

Tandem Notes

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— Phrog Phorum —

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Helos lift heros, hopes after 9/11 tragedy

On Sept. 11, former Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge, the newly appointed Director of Homeland Security, boarded a Pennsylvania Army National Guard Chinook in Harrisburg, Pa., with National Guard Adjutant General Bill Lynch for a flight to rural Somerset County. The two surveyed the crash scene of United Airlines Flight 93, a Boeing 757 with 45 people on board.

Thanks to the quick response of the “Nomads” of Company G, 104th Aviation, based at Fort Indiantown Gap, the Governor coordinated a full range of state resources more efficiently to help contain the site and begin investigations at the scene.

In less than 48 hours, the Nomads were in the air again, with four Chinooks carrying 15,000 “Meals Ready to Eat” to Newburgh, N.Y., for New York City relief workers digging around the clock at the World Trade Center in lower Manhattan.

At the same time, the “Flippers” of Company C, 159th Aviation, part of the 18th Airborne Corps’ Aviation Brigade, sent four Chi-

nooks and more than 30 air crew members from their Fort Bragg, N.C., home to Washington, D.C. Their mission, designated “Operation Noble Eagle,” was to transport victims of the Pentagon attack, including 64 people on American Airlines Flight 77, a Boeing 757-200, and at least 126 people in the Pentagon’s west side, to the human remains identification facility at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware. A fifth Chinook from the Flippers joined this operation, accumulating nearly 60 flight hours over five days while helping to facilitate the victim identification process.

A week following the attack, the Nomads returned to New York City with two Chinooks carrying nearly three dozen large tents to shelter the rescue teams.

One of the most memorable images over these days was captured by local TV crews in Harrisburg as the Nomads returned home from their first support mission to New York. As they flew in formation over the state capitol, the Nomads, like so many Americans, carried the flag, suspended from a hoist cable.



Photo courtesy Office of Tom Ridge

A CH-47D Chinook transported Maj. Gen. Bill Lynch, National Guard adjutant, left, and Tom Ridge, former Pennsylvania governor, middle, to the crash scene of United Airlines Flight 93. A Pennsylvania state police officer, right, joined them.

Dear Chinook and Sea Knight User

Much has happened in the world’s war against terrorism since the last issue of Tandem Notes. Although specific details have not been released, both CH-46 Sea Knights and CH-47 Chinooks have served crucial roles in operations in and around Afghanistan.

The entire tandem rotor community has earned a tremendous amount of credit for the operational excellence of both platforms, especially when you consider the inhabitable terrain and hostile environment. We’re looking forward to documenting these events in upcoming issues as soon as the Defense Department releases the information. The near-flawless performance of the Chinook and Sea Knight almost guarantees that they’ll see action in future engagements.

These venerable helicopters also continue to excel in international operations and sorties on American soil. A few examples are featured in this issue, including “Exercise: Northern Neighbor,” a NATO-led mission in Iceland, and a heroic rescue made by “PEDRO,” a Sea Knight unit based in Cherry Point, N.C. These are the kinds of stories that help fuel this newsletter and solidify the aircraft as legends in the rotorcraft arena.

We’re always looking for customer-related news, “tales from the field” and photographs, so please submit them to: Jack Satterfield, Boeing Philadelphia, P.O. Box 16858, M/S P30-18, Philadelphia, PA 19142-0858. Ph: (610) 591-8399; Fax: (610) 591-2701, e-mail: john.r.satterfield@boeing.com; or Doug Holmes (same mailing address and FAX number), Ph: (610) 591-4901, e-mail: william.d.holmes@boeing.com. Keep the stories coming and happy flying!

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Columbia Helicopters reaches two milestones

The tandem rotor community celebrated several achievements this year, including the rollout of the CH-47F model, the 40th anniversary of the Chinook's first flight and continuing global humanitarian and military support.

Columbia Helicopters, Inc., an Oregon-based heavy-lift helicopter company founded in 1957, has two more to add to the list.

The company's fleet of 14 Boeing Vertol 107-II helicopters recently surpassed the 500,000-flight hour mark. They have amassed more than 17,650 flight hours this year alone, and should easily surpass 20,000 flight hours by year's end.

One of Columbia's choppers also has individually logged more than 56,600 total flight hours—the equivalent of working eight-hour days for 19 years. The helicopter, model number N6674D, is believed to be the world's "highest time" helicopter. The company purchased the aircraft, which had already logged more than 9,000 flight hours, in January 1972—10 years after it rolled off the assembly floor.

"For a company to attain half a million flight hours in one model of aircraft is always an achievement," says Mike Fahey, president, Columbia Helicopters. "But for a heavy-lift helicopter company to attain that many hours is absolutely stunning."

The milestone, notes Fahey, is a result of



Photo courtesy Columbia Helicopters

One of Columbia's 107-II helicopters conducts a logging operation in the northwest United States.

a top-notch maintenance crew and the Boeing Vertol employees who designed the durable aircraft in the 1950s.

"Half a million flight hours means you have a fleet of helicopters working very long days," he explains. "Our maintenance crew goes to great lengths to ensure that our aircraft are always in top shape and ready to fly. We must also recognize the efforts of

the people at Boeing who designed this helicopter, as well as those who support our operations today. We couldn't accomplish even a portion of our workload without a helicopter as well designed and built as the 107."

The helicopters, which can lift up to 10,500 pounds, have been used for myriad missions around the world, including large-scale construction projects, logging operations, petroleum exploration and fire fighting.

The aircraft's history is as diverse as its missions.

The Boeing Vertol 107-II—the predecessor of the CH-46 Sea Knight—conducted its first flight in October 1960, shortly after The Boeing Company acquired the Vertol Aircraft Corporation. The aircraft entered military service with Canadian and Swedish armed forces in 1961. The following year, the Federal Aviation Administration certified the 107-II for commercial support, and New York Airways (NYA)—a scheduled mail and passenger helicopter operator—began extensive flight operations. The helicopters linked midtown Manhattan with several nearby airports until the company closed in 1979—eight years after Boeing stopped producing the aircraft. Columbia Helicopters purchased four NYA 107-IIs and has used them for heavy-lift operations ever since. More than 90 Boeing Vertol 107-IIs remain in operation around the world.

Like a good neighbor...Nomads are there

This past Halloween, the "Nomads" of the Connecticut National Guard helped their neighbors in Massachusetts fight a forest fire, marking the first time they used the collapsible Bambi Bucket in a real world situation. Dropping over 300,000 gallons of water, and flying two Chinooks over 12 hours, Co. 104th AVN Det 1 (Connecticut) successfully contained the fire and stopped it from spreading into the local community. After a little effort setting them up, the buckets worked without a hitch, dropping 2,000 gallons of water in about 10 seconds each turn. The Connecticut National Guard has three of the new buckets and is always ready to lend a hand to its neighbors.

Photo and story courtesy
SSG Ken Gillissie and SSG Ed Dettore



The prodigal Phrog returns home



BUNO 154803 returned to its birthplace in Philadelphia sporting its 30-year-old color scheme.

In February 1968, the U.S. Navy accepted a CH-46D Sea Knight, Bureau Number 154803, from the Boeing Philadelphia factory where it was manufactured.

After more than 8,000 flight hours and 33 years of Marine Corps service, this venerable "Phrog" returned Oct. 10 to its Philadelphia birthplace, looking much the same as when it left.

Sea Knights have changed many times

over the years, of course, with upgraded rotor blades, more powerful engines, larger fuel tanks and stub wings, and even a change in model designation, from D to E. Paint schemes also changed several times, from the 1960s-vintage "field green," to camouflage green in the '70s and '80s, to today's gray-on-gray pattern.

Not so BUNO 154803, however. Thanks to help from Boeing Aerospace Support,

which provided the paint, the Sea Knight will come home sporting its 30-year old colors.

There's a good reason for that unique appearance. BUNO 154803 has handled many missions with several squadrons in its lifetime, but none more important than a flight on April 30, 1975.

On that day, the Sea Knight, then designated YW 09, lifted off the roof of the American embassy in Saigon with the U.S. ambassador and other passengers on board. As the Sea Knight—one of the last American aircraft to leave South Vietnam before its defeat—flew away, its crew radioed the coded message, "Tiger, tiger, tiger," indicating the Embassy was vacant. To honor this unique heritage, Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 774 (HMM-774), a Marine Reserve unit based at Naval Air Station Norfolk, Va., requested and received help from Boeing in restoring the rotorcraft's Vietnam-era color scheme.



One of the last American aircraft to leave South Vietnam approaches the Philadelphia flight ramp.

'PEDRO' to the rescue

Two CH-46 Sea Knights stationed at the Cherry Point Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Point, N.C., recently rescued four fellow Marines who ejected from an EA-6B Prowler approximately 25 nautical miles southeast of the air station. The downed crewmembers suffered minor injuries. The rescue unit, known as PEDRO, flies more than 100 missions a year with about half of them involving civilian individuals and agencies. PEDRO members include: Capt. Daren Brown, aircraft commander, Maj. Frank Hodges, copilot, Cpl. Michael Tatalovich, crew chief, SSgt. Christopher Vaneycken, rescue swimmer, HMC Art Dornfeld, medical technician, Maj. Heath Lawson, AC, Capt. Darren Doyle, CP, GySgt. Edward Morris, CC, Cpl. Brenton Snipes, CC, GySgt. David Cummiskey, RS, and HM2 Chad McFall, MT.



Photo by Lance Cpl. Bradly Shaver, staff correspondent, Marine Corps Public Affairs

From the field: Chinooks excel in Icelandic missions

The 1st Battalion, 106th Aviation Regiment, under the command of LtCol Gregory E. Crocher, recently supported the 66th Infantry Brigade and the Icelandic Defense Forces during Northern Viking-01, a biennial NATO exercise in Iceland.

The role of the 1-106th Aviation was two-fold: support the Icelandic Defense Forces during NV-01 and fly nation building missions for the Government of Iceland (GOI). The nation-building mission was code-named "Northern Neighbor." Part of the aviation task force included Company F(-)/106th Aviation, a CH-47D unit attached to the 1-106th Aviation, commanded by Maj. Thomas O. Parker. Maj. Parker and his crews were assigned the Northern Neighbor missions.

Three CH-47Ds and two UH-60As departed Peoria, Ill., late in May 2001, self-deploying to Norfolk, Va., where they were shrink-wrapped and loaded aboard ship for the 10-day voyage to Iceland. The ship arrived on June 2 followed by a C5-A on June

8 with the other UH-60s and our maintenance teams. Less than 24 hours later, the aviation task force was ready to begin the Northern Neighbor missions.

The Northern Neighbor missions were diverse and ranged from moving 31 tons of fertilizer to removing a 10,000 pound WWII railroad car from a former British Naval Base located deep in a fiord just north of the capital city of Reykjavik. Using external loads, Company F(-) crews transported the fertilizer intended for a stretch of barren land suffering severe erosion. The GOI planned to deposit the fertilizer on high ground and let the rains carry it down the steep slopes in hopes of promoting vegetation to control the erosion.

Company F(-) crews also moved what appeared to be small houses. They were actually 8,000 pound shelters placed in remote areas that serve as survival shelters during the winter months when weather can become severe with little notice. Another mission

consisted of moving 12,000 pound segments of a bridge into place over a fast running glacier stream.

The Company F(-) crews completed tasks that would not have been possible without the CH-47D due to the nature of the task and the Icelandic terrain. The rugged beauty of this volcanic country, with its snow-capped mountains, majestic waterfalls, natural hot springs and enormous glaciers, kept their visual senses peaked while other challenges tested their skills. The CH-47D flight and maintenance crews, managing the effects of constant, quick changing weather, low ceilings and visibility, and the navigation challenges associated with glaciers, completed 83 accident free flight hours, while maintaining an 88 percent operational readiness rate.

Additional photos can be found at <http://www.angelfire.com/super/elvisflight/index.html>

Story courtesy
Steve Rager, 106th AVN BN



Photo by JO1 Linda Pepka
Official U.S. Navy photograph

Members of the Illinois Army National Guard flew a CH-47 Chinook to lift a house for Icelandic builders. The house was successfully guided into its below-grade foundation with only a foot of clearance around the sides.



Photo by JO2 Jean Ross
Official U.S. Navy photograph

Members of the 1st Battalion of the 106th Aviation attach bags of fertilizer to a CH-47 Chinook for transport to different locales in Þórsmörk, (Thorsmark) Park during Exercise Northern Neighbor.