

AIR AMERICA BELL 47s

by Dr. Joe F. Leeker

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The types of missions flown by Air America's Bell 47s:

Little is known about how Air America used their Bell 47s, but their main function seems to have been pilot training. Occasionally, they were also leased to other operators like Boun Oum Airways.

Statistics according to official Air America documents:

- Inventories of 31 March 72 > 30 November 72 (in: UTD/CIA/B1F10): 0 > 0

The individual aircraft histories:

Type _____ registration / serial c/n (msn) _____ date acquired _____ origin _____



Kawasaki-Bell 47 B-803 in CAT colors, taken at Taipei in August 1960 by Dale Williamson (former photo no. 1-WL1-27-4-PB42, now in UTD/Leary/B75F17)



Kawasaki-Bell 47G2 B-803 at Tainan in August 1960 (UTD/Rousselot/F5)

Kawasaki-Bell 47G2 B-803

150

5 Oct. 59

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Service history: officially regd. on 5 October 59 (e-mail sent by the Director General, CAA, Republic of China, to Martin Best on 18 October 2012, kindly forwarded to the author by Martin Best); identity given in the Air America Aircraft list of June 62, corrected to Sept. 1963 (in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); flew an emergency rescue mission to Paoshan, an isolated mountain village near Kaohsiung, Taiwan in August 1960; the village had been devastated by Typhoon *Shirley* in early August 60 (*CAT Bulletin*, vol. XIII, no. 9/10, September/October 1960, p.24); used by Air Asia for flight training at Tainan (photo in: UTD/Rousselot/Sm.Coll.4F5); at Udorn in 1961 (photo in: UTD/Abadie/B2F6); was to be sold in March 62, but was retained (Minutes ExCom-AAACL of 13 March 62, in: UTD/CIA/B7F1); operated out of Udorn as B-803 in 1963, unassigned (AAM Aircraft Availability for 1 July 63, 15 July 63, and 21 September 63, in: UTD/Walker/B25F8), but was to be leased to Collins Radio, Taiwan, for 8 months (Minutes ExCom-AAACL/AAM of 10 September 63, in: UTD/CIA/B7F2); based at Udorn, unassigned, in February 64 and in April 64 (AAM Aircraft availability of 1 February 64, in the possession of Ward Reimer who kindly faxed it to the author on 17 February 2004; AAM Aircraft availability of 1 April 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B8F4); flown by Richard Crafts out of Udorn on 3 and 4 June 64 (Log book of R. Crafts, in: UTD/Leary/B44F6); still based at Udorn in July 64, with occasional calls from USOM/Thailand (contract AID-493-34) (Aircraft status as of 7 July 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); leased to Boun Oum Airways in 1964, and damaged in an accident (Minutes ExCom-AAACL/AAM of 1 December 64, in: UTD/CIA/B7F3); repaired at a cost of \$ 9,000, reimbursed by Boun Oum (Minutes ExCom-AAACL/AAM of 5 January 65, in: UTD/CIA/B7F4).

Fate: no longer with Air Asia / Air America on 31 March 65 (Air Asia properties as of 31 March 65, in: UTD/CIA/B26F5); still listed without reg. in May 65, but no longer listed in October 65 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memos of 3 May 65, 22 May 65, and 27 October 65, all in: UTD/Walker/B12F3+4); not current with Air America on 1 November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 November 65 in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); possibly sold to Boun Oum Airways; did no longer exist in 1996.

Bell 47G3

N48864

2611 Nov. 65?

ex Air Ventures Inc., Nepal, by whom it was used at least between 21 July 64 and 28 February 65 (Log book of Elmer Munsell, in: UTD/Munsell/B3F24); formerly SE-HAY (e-mail dated 20 December 2005, kindly sent to the author by Martin Best)

Service history: ?; not mentioned in the list Aircraft status as of 1 November 65 (in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); possibly a replacement aircraft for B-803 to be used by Boun Oum Airways.

Fate: destroyed on 23 November 65, as the spin became uncontrollable; was on a training flight and crashed 1 mile west of the airfield of Udorn (XOXO of 23 November 65, in: UTD/Walker/B25F2; Minutes ExCom-AAACL/AAM of 24

November 65, in: UTD/CIA/B7F4; DD/S, Monthly Report for October/November 1965, p. 3, online at 1818029/196510).

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