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DOWNGRADED MISSION NARRATIVE
101 AF 2-275-2
19 FEB 66

Jolly Green 29 and 32 were scrambled from Nakhom Phanom AB on notification of a downed pilot at 0303Z. Both helicopters were airborne at 0309Z and were followed by two Sandy's at 0312Z. Jolly Green 29, low bird, had no operative navigation equipment. The TACAN, ADF, UHF/DF homer, and the Doppler were all inoperative. We proceeded to an orbit point approximately 15 miles north of the downed pilot on a time distance and heading. Both helicopters entered the clouds at approximately 4000 feet. Jolly Green 29 leveled at 9800 feet and 32 climbed to 10,300 feet to maintain altitude separation in the weather.

The two Sandy aircraft proceeded directly to the downed pilots position at low level. At this point information was recieved that the downed pilot, Healey Lead, had a good chute. His wingman, an F-105, Healey Two, reported his exact location as coordinates, 17°34'N 105°41'E, in Migia Pass. Crown 13 established voice contact with the downed pilot at 0330Z and determined that he was in good condition. The Sandy flight was in the area at approximately 0346Z and established voice contact with the downed pilot and established his exact position. Sandy Lead asked for the Jolly Green and advised that there was heavy ground fire south of the pilot's position, but a pickup appeared possible if we stayed north of a main road running through the area. The pilot was 100 yards north of the road.

Jolly Green 29 and 32 started their instrument letdowns through the weather. This was a precarious operation as our exact location was unknown. Terrain in the immediate area was as high as 6300 feet with lower elevations to the west. We descended rapidly until reaching 7000 feet and then slowed our descent to 500 feet per minute on a westerly heading while mointoring the radar altimeter. We broke out VFR at 4800 feet with restricted visibility of approximately 5 miles in haze. Our position was approximate and as our UHF/DF was inoperative we asked Sandy 21 for a steer to his position. After three steers from Sandy aircraft we arrived at a position immediately north of the east-west portion of Migia Pass and immediately north of the downed pilot's position. We were now joined by the second Sandy flight from Udorn.

Sandy Lead was attempting to get an F-105 strike on known ground fire. F-105's were in the area, however, weather conditions prohibited their strike. Jolly Green 29 joined in loose formation with the four ALE's and descended into the pass from the North. Sandy lead asked the downed pilot to mark his position with smoke if he had it. The smoke was observed immediately after entering the pass. I advised the Sandy's that we would be making a high speed low altitude pass over the pilot and requested one Sandy on each wing. We crossed over the pilot at 140 knots and both the Pararescueman and the Helicopter Mechanic saw the pilot. One of the Sandy's observed that we were drawing heavy ground fire from our 6 o'clock position. To establish a firing position to surpress this fire he turned head on into us with approximately 50 feet separation.

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After our initial high speed pass I pulled up sharply to kill off my airspeed and turned 180°, dropped our auxillary fuel tanks, and began our approach to the downed pilot. I informed the Sandy's we were starting our approach and to begin surpressing ground fire. We received ground fire during our approach. The mission was made possible from this point on only by the fantastic firepower of the Sandy aircraft. During our approach to the downed pilot and while stationary in a hover, the Al's maintained a surpressive CAP over us working inside a 3/4 mile radius, continuously directing 20MM and rocket fire into known and suspected enemy position.

We made a fast, steep approach slipping side to side as we descended attempting to relocate the pilot's position in the trees. Lt Guilmartin, my co-pilot, sighted the red smoke which was still floating in the area and began guiding me in on it. Almost simultaneously, SSgt Youngblood sighted the pilot's ejection seat and the pilot himself. From this point, SSgt Youngblood, with the tree penetrator already started down, directed me over the pilot during the last few feet of the approach. We hovered as close to the tree tops as possible, both to avoid the ground fire which was now hitting the aircraft and to reduce the time required to retrieve the pilot. The helicopter was rocked several times from the concussion of rockets fired by the Sandy's. The sound of gunfire was all around us and all crew members felt the helicopter shudder from several hits as we were hovering. Airman Kelsay requested permission to open fire at this point. Upon receiving my permission, he directed short well controlled bursts with his M-16 against three enemy troops he had sighted less than 45 yards from the aircraft. Airman Kelsay emptied two M-16's and was halfway through his third 20 round clip when we pulled off target.

SSgt Youngblood was working extremely fast with the hoist. As soon as SSgt Youngblood advised me that the pilot was on the tree penetrator and coming up we began lifting straight up to minimize time required to clear the pilot of the trees. I asked SSgt Youngblood to advise me when the pilot was clear of the trees. When he did so we immediately started our climb out with the pilot hanging 100 feet below us on the hoist. Ground fire was intense during the take-off. One of the Sandy aircraft made a gunnery pass just under the pilot on the hoist and drew a large number of airbursts from an area 100 meters to the west of the downed pilots position. During the climb out I felt another hit and the Sandy's called heavy anti-aircraft fire behind us. They later stated that the airbursts looked like a cotton field. SSgt Youngblood pulled the pilot in the door and the pickup was complete by 0425Z. The pilot was in good condition with only a small burn on his neck. I continued to climb into the overcast for protection and leveled off at 8000 feet.

Jolly Green 32, who had been orbiting 15 miles to the North gave us an approximate heading back to Nakhom Phanom and climbed to 10,000 feet. Invert Radar gave us radar guidance back to Nakhom Phanom and we landed at 0500Z.

Crown 13 had landed at Nakhom Phanom and we transfered the recovered pilot to the C-130 for return to Udorn AB.

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12 MAY 1970

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The helicopter received five separate hits. One bullet struck a main rotor blade on the leading edge, penetrating the blade spar. One entered the left side of the cabin behind the pararescueman and departed through the right side on a nearly horizontal path. Another bullet entered the aft cabin on a rising path from the left. A large caliber projectile, possibly a 50 caliber, tore a large hole near the tail rotor drive shaft aft of the main transmission. One additional bullet passed vertically through the right sponson.

I cannot adequately express my thanks for the fire power the Sandy aircraft gave on this mission. Sandy 21's direction of the search and subsequent fire suppression activity was accomplished in a highly professional manner.

The downed pilot enhanced his recovery chances by the cool manner in which he conducted himself, by his effective use of his radio and by his timely use of smoke.

My crew knew and performed their jobs to perfection. This mission was an excellent example of a team effort and knowledge of rescue techniques and equipment.

Low Bird

Capt Norman B. Kamhoot, RCC
1/Lt John F. Guilmartin Jr, RCCP
SSgt Theodore M. Youngblood, HM
ALC Leroy W. Kelsay Jr, PJ

High Bird

Capt James C. O'Dell, RCC
Capt Erling R. Drangstveit, RCCP
SSgt William C. Gladish, HM
ALC George E. Hunt, PJ

Pilot Recovered: Robert G. Green,

Norman B. Kamhoot

NORMAN B. KAMHOOT
Captain, USAF
RESCUE CREW COMMANDER

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12 MAY 1970

(Date) 11W AFR 205-2

STAFF AGENCY	ACT	INFO
ARCCO		X
ARCCG		X
ARPDG		X
ARBDG		X
ARMDC		X
ARQAS		X
ARXDC		X
ARCOI		X
ARHIG		X
ARAMS		X

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WHEN LUCK IS WITH YOU

Everybody Feels Fine After Rescue

SAIGON (OI)—"We have just saved a life and I have a great feeling!"

The words were those of A1C LeBoy W. Kelsay Jr., a former school teacher from Summit, N.J., now an Air Force pararescue specialist in Vietnam.

He and three other crew members of the 38th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Sq. had just completed a daring rescue of a downed pilot inside territory heavily-infested by the Viet Cong.

It was rescue mission No. 70 for Kelsay and it was marked with exceptional danger from the

klaxon sounded.

"We knew the pilot was in a valley near a highway and that there were many gun emplacements in the area. Frankly, we felt there was little chance to make the pickup. Nevertheless, we were determined to make the rescue if at all possible," recalls Kelsay.

The rescue crew's chances diminished even further as the flight progressed. A heavy overcast cut their visibility. Their navigational equipment went out a few minutes later.

The radio calls of their fighter pilot escorts gave them moment-

ary reassurance, but then new reports told of heavy ground fire in the pickup area.

When the rescue crew commander thought his destination was near, he brought his huge HH-3C chopper below the cloud layer. To his great relief, the road appeared almost directly below them.

SSgt. Theodore M. Youngblood of Valdosta, Ga., the flight engineer, was first to spot the downed Air Force pilot, about 50 yards from the highway. The pilot was standing at the edge of a narrow stretch of woods beyond which

spread the ever-present rice paddies.

While the helicopter made a turn toward the man on the ground, Youngblood readied the chopper's cable hoist and Kelsay prepared to lower himself to the ground in case the pilot needed help.

Kelsay's first aid equipment was ready.

As the chopper approached the downed flier, the first of many enemy bullets ripped through its cabin. The enemy firing became more intense and the bullets found their target with increasing frequency.

Each time the rescuemen heard the sound of clashing metal, their hearts skipped a beat, but the downed pilot was in sight. They knew that for them the die was cast. They would pick him up or die trying.

Escort fighters made continuing strafing passes over the woods.

Suddenly Kelsay spotted three figures running through the rice paddies toward the woods and the pilot. He reached for an M-16 automatic rifle and fired towards the enemy as they reached the edge of the trees.

While the exchange of fire filled the air, Youngblood raised the hoist with the unharmed pilot dangling at its end.

The moment he climbed aboard, the rescued airman attempted to throw his arms around his saviors. They shared his feelings but there was no time to display them.

Instead, they strapped a parachute on him. The chopper picked up altitude while below the fighter pilots continued to rake the enemy with rockets and cannon fire.

Within a short time the bullet-riddled helicopter landed safely at home base. Another mission was successfully completed—another life saved.

"My job is to save a life—to assist the downed pilot in getting aboard the helicopter and to give him medical aid if he needs it. However, in a situation like this I will do just about anything to save his life—and that includes using a gun," says Kelsay.

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19 FEB 66



THE CREW S/Sgt. Theodore M. Youngblood, First Lt. John F. Guilmartin Jr. and Capt. Norman B. Kamhoot

Air Force Chopper Crew Reels In Downed Pilot Despite Enemy Fire

19 FEB 66

Saigon—An Air Force rescue helicopter crew supported by four A-IE Skyraiders has combined skill and daring to recover an F-105 Thunderchief pilot from enemy territory.

The HH-3C helicopter, piloted by Capt. Norman B. Kamhoot of Forsyth, Mont., took five hits during the rescue.

The entire operation came as a surprise to the chopper crew. Their helicopter's navigational gear had failed during an early morning mission and they were heading home for repairs, when told to make the pickup of the downed F-105 pilot.

The F-105 pilot was down in Viet Cong territory, his plane having been hit by groundfire.

On being advised of the downed pilot's position, 1st Lt. John F. Guilmartin Jr., of San Antonio, Texas, Kamhoot's co-pilot, quickly checked his maps.

"It's going to be tough. He's down in a pass," Guilmartin told Kamhoot. The pass Guilmartin referred to was defended from ridge to floor by automatic weapons and small arms of VC troops.

Overcast weather and a heavy ground haze shielded the pilot's ground position, and enemy troops were combing the area—getting closer to him by the moment.

Kamhoot didn't want to venture into the heavily-defended pass unless he could be certain

the pilot was alive and uncaptured.

Suddenly, Air Force A-IE Skyraider pilots spotted the pilot and established voice contact with him on his survival radio.

The Skyraider pilots were on hand to protect the rescue chopper, as much as possible.

As Kamhoot flew steadily toward rendezvous with the A-IE pilots, Guilmartin determined their position by glimpses of landmarks through openings in the clouds and fog.

S.Stg. Theodore M. Youngblood, Omaha, Neb., flight mechanic, and A.I.C. LeRoy Kelsay of Summit, N.J., para-rescue man, prepared equipment in the rear of the chopper for the pickup.

Kamhoot descended to 4,000 feet, getting beneath the clouds. The Skyraiders, nicknamed "Sandies," were ready and waiting when the HH-3C came out of the base of the clouds.

The Sandies swept down through the pass to check intensity of ground fire while Kamhoot orbited several miles north of the pass. Minutes later the Sandies returned to the rendezvous point.

"Approach from the northeast and go to the pickup area as fast as possible," radioed one of the A-IE pilots.

The HH-3C swung over the lip of the ridge and proceeded

(Continued on page 5)



Help Arrives Quickly

At this moment, the C-54, the "crown ship," has a priority call on whatever other aircraft happens to be in the area—Army helicopters, Air Force fighters, perhaps even a Vietnamese air force fighter-escort. Given the tremendous number of aircraft in the republic (the army has more than 1,500 helicopters alone), there's a good chance the crippled pilot has friends in his neighborhood.

"Actually," says Col. Arthur W. Beall of Orlando, Fla., the commander of the 3rd Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Group at Saigon's Tan Son Nhut Air Base, "a man can hardly bail out anywhere in South Vietnam without a chopper following him down, especially if he can broadcast any kind of warning at all. When a pilot warns us, we'll follow him in."

The Air Force quickly finds and notifies Army or Marine or Vietnamese army units on the ground to watch for and protect the pilot; then the 3rd Aerospace rescue men call in fighters or Army helicopter gunships to stand by in the area.

When, finally, the pilot is down and located, the fighters, usually the propeller-driven A-1 Skyraiders or F-105 jet fighters, are ordered in to clear a rescue area near the pilot; the rescue men euphemistically call this "sanitizing" the area. Usually when they finish, it is, indeed, sanitized.

By this time, the rescue helicopter is standing by to make the pick-up. It then becomes clear why the pick-up area has to be sanitary: The rescue chopper rarely lands for the pick-up, relying instead on an electric winch-operated 250-foot nylon rescue rope.

A Ride Through the Trees

Rescue choppers use a large leather horse-collar for pick-ups at sea; this is similar to the horse-collar device used to pluck astronauts from their ocean landings. But this wouldn't work in the jungle because it gets tangled up in vines or the limbs of trees.

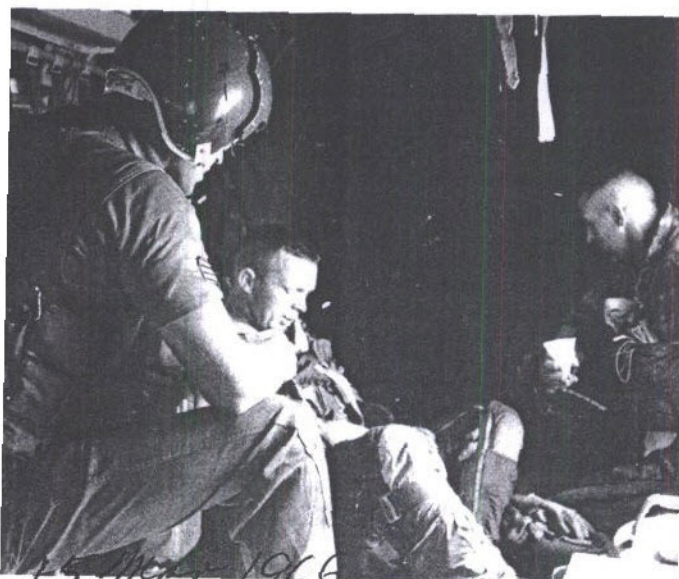
Instead, the the pilot gets the big bird as close to the ground as he can, the co-pilot and the para-rescue man lower a long, bullet-shaped cylinder nose first through the trees. When the downed pilot gets his hands on it, he unfolds a seat from the cylinder, climbs on, and rides up through the trees.

A more exotic piece of rescue equipment may be introduced in Vietnam this summer. The Navy is experimenting with a "skyhook retriever system," a flying body-snatcher that would pluck up pilots at lift-off speeds of 450 miles an hour. It's strikingly similar to the device that rescues James Bond in the final scene of his new movie, *Thunderball*.

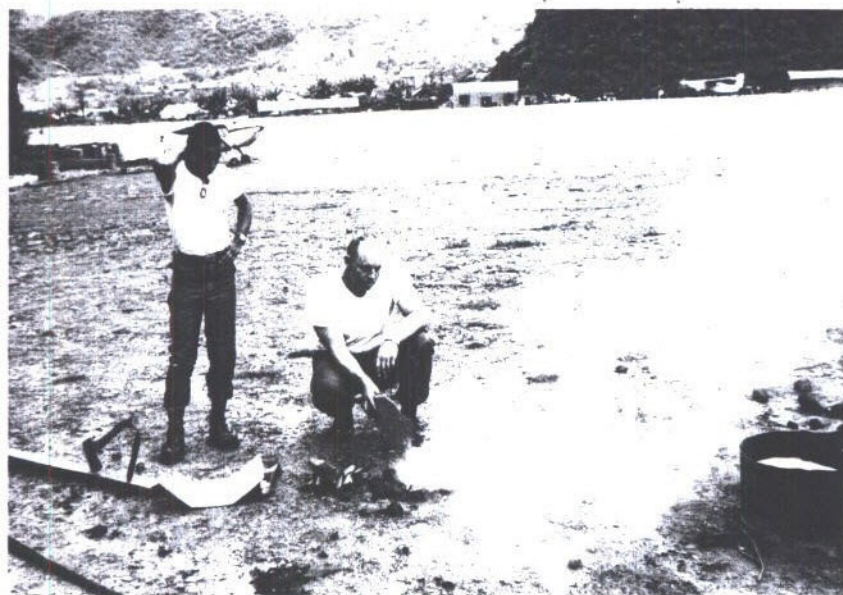
If it works, a rescue plane would drop a kit to a downed pilot; the kit includes a 25-foot plastic balloon, bottles of helium, special harnesses, and a coil of elastic nylon rope. The pilot gets into the harness, attaches the elastic nylon rope to harness and balloon, inflates the balloon with the helium, and waits.

Tests Are Encouraging

Along comes the rescue plane—probably it will be a C-130 with a special V-shaped hook on its nose—and catches the nylon rope just under the balloon. Up comes harness, rope, man, and all. "The tests so far show that the man goes



15 April 1966
Pictures here show actual rescue in North Vietnam. HH-3E (top), flanked by A-1Es, heads for spot where F-4B was downed. F-4B crew is found, and HH-3E hovers while paramedic Dennis Craft (with helmet) attaches hoist to Warrant Officer D.D. Redmond (second from top). Moments later, Maj. Eddie Paige, F-4B commander is lifted. Craft reports on condition of men (second from bottom) while Redmond, wounded, sprawls on HH-3E cab. Then, Paige (bottom) on way home.



THE CREW S/Sgt. Theodore M. Youngblood, First John F. Guilmartin Jr. and Capt. Norman B. Kamhoo

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DET 2-3-13-19 Feb

(U) USAF F-105 pilot on strike mission in Laos was forced to bail out. A good chute was observed by wingman. Heavy ground fire was reported in the area and weather prevented fighter aircraft from striking at the ground positions. HH-3C used forest penetrator to lift pilot out of the area while the HH-3C crew members returned enemy fire using personal M-16's. The helicopter took several hits during the rescue operation and escort aircraft reported that anti-aircraft bursts made the helicopter look as if it was in a cotton field.

DET 2-3-14-20 Feb

(U) USAF F-4C was hit by ground fire while on a gunnery pass in Laos. Wingman saw two good chutes but visual contact on the ground was lost due to darkness. A first light hoist pick-up was made by HH-3C. The men were on the side of a steep slope, so steep that the rotor blade clearance was only two to three feet.

DET 2-3-16-24 Feb

(U) USMC F-4B crew ejected over Laos. SAR aircraft arrived on the scene but could not establish contact with either crew member. After searching for about an hour one crew member was located and recovered. A short time later the second chute was spotted but no pilot. The paramedic was lowered to the ground and located the injured crew member who was lifted with the aid of a stokes litter.

DET 2-3-17-26 Feb

(U) USAF F-105 on a strike mission in Laos was forced down by ground fire. Voice contact was established and HH-3C made a hoist pick-up.

DET 2-3-18-27 Feb

(C) USAF F-105 pilot returning from a bombing mission in North Vietnam was forced to eject from his aircraft near the Thailand border. An HH-3C was dispatched, landed and picked up the uninjured pilot.

DET 2-3-20-1 Mar

(U) False Mission.

DET 2-3-20-1 Mar

(C) USAF F-105 on strike mission in Laos burst into flames. The pilot was recovered by HH-3C helicopter. Later investigation indicated a mid-air collision between the F-105 and a FAC aircraft. No wreckage was ever located and the pilot of the FAC aircraft is reported as missing.

DET 2-3-21-7 Mar

(U) USAF F-105 on strike pass in Laos was forced down. The pilot was recovered by HH-3C and reported in good condition. Rescue aircraft received several hits from ground fire during the operation.

DET 2-3-22-7 Mar

(C) Two USAF RF-101's were forced down in North Vietnam. Aircraft were reported to have exploded in the air and search aircraft were unable to make any visual or electronic contact with the pilots. No chutes were observed and the mission was suspended.

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When the helicopter is positioned, the forest penetrator is lowered to the survivor. If he is injured or in a state of shock, which is often the case, the paramedic is lowered to assist him. The penetrator is designed so that both men can be retrieved simultaneously.

The general assumption is that if a route proved to be safe on approach, it will also be safe for departure. This, however, is not always true. On 19 February 1966, an F-105 pilot was downed in the heavily defended Mu Gia Pass area. The Sandies and the Jolly Green, with the paramedic and flight mechanic firing M-16's from the doorway, had to fight their way in and out of the pass. The RCC had to lift off while the survivor was suspended 100 feet below the aircraft. ^{122/}

If a second survivor is involved in the operation, the low Jolly Green will usually make the pick-up. However, if it is low on fuel because of the high power requirements in the hover, the high helicopter descends for the recovery. The high helicopter also provides an immediate recovery capability if the low helicopter is shot down.

Enroute to the recovery base the survivor is given necessary first aid.

Previous USAF combat SAR operations were conducted in the Korean War. According to Major Baylor Haynes the nature of that war and the equipment then available dictated the tactics significantly different from those used today in Southeast Asia. Because the threat

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SO G-337, 7AF, 28 Apr 66, Capt John B. Riederich, Det 8, 38 ARRSq, Air Medal for meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight on 18 Nov 65.

SO G-141, PACAF, 5 May 66, Capt Norman B. Kamhoot, Det 5, 38 ARRSq, Silver Star for gallantry while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing armed force on 19 Feb 66.

SO G-141, PACAF, 5 May 66, Capt John F. Guilmartin, Jr., Det 5, 38 ARRSq, Silver Star for gallantry while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing armed force on 19 Feb 66.

SO G-141, PACAF, 5 May 66, SSgt Theodore M. Youngblood, Det 5, 38 ARRSq, Silver Star for gallantry while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in armed conflict against an opposing armed force on 19 Feb 66.

SO G-141, PACAF, 5 May 66, A2C Leroy W. Kelsay Jr., Det 5, 38 ARRSq, Silver Star for gallantry while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing armed force on 19 Feb 66.

SO G-436, 7AF, 31 May 66, ALC Thomas C. Story, Det 6, 38 ARRSq, Air Medal for meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight from 28 Jan 66 to 26 Feb 66.

SO G-443, 7AF, 2 Jun 66, TSgt Richard A. Connon, Det 6, 38 ARRSq, Purple Heart for wounds incurred on 13 May 66 as a result of action by a hostile foreign force.

SO G-450, 7AF, 6 Jun 66, Capt Carlton P. Vermeys, Det 9, 38 ARRSq, Air Medal for meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight from 19 Mar 66 to 26 Apr 66.

SO G-453, 7AF, 7 Jun 66, Capt John B. Riederich, Det 8, 38 ARRSq, Air Medal for meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight from 22 Oct 65 to 17 Mar 66.

SO G-470, 7AF, 13 Jun 66, Capt William E. Cowell, Det 7, 38 ARRSq, DFC for heroism while participating in aerial flight from 23 Mar 66 to 24 Mar 66.

SO G-470, 7AF, 13 Jun 66, Capt David C. Henry, Det 7, 38 ARRSq, DFC (1st OLC) for heroism while participating in aerial flight from 23 Mar 66 to 24 Mar 66.

SO G-470, 7AF, 13 Jun 66, SSgt Robert J. Watson, Det 5, 38 ARRSq, DFC for heroism while participating in aerial flight from 23 Mar 66 to 24 Mar 66.

SO G-470, 7AF, 13 Jun 66, ALC Laverne W. Kellerman, Jr., Det 5, 38 ARRSq, DFC for heroism while participating in aerial flight from 23 Mar 66 to 24 Mar 66.

SO G-475, 7AF, 15 Jun 66, TSgt John H. Doering Jr., Det 2, 38 ARRSq, Air Medal for meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight from 7 Oct 65 to 19 Mar 66.

SO G-476, 7AF, 15 Jun 66, Capt John M. High III, 3ARRGp, Air Medal for meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight from 8 Oct 65 to 25 May 66.

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N. Viet Downs Three U.S. Jets

Downed Pilot

(Continued from Page 1)

down the pass with two Sandies up front and two in the rear. Kamhoot accelerated to better than 160 m.p.h., heading in the direction the Sandies had advised.

The Sandies radioed the downed pilot to fire a red flare. Seconds later Youngblood calmly told his helicopter pilot. "I see the flare and I see him". "I did enemy gunners who opened fire on the descending helicopter.

Youngblood radioed directions to his pilot. "Forward, forward, steady, okay."

Ground fire swelled. The Sandies made pass after pass, trying to silence the enemy guns with their own 20mm cannon.

"Their cover was so close", relates Guilmartin, "we worried that shell casings from their guns would hit our rotar blades."

The HH-3C lowered its tree penetrator, a heavy, bullet-nosed projectile attached to 200 feet of cable. When it hit the ground, it unfolded and became a seat. Kamhoot was hovering almost motionless when armor-piercing shells began to rip through his ship's hull.

"We caught one in our blade and one big hit that almost knocked out our drive shaft," he recalls.

The F-105 pilot scrambled out of the woods and jumped onto the projectile seat. Youngblood, the hoist operator, was watching from above.

"He didn't secure himself with the harness belt. He just bear-hugged that cable."

Three black-pajama-clad men emerged from the woods. They ran toward the hovering ship.

Para-rescueman Kelsey thrust two M-16 rifles out the door, over the hoistman's head and fired off three clips. The three men ran back into the trees.

Ground fire was taking its toll on the hovering chopper. "Let's get out of here," Youngblood advised Kamhoot.

The ship rose quickly with the F-105 pilot still grasping the cable 200 feet below. Kamhoot headed straight up the pass while Youngblood reeled in the F-105 pilot.

More fire from the rear was encountered and a Sandy came winging down the pass, flew under the dangling F-105 pilot and silenced the guns.

Youngblood had "fished" his pilot into the chopper now, and more enemy guns opened up as the five U. S. aircraft sped out of the pass.

Capt. Kamhoot is the son of Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Kamhoot of Forsyth. His wife, the former Joanne Bean, and their two children, a boy 5, and a girl 3, make their home in Montana. The Captain expects to be in Vietnam until October.

All Five Crewmen Rescued

Other Bomb Raid 'Closest' to Hanoi Hits Missile Sites

BULLETIN

SAIGON, Monday, April 18 (AP)—U.S. Air Force planes attacked two missile sites only a few miles from Hanoi in two raids Sunday afternoon, a U.S. military spokesman said. It was the closest raid yet to the North Vietnamese capital.

Pilots reported they saw rockets on the launching pads just before they attacked.

No missiles were fired at the U.S. planes, the pilots said.

By THOMAS A. REEDY
Associated Press Staff Writer

SAIGON, April 17 (AP)

—North Vietnamese gunners brought down three U.S. jet attackers today during heavy air strikes around Communist supply centers at Dong Hai and Vinh. All five crewmen aboard the planes were rescued by helicopters.

B-52 saturation bombers from Guam struck below the border, hitting 15 miles from the Buddhist center of Hue. A U. S. spokesman in Saigon said the strike was aimed at a North Vietnamese regiment which is believed to have filtered down recently from North Viet Nam.

WHEN LUCK IS WITH YOU

Capt Kamhoo
St. Guilmarin

picked up Capt Green
19 Feb 66

Everybody Feels Fine After Rescue

SAIGON (OI)—“We have just saved a life and I have a great feeling!”

The words were those of A1C LeBoy W. Kelsay Jr., a former school teacher from Summit, N.J., now an Air Force pararescue specialist in Vietnam.

He and three other crew members of the 38th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Sq. had just completed a daring rescue of a downed pilot inside territory heavily-infested by the Viet Cong.

It was rescue mission No. 70 for Kelsay and it was marked with exceptional danger from the moment the rescue “scramble”

klaxon sounded.

“We knew the pilot was in a valley near a highway and that there were many gun emplacements in the area. Frankly, we felt there was little chance to make the pickup. Nevertheless, we were determined to make the rescue if at all possible,” recalls Kelsay.

The rescue crew's chances diminished even further as the flight progressed. A heavy overcast cut their visibility. Their navigational equipment went out a few minutes later.

The radio calls of their fighter pilot escorts gave them moment-

ary reassurance, but then new reports told of heavy ground fire in the pickup area.

When the rescue crew commander thought his destination was near, he brought his huge HH-3C chopper below the cloud layer. To his great relief, the road appeared almost directly below them.

SSgt. Theodore M. Youngblood of Valdosta, Ga., the flight engineer, was first to spot the downed Air Force pilot, about 50 yards from the highway. The pilot was standing at the edge of a narrow stretch of woods beyond which

spread the ever-present rice paddies.

While the helicopter made a turn toward the man on the ground, Youngblood readied the chopper's cable hoist and Kelsay prepared to lower himself to the ground in case the pilot needed help.

Kelsay's first aid equipment was ready.

As the chopper approached the downed flier, the first of many enemy bullets ripped through its cabin. The enemy firing became more intense and the bullets found their target with increasing frequency.

Each time the rescuemen heard the sound of clashing metal, their hearts skipped a beat, but the downed pilot was in sight. They knew that for them the die was cast. They would pick him up or die trying.

Escort fighters made continuing strafing passes over the woods.

Suddenly Kelsay spotted three figures running through the rice paddies toward the woods and the pilot. He reached for an M-16 automatic rifle and fired towards the enemy as they reached the edge of the trees.

While the exchange of fire filled the air, Youngblood raised the hoist with the unharmed pilot dangling at its end.

The moment he climbed aboard, the rescued airman attempted to throw his arms around his saviors. They shared his feelings but there was no time to display them.

Instead, they strapped a parachute on him. The chopper picked up altitude while below the fighter pilots continued to rake the enemy with rockets and cannon fire.

Within a short time the bullet-riddled helicopter landed safely at home base. Another mission was successfully completed—another life saved.

“My job is to save a life—to assist the downed pilot in getting aboard the helicopter and to give him medical aid if he needs it. However, in a situation like this I will do just about anything to save his life—and that includes using a gun,” says Kelsay.

HH-3E in Battle Dress



... look at HH-3E ...