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SOUTHERN CROSS

AMERICAL DIVISION

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Russell Beach Task Force Sweeps To Sea

AMERICAL SOLDIERS LEADING VIETNAMESE women and children to safety and hot food (above); an Infantryman tensely watching for enemy snipers (left); GIs painstakingly uncovering hidden tunnels (right). This is Operation Russell Beach—a combined Americal, ARVN, Marine, and Navy task force that has uprooted stubbornly-entrenched VC and destroyed mammoth tunnel complexes in the Batangan Peninsula area 10 miles northeast of Quang Ngai City. (Photos by SP4 Steve Shingledecker, 523rd Sig. Bn. More Photos on Pages 4-5.)

CHU LAI—Americal soldiers continued their push to the sea in Operation Russell Beach, and as of Jan. 31 were less than two kilometers from reaching the end of the Batangan Peninsula south of here.

Action on the peninsula 10 miles northeast of Quang Ngai City began Jan. 13 when almost 9,000 Americal soldiers, Marines, 2nd ARVN Div. soldiers, and Navy swift boats encircled the area.

After four days of PSYOP leaflet drops and aerial broadcasts urging civilians to evacuate the peninsula, the massive allied force began their march toward the sea.

Joint Operation

Division units included the 5th Bn., 46th Inf. and H Trp., 17th Cav., 198th Inf. Bde.; the 4th Bn., 3rd Inf., 11th Inf. Bde.; and A Trp., 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav., which came ashore in Navy landing craft to add more firepower to the final phase of the operation.

The discovery of many elaborate tunnel complexes and scattered mines and mine fields made progress slow. Special care was taken to move deliberately so that every tunnel discovered could be checked for weapons caches, food, or VC.

Through Jan. 31, 151 VC had been killed in skirmishes on the peninsula, including 73 by Americal Infantrymen, 59 by the Marines, and 19 by the 2nd ARVN Div. elements.

(Continued on Page 8)

2/1 Finds Huge Cache

LZ BALDY—Division soldiers discovered large caches of enemy ammunition and weapons hidden in well-concealed caves while on search and clear missions in a mountainous NVA stronghold area, 25 miles northwest of Tam Ky.

One of the biggest prizes unearthed by the 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., 196th Inf. Bde., was a 12.7mm anti-aircraft machinegun with 2,000 rounds of ammunition.

Two heavy and four light 7.67mm machineguns also were found along with 100 RPG rounds with launcher, 20 82mm mortar rounds, 14 bangalore torpedoes and, nine SKS-44 and four AK-47 rifles.

There were four new Chicom mortar sights, nine landline sets, and two Chicom telephone switchboards discovered along with 4,300 pounds of rice and 550 pounds of rock salt.

The caches were found in caves within a kilometer of each other on the rugged slopes of Hill 953.

Obliterate NVA Troops In Buff Triangle Area

DUC PHO—Supported by devastating air, artillery, gunship, and APC barrages, 11th Inf. Bde. soldiers smashed an NVA battalion-sized force seven miles northwest of Quang Ngai City, killing 45 NVA and destroying mammoth tunnel complexes.

Executing a village cordon tabbed "Buff Triangle," elements of the 4th Bn., 21st Inf. and 3rd Bn., 1st. Inf. swept through the region after a week of fighting enemy troops concentrated in the area.

NVA Open Up

Action began when the "Jungle Warriors," moving close to the village, received intense small arms, mortar, and RPG fire from the enemy.

"We weren't in the village two minutes before they opened up on us," said PSG Jose J. Fernandez (Bridgeport, Conn.), acting platoon leader of the 1st Plt., A Co., 4/21. "We called in gunships and pulled back so that air strikes could come in."

Fierce Barrages

In a matter of minutes, the tactical jet fighters were on the scene dropping their explosive cargo with pinpoint accuracy—so close that the infantrymen could hear shrapnel whizzing overhead.

"You could hardly get your head out of your foxhole for all the air strikes, artillery, and 50-caliber fire from the tracks, (II Trp., 17th Cav., 198th Bde.)" remarked SGT

(Continued on Page 7)

Religion and You

Perseverance Pays

By CHAPLAIN (CPT) ALEXANDER M. MASON
198th Inf. Bde.

We have all watched in distress and disbelief as our favorite team blew a big lead in the closing moments of the game.

Similarly, many of us get off to a fast start, set a fair pace for awhile, and then fizzle out before we reach the finish line. We started well, but something—our lack of faith, of courage, of perseverance—hindered us.

We all have days when we feel we cannot keep going. Life becomes so routine that we wish we could just get away from it all. And to be sure some of us yield to the lure of change, or the feeling of being fed-up, and give up. Fatigue and fear reduces our courage and power of endurance.

To be able to fail and get up and go on again requires a genuine faith in the worthwhileness of life. It enhances the importance of being a responsible person. It requires conviction that there is meaning in living, that God has a design for life, that our life too, however humble, commonplace, or seemingly insignificant, is part of a plan.

"They that wait upon the Lord," wrote the prophet Isaiah, "shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint." To just keep going through each hour and each day, that is the crowning achievement.

VIETNAM-STYLE

By SP4 JOHN W. HEATH

Another New Year

Happy 4606! Just as we celebrate the new solar year, the Vietnamese are welcoming the new lunar year during TET (Feb. 17-19), traditionally Vietnam's most festive holiday.

But why do TET new year celebrations begin over a month later than ours? The answer lies in the difference between their lunar (Sino-Vietnamese) calendar and our solar (Gregorian) calendar. Our calendar is based on how long it takes the earth to revolve around the sun—a little more than 365 days. That extra time is balanced out by a leap year every four years.

Measured by the orbit of the moon around the earth (29½ days), the Sino-Vietnamese calendar is made up of 12 lunar months or 355 days, which is adjusted to the solar year of 365 days by adding a 13th month every two or three years.

The lunar calendar also puts an animal label on each year, the coming year being the year of the cock. Each of the years in this 12-year cycle, called Ky, bears a name of an animal of the Chinese zodiac. We have just completed the year of the monkey.

The Vietnamese use the Gregorian calendar in private business and in government offices, while the Sino-Japanese calendar governs religious and social life. The lunar calendar began in 2637 B.C., 1969 being the year 4606.

Just as we celebrate the Christmas-New Year Holiday Season with the exchange of gifts, the Vietnamese give small amounts of money to persons of all ages during TET—a much more sobering New Year's tradition.

So if you have broken those resolutions for 1969 already, now is your chance to try again during the lunar new year.

SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION

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Specialist Four Alfred Anthony Jr. ..... Staff Artist

A Vietnamese Valentine Tale

By SFC LARRY BABITTS

In Vietnam, the most romantic of all south-Asian countries, it is widely believed that the love of every young couple has been predetermined in another life. When two people fall in love they shall remain together in life and even after death.

"No tinh chua tra cho ai, Khoi Tinh mang ocoung tuyen dai chua tan," is a South Vietnamese proverb that translates "the gem of love won't dissolve after death while a debt of love remains."

Of the legends bearing upon the subject of love, perhaps the most beautiful is the following tale.

"The Gem of Love"

When Nuhn Li Te was the ruler and mandarin of a small province in Vietnam he built his castle on the bank of a river and lived there with his wife and beautiful girl-child, Nam.

Of the many rooms in the castle, the favorite place of the daughter was a small room high in the watchtower where she could see the river for many miles and watch the boats glide by.

The Voice of Love

One morning, as Nam sat by the window, she heard a voice more lovely than the Chinese nightingale, and knew it was the voice of love. In the distance she could see a small boat with a young fisherman in it.

She could not see his face, but she knew he must be handsome! She knew that with such a voice he must be tall and fair complexioned, strong and virile. She knew these things to be true, for her heart told her so.

And so, each morning for one year she sat by the window to hear the voice with which she had fallen in love.

One morning as she sat impatiently by the window, she did not hear the voice of her river-nightingale. A week passed, and still the singing fisherman did not return.

The Heartbreak Of Love

Nam became heartsick and refused to eat or to speak with anyone. Her servant became fretful and went to the mandarin and told him of Nam's love for the fisherman.

Immediately, the mandarin dispatched his guards to search for the fisherman, Tan. The ruler explained the problem to the humble fisherman and brought him to the room atop the tower. When they entered the room, Tan began singing and Nam became flushed and excited.

The Disappointment Of Love

Her father said, "This is Tan the fisherman; this is the man you love." As Tan approached her, the girl became frightened. He was hump-backed and had a head as large and shaggy as a buffalo. His work-worn hands were gnarled and ugly as the claws on a phoenix (a mythical bird).

A tear ran down his scarred cheek as Nam raised her arms and shouted, "He is ugly, no, no, I do not love him. Take him away."

In that brief moment basking in Nam's great beauty, Tan the fisherman had fallen hopelessly in love.

The next day, after returning to his village, the golden-throated fisherman died of a broken heart and his body was placed in a casket for internment.

The Price of Love

When his family came for his burial they discovered that the body was gone, and in its place was a small crystal-like gem. Not knowing what to do in this situation, the family brought the stone to the ruler for his advice.

Mandarin Nuhn Li Te declared it to be a love-crystal, the rarest of all jewels. He ordered a golden cup filled with tea be brought to his chambers and demanded that the court magician dissolve the love-crystal in the golden cup.

An Act of Love

When this was done, there appeared an image floating in the tea, an image of the homely fisherman rowing his tiny craft and singing, "The gem of love won't dissolve after death while the debt of love remains."

When Nam saw and heard the vision she knew what she had done. She had taken Tan's love, but had not returned it, and she knew what she must do!

A Sacrifice of Love

Taking the golden cup in her cold, trembling hands, she returned to the tower room where she could be all alone. She sat in her chair by the window, overlooking her beloved river and held the cup in her lap.

Then she began to cry and her tears mixed with the tea. The crystal began to melt, and when it was all dissolved, Nam was still and lifeless.

Nam and Tan were together in another world.

Does It Come In Nuoc Mam Flavor Too?

A Vietnamese woman gleefully samples that familiar GI drink—Kool-Aid, offered by 198th Inf. Bde. soldiers from D Co., 1st Bn., 52nd Inf. (Photo by SP4 Walter Jackson, 198th Inf. Bde.)

Where A Haircut Is An Adventure

By SP4 JIM BRUCE
196th Inf. Bde.

LZ BALDY — The razor may be worn dull, but the massage makes it all worthwhile.

Walk into any barbershop, whether bunker or salon, from Saigon to Chu Lai, and a quiet little Vietnamese barber in loose-fitting shirt and trousers and shower sandals nods politely as your turn comes.

Make-Shift Equipment

He sits you down in a high, straightback wooden chair, and deftly tucks the barber's cloth around your neck, a cloth that probably is the remains of a signal flare parachute.

On the narrow wooden shelf before you rests the paraphernalia of modern barbering: A small, fingerprint-smudged mirror, an RC can full of combs, plastic mosquito repellent bottles of water or hair tonic, and the inevitable C-ration can of diluted shaving soap and cold water, brush and razor.

A flourish of the shears, and the locks, so defiantly cultivated in the field, begin to fall.

Barber Mum

There is little talk. Chances are the barber's English is limited, and he could care less how the Celtics are doing.

The haircut is not bad. Clippers may stick and pull occasionally, but the barber's touch is usually skilled. It's the accompanying shave that tests a soldier's courage.

Instead of the leather strop, the Vietnamese barber uses his hand to sharpen the razor. He strokes vigorously back and forth across the palm, allowing horny callouses to hone the blade.

It all looks impressive, until you first feel the razor on your face. It smarts!

Finishing Touches

Finally, you are as neatly trimmed as any reviewing general could ask, and the barber whisks his cloth from under your chin.

With sharp, slapping blows from the edges of his hands, he rhythmically begins pounding your shoulders and back in a bracing massage that leaves skin and muscles tingling.

A quick snap to the left and right, and your neck feels loose and free. Nothing like it east of San Francisco.

As you step down from the barber chair and pay your piasters, your temples and neck may still be smarting from the scraping of the razor.

But that last 30-seconds massage makes the visit worthwhile.

Brings 198th To Refugees

Little Hero Leads Home Hope

By SP4
ALFRED ANTHONY JR.
198th Inf. Bde.

LZ BAYONET—One foot in front of the other, the men have to walk with one eye on the ground, the other combing the surrounding rice paddies.

A young Vietnamese boy walks with the platoon leader at the front of the procession. An hour earlier he had been brought in with his family as a detainee.

He has offered to bring the soldiers back to his village where he knows people are hiding from the "forces." He says they are NVA, and now are in hiding themselves.

The Vietnamese interpreter has told the boy that the remaining villagers must be brought to the detainee center for their safety; or, if they are enemy, they must be found.

Little, But Courageous

The boy is young, only nine or ten, but he is brave.

A small boy leading a platoon of giant men from the 198th Inf. Bde. across the rice fields to bring a few people to safety—to a place for food and shelter and a kind hand from a medic who will patch their cuts and treat their diseases.

Approach Village

He goes without the least coercion. As the line nears the island of trees, the boy beckons on with a proud arm.

Along the dike the line forms a right angle, turning into the trees at the edge of the island.

At the platoon leader's soft-spoken command, his men spread through the trees and village yards to encircle the small central hamlet the boy is leading them to.

Ambush?

Pointing to the properous-looking hamlet he has led the troops to, the boy repeats a few words to the interpreter, and runs excitedly under the eaves and into the darkness of a building.

The platoon leader waits cautiously, remembering to keep a solid perimeter and an eye to the other hootches.

At this point there is some doubt in each man's mind as to the sentiments of the little boy who has brought them here.

When the boy comes out, prodding and assuring a long line of people carrying sleeping mats and pots and pans and, it seems, everything possible, there is a special joy to be seen in the faces of even the most hardened soldiers.

One man tousles the boy's hair as he leads the people by the soldier's post.

Back To Safety

The old women and men, along with their children and grandchildren, lengthen the line now, as it criss-crosses back across the silent fields of rice to the Americal camp.

The small Vietnamese boy walks proudly hand-in-hand with the lieutenant.

Clothing Conex Suits Troops

CHU LAI—A new concept in combat merchandising is insuring that the Americal soldier is better dressed for his work in the field.

The idea involves a renovated conex container equipped with bins and shelves to hold new fatigues, socks, boots, and other items the infantryman wears.

Dubbed the "Mobile DX" (direct exchange), the conex can be airlifted to forward areas where the men may turn in used or unserviceable equipment and draw the new gear.

A Co., 23rd Supply and Trans. Bn., a part of Div. Spt. Com., designed and built the interior of the conex.

Stopping The Hurt

Maybe they can't fix a scraped knee like mom can, but these medics from C Trp., 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav. are experts at easing a little boy's ouch. (Photo by SP4 Steve Shingledecker, 523rd Sig. Bn.)

196th Readies 4,000 Gift Bags For TET Holiday

LZ BALDY — A battalion from the 196th Inf. Bde. is ready for TET, not only militarily, but also in a spirit more appropriate to this ancient traditional holiday.

The Civil Affairs Section (S-5) of the 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., at LZ Ross, 20 miles northwest of Tam Ky, filled some 4,000 gift bags for holiday distribution among the people of the nearby Que Son refugee village.

The bags contained rice, soap, candy, and sundry articles.

"The idea got its start this Christmas when we filled and distributed almost 3,000 two-pound bags of rice," said 1LT Edward R. Suits (Palatine Bridge, N.Y.), the battalion S-5.

"We included a card with Christmas greetings from the battalion to the Vietnamese people with each bag, and GIs distributed them throughout the GVN-(Government of Vietnam) controlled area."

1LT Cecil Green, Americal IO

11th Bde. soldiers launch rubber boats across river on Batangan Peninsula

Flooded rice paddies and gnarled tree sur

SP4 Peter Schwarz, Americal IO

Refugees receive food in a variety of eating utensils at holding center

MAJ Paul B. Parham, Americal IO

BG Cooksey (center) discusses tactics

Inc

Alert for booby traps, Americal infantry

Flushing The Enemy In Russell Beach

SP4 Steve Shingledecker 523rd Sig. Bn.

'round advancing "Brave and Bold"

SP4 Steve Shingledecker, 523rd Sig. Bn.

h-by-inch search for lurking enemy

SP4 Steve Shingledecker, 523rd Sig. Bn.

team sweeps across field

SP4 John Hollenhorst, 198th Inf. Bde.

Framed by rubble of a building, division trooper peers in looking for VC

MAJ Paul B. Parham, Americal IO

"Charlie" may be hiding anywhere—so cautious advance is a must

Copter Crew Rescues Hotly-Pursued Patrol

CHU LAI — What started out as an ordinary mission for WO1 Kenneth G. Wood (Idaho Falls, Idaho) soon turned into a daring rescue reminiscent of an adventure-packed Hollywood thriller.

WO1 Wood was the aircraft commander of a UH-1H "Huey" troop-carrying helicopter of the 176th Aslt. Hel. Co. "Minutemen" recently involved in the insertion of a long range patrol (LRP) northwest of Chu Lai.

Call For Help

The drop off was made without difficulty, and WO1 Wood and his co-pilot, WO1 William T. Koehler (Greer, S.C.) proceeded to other duties.

In a few hours, however, they were recalled for an emergency extraction of the LRPs, who were fleeing a large enemy force.

Despite bad visibility due to rain and cloud layers, WO1 Wood co-ordinated with the LRPs, getting them to mark their position with smoke while he directed gunships to lay suppressive fire as close to the patrol as possible.

Chops Down For Rescue

Since the patrol had expended all its smoke, the "Minuteman" had to hover alongside a mountain until the chopper pilot spied a hole in the thick foliage leading to a suitable pickup point near the patrol's last marked position.

Chopping through dense jungle with his rotor blades, the warrant officer made his way down a cliff to the landing zone and waited until the LRPs could make their way to the chopper.

Ten-foot elephant grass prevented the chopper pilot from landing so he hovered while the members of the patrol scurried aboard.

Zooms Away

With door guns blazing at the enemy's position, he took off, carefully hovered over the trees until clear of the cliff, and dove down into a valley to gain airspeed.

WO1 Wood deposited the patrol members safely back at their base, then continued with his "normal" duties.

Pluck Pilot From Sea

CHU LAI—Americal engineers came to the rescue recently when an Air Force F-100 pilot ditched his plane in the South China sea near here.

While flying over Chu Lai, the 26th Engr. Bn.'s command and control helicopter spotted the Air Force pilot after he had abandoned his aircraft and was parachuting into the sea.

The helicopter pilot, WO1 John R. Elwell (Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.), a pilot with the 123rd Avn. Bn., hovered over the downed pilot until LTC Matthew W. Hoey (San Antonio, Tex.), commanding officer of the 26th Engrs., and SP5 Richard S. Melcher (Portland, Ore.), a crew chief in the chopper, managed to pull the pilot aboard.

At one point, WO1 Elwell deliberately put his ship's left skid into the water and held it there while LTC Hoey climbed out on the skid to get a better grip on the jet pilot, encumbered by his flight gear.

The pilot was flown to the 312th Evac. Hosp., where he was treated and released.

Tiger Slips Through Division Bunker Line; Keeps Guards Edgy

CHU LAI—A fast-moving tiger invaded the defensive perimeter here, recently and gave the bunker guards a taste of big game hunting.

The large cat slipped in through the perimeter wire along highway 1 during the night, and moved out at a fast pace.

One nervous soldier reported to the command bunker that the tiger "...wasn't the largest I've ever seen, but he wasn't the smallest, either."

Other guards who briefly glimpsed the running beast estimated his weight at 250 pounds.

At dawn, a helicopter with sharpshooters aboard and a ground patrol began a thorough search, without success.

The tiger probably managed to jump the perimeter wire and escape, but the night bunker guards are now on the lookout for more than VC.

Combat In Review

Wary Approach

Cautiously edging toward a smoke-shrouded haystack, a medic from the 11th Inf. Bde. looks for the enemy during a search and clear operation southwest of Quang Ngai City. (Photo by SP4 Steve Shingledecker, 523rd Sig. Bn.)

RTO Performs Heroics

Saves Wounded Under Fire

LZ BALDY — Suddenly thrust into the role of platoon leader, a radio-telephone operator (RTO) from the 196th Inf. Bde. exposed himself to intense enemy fire to direct the rescue of wounded platoon members.

During recent combat operations in Hiep Duc Valley, 26 miles northwest of Tam Ky, SP4 Ronald McFee (Joseph, Oregon) an RTO with A Co., 4th Bn., 31st Inf., volunteered to go with his platoon leader to rescue two men who had been wounded in a fire fight with NVA soldiers.

As the rescue team neared an enemy bunker position, McFee's platoon leader was severely wounded.

McFee immediately took command of the rescue team and platoon and pulled his men back to regroup.

Learning some wounded men had been left behind, McFee took a squad of men and moved back to the enemy bunker area.

The "Chargers" gathered the wounded as bullets whizzed all around them.

While the injured were moved beyond range of the NVA weapons, McFee fired a heavy barrage at the enemy with his M-16.

196th Surprises Napping VC, Kills 10 And Nabs Tax Man

LZ BALDY—A small Vietnamese hamlet took a big tax cut recently when a platoon from the 196th Inf. Bde. surprised 10 VC, killing eight, one of them a tax collector, and capturing two wounded.

While on a search and clear mission 24 miles northwest of Tam Ky, a platoon-size element of A Co., 4th Bn., 31st Inf. advanced to within 30 meters of the first hut where the VC were lounging around, all their weapons stacked in a corner of the hut.

When a VC nurse spotted the "Charger" unit and sounded an alarm, the VC grabbed their weapons and attempted unsuccessfully to escape.

The rear elements of the patrol then spotted two VC and brought them down with small arms fire as they attempted to flee across a rice paddy.

One of the dead enemy soldiers turned out to be an NVA officer. He had in his possession a sizeable sum of Vietnamese currency which he had been collecting in taxes from the local people.

The people of the hamlet all waved their appreciation to the departing Americal troops.

Home Guard

Members of a Vietnamese Popular Forces platoon move through a hamlet 20 miles northwest of Tam Ky in the Operation Hardin Falls area. The operation is a pacification project conducted by the 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav. and Government of Vietnam forces. (Photo by SP4 John Wolford, Americal IO)

Hair Today, Gone Tomorrow?

Mustaches Flourish In Vietnam Climate

By SP5
ROBERT BUZOGANY

Many mothers of America may not recognize their sons when they return from Vietnam. Besides the suntan, added or lost weight, and the new look of maturity gained in the combat zone, some men will be sporting a hairy upper lip.

It's not a rare tropical disease, but it does seem to be contagious among the men here. The mustache is definitely "in" among American combat soldiers.

Ever since the Department of the Army came out with Army Regulation 600-20 a year ago permitting soldiers to wear "neatly trimmed" mustaches, the trend here has been catching on to the point where the number with them nearly equals those cleanly shaven.

The vague phrase "neatly trimmed" is left to the individual unit commanders for interpretation. Generally, the mustache should not extend below the corners of the mouth and should be trimmed into a neat shape. Beards, though, are not authorized for military personnel.

Vietnam presents an excellent opportunity for experimentation with mustaches, and a check of some of the mustachioed men of the Americal revealed varying reasons for starting their new growth.

For a few it provides a visible sign of their manliness, but some of the meager products attest to the youth of the would-be mustache wearers.

As one slightly embarrassed "Jungle Warrior" from the 11th Inf. Bde. defiantly said, "I've only been letting it grow for four months. What do you expect? Overnight results?" His mood was darker than his fuzzy upper lip.

Other men stated there wasn't any special reason behind growing their mustaches. It was just something different to do, and since many of their buddies were doing it, they wanted to try too.

"I just thought it would save me a little time shaving in the morning," explained an infantryman from the 198th Inf. Bde. "It hasn't been a bother, and I just may keep it when I return home."

However, most of the men said a mustache always has been something they wanted to try, but never had the appropriate opportunity to grow one.

A 196th Inf. Bde. soldier with a heavy bush of hair creeping around his mouth stated, "I guess it always had been a secret desire of mine to see what I would look like in a mustache, but my former civilian boss didn't go for the idea."

"I started one once back home," explained a trooper from the 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav., "but my girl didn't like its sloppy appearance when it was just beginning. I had to wait till now to grow a full mustache."

The majority of the mustaches appear to be slated to get the axe (i.e. the razor) when the soldiers head home, either because of personal choice or because of pressure at home.

An indication of this clean shave comes through observing soldiers who have just returned from R&R, especially those who met their wives in Hawaii.

Many proud, tough combat soldiers have gone off on R&R with their bristles shining, only to return six days later sans mustache under orders from their "better half."

The big test for the mustache wearer will come when he first sticks his new facial decoration through the door to face his wife or sweetheart. It may present a hairy problem.

A SAMPLE of the many types of mustaches seen among Americal troops reveals there are as many varieties as there are men wearing them. In all sizes, shapes, colors, stages of trim, and among all age groups, the mustache is definitely a "growing" fad. However, we must confess that the lengthy specimen in the center does not belong to a GI. Nearly seven inches long, the mustache belongs to Kurt Rolfes, an entertainer who toured the division area several months ago with a singing group appropriately called "The Mustache and Us."

Obliterate NVA In Buff Triangle

(Continued from Page 1)

Rick Snoderly (Pocatello, Idaho), platoon sergeant of 2nd Plt., B Co., 3/1. "They really knocked the hell out of the place."

As the 11th Bde. soldiers set up a cordon which sealed the fate of the trapped enemy force, artillery and air strikes continued to pulverize the area throughout the day.

During the night, continuous flares illuminated the area to preserve the integrity of the cordon.

Pitted Like Moon

The next morning, after artillery fire from the 6th Bn., 11th Arty. prepared the area and ACAVs of B Trp., 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav. swept through, the "Jungle Warriors" moved in.

They discovered a landscape so covered with craters that it resembled the surface of the moon.

The infantrymen found huge interconnected spider holes in each of the hedgerows, some extending 40 feet deep.

1LT Thomas L. Smith (Hicksville, N.Y.), commander of A Co., 4/21, described it as "the biggest set of tunnels I've ever seen. According to the engineers, they are even bigger than the tunnels found on the Batangan Peninsula."

Fortified Bunkers

"They were really dug in," said SP4 Dean Bonde (Portland, Oregon), an RTO with B Co., 4/21. "Some of their bunkers had steel doors on them that even a direct hit with a 106mm recoilless rifle wouldn't blow."

In addition to the 45 confirmed kills, it is suspected that as many as 200 enemy dead are in the collapsed bunkers.

Intelligence reports indicated that the decimated NVA battalion was a forward fighting element in position for an attack on Quang Ngai City.

Five From Same Home Area Together From Basic To Nam

LZ BALDY—At least five men in the 196th Inf. Bde. will not have to look far when struck by the nostalgic feeling to talk to someone about the folks back home.

Carolina Neighbors

The five, all of A Co., 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., live within 10 miles of each other in their home state of North Carolina.

PFCs Ernest Campbell and Jackie Clark (Morgantown, N.C.) and Paul Barnes, Jerry Gauge, and Dennis Hawkins (Marion, N.C.) met each other April 18 last year at the Army Induction Center in Morgantown.

After taking their basic training together at Ft. Bragg, N.C., they went on to AIT at Ft. Polk, La. Following AIT, they were assigned to Vietnam, all five on the same set of orders.

The quintet drove home together for their 30-day leave and then found themselves aboard the same Vietnam-bound plane from Ft. Lewis, Wash.

To Vietnam Together

From Cam Ranh Bay, the five headed north for a week of training at the Americal Combat Center.

Much to their pleasure and surprise, at the end of their training all the men were assigned to A Co., 2nd Bn., 1st Inf.

No one in their unit now dares knock North Carolina.

Joan Sliwin

A pretty college senior from Detroit, Honey Ltd. member Joan Sliwin poses backstage at the Bob Hope Christmas Show in Chu Lai. (Photo by SP4 Peter Schwarz, Americal IO)

Good-Bye Grit

A clean weapon is a real lifesaver when the going gets tough. These 196th Inf. Bde. soldiers take time out from operations north of Tam Ky to service their ticket home. (Photo by SP5 Donald Evanger, 196th Inf. Bde.)

VC Lose Boxing Match

Burly NCO Thwarts Kidnappers

By SP4 TONY SWINDELL
11th Inf. Bde.

LZ CORK—The Viet Cong made a big mistake when they tried to kidnap PSG Enrique Perez (Caparra Heights, Puerto Rico) during a recent sapper attack on LZ Cork, a fire support base in the 11th Inf. Bde.'s Operation Vernon Lake II.

Six-foot, 200-pound Perez leads the 1st Plt., A Co., 3rd Bn., 1st Inf.

VC Strike

After checking bunkers on the base's southern perimeter during the early hours of an inky night, Perez returned to his bunker, and shortly afterwards, the VC sappers attacked the LZ with satchel charges, Chicom grenades, and 60-mm mortars.

Perez's bunker was open on one end, facing the perimeter, with a poncho over the opening as a curtain.

Just as Perez started to pull the poncho back, he heard a thump and a jarring explosion beside his bunker. Three more times he heard grenades hit the poncho, drop, and then explode.

The sergeant's life had apparently been saved four times by the poncho, which had bounced the grenades back into a depression directly in front of the bunker.

Jumped By VC

Perez waited a few moments after the last explosion, leaped outside, and sprayed a magazine to his front.

While he inserted a new magazine, two VC jumped the hefty sergeant from the sides of his bunker, attempting to drag him down a rain-slick hill.

As Perez struggled, all three fell and rolled wildly down the slippery hill to within a few feet of the perimeter wire.

About half way down the hill, Perez lost his weapon, and the struggle turned into a hand-to-hand combat match as he pummeled the VC with his fists.

Struggles Free

When the trio began receiving AK-47 fire over their heads, the husky sergeant broke away from his would-be captors and began crawling quickly back up the hill, the VC unwilling or unable to follow.

The next morning it was determined that around 20 VC had penetrated the wire.

As for Perez, it's a night he never will forget, and neither will a couple of black-and-blue VC.

Russell Beach

(Continued from Page 1)

The number of civilians evacuated through the cordon line and flown to the Combined Holding and Interrogation Center (CHIC) in Quang Ngai City increased gradually throughout the operation.

At press time, 11,257 Vietnamese had been processed by government officials at the CHIC.

Of this number, 48 were held as VC prisoners of war, 218 were identified as VC infra-structure, and 111 were listed as VC suspects, pending further interrogation. Thirty-two persons rallied to the government as Hoi Chanhs.

The remaining 10,848 persons were classified innocent civilians at the CHIC.

Capture Supplies

As the allied forces pushed through the rolling hills and rice paddies on the peninsula, they uncovered 43 individual weapons, four crew-served weapons, more than 10 tons of rice, and more than 15 tons of salt.

The Batangan Peninsula has been a major enemy storage area and base camp since the war with the French, and earlier minor probes of its defenses have almost always resulted in fierce fighting.

Computer Called Freddy Puts Artillery On Target

LZ AMY—Americal artillery is right in step with space age technology, even on this remote fire base in the 11th Inf. Bde.'s Operation-Vernon Lake II.

On LZ Amy, 21 miles northwest of Duc Pho, D Btry., 6th Bn., 11th Arty., has a Field Artillery Digital Computer (FADAC) locating targets in a quick and efficient manner, with few mistakes.

Fast "Freddy"

The battery's computer, known as "Freddy" by members of the artillery unit, has added to the accuracy of fire and has reduced the time needed to get the projectiles heading for the target.

As soon as a fire mission is called in, a chart operator, a manual computer operator, and the man who operates "Freddy" gather data for the guns.

"If 'Freddy' and our manual computer ever come up with differing figures, we go with 'Freddy'," said 1LT Walter H. Haltom (Houston, Tex.), the fire direction officer.

Talented Machine

"'Freddy' does everything for us," he continued. "He gives us the correct charge, azimuth, range, deflection, and time of flight in a matter of seconds."

Since its arrival in December, the computer has made it possible for the artillerymen to fire as many as five fire missions at one time, and undoubtedly has made their work a little easier and more efficient.

RE-UP! ARMY

Wars may be fought with weapons, but they are won by men. It is the spirit of those who follow and the man who leads that gain the victory.

If you meet the physical, mental, and moral requirements for reenlistment in the Regular Army, you may be eligible to reenlist for the Army Schooling of your Choice.

Another of the outstanding "bennies" is the Variable Reenlistment Bonus, a special program that pays large amounts of cash upon the first reenlistment to the holders of certain, specified MOSs.

For further information on these programs, contact your unit career counsellor or the Americal Re-Up Center (Chu Lai 2519).

Skilled Surgeon Is A Lady

Story and Photo by
CPT JOHN MEDLIN
312th Evac. Hosp.

CHU LAI—The Chief of Professional Services at the 312th Evac. Hosp. here, LTC Brady, looks like a nurse, but answers to the title of doctor.

LTC Anna M. Brady (Philadelphia) is an orthopedic surgeon (in layman's terms, a bone doctor) a distinction shared by only 12 other women in the United States.

She was recalled from the Reserves last May along with the other members of her orthopedic team, the 305th Med. Det., which she commands.

Extensive Experience

Back in the States, LTC Brady was the Chief of Orthopedics at Frankford Hospital in Philadelphia.

In addition, she was on the staff at Kernan Hospital for Crippled Children in Baltimore, and most recently taught at the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania.

"It was a pretty busy schedule, especially with the Reserves one weekend a month," LTC Brady said. "However, it did provide a way to train the members of my team, for I would let them assist me on some of my operations.

Well-Trained

"Naturally, that's the best training they could receive, and we were lucky to get all the cooperation needed to make it possible."

AN ORTHOPEDIC SURGEON, LTC Brady performs surgery at the 312th Evacuation Hospital in Chu Lai, where she is Chief of Professional Services. Only 12 other women in the United States claim her orthopedic specialty.

LTC Brady was a nurse during World War II and saw action in the European Theater, first in France and later in Germany.

"The biggest difference in the hospital situation there as opposed to Vietnam is the facilities themselves," she commented.

"We operated in tents in Germany, and we had fewer conveniences and mvoed quite a bit more. Here we have basically a fixed installation, which naturally affords us a more flexible operation."

Meets Boss's Wife

Does being a woman affect her practice in any way?

"Probably the only time I was treated differently from any other orthopedic surgeon because of being a woman was when I was going through my residency.

"Before being accepted by my preceptor, I had to meet his wife. I'm sure that's one thing my male counterparts didn't have to do."

Each day, LTC Brady continues her routine of reporting to the commander, working at her skill without special notice.

Once in a while, however, a new patient will say, "Nurse, could you come here for a minute?"