

# Chapter 451, Vietnam Veterans of America, Baltimore Maryland Restoration Project Huey



Resurrection Day - UH-1C/M 66-15238 is rigged to be airlifted from the boneyard at Aberdeen Proving Grounds by members of the Maryland Army National Guard. Her next stop was to be the Target Range.



Final checks and she's up and away, transported by a Sikorsky UH-60 "Blackhawk" helicopter.



Arriving at Martin State Airport



First looks - needs *a lot* of work!

# The First Moving Day



From Martin State Airport  
on a flatbed tractor trailer...

To one last trip airborne (well  
sort of) at the end of a crane  
hoisted high in the air...

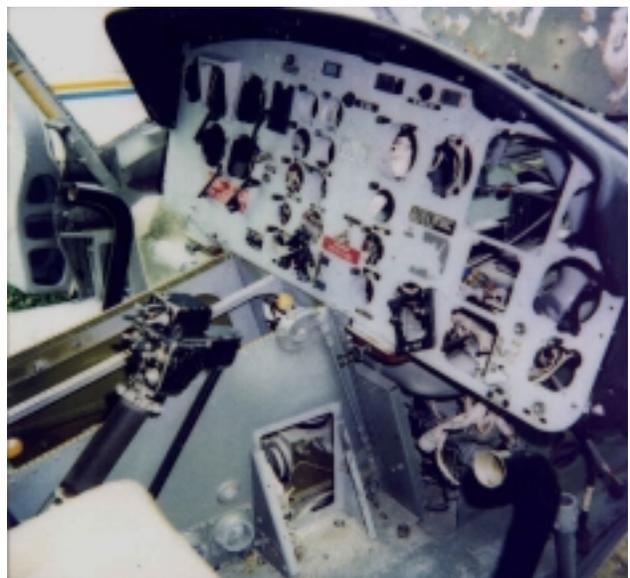


To her home for many  
months of restoration work  
yet to come...

Our first “official” work day out back of the Chapter home in Dundalk...



Lots of friends from the Maryland Army National Guard began work to repair the damage that her years as a derelict wrought. At times it seemed an insurmountable task...





The “crew” hard at work during that first day. And what we saw convinced us she could be saved. People began dropping by as we worked and offered comments, thoughts, and memories of other days...



Missing parts...



like an engine here....



Bits and pieces...



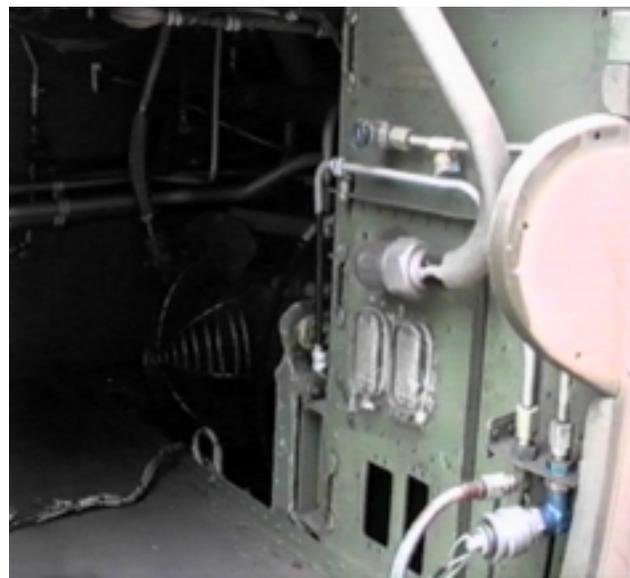
some more than others



a cockpit panel with empty eyes instead of guages



but we knew who she was we thought.

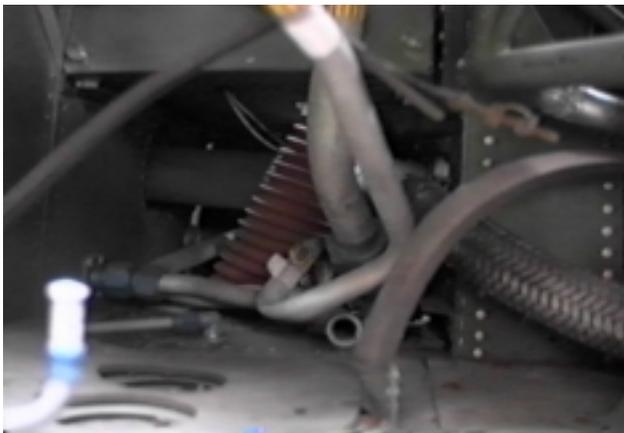




A few small surprises - like a nitrogen bottle still holding 1500 psi...



but a broken bracket caused major problems opening a cowling.



A missing oil system here...



major corrosion there (sync elevators)



Radios? You got to be kidding...



Even tail position lights



Jim Henthorn      Curtis Epps      Greg Kecken  
Dave Hare      Jack Tarr      Bob Nueslein      David White  
Arthur Johnson

The Crew on that first Work Day



Hard at work on the many tasks to be done.



Work continues in many ways that are not obvious but must be done.



Jack Tarr worked many countless hours in a labor of love.



Parts began to arrive from around the country as fellow former helicopter crewmembers learned of our project and the reasons behind it. A cowling here, a door there, and an engine fairing!

She began to take shape under the skilled hands and willing hearts of those committed to the project.



Windshields, both left and right hand to fill the void, took three sets of hands to install. Don Head peached on the nose for several hours while we installed the hundreds of nuts and bolts...



You want to go flying when???



The last bolts installed, the last nuts secured and the windshields were done...



Our Huey began to return to the shape we all knew and loved... but still had a long way to go.



More parts



more installations...



A repaired tail rotor

Cockpit work...



# Painting Day!

At long last she would get a fresh coat of paint...



Masking off was an important part of the preparations prior to the first touch of the painter's hand...



Jimmy Brennan ready to start...





From the nose...

to the tail....



And all the places in  
between.



Then we started on the detailing...

Larry Tweedie provided guidance along with Bill Reid and Joe Skarda



Copies of photos from Paul Jenkins and the memory of Jack Tarr...



A little red here...

A little more red there.



From the side as we worked.





Taking pictures all along the way so we wouldn't forget this time...

Does this look right? Yup, that's it.



And, oh yeah, a red stripe across the cabin roof...



And she got harder to walk away from...

More and more pictures...



The morning light showed  
her off the best



Oh, don't forget the tips of  
the sync elevators...





Her tail number, restored at last...66-15238  
Note the main rotor tip is painted along with the arrow to be marked "DANGER"

A "target on the tail"? Yup it was there



"Hey Jack! The Army said since it carries their name they want it back! Said it looks better than what they're flying now..."



Lettering for both the left...

and the right side.



Jack had a small detail to attend to...



“Hey Jack...  
What’s that stand  
for???”

“Jim, I think I must have CRS... not real sure, Latin I think.  
But I do know that it was right there.”



Meanwhile, Jack poured her pad in front of the Chapter Home. The materials were donated by Steve Robertson, General Manager, Arundel Concrete.

Nose art is a critical step in the painting of any combat aircraft... and so Jimmy Brennan returned for this final phase.



Ready for the final touches from other helping hands



# And then it was October 21, 1996 and Moving Day...

Mr. Joe Cavallaro, Director of Maintenance for Helicopter Transport Services donated the use of a set of ground handling wheels. These were critical to the movement of our Huey to the permanent pad in front of the Chapter Home.



Up on the wheels



and off the blocks..



And Micky Saltzmann used his Chevy Blazer to pull her to the tree at the gate... clearance???? hmmm...



Some small adjustments up in the tree by Jim...



and we were through and in the back parking lot...



Too much weight aft of the wheels resulted in Jim in the cockpit to counter-balance and stop the skids from dragging.



Some support was still required...



And a crane appeared in the nick of time



The lift from the driveway,

over the grass (watch the  
chin bubbles),



easy, easy, that's it... and  
down...

# The Moving Day Crew



(left to right) Ray Glock, Chuck Hilton, Ron Springston, Frank Shannon, Gleason Harris, Bobby Selsor, Ray Smith, Jack Tarr, and Jim Henthorn



We made it...  
A project that began in March, 1996 had made it  
to her permanent site on October 21st.



There was still some site work to be done...

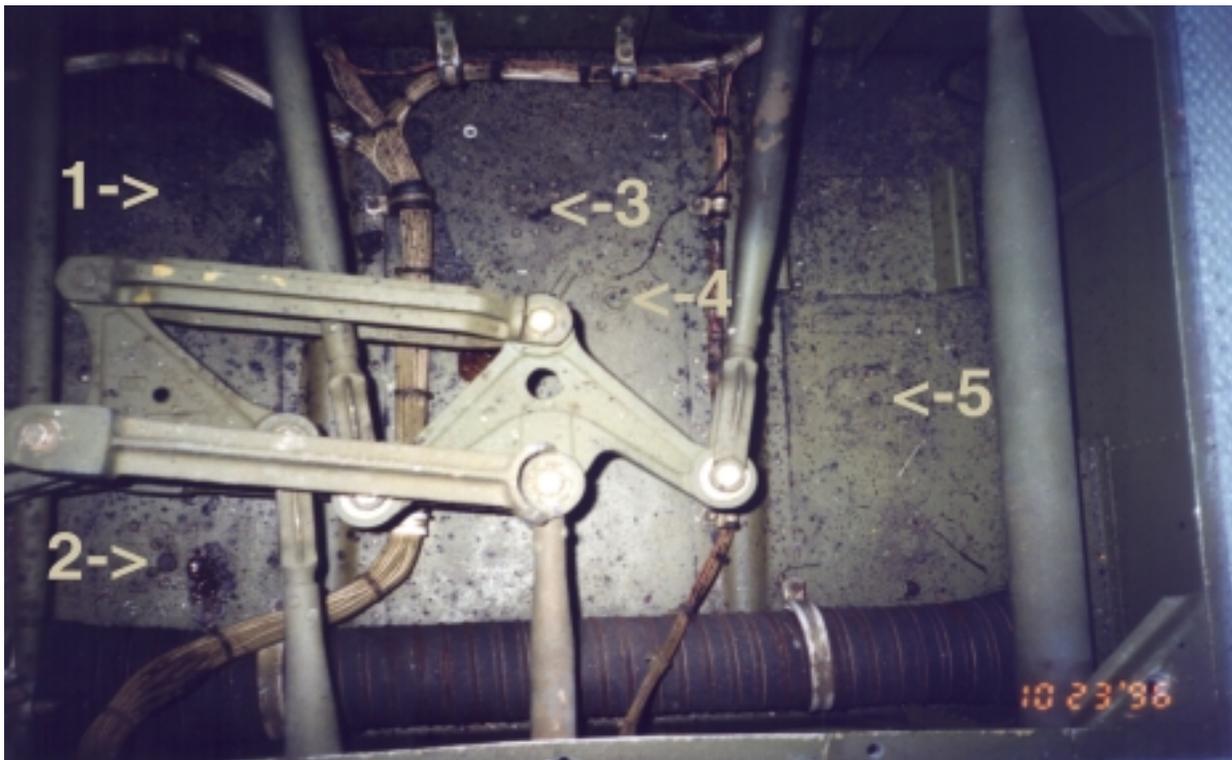


All cleaned up. We do have more work to do but this was a big day for us all...



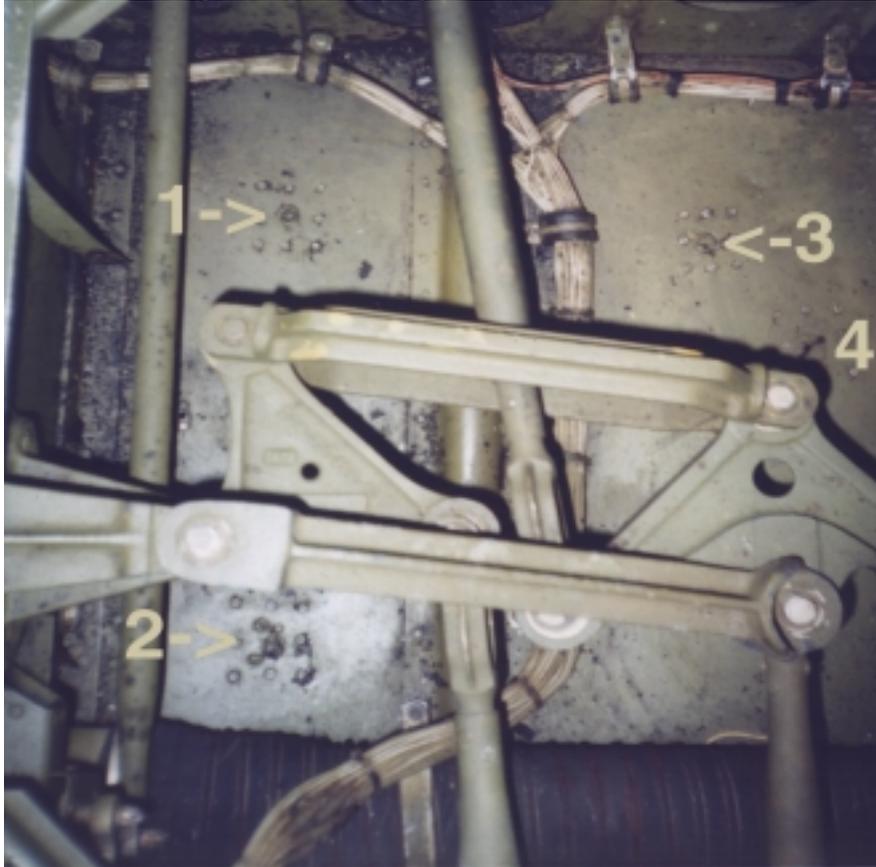
## UH-1C/M 66-15238's True History

We said before that we thought we knew who she was and where she had been but something did not add up. We found patches where there shouldn't be any, on the tailboom and the the cabin roof. Taking a serious look at her from the underside, we found more patches. The Sunpapers article published on February 28, 1996 said in part "...that the chapter's Huey was manufactured in 1966, serial number 66-15238, but never left the United States. It was used to train Vietnam—bound pilots at Fort Rucker, Ala., saw duty at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., moved to an Army Reserve unit in Mississippi, a government storage yard and then was left on the junk pile at Aberdeen Proving Ground." The stories did not agree...



Under the floor of the crew compartment before cleaning...  
note the 5 numbered bullet hole patches...

We cleaned it up and the patches were even clearer.



Convinced that the story we had been told was somewhat suspect, we did some further investigation into her true story. From the US Army Goldbook as supplied by Gary Roush of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association:  
**Helicopter 66-15238**

Information on U.S. Army helicopter UH-1C tail number 66-15238

The Army purchased this helicopter 1067

Total flight hours at this point: 00000700

Date: 691113

Unit: 134 ASLT HEL CO

This was a Combat incident. This helicopter was REPAIRED IN THEATER for Close Air Support

While in Target Area this helicopter was Attacking at 0800 feet and 070 knots.

South Vietnam

Helicopter took 1 hits from:

Small Arms/Automatic Weapons; Gun launched non-explosive ballistic projectiles less than 20 mm in size. (7.62MM)

The helicopter was hit in the Passenger Cargo Section  
 Systems damaged were: FUEL SYS  
 Protection of FUEL TANK by SelfSeal was Sealed  
 The helicopter Continued Flight.  
 The aircraft continued and accomplished all mission objectives.

Information on U.S. Army helicopter UH-1C tail number 66-15238  
 The Army purchased this helicopter 1067  
 Total flight hours at this point: 00000700  
 Date: 691117  
 Unit: 134 ASLT HEL CO  
 This was a Combat incident. This helicopter was REPAIRED IN THEATER  
 This was a Recon mission for Armed Escort , Other Aircraft.  
 While On Target this helicopter was Attacking at 0500 feet and 070  
 knots.

South Vietnam  
 Helicopter took 1 hits from:  
 Small Arms/Automatic Weapons; Gun launched non-explosive ballistic  
 projectiles less than 20 mm in size. (7.62MM)  
 The helicopter was hit in the Right Side  
 Systems damaged were: UNK  
 The helicopter Continued Flight.  
 The aircraft continued and accomplished all mission objectives.

The following is Goldbook information on US Army helicopter UH-1C  
 tail number 66-15238  
 It is provided here as an ESTIMATE of the history of this helicop-  
 ter and is not intended to be the final authority.  
 This helicopter was purchased by the US Army in 1067.  
 Please provide any additional information on this helicopter to the  
 VHPA.

DATE	FLT	HRS	UIC	UNIT	AREA	POST	COUNTRY
6710	0000	0000	W0Y6AA	INTRANSIT		IN TRANSIT	
AVCOMCTR							
6711	0032	0032	2067	355 AVN CO	4TH ARMY	FORT SILL	4TH ARMY
...to...							
6803	0003	0090	2067	355 AVN CO	4TH ARMY	FORT SILL	4TH ARMY
6804	0029	0119	WCXYAA	220 RECON AIRCO		VIETNAM	RVN
6805	0076	0195	WG1RAA	361 AVN CO		VIETNAM	RVN
6806	0049	0244	WAAMT0	HQTRP 3SQ 17CAV		VIETNAM	RVN
6807	0042	0286	3410	OPM SEA NITEOPS	1ST ARMY	FORT BELVOIR	AMC
6808	0088	0374	3410	HHD 44 ENG GP		THAILAND	PACIFIC
...to...							
6810	0072	0507	3410	HHD 44 ENG GP		THAILAND	PACIFIC

DATE	FLT	HRS	UIC	UNIT	AREA	POST	COUNTRY
6811	0000	0507	WE4HAA	142 TC DS		VIETNAM	RVN
6812	0000	0507	W0MUAA	ARADMAC	IN MAINT	NAVAL AIR STN	AVCOM
6901	0000	0507	W0MUAA	ARADMAC	IN TRANSIT	NAVAL AIR STN	AVCOM
6902	0000	0507	W2WJAA	BELL HCPTR	BAILMENT	FT WORTH	AVCOM
...to...							
6908	0000	0507	W2WJAA	BELL HCPTR	BAILMENT	FT WORTH	AVCOM
6909	0011	0518	WC07AA	134 ASLT HEL CO		VIETNAM	RVN
...to...							
7108	0042	1708	WC07AA	134 ASLT HEL CO		VIETNAM	RVN
7109	0058	1766	WC07AA	79 TC CO		VIETNAM	RVN
7110	0032	1798	WC07AA	134 ASLT HEL CO		VIETNAM	RVN
7111	0024	0822	WC07AA	134 ASLT HEL CO		VIETNAM	RVN
7112	0000	1822	WC07AA	61 ASLT HEL CO		VIETNAM	RVN
7201	0000	1822	W0MUAA	ARADMAC	IN MAINT	NAVAL AIR STN	AVSCOM
7202	0000	1822	W0MUAA	AVSCOM FLT	DET 5TH ARMY	ST LOUIS	AVSCOM
7203	0000	1822	W0MUAA	ARADMAC	IN MAINT	NAVAL AIR STN	AVSCOM
7204	0000	1822	W0MUAA	ARADMAC	IN MAINT	NAVAL AIR STN	AVSCOM
7205	0000	1822	W0MUAA	AVSCOM FLT	DET 5TH ARMY	ST LOUIS	AVSCOM
7206	0000	1822	W0MUAA	AVSCOM FLT	DET 5TH ARMY	ST LOUIS	AVSCOM
7207	0000	1822	W0MUAA	AVSCOM FLT	DET 5TH ARMY	ST LOUIS	AVSCOM
7208	0000	1822	W2WJAA	BEL HEL	BAILMENT	FT WORTH	AVSCOM
...to...							
7301	0000	1822	W2WJAA	BEL HEL	BAILMENT	FT WORTH	AVSCOM
7302	0000	1822	W2WJAA	ARADMAC	IN MAINT	NAVAL AIR STN	AVSCOM
7303	0000	1822	W2WJAA	BEL HEL	BAILMENT	FT WORTH	AVSCOM
7304	0017	1839	W2WJAA	BEL HEL	BAILMENT	FT WORTH	AVSCOM
7305	0015	1854	W1D74F	USATSCH	T SCHOOL	FORT EUSTIS	CONARCTS
7306	0002	1856	W1D74F	USATSCH	T SCHOOL	FORT EUSTIS	CONARCTS
7307	0002	1858	W1D74F	USATSCH	1ST ARMY	FORT EUSTIS	TRADOCTS
...to...							
7512	0002	2107	W1D74F	USATSCH	1ST ARMY	FORT EUSTIS	TRADOCTS

And so “our” Huey was indeed a combat veteran, having served in Vietnam and Thailand. She had been hit any number of times and had come home in 1972 having amassed a total of 1703 hours in SouthEast Asian skies. Thus she is indeed a fitting aircraft to be displayed in front of the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 451.

# Interior

Once we had moved her to her final resting place  
work began on the interior.



The armoured seats were pulled and the crew compartment  
painted



Preping took longer than the painting...



Holes, under both the left and right seats spoke volumns  
about her combat life...



We masked off everything in sight!!!



While Jack worked on the floor plates from the floor...



The floor was finished but the clean-up wasn't...



With the seats out it was the right time to clean the chin bubbles...



We began installation of the cockpit center console.



Ruth lent a helping hand when and where ever needed.

# Finishing Touches

The final pieces all began to come together because of a discovery made by Joe Skarda and Bill Reid. They heard about a museum that was supposed to have several 116th AHC helicopters. They made the trip to the Long Beach Airport and discovered that the stories were true. The Darkhorse Army Aviation Museum had several C model Hueys, at least one of which was a 116 AHC helicopter. Mr. Al Gerbino, the Director of the Museum, pitched in to help us fulfill our dream of dedicating a completed helicopter. He sent the radios, rocket tube mounts, tail position lights and a upper position light lens, all of which we immediately installed.



He followed that shipment up with the actual tubes and several of the missing gauges to complete the instrument panel. We can not begin to thank him enough for his generosity...



