

Pilots' heroism highlights action

Shortly after being inserted into the jungled area east of Lai Khe on August 12, the members of the Air Cav Troop's Aero Rifle Platoon (ARPs) spotted three Viet Cong moving on an open trail. Shots were exchanged and the ARPs went in pursuit of the fleeing enemy.

Up the trail, the 11th ACR troopers started receiving small arms and B40 fire, wounding three ARPs. Supported by two pink teams, they returned fire.

An Air Cav Huey, equipped with a jungle penetrator, came down to pick up the wounded men, but it started receiving enemy fire. Piloted by First Lieutenant Joe E. Clemons and Warrant Officer George M. Madison, the ship continued to hover over the wounded men.

After a Cobra rolled in and temporarily suppressed the enemy fire, First Lieutenant Dan Coombs brought his LOH down between the medevac ship and the enemy fire, drawing the fire away from the rescue ship while his gunner, Specialist 4 Jerry B. Ferrell, laid down suppressive fire. One VC was spotted moving in the open and was killed.

The Lift ship had meanwhile completed the rescue of the three wounded men when another ARP was wounded. A medevac ship was called from Long Binh. As it approached, a LOH spotted and killed another VC.

Throughout the month of August, the Blackhorse Air Cav Troop conducted continuous visual reconnaissance with pink teams in support of the squadrons and provided fire team response to the squadrons and Regional Forces units in the area.

In other activity, 1st Squadron's A Troop worked with the 544th Engineers to make Rome Plow cuts in the Duc Tu District, B Troop conducted population resources control operations, and C Troop assisted the Vietnamese police in an effort to stop the flow of enemy supplies in the Kiem Tan area.

A new Rome Plow, the D9, was used for the first time in Vietnam in the A Troop area. The D9 is considerably larger and more powerful than the older D7 model and can do three times the work.

In combined operations with the 185th RF Company, A and B Troops killed four enemy soldiers, wounded another, and took in a Hoi Chanh.

Another former VC led the RF forces and A Troop to a bunker complex which yielded three AK47's, three RPG launchers, and ammunition.

On another occasion, the same Hoi Chanh, led RF forces, supported by A Troop and D Company, on an assault against an enemy base camp area, killing two VC and taking one prisoner. From July 20 until stand down, 2nd Squadron's E Troop was under the operational control of the 2nd Brigade of the 1st Air Cav, providing security for their Rome Plow operations.

The rest of the squadron, working in the northern area of operations, participated in reconnaissance, cordon and search operations, and in combined operations with Regional Forces. Nine enemy soldiers were killed.

F Troop conducted a number of reconnaissance

missions in the southern and western portions of the AO and also participated in cordon and search operations with the Chau Tanh District Regional Forces.

G Troop provided a two-day blocking force for the Regional Forces in the Tan Uyen District.

H Company tankers provided security for Fire Support Base Victory and conducted operations with Regional Forces and the ARPs in the Heart-Shaped Woods.

On August 4 and 7, the squadron ran two giant cordon and search operations. F Troop, G Troop and H Company and the Aero Rifle Platoon combined efforts with two Regional Forces Companies.

Most of the squadron came in for stand down August 13. E Troop arrived two days later.

On August 13, 3rd Squadron moved into the AO previously worked by 2nd Squadron, setting up Fire Support Base Bandit t 14 miles north of Di An.

The squadron ran a series of Medcaps into the local villages, helped monitor movement in the area and participated in a giant cordon search operation that included all three line troops.

The Bandits are using a team of tracker dogs which comb the AO, searching for VC.

The troopers of 3rd Squadron are also working closely with the Regional Forces units in the area. On one occasion, an estimated enemy squad ran into an ambush set up by the local Vietnamese. Indirect fire support was given by 3rd Squadron and a ready reactionary force was sent out.

Squadron CSM fatally wounded

Second Squadron's Acting Command Sergeant Major Robert L. Bolan was killed and Lieutenant Colonel Richard L. Coffman, the squadron commander, and Private First Class Thomas P. Marchant, a crew chief, were wounded when their helicopter took ground-to-air fire July 24.

Lt. Col. Coffman, who received two AK47 rounds in the left arm, was evacuated to Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington, D.C., July 28.

PFC Marchant was evacuated to Japan for treatment of his leg wound July 30 and was later returned to the states.

According to Specialist 4 Donald Ayscue, a door gunner, the ship was flying to Fire Support Base Victory when Sergeant Major Bolan spotted three men running in the brush below.

The helicopter banked to the left. Sgt. Maj. Bolan moved over next to Lt. Col. Coffman to point out the enemy movement.

"The colonel told us to keep an eye on them as we circled over head," recalls Specialist Ayscue. "Right after that one of them raised his rifle and fired about 15 shots."

After the ship landed at Fire Support Base Victory, the wounded men were taken to the 24th Evacuation Hospital, where the sergeant major was pronounced dead.

Sgt. Maj. Bolan, who leaves a wife and three children, was on his second tour in Vietnam with the 11th ACR. He served in 1966-1967 as operations sergeant for 1st Squadron and returned in August 1969 as operations sergeant for the 2nd Squadron. He became acting command sergeant major in April.

Among his decorations are the Silver Star, the Bronze Star Medal, the Air Medal, and the Army Commendation Medal. He also had awards of the Legion of Merit and the Distinguished

Flying Cross pending.

Memorial services for the sergeant major were held at FSB Victory and at the Regimental Chapel in Di An.



— Find the Bastards — Then Pile On —

Vol. 3, No. 3

BLACKHORSE

September 1970



ACAVs from G Troop, 2nd Squadron, thunder through an open field.

Family reunion

Pruynes get together

On August 2, Warrant Officer Gary A. Pruyn, a Cobra pilot newly assigned to the Air Cav Troop, was sitting in the Officers' Mess when he walked his father, Sergeant First Class Warren D. Pruyn. "I didn't even know he was coming," Gary said. "I just looked up and there he was."

It was their first get together in 16 months — and the first time the senior Pruyn, a 24-year veteran, had seen his son since he finished flight

school and received his warrant.

Sergeant Pruyn had come down from Ban Me Thuot, about 90 miles north of Di An, where he is stationed with the 864th Engineer Battalion. He was able to visit his son for four days before returning to his unit.

The two had a similar reunion in 1966 when both were on their first Vietnam tours.

11th ACR monitors traffic

by Ed Yokum

Recently, Blackhorse armored cavalymen, accustomed to rifling the jungle in search of NVA regulars, have found themselves on an entirely new kind of operation: posted at road junctions with Vietnamese National Police, they pass their days monitoring a steady stream of Lambrettas, oxcarts, bicycles and pedestrians.

"What we are looking for is movement — people carrying unauthorized supplies," explains First Lieutenant William Sartor, a platoon leader with 1st Squadron's B Troop, which has been operating near Bien Hoa.

The purpose of the joint operation: to cut off the enemy's supplies.

By working together, both the troopers and the police are more effective. The troopers provide protection for the police, who act as a bridge between the local Vietnamese and the Americans.

The men on the tracked vehicles stop everyone using the roads they oversee. At this point the police, who are better able to tell if a particular person is an enemy agent or a farmer bringing his crops to market, take over and interrogate the travelers.

If their papers are in order and they have a valid reason for travel, the police let them proceed. When the police suspect something, they make an arrest on the spot.

Commander's column

Patience and care

The month of August should have convinced any doubters that the rainy season is wet and muddy. In another month the monsoon will begin its swing to the northeast and we will slowly begin to enjoy more sunshine. The twice a year change of seasons and the gradualism of those changes contain a message for us.

In Southeast Asia most things change only gradually. This is reflected in the patience and refusal to hurry commonly found here, but found most importantly in the actions of our enemy. Those traits are different from ours which we bring from an environment where rapid change is the accepted norm. However, to be successful in combating our enemy, we must adopt some of his patience.



John L. Gerrity
Colonel, Armor
Commanding

While speed and violence are hallmarks of our Regiment, we cannot act in haste. The enemy knows we are an impatient people, anxious to get the job done; he uses this knowledge to lure us into no-win situations. Each of us must, therefore, take the time necessary to think our actions through and guard against the unexpected. Move with deliberate speed, but do not hurry. Remember, the time it takes to be sure of the situation before you act is much less than is lost to a medevac mission. Deliberate planning and violent executions are traditions of Armored Cavalry.

At every level, let's put emphasis on the "deliberate planning" — the "violent execution" comes naturally.

"Allons"

You can't go back!

by Chaplain (LTC)
Peter J. Hoffman

We all dream about taking the sentimental journey back but we will never make it. Most of us will go home, but home will be new and changed. Now, that's not as bad as it seems. I say that because the memory has way of forgetting unhappy things and remembering happy things. As good as your memories of home are, things could have been better.

We make a mistake then, if we long for and dream of an idealized relationship and experience which never actually existed and probably never will. It would be far better if we used our thinking time to formulate goals for our lives and principles of behavior which would help us reach these goals.

This kind of formulation is not the easiest thing to do because there are so many possible goals for a man to strive for. Without listing values or describing value systems for you, it should be sufficient to say that any sound set of goals should take into consideration the purposes of God and the possibility that he has a job for you to do.

During my time I've met men from all walks of human experience and I have often sensed God's leading in their lives. I have become convinced that God has a plan for every man. Vietnam in one sense is a part of that plan for each of us now, but He has better things ahead. Some of us will find purpose and those better things. Many, on the other hand, will fail. They will fail because they seek some euphoric fantasy that does not and cannot exist.

When you leave Vietnam, don't try to go back, but rather go home, remembering that home is going to be what you will make it.

BLACKHORSE

— Find the Bastards — Then Pile On —

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Captain Neswiacheney goes over plans with district military leaders.

Pigskin to pacification

It's September, but there won't be much time for football for Captain Bohdan "Bud" Neswiacheney this year.

In 1967 Neswiacheney was captain of the West Point football team, but now he is 1st Squadron's liaison officer to Duc Tu District in Bien Hoa Province.

The 1967 team, with Neswiacheney playing defensive end, compiled an 8-2 win-loss record, with victories over such powers as Southern Methodist University, the University of Utah, and the Air Force Academy, and received an invitation

to the Sugar Bowl, which they declined.

The one big heartbreaker of the season, Capt. Neswiacheney remembers, was the 19-14 loss to the Naval Academy. "We were on the way to the winning touchdown when we fumbled on their 13 yard line with just seconds left in the game," he recalls.

He did not bow out of his college career in a losing game, however, as he joined the North team for the annual North-South game in Miami's Orange Bowl Stadium in a 24-0 victory.

Education center

Calling non-high school grads

The Di An Educational Center is making a special effort to contact men without high school diplomas. The appeal is part of the Center's program to make everyone aware of educational opportunities available now and after separation from active duty.

The center has set up a special tutoring program to help individuals prepare for the GED high school equivalency test. A GED certificate is equal to a high school diploma in most states. More than 230 men took the test in August.

To reach as many non-graduates as possible, education officer Captain James B. Porter set up a table in the records processing line of each squadron as it came in for stand down. Men without diplomas were interviewed about their educational plans.

In addition to its program for non-high school graduates, the center offers a variety of other

services.

It offers the CCCT series of tests, which can give a person credit for up to 30 hours of college work, and it administers tests to help individuals identify their vocational talents.

The Center arranges for men to take the College Boards, the Graduate Record Exam, and the Law and Business Boards.

For those interested in starting work now, the center can sign them up for USAFI correspondence courses.

Two courses, one in English and one in Psychology, are currently being taught at Di An. The center is looking for individuals with advanced degrees to teach other college-level courses.

The center's counselling service has information available on Veteran's benefits and special vocational training programs.

Khai's column

You are the foreigner!

by Sergeant First Class
Doan Khai

Remembering a few cultural do's and don'ts while serving in Vietnam can help you avoid some embarrassing situations.

Don't forget that you are the foreigner. Vietnam belongs to the Vietnamese, you are guests and should respect our customs.

Some Vietnamese customs are frequently violated by the Americans, not because you want to, but because of a lack of knowledge. Here are some of them:

Don't call a Vietnamese by waving your hand or your finger with the palm up (the usual American way). This represents to them that you consider them as animals or very low individuals. It also reminds them of the French domination. If you wave your hand, keep the palm of your hand facing down.

When you see two Vietnamese of the same sex holding hands, it is a sign of friendship. Never be seen in public holding hands with a Vietnamese girl as she will get a bad reputation among the Vietnamese people. You will be here for only 12 months, but she must live here!

The head of a Vietnamese is considered very sacred. In each hair is supposed to be a spirit of a dead relative. Knowing this, don't ever touch a Vietnamese head — man, woman, or child — you will be offending their ancestors. If you know a

man very well and want to show your affection, you can slap his shoulder slightly. Never do this to a Vietnamese woman.

Do try to learn some Vietnamese while you are here. A few helpful phrases are:

"Chao ong", (chow om) — a useful phrase which can mean either hello, goodbye, good morning, good afternoon, or good night. Use "ong" (om) when talking to a man, "ba" (bah) for a woman, "Co" (ko) for a girl, and "em" (im) for a child.

"Ong manh gioi khong" (om man yoy kom) — How are you sir?

"Cam on ong" (Kam on om) — Thank you sir.

"Toi han hanh duoc gap ong" (Toy hun han duk gap om) — I'm glad to meet you sir.

"Ong hieu toi duoc khong" (Om hu toy duk kom) — Can you understand me?

"Ong noi tieng anh duoc khong" (om noy ting an duk kom) — Do you speak English?

Holiday this month: September 15, the Vietnamese mid-Autumn festival, a special day for children.

Sergeant First Class Khai has been an interpreter with the Regiment since September 1966, when it arrived in country. He has served with E Troop, the Armed Propaganda Team of the Regimental S-5, and the III Corps Liaison Team Office. He is now working for the Regimental S-5, or civil affairs office, again. Sergeant Khai has been awarded the Bronze Star Medal for valor.

LTC Schweitzer

Vietnam expert new XO

Lieutenant Colonel Robert L. Schweitzer, a veteran of two previous tours and two other TDY trips to Vietnam, is the new Regimental executive officer.

Returning to Vietnam, Lt. Col. Schweitzer believes that the United States is "on the right track with Vietnamization."

During his first tour, which began in July 1964, he served first as senior advisor in Binh Long Province and then as an advisor with the RVNAF General Reserve Units, seeing combat in all four military regions. In addition, he was the Army Ground Operations Staff Officer for the MACV J-3.

Lt. Col. Schweitzer returned to Vietnam on an emergency requisition in June 1966, the day after his graduation as the Honor Graduate from the Command and General Staff College.

He was assigned as deputy commander of the 6th PSYOP Battalion before going to the 1st Infantry Division, where he was commander of a Provisional task force which included at one time seven battalions.

"The task force did essentially what the Regiment is doing now," Lt. Col. Schweitzer recalls. "Created by Lieutenant



LTC Schweitzer

General William DePuy, it was an early Vietnamization project, very much involved with pacification and the attack on the communist infrastructure."

During part of that period, Lt. Col. Schweitzer, who speaks Vietnamese, was also the G-5 or civil affairs officer of the Big Red One.

He comes to the Blackhorse following special assignments from 1967 to 1969 with the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of the Army on Vietnam matters. During the

past year he was graduated from the Army War College.

Since 1967 he has visited college campuses, speaking to dissident student groups about the war in Vietnam and the larger issues of war and peace in the nineteen seventies.

In the spring semester of 1969 he taught International Relations at Georgetown University, where he is now a doctoral candidate in Government.

Married and the father of six children, Lt. Col. Schweitzer has received the Distinguished Service Cross, the Silver Star with two oak leaf clusters, the Legion of Merit, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Soldier's Medal, the Bronze Star Medal with "V" and oak leaf cluster, and the Purple Heart with five oak leaf clusters.

Volunteering for this, his third tour in Vietnam, Lt. Col. Schweitzer was surprised to learn of his assignment to the Blackhorse. "Each time I came over here, I wanted to serve with an Armor unit, hopefully the 11th ACR," he said. "This time I didn't even hope. I was elated to learn that I was being assigned to the 11th Cav. It is without doubt the finest Armor unit in the Army today, and everyone in the United States Armed Forces knows it."

Hoffman chaplain

Lieutenant Colonel Peter J. Hoffman, a chaplain who served two and one-half years as an enlisted man in the mid-1940's, is the new Regimental chaplain.

"I am really pleased to be assigned to the 11th ACR," the new chaplain remarked. "It has a tremendous reputation. When I found out that I would be with the Blackhorse, everyone congratulated me on my good luck."

A 1956 graduate of the Conservative Baptist Seminary, Denver, Colo., Chaplain Hoffman was appointed to the Army Chaplaincy one year later.

Since then he has found that his background as an enlisted man has served him well. "Having enlisted experienced is a great asset for a chaplain," Hoffman explained. "I have found that I am better able to understand the problems of the G.I."

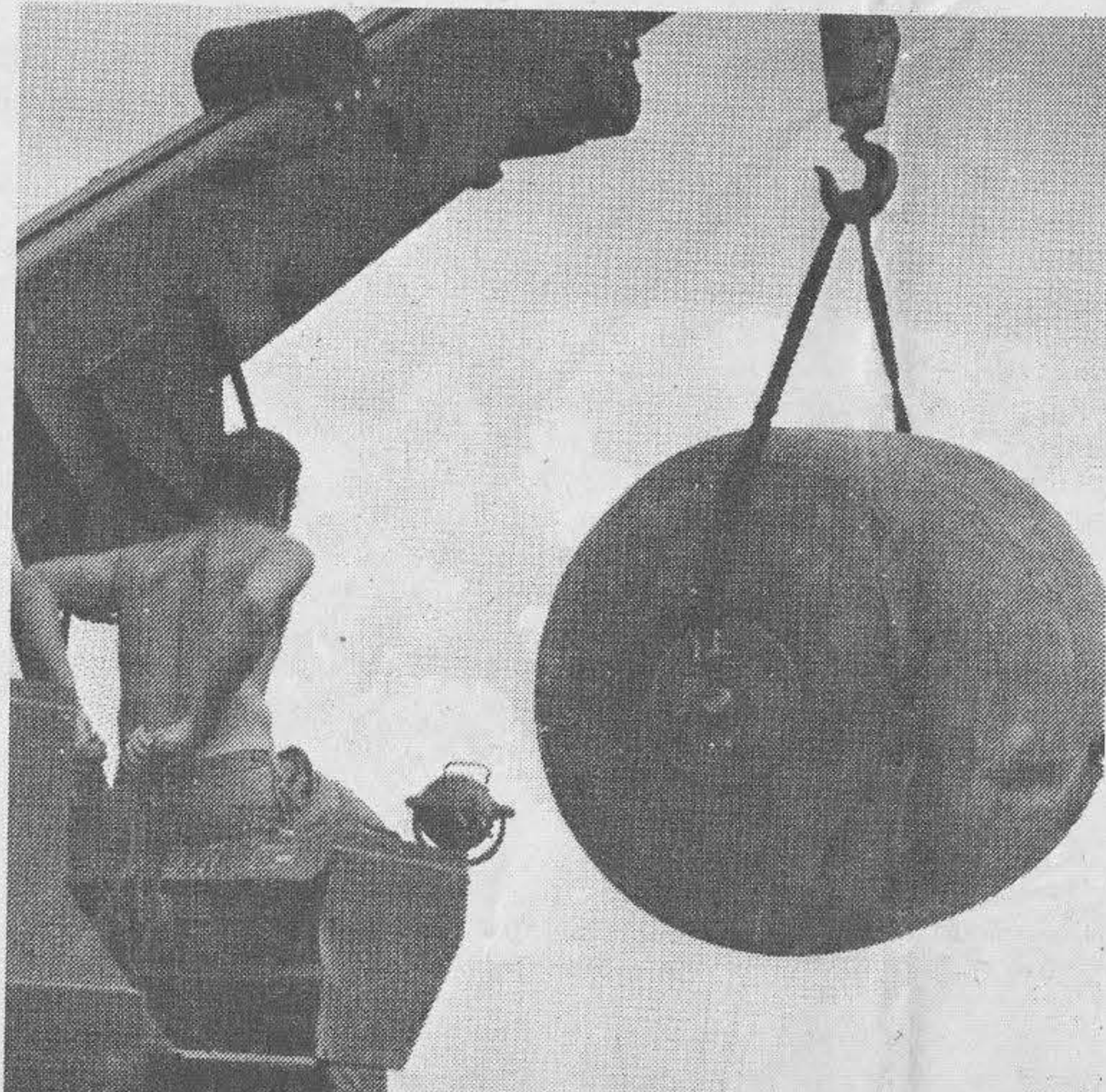
Chaplain Hoffman's first tour in Vietnam was with the 716th



Chaplain Hoffman

MP Battalion in 1965-1966. He comes here from an assignment with the 193rd Infantry Brigade in Panama.

His wife, Mrs. Naomi (Benson) Hoffman, resides in Fargo, N.D. They have two sons.



Blackhorse gas station

Honored for Valor

SILVER STAR

- Major Frederick Franks, 2nd Squadron Headquarters.
- Captains John S. Caldwell, Jr., L Troop; Thomas R. Hammerstone, L Troop; Ralph J. La Chance, 3rd Squadron Headquarters.
- Sergeant Raymond L. Hopper, C Troop.
- Specialist 4 Anthony Herbert, L Troop.
- Private First Class Raymond A. Ziehmer, L Troop.

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

- Lieutenant Colonel Bobby F. Griffin, 3rd Squadron Headquarters.
- Captain Ralph J. La Chance, 3rd Squadron Headquarters.
- Warrant Officer Robert L. Clark, 3rd Squadron Headquarters.

BRONZE STAR

- Captain John C. Speedy, III, K Troop.
- First Lieutenants Michael G. Blose, M Company; Michael P. Peters, M Company; Richard M. Rogers, I Troop; William L. Trubeck, 919th Engineer Company.
- Sergeants First Class Jimmie D. Caffey, 919th Engineer Company; Marion T. Creswell, 919th Engineer Company; Romie S. Harmon, C Troop.
- Staff Sergeants Floyd J. Brooks, C Troop; Ford O. Canutt, 919th Engineer Company; Arthur B. Dennis, C Troop; Thomas L. McRoberts, 2nd Squadron How Battery.
- Sergeants Rose S. Glatzer, 919th Engineer Company; Michael Harvey, 3rd Squadron Headquarters; Marcus R. Morse, 3rd Squadron Headquarters;
- Specialists 4 Marvin C. Anderson, E Troop; Noah R. Daves, C Troop; Mark E. Derge, 1st Squadron Headquarters; Lonnie B. Gatewood, 2nd Squadron Headquarters; Robert R. Lee, 1st Squadron Headquarters; Elmer C. Parker, Jr., 2nd Squadron How Battery; Kenneth L. Snyder, C Troop; Ronald J. Walton, 2nd Squadron How Battery; Joseph M. Yeeierski, 919th Engineer Company.
- Privates First Class Darrell R. Strange, 2nd Squadron How Battery; Marvin R. Vincent, L Troop.

AIR MEDAL

- Major William K. Harris, 3rd Squadron Headquarters.
- Captain Ralph J. LaChance, Jr., 3rd Squadron Headquarters.
- Specialist 5 Max Cervera, 1st Squadron Headquarters.

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL

- Chief Warrant Officer John H. Mallette, 2nd Squadron Headquarters.
- Specialist 5 Carl E. Gillispie, E Troop.
- Sergeant Luther G. Gee, L Troop.
- Specialist 5 Carl E. Gillispie, E Troop.
- Specialists 4 Francis R. Addis, A Troop; Clifton T. Geerdes, A Troop; Michael S. Hyman, B Troop.
- Privates First Class Frederick E. Bail, A Troop; Dan D. Walker, 2nd Squadron Headquarters.

Bilyeu Arty chief

Major Ronald E. Bilyeu, the new Regimental fire support coordinator, is beginning his second tour in Vietnam. In 1966-67, he served with the 173rd Airborne Brigade, first as an artillery liaison officer and then as a battery commander.

In his new job with the Blackhorse, Major Bilyeu serves as advisor to the Regimental and Squadron commanders on artillery tactics and techniques and coordinates the Regiment's artillery strikes.

Major Bilyeu received his commission upon graduation from Southwest Missouri State College, where he participated in the ROTC program.

His first assignment was a three year tour with the 4th Armored Division in Germany.

Prior to coming here, he attended the Command and General Staff College at Ft.

Leavenworth, Kan. His decorations include the Bronze Star, the Air Medal, and the Army Commendation Medal.



Major Bilyeu



LTC Ballantyne

Ballantyne takes sqdn. command

Lieutenant Colonel John L. Ballantyne III has taken command of the Blackhorse Regiment's 2nd Squadron.

A 1954 graduate of West Point, he comes to the Regiment from I Field Force Headquarters where he was secretary to the general staff.

Speaking of his new command, Lt. Col. Ballantyne said: "I've heard many fine things about the 2nd Squadron, and I feel honored and privileged to join it. I'm looking forward to serving with the men."

This is his second tour in Vietnam. In 1965-66 he was a subsector advisor in Vinh Binh Province, about 50 miles southwest of Saigon. In that position, he acted as a consultant to the district chief, all the Regional Forces and Popular Forces, and the Revolutionary Development teams there.

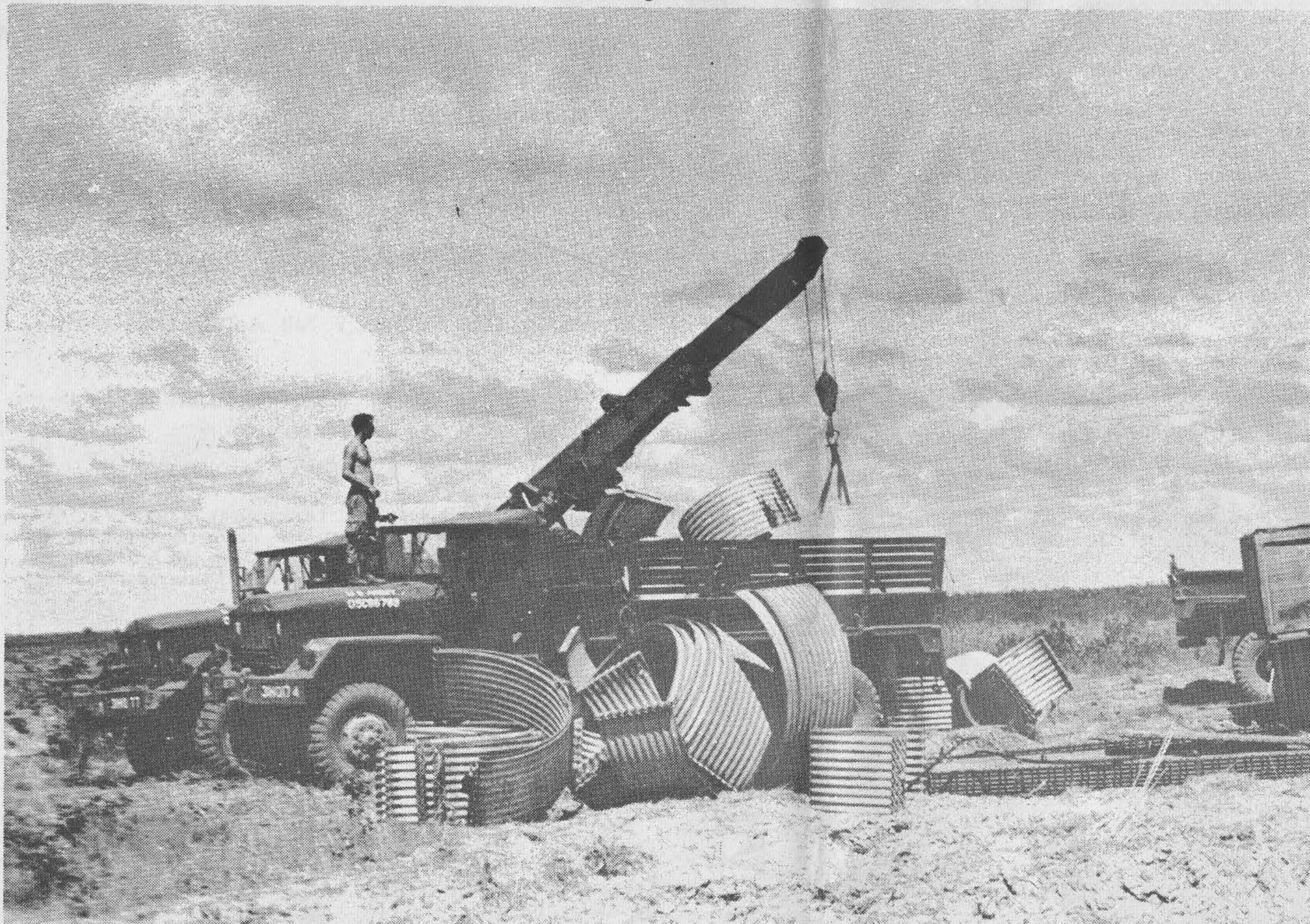
Prior to this tour in Vietnam, Lt. Col. Ballantyne was assigned to the Armor Branch, Office of Personnel Operations, Department of the Army.

Beginning his first assignment with the Blackhorse Regiment, Lt. Col. Ballantyne commented: "I'm delighted to have the opportunity to serve with the 11th ACR, as I think any Armor officer would be."



Giant shovels dig in places for the How Battery and the TOC to set up.

Unloading the culvert.



Birth of Fire Support Base BANDIT



A trailer truck takes fuel out to the fire base site.

Last month 3rd Squadron finished up its Di An stand down and headed north to a new AO near Lai Khe. When it got there, Fire Support Base Bandit was waiting -- courtesy of the 2nd Platoon of the 919th Engineers.

The Engineers had preceded the squadron by three days. During that time their Rome plows bowled over trees and cut through heavy underbrush. Bulldozers scooped and leveled -- packed a helipad and pushed up a berm.

All the while the Red Devils provided their own security. For they are combat engineers in the truest sense. Equipped with their own armored vehicles, they are often called upon to support a troop in contact.

But their primary mission is clearing roads and building things like Fire Support Base Bandit. And, later, tearing them down.

Birth of Fire Support Base BANDIT



On the Road -- the 3rd Squadron column on the way to Bandit.



A trailer truck takes fuel out to the fire base site.

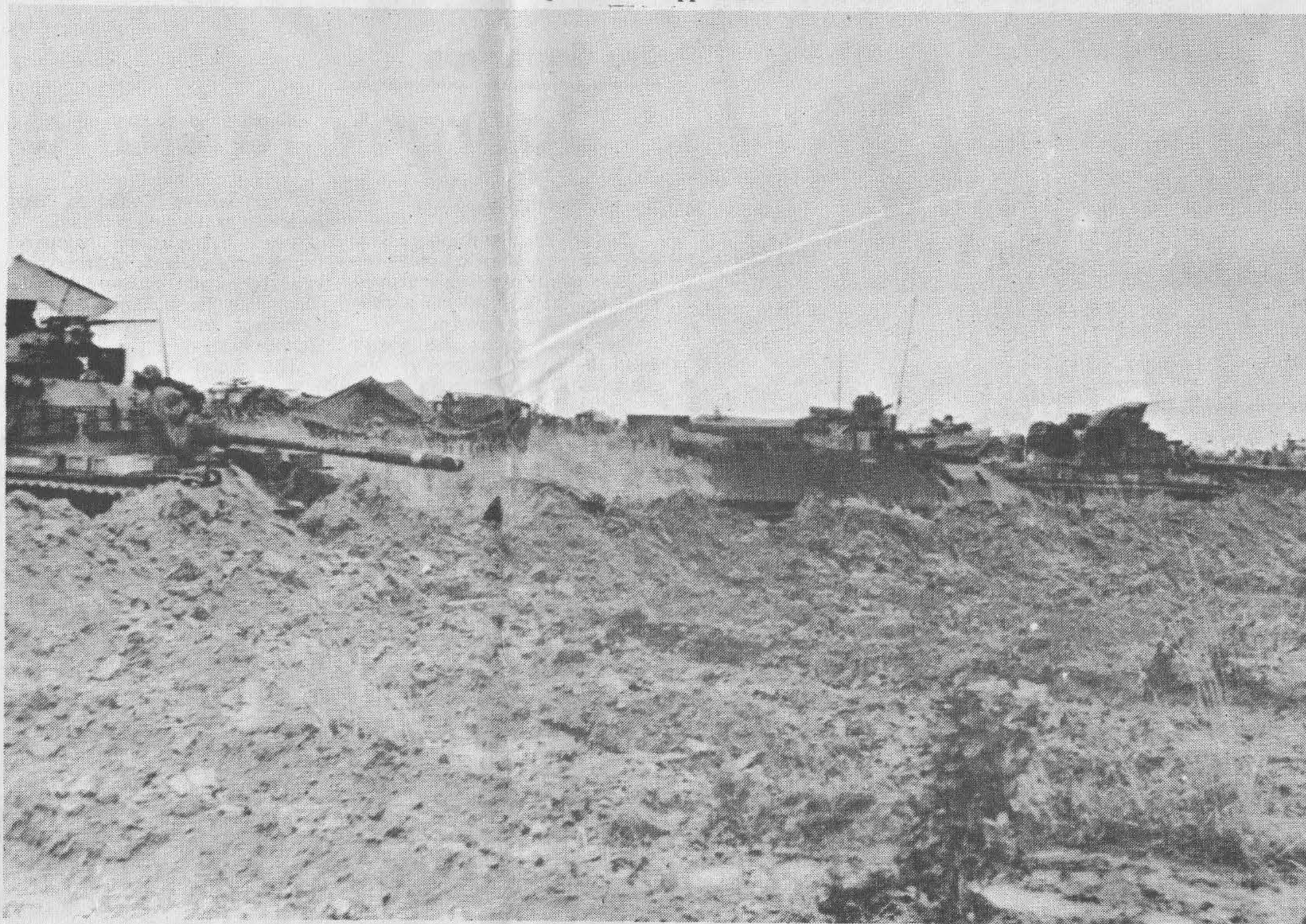
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The completed Fire Support Base Bandit.





There she is, Blackhorse trooper, Miss America

Amid a light rain, clicking cameras, and the occasional buzz of miniguns, the reigning Miss America, Pamela Anne Eldred, and six other beauties put on a two-hour show for 1st Squadron Troopers at Fire Support Base Henderson August 15.

The girls came a little closer to the war than was planned when some Viet Cong were spotted near the fire base during the show. The call of "Fire mission" midway through a soft shoe

number sent half the audience scrambling to their Howitzers and ACAVs.

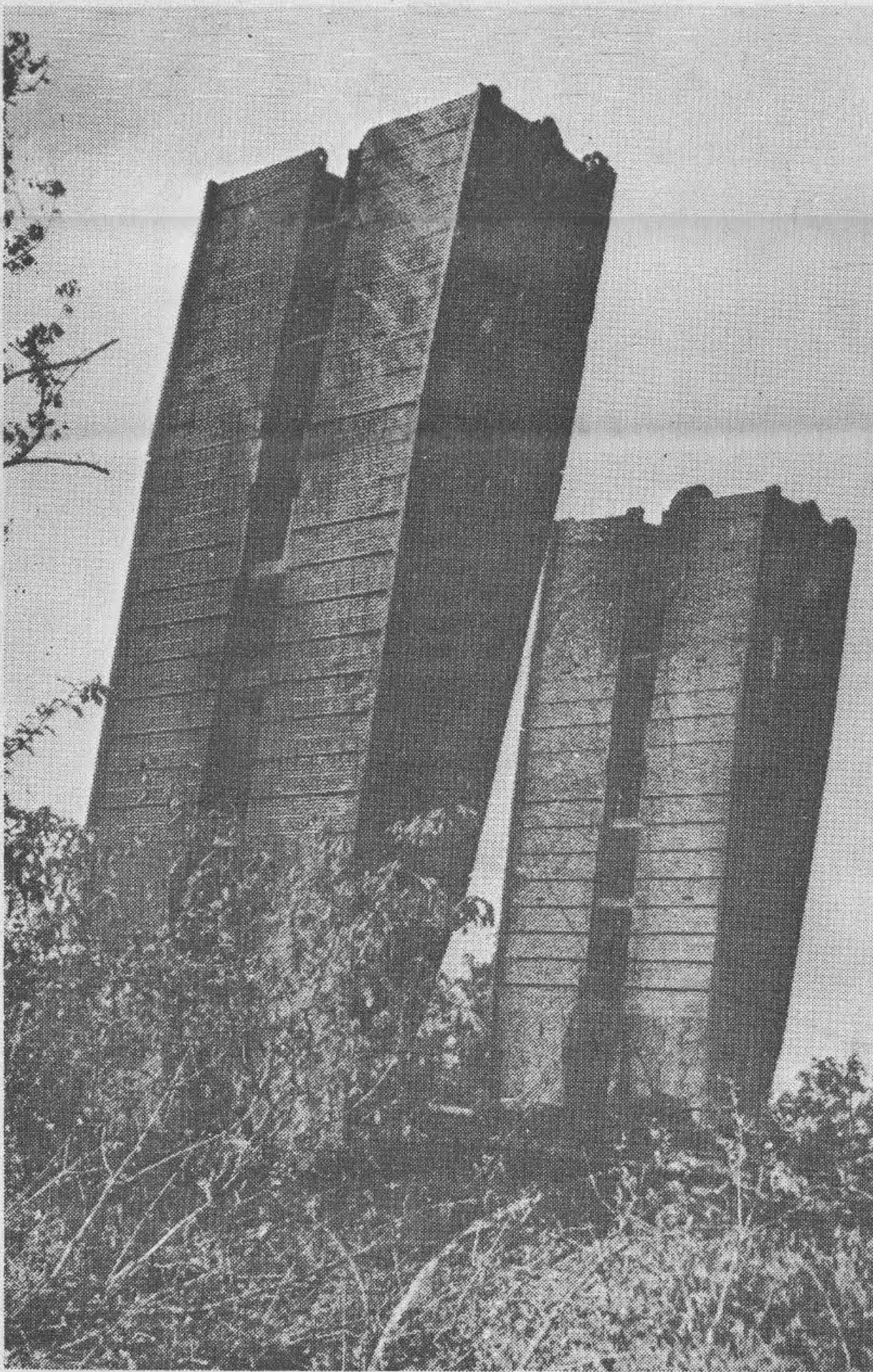
In spite of the confusion, the young ladies on stage continued the dance routine until Cobra gunships came over the horizon, their guns roaring.

Pamela Anne and the other beauty queens stopped the act and watched the Cobras work out. All the girls covered their ears each time the sound of the guns reached them, but they did

not forget their audience. With admirable aplomb, the girls came to the edge of the stage and began signing autographs and talking to the troops.

In a few minutes it was all over. The Cobras were gone and the men were back in the audience, watching the seven pretty girls.

That afternoon, the girls came to Di An to put on their show for the men of 2nd Squadron. This time the VC stayed away.



Two AVLBs extend into the air.

AVLB's

Crossing that bridge

by Darrel Jensen

"A tank is a wonderful piece of machinery, but it can't cross a monsoon flood stream," states Sergeant George E. Pile.

Monsoon flood streams and armored vehicles are things which Pile has learned quite a bit about in the two years that he has worked with 2nd Squadron's bridge section.

The squadron's three Armored Vehicle Launched Bridges (AVLB) enable the Blackhorse troopers and their giant tracked vehicles to pass over rivers and through rough terrain whenever the tactical situation requires it.

The famous 11th ACR dash to Snuol early in

the Cambodian operation was made possible by the AVLBs which were slung across three rivers along Route 7.

An AVLB is a folding, two-sectioned bridge mounted on the back of an M60A1 Tank. Extended, it spans 50 feet from one abutment to another. The bridge is launched into its flat position by a hydraulics system operated by the driver of the vehicle.

The crews of the three bridges are on standby alert at all times to respond to a call from any troop which has difficulty passing through an area.

In addition to their intended use, the AVLBs have seen duty as grease racks and as mobile bunkers in the squadron fire support base.

Working together

Troopers, RF hunt VC

by Darrel Jensen

"They have been raised in this area and they know what to look for."

The speaker was Captain George K. Crocker, the F Troop commander, and he was referring to the Vietnamese Regional Forces soldiers who have been engaging in joint operations with 2nd Squadron troopers in the Chau Thanh and Tan Uyen Districts, 13 miles north of Bien Hoa.

Regional Forces companies have been riding on Blackhorse ACAVs on reconnaissance missions. In dense jungle, the Vietnamese soldiers dismount from the vehicles in search of the Viet Cong, their supplies, and bunkers.

The RF companies remain under the direct

control of the province-chief and must stay within the borders of their province. Each night the Vietnamese soldiers returned to provide hamlet and road security.

The joint operations had at least one unexpected dividend for one person, Nguyen Van Kiem, chief Kit Carson Scout for 2nd Squadron. "I've had a chance to meet many of my old friends during the operations," he said.

In addition to giving 2nd Squadron troopers the benefit of a native's knowledge of the area, the joint operations help speed the process of Vietnamization. Says Capt. Crocker: "The Vietnamese soldier is now going into areas where he has feared to go and he's finding out that they are not as bad as the legends said."

3rd Squadron

Journey to stand down

By Vincent Spadafora

On July 23, Fire Support Base Petrie was the starting point for a contingent of 3rd Squadron troopers setting out on a new operation - stand down.

Preceded by the line troops and the tank company, the Squadron's Headquarters Troop and How Battery left the circle of dirt and mud which had been their base of operations for the past month and started for Di An.

A large part of the road march took them over a four-lane paved highway - a far cry from

the terrain the Squadron had traversed in the past months.

The Blackhorse troopers found themselves driving in traffic and encountering everything from Lambrettas to Mustangs. And hardly a water buffalo in sight.

The mood was predictably

festive. The men did have three weeks of thorough maintenance work in front of them, but that wasn't everything.

"It's been seven months since I've seen a club," said Staff Sergeant Cyrus Dodd of K Troop. "You can almost be sure where I'll be in my spare time."



A Sheridan cuts along on a reconnaissance mission.

919th opens the roads for 11th ACR tracks

"Many think that mine sweeping is dangerous, but it's like getting used to driving a car or bike. After a while you can tell if something is a nail or a piece of wire," said Platoon Sergeant Delbert Cotton of the

4th Platoon, 919th Engineers, serving with the 2nd Squadron. A normal mine sweep starts out early in the morning when the two sweep teams, one on each side of the road, leave the fire support base. Two point

men armed with M-16's lead the way. They set the quick pace for the rest of the team.

Following at about fifty meters are the mine sweepers, and, right behind them, the probers, who stop each time the sweepers detect a piece of metal in the ground.

Fifteen meters behind the probers are the two men providing security. The ACAVs follow closely to the rear.

The two teams spend most of the morning clearing the road. Most days, all they return with are tired feet, but they do pick up enough mines to keep alert.

Most of the mines they find are homemade. According to First Lieutenant Peter K. Rosenkrands, the VC make and booby trap their own mines.

When the teams are close to a village, they begin to look for VC mine markers put out to warn the civilian population. These markers may be crossed bones, two sticks, or just a pile of rocks pointing to the mine.

"The VC are always watching us to find places to put mines where we don't sweep," commented Rosenkrands, "so we can't establish any pattern in the sweeping."

Sheridan TC

Leading the Rif

by Vincent Spadafora

It's officially called the AAARV 551 - the Armored Airborne Assault Reconnaissance Vehicle - but if you don't know it as the Sheridan, you probably don't know it at all.

On a RIF the Sheridan leads the way, pushing through and over the brush and trees when necessary. In front of the Sheridan is a fat, stubby barrel which measures 152 millimeters in diameter and which can create havoc in any enemy position or bunker.

In 3rd Squadron's I Troop,

one of the lead Sheridans is named "You and Me, Lord!", inspired by a Bill Cosby routine, and up on top, behind the .50 caliber sits Specialist 5 Kevin Jones, its T.C.

Jones knows "You and me, Lord" as more than a deadly weapon. "It's so full of electric circuits that sometimes I think I'm taking care of a computer or a robot," he declared.

A college graduate, Jones has used every credit hour keeping his vehicle and men up and fighting.

"It's a nerve-wracking job, but I like the challenge," he said.

"You and Me, Lord!"



Helicopter maintenance

398th keeps Blackhorse in the air

By Darrel Jensen

There is a good reason why the men of the 398th Helicopter Maintenance Company take such care in their work. For, as the commanding officer, Captain John P. Mandulak puts it, "If something goes wrong with an aircraft, there's only one way to go, and that's down."

It's the 398th's job to keep the 47 Hueys, LOHs and Cobras of the 11th ACR flying. The 124th Avionics Maintenance Detachment is charged with keeping up the aircraft's radios and instruments. Together the two units, located at Camp Frenzell Jones near Long Binh with a forward element at Di An, comprise 160 men.

In addition to routine repair work, the 398th and 124th run periodic checks on the

Blackhorse choppers. Cobras and Hueys come in after 100 hours flying time, LOHs after 300 hours.

The big inspection, called TBO (time before overhaul) is done between six and twelve thousand hours. Engines, transmissions, instruments and rotor heads and blades are replaced.

Whenever an emergency comes up, the men must adjust their schedules to get as much work done as soon as possible. During one month they were able to change 19 engines, in addition to their normal work.

Should a ship go down in the field, a crew immediately goes to the scene. Often after minor repairs the ship can be flown to the 398th for further work. But if it needs extensive work, the ship will be taken back by truck or Chinook.

Taking in downed aircraft sometimes is a test for the imagination as well as the maintenance skill of the men. On one occasion they landed a helicopter with only one skid at the 398th by piling a few crates on the ground to balance the ship as it set down.

When the repairs are complete, the ship is taken for a test flight, checked over, then tested again, thus insuring that each helicopter delivered to the Regiment has been test-flown twice.

The 398th forward section in Di An has a crew of 16 men, including eight Cobra and Huey mechanics and two LOH mechanics.

Their job consists of performing all preventive and intermediate maintenance on the Regiment's Hueys and Cobras. They also are responsible for

minor unscheduled maintenance on all three types of helicopters, and they determine if and when a ship should be sent to the rear 398th.

After 25 hours in the air, the 398th in Di An gives each Cobra and Huey an intermediate inspection. "The inspection takes about three hours and is a real close visual check of the aircraft," said Warrant Officer William R. Owens, the section

leader.

Each aircraft is checked for excessive wear on parts. Oil samples are taken from the engine and transmission and analyzed electronically for dirt and metal particles.

"Aircraft availability depends on maintenance," Mr. Owens stated, "and we're on call 24 hours a day to keep the ships available."



Mechanics from the 398th Helicopter Maintenance Company work on the blade of a Cobra and on a 3rd Squadron LOH.

The Name Game

