



COMMANDER ATTACK CARRIER STRIKING FORCE
SEVENTH FLEET

FPO SAN FRANCISCO 96601

IN REPLY REFER TO

CTF 77/CVA/FB1/002:rm
1650

Ser: 189/77/88-65
6 May 1965

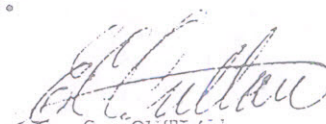
HENRY J. O'BERNE AIC

From: Commander Attack Carrier Striking Force SEVENTH Fleet (CTF 77) (CCD-1)
To: Airman First Class Harvey O'Bern, United States Air Force
Via: (1) Commander SEVENTH Fleet
(2) Commander 2ND Air Division, United States Air Force

Subj: Letter of Commendation

1. At approximately 1745 on 9 April 1965, while serving as parachute rescue crewman of Air Force 51-7217 HU-16B aircraft of the 31st Air Rescue Squadron, your aircraft arrived over downed Navy Pilot, LCDR C. H. McNeil, U. S. Navy at a point approximately 1500 yards off the shore of North Vietnam. LCDR McNeil had ejected from his Navy A4 aircraft which had been damaged in an attack in North Vietnam. Your aircraft approached the area through heavy ground fire, consisting of small arms and automatic weapons, and landed in heavy seas with dangerous swells. Under the adverse conditions and still under enemy fire you participated as a member of the crew in the expert rescue of LCDR McNeil. Your aircraft then attempted take off but sea conditions were such that several attempts were unsuccessful. One engine of the aircraft became over heated necessitating taxiing to seaward, and allowing the engine to cool and be inspected. Still under fire, the aircraft was successful in becoming airborne and returned to its home base with the rescued Navy Pilot.

2. Your courageous action under fire in participating in the rescue of LCDR McNeil upheld the finest traditions of the United States Military Service. Commander Task Force SEVENTY-SEVEN extends his appreciation for your service in the rescue of this Navy pilot, and heartily commends you for your heroic actions under fire.


E. C. OUTLAN

K318,2411-6

DETACHMENT 5
PACIFIC AIR RESCUE CENTER
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
APO U.S. FORCES 96337

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: DET 5 PARC

SUBJECT: Mission Narrative

TO: DET 3 PARC

*Vandenberg has op
20 Oct 65
Perry*

12 Apr 1965

On 9 Apr 1965, HU-16's Alpha and Bravo were circling "Sharpnote", a U.S. Navy Destroyer, when a message came of an aircraft down in the water about one mile off-shore. Both aircraft proceeded outbound, and further information, ie, the exact location, positive sighting of a survivor, Rescap available, was secured. Additional Rescap with air-ground ordnance was requested, and was pulled "off-target" by the Navy and diverted to the SAR area. The HU-16's arrived in the target area at 1745H, sighting was made of the survivor, and a recheck of the local sea condition made. The crew of Alpha elected to attempt a open-sea landing and pick-up. Landing was made on a heading of 230°, with touchdown approximately 1 to 1½ miles off-shore. The aircraft was taxied at low to medium speed toward the survivor under the direction of Bravo and the Rescap, as spray prevented positive sighting by the aircraft on the water. When informed that the survivor was about 100 yards ahead, the aircraft was brought to "dead slow" taxi, visual sighting established, and a two engine pick-up made. Estimated position of the aircraft at time of pick-up was 800 to 1,000 yards off-shore. Immediate taxi out to sea was made, then take off was accomplished on a heading of 230°. Landing time was 1805H, pick-up at 1810H, and take-off at 1820H. Prior to landing, small arms fire had been reported by the Rescap, and they had reported that they believed they could suppress it. During landing, water operations, and take-off the Rescap maintained constant firing passes on the shore line and high ground in the area, performing what I consider an outstanding job. Pick-up could not have been attempted without adequate Rescap to insure safety of the aircraft and crew from ground fire. The survivor was in good condition, with a cut on his left thumb and bruises on both thighs. All injuries were sustained when the survivor "bailed out" by spinning the aircraft to throw himself out after ejection systems had failed. The downed aircraft was an A-4C Skyhawk. The Survivor was returned to Danang A.B. and turned over to the station medical personnel.

Landing Aircraft HU-16 51-7217 31st ARS
Survivor—— LtCdr Charles H. McNeil, USN
Crew Members— RCC-Capt. R.F. Reichardt; Pilot-Capt. F.A. Burkhart;
Nav- 1lt Slocombe, J.O.; FM- SSgt K.V. Lundy; RO- SSgt J.A. Powers—
all 31st ARS. PJ-Alc H.J. O'Bierne, 36th ARS; PJ-Alc L. Huyett, 33rd
ARS.

Richard F. Reichardt
Richard F. Reichardt
Captain USAF
RCC

CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

TO

HENRY J. O'BIERNE

Airman First Class Henry J. O'Bierne distinguished himself by heroism while participating in aerial flight as a Pararescueman on an unarmed HU-16 aircraft on a rescue mission in Southeast Asia on 9 April 1965. On that date, Airman First Class O'Bierne and crew recovered a downed pilot from the South China Sea although hampered by extremely unfavorable wind and sea conditions which necessitated a raft approach to the downed airman, and a takeoff directly into heavy fire from the shore batteries. The outstanding heroism and selfless devotion to duty displayed by Airman First Class O'Bierne reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

31ST AIR RESCUE SQUADRON
AIR RESCUE SERVICE (MATS)
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96274



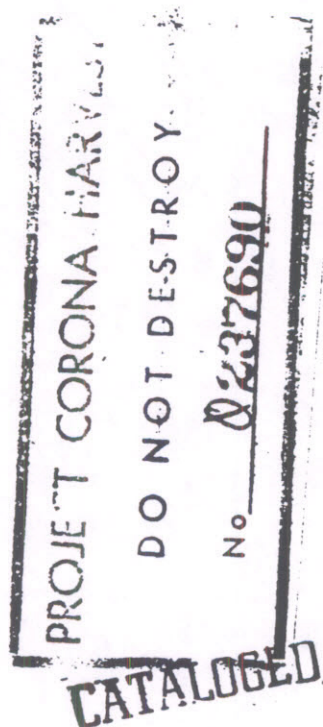
Y TO
OF: 31ARSA

2 June 1965

ECT: Monthly Historical Report (RCS: AU-D5(ARS) 1 - 30 April 1965)

TO: Hq ARS (ARCOI)
Orlando AFB Fla

1. NAME OF UNIT:
2. REPORTING PERIOD:
3. STATION:
4. ASSIGNMENT:
5. COMMANDER:
6. MISSION:



31st Air Rescue Squadron

1 April thru 30 April 1965

Clark Air Base, Philippines

31st Air Rescue Squadron
Headquarters Pacific Air Rescue Center
Air Rescue Service
Military Air Transport Service

Lt Col Gardner W Kendall
12511A, Regular Commander

To operate and maintain assigned search and rescue equipment to search for, locate and recover personnel and/or aerospace hardware in support of Air Force and other agencies in global air and space operations including research and development.

7. OPERATIONS:

Flying time for the month of April was as follows:

<u>TYPE A/C</u>	<u>MISSION</u>	<u>TRAINING</u>	<u>OTHER</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
HU-16B	322:35	18:00	5:05	345:40
HH-43B	11:10	52:00	9:45	72:55
HC-54	201:55			201:55
HC-97	90:45			90:45
TOTAL	626:25	70:00	14:50	711:15

a. Squadron mission activity for the Month of April rose to a new high of 126 sorties and 625:25 hours.

(1) HU-16 missions: Two HU-16 aircraft and crews were deployed in SEA during the month on temporary duty. A total of 53 sorties were flown 322:35 hours. Of that time 299:40 was combat support time in SEA.

(2) HH-43 missions: Thirty sorties were flown for a total of 11:10 hours. One pilot was TDY to SEA during the entire month.

(3) HC-54 missions: Two HC-54 aircraft and crews augmented the squadron during April. They flew 29 sorties totaling 201:55 in support of the Clark Air Base area of responsibility.

(4) HC-97 missions: One HC-97 aircraft and crew augmented the squadron during April. Fourteen sorties were flown totaling 90:25 in support of the Clark Air Base area of responsibility.

b. Lt Col Kendall, the 31st Air Rescue Squadron Commander, visited the HU-16 deployment site on 26, 27 and 28 April.

c. Missions of special interest during April follow:

(1) HC-54 Search and Rescue Mission 31-187-10 April 1965. HC-97 number 30147, on an orbit mission, received a call that an F-100 pilot was down in the South China Sea at 1520 N, 113 25E at 0915. By 1000 the HC-97 crew had located the F-100 pilot and dropped an MA-1 kit to him. At 1015 a second MA-1 kit was dropped. At 1036 the HC-97 crew reported that the pilot was in the MA-1 life raft and that a U.S. Navy Ship, Eagle Rock 387, was proceeding to the scene for pickup. The HC-97 crew commander assumed mission command duties, and the survivor was picked up by the Eagle Rock at 1246 in good physical condition. HC-97 30147 returned to Clark, landing at 1535. One sortie for 9:30. Flight Crew from 79th Air Rescue Squadron. Crew members: RCC Captain James S Westfall; CP Major Rodney E Houghton; Navigator Captain Edward R Nugent; RO SSgt Dennis M Mackrel; FM TSgt Leo A Guehl Jr.; FM TSgt M. L. Gibson.

(2) On 9 April 1965 a 31st Air Rescue Squadron HU-16 crew performed a hazardous combat rescue mission under the control of Det 3, PARC. The mission required an extremely difficult open-sea landing in hostile territorial waters to rescue a downed U.S. Navy pilot. While on a precautionary orbit, the crew received a call that there was a downed pilot approximately one mile off the enemy coast. They performed an open-sea landing and recovered the downed pilot who was receiving small arms fire. After the recovery, a takeoff was attempted toward the open sea, but wind and sea conditions caused the takeoff to be aborted. Approximately two miles off shore, the crew reversed course and accomplished the takeoff toward shore directly into the enemy fire. Crew members were: RCC Captain Richard F Reichardt, CP Captain Frederic A Burkhart, N 1st Lt Jack O Slocombe, FM SSgt Kearney V Lundy, RO SSgt James T Powers, PJ ALC Larry D Hugett, PJ ALC Henry J O'Bierne.

(3) HH-43B Air Evacuation Mission 31-227-27 April 1965. Notified by the Det 2 PARC Joint Search and Rescue Center to airlift a seriously ill Philippine businessman, Mr Leonardo Go, from Infanta, Quezon Province, to Manila for treatment. The HH-43B was airborne at 0600 local and landed at Manila with the patient at 0830. After refueling at Manila, the crew returned to Clark, landing at 1200. Two sorties for 3:05. Crew: RCC Captain Marvin L Palmer; CP Captain Raymond Albee; FS Captain (DR) Thurman E Tobias, and HM David D Dere.

From: Hobeirne@aol.com <Hobeirne@aol.com>
To: rlapointe@gci.net <rlapointe@gci.net>
Date: Tuesday, September 14, 1999 4:51 PM
Subject: Re: HU-16 SAR

Hey Bob,

Got your message, and the second one where you found the date. The Navy pilot's name was LCDR McNeil; the HU-16 crew was from the Philippines; the second PJ was SSgt. Larry Huyett from Okinawa. I don't know the individual names of the crew. According to the paperwork that I have the HU-16B was AF51-7217. The date, as you already know, was 9 April 1965, and the time was reported as approximately 1745 hours. This mission was my first DFC award. Keep up the good work. I'm going to be speaking at a graduation at Kirtland AFB this month, and I'll give your book a plug.

Obee

SECRET
 100-100000-100000
 100-100000-100000
 100-100000-100000

100-100000-100000

ARSI-65

SECRET

200

SECRET

Mission Number				Aircraft			Personnel			Totals			
Det	ARC	Sq	Msn	Date	HU-16	HH-43	HH-3	USAF	USN	USA	Fgn Mil	Indiv Msn	Accumulative
5	PARC	70		8 Feb		1					1	1	1
3	PARC	128		11 Feb	1				1			1	2
3	PARC	187		2 Mar	1	4		4			1	5	7
3	PARC	252		22 Mar	1			1				1	8
3	PARC	266		26 Mar	1	1			2			2	10
3	PARC	277		29 Mar	1				1			1	11
3	PARC	283		31 Mar		1		1				1	12
3	PARC	319		9 Apr	1				1			1	13
3	PARC	393		27 Apr		1			1			1	14
3	PARC	428		7 May	1			1				1	15
3	PARC	433		8 May	1				1			1	16
3	PARC	448		12 May		1		1				1	17
3	PARC	469		17 May		1		1				1	18
3	PARC	493		23 May	1			1				1	19
4	PARC	269		28 May		1				1		1	20
3	PARC	529		1 Jun	1				1			1	21
5	PARC	313		2 Jun		4		4				4	25
3	PARC	562		8 Jun		1		1				1	26
3	PARC	568		9 Jun		2		2				2	28
3	PARC	630		23 Jun		1		1				1	29

SECRET

MISSIONSRESCUERSLOCATIONSSURVIVORS

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Aircraft</u>		<u>Name</u>	<u>Service</u>	<u>Aircraft</u>
5-PARC-70-8 Feb	Capt Hartley	HH-43F	1607N - 10812E	Maj Hung	VNAF	A1H
3-PARC-128-11 Feb	Capt Richardson	HU-16B	1728N - 10646E	LT Majors	USN	A4C
3-PARC-187-2 Mar	Maj La Dou	HU-16B	1743N - 10634E	Lt Cullen	USAF	F-100
	Maj Ingraham	HH-43F	1706N - 10640E	Capt Baird	USAF	F-105
	Capt Freedman	HH-43B	1615N - 10525E	Maj Panas	USAF	F-105
	Lt Phelan	HH-43F	1720N - 10655E	W/O Van Phu	VNAF	A1H
	Capt Kelly	HH-43B	1604N - 10340E	Capt Spagnola	USAF	F-105
3-PARC-252-22 Mar	Maj Waechter	HU-16B	1758N - 10638E	LCol Risner	USAF	F-105
3-PARC-266-26 Mar	Maj Shook	HU-16B	1758N - 10635E	CDR Shugart	USN	A4E
	Lt Phelan	HH-43F	1620N - 10823E	LT Wangman	USN	F8U
3-PARC-277-29 Mar*	Maj Shook	HU-16B	2010N - 10737E	CDR Donnelly	USN	F8U
3-PARC-283-31 Mar	Capt Strayer	HH-43B	1717N - 10545E	Capt Bigoness	USAF	F-100
3-PARC-319-9 Apr	Capt Reichardt	HU-16B	1854N - 10541E	LCDR McNeill	USN	A4C
3-PARC-393-27 Apr	Capt Rodenberg	HH-43B	1727N - 10445E	LTJG Wilkes	USN	A1H
3-PARC-428-7 May	Capt Reichardt	HU-16B	1935N - 10605E	Maj Lambert	USAF	F-105
3-PARC-433-8 May	Capt Reichardt	HU-16B	1753N - 10705E	LT Wilson	USN	RF8A
3-PARC-448-12 May	Capt Ballinger	HH-43B	1655N - 10443E	Capt Schneider	USAF	F-105
3-PARC-469-17 May	Capt Hepp	HH-43B	1905N - 10442E	Capt Taliaferro	USAF	F-105
3-PARC-493-23 May	Capt Richardson	HU-16B	1840N - 10600E	Maj Hernan	USAF	F-105
4-PARC-269-28 May	Capt Boyles	HH-43F	1048N - 10640E		USA	UH-1B
3-PARC-529-1 Jun	Capt Brunner	HU-16B	1847N - 10609E	LT Field	USN	F8
5-PARC-313-2 Jun	Capt Hartley	HH-43F	1611N - 10808E	Capt Lockhart	USAF	HH-43F
				SSgt Kilpatrick		
				A2C Smith		

* Recovered on 31 March

ARSH-65

SECRET

Robert LaPointe

From: <Jwflyfish@aol.com>
To: <rlapointe@gci.net>
Sent: Saturday, October 07, 2000 1:33
Subject: book

I am having a problem with damn confusers, so if you have received any previous messages I got lucky. Attack Squadron 215 "Barnowls", flight leader was Frank Morrow, who can be contacted famorrow@slip.net, daylight mission for trucks. Silly us. All hell broke loose and we were both hit, but my hit was in the inboard 20 mil with 200 rounds, so in a sense I shot myself down, as the port landing gear and all the rest disappeared. Frank had problems of his own but was able to direct the HH43 to my pickup after my bailout. I was force fed beer and a turkey dinner and about 6 hours after leaving the Hancock I was back aboard. I do not recall any other of the crewmembers names. If you run into Capt. Rodenberg please convey my admiration for a job he and the boys did for a squid. Looking forward to your book so send me a copy. I had 151 missions in the North and the rest and probably at least 40-50 were rescap so give the Barnowl a Hoooot at my Australian address. Scotty Wilkes Unit 6 #3 Maytown Close Manoora, Queensland Australia 4870 spadriver@one.net.au

27 APR 65 SAR

GOOD THINK WE RESCUED
HIM, WE SURE GOT HIS
SUPPORT LATER IN THE WAR
40 + SANDY MSLS

ACC
Detachment Provisional Second (PARC)
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
APO U. S. Forces 96310

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: Det Prov Second

28 APR 1965

SUBJECT: Rescue Mission Det 3, PARC 28 Apr 65 - 393

TO: Det 3, PARC

1. At 0340Z Radar Operations alerted us that they had contact with a Navy A-1H, squawking emergency. I went directly to Radar Operations, where at 0345Z I overheard a radio transmission from an A-1H in a flight of two, saying that they were 19 miles out and would attempt an emergency landing at this station. I immediately made the decision to scramble one helicopter to intercept the damaged aircraft. Since the aircraft was or would soon be in Thailand, I directed that the additional survival gear not be loaded aboard the aircraft. At 0350Z helicopter 60-280 was airborne.
2. Radio transmissions upon take-off revealed that the pilot of the damaged A-1H had elected to bail out. Upon turning out of traffic we had the flight of A-1H's, followed by the Rescue HU-16, in sight. In an attempt to gain altitude, the flight of A-1H's made a 360 degree turn around the base. On approximately the 030 degree radial, about two miles from the base, the pilot abandoned his aircraft. The aircraft made a descending turn to the right and dove into an uninhabited, wooded area just over a mile from the base. The pilot's parachute "blossomed" a few seconds after he left the aircraft, and he floated almost straight down in the very light wind. I flew descending circles around the pilot until he touched down in a lightly wooded area. I was able to land in a confined rice paddy, not more than 75 yards from the downed pilot. The pilot apparently did not strike any trees, but his parachute tangled in the top of one tall tree. As I was making a hover landing, the pilot released himself from the parachute harness and dropped five to ten feet to the ground. The pararescue man and crew chief departed the aircraft and assisted the pilot to and aboard the helicopter. The pilot apparently suffered only minor superficial injuries.
3. With the pilot aboard I made a max-performance take-off and returned to the base. I left the crew chief at the sight to recover the pilot's survival equipment. The crew of a second helicopter later assisted and picked up the crew chief. After letting off the downed pilot, who was met by the base doctor at the ramp, I returned to the downed aircraft to insure that the fire had not gotten out of control. I terminated the flight at 0420Z.
4. The weather throughout the mission was 4,000 feet scattered to broken, visibility 15 miles, winds light and variable.

James C. Rodenberg
JAMES C. RODENBERG, Capt, USAF
Rescue Crew Commander