

1970

Information published below is in most cases raw data excerpted from primary sources. In a few cases it has been refined into a draft story. It is presented here for critical review. Are the facts correct? Are names spelled correctly? Do you have information on missions missing from this rough outline? Do you have a photo or primary source material related to something provided in the outline. E-mail me with information to update this information. Rest assured that your inputs will be seriously considered. I am striving for accuracy above all else.

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In 1970, as the VNAF capability was expanded, the first USAF units were withdrawn. Inside South Vietnam, enemy activity was at a low during the year. Even then, the USAF flew more than 48,000 sorties, flying strike missions against North Vietnamese forces that had infiltrated into South Vietnam. Although the bombing halt continued throughout 1970, the USAF attacked antiaircraft and SAM sites whenever a USAF unarmed reconnaissance plane was fired upon. Although Communist movements down the Ho Chi Minh Trail grew during the year, the U.S. war effort was reduced because authorities in Washington, believing the U.S. objectives in SEA were being achieved, imposed budget limits. This reduced the number of combat missions the USAF could fly. At the beginning of 1970, fresh troops from North Vietnam advanced through northern Laos. The USAF called in B-52s and on February 17th, they were used to bomb targets in northern Laos. The enemy advance was halted by Laotian reinforcements, and for the remainder of the year it was a "seesaw" military campaign.

By April 20, North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troops had seized large areas of the country and the Cambodian Government called for assistance. In response, USAF and VNAF aircraft bombed enemy targets in Cambodia on April 24 and five days later, U.S. and South Vietnamese troops crossed the border and struck the enemy's sanctuaries. They withdrew into South Vietnam by the end of June. The enemy continued his offensive operations within Cambodia, and by year's end, had occupied about one-half of the country.

Beginning in 1970, twin engines OV-10 "Broncos" begin working with SARTAF as FAC's. *Discuss OV-10 capabilities p126-127#7*

7 January 70

40th ARRS was requested to assist the 21st Special Operations Squadron in relocating indigenous personnel and their belongings from LS27845 to LS 108.6 This mission was commonly referred to as the "Pigs and People" mission since the personal belongings included pigs and chickens, a total of 94 flying hours

were logged in support of this mission for the period 7-12 January. Many of these missions were flown in unfavorable weather conditions. The mission was accomplished however and the 40th aircraft moved a total of 1238 people and 85,600 pounds of cargo.

Note 1 – see 40th ARRS unit history for documentation

Note 2 – This may have been the largest number of saves in the history of the Vietnam War. I am uncertain if they are included in the RCC totals. Terry Caffery has photos of this operation. He sent the following email to me:

On your research for 1970 40th ARRS did you find any reference to an evacuation of hundreds Mong or Mei. We evacuated a whole tribe/village with Army from the top of a mountain in Laos with the NVA coming up the mountain. The top of the mountain had a radio post/building which was destroyed by the Sandies after we got the last load. I have pictures. Also the time was prior to Larry Colbert and Terry Wetzell being shot on the in SVN. Larry Colbert was on my crew when we had the 80 to 100 people and pigs on board on three round trips to the site. I don't know the number of HH-53s used or how many days were needed.

9 January 70

Firefly 43, an A-1H downed at 038/11/108. 40th ARRS HH-53C piloted by LtCol Campbell rescued the pilot. PJ went down to get him out of the trees. This was Campbell's first CSAR save.

27 January 70

OV-10, Nail 35 downed at 040/68/108. HH-53 from 40th ARRS, A/C Captain Reader made pickup.

Cookie 02, F-105 downed at 040/68/108. Picked up by HH-53 from 40th ARRS, A/C Captain Brown.

28 January 70

SENIOR MASTER SERGEANT WILLIAM D. PRUETT and MASTER SERGEANT WILLIAM C. SUTTON. Anti-aircraft guns shoot down an F-105 fighter-bomber along the border Between North Vietnam and Laos. It is one of the first aircraft losses since the bombing halt ordered by President Johnson, fifteen months prior. Sergeant's Pruett and Sutton are TDY to an HH-53 unit in Thailand, and are crewmembers on one of the HH-53s launched to effect the recovery of the F-105 crew. The mission is deep in enemy territory; and often the forces penetrate North Vietnamese airspace. This does not go unnoticed by communist ground radar controllers who launch at least one Soviet Mig fighter against the intruders. Although U.S. airborne radar control aircraft are aware of, and broadcast the MIG's presence, little concern is rendered by the overwhelmingly superior American force. The North Vietnamese Air Force is not known for brazen acts of courage. But this is not a typical Mig fighter pilot. Hugging the lowlands and valley of the mountainous region, he skillfully conceals himself in adverse weather and slips through the American protective combat

screen. He launches first one air-to-air missile that misses Pruett's and Sutton's aircraft, then, immediately, another one. It impacts, bringing the huge helicopter down. The six-man crew is lost. This is believed to be the first time a helicopter is brought down by an air-to-air missile during the Vietnam War. *Source = 50 years*
Jolly Green 71 crew was A/C Captain Holly Bell, C/P Captain Leonard Leaser, FE Sgt William Shinn, PJ's SMSgt William Pruett and TSgt William Sutton, Photographer Sgt Gregory Anderson

7 February 70

40th ARRS conducts SAR for Milestone 516 A&B (USN) downed at 110/80/89 on 6 February. First light SAR pickup by JG 71 on 7th. JG 81 was high bird.

16 Feb 70

Det. 9, 38 ARRS relocated from Pleiku to NKP

17 Feb 70

B-52s bomb targets in northern Laos for the first time.

18 February 70

Banyon 03, F-4C, downed at 072/68/108. No contact with Alpha. Bravo established radio contact and was rescued during a last light SAR. 40th ARRS HH-53 Jolly 81 pilots were LtCol Shipman and Thompson.
JG 79 shot up by ground fire and RTB Ch 108. *SAR log*

25 February 70

40th ARRS takes command of Detachment 1. *SAR log*

1 March 70

40th ARRS HH-53 SAR for Charger 411. Navy A-7 downed at 350/57/72. Captain Cody made pickup in JG 81. *SAR log*

5 March 70

Firefly 32 (A-1?) downed at 110/80/89. 40th ARRS HH-53 JG 77 makes pickup. *SAR log*

6 March 70

US military involvement in Laos is publicly acknowledged for the first time in a statement by President Richard M. Nixon.

17 March 70

Samo was awarded the DFC for a mission in which Jules Smith and I recovered Army Major General Loyd B Ramsey on March 17, 1970 near Chu Lai. The mission call sign was Sabre 6. Ramsey may have been the highest ranking officer recovered in Viet Nam.

20 March 70

40th ARRS JG 68 picks up Strike 63 at 071/58/89 *SAR log*

21 March 70

40th ARRS rescues Wolf 06 A&B downed at 082/65/89. *SAR log*

Wetzel & Samo WIA both awarded DFCs & Purple Hearts. Send Samo his mission reports

6 April 70

40th ARRS HH-53 piloted by LtCol Catlin makes a double pickup (Sandy 03 and Raven). Raven was picked up at night using flares for illumination. *SAR log*

7 April 70

First light effort by 40th ARRS for Loreda 02 A&B. Picked up by LtCol Hegewood in JG 77. *SAR log*

9 April 70

40th ARRS HH-53 piloted by LtCol Catlin has mechanical difficulty. Three of crew bail out. Aircraft landed safely.

22 April 70

Cowpoke 18 SAR. Six HH-53's from 37th ARRS work SAR with five saves. *SAR log*

30 April 70

President Nixon in a televised speech to the nation

Good evening my fellow Americans:

Ten days ago, in my report to the Nation on Vietnam, I announced a decision to withdraw an additional 150,000 Americans from Vietnam over the next year. I said then that I was making that decision despite our concern over increased enemy activity in Laos, Cambodia, and in South Vietnam.

At that time, I warned that if I concluded that increased enemy activity in any of these areas endangered lives of Americans remaining in Vietnam, I would not hesitate to take strong and effective measures.

Despite that warning, North Vietnam has increased its military aggression in all these areas, and particularly in Cambodia.

After full consultation with the National Security Council, Ambassador Bunker, General Abrams, and my other advisors, I have concluded that the actions of the enemy in the last 10 days clearly endanger the lives of Americans who are in Vietnam now and would constitute an unacceptable risk to those who will be there after withdrawal of another 150,000.

To protect our men who are in Vietnam and to guarantee the continued success of our withdrawal and Vietnamization programs, I have concluded that the time has come for action.

Tonight, I shall describe the actions of the enemy, the actions I have ordered to deal with that situation, and the reasons for my decision. Cambodia, a small country of 7 million people, has been a neutral nation since the Geneva agreement of 1954 an agreement, incidentally, which was signed by the Government of North Vietnam.

American policy since then has been to scrupulously respect the neutrality of the Cambodian people. We have maintained a skeleton diplomatic mission of fewer than 15 in Cambodia's capital, and that only since last August. For the previous 4 years, from 1965 to 1969, we did not have any diplomatic mission whatever in Cambodia. And for the past 5 years, we have provided no military assistance whatever and no economic assistance to Cambodia.

North Vietnam, however, has not respected that neutrality.

For the past 5 years as indicated on this map that you see here North Vietnam has occupied military sanctuaries all along the Cambodian frontier with South Vietnam. Some of these extend up to 20 miles into Cambodia.... In cooperation with the armed forces of South Vietnam, attacks are being launched this week to clean out major enemy sanctuaries on the Cambodian Vietnam border.

A major responsibility for the ground operations is being assumed by South Vietnamese forces. There is one area, however, immediately above Parrot's Beak, where I have concluded that a combined American and South Vietnamese operation is necessary.

Tonight, American and South Vietnamese units will attack the headquarters for the entire Communist military operation in South Vietnam. This key control center has been occupied by the North Vietnamese and Vietcong for 5 years in blatant violation of Cambodia's neutrality.

This is not an invasion of Cambodia. The areas in which these attacks will be launched are completely occupied and controlled by North Vietnamese forces. Our purpose is not to occupy the areas. Once enemy forces are driven out of these sanctuaries and once their military supplies are destroyed, we will withdraw.

We take this action not for the purpose of expanding the war into Cambodia but for the purpose of ending the war in Vietnam and winning the just peace we all desire. We have made we will continue to make every possible effort to end this war through negotiation at the conference table rather than through more fighting on the battlefield.

The action that I have announced tonight puts the leaders of North Vietnam on notice that we will be patient in working for peace; we will be conciliatory at the conference table, but we will not be humiliated. We will not be defeated. We will not allow American men

by the thousands to be killed by an enemy from privileged sanctuaries.

My fellow Americans, we live in an age of anarchy, both abroad and at home. We see mindless attacks on all the great institutions which have been created by free civilizations in the last 500 years. Even here in the United States, great universities are being systematically destroyed.

If, when the chips are down, the world's most powerful nation, the United States of America, acts like a pitiful, helpless giant, the forces of totalitarianism and anarchy will threaten free nations and free institutions throughout the world.

It is not our power but our will and character that is being tested tonight. I have rejected all political considerations in making this decision.

Whether my party gains in November is nothing compared to the lives of 400,000 brave Americans fighting for our country and for the cause of peace and freedom in Vietnam. Whether I may be a one-term President is insignificant compared to whether by our failure to act in this crisis the United States proves itself to be unworthy to lead the forces of freedom in this critical period in world history. I would rather be a one-term President and do what I believe is right than to be a two-term President at the cost of seeing America become a second rate power and to see this Nation accept the first defeat in its proud 190-year history.

25 May 70

STAFF SERGEANT LUTHER E. DAVIS. Sergeant Luther Davis is assigned to the HH-3E squadron at DaNang AB, RVN. He is on his second combat tour. When an Air Force fighter jet is knocked from the skies by communist forces, he and his crew race the clock and advancing enemy troops to see who arrives at the survivor's position first. When his helicopter pulls into the area for a pickup, it is evident the bad guys are there first. They launch a deadly barrage of ground fire at his approaching helicopter, shredding it to pieces as it crashes into the jungle. Immediately it catches fire. Hands and arms aflame, Luther frees himself of his equipment and prepares to escape the inferno. It is then that he notices the struggling form of his flight engineer engulfed in flames, unable to release his own gunner's belt. Sergeant Davis bounds to his side, grabs the nylon strap that connects the belt to the aircraft and, since his own badly burned hands cannot grasp the knife secured to his web gear, he plunges hands and belt into the flames. Eventually, the belt begins to melt, and Luther is able to pull it in two. He lunges to the crew entrance door with the nearly unconscious man, and together they fall into a heap on the ground. The pilot and copilot stagger forward to pull them away from the blazing mass. Close air support churns up the jungle around them. Eventually, another helicopter makes it in and extracts the badly injured men. All are hospitalized, but Luther's condition is such that he needs definitive bum care. He is swiftly evacuated to a bum facility in Japan where he is placed in intensive care. The diagnosis is grim: he is too severely burned to survive. The

decision is made to transport him to the CONUS where his last moments may be with his family. Sergeant Davis dies en route. *Source = 50 years*

25 May 70

Samo flew F-4 recovery with DFC

20 June 70

40th ARRS rescues Nail 42. A/C Weeks, C/P Sattler, FE Nelson, PJ's Moran & Fisk SAR log

24 June 70

On June 24, 1970, in an effort to limit the President's power to continue the war, the Senate voted to repeal the Tonkin Gulf Resolution. President Nixon signed the legislation. However, he asserted that his conduct of operations in Southeast Asia was based not on the resolution. It was a constitutional exercise of the President's authority, as Commander in Chief of U.S. military forces, to take necessary steps to protect American troops as they were gradually withdrawn under his policy of Vietnamization.

30 June 70

An HH-53, Jolly 54 from the 40th ARRS, Udorn RTAFB, Thailand scrambles to rescue the pilot of an OV-10, Nail 44 that has gone down in Laos. Its crew consists of Leroy C. Schaneberg pilot, John W. Goeglein co-pilot, Marvin E. Bell FE and PJ's MSgt Paul J. Jenkins and SSgt Michael F. Dean. Earlier attempts by a Jolly from the 37th ARRS at DaNang AB, RVN have been unsuccessful. On their second attempt to rescue the survivor, they encounter heavy ground fire from all sides. Attempting to exit the area, their helicopter is badly damaged by enemy fire, inverts and crashes in a fireball. Secondary explosions further destroy the craft and dash any hopes for survivors. Many hours later, Sergeant Jules Smith, aboard an HH-3 from DaNang is able to penetrate the scene by hoist and rescue the downed Nail 44 crewmember. *Source = 50 years*

Wayne Fisk, while a member of the Defense Intelligence Agency at an American Embassy, had access to information pertaining to enemy ground events during the Jenkins-Dean shoot down as well as the search and eventual repatriation of the Jolly 54 crew remains. He relates the following:

"Being the embassy's primary point of contact for all PW/MIA information collected in-country, and in regular contact with key Agency personnel in its Washington PW/MIA office, it was logical that discussions would eventually center upon such personal incidents as Jolly 54. One day in 1993, a contact phones to say a recovery had located Jolly Green 54's crash site, but seasonal monsoons were forthcoming and operations had to be suspended until the following dry season. In early 1994, I receive another call: the site has been excavated and evidence of full crew remains obtained. A short time later, I was made privy to a number of interesting details of the incident, by way of a former North Vietnamese Army officer who had been in the immediate vicinity during the

shoot down and who, in 1991, was willing to tell our personnel his recollections. "He was an NVA POL (petroleum, oil, and lubricants) officer, part of a large Pathet Lao/NVA contingency located where the incident occurred. Obviously, he was a combatant, and at this particular time, very interested in not getting killed as the Sandy's softened up his area precursory to the arrival of Jolly 54. He had already participated in the shoot down of the OV-10 that was Jolly 54's objective. The SAR force knew the area was "hot," hence, the intense preparatory work. He apparently had a ringside seat and watched as Jolly 54 raced into view, straight into the sights of strategically placed 37mms of Company 3, 35th Battalion, Group 559. Immediately, it was brought under lethal fire. Jolly 54 rolled over and crashed in flames just west of Highway 16. The Sandy's tore into the area with a vengeance. Eventually, the Sandy's leave, and in the silence of the aftermath, he is able to approach the fiery, gutted remains of the Jolly. In the confines of the wreckage, he sees the remains of all five crewmen. His time on-scene is short as another wave of American aircraft soon descends and blasts his comrades' entrenched gun positions. In the hours and days that follow, a Pathet Lao radio broadcast boasts of the Jolly kill and of three other U.S. aircraft; the OV-10, and A-7A; and an F-4E. It states almost all personnel have been killed or wounded. This "almost" caveat is accurately reported, as the OV-10 driver was later recovered by 37th ARRS HH-53's.

In the following years, the area continues to suffer the affects of the war and is often visited by indigenous personnel who scavenge metal from the crash site. Then, in December 1991, the NVA officer, apparently in response to communist efforts to locate knowledgeable individuals who possess information about U.S. casualties in SEA, comes forth to offer his assistance. He provides the information which leads to the formation of a March 1993 joint U.S./Lao survey team that locates the crash site. Concurrently, Group 559's account is acquired in the form of a five page, handwritten record summary of U.S. and Allied aircraft claimed to have been shot down during the 1965-75 period. It confirms the downing of a Jolly Green on 30 June 1970. Interestingly enough, it claims to have hosed two Jollies. The document reads: "Two helicopters were hit with 37mm by Company 1, 35th Battalion at 1215 and 1530 hours. Killed: five Americans and eight local soldiers." U.S. archives reveal that, indeed, another Jolly Green was battle damaged on that day: it was Jolly Green 24 from DaNang, which had received ground fire.

In December 1993, the joint U. S./Lao recovery team, previously mentioned, excavates the site. It finds 132 small bone fragments; a dental bridge; enough J-1 parachute canopy releases to comprise five parachutes; and a dog tag. The remains are flown to the recovery team's primary staging area, and then on to Hawaii. There they undergo an extensive identification process, and on 29 March 1995, they are officially released. The men now rest in Arlington National Cemetery. *Fisk info from 50 years. Combine & re-write*

June 70

U.S. troop levels fell from 539,000 in June 1969 to 415,000 in June 1970

26 July 70

Dipper 01 A&B rescued by 37th ARRS.

29 July 70

Hobo 20, A-1, rescued by 37th ARRS.

20 August 70

HH-53's complete trans-Pacific flight and land at DaNang

15 September 1970

Det. 8, 38 ARRS, Cam Ranh Bay, deactivated.

16 Sept 70

39th ARRS Tuy Hoa moves its 11 HC-130P's to Cam Ranh Bay. HH-3E assigned to 37th ARRS rescues an F-100 pilot. This is the last CSAR by an HH-3E assigned to DaNang. The HH-53's conduct all future pickups by the 37th

15 October 70

Det. 11, 38 ARRS, Tuy Hoa, deactivated.

October 1970

3rd ARRGp/CC, Col. Sohle statement about relearning past lessons P44#3

20 November 70

Son Tay Raid. *P103-112#7*

Son Tay POW Camp, North Vietnam. Ten pararescuemen participate in a daring raid to liberate U.S. prisoners-of-war (POWs) from the infamous compound at Son Tay, twenty-three miles west of Hanoi. The men train intensively under extremely classified conditions with Army Special Forces and other Air Force Special Operations personnel at Eglin AFB, Florida, between August and November 1970. The highly dangerous raid is conducted with flawless precision, only no POWs are found. While the mission to free POWs from captivity is a failure, the bold and brazen move causes the North Vietnamese communist regime to close all POW camps, save the "Hanoi Hilton." This action forces crowded living conditions under which the captors can no longer isolate, torture, and murder U.S. servicemen. Aside from actual liberation, the POWs experience previously unconceived freedom, safety, and camaraderie. While brutality continues until POW release in 1973, it is never of previous intensity. Five ARRS crewmembers receive the Air Force Cross, while twenty-three others receive Silver Stars. Pararescue recipients are: Master Sergeant Harold Harvey; Technical Sergeants Bill Lester, Dan Galde, and Larry Wellington; and Staff Sergeants John Eldridge, Wayne Fisk, John Hoberg, Randy McComb, Jim Rocers, and Wally Sowell.

50 years

<https://www.thisdayinaviation.com/tag/jolly-green-giant/>

On November 20-21, 1970, a Joint force composed of USAF Special Operations and rescue personnel and U.S. Army Special Forces, supported by U.S. Navy Carrier Task Force 77, made a daring raid on the Son Tay prison camp located less than 30 miles from Hanoi, North Vietnam. The objective was to rescue as many as 100 U.S. captives thought to be held there. The assault troops, in six ARRS helicopters accompanied by two C130 aircraft, flew 400 miles to Son Tay from bases in Thailand. U.S. Navy pilots made a diversionary raid while 11 6 USAF and Navy aircraft from seven air bases and three aircraft carriers flew refueling, surface-to-air missile suppression, fighter cover, close air support, early warning, communications support and reconnaissance missions. Although no prisoners were found in camp, the raid was a brilliant success in transporting, landing and recovering an assault force of 92 USAF and 56 Army personnel without the loss of a single man.

Although no prisoners were rescued, the raid focused world attention on the plight of the prisoners of war (POWs), raised their morale and resulted in improved living conditions for all U.S. prisoners of the North Vietnamese. The men of the Joint Task Force earned the admiration of their countrymen for risking their lives in an attempt to bring freedom to others.



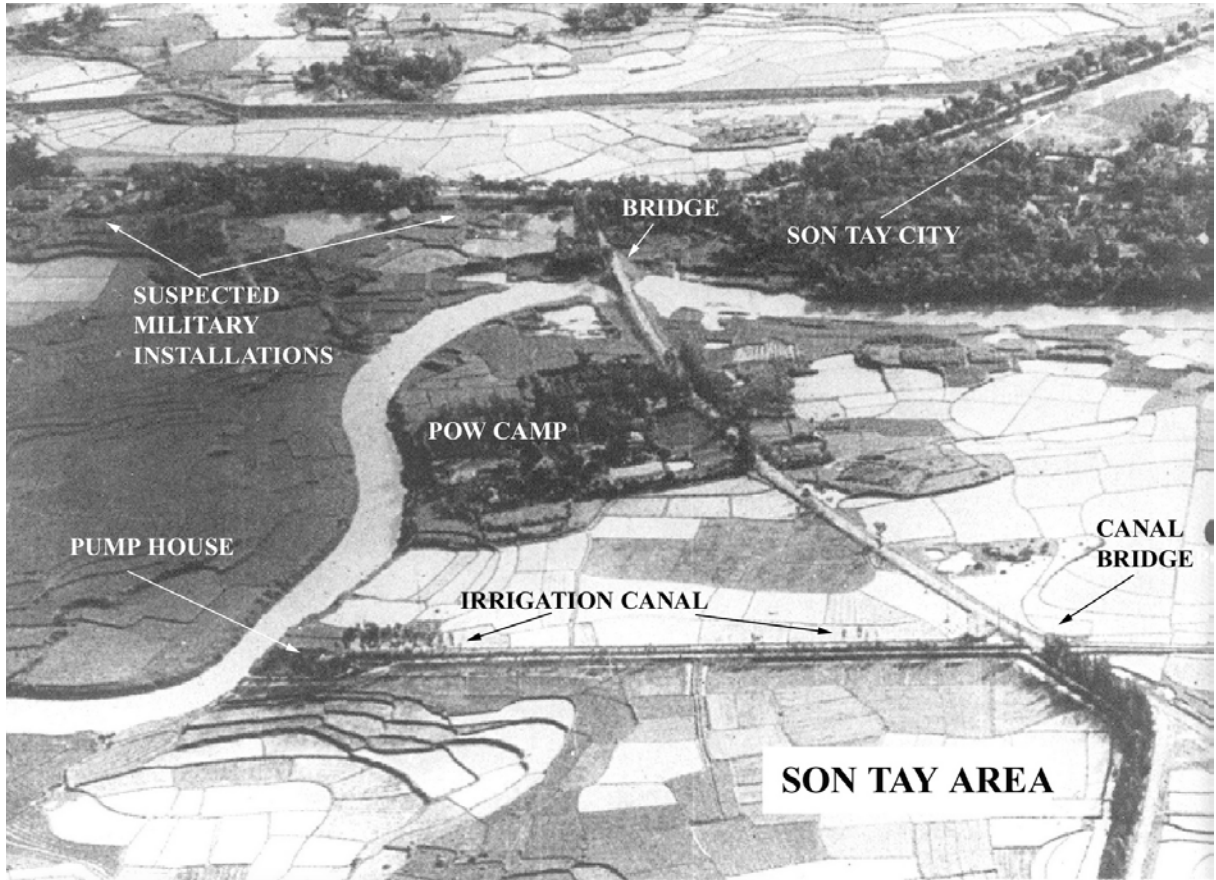
Blueboy assault team in the back of the 37th ARRS HH-3 the night of the Son Tay USAF Photo

21 November 1970: Operation Kingpin was a mission to rescue 61 American prisoners of war at the Sơn Tây Prison Camp, 23 miles (37 kilometers) west of Hanoi, North Vietnam. There were over 12,000 North Vietnamese soldiers stationed within five miles of the prison. The ultra-secret mission was carried out by 56 U.S. Army Special Forces soldiers and 98 airmen aboard 28 aircraft.

Months of intelligence gathering, mission planning and meticulous training preceded the mission. Personnel were selected from more than 500 volunteers. Training was conducted at Duke Field, an auxiliary field at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida. A full-size replica of the prison was constructed and live-fire training was conducted. Aircraft formations

flew day and night, following the precise courses and distances that would be flown during the actual mission.

Originally planned for October, the mission had to be pushed back to November.



Reconnaissance photograph showing the Son Tây prison and surrounding area. (U.S. Air Force)

Two Lockheed C-130E(I) Combat Talons (a special operations variant of the four-engine Hercules transport), call signs CHERRY 01 and CHERRY 02, each lead a formation of aircraft for the raid. The assault group, consisting of a Sikorsky HH-3E Jolly Green Giant, 65-12785, (BANANA 01) and five Sikorsky HH-53B/C Super Jolly Green Giant helicopters (APPLE 01–05) carried the Special Forces team. The second formation was a strike group of five Douglas A-1E Skyraiders (PEACH 01–05) for close air support. The Combat Talons provided navigation and communications for their groups and illumination over the prison.



A C-130E Combat Talon leads the assault group during training at Duke Field, near Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, October–November 1970. (U.S. Air Force)



Soldiers of BLUE BOY element aboard the Sikorsky HH-3E Jolly Green Giant, BANANA 01, at the start of Operation Kingpin. (Son Tay Raiders Association)



Rescue force enroute to Son Tay. (USAF 071120-F-6420S-002)

Because there was insufficient room to land a helicopter within the prison, it was planned to have BANANA 01, flown by Major Herbert D. Kalen and Lieutenant Colonel Herbert R. Zehnder, and carrying a 14-man assault team, BLUEBOY, crash-land inside the perimeter. The Special Forces soldiers were tasked to locate and protect the prisoners and to kill any guards that might interfere. The larger helicopters first fired on the guard towers with their miniguns and then landed their soldiers outside the prison. The A-1 Skyraiders bombed and strafed nearby foot and vehicle bridges to stop reinforcements from making their way to the prison.



Assault Element Blueboy

Once inside the prison, it was quickly discovered that there were no American POWs there. The assault forces then withdrew. The total time from the beginning to the end of the assault was just 26 minutes. One American soldier suffered a gunshot wound to the leg. The crew chief of BANANA 01 broke an ankle when it was hit by a falling fire extinguisher during the crash landing. As expected, BANANA 01 was written off. Between 100–200 North Vietnamese soldiers were killed.



A Sikorsky HH-53B Super Jolly Green Giant, illuminated by the flash of an exploding surface-to-air missile, leaves the Sơn Tây Prison, 21 November 1970. Banana 01, the Sikorsky HH-3E, is visible inside the prison compound. (Air University, United States Air Force)

During the withdrawal from the area, North Vietnam fired more than 36 surface-to-air missiles at the aircraft. None were hit, though one Republic F-105G Wild Weasel, 62-4436, call sign FIREBIRD 05, was damaged by a near miss. This aircraft ran out of fuel just short of its tanker rendezvous and the crew bailed out over Laos. They were rescued by Super Jolly Green Giants APPLE 04 and APPLE 05, after they had been refueled by an HC-130P Combat Shadow, LIME 02.

Although meticulously planned and carried out, the mission failed because the POWs had been moved to another prison camp, closer to Hanoi ("Camp Faith"). Three days after the raid on Sơn Tây, they were again moved, this time to the infamous Hanoi Hilton.

Jolly Green Giant



Sikorsky HH-3E Jolly Green Giant 67-14709 at the National Museum of the United States Air Force, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. This is the same type helicopter as BANANA 01. (U.S. Air Force)

Super Jolly Green Giant



This USAF/Sikorsky MH-53M Pave Low IV, 68-10357, a special operations combat search and rescue helicopter, was APPLE 01 on the Son Tây Raid, 21 November 1970. Flown by LCOL Warner A. Britton and MAJ Alfred C. Montream, it carried the command element for the raid. Built at Stratford, Connecticut, as a HH-53C Super Jolly Green Giant, it was continuously upgraded over its service life, to MH-53E, MH-53J and finally MH-53M. It flew its last mission 28 March 2008 in Iraq. After 38 years of continuous front line service, Three Five Seven was retired to the National Museum of the United States Air Force. (U.S. Air Force)

Combat Talon, Combat Shadow



This Lockheed MC-130E-LM Combat Talon I, serial number 64-0523, was CHERRY 01, leading the assault helicopters during the raid on the Son Tây prison. After 47 years of service and more than 23,500 flight hours, Five-Two-Three made its last flight, 22 June 2012. It is shown in this photograph taking off from its special operations base at Duke Field, near Eglin AFB, Florida, on its final flight. It is on static display at Cannon AFB, New Mexico. LIME 02, HC-130P-130-LM Combat Shadow 65-0991, is also displayed at Cannon. (U.S. Air Force)

Skyraider



This Douglas A-1E Skyraider, 52-132649, was transferred from the U.S. Navy to the U.S. Air Force in 1952. In 1966, it was flown by Major Bernard Fisher when he rescued another pilot, an act of heroism for which Major Fisher was awarded the Medal of Honor. This Skyraider was restored by the National Museum of the United States Air Force and is in its permanent collection at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio. It is the same type aircraft as PEACH 01-05. (U.S. Air Force)

Wild Weasel



Republic F-105G Wild Weasel 63-8320 (converted from an F-105-1-RE Thunderchief) at the National Museum of the United States Air Force. This is the same type aircraft as the F-105G lost on the Son Tây Raid, 21 November 1970.

Consolidate with additional material in Son Tay folder

29 Jan 70

C-123K callsign Bookie 540

Five PJ's assigned to Bien Hoa are credited with saving the lives of two AF Sergeants who survive the crash of, and lie injured for six days near their downed C-123 Provider. Forty-four other people die. When the crash site is finally located, Det 1 37 ARRS PJ's William P. MacDonald, Robert T. Martin, Donald J. Pecoraro, James D. Scott, and Randy L. Zonker are inserted into the site where they administer emergency medical treatment to the two survivors before carrying them down a mountain to a waiting helicopter.

29 Dec 70

The last HH-3E departs from DaNang. It is flown to Japan for reassignment to the rescue unit in Kadena. With it's departure, the HH-53's are the only Jolly's in theater and they now have the ball. The era of the "Nitnoy" is declared over in the 37th ARRS duty log.

In 1970, Sergeant Steve M. Northern was killed in an industrial accident in Los Angeles. In 1968, Sergeant Northern had completed 30 months in SEA and personally recorded a total of 51 combat saves. He received two Silver Stars during his tours of duty.

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