

HAWK

FEBRUARY 1970

HAWK MAGAZINE salutes

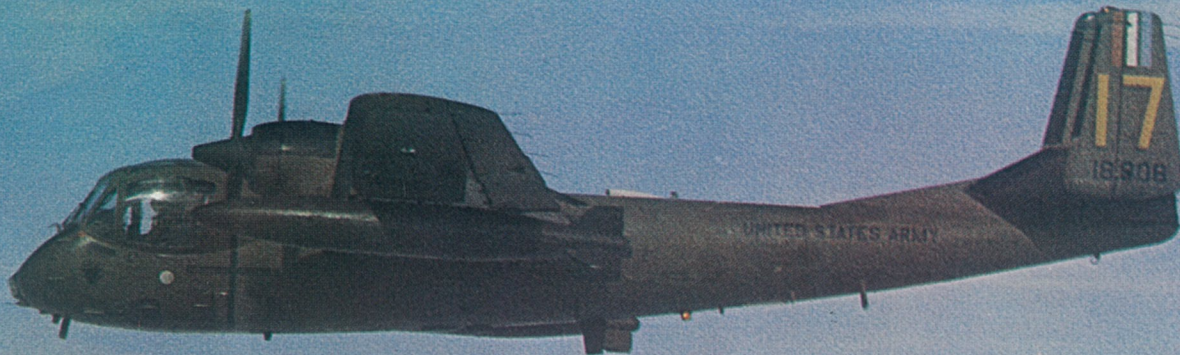
17th Aviation Group (Cbt)



Formed in Saigon on December 15, 1965, the 17th Aviation Group (Cbt) transferred to Nha Trang in March 1966. The Group's name, "Freedom's Eagles," denotes the 17th's participation in numerous actions in Vietnam, the latest of which was staged in the Ban Me Thuot—Pleiku areas.

From October through December 1969, companies of the 17th Group combined and coordinated their efforts in a single operation, with a single goal. Hueys, Chinooks, Cobras, and Skyranes worked together from one operations center to support the isolated firebases and ground operations in this area near the Cambodian border. Using the characteristics of the different helicopters to the utmost degree, the 17th Group operations sent skyward from 40 to 50 ships each day to do a job that could be done only by aviation.

Three companies, doing three different jobs at the same time, worked together on the same re-supply mission to efficiently and successfully complete the task. This is the sort of cooperation and teamwork that was necessary in an operation of the immense scale that was staged out of Ban Me Thuot, and the professional attitudes and capable personnel of the 17th Group provided nothing less.



I Fly Nights

by CWO Robert L. Jensen

A Phantom Hawk begins low-level run.

Gear in wells, engine gages normal, system power on... the checklist is read off item by item until finally "Mohawk 815" is cleared to depart the 225th Aviation Company (Surveillance Airplane) at Phu Hiep for its mission deep in the Central Highlands of II Corps.

First fuzzy static and then the electrofied voice of a "Phantom Hawk" pilot comes over the radio, "Pigeon, this is Mohawk 815, over."

The pilot is acknowledged, "Mohawk 815, this is Pigeon, go ahead."

Again the pilot's voice, "Pigeon, we are approximately 75 miles



southwest, 8,500 feet, enroute mission area northwest your station, request artillery firing and flight following, over.”

Pigeon, the Air Force radar control installation for northern II Corps, answers, “Mohawk 815, we have you on radar contact 73 miles southeast of Pleiku. Negative reported arty enroute of flight.”

“Mohawk 815, roger.”

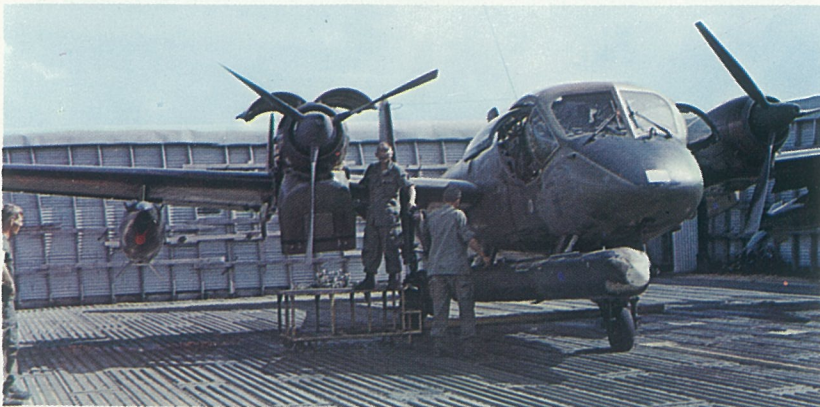
Mohawk 815 flies on through the night toward its target area, a small area of land which will be thoroughly checked for enemy activity by the sensing devices carried aboard the Mohawk.

By now one of the many 225th data terminal stations located throughout II Corps has established contact with Mohawk 815 and is prepared to receive the telemetry data transmitted from the Mohawk’s sensory systems. The station has the capability of instantaneous readout of the sensings.

The terminals work closely with the aircraft and know its exact location at all times that the sys-



Ground crew prepares a Mohawk for a pre-flight “run-up.”



Banking right, a 225th Mohawk heads to photo target area.

tem is on. One variety of mission utilizes infrared sensing devices and is usually flown very low. Because of the low-level techniques, ordinary radar cannot always follow the Mohawks on an infrared mission. But the data terminal stations, by knowing the route their plane is flying, and the length of time it has been flying that direction, can keep track of the Mohawk for emergency needs.

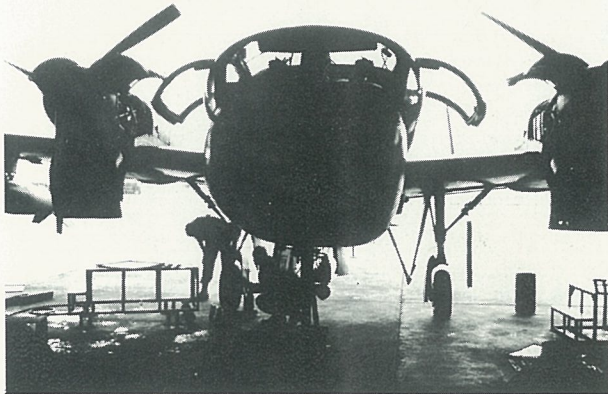
The hazards of flying the 225th’s missions are easily understood when the rugged, mountainous terrain of II Corps and the motto, “I Fly Nights,” are put together.

Low altitude night flying in mountainous terrain calls for the utmost in pilot ability, procedures and alertness.

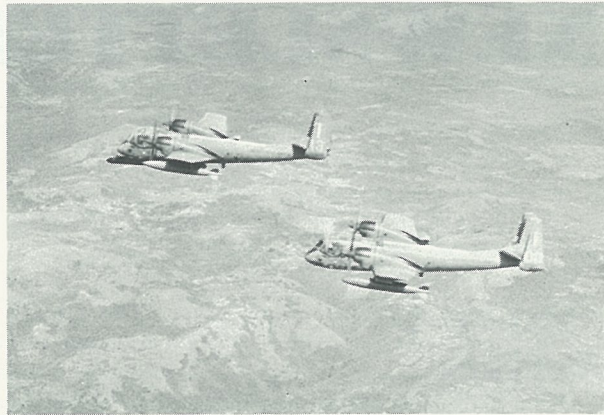
Despite the dangers involved with the 225th’s type of flying, the unit has one of the best safety records in Vietnam, attaining more than 24 months and 20,000 hours of accident-free flying. The safety record speaks well for the caliber of the flight crews and maintenance personnel at the 225th. It also reflects on the airplane involved. The OV-1 Mohawk is one of the safest aircraft currently in the military inventory. It has all weather capability, all the emergency and back-up systems a pilot could want, and if all else fails, ejection seats. . . .

In addition to the infrared missions, the 225th flies Side Looking Airborne Radar (SLAR), Visual-Photo and Visual-Reconnaissance missions.

After the aircraft lands at Phu Hiep upon the completion of a mission, the crew is debriefed in the Imagery Interpretation Section while the photos are being processed in the photo lab. The Imagery Interpreters are all highly



Nosed into hangar, a Mohawk is overhauled.



Two Mohawks rendezvous and proceed home.

trained in examining the photos for bunkers, huts, paths and other possible enemy staging areas or infiltration routes.

After the Imagery Interpreters "read out" the data, the results are transmitted to I Field Force Vietnam (IFFV) Headquarters which has the operational control of the 225th.

The G-2 Air at IFFV coordinates all supported unit's requests for targets and relays them to the operations officer at the 225th, who plans and schedules the missions.

The operations officer's job in a Mohawk outfit is one of great importance and responsibility. Close coordination must exist between friendly elements in the suspected

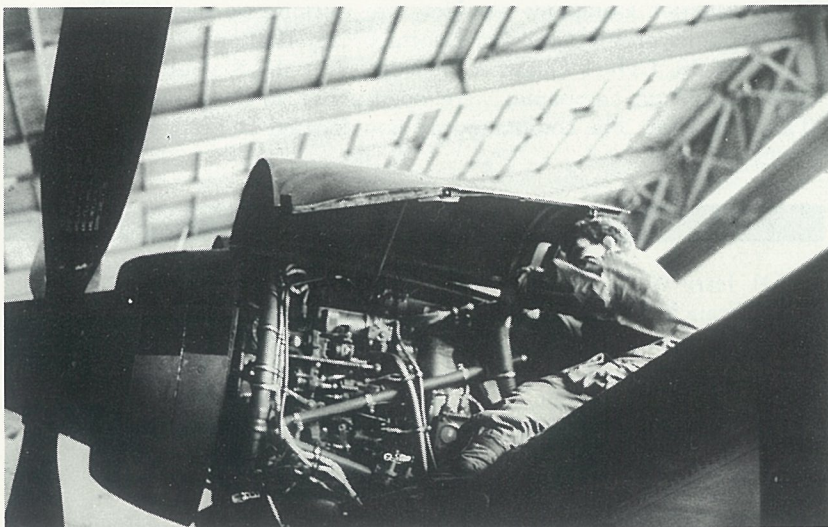
enemy areas and the operations officer. Otherwise, it would be quite easy to label friendly units as the enemy, a situation which could end disastrously. The operations officer must see to it that the mission is accomplished with the minimum interruption of friendly actions and maximum safety for the aircraft and crew.

The 225th "Phantom Hawks" have admirably performed a mission which provides the Free World Forces in Vietnam with a terrific advantage over the communist aggressors. They fly by night to detect an elusive enemy. To the troops of II Corps, the 225th's Mohawks flying overhead has become a reassuring symbol.

Image Interpreters study negatives to locate enemy.



A complex OV-1 Mohawk engine receives TLC.



NEWSLETTER

“Super C” Arrives

The CH-47 Chinook, the Army's prime artillery mover, has been revamped to haul heavier loads longer distances. The first of the new C-model Chinooks arrived in-country October 19, 1969, and went to the “Shrimpboats” of the 179th Assault Support Helicopter Company. Since the initial shipment, nine more have arrived in Vietnam; and at present, four are located with the Shrimpboats at Pleiku, five are assigned to the 180th ASHC in Phu Hiep, and one is working with the 101st Airborne Division.

A bigger engine, wider rotor blades and an increased fuel capacity give the C-model the edge in performance over the previous A and B models.

273d Reaches 100,000 Mark

February 1970, marks the passing of the 100,000 ton mark for the 273d Aviation Company (Heavy Helicopter). This is a notable achievement for the men of the 273d “Superhooks.” The company arrived in Vietnam on December 15, 1967, and in slightly over two years, has carried over 100,000 tons of cargo in the CH-54A Skycrane.

Two 1st Avn Bde Units Begin Ninth Year In RVN

The discussion as to who stepped ashore first continues, but the fact remains that both the 117th Aviation Company (As Hel) and the 120th Aviation Company (As Hel) are working on their ninth year in the Republic of Vietnam. On December 13, 1961, two aircraft carriers unloaded 40, CH-21 Chawnee helicopters at the foot of Tu Do Street in Saigon. Both companies were operational 10 days after arriving at Tan Son Nhut. The companies are now located at Long Binh.

High Flier Silver Stars 9 Nov - 21 Dec

WO1 Jerry W. Marshall, 195th Aviation Company (Ambl)
*SGT Francis M. Monroe, 361st Aviation Company (Escort)
1LT Raymond C. Dell, 57th Aviation Company (As Hel)
CPT John Sullivan, 116th Aviation Company (As Hel)
WO1 Keith S. Scudder, 121st Aviation Company (As Hel)
*SP4 Roy W. Hunter, 61st Aviation Company (As Hel)
*SGT Larry R. Brown, 361st Aviation Company (Escort)
CPT Kenneth R. Carlton, 191st Aviation Company (As Hel)
*posthumous