

JULY 1966

On 1 July Lt. Col. James E. Kennedy assumed command of the "Winged Warriors". Colonel Kennedy had been in country for 6 months and came from HQ USARV in Saigon. Maj. Ruby L. Whitehead moved to Can Tho to become the S-3 of the 13th "Delta" Battalion.

During the month of July the "Warriors" participated in eleven air mobile operations and had mission command of five. This may seem fewer than in the past months, however one was a three day operation and one lasted two days.

On the evening of 26 July Soc Trang was again attacked by mortar fire, however this one was not as effective as their attack of June. Only two rounds landed on the compound the rest were off. One round hit near the main gate and another hit near the road along the North side of the compound. The "T-Birds" scrambled and the attack ended as abruptly as it had started.

On 1 July the "T-Birds" scrambled to Ca Mau. The VC were attempting to cut a road. The "T-Birds" caught a platoon in the open. They had good target effect but could not determine the number of casualties. There were blood traces in the area which were noted when ground units moved in to investigate.

On 5 July the "T-Birds" were again scrambled to drive off a reported VC battalion and to support special forces troops at HAI YEN. There were few VC in the area. The "T-Birds" killed 3 VC.

On 14 July a "lightning bug" mission at Ca Mau netted the "T-Birds" 11 VC dead, and 30 destroyed or damaged sampans.

On 16 July the "T-Birds" again scrambled to a HIEN HOA Mangrove. A forward air controller sighted 20 sampans and tactical airstrikes were not getting all of them. The "T-Birds" were credited with 2 kills and 4 sampans.

The other missions this month were the normal airmobile operations (RF's), C & L's and of course "Swatter". But there were an increase in the number of missions over previous months.

At last, the Soc Trang swimming pool was renovated and met the health requirements for use. It operated from 1100 hours until 1900 hours with a life guard on duty. Night lighting was planned for this facility to extend the operating hours. The month of July was a hard month on DEROS. The company began to feel the loss in personnel and many of our experienced aviators and crew men had or would be rotating shortly.

The "Warrior Slicks" flew 1,845 hours, a new all time monthly record, and the "T-Birds" flew 461. The high aviator for the month flew 111.7 hours.