



SEARCHER

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THIRD RESCUE GROUP MARKS 25th YEAR



APOLLO 9 WAS CIRCLING THE EARTH as the Searcher went to press and the men and aircraft of the 41st ARRWg were prepared for any contingency landing in the Pacific. Col. Thomas L. Shockley, (center) wing commander, conferred shortly after blastoff with Capt. Bruce Forsgren (left) and Capt. Charles Colvin at the Pacific Recovery Forces Control Center. Captain Forsgren is an aircraft controller and Captain Colvin is chief of the 41st Wing's space recovery branch. (Photo by 1st Lt. Larry Potter)

TAN SON NHUT AB - Valentine's Day 1969 had special meaning for the 1,200 members of the 3d Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Group. It marked the combat rescue unit's "silver anniversary."

Older than its parent services (both the U. S. Air Force and the Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service were formed later), the Third Group was formed 25 years ago on Feb. 14, 1944. Then known as the 3d Emergency Rescue Squadron, it was organized at Gulfport Army Air Field, Miss.

The "Thumping Third" came into being as the result of similar rescue units formed by the British to save downed Allied aircrews from the English Channel.

During the fall of 1944 the infant Third followed the advice of Horace Greeley . . . and U. S. Army Air Force directives . . . and headed west. Throughout the remainder of World War II units of the 3d Rescue Group operated from such places as Biak, Luzen, Dulag, Leyte, Noemfoor, Morotai, Mondore and Ie Shime. When the war ended, it moved to Atsugi, Japan, to join other elements of the Fifth Air Force.

Continued on Page 2

THAT OTHERS MAY LIVE

Thirteen crewmen of a Rescue HC-130 lost their lives on Feb 5, while trying to save the lives of others. The 31st Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron crew was engaged in a search for survivors of a Japanese vessel which had capsized and sunk east of Taiwan when their aircraft apparently struck the water and disintegrated.

Only Pararescueman A1C James Phelps survived the crash.

"We at the Wing feel this loss deeply and very personally, as do all Rescue people throughout the world," was the way 41st ARRWg

commander Colonel Thomas L. Shockley summed up his unit's feelings. "We are a close group of people and an accident like this touches each of us."

High officials of the Japan Maritime Safety Agency (MSA), the Japanese Rescue Service, expressed their "deep regret and sorrow over the loss of crew members of 31st ARRSq while the crew was searching for survivors of the Japanese Merchant vessel Shoka Maru."

Lost in the mishap were Capt. Giles J. Gray, Capt. Jack Hover, Capt. Jonathan B. Whitney, 1st Lt. Hal M. Ward, TSgt. Gary D. Crosby, TSgt. Richard G. St. Peter, SSgt. Theodore H. Bourne, SSgt. Thomas Ashcraft, SSgt. William F. Griffin, SSgt. Walter E. Bechyne, SSgt. Carlton E. Stroud, SSgt. Paul J. Reindl and Sgt. Michael D. Day.

Captain Hover was assigned to Det. 2, 41 ARRWg. Sergeant Day was assigned to the Clark AB Hospital and was aboard as an additional scanner.

79th SQUADRON

NEPTUNE CREW
GETS QUICK AID
FROM RESCUE PJs

ANDERSEN AFB, GUAM - Two para-rescuemen parachuted into the ocean from a 79th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron HC-130 on Feb 28 to aid the victims of a Navy plane which crashed some 500 miles west of Guam.

The twin-engined antisubmarine warfare bomber, stationed at Whidbey Island Naval Air Station, Washington, was on a flight from the Philippines to Guam when it developed engine trouble and the crew was forced to ditch. The nine men aboard escaped serious injury.

A1C Robert "Chris" Schmidt and Sgt. Charles R. Hawkins parachuted into the 25-mile per hour surface winds and 12-foot swells. Wearing full SCUBA gear, they hit the water and swam to the men in the raft. They examined the survivors and reported only minor lacerations and burns.

Meanwhile, the HC-130 crew overhead directed the nearest ship to the area. The passenger liner President Cleveland, some 100 miles away, came to the rescue and picked up the survivors and the para-rescuemen.



"NOW THEN, JUST WHAT TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT DID YOU HAVE IN MIND???"

The SEARCHER is a monthly publication of the 41st Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Wing.

COMMANDER

Col. Thomas L. Shockley

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Chief

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NCOIC

COMMAND
MEMO

The American military man is more closely associated with the flag of his country than most citizens.

Our standard flies at military bases around the world and we are sworn to protect the freedom it symbolizes. Each day men and women in uniform salute its raising and lowering.

But this close association, in itself, may cause us to take for granted the heritage embodied in the stars and stripes of our flag.

In some segments of our society patriotism has become unfashionable. We as members of our nation's armed forces owe it to ourselves to keep our personal patriotism strong. The uniform we wear reminds us of our sworn dedication to our country and the principles for which our flag stands. This reminder is especially appropriate in these trying times when some members of our society choose to desecrate and ridicule the flag.

Each of us should remember that when we honor Old Glory, we are not honoring simply a piece of red, white and blue.

cloth with stripes and stars. We are paying tribute to almost 200 years of work, dedication and sacrifice by patriotic men who have built a nation unequalled in history.

When men rip this flag down, curse and revile it, they are denying their heritage and undermining the work of countless courageous men.

As we approach spring and take the occasions of Memorial Day and Independence Day to look to the past for inspiration, let each of us take a moment to gaze up at the flag and remember its significance.

In this widely dispersed command, some will see the flag amidst the rubble of war in Vietnam while others will see it fluttering in the tropical breezes of Pacific islands.

Its message, however, will be the same - pride in country.

THOMAS L. SHOCKLEY, Colonel USAF
Commander

FEB. 14, 1944:
SPECIAL DATE FOR 3rd ARRGp

Continued from Page 1

When North Korean communist forces attacked the Republic of Korea on June 25, 1950, aircraft and men of the Third Rescue were among the first American forces sent to that country. It was in Korea that the helicopter earned its reputation as an outstanding search and rescue aircraft.

From June 25, 1950, to the termination of Korean hostilities on July 27, 1953, the Third's aircrews rescued 996 United Nations personnel from behind enemy lines.

The Korean War produced 40 aces, at least four of whom were saved by air rescue.

No unit in the entire Air Force has received a higher number of personal awards and decorations (over 1,500). The Third Air Rescue Squadron was the first unit to receive the Presidential Unit Citation during the Korean War.

Following that warfare, the 3d Air Rescue Group was inactivated on June 18, 1957, at Nagoya AB, Japan.

As U. S. participation in the Vietnam War progressed from a handful of advisors in 1962 to the large number of

men and aircraft now involved, new Rescue units were organized, equipped and deployed. The 3d Air Rescue Group, with a new name, "3d Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Group," was reactivated on Jan. 8, 1966, having been preceded as parent rescue unit by Det. 3, Pacific Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Center, and the 38th Air Rescue Squadron. The latter is now a part of the 3d Group.

From its headquarters at Tan Son Nhut AB, near Saigon, the 3d ARRGp exercises command and control over the 37th, 38th, 39th, 40th and Det 1, 40th ARS Squadrons. Resources include the famed HH-3E and HH-53 "Jolly Green Giants" and workhorse HH-43 "Pedro" rescue helicopters, as well as HC-130P "Crown" aircraft. The latter serve as airborne command posts and aerial tankers.

This may well be regarded as the space age, the era of supersonic jet set . . . but for the wingless warriors of South Asia's air rescue force . . . and for 2,300 who they have carried to safety, there's still a lot of romance in the sub mach rotor-driven rescue fleet.