ANNUAL REPORT

HISTORY OF THE

173RD AVIATION COMPANY (ASLT HEL)
11TH AVIATION BATTALION (COMBAT)
12TH AVIATION GROUP (COMBAT)
1ST AVIATION BRIGADE

1 January 1969 - 31 December 1969

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

In preparing this annual historian report of the past year's operations of the 173rd Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) all dates and events indicated in this text were verified either by conversation with responsible individuals or extracts from authenticated records.

In this text all incidents of historical value were recorded, however, what was not recorded in these subsequent pages was the "unofficial" history of the Robin Hoods and the high spirit of the men.

The mission of the Robin Hoods of Sherwood Forest during the past year has consisted of operating and maintaining helicopters to provide tactical air movement of combat troops in airmobile operations and to provide movement of supplies and equipment.

These missions were run on a daily basis, seven days a week, each day introducing something new with each mission based upon a highly sophisticated operation requiring pin point timing and coordination between ground, air and artillery commands.

Although it is impossible to recognize all of the men who have served in the 173rd Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) during the past year in this report just recognition must be given to every individual who through their endeavor, team work, and devotion to duty, the Robin Hoods of Sherwood Forest have proven themselves to lead the way and set the standards in the 11th Aviation Battalion (Combat) and all aviation companies in the Republic of Vietnam.
My special thanks and appreciation to SP5 Jerome E. Kocha, SP4 Gerald R. Provost, and SP4 Charles R. Bolton who have spent many arduous hours typing this report. DANNY M. VAUGHAN CPT, CE Unit Historian

CHAPTER I
HERALDRY

The 173rd Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) officially entered into combat action in the Republic of South Vietnam on the 10th of May 1966, in operation "Birmingham". The 173rd Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) arrived in country with the nickname "Robin Hoods" and because their new home was within the rubber trees of Lai Khe Plantation, it became known as "Sherwood Forest". The original unit symbol was a heart with an arrow through it, however, this was changed to the present symbol, shown above. The gunship platoon, nicknamed the "Crossbows", also designed a special crest for the gunship platoon. The crest is circular in shape with a red background with a skull having wings superimposed over a crossbow. The flying skull symbolizing death and the crossbow signifying the deadly accuracy in which the Crossbows are able to effectively place suppressive fire upon the enemy. Since their arrival in the Republic of South Vietnam, the Robin Hoods of Sherwood Forest have distinguished themselves with a long list of awards and decorations. The Robin Hoods were the first aviation unit to have a member, SP4 Gary G. Wetzel, awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for heroism in the Republic of Vietnam.

CHAPTER II
COMMAND AND CONTROL

A. MISSION: The mission of the 173rd Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter) is to provide tactical air movement of combat troops in airmobile operations, and to provide tactical air movement of combat supplies and equipment.

The mission of the 759th Medical Detachment is to provide medical care and preventive medicine to the 173rd Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) and its assigned or attached units.

B. COMMANDER: Major Richard J. Burtnett, present commander of the 173rd Aviation Company (Aslt Hel), entered the service in December 1948 as an enlisted man. He was discharged in December 1952 to continue his education. After graduating from college in 1957 he entered the Army as a regular officer. He attended Army Aviation Flight School in 1959, rotary wing qualification course in 1961 and
holds both a rotary wing and fixed wing instrument ticket. He has attended numerous other Army schools to include the Infantry Officers Advanced Course and the Aerospace Safety Engineering Course. His overseas tours include tours in Germany, Korea, Vietnam, and Japan. He has been awarded the Bronze Star, Air Medal with 11 Oak Leaf Clusters, Army Commendation Medal, Good Conduct Medal, China Service Medal, Occupation Medal, National Defense Nations Service Medal, and the Vietnam Service Medal. He is authorized to wear the Meritorious Unit Commendation Medal and the Korean Presidential Unit Commendation Medal.

C. ORGANIZATION: The 173rd Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter) was activated at Fort Benning, Georgia on the 1st of September 1965, under General Order 268, dated 31 August 1965, Headquarters Third Army. The Company was attached to the 10th Aviation Group and was further attached to the 101st Aviation Company (Airmobile) (Light) as commanded by General Order 30, dated 27 September 1965, Headquarters 10th Aviation Group, Fort Benning, Georgia.

173rd Aviation Company (Asslt Hel) consisted of a Headquarters platoon, two flight platoons, a gunship platoon, and a service platoon. Also attached to the company under the same General Order was the 408th Transportation Detachment, the 451st Signal Detachment, and the 759th Medical Detachment.

The 173rd Aviation Company remained at Fort Benning, Georgia, organizing and training until January 1966 at which time the company began its movement to the Republic of Vietnam.

The company was deployed overseas in four phases which included a minimum essential equipment element, main body, advanced party, and an aircraft movement element. The main body element consisting of 44 officers and 151 enlisted men departed Columbus, Georgia, 15 February 1966 and arrived in Vung Tau, Vietnam 10 March 1966. From Vung Tau, the company was flown by Air Force C-130's to its new home, Lai Khe, later to become known as "Sherwood Forest". By the time the company arrived at Lai Khe, it consisted of 56 officers, 173 enlisted men and 24 UH-1B and D model helicopters.

The 173rd Aviation Company (Asslt Hel) arrived in country with the nickname of the "Robin Hoods" and since their new home was under the rubber trees of Lai Khe plantation, the Robin Hoods designated the company area as "Sherwood Forest". In keeping with the tradition, the gunship platoon was nicknamed the "Crossbows", and the maintenance section designated as "Friar Tuck", and the avionics section was dubbed "Little John".

From the period of 18 March to 31 March 1966, the unit not yet being fully operational, flew missions with other companies and assisted the 11th Aviation Battalion (Combat) with administration flights. The Robin Hoods continued throughout the month of April in a non-operational status. However, the unit was committed heavily in Operation Birmingham beginning 29 April 1966. The Robin Hoods continued to support the 11th Aviation Battalion (Combat) until 10 May 1966, when the company was declared fully operational. This date was later declared as "Unit Day" for the 173rd Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter) by the Chief of Military History in Washington, D.C..

B. OPERATIONS:

During the reporting period of 1 January 1969, through 31 December
1969, the Robin Hoods of the 173rd Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) participated in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th phases of Operation "Toan Thang" (Complete Victory) which encompassed the entire III Corps area of operations. The operation for the year netted 6,533 enemy killed and tons of enemy arms and equipment captured. During this period, normal operations consisted of company and battalion size combat assaults during both daylight and night hours, with gunship support and direct combat support roles of medical evacuation, re-supply, and "Sniffer Missions". The Robin Hoods flew a total of 31,100 hours and carried 194,734 passengers during the year.

OPERATIONS FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY 1969

The new year began calmly for the Robin Hoods with the Hoods flying daily routine air combat assaults in the III Corps area of operations. During the month of January, the Robin Hoods were kept busy destroying enemy bunker complexes and other enemy built structures. Throughout the month Lai Khe was continuously rocketed by the local VC. Fortunately no one was seriously injured as a result of the rocket attacks. The Robin Hoods flew combat assaults in support of the 1st Division and 9th Infantry Division. The Robin Hoods also flew a large number of ash and trash missions throughout the III Corps area in support of CMAC and II Field Forces.

On the 2nd of January, while flying CA's out of the Water Plant (XT 5980962), in support of the 1st Infantry Division the Crossbows spotted two enemy bunkers in the vicinity of Coord XT 5995957. Receiving clearance from the C&C aircraft, the Crossbow gunships rolled in and successfully destroyed the two bunkers.

During the 3rd and 4th of January, the Robin Hoods were credited with the destruction of seven more enemy bunkers while flying CA's in support of the 1st Infantry Division and CMAC. The bunkers were located in the vicinity of Coord YS 004949 and XT 521314.

The 9th of January found the Robin Hoods once again flying combat assaults in support of the 1st Infantry Division out of the Water Plant. On this day, the Robin Hoods received credit for two confirmed enemy kills. The Robin Hoods also destroyed one house and damaged a bridge at Coord 630410, both of which were being used by the enemy.

The 21st of January found the Robin Hoods flying combat assaults in support of CMAC. During one of the missions, the C&C aircraft experienced a fuel control valve failure and was forced to land at Binh Chanh. The Friar Tuck aircraft was immediately dispatched from Sherwood Forest to render aid to the downed aircraft. While both aircraft were shut down at Binh Chanh, the base came under enemy mortar attack. Several rounds landed near the two aircraft causing heavy damage to one aircraft and moderate damage to the other. The Crossbows who were circling the area immediately came to the aid of their grounded comrades and began pumping suppressive fire into the source of the enemy bombardment, resulting in the silencing of the enemy guns. The following day a Robin Hood aircraft was dispatched to pick up the crews of the two aircraft and the aircrafts were "pipe-smoked" back to Sherwood Forest.

Toward the latter part of the month, Sherwood Forest saw the beginning of an influx of new personnel, bringing the Robin Hood
force up to maximum strength. The remainder of the month was spent training these replacements and repairing aircraft in preparation for an anticipated TET offensive, an offensive which would find the Robin Hoods combat ready.

OPERATIONS FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 1969

The month of February proved to be an action packed month for the Robin Hoods. The month of February signified the beginning of TET. Throughout the month the Robin Hoods flew numerous combat assaults in support of the 1st Infantry Division, 5th Special Forces, CMAC, and II Field Forces. February also saw the continuation of the almost nightly rocket attacks upon Lai Khe. Although few Robin Hood aircraft were moderately damaged as a result of shrapnel from the rockets, fortunately no one in the Robin Hoods incurred any serious injury.

The month got off to a hot start when on the evening of the 1st of February the Robin Hoods were scrambled at 2300 hours to insert a company of 1st Infantry Division troops around FSB IRANE which was being overrun by the VC and NVA. The enemy had been able to penetrate the FSB's defensive wire and had blown up the ammunition dump. The Robin Hoods picked up the reinforcement troops and orbited the area while the LZ received a thorough artillery prep from Dau Tiang and close fire support from the Crossbows and the Rebel gunships. After the prep, the Robin Hoods began the insertion of troops around the perimeter of the FSB. A total of twenty sorties were inserted.

During the assault, the Crossbows provided cover for the flight who were taking intensive automatic small arms fire. The Crossbows prepped the area with a savage barrage of suppressive fire, however the enemy continued to return fire. During the engagement, one of the Crossbow gunships took several hits knocking out the aircrafts hydraulics and forced it to make an emergency landing on a nearby road located in an area of heavy enemy concentration.

Upon hearing the distress call of the going down aircraft, the C&C aircraft immediately followed them down and rescued the crew without further incident. After the crew was rescued, the Robin Hoods continued the insertion of troops into the hot LZ and were able to efficiently and successfully complete the mission. Once again the Robin Hoods through their performance had displayed that they were the best combat assault unit in Vietnam.

The 5th of February the Robin Hoods assumed a different type of role from their usual routine mission. This day the Robin Hoods found themselves working with the Navy. The mission called for the Robin Hoods to assist the Navy in river patrol reconnaissance in an area called Sandy Point which is located near Nha Be. The day went smoothly and without any enemy contact.

The 6th of February found the Robin Hoods flying support for CMAC in the vicinity of coordinates XS 7590 and XS 7593. Although the flight didn't encounter any enemy contact during the day of combat assaults, the Crossbows were successful in locating and destroying three suspected enemy sampans being used for re-supply.

On the 15th of February the Robin Hoods were credited with one confirmed enemy kill while working for the CMAC in the vicinity of XS 7593. A lone VC was spotted by the Robin Hoods near the opening of a tunnel complex. Troops were later inserted in order to search the area for any further enemy activity.
During the morning hours of 23 February 1969, the men of Sherwood Forest were awakened by the thundering sound of incoming rockets from local VC. An undetermined number of 122mm rockets hit Lai Khe. Just about the time when everything settled down and everyone went back to bed for a last twenty winks before reveille, the familiar sound of incoming rockets again struck. Luckily no one was injured nor was any equipment damaged from the two rocket attacks. On this particular morning the VC had just wanted to make sure everyone was up bright and early.

The 24th of February proved to be an action packed day and evening for the Robin Hoods. While flying combat assaults in support of the 1st Infantry Division in the vicinity of Coord XT 597425, a Crossbow gunship spotted a VC road block. A lone VC was also sighted. After receiving clearance to fire, the gunship rolled in and killed the VC who was hiding behind the trees.

During the afternoon, a Robin Hood aircraft flying ash and trash missions in support of the 5th Special Forces Group came under moderate enemy automatic small arms fire in the vicinity of Coord YU 1607. As a result of the hostile enemy fire, the aircraft took two direct hits. However, the pilot was able to successfully fly the damaged aircraft back to a secure area and land without injury to the crew or further damage to the aircraft.

During the evening of the 24th of February, the VC began a barrage of rocket attacks upon the Lai Khe installation, an attack which continued into the early morning hours of the following day. Although a large number of rockets landed in Lai Khe, Robin Hood luck prevailed and no Robin Hood personnel were injured nor was any equipment damaged from the rocket attacks.

The 25th of February was another busy and exciting day for the Robin Hoods. While flying combat assaults in support of the 1st Infantry Division in the area of Coord XT 5640, the flight came under enemy automatic small arms fire. One of the aircraft in the flight was hit, fortunately only light damage resulted to the aircraft and negative injury to the personnel aboard the ship. When the flight began receiving the enemy fire the Crossbows immediately rolled in and placed a heavy barrage of suppressive fire into the suspected area of enemy fire resulting in an estimated four kills and silencing of the enemy guns.

The last day of February, the 28th turned out to be a day which characterized the month of TET. On this day, the Robin Hoods flew a total of 10 combat assault missions all in support of the 1st Infantry Division. Although the day was long and arduous, the enemy felt the wrath of the Robin Hoods with the Robin Hoods collecting an estimated five enemy kills.

The month of February had been a particularly trying and long month. However, all the Robin Hoods made it and looked forward to the month of March in good spirits and high anticipation of better things to come.

OPERATIONS FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH 1969

Everyone looked forward to the month of March in anticipation that this month would be different from the previous one. However, this fantasy would be destroyed by the events to follow. Throughout the
month, the Robin Hoods continued to fly in support of CMAC, 5th Special Forces, and 9th Infantry Division. Aside from the month being another action-packed month for the Robin Hoods, the month also marked another series of regular rocket attacks upon the Lai Khe Base Camp.

On the morning of the 2nd of March, while making an insertion of troops from the 1st Infantry Division into Coord XT 752390, the Robin Hoods were greeted by a hostile force of an undetermined size. As the Robin Hoods started to turn final into a seemingly cold LZ, the calmness of the morning was broken by the sound of small arms fire. The flight immediately initiated a go-around in order to break contact with the enemy. The Crossbows, who were providing air cover for the flight, once again saved the day by rolling in and spraying a savage barrage of suppressive fire into the area. When the smoke had cleared the Crossbows had collected one enemy kill and had succeeded in silencing the enemy contact. The remainder of the day's missions went smoothly and without any further incident for the Robin Hoods.

Three days later on the 6th of March, while flying combat assaults in support of the "Big Red One", the Robin Hoods once again came under enemy automatic small arms fire. Contact was made as the Robin Hoods were returning to a PZ for a troop pickup. One of the aircraft in the flight took light hits. Fortunately no one was injured in the aircraft and the aircraft returned safely to Lai Khe where the extent of damage was carefully checked. Meanwhile the Crossbows had successfully squelched the enemy fire and were later credited with five casualties, three of them kills.

On the 7th of March, while providing cover for the Robin Hoods who were busy with combat assaults in support of the 1st Infantry Division, the Crossbows spotted a large number of camouflaged enemy bunkers in the vicinity of Coord XT 593572. As the Crossbows rolled in to investigate the bunkers, they began to receive intensive enemy small arms fire. The Crossbows immediately returned fire and succeeded in destroying five of the enemy bunkers and were credited with an estimated five enemy killed. However, during the encounter, one Crossbow aircraft received light damage when hit by small arms fire. Luckily, nobody aboard the hit aircraft was injured and the damaged aircraft returned to Lai Khe.

The 9th of March turned out to be a bad day for the Robin Hoods, for enemy fire proved to be much more intensive and accurate. The flight was performing combat assaults in support of the 1st Infantry Division in the vicinity of Coord XT 6447 and 3287, just west of Lai Khe. The flight had just picked up a load of troops in a PZ and was departing when it came under heavy automatic weapons fire. Two aircraft were hit, aircraft 143, piloted by WO1 Dunfee, and aircraft 999, piloted by WO1 Auld and LIT Windle. The flight immediately dropped smoke on the suspected source of fire and a Crossbow gunship rolled in to check it out. WO Bremer, who was the aircraft commander of the gunship, made his first pass over the area revealing negative enemy sighting. However, when he came back for a second check, his aircraft came under heavy automatic weapons fire. WO Bremer was hit in the left arm and left leg. His pilot, WO Dubs, took control of the aircraft and flew it back to Doctor "Delta" at Lai Khe, where medical attention was given to WO Bremer. The aircraft was then flown back to Sherwood Forest and checked for damage. It had revealed that the aircraft had 9 bullet holes in it. Meanwhile remaining gunships at the location of contact, had rolled in on the area expended. The secondary fire team was scrambled from Lai Khe to cover the flight for the remainder of the missions. The size of the enemy force was never determined, nor
were the Crossbows credited with any enemy kills.

During the evening of the 16th of March and the early hours of the 17th of March, Lai Khe installation came under numerous enemy rocket attacks. The rocket attack of the 16th resulted in the injury to SP4 Swift who was performing maintenance on his aircraft. The Robin Hood was struck by shrapnel when a rocket hit in the vicinity where he was working. The force of the blast was such that the wounded crew chief was literally blown from the top of his aircraft. SP4 Garringer, who was also working in the vicinity immediately rendered first aid to the critically wounded crew chief and was credited with saving SP4 Swift's life. Once again professionalism and heroism prevailed.

The 21st of March, 1969, will always be remembered, for tragedy struck the Robin Hoods. On this day, 1LT Thompson and SP5 Thompson were killed while performing a routine avionics test flight, just off the Lai Khe perimeter. During their trip around the traffic pattern, their aircraft developed unknown problems and 1LT Thompson went into an autorotation which ended in a ball of fire. The ordinance aboard the aircraft was set off by the fire and continued to explode until all was gone. After the aircraft had stopped burning the accident investigation team went out to recover the bodies and inspect the wreckage for a clue to the cause of the accident. While the team was at the crash site, they came under small arms fire from nearby enemy force. The Crossbows were scrambled and silenced the enemy fire. They continued to provide cover for the inspecting team on the ground until the inspection was completed.

During a routine insertion of troops of the 1st Infantry Division, the flight came under enemy small arms fire, which resulted in damage to one Robin Hood aircraft. The damaged helicopter was flown back to Lai Khe to be checked, leaving the rest of the flight to continue its mission.

Thus, the month of March ended as it had began. A month filled with tragedy and numerous encounters with the enemy. Needless to say, everyone was glad to see March conclude and looked forward to April with hopes that the new month would be less hectic.

OPERATION FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL 1969

The month of April was busy for the Robin Hoods. The majority of the missions were daytime combat assaults, however, a number of night missions were also flown. The Robin Hoods flew in support of the 1st Infantry Division, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), and the 5th Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) Division, all located within the III Corps area.

On the 6th of April, while returning from combat assault in the Minh Tanh area, the Robin Hoods received an ASAP (As Soon As Possible) mission to insert a blocking force, and to extract two LRP (Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols) which were in heavy contact with the VC (Viet Cong) northwest of Fire Support Base Aachen. While inserting the blocking force, the Robin Hoods came under intensive enemy ground fire. However, the Hoods accomplished their mission, inserting the blocking force and countering the enemy concentration which had the LRP's pinned down. Under heavy enemy fire, the Robin Hoods extracted the LRP's and returned them to their base of operations.

15 April 1969 found the Robin Hoods flying Eagle Flights northwest of Lai Khe. At approximately 1300 hours, the Crossbows were scrambled to
provide cover for the evacuation of wounded American soldiers still in contact with the enemy. The Crossbows were directed to Michelin Rubber Plantation, where they provided the necessary fire suppression for a successful evacuation.

The 16th of April, the Robin Hoods operated from the Water Plant in support of the 1st Infantry Division. The flight received an urgent request to report to Quan Loi, where a fire support base was being overrun by the Viet Cong. The Robin Hoods were able to successfully insert a blocking force to prevent the overrunning of the fire support base, while the Crossbows provided heavy fire suppression. The insertion was completed without injury to the Robin Hoods or their aircraft.

On 20 April 1969, the Robin Hoods were flying combat assaults in support of the 5th Special Forces Group southwest of An Loc. While inserting troops into the area, the flight came under enemy fire. The Crossbows rolled in, silenced the enemy guns, and were credited with an estimated eight enemy kills.

Tragedy struck the Robin Hoods in the early hours of 23 April 1969. Participating in a night air assault conducted by the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion, the Hoods mission was the insertion of troops of the 1st Infantry Division and the 5th ARVN Division into several landing zones located south of Ben Suc village. The objective of the night insertion was to surround and seal off the village in order to destroy enemy elements which were reported to inhabit the village. The mission involved a combination of slicks from the 173rd Assault Helicopter Company and the 128th Assault Helicopter Company. A flight of "Rebels", gunships from the 1st Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, was to provide fire support. During the first descent into the landing zone, entering final approach, the lead aircraft of the 173rd flight, flown by CPT Arnold Sanford and WO1 Rodger Auld was involved in a mid-air collision with the wing gunship of the Rebel flight. Upon mid-air impact both aircraft burst into flames and fell to the ground, where they exploded and burned. The Robin Hoods immediately flew in a ground force to secure the aircraft and search for survivors. There were none. Eight Americans, four of whom were Robin Hoods, and seven ARVN soldiers from the 5th Division died in the crash. The men of Sherwood Forest were sad this night, as memory of lost friends hung heavy on their minds. Through this, however, as through each tragedy before, the indomitable spirit of the Robin Hoods prevailed. The next day would bring more missions and a renewed call to duty for the Robin Hoods.

Near tragedy struck the next day, 24 April 1969. While flying a combat assault in support of the 1st Infantry Division, a Robin Hood aircraft experienced a tail rotor failure. Through professional flying, the pilot was able to divert what could have been a fatal accident and made a successful emergency landing without injury to anyone aboard the aircraft. The aircraft was later returned to Lai Khe by Pipesmoke.

The 25th of April found the Robin Hoods again supporting the 1st Infantry Division. The flight had a 59 sortie extraction of troops in the same area in which the mid-air collision had occurred. While making the extraction, the flight received intensive small arms fire from the enemy. Five aircraft took hits, but no one was injured in the engagement and all aircraft were able to return to Lai Khe. The Crossbows successfully located and silenced the enemy with rockets and suppressive fire and were credited with an estimated eight kills.
The remainder of April went slowly for the Robin Hoods, even though busy with many hours of combat assaults and resupply missions; the memory of our lost aviators and friends remained.

OPERATIONS FOR THE MONTH OF MAY 1969

The month of May was filled with excitement for the Robin Hoods. The majority of missions flown during this period were combat assaults in support of the 1st Infantry Division and the 5th ARVN Division with a few flown in coordination with the Royal Thai Army.

The month began rather calmly. However, by the 6th of May, action was picking up. Late in the afternoon of 6 May 1969, the Robin Hoods were assisting in an insertion of ground troops, when intelligence reports verified that a North Vietnamese Army battalion was infiltrating the area west of Lai Khe. Infantry units from the 1st Infantry Division were quickly and effectively placed into blocking position, as artillery and air strikes were begun on the suspected enemy positions. CPT Haas, flying lead in a flight of five Robin Hood aircraft, was on short final of the second insertion when a tremendous explosion went off in front of his aircraft and disrupted the seemingly routine approach. The explosion was a command detonated mine which rendered the controls of the lead aircraft nearly useless, causing the aircraft to fall through in a nose low attitude. CPT Haas managed to level his helicopter and land safely at the lip of a bomb crater filled with infantry men. CPT Haas's composure and skill undoubtedly prevented serious injury or death to the infantry troops both aboard his aircraft and in the crater.

The 10th of May was a jubilant day for us Robin Hoods as we celebrated the Fourth Anniversary of our "Unit Day". The proud spirit of crews rehashing their skills and accomplishments filled the air. An evening of festive partying evolved into a night of song and community spirit as the men displayed their devotion to their unit and its commander. The night air was also filled with wild sounds of a rock 'n' roll band and the clamor of people filled with liquid cheer endured into the wee hours of the following day. Lucky for the Robin Hoods, the 11th of May was declared a maintenance stand down day.

The 11th of May saw the departure of our Executive Officer, CPT Stewart. We were all sorry to see him leave. However, we knew our new Executive Officer, CPT James E. Tomlin would do no less in keeping the Robin Hoods on top.

The 17th of May found the Robin Hoods flying in support of the 1st Infantry Division southwest of Lai Khe in the vicinity of the "Mushroom", with the Crossbows, as usual, providing cover. While the Robin Hoods were on their way to a LZ after picking up ground troops, a sudden plea for assistance was heard on the radio. Crossbow 34 had experienced an engine freeze-up and was going down. The Aircraft Commander, WO Willis, had managed to make a successful autorotation and had landed the aircraft with no injuries or damage. The Robin Hoods deployed troops around the aircraft and picked up the downed crewmen to return them safely to Lai Khe. Robin Hood professionalism had shown through again in WO Willis's ability to land his disabled aircraft safely.

On the 21st of May the Robin Hoods, flying in support of the 1st Infantry Division, had just finished a company size insertion in the
vicinity of Fire Support Base Aachen. The flight returned to the fire support base to await the loading of troops for another insertion. While the flight was standing by, the base came under sudden mortar attack. The initial rounds landed very near the flight, severely damaging four aircraft. Shrapnel from the mortar rounds resulted in 15 casualties. The Robin Hoods brought in power very quickly and departed the impact area. Just before take-off the Command and Control aircraft monitored a radio call for an urgent evacuation of wounded soldiers on the ground. Although he had received shrapnel wounds to the throat, CPT Goggin, the Air Mission Commander, and CW2 Colquitt, his pilot, who had multiple shrapnel wounds to his face, returned to the base to participate in the medevac operation. The heroic actions of CPT Goggin and CW2 Colquitt once again displayed the extraordinary professionalism of the Robin Hoods in performing their "routine" duty.

On the 25th of May, flying combat assaults west of An Loc for the 1st Division a Crossbow aircraft came under intensive 50 caliber automatic weapons fire while circling the LZ awaiting friendly artillery preparation. The aircraft received several hits, resulting in engine failure and subsequent explosion. Performing an autorotation the aircraft continued to be hit by 50 caliber rounds. The Aircraft Commander, 1LT Ferguson, attempted to land in a clearing. However, because of the condition of the aircraft, he was unable to make a fully controlled landing and his aircraft crashed into a tree and came to rest on its right side, where it burst into flames. WO1 Kelly, the pilot, was pinned within the wreckage. The crewmen were able to extract him, though ammunition within the burning aircraft had began exploding, and the wounded crew crawled to safety behind a rice dike awaiting rescue. Throughout the ordeal, the wing gunship circled the crash site providing cover for the downed crew. The wounded crew members were medevaced to Quan Loi; and were able to return to Sherwood Forest that day. They were ready for duty again after a few days rest.

On the 28th of May, while coming in on short final to Fire Support Base Gala, WO1 Ferguson experienced an engine failure just prior to touch down. Through his professional skill, he was able to land the aircraft with no injuries to the crew or damage to the aircraft.

The remainder of May, the Robin Hoods flew in support of the 1st Infantry Division, and carried out routine missions throughout III Corps. The highlight of the last week was the sound of pay call in Sherwood Forest.

OPERATIONS FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE 1969

The month of June found the Robin Hoods again flying mostly support of the 1st Infantry Division. This particular month was a rather calm one in contrast with past months. The Robin Hoods found themselves performing mostly Eagle Flights in the III Corps area. Back at home base, the month was marked with an increase in enemy rocketing.

The evening of June 5th started out as a quiet evening in Sherwood Forest. However, at approximately 2300 hours, Lai khe came under an enemy rocket attack. Russian made 107mm rockets came crashing into the helicopter pads on the flight line. A total of four Robin Hood aircraft received minor damage as a result of the attack. Luckily no personnel in the area were injured.
On the 13th of June, while flying Eagle Flights in support of the 1st Infantry Division, the flight received enemy fire while waiting to pick up troops in a PZ in the area of Junction City. Two Robin Hood aircraft took hits from rocket propelled grenade (RPG) rounds. The Crossbows immediately rolled in and put suppressive fire into the suspected area of the enemy. And the Robin Hoods were able to continue their mission with no further enemy contact.

Again on the 15th of June, while flying Eagle Flights in support of the Big Red One, troops of the 1st Infantry Division, in the An Loc area, the Robin Hoods came under enemy small arms fire. This time only one aircraft was hit. No personnel aboard the aircraft were injured and the ship was able to return to Lai Khe.

The 22nd of June began early when the Robin Hoods were abruptly awakened by rocket blasts. Once again Russian made 107mm rockets landed on the flight line, causing light damage to four Robin Hood aircraft. One of the rockets landed in the company area resulting in minor injury to four of our men and damage to a number of surrounding buildings. The remainder of the day went without incident.

The 23rd of June introduced a troublesome series of incidents for the Robin Hoods. While enroute to a LZ northeast of Lai Khe for a combat assault, a Crossbow gunship flown by WO1 Kopanke and WO1 Broich, lost its hydraulics and was forced to land in a wooded area. The pilot made a successful forced landing with no injuries or damage to the aircraft. Within minutes after the gunship had touched down, the Robin Hoods were on the scene to render assistance and protection for the aircraft until Pipe Smoke arrived.

Then on the 26th of June, while enroute from Saigon Heliport to Spartan Tower, a Robin Hood aircraft flown by WO1 Peace and WO1 Davidian, began violently vibrating. WO1 Peace proceeded to execute a precautionary landing. While on short final, the aircraft pedals froze and the ship started to bear to the right. WO1 Peace, exhibiting professional flying technique, fought his crippled ship to a safe landing.

The closing of the month saw the beginning of the rainy season. The end of the month also marked a 65 day period without an accident. Thus another month slipped by with the Robin Hoods performing their mission of supporting the ground commanders in the manner expected of this company and battalion; by "ESTABLISHING THE STANDARDS".

OPERATIONS FOR THE MONTH OF JULY 1969

The month of July unleashed the wrath of the monsoon season. Harried by the rains and poor flying conditions, Robin Hood aviators completed, none the less, a successful mission schedule unmarred by injury or mishap.

The month was led off with CA's in support of the 1st Infantry Division and the 1st Cavalry, activity concentrated north west of Minh Thanh and FSB Gala. July 3rd declared a Maintenance Stand Down Day. All Robin Hoods busied themselves performing minor maintenance and clean-up on their aircraft. That afternoon brought a courtesy visit to Sherwood Forest by Battalion Commander LTC Reid. After all the aircraft had been cleaned up, the Robin Hoods turned their attentions to the completion of the volley ball court, and succeeded in finishing the pouring of the cement.
On the 13th of June, while flying Eagle Flights in support of the 1st Infantry Division, the flight received enemy fire while waiting to pick up troops in a PZ in the area of Junction City. Two Robin Hood aircraft took hits from rocket propelled grenade (RPG) rounds. The Crossbows immediately rolled in and put suppressive fire into the suspected area of the enemy. And the Robin Hoods were able to continue their mission with no further enemy contact.

Again on the 15th of June, while flying Eagle Flights in support of the Big Red One, troops of the 1st Infantry Division, in the An Loc area, the Robin Hoods came under enemy small arms fire. This time only one aircraft was hit. No personnel aboard the aircraft were injured and the ship was able to return to Lai Khe.

The 22nd of June began early when the Robin Hoods were abruptly awakened by rocket blasts. Once again Russian made 107mm rockets landed on the flight line, causing light damage to four Robin Hood aircraft. One of the rockets landed in the company area resulting in minor injury to four of our men and damage to a number of surrounding buildings. The remainder of the day went without incident.

The 23rd of June introduced a troublesome series of incidents for the Robin Hoods. While enroute to a LZ northeast of Lai Khe for a combat assault, a Crossbow gunship flown by WO1 Kopanke and WO1 Broich, lost its hydraulics and was forced to land in a wooded area. The pilot made a successful forced landing with no injuries or damage to the aircraft. Within minutes after the gunship had touched down, the Robin Hoods were on the scene to render assistance and protection for the aircraft until Pipe Smoke arrived.

Then on the 26th of June, while enroute from Saigon Heliport to Spartan Tower, a Robin Hood aircraft flown by WO1 Peace and WO1 Davidian, began violently vibrating. WO1 Peace proceeded to execute a precautionary landing. While on short final, the aircraft pedals froze and the ship started to bear to the right. WO1 Peace, exhibiting professional flying technique, fought his crippled ship to a safe landing.

The closing of the month saw the beginning of the rainy season. The end of the month also marked a 65 day period without an accident. Thus another month slipped by with the Robin Hoods performing their mission of supporting the ground commanders in the manner expected of this company and battalion; by "ESTABLISHING THE STANDARDS".

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Independence Day, July 4th, found the Robin Hoods returning to the air again in aiding this war-torn country in its struggle to gain its freedom and independence from communist aggression. The day was the same as any other day, with the Robin Hoods flying regular combat assaults in support of the 1st Infantry Division. A long hard day of scheduled missions was capped off with a challenging emergency add-on. Ground forces in the vicinity east of FSB Gala reported heavy contact with an enemy force of undetermined size. The Robin Hoods were called and responded with flown-in reinforcement troops. While on take-off after successfully inserting the ground forces, the reinforcement flight came under heavy small arms fire. The lead aircraft took several hits, but was able to safely return to Lai Khe. The Crossbows, whose job was to provide cover for the flight, were unable to put suppressive fire on the suspected enemy position because of the friendly forces in the immediate area. The Crossbows did however, drop smoke on the enemy to positively locate them for the ground forces.

Returning to Sherwood Forest the Robin Hoods were greeted with a specially prepared steak dinner. The remainder of the 4th of July closed out quietly, leaving each of us with his private anticipation of next year's 4th of July at home.

The 5th of July dawned with the Robin Hoods once again flying CA's in support of the 1st Infantry Division in the vicinity of the Water Plant and Venerable Heights. The day went smoothly for the Robin Hoods and they were able to complete all of their missions efficiently and without incident. The evening rolled in as seemingly routine in Sherwood Forest; however, at approximately 2030 hours, the calmness of the night was suddenly broken with the thunder of exploding Russian made 107mm rockets. This was just the beginning of an evening which was to be marked by a number of rocket attacks. The company area took four hits, with resulting damage moderate to heavy. The officer's water tower collected a direct hit and company power lines were pulled down with falling trees. The company ambulance received heavy damage when a rocket exploded only a few feet away from it. Miraculously no personnel were injured from the rocket blasts; however, several people received minor injury while attempting to reach shelter. Seven Robin Hood aircraft suffered minor damage as a result of shrapnel from the rocket attacks. However, admirable 'round the clock work by the maintenance personnel, yielded flyable aircraft to meet the following day's commitments.

On the 10th of July the Robin Hoods were flying Combat Assaults in support of the 5th ARVN Infantry Division. While inserting ARVN's into an LZ northeast of Saigon, the Vietnamese regulars came into contact with an enemy force of undetermined size. Crossbows were immediately called in to provide suppressive fire and cover for the ground forces. The Crossbows rolled into the area of the hostile fire and blasted a hot trail of minigun fire and rocket barrage with pin point accuracy. When the smoke had cleared the Crossbows had succeeded in killing six VC, and the pinned down ARVN's were able to continue their missions.

The 12th of July the Robin Hoods began what appeared to be an easy day, because they had a release time of 1020 hours. Unfortunately, hopes were poorly founded and the day turned into a day filled with excitement. The Hoods found themselves with "add-ons" popping up throughout the day. While performing one of these add-on missions, the Robin Hoods ran into heavy enemy contact. The Robin Hoods were flying in support of the 1st Infantry Division in the vicinity of FSB Gala when on short final into the LZ, the flight started to receive heavy enemy small arms fire. A go-around was initiated and the flight
attempted to insert the troops from the other end of the LZ. Successfully inserting the troops, the flight returned to examine the extent of damage to their aircraft. It was discovered that three aircraft had been hit by enemy fire. The lead aircraft which was flown by CPT Morris and 1LT Egan had taken several rounds in the forward section of the aircraft. Protective armor surrounding each of the pilots limited injury to a bad case of shot nerves.

The morning of the 24th of July brought a scheduled change of command ceremony to Sherwood Forest. Major James W. Griffin, Robin Hood 6, was departing to the states, turning over his company command to Major Richard J. Burtnett. The Robin Hoods were sad to see Major Griffin go, recalling his confident voice over the radio from the Command and Control aircraft, directing and re-assuring. But the sadness was accompanied by a dedication to Major Burtnett, our new Commanding Officer and a Knowledge that he would keep the Robin Hoods on top. Witnessing the ceremony were 12th Group Commander Colonel Turner and 11th Battalion Commander Lieutenant Colonel Reid.

The remainder of July and the first week in August saw a temporary lull in the fighting. For almost three weeks the Robin Hoods were able to perform their daily combat assaults in support of the 1st Infantry Division, suffering no flight incidents and making no contact with the enemy. The temporary calm in the war was welcome, and began to promote a wishful optimism among many of us. However, the enemy had other ideas.

OPERATIONS FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST 1969

The month of August saw the continuation of the monsoon season with its daily rainstorms and showers. Once again the Robin Hoods busied themselves flying combat assaults in support of the 1st Infantry Division throughout the III Corps area of operation.

A lively enlisted personnel party on the 1st of August began a rather slow, uneventful week. Throughout the week, the Robin Hoods continued their daily combat assault missions in support of the 1st Infantry Division.

The 6th of August turned out to be the longest day of the month for the Hoods. Logging a total of 91 hours of flight time, the Hoods flew 353 sorties and carried a total of 719 passengers. The entire day of missions was flown in support of the "Big Red One" Division. The majority of combat assaults was flown in the area east and west of Lai Khe. Hoods were able to successfully complete all their missions safely and efficiently, without incident or mishap.

The evening of 11 August began as a normal nightfall in Sherwood Forest. However, at approximately 2100 hours, Russian made 107mm rockets came crashing into the Sherwood Forest area; and the flight line as always received the brunt of the rocket shrapnel destruction. A total of five Robin Hood aircraft were damaged as a result of shrapnel from the rockets. The company Orderly Room suffered a near direct hit from one of the rockets. Orderly Room personnel, as the rocket zeroed in, were on their way back to their billets after working a late evening. A well ventilated orderly room greeted its daytime inhabitants as they returned to work the next morning. SSG James F. Jones, who received minor injury while working on the flight line, was the only one injured directly from the rocket attack. With the exception of finding it painful to sit down for a while, SSG Jones was able to return to duty the following day.
The 12th of August found the Hoods again flying combat assaults in support of the 1st Infantry Division northwest of Lai Khe out of Dau Tiang. Receiving small arms fire from a tree line next to the landing zone, the landing craft called on the Crossbows to save the day. A fast and deadly suppressive fire into the area where the enemy laid in ambush enabled the Robin Hoods to continue the insertion and to return to Sherwood Forest with no hits to the aircraft or injury to personnel.

The following day the Robin Hoods were busy assisting the 1st Cav Division in the Phuc Vinh area. The Hoods flew mostly Ash and Trash missions throughout the day with a few combat assaults thrown in to make the day exciting. The day concluded with no incidents or mishaps.

Following a normal day of operation for the Robin Hoods, the 15th was sprung out of the ordinary with an evening feast of mouth watering steaks and cold drinks. Enjoying with us one of the best company barbecues in Sherwood Forest were Colonel Turner, 12th Group Commander, and Lieutenant Colonel Reid, 11th Battalion Commander.

The 18th of August dawned with the Robin Hoods flying in support of the 1st Infantry Division out of Fire Support Base Lorraine. The Hoods were extracting troops out of a PZ three miles south of the FSB. There were too many troops in the PZ to extract them all in one lift, so one aircraft was sent into the PZ first to pick up a sortie. This initial mini-pick-up would prevent a small number of men from being left in the PZ after the main flight departed. As the extraction progressed, the PZ came under heavy enemy mortar attack. In retaliation, the Command and Control Commander called in the Crossbows to put suppression into the area, and consequently enable the Robin Hoods to continue their extraction of troops from the PZ. The rest of the day yielded no further incidents.

The 20th of August found the Robin Hoods flying combat assaults in support of the 1st Infantry Division out of Fire Support Base Gala. The Robin Hoods' mission was to extract ARVN troops from the old Fire Support Base Aachen and to insert them into another LZ. Moving into the PZ, the number three aircraft in a formation of four ships came under intensive enemy automatic small arms fire from the tree line. The aircraft took numerous hits with door gunner, SP4 Miquel A. Deltoro, suffering a round in his right leg. The helicopter began losing power and the aircraft commander WO1 Wendell Jesmer made a forced landing in the PZ without hydraulics. With the remainder of the flight executing a go around, the lead ship and the number two aircraft dropped to the downed aircraft to provide security and to evacuate the wounded door gunner. The number two aircraft, flown by WO1 Herman L. Peace and 1LT Danny M. Vaughan, picked up the wounded man and brought him back to Doctor Delta for emergency medical treatment. Meanwhile the Crossbows were called in to prep the area and were later credited with three enemy kills. The troops still in the PZ set up security around the downed aircraft until it could be "Pipe Smoked" back to Lai Khe for repairs. Fortunately, SP4 Deltoro's injuries proved to be less than critical, and he was sent back to the states to recover.

The 21st of August brought an Awards and Decorations Ceremony into the camp of Robin Hoods to acknowledge the merits and acts of heroism by the enlisted men of the 173rd Aviation Company (Aslt Hel). Major Burtnett was the presiding officer and proudly presented the men of
On the evening of the 24th, Sherwood Forest was once again filled with the sounds of loud music and the clamor of people enjoying themselves. The officers club, under the guidance of WO1 Jesmer, had enlisted an Australian Band Show from Saigon to come to Sherwood Forest and do their thing. Before the show got under way there was a barbecue outside the club, with free bar privileges extending the entire evening. Although the musical abilities of the band were less than extraordinary, their show was greatly enhanced by the presence of four young Australian lovelies. The evening of festivities endured into the wee hours of the following morning.

The 27th of August saw the Robin Hoods having their long awaited Maintenance Stand Down Day. Through a combined personnel effort, the day resulted in a measurable improvement in the appearance and performance of the aircraft. The Group Commander, Colonel Turner, paid the Robin Hoods a visit this day and commented on the enthusiasm and high degree of professionalism which the Robin Hoods exuded this Maintenance Stand Down Day.

The 30th of August was a long day for the Robin Hoods and was filled with plenty of excitement. During the first part of the day, the Hoods were flying combat assaults in support of the 1st Infantry Division west of Lai Khe out of Fire Support Base Lorraine. While inserting troops into an LZ west of Dau Tiang, the flight came under enemy small arms fire. The Crossbows immediately rolled in and silenced the enemy guns. The Robin Hoods were able to complete their mission without further incident. Later during the day, the Hoods once again ran into contact with the enemy. Performing what appeared to be the last mission of the day, the Hoods picked up four sorties of LRRP's at Lai Khe and inserted them into a LZ north of Lai Khe out of FSB Thunder #3. After the insertion, the aviators returned to Sherwood Forest and started to settle down to a Saturday evening of movie watching. A scramble call broke the stillness. It appeared that the LRRP team which the Hoods just inserted had come under heavy contact with an enemy force of undetermined size, with the LRRP's fearful of being overrun. Responding to the call, the Robin Hoods picked up reinforcement troops out of FSB Thunder #1. Moving into the contact area, the Hoods circled while air strikes and artillery fire from the nearby FSB's prepped the LZ. Then with cover from Cobra gunships for both of the flights and with full outside door gunner suppression, the Robin Hoods desended into the LZ. Once again the Robin Hoods were able to successfully accomplish their mission with no aircraft being hit. Again Robin Hood luck held and all personnel returned to Sherwood Forest safe, but well-stocked with some grizzly memories.

This has been a particularly trying and long month but the Robin Hoods all made it and looked toward September in good spirits.

OPERATIONS FOR THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 1969

September was a rather calm month by the standards of the 173rd Aviation Company (Aslt Hel). Throughout the month there was only sporadic contact made with the enemy. However, that contact left its mark upon the enemy, with inflictions of numerous casualties. The Robin Hoods continued in coordination with the 1st Infantry Division.

The 2nd of September found the Robin Hoods flying CA's in support of the 1st Infantry Division. The morning missions called for the Robin
Hoods to fly CA's south of Lai Khe out of Fire Support Base Mortain. The flight picked up its troops at FSB Mortain and was beginning the insertion of troops into an LZ approximately 4 miles southeast of the FSB. The flight, which consisted of five aircraft in a staggered left formation, started its final approach into a quiet-looking LZ. As the flight touched down, the area snapped alive with automatic small arms fire. Apparently the VC were caught by surprise in the grassy field. The door gunners immediately began laying down a savage spray of M60 fire. The number three aircraft appeared to be the center of attraction for the VC fire and received several hits causing moderate damage. The aircraft commander, WO1 Newport, was wounded when a round came through the left side of the aircraft and bounced off his chicken plate. Because of the chicken plate, WO Newport suffered only a few bruised ribs and some leg wounds from shrapnel. Through the alertness of SP4 McGarity and SP4 Singleton, who collected confirmed kills and kept the enemy's heads down, the flight was able to successfully initiate a go around. The Crossbows then rolled into the LZ chopping up the area with minigun and rocket fire. The Crossbows were credited with an estimated 10 kills. After the gunships had done their thing, the flight returned to the LZ and inserted the troops without receiving any further complaint from the enemy.

The 12th was September's maintenance stand down day. After a morning of hard work on the aircraft, the afternoon brought an Awards and Decorations Ceremony in which the Group Commander Colonel Turner presented awards to the men of the 173rd and congratulated them for a job well done. After the awards ceremony, everyone enjoyed a smorgasboard of barbecue steak, spare ribs, and chicken, with plenty of free soft drinks and ice cold beer to go around.

The 21st of September turned out to be one of the best days for the Crossbows who saw their share of excitement this day and were credited with a large number of enemy kills. The day started off as another routine day, however, in the afternoon, events started to happen which would bring credit to the Robin Hoods for a job well done. The two gunships which normally accompany the slicks on CA missions flew ahead of the flight to the designated area where the troops were to be inserted. As the two Crossbows rolled into the LZ located in the vicinity of the abandoned FSB Aachen, the crew immediately radioed the C&C aircraft for confirmation to fire. Receiving clearance, the two gunships moved into the LZ spraying the area with minigun and rocket fire. Meanwhile the secondary fire team, having been scrambled out of Lai Khe arrived at the scene and doubled the suppressive fire into the VC infested area. While the Crossbows were doing their thing, the slicks were patiently circling awaiting the word to insert their ground troops. During the time in which the gunships were making their passes over the LZ, they were receiving heavy enemy small arms fire. Fortunately, Robin Hood luck again prevailed and none of the Crossbow aircraft were hit. Thanks to the exemplary shooting of the gunships under the direction of the C&C ship piloted by CPT Goggin, the Robin Hoods were credited with a confirmed nine kills and an estimated 41 other kills. When the smoke had cleared, the slicks dropped into the LZ, safely inserting the ground forces.

The 24th of September once again saw Sherwood Forest having another of its outdoor barbecues. This time it was a going away party for the Battalion Commander, LTC Reid, who was returning to the world. The party, which included barbecued steaks and a free bar, was temporarily halted when Lai Khe came under an enemy rocket attack. However, as soon as the rocket attack was over and Lai Khe was off Red Alert, the party resumed and everyone enjoyed themselves in giving LTC Reid a
On the 25th of September, the Crossbows provided cover for our sister company the Tomahawks during combat assault missions. The flight operated south of FSB Lorraine in support of the 1st Infantry Division. The two Crossbow gunships were flying over the intended LZ in order to mark it with smoke for the incoming slicks, when SP4 Spicha, a crew member aboard one of the gunships, spotted two enemy soldiers in the tree line next to the LZ. After receiving confirmation from the C&C aircraft to fire, the two Crossbow aircraft rolled into the LZ spraying the area with a heavy barrage of minigun fire, clearing the way for the slicks to insert the ground troops. The Crossbows were credited with an estimated 2 enemy kills and congratulated for a job well done.

The mission on the 29th of September was flown in support of the 1st Infantry Division west of Lai Khe. All lifts had gone well and dusk was coming on when the last flight of the day came under small arms fire during a troop insertion. The Crossbows reacted quickly and once again saved the day. They immediately rolled in and put suppressive fire into the suspected source of enemy fire. After the Crossbows had succeeded in silencing the enemy guns, the flight was able to continue the insertion with no further trouble from Oke Charlie.

The closing of the month saw the beginning of the end for the rainy season. And the prospect was met with little complaint from aviators and maintenance teams alike. The month's conclusion also marked the 162nd day of accident free work.

OPERATIONS FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER 1969

October was an active month for the Robin Hoods. Throughout the month the Robin Hoods flew combat assaults in support of the 1st Infantry Division. The month of October saw the ending of the monsoon season with its daily rainstorms and the beginning of the dry season, bringing with it heat and dust.

The 1st day of October was routine for the Robin Hoods. Throughout the day the Robin Hoods flew combat assaults, inserting and extracting 1st Infantry Division troops in and out of suspected areas of enemy activity and concentration. Near the completion of the day, the Robin Hoods assumed the role of providing Eagle Flights in support of the 1st Infantry Division. The day ended without incident or contact with the enemy.

The 5th of October found the Robin Hoods flying Eagle Flights in support of the 82nd Airborne Division. The Robin hoods were able to complete all their missions safely and efficiently, without incident or mishap.

During the period from the 6th of October through the 11th, the Robin Hoods continued to fly mainly daytime combat assault in support of the 1st Infantry Division. There were days during this period when the Robin Hoods flew Eagle Flights in support of the 82nd Airborne Division. Enemy-initiated activity was at a relative lull and the Robin Hoods failed to incur any enemy contact.

October 12th was declared a Maintenance Stand Down Day. The crews spent the morning busily working on their aircraft, repairing minor maintenance problems and cleaning up the ships. The afternoon started with an awards and decorations ceremony in which 1SG Deville was
awarded a Bronze Star by the company commander Major Burtnett for performing his duties as first sergeant in a exemplary manner. Following the ceremony, an outdoor barbeque in which the battalion commander LTC Flint was present, was held beneath the trees of Sherwood Forest.

The 17th of October once again found the Robin Hoods flying combat assaults in support of the 1st Infantry Division. The morning operations were uneventful and routine. However, during the afternoon the Command and Control aircraft piloted by CPT Horn experienced a little unexpected excitement. The flight was operating out of FSB Hard Corps (XT 694140). The intended LZ was located southwest of Lai Khe. After the "lift" aircrafts had picked up their troops from FSB Hard Corps, they proceeded to the LZ to make their insertion. As the flight neared the LZ, the Command and Control Commander proceeded to make a marking run on the proposed landing site. As the C&C aircraft approached the LZ, crewchief SP4 Konen spotted a NVA soldier running across the LZ. After receiving clearance from the ground commander, CPT Horn instructed his door gunners to fire upon the fleeting soldier. Accomplishing a confirmed kill, the C&C aircraft proceeded to mark the LZ with smoke, and the flight inserted their troops into the LZ without further incident.

On the 22nd of October, WO Hamrick, who was aircraft commander of UH-1 6118, experienced an unpleasant surprise while flying ash and trash resupply for the of II Field Forces. The area in which he was flying was along the Cambodian border, WO Hamrick's aircraft came under intensive automatic small arms fire. His aircraft took seven direct hits, luckily none of them damaging enough to force WO Hamrick into an emergency landing. Robin Hood professionalism once again showed through as WO Hamrick was able to successfully return his crippled aircraft to Lai Khe and safely land the bullet-riddled ship. That night the Blue Boar Inn echoed with WO Hamrick's war stories, needless to say, WO Hamrick had the honor of buying the bar that night.

For the remainder of the month, the Robin Hoods continued to fly mostly combat assaults in support of the 1st Infantry Division carrying out their missions within the III Corps area in their usual efficient manner. Thus another month passed with the Robin Hoods continuing to provide excellent support throughout the III Corps Tactical Zone with few significant difficulties and no casualties at the hands of the enemy.

OPERATIONS FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER 1969

November was expected to be the month in which the enemy would initiate a winter-spring offensive within the III Corps area. Barring a small increase in fire and ground attacks during the 4th and 5th of November, a relative lull in enemy initiated activity continued throughout the month. Although the enemy offensive didn't materialize into what had been expected, the Robin Hoods nevertheless found the month filled with excitement and plenty of action.

The month got off to a fast start on the morning of the 1st as the number three aircraft in the Yellow Flight departing Lai Khe experienced a power loss. Aircraft commander WO Harrigan was able to execute a successful autorotation and landed his aircraft on the Lai Khe perimeter, suffering no injury to his crew or damage to the aircraft. Robin Hood professionalism had shown through again in WO Harrigan's ability to land his aircraft safely.
On the 5th of November the Robin Hoods again experienced what could have been a disaster, the averting force being CW2 Newport's quick and professional pilot technique. The flight was between missions and had just finished refueling at danger POL. CW2 Newport received clearance to depart and was on climb out when his aircraft lost power. He immediately went into autorotation and successfully landed his aircraft without injury to his crew or damage to the aircraft.

The 6th of November saw the monthly Maintenance Stand Down. A hard morning of enthusiastic work on the aircraft, was followed by an afternoon of recreation, outside barbeque, and free soft drinks.

During the afternoon of the 7th the Robin Hoods conducted combat assaults north of the michelin Rubber Plantation and northeast of the Razer Back Mountains (XT 658629). Ground forces had been in the area for a number of days in pursuit of an enemy force whose size was unknown. The Infantry unit had finally lost contact with the enemy and Robin Hoods were called in to extract the infantry company and return them to Dau Tiang. The selected PZ was a rectangular area over grown with high grass and surrounded by eighty to one hundred foot trees and dense jungle growth. The flight set down in the PZ and the troops boarded the aircrafts without incident. However, as the flight pulled out a large explosion rocked the PZ. The number three aircraft, which was piloted by WO Davis, was heavily damaged by a Viet Cong Claymore-type booby trap. Door gunner Private Fortenberry received wounds as a result of the blast. An infantry soldier aboard the aircraft also was severely wounded in his thigh. Although WO Davis's aircraft had received over sixty direct hits resulting in extensive damage to the tail rotor, drive shaft, and the collective push-pull tubes, WO Davis elected to fly his damaged aircraft back to Dau Tiang to medical facilities for his injured men. WO Davis's disregard for his own safety possibly averted severe medical complications in the wounded men and returned his badly damaged aircraft to home base where it could be repaired. Once again Robin Hood professionalism and heroism came through when the chips were down.

On the 8th of November, while a flight was flying CA's in support of the 1st Infantry Division, Lai Khe came under enemy attack. Luckily nobody received injury nor did the company incur damage as a result of the rocket attack. The entire affair served as a reminder to everyone that there was a war going on and that Charlie was thinking of us here at Lai Khe.

On the 11th of November, the Robin Hoods participated in a four-sortie extraction of a reconnaissance element in the vicinity of FSB Normandy III. The recon element, from the 1/18 infantry, 1st Infantry Division, had been in a day-long contact with a company-sized enemy force of the Dong Nai Regiment. They had succeeded in killing 16 of the enemy and capturing six and were ready for extraction. The C&C aircraft piloted by CPT Tomlin and CPT Horn spotted what appeared to be someone down in the PZ waving a white object. The C&C aircraft made several passes over the PZ but had difficulty in determining who or what was waving the white object, due to the density of the surrounding jungle. They were finally able to make out a wounded VC who desired to give himself up. Realizing the possibility of obtaining intelligence information from the wounded soldier, the C&C aircraft elected to land, watchfully covered from above by the Crossbows. Due to the tightness of the PZ the C&C aircraft had to make a vertical descent into the extremely hazardous landing area. After touchdown, two members aboard the aircraft jumped out and went
to the aid of the wounded VC. Meanwhile the C&C aircraft returned to the air and circled the PZ, awaiting for the signal in the PZ to pick up the two members of the C&C party and the wounded VC. Upon receiving the correct signal, once again the C&C aircraft landed in the tight PZ to pick up its passengers. After the extraction was completed the aircraft returned the C&C party to FSB Normandy III where the wounded VC was medivaced to the nearest medical facility. Once again the Robin Hoods had performed their duty beyond the call of duty in behalf of helping bring this conflict to an end.

Congratulations for a job well done to CPT Tomlin and CPT Horn and the crew members SP4 Hilligoss and SP4 Clench who directed the pilots in and out of the extremely hazardous landing area.

On the 14th of November the Robin Hoods were once again flying CA's in support of the 1st Infantry Division. During an extraction of troops southwest of FSB "All American", the lead aircraft, piloted by CPT Cahill and WO Davidian of the white flight, came under enemy small arms fire from a hidden position in the dense jungle below. The lead aircraft took rounds in the fuel cells and engine cowling. However, CPT Cahill was able to fly the badly leaking aircraft back to Lai Khe and make a safe landing without injury to the crew or damage to the aircraft.

On the evening of the 15th of November the officers of the 173rd had a party in the "Blue Boar Inn". The festivities consisted of an outdoor barbeque followed by a floor show and band group from saigon. The evening also included a free bar, and everyone enjoyed themselves as a large amount of liquid cheer was consumed.

The 18th of November began uneventfully for the Robin Hoods; with routine CA's flown in support of the 1st Infantry Division. The evening of the 18th turned out to be a different story. At approximately 1915 hours the quietness of the night was broken by the sickening "whoom" and "Kawapp" of incoming rockets. As a result of the rocket attack, two aircraft received minor shrapnel damage. Luckily nobody was injured as a direct result of the rocket blasts, although a few members of the Robin Hoods did however sustain minor injury while frantically diving for cover.

The next week and a half of November was relatively calm in comparison to the past weeks of Nov. The Robin Hoods continued to fly long hard tedious hours of combat assaults in support of the Big Red One. The relative calmness was broken momentarily on Thanksgiving Day. The day saw the Robin Hoods flying regular combat assaults in support of the 1st Infantry Division. While on final approach into FSB Appollo (XT 643506) the number three aircraft in the yellow flight experienced a complete engine failure. The aircraft commander WO Christenson, immediately went into an autorotation and aimed his aircraft for a road, without injury to any of his crew or damage to the aircraft, again a job well done by a Robin Hood. WO Christenson and his crew had something special to be thankful for this Thanksgiving Day.

The flight returned to Sherwood Forest at approximately 1400 hours with everyone looking forward to a huge Thanksgiving meal. Besides copious amounts of turkey, the Robin Hoods had a delightful abundance of other foods to enjoy, everything from shrimp cocktails to pumpkin pie. Needless to say everyone was present and accounted for. The Robin Hoods really appreciated the outstanding job the cooks had done in preparing such a delicious meal. Through their efforts, Thanksgiving day seemed a little more cheerful and definitely very
tasteful. After, on full bellies, the Robin hoods returned to the
day's mission with thoughts of next year when we would be home
enjoying Thanksgiving Day football games on TV.

OPERATIONS FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER 1969

The last month of the year, December, was relatively a peaceful and
calm month for the Robin Hoods. The holiday atmosphere prevailed
throughout the month. The expected enemy winter offensive never
materialized and with the exception of a few scattered incidents,
engagements with the enemy were at a minimum.

The first week of December was a hot one, for Lai Khe experienced
numerous rocket attacks. On the 2nd of December, Sherwood Forest came
under the first of these attacks. During the shellings, one rocket
exploded next to an EM billet, injuring three Robin Hoods. SP4 Clark
and SP4 Spillers received minor injury from shrapnel and had to be
hospitalized. SP4 Perkins was also hospitalized for shock.
Fortunately no one else was injured. The following night the familiar
sound of incoming rockets once again shattered the calmness of the
night. However this time the enemy's aim was less accurate and
Sherwood Forest escaped unscathed.

On the 3rd of December, during a routine combat assault in support of
the 1st Infantry Division, a Crossbow gunship, one of two, providing
cover for the flight, came under enemy small arms fire in the
vicinity of Coord (XT 733385). Although his aircraft received moderate
damage, the aircraft commander was able to fly the crippled gunship
back to Lai Khe for repairs. Meanwhile the remaining Crossbow gunship
sprayed a savage barrage of minigun fire and rockets enabling the
flight to continue on with its mission.

During the evening of the 7th, the calmness of the evening was again
broken with the familiar thundering sound of incoming rockets.
Fortunately no one was injured nor were any Robin Hood aircraft
damaged.

The next two weeks, things were quiet for the Robin Hoods. During
this time they continued to fly combat assaults in support of the 1st
Infantry Division with negative enemy contact.

As Christmas neared, Sherwood Forest echoed with the sound of
Christmas songs and festive rock 'n' roll music. On the evenings of
the 23rd and 24th the Robin Hoods were entertained under the trees of
Sherwood Forest by a band from Saigon. Everyone enjoyed the sounds,
combining the music with a fair amount of liquid cheer.

Christmas Day might have slipped by as any other day, had not mess
hall personnel prepared such an immense, succulent afternoon meal that
brought out the Christmas spirit. Christmas celebrations were cut
short when on the 26th the Crossbows twice engaged the enemy while
performing combat assaults. On both occasions, the Crossbows were
providing cover for the flight. The first encounter occurred during
an insertion of the 1st Infantry Division troops into a LZ 12 km.
northwest of Minh Thanh. The Crossbows collected one enemy kill. The
Crossbows again engaged the enemy at an LZ 6 km. northwest of Minh
Thanh. However, it could not determined if they had inflicted
casualties due to the heavy jungle.

The 31st of December, the last day of 1969, found the Robin Hoods
flying combat assaults in support of the 1st Infantry Division.
During the day, the Robin Hoods flew missions out of FSBs Oklahoma and Apollo, and from Dau Tiang and Minh Thanh. All the missions were completed without incident and all the Hoods returned to Sherwood Forest to spend a quiet New Year's Eve.

Though 1969 quietly crept past, the year had not been left unmarked by the heavy footfalls of intense combat, six Robin Hoods had given their lives in action and their sacrifice served as a grim reminder of the toll for freedom. With America's involvement in this conflict being phased out, the Robin Hoods along with other American soldiers hope that the new year might at last bring peace to this war torn country.
APPENDIX I

KEY PERSONNEL

173rd Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter)

Commanding Officer

(1 Jan 69 - 30 Jan 69) MAJ STEENSON, Morris R.
(30 Jan 69 - 21 Jul 69) MAJ GRIFFIN, James W.

Executive Officer

(1 Jan 69 - 30 Jan 69) CPT STEWART, William M.
(30 Jan 69 - 3 Mar 69) CPT LEWIS, Carlos
(3 Mar 69 - 7 May 69) CPT STEWART, William M.
(17 Jun 69 - 22 Dec 69) CPT TOMLIN, James E.
(12 Dec 69 - 31 Dec 69) CPT BERG, Robert C.

Operations Officer

(1 Jan 69 - 16 Feb 69) CPT HINELINE, James
(16 Feb 69 - 3 Apr 69) CPT CABLE, Murry L.
(3 Apr 69 - 28 May 69) CPT VOORHEES, James W.
(28 May 69 - 1 Oct 69) CPT GOGGIN, Edward
(1 Oct 69 - 31 Dec 69) CPT HORN, John E.

1st Platoon Commander

(1 Jan 69 - 26 Jun 69) CPT MARICLE, Wayne E.
(26 Jun 69 - 31 Dec 69) CPT MORRIS, Malcolm C. Jr.

2nd Platoon Commander

(1 Jan 69 - 21 Apr 69) CPT SANFORD, Arnold
(21 Apr 69 - 12 Sep 69) CPT HAAS, Michael
(12 Sep 69 - 31 Dec 69) CPT CAHILL, Thomas E.

3rd Platoon Commander

(Armed)

(1 Jan 69 - 27 Jan 69) CPT SOARES, Francis
(27 Jan 69 - 13 Mar 69) CPT CALLAGHAN, Brian
(13 Mar 69 - 21 Mar 69) ILT THOMPSON, Michael
(21 Mar 69 - 16 Jun 69) CPT FERGUSON, James P.
(16 Jun 69 - 1 Oct 69) CPT HUTCHINSON, Jim S.
(1 Oct 69 - 31 Dec 69) CPT DOWLING, James H. III
Service Platoon Commander (1 Jan 69 - 30 Jan 69) CPT LEHIS, Carlos;
(30 Jan 69 - 3 Mar 69) CPT STEWART, William M.
(3 Mar 69 - 19 Aug 69) CPT BRANCHCOMBE, Thuron
(19 Aug 69 - 12 Dec 69) CPT BERG, Robert C.
(12 Dec 69 - 31 Dec 69) CPT BROWELL, Gary

First Sergeant (1 Jan 69 - 8 Oct 69) 1SG DEVILLE, Pierre L.
(8 Oct 69 - 31 Dec 69) 1SG CASH, Paul T.

Operations Sergeant (1 Jan 69 - 24 Mar 69) SFC ROWLEY, Stephen
(24 Mar 69 - 31 Dec 69) SFC SORRENTINO, August W.

1st Platoon Sergeant (1 Jan 69 - 10 May 69) SSG GARCIA, Pedro A.
(10 May 69 - 10 Nov 69) SFC THOMPSON, David W.
(10 Nov 69 - 31 Dec 69) SSG JONES, James F.

2nd Platoon Sergeant (1 Jan 69 - 19 Mar 69) SSG DALZELL, William
(19 Mar 69 - 21 Jun 69) SFC MC WATERS, Marvin P.
(21 Jun 69 - 31 Aug 69) SFC GIBSON, Reginald B.
(31 Aug 69 - 31 Dec 69) SSG BEARDEN, Gene M.

3rd Platoon Sergeant (Armed) (1 Jan 69 - 11 Feb 69) SSG LAWSON, Albert J.
(11 Feb 69 - 20 Nov 69) SFC BAGGETT, Claude H.
(20 Nov 69 - 31 Dec 69) SFC MILBAUER, Peter W.

Service Platoon Sergeant (1 Jan 69 - 10 Nov 69) SFC PEEPLES, Donald
(10 Nov 69 - 31 Dec 69) SFC THOMPSON, David W.

Detachment Commander (1 Jan 69 - 10 Nov 69) CPT PREIMESBERGER, Kenneth

Detachment Commander (1 Jan 69 - 9 Mar 69) SSG RODRIGUEZ, Francis
(11 Apr 69 - 31 Dec 69) SSG HAHN, Frederick
APPENDIX IX

ORGANIZATION

AUTHORIZED STRENGTH

as of 31 December 1969

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AVERAGE ASSIGNED STRENGTH

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as of 30 April 1969

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as of 30 June 1969

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### APPENDIX III

#### A. AVERAGE NUMBER OF HOURS FLOWN PER AVIATOR PER MONTH

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<td>MARCH</td>
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<td>APRIL</td>
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<td>DECEMBER</td>
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#### B. TOTAL NUMBER OF HOURS FLOWN EACH MONTH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MONTH</th>
<th>JANUARY</th>
<th>MAY</th>
<th>JUNE</th>
<th>JULY</th>
<th>AUGUST</th>
<th>SEPTEMBER</th>
<th>OCTOBER</th>
<th>NOVEMBER</th>
<th>DECEMBER</th>
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#### C. NUMBER OF ENEMY KILLED PER MONTH

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<th>JULY</th>
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<th>DECEMBER</th>
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#### D. NUMBER OF ENEMY STRUCTURES DESTROYED OR DAMAGED (Bunkers, sampans, etc)

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## APPENDIX IV

### MAINTENANCE OF AIRCRAFT AVAILABILITY FOR THE REPORTING PERIOD - 1 January 1969 - 31 December 1969

#### JANUARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AIRCRAFT</th>
<th>AVAILABLE %</th>
<th>HOURS FLOWN</th>
<th>NUMBER OF AIRCRAFT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UH-1C</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>427</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>UH-1D</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>1865</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UH-1H</td>
<td>67.1</td>
<td>359</td>
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#### FEBRUARY

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<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UH-1C</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>447</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>UH-1D</td>
<td>87.7</td>
<td>1402</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>UH-1H</td>
<td>88.2</td>
<td>536</td>
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#### MARCH

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<tr>
<td>UH-1H</td>
<td>86.0</td>
<td>803</td>
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#### APRIL

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<td>UH-1D</td>
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<td>UH-1H</td>
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#### MAY

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<tbody>
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#### JUNE

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### APPENDIX IV
(continued)

#### JUNE

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<th>Number of Aircraft</th>
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#### AUGUST

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<td>UH-1H</td>
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<td>UH-1H</td>
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<td>UH-1H</td>
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#### DECEMBER

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<td>UH-1H</td>
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<td>887</td>
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GLOSSARY

ARVN: Army of the Republic of Vietnam

ASAP: As Soon As Possible

Ash & Trash: Working for a unit in which you fly all types of missions from resupply to visual recon missions.

Blue Bear Inn: Nick name of the Officer's Club

CA: Combat Assault

Chicken Plate: A protective armored vest which is worn by an aviator for protection from enemy small arms fire. The protective plate covers the chest area and is capable of stopping small arms fire.

Crossbows: Call sign and nickname of the Armed Helicopter Platoon of the 173rd Aviation Company (Aslt Hel).

Danger POL: Lai Khe refueling area.

Drop Smoke: A term used when a smoke canister is dropped in order to mark a position.

Eagle Flight: Working for a unit on a "on call" situation

Friar Tuck: Nickname assigned to the company's maintenance aircraft.

FSB: Fire Support Base, a small outpost usually not much larger then two or three companies in size.

LRRP: Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol

LZ: Landing Zone

Maintenance Stand Down: Once a month one day is declared such a day at which all the aircraft are grounded in order that the crews are given the opportunity to perform needed minor maintenance.

Pipe Smokel Designation given the evacuation of downed aircraft by CH-47, "Chinook" medium lift helicopter.

PZ: Pick up Zone

Robin Hoods: Call sign and nickname of the 173rd Aviation Company (Aslt Hel).

Sherwood Forest: The home of the Robin Hoods; the company area at Lai Khe Base Ca.

Slick: Term for an unarmed, troop carry, troop carrying helicopter, primarily UH-1D and UH-1H model helicopters.

Sorties: A term used to describe a combat mission of aircraft.

TET: Vietnamese Lunar New Year

VC: Viet Cong
A. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL

SP4 PREVOST, Frank V.
SP5 VIGER, Richard W.
SP4 KINGCAID, Terrell G.
SP4 SAUNDERS, Roger L.
SSG GARDELLA, Edward J.
SP4 RIVERA, Leroy
WOI BIDAN, Albert H. III
SP5 GARCIA, Henry H.
SP5 GOLDEN, John L.
SP5 SCOTT, Robert F.

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL WITH "V"

CW2 ADKINS, Clifford M.

BASIC AIR MEDAL

PFC GRISCO, David L.
WO1 KOPANEK, Nicholas A.
SSG RODRIGUEZ, Francisco L.
SP4 BRISTOW, Charles E.
PFC GRESS, Dennis R.
LT VOORHEES, James W.
SP5 SWIFT, Louis J.
PFC BOLLINGER, Berwood R.
PFC HARVEY, Mark

BASIC AIR MEDAL

WO1 KELLY, Edward W.
WO1 KERNSTOCK, Stephen C.
WO1 HNATTUK, Francis J.
WO1 HAMROCK, John R.
WO1 DUNFEE, Geoffrey L.
SP4 KONEN, John J.
PFC LABER, Francis A.
SP4 SHAMBLIN, James P.
SP4 HOLDGRAFFER, Louis

January

BASIC AIR MEDAL

CPT HAAS, Michael E.
SSG GARcia, Pedro A.

OAK LEAF CLUSTER TO THE AIR MEDAL

CPT REVELES, Jack W. 2nd - 31st OIC
CPT HAYE, Edward 2nd - 13th OIC
WO1 DUBBS, Edward A. 1st - 29th OIC

BRONZE STAR

CW2 BROWN, John S.
CPT SAVILLE, Duane E.

February

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL

WO1 SMITH, Robert W.
SSG MARTINEZ, Benjamin G.
SP5 COKK, Donald E.

BRONZE STAR

SSG ARNOLD, James
SPC HERNANDEZ-NIEVES, Juan
Maj STEENSON, Morris R.

PURPLE HEART

WO1 AUD, Roger M. Jr.
SP4 BRISTOW, Charles E.

AIR MEDAL WITH "V" DEVICE

Maj STEENSON, Morris R. 20th OIC with V
CPT HINELINE, James L. 18th OIC with V
REFLECTIONS

A. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:

JANUARY

ARMY COMENDATION MEDAL

SP4 PREVOST, Frank V.
SP5 VIGOR, Richard W.
SP4 KINGGAID, Terrell G.
SP4 SAUNDERS, Roger L.
SP4 GARDINIA, Edward J.
SP4 KINES, Leroy
WOL EIDAM, Albert H. III
SP5 GARCIA, Henry H.
SP5 GOLDEN, John L.
SP5 SCOTT, Robert F.

ARMY COMENDATION MEDAL WITH "V"

CW2 ADKINS, Clifford M.

BASIC AIR MEDAL

CPT HAAS, Michael E.
SSG GARCIA, Pedro A.

OAK LEAF CLUSTER TO THE AIR MEDAL

CPT REVELS, Jack W. 2nd - 31st OLC
CPT RAY, Edward 2nd - 13th OLC
WO1 DUBBS, Edward A. 1st - 29th OLC

BRONZE STAR

CW2 BROWN, John S.
CPT SAVILLE, Duane E.

FEBRUARY

BASIC AIR MEDAL

PFC GHISCO, David L.
WO1 KOPANKE, Nicholas A.
SSG RODRIGUEZ, Francisco L.
SP4 BRISTOW, Charles E.
PFC GHESIS, Dennis R.
1LT VOOREES, James W.
SP5 SMITH, Louis J.
PFC BOLLINGER, Derwood R.
PFC HARVEY, Mark
WO1 KELLY, RUSELL W.
WO1 KERSTOCK, Stephen G.
WO1 NUIATUK, Francis J.
WO1 HAMILL, John R.
WO1 DUNPH, Geoffrey L.
SP4 KONEI, John J.
PFC LABRIE, Francis A.
SP4 CLAYBURN, James F.
SP4 HODGKIN, Louis

OAK LEAF CLUSTER TO THE AIR MEDAL

SP5 BONHAM, James D. 1st - 19th OLC

ARMY COMENDATION MEDAL

WO1 SMITH, Robert W.
SSG MARTINEZ, Benjamin G.
SP5 COOK, Donald E.

BRONZE STAR

SSG ARNOLD, James
SP4 HERNANDEZ-NIRVES, Juan
MAJ STEENSON, Morris R.

PURPLE HEART

WO1 AID, Roger M. Jr.
SP4 BRISTOW, Charles E.

AIR MEDAL WITH "V" DEVICE

MAJ STEENSON, Morris R. 20th OLC with V
CPT HINELINE, James L. 13th OLC with V
MARCH

ARMY COMENDATION MEDAL

Sgt Marino, Anthony
Sp4 Delphiaff, Jacobus
Wo1 Dubbs, Roger D.
Sfc Rowley, Stephen G.
Sp6 Smith, Emil T.
Wo1 Drawbridge, Charles R.
Sp5 Villareal, Rudy E.
Wo1 Brennan, Howard N.

BASIC AIR MEDAL

Sp1 Derrick, Harry J.
Wo1 Haude, Richard A.
1Lt Haire, Joe C.

GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL

Sp5 Thompson, Gerald R.

FURPLE HEART

Sgt Swift, Louis J.

APRIL

BASIC AIR MEDAL

Wo1 Thullen, Jeffrey C.
1Lt Wendle, Edward L.
Sp5 Brown, Johnnie D.
Sp4 Weil, Bernard S.
Sp4 Joachim, Jeffrey L.
Sp4 Beneville, Rafael
Sp4 Bradley, Dean R.
1Lt Nenstiel, Jared S.
1Lt Brennan, Richard A.
Cpt Freimicsberger, Kenneth P.
Wo1 Molvig, Charles V.
1Lt Schmidt, Larry D.
1Lt Morris, Malcolm C., Jr.
Wo1 Mc Bride, Thomas R.
Sp4 White, Michael J.
Wo1 Shinkle, Donald A.
Wo1 Ferguson, Roger D.
Cw2 Jones, Derrel C.
Wo1 Jesmer, Wendell L.
1Lt Callahan, Brian P.
Sp4 Nelson, Robert P.
Cw2 Drawbridge, Charles R.
Sp4 Pica, Kent A.
Wo1 Casseis, Randall B.
Sp4 Romo, Andres

GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL (POSTHUMOUS)

Sp4 Mc Graw, Donald C.

OAK LEAF CLUSTER TO THE AIR MEDAL

Sp4 Carter, Francis L. 1st - 20th OLC
Cw2 Telando, Thomas M. 1st - 20th OLC
Wo1 Dubs, Roger D. 1st - 40th OLC
Cpt Cable, Murry L. 1st - 44th OLC
Wo1 Drawbridge, Charles 1st - 36th OLC

ARMY COMMISSION MEDAL

Sp5 Feingold, Edward D. 2nd OLC
Sp4 Carter, Francis L.
Sp5 Jeske, Michael A.
Sp4 Garenges, Lloyd O.
Sp4 Guiz, Henry R., Jr.
Sp5 Wiley, Michael
Sp1 Roothuisberger, John A.
Sp5 Mc Lennard, David W.
Cw2 Telando, Thomas M.

AIR MEDAL WITH "V" DEVICE

Sp5 Prevost, Frank V.
Pfc Clemens, Warren

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

Cpt Heline, James L.
Cpt Lewis, Carlos G.

BRONZE STAR

Wo1 Roffey, Robert J.
Cpt Voehies, James W.
Cpt Cable, Murry L.
BASIC AIR MEDAL

PFC DAVIDE, James F.
SP4 CANADA, Theodore V.
SP4 HOFFMAN, William A.
SP4 DEL TORO, Miguel A., Jr.
SP4 EPLEY, Frank W.
SP4 GABRIEL, Lyle J.
SP4 KANASAKI, Clifton S.
SP4 McKIBBEN, Roger B.
SP5 MONROE, Brett R.
SP4 MC GRAW, Donald O. (Posthumous)

AIR MEDAL with "VII" DEVICE

SP4 MC GRAW, Donald O. 9th OLC "V" (Posthumous)
SP5 FAULKNER, Troy D. 25th OLC "V" (Posthumous)

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL

CW2 JONES, James R.
CW2 EVANS, Kris R.
SP4 ARENA, Joseph
SP5 SWIFT, Louis J.
SP5 SMITHE, Joseph L.
SP4 LABRESE, Francis A., Jr.

BRONZE STAR with "V" DEVICE

SP4 GARRINGER, Lloyd O.

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

WO1 AUD, Roger M. (Posthumous)
CPT SANFORD, Arnold (Posthumous)

BASIC AIR MEDAL

WO1 BITTING, Kenneth H.
SP4 WEDGENORTH, William L.
SP4 SPICA, Bogumil
SP4 BLAINE, William A.
SP4 KEDZIERSKI, Ronald P.
LT SWANK, Leo A.
SP4 MILLIS, Willie B.
LT ADAMS, Kurtis P.
SP4 SHAPIRO, David G.
SP4 ROMERO, Ronald W.
SP4 SANCHEZ, Blas J.

JUNE

LAST LINVILLE, Dennis A.
SP4 EARSEY, Monroe D.
WO1 WURSTER, David J.
WO1 HARKOGAN, Robert K.
WO1 ZIELINSKI, Gary L.
LT DOWLING, Thomas H., III
WO1 KIMBALL, Richard S.
SP4 BAILEY, Dexter H.
SP4 CALDWELL, Rodney P.
SP4 DWIGUN, Anthony

Page 29
OAK LEAF CLUSTER to the AIR MEDAL

SP4 WEIK, Bernard S. 1st - 6th OLC
SP4 LEBRERE, Francis A. Jr. 1st - 12th OLC
SP5 HODAN, Michael J. 1st - 23rd OLC
SP5 JESKE, Michael A. 1st - 15th OLC
SP4 BREHN, Donald D. 1st - 21st OLC
CPT MARICLE, Wayne E. 1st - 10th OLC
SP5 ROETHISBERGER, John A. 1st - 19th OLC
SP5 HUD, Roy W. 1st - 17th OLC
SP5 WILLEY, Michael 1st - 23rd OLC

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL

SP4 DIGGS, Harlan M.
SP4 ROMO, Andres
SP4 PIERSON, William K.
SP4 NELSON, Robert F.
SP5 HUD, Roy W.
SP4 RENZ, Stephen O.
SP4 FORD, Dann R.
SP5 BARSLEY, Monroe D.
SP4 SWANSON, Galen
SP5 HASSISBACK, Rolland
SP5 AIRI, Maurice E.
SP4 BENNETT, Joseph
SP5 JESSEN, Paul L.
SH4 BUTLER, Barry D.

BASIC AIR MEDAL

CPT BRGWELL, Gary L.
CPT HORN, John E.
LT RADONOVICH, Michael A.
LT VAUGHAN, Danny M.
COL COX, James C.
Capt FESS, Warren M.
Capt GRABOWSKI, Douglas F.
Capt MOSHER, Daryl L.
Capt WELCH, Franklin D.
Sgt ANDERSON, Jack D.
Sgt JOHNSON, Michael S.

SP4 CASTORENO, Robert F.
SP4 HOUGHTON, Louis E.

BRONZE STAR

CPT MARICLE, Wayne E.
Maj GRIFFIN, James W. (1st OLC)
SGT GARCIA, Pedro A.
CPT BRANCHOMB, Thurman Jr.

W21 HOUDE, Richard
W21 FELD, Gary
W21 MOLLER, Albert

PURPLE HEART

LT FERGUSON, James P.
LT DOWLING, Thomas H. III
SP4 DERRICK, Harry J.
CM2 COLQUITT, John D.
SP4 BOLLINGER, Derwood R.
SP4 BLAINE, William A.
SP4 KAWASAKI, Clifton S.

W21 JESMER, Wendell L.
LT HUTCHINSON, Jim S.
SP4 WEDGEWORTH, William L.
SP4 SHABBLIN, James P.
CM2 HARPOL, Jimmy L.
LT NENSTIEL, Jared S.

JULY

SP4 GARDINER, David C.
SP4 HEATH, Robert L.
SP4 SCHEUTZELLE, Walter H.
SP4 SINGLETON, Dewayne D.
SP4 TOWNSEND, Stephen F.
SGT WAIOLOMA, Jerry A.
SP5 LANIAS, Clifford C.
SP4 DURAN, George R.
SP4 GODSTON, Steven M.
PFC VILLALVA, Ernest

Page 30
**OAK LEAF CLUSTER to the AIR MEDAL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Date Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MAJ GRIFFIN, James W.</td>
<td>6th</td>
<td>10th</td>
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<tr>
<td>CW2 POND, Gary M.</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>35th</td>
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<td>WO1 HUGUEN, Richard A.</td>
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<td>3th</td>
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<td>WO1 MILLER, Albert L.</td>
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<td>35th</td>
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<td>SP4 BOLLINGER, Derwood</td>
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<td>15th</td>
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<td>SP4 CLEMENS, Warren</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>11th</td>
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<td>SP4 KASSELEY, Monroe D.</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>4th</td>
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<td>PFC DAVIE, James F.</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>15th</td>
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</table>

**ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Date Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CPT HAAS, Michael E.</td>
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<td>CW2 JONES, James R.</td>
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<td>SSG GARCIA, Pedro A.</td>
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<td>SP5 SMITH, Karl R.</td>
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<td>SP4 COBURN, Clarence D.</td>
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<td>SP4 KEDZERSKI, Ronald P.</td>
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<td>SP4 RAMSEY, Roger B.</td>
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**GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL**

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<th>Date Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SP4 EPLEY, Frank</td>
<td></td>
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<td>SP4 RAMOS, Wilfred</td>
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**DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<th>Date Range</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CPT MARICLE, Wayne E.</td>
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<td>CPT MORRIS, Malcolm C. Jr.</td>
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**BRONZE STAR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SSG SHIVER, James R.</td>
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<td>SGT ANDERSON, Jack D.</td>
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<td>SGT JOHNSON, Michael A.</td>
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</table>

**AUGUST**

**PURPLE HEART**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Date Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SP4 HEATH, Robert L.</td>
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<tr>
<td>PFC McGARRITY, Scott J.</td>
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</table>

**BRONZE STAR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Date Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CW2 WILLIS, William C.</td>
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**DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Date Range</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CW2 JONES, James R.</td>
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**OAK LEAF CLUSTERS TO THE AIR MEDAL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Date Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CPT BRANCHOMB, Thurman</td>
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<td>1st - 18th</td>
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<tr>
<td>CW2 WILLIS, William G.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SP5 HODGES, Ronald B.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SP4 DEL TORO, Miguel A.</td>
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<td>SP4 EPLEY, Frank W.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SP4 HOLDORAFER, Louis</td>
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<td>2nd - 33rd</td>
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<td>SP4 KEDZERSKI, Ronald</td>
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<td>1st - 12th</td>
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<tr>
<td>SP4 MOONUS, William S.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1st - 32nd</td>
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<tr>
<td>SP4 MORGAN, Dennis D.</td>
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<td>SP4 RAMSEY, Roger B.</td>
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<td>1st - 29th</td>
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<tr>
<td>SP4 ROMO, Andres</td>
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<td>1st - 16th</td>
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<tr>
<td>PFC DERRICK, Harry J.</td>
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<td>1st - 12th</td>
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<tr>
<td>PV2 HOFFMAN, William A.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1st - 11th</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## September

**Air Medal with Oak Clusters**

- CPT FERGUSON, James F.  1st - 37th
- CPT GOGGIN, Edward F.  1st - 46th
- CPT HUTCHINSON, Jim S.  1st - 33rd

**Purple Heart**

- WO1 NEWPORT, James F.
- SSG JONES, James F.

**Bronze Star**

- CPT HAIRE, Joe C.
- CPT FERGUSON, James F.
- CPT GOGGIN, Edward F.
- CPT HUTCHINSON, Jim S.

## October

**Basic Air Medal**

- CPT CAHILL, Thomas E.
- PFC PATTERSON, Jerry R.

**Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal**

- SP4 EDELMAN, Joseph S. Jr.  1st - 10th
- SP4 BRADLEY, Dean R.  1st - 23rd
- SP4 SINGLETON, Dewayne D.  1st - 12th
- SP4 SHIPPEY, David G.  1st - 19th
- CW2 DUNFEE, Geoffrey L.  1st - 36th
- WO1 HUMPHREY, Francis J.  1st - 29th
- CW2 MC BRIDE, Thomas R.  1st - 32nd
- CW2 PEACE, Herman L. Jr.  1st - 38th
- CW2 FERGUSON, Roger D.  1st - 30th
- SFU BAGGETT, Claude N.  1st - 6th
- SP5 MONROE, Brett R.  1st - 49th
- SP5 BANGERT, Kenneth J.  1st - 23rd
- CW2 WOLFF, Richard J.  1st - 27th
- SP4 DILLON, Lonnie E.  2nd - 12th
- CW2 COLQUITT, John D.  2nd - 71st

**Army Commendation Medal**

- SP5 HATHAWAY, Kevin 2nd OLC
- SP5 HALL, David
- SF4 SHIPPEY, David G.
- SP5 BLAINE, Gerald W.
- SF4 GARVINER, Guy M.
- SF4 SINGLETON, Dewayne D.
- SP5 HEBB, Terry
- SP5 MONROE, Brett R.
- SF4 ATWOOD, Tommy G.
- SF4 BRADLEY, Dean R. 1st OLC

**Army Commendation Medal with "V" Device**

- SP5 LANDE, Clifford C.
- WO1 DAVIS, James E.

**Purple Heart**

- SF5 DURAN, Steven G.

**Bronze Star**

- CW2 DUNFEE, Geoffrey L.
- CW2 MC BRIDE, Thomas R.
- CW2 FERGUSON, Roger D.
- CPT PREIMESBERGER, Kenneth F.
- CW2 NEWPORT, James F.
- CW2 WOLFF, Richard J.
- SFU SANTINO, August W.
- SFC BAGGETT, Claude N.
- SFC PEEPLES, Donald R.
NOVEMBER

BASIC AIR MEDAL

WO1 VAN VLAIRICKEN, George
SP5 KOMAROWSKI, Thomas M.
WO1 MOORE, James W.
SP4 JACKSON, Ricky G.
SP4 CHRISTIANSEN, Vernon W.
SP4 NICHOLS, Nolan C.
WO1 BIRCH, David G.
SP4 WHEELER, Richard A.

OAK LEAF CLUSTER TO THE AIR MEDAL

Maj SAVILIE, Duane E. 2nd - 30th

AIR MEDAL WITH "V" DEVICE

1Lt NENSTIEL, Jared S. 2nd OLC
SP4 BENITEZ, Rafael 1st OLC
SP4 BENNETT, Joseph 1st OLC
SP5 MONROE, Brett R. 50th OLC
SP4 SANCHEZ, Blas J. 1st OLC
SP5 KOMAROWSKI, Thomas M. 2nd OLC
SP4 MIES, Willie B. 1st OLC

PURPLE HEART

CW2 BUEHLER, Howard W.

DECEMBER

BASIC AIR MEDAL

SP4 BROCK, Ray O.
SP4 CUSTAR, Gary
PFC HILLIGOS, Russell R.
1LT RADCUFFIE, Ronald A.
1LT SHAFFER, Joseph K.
SP4 ALDEN, Albert G.
SP4 KAISER, Charles M.
PFC ODONE, Francis E.
PFC BURKE, Phillip N.
PFC BUKOMICZ, Peter J.
SP4 LAFERTY, David M.
SP4 MAXON, David M.
WO1 DAVIDIAN, Lawrence M.

OAK LEAF CLUSTER TO THE AIR MEDAL

WO1 MOLVIG, Charles V. 1st - 31st
CW2 HAMRICK, John R. Jr. 1st - 31st
PFC BARTNER, Jerry R. 1st - 9th
WO1 KOPANKE, Nicholas A. 1st - 35th
SP4 WIOLAMA, Jerry 1st - 17th

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL

SP4 LEIDER, Joseph S.
SP5 KAWASAKI, Clifton S.
SP5 WINKER, Bruce
CW2 COLQUITT, John D.
SP4 WAIOLAMA, Jerry
SP5 WEDGEWORTH, William L.
SP5 SHAMHILL, James P.
PFC BLANSET, William A.
SGT LEOP, Richard
SP5 BALK, Kenneth J.

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

CPT DOWLING, Thomas H., III
CPT HUTCHINSON, Jim S.
WO1 JESMER, Wendell L.
WO1 MOLVIG, Charles V.

BRONZE STAR

WO1 SHINKLE, Donald A.
CW2 HAMRICK, John R. Jr.
CW2 COLQUITT, John D.
CW2 COLQUITT, John D., 1st OLC
B. HONOR ROLL OF THE UNIT MEMBERS KILLED IN ACTION

1st Lieutenant Michael K. Thompson 21 March 1969
Specialist Five Gerald R. Thompson 21 March 1969
Captain Arnold Sanford 23 April 1969
Warrant Officer Roger M. Auld Jr. 23 April 1969
Specialist Five Troy D. Faulkner 23 April 1969
Specialist Four Donald O. McGraw 23 April 1969
B. CONGRATULATIONS FOR A JOB WELL DONE

Throughout this reporting period the men of the 173rd Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) continued to distinguish themselves and bring praise upon the unit for displaying professionalism while performing their job in an exemplary manner. The following is a copy of the several letters of commendation which the men of the 173rd have earned while doing their job for the people we supported.

Dear Gentlemen:

Upon my departure as the commanding officer of the 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry, I would like to take this opportunity to express to each of you my appreciation for the excellent support which you have given to the DOBOL Battalion.

During my tenure as Battalion Commander I have witnessed your outstanding efforts and fine display of professionalism. On numerous occasions our success was due largely to your work. It has been a pleasure for me and a credit to the 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry to have you with us.

My best goes to each of you for continued success and a pleasant tour.

Sincerely,

JACK W. RADCLIFFE
LTC, Infantry
Commanding

1. Please accept my extreme appreciation and heartfelt thanks for my rescue by a UH-1 Helicopter of your unit flown by 1st Lt Curtis P. Adams, WO1 James C. Cox, SP/4 Ronnie W. Romero and SP/4 William Nobus on 12 September 1969.

2. I was forced to eject from my F-100 which was burning and exploding as a result of ground fire and landed some distance northeast of Bien Hoa, RVN. Almost immediately after my landing your helicopter touched down within 200 feet of my position and the gunners ran over to assist me. Believe me, that Huey was the most beautiful sight I have seen in my 9+ months in Vietnam. Fortunately, I was uninjured and we departed the area, as the saying goes, "in an expeditious manner." I would estimate I was on the ground only two minutes.

3. The efficiency and professionalism of this crew was truly outstanding. I make this observation from more than just casual knowledge as I have in the past flown helicopters and, in fact, have flown the UH-1.

4. Let me reiterate my gratitude and speak for all fighter pilots in saying how much easier our job is when armed with the knowledge that if we get in trouble you will be there waiting to get us out, regardless of the difficulty or danger to yourselves. Thanks again.

5. I would be most happy to know that this crew receives just recognition for their outstanding job.

ARTHUR W. STEINHAUER,
MAJ, USAF
612th Tac Ftr Sq.
On the eve of my departure from 11th Aviation Battalion (Combat), I extend a most heartfelt thanks for the loyalty and support I've received as your commander. One fact eases my disappointment in leaving, that I leave behind an outstanding group of officers and men.

I have been associated with the Battalion for 25 months of its history, first as a Section Leader in one of the companies and now as its commander. During this time, I have watched the character of its men and quality of performance improve steadily. The Battalion is an outstanding organization. The credit belongs to you. Your sacrifices and professionalism, loyalty and service have been a source of inspiration to me and have created a unit of which you can justly be proud.

LTC Robert W. Flint will be your new commander. I have no doubt that you will give him the same full measure of support that you gave me. It is inherently characteristic of men of your caliber.

Again, I extend my sincerest appreciation and wish you all good luck and God speed.

Sincerely,

ALTON B. REID
LTC, Infantry
Commanding

TO: WO1 Daryl L. Mosel
173rd Aviation Company (Aslt Hel)
APO 96289

1. I wish to commend you for the professional manner in which you successfully autorotated your UH 1D helicopter with no damage after experiencing engine failure on 8 September 1969. The skill you demonstrated in executing the autorotation may have probably saved the lives of you and your crew and a valuable Army aircraft.

2. Your actions in this emergency may seem routine to more experienced pilots, but by this successful autorotation you demonstrated the thorough training you receive in handling such emergencies. Your prompt response to this situation, as well as the manner in which you handled it are to be commended. What could have been a major accident was prevented by your skill and professionalism. I extend my personal thanks and congratulations on a job well done.

LEO D. TURNER
Colonel, IN
Commanding