Cav. Units Kill 99 In Island Battle

SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION

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CHU LAI—Elements of the 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav. killed 38 NVA and 61 VC in a fierce five hour battle on a marshy, flat island 10 miles north of Tam Ky.

D Trp.'s Aero-rifle platoon, "The Blues" landed on the north side of the small island and began moving in a westward direction.

"We were inserted to check results of contact made by a Light Observation Helicopter (LOH)," said 1LT Darrel T. Henderson. (Carolina Beach, N.C.).

"We found nine VC killed by the Scout Ship and as we continued our search, we received fire from well concealed bunkers, simple in structure, two yards square and about three feet below the surface of the ground."

Hug Ground

The "Blues" advanced to within 25 meters of the bunkers when Henderson directed the platoon to lay down in tall reeds on line with the enemy positions.

While the platoon fired a wall of steel at the bunkers, SP4 Christian Tiedt (Nashville) and SGT James Broadfoot (Greenville, Tenn.) advanced on the bunkers.

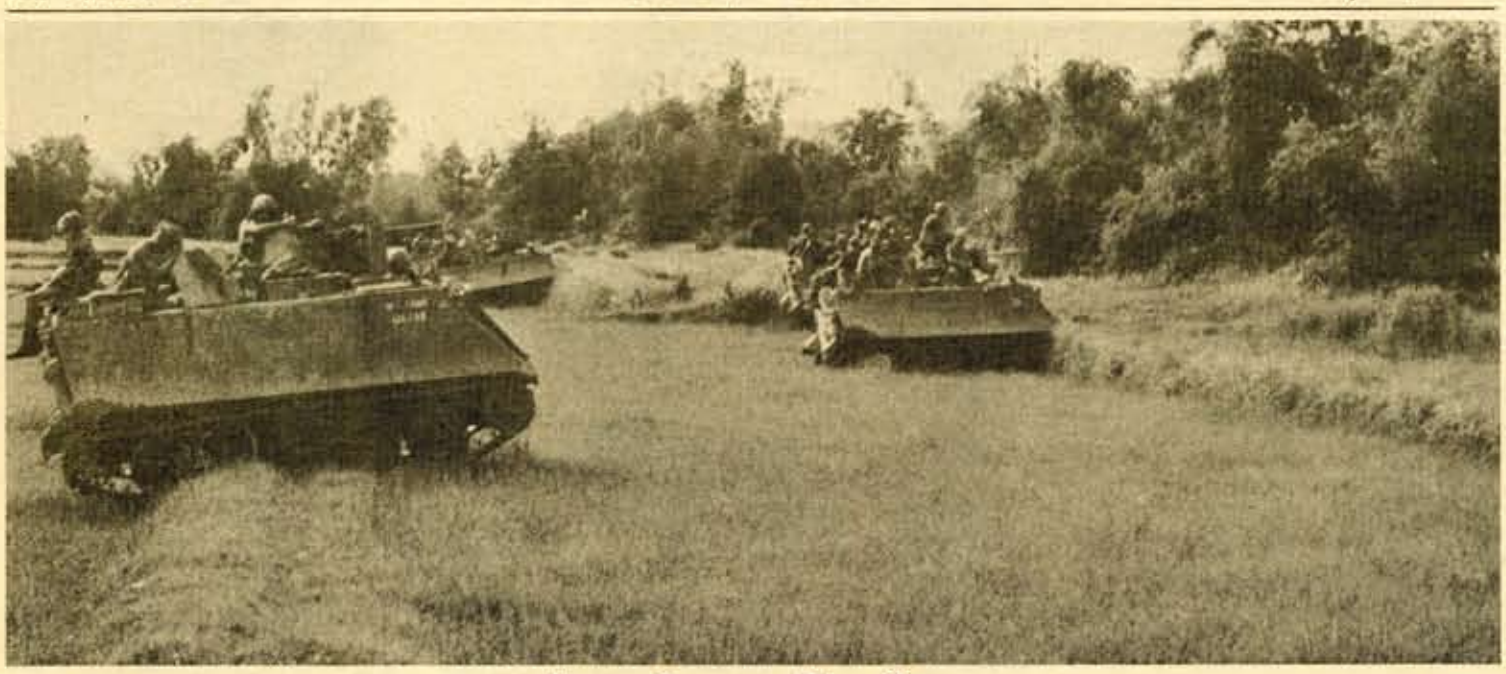
"SGT Broadfoot began giving me cover fire as I maneuvered up to the bunkers," said Tiedt.

"I removed the sod from the overhead cover and dropped in a grenade, which silenced four enemy soldiers." Tiedt repeated his actions on another bunker, killing three more VC.

R & R Site

As the rifle platoon advanced across the island, LT Henderson remarked about the area, "It looked as though it may have been used as some sort of enemy R&R center. There were not that many weapons and the enemy appeared to be fresh and rested."

The "Blues" had plenty of support from three "Cobra" gunships, a LOH, and elements of C Trp. Also working with the rifle platoon were elements of 3-5 ARVN Regt. (Americal IO)



Here Comes The Cav

APCs of the 1st Plt., B Trp., 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav. on a sweep northwest of Quang Ngai move across an open field towards a tree line in search of "Charlie". (Photo by SP4 Steve Shingledecker, 523rd Sig. Bn.)

VC Hide, US Seek Eureka!

CHU LAI — American soldiers hit "Charlie" where it hurts by discovering one of the largest weapons caches ever found in southern I Corps.

The cache included 37 122mm rockets, 72 AK-47 rifles, 39 SKS rifles, and three 60mm mortars.

A recon platoon from the 101st Airborne Division's 1-502 Inf. discovered the huge cache in a jungle-mountainous region 28 miles southwest of Tam Ky in Operation Lamar Plain.

Included in the find were 485 82mm mortar rounds, 706 60mm mortar rounds, 224 rocket propelled grenades (RPG) rounds, 27 57mm recoilless rifle rounds, 13 75mm recoilless rifle rounds, 30 B-40 rockets, 13 cases of AK-47 ammunition (3,250 rounds), ten cases of SKS ammunition (5000 rounds), 19 cases of blasting caps (10 per case), eight assorted artillery rounds, and numerous mortar fuses. (Americal IO)

2-1 Reaches MEDCAP Milestone

Treat 10,000th Vietnamese

By SP4 JIM BRUCE

LZ BALDY—A battalion from the 196th Inf. Bde. during a recent MEDCAP treated their 10,000th patient in the span of one year.

For the milestone MEDCAP, 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., returned to Phu Huong hamlet, 20 miles northwest of Tam Ky. The 500-population hamlet had been the site of some of the "Legionnaires'" first MEDCAPs in Que Son Valley shortly after the battalion's arrival from Tam Ky a year before.

Skin Disease

Significantly, the 10,000th patient was not a casualty of the fighting, but a young mother with a baby suffering from one of the numerous tropical skin irritations so prevalent here.

"Few of the people we see have been wounded," said 2-1 Battalion Surgeon, CPT Phillip I. Whong (Los Angeles).

It was difficult to say just who would be the exact 10,000th patient, according to Civil Affairs Officer, 1LT Spencer Baba (Bethesda, Md.). "But our records indicated that the upcoming MEDCAP in Phu Huong would pass that mark, so we decided that the 14th person treated that day would become our official 10,000th patient."

Cooperative

On the appointed morning, CPT Whong and LT Baba loaded their retinue into a couple of jeeps and the small MEDCAP convoy left the gates of LZ Baldy.

"The people in this hamlet pretty much accept us," LT Baba said. "Word gets around that we're here, and there will be a steady stream of people coming in all morning but never a crowd. They're very orderly."

Twice CPT Whong got out his scalpel to perform minor surgery on an infected splinter and a smashed toe, and his patients accepted the momentary pain stoically.

Milestone

Five, ten treated. Who would be the 14th? Who would be the 10,000th patient? Then she came in, the mother with the sick child. There was no fanfare or special notice taken, just the same attentive care which marked the entire day.

As the mother departed with her baby, a bottle of medicine, some soap, and a pamphlet in hand, the 2-1 team began the job of working toward its second 10,000 MEDCAP patients in Que Son Valley. (196th IO)

5 Reserve, NG Units Leave

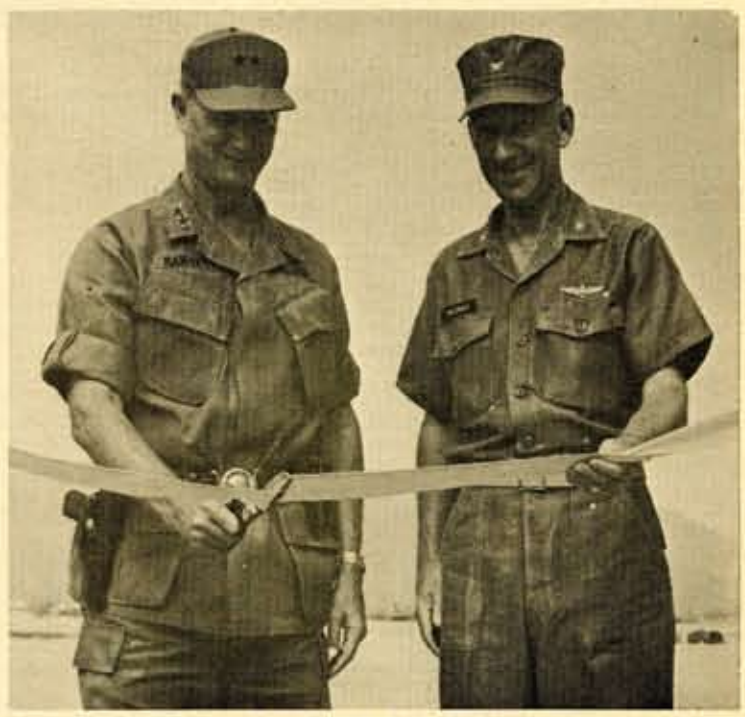
SAIGON — Five division units are among the 20 Army Reserve and National Guard elements scheduled to leave South Vietnam for demobilization in the next two months, according to a MACV announcement.

Personnel in these units are part of the 2,000-man group of Reservists and Guardsmen included in the 25,000 troops to be replaced by Vietnamese armed forces in July and August.

The four USAR and one NG units serving with the division are the 312th Med. Evac. Hospital (Semi-Mbl) from Winston-Salem, N.C.; 305th Med. Det. (Orthopedic) of Philadelphia; 378th Med. Det. (Neurosurg), Memphis, Tenn.; and 889th Med. Det. (Surg), Richmond, Va., all USAR; and the 126th Sup. & Svc. Co. (DS), Quincy, Ill., NG.

Men who came to Vietnam with their organizations will return to the United States as "packets." Those who did not arrive with the units will nonetheless be released from active duty at the same time as the units.

The Reserve and Guard elements will move first to an Army post near their home station for processing, and then to their home Reserve Center or Armory for demobilization. (198th IO)



New Airport

Cutting the ribbon to officially open the new Chu Lai air terminal is MG Lloyd B. Ramsey (Somerset, Ky). assisted by COL Thomas H. Nichols (Greenwood, S.C.), MAG-12 CO. Located between MAG 12 and 13, the new terminal was built by Seabees and a private construction firm. It features a large waiting room and baggage service.

(Photo by CPL Ed Willis, U.S. Marines)

Religion And You

God Is The Winner

By Chaplain (LTC) JACK C. RANDLES
Acting Division Chaplain

Standing on a river bank, one can notice the swirling eddies next to the shore. The eddies make the water flow back up stream along the bank. At first it looks as though the river is going in the wrong direction, but then one looks into the mainstream of the channel and sees that the current is speeding on its way in the right direction after all.

This is an illustration of how God frequently works in our lives. His quiet performances are indirect, deep, serene, and seemingly slow and have to be explored to be understood and appreciated. There may be occasions when in the immediate context, things look like they are flowing backwards and there are defeats.

During such occasions one has but to look up and cast his gaze out from the shore of frustrating encirclements of the present and consider the entire stream of God's purpose among His people in order to see that He is continually winning the battle in quiet, circuitous ways.

God works through individuals, conquering some heart and through that heart He pours His purpose like a mighty river. The Lord makes His conquests by keeping His saints in utter dependence upon Him, making them alive by faith.

His children succeed in being what skeptics believe to be failures. They conquer their enemies by loving them and by quietly letting God do the rest. The Lord always comes out the Victor. He continues to perform His wonders behind the scenes and beneath the surface of roaring waters.

RE-UP! ARMY

Variety Of Good Jobs Now Open

The Americal Reenlistment Office would like to bring you some additional information about some of the many jobs available to you through the reenlistment program. This week we will discuss briefly the clerical or administrative field.

Administration

Under this heading are the office procedures specialists: Clerks, Typists, Stenographers, Legal Clerks, Court Reporters, Postal Clerks, and the soldiers who initiate and maintain personnel and finance records and those responsible for administration procedures.

This field also covers the Chaplain's Assistant, who must have general knowledge of the history, tenets, and belief of his particular religion (Protestant, Roman Catholic or Jewish).

The Movements Specialist has his own office procedures, specialty-planning movement of personnel and material by rail, water, highway, air, or pipeline. The Flight Operations Specialist schedules, clears, and dispatches aircraft.

Information Specialists keep military personnel informed of military and civil events, conditions, and policies; they assist in programs to provide civilians with factual reports on Army activities to create better public understanding of the Army. To accomplish these missions, they collect and distribute verbal and pictorial news items, edit Army newspapers, and assist in the promotion of special events.

The Broadcast Specialists write scripts and participate as announcers, masters of ceremony, and actors in radio and television programs.

Communications Center Operations

The operation and maintenance of automatic, semiautomatic, and manual teletypewriter equipment; crytographic (scrambling classified information messages) devices; and telephone switchboards describe this field.

Finance

The realm of finance administration: cashier, bookkeeper, accounting, budget vouchers, ledgers and auditing—as found in civilian offices—is duplicated in this field.

The Army's electrical accounting machines and auxiliary electronic computer equipment systems equal the finest civilian standards: specialists are trained and gain practical experience, in one or more of these modern specialties.

Supply

This field is mostly concerned with stock records pertaining to receipt, storage, and issue of supplies, but physical inventory and handling of actual supplies is involved. For example, the Chemical Supply Specialist handles records and checks stocks against deterioration while the Film Library Specialist, in addition to record-keeping, inspects, repairs and rewinds film.

Many arms and services of the Army have MOS's devoted to their own particular supply requirements. How can you qualify? Phone, write or see your brigade counselor, or stop by the Americal Division Reenlistment Office.

SOUTHERN CROSS AMERICAL DIVISION

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ARVNs Reveal Strength

By PFC TERRY MACK

The battle to defend their homeland has been a continuing struggle for the Vietnamese people for centuries.

Time and again their country has been invaded, and time and again free men of Vietnam have risen to fight and defeat the invaders.

After centuries of Chinese domination, the Vietnamese were able to overthrow their conquerors in the ninth century. Since then the Vietnamese have weathered attempts by Europeans to control the country.

The French formed the first Vietnamese regular military army to fight against the Viet Minh, led by Ho Chi Minh.

War Ends

When the Indo-China War ended in 1954, after eight years of fighting, the French handed over control and administration to the non-communist Vietnamese with their capital in Saigon.

Despite their hopes, the people of South Vietnam have not been allowed to live in peace.

Today as they have done for centuries, the people of Vietnam are fighting against another aggressor threatening the freedom of a proud country.

U.S. Forces became involved when the Government of Vietnam asked for assistance against the aggressors.

Americans answered this call, perhaps remembering the help we received during our struggle for independence 193 years ago.

The regular Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) was at first long on spirit, but short on training, support troops, and the logistics necessary for a modern army.

Improvements

These problems gradually have been eliminated as the ARVN forces have become a competent fighting force, capable of handling themselves in the present conflict.

The 2nd ARVN Division, sandwiched among the Americal's three infantry brigades, operates under the I Corps commander in the southern portion of the tactical zone.

The division has proven itself in such victories as Phuoc Son, Don Ro, and in campaigns in An Son and Binh Chau.

The 2nd ARVN Division, organized roughly along the lines of a U.S. Army division, consists of the 4th, 5th and 6th Regiments generally co-located with the Americal's three brigades. The division headquarters is in Quang Ngai.

Fight More

Gradually overcoming obstacles confronting other ARVN units — untrained soldiers and officers, lack of fire support, and poor supply channels — the 2nd Division has assumed a larger share of the fighting in I Corps.

Backed now by support elements needed for war, the division is a formidable opponent for those who threaten the freedom of the South Vietnamese people.

The battle is not always fought with guns, but often with words and deeds to win the support of the people.

Here the 2nd ARVN Division has made great strides, along with the Americal, in rebuilding villages and hamlets, giving assistance to refugees who have lost their homes due to terrorist activities of the NVA and VC.

Pacification programs conducted by the 2nd ARVN Division and the Americal are enhancing the fire of national unity among the people of South Vietnam.

The ARVN's are achieving the goal these people cherish so dearly, the right to be free and live in peace.

VC Hit Civilians

SON TRA — For more than a year the three coastal fishing villages at the mouth of the Son Tra River south of Chu Lai were free from the hostilities of war.

One almost forgets that the area was the scene of heavy fighting in last year's TET offensive.

Then the calm erupted into violence. An estimated 70 Viet Cong stormed through the three villages of Son Tra (1), Son Tra (2), and Tan Hy as a heavy rocket and mortar barrage pinned down a nearby U.S. Marine CAP team.

Heavy Toll

In the attack five civilians and a member of the Rural Development force were killed, another 10 Vietnamese wounded, and 39 homes destroyed.

"They knew where they were going because they hit the homes of the village chief, a lot of the leaders, and anyone who had been extra friendly with us," said one of the Marines.

The CAP team, which has its small compound on a knoll between the villages, was not penetrated by VC but a steady flow of mortar and B-40 rocket fire kept the Americans pinned down until the enemy was finished heaving satchel charges and grenades in the villages.

Terrorism

"This was definitely aimed at the civilians and not us," said one Marine.

Many of the inhabitants of Son Tra (1) are refugees who, until recent pacification efforts in the area, had lived in villages freely used by Viet Cong.

"The VC are terrorizing the people to get them to move back into VC-controlled areas. Then the VC again will be able to take their rice and foodstuffs," said CPT James B. Perez (Fresno, Calif.), an intelligence officer for the 198th Bde.'s 5th Bn., 46th Inf. (198th IO)

'Wider Please'

With precise skill and gentle coaxing a division doctor prepares to check the throat of a young Vietnamese boy. Medics demonstrated what the doctor wanted, and the boy enjoyed their face making so much he decided to add his own interpretation of the proper way to say, "Ah!" (USA Photo)

Artillery Overlooks Hiep Duc

Friendly Giant Guards Valley

By
PFC CARL EKENGREN

LZ BALDY—An Americal artillery battery stands 160 meters above fertile Hiep Duc Valley and provides valuable security for the gigantic pacification efforts conducted in the lowland area below.

In a two month period, every able hand of D Btry., 3rd Bn., 82nd Arty., pitched in to convert LZ Siberia from a barren hill to a liveable and effective fire support base.

Enemy Terror

Hiep Duc has been the site of hundreds of returning refugees in recent months. In 1965, government officials of Vietnam were forced to evacuate the area in the wake of devastating terrorist attacks by VC/NVA forces.

Now, through the combined efforts of the 196th Inf. Bde.'s 4th Bn., 31st Inf., and the Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV), the Hiep Duc Government has returned home, 35 miles northwest of Tam Ky.

D Btry. assumes a very important role in providing protection for the returning landowners, but it has taken many hours of hot work to get the landing zone ready.

Level Hill

Unlike the other fire support bases of 3-82, Siberia is unique in that it is built in the form of a shelf or plateau; the hootches and bunkers are situated below the guns.

"The advantage to this," stated SP4 Graham Stockdale (Bedford, Ky.) "is that you can shoot very low with the 105 howitzers without hitting any of the hootches or other structures."

Real Homey

Securing an LZ means more than just clearing an area and providing places for gun sites; it also involves constructing suitable living quarters for the men.

D Btry. has moved its location several times, the most recent move from LZ Ryder.

According to cannoneer PFC Jeffrey Hill (Evansville, Ind.) "It wasn't easy getting settled here. Our living quarters when we first got to Siberia consisted of culverts, which are small shelters built of galvanized steel.

"Two men slept in these. Eventually we built hootches from ammo boxes and sandbags."

The men of the fire support battery now are well prepared to provide security for the surrounding area. (1-82 IO)

'Early Word' Speaks With Impressive Voice

LZ BRONCO — All O2B Psychological Warcraft (PSYWAR) aircraft flown by the 9th Special Operations Squadron are now equipped with a re-broadcasting system.

The "Early Word" system allows ground units of the 11th Inf. Bde. to broadcast radio messages to a plane which re-transmits the message over loudspeakers on the aircraft.

By switching over to the "Early Word" frequency, men on the ground can broadcast directly to an area to warn civilians of enemy movement or forthcoming air or artillery fire.

Helps Field Troops

"The 'Early Word' re-broadcasting system is proving invaluable to Americal units in the field," said 1LT James Ferrier (Sacramento, Calif.) assistant S-5 officer.

The re-broadcasting system has proved specially valuable in the Chieu Hoi Program.

Before the system was introduced a Hoi Chanh was extracted from an area by helicopter, taken to an airstrip, put on the plane, and flown back over the area he was extracted from to broadcast messages to his old unit.

Now, immediately after a Hoi Chanh turns himself over to American troops a PSYWAR aircraft is contacted and given the unit's location.

Testimonial

With the plane circling overhead the Hoi Chanh, with a Vietnamese interpreter overseeing the conversation, tells his old unit of his treatment and condition and urges others to turn themselves over to Americal troops.

In another use of the "Early Word" system, troops separated from their main unit and without an operational radio receive broadcast instructions.

The rebroadcasting system gives division soldiers immediate and on the spot broadcasting capability when sending of messages or instructions is needed and time is a factor. (11th IO)

Father, Son Finally United

DUC PHO — When the USS Turturlia docked in Vung Tau it ended one chapter and started another in the life of SP4 Jerry Cantu (El Paso, Tex.) of the 11th Bde.'s 1st Bn., 20th Inf.

Cantu's parents were separated just after he was born and he never saw his father.

But when Chief Steward First Class Reynaldo M. Cantu arrived in Vietnam aboard the USS Turturlia to begin his fifth tour, father and son met for the first time.

"I had been writing to him for the past years both while in school and then in the service but Vietnam was the last place I thought we would meet," Cantu said. (11th IO)

AER Aid For You

CHU LAI — ARMY EMERGENCY RELIEF (AER) helps the Americal live up to the motto "The Army Takes Care of its Own."

Financial Assistance

AER is the service's way of assisting active and retired Army personnel and their families when a financial problem arises.

Assistance is provided in time of emergency for privation of dependents, emergency travel, medical and dental expenses, or other emergencies which cause the soldier or his family hardship.

The 1969 Joint Army Emergency Relief and Army Relief Society Fund Raising Campaign is presently being conducted within the division and will end August 15. See your unit AER project officer to make contributions.

When you give to AER, remember that your contribution is merged with AER funds from all units in the Army for your use in case of need.

It also enables AER to cover disbursements for assistance world wide. You are asked to make generous contributions to help your fellow soldiers and their families.

AER can help you by an outright grant or by a non-interest bearing loan which may be repaid in small monthly installments.

To apply, contact CPT Bratt, the division AER Officer, located in the rear of the AG Personnel Services Division Butler building, AG Personnel Actions Branch in Chu Lai. (Americal IO)

Silver Star

LZ PROFESSIONAL — LTC George R. Underhill, former commander of the 1st Bn., 46th Inf., was awarded the Silver Star with First Oak Leaf Cluster by MG Lloyd B. Ramsey in ceremonies here.

LTC Underhill was in command of the battalion on April 22 when A Co., operating in dense foliage three miles from the LZ, was hit on all sides by an ambush.

Flying immediately to the area, Col. Underhill debarked the aircraft to assist the wounded, carrying several of them to the helicopter for evacuation. (198th IO)

2-1 'Adopts' Spunky Orphan

By SP4 JIM BRUCE

LZ BALDY—The Americal soldiers knew him only as Son. At 12, already he was head of his family and sole support of a younger brother and sister.

But when the Vietnamese orphan told his story to a burly mortar platoon sergeant of the 2nd Bn. 1st Inf., the entire outfit took him under its wing.

This 196th Inf. Bde. unit was located in the village of Tien Phuoc, eight miles northwest of Tam Ky, engaged against fortified NVA positions in the surrounding mountains, when Son approached PSG Clifford Gardner (Radcliff, Ky.).

Handy Hat

He was a small boy, dressed in a pair of red shorts and an oversized GI jungle hat stuffed with the receipts of his responsible little world. "He had that hat stuffed with papers until it looked like a filing cabinet," Gardner said.

"The little character came to me and said he was hungry along with his little brother and sister, he wanted work. With my broken Vietnamese and his broken English, I learned he was sole support of himself, an eight-year-old brother and four-year-old sister."

Gardner gave Son a job policing up the company area and took the matter to the Battalion Chaplain (CPT) Thomas M. Warme (Minneapolis, Minn.). The two men accompanied Son home for a visit.

They found the children living in a small hut in the village. The family originally lived on a small farm outside of Tien Phuoc until Son's mother and father died a year ago.

Buy Bicycle

Back at the 2-1 compound, Gardner and Chaplain Warme dipped into their pockets for $20 each, and the men of B. Co. passed the hat. With the money, they planned to buy Son a bicycle so he could more easily get around to support his little family.

But where to buy the bicycle?

Chaplain Warme decided to use his chain of command. He contacted the 196th Chaplain, MAJ Donald Bartley (Rockbridge Baths, Va.) at the brigade's home on LZ Baldy.

He told Chaplain Bartley he and 2-1 commander, LTC Sinclair L. Melner (Reno, Nev.), wanted a bicycle.

"No problem," answered Chaplain Bartley, "I'll have a bicycle there by tomorrow." Then he called a friend in Da Nang and had one flown on a dustoff.

In Tien Phuoc, a very surprised Son was presented with his new bicycle plus three 100-pound bags of rice, a supply of canned fish and 1200 piasters cash, all compliments of B Co., 2-1, and the 196th Bde.

Things are definitely looking up for the independent Vietnamese youngster in the red shorts and filing cabinet hat. (19th IO)

Chris Noel asks Americal troops "Are you ready?" You Bet!

Comedienne-singer Betty Waldron snaps in tune

Chris coaxes 11th Bde. soldiers to do their thing on stage

'Hi Love'

Story and Photos By 11th Bde. IO

LZ BRONCO—A "Mod" Chris Noel came on strong at this forward firebase recently as she and her talented troupe swung with 11th Bde. soldiers.

Audience participation was the order of the day as "Jungle Warriors" joined in with Chris and her talented co-star, Betty Waldron, in song and dance.

Swinging its way through a whirlwind tour of Southeast Asia, the group had just completed a tour of Korea and Thailand prior to arriving in Vietnam. They are providing entertainment to the troops while documenting an hour-long TV special to be aired in the US.

Ready, Gang?

Chris, opening the show with her familiar greeting "Hi love," warmed up the soldiers for comedienne-singer Betty by singing the popular song "Are you ready."

She then hopped into the audience with an assist from an enthusiastic 11th Bde. soldier and sang to an overheated SP4 Tommy Greenwalt (Cedar Rapids, Iowa) of the 1st Bn., 20th Inf.

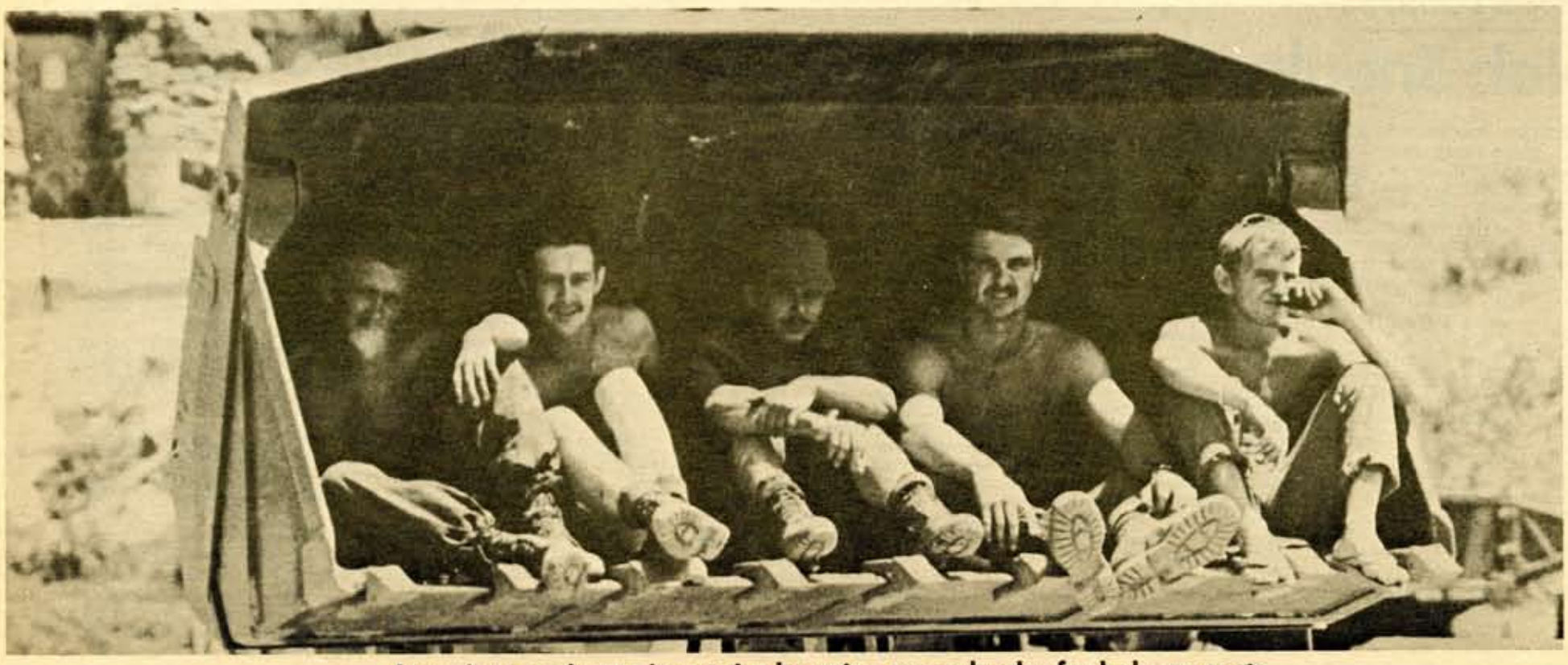
Betty followed, hitting the audience with, "I've been in Vietnam so long my suitcase has developed jungle rot and my dog tags have got rabies!"

Amateur Hour

Her routine also was audience participation oriented. She invited the eager soldiers to dance with her and then held an amateur talent show of her own, having three "Jungle Warriors" join on "If I had A Hammer."

The talent came in the form of two operations officers from the brigade's S-3 section, CPT Benjamin F. Maxhan (Burbank, Calif.) and 1LT James E. Jordan (Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.). SP4 Charles Jordan (New York) of B Co., 723d Maint. Bn. exhibited a fine voice and a great deal of showmanship during this segment.

Sporting mod outfit, Miss Noel sings "By the time I get to Phoenix"



Ingenious engineers improvise by using scoop loader for balcony seats

Lift Downed Crew From NVA Horde

By PFC DEAN WILLIAMS

LZ EAST—"Mayday!" "Mayday!" sounded through all radios in the area of LZ East. Everyone receiving the call was eager to answer because a fellow pilot was in trouble.

WO1 Robert Combs (Huntington Beach, Calif.) was just departing with a load of passengers when the words hit his ears. He immediately dropped back to East and left the riders.

"Firebird 97" of the 71st Avn. Co. had crashed into a hillside after enemy rounds hit the fuel tanks.

Another Mayday

By the time Combs took off, another helicopter tried to help and was shot down, and now was sending a Mayday signal also.

Combs headed for the second ship, which was closer, but was directed off by WO1 James Leach (San Diego, Calif.), who was even nearer. Leach, also of the 71st, was able to direct Combs to the first ship.

"Firebird 97" was going to be a toughie to rescue as they had crashed in deep elephant grass," Combs said. "Coming up the east side of the hill perhaps not a 100 meters away were an estimated 40 NVA. The doorgunners opened up as they neared the ground, and were met with heavy return fire."

Just as Combs' helicopter reached the ground, and the downed crew came hurrying up, two .50 cal. rounds burst through the windshield, and Combs was struck in the face with flying plexiglass.

Rotor Hit

As the crew started its ascent, the main rotor stabilizer was nearly blown off with a round. Had this occured the craft would have gone out of control and been unable to fly.

Every available weapon was firing on the charging NVA and several were cut down.

After the choppers evacuated the area, artillery was called in on the location.

When asked about the incident later Combs said, "Thank God the doorgunners were good shots, and I had my flight helmet lens down when the round came through the windshield.

"I'm glad we were able to help the other fellows. They would have done the same for us."

Dog Victor Over Cong

LZ BAYONET — A scout dog put a group of Viet Cong in their superiors' doghouse recently and helped to find a booty of 23 mortar rounds in the process.

It began when a 90-pound German Shepherd named "Dix" sensed something while he and his handler, PFC Roger M. Collins (Mt. Airy, N.C.) of the 57th Inf. Plt. (Scoutdog) were on a night ambush patrol with the 1st Bn., 6th Inf. near LZ Bayonet.

"We were heading toward our first checkpoint when the dog started to lead us off to the side," recalled SP4 Rudy Lopez (La Puente, Calif.), the patrol leader of the squad comprised of soldiers from the battalions HHC.

The dog led the 198th Bde. squad to the edge of a sand berm where they saw 19 82mm mortar rounds scattered on the ground around two freshly dug holes.

"I guess we interrupted someone from digging up these rounds and using them," Collins said.

But the enemy the "Brave and Bold" unit interrupted continued to lurk nearby and "Dix" sensed something awry.

"This time he's telling us there are people around," the canine's handler advised the patrol. The men took cover at the base of the sand berm.

"We were in a bad position to move forward since 'Charlie' was on the high ground and we had very little cover," Lopez recalled.

But the men, many of whom normally work as cooks, carpenters, and clerks at the battalion basecamp, held their position and the Viet Cong moved from the area. (198th IO)

Sappers Zapped

Nab Sneaky Enemy

LZ LIZ — A stealthy NVA sapper squad wasn't stealthy enough to sneak up on guards protecting this firebase, three miles northwest of Duc Pho.

Alert bunker guards of the 11th Bde.'s 1st Bn., 20th Inf., spotted 11 NVA in the protective perimeter wire and engaged the enemy with mortar, machinegun, and small arms fire, killing at least three NVA.

An hour later, a six-man patrol, led by 1LT William Castille (Port Arthur, Tex.), B Co. XO, was sent to look over the contact area.

Pardon Me

While moving down a path, 1LT Castille stepped on the arm of a sapper. The startled NVA, hiding in a trench, sprang out of the ditch and was killed by the officer.

Three more NVA, hiding in the same trench, were killed by the rest of the patrol.

Upon searching the area, the men found 10 woven baskets filled with Chicom grenades and B-40 rockets, 110 yards of commo-wire, and several satchel charges. Also located were two RPGs and two AK-47 rifles.

Two hours later, sappers invading the area of C Btry., 1-82 Arty., destroyed a generator and communications bunker. The NVA were repelled by grenades; two of them were killed and one slightly wounded soldier captured.

Dog Sweep

Later the same morning, a tracker dog team from the 63rd Inf. platoon swept the wire and flushed two NVA from hiding. The team engaged the sappers, wounding one. Both NVA evaded the team in a nearby village.

The captured NVA stated that the attacks consisted of an 18-man NVA force of the 3rd NVA Div.

Altogether, 12 of the 18-man element were killed and one detainee captured, thanks to the night vision of alert guards. (Americal IO)

Combat In Review

Hi Mom

Not really on a chain, this platoon leader is making a commo check and report on the whereabouts of his platoon, as the radio telephone operator (RTO), unconcerned by his trailing shadow, forges on towards Duc Pho after the 11th Inf. Bde. unit's operational sweep in the area was completed for the day. (Photo by SP5 Bill Guerrant, Americal IO)

Chopper Crashes In Jungle, Crew Hacks Rescue Path

CHU LAI — The pounding of an enemy .50 cal. machinegun turned a routine helicopter flight into a 45-minute gunfighting and trailblazing race for four division crewmen recently.

The helicopter from the 176th AHC was on LZ Gator, about 6 miles south of Chu Lai, when a call for a medical evacuation was received from a nearby infantry unit at 4 pm.

CPT David L. Grieger (Fremont, Ohio) was aircraft commander and WO1 Dee Hyden (Amarillo, Tex.) was the pilot that afternoon as the helicopter sped toward the Tra Bong Civilian Irregular Defense Group camp 12 miles away.

Deadly Sound

Flying over the double and triple canopy jungles that surround the Song (river) Giong area at 2200 feet the ship abruptly lurched, and a sound all fliers dread echoed in their ears — the thumping of an enemy .50 cal. machinegun.

Immediately the crew chief, SP4 Daniel R. Neal (Aurora, Colo.), and the gunner, PFC James E. Skeen (Live Oak, Fla.), opened-up with M-60 machineguns in the direction of the enemy gunfire, managing to suppress it for a few valuable seconds.

Engine Fails

"The caution panel lit up like a Christmas tree," said CPT Grieger. "Then the engine quit. I flared out, reducing our speed to about 40 knots, and the tail boom hit the trees.

"The tail rotor section broke loose and the main rotor blade flew off. We then fell through the trees crashing to the ground on our left side."

The chopper crew maintained radio contact with a U.S. Air Force observation plane operating near the area. The last radio message was "engine quit, going down."

Grabbing all the necessary equipment, while enemy movement erupted in the bushes and grew closer, the crew proceeded down a hillside, moving through dense undergrowth toward the Song Giong riverbed.

Cut Jungle

The point was taken by Hyden with his M-16 rifle and bush knife, hacking a path through thick vines.

CPT Grieger took the job as coverman with an M-16 and one box of ammo, while Neal and Skeen followed in the rear with an M-60 and all the ammo they could manage.

Nearly 250 yards and 40 minutes later they reached the river bank and spotted the rescue aircraft which was backed up by two 176th assault gunships.

MAJ Ronald C. Metcalf (Hickory, N.C.), commanding officer of the 176th AHC, set his aircraft down while enemy small arms fire crackled from the treeline. The crew was extracted safely just 45 minutes and a long run after the last radio message was transmitted. (14th CAB IO)

1-52 Soldiers Decorated For Actions In Heroic Battle

LZ STINSON—Four "Ready Rifles" of the 1st Bn., 52nd Inf. were decorated for gallantry in a recent ceremony at this division forward firebase. COL Jere O. Whittington, commander of the 198th Inf. Bde., presented the Silver Star to PFC Ronnie L. Davis (Marion, S.C.)

Three other members of the battalion's A Co.—SGT Scott G. Hasselbach (Burgoon, Ohio), SP4 Richard A. Paddon (Albany, N.Y.) and PFC Abraham Gilbert (Marianna, Fla.)—were awarded the Bronze Star for Valor.

Heroic Battle

All four were decorated for their heroism in an engagement July 11. Davis was acting as point man for the company, which was sweeping a village, when he saw four Viet Cong run into thick underbrush.

As the point squad advanced on the location a well-entrenched enemy force put out intense automatic weapons and small arms fire pinning down virtually all elements of the company.

Davis then saw two VC running toward a stone bunker, and went after them. Running forward through heavy fire, he killed one with his rifle, and threw a hand grenade into the bunker killing the other.

Cover Fire

Hasselbach was busy at the same time, laying down suppressive fire and organizing his men. He then led his squad in a frontal assault through the heavy fire, sweeping over the enemy emplacement. The VC manning the bunker were killed and their weapons captured.

Gilbert, a grenadier with Hasselbach's squad, upon reaching the communist position, fired his M-79 grenade launcher into it, clearing the Viet Cong and forcing them to abandon their weapons.

Paddon, a squad leader, drew his men up on line and assaulted an enemy position across 75 meters of open ground. Exposed to heavy fire from the front and left flank, Paddon and his squad took the emplacement, killing the VC and capturing two automatic weapons. (198th IO)

If you are building a book shelf in your living quarters, may we suggest a beautiful book end to keep those books upright. This is the petite size measuring five feet two inches, and is available in the United States. Just ask for Wiffle.

11th Bde. Nabs Enemy Politician

LZ BRONCO—Infantrymen of the 11th Bde's B Co. 4th Bn., 21st Inf recently captured an NVA political officer as he and members of a rice carrying party moved down a trail six miles west of Duc Pho.

"We had observed several people moving off a hill into the area of a known NVA basecamp," said CPT Frank W. Koleszar (Norwalk, Con.), B Co. commander. Patrols went out to investigate.

"It was about noon when we noticed three of these characters walking down the trail toward us," continued SP4 James McNair (Newburgh, N.Y.). "They were carrying packs but no weapons so we poked our weapons out of the bushes and made our presence known."

Gives Up

The first NVA dropped his pack, his legs buckled, and he fell to his knees with a sheepish grin.

"The next two ran for it," said SGT Bob Lanning (Ellijey, Ga.). One was killed and the other gave up after mortars and small arms fire was directed at him.

In his attempted escape the NVA was wounded. The soldiers gave him some water and he said, "Thank you" in English and seemed to understand every word they were saying.

Political Officer

The four were identified as an NVA political officer, an NVA PFC, and two VC guides. The guides had shown the NVA the location of a rice cache. They were returning to their location when captured.

CPT George A. Durgin (Los Angeles), brigade assistant S-2, underscored the importance of the "Gimlets" capture. "A political officer is the NVA unit's hard-core Communist. He is entrusted with the responsibility of explaining Communist doctrine to the NVA soldiers." (11th IO)

198th Pilot Saves Life Of Marine

CHU LAI — A late afternoon mission which had taken a 198th Inf. Bde. helicopter pilot out of his normal area may have saved the life of a Marine.

1LT John F. Lowey (Mineral Wells, Tex.) was flying his light observation helicopter along the coast of the South China Sea, heading for LZ Minuteman, where he planned to refuel.

Suddenly he and his crew chief, SP4 Richard Casper (Bethpage, N.Y.), sighted four men in swim suits on the beach inside the basecamp perimeter frantically yelling for help.

The pilot dipped his four-man chopper into the white sand where one of the Marines was unconscious and had stopped breathing.

The other men revived him by artificial respiration, put him into the chopper, and LT Lowey flew him to the 312th Evac. Hosp. where he recovered.

"You know, if it hadn't been for a late flight," Lt Lowey said, "I wouldn't have been in the area." (198th IO)

READY WITH PLENTY OF FIREPOWER IS THIS GUN TRUCK from the 63rd Trans. Co. leading another convoy on the hazardous trip on Highway 1. Armed with two 7.62 mm and one .50 cal. machineguns, the truck spells bad news for snipers and ambushers attempting to slow the supply runs made by the 63rd to 11th Bde. bases. (Photo by SP4 Steve Tipton, 11th Bde. IO)

Convoys Are Division Lifeline

By SP4 DALE E. REICH

LZ BRONCO — As the lead MP jeep in the convoy moves swiftly down the winding dirt road, an 11th Inf. Bde. soldier grips the trigger of his M-60 machinegun and carefully scans the mountainous terrain to his left.

To his right and just 100 meters away is the South China Sea. Following the jeep is a long string of five-ton trucks, seemingly connected by clouds of heavy, grey dust.

These vehicles represent a typical convoy from the 3rd Plt, 63rd Trans. Co. located on LZ Bronco. The 63rd supplies the 11th Bde. with everything from cement to soda and beer many times each week.

Iceman Cometh

"We make an ice run to Quang Ngai City every day," explained 1LT Allen J. Matchie (San Diego, Calif.), the platoon's acting commander. "We also make two runs to LZ Charlie Brown, 12 miles south of here, on a typical day."

"I believe we supply everything for the brigade that planes don't bring in," LT Matchie continued. "That runs into quite a lot of tonnage.

Briefing

"Before they leave the gate," said SFC Louis J. Decamilla, (Bath, S.C.), NCOIC, "They are briefed by the convoy commander.

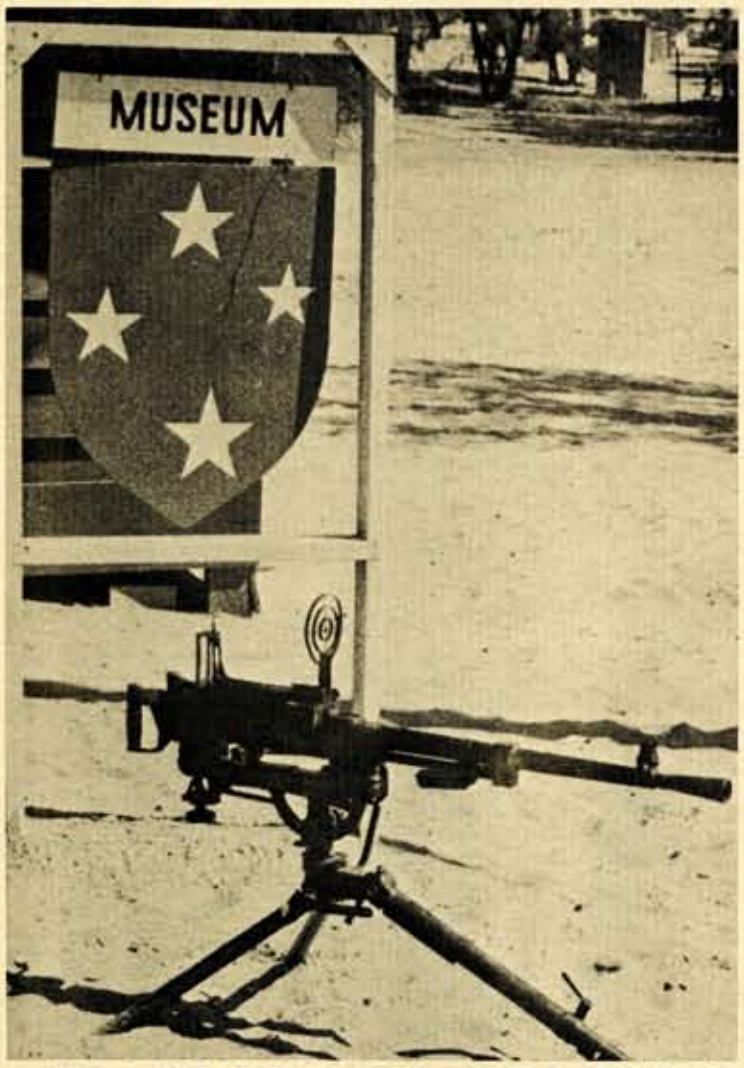
"The convoy commander checks to make sure the roads are clear and lets drivers know road conditions. He's also responsible for knowing where friendly troops are along the convoy's route."

"The engineer minesweep teams do a great job of clearing the roads," Decamilla commented.

"We sometimes get support from artillery and gunships," LT Matchie added. "Our best protection, though, are the gun vehicles that travel with us. The MPs help out and we have our own jeeps and a gun truck. That adds up to a lot of firepower for the convoy."

The job of the 63rd Trans. Co. is a dangerous one, but as LT Matchie said, "It's a job that has to be done." (11th IO)

Museum Stocks Enemy Arms



THIS IS ONE MORE WEAPON "CHARLIE" WON'T USE AGAIN. The Chicom 7.62mm machinegun, captured by an Americal unit is on display at the Combat Center Museum, which is open daily for tours. The museum has many other captured weapons and equipment on display besides this machinegun. (Photo by SP4 James Bennett, 523rd Sig. Bn.)

CHU LAI — New replacements coming through the division's Combat Center get a close look at enemy armament by touring the museum.

One of the newest additions is a new Chinese Communist 7.62mm machinegun donated to the Combat Center by A Co. 3rd Bn., 21st Inf., 196th Inf. Bde.

A Co. was working a joint search and clear mission when they came under heavy sniper fire. Two NVA were spotted on a hill to the front. One was killed, and quick assault over the hill accounted for six more NVA who were setting up the weapon.

1LT James Shoesmith (Clovis, N. M.), platoon leader said, "They never even had time to get ammunition into the gun."

The weapon is a Chinese Communist type 53, has a simple design, and is exceptionally reliable. It can be mounted on wheels for mobility, and when fully mounted weighs around 80 pounds. (Americal IO)

ITT Course Simulates Field; Readies Grunts For Combat

By SP5 JIM KELLEY

LZ BAYONET — The infantryman's eyes narrowed as he focused on the dense foliage before him.

It looked as if it would be safe to move through the high grass, so PFC James L. Kirkland Jr. (Miami, Fla.) stepped steadily on.

Suddenly it hit. The first booby trap was tripped and Kirkland knew what patrolling with the 198th Inf. Bde's 1st Bn. 6th Inf. was all about.

ITT Course

For the lanky soldier it was only a teaching experience, however, for he was the first newly arrived infantryman of the "Brave and Bold" to go through the 1st Bn. 6th Inf. ITT combat course here.

"That course will definitely help me be more observant after I've been sent to the field," Kirkland said as he moved on through the first and second phases of the exercise.

"The course is outstanding," remarked SP4 Robert E. Johnson (Chicago) a veteran of eight months in the field. "The booby traps are so realistic that when we hit the first few I was scared."

The new course constructed on LZ Bayonet, basecamp of the 198th Bde. and rear headquarters for the battalion, will help cut down the number of casualties suffered from booby traps.

Just Like Field

It will be included in the physical training classes for all newly arrived personnel to the battalion.

Consisting of two phases, the first part of the course includes pop-up targets of both enemy and friendly troops, along with 15 to 20 hidden smoke and CS grenades.

Phase two is comprised of a search and clear operation and a fire and movement mission made more difficult by booby traps and pop-up targets.

"This gives the men an idea of what they are likely to find in the field," explained SP5 Fred Teer (Corpus Christi, Tex.), one of the course instructors. (198th IO)

Construct Sturdy Tower

CHU LAI—In blazing sunlight the 123rd Avn. Bn.'s newly constructed Ky Ha Flight Control Tower here first looks like a gigantic red and white checkerboard.

The brainstorm of 1LT Richard Leanard (Newport Beach, Calif.) and SFC James P.L. Gordon (Washington), the tower was constructed with assistance from 10 enlisted flight-tower controllers operating the installation.

Gordon planned, supervised, and worked through completion of the 19-day project.

"It's constructed of salvaged materials, a window from here and a plank from there," Gordon said. "We didn't have any professional carpenters."

The Ky Ha Flight Control Tower is massive and hardnosed like an old trooper.

It has a field elevation of 73 feet, a sub-floor of 3¼ inches of sheet metal weighing more than 580 pounds, and three feet of sandbags between its hard core walls—hardy construction to withstand direct enemy rocket and mortar hits (Americal IO)