

JANUARY 1966

During the first month of the new year the "Winged Warriors" participated in thirteen airmobile operations conducted by the aviation companies of the "Delta" Battalion. The "Warriors" had the mission command on seven of these operations. On 28-29 January, operation Dan Chi 199 was staged at Vi Than by the 21st Division (ARVN). The "Warriors" had the mission command in support of the division. The assault elements of the 2nd Battalion 31st regiment and the 42nd Rangers were airlifted into a known VC occupied area nearby. Eight tons of weapons and ammunition were captured. On the second day of the operation, the T-Birds with the other gun platoons of the "Delta" Battalion participating in the operation were credited with 65 Viet Cong kills.

January was the first month that the "Warriors" participated in a "lightning bug" operation. The "lightning bug" team usually consisted of one slick equipped with a searchlight made from a cluster of high intensity lights, three gun ships and a control or "dust off" ship. The main purpose behind "lightning bug" was to enforce the curfew which forbids the movement of sampans along the canals of the Delta during darkness. The light detected the sampans and also tended to draw fire. The targets were then fixed and the gunships did their work.

On 19 January at 0200 hours a team staged at Rach Gia to conduct a "lightning bug" operation in the 9th Division sector. The operation lasted 2 hours. The "T-Birds" bagged 25 VC dead and 15 VC wounded.

The "T-Birds" inflicted many casualties on the enemy during several daylight scrambles also. It was a good month for the T-Birds.

The "slicks" flew 1,438 hours and the "T-Birds" flew 444 hours during January. The high aviator for the month had 102.0 hours.