeeding COL William D. Proctor. COL McCullar had previously been assigned to Headquarters, Fifth Army at Ft. Sheridan.

In another transfer at Brigade Headquarters, COL Charles R. Smith assumed the position of Chief of Staff on October 18, 1970. He succeeded LTC Gerald E. Royals.

FACTS ABOUT UNIT AWARDS

When can you wear and when are you not allowed to wear your unit awards? This question has arisen lately as a result of a new Army directive requiring all personnel to wear khakis when returning to the States.

While serving with a unit, you are permitted to wear all unit awards which have been awarded to it. However, only those awards which were presented to the unit while you were assigned with it may be worn by you permanently, regardless of your new assignment.

On the subject of unit awards, congratulations are in order for the men of the 14th Combat Aviation Battalion which is presently attached to the Americal Division. They recently received the Valorous Unit Award.

PREPARE PROPERLY FOR MOS TESTS

Some soldiers do not fully realize the profound effect which the results of testing administered under the Enlisted Evaluation System may have upon their career development.

An individual's MOS evaluation score not only determines whether or not he qualifies for Proficiency Pay, but also has a direct influence on such other critical personnel actions as promotions, training, assignment and retention. A low score, indicating that a person is deficient in certain subject areas, can hinder his career progression.

Because of the importance of these annual examinations, enlisted personnel who must take the tests should be reminded that it's in their own best interests to properly prepare for them. Chapter 5, AR 600–200 tells how they are administered and gives other pertinent details.

CHEAP FARES

Soldiers can now fly from Los Angeles or New York to Europe at very low rates through the United Service Club, a non-profit organization. Rates are as low as $69 for the New York to Frankfurt flights. Further information is available from the club at Box 4087, McChord AFB, Washington 98438.

WATCH OUT

Soldiers who take "early outs" to attend school, then forget to enroll may face some pretty serious consequences. DA is considering the following actions against such violators: revocation of discharge/release from service, making the soldier subject to disciplinary actions for fraudulent separation, referral of the case to the Justice Department for possible action in the civilian court system, and for those in Reserve status, elimination for misconduct.

TEACHING JOBS

How would you like to be a teacher? Some 130 school systems throughout the U.S. are looking for about 3,000 veterans from low income areas who want to be teachers. The program is designed to begin training ex-servicemen during FY 1971. Those in the program will start out as part-time teachers aides and will attend college part-time in a teacher training program. G.I. Bill money will be paid for the training and a salary of not less than $75 per week plus dependents allowances will be furnished. See your Army Education Center.

SILVER STARS

SP4 Larry J. Davis
SP5 Ronald C. Lee
CW2 Joseph C. Riley
SGT Reginald A. Humphries
1LT Samuel J. Patriacca
WO1 Patrick G. Fitzsimmons
WO1 Shawn G. Cannon
WO1 Richard O. Oxemann
CPT James R. Jackson
SP5 Van R. Jones
SSG Ray W. Scarbrough
1LT Harry C. Inman III
CPT Richard Carvill
MAJ Robert L. Rackley
CPT Doughton C. Bare
CPT Peter A. Kacerguis
CPT Douglas M. Flenniken
SP4 Lorenza Fox

WING TIPS...

THE 15 MOST COMMON REASONS FOR FUEL EXHAUSTION
(none of which will hold fuel)

1. I—er—ah—well I mean....
2. I thought the 20 minute fuel light meant I would have low fuel in 20 minutes.
3. I didn't notice the fuel warning light because the engine stopped running.
4. There was a party back at base camp....
5. I thought I could make it.
6. I don't like to hear it slosh.
7. The crew chief wanted to check out the accuracy of the gauges.
8. They told me in flight school there was a built-in fudge factor.
9. I can go faster with less fuel and thought I could get back quicker if I didn't stop.
10. There was a long line at the POL point.
11. It's the co-pilot's job to refuel at stopovers.
12. It's the aircraft commander's job to refuel at stopovers.
13. We turned off all the switches to simulate an electrical failure.
14. The fuel gauge hasn't worked in this aircraft for two weeks, besides I had only been flying a little more than two hours.
15. I thought the crew chief refueled.

Running out of fuel has several side effects. It's embarrassing, the C.O. gets mad, the aircraft usually gets broken, the crew loses confidence in the pilot. The pilot, if he gets to fly again, must always remember he made the blunder of blunders.

CPT. Dick Hooper