

SORTIE 38  
JANUARY '07

1ST QUARTER  
NEWSLETTER



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**The 155 WON THE WAR BY SUPPLY & RESUPPLY**

*Editor's Note:* Ever wonder how the unit always had no shortage of anything? I thought that it would be interesting to build around this theme for this newsletter. In reference to the M-60 newsletter, I received the following:

I think we all needed that poke in the ass to remind us that we can't depend on "somebody else" to provide all of the info to publish the newsletter. An old southern saying "Poke the dog till he barks" is appropriate here. We all need a bunch of "poking". It is too easy to just read what others have written and complain, "Well, that isn't really the way it was." Everybody's recollections are not the same. Different times made the same situations different in other folks thoughts.

Your description of how to clean and maintain an M-60 was good. If we had had time to read and maintain it by the book, the damn thing would probably have never got off the ground. The ammo is listed along with its purpose. I saw 4 in 1 listed (4 ball and one tracer) which was good for the ground troops. In the choppers the main thing (in my time in the armed B models) was to make the "enemy" keep his head down as we flew past.

Every Platoon leader had different ideas about things. In my time frame as Armed Helicopter Platoon Sergeant, my Captain Platoon Leader wanted us to fire all

tracers. Now for the newbies who have never seen a tracer coming up at them, knowing that there are four unmarked rounds between tracers, that tracer looks like a basketball on fire. Don't see how it could ever miss the chopper. Other people probably saw it as a firefly flitting around. I didn't see all tracers listed in the manual. Maybe they were a figment of my imagination?

Also, never interchange the barrel with other M-60's. The fellow who wrote that would have pulled his hair out if he would have been the fly on the cabin wall and observed an armed B-Model pull out of a fight and the crew chief grab an insulated glove and shinny out to the M-60's on an M-6 quad mount (without a monkey belt) and change a barrel. Hey, the book said it couldn't be done!! The Safety Man would have had a shit fit. But it worked. Swap them out and head back downstairs.

The day-to-day operations weren't worth mentioning, yet that is where a lot of the interesting things happened.

I remember mid '65 when the Special Forces A team guarding our west flank came in to our NCO Club tent one noon day with their beat up 3/4 ton to get some water and had a tiger (dead) in the back. A Montagnard SF troop on night guard had shot it with a .30 cal carbine. Actually shot it three

times. The last time the tiger was about 10-15 feet away. This is what the SF Sergeant said. Beautiful animal. Took up most of the back of the 3/4 ton. The tail was probably 2 1/2 to 3 inches in diameter. Had I known then what I knew later I would have bought that animal and had him mounted or at least skinned and tanned. The SF troops took him to BMT and sold him for enough to have a party on. The tiger was killed about 1 to 3 miles west of our compound.

Did you ever take a shower every day in cold, COLD, water? That is the way it was when A-1-1 got to the brand new compound. After maybe a month, the crew chiefs of the armed platoon (Falcons by then) got together and decided (with my engineering help) to build a hot water system. We all chipped in, and I went to "town" and bought pipe fittings and the fittings and the crew chiefs hooked six 55 gallon barrels in series, sand bagged them in like a bunker and had a top over it. We built a fire fed by JP-4 to heat the water in the barrels. It worked good except that the hooch maids wanted to wash the clothes in the hot water, and there was none left when the choppers returned from the missions. We won the battle and the hooch maids were not happy!!

## Supply

We shamed the contractor . . . what was their name now . . . PA &E (Pacific Architects and Engineers) so bad that they finally put in hot water heaters for the showers.

When we got there, we had two slick platoons of new D models. The third platoon of 8 new D models had been confiscated in Vung Tau after we flew them off the Carrier Iwo Jima. The Brass scrounged up the most ratty, B model gun ships from all of Vietnam north of Nha Trang and gave them to us as our third "armed platoon". I flew as crew chief, and we went over to Qui Nhan to pick one up. The field then was PSP over sand dunes and refueled out of 55 gallon barrels thru a chamois. Hand pumped, by the way. I don't think you could have landed an O-1 Bird Dog in there over those sand dunes. Later it became an airbase to rival the best in the U.S.!

We didn't get any vehicles till about a month after we got there, then they were driven overland by Viets from Nha Trang.

The armed platoon shot a lot of rockets and MG ammo. The SF B team troops (from behind the Grand Bungalow) had an extra jeep that had been written off, and we made a swap. One jeep for a bunch of rocket pods. When the cardboard tube in a 7 shot rocket pod went bad, we pitched it. (If we had



This is not the jeep swapped. The editor is having fun.

a replacement)

The SF would take it and make a mount to hang it from and would shoot "our" pre-positioned rockets in the A team locations pointed at the VC at night. I helped them with the idea. We would load that old jeep down with rockets in the back end and MG ammo belts across the hood to rearm the choppers when they came in. The company "Brass" did their best to take that jeep away from us, but Lt. Wilkie (whose dad was a General someplace) was a real scrapper, and we managed to keep it. Later, we got our 3/4 ton but it was not nearly as handy.

The helicopters needed a bath but there were no facilities. I swapped some barrels of JP-4 to the SF B-team for a water tank on a trailer, complete with a gas operated water pump. We took up a collection and bought a fire nozzle in town. The armed platoon was in business, and the other platoons were crying "discrimination". I think First Shirt Myers had a lot to do with putting down the dissent. We had a lot of vines and weeds growing in the perimeter fencing out in front of the bunkers on the west side. 1st Sgt. Myers was trying to find a way to get rid of the greenery.

I told him "Top, the armed platoon will take care of it."

"How?" he said.

"Just go drink some coffee and don't come back to soon" I replied.

We put some JP-4 in our water trailer and fired up the pump and sprayed JP-4 under the fence and in front of it.

I lit some paper and threw it in the soaked area, then hit the paper with a stream of JP-4. It was like a big blow torch. The armed platoon cleared the "greenery" from

under that fence along with 20-30 feet in front of it in under 15 minutes.

Myers about had a shit fit!! But if they wanted something done they always tapped the armed platoon. Most of my crew chiefs were second timers, already had served one tour in VN and were real go-getters.

The beer is starting to get good, so I better quit before I start telling lies.

*Milo Taylor*

HAPPY BUDDHA . . . IT IS AMAZING HOW I AM BEGINNING TO TRANSFORM OVER TIME TO LOOK LIKE THIS STATUARY.



## Combatants in Vietnam:

### "Good Guys"

-  [Republic of Vietnam](#)
-  [United States of America](#)
-  [Republic of Korea](#)
-  [Thailand](#)
-  [Australia](#)
-  [New Zealand](#)
-  [The Philippines](#)

### "Bad Guys"

-  [Democratic Republic of Vietnam](#)
-  [National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam](#)
-  [People's Republic of China](#)
-  [Democratic People's Republic of Korea](#)

Last but not least: The U.S.S.R.

## Resupply

### It's a Torpedo.

When I arrived into the 165<sup>th</sup> TC, both the 165<sup>th</sup> TC and the 155<sup>th</sup> AHC belonged to the 52<sup>nd</sup> Avn Bn and later were realigned under the 10<sup>th</sup> Avn Bn. This action also changed our maintenance support company. However, this was not noticed — at least not right away. We were now having two supply companies providing repair parts and major helicopter components. I didn't know either until the tech supply in Pleiku sent word that we had to pick up our stuff or else. Since I had already been in trouble for something, I didn't need to have more. I decided to fly up and fix the confusion. After seeing the cache of parts and components, I decided to leave them confused and promised to make weekly runs to check on our parts status. To keep the appearance of being correct, requisitions were also submitted. During one of the trips the tech supply was cleaning up their area and asked if I would take away some tubes that were lying on the floor. I looked at them. I had my suspicions as to what they were but not how they were used. The design made them look like a torpedo without the propeller, and the tech supply had no clue either. They were eager to give them away and since I needed some goodwill, I took the two they had. When I got back to BMT, I removed the cone cover and my first suspicion was confirmed. I figured at least we could use them for spare parts. I asked Falcon guns WO Messenger, to look and see if they could use them for parts. He took them over to his gun shack to tinker with them. These long pods it turned out were self-contained mini guns, they were to be hung on the wings of the new gunship AH-1g. The pods had arrived early and were never to be seen again whole.

The pictures below show the firing of one of the pods. I don't remember the names of the personnel in the following pictures.

*Mike Lach*



"This aircraft is Red 'X'd." said the mission pilot.

Maintenance Officer, "B—S—, that is a perfectly good helicopter. I just got done test flying it myself!"

## And More Resupply . . .

After all these years things get a little fuzzy but for the sake of the newsletter I shall give it a try. Every since the SOG Mission where Johnny Gann got hit my duties with the 155 changed. I recall sitting out on the sandbags of the A camp early one morning and watching the Jolly Green sit down. I began to think, Hmm this ain't gonna be a good day and then a few minutes later Major Cochran walked out and sat down with me. He says, "Mr. Swafford, I need a big favor from you." I look at him and reply, Yep - Majors are always asking W-2s for a favor. He says, No you don't have to do this but I would really appreciate it and you are the only Warrant officer in the outfit that knows the army "Regs" backward and forward and I have a real problem. It seems that our

unit is short some of its TO&E and we need to bring it back up to strength so we can go home when our time comes.

I happen to know that you have an unusual ability to lay your hands on government material quietly and I think you are the man for the job. I was asked to go back to the unit and try to find out where the material had been disappearing to. Now some of my old buddies are going to read this and think, "Norm you are not going to name names are you?" No I am not. The guilty parties know who they are.

The major says that helicopter over there has no radios and we can't take it on the mission. I want you to take it back to the unit and sign for everything in the unit like it is there. When I get back, the two of us will straighten this out, and we will go home when our time comes. Well about 5 minutes later I had the blades turning on that old bird and me and another pilot were headed down the coast of the South China Sea to Nha Trang where we spent the night and then went on to BMT the next day. I can see that pilot's face but his name slips my mind. He was going on R&R.

My two comrades in this venture, Klotz and Lackey, were fantastic help and I will always be grateful to them for their loyalty to me and for their help. Seems that some of our people were running a couple of "cathouses" in downtown BMT and supplying these business ventures with the assets of the 155. We were short 2500 bed sheets on the property books and it cost me 3 cases of bacon-wrapped filet mignon traded to an MP Colonel at Nha Trang for the bed sheets.

Ah, the good old US Army Supply System. Keeping up with everything was not easy either. I remember checking the serial number on Bob Johnson's weapons

frequently. You all remember old Bob - he's the one who was always having a few too many and singing "Here Rattler Here" Bud Henry remembers him well. Old Bob would sell or trade anything he had.

We had all been issued those little survival radios and word was passed to me that two of them had been traded to a Special Forces camp commander down at one of the southern A Camps. I flew down and took my property book and asked the Commander to see the radios. He showed them to me, and when I showed him that they were on my property book, he was very nice and returned them to me. I was really glad when old Bob went home, my job got a whole lot easier.

I suppose the dumbest thing I did while out rounding up equipment for the company was one day at Nha Trang. We had landed for lunch and someone at the Air America helipad left a pallet of Budweiser beer on the pad with the cargo net and the "D" ring still attached. After lunch when we started to leave I noticed the crew chief was not in his seat. Asking the gunner where the chief was, he pointed to the pallet of beer. He was hunkered down on top of it with the "D" ring in his hand and was motioning for me to hover over and hook on. I did and we took off with their beer. Somehow we got away with it.

One day I happened to be down at the Grand Bungalow and walked through their mess hall. These guys were eating Class A rations. I asked what VIPs were coming to town and the cook says we eat this way everyday." I inquired where the rations come from and he told me they come in at east field on a C-130 every Wednesday. I went back to the unit, rounded up my band of merry men, and we all

Robin Hood is famous for his gallantry, robbing the rich to feed the poor and fighting against injustice and tyranny. His band of merry men apparently resided with Robin in the forest, robbing passersby on Watling Street near the River Went, a street leading straight to

stripped down to t-shirts and pants, no rank or nametags and checked out a 5 ton. We then drove out to East Field and waited for the 130. When it arrived with the real food on it, we backed up and off loaded the goods and then stacked the booty in the Maintenance Shed. We had just made a heist of MACV's Class A rations. Boy was that colonel pissed - but we started eating better. I will shut up for now. Hope I did not hurt anyone's feeling with this story.

*Norm Swafford*

### **And now, a reply from the guy who had to shut the company down in 1970**

The young Lieutenant, supply officer, was nervously seated in the "hard ass" Captain's office as the captain scanned the annotated property book.

The Captain asked in a rather harsh tone "Where did all this sh\_\_ come from?" indicating one column, "and where did all this sh\_\_ go?" indicating another column.

Lt. Bob Goolsby was briefing his Commander, Captain Chuck Markham about the turn in status of the 155<sup>th</sup> Assault Helicopter Company. They were shutting it down in 1970 as the US Army pulled out of Ban Me Thuot. The helicopters and most mission-essential equipment had been transferred to other US units and to the ARVN. The remaining items consisted mostly of some highly sensitive things like weapons and "mox nix" stuff

like forks and spoons. That is what it was like day in and day out, until I got the books straight from all your "endeavors" of years past.

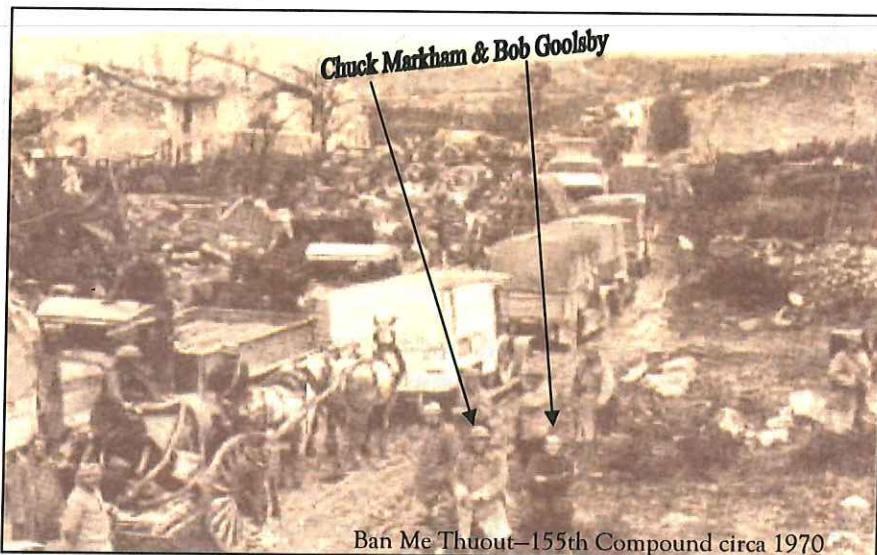
I want to take this opportunity to personally "thank" all those prolific scroungers that must have populated the 155 from the day of its inception. In 1970 it came time to turn all this stuff in. The Army supply system, we all know how much sense that system makes, thinks it's almost as big a sin to have too much as not enough, and did we have too much! Too much helicopter armament, too many rotor blades and tail booms, engines . . . yep just piddly stuff like that.

One of the problems was mini-guns. Yep the Falcons strike again. Not only did we have a surplus, and I use the term lightly, but many of the serial numbers didn't match those on the books. I wondered why that might be? I guess some Falcon armament officer had them left under his pillow by the "killing machine fairy".

Maintenance was another fountain of excess metal. I think, though I have no first hand knowledge, if the Vietnamese were to excavate certain sectors of what was Camp Coryell, they might, JUST MIGHT, dig up enough stuff to allow some former VC to corner the Asian scrap metal market.

Bob Goolsby was the guy who actually got it done. His patience and ability to improvise got us through it. I am eternally indebted to Bob and all the others who accomplished that mission with the same dedication exhibited by the 155<sup>th</sup> Assault Helicopter Company in the accomplishment of ALL its missions.

*Chuck Markham*



Ban Me Thuot—155th Compound circa 1970



### MEMBERSHIP ROSTER:

- The Association Roster will be sent out to all members of record for the use of contact and fellowship.
- Members who don't want their information to go to other members must request that it be removed within 60 days of receiving this notice. Contact Chuck Markham or Larry Matthews. Their addresses are listed on page 7.
- Request that all members update their email addresses as required. Contact Larry Matthews.
- After the 60 days, we will send out the roster electronically to those who are wired and hard copy to those who are not.
- Printing and postage to be paid for by the money raised from Ken Donovan's helicopter raffle conducted at the reunion. (The Association Treasury.)
- We, the officers of the association, ask that all members exercise good judgment in handling this information. It should not be used for distribution, solicitation, or publishing beyond our association. Respect every person's privacy!

Sneak preview of the new design on our challenge coins. Real nice . . .



We should be able to order them soon. Notice will be posted on the web site or in the next issue of the BARB.



## Mail Call! Incoming Commo from the Troops . . .

**Name:** CHUCK MARKHAM **E-Mail:** [net](#)  
**Location:** HICO, TEXAS **Comments:** Just went through Mike and Les's pictures of their recent Viet Nam trip. Great stuff. Wish I had been along.

**Name:** Terry Racine **E-Mail:** [om](#)  
**Location:** Midlothian,IL **Comments:** I am looking for anyone who was at Camp Holloway in 1965 and may have known my brother, SP5 Frank Racine. Frank was with the 119th AHC, Crew Chief and was KIA in the Battle of Plei Me on 10/20/65.

**Name:** Terry B. Roderick **E-Mail:** [m](#)  
**Location:** Cocoa, FL **Comments:** I had the pleasure of spending New Year's Eve with Jeff Schrader, Falcon 7, and his wife and his Ranger son, Bryan, at Kevin Barry's Pub in Savannah, Ga. It was a pleasure to thank Jeff and let him and his mates know how much us older Rangers and LRP/LRRP's appreciated their bravery and skill in Vietnam. The whap whap song of the Huey blades is still one of my favorite sounds!! Rangers Lead the Way!! Terry B. "Rock" Roderick P/75th RVN 69-70

**Name:** tommy rutherford **E-Mail:** [1](#)  
**Location:** right now in Idaho **Comments:** Just wanted to wish all my fellow brothers in arms a happy new year. May we all see each other at the next reunion.

**Name:** John Bojarski **E-Mail:** [1](#)  
**Location:** Pittsburgh, PA **Comments:** Just wanted to wish everybody in the 155th family a Happy and Healthy New Year!!! Maybe we'll get more home this year.

**Name:** Scott w Larson **E-Mail:** [tsn.com](#)  
**Location:** Arlington, Wa **Comments:** Hey, all hope everyone in the 155th family had a great Christmas, and hope you all have a great New Year! Looked like the last reunion went well, I would have liked to go to that one since I was born in Augusta and all. Still remember the good times and people I met at the Vegas reunion. Mary the site is still top notch and you are awesome at keeping it the best on the web. Oh, and the BOSOX will conquer the evil empire in '07'!!!! God Bless and Take care. Scott Larson (Son of Paul N.Larson) Nov.67- Apr. 19th 68

**Name:** chris bosworth  
**E-Mail:** [m](#)  
**Location:** Fresno Ca,  
**Comments:** my uncle, Steve Bosworth, was a helicopter mechanic with the 155th ahc from 69-71. On 12/25/2006 he passed away from the many medical problems he had been fighting. he was proud of his military service, and a true patriot. if anyone has any stories, or knew Steve Bosworth, i would like to here from you.

Gentlemen, I need your stories. I have just used up the last of them in this issue. My address is on page 7. You can e-mail them to me or send them by snail mail. Thank you. Keep them coming and keep the "BARB" alive.

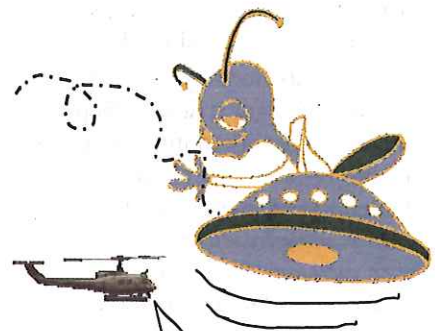
## The Camp Coryell "Q & A" Box

*Editor's Note:* We are going to try something new — a question and answer column suggested by one of our members. If you ever wondered about something— anything under the sun that happened "over there", then send in your question. Maybe someone knows the answer. Here are some recent questions. If you have an answer for any of these, send it along to the editor.

+++++  
Who painted all the nose art on the 155th aircraft?

Who extended the most times and/or who spent the most time in the 155th?

Anyone remember this? "10 May 69 - A 155th aircraft flying north of Bu Prang, approximately 3 to 5 miles south of the Cambodian border was buzzed by an unidentified aircraft. The aircraft circled the 155 aircraft several times, then returned to Cambodia. The unidentified aircraft had a tail assembly similar to an OV-1 (*Mohawk*), twin fuselage, straight blunt nose and wings, twin engine (jet), interceptor type with crew of two in tandem. This information was reported to 17th CAG S-2 for action."



Whoa! I told you to get me out of the O-Club early last night!

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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 Thuot, 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 those other missions 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 the 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.

<http://155thahc.com>  
Our Premium Website



Just a note to let you know that we have a full inventory of gray & blue shirts, hats, coins & patches in stock.

Contact Mike Stark at:  
j\_mike\_stark@yahoo.com

**155th AHCA**

*"Your business is keeping us in business."*

Remembering the 155th Assault Helicopter Company & All the Ban Me Thout Guys

**Sweat and Sandbags from the Bunker**

I hope you have enjoyed this quarter's issue of the BARB as much as I have enjoyed putting it together. You know, when you put something like this on paper, your mind roams at times and a lot of lost memories flow back to the top of your mind.



I am dedicating this issue to my son, SFC Bryan J. Schrader, U.S. Army Ranger and to Mike Stark's son, John.

Bryan was recently involved in a parachute accident and is recovering from fractures to his right femur, left tibia and fibula, and his left hip. Heal well and quickly, Bryan. You are always in my thoughts.

John has just arrived in Afghanistan and is located at Kandahar as an Army Aviator and fellow gun pilot. Good hunting, John! Everyday is a good day to smoke a Taliban. Guard your six!

*Jeff Schrader*  
Editor

Time for some math . . .



+ C4 +



=

A good, wholesome, hot meal in the field.



U.S.S. IWO JIMA (LHD 7)

155<sup>th</sup> Assault Helicopter Company Association

Durham, N.C. 27712

**Kilroy was here**

