

69-605

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NEWS RELEASE



UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION, Headquarters Seventh Air Force
TAN SON NHUT AIR BASE Republic Of Vietnam
APO San Francisco 96307

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

*Date of Mission -
7 April 1969*

172

CHOPPER PILOTS UNDER FIRE
DURING MED-AIR EVACUATION

PHAN RANG (7AF) -- Ignoring enemy small arms and mortar fire, a helicopter crew from Detachment 1, 33rd Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, Phan Rang AB, recently performed an air medical evacuation of three critically wounded Republic of Korea (ROK) soldiers.

Within minutes of the initial call, Major John C. Acton Jr., 36, Jacksonville, Ark., detachment commander, was airborne and on his way to the scene.

When the rescue crew arrived at the battle location, the ROKs were still exchanging fire with the hostile forces. Overhead flares to light the helicopter landing zone could not be used--they would expose friendly troops to enemy fire.

As a final resort, ground flares were ignited to give the chopper crew a landing position. Acton, rescue crew commander, elected to make the hazardous approach.

Coming in over a minefield surrounded by concertina wire, he hover-taxied the HH-43B over the wire and landed on the rough, unprepared surface.

NO PHOTO

- MORE -

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outside the ROK compound perimeter.

Staff Sergeant Joseph Defeo, 21, Bohemia, Long Island, N.Y., air medical technician, and Staff Sergeant Jeffrey L. Bailey, 22, Baton Rouge, La., flight engineer, darted from the chopper to guide the Korean soldiers under the low, turning rotor blade to the helicopter.

The crew waited as ROK soldiers threw a defensive perimeter around the rescue chopper. Enemy forces renewed their small arms and mortar attack against the friendly compound.

As the Pedro's fuel supply drew dangerously low, the wounded men brought in and the return flight made to Phan Rang.

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Capt. William D. McCall, Co-Pilot

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Additional Info

FROM: Det 1, 38 ARRS

15 Oct 1969

SUBJECT: Kaman Scroll Of Honor

TO: Kaman Aircraft Corp.

In response to your request of 4 Sep 1969 the following information is forwarded at this time. The date of the rescue mission by Major Acton and the crew of Pedro 92 was 7 April 1969. The names of the crew members on this mission are:

- a. John Acton, C. Jr., Major, Aircraft Commander
Major Acton has since been promoted to Lt Colonel and has now departed SEA. His current address is:
Central ARCC (MAC)
Richards-Gebaur AFB Mo 64303
- b. William McColl, D., Captain, Co-Pilot
Captain McColl is now PCS to:
Det 5, 38 ARRSq
APO San Francisco 96237
- c. Jeffery Bailey, L., SSgt., Flight Engineer
Sergeant Bailey is now PCS to:
Sheppard Tech Training Center (ATC)
Sheppard AFB, Tex 76311
- d. Joseph Defeo, (NMI), SSgt., Medical Technician

FOR THE COMMANDER

Harold N. Hansen

HAROLD N. HANSEN, Captain, USAF
Information Officer, Det 1, 38 ARRSq

Chopper Crew Aids Three ROK Soldiers

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As a final resort, ground flares were ignited to give the chopper crew a landing position. Major Acton, rescue crew commander, elected to make the hazardous approach.

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SSgt. Joseph Defoe, Bohemia, Long Island, N.Y., air medical technician, and SSgt. Jeffrey L. Bailey, Baton Rouge, La., flight engineer, darted from the chopper to guide the Korean soldiers under the low, turning rotor blade to the helicopter.

The crew waited as ROK soldiers threw a defensive perimeter around the rescue chopper. Enemy forces renewed their small arms and mortar attack against the friendly compound.

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