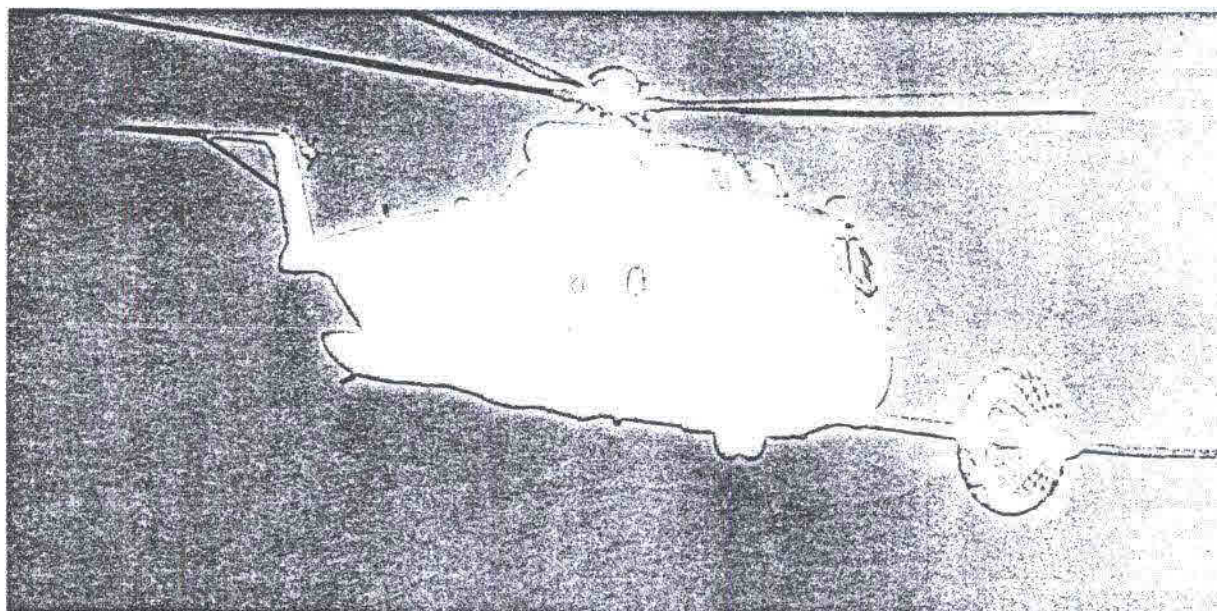


AIR RESCUE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA



High above the jungles of Vietnam, an HC-130 mission controller/tanker provides fuel to an HH-3 Jolly Green Giant of the 3d Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Group.

reasonable extent, or in cases where the Sandys detect no enemy threat, the HH-53 rescue copters are called in. These are relatively lightly armed, with three 7.62-mm Miniguns, so the A-1s stay handy to provide whatever further support may be needed. (Both the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong have grown familiar with SAR procedures and often stay hidden until the copters descend. Hovering copters, they have found, make easy, highly vulnerable targets.)

The two HH-53s of a standard SAR force work in tandem, with one acting as "low-bird" and the other "high-bird." This arrangement provides backup should the low-flying copter get shot down or otherwise be unable to perform the rescue.

Many rescue operations in SEA take place in dense jungle, with the downed flyer hidden from view by thick foliage of several layers. In this situation, a downed airman will "pop" a smoke marker carried in his survival kit to reveal his precise position.

The low-bird HH-53 then lowers its jungle penetrator, a heavy metallic device shaped like a big arrowhead with three paddle seats

folded into its sides. It is extended on a 250-foot steel cable by a hoist positioned much like an outrigger on the right side of the rescue chopper. Except when a pararescueman rides it down, the penetrator is closed, its weight forcing it through the dense jungle roof. A pararescueman, known as a PJ, descends whenever a downed flyer is injured or otherwise unable to strap himself onto the penetrator.

Nighttime Operations

At present, combat rescue operations are confined to daytime missions involving visual contact. But the 3d ARRGp has pioneered and field-tested techniques for limited night recovery, which are now operational on a limited basis. Known as the PAVE IMP Limited Night Recovery system, it uses a low-light-level TV, infrared sensors, and related equipment installed aboard the Super Jollys. The system, in effect, can see in the dark by augmenting and magnifying the traces of light present at night.

One unit of the 3d Group, the 40th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, located

AIR RESCUE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

at Udorn Royal Thai AFB, currently is the only organization in the world believed to have a night rescue and recovery capability. The 40th Squadron evaluated the system during a ninety-day period while also conducting its normal work load of daytime rescues. The unit developed battle tactics and operational concepts and provided its own systems support for the specially equipped HH-53 copters used in the program. The USAF Chief of Staff had requested that the Military Airlift Command, in charge of all aerospace rescue and recovery units, develop such a system.

Senior officers of the 3d ARRGp point with pride at the extent to which advanced technology has been incorporated into air rescue operations. A problem fundamental to all combat rescue operations is "both obvious and very difficult to solve: We must know where the survivor is with absolute certainty and complete precision; until you know that you just don't dare put any ordnance in," a senior rescue expert told AIR FORCE Magazine.

One obvious way to ascertain the exact whereabouts of a survivor is to have an observer on the scene during bailout, and every effort is made to assign an escort to all aircraft in distress. The rescue coordination centers do this, of course, in cases where no wingman is present to shepherd an aircraft in trouble.

A New Rescue Aircraft?

Staff officers of the 3d ARRGp highly praise the performance of the A-1, the propeller-driven vintage aircraft used in close support. The A-1 Sandy is considered "the best airplane in the inventory for this job," because of its slow speed, high maneuverability, and ability to remain on station for long periods. In addition, it carries a large ordnance payload and can sustain extensive battle damage without impairment of performance.

Despite this high opinion of the A-1, air rescue experts in Southeast Asia believe that, once available, the Air Force's upcoming A-X, designed specifically for close air support, will bring important new muscle to future USAF rescue and recovery operations. The experts also say that the most pressing equipment need, in the light of recent Southeast Asian experience, is for "a small V/STOL [vertical/short takeoff] recovery vehicle capable of going in with a strike force." It should have enough self-protection to be able to function against heavy ground defenses, have a self-contained ECM capability, and be able to pinpoint the location of survivors.

Such a vehicle, rescue people in Vietnam believe, should be able to hover, as well as cruise at between 300 and 350 knots, and be capable of refueling during flight. The latter feature is meant to reduce vulnerability because such an aircraft would not be required to carry substantial quantities of fuel during combat operations.

A high-ranking planner at Headquarters USAF told AIR FORCE Magazine that plans for an advanced V/STOL rescue vehicle, a replacement for the canceled CARA project of the late 1960s, are currently in a preliminary stage and might be incorporated in the FY '74 budget. There is widespread recognition that the HH-53s are both too big and too slow for optimum rescue operations. Similar drawbacks afflict Army, Navy, and Marine Corps copters that participate from time to time in Southeast Asia rescue operations. (SARs operate flexibly, drawing on whatever sources happen to be available at the time.)

In addition to the some 2,600 combat rescues that the Air Force has performed or coordinated in Southeast Asia during the past seven years, about 1,200 noncombat saves were performed by the 3d Group, each of them representing a human life saved. (One frequent "customer" of the 3d Group is Air America, the air logistics operation supplying non-Communist forces in Cambodia from Saigon and other points by small transports under CIA contract. A spokesman of the 3d ARRGp said, "We arrange pickups for them on a routine basis whenever one of their aircraft is reported down.")

In testimony to the rescue effort throughout SEA, a recent award of another Presidential Unit Citation to the 3d ARRGp, already the most highly decorated unit in the Air Force, contained this statement by Gen. John W. Vogt, Commander of PACAF's Seventh Air Force:

"The personnel of the 3d Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Group performed their duties under extremely hazardous conditions and in a manner epitomizing the virtues of duty, honor, and allegiance to country. . . . The extraordinary dedication and heroic determination of the rescue crews, often hovering directly over enemy positions to snatch a pilot from the enemy, has become a legend in Southeast Asia."

Even a casual visit with the officers and men of the 3d ARRGp leads to one definite conclusion: They have made an unstinting commitment to their motto, "That Others May Live."

Spells Doom for Red

HQ. 7TH AF, TAN SON NHUT AB, Vietnam — The Air Force, Navy and Marines teamed up Aug. 12, and that combination was a little too much for a Mig-21.

Flying an Air Force F-4 from Udorn RTAFB, Thailand, Capt. Larry Richard of the Marines and Lt. Cdr. Michael Ettel of the Navy shot down a Communist jet 50 miles northwest of Hanoi.

The two are assigned with the

Air War Deadlier

WASHINGTON — The "Triple Nickle" squadron didn't celebrate much the day Steve Ritchie shot down his first Mig-21.

It was May 10 and fliers from Udorn shot down three of the Communist jets that day — but their best pilot and backseater had gone down in the jungle near Hanoi moments after shooting down their third Mig of the war.

For the next 23 days, one of those crewmembers, Capt. Roger Locher, hid in the jungle and heard the sounds of war, of bombing raids of missions by his fellow 555th TFS members.

He may have heard the sounds of battle on May 31, when Ritchie got his second Mig and when a navigator named Capt. Jeff Feinstein of the 13th TFS was in on his second kill.

That was the day Locher made contact and set up a huge rescue mission that finally plucked him from the jungle and returned him in triumph to Udorn. He had spent more time in North Vietnam without being captured than any Air Force man yet.

Not all have been as lucky as Locher. While AF Phantoms have been downing 28 Migs, the Mig-21s have taken their toll and shot down 18 F-4s. "We're spending a lot of time in pretty hotly defended country," an AF spokesman said.

There have been 22 more AF Phantoms lost over North Vietnam to anti-aircraft fire and other causes. Three crew members who were involved in shooting down Migs are listed as missing.

Mig Killers of the 432d Tactical Fighter Reconnaissance Wing under an Air Force-Navy-Marine exchange program.

When they got their Mig, the rest of the crews in their flight all were Air Force men. Joining in effort back at Udorn was the crew chief for the plane, AF Sgt. Alvin Stephens.

Richard said he and Ettel engaged two Migs and chased off the flight leader. "The Mig's wingman broke away and we broke after him. We fired a missile which guided and impacted just in front of his vertical fin," Richard said.

It was the 430th combat mis-

sion for the second SEA tour first Mig. Ette SEA tour and combat mission

"What impressive close flight it maintained this tire engagemer

"Everyone w should have b where my Air should be and there — and th

This was th killing of the Marine pilot fl Force backsea Mig-17.

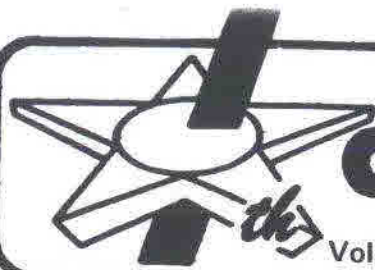
MIG KILL

THE AIR WAR in Vietnam has occurred in dis crews shot down 111 Migs. Then President John north and AF planes did not see Migs again. Th Vietnamese invasion of South Vietnam. Since Febr war, 161 Migs have been downed, 109 by the Air F shot down by Air Force crews. Confusing the statis Marine-Air Force F-4 crew and the downing last 1 Force plane, on a mission with an Air Force flight.

Following are details on the 28 Air Force-downed

DATE	CREW	NO. OF MIGS	TYPE SHOT DOWN
Feb. 21	(Pilot is MIA) Capt. Roger Locher	1	Mig-21
Mar. 1	(Pilot and WSO are MIA)	1	Mig-21
Mar. 30	Capt. Fred Olmsted Capt. Roger R. Volloy	1	Mig-21
Apr. 16	Maj. Dan Cherry Capt. Jeff Feinstein	1	Mig-21
	Capt. Fred Olmsted Capt. Stu Maz	2	Mig-21
	Capt. James Null Capt. Mike Vahue	1	Mig-21
May 8	(Pilot is MIA) Capt. Roger Locher	2	Mig-21
	Maj. Barton D. Crews Capt. Keith W. Jones	1	Mig-19
May 10	(Pilot is MIA) Capt. Roger Locher	3	Mig-21
	Capt. Richard S. Ritchie Capt. Charles D. DeBellevue	1	Mig-21
	Capt. John D. Markle Capt. Stephen D. Eaves	1	Mig-21
May 12	Lt. Col. Wayne T. Frye Lt. James P. Cooney	1	Mig-19
May 23	Capt. James M. Beatty 1st Lt. James M. Sumner	1	Mig-21
	Lt. Col. Lyle L. Beckers Capt. John F. Hume	1	Mig-19

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U.S. \$4,378
\$VN 213,400 = 508
\$4,886

The fund drive continues through July 2.
There is still time to join with thousands
of your buddies in this worthy cause.

Locher rescued after 23 days north of Hanoi

A U.S. Air Force search and rescue task force ventured north of Hanoi early this month to recover an Air Force F-4 crew member who evaded the North Vietnamese for 23 days before he was rescued.

Capt. Roger C. Locher, a 28-year-old weapons system operator with the 432d Tactical Reconnaissance Wing was extremely weak—he lost 15 pounds during his ordeal—but otherwise in good condition. Rescue men acclaimed the captain's presence of mind throughout the evasion and rescue.

Locher and the F-4 Phantom pilot, who is still missing, were shot down May 10 by a MIG-21 firing a heat-seeking missile. Shortly before, Locher had bagged his third MIG. He previously scored MIG hits on Feb. 21 and May 8. When he was shot down the captain was flying his 407th combat mission.

The rescue task force included HH-53 Super Jolly Green Giant helicopters to make the actual pickup, A-1 Sandy propeller-driven fighters to locate the downed airman, suppress ground fire and lead in the helicopters, HC-130 King command aircraft which also refueled the helicopters on the long journey, and F-4 Phantom and F-105 Thunderchief jet fighters to protect the slower-moving aircraft.

The task force encountered heavy ground fire on its way to and from the captain's mountainside perch.

Describing his downing, Locher said, "We immediately went out of control, flopping from side to side. Then fire started coming in the back of the cockpit. It seared my canopy with bubbles and I couldn't see out anymore. The airplane slowed down and we went into a flat spin.

"I told the pilot, 'I think I'm going to have to get out. It's starting to burn pretty bad back here.'

"I yanked for what seemed like an eternity

on my primary ejection. The next thing I heard was a big blast. When I opened my eyes, I was in my parachute and just about then I could see the airplane hit the ground right below.

"I looked around and was going into a kind of deep-dished valley. I aimed for a steep mountainside and came down through the trees. My heels were on the ground so all I had to do was unbuckle and get out. I just sat down for a minute and listened."

During the next 23 days he subsisted on fruit, nuts and berries. He was very successful in locating water.

"One day I eyed a banana tree all day. It didn't have any bananas on it, but I remembered I could get water out of it. Just before evening I stuck a hole in it and got myself three pints of good banana water."

On another day, he reported, "I went through somebody's garden and stole some chives. They had some pretty good chives there."

The captain changed his position in search of good cover, food and water. He shifted approximately 15 miles during his 23-day ordeal.

"In this one clearing there was a hootch and behind it was a pretty steep little mountain, so I just clambered right up their garden and halfway up their mountain, quite near the top. That's where I stayed the last two days."

Although he had made attempts, the captain had been unable to make radio contact with U.S. aircraft.

"I could hear them bombing and hear the enemy shooting back, so I figured when they stopped shooting that meant they were heading home. I also meant they could listen for people and I could get on the radio.

"I did this yesterday and two flights came up to answer me. That was the first time I made radio contact." (Continued on page 8)

By SSgt. Tom Merchant



U.S. Air Force Photo by Sgt. Charlie R. Stutts

Captain Locher is greeted by Gen. John W. Vogt, commander of Seventh Air Force, after the weapons systems officer was rescued from North Vietnam. He was shot down May 10 and survived 23 days in North Vietnam before being rescued on June 2.

By John L. Frisbee, Contributing Editor

A Good Thought to Sleep On

The rescue of Roger Locker did more than set a couple of Vietnam War records.

ON May 8, 1972, President Nixon authorized the mining of Haiphong and other North Vietnam ports, together with regular and frequent air strikes north of the twentieth parallel. Operation Linebacker was on.

Two days later, the US Air Force launched 120 aircraft against targets in and around Hanoi. Oyster Flight, four F-4s from the 555th Tactical Fighter Squadron flying MiG-CAP, was led by Maj. Bob Lodge, an outstanding young combat leader. He and his backseater, Capt. Roger Locker, were veterans of the air war, both with previous tours in southeast Asia. Also in Oyster Flight were Capt. Richard S. "Steve" Ritchie and Chuck DeBellevue, who were to become the Air Force's only F-4 "ace" team with five victories.

As Oyster Flight neared the Red River at a point about seventy-five miles northwest of Hanoi, they were alerted to the approach of MiGs. In the ensuing battle, Lodge and Locker shot down a MiG-21 and were positioning themselves to fire on another when they were hammered by 30-mm shells from two MiG-19s. The F-4's hydraulic system was knocked out, making the aircraft uncontrollable. A fire in the rear of the fuselage forced Captain Locker to punch out while the plane was inverted. Major Lodge did not eject. Since no one in the vicinity saw parachutes, it was assumed that both men had perished.

Captain Locker had, in fact, landed in trees near a MiG base at Yen Bai, north of the Red River, shaken but uninjured. He could not retrieve his parachute, which was caught in the trees, or his survival pack. After a brief radio call, he sought to put distance between himself and the parachute, which inevitably would attract a search party. (His radio signal was received by friendly aircraft, but, since there was no voice transmission, the signal probably was thought to be

sent by a North Vietnamese using a captured radio.)

Within minutes, Captain Locker heard sounds of a search party. Taking cover in a brush pile, he took stock of his situation. It wasn't encouraging. He had the contents of his survival vest, including two pints of water and a couple of snacks. Rescue so deep in enemy territory—some 350 miles north of the DMZ—was unlikely.

His best chance of rescue was to cross the heavily cultivated Red River Valley, swim the river, and work his way to the sparsely inhabited mountains about ninety miles to the west. The river lay several miles away through forested, hilly terrain. He would travel only at first light and at dusk, living off the land.

The enemy's search resumed the next morning. At one point, searchers came within thirty feet of Captain Locker's hiding place. On the third day, there were no sounds of a search party, and Locker could move some-

what more freely, but living off land proved to be a greater problem than he had anticipated. It was early in the season for ripened fruits, or berries. He ate what he could find, gradually weakening as the days passed. Water was no problem. There were plenty of small streams. There were also plenty of mosquitoes and drenching rains as he inched along less than a mile a day.

Captain Locker frequently tried radio contact, with no success. Then on June 1, three weeks after he was shot down, as he was contemplating leaving the forest for a dicey venture into the valley, a flight of F-4s passed directly over him on their way home from a strike and, he hoped, with radio frequencies open.

Locker's call was picked up. Within hours, a small search-and-rescue (SAR) force was on its way from Nakhon Phanom, Thailand. After A-1 Sandys were satisfied that they were talking to Locker, an HH-53 Super Jolly helicopter, flown by Capt. Dale Stovall, started in for the pickup, but the SAR force was driven off by missiles and MiGs. Maybe rescue was not possible so far north of the DMZ after all.

Seventh Air Force thought otherwise. On June 2, another SAR force, supported by fighters, bombers, Wild Weasels, tankers, and ECM aircraft numbering more than 100 in all, fought its way in. Captain Stovall's HH-53 picked up Roger Locker and returned him to Ubon RTAFB.

It had been a record-setting show. Captain Locker had eluded capture in enemy territory for twenty-three days, setting a record for successful evasion in the Vietnam War. Capt. Stovall had twice flown his rescue helicopter further into North Vietnam than had been done before, earning him the Air Force Cross. All the principals emerged as heroes, but there was more to the story. Combat crews would be flying Linebacker strikes north of the Red River now knew that eluding capture in that inhospitable land and rescue from Hanoi's backyard were indeed possible. That was a good thought to sleep on.



Over his "Triple Nickel" cap, a haggard but happy Captain Locker dons that of the SAR unit that rescued him after twenty-three days in Hanoi's backyard.

...New commander

During his tour as MAC commander since August 1969, General Catton introduced the C-5 Galaxy into the Air Force strategic airlift inventory.

General Catton's command is charged with the operation of the global military airlift system plus aerospace rescue, air weather, photo audio-visual and aeromedical evacuation systems throughout the world.

General Simler assumed command of ATC in September 1970 and was charged with the mission of selecting and training American men and women for the Air Force in military, technical, and flying skills.

General Simler is a native of Johnstown, Pa., and a graduate of the University of Maryland. He was commissioned in August 1942 and served two combat tours in the European Theater of Operations during World War II. He was shot down in July 1944 and evaded capture and was successful in making his way back to the Allied lines in September 1944.

He is a command pilot and had served as vice commander, USAFE, prior to his ATC assignment.

General McBride served as MAC Chief of Staff under General Catton and was appointed to the USAFE position last September.

Missing man formation tribute to crew

TAN SON NHUT AB, RVN—When Maj. Gary L. Gamble recently returned from what was to be his last mission in Southeast Asia, he led his crew in a tribute to members of his squadron who would not be returning home.

Traditionally, a 40th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron pilot's last flight in SEA ends with a ceremony consisting of an extra pass over the field and a splashing with a bucket of cold water when he steps from his aircraft.

But Major Gamble wanted to express the feeling of his squadron for those who will never return home. He requested permission for three HH-53 Super Jolly Green Giants on his mission to fly a brief "missing man" formation as a tribute to a crew that perished in March.

The crew, flying an HH-53 of the 40th ARRSq, was downed by hostile action during a rescue operation in enemy territory.

The 40th ARRSq is well known for flying Super Jolly Green Giants. Their record of saving lives of downed flyers has earned them great respect in the Air Force.

The pride within the unit and the feeling among its members made the brief and simple ceremony very meaningful. In fact, it was so meaningful that Major Gamble voluntarily extended his assignment for three months.

Flyer rescued after 23 days in North Vietnam

UDORN RTAFB, Thailand — An Air Force search and rescue task force ventured north of Hanoi to recover an Air Force F-4 crew member who evaded the North Vietnamese for 23 days before he was rescued.

Capt. Roger C. Locher, a weapons system operator with the 432nd Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, was extremely weak—he lost 15 pounds during his ordeal—but otherwise in good condition. Captain Locher and the F-4 Phantom pilot, who is still missing, were shot down by a MIG-21 firing a heat-seeking missile. Shortly before, Captain Locher had bagged his third MIG; he had previously scored MIG hits on Feb. 21 and May 8. When he was shot down the captain was flying his 407th combat mission.

The rescue task force included HH-53 Super Jolly Green Giants, A-1 Sandys, HC-130 King Command aircraft which also refueled the helicopters on the long journey, and F-4 Phantom and F-105 Thunderchief jet fighters to protect the slower-moving aircraft.

The task force encountered heavy ground fire on its way to and from the captain's mountainside perch.

During the next 23 days he subsisted on fruit, nuts and berries. He was very successful in locating water.

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Although he had made attempts, the captain had been unable to make radio contact with U.S. aircraft.

"I could hear them bombing and hear the enemy shooting back, so I figured when they stopped shooting that meant they were heading home. It also meant they could listen for people and I could get on the radio."

"I did this yesterday and two flights came up to answer me. That was the first time I made radio contact."

The contact triggered the search and rescue penetration deep into North Vietnam. The rescue forces were driven off by MIGs on their first attempt.

The next day, the task force headed north again, led in by the Sandys of the 56th Special Operations Wing. Heavy ground fire failed to dissuade the rescue aircraft as they continued north.

When they approached Captain Locher's position, the Sandys made a pass over him, circled the mountain, made another pass and then led in a Super Jolly Green Giant, commanded by Capt. Dale E. Stovall.

As the 40th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron helicopter moved in,

automatic weapon fire erupted from a nearby hootch. Sgt. Charles B. McQuid and A1C Kenneth W. Cakebread, parascramen on the HH-53, silenced the ground fire with their miniguns.

The flight engineer, Sgt. James F. Walsh, lowered the jungle penetrator to Captain Locher, who mounted it on his own power.

"It sure is a good feeling to get that penetrator, strap it on, give a thumbs-up, and hang on."

To evade further ground fire, the helicopter lifted to the top of the mountain as the captain was being hoisted in. Captain Locher was swung onboard and the rescue force headed home.

The trip home was no downhill glide. Every village was a source of ground fire. Trucks, even a train, opened fire on the task force, but the A-1 Sandys returned the fire, not only protecting the helicopters but destroying one locomotive, several railroad cars and trucks.

Other crewmembers on the HH-53 making the pickup were Capt. John H. Gillespie, copilot, and TSgt. Bobbie L. Welborne, combat photographer.

Upon return here, Captain Locher was greeted by Gen. John W. Vogt, commander of Seventh Air Force, who was here on a staff visit.

Captain Locher said, "Those Jolly Greens and Sandys are just great. They did a wonderful job in getting me out of there. I can't thank them enough."

...Team places second

changing ideas and techniques for search and rescue operations, the competition has evolved into a test of team skills in navigation, scramble and precision winning events.

The Alpha crew from Det. 4, 40th ARRWg, Ramstein AB, Germany, included: Captains Leonard and John C. Smith, TSgt. Leroy W. King and SSgt. William G. Wilson.

The Bravo crew from Det. 5, 40th ARRWg, Hahn AB, Germany, included: Maj. William D. McColl, Capt. John W. Christianson, and Staff Sergeants Robert T. Anderson and Carl M. Miller.

Ground crew members included Staff Sergeants Carlos L. Joiner and Donald C. Blair, and Sgt. Gary W. Wasner.

The teams participating were: Royal Belgian Air Force; Royal Danish Navy and Air Force; French Navy; Federal German Navy and Air Force; Royal Netherlands Navy and Air Force; Italian Air Force; and Britain's Royal Air Force.

1972 (cont)

- 1 May 72 Evacuation of Quang Tri. The 3d ARR Group evacuated 132 persons from the citadel in the besieged city of Quang Tri to Da Nang, Vietnam. Five HH-53s of the 37th ARR Squadron were used for this mission. No one was injured, despite the nearby presence of enemy forces. Staff Sergeant Robert L. LaPointe, a pararescue-man in the first HH-53, silenced enemy snipers with a mini-gun. When the plane landed, Sergeant LaPointe organized the evacuees and maintained ground control until the second HH-53 departed.
- 11 May 72 General John D. Ryan, USAF Chief of Staff, directed that the mission of ARRS be primarily oriented toward combat rescue operations.
- 1 Jun-
2 Jun 72 The 3d ARR Group, augmented by A-1s and other forces, rescued Captain Roger C. Locher, who had lost his F-4 over North Vietnam on 10 May and had evaded capture for 23 days. Captain Dale E. Stovall, 40th ARR Squadron, and his HH-53 crew successfully evacuated Captain Locher on 2 June. New electronic locator finder (ELF) equipment aided in the success of this operation.
- 27 Jun 72 Captain Stovall, 40th ARR Squadron, again flew deep into North Vietnam to rescue two downed airmen. After another HH-53 was forced to withdraw from the rescue site due to enemy fire, Captain Stovall's crew descended and retrieved the two survivors. The second HH-53 received more than 16 hits during the engagement, and several personnel aboard both HH-53s were wounded. Later, Captain Dale E. Stovall and Staff Sergeant Charles D. McGrath (pararescueman) were awarded the Air Force Cross.
- 6 Oct 72 General John D. Ryan, USAF Chief of Staff, ordered a sizeable reduction in the number of ARRS local base rescue elements and detachments during Fiscal Year 1973.
- Oct-
Nov 72 The 71st ARR Squadron joined with elements of other agencies in the search for House Majority Leader Hale Boggs, Congressman Nick Begich, and two other men, who disappeared in Alaska during a flight between Anchorage and Juneau. Despite a 40-day search, no trace was found.
- 2 Dec-
3 Dec 72 Three HC-130s and two HH-3s from the 31st ARR Squadron hoisted 29 Philippine sailors and one pet orangutan from lifeboats after their logging ship, the *San Martin*, sank about 500 miles east northeast from the Island of Luzon. Twenty-nine plus saves.
- 21 Dec 72 The 40th ARR Squadron performed its first night combat recovery in Southeast Asia by an HH-53 using a new Night Recovery System.

MILITARY AIRLIFT COMMAND NOMINEE

FOR

THE KITTY HAWK MEMORIAL AWARD

CAPTAIN DALE E. STOVALL

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Captain Dale E. Stovall is a 29-year old native of Toppenish, Washington. He graduated and received his commission from the United States Air Force Academy in 1967. While at the Academy, Captain Stovall served on the Cadet Group Staff and made the Superintendent's list for academic and military excellence. He was a 3-year Letterman in track, qualifying for the 1966 All-American Indoor Track Team.

Upon completion of pilot training in 1968, Captain Stovall flew the C-141 Starlifter for the Military Airlift Command. In 1970, he transitioned to the HH-53C "Super Jolly Green Giant" helicopter and was assigned to Patrick AFB, Florida, where he flew on the Launch Site Recovery Team for Apollo 14 and Apollo 15 space flights. In January of 1972, Captain Stovall was assigned to the 40th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, Nakhon Phanom AFB, Thailand, as a Rescue helicopter pilot.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Captain Dale Stovall compiled one of the finest combat records in Southeast Asia as an aircraft commander of an HH-53C "Super Jolly Green Giant" Rescue helicopter. His decorations include the Air Force Cross (the nation's second highest decoration), two Silver Stars, and two Distinguished Flying Crosses. He made 12 combat saves of downed airmen during his year tour, one of the highest individual saves totaled by one pilot. Captain Stovall flew on 18 actual combat rescue missions, including five into North Vietnam, and led two of the deepest penetrations into North Vietnam, north of Hanoi, ever attempted by a rescue crew. Two missions in particular, for which he was awarded the Air Force Cross and the Silver Star, highlight the bravery and determination of Captain Stovall in rescuing downed airmen from certain capture or death.

On the first of June 1972, Captain Stovall was flying the lead helicopter on a precautionary rescue orbit in northern Laos when he received word that an American airman, Captain Rodger Locher, had radioed from deep in North Vietnam that he had been on the ground since the tenth of May, 22 days before, when he was shot down by a MIG aircraft. Although the rescue force felt that it was a ploy to lure the slow moving helicopters into a trap, they elected to proceed into North Vietnam. After flying 110 miles into North Vietnam, the rescue force of two helicopters and two A-1H Sandy aircraft stopped at the edge of the famed

Red River, just eight miles from North Vietnam's Yen Bai Airfield that based over 70 MIGs. At that time, the enemy reacted with numerous surface-to-air missiles (SAMs), antiaircraft and small arms fire. Because of the enemy reaction and confusing directions given by Captain Locher, the rescue force was unable to locate Captain Locher. During 45 minutes of searching, the two "Jolly Green Giant" helicopters were twice attacked by a MIG-21 jet fighter, but the rescue force only terminated the search efforts when they had reached critically low fuel level.

The following day, Captain Stovall lead an all-volunteer mission back into North Vietnam on a second attempt. This time the rescue force of two "Jolly Green Giant" helicopters and four A-1H Sky Raiders was supported by dozens of other aircraft. After reaching the Red River Valley, the rescue force again was subjected to violent enemy reaction, but after locating the downed airman, they elected to continue and press deeper into North Vietnam across the Red River Valley. This placed the MIG airfield between themselves and safety. The rescue force had proceeded 130 miles into North Vietnam, just 30 miles north of Hanoi. Just prior to crossing the Red River Valley, the rescue force learned that their fighter protection against MIG aircraft had to leave because of low fuel. At this point, Captain Stovall, the aircraft commander in the helicopter that was to attempt the pick up, had the choice to continue or turn back. He immediately radioed that he would not turn back without the survivor.

Although the rescue force was still suspicious that they might be entering an enemy trap, Captain Stovall faced the task of hovering the big helicopter perfectly still while the downed airman was hoisted aboard. After spotting Captain Locher's signal smoke, Captain Stovall expertly flew his helicopter into a hover over the survivor, as he had previously done for nine other downed airmen in hostile areas. A stream of rifle fire erupted from a nearby village toward the motionless helicopter. Captain Stovall continued to hold his hover and give directions to the A-1H Sky Raiders to strike the enemy gun positions while his own helicopter crewmen returned the fire.

Following the successful pick up, a MIG-17 jet fighter attacked the rescue force as they were crossing the Red River Valley. They were able to evade it as well as the antiaircraft guns that were directed at the low flying rescue force. After 3 hours and 45 minutes in North Vietnam, Captain Stovall and his force reached the relative safety of northern Laos, completing one of the epic rescues of the Vietnam conflict. Captain Rodger Locher had evaded capture for 23 days, and his rescue was the second deepest penetration into North Vietnam by a rescue helicopter.

SYSTEM: 01 SAR

CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF

THE SILVER STAR

TO

DONALD H. GOODLETT, JR.

Staff Sergeant Donald H. Goodlett, Jr. distinguished himself by gallantry in connection with military operations against an opposing armed force in Southeast Asia on 2 June 1972. On that date, Sergeant Goodlett, a Pararescue Recovery Technician on an HH-53C rescue helicopter, voluntarily penetrated deep into an extremely hostile and heavily defended area of North Vietnam to assist in the recovery of a downed American airman. At great risk to his own life, he willingly exposed himself to hostile ground forces while manning his minigun position. Sergeant Goodlett's superior skill in suppressing the groundfire being directed at his vulnerable aircraft was instrumental in the successful completion of this hazardous rescue. By his gallantry and devotion to duty Sergeant Goodlett has reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

To: "Robert LaPointe", rlapointe
From: "Don Goodlett", INTERNET:dgoodlet@cyberhighway.net
Date: 2/17/99, 7:20 PM
Re: Oyster 01B SAR

Sender: dgoodlet@cyberhighway.net
Received: from pop1.cyberhighway.net (pop1.cyberhighway.net [209.161.0.35])
by hil-img-5.compuserve.com (8.8.6/8.8.6/2.18) with SMTP id XAA14077
for <rlapointe@compuserve.com>; Wed, 17 Feb 1999 23:20:22 -0500 (EST)
Received: (qmail 26033 invoked from network); 17 Feb 1999 21:17:14 -0700
Received: from ts19-42.boi.cyberhighway.net (HELO ngood) (209.161.10.181)
by pop1.cyberhighway.net with SMTP; 17 Feb 1999 21:17:14 -0700
Message-ID: <002701be5af4\$b20a6ba0\$b50aald1@ngood>
From: "Don Goodlett" <dgoodlet@cyberhighway.net>
To: "Robert LaPointe" <rlapointe@compuserve.com>
Subject: Oyster 01B SAR
Date: Wed, 17 Feb 1999 21:09:44 -0700
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: multipart/mixed;
boundary="-----_NextPart_000_0022_01BE5AB9.D9792F40"
X-Priority: 3
X-MSMail-Priority: Normal
X-Mailer: Microsoft Outlook Express 4.72.3110.1
X-MimeOLE: Produced By Microsoft MimeOLE V4.72.3110.3

Bob:

Both crews got Silver Stars. This was first use of ELF location system. Dale Stovall w

Don.

OYSTER 01B SAR

SSDON#1.PDF = ATTACHMENT PARTS

THE AIR FORCE's bold and superbly efficient teams that rescue downed airmen have been working overtime since the North Vietnamese invasion of South Vietnam in March of this year.

During the past four months, almost 200 "saves," many involving deep penetration into North Vietnam, have been made or directed by men of the 3d Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Group (ARRGp), headquartered at Tan Son Nhut Air Base in Saigon. The total of all USAF combat rescues completed in Southeast Asia during the past seven years stands at about 2,600 at this writing.

The 3d ARRGp is responsible for overseeing all USAF rescue and recovery operations in Southeast Asia. Involved is a huge area

totaling some 1,100,000 square miles in four countries and the Gulf of Siam. (The US Navy handles rescue operations in the Gulf of Tonkin and along the shoreline of North Vietnam up to five miles inland.)

The 3d covers its vast territory with a staff of fewer than 700 people and a hardware inventory of about thirty aircraft. The unit operates fixed-wing HC-130P King mission coordinators, which also serve as aerial tankers, plus HH-53 and HH-3 air-refuelable, long-range helicopters. They are known as "Super Jolly Green Giants" and "Jolly Green Giants," respectively.

The 3d Group also operates a large number of short-range HH-43 "Pedro" local rescue helicopters from eight bases in Southeast Asia. The HC-130Ps are based at Korat Royal Thai Air Force Base in Thailand, and the long-

AIR RESCUE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

From a human as well as a political point of view, airpower in Southeast Asia has shown one vulnerability—the downed aviators who fall into the hands of a ruthless enemy who exploits them to serve his own objectives. But an ingenious, elaborate mechanism has been created which, operated by a special breed of dedicated, fearless airmen, keeps bringing survivors back to safety . . .

Right from Hanoi's Own Backyard

range choppers at Da Nang and Tan Son Nhut in South Vietnam, as well as at Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai AFB.

The 3d Group also runs the Joint Rescue Coordination Center at Tan Son Nhut, code-named "Joker," and two subregional coordination centers located at Son Tra AB in South Vietnam and at Udorn Royal Thai AFB, Thailand. These centers plan and execute rescue operations in the areas under their jurisdiction and maintain command and control for each.

Air rescue operations also draw freely on personnel and planes of other USAF units, and the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps. Some of these "outside" forces participate in almost all search and rescue operations (SAR), under USAF direction.

At the outset of a "routine" SAR, an HC-130P King has already been prepositioned and is "orbiting" in the vicinity of combat missions being flown at that time. The SAR starts with report of a bailout, an aircraft down, or a May Day distress call. When any of these events occurs, the mission coordinator aboard the HC-130P King tries for a bearing on the downed flyer or aircraft in distress, or, failing that, to establish the location through aircrews on the scene. Once the approximate location of a downed flyer is established, the coordinator directs the rescue force to the site.

During periods of heavy air combat activity, the rescue force is likely to be airborne, but if not, is quickly launched by the mission coordinator via the "Blue Chip" Tactical Air Control Center at Tan Son Nhut. In addition to the HC-130P mission coordinator, a SAR force usually consists of at least two A-1 Sandy aircraft, aided occasionally by a forward air controller (FAC) and two HH-53s. The Sandys go in first and attempt to establish positive identification. Actual voice contact with the survivor over his survival radio is "considered almost mandatory because there are simply too many beepers [personnel locator beacons] loose around the countryside," an Air Force rescue expert told AIR FORCE Magazine. In several instances, the enemy has used captured beepers to bait traps for the rescue force. While no USAF rescue aircraft have been lost to ground fire due to such tricks, present procedures "more or less dictate" that a survivor be unmistakably identified before the rescue copters go in.

To minimize the danger of detection by the enemy, downed flyers are instructed to use survival radios only intermittently and as sparingly as possible. Current long-term Air Force efforts to improve rescue operations through the application of advanced technology center on more efficient means of locating and identi-

fying survivors and providing them with some degree of mobility.

One innovative way of finding downed flyers quickly is being explored through ASAP (Advanced Survival Avionics Program), which uses a space satellite to establish the survivor's "gross," or approximate location on an essentially instantaneous basis. ASAP is premised on DME (distance measuring) techniques that evaluate the differences in the time it takes a signal from the survivor's radio to reach two points whose locations are known, *i.e.*, the satellite and the mission coordinator aircraft. From this information the system then calculates with reasonable accuracy the survivor's location. Once the SAR force has reached that general area, another system pinpoints the exact location.

Another promising approach to the rescue problem is through a program called Air Escape and Recovery Capability. Several schemes are under investigation and have proved feasible in tests. Common to all is the survivor's ability to be propelled for many miles, perhaps as many as a hundred, from the bailout area to either friendly or less-hostile sites. The bailing-out airman attains this mobility through either a parawing (a cross between a parachute and an aircraft wing) or a rotary wing, either of which works in concert with a rocket booster to furnish power (*for details on development of such a device, see "Jane's Supplement," p. 43*). The systems under investigation are folded when not used and fit into the ejection seat of an F-4 aircraft. They require no modification of the aircraft's cockpit. Yet a third approach, by which the survivor is provided with mobility once he is on the ground, is under preliminary investigation but can be expected to require many more years of research and test before it can become operational.

Major Outside Support

One of the two A-1 Sandys normally assumes command control over a rescue operation once a downed flyer is located and identified. If the Sandys draw enemy ground fire, they attempt to suppress it; when the enemy is too tough for the Sandys to overcome, they call in outside support supplied by Blue Chip—usually F-4s, Navy fighters, A-7s, A-37s, and Army gunships. It is not unusual for forty to fifty combat aircraft to participate in a difficult rescue operation. (In several instances, that number has swelled to more than a hundred to deal with especially intensive ground fire.) And, at times, the supporting force can include MIG CAP (combat air patrol) air-superiority fighters and F-105 "Iron

Hand" (electronic countermeasure) aircraft to combat enemy fighter aircraft.

Rescue operations in South Vietnam also involve friendly ground forces from time to time. In certain instances, when enemy forces were

so close to the downed flyer that conventional munitions couldn't be used without endangering him, the rescue force has dropped conventional riot-control agents.

After enemy fire has been suppressed to a

THE SAGA OF ROGER LOCHER



Capt. Roger C. Locher was rescued from deep within North Vietnam after avoiding capture for twenty-three days.

By
SSgt.
Tom
Merchant,
USAF

A US Air Force search and rescue task force ventured north of Hanoi early this summer to recover an Air Force F-4 crew member who evaded the North Vietnamese for twenty-three days before he was rescued.

Capt. Roger C. Locher, a twenty-eight-year-old weapon system operator with the 432d Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, was extremely weak—he lost fifteen pounds during his ordeal—but otherwise in good condition. Rescue men acclaimed the captain's presence of mind throughout the evasion and rescue.

Locher and the F-4 Phantom pilot, who still is missing, were shot down by a MIG-21 firing a heat-seeking missile. Shortly before, Locher had bagged his third MIG. He previously scored MIG hits on February 21 and May 8. When he was shot down, the captain was flying his 407th combat mission.

The rescue task force included HH-53 Super Jolly Green Giant helicopters to make the actual pickup; A-1 Sandy propeller-driven fighters to locate the downed airman, suppress ground fire, and lead in the helicopters; HC-130 King command aircraft, which also refueled the helicopters on the long journey; and F-4 Phantom and F-105 Thunderchief jet fighters to protect the slower-moving aircraft.

The task force encountered heavy ground fire on its way to and from the captain's mountainside perch.

Describing his downing, Locher said, "We immediately went out of control, flopping from side to side. Then fire started coming in the back of the cockpit. It seared my canopy with bubbles and I couldn't see out anymore. The airplane slowed down and we went into a flat spin.

"I told the pilot, 'I think I'm going to have to get out. It's

starting to burn pretty bad back here.'

"I yanked for what seemed like an eternity on my primary ejection. The next thing I heard was a big blast. When I opened my eyes, I was in my parachute and just about then I could see the airplane hit the ground right below.

"I looked around and was going into a kind of deep-dished valley. I aimed for a steep mountainside and came down through the trees. My heels were on the ground so all I had to do was unbuckle and get out. I just sat down for a minute and listened."

During the next twenty-three days he subsisted on fruit, nuts, and berries. He was very successful in locating water.

"One day I eyed a banana tree all day. It didn't have any bananas on it, but I remembered I could get water out of it. Just before evening I stuck a hole in it and got myself three pints of good banana water."

On another day, he reported, "I went through somebody's garden and stole some chives. They had some pretty good chives there."

The captain constantly changed his position in search of good cover, food, and water. He covered approximately fifteen miles during his twenty-three-day ordeal.

"In this one clearing there was a hootch [hut] and behind it was a pretty steep little mountain, so I just clambered right up their garden and halfway up their mountain, quite near the top. That's where I stayed the last two days."

Although he had made attempts, the captain had been unable to make radio contact with US aircraft.

"I could hear them bombing and hear the enemy shooting back, so I figured when they stopped shooting that meant they were heading home. It also meant they could listen for people and I could get on the radio."

"I did this yesterday and two flights came up to answer me. That was the first time I made radio contact."

The contact triggered the search and rescue penetration deep into North Vietnam. The rescue forces were driven off by MIGs on their first attempt on June 1.

The next day, the task force headed north again, led in by the Sandys of the 56th Special Operations Wing. Heavy ground fire failed to dissuade the rescue aircraft as they continued north. When they approached Locher's position, the Sandys made a pass over him, circled the mountain, made another pass, and then led in a Super Jolly Green Giant, commanded by Capt. Dale E. Stovall.

As the Jolly Green of the 40th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron moved in, automatic weapons fire erupted from a nearby hootch. Sgt. Charles B. McQuid and AIC Kenneth W. Cakebread, pararescue specialists on the HH-53, silenced the ground fire with Miniguns.

The flight engineer, Sgt. James F. Walsh, lowered the jungle penetrator to Locher.

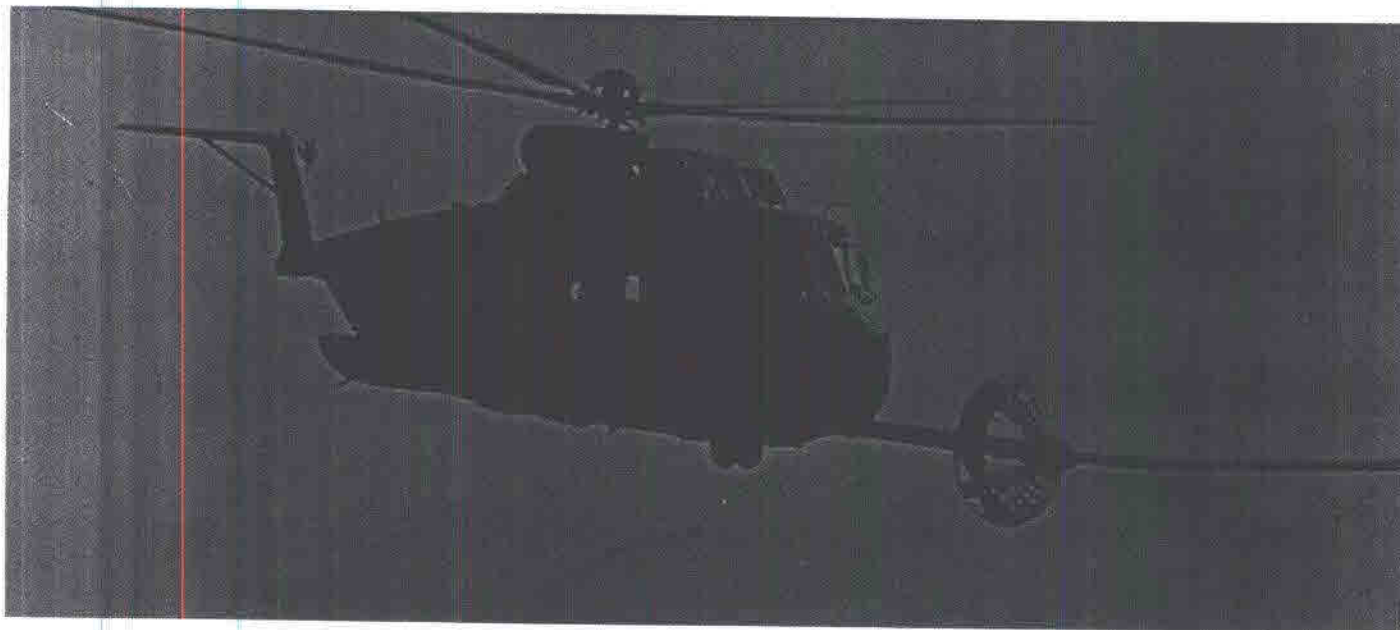
"It sure is a good feeling to get that penetrator, strap it on, give them a thumbs-up, and hang on."

To evade further ground fire, the helicopter lifted to the top of the mountain as the captain was being hoisted in. Locher was swung onboard, and the rescue force headed home.

The trip home was no downhill glide. Every village was a source of ground fire. Trucks and even a train opened fire on the task force, but the A-1 Sandys returned the fire to protect the helicopters, and in the process destroyed one locomotive, several railroad cars, and trucks.

The rescued weapon systems officer said, "Those Jolly Greens and Sandys are just great. They did a wonderful job in getting me out of there. I can't thank them enough."

AIR RESCUE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA



High above the jungles of Vietnam, an HC-130 mission controller/tanker provides fuel to an HH-3 Jolly Green Giant of the 3d Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Group.

reasonable extent, or in cases where the Sandys detect no enemy threat, the HH-53 rescue copters are called in. These are relatively lightly armed, with three 7.62-mm Miniguns, so the A-1s stay handy to provide whatever further support may be needed. (Both the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong have grown familiar with SAR procedures and often stay hidden until the copters descend. Hovering copters, they have found, make easy, highly vulnerable targets.)

The two HH-53s of a standard SAR force work in tandem, with one acting as "low-bird" and the other "high-bird." This arrangement provides backup should the low-flying copter get shot down or otherwise be unable to perform the rescue.

Many rescue operations in SEA take place in dense jungle, with the downed flyer hidden from view by thick foliage of several layers. In this situation, a downed airman will "pop" a smoke marker carried in his survival kit to reveal his precise position.

The low-bird HH-53 then lowers its jungle penetrator, a heavy metallic device shaped like a big arrowhead with three paddle seats

folded into its sides. It is extended on a 250-foot steel cable by a hoist positioned much like an outrigger on the right side of the rescue chopper. Except when a pararescueman rides it down, the penetrator is closed, its weight forcing it through the dense jungle roof. A pararescueman, known as a PJ, descends whenever a downed flyer is injured or otherwise unable to strap himself onto the penetrator.

Nighttime Operations

At present, combat rescue operations are confined to daytime missions involving visual contact. But the 3d ARRGp has pioneered and field-tested techniques for limited night recovery, which are now operational on a limited basis. Known as the PAVE IMP Limited Night Recovery system, it uses a low-light-level TV, infrared sensors, and related equipment installed aboard the Super Jollys. The system, in effect, can see in the dark by augmenting and magnifying the traces of light present at night.

One unit of the 3d Group, the 40th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, located

AIR RESCUE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

at Udorn Royal Thai AFB, currently is the only organization in the world believed to have a night rescue and recovery capability. The 40th Squadron evaluated the system during a ninety-day period while also conducting its normal work load of daytime rescues. The unit developed battle tactics and operational concepts and provided its own systems support for the specially equipped HH-53 copters used in the program. The USAF Chief of Staff had requested that the Military Airlift Command, in charge of all aerospace rescue and recovery units, develop such a system.

Senior officers of the 3d ARRGp point with pride at the extent to which advanced technology has been incorporated into air rescue operations. A problem fundamental to all combat rescue operations is "both obvious and very difficult to solve: We must know where the survivor is with absolute certainty and complete precision; until you know that you just don't dare put any ordnance in," a senior rescue expert told AIR FORCE Magazine.

One obvious way to ascertain the exact whereabouts of a survivor is to have an observer on the scene during bailout, and every effort is made to assign an escort to all aircraft in distress. The rescue coordination centers do this, of course, in cases where no wingman is present to shepherd an aircraft in trouble.

A New Rescue Aircraft?

Staff officers of the 3d ARRGp highly praise the performance of the A-1, the propeller-driven vintage aircraft used in close support. The A-1 Sandy is considered "the best airplane in the inventory for this job," because of its slow speed, high maneuverability, and ability to remain on station for long periods. In addition, it carries a large ordnance payload and can sustain extensive battle damage without impairment of performance.

Despite this high opinion of the A-1, air rescue experts in Southeast Asia believe that, once available, the Air Force's upcoming A-X, designed specifically for close air support, will bring important new muscle to future USAF rescue and recovery operations. The experts also say that the most pressing equipment need, in the light of recent Southeast Asian experience, is for "a small V/STOL [vertical/short takeoff] recovery vehicle capable of going in with a strike force." It should have enough self-protection to be able to function against heavy ground defenses, have a self-contained ECM capability, and be able to pinpoint the location of survivors.

Such a vehicle, rescue people in Vietnam believe, should be able to hover, as well as cruise at between 300 and 350 knots, and be capable of refueling during flight. The latter feature is meant to reduce vulnerability because such an aircraft would not be required to carry substantial quantities of fuel during combat operations.

A high-ranking planner at Headquarters USAF told AIR FORCE Magazine that plans for an advanced V/STOL rescue vehicle, a replacement for the canceled CARA project of the late 1960s, are currently in a preliminary stage and might be incorporated in the FY '74 budget. There is widespread recognition that the HH-53s are both too big and too slow for optimum rescue operations. Similar drawbacks afflict Army, Navy, and Marine Corps copters that participate from time to time in Southeast Asia rescue operations. (SARs operate flexibly, drawing on whatever sources happen to be available at the time.)

In addition to the some 2,600 combat rescues that the Air Force has performed or coordinated in Southeast Asia during the past seven years, about 1,200 noncombat saves were performed by the 3d Group, each of them representing a human life saved. (One frequent "customer" of the 3d Group is Air America, the air logistics operation supplying non-Communist forces in Cambodia from Saigon and other points by small transports under CIA contract. A spokesman of the 3d ARRGp said, "We arrange pickups for them on a routine basis whenever one of their aircraft is reported down.")

In testimony to the rescue effort throughout SEA, a recent award of another Presidential Unit Citation to the 3d ARRGp, already the most highly decorated unit in the Air Force, contained this statement by Gen. John W. Vogt, Commander of PACAF's Seventh Air Force:

"The personnel of the 3d Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Group performed their duties under extremely hazardous conditions and in a manner epitomizing the virtues of duty, honor, and allegiance to country. . . . The extraordinary dedication and heroic determination of the rescue crews, often hovering directly over enemy positions to snatch a pilot from the enemy, has become a legend in Southeast Asia."

Even a casual visit with the officers and men of the 3d ARRGp leads to one definite conclusion: They have made an unstinting commitment to their motto, "That Others May Live."