SOUTHERN CROSS

AMERICAL DIVISION

Vol. 2, No. 30 | Chu Lai, Vietnam | October 22, 1969

Viet Cong CO And 23 Chieu Hoi

Tools Of Propaganda

Printing tools, crude but effective are laid out for display after being confiscated by infantrymen of the 198th Inf. Bde. The tools were uncovered as part of an enemy propaganda office hidden in heavy underbrush six miles south of Tam Ky.
(Photo by PFC Tim Vaughn, 523rd Sig. Bn.)

TAM KY — The future of a small hamlet some 10 miles north of this provincial capital took a sudden turn when a former VC company commander, whose guerillas operated from the hamlet, rallied to the Republic of Vietnam bringing 23 of his men with him.

The former enemy, who U.S. advisors say was "disillusioned with the Viet Cong," came over to the allied side under the Chieu Hoi Program. A few days later he returned to his village of Binh Sa, 30 miles north of Chu Lai, and persuaded 23 of his followers to do the same.

"COL Hoang Dinh Tho, Quang Tin Province chief, under whose jurisdiction the hamlet lies, fetted the 27-year-old former VC and ten of his men in Tam Ky in order to show them," explained LTC M.G. Stafford (Eagle, Tex.), the U.S. senior advisor to COL Tho.

The province chief then gave consent to hand over 10 M-16 rifles and an assortment of grenades to the new ralliers and sent them back to their village to organize a rural defense force — this time on the side of the Government.

"The province chief talked with him (the former VC commander) extensively and believed him," said COL Stafford.

It was further explained by COL Stafford that the former VC company commander at first was impressed by the Viet Cong but as the months passed "none of the promises were ever fulfilled."

"When he saw what we had on our side," the advisor continued, "seeing that we lived in relative peace compared to the pounding received by the enemy, he turned himself over."

A week of negotiations preceded the actual rallying of the commander and 23 of his men since the men's safety had to be guarded, said CPT Gerald Hamm (Jamestown, N.D.), an intelligence advisor to the Quang Tin Province chief.

Hamm explained that the former enemy leader had commanded a VC local force company until it was disbanded last April. Then, most of his men — and many of the men who rallied with their commander — became part of a guerilla force operating out of the hamlet of Binh Sa.

The hamlet has been classified conservatively by U.S. and South Vietnamese military officials as "contested."

Today the future of Binh Sa, where most of the families of the men who rallied to the Government live, seems to be well on its way to being pacified — with the help of several dozen former Viet Cong.

A Change Of Command Ceremony Honors CSM

CHU LAI—During a unique ceremony, believed to be a first in the division, CSM Hervey McChesney (Bowling Green, Ky), Spt. Cmd. sergeant major relinquished the command's top non-commissioned officer position to CSM Victor M. Fike (Grant Park, Ill).

With the exception of COL K.B. Barlow, (Savannah, Tenn.), Spt. Cmd. commander, who officiated and passed the color from the old to the new sergeant major, it was an entirely enlisted review.

CSM Richard Read (Columbus. Ohio), 23rd Supply and Transport Bn. sergeant major was commander of troops. The Spt. Cmd. staff was composed of MSG Paul Morel (Antwerp, Belgium), division transportation office; MSG Leonard Gluege (Platteville, Wis.), S-2; MSG Donald French (Fayetteville, N.C.), S-4; SFC George Willis (Sierra Vista, Ariz.), S-3; and SFC August Stangle (Canton, Ill), S-1.

Distinguished guests among the many officers and enlisted men present included COL Joseph G. Clemons and CSM J.P. Meade, division chief of staff and command sergeant major respectively.

During the unique enlisted review, COL Barlow presented CSM McChesney with the Bronze Star Medal, first, second and third oak leaf cluster; Army Commendation Medal, second oak leaf cluster and an Air Medal, first oak leaf cluster. CSM McChesney is being reassigned to Frankfurt, Germany.

The new Spt. Cmd. sergeant major is a veteran of 22 years who has served in Canada, Germany, France, Iran, Taiwan, and the Far East Command. He is presently starting his second tour in the Republic of Vietnam.

CSM Pike comes to this command from an assignment as CSM of the US Army Quartermaster School, Fort Lee, Va. (Spt. Cmd. IO)

Pilot Visits Son

Dad Flies Freedom Birds To-Fro Vietnam

By PFC Bill Eftink

LZ BAYONET — For a soldier in Vietnam, having a dad who flies 'freedom birds' for a living has its advantages.

SP4 Terry C. Whitaker (Long Beach, Calif.) pointed this out when he told his buddies in H Trp., 17th Cav. that his father was arriving that afternoon at their 198th Inf. Bde. besecamp for a two-day visit.

Continental Airlines pilot Captain W.C. Whitaker, who had landed his Boeing 707 'freedom bird' at the Da Nang airport two days earlier, received a five-day vacation to visit his son.

When his father arrived at the Chu Lai Airport, Terry was given his commander's jeep to pick up his Dad and show him around the basecamp.

"The whole thing really worked out well," Terry explained as he sat with his father and other members of his platoon. "Our entire troop just returned to the basecamp yesterday, so Dad has plenty of time to see my track and meet the rest of the guys."

It wasn't long until the older Whitaker had met most of H Trp.'s 2nd platoon and the conversation turned to airplanes, APCs and war-stories.

Not to be out-done by the division troops, the ex-WW II bomber pilot recalled the time when the formation he was flying in was attacked by German fighter planes.

"Suddenly I heard a loud popping noise in the cockpit. When I looked up from my instrument panel, I saw my co-pilot with the window open blazing away at them with his .45 cal. pistol."

After WW II, CPT Whitaker became a civilian pilot and logged over 4,000 hours of flight time flying DC-3 passenger planes. This is the civilian version of the AC-47s now used as 'spookey' gunships, Whitaker explained.

For the last five years he has been flying an average of two trips monthly to Vietnam in the giant 707 'freedom birds'.

"It's always a thrill to take a load of men home", said Whitaker. "As strange as it may sound, the men coming over seem to be a lot louder and more excited until we start to land. That's when everything becomes hushed. On the way back to the world, it's just the opposite. The men are usually quiet or sleeping until we touch down in Washington or California, and then all kinds of hell breaks loose."

Both father and son are hoping that they will be able to make Terry's return trip home together five months from now. The 21-year-old Whitaker says, "I'd like to be able to fly home with dad; but as soon as they tell me I can go, if his plane isn't the first one available that's just too bad." (198th IO)

Supply Copter

A helicopter makes one of its many resupply runs to units in the field. The division copter was supporting infantrymen of the 11th Inf. Bde. two miles southeast of LZ Stinson.
(Photo by PFC Ronald Massey, 523rd Sig Bn.)

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS AMERICAL DIVISION
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96374

AVDF-CG

SUBJECT: Anniversary Message

TO: Men of the Americal Division

1. October 26 is a special day in the history of the Americal Division. On that date two years ago, the Americal Division colors were again unfurled on foreign soil.

2. Since that time, many soldiers have served under the four stars of the Southern Cross, fighting the Communist aggressor in the marshlands, rice paddies and jungle-covered mountains of the Republic of Vietnam. Although our task is not complete in this harsh struggle, it has been through the individual efforts and sacrifices of the Americal soldier that significant inroads against oppression have been made.

3. Our achievements during the past two years, both in combat and pacification, are a matter of record and stand second to none. In every encounter, we have soundly defeated Viet Cong guerrilla and main force units and the trained soldiers of the 2nd and 3rd NVA Divisions, inflicting well over 30,000 casualties in the two years. Because of the men of the Americal Division, South Vietnamese civilians are now able to live and work in areas that were once under the control of enemy terrorists. We can all take pride in these accomplishments, which are spelling the defeat of the enemy.

4. I wish each of you continued success and best wishes as we--the Americal Division--enter our third year.

Lloyd B. Ramsey
LLOYD B. RAMSEY
Major General, USA
Commanding

Proudly Serving Our Action Army

MSG Harry J. Donahue
Reenlistment Supervisor
Amcal. Div.

by MSG H.A. Bonesio

Sixteen of the 27 soldiers reenlisting during a one-week period in the AMERICAL Division were "first termers". Seventeen of the reenlistees chose guaranteed enlistment options while the others remained on their present duty assignment.

Division Artillery keeps SF5 Oscar L. Wilson, 251st F. A. (Radar Det.); and the 16th Combat Aviation Group, SSG Ismael Rodriguez, HHC, 123rd Avn. Bn.

The 11th Infantry Brigade retains PFC William Cherry, PFC Harvey Atkins and PFC Patrick Bowley, all with A Co., 4-3; and PFC Armando Rodriquez, E Co., 4-21.

The 196th Infantry Brigade re-upped SSG Donald P. Fleshman, B Co.; PFC Stephen Chestnut, A Co., PFC Danny A. Weymouth, HHC; PFC Gene W. Wellman, B Co.; and FVT Waldo F. Montgomery, D Co.; all with 3-21. Also, from 4-31, PFC David Price, HHC; and PFC James H. Sinderman, B Co. From 2-1, PFC Wilbur Perry, C Co.; and PFC James M. Boersema, B Co.

The 198th Infantry Brigade reenlistees were SSG Clinton McAplin, HHC; and SP4 Sidney Crenshaw, B Co., both with 1-52.

Dishonorable A Bad Scene

KNOW WHAT?

What is an honorable discharge?

Each type of discharge characterizes the quality of service during an individual's military career. Veteran right's, eligibility for reentry into the service, and acceptance for employment are the essential factors controlled by discharge status.

Many servicemen have the false impression that a less than honorable discharge can be easily changed by petitioning the Army Discharge Review Board (ADRB). However, DA recently announced this is not the case. Only a small percentage of such petitions have been acted upon favorably.

Those who receive a Dishonorable or Bad Conduct Discharge are not eligible for most benefits administered by the Army, the Veterans administration and Federal agencies for the remainder of their lives.

An honorable discharge, however, can be "money in the bank." Some of the benefits of an honorable discharge are: eligibility for Federal Civil Service employment, job-finding-assistance, reemployment rights, unemployment compensation, preference in housing purchase and rental, vocational rehabilitation, educational assistance allowance, and burial rights.

Results of Federal government studies show that nearly all soldiers who separated from the Army with a less than honorable discharge were unable to overcome a civilian life of failure and insecurity.

HEALTH AND WELFARE REPORTS

It is important to write the family regularly and to receive word from them often. But breakdowns in communications sometimes occur. If you are concerned about the family, your Red Cross field director can obtain a health and welfare report.

See your field director for other assistance, too. He can help when you need counseling on personal and family problems or emergency financial assistance. Through the chapter back home, Red Cross can give emergency assistance to your dependents if needed. Ask your field director about other services available to you and your loved ones.

Education

The 27th Surgical Hospital is now sponsoring a high school Government Educational Development (GED) Test preparatory program, in which eighteen personnel from various units in the division are enrolled. The program's major objective is to sufficiently prepare enrollees, through formal classroom studies, in the five subject test areas, thus enabling them to pass the GED Test Battery, and subsequently obtain high school diplomas from each student's home state department of education.

The GED program offers subjects in English Composition, Social Studies, Science, Literature, and Mathematics. The group of diploma aspirants receive an average of twenty hours of instruction per week by two instructors.

The Americal Education Center in Chu Lai has available application forms for SAT and Achievement Tests, Graduate Record Examinations, Graduate Business, and Law School Admission Tests. College Board Admission Tests are also offered by the center.

Religion And You

Questions Of Essence

CHAPLAIN (MAJ) PATRICK J. DENNIGAN
198th Inf. Bde.

Who am I? What is my purpose in life? These are two questions that have engrossed philosophers and theologians since the beginning. But if we can answer these questions, it will help us adapt to the maze of circumstances and events that affect our life, as well as give us a certain amount of the relative peace and happiness that God has intended all of us should have here and now.

Who am I? I am a rational animal, which means I am composed of two elements; a body and a soul. It also indicates, if we think about it, why the material pleasures of this life can never truly satisfy a person. The spiritual part of man—his soul—is immaterial, and continually striving for something more than this world can offer.

What is my purpose in life? Since I am a creature composed of body and soul, made by a Creator (through the cooperation of my parents, of course), my whole aim in life should be to know, love and serve this Creator who made me out of pure love and has destined me to live for eternity with Him in heaven.

This concept of enternity is very difficult for our finite, limited minds to grasp. One author described eternity in this manner: Far to the north there is a high mountain, one hundred miles high, and one hundred miles wide. Once every thousand years, a small bird comes to sharpen its beak on the side of this mountain, 100 miles high and 100 miles wide. When that bird has leveled the mountain to the ground, then one day of eternity will have passed! And only one day! We begin to realize how important it is to make our life here and now useful, fruitful for our own happiness and that of our neighbor. God has so much in store for us, if we complete His plan for us here on earth.

SOUTHERN CROSS AMERICAL DIVISION

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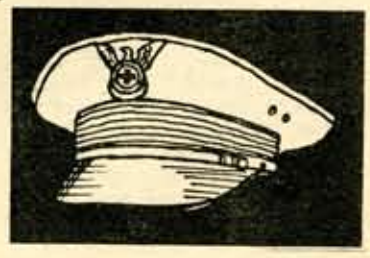
Major General Lloyd B. Ramsey ..... Commanding General
Major John T. Pauli ..... Information Officer
1LT LeLand R. Smith ..... Officer-In-Charge
Specialist Four Terry Mack ..... Editor
Specialist Four James Brown ..... Managing Editor
Specialist Four Paul F. Palmer ..... Staff Artist



Orphanage Reflects Happiness

BINH SON — Sister Gisele thought a few moments before answering. "What would happen if this orphanage received no outside help?" she repeated the question, adding: "It would close within a month."

Infantrymen of the division have been working hard the last few months to keep the orphanage open which Sister Gisele took charge of last August.

"You Americans have been very, very helpful," she said, glancing at the orphanage's almost completed new wing, which was built in part from money gathered by men of the 198th Inf. Bde.

LTC Julian Wagner (Green Cove Springs, Fla.), commander of the 5th Bn., 46th Inf., referred to the project to help the orphanage as "Project Adoption" aimed at helping "some little children who are caught in a war."

COL Wagner's battalion gave more than $900 to the orphanage during a 10-week period, with the money coming from contributions at the pay lines and church services.

One of the spark plugs of the project to help the youngsters has been Chaplain (CPT) Charles V. Adams (Springfield, Mo.) who makes frequent trips to the orphanage about five miles from the battalion basecamp of LZ Gator.

"A few weeks ago it was my birthday," Adams said, "and they had me to lunch at the orphanage. It was my birthday party and you really wouldn't have believed it."

At this time the chaplain has plans for a Christmas party at the orphanage. Already he and the men of his battalion have written letters to relatives in the states to send various items for the youngsters.

Many of the men are getting involved with this," Adams explained. "This gives the men an outlet. Many of them want to go down to visit the orphanage if nothing else."

The soldiers of the 5th Bn., 46th Inf. have helped Sister Gisele and her young charges in many different ways; giving them money and bringing clothing and food or just a moment of good cheer.

"Last month it was the first time each of these kids slept in his own bed — up off the wet floor," Adams said.

The cots were found for the youngsters by members of the battalion at a division salvage yard. With a little work the cots suited the needs of the children, the chaplain related. (198th IO)

U.S. ARMY CHAPLAIN (CPT) Charles V. Adams takes a half dozen orphans for a walk through the grounds of the Binh Son Orphanage 10 miles south of Chu Lai. The chaplain for 198th Inf. Bde.'s 5th Bn., 46th Inf. has spearheading the unit's "Operation Adoption" aimed at helping the 95 youngsters at the orphanage. (Photo By 1LT Josef Hebert)

Seabees Build School

CHU LAI — When distance is coupled with the lack of modern transportation, problems are bound to arise, especially if you are the progressive-minded populace of Cu Lao Re Island, eighteen miles off the coast of South Vietnam.

Island students must receive their secondary education in Quang Ngai City on the mainland.The province and district officials, representatives of fourteen thousand residents, desired to bring about reforms in the realization of a high school for the island.

They brought their burden to the Americal Division's G5 section who assigned MCB-58 (Seabees) to the task. Reacting quickly civic action officers of MCB-58 met with island officials to work out the details. They determined that the construction of a high school would be a joint effort with the supply of materials to be split between them. A construction team of eight seabees and 20 Vietnamese laborers would build the school.

On August third eight seabees were airlifted to Cu Lao Re island via helicopter provided by the 16th CAG, Americal Div. There they were to live for the next two months with the people of the island.

Problems which were often encountered due to combat priority on materials, and the monsoon season were solved by the combined effort of the participants. Virtually every means of transportation was used; Vietnamese Navy junk boats, US Navy "Mike" boats and US Army huey and chinook helicopters.

The high morale and intense enthusiasm of the eight seabee constructors moved virtual mountains of work in the wake of their two month deadline.

On October 1, 1969 the four room, two story, Ly Son high school constructed in traditional Vietnamese architectural style was dedicated. Among the honored guests was the Commanding General, Americal Division, MG Lloyd B Ramsey (Somerset, Ky.).

MCB-58's operation in concern was consummated in the ribbon cutting, but long will the people of Cu Lao Re Island remember the eight seabees that lived in their midst, worked with them, and helped them complete their school. (Americal IO)

Ceremony Of Bracelets

LZ BRONCO—Five division officers of the 11th Inf. Bde. were presented wrist ornaments as a token of esteem and to symbolize their induction as honorary members of the Montagnard village of Ba Long in the Ba To district.

The officers taking part in the ceremony were, LTC Robert Fernandez (Honolulu), commander of the 4th Bn., 3rd Inf.; MAJ Wilford A. Fhelps (Malibu, Calif.), battalion operations officer; CPT Joseph S. Fagin (Long Beach, Calif.), battalion surgeon; CPT Anthony F. Farinelli (Boston), commander of E Co.; and CPT Joseph A. Monday (Lawton, Okla.), artillery liaison officer.

Hosting the simple Montagnard ceremony was MAJ Dinh Enh, a regional force company commander.

The officers removed their boots before climbing to the top of a six-foot high platform. They then sat down and exchanged pleasantries with the village chief as they sipped rice wine through hollow reeds leading to a vase in the middle of the platform.

As an ancient chime sounded five Montagnard girls sitting between the men, placed bracelets around each man's wrist. Standing up, each man downed a cup of rice wine, signifying that the ritual was concluded.

MAJ Phelps, who worked with the Montagnards on his first tour in Vietnam explained later: "The rice wine symbolizes purity, integrity, and loyalty while the bracelet symbolizes an honorary position in the Ba Long Montagnard tribe. The ceremony was beautiful for its simplicity." (11th IO)

Festivities And Children

LZ BALDY — Children's Tet was celebrated by some 1,500 youngsters at the U.S.-supervised Hiep Duc Refugee Center, located 17 miles west of Tam Ky.

Festivities were not spoiled in the aftermath of the grim battles waged near the settlement in late August. Infantrymen of the division had killed more than 1,200 NVA soldiers, mainly from the 2nd NVA Div., in the Hiep Duc Valley during a fortnight of continuous enemy contact. The refugee center was one object of the massive enemy offensive — it was saved.

For the celebration, infantrymen of the 196th Inf. Bde.'s 4th Bn., 31st Inf., gave 60 pounds of candy to the children of the refugee settlement.

"I feel that it was extremely important that the children be given the opportunity to hold their celebration in spite of the recent heavy fighting," said 2LT Michael Dononoe (San Francisco), the civil affairs officer of the 4th Bn., 31st Inf. "It definitely had a positive effect on the morale of the people, and the children had a ball." (196th IO)

A Heartwarming Children's Day

IT JUST WOULDN'T SEEM like Children's Day without a brightly colored lantern as this little celebrant readies hers for the festivities at Quang Ngai. Soldiers of the 11th Bde. ensured that there were plenty of candy and toys in southern I Corps for this national lunar holiday. (Photo By SP4 Steve Tipton)

LZ BRONCO — The subject is children. There have always been and there always will be — children. No matter how hard he tries, the adult sophisticate cannot escape the presence and the innocence that children inject into the world.

They experience the hassles of growing-up in ways and under circumstances too numerous, too different, and often too difficult to imagine.

From the swimming pools of suburban America to the streams of the Republic of Vietnam, all children share a common bond — the need for warmth and affection. In return they are capable of pervading the world with an aura of serenity and the hopes of a secure and lasting peace.

Last week was Children's Day in the Republic of Vietnam and the men of the 11th Bde. did their small part in contributing to the genuine needs of 300 orphaned Vietnamese youngsters.

It is traditional that each child receive a gift on this festive occasion. Through the efforts of seven men and a Chaplain, (MAJ) Clyde J. Wood (Birmingham, Ala.) from 1st Bn., 20th Inf., the children were not disappointed. The group arrived at the Duc Pho Orphanage laden with enough candy to delight any child. Although the gesture was brief and unceremonious, the orphan's eyes were wide in anticipation and delight knowing that they had not been forgotten.

Lunar Monarch Reigns Supreme

By 1LT James P. Collins, Jr.

LZ BRONCO — A combination of Christmas and Halloween is a pretty fair cultural translation of Children's Day, which is also called the mid-autumn festival. It has all the trappings of the two holidays: gaily-costumed youngsters, brightly-lit lanterns, and plenty of toys and candy.

Members of the PSYOPS section of the Div.'s 11th Inf. Bde. journeyed with an assortment of treats to this celebration at Quang Ngai City. There they gave gifts of candy, lanterns, and school supplies to 500 dependent children of the 4th ARVN Regiment. Later in the day they converted the regimental school into a theater with their own "magic lantern" and treated the children to a Vietnamese movie and cartoons.

Most Vietnamese holidays are embedded with both lunar and legendary motifs. Children's Day is no exception, being a festival of homage to a lovely queen who lived on the moon. According to the ancient legend, this moon queen surrounded herself with many beautiful and happy children to dispel the loneliness of space.

Children today celebrate the feast, which they call Trung Thu, with the wish that they too might share in the happiness of the Moon Queen.

It is, of course, a time of great joy — a day of games, gifts, and special foods. The favorite fare is rich, moon-shaped cakes made of peanuts, flour, and egg.

Americal...

... Vietnam

...2 Years

King Of Booby Traps

"That's the way to check out those booby traps, King," is what SP4 Roy Bustin told his scout dog. The scout dog and handler are from the 60th scout dog platoon and working with the Div.'s 1st Bn., 52nd Inf. on an operation northwest of Quang Ngai. (Photo by D.K. Williams, Americal IO)

Arty Matches NVA Recoilless

LZ SIBERIA—It didn't take long for a group of NVA soldiers to discover that their recoilless rifle was no match for a 105mm howitzer. By then, it was too late.

For several days a small element of NVA troops hid on a hill in the Hiep Duc Valley shooting their recoilless across the Song Thu Bon River at a division fire support base 30 miles south of Da Nang.

But one day, the men of the 3rd Bn., 82nd Arty. were too quick for the enemy gunners and gave them a taste of their own medicine.

"It was about 6 p.m.," said SGT Ronnie Jackson (Joplin, Mo.) "and the battery was in the process of resupplying its gun sections with ammunition. Suddenly a series of rounds came whizzing over our heads. The rounds were high and none of them actually hit the LZ, landing in the dump on the other side of the hill."

Within seconds Jackson's gun crew shifted its howitzer in the direction of the enemy fire. "We could see the smoke and flash from the tube of the recoilless, so we knew exactly where to position our gun," explained SP4 John Vines (Lansing, Mich.), assistant gunner.

Before the enemy had a chance to lower its weapon, Jackson's gun blasted a series of high explosive rounds directly at the enemy position. Another gun quickly joined in the fight and soon the enemy was silent.

A sweep of the hill the next day by infantrymen of the 4th Bn., 31st Inf. revealed five enemy killed and three wounded. "Not only did we knock out the recoilless rifle and the gun crew, but we also got the ammo," Vines said.

Combat In Review

Unique Weapons Find Astonishes Officials

LZ BALDY — A Thompson submachine gun and Soviet-manufactured ammo stashed inside an American perimeter?

Impossible! Not quite. Division's SSG Alan K. Milton (Billerica, Mass.) didn't believe it either at first. Milton of the 196th Inf. Bde.'s 1st Bn., 46th Inf. was supervising a sandbag detail in a rear area in Chu Lai. He was directing two men carrying sandbags up an incline near thick undergrowth.

"I glimpsed under a bush. It looked like cardboard with something inside," the sergeant said.

Further investigation revealed 40 rounds of AK-47 ammo wrapped inside cellophane with an outer cardboard covering. This find had just been announced when another discovery was made in the same area.

PFC Alfred L. Middleton (Panama City, Fla.) never made it to the bunker detail that he was scheduled to join that afternoon. He almost fell over a Thompson submachine gun when he rounded a long hooch on his way to work.

For some time the mini-caches were a puzzle for Army officials. However, the possibility of an enemy arms cache was discarded. Apparently an American soldier stored the munitions in hope of taking them back to the states as souvenirs, officials theorized. (196th IO)

Combat Machine

Aided by another, a tank from Div.'s 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav., is removed from its muddy bed in the Pineapple Forest area northwest of Tam Ky. (Photo by SP4 Michael Sullivan, 523rd Sig. Bn.)

Pigeon Cache Found

CHU LAI — Infantrymen of the division found it hard to believe they had found an enemy pigeon stop while on a search and clear mission near Duc Pho.

But a RTO of the 11th Inf. Bde.'s 4th Bn., 21st Inf. reported the incident just as his unit had reached the end of a hazardous trek down a mountainside in triple canopy jungle.

The courier pigeon network consisted of huge nets about 15-feet high by 10-feet wide, and arranged so that the birds could be retrieved both night and day.

At the base of these nets were cages well concealed in the underbrush. The resting place of the winged messengers had been used recently, as there were a lot of feathers and a bag of grain nearby.

In this age of "faster than fast" communication, the division soldier must still keep an alert eye for pigeons with messages. (Americal IO)

Soldier Earns Bronze And Silver Stars

LZ GATOR — The commander of 198th Inf. Bde., COL Jere O. Whittington awarded both the Silver Star and the Bronze Star Medal with "V" device to SP4 Walter G. Yeargin, (Avendale, Ariz.) during mid-morning ceremonies held at this division forward firebase.

SP4 Yeargin was awarded the Silver Star for his heroic actions while serving as a medic with D Co., 4th Bn., 3rd Inf. of the 11th Inf. Bde.

While conducting a sweep near the village of Da Son, his platoon was pinned down and sustained numerous casualties. Although wounded himself, Yeargin continued to expose himself to the enemy fire while traveling from man to man administering first aid.

In an attempt to get near the wounded men a medevac copter was shot down a short distance from the pinned down platoon; Yeargin again exposed himself to the enemy to reach the downed craft where he helped evacuate the crew and administer first aid to its injured members.

Yeargin received the Bronze Star in connection with a later action in which the helicopter he was riding in was shot down in a remote area.

At the same ceremony COL Whittington also awarded the Army Commendation Medal with "V" device to SP4 Wayne R. Otto (San Francisco) for valorous actions in the defense of LZ Gator while serving with D Co., 5th Bn., 46th Inf. (198th IO)

Infantrymen Uncovers Hot Rocket Cache

LZ BRONCO — A campaign against NVA rocket operations by A Co., 1st Bn., 20th Inf. paid off when the company discovered a rocket cache near the South China Sea, six kilometers north of Duc Pho.

The day before A Co.'s find, a light observation helicopter, accompanied by two Cobra gunships supporting the 11th Inf. Bde., spotted the rockets during a visual recon of the area.

The infantrymen were moved into the area by air on a combat assault operation and immediately conducted a sweep of the possible rocket site. In spite of hostile fire on its position, the company's search disclosed five self-propelled 122mm rocket bodies and six warheads. (11th IO)

Combat Ready Bird

A 123rd Avn. Bn. huey cobra roars from its helipad in pursuit of the enemy. These "firepounding" choppers fly combat missions near the Division's LZ Bronco, 35 miles south of Chu Lai. (Photo By SP4 Lou Pearson, 523rd Sig. Bn.)

Bountiful Beth Owens wants to remind you that Christmas is only two months away. So don't forget to mail Christmas cards and packages early. Wonder whose Christmas stocking Beth is going to fill this year.

Immersion Foot: Personally "Painful" Podiatry

By CPT Robin R. Gunnings, MD

CHU LAI — Last October in the Americal area of operation there were 89 hospitalized cases of immersion foot. This alone concludes that preventive measures must be taken.

Of prime importance is a basic understanding of what immersion foot is, and how it is caused. The disorder is characterized by severe wrinkling and maceration (tearing) of the soles of the feet, accompanied by a marked rise in sensitivity to pain which can make simple walking unbearable. The skin disorder is caused by exposure of the feet to prolonged, uninterrupted immersion in water. The continual pressure of combat boots to the saturated skin causes deterioration of what was once healthy, firm tissue.

To prevent immersion foot measures must be taken by the individual soldier and insured by the leader to be sure that recommended procedures are followed to the letter.

Weather and combat situation permitting the thorough drying of the feet and exposure to sun and air for one or two hours each day will reduce cases considerably. Boots can be laced from the third lace up to minimize pressure on the foot; close inspection of the feet for minor infection should be effected daily; and a liberal amount of foot power applied daily and furnished by the unit medic or supply room coupled with regular cleaning of the boot liners with soap and water will aid in drying and prevent infection. Socks should not be worn unless their absence irritates the individual.

Immersion foot usually requires hospitalization for more than a week depending on the degree of complicating infection.

First In Re-Up Record

PFC ANDREW T. MARTIN REPEATS the oath of enlistment administered by MG Lloyd B. Ramsey, division commander. Martin became the first soldier to crack the 200th reenlistment goal for a monthly record in Vietnam. PSG Thomas B. Rogers (Gary, Ind.), holding the National Flag during the ceremony, is the career counselor of the 3rd Bn., 21st Inf., 196th Inf.

CHU LAI — Career counselors from the U.S. Army's Americal Division set a monthly record in Vietnam for the highest number of reenlistments, stated CPT Domingo A. Molinelli (Santruce, P.R.), division reenlistment officer.

PFC Andrew T. Martin III (Olean, N.Y.), A Co., 3rd Bn., 21st Inf., 196th Inf. Bde. was administered the oath of enlistment by MG Lloyd B. Ramsey (Somerset, Ky.), division commander, becoming the 200th soldier to re-up during the month of September.

For good measure, the division reenlistment NCOs signed up an additional half-dozen troopers prior to midnight of the last day, bringing the month's total to 206 new careerists for the Army.

Last July, the division reenlistment office, headed by senior career counselor, MSG Harry J. Donahue (Beckley, W. Va.), set a record of 175 enlistments during a single month. This mark was broken by the 1st Cav. Div. in August with 179.

Much of the credit for shattering the 200-man barrier is due to the efforts of SFC Harold Mathis Jr. (Wallington, N.J.) and his career counselors of the 196th Inf. Bde., who reenlisted 422.2 per cent of their assigned objective.

Although the Americal is the only division in the U.S. Army lacking a numerical designation it doesn't lack for numbers when it comes to staying with the "team." (Americal IO)

Awards & Decorations

SILVER STAR MEDAL

SGT George E. Eastman Jr, 196th Bde; PSG Pete Gonzales 196th Bde;1LT Willie B. Grant Jr, 196th Bde; SP4 John W. Haak, 11th Bde; CPT James P. Hurley, 11th Bde; PFC Melvin W. Murphy, 11th Bde; 1LT Victor D. Ricci, 11th Bde.

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

CPT Earl S. Holp, 14th Cbt Avn Bn; WO1 William Horvay, 14th Cbt Avn Bn; WO1 Steven B. Johannsen, 14th Cbt Avn Bn; CPT John S. Walker, 11th Bde.

BRONZE STAR MEDAL WITH "V" DEVICE

FFC John R. Alsup, 11th Bde; SGT Arturo R. Ariaga, 11th Bde; PFC Dennis E. Besse, 11th Bde; SP4 Jerry W. Boice, 1st Cav; SP4 Herbert Bolden, 196th Bde; PFC Howard G. Bowers Jr, 196th Bde; PFC David L. Brownell, 196th Bde; 1LT William D. Castille, 11th Bde; SGT James E. Chapin, 11th Bde; PFC Lawrence J. Cleary, 196th Bde; SGT Sam Day, 75th Inf (Ranger); SGT Robert L. Devol, 198th Bde; 2LT Mark A. Eidemiller, 196th Bde; 1LT Charles G. Fairchild, 11th Arty; PFC Charles F. Ford, 11th Bde; SGT David Galliher, 82nd Arty; SGT Homer L. Garrison Jr, 11th Bde; SP4 Daniel B. Girres, 11th Bde; SP4 Charles W. Goodrich, 11th Bde; PFC Dannile Hamlin, 11th Bde; SP4 Bruce N. Johnson, 75th Inf (Ranger); 1LT Kenneth K. Killingsworth, 11th Bde; Peter F. Kuhaneck (2nd OLC), 11th Bde; SSG David E. Lambert, 11th Bde; PFC Robert A. Landis, 11th Bde; SP4 Robert B. Lombardo (1st OLC), 23rd Med Bn; SP4 Michael P. Mann, 11th Bde; PFC Jennings Marshall, 198th Bde; PFC Charles L. Molnar, 82nd Arty; PFC Robert Musthare, 11th Bde; PFC Donald Naughton, 11th Bde; SP4 Harry J. Niedfeldt, 198th Bde; SGT Otto F. Numssen, 11th Bde; FFC Lawrence M. Osment, 11th Bde; SGT Jeffrey C. Peterson, 196th Bde; PFC Richie J. Rowan, 11th Bde; SGT Enrique R. Santos, 196th Bde; PFC William T. Sawatzki, 11th Bde; SP4 Anthony F. Scasino (1st OLC), 11th Bde; PFC Norman L. Snider, 196th Bde; SP4 Paul D. Stepp, 196th Bde; SP4 Henry M. Stewart, 11th Bde; SP4 Jacob J. Weathersby Jr, 196th Bde; SF4 Roosevelt Wilson, 196th Bde; PFC Gary L. Zellweger, 196th Bde.

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL WITH "V" DEVICE

PFC Dalton J. Adams, 198th Bde; SP4 James B. Bennett Jr, 196th Bde; SGT Eddie D Benson, 11th Bde; SP4 Robert L. Brink, 198th Bde; PFC Fatrick R. Burke, 11th Bde; PFC Charles F. Chapman, 82nd Arty; PFC Aubrey K. Gover, 1st Cav; PFC William J. Grubb, 198th Bde; SP4 Kenneth Heath, 14th Cbt Avn Bn; PFC Steven Holland, 11th Bde; PFC Richard Jones (1st OLC), 11th Bde; SGT Arthur L. Krumsiek (1st OLC), 11th Arty; SF4 Timothy V. Miles, 196th Bde; PFC Larry R. Wimmer, 14th Cbt Avn Bn; SP4 Albert Murphy (1st OLC), 11th Bde; SGT R.J. Odle, 82nd Arty; PFC Roger D. Rice, 11th Bde; SSG Brian W. Riedel, 11th Bde; SP4 William A. Rozar Jr, 196th Bde; CPT Jerry L. Simpson, 11th Arty; 2LT Gregory A. Smith, 11th Bde; SSG Charles F. Swaggert, 196th Bde; PFC Walter A. Swain, 11th Bde; CPT John S. Walker, 11th Bde; SP4 Charles R. Woods, 11th Bde; SP4 John T. Wright, 11th Bde.

A Cook Tells Method Food Is Prepared

LZ BALDY — Oh, &&&-!!6, not "Baldy Steak" (roast beef) again; powdered eggs this morning, man what a bummer. Does this sound familiar to you? Well if you're a cook at LZ Baldy and your name is SP4 Teddy Collins (Bardstown Ky.) A Btry., 3-82nd Arty., it's as common as "Baldy steak."

"I don't mind the occasional kidding, in fact sometimes I like it. I feel it creates a better rapport between myself and the men. A cook has his responsibilities just like any other member of the battery. Some people think all he does is push KP's," said Collins.

The biggest job of a cook is preparing the food. A regular food schedule is listed by the mess sergeant. Items such as meats which take the greatest amount of time to prepare are first on the agenda. Anything that can be cooked on the spot such as eggs or toast is prepared last. Dinner rolls, pie, and cake require the most preparation time, so they are molded, panned and baked the night before. This is standard procedure for all meals. Of prime importance is the daily headcount, for once it is known how many men have to be served, the cooks requisition an equal amount of food for the next day.

"There is more to being a cook than just preparing meals and working over a hot fire unit," stated Collins. "We do have fun occasionally. We like to experiment once in awhile, especially when the troops are tired of the same thing. For example, on one occasion everyone was complaining too much lime drink was being served. So we decided to change that. We added some red food coloring to the drink, changing the color but not the taste. Everyone appeared satisfied and we had a laugh for ourselves!" (196th IO)

Bush Lingo

Stumped for the right word? Haven't always been able to communicate with your peers? Bush terminology has been a little beyond your grasp? When Mom writes and asks why her son is a "grunt" and you can't give her an adequate explanation consult the bush thesaurus.

Infantryman (grunt) Medevac Helicopter (dust-off) March w/full field equipment (hump, humping) Huey Gunship (hog) White Phosphorus Arty. Round (willie peter) CH-47 Helicopter (hook) Armored Personnel Carrier (APC) Artilleryman (gunbunny) Artillery Fire (bringing red leg) Vietnamese Women (mama san) Vietnamese Man (papa san) Vietnamese Boy or Girl (baby san) Village (vill) Jungle Area (boonies) Fragmentation Grenade (frag) Ignite Smoke Grenade (pop smoke) Telephone, Commo (horn).

The Men of Weather Chart Forecasts

By SP4 Stephen G. Frazier

CHU LAI — Combat demands are met as a matter of routine. And with the advent of airmobile warfare, the mission of the division staff weather office is an increasingly real and cognizant part of combat planning procedure.

The staff weather office, comprised entirely of Air Force personnel, provides direct weather support to all units of the Americal Division.

"We provide support in two ways," explained CPT John P. Huddle, USAF, (Sycamore, Ohio). First in an advisory capacity to the division commander, to aid in the planning of operations. Secondly to provide assistance in the form of information to the three brigades 16th C.A.G., and attached units of the division."

Most of the support is generated from operating location 7 (OL 7), the Air Force designation for the Americal Weather Office. Also two combat weather teams are located strategically in Quang Ngai and Duc Pho. These teams gather terminal weather data and pass it on telephonically to the main station at Chu Lai.

Close support is accomplished by the forward weather teams. When a tactical situation warrants an observation flight the teams are there to provide an area weather synopsis which presents invaluable information about visibility, ceiling and winds. Chopper pilots frequently request the same information.

Concurrent with the situation all the information received at the weather office is interpreted, and teletyped to the weather relay center at weather group headquarters, Tan Son Nhut AFB, Saigon. There it becomes part of the entire Vietnam forecast.

The forecaster, MSG Robert W. Mitchell (foreground) and his observers assimilate and chart the current Chu Lai weather situation. (photo by SP4 D. Williams, Americal IO)

For the largest part, this job of compiling information to make a forecast is the job of the NCOIC of the staff weather office, MSG Robert W. Mitchell, (Ellsworth, Maine). A substantial part of his job as forecaster is briefing pilots on the weather situation, furnishes weather warnings when needed, and monitors the general weather situation. To help him are two weather observers who run the teletype machine, plot the maps and charts, and collect the information from forward weather teams.

Of course as with any job there are the extra considerations. The weather office provides a daily forecast for AFVN channel 13 television, Chu Lai and an automatic telephone system that gives the daily forecast when Chu Lai 118 is dialed.

Monthly climate publications are produced for command information purposes and special publications are produced for major operations. As a special service to all members of the division the staff weather office produced a climatalogical survey for all the R&R centers.

Accurate and concise information coupled with determined individual performance has made the staff weather office one of the finest members of the Americal Team. (Americal IO)