

- BAN ME THOUT -
BARB

SORTIE 33
OCTOBER '05

4TH QUARTER
NEWSLETTER

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Chopper Lands on Sea Craft

There I was, second in command of a high-tech B747-400, cruising at flight level 350, heading between Taipei and Bangkok and approaching the gorgeous white beaches of Vietnam. The B 747 is a dream machine to fly and as a true "heavy" maneuvered like a giant J 3 Cub. As I made my next position report to "Ho Chi Minh" Radio, the memories came flooding back to my year flying choppers in the Nam! There were so many great stories to tell, but today I was also looking down at Cam Ranh Bay and remembered how my crew and I had saved the day for a US Navy advisor to a South Vietnamese boat crew, with a load of Army doctors, stranded in the bay.

We were southbound at about 3000' to rejoin the unit (155th AHC) after a day of ash and trash flying.

My crew reported over the intercom seeing a distress flare fired from a boat in the bay. I have to admit I was a bit skeptical after my previous experience with enemy fire, and asked if they were tracers. They reassured me that they were flares, so I entered a gentle turn in the

direction of the reported ship and watched for another flare. Sure enough they fired one, but what could a chopper do for a boat that appeared to be about 40' long and stranded in open water?

We decided to make a high speed, low level pass to figure out what we could do or see. I asked the guy manning our M-60 on my side to be ready to return fire if needed and proceeded to descend for the reconnaissance maneuver. There appeared to be men in fatigues waving at us, but I could see no US flag or markings on the boat, and we received no hostile fire! I decided to make a radio report to Cam Ranh Tower asking the Navy to attempt a rescue so we could proceed on our flight home.

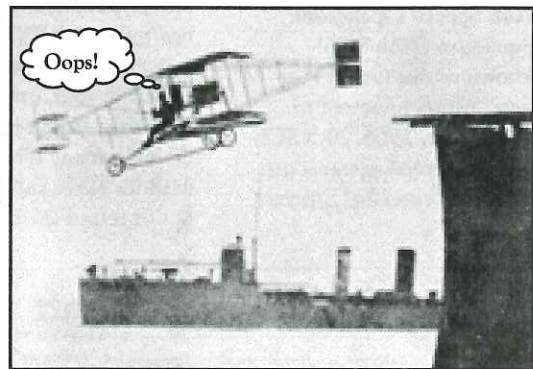
Soon Coastal Center Flight Following called to report the same incident we reported to the tower and asked if we could have "another look" since no one else was in the area or available to help.

Another pass as fast as that old Huey would hump, this time closer than the first, and again we could see the

fatigue uniformed soldiers waving, but this time we were close enough to see that they were definitely Caucasian and appeared to be Americans! What to do was again the tough question!

This time I decided, with the consent of my crew to shoot an approach across the long axis of the ship and attempt to rest the skids on the top of the cabin. The cabin was painted grey, had an X on it and appeared to be free of antennas. As I came to a hover, probably blowing everything that was loose overboard, a Navy LT. climbed aboard by way of the skids and briefed me about what was wrong over the intercom using my gunner's helmet.

He was a US Navy advisor to the South Vietnamese Navy, aboard their ship and conducting a US Army MED-



Special points of interest:

- *Approximately 12,000 helicopters saw action in Vietnam (all services).*
- *There were a little over 5,000 Huey's lost during the War in Vietnam, Laos, and in Cambodia (a 42% loss to total).*
- *Army UH-1's totaled 7,531,955 flight hours in Vietnam between October 1966 and the end of 1975 (that works out to be approximately 628 hours each for the 12,000 choppers).*

What the jeep was to Americans during World War II, so was the Huey to those who fought in Vietnam

20th SOS Huey's —

The USAF Green Hornets

While purchased for missile site support, the U.S. Air Force also used the UH-1F Huey for staff transport, cargo delivery, security, and rescue. A number of UH-1F's served with the 606th Air Commando Squadron in Thailand during the early 1960's. Huey's from this unit were later used to form the 20th Special Operations Squadron (20th SOS) known as the 'Green Hornets', which relocated to Vietnam in 1966. 20th SOS UH-1F's served as transports for highly classified Special

Operations Group (SOG) teams, which conducted 'cross boarder' operations. These Huey's were fitted with armored seats, rope ladders or hoists, and M-60 machine guns suspended from cords in the cargo doorways. (Editor's note: "Sound familiar?")

All 20th SOS Huey's were painted in the 'tri-tone' camouflage scheme peculiar to USAF aircraft during this period. Green Hornet UH-1F Huey's had the later style screened particle separator units retrofitted to the engine intakes. Many of these Huey's were later observed having two UHF/VHF blade type antennas mounted on the cabin roof, one behind the other. When replaced by UH-1Ns, many UH-1F's were used for range support duties or found their way onto

the inventories of fire fighting agencies.

The 20th SOS (Special Operation Squadron) Green Hornets were the only unit that used these type of helicopters. The Air Force also used the UH-1P gunship. Both UH-1F and UH-1P helicopters were equipped with a 7.62mm minigun that could spit up to 6,000 rounds. The unit was activated at Tan Son Nhut Air Base (Saigon) in South Vietnam, but it sometimes was used for classified missions into Laos and Cambodia. Due to the classified nature of their missions, these Huey's carried no other markings other

than their serial numbers and a Green Hornet insignia on the tail boom. There were a total of 6 UH-1F's lost due to heavy combat in the Vietnam War, but there was one UH-1F Huey pilot that flew into Air Force history. His name was Lt James P. Fleming, a 20th SOS pilot that received the Medal of Honor for his actions. These types of helicopters were also used for very special classified psychological warfare missions as well as the gunship role.

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Chopper Lands on Sea Craft - Continued from Page 1

Dick Sperling has always loved flying and is now a retired United Airlines pilot with over 16,000 logged flying hours. He is type rated in B 737, B747, B757 and B767 aircraft. He also holds a rating as a turbo-jet flight engineer and has crewed B727, B747, and DC-8 aircraft

CAP mission. The men on board were a team of doctors and medics and while en-route back home from their mission the fuel pump failed.

We decided to fly the Navy LT. to his base station where he could dispatch another boat to tow the stranded boat home. My timing was just right since it was starting to get dark and the boat was stranded in hostile waters.

We spent the night at the Navy base and after reviewing all our serial numbers were assured by my new friend he was going to follow up by recommending us all for some "appropriate" award. Apparently that never happened since a later

review of all possible Navy channels, revealed nothing was ever submitted!

On opening my flight plan the next morning with Coastal Center a message was waiting for me. The unit operations group had been informed of my RON decision the previous night and my platoon leader, Capt Barney Hancock forwarded his orders to me. He didn't care if the Queen Mary was sinking, he wanted me home ASAP to fly in today's combat assault mission!

Who ever remembers flying with me that day as my crew, PLEASE send me an E note message. I think that the U S Navy owes us a big overdue thank you!

Submitted by,
Richard A. (Dick) Sperling,
DSC
COL. USAR Ret., Aviation

Reference Article, Titled:
"Chopper Lands On Sea
Craft,"; The Pacific Stars
and Stripes, (June 3, 1967).

Picture accompanying this article is solely the Editor's idea, and after flying under Agent Orange for extended periods of time, cannot be blamed or held responsible in any way, shape or form for his sanity.

Get your vote in . . . where do you want to go for the next get together? Majority wins on this one.

The 2006 reunion

is once again approaching. The suggested dates from the site sponsors are September /October for Savannah and Nov. for Ft. Rucker. Following are a couple statements from the sponsors for information purposes so you can make some informed choices. The vote can be conducted on the homepage.

For those not on-line please contact Chuck to send in your vote at:

US postal Service to:

155th AHC Assoc.
11028 CR. 209
Hico, TX. 76457

Or email any officer in the association and they will forward them to be counted.

Fort Rucker, AL.

The following sent by Tom Hunt: I think it should be over the Veterans' Day holiday. I can work something into the observance at Ft. Rucker for us.

Savannah, GA.

The following sent by Gilbert Terry: I am sure that there are a lot of factors that are considered when picking the best month for the Reunion. I think the best time for Savannah would be September, or October. The average temp would still be between 70 and 90. The room rates would be lower at the beach, and most every thing would still be open.

Although our war stories are very interesting, I am sure most of the wife's have heard them several times, and may choose to spend some time in Savannah. Tour historic homes, visit unique shops, art studios, tea rooms, or just walk across the street, and spend a day on the beach.

The birthplace of, and museum for Juliette Gordon Low, the founder of the Girl Scouts. The Mercer House; famous home of Johnny Mercer, composer of "Moon River" and "Jingle Bells," that was also owned by Jim Williams, the famed antiques dealer featured in "Midnight in the Garden of Good & Evil." Visit Wormsloe, the site of an antebellum plantation, and also featuring the famous row of Oak Trees that lined the path to Forest Gump's childhood home. This is the site of the famous scene where Jenny yells "Run, Forest, Run!!" Visit Art Galleries, Silversmiths & Jewelry Design Studios all featuring the work of the students of the Savannah College of Art & Design (SCAD), a world-renowned Art School. You can purchase treasured pieces from these up-and-coming artisans before their rates catch up to their impeccable talent!! Enjoy High Victorian Tea at 4pm at the Tea Room, on world famous Broughton Street, which was the original retail district of Historic Savannah long before the first Mall was ever even a thought. Broughton Street is also the site of numerous scenes from "The Legend of Bagger Vance." Or take in a more Bohemian Tea experience at the Gryphon, a Russian Tea room run by SCAD professors, situated on one of the Historic

Districts' beautiful squares designed by General Oglethorpe himself as part of America's first planned city. Walk along the shores of Tybee Island separated from Hilton Head Island by only a Ship's Channel... the same Ship's Channel that put Savannah on the World Map by enabling the Great Cotton Trade in the days of the Cotton Gins' debut. Walk along The Bluff on Isle of Hope, along the intra-coastal waterway... home to many of the descendants of Savannah's original charter families and the breath-taking plantation homes they inhabit.

The men might like to visit the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum, it's very well done. We could test our skill as a waist gunner, or fly a bombing mission with a B-17 crew. Lunch at the Chatham Arms Pub, or maybe the Kasbah, a Moroccan restaurant, where the food is good, and so are the belly dancers.

"You guys in the 155th were legendary in the Nam. Saved my

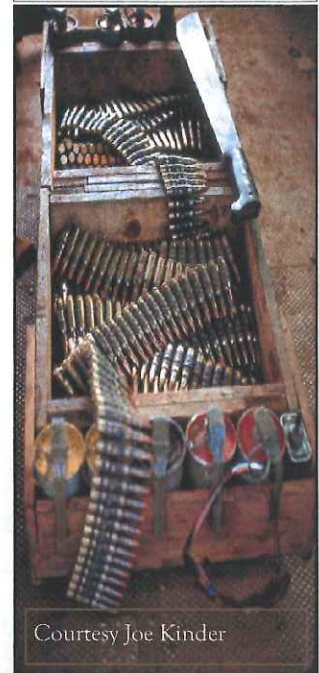
'butt' more than once! "

Wiley Dodd (Tiny)

Sergeant at Arms

35th Infantry Association

Recon 2/35th



Courtesy Joe Kinder

Recent Quote by a friend of the Editor: "I envy you; you've done something that I've never had the guts to do but always wanted to do. When it got hard, you just quit. And now, the rest of your life will be a breeze, because whenever life gets tough . . . all you have to do is quit." CSM Rick Merrit, 3rd Ranger Btn. addressing several troops electing to drop from Ranger training while in company formation with their peers.

"Hoorah, Ranger Rick!"

“Give Me a Ticket for an Airplane” A Hurricane in the NEWS—Camille 1969

Hurricane Camille

August 17, 1969

Winds 190 MPH

Pressure 909 Mb/26.84”

Storm Surge 22' to 25'
above Mean Tide



After the storm . .
. there is peace.

Late August starts the peak hurricane season for the Atlantic and Gulf coasts. That's when Hurricane Camille decided to come through Biloxi, MS. My family lives just east of Biloxi, and this is the worst area during a hurricane. If anyone recalls 1969 communication was not as fast as today. No computers, CNN, Fox News. You got the quickest reports from a MARS station.

After the storm, the information I got was that everything on the Mississippi coast was destroyed from the coast line to 25 miles inland. My parents lived less than 25 miles inland. To make it worse, I got through, on a MARS call to a lady in Indiana who told me that all the phone service in that area was out. This didn't help me— thinking that they were all dead.

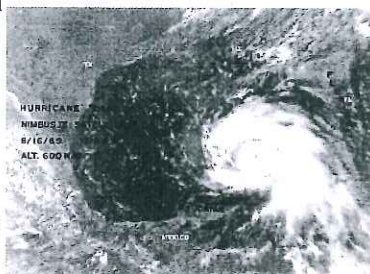
I went to the 1SG and told him the situation and that I had only 2 or 3 weeks before my PCS. He asked me how long it would take me to pack. I said 15 minutes. He said he would have a helicopter on the company pad in 10 minutes. When I questioned him about orders, he said don't worry about it, I'll take care of it. When I got back the aircraft was waiting, and I was told to contact the Battalion SGM when I got to Dong Ba Thin.

When I arrived the SGM was at the pad in his jeep to pick me up. He took me to 10th Bn Hq. He then told me to sign out and he would have his driver take me to

Cam Rahn Bay. I was to contact the SGM at the replacement center. When I asked about orders he told me not to worry about, he would take care of it.

When I got to the replacement center the SGM met us and told me to come along— that I was on the next aircraft out. It departed in 3 hours. I was put at the head of the processing line and told to be ready to go in 2 1/2 hours. When I asked the SGM about orders I was told not to worry, he would take care of it.

When the time came to go to the aircraft, the SGM put me in his jeep and drove me to the ramp. We walked to the head of the line and he



told two Colonels that I was boarding first because I was on emergency leave. The two Colonels stepped aside and I was the first to board. I

picked out a nice seat for the ride to Ft. Lewis. I was told to contact the SGM when I got there.

By now I'm sure you can guess he was waiting on me.

It was about 3:00 am when we arrived, the SGM told me where the mess hall was and that they had steak and eggs there. I was to meet him at the finance office at 0700.

When we got to finance there was about 100 people in line. The SGM took me to the head of the line, told everyone I was on emergency leave and that I was going first. He not only arranged for some cash but had an airline ticket to Mobile, AL. When I got home I found all of my family OK.

Remember I did all of this without one piece of paper saying I could depart Viet Nam. This had a lot to do with me staying in the Army for 21 years. The old saying that the Army takes care of their own is true, I'm an example.

Postscript: After being home for about two weeks all of my records caught up with me along with orders to my stateside assignment. I also answered a phone call from a lady in Indiana who was trying to get some information about my family so she could call me in Viet Nam to give me an update. The two of us had a nice long chat.

Submitted by: Thomas L. Hunt
AOTC Training Instructor
DSN 558

Editor's note: Tom we all hope that if you still have family in the Biloxi area that they are doing OK since Katrina hit the coast.

How many of us have sat in our living rooms watching the aftermath of the storm along with the rescue efforts and wished that we could get a hand on a Huey and help



Editor's Photo Pick of the Quarter

Courtesy of: Joe Kinder
Falcon/Stagecoach 66/69

Great Picture, Joe!!

Do any of you out there have outstanding pictures like this one? Share it with the rest of us. Send them to the editor for a possible "Editor's Pick of the Quarter".

Sweat and Sandbags from the Bunker

To all of you folks out there, it is my sincere hope that you are enjoying this and all other copies of the BARB. I know that I look forward to mine every three months. It is a way of remembering and catching up on news on a group of men that will never be replaced in both my mind and my heart.

I would like to take the op-

portunity to invite you to help in the further success of our newsletter. If each of you would sit down and spend a little time writing up a memoir or a story, whether humorous, serious, dramatic, or just to make a comment about something you would like to share with the group, it would be greatly appreciated. None of us

ever wanted to run out of ammo! And neither do your editors. We wish to thank

those that have contributed in the past.

If you choose to not participate, you may one day find a whole BARB filled with only my war stories. Remember, I warned you! ☺

Jeff Schrader (temporary editor)



It "Pays" to go to a Reunion submitted by Jeff Schrader

Last November, I attended the reunion in Ft. Worth. Along with all the great time I had with old and new friends of the 155th, I won a car. Yep, I won a car! On the way back to the airport for our flight back to Ohio, I stopped to top off the rental car at a Shell station. I spent \$10 and put the amount on my debit MC account. At that point my Master Card

number must have been entered into a contest. Three months later, a FedEx driver was at our door with an official notification that I had won a 2005 Chrysler Crossfire, one thousand dollars in gasoline and some luggage. What a surprise! I encourage you to go to the next reunion. You never know what is going to happen! Who knows, maybe you will

even drive away in a new car. **FOR SALE!!**



*“What was
your reason
for coming
back?”*

Hi to everyone. I was hoping that someone could give me some information concerning the death of Francis (Ken) Henson. I think he was around the Fort Rucker area. Ken was with me in the 155th from Aug 67 till Aug 68. We never saw each other after leaving BMT. Also I have lost the e-mail address for Norman Swafford. I hope that our brothers in the hurricane area are doing OK. **Cw4 Calvin Hilton Stagecoach 25**

Boy is it tough to get old, and I'm not even sure what the golden years mean. I found many spelling errors in my last message but the thought was there. We are in Jacksonville OR. We wanted to buy a home on Stagecoach Drive but that area is so expensive so we settled for Vintage Circle. Our next door neighbor owns a well known winery which made me decide to buy here. **Bo Atkinson**



Mail Call! Incoming Commo from the Troops . . .

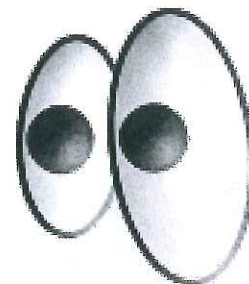
“It’s nice to get the newsletter. A lot of effort goes into any endeavor such as it. When I read the stories, recollections and memories, I remember having to type up the many recommendations of valor awards. I am still amazed at the perils that the pilots, gunners, and crew chiefs along with others had to go thru to save lives. What was your reason for coming back? I believe each of us has a purpose. God has blessed me greatly and I am glad to be here to tell you. Peace and harmony to you and yours.”

Royce Campbell, 2-'68
thru 4-'70; 165th and 155th
“Remington Raider” (Clerk)
Enlisted Men’s Club;
Awards & Decorations
Clerk

Rick Erickson - Getting used to life in the good old USA is a piece of cake.

Going the other direction is what was hard. It is good to have so much support during and after my deployment. I have had an interview with the local paper and made a couple of presentations showing some of the pictures I took while in Iraq. Everyone is really nice and seem interested in what life was like in Iraq. This is a much better reception than what I received upon returning from Vietnam.

Ed Bullard - I was an Air Force guy at BMT in '69 & '70, call sign Walt 03. Your message brought back a lot of memories of Duc Lap and Bu Prang, those were busy times with the NVA offensive around Christmas. After the "hunting lodge" burned down we moved in with the Pterodactyls at City Field for awhile. Managed a ride in one of



your Hueys in exchange for a ride in my O-1. Can't remember the name of one of the Platoon leaders who I spent some time with. Had a memorable New Years Eve with the "rockets red glare" literally. Glad to be part of the group. I've lost contact with all the Air Force guys except Karol Franzysen who was at East Field.

*155TH Assault Helicopter
Company Association*



Courtesy: Joe Kinder

President: Jim Ferris; 161 F	St.;
Y	;
Hi	;
I	;
W	;
15	;
Edi	lon
Sgt	28
Me	f8
Riv	7;
Fou	na
	cbb.net

This quarterly newsletter is dedicated to the men of the 155th Assault Helicopter Company and the many other units that served alongside us in and around Ban Me Thout, Central Highlands, II CORP, Republic of Viet Nam. These are stories submitted by those that were there. The horrors, sadness, esprit de corps, camaraderie, humor, fears, loneliness, heroics, bravado—false or real, the confusion and bullshit of war, are all expressed in this quarterly. We hope that some find solace in its content, others find lost friendships, and still others find themselves once again within the pages of this publication and our organization. This is our mission today, and we endeavor to meet this mission with all the compassion and commitment that we gave to those other missions of so many years ago.

The 155th AHCA was founded in Washington, D.C. in November, 1995. Annual membership dues of \$30 are appreciated but not required. The dues help defray costs of this publication's mailings, inventory such as hats, t-shirts, etc. and reunions. Payment by check or money order addressed to the 155th AHCA and mailed to the Treasurer is preferred.



(The Army Aviator in the left seat on this Wright trainer has been identified as our own Gilbert Terry. Gil, we never believed your stories that you were a pioneer in aviation history but this photo is undisputable. There you are, teaching another student pilot how to leap from the earth, circa 1910.)



WE ARE ON THE WEB AT:
<http://www.geocities.com/Pentagon/Quarters/1517/>

Remember “Ham & Mothers”, Pound Cake, Mystery Meat, P 38’s & C-4 Stoves . . . ?

This is the official Quartermaster's description of C-Rations used in Vietnam

"The Meal, Combat, Individual, is designed for issue as the tactical situation dictates, either in individual units as a meal or in multiples of three as a complete ration. Its characteristics emphasize utility, flexibility of use, and more variety of food components than were included in the Ration, Combat, Individual (C Ration) which it replaces. Twelve different menus are included in the specification.

Each menu contains: one canned meat item; one canned fruit, bread or dessert item; one B unit; an accessory packet containing cigarettes, matches, chewing gum, toilet paper, coffee, cream, sugar, and salt; and a spoon. Four can openers are provided in each case of 12 meals. Although the meat item can be eaten cold, it is more palatable when heated.

Each complete meal contains approximately 1200 calories. The daily ration of 3 meals provides approximately 3600 calories."

B-1 Units	B-2 Units	B-3 Units
Meat Choices (in small cans): Beef Steak Ham and Eggs, Chopped Ham Slices Turkey Loaf	Meat Choices (in larger cans): Beans and Wieners Spaghetti and Meatballs Beefsteak, Potatoes and Gravy Ham and Lima Beans Meatballs and Beans	Meat Choices (in small cans): Boned Chicken Chicken and Noodles Meat Loaf Spiced Beef
Fruit: Applesauce Fruit Cocktail Peaches Pears	Crackers (4) Cheese Spread, Processed Caraway Pimento	Bread, White Cookies (4) Cocoa Beverage Powder Jam
Crackers (7) Peanut Butter Candy Disc, Chocolate Solid Chocolate Cream Coconut Accessory Pack*	Fruit Cake Pecan Roll Pound Cake Accessory Pack*	Apple Berry Grape Mixed Fruit Strawberry Accessory Pack*



The Victory Fly-By. Courtesy Joe Kinder

155th Assault Helicopter Company Association

155th Assault Helicopter Company Association

Dumont, N.C. 27832

Kilroy was here.

