

SYNOPSIS OF EVENTS PRECIPITATING THE FOLLOWING AWARDS

LCDR G. J. TARRICO	AIR MEDAL
LTJG R. GRANT	AIR MEDAL
ATR2 A. E. HARDIN	AIR MEDAL
AX3 G. V. SMITH	AIR MEDAL

The crew flying a Search and Rescue mission from the USS KEARSARGE was vectored among the heavily defended North Vietnamese Islands to rescue a downed fighter pilot. The survivor was reported in a raft in the water near the fortified Ile De Cac Ba. Employing low level evasive maneuvers to minimize the hazard of known enemy anti-aircraft weapon emplacements, the crew skillfully guided the helicopter through numerous enemy islands toward the survivor. Upon reaching the rescue scene, a search was conducted for the surviving pilot and he was brought into a hover and the downed pilot taken aboard. Departing the rescue scene after having been within range of enemy batteries for over ten minutes, further evasive action successfully prevented the helicopter from being taken under fire during its dash for the open sea and safety. This bold penetration of enemy waters resulted in the rescue of a fellow pilot who probably would have been captured by the enemy had this daring action not been undertaken.