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<u>MISSIONS</u>	<u>NUMBER OF SORTIES(ARS)</u>	<u>OBJECTIVES</u>	<u>TYPES AND NR</u> <u>ARS ACFT LOST</u>	<u>ARS MENWIA ,</u> <u>KIA, MIA</u>
38-1110-6 Nov 65	4	1 F105 Pilot 2 A1E Pilots 4 CH3C crew 4 SH3 crew	1 Ch-3C	3 MIA 1 WIA
38-1111-7 Nov 65	1	1 A4C Pilot		
38-1114-8 Nov 65	71	106 Btl Cas*		
PROV 1-1-14 Nov 65	5	Accid. Vict.		
38-1138-17 Nov 65	2	1 F8E Pilot		
38-1141-18 Nov 65	3	1 F105 Pilot		
7-671-21 Nov 65	2	UNK C-123		
38-1167-26 Nov 65	2	6 UH1B crew		
38-1174-28 Nov 65	2	1 F8E Pilot		
38-1188-2 Dec 65	4	2 F4B crew		
38-1220-15 Dec 65	3	1 F105 Pilot		
38-1236-20 Dec 65	2	1 F105 Pilot		
38-1239-21 Dec 65	3	1 F105 Pilot		

*Battle Field Casualty evacuation.

31. Key personnel assigned. (U) 38th Air Rescue Squadron

Col Arthur W. Beall	Commander 26
Lt Col James L. Blackburn	Operations Officer
Lt Col Donald F. Karschner	Chief JSARC
Maj Franklin H. Roberts	Chief of Maintenance
1st Lt James R. Haug	Supply Officer
CWO W-4 Earl A. Wilson Jr.	Administrative Services Officer

Det Prov First, 38ARS, Cam Ranh Bay AB, RVN Capt Richard C. Pfadenhaur, Cmdr 27
Det 2, 38ARS, Takli AB, Thailand, Capt Edwin J. Christy, Cmdr 27
Det 3, 38ARS, Ubon AB, Thailand, Capt Henry P. Fogg, Cmdr 27
Det 4, 38ARS, Korat AB, Thailand, Capt Jerome R. Luttinger, Cmdr 27
Det 5, 38ARS, Udorn AB, Thailand, Major Baylor R. Haynes, Cmdr 27
Det 6, 38ARS, Bien Hoa AB, RVN, Major Maurice G. Kessler, Cmdr 29
Det 7, 38ARS, Danang AB, RVN, Major Charles E. Hamrick, Cmdr 28
Det 9, 38ARS, Pleiku AB, RVN, Capt Richard R. Cowles, Cmdr 27
Det 10, 38ARS, Bien Tuy AB, RVN, Capt Ervin L. Schaefer, Cmdr 30

26 Atch 1
27 Atch 5
28 Atch 3
29 Atch 8
30 Atch 9

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down by small arms or AW fire. The two USAF A-1's which had been
FROM: Lt. Col. 2nd Div. (2nd) APO US Forces 96237
SUBJECT: SAR Mission, 6 Nov 1965, Oak Lead

TACC established 3 H-4's from Lima 36 to attempt to pick-
up the downed A-1's. People were of the belief there were
Cdr 2nd Air Division. The CH-3 chopper at point D, and the A-1's
APO U.S. Forces 96307. The JTA of the H-4's and the A-1's
(S) The report you requested on the SAR mission triggered with the
search for Oak Lead on 6 Nov was mistakenly understood by my people to
have been made by a telecon (incl. 2) answering specific questions in a
telecon from your headquarters (incl. 1). Also, the SAR summary message
from this Headquarters (incl. 3) was believed to have been briefed to
you. I have reviewed in logs, the oprep-3 and other reports for the
period and interviewed by people for the following summary (refer to map
incl. 4). The report to report that the A-1's were shot down at point
A. Oak Lead first was reported down at point A. This was later
changed in the flight oprep-3 to point B. Weather prevented an elec-
tronic search on 5 Nov. Col. Carter believed it necessary to run an
electronic search as there was a chance for Oak Lead to have bailed out
unobserved while in the cloud.

b. Major Lou Gang, OIC of the A-1B detachment, was in my TACC on
5 Nov, when Oak Lead was downed. He planned his route (map-incl. 7) to
the search area avoiding known and suspected defenses. His search was
planned for the 6th as four sweeps between points A & B was withdrawal
on the penetration route. The search was dependent on an uneventful
completion of his airborne alert at Lima Site 36 on the AM of the 6th
and the weather. If he received a "go", he was instructed to remain
within 1500' AGL in the SAM area. He was passed word from the TACC at
0930 Local that the weather appeared good and the proceed on the search
at 1000 local.

c. On the way into the search area, Maj Gang's wingman was shot
down by AW fire. This was reported by Maj Gang to be at Point C. He
thought he was south of course and had turned more to the north and
descended to 200 feet while crossing a low, flat area (incl. 4). Maj
Gang reported a good chute about 3 miles SB of the AW position and the
pilot OK in a rice paddy. It was to this point, C, that my TACC thought
they were sending the rescue chopper for the A-1 pilot.

d. The HC-54, working as control and radio relay with Maj Gang
on his electronic search, was orbiting in the vicinity of SAM TEU air-
field in Laos. The HC-54 was unable to DME Maj Gang's IFT as he orbited
the downed A-1B, they did "paint" USN F-4's who were orbiting and had
Maj Gang in sight. It was to this point, D, that the HC-54 directed
the CH-3 chopper, A-1 escort and the high cover for the intended rescue
of the downed A-1B. (The difference between points C & D was not known
at the TACC at this time. The HC-54 reported only the azimuth and
bearing from his position). It was at point D that the CH-3 was shot

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OAK LEAD SAR
6 NOV 65

ORIGINAL LETTER

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down by small arms or AW fire. The two USAF A1E's which had been escorting the chopper were joined by USN A1H's. They all reported four good contacts from the chopper, beeper and voice contact, and no ground fire. They gave coordinates which corresponded to point D.

c. By TACC scrambled 2 HH-43's from Lima 36 to attempt to pick-up the CH-3 crew. (The TACC people were of the belief there were not two rescue requirements: The CH-3 crew at point D, and the A1E pilot at point B.) The correlation of the ETA of the HH-43's and the fuel remaining for high-cover and close escort was good. Just a few minutes after the scramble of the HH-43's, the 2AD CP directed the recall of all SAR forces. This was passed to and acknowledged by all the USAF aircraft.

f. The USN, however, through the USAF HU-16 in the gulf, requested assistance for a rescue attempt of the CH-3 chopper crew. The HU-16 contacted our two A1E's, still in the vicinity of the CH-3 crew. With concurrence from the 2AD CP, the A1E's proceeded to the coast to pick-up the USN effort to escort them to the scene. On the way to the coast, the wingman reported ground fire, and pulled up into the clouds. No further contact was ever established with him. His last known position was at point B. The remaining A1E joined the USN chopper and its escort and led them back to the vicinity of the downed CH-3. The A1E departed the area at Bingo fuel and recovered at DaNang. Later the USN chopper recovered one of the CH-3 crew.

g. The plan for further recovery of the USAF CH-3 crew members on 7 Nov was approved by the 2AD CP. This effort was interrupted by the loss of a USN chopper hit by AW on the way for a further attempt for the USAF personnel. Our 2nd CH-3 also going after the crew of our downed CH-3, was diverted by the HC-54 to the USN chopper. This was to pick-up the two USN crew members remaining from a recovery effort cut short by fuel. Our CH-3 had to dump fuel to pick up the USN people and then was unable to proceed for our own personnel. Escort and high-cover forces had insufficient fuel to remain for any further effort at that time. Suspension was recommended and concurred with by the 2AD CP.

2. (U) Carter has told me that he believed the odds were against Oak Lead's survival. But because of the sighting of the canopy, the flight being in cloud, the thickness of the cloud deck and the dispersal and confusion in the flight itself, he believed it possible for Oak Lead to have gotten out successfully without being seen. For these reasons he decided to make the electronic search. Had he not made this decision none of the later events would have taken place.

3. (U) The route planned by the A1E pilots and search area were not known to harbor AW or AAA. It was not considered an unusual risk mission. I agree with this from the known defenses of this area at that time. Perhaps if the route had been flown as planned the unfortunate incidents might not have happened.

4. (U) Had the HC-54 reported the coordinates of point D to the TACC the last leg of the route of the following SAR effort for the first A1E

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would have been from the west rather than the southwest. The effect this variation might have produced would be conjecture. In all probability, if the TACC and the knowledge at that time of the two different positions for the downed A1B (C & D), they would have delayed the dispatch of the CH-3 until resolution of the correct position. Again the change in outcome would be only conjecture.

5. (C) The cancellation by the 2AD-CP of the HH-43's going for the CH-3 crews may have been hasty. This turned out to be the last USAF effort which could have succeeded. It would have reached the area several hours ahead of the USN (6 Nov) effort which was successful at picking up one man and evading ground fire.

6. (C) Two A1B's remained at the scene of the downed CH-3 crew after withdrawal orders were received. They did so while alternately in communication with the HU-16 and in the anticipation of further effort. Had they withdrawn one probably would not have been lost. The element leader was forced later to withdraw alone over proven defenses to recover at Da Nang. His leading of the USN SAR effort to the scene resulted in one man being rescued, however.

7. (C) In reviewing the decisions and actions there are errors and deviations from best and practiced procedures and tactics. Carter's electing to rise the initial electronic search is probably the most controversial - it proved to be the trigger to later events. The known defenses and the amount of planning and briefing for the search gave every chance for a routine mission. As for the remaining events, I cannot see that location or caliber of ground control was a contributor to any malpractice. There may have been a hasty reversal of the HH-43 rescue effort by the 2AD-CP.

8. (U) It is recommended that the SAR mission in this area of responsibility be run completely by single agency.

9. (U) It is requested that the SAR mission for this area be returned to us and without the restrictions recently imposed (incl. 5 & 6).

10. (U) This Headquarters has placed an unusual burden on the Director of Operations, he needs assistance in the manning of his office.

s/John R. Murphy, Brig. Gen., USAF
t/JOHN R. MURPHY, BRIG. GEN., USAF
Deputy Commander
2d Air Division, Thailand

7 Inclosures (S)

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A CH-3C had been scrambled from Nakhon Phanom to relieve the HH-43's on station. A CH-3C made voice contact with the downed pilot who was able to direct the helicopter to his location, and the rescue technician was lowered to assist the injured survivor into the hoist. Following the successful pickup the survivor was taken to Nakhon Phanom where medical assistance was standing by. 19

17. 33ARS-1110-6 Nov 65 (S). On 5 Nov 65 an F-105, call sign Oak 1, was missing over North Vietnam. His wingman had last seen him going into the clouds. The weather in the area was rapidly deteriorating and no signals were being received. On 6 Nov, two A1E's, Sandy 11 and 12, went into the area to search for Oak 1. During the course of the search, Sandy 12 was hit by ground fire, and the pilot bailed out. His wingman observed him on the ground. A CH-3C was scrambled from a forward site in Laos, and two more A1E's were sent from Udorn, but Sandy 11 was not able to relocate the downed pilot prior to his bingo fuel time. The CH-3C, Jolly Green 85, was hit by ground fire in the search area. The four man crew bailed out, and four good chutes were observed by their A1E escort. Voice and beeper contact was made with at least one crewmember, and a visual sighting was made on another. At this time, the on scene commander received a call stating that the Navy had a helicopter enroute to the search area. Two A1E's, Sandy 13 and 14, were sent to the coast to escort the Navy helicopter in, and while escorting the helicopter Sandy 14 was hit by ground fire. A transmission from him stating he had been hit followed, but there was no further contact. The remaining A1E and the Navy helicopter remained in the area until the helicopter had to depart due to fuel limitations. After refueling, the Navy helicopter returned to the search area, accompanied by Navy A1H RESCAP. The A1H's picked up a beeper in the vicinity of the CH-3C bailout location. Soon after this voice contact was made and the Navy SH3, call sign nimble 62, went in low to attempt visual contact. It was dark at this time, but fortunately the survivor had a cigarette lighter which was used to signal the helicopter. His flashes were observed and Sgt Naugle, a crewmember from the downed Jolly Green 85, was picked up and taken to the carrier. The only injuries Sgt Naugle suffered were slight burns on his hand. The following morning Nimble 62, piloted by Lt JG Campbell, returned to the search area in an attempt to locate additional survivors. While enroute a Mig alert was received, and Nimble 62 descended to get between cloud layers at 2000 and 3000 feet. As it flew over a hole in the bottom cloud deck it was hit by automatic weapons fire. The fuel lines were ruptured and a rapid loss of fuel was experienced forcing the pilot to make a controlled landing in North Vietnam. The two A1H aircraft that escorted Nimble 62 were also hit, however, both made it safely to Danang; although one aircraft had to make a gear up landing. A short time later another Navy helicopter, a UH-2, arrived at the landing sight of Nimble 62 and was able to pick up 2 of the 4 crewmembers. Jolly Green 76, was enroute to the bailout site of Jolly Green 85 when informed of the Navy helicopter in distress. It diverted

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to the Navy helicopter landing scene and picked up the remaining two crewmembers. In order to hover it was necessary to dump fuel which precluded its continuing on to the CH-3C bailout area. The two Navy survivors were taken to Udorn. On the morning of Nov 8, a first light search was initiated in the CH-3C bailout area. Several passes were made and no ground fire was observed by the A1E's that were receiving a beeper. However, as more aircraft entered the area to attempt to pinpoint the beeper heavy ground fire erupted. Two A1E's were hit and had to withdraw; both landed safely at Udorn. Due to the intensity of the ground fire, the further recovery of survivors was deemed to be not feasible without additional losses. The mission was suspended on 8 Nov. The missing CH-3C crewmembers are: Capt Warren Lilly, 1Lt Jerry Singleton, and SSgt Arthur Cormier. 20

18. 38ARS-1111-7 Nov 65 (U). On 7 Nov 65, Lt Cmdr Charles Wack's A4E was hit by ground fire while pulling out of a dive over his target. He immediately headed toward the coast, and about 12 miles out over the Gulf of Tonkin he ejected. The distress call on guard channel was monitored by the HU-16 pilot 1Lt Joseph Kirby, who immediately headed for the bail out site. The HU-16 crew spotted the pilot approximately 15 minutes later, and noted a junk fleet one half mile from the downed pilots raft. The external fuel tanks were jettisoned, and a water landing made. The downed pilot was brought aboard the HU-16 just 17 minutes after his distress call went out. The uninjured pilot was taken to Danang AB.

19. 38ARS-1114-8 Nov 65 (C). At 1230H on 8 Nov, a request for MED EVAC of battle casualties was received. A large scale operation was taking place and over 100 casualties were reported. Rescue helicopters from both Bien Hoa and Tan Son Nhut were utilized in this recovery operation that was to run two days. The recovery site was a heavily wooded jungle area with trees 150 to 180 feet high. There were no clear areas, so all of the wounded had to be picked up from a high hover. A rescue technician was lowered into the pick up point with a chain saw to make a landing zone but the saw malfunctioned. Of the 71 sorties flown by the HH-43's during the two days the following was typical. They were escorted in by armed UH-1B's and waited in a high hover until the "Hueys" had made several firing passes to suppress VC ground fire. The "Hueys" received hits while performing this task. When they felt they had silenced the opposition, the HH-43's were directed in. While hovering over the 180 foot trees, the rescue technician lowered the stokes litter threading it through the tree branches. The casualties were picked up and taken to a forward aid station, and ammunitions and C-rations were taken in on the return journey. During the course of the operation the HH-43's recovered fifty personnel, of whom 20 were saves. In addition 8 cases of ammunition, 2 cases of TNT, 10 cases of medical supplies and 30 cases of C-rations were taken into the battle area. 21

20 Append 5 page 12

21 Append 6 page 11

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NARRATIVE OF RESCUE MISSION

At 2250 Z on 6 November 1965, Jolly Green 76 (CH-3C) departed Nakhon Phanom Air Base with a refueling stop scheduled at a forward operating base. Jolly Green 76 refueled and continued on with its mission of attempting rescue of downed Jolly Green 85 crew lost to enemy fire at 0530Z on 6 November. Jolly Green 76 was escorted by five A-1E aircraft who were to provide cover and suppressive fire power as needed. Enroute to the objective area, Jolly Green 76 was advised that a Navy HSS-2 rescue helicopter had been damaged by hostile fire and had been forced to land in hostile territory. Jolly Green 76 was diverted from its original mission and proceeded to the area of the downed Navy HSS-2, which was about 35 miles south of Jolly Green 85 coordinates. While enroute to the area, a Navy UH-2B helicopter picked up two of the four downed crewmen, but being limited in hovering capability at that altitude (4500 Feet MSL), had been forced to leave the pilot and copilot of the downed HSS-2. Jolly Green 76 made their first sighting of the distressed aircraft while at an altitude of 9300 feet MSL, and began an immediate descent at maximum rate simultaneously jettisoning all auxiliary fuel to decrease gross weight. A Navy A-1H aircraft recommended a final approach heading for the pick up, and flew this approach at tree top level attempting to draw ground fire. There was no ground fire observed, so Jolly Green 76 initiated a slow final approach and evaluated the power required to hover. A Hover out of ground effect would be required, and in order to use the least amount of power and avoid overheating the engines and transmission, the hover would have to be maintained in a small area which put the tip path of the rotor 10 to 12 feet from the surrounding trees. While the flight mechanic operated the hoist, the copilot monitored the controls and engine instruments. As the second survivor was being picked up, the fire warning light for number one engine came on. As soon as the survivor was aboard, an immediate take off at max power was made, and the fire warning light went out as the airflow through the engine was increased. The take off and climb were normal and level off was at 10,300 feet. Jolly Green 76 was escorted to a forward operating base where the survivors were picked up and flown back to their ship.

Crew Members:

BCC Capt Norman B. Kamhooat
CP Capt Robert A. Weekley
HM T/Sgt William J. Warren
EJ M/Sgt William G. Daniels

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and was forced to designate the four men as missing in action (MIA) -- the first lost in the Southeast Asia conflict.

(S) The names and the home bases, from which they were on temporary duty to Det 1, 38th Air Rescue Squadron, at Nakhon Phanom Airport, Thailand, of all crew members of HH-43B, 62-4510, are given below:

Pilot:	Captain Thomas J. Curtis, 47753A Detachment 9, Central ARC England AFB, Louisiana
Copilot:	1st Lt Duane W. Martin, 75418A Detachment 9, Western ARC Portland International Airport, Oregon
Mechanic:	A1C William A. Robinson, AF14782798 Detachment 3, Central ARC Grand Forks AFB, North Dakota
Pararescueman:	A3C Arthur N. Black, AF12666475 41st Air Rescue Squadron Hamilton AFB, California

(U) Mission 38ARS Udorn - 1110 - 6 Nov 65³

(S) The second loss of men and the third loss of an helicopter in a combat situation by ARS occurred on 6 November 1965, when Captain Warren R. Lilly went to the aid of Sandy 12, the pilot of an Air Force -1E aircraft.

. Data obtained from mission reports in Mission Folder 54 in ARSCP files.

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(S) When Sandy 12 was shot down at 20-30N 105-33E, 35 nautical miles southwest of Hanoi, North Vietnam, Captain Lilly launched a Jolly Green Giant, the CH-3C helicopter 63-9685, from Lima 36 Site, Thailand at 1148, local time, to pick him up. Lilly, who was navigating under instrument flight rules, proceeded to a point near the target area and descended, breaking out of an overcast at 8,000 feet above sea level at 20-29N 105-27E. At this point, the helicopter was severely damaged by several hits from anti-aircraft fire, losing a rotor blade and suffering damage to the rotor transmission section. Unable to overcome the excessive control pressures which resulted from the damage to the rotor, Lilly transmitted a MAYDAY call and directed his crew to abandon the helicopter. The pararescue-man jumped first followed by the mechanic who observed fire in the cabin before his exit.

(S) Captain George W. Koronsbein, pilot of the lead escort (Sandy 13), observed four deployed parachutes in the air, saw one of the crew gathering up his parachute on the ground, and established voice and beeper contact via radio with one of the crew. Sandy 13 and Sandy 14 then met a Navy SH-3 helicopter off shore in the Gulf of Tonkin and escorted it to the crash area, during which Sandy 14 was shot down, becoming the sixth missing person on this mission.

(S) Second Air Division personnel advised the withdrawal of rescue

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forces due to the heavy concentration of ground fire. Two HH-43 Rescue helicopters, which had been ordered to the scene, were recalled while enroute there. However, combat air patrol (CAP) aircraft were sent into the area to search for Lilly and his crew and did establish radio voice contact with them. At dusk a second SH-3, Nimble 62, located and rescued SSgt Naugle, the CH-3C mechanic, leaving five men unaccounted for at the end of the day.

(S) The following morning the SH-3, Nimble 02, attempted a pick-up in the area of the downed Jolly Green Giant and was struck by ground fire, lost fuel and was itself forced down 19-53N 105-11E. Angel 7 picked up two of the crewmen and a Jolly Green Giant rescued the other two and took them to Lima 36 Site. Two USAF A-1E aircraft, also, had been struck by ground fire.

(S) CAP aircraft once again established voice contact with Lilly's crew. Radio beeper signals in the area indicated that Sandy 12 probably was evading the enemy. There was no information on Sandy 14.

(S) November 8th left little or no hope. With the dawn came a 1500 foot overcast with mountain peaks visible above it. The search was resumed under these unfavorable weather conditions in the first light of the day. After several sweeps across the area by search aircraft, a radio beeper signal was received at 0930 hours and aircraft reentered the area to pinpoint the location from which that signal emanated. Search aircraft

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in the vicinity of the signal origin point encountered heavy, hostile fire from the ground. At 1005 hours a second beeper signal was heard. Aircraft approaching the area again encountered strong ground fire and severe damage to two A-1E aircraft forced those pilots to withdraw.

(S) The mission was suspended at 1044 hours due to intensive ground fire, after coordination with Commander, 2nd Air Division.

(S) The debriefing of the survivor, SSgt Naugle, and the aircrew of Nimble 62, attached to and operating from the U.S.S. Independence, brought forth the following additional data on this mission. Captain Lilly launched to the north and an orbit point to await Sandy, his escort of A-1E aircraft. After meeting the escort, SSgt Naugle believes all proceeded toward the east and descended through the 8,000 foot altitude level, and broken clouds, at a point approximately five miles west of Sandy 12's reported crash position, at which time heavy tracer fire and flak were encountered. Fuel lines were ruptured, allowing fuel to enter the cabin of the CH-3C where it ignited and filled the aircraft with flame. The pararescueman, SSgt Cormier, shouted the alarm: "FIRE," and bailed out. SSgt Naugle attempting to follow Cormier, found himself fastened to the aircraft by his gunner's belt, released the belt while observing Cormier's open parachute and parachuted toward a hillside. During his descent, Naugle observed two other deployed chutes in the air. After cutting away approximately three square yards

of it for a signal panel he hid his parachute, discarded his parachute harness, helmet, and flak vest which interfered with his movements through the heavy undergrowth, and crawled to the top of the hill. From his position he heard voices of unfriendly troops, and saw the burning helicopter which was already surrounded by troops who arrived in motor vehicles.

(S) SSgt Naugle hid among rocks and activated his signal radio but discontinued its use after the CAP aircraft departed. One attempt to establish voice communications was unsuccessful, as were attempts with a signal mirror. The remainder of the day was employed in reading charts, examining the contents of the survival pack, and listening to the voices and cutting sounds of troops searching the jungle growth for him. He heard jet aircraft at approximately 1700 hours and established voice contact with a pilot. His recovery was accomplished later by Nimble 62, in concert with A-1H aircraft escorting it. SSgt Naugle had suffered only minor burns and scratches and was in excellent condition.

(S) The aircrew of Nimble 62 had launched from its carrier, U. S. S. Independence, at 1515 hours, had refueled at 1700 hours from the Tucker, and was on a prearranged station 19-00N 105-45E at 1800 hours. It departed this station shortly after that and proceeded inland, crossing the beach on a heading of 317 degrees, escorted by the pilot of Locket One, an A-1H aircraft. They proceeded to 29-06N 105-29E where they were

by Lockets Three and Four. The Locket aircraft sighted Naugle and
 tented his position with their lights, despite small arms fire and flak
 s. Naugle used the flame of his cigarette lighter to aid the pilot of
 le 62, who needed less than two minutes to bring him aboard in a horse-
 ar at 1855 hours. Nimble 62 and Locket One returned via the inbound
 e to the Tucker for fuel and then to the Independence, on which a landing
 inated their flight at 2325 hours.

(S) The crew members of the CH-3C were assigned to Detachment 5,
 n Air Rescue Squadron, Udorn Airfield; attached at Nakhon Phanom
 port; and staging from Lima 36 Site, all in Thailand. All are identified
 ow by crew position:

Pilot:	Captain Warren R. Lilly, FR57557
Copilot:	1st Lt Jerry A. Singleton, FR64076
Mechanic:	SSgt Berkeley Naugle, AF17385794
Pararescueman:	SSgt Arthur M. Cormier, AF12454730

Air Force and Navy intelligence officers briefed aircrews on team activities and procedures. Flyers were told that team members would wear white arm bands. Furthermore, they would probably have American style uniforms and carry American weapons. Laotian team members usually wore snappy red berets.³⁸

The roadwatch teams operated until the end of the war as an unconventional complement to regular search and rescue operations. The recovery of downed aircrew members was only a secondary mission for these teams, however, and they rescued only a small number of people. Over the years, the Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service (as the Air Rescue Service became in January 1966) received new equipment and developed better tactics. Consequently, roadwatch teams were used less. In 1968, for example, there were only seven instances in which roadwatch teams were alerted for possible recovery activity, and in only two cases were teams actually used.³⁹

As the war continued, helicopters remained the primary means of recovering downed airmen. On July 6, 1965, two Sikorsky CH-3C turbine-driven helicopters arrived at Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai Air Force Base to initiate a new era for search and rescue in Southeast Asia. The added range, protective armor, and a large carrying capacity made the CH-3C an adequate aircrew rescue vehicle — certainly an improvement over the short-range, unarmed, vulnerable HH-43F. Assigned to the newly established Detachment 1 of the 38th Air Rescue Squadron, the two helicopters were on loan from the Tactical Air Warfare Center at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida.⁴⁰ Dubbed the “Jolly Green Giants” because of their green and brown camouflage scheme, these helicopters were hastily converted Tactical Air Command cargo choppers and, as such, were only interim aircraft.

In August 1965, as the temporary duty crews for the CH-3s settled in at Nakhon Phanom, crews for the Sikorsky HH-3Es, the same basic helicopter as the Tactical Air Command models but built for rescue, gathered at Stead Air Force Base, Nevada under the code name “Limelight 36”.⁴¹ Maj. Baylor R. Haynes, a rescue veteran of Korea, led these men as they plunged into their orientation and training program. Many were old rescue hands from Korea, who had been in choppers throughout their Air Force careers. Others had recently transferred to helicopters from fixed-wing aircraft. For a few young copilots, helicopters would be their first assignments right out of pilot training. After completing orientation in September they took leave and reported to Udorn in late October. On November 3, a pair of HH-3Es arrived at Bien Hoa Air Base, Vietnam, in a special rush delivery by C-133 transport. Major Haynes and a selected crew tested the choppers over the South China Sea before flying them to Udorn on November 10. One of the CH-3Cs stationed at Nakhon Phanom had been lost to enemy action on November 5, but the remaining CH-3C moved up to Udorn. By the end of December there were six HH-3Es and the CH-3C operating from Udorn. The CH-3C was returned to the Tactical Air Command in Early January 1966.⁴²

1965

First Flight Across the Fence!

By
Berkley E. Naugle
USAF MSGT/Retired

6 NOV 65
DOWNED PH-3
STORY AS TOLD BY
F.E.

F.E. WAS ONLY ONE
RESCUED FM JULY



Throughout the air war in Viet Nam, every attempt was made to rescue downed crew members. In 1965 the best aircraft for this mission was the Sikorsky CH-3C helicopter called the Jolly Green Giant this due to the size and color of our helicopters. The normal crew consists of two pilots, flight engineer and a pararescue man.



This is the story, as I remember it, of my experiences during my first mission into North Viet Nam. I was assigned to Detachment 5, 38th Aerospace Rescue & Recovery Squadron, Udorn Royal Thai Air Force Base, Thailand.



I was one of the "Jolly Green's" enlisted flight

engineers.

Other crew members had nicknamed me the Jolly Green's Mr. Clean. This because of my being slightly rotund and having my hair cut very short because of the filthy conditions we had to endure when on station at our forward operations sites. Wind blown red dust would get into and stick to everything especially your hair.

There was no clean water for sanitary needs. Even the streams were severely polluted. Villages were normally located along streams and the streams were used for washing clothes, bathing, and garbage disposal. The village's water buffaloes also used the streams. The village furthestmost down stream always had the most polluted water.

The only safe water available was that which we carried with us for cooking our rations and drinking. Washing ourselves or our clothes was out of the question while we were at a forward site.

When my misadventure began it was about 5 AM, 6th of November 1965. My pilot; Captain Warren E. Lilly, co-pilot; 1st Lt. Jerry A. Singleton, pararescue man; Ssgt Arthur Cormier and I were operating out of Lima site 36. This was one of our forward operating sites in the steaming jungles of northern Laos.

It was a soggy sticky morning like all mornings in that little country where we were not supposed to be.

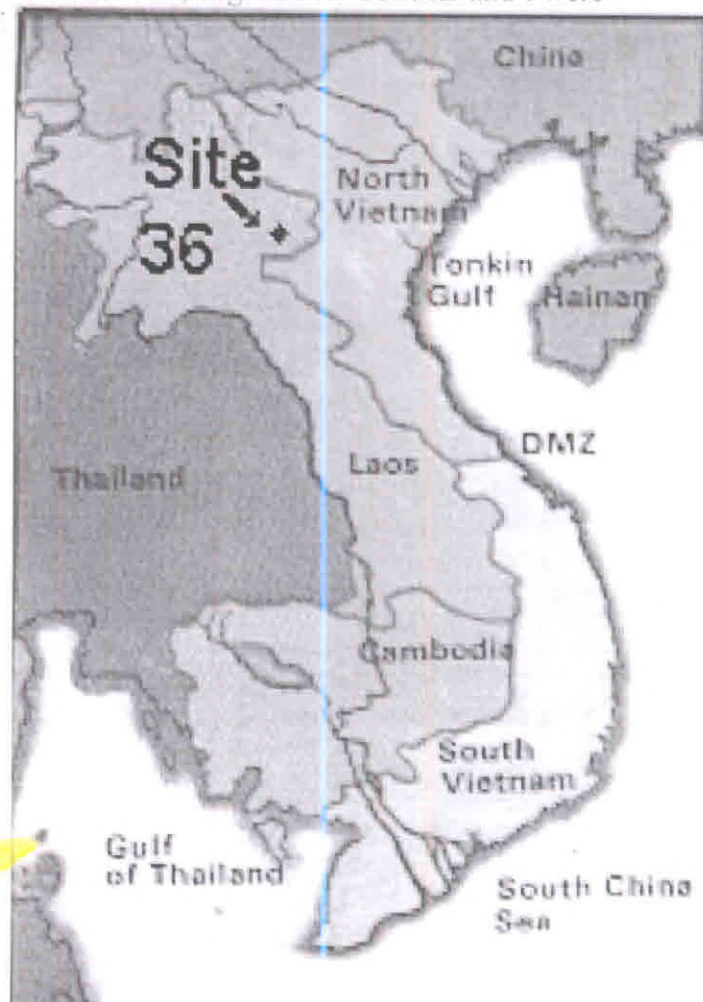
It was just a short jump across the border into North Vietnam. I was crewing CH-3C 63-09685, one of the two CH-3C Jolly Green Giant rescue helicopters on site. This was presumably, a safe site for us to use as a jumping off point for performing rescue operations inside North Vietnam.

We had arrived in Viet Nam months ahead of our promised HH-3E helicopters that were going to have all the goodies such as, armor plating, external, jettisonable, fuel tanks for extra range, etc

Since these helicopters had not arrived we were using some older cargo type CH-3Cs.

They had been painted dark green, no insignias, no armor plating and with a 450 gallon fiberglass fuel tank strapped down inside the cargo area to provide the fuel for

the extra range we needed to perform our missions into North Vietnam and return. This fuel tank



would prove to be nothing but a big bomb we were carrying along with us.

As morning broke we shook off the urge to go back to sleep and started to prepare our usual breakfast of tinned ham and eggs and heat some water for our instant coffee. Then, our radio set started to screech "MAYDAY, MAYDAY, AIRCRAFT DOWN".

A P-105 Thunderchief pilot was down, 35 miles southwest of Hanoi and needed a ride to safety.

This was our call to duty and pandemonium broke out. We all scrambled to our helicopters, trying to get into the air as soon as possible.

After donning our flak vests, survival vests, parachutes and our helmets, we waited while two Skyraiders scouted the crash area. At 10 a.m., another Skyraider was shot down.

This was territory where no U.S. helicopter had ever flown before but we decided to go and give it a try. We got our helicopters into the air and started toward our target. Then fate struck. The second helicopter's pilot reported that they had an engine problem and they could not continue the mission with only one engine operating.

Normally this would have been the end of the mission. We had been instructed that we would "NOT" proceed on a mission if we did not have both helicopters to provide cover for each other. Normal procedure was that other helicopters would be launched from Vietnam or Thailand to perform the rescue, if possible, but we knew that would have caused hours of delay in getting to the pilots assistance.

Upon hearing from the downed pilot's wingman that he had sighted the downed pilot, we decided that we were going to proceed on the mission alone. The C-130 (Crown) communications aircraft relayed to us that the Rescue Center in Vietnam (KING) did not want us to continue on the mission alone. This due to the danger from the numerous concentrations of anti-aircraft batteries and ground fire reported in the target area, but we continued on the course being relayed to us by the Crown aircraft.

Shortly we met up with the two A-1E Skyraiders (Sandies) who were going to be our escorts during the mission and continued onward at 10,000 feet, out of range of ground fire.

While we kept our eyes open, watching for any Sam missiles launched at us, one of the A-1Es proceeded ahead. It was going to check the area where the downed aircraft was supposed to be, to see if he could spot the pilot and see if the area was safe for a rescue attempt.

Immediately upon arriving at the supposed crash site, Enemy gunners raked the A-1E setting it on fire. The pilot bailed out.

Now there were two pilots to find and rescue. I quickly donned my safety harness to the aircraft so I could not fall out the door if wounded, while assisting with the rescue.

Then we and the remaining A-1E escort aircraft dropped through the fluffy white clouds.

Then all hell broke loose! It was as if They were waiting for us! At the 7000 feet of altitude we began to fly into a squall of machine gun bullets and flak. How could that be? We were supposed to be too high for any ground fire. It turned out that the terrain in this area was around 4000 feet above sea

level. This was what put us in range of the enemy guns.

If we had descended into the area where we were supposed to have been, the terrain would have been almost at sea level. We should have still been out of range of any ground fire.

As it turned out, the navy ship providing us with radar guidance to the downed plane's position was off it's assigned course. This had consequently sent us further North than we should have been, 35 miles southwest of Hanoi, to be exact.

A burst of tracers and armor piercing shells began tearing through the floor around me and up into the engines that were mounted overhead on top of the helicopter. Fuel and oil leaking from the damaged engines poured into the cabin of the helicopter and caught fire. The wind blowing in through the open door and Pilots windows swirled the fire around in a hellish firestorm inside the helicopter. My first reaction was to grab a fire extinguisher.

Just then the pilot yelled over the radio "THERE GOES A ROTOR BLADE", "BAIL OUT".

BAIL OUT? My initial reaction was that of shock. I did not want to bail out but I knew I had no choice.

Reaching the door I hesitated. I had trained on the use of parachutes, but I had never made a real jump, even less, into enemy territory. What if they caught me? I was wearing civilian clothes and we carried no identification except for a Geneva Convention Card That North Vietnam refused to recognize. Would they treat me like a spy? Below me I could see the parachutes of the other crew members already floating down through some puffy clouds over near the enemy camp.

What seemed like an eternity had been only an instant. Then the decision was made for me. The 450 gallon auxiliary fuel tank exploded, spraying me with burning fuel and luckily at the same time, blasting me out the open cargo door.

To my surprise, I found myself dangling under the helicopter, being dragged along with it, in its spiraling death plunge. Miraculously due to the combination of my weight and the force of the explosion, my safety harness's leash had extended to its full length.

Scared and fumbling, I hurried to undo the safety harness's quick release. Where was it? It had pulled up under my survival and flack vests. I clawed it out from under the vests and pulled it open. Then I was finally falling. Free of the fireball that had been my helicopter.

While falling rapidly towards the ground I groped at my parachute's D-ring and waited for the opening shock. Now what? Glancing down at the D-ring I saw I had barely pulled the D-ring. In frustration I yanked the D-ring completely free of the parachute and tossed it as far as I could. Almost immediately I felt the life saving opening shock. Now I was floating down. To what?

I looked around. Just 300 yards away I saw the helicopter's funeral pyre in the rice paddies near a large village. On the other side of the rice paddies, I saw a heavily forested jungle and some large rugged hills. I also saw two crew members canopies dropping into some cloud banks. I never saw them again. It suddenly dawned on me. Due to my getting hung up under the aircraft, I had been carried further away from the enemy than the others and that I would land very close to the jungle.

Immediately, upon landing in the middle of 10 foot tall brush, just 300 yards away from the copter's funeral pyre I got out of my parachute harness. I noticed that nearby was a paved road and a village, and on that road were five trucks loaded with North Vietnamese soldiers.

I took off running through the brush crawling, and scrambling on my hands and knees. The bushes kept catching on me so I shed everything but my shirt, pants and survival jacket. Behind me I could hear the enemy shouting as they flailed into the brush after me. I had no doubt they knew I was there. I headed for the jungle but the enemy had spotted me and were shooting at me and running in my direction. Upon reaching the cover of the jungle I moved as fast as possible into the jungle not even considering the dangers of snakes and all of the other things I could run into. I did not see the enemy again, but I could still hear them shouting to one another and hacking at the brush.

Upon reaching the base of a steep 1,500 foot hill I had spotted, I decided climbing to the top of one of them would be the best thing I could do. That way the enemy would not be able to follow my footsteps as easily there on the stones and rocks. I knew through my training, that if I was going to get rescued, it would be easier for a rescue aircraft to spot me up on the hill, rather than in the dense jungle.

Finally, after pulling myself up a cliff while the brush continued to claw and scratch my face and arms, I reached the highest point of the hill. Then I realized they had me cornered. I had picked a hill where there was a sheer cliff on the other side.

I could not go any where except back down the hill into the enemy's arms. I finally found a space between a couple of the biggest rocks and crawled in. That was it! All of a sudden, I was exhausted. I just could not go on. I needed to rest and think. I shivered. I couldn't help feeling that I was going to be captured or killed at any time. After a couple of deep breaths I started to consider the situation and take inventory.

The first thing I noticed was my pants were wet. Oh no, I had wet myself without knowing it, but worse, now that I had a moment to think, I found that my right leg was aching, throbbing, swelling and getting stiff. I had burns on the arms and right side of my face, all the areas that were not covered by my short sleeved shirt or flight helmet. The burns were also hurting. The area behind my right knee was getting bigger all the time and turning dark from the internal bleeding caused by a contusion. Something must have hit my leg when the fuel tank exploded.

Above me, I could see Air Force and Navy rescue birds flying over. They were looking for us. They were taking heavy ground fire, and another Skyraider crashed. Finally all aircraft departed the area.

I realized that if I was not rescued, there was no way out. I was surrounded by soldiers and the cliff.

I had no water, food, or medical supplies. My sheath knife had disappeared, either during bailout or while running through the jungle. I had only a few cigarettes and my Zippo lighter. In the survival vest I found a URC- 4 survival radio. At least if it works (They were not known to be very dependable) I will be able to call for help if any plane comes into range later.

I settled down between the rocks trying to get comfortable and calm my nerves. I listened to the enemy's shouts and the noises they were making. It dawned on me that they might be using me to lure in more rescue aircraft just so they could shoot them down too? It wouldn't be the first time.

I could not help think about being a prisoner. We all had heard how they treated flight crew members. I also thought about my wife and kids. What were they going to go through if I didn't return. What would happen when they found out?

The sun set and it got cold. I did not realize it, but I must have dozed off. Suddenly, awaking I thought I heard a siren blowing in the distance. What was going on? Did that mean some of our airplanes were in the area? It did! I spotted two navy jets heading towards the coast. They must be returning from some bombing mission. Hurriedly I got my URC - 4 radio out and began calling for help. One of the planes answered. I could not believe it. The radio worked.

One of the pilots asked me for my recognition code words to make sure it was not an enemy using the radio. I spoke the code words into the radio and waited. After the pilot checked with KING in Saigon to verify my identity, he told me help would be coming. I warned him of the possible enemy trap.

I figured since it was becoming dark any rescue attempt would not be made until the next morning because at this time night flights over North Vietnam were not being authorized.

I could not determine exactly where or how close the enemy was. Every now and then I could still hear some of their voices and noises. My M-16 had gone down with the helicopter so the only weapon I had was a six shot revolver that was useless against a multitude of enemy with AK-47s. It would have been useless to put up any resistance if the enemy soldiers came for me. I prayed to be rescued.

Night fell. I could not tell what time it was. I then realized I had also lost my wrist watch with its expandable band, sometime during the bailout, possibly from the opening shock of the parachute. I was too scared to sleep, but couldn't help nodding off. Why couldn't I just wake up and find this was all just a bad dream and that I was still back at site 36.

Then, off in the direction of the coast I heard familiar rotor blade noises. Yes, there they were some helicopters. Were they ours or Vietnamese? It was still night. I grabbed my URC - 4 radio again and tried to make contact with the helicopters. Success! they were Navy Sea King helicopters. They told me that fighter support was on its way. The fighters would try to try to surprise the enemy and create a diversion. Then the helicopters would approach my area from the cliff side so the enemy would not see them until the last moment.



The A1-E's, while turning their aircraft landing and position lights off and on to attract attention, proceeded to bomb and strafe the enemy. Tracers were flying in both directions.

When the enemy's attention seemed to be drawn to the A1-Es and the ensuing fire fight, I caught the first sight



of my rescuers. They were two Navy Sea King helicopters similar to our Jolly Greens, except these were normally equipped

with sonar used by the Navy to search for submarines and had the crew door in the rear.

The Sea King helicopters were heading directly for me but could not see me because of the darkness and the brush. They radioed to me and asked me to give them some type of signal. I remembered my Zippo lighter and told them this was all I had on me. They told me one of them would pop up from behind the cliff just long enough for them to spot my light and hoist me up. They said to hurry because if the enemy spotted us and started firing, they would have to leave because they did not have enough fuel left to remain in the area for a second try.

One of the helicopters eased toward my hideout. I flipped open my Zippo lighter. It lit on the first try! The helicopter positioned itself over me and then I was in the hoist sling being pulled upward while the helicopter pulled back and up, until out of sight of the enemy.

I expected enemy ground fire to come in our direction at any second, but it never came. Finally I was pulled into the helicopter. One of the crew members motioned me to go forward. While limping towards the front of the helicopter, all of a sudden I was looking down at the ground rushing past far below

Later I found out that to prepare the helicopter for the long flight with its limited fuel capacity. The crew had hurriedly removed the sonar set and the antenna from the floor so as to reduce weight and drag. This had left a large hole, approximately three feet wide in the middle of the helicopter floor into which I almost fell. Once again, I had been saved from possibly falling to my death, by fate.

Upon reaching the front of the helicopter, I found an empty seat and noticed a thermos lying nearby. I strapped myself into the seat, picked up the thermos and found it was full of coffee. I immediately drained it to the last drop. Shortly one of the pilots told me that if I was thirsty he would share his coffee with me. I thanked him and told him I was sorry, but there was no coffee left to share. He turned, looked at me and just smiled.

After a while we finally slipped over the coast line. The pilot told everyone that reaching the aircraft carrier Independence was going to be a close call because they had used more fuel than expected. The aircraft carrier was now heading South bound on its assigned route, moving away from us. The longer we flew the more the crew and I worried. We could not see the carrier and the engines had to be running on fumes.

Suddenly one of the crew spotted a ship in the distance, but it was one of our destroyers not the carrier we needed for landing. The destroyer informed the pilot that they had a diesel refueling hose for small ships but there was no landing pad or other space where we could land on the destroyer. I thought to myself. At least it was there if we had to abandon the helicopter.

All of a sudden someone suggested that they could use the personnel hoist to pull the destroyer's refueling hose up into the helicopter. Then pump enough fuel into the helicopter's fuel tank to allow us to reach the aircraft carrier..

It was a dangerous risk, but they had no choice. The pilot flew sideways over the fantail of the destroyer while one of the helicopter's crew members pulled the refueling hose up with the rescue hoist. Then pumped fuel into an opening they had made in a tank.

By opening the windows and door the airflow through the helicopter whisked any dangerous, explosive, fumes out of the helicopter.

After refueling, we proceeded, without further incident, en-route to the aircraft carrier.

After landing on the carrier, I was thanking the crew of the helicopter when I realized everyone on the deck of the aircraft carrier was staring at me. I was a dirty smelly mess. My clothes were singed and torn, but that was not what they were staring at. It was the fact that they had just rescued a USAF flight crew member out of North Viet Nam dressed in short sleeved civilian shirt and pants.

I was immediately taken to the carrier's sick bay for treatment of my burns and the contusion of my right leg. I was told I could not discuss my mission with anyone and a guard was assigned to make sure I didn't talk to anyone about my mission or why I was dressed in civilian clothes.

Having lost track of time I cannot remember exactly how long I was in sick bay. Sometime later I was summoned to the operations center of the carrier where I was debriefed about the failed rescue attempt and my subsequent rescue. They wanted every last detail, such as, what I saw, what I heard, and everything that had happened from the beginning to when the helicopter finally picked me up.

It was then I found out, about the radar ship being off course and exactly where we were when we were shot down in North Vietnam. Also, that out of a total of eight crew members shot down during that mission, I was the only one rescued.

Finally, after hours of debriefing I was told that I could now start eating in the ship's chow hall. Accompanied by my guard, I arrived at the chow line. I took a tray and got into line with everyone else. I couldn't believe the good smells coming from the galley.

Since arriving in Udorn Thailand I had not had any thing but rations, powdered eggs, and other food prepared so badly you would probably refuse to eat any of it at home.

When it was my turn, the cook plopped the biggest steak I had ever seen on my tray, I must have frozen while staring at it. The cook got my attention by asking "What's the matter, isn't that enough," and before I could reply, he plopped another steak on my tray. Arguing with him was useless, everybody was laughing and he would not take the second steak back.

After getting the rest of my meal, and looking for a place to sit, I was told by a messenger that I was supposed to take my tray and report back to the operations center.

Upon arriving, I was told that while I ate my meal I was going to be debriefed again. They would not even let me eat my meal in peace. They had a thousand new questions. Finally they told me that I was going to be sent by plane to Saigon to be debriefed once again by the Air Force HQs. there.

I anxiously awaited the chance to be catapulted off of a carrier in a plane, but the idea of yet another debriefing took most of the fun out of it.

Later, a S-2, a two engine, prop driven, Navy courier plane arrived. I was told that it was the plane that was going to take me to Saigon.

When it was time to get on board the S-2, I found that the passenger seats all faced to the rear and when you were told to prepare for launch for safety reasons, you were supposed to put your head between your knees.

All kind of visions of the plane splashing into the sea after being catapulted ran through my head. The plane's crew said no problem this was just routine for them and they had never had a problem with being catapulted off a carrier.

The pilot started the engines. Then he ran them up to full power. The aircraft strained and shook, any second now they were going to catapult us off the carrier. Then all of a sudden the engine outside of my window started to backfire and cough, belching out black smoke. I just knew we were going to wind up in the ocean. I almost lost it!

My nerves were already shot, but thank goodness the pilot shutdown the engines and the catapult crew pulled us off the launcher.

Later the same day, I was flown by helicopter, over to the Oriskany, a smaller aircraft carrier, then subsequently launched in another plane and flown to Saigon.

Upon arrival at Ton Son Nhut air base, Saigon, My plane was met by air policemen who escorted me to the headquarters building where I was told that they were waiting to debrief me again. Upon arrival at the room where the debriefers were waiting, I asked, why don't you just ask the Navy for a copy of their debriefings?

The debriefers explained that every time I had to repeat the experience I could possibly remember something of importance that I had not offered before. So I went through another long drawn out debriefing.

During the time I was being debriefed someone asked me If my family knew I had been rescued. It was then, like a big rush of cold air, that it came to me that no one had even mentioned my family before. With everything happening so fast, I had not asked about notifying them. I knew they would be worried.

I was told that they had immediately sent a telegram to my family. Stating that I had been shot down and was declared Missing in Action, but there was a possibility that I had been rescued and that further word would be forthcoming. No one present at the debriefing knew if my family had been notified that I had been rescued and was in good health.

The 7th Air force Commander asked me to follow him to his office. In his office, he immediately placed a phone call to my parents.

Boy, were they surprised and happy. My wife was not home. She had been having a real bad time of it and had gone to her church to talk with a priest who spoke Spanish. Hoping that he would pray for me with her.

I can imagine how she reacted when my parents told her of the phone call.

After hours of debriefing I was finally released. I could go where I pleased, the chow hall, post exchange, any where. I still had an air policeman escorting me so I could not disclose any of the details of what happened or where I was from to any reporters or any one else.

When the information was released to the news services, they were just told the rescue attempt had occurred in North Viet Nam and one crew member had been rescued. Some of the stories even stated it was a pilot that had been rescued.

The next day I was put on a C-130 being used as a courier plane between all the bases in South East Asia area and flown back to my detachment in Udorn Thailand.

There I was given a weekend of rest & relaxation then assigned to a new flight crew for the rest of my tour of duty.

The rest of my crew who were on board with me when we were shot down, spent the next seven years as prisoners in the Hanoi Hilton. They were finally released on April 1, 1973, after the cease fire had been signed in Paris.

Stars & Stripes article referencing the mission.



Return to Rescue Stories

K318.2411-6

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90-10555

(B)

TACC Rescue Control Element
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
APO San Francisco 96237

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Copies sent to Comus +
Atlantic Center of Hydro.
14 Nov
10 Nov 1965

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: TACC/Capt. Reeves

SUBJECT: Narrative Report, Mission Number 1110

Exec: Send copy
of this to NMTS
9ms.

TO: Hqs PARC, Hickam AFB Hawaii

Crown 29 was an HC-54D, No. 42-72666, assigned to 36 Air Recovery Squadron, Tachikawa AB, Japan. The following crewmembers manned the aircraft:

RCC - Robert R. Reeves,	4SARSQ, Eglin AFB, Florida
CP - John A. Vogt,	36 Air Recovery Squadron, Tachikawa AB, Japan
NAV - Robert P. Sarball,	36 Air Recovery Squadron, Tachikawa
AB, Japan	
BO - E. L. Wasley,	36 Air Recovery Squadron, Tachikawa AB, Japan
FM - V. L. Flores,	36 Air Recovery Squadron, Tachikawa AB, Japan
FM - G. W. Ashworth,	36 Air Recovery Squadron, Tachikawa AB, Japan

1. On 7 November 1965 Mission Number 1110 was briefed by Lt Col Hamilton, Director of TACC, Udorn. Crown 29 was to proceed to Sam Tev and orbit. We were to back up the Navy who was already searching for Sandy 12 and 14 and Jolly Green 85. If not successful we were to request permission from Compress to enter the mission. Jolly Green was to refuel at Site 11 with Sandys orbiting overhead for use if needed.

2. The following agencies were involved:

TACC/Rescue Control Element - Compress
38th Air Rescue Squadron, Tan Son Nhut - King
HC-54 On Scene Commander - Crown 29
HU-16 On Scene Commander - Crown Alpha
Destroyer - Astronaut
Navy AL-H5 - Locketts
Navy Choppers - Nimbale 62 and Angel 07
Navy F8a - Sea Grape 103 and 104
A-1Es - 2 Sandys and 3 Hobos
F-4Cs - Bango Flt and Cobra Flt
GH-3 - Jolly Green 76
HH-43s - Pedro 3 and 4

4/4/66 RE-ENTERED
Ref. 1 MAY TO CISA F HOOP TRAVIS
1 MAY 1966 SHIPPED
14 TO FT BELVOIR
139

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED
DECLASSIFIED AT 2 YEAR INTERVALS
OR CHANGED TO
By Authority of GDS
By (Date) 14-3-75

3. Crown 29 departed Udorn AB, Thailand at 2244Z with an ETA at Sam Tev orbit point of 2344Z. My radio operator reported having difficulty reading Compress. This difficulty was experienced on almost every early morning flight and later cleared up. As we proceeded toward orbit point we were reading Compress weak but readable. At 2323Z we were reading King 5 by on HF and he requested us to advise Lockett Flight, in search area, to contact Crown Alpha who was working off coast. We advised Lockett flight to contact Crown Alpha on SAR primary.

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sq ARS SC No. 656084
ODC # 65536.7 65011

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Approximately 2333Z we relayed to Compress through King that we had negative contact with Jolly Green and could not get his ETA at Site 11. We arrived on orbit at 2344Z. We could hear Lockett Flights UHF transmissions. They were talking on Guard to someone which turned out to be some of the survivors in the search area. The navigator got a radar (APX-28) fix on them. He had numerous targets on the Sarah Receiver also. We pinpointed their position at 060° 66NM from Sam Teu. Lockett Flights high cap left at 2345Z and we advised that Zebra Flight was due in the area at 0010Z. We attempted contact with Zebra on SAR Primary and Guard without success. At 2346Z Astronaut advised, bogeys closing on SAR area from the North. Approximately the same time we received a Red Mig Alert over HF in the same quadrant. We attempted contact with Zebra Flight again on Guard numerous times without success. Lockett was trying to get Cap from Astronaut also. At 2347Z Locketts advised they were receiving heavy ground fire. Shortly afterwards Lockett 2 was hit and reported boost control failure, fumes in cockpit, and he was unable to open canopy. The problem looked critical, but fortunately the fumes cleared and Lockett 2 said he was O. K. and would continue to search. At 2350Z Lockett 3 reported that they were receiving strong VRT-21 signals. Lockett flight was still picking up considerable ground fire. We advised Crown Alpha to attempt contact with Zebra flight as requested by King. Crown Alpha could not contact Zebra either, nor could Locketts. Nimble 62 was hit by ground fire as he was crossing into the SAR area. He reported heavy ground fire and his fuel tanks were damaged. He estimated only 30 to 40 minutes of fuel remaining and could not return to the destroyer due to rapid fuel loss and fumes in the cockpit. This was at 0005Z and Astronaut advised that the Bogeys had turned back to a 360° heading. This took some of the pressure off, but we still had no High Cap. Lockett flight started searching for a landing area for Nimble 62. Lockett 3 located an open area large enough for the damaged chopper. It was only 24NM East of our orbit position at Sam Teu. My navigator advised me of the bearing and distance to L. Site 36 and we knew Nimble 62 could not make it that far. He was too far from any friendly sites to recover. Lockett flight requested Astronaut to scramble another chopper for pickup of 4 crewmembers. Angel 07 was scrambled by the Navy for the recovery. At 0015Z King advised us that Bango Bravo flight was estimating the area in 30 minutes. We advised Crown Alpha. We confirmed negative high cap with Compress at 0022Z. At 0028Z Lockett 3 led Nimble 62 to the landing spot on top of a mountain where trees had been chopped down. It was just large enough for him to land with relative safety. The navigator pinpointed Nimble 62 on the APX 28 with a bearing of 111° for 26NM from Sam Teu. The co-pilot sighted them visually as they were orbiting the landing area. They reported no hostile ground fire or movement. When Angel 07 reported some doubt of recovering all 4 survivors we called Sandy Flight at Site 11 and requested they relay to Jolly Green to expedite refueling at Site 11. At 0035Z Lockett 3 advised that Nimble 62 had landed safely and all were outside the chopper and appeared to have no injuries. At 0040Z Angel 07 was crossing coastline and Lockett 3 advised him he could not land and would have to hover out of ground effect. At this point I decided to scramble Jolly Green for back-up for Angel 07. We had no contact with Pedro 3 and 4 at Lima Site 36 so we could not scramble them. Just about this time Pedro 4 contacted us. He had taken off from L. Site 36 to give Jolly Green a steer to 36. He thought Jolly Green was enroute to 36 and became worried when they figured he was overdue. While we were talking to Pedro 4 Compress advised us to put the Pedros on Red Alert at 36. We advised Pedro 4 to land and standby Red Alert. This was at 0055Z and since Pedros were advised to

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13 MAY 1970

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hold Red Alert at 36 I immediately called Sandy flight and requested they scramble Jolly Green and escort him to Sam Teu. At 0110Z Compress advised that Bango Bravo was on tanker and would contact us when off. Sandy flight advised us that Jolly Green's ETA was 0210Z. Compress was advised. At 0120Z Compress requested that we move Lockett flight out of the area so Bango Bravo could plot and suppress flak. We advised there was no flak or ground fire in the area. Compress requested that Sandy 13 plot flak and we advised there was no Sandy 13 in the area. At 0139Z Angel 07 reported 1st pickup of one survivor. He only had 7 minutes till Bingo fuel and advised we would probably have to use Jolly Green. We advised Jolly Green. At 0140Z we started vectoring Bango Bravo into our position and at 0145Z he passed directly overhead. He was a welcome sight as the area had no high cap for approximately 1+58. His Bingo time was 0215Z. Compress advised us to use Sandy 13 and Hobo 91 as forward air controllers for Bango Bravo. We advised 91 and decided to keep them with us in case Lockett 3 and Angel 07 needed them for assistance. At 0151Z Angel 07 recovered second survivor on slow running pickup due to weight and altitude. At 0156Z Bango Alpha arrived in area for high cap. At 0158Z Angel 07 departed for the destroyer. At 0200Z Jolly Green and Sandy flight and Hobo flight arrived at Sam Teu and we had Lockett 3 vector us to the scene. We located the 2 remaining survivors and orbited directly overhead so Jolly Green could see us and fly directly to the scene. At 0205Z Compress advised us to proceed with primary mission after recovery of Navy survivors. Bango Bravo binged at 0215Z and headed for a tanker. Jolly Green started jettisoning fuel since he was too heavy for recovery at that altitude. He only had 2400 hours of fuel remaining after jettisoning. We advised him to return to Site 36 with two Sandys and refuel or launch Pedros for primary search. At 0217Z Compress again advised us to have Sandy 13 take Bango Bravo to primary area for expending. We again advised that there was no Sandy 13 in the flight and that Bango Bravo was recycling on tanker. At this time Lockett, Sandy and Hobo flights escorted Jolly Green over scene. We all went to (UHF) guard to preclude excess traffic and all were advised to maintain radio silence except as necessary. At 0222Z Jolly Green recovered both survivors and said they were in good condition. After Jolly moved out of area Lockett 3 expended rockets into the disabled chopper as directed by Astronaut. Sandy and Hobo followed suit and the chopper was left in roaring flames. Lockett 3 departed as he was low on fuel. The other Locketts had departed approximately 15 minutes earlier. At 0227Z Compress advised return all Sandys not taking part in strike. At 0228Z Bango Alpha, Sandys, Hobos, Jolly Green and Crown 29 headed for primary search area. At 0233Z Jolly Green advised he would only have 20 minutes fuel for search in primary area. Compress was notified and they advised us to send Jolly Green to Site 36. Jolly Green was advised and we sent 1 Sandy and 1 Hobo with him for escort. At 0240Z remaining Sandys, Hobos, Bango Alpha and Crown 29 continued toward primary area. Five minutes later Bango Alpha said he would Bingo in ten minutes and Bango Bravo would be back in 30 minutes. New Lockett aircraft reported coming in but they had no high cap. They requested high cap from Astronaut. With no high cover for 20 minutes at least, we advised Lockett to hold short and Sandy, Hobo, and Crown 29 pulled back to Sam Teu awaiting high cap. At 0302Z Compress again advised us to have Sandy 13 direct high cap for expending ordnance and we advised that no Sandy 13 was anywhere in the area to be found. We checked with the Sandys and found out that Hobo 93 had been Sandy 13 in the days previous search. He was enroute with Jolly Green to Site 36 and said he did not have enough fuel to return to the search area and get back to home plate.

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At 0318Z we told Compress that Jolly Green and Hobo 93 and Sandy were 7 minutes out of Site 36. At 0324Z Astronaut said Seagrape 103 and 104 were inbound for high cap, but no one could make contact. At 0326Z we advised Compress that remaining Sandys and Hobos would only have 30 minutes to search in primary area if they left immediately. Locketts had 2+00 hours in search area, but still no high cap. Compress advised we would have 4 Bango Bravos and 2 Bango Alphas for flak suppression. They advised to use Sandys as forward air controllers for the ordnance expending. Sandy, Hobo and Lockett Flights did not know the positions of any flak or ground fire in the primary search area. They said they could draw fire possibly, but we all agreed that this was not good practice as there was no high cap and they would have to recover before either Bango flight could return to the area. At 0335Z Compress advised us to recall all Sandys, Hobos and high cap ASAP, and for Crown 29 to proceed to Site 36 and orbit. When Harbormaster (destroyer) heard us recall our forces he recalled Lockett flight. We arrived at Site 36 at 0410Z and advised Compress that Jolly Green was on the ground and the 2 survivors had departed on a Porter (Papa Charlie Echo) for Site 20. From there they would be taken to Udorn via another aircraft. We departed Site 36 at 0545Z after being relieved by Crown 23. We landed at 0647Z.

4. Pertinent comments: There was a breakdown in high cap during this entire effort. Out of the 3+41 hours covering the span when cover was needed we only had 1+05. Lockett flight and Nimble 62 were left in the primary SAR area without cover and about the same time bogeys approached from the North. We considered using Pedros for Angel 07 backup, but were told to leave them at Site 36 on Red Alert. We could not enter the primary search area (for Jolly Green 85 and 2 Sandys downed) because there was no high cover provided after the recovery of the 2 navy survivors. Sandys could not direct expending of ordnance because by the time Bango Bravo started back to the SAR area all Sandys and Hobos were Bingo fuel. None of the low cover aircraft knew the location of the ground fire. I decided when the Navy chopper went down and only 2 could be recovered this became our primary mission. I considered the 2 positive survivors paramount over 4 possible recoveries with whom no visual contact had been made. Even though the Navy survivors appeared to be in an isolated area (mountain peak with valleys and villages around it 5NM distant) I could not by pass them for possible recoveries. Overall except for high cover we thought the recovery of the navy survivors was handled with flexibility which is the by-word of rescue. As on scene commander I had to use my best judgement of the situation when the Navy chopper was downed. The complexion was suddenly completely changed. Major Halseworth, Col Karschner, and Col Mack all agreed that I made the proper decision. They were the responsible rescue personnel attending the crews debriefing. My reason for mentioning this is that 2nd Air Division was directing this mission. Col Hamilton briefed the crew before departure and Col Carter, Chief of Operations for Deputy Commander, 2nd Air Division, debriefed. In the debriefing I was criticised for not carrying out the mission as briefed. My reason for deviating was obvious I thought. The entire mission changed before we even got to orbit. In addition Lockett 2 had been shot up as had Nimble 62 and all reported heavy ground fire in the area. Jolly Green 76 would have been taking much more than Rescues policy of a calculated risk, but this is not why I did not proceed as briefed. The Log at TACC reflected that we had been advised to scramble the Pedros for back-up of Angel 07 and to take Jolly Green to the briefed SAR area.

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This was not the case and the RCC of Pedro 3 at Site 36 confirmed that he heard Compress advise us to have Pedros on the ground at Site 36 on Red Alert. The recovery of the Nimble 62 crew went very smoothly. Lockett 3 and Nimble 62 demonstrated some of the best teamwork I have witnessed. Lockett2's refusal to abandon the search after being in trouble himself was commendable. Having 2 UHF's and 2 HF's on Crown 29 has been the best modification to an F-54 in a long time. The co-pilot coordinated the high cover and worked with Astronaut on SAR secondary and I handled the recovery on SAR primary and guard. The result was excellent radio discipline and a minimum of confusion. These 2 duplicate radios have kept A/C 42-72666 from having a single radio abort since it left Tachikawa 15 October 1965.

5. Recommendations: It has become difficult to know who the rescue crews are responsible to. One day it appears to be TACC and the next its back to the Rescue Element. I would recommend for the best mission accomplishment that this rescue operation be left to the Rescue Controllers and Element Commander who are trained for and have the experience to best perform this function. A continuation of this confusing situation could cause a rescue crew commander to err in judgement and result in a tragedy. I recommend that all HC-54s operating in South East Asia be equipped with 2 UHF and 2 HF radios. The station for the airborne controller is not needed but the tables and areas for charts and recording scheduled Binges, etc., prove helpful. My entire crew agrees that the airborne controller is not needed and is a waste of valuable manpower. The extra radio equipment has been the God send of this modification. It is important that the co-pilot be able to transmit on the second UHF set independently of the Pilots, however, each should be able to monitor and transmit on the other set if so desired. The refueling situation at the sites is critical in some cases during missions. Better equipment is needed for faster refueling. The old slow hand pump method could and probably has caused the failure of a recovery mission. If not, it will. We could give better coverage with more HC-54 planes and crews. We cannot cover the entire area with one 54 airborne. We also need more choppers for better placement and faster reaction.

6. Everyone is trying hard to recover our downed pilots. I don't mean to sound critical and every word I have mentioned is sincere and meant to be constructive. My concern is that we recover every pilot who goes down if possible and that the air rescue image is enhanced.

Robert R. Reeves

ROBERT R. REEVES

Captain, USAF

Rescue Crew Commander

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED
Or Changed to *Unclassified*
By Authority of *GDS*
By *[Signature]* (Date) *3-73*

38 ARS

36 ARS

48 ARS

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pilots had plotted a course around known gun positions, one of the A-1E's was shot down by automatic weapons fire. A CH-3C was sent to the location where it was believed that the A-1E went down. As it arrived in the area, the helicopter was hit by ground fire and the crew bailed out. Since little ground fire was actually reported by the RESCORT, a second helicopter would probably have had a good chance of recovering the crew. The RCC at Udorn scrambled the two HH-43's at Lima Site 36, but the 2AD Command Post overruled this order and directed a recall of all SAR forces. 100/

The USN, however, had launched a helicopter to attempt a recovery of the CH-3C crew. The A-1E's, which had not withdrawn in spite of the order, were directed to meet this helicopter at the coast and escort it to the scene. On the way to the rendezvous the wingman reported ground fire, pulled into the clouds, and no further contact was ever made with him. The remaining A-1E and the helicopter searched the area until the helicopter had to refuel. Even though it was dark by that time, the helicopter returned and made voice contact with one of the crew members. Fortunately, the crew member, SSgt Naugle, had a cigarette lighter which he used to signal the helicopter. A successful pick-up was made but Captain Warren Lilly and his other crew members could not be located. 101/

The next morning the Navy helicopter set out to try to recover the remaining crew members. Enroute a MIG alert was received and the helicopter descended to get between cloud layers. It was hit by

[REDACTED]

In August 1965, the 602nd Air Commando Squadron began rotating its A-1E aircraft from Bien Hoa to Udorn to provide RESCORT. In February 1966, the 602nd Air Commando Squadron moved all of its operations to Udorn, with SAR RESCORT as one of its primary missions. ^{97/}

With this USAF buildup, direct SAR support from Air America in Laos was needed less. Air America continued to provide SAR for the RLAF, their own operations, and on an on-cell basis for U.S. aircraft. At present Air American continues to furnish the USAF SAR forces with staging sites, weather information, and intelligence, all of which are indispensable to successful operations. ^{98/}

The USAF SAR equipment and its disposition in the summer and fall of 1965, was still an interim proposition. The longer range and greater speed of the CH-3C were significant improvements, but their small number, and their lack of survivability in combat, limited their effectiveness. One of the two helicopters assigned was usually out of commission. Consequently, they could not be employed as a pair. This single mode of operation is avoided if at all possible. ^{99/} These two shortcomings were both tragically brought out during a rescue mission, 6-7 November 1965.

On 5 November, Oak Lead, an F-105, disappeared over NVN. There was some possibility that the pilot had survived, since his plane was last seen heading into a cloud, and an electronic search was initiated by two A-1E aircraft on the following day. Although the

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6 NOV 65

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A-1
DOWNED

CH-3
DOWNED

pilots had plotted a course around known gun positions, one of the A-1E's was shot down by automatic weapons fire. A CH-3C was sent to the location where it was believed that the A-1E went down. As it arrived in the area, the helicopter was hit by ground fire and the crew bailed out. Since little ground fire was actually reported by the RESCORT, a second helicopter would probably have had a good chance of recovering the crew. The RCC at Udorn scrambled the two HH-43's at Lima Site 36, but the 2AD Command Post overruled this order and directed a recall of all SAR forces. 100/

The USN, however, had launched a helicopter to attempt a recovery of the CH-3C crew. The A-1E's, which had not withdrawn in spite of the order, were directed to meet this helicopter at the coast and escort it to the scene. On the way to the rendezvous the wingman reported ground fire, pulled into the clouds, and no further contact was ever made with him. The remaining A-1E and the helicopter searched the area until the helicopter had to refuel. Even though it was dark by that time, the helicopter returned and made voice contact with one of the crew members. Fortunately, the crew member, SSgt Naugle, had a cigarette lighter which he used to signal the helicopter. A successful pick-up was made but Captain Warren Lilly and his other crew members could not be located. 101/

The next morning the Navy helicopter set out to try to recover the remaining crew members. Enroute a MIG alert was received and the helicopter descended to get between cloud layers. It was hit by

NAVY
H90
DOWN

automatic weapons fire, the fuel lines were ruptured, and it made an emergency landing in North Vietnam. The two escort aircraft were also hit and one of them had to make a gear up landing at Da Nang. The second USAF CH-3C was on its way to the bailout site when it received word about the Navy helicopter in distress. It diverted and between the CH-3C and another Navy helicopter all of the crew members were recovered. Neither had enough fuel, however, to proceed to the other crash scenes. 102/

A first light search was conducted on 8 November for the unrecovered crew members. The A-1E's picked up a beeper signal but, as more aircraft entered the area, heavy ground fire was encountered and several planes sustained battle damage. At this point the mission was suspended. 103/

This mission not only illustrates the shortcomings mentioned above but also indicates how critical judgment and coordination become in a search and rescue effort. The original decision to conduct a search for Oak Lead was based on the slim possibility that, because of the cloud deck and the general confusion in Oak flight at the time, the pilot could have made a successful bailout without being seen. The position originally given for the first A-1E pilot's bailout turned out to be wrong, thus compounding the confusion that existed. At one point the A-1E's and the Navy helicopter were not acting in coordination with the central controlling authority. When disaster follows disaster, at what point should the mission be suspended? Differences of opinion

requirements of an expanding and contracting conflict. Improved rescue aircraft and equipment enhanced aircrew recovery capabilities, as doctrine and tactics evolved to meet the changing demands imposed by ever-improving enemy defenses.

Most of the time, planning, skill, tactics, and equipment, combined with raw courage of the men, pulled rescue forces through the most precarious situations. Death or captivity, however, were always possibilities. All these elements were present during a rescue effort that began on November 5, 1965, when Oak 01, an F-105 returning from a mission near Hanoi, flew into a cloud and disappeared. The wingman reported Oak 01's last known position, but noticed no anti-aircraft fire, missile firings, or explosion. Because of the rapidly deteriorating weather and approaching darkness no rescue attempt was made.

At dawn, under clearing skies, Sandy 11 and Sandy 12, a pair of A-1s, flew over North Vietnam to where Oak 01 had disappeared. Anti-aircraft fire hit Sandy 12, and the pilot ejected. Sandy 11 circled and soon spotted the downed pilot. Jolly Green 85, a CH-3C commanded by Capt. Warren R. Lilly, was enroute to the survivor as two more A-1Es scrambled from Udorn to form a search and rescue task force. Enemy small arms fire cut into Jolly 85 as it neared the survivor. Lilly managed to raise his badly damaged helicopter to an altitude sufficient for bailing out. As the Sandys circled, Lilly punched in the automatic pilot and made his way to the door. Pilots in the A-1s reported that four chutes had opened and soon made voice and beeper contact with the downed crewmen. Normally, since rescue helicopters usually flew in pairs to meet emergencies like this, the second chopper — the high bird — would have swooped in for the recovery. But, because of mechanical problems, only Jolly Green 85 was available for this particular mission.

Help, however, was on the way. A U.S. Navy Sikorsky SH-3 Sea Knight helicopter, Nimble 62, reported it was flying toward the crash scene from the carrier *Independence*. Two A-1Es, Sandys 13 and 14, flew to intercept the Sea Knight and escort it into the rescue area. They rendezvoused with Nimble 62 just east of the Vietnamese coast and flew alongside it over the beach and westward toward the jungled mountains of North Vietnam. When the pilot of Sandy 14 spotted 37-mm tracers he peeled off into a cloud in an evasive maneuver. Like Oak 01, Sandy 14 disappeared forever. Sandy 13 and Nimble 62 searched the area but found no sign of wreckage or a survivor. When their fuel ran low the A-1s returned to Udorn and Nimble 62 flew back to its carrier. After refueling, Nimble 62, with an escort of Navy A-1Es, returned to search for Sandy 14, but after an hour without contact with the missing pilot they flew on to the wreckage of Jolly Green 85. At dusk, just before abandoning the search until dawn, a Navy A-1 pilot monitored a beeper's signal. As darkness engulfed the circling task force, Nimble 62 dipped down for a tree-top level visual search. The copilot spot-

SEARCH AND RESCUE

ted a tiny light and ordered the penetrator down to pick up the parajumper from Jolly Green 85. The A-1Es and the helicopter, with an Air Force sergeant — who would be forever associated with the U.S. Navy and his Zippo cigarette lighter — the *Independence*.⁴⁹

The early rays of dawn picked off the Gulf of Tonkin as Nimble 62 and its SGT NAUGLE radar picket plane issued a Mig alert. Enemy jets were clearly seen and its escort flew just above the waves then skimmed over the beaches to the jungle where they encountered intense small arms fire. Nimble 62 shuddered as bullets tore through its skin to slash at fuel lines and control cables. Unable to turn back because of rapid fuel loss, the helicopter pilot made a controlled crash-landing inside North Vietnam. As the downed aircrew broke out M-16s and prepared to fight for their lives, the A-1s blasted enemy troops moving toward the wreckage. Meanwhile, a second Sea Knight scrambled from the *Independence* as a CH-3C left its forward operating base in Laos. The North Vietnamese moved an anti-aircraft gun into the area and the A-1 pilots suddenly realized they were involved in a shoot-out. Heavily damaged, the two Skyraiders limped southward to make gear-up belly landings at Da Nang. Meanwhile, the Sea Knight raced to the crash site and rescued all the survivors. Additional A-1s from the carrier then demolished the downed chopper to keep it from falling into enemy hands.⁵⁰

Meanwhile, encouraged by the rescue of the parajumper, the search for other survivors of Jolly Green 85 continued. Late on the afternoon of November 7, an Air Force Sandy pilot heard a beeper signal, but darkness precluded pinpointing the source. Throughout the night, in operations rooms at Udorn and Nakhon Phanom, at the Joint Search and Rescue Center in Saigon and Rescue Control Center at Da Nang, and aboard the *Independence*, intelligence officers, operations officers, and pilots planned the next day's efforts. On flight lines and in hangars throughout South Vietnam and Thailand, as well as in the bowels of the *Independence*, mechanics and munitions loaders prepared their planes and helicopters. In the jungles of North Vietnam the enemy cleaned their weapons and rested before the inevitable fight. An aerial task force of A-1s, CH-3Cs, and SH-3s rose with the sun and converged on the Jolly Green crash. Air Force F-100s from Da Nang and Navy F-8 Crusaders from the *Independence* flew toward their assigned anti-Mig combat air patrol orbit.

A-1s flew low over the helicopter wreckage and finally picked up the sound of a beeper. Two Air Force Skyraider pilots were concentrating on the signal when enemy gunfire ripped, almost simultaneously, into both airplanes. While the two damaged A-1s returned to Udorn, their comrades strafed the enemy gunners who answered with 23-mm, 37-mm, and small

arms fire. Meanwhile, rescue controllers in Saigon and at the rescue control centers at Udorn and Da Nang decided that further efforts would only result in additional casualties. Grudgingly they called off the rescue operations. Their decision, though a painful one, was correct. Capt. Warren Lilly, Lt. Jerry Singleton, and SSgt Arthur Cromier, captured soon after parachuting into the jungle, were already miles away, on their way to prison camps in Hanoi.⁵¹

Rescue was indeed a risky business, and A-1 pilots shared the danger with the chopper crews. By 1967 the A-1E had the highest overall loss rate of any airplane in Southeast Asia. Skyraider loss rates per 1,000 sorties ranged from 1.0 in South Vietnam to 2.3 over Laos and up to 6.2 for missions over North Vietnam. The high loss rate over North Vietnam was directly attributable to the A-1s rescue escort role. Of the twenty-five A-1s shot down over North Vietnam between June 1966 and June 1967, seven were lost on rescue missions.⁵²

Korean War vintage, propeller-driven A-1 Skyraiders, like the helicopters they escorted, were slow and faced extreme danger when flying into an area where enemy defenses could shoot down a modern jet fighter. Careful mission planning followed by controlled execution took some edge off the danger. The task of controlling rescue missions evolved with the increasing commitment of American forces.

Before June 1964, the covert nature of operations buried the rescue task in secrecy as search and rescue controllers worked in a liaison capacity within the air operations center at Tan Son Nhut. With the rapid increase in air activity, starting in August 1964 and gaining momentum thereafter, the cloak of secrecy lifted and rescue personnel began functioning overtly. On July 1, 1965, when Detachment 3, Pacific Air Rescue Center, became the 38th Air Rescue Squadron, manning the Joint Search and Rescue Center, functioning in Tan Son Nhut's Air Operations Center since 1962, became part of their mission.⁵³

The Joint Search and Rescue Center was responsible for rescue operations in the Bangkok-Saigon Flight Information Regions. It had overall control for coordination of rescue activities in the Republic of Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and most of North Vietnam, with the Seventh Fleet having control of search and rescue in the waters adjacent to North Vietnam. The rescue control centers at Da Nang and Udorn had regional responsibilities and acted in a liaison capacity.⁵⁴ Search and rescue in South Vietnam was necessarily a coordinated effort involving the Air Force, U.S. Army, Marines, and the Vietnamese Air Force. Coordination was accomplished through the Joint Search and Rescue Center, the Tactical Air Control Center at Tan Son Nhut, corps direct air support centers — responsible for coordinated air activity within each of the four corps areas — and other agencies like the rescue coordination centers at Da Nang and Udorn. While the Vietnamese Air Force was responsible for its own rescue func-

SINGLETON, JERRY ALLEN

Name: Jerry Allen Singleton
 Rank/Branch: O2/United States Air Force
 Unit: DET 1, 38th ARS
 Date of Birth:
 Home City of Record: Oklahoma City OK
 Date of Loss: 06 November 1965
 Country of Loss: North Vietnam
 Loss Coordinates: 202000N 1053000E
 Status (in 1973): Returnee
 Category:
 Aircraft/Vehicle/Ground: CH3C

Other Personnel in Incident: Warren Lilly, returnee, pilot; Arthur Cormier, returnee, pararescue; Sgt. Nagle, flight engineer, (burned, escaped, evaded, rescued)

Source: Compiled by P.O.W. NETWORK March 1997 from one or more of the following: raw data from U.S. Government agency sources, correspondence with POW/MIA families, published sources, interviews.

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SOURCE: WE CAME HOME copyright 1977
 Captain and Mrs. Frederic A Wyatt (USNR Ret), Barbara Powers Wyatt, Editor
 P.O.W. Publications, 10250 Moorpark St., Toluca Lake, CA 91602
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JERRY A. SINGLETON
 Captain - United States Air Force
 Shot Down: November 6, 1965
 Released: February 12, 1973

I grew up and attended high school in Oklahoma City. I attended the United States Air Force Academy and graduated in 1962. After pilot training I was assigned to helicopters and in September of 1965, I went to Southeast Asia to fly CH-3C rescue helicopters (Jolly Green). Our mission was to recover American pilots downed over North Vietnam. The Jolly Green in which I was flying was shot down over North Vietnam on November 6, 1965 and I was captured. I was released on February 12, 1973.

My wife, Bonnie, and I have a son, Rick, who was born after I was shot down. Our first meeting was a very happy day for me. We are living in a new home, the bad dream is over, the future is bright, and the three of us are very happy together.

I will be taking about three years extended leave from the Air Force to attend law school. After that I will go back on active duty with the Air Force.

I was very pleased by the wonderfully warm welcome we received when we returned to the United States as free men. I was also very pleased to learn about the many people who supported or participated in efforts to make the North Vietnamese, Viet Cong, and the other communist captors in Southeast Asia treat us according to the Geneva Accords on Prisoners of War, and to obtain our release. I personally believe these efforts saved many lives of American Prisoners of War, and I am eternally grateful for your work, thoughts, and prayers in our behalf.

I feel very fortunate now. My efforts as an American soldier in Vietnam only required a few years from me. Many men gave their lives proudly and unselfishly. We cannot do anything for these men now. We can't even say "Thank you!" But we can honor them by giving time and effort to make ourselves better citizens - and in so doing, make the United States of America an even better country.

Our Country, the U.S.A., is not perfect, and it never will be. But it is the best in the world today. Love it, honor it, work for it, and protect it, and it will reward you many times over.

God bless America

December 1996

Jerry Singleton became a Chaplain after his release. He retired from the United States Air Force as a Lt. Colonel. He and his wife Barbara reside in Texas.

CORMIER, ARTHUR



Name: Arthur Cormier
 Rank/Branch: E5/United States Air Force
 Unit: DET 1, 38th ARS
 Date of Birth: 24 October 1934
 Home City of Record: West Orange NJ
 Date of Loss: 06 November 1965
 Country of Loss: North Vietnam
 Loss Coordinates: 202000N 1053000E
 Status (in 1973): Returnee
 Category:
 Aircraft/Vehicle/Ground: CH3C

Other Personnel in Incident: Warren Lilly, returnee, pilot; Jerry Singleton, returnee, co-pilot; Sgt. Naugle, flight engineer, (burned, escaped, evaded, rescued)

Source: Compiled by P.O.W. NETWORK March 1997 from one or more of the following: raw data from U.S. Government agency sources, correspondence with POW/MIA families, published sources, interviews.

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 P.O.W. Publications, 10250 Moorpark St., Toluca Lake, CA 91602
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 November 1996 - Edited by request of Capt. Arthur Cormier, USAF RET

ARTHUR CORMIER
 S M Sergeant- United States Air Force
 Shot down: November 6, 1965
 Released: February 12, 1973

I was born in Rumford, Maine on 24 October 1934. I lived there until I was six years old. We then moved to Boston, Massachusetts and New Jersey. I was reared in Lincoln Park, New Jersey, and finished my last two years of high school in West Orange, New Jersey. I graduated in 1953 the eldest of six children (three boys and three girls).

I joined the Air Force in April 1954. I took my basic training at Sampson AFB, New York, followed by a a tour in Germany, May 1955 to November 1957.

During my tour at Suffolk County AFB, New York, February 1958 to February 1960, I met my wife, Eileen M. Weth, from Bay Shore, New York. We were married 1, January 1960. We had four children Sean 12, Daphne 11, Mercedes 10, Kevin 9.

I spent a year Minot AFB, North Dakota February 1960 to February 1961 then Andrew, AFB, Maryland, August 1961 to March 1963. I joined Rescue in April 1963 as a Para-rescueman. I had two tours in Vietnam and was shot down on my second tour. Our helicopter was shot down 30 miles from Hanoi on 6 November 1965.

I have enrolled this fall (1973) at Long Island University and plan to finish my under graduate degree within the next two years. The future looks very bright to me and it's a good world. Thank you for the prayers and help bestowed so abundantly upon my wife and my family over the years. We especially thank you for the magnificent homecoming.

November 1996

Eileen and Arthur subsequently divorced. Both have remarried. Arthur retired from the United States Air Force as a Captain. He and his wife Merry K. have 2 children and reside in Massachusetts.

LILLY, WARREN E.

Name: Warren E. Lilly
 Rank/Branch: O3/United States Air Force/pilot
 Unit: DET 1, 38th ARS
 Date of Birth:
 Home City of Record: Dallas, TX
 Date of Loss: 06 November 1965
 Country of Loss: North Vietnam
 Loss Coordinates: 202000N 1053000E
 Status (in 1973): Returnee
 Category:
 Aircraft/Vehicle/Ground: CH3C

Other Personnel in Incident: Jerry Singleton, returnee, co-pilot; Arthur Cormier, returnee, pararescue; S/Sgt. Naugle (escaped, evaded, rescued, badly burned)

Source: Compiled by P.O.W. NETWORK March 1997 from one or more of the following: raw data from U.S. Government agency sources, correspondence with POW/MIA families, published sources, interviews.

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WARREN R. LILLY
 Lieutenant Colonel - United States Air Force
 Shot Down: November 6, 1965
 Released: February 12, 1973

The statement below was given at Nederland, thanking them for dedicating a Freedom Tree to me during my detention. It sums up how I feel. It's the men who won't or haven't come back that deserve remembering, the rest of us just did our jobs.

MESSAGE

On 14 October 1972 a plaque and flame were dedicated specifically to myself and those who were detained or listed as MIA in the Vietnam conflict. I would like to thank you for the thoughts that you offered that so heavily contributed to my presence here with you today. I consider myself very fortunate and totally inadequate to receive the honors you have bestowed upon me, for I have returned. It is those brave men who have not returned that so rightfully deserve yours and the nation's highest tribute. The men of whom I speak are those who made the ultimate sacrifice in Vietnam, and those whose fate yet remains unknown. Vietnam was perhaps the most difficult, least understood, and least supported military endeavor ever undertaken by our nation. But our KIA's and MIA's did not fail their duty and because of their devotion to their country, PEACE with HONOR, tenuous though it may be, was obtained. Their personal sacrifice must never be forgotten, for they did it for you and for me. At the present time our government is making every effort to account for all those whose fate remains in question in Vietnam. The communists continue to procrastinate in making it possible to accurately conclude this final accounting. It is your continuing concern for these men which will ultimately result in a terminal

conclusion to Vietnam for it cannot be so until we know as absolutely certain as possible the fate of all who served our country so valiantly, whose families continue to wait. Our country is a far richer place for what these men have sacrificed ... They did not forget you ... DO NOT FORGET THEM!

December 1996

Warren Lilly retired from the United States Air Force as a Colonel. He and his wife Gwen reside in Alabama.

WINS SILVER STAR

NCO Escapes in North

SAIGON (UPI)—Air Force SSgt. Berkley E. Naugle of Gettysburg, Pa., was blown through the open door of his rescue helicopter over north Vietnam.

The flight mechanic opened his parachute and floated down. He landed in a jungle village.

Five truckloads of north Viet-

namese troops closed in on Naugle. Despite injuries, the sergeant dashed into the jungle.

The troops combed the area. But at nightfall, Naugle climbed to a hilltop and signaled for help. He was rescued.

The Air Force announced Thursday Naugle has been presented a Silver Star, the nation's third highest award for valor.

Pacific Stars & Stripes
Saturday, May 14, 1966

Determined Copter Pilot Receives Silver Star

SAIGON (UPI)—Capt. Jerry Jennings of El Paso, Tex., saw the Viet Cong firing at him, but still he lowered his helicopter.

He moved his HH3C helicopter slowly back and forth over the jungle infested with Viet Cong.

Jennings spotted the downed American pilot and set down. Bullets whizzed around his chopper. The communists were closing in.

With the downed pilot picked up Jennings tried to fly off. But

his rotor blades were stuck in trees.

He wiggled them loose and flew off through the communist fire.

Jennings has been presented the Silver Star, the nation's third highest award for valor, for his recent rescue action the Air Force announced Friday.

Silver Stars Won by Two Copter Pilots

SAIGON, Vietnam — Two rescue helicopter crewmen with the 38th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Sq. have received the Silver Star for duty in Vietnam.

Capt. Jerry Jennings, an HH-3C pilot, was cited for his bravery in flying deep into VC-controlled territory to rescue a downed Air Force pilot. With the hoist broken, Jennings had to land to pick up the pilot, navigate around the heavy underbrush and avoid the closing in VC.

SSgt Berkley E. Naugle, a helicopter flight mechanic, was on a rescue mission over North Vietnam when an explosion blew him through the hatch door. He opened his parachute and landed safely in a jungle village. Despite injuries received in the explosion, he evaded five truckloads of enemy troops looking for him. He eventually was rescued.

Two Airmen Earn Medals For Valor

TAN SON NHUT — Two rescue helicopter crewmen of the 38th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron have been awarded the Silver Star — the United States' third highest award for valor.

Capt. Jerry Jennings of El Paso, Tex., and SSgt. Berkley E. Naugle of Gettysburg, Pa., were presented the medals recently by Col. Donald T. Smith commander of the Pacific Air Rescue Center.

Captain Jennings, an HH-30 Helicopter pilot, was cited for bravery when he flew deep into Viet Cong controlled territory last November to rescue a downed Air Force pilot.

Despite intense enemy ground-fire, the captain made repeated slow passes over the rescue area before locating the pilot. Because the helicopter hoist was broken he could not lift the pilots to the helicopter and had to land and pick up his man as the VC were closing in.

During the descent the helicopter's rotor blades struck surrounding trees, but Jennings still managed to lift his crew and the pilot to safety.

Sergeant Naugle, a helicopter flight mechanic, was on a rescue mission over North Vietnam last November when enemy gunfire touched off an explosion that blew him through the hatch door. He opened his parachute and landed safely in a jungle village.

Despite injuries suffered in the explosion, the sergeant evaded five truckloads of enemy troops who combed the area searching for him.

At night, he worked his way to a hilltop where he radioed for help and was rescued.

1965

AIR FORCE MEN GET
MEDALS FOR VALOR

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May 2, 1966

Rescue For the Perishing

When a Flier Jumps Over Vietnam Jolly Green Giants Hurry to Help

Continued From Page One

Vietnam are impressive. Since the raids began on North Vietnam on Feb. 7, 1965, the United States has lost about 215 planes, flown by about 230 crewmen. (Some planes carry more than one man.) But of all these, the air-crew rescue squadrons have picked up more than 116 men, and nearly always under fire.

Inside South Vietnam, the pilot who gets out of his wrecked plane alive and well can almost count on surviving; rarely does the air-crew rescue squadron lose one of these pilots. So far, 177 have been picked up in South Vietnam.

The 'Safest' Spot of All

Bailing out into the Gulf of Tonkin, a 150-mile wide ocean separating North Vietnam and the Red Chinese island of Hainan, is safest of all. Thirty-three pilots have jumped into the Gulf of Tonkin, and 32 have been picked up. The other man drowned.

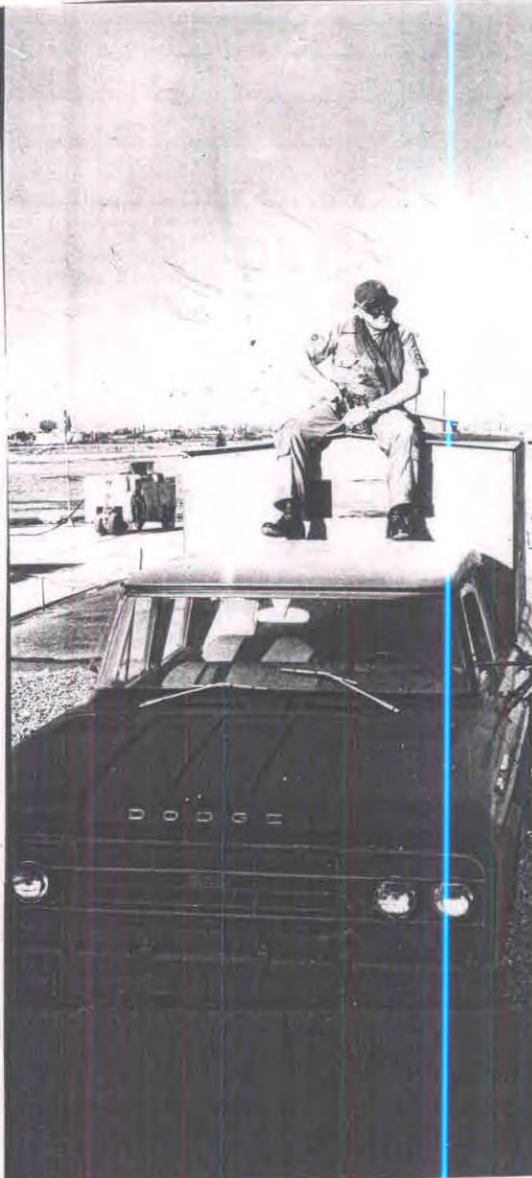
Pilots call the rescue men the "Jolly Green Giants," partly because their shapeless green helicopters are, after all, pretty big, and because, to the pilot bobbing in the ocean or sitting in terror in the enemy jungle, the air-rescue man's job is the biggest job in all of Vietnam.

Major Haynes, the man whose brown-and-green chopper has picked up more than 20 downed aviators inside North Vietnam, is, himself, a giant of a man. Like a lot of helicopter pilots, he tends to talk too loud, a habit formed from hours of yelling at other crewmen and men on the ground over the noise of the clattering rotor blades.

The gangling choppers, it hardly needs be said, offer fat, slow targets for sniping Viet Cong gunners on the ground. And, once the downed flyer is spotted, the chopper must hover over him for several minutes, presenting a standing target that is laced with oil and fuel lines and hydraulic systems.

Most Dramatic Rescue

Three of these choppers have themselves been knocked down in North Vietnam, and it was one of Baylor Haynes' air crewmen who was the star of one of the service's most dramatic and unlikely rescues.



or South Vietnam, he signals "May Day!" This is the international distress signal, the signal that the pilot is ditching. At this instant, a unit of the 3rd Aero Rescue Group starts building a rescue "task force." How big this task force becomes depends on how badly the plane is hit, where the pilot expects to ride his plane down or where he expects to land if he bails out, whether he is himself hit or otherwise hurt.

A huge C-54 transport, flying constantly in an assigned pattern in expectation of just this crisis, immediately finds the wounded plane on radar, makes a quick judgment of how much help is needed, and starts calling it in. **OVER**

Staff Sgt. Berkeley E. Naugle, 32, Gettysburg, Pa., rode flight engineer a rescue ship up north one morning before President Johnson ordered the in the bombing of North Vietnam; at time, just before Christmas, U.S. bombs regularly-attacked key targets near Hanoi.

It was on one of these flights that Naugle's HH-3C, one of the choppers, was hit hard in a vulnerable spot and burst into flames. The sergeant jumped out, suffering burns so severe he could barely maneuver his parachute. He fell, otherwise unhurt, into the jungle 40 miles southwest of Hanoi—250 miles as another helicopter flies, from Thailand, the nearest safe area.

On his way down, Sergeant Naugle lost all his survival gear except, fortunately, a tiny but powerful transistor transistor—a two-way radio not much bigger than a package of cigarettes. For a long time he had no one to talk to, transceiver not. He spent most of the day, seven hours scrambling through the jungle eluding patrols sent out by Communist North Vietnam officers who had seen him jump from the burning helicopter.

Tiny Light in the Jungle

As night fell a rescue chopper circled overhead. More in wild hope than expectation of being seen, the sergeant signaled the rescue chopper with the beacon he had—a tiny cigaret lighter. Somehow, a clear-eyed crewman on the chopper saw the flickering lighter beneath the jungle canopy, and within a few minutes the thoroughly astonished sergeant was pulled aboard for the ride home to Thailand.

Most rescues are routine, though routine is anything but undramatic. When a pilot is hit, whether in North

Aerospace Rescue's Colonel Beall, "and that means it ought to work well in the jungle because we'd only need a 30-foot clearing to get a man out."

The Air Force is experimenting, too, with an infrared flasher for nighttime rescue. But now, anyway, the list of items the Air Force requires its pilots to carry is small: A transceiver (radio), flares and smoke bombs, a mirror (to attract rescue ships during sunlight hours), and an electric vapor-light for night flights.

For all its exotic gear and best-laid plans, some of the most dramatic and all-but-impossible pilot "saves" are made in the best flying-by-the-seat-of-the-pants tradition.

One day not long ago, an Air Force C-130, a giant four-engine transport, picked up a weak distress signal while cruising up the coastline of Vietnam not far north of the growing port city of Cam Ranh Bay.

In Enemy-Held Territory

Capt. Jimmie L. Jay of Stillwater, Texas, turned to follow the signal and a few minutes later spotted an Army helicopter down on the beach, its crew outside waving for help. He tried to call the downed chopper, but by this time the little's bird's weak radio had finally quit for good.

Climbing quickly to a higher altitude

to improve his own radio transmission, Captain Jay notified the base at Cam Ranh Bay. But because this area was known for a concentration of Communist Viet Cong, Captain Jay and his crew kept eyes out for something close, something small enough to land on the beach.

They found them, a formation of Army "Huey" helicopters flying out at sea a few miles away. He tried calling them by radio, but couldn't find their radio channel.

"There wasn't anything else to do," he said, "so I tried some 'sheep-dog tactics.'" Nosing his giant transport to the helicopters' altitude, Captain Jay began circling them, slowly closing his orbit. The little helicopters were quickly convinced they better pay attention; a C-130 is, after all, a lot bigger than a tiny "Huey." The helicopters soon got the idea, headed for the beach and rescued the helicopter crew.

Some of the "saves" are even more daring, and often by men who have no special rescue training. One of the most celebrated was the pick-up of a downed pilot at the Special Forces camp at A Shau in northwest Vietnam last month.

Air Force Maj. Bernard Fischer, who landed his Skyraider under fire on a bombed-out landing strip and waited for his buddy to sprint to the plane, may well have won the Medal of Honor.

Most of the pilot pick-ups are, for Major Haynes and the men like him, a routine day's work. To the man on the ground, though, the Jolly Green Giants are giants indeed. —WESLEY PRUDEN, JR.

