

AUGUST 1965

The impact of enemy mortars was once again felt on the installation on the 2nd and 3rd of August. No casualties or damage to the aircraft resulted from the attack.

On 26 August, the section commanders were briefed for operation Dan Chi #157. The operational area was 45 miles West of Soc Trang near the town of Vi Thanh and the enemy consisted of elements of the Ta Ho Battalion augmented with some other unidentified units. Dan Chi 157 proved to be an equipment consuming operation.

Red Devil, our maintenance ship, made several trips into the landing zone during both daylight and darkness to work on some downed aircraft which were hit by enemy fire. Sixteen helicopters received damage from the enemy ground fire within combat area but casualties were very light. PFC Gagnon received a leg wound and the Purple Heart on this operation.

SEPTEMBER 1965

On 9 September in the late afternoon, the entire crew of four of one of the armed Platoon gun ships were killed in action when their aircraft crashed and burned in an area North of Soc Trang near the town of Leng Phu. These members of the T-Birds were by name: Lt. Leonard Dadante, WO Robert Regan, PFC Hipke and SP/5 Simkitis.

On 15 September, Major Wayne E. Dutton, the commander, assumed new duties in the S-3 office of the 13th Aviation Battalion and Major Donald J. Elmore assumed command of the "Winged Warriors of Soc Trang."