AIR AMERICA:
DE HAVILLAND CANADA DHC-4 / C-7A CARIBOU

by Dr. Joe F. Leeker

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An unknown Air America C-7A whose left gear sunk into the mud while taxiing at a small landing strip on the Plain of Jars in May 69
(with kind permission from MacAlan Thompson)

The types of missions flown by Air America’s Caribous:
The story of Air America’s Caribous begins even before their own first two aircraft arrived in July 62, because already some months earlier, on 12 May 62, Air America pilot Fred Walker had successfully landed a bailed US Army Caribou (“333”) on the newly constructed airfield of Long Tieng (Hamilton-Merritt, Tragic mountains, p. 118). The first of Air America’s own Caribous (B-851) served in Laos for many years. At least since 1965, however, it was actually based at Udorn as a special mission aircraft for rescue and exfiltration work, to which a Fulton Skyhook system could be attached. In the early years this aircraft was also used to transport small Air America aircraft like Helio Couriers which had had an accident: In such a case, the wings of the Helio were separated and then put into the Caribou together with the fuselage. Only in the early seventies B-851 was transferred to Saigon where it obtained the registration N11014 and was finally used in South Vietnam to supply Air America’s own fleet of aircraft with fuel. Air America’s second Caribou (B-853) was quickly considered to be inadequate for service in Laos, although reverse props had been installed in both aircraft by 1963. After some years of work with the Royal Thai Border Police out of Bangkok, it was leased to the USAF in August 68 until it was sold in 1973. The other two Caribous owned by Air America, N539Y and N544Y, were based at Saigon nearly all the time and used under a variety of military and USAID contracts, delivering all sorts of supplies as all Air America aircraft did in South Vietnam. Because of their STOL capabilities, however, those Caribous were often used on flights to the Montagnard population living in the hill country. Although USAID was officially the main contractor to Air America in South Vietnam, all CIA missions in South Vietnam were flown as part of the USAID contracts, and within those contracts, all CIA requirements were handled with priority (Harnage, A thousand faces, pp. 81/2).

The majority of Caribous operated by Air America, however, were bailed aircraft, which used the last three digits of their military serial as Air America serial. Since 1964 Air America operated at least four of them in Laos which were bailed from the US Army.
Sometimes bailed Caribous were used as “Victor Control”, that is as an orbiting command post during rescue operations. The reason for using only bailed Caribous on those rescue missions was that they had VHF/UHF capability so that they could talk to military aircraft, while B-851 and B-853 had only VHF (e-mail dated 24 April 2005 kindly sent to the author by former Caribou pilot Joe Hazen). But of course Air America’s Caribou were mainly used as STOL cargo aircraft, whose role within the Company is well described by a 1968 article published in Air America Log: “Of the nine de Havilland DHC-4A, or C-7A, Caribou aircraft in our fleet, the majority (five) are assigned to our base at Vientiane, Laos. The Caribou offers a wide range of payload performance alternatives, depending upon the length of landing strip available. At 26,000 lb. gross weight, the aircraft is capable of taking off, for example, from an unprepared dirt strip in a distance of 540 feet ground-roll and clearing a 50-foot obstacle in 1,020 ft. With fuel and oil for 400 nautical miles, plus reserves, the aircraft is capable of getting airborne with a payload of 5,420 lb. Where the runway length is not quite so critical – although still demanding of STOL performance – the Caribou, at 28,500 lb., will take off in a distance of 725 ft. ground-roll and clear a 50-foot obstacle in 1,185 ft. for the same 400 nautical mile stage length with a payload of 7,920 lb. A payload of 8,765 lb. may be carried over 200 nautical miles or 6,200 lb. may be carried 800 nautical miles. While smaller than a Douglas C-47, the Caribou can carry a larger load into and out of shorter fields than the old World War II Goonybird. The plane’s rear drop ramp speeds loading and unloading and makes it a fine airdrop aircraft. The de Havilland Caribou will accommodate 32 people when configured as a passenger plane.” (“Caribous carry the freight”, in: Air America Log, vol. II, no.4, 1968, p. 2). Caribou pilot Joe Hazen describes the missions flown as follows: “Caribous, in addition to carrying people and their goods, were used for air drops, both free fall, like bags of rice and parachute, like gas drums or ammunition or whatever on pallets, as well as landing gas drums and other cargo on mountain strips. It was also used for training people to jump, with parachutes, of course, out of a perfectly good operating aircraft (Thai PARU). The Caribou was a VERY versatile aircraft and a pleasure to fly.” (e-mail dated 29 May 2005, kindly sent to the author by Joe Hazen).

In the early years the bailed Caribous were painted Army brown and did not have a radar nose. But when all US Army Caribous were transferred to the USAF in 1967, their colors equally changed. Since that time, all Caribous bailed from the USAF are all silver – except for “762”, which was camouflaged. Later Air America titles and a radar nose were added. Those USAF Caribous on loan to Air America never left Laos, however, so that the last of them returned to the USAF in June 74. As to the Caribous remaining in South Vietnam at the end, N539Y even flew for ICCS Air Services in 1973, and N11014 did not make it home. It had to be abandoned at Con Son Island on 29 April 75. A final acquisition in exchange for other aircraft, Caribou N6080, never joined the theater in South East Asia.

Statistics according to Air America documents:
1) 1964: + 5 (= “149”, “392”, “393”, “401” and “404”) (Minutes BoD-AAM 21 July 64, in: UTD/CIA/B3F5) >
2) 1965: the purchase of 2 “Skyhook” installations for Caribous was approved on 25 May 65; it takes about 30 days to install them (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 25 May 65, in: UTD/CIA/B7F4)
3) 1966: Inventory of 1 Feb. 66, in: UTD/Herd/B2: 4 owned + 5 bailed + 2 more planned
1966: + 2 approved for March 66 (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 23 Feb. 66, in: UTD/CIA/B8F1)
The individual aircraft histories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>registration / serial</th>
<th>c/n (msn)</th>
<th>date acquired</th>
<th>origin</th>
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<tr>
<td>I) DHC-4 Caribous owned by Air Asia Co Ltd and by Air America Inc.:</td>
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1) Caribous acquired in 1962:

1) Caribous acquired in 1962:

Caribous B-851 and B-853 were both registered to Air Asia Company Limited on 1 June 62, but without indicating their manufacturer’s serial numbers (both documents in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel no. 4)

DHC-4 “851”, taken by Joe Hazen at Moung Cha (LS-113), probably in April 1964 (with kind permission from Joe Hazen)

DHC-4 Caribou B-851 34 July 62 bought new

“851” with Fulton Skyhook system, taken by Dave Hickler (photo ex no. 1-WL1-28-26-PB407, now in UTD/Leary/B77F2)
Service history: registered to Air Asia on 1 June 62 (Certificate of Registration, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no.4); acquired in “51/7”, that is in July 62 according to Air Asia’s Statement of Property of 31 March 65 (in: UTD/CIA/B26F5); was to depart Toronto on 10 July 62 (Minutes ExCom AACl of 26 June 62, in: UTD/CIA/B7F1), but departed only on 22 July 1962; Don Schwabel was the ferry pilot of Caribou B-851 and Al Sandoval was his co-pilot. Dave Fairbanks, the DeHavilland company pilot, was along for the ride, to do training when the aircraft got to Vientiane. Don departed Downsville on 22 July and flew to Edmonton/Anchorage/ Adak/Shemya/Tokyo/TPE/ TNN, arriving TNN on 28 July. On 4 August, after Air Asia did whatever to the aircraft, Don flew it to Vientiane via HKG and TOU (Danang SVN) (e-mail dated 21 October 2008, kindly sent to the author by Joe Hazen); officially regd. to Air Asia Co Ltd. as B-851 on 20 August 62 (Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F3); struck horses located on runway while landing at Vientiane (T-08), Laos, on 30 August 62 (Aircraft accidents 1962, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2); repaired; used out of Vientiane on a USAID contract at least 7 Oct. 62 to 1 Oct. 64 (Availability list, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F8); leased from Air Asia; photos, taken at Sam Thong, can be seen on the video made by Ed Eckholdt (at 0.02.35, 0.19.25, and 1.09.50 minutes); between 2 and 14 November 62, B-851 was at Tainan for maintenance (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); reverse props were added only in 1963 (Eckholdt-video at 1.05.55 minutes), probably when B-851 was at Tainan for maintenance between 16 and 21 February 63 (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); made a hard landing in Laos on 22 May 63 (Aircraft accidents 1963, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2); repaired; assigned to contract no. AID-439-342 for use out of Vientiane at least between 1 July and 21 September 63 (AAM Aircraft Availability for 1 July 63, 15 July 63, and 21 September 63, in: UTD/Walker/B25F8); ferried back from Tainan on 17/18 August 63, where it had apparently been for Company business (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); again ferried to Tainan on 9 October 63; back at Vientiane at least on 22 October 63 (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); on 25 January 64, “851” picked up a Helio at Phou Khong (VS-42) and ferried it back to Udorn, and on 27 March 64, “851” picked up another Helio at Ban Nam Thouei (VS-118) (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); on 22/23 February 64, Ed Eckholdt ferried “851” back from Tainan to Vientiane (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); on 28/29 July 64, Ed Eckholdt ferried “851” again back from Tainan to Vientiane (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); ferried Vientiane-Tainan on 17 September 64 and back on 29/30 September 64 (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); when a fully armed RLAF T-28 exploded on the ramp of Vientiane airport on 24 January 65, several more bombs cooked off, and flying metal also caused damage to a number of Air America aircraft parked nearby; in his report to the President of Air America, Dave Hickler notes: “A number of our people performed well under this crisis. Captain Joe Hazen, for instance, between bomb blasts started up a Caribou which was loaded with gasoline drums and taxied it out to the ramp with the landing gear pins still in and took it off single handed and flew it to Udorn for safety. This man showed real courage and real intelligence during the emergency. He saved one aircraft from possible sure destruction”; according to the statement of D. Fisher that is part of that report, that Caribou was “851” that “had been parked in front of Traffic and loading with chopper gas was completed” (Report “Blow up”, that is document no. GML-65-036H sent by Dave Hickler to Air America’s President on 28 January 1965; copy in the possession of Joe Hazen who kindly faxed it to the author on 9 May 2005); a photo taken at Vientiane in March 65.
with Fulton recovery system standing besides the aircraft can be found in: UTD/Hickler/B29; a photo taken by Dave Hickler (formerly no. 1-WL1-28-26-PB407), showing “851” with the Fulton Skyhook system mounted can be found at UTD/Leary/B77F2; at Sam Thong in May 65 as “851”, photos can be found in: UTD/Hickler/B28, B29, and B32; a slide is in UTD/Wiren/B2; probably the reason for dropping the “B-” was that China and Laos broke off diplomatic relations in mid-1962 which also affected the registration of AAM aircraft (see Minutes ExCom-AACL of 25 Sept. 62, in: UTD/CIA/B7F1); used out of Vientiane under contract AID-439-342 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; Aircraft availability of 1 April 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B8F4); still in July 64 (Aircraft status as of 7 July 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), and in October 64 (Aircraft availability as of 1 Oct. 64, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F8); based at Vientiane in April 65 (Aircraft list of April 65, in: UTD/Walker/B12F3), and still on 22 May 65, but based at Udorn on 27 October 65 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memos of 3 May 65, 22 May 65, and 27 October 65, all in: UTD/Walker/B12F3+4); test flown at Tainan on 3 August 65 by Joe Hazen who then ferried “851” Tainan-Taipei-Hong Kong-Danang-Vientiane on 4 and 5 August 65 (e-mails dated 31 December 2004, kindly sent to the author by Joe Hazen); used out of Udorn under CEECO contract 59-069 in November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); still based at Udorn on 1 January 66 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memo of 1 January 66, in: UTD/Walker/B7F8); flew Bangkok-Vientiane on 18 December 65 (Flight crew member monthly movement report of A. J. Zarkos, in: UTD/Zarkos/B1F8); photo in Flight, 26 March 70, p. 466; photo in Airliners, summer 93, p. 19, with Fulton recovery system; on 5 January 66, no. one engine of “851” went out some 30 minutes out of Pitt’s Camp (T-603), Thailand; so the aircraft returned to T-603 and was repaired (XOXO of 5 Jan. 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); in use out of Udorn under contract AID-439-713 on 8 April 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); still on 4 May 66, called thru 27 June 66 (Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2); still on 1 May 68, called thru 30 June 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); still on 15 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 Aug. 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); in use at Vientiane at least between 2 Sept. 65 and 8 Feb. 69 (Log book of L. H. Maxwell, in: UTD/Maxwell/B1F6; Log book of R. L. Wofford, in: UTD/Wofford [Sm.C. 6]); incurred substantial damage as the result of a hard landing at Ban Moung Ngan (LS-236), Laos, on 8 Nov. 67, resulting in a damaged skin, spar, rib, flaps and main landing gear (Accident report, in: UTD/Hickler/B24F3; Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 14 Nov. 67, in: UTD/CIA/B8F2; possibly, the photo on the video made by John Tarn at 0.16.52 minutes refers to this accident); repaired; at Tainan for maintenance and Skyhook modifications in September 68 (F.O.C. of 15 August 68, in: UTD/LaShomb/B14); the nose gear collapsed while taxiing at Danang (V-03), South Vietnam, on 23 Oct. 68 (Accident report, in: UTD/Hickler/B24F7); repaired; based at Udorn 16-30 June 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); flew Udorn (T-08) - Luang Prabang (L-54) on 27 July 69 (Log book of D. Keele, in: UTD/Keele/B1F6); current on 1 July 70 (Leary, The aircraft of Air America, p. 20), but assigned to contract VN-70 out of Saigon (Aircraft Information Circular of 1 July 70, in: UTD/Leary/B41F4); photo in Air America Log, vol. V, no. 7, 1971, p. 2; used out of Saigon at least between 20 April 71 and 6 July 71 (Saigon daily aircraft schedules, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F1); based at Saigon 1-15 July 71; put into inactive storage at Saigon on 1 July 71, in process of re-registration 16-31 July 71 (F.O.C. of 15 July 71, in:
UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); the registration was cancelled on 23 July 71 (Letter by Clyde S. Carter, dated 23 July 71, in: UTD/CIA/B15F2).

**Fate:** sold by Air Asia Co Ltd to Air America on 23 July 71 and rereg as N11014 on 29 July 71 (Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F3; Bill of Sale in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel no.4).

Bill of Sale dated 23 July 71: Caribou B-851 of Air Asia Co Ltd to Air America Inc (in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel no.4)

| N11014 | 34 | 23 July 71 | Air America B-851 |

**Service history:** registration requested on 23 July 71 (Letter by Clyde S. Carter dated 23 July 71, in: UTD/CIA/B15F2); in use out of Saigon under contract AID VN-100 16 April-1 May 73 (F.O.C. of 16 April 73, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F14); used in a convertible 12 seat/cargo configuration out of Saigon 1 Nov.-31 Dec. 73 under contract AID VN-100, and since 1 Dec. 73 as a spare aircraft (F.O.C. of 1 Nov. 73 and 1 Dec. 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); was in temporary storage in Feb. 74 (F.O.C. of 1 Feb. 74, in: UTD/CIA/B51F21); reactivated and used out of Saigon as a spare aircraft for contract AID C-1029 at least 1-30 April 74 (F.O.C. of 1 April 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); used as a spare aircraft out of Saigon 1-31 May 74 (F.O.C. of 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); damaged at coordinates WT-8726 near Svay Rieng (C-49), Cambodia, on 30 May 74, when three pallets of cargo shifted on take-off and broke open the rear cargo door; there were no injuries; the aircraft was repaired and returned to service on 31 May 74 (XOXO of 30 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B10F12; Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 11 June 74, in: UTD/CIA/B10F1); in April 75, N11014 was used to carry fuel to keep the Air
America UH-1Hs in operation (Telex dated 28 March 75, in: UTD/CIA/B18F2); based at Saigon in March 75 (Telex dated 20 March 75, in: UTD/CIA/B18F2); departure from Saigon to the Continental US was scheduled only for 15 May 75 (Telex dated 20 March 75, in: UTD/CIA/B18F2).

**Fate:** abandoned at Con Son Island, South Vietnam, on 29 April 75; however, it was requested on 11 June 75 that the registration should be maintained (XOXO of 19 July 75: “Write-off of aircraft that were abandoned at Saigon”, in: UTD/CIA/B40F4; Survey report dated 21 July 75; Letters by Clyde S. Carter to FAA, dated 11 June 75 and 2 August 77, in: UTD/CIA/B17F4 and UTD/CIA/B18F10), amounting to a loss of $ 526,634.86 (list in UTD/CIA/B18F7); still regd. to Air America in the 1974-77 USCARS; canx; no longer regd. on 31 Oct. 82; it had been reported that the fuselage of this aircraft had been seen painted as “34/U” at Cape May in basic Indian Air Force camouflage colors, fuselage only, marked with its c/n and a code letter, at Cap May, NJ, on 26 Jan. 99 – one of 7 former Indian Air Force aircraft (Aviation Letter, no.387, p. 43); even registration N21NC had been reserved for this aircraft on 19 March 96 for Newcal Aviation Inc, Little Ferry, NJ, and again on 19 December 96 for Pen Turbo Aviation, Rio Grande, NJ. “There are seven other ex Indian Air Force Caribous at Cape May, and all do indeed have the c/n painted on the fuselage. But this particular aircraft was painted incorrectly. Although painted as "34", it is in fact c/n 94, ex Indian Air Force M2168, coded "U". The same error caused to the reservation of N21NC for this aircraft. This reservation was never taken up” (e-mail dated 27 June 2009 kindly sent by Aad van der Voet to Paul Oelkrug who forwarded it to the author); the fate of former Air America Caribou N11014 can only be guessed: Probably like many South Vietnamese Air Force Caribous also captured by the Communists, it was flown by the Communists as long as spare parts were available and then scrapped.

**Service history:** registered to Air Asia on 1 June 62 (Certificate of Registration, in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel no.4); acquired in “51/7”, that is in July 62 according to Air Asia’s Statement of Property of 31 March 65 (in: UTD/CIA/B26F5); ferried by Ed Eckholdt (PIC), LeRoy Letender (Co-pilot), and Don Williams (Navigator) Toronto-Edmonton-Anchorag-Shemya-Tokyo-Tainan between 10 and 16 July 62; on 21/2 July, Eckholdt ferried B-853 from Tainan to Vientiane, and after some days of training, B-853 was flown on shuttles between Sites 22 and 20 on 30 July 62 (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); between 5 and 12 August 62, Ed Eckholdt shuttled between Hua Hin in southern Thailand and Sam

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**Images:**

- DHC-4 853 taken in the early sixties (UTD/Hickler/B33)
- DHC-4 B-853 at Saigon in June 67 (UTD/Hickler/B28)

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**DHC-4 Caribou B-853**

- **52**
- **July 62**
- **bought new**
Thong in Laos via Vientiane, Udorn or Takhli in B-853, probably bringing PARU advisors and their equipment (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); leased from Air Asia; all silver; photo on the video tape made by Ed Eckholdt at 1.05.55 minutes; initially used as “853”; a photo in UTD/Hickler/B33 and photos on the video tape made by Ed Eckholdt (at 1.13.10 minutes) show this aircraft in Laos during 1963, having a light gray anti-corrosion test color scheme; probably the reason for dropping the “B-” was that China and Laos broke off diplomatic relations in mid-1962 which also affected the registration of AAM aircraft (see Minutes ExCom-AAACL of 25 Sept. 62, in: UTD/CIA/B7F1); hit obstructions when landing at an airstrip in South Vietnam on 28 June 63 (Aircraft accidents 1963, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2); repaired; “853” was assigned to CSG contract no. 1861 for use out of Danang at least between 1 July and 13 September 63; that day transferred to Thai Police contract no. 58-056 for use out of Bangkok (AAM Aircraft Availability for 1 July 63, 15 July 63, and 21 September 63, all in: UTD/Walker/B25F8); flown Bangkok-Danang-Hong Kong-Tainan for maintenance on 11 November 63 and the same way back on 18 November 63, both ways piloted by Joe Hazen (E-mail dated 5 May 2013, kindly sent to the author by Joe Hazen); on 11 February 64, Ed Eckholdt flew “853” Bangkok-Takhli-Phitsanulok-Bangkok (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); ferried Bangkok-Danang-Hong Kong-Tainan on 25 February 64 (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); used out of Bangkok on Royal Thai Border Patrol Police contract 58-056 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; Aircraft availability of 1 April 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B8F4); still in July 64 (Aircraft status as of 7 July 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); ferried back from Tainan to Bangkok on 7/8 September 64 and used for paratroop drop practice at Phitsanulok on 9/10 September 64 (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); flew Bangkok-Tainan on 29 October 64 and Tainan-Bangkok on 4 November 64 and made border air drops out of Phitsanulok on 21/22 November 64; based at Bangkok in April 65 (Aircraft list of April 65, in: UTD/Walker/B12F3), also between 3 May 65 and 27 October 65 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memos of 3 May 65, 22 May 65, and 27 October 65, all in: UTD/Walker/B12F3+4); again flown by Ed Eckholdt between 3 May 65 and 1 August 65, mostly making air drops out of Phitsanulok or Udorn; ferried Bangkok-Danang-Hong Kong-Tainan on 6 June 65 and back to Bangkok on 12/13 June 65 (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); participated in the search for the ill-fated UH-34D H-32 in the Saravane (L-44) area on 13 October 65 (Chronological account, in: UTD/CIA/ B58F6); used out of Bangkok under contract AID-493-66 in November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); still on 8 April 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1) and on 4 May 66 (Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2); had a hard landing at ? on 26 March 66; back in service on 5 April 66 (Minutes ExCom-AAACL/AAM of 6 April 66, in: UTD/CIA/B8F1); transferred to Saigon in 67 (?) for use under contract AID/VN-23; released from that contract on 31 December 67 and used as a spare aircraft still on 1 May 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); the left landing gear collapsed on touchdown at Saigon (V-01) on 2 June 67, when it was already “B-853”; repaired at a cost of $13,900; back in service on 11 June 67 (XOXO of 2 June 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16; Minutes ExCom-AAACL/AAM of 13 June 67 and 11 July 67,
in: UTD/CIA/B8F2; a photo of this accident is in UTD/Hickler/B28); at Saigon on 5 May 67; photo in UTD/Luckett/B1F14; on 26 February 68, B-853 received battle damage while parked at Tan Son Nhat (V-01), when a rocket round hit the airfield; repaired (XOXO of 26 Feb. 68, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); in use out of Saigon at least between 11 June 68 and 17 July 68 (Log book of R. L. Wofford, in: UTD/Wofford [Sm. C. 6]); bought by Air America from Air Asia on 5 August 68.

**Fate:** ferried to Tainan for modification on 5 August 68; renumbered as “61-2388” (F.O.C. of 15 Aug. 68, in: UTD/LaShomb/B14).

61-2388 52 5 Aug. 68 Air America B-853

**Service history:** leased to the USAF 3 Sept. 68 - 15 June 73 as “61-2388” (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B; F.O.C. of 15 Aug. 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1; Letters by Clyde S. Carter to the Pacific Corp., dated 15 June 69, and to the USAF, dated 15 May 73, in: UTD/CIA/B15F5); a Company Inter-Office Routing Slip of 2 June 70 (in: UTD/Bisson/B5, microfilm reel no.4) gives the following details: B-853 was de-registered on 7 September 68 and kept on Company aircraft liability schedule as 61-2388; accepted by the USAF ferry crew and departed Tainan on 27 September 68; deleted from the Company list on 1 December 69; not current with Air America on 1 July 71, 15 July 71, 1 Nov. 73 (F.O.C. of 1 July 71, 15 July 71, 1 Nov. 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B+C).

Fate: sold to The Pacific Corp., Washington, DC, on 15 June 73; sold to Southern Sky Inc., Dallas, TX, on 27 June 73 (Invoice of 27 June 73, in: UTD/CIA/B15F5; Minutes BoD-AAM of 15 Nov. 73, in: UTD/CIA/B4F3; Minutes of the Pacific Corp. of 30 Oct. 73, in: UTD/CIA/B1F6; Letter of Paul C. Velte to Southern Sky, dated 15
Apparently, the aircraft then passed to a CIA-backed Project in Iran called “IBEX” during the mid and late 1970s and was flown in the colors of the Imperial Iranian Air Force (IIAF) and serialled “553”: Together with its sistership “555”, whose identity is unknown, both Caribous were withdrawn from use following the Iranian revolution in January 1979. The aircraft was then transferred to the Tehran Aerospace Exhibition Center at Mehrabad Airport in Tehran, where, until 2007, the aircraft still carried its military markings, with “IIAF” on the nose, and serial 553 in Arabic numerals below it. Between March 2007 and February 2008 it was repainted in civil colors, with the fictitious registration “EP-RAJ”. “A photo of the aircraft’s data plate very recently confirmed that the DHC-4A Caribou still surviving at the Tehran Aerospace Exhibition Center is none other than c/n 52, ex B-853 and 61-2388(2)” (e-mail dated 27 June 2009 kindly sent by Aad van der Voet to Paul Oelkrug who forwarded it to the author).
2) Caribous acquired in 1964/65:

DHC-4 N539Y at Long Tieng in 1965
(UTD/V. David)

ICCS Air Services DHC-4 N539Y
at Saigon in 1973
(Air America Log, vol. VII, no.8, 1973, p. 4)

DHC-4 Caribou N539Y 197 26 Nov. 64 bought new

Service history: arrived at Saigon from Bangkok on 15 December 64 (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); regd. to Air America as N539Y on 6 January 65 (Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F3); on 19 January 65, the gear of Caribou N539Y collapsed at V-70 (XOXO of 19 January 65, in: UTD/Walker/B25F2); based at Saigon in April 65 (Aircraft list of April 65, in: UTD/Walker/B12F3), also between 3 May 65 and 27 October 65 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memos of 3 May 65, 22 May 65, and 27 October 65, all in: UTD/Walker/B12F3+4); flown by Ed Eckholdt out of Saigon between 5 and 14 February 65 (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); at Long Tieng (LS-20A), Laos, in 65 (photo in UTD/V. David [Sm. Coll.1]); the left wing of N539Y was damaged at Saigon on 26 September 65, when China Airlines C-46 CA-2 was towed too close to the Caribou (XOXO of 26 September 65, in: UTD/Walker/B24F1); the right wheel received battle damage at Quang Ngai (V-23) on 3 October 65 (XOXO of 3 October 65, in: UTD/Walker/B24F1); used out of Saigon on USAF contract AF49(604)-4395 in November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); still on 8 April 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1) and on 4 May 66 (Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2); the landing gear partially retracted while landing at Hue Citadel (V-70), South Vietnam, on 18 November 65; repaired (XOXO of 18 November 65, in: UTD/Walker/B25F2); Aircraft accidents 1965, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2; Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 24 November 65, in: UTD/CIA/B7F4); on 16 December 65, the nose wheel of N539Y stuck in the mud at Duc Pho (V-201), while the aircraft was shot at; the crew was evacuated and later the aircraft was temporarily repaired and flown back to Saigon (XOXOs of 16 December 65, in: UTD/Walker/B25F2); received battle damage at Quang Ngai (V-23) on 16 March 66, damaging the fuel cell; returned to service on 28 March 66 (XOXO of 16 March 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16; Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 23 March 66, in: UTD/CIA/B8F1); the fuel cell was damaged on the ground on 7 May 66; returned to service on 15 May 66 (Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 11 May 66, in: UTD/CIA/B8F1); on 1 September 66, the propeller of N539Y was damaged at Tuy Hoa (V-113); repaired (XOXO of 1 Sept. 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); a photo taken at Saigon in February 67 is in Love, Wings of Air America, p. 45; on 15 February 67, N539Y made a precautionary landing at Gia Nghia (V-202) because of a loss of oil pressure; repaired (XOXO of 15 Feb. 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); on 5
July 67, a truck drove into N539Y, while it was at the ramp at Saigon (V-01); repaired (XOXO of 5 July 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B27F1); transferred to Vientiane in?; on 24 January 68, a truck drove into N539Y, when it was parked at Vientiane (L-08), Laos; repaired (XOXO of 24 January 68, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F17); returned to Saigon on 5 April 68, used under contract AID/VN-23 on 1 May 68, called thru 30 June 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herdl/B2); on 23 October 68, the nose gear of N539Y sheared after landing at Danang (V-03); repaired (XOXO of 23 Oct. 68, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F17); based at Saigon unassigned on 15 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 Aug. 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); in use out of Saigon on 27 May 68 (Log book of R. L. Wofford, in: UTD/Wofford [Sm.C. 6]; and photo in UTD/McCauley/B1F3); based at Saigon 15-30 June 69 as a spare aircraft; used out of Saigon at least between 20 April 71 and 23 June 71 (Saigon daily flight schedules, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F1); put into inactive storage 1 July 71 and stored at Saigon 1-30 July 71 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, 1 July 71, 15 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); in use out of Saigon under contract ICCS 73-008, that is by ICCS Air Services, Saigon, at least 16 April-1 May 73 (F.O.C. of 16 April 73, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F14) and 1 Nov. 31 Dec. 73 (F.O.C. of 1 Nov. 73 and 1 Dec. 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C; photo in Air America Log, vol. VII, no. 8, 1973); in use out of Saigon on 26 December 73 (Saigon daily flight schedule of 26 Dec. 73, in: UTD/Dexter/F1); in temporary storage in Feb. 74, but re-activated as a spare aircraft in Feb. 74 (F.O.C. of 1 Feb. 74, in: UTD/CIA/B51F2); used out of Saigon as a spare aircraft for contract AID C-1029 at least 1-30 April 74 (F.O.C. of 1 April 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); in inactive storage at Saigon 1-31 May 74 (F.O.C. of 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); was to be sold to Masin Aircraft, Cologne, on 23 December 74, but the deal fell thru (Summary of sales, in: UTD/CIA/B40F6); at Hong Kong in 1975; based at Saigon in March 75 (Telex dated 20 March 75, in: UTD/CIA/B18F2).

**Fate:** departure from Saigon to the Continental US was scheduled for 15 April 75 (Telex dated 20 March 75, in: UTD/CIA/B18F2); at Tainan in June 75 (Airplane list of 12 June 75, in: UTD/CIA/B51F12); was at Tainan between 15 June 75 and 9 September 75; ferried to Roswell NM, but stopped at Midway for maintenance; still there on 30 September 75 (Air America, owned aircraft as of 30 September 75, in: UTD/CIA/B56F1); sold to Omni Aircraft Sales, Washington DC, at $ 200,000 according to the Sales Agreement of 13 November 75 (Summary of aircraft sales, in: UTD/CIA/B40F6); passed thru Honolulu 29 Dec. 75 to 7 Jan. 76 on return to the USA; at San Francisco on 8 Feb. 76 all silver with US flag on tail; arrived at Roswell, NM, for storage on 11 Feb. 76 (Letter by Clyde S. Carter dated 12 Feb. 76, in: UTD/CIA/B18F9); sold to Omni Aircraft Sales, Washington, DC (TT 10611 hrs) on 17 Feb. 76; cancellation of registry requested on 17 February 76 (Properties list dated 17 Feb. 76, in: UTD/CIA/B18F9); Letter by Clyde S. Carter dated 17 Feb. 76, in: UTD/CIA/B18F9); sold to Alaska Air Service, Anchorage, in 1976 (?); at Anchorage on 1 Sept. 78 and 1 July 79, all metallic; photo in Air-Britain Digest, May-June 79, p. 53; sold to Charles T. Connell Trustee, Anchorage, AK in November 81; sold to Wood's Air Service, Palmer, AK (Warren W. Woods), in October 83; current in 1986; crashed on final approach to Lime Village, AK, on 20 March 86, killing 2 crew; was on a flight from Palmer, AK, to Lime Village; cancelled in April 87; still noted as deregistered in March 2004 (request submitted to the FAA on 13 March 2004 at http://162.58.35.241/acdatabase/).
DHC-4 N544Y, taken at Tan Son Nhut in January 1970 by Bob Livingstone
(with kind permission from Bob Livingstone)

DHC-4 Caribou N544Y 241 21 Oct. 65 bought new

**Service history:** bought on 25 October 65; regd. to Air America as N544Y on 12 November 65 (Status as of 15 January 74, in: UTD/CIA/B56F3); manufactured in October 65 (Inventory list made up by R. Dixon Speas Associates Inc and dated 10 and 11 November 1975, p. 5, in: UTD/CIA/B18F6); take-over at Downsview scheduled for 8 December 65 (Minutes ExCom-AAACL/AAM of 6 Oct. 65, in: UTD/CIA/B7F4); was to be used out of Saigon on USAF contract AF49(604)-4395 in November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); based at Saigon on 1 January 66 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memo of 1 January 66, in: UTD/Walker/B7F8); still assigned on 8 April 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1) and on 4 May 66 (Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2); still on 1 May 68, called thru 30 June 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); received light battle damage about 8 miles from Duc Pho (V-201) on 26 March 66, while en route from Quang Ngai (V-23) to V-84; returned to service on 28 March 66 (XOXO of 26 March 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16; Minutes ExCom-AAACL/AAM of 6 April 66, in: UTD/CIA/B8F1); on 16 November 66, a kicker fell out of N544Y during a drop about 5 miles southwest of Binh Thanh Thon (V-168), but landed safely with his parachute (XOXO of 16 Nov. 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); at Vientiane 30 Jan. 67 (Flight crew member monthly movement report of A. J. Zarkos, in: UTD/Zarkos/B1F8); in use out of Saigon at least between 29 May 68 and 21 June 70; flew Saigon-Danang-Hong Kong-Tainan on 2 July 68 and Tainan-Danang-Vientiane-Saigon on 8-11 July 68 (see also Log book of R. L. Wofford, in: UTD/Wofford [Sm. C. 6]); used out of Saigon as a spare aircraft 16-30 June 69, 15 Aug.- 1 Sept. 69 (F.O.C. of 15 Aug. 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); a photo taken by Bob Livingstone at Saigon in Jan. 70 is in Love, *Wings of Air America*, p. 48; used out of Saigon at least between 20 April 71 and 23 June 71 (Saigon daily flight schedules in: UTD/Hickler/B8F1); put into inactive storage at Saigon on 3 July 71 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, 1 July 71, and 15 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B+C); in use out of Saigon under contract AID VN-100 at least between 16 April and 1 May 73 (F.O.C. of 16 April 73, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F14); used as a convertible 12 seat/cargo configuration out of Saigon 1 Nov.-31 Dec. 73 under contract AID VN-100, and since 1 Dec. 73 as a spare aircraft (F.O.C. of 1 Nov. 73 and 1 Dec. 73, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); still a spare aircraft in Feb. 74 (F.O.C. of 1 Feb. 74, in: UTD/CIA/B51F21); in use out of Saigon 1-30 April 74 as a spare aircraft (F.O.C. of 1 April 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); in inactive storage at Saigon 1-31 May 74 (F.O.C. of 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B+C); was to be sold to Masin Aircraft, Cologne, on 23 December 74, but the deal fell thru (Summary of...
sales, in: UTD/CIA/B40F6); at Hong Kong in 1975; based at Saigon in March 75 (Telex dated 20 March 75, in: UTD/CIA/B18F2).

**Fate:** departure from Saigon to the Continental US was scheduled for 20 April 75 (Telex dated 20 March 75, in: UTD/CIA/B18F2); at Tainan in June 75 (Aircraft list of 12 June 75, in: UTD/CIA/B51F12); at Tainan between 15 June 75 and 9 September 75; ferried via Adak, AK, (photo in: UTD/Ann Stuart [Sm.Coll. 5]) to Roswell, NM, between 9 and 25 September 75 (Air America, owned aircraft as of 30 September 75, in: UTD/CIA/B56F1); arrived at Roswell, NM, on 25 Sept. 75 (Inventory list made up by R. Dixon Speas Associates Inc and dated 10 and 11 November 1975, p. 7, in: UTD/CIA/B18F6); was to be sold to Omni Aircraft Sales, Washington DC, at $200,000 according to the Sales Agreement of 13 November 75 (Summary of aircraft sales, in: UTD/CIA/B40F6); sold to Omni Aircraft Sales, Washington, DC, at TT 8931 hrs. on 2 February 76 (Properties list dated 17 Feb. 76, in: UTD/CIA/B18F9); deregistration requested on 6 Feb. 76 (Letter by Clyde S. Carter dated 6 Feb. 76, in: UTD/CIA/B16F9); sold to American Elite Inc, Chicago, in December 76; at Miami all silver on 12 March 77; leased to Air Cargo America, San Juan, PR, in March 78; at Opa Locka, FL, on 24 March 78; a photo was published in: *Propliner*, no. 32, p. 46; leased from Jim McIvor, Miami; at Miami in July 80; current in 1981-82; bought in October 83; sold to Union Flights, Sacramento, CA, in September 85; entered service in January 86; sold to Alcohol Aviation Fuels Inc. on 11 Feb. 91, but still leased to Union Flights; current in 1995; sold to Operation Blessing International Relief & Development, Norfolk, VA, on 4 August 94; regd. on 5 Aug. 94; leased to G. de Klerk, Benoni-Brakpan, Zaire, in 1995; parked at Brakpan, on 22 Nov. 95; seen stored at Brakpan, South Africa, on 10 Nov. 97 in poor condition and without engines; regd. in to Wilmington Trust Company, Wilmington, DE, on 24 November 97; still at Brakpan, South Africa, on 1 December 99, partly broken up (*Aviation Letter*, no. 398, p. 42); still noted as deregistered in March 2004 (request submitted to the FAA on 13 March 2004 at [http://162.58.35.241/acdatabase/](http://162.58.35.241/acdatabase/)).

3) A Caribou acquired in 1975 that was never used:

**DHC-4 Caribou N6080 2 June 75 Tynol Associates Inc., N6080; previously CF-LAN-X, then CF-LAN, then N6080 of Intermountain Aviation**

**Service history:** according to a contract dated 24 February 75, this aircraft was exchanged for former Air America C-45s N9542Z (c/n AF-674) and N3728G (AF-65) (see Summary of aircraft sales, in: UTD/CIA/B40F6), but the aircraft did never come to South Vietnam; registration to Air America requested on 30 May 75 (Letter by Clyde S. Carter dated 30 May 75, in: UTD/CIA/B17F4); regd. in June 75; only a paper transaction; the aircraft was still at Marana AZ in June 75 (Aircraft list of 12 June 75, in: UTD/CIA/B51F12); ferried from Marana AZ to Roswell NM on 6 August 75 (Air America, owned aircraft as of 30 September 75, in: UTD/CIA/B56F1); a photo is contained in the inventory list made up by R. Dixon Speas Associates Inc and dated 10 and 11 November 1975 (p. 8, in: UTD/CIA/B18F6).

**Fate:** sold to Omni Aircraft Sales, Washington DC, at $235,000 according to the Sales Agreement of 13 November 75 (Summary of aircraft sales, in: UTD/CIA/B40F6); sold on to Omni Aircraft Sales, Washington, at TT 6383 hrs. on 2 February 76 (Properties list dated 17 Feb. 76, in: UTD/CIA/B18F9); deregistration
requested on 6 Feb. 76 (Letter by Clyde S. Carter dated 6 Feb. 76, in: UTD/CIA/B16F9); sold to Environmental Research Institute of Michigan, Detroit, on 16 June 77; flew Reykjavik-Biggin Hill-Ramstein on 24/25 July 80 and returned Frankfurt-Prestwick-Reykjavik on 17/18 Sept. 80; current in 1995; rereg'd. to ERIM International Inc, Ann Arbor, MI, in September 97; rereg'd. to Environmental Research Institute of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, on 11 June 98; sold to H.A.T. Aviation Inc, Ypsilanti, MI, in August 98; rereg'd. on 27 Aug. 98; current with them in March 2004 (request submitted to the FAA on 13 March 2004 at http://162.58.35.241/acdatabase/).
II) C-7A Caribous bailed from the US Army and since 1967 from the USAF:

1) A Caribou evaluated in 1962:
DHC YAC-1 Caribou “333” 4 62   ex US Army 57-3080; previously CF-LKU-X

Service history: leased from the US Army for evaluation in the spring of 1962 (Aircraft list of June 62, corrected to Sept.1963, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); Air America pilot Fred Walker evaluated the Caribou’s performance. On his initial flight into Pa Doung (LS-05), with Col. H. Aderholt in the right seat, they landed short and skidded to the end of the runway. So the agency advised the Army that the Caribou should be equipped with reversible props (Trest, *Air Commando One*, p. 119). On 12 May 62, Fred Walker landed “333” at a newly constructed airstrip, Lima Site 30: Long Tieng (Hamilton-Merritt, *Tragic mountains*, p. 118).

Fate: returned to the US Army as 57-3080 in 62? (Aircraft list of June 62, corrected to Sept. 1963, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); re-designated as CV-2A-DH in 1962; transferred to the USAF on 1 January 67; to 0-73080 with the US Army in?; at Toronto on 24 June 73; to 57-3080 with the US Army Aviation Museum, Fort Rucker, Alabama, in ?; still preserved there in November 88.

2) Caribous received in 1964:

DHC C-7A Caribou “149” 85     27 May 64 US Army 62-4149

Service history: received on 27 May 64; used out of Vientiane under contract AID-439-342 (Aircraft status as of 7 July 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); flown on 10, 20, 21, and 25 June 1964 out of Vientiane by Joe Hazen (e-mail dated 5 January 2005, kindly sent to the author by Joe Hazen), flown by Ed Eckholdt several times between 14 June 64 and 1 October 64 (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B6F12).

Fate: flown Vientiane-Udorn by Ed Eckholdt on 1 October 64, “ferry to Army” (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B6F12); became 62-4149 with the USAF on 1 Jan. 67; transferred to the US Army / Connecticut Air National Guard, Groton, Aviation Classification Repair Activity Depot (AVCRAD) as 0-24149 in 75/6?; active in August 90; withdrawn from use at Groton New London Airport, Connecticut in 95; sold to Westair International USA Inc, Monument, CO, as N9249Q on 2 Aug. 95; regd. in Oct. 95; sold to Patrick M. Murphy, Queensland, Australia, as N9249Q in Feb. 98; regd. 13 Feb. 98; sold to Catalina Flying Boats, Long Beach, CA, as N9249Q on 4 Sept. 98; regd. on 15 Dec. 98; sold to Vanderwall Aircraft LLC, Peachtree City, GA, as N9249Q in July 99; regd. on 12 July 99; rereg'd. to them as N149HF on 24 Aug. 99; reg. reserved on 12 July 99; current with them in March 2004 (request submitted to the FAA on 13 March 2004 at [http://162.58.35.241/acdatabase/]).
C-7A “389” in Army brown colors somewhere in Laos in the mid-sixties
(UTD/Wiren/B2)

C-7A “389” all silver with a radar nose at Vientiane in 1971
(Air America Log, vol. V, no.6, 1971, p.7)

DHC C-7A Caribou “389” 46 64 US Army 61-2389

Service history: received after 1 April 64, but returned to the US Army on 8 June 64
(AAM aircraft availability of 1 April 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B8F4; Aircraft status as of
7 July 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); a slide in UTD/Wiren/B2 shows “389” in
dark colors without a radar nose; based at Vientiane in April 65 (Aircraft list of April
65, in: UTD/Walker/B12F3), also between 3 May 65 and 27 October 65 (Planned
Aircraft Assignments, Memos of 3 May 65, 22 May 65, and 27 October 65, all in:
UTD/Walker/B12F3+4); flown out of Vientiane by Ed Eckholdt on 30 and 31 May 65
(Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); used out of Vientiane under
contract AID-439-342 in November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in:
UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); still on 8 April 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in:
UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), on 4 May 66 (Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in:
UTD/Hickler/B1F2), on 1 May 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2),
and on 15 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 Aug. 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); the USAF
Assignment records (reel AVH-7) note for that period: C-7A 61-2389 GI (= returned
from outside the USAF) from CNA (= US Army) to LOG HQ, Wright Patterson, on
67120; GF / Reconciliation on 67151, which probably means: transferred from the US
Army to the USAF, Logistic Air Command, Headquarters, Wright Patterson AFB,
on 30 April 67, but administratively, it was decided on 31 May 67 to let the aircraft with
its user Air America; again with Air America in use out of Vientiane at least between
23 August 65 and 11 April 72; on 28 September 67, “389” received battle damage
near Savannakhet (L-39), but nobody on board was injured (XOXO of 28 Sept. 67, in:
UTD/Hickler/B27F1); on 20 June 68, “389” received battle damage at coordinates TJ
4275 in Laos; fortunately, nobody on board was injured, and the damage to the
aircraft was only minor; repaired (XOXO of 20 June 68, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F14); flew
Vientiane-Danang-Hong Kong-Tainan on 29 July 69 and Tainan-Hong Kong-
Savannakhet-Vientiane on 12 Aug. 69 (Log book of L. H. Maxwell, in:
UTD/Maxwell/B1F6; Flight crew member monthly movement report of A. J. Zarkos,
in: UTD/Zarkos/B1F8; and Log book of R. L. Wofford, in: UTD/Wofford [Sm. C.
6]); photo taken in the mid 60s shows “389” camouflaged, but without a radar nose,
so it was probably used on night drops (in: UTD/Hickler/B28+29); based at Vientiane
16-30 June 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); flew Vientiane (L-08)
- Long Tieng (LS-20A) on 1 January 70 (Log book of D. Keele, in:
UTD/Keele/B1F6); current on 1 July 70 (Leary, The aircraft of Air America, p. 20); at
Udorn on 20 July 70; current on 3 August 70 (Aircraft time, in: UTD/CIA/B29F4);
damaged at San Tiau (LS-2), Laos, on 28 December 70, when Boumy Vongachak was
killed by gunfire, when flying under the provisions of contract no. AID-439-342 (XOXO of 28 Dec. 70, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F10; List “Deceased employees”, in: UTD/Leary/B34F1; Memorial file, in: UTD/LaShomb/B16F3); repaired; based at Vientiane 1-31 July 71 (F.O.C. of 1 July 71, 15 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); lost the rear upper cargo door in flight 10 miles south of Ban Xon (LS-272) on 13 August 71 (Accident report, in: UTD/Anthony/F4); repaired; photos in UTD/Abadie/B2F3 and Air America Log, vol. V, no. 6, 1971, p. 7; damaged by ground fire over Laos on 9 December 71, while making a drop; the bottom of the fuselage was damaged; repaired (Minutes ExCom/AACL/AAM of 11 Jan. 72, in: UTD/CIA/B9F7); current on 7 July 72 (Airframe time report, in: UTD/CIA/B29F9); current in December 72 (Airframe time report, in: UTD/CIA/B32F1); maintained by Air America Vientiane at least on 1 January 73, 1 March 73, 1 July 73, and 1 August 73 (Assigned, maintained aircraft, in: UTD/CIA/B32F1 and /B31F10); in use out of Vientiane under contract F04606-71-C-0002 at least 16 April-1 May 73 (F.O.C. of 16 April 73, in: UTD/Kaufman/ B1F14); in use out of Udorn under contract F04606-71-C-0002 at least 1 Nov.-31 Dec. 73, 1-28 Feb. 74 (F.O.C. of 1 Feb. 74, in: UTD/CIA/B51F1), and 1 April-31 May 74 (F.O.C. of 1 Nov. 73, 1 Dec. 73, 1 April 74, and 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); flew the last Air America service out of Laos on 3 June 74, from Vientiane to Udorn (UTD/Leary/B1 for 3 June 74).

**Fate:** probably returned to the USAF in June 74; became 0-12389 of US Army / Mississippi Air National Guard, Gulfport, Aviation Classification Repair Activity Depot (AVCRAD), in 75/6; active in August 90; sold to the National Museum of Naval Aviation, Pensacola, FL on 24 November 92; regd. on 4 Dec. 92 as N6154T; sold to Air Power Financial Group Inc in ?; sold to Bishop Aviation, Decatur, TX, on 18 March 94; regd on 30 March 94; current in 1995; sold to Turbine Group Inc., Melbourne, FL, on 18 Dec. 96; regd. in Jan. 97; sold to St. James Development Inc., Naperville, IL, in January 98; regd. on 23 Jan. 98; current with them in March 2004 (request submitted to the FAA on 13 March 2004 at [http://162.58.35.241/acdatabase/](http://162.58.35.241/acdatabase/)).

Found by Trevor McIntyre / Air America Foundation in a junkyard in Florida and bought by him in January 2007 for restoration (e-mail dated 14 January 2007, kindly sent by Trevor McIntyre to Dr. Erik Carlson, who forwarded it to the author).

**DHC C-7A Caribou “392” 50 27 May 64 US Army 61-2392**

**Service history:** used out of Vientiane on USAID contract AID-439-342 at least 27 May 64 to 1 Oct. 64 (Availability list, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F8; Aircraft status as of 7 July 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); made a hard landing somewhere in Laos on 5 July 64 (Aircraft accidents 1964, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2); repaired; on 6 July 1964, in Caribou “392”, Joe Hazen flew parts of a Russian tank from Muong Soui to Udorn and then on to Bangkok; on 7 July 64, he flew “392” from Bangkok to Udorn, picked up a load of ammunition, and flew it to Muong Soui (E-mail dated 4 February 2006, kindly sent to the author by Joe Hazen); flown by Richard B. Crafts on 8 and 9 July 64 (Log book of Richard B. Crafts, at: UTD/Leary/B44F6); on 14/5 August 64, Ed Eckholdt flew “392” over the PDJ on an air search for a downed T-28 (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); on 18 August 64, Gary Malmberg flew “392” cover near Ban Peung (LS-95), when H-19 was shot down (“Personal Observation”, that is doc. no. GML-64-065H, sent by Dave Hickler to Air America’s President on 22 August 64, document in the possession of Joe Hazen who kindly faxed it to the author on 9 May 2005); photos taken at Vientiane in March 65 can be found in UTD/Hickler/B29; Joe Hazen ferried “392” Vientiane-Danang-Hong Kong-Tainan on 12 April 65 (E-mail dated 31 December 2004, kindly sent to the author by
Joe Hazen); and Ed Eckholdt ferried “392” Tainan-Hong Kong-Vientiane on 18 April 65 (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); when US Navy Lt. Ilg was shot down on 3 June 1965, flying an A-4 Skyhawk, Joe Hazen contacted him on 4 June 65 from Caribou “392” that was used as “Victor Control” (e-mail dated 24 April 2005, kindly sent to the author by Joe Hazen); based at Vientiane in April 65 (Aircraft list of April 65, in: UTD/Walker/B12F3), also between 3 May 65 and 27 October 65 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memos of 3 May 65, 22 May 65, and 27 October 65, all in: UTD/Walker/B12F3+4); used out of Vientiane under contract AID-439-342 in November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1) and still on 1 January 66 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memo of 1 January 66, in: UTD/Walker/B7F8); Joe Hazen recalls: “The last time I flew 392 was on 22 December 1965. I was bringing a load of sheet metal from LS-36 (flattened gasoline drums) to either LS-20 or 20A when the right engine failed and I had to shut it down. The load was quite heavy and we were losing altitude, so I had the load jettisoned and proceeded to Vientiane. When the load was jettisoned, the flattened sheet metal sailed through the air, twisting and turning and acting like a scythe when it hit the jungle. There never was a report of any damage from any of the villages, so I guess the area was uninhabited” (E-mail dated 29 January 2006, kindly sent to the author by Joe Hazen); still assigned on 8 April 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), on 4 May 66 (Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2), and on 1 May 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); the USAF Assignment records (reel AVH-7) note for that period: C-7A 61-2392 GI (= returned from outside the USAF) from CNA (= US Army) to LOG HQ, Wright Patterson, on 67120; GF / Reconciliation on 67151, which probably means: transferred from the US Army to the USAF, Logistic Air Command, Headquarters, Wright Patterson AFB, on 30 April 67, but administratively, it was decided on 31 May 67 to let the aircraft with its user Air America; on 14 July 68, “392” ran off the left side of the runway approximately 200 feet when landing at Vientiane (L-08) - due to an hydraulic failure; nobody on board was injured, but both propellers were bent; repaired (XOXO of 14 July 68, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F14); in use out of Vientiane at least between 8 September 65 and 12 April 72 (Log book of L. H. Maxwell, in: UTD/Maxwell/B1F6; Log book of D. D. Wharton, in: UTD/Wharton/B1F2; Log book of R. L. Wofford, in: UTD/Wofford [Sm.C. 6]); photo in Troupes d’ Élite Aviation, no.142, p. 186, as “392”; at Ban Muang Ngan (LS-236), Laos, the parked aircraft began to roll down a steep slope on 21 May 69, coming to rest among trees 50 feet below runway level and 150 feet from its point of departure, causing substantial damage (XOXO of 21 May 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F9; Accident report, in: UTD/Hickler/B24F2; photos of the accident can be found in: UTD/Wharton/B1F6, and in the John Anthony collection preserved at TTU); originally, it was not to be rebuilt (Minutes ExCom-AAM/AACL of 27 May 69, in: UTD/CIA/B8F3), so that it was not yet repaired on 15 June 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); not listed on 15 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 Aug. 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); but then it was recovered by a US Army Sikorsky Skycrane (see the photos at the Air America Association’s Image Gallery 1, at http://airamerica.org/ImageLibrary/ImageGallery1.shtml) and restored;
Air America Caribou “392” at Udorn in 1969 after restoration
(with kind permission from Judy Porter)
current on 1 July 70 (Leary, *The aircraft of Air America*, p. 20); current on 3 Aug. 70
(Aircraft time, in: UTD/CIA/B29F4); based at Vientiane 1-31 July 71, but at Bangkok
for maintenance; flew Udorn (T-08) - Savannakhet (L-39) - Pakse (L-11) on 28 Sept.
71 (Log book of D. Keele, in: UTD/Keele/B1F6); current on 15 Oct. 71 (F.O.C. of 1
July 71, 15 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); at Udorn on 24 May 72; current on 7
July 72 (Airframe time report, in: UTD/CIA/B29F9); a photo of “392” taken in 1972
can be seen in: Conboy, *War in Laos*, p. 57; current in December 72 (Airframe time
report, in: UTD/CIA/B32F1); at Vientiane in 73 (photos can be found in: UTD/Anthony/F9,
and in the A. Cates collection preserved at TTU (no. VA024858); maintained by Air America Vientiane at least on 1 January 73, 1 March 73, 1 July 73,
and 1 August 73 (Assigned, maintained aircraft, in: UTD/CIA/B32F1 and /B31F10);
on 25 February 73, “392” received battle damage over Laos; repaired (Accident note
to the USAF, dated 27 Feb. 73, in: UTD/CIA/B32F1); in use out of Vientiane under
contract F04606-71-C-0002 at least 16 April-1 May 73 (F.O.C. of 16 April 73, in:
UTD/Kaufman/B1F14); in use out of Udorn under contract F04606-71-C-0002 at
least 1 Nov.-31 Dec. 73, 1-28 Feb. 74 (F.O.C. of 1 Feb. 74, in: UTD/CIA/B51F1), and
1 April-31 May 74 (F.O.C. of 1 Nov. 73, 1 Dec. 73, 1 April 74, and 1 May 74, in:
UTD/Hickler/B8F7C).
**Fate:** probably returned to the USAF in June 74; to the US Air Force Reserve in
75/6?; became 0-12392 of US Army / Missouri Air National Guard, Springfield,
Aviation Classification Repair Activity Depot (AVCRAD), in 75/6?; active in August
90; sold to the National Museum of Naval Aviation, Pensacola, FL, as N6154S on 24
Nov. 92; regd. on 4 Dec. 92; current in 1995; not registered in March 2004 (request
submitted to the FAA on 13 March 2004 at [http://162.58.35.241/acdatabase/](http://162.58.35.241/acdatabase/)).
Caribou “393” after the accident at Ban Na (LS-15) in 1966, photos taken by Joe Hazen (with kind permission from Joe Hazen)

DHC C-7A Caribou “393”

29 June 64

US Army 61-2393

Service history:

- based at Vientiane in April 65 (Aircraft list of April 65, in: UTD/Walker/B12F3), also between 3 May 65 and 27 October 65 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memos of 3 May 65, 22 May 65, and 27 October 65, all in: UTD/Walker/B12F3+4);
- used out of Vientiane under contract AID-439-342 in November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), on 8 April 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), on 4 May 66 (Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2), on 1 May 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2), and still on 15 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 Aug. 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1);
- the USAF Assignment records (reel AVH-7) note for that period: C-7A 61-2393 GI (= returned from outside the USAF) from CNA (= US Army) to LOG HQ, Wright Patterson, on 67120; GF / Reconciliation on 67151, which probably means: transferred from the US Army to the USAF, Logistic Air Command, Headquarters, Wright Patterson AFB, on 30 April 67, but administratively, it was decided on 31 May 67 to let the aircraft with its user Air America; made a crash-landing at Ban Na (LS-15), Laos, on 6 March 66, while piloted by Bob Laturner, due to inadvertent prop reversal, causing substantial damage, but resulting in only 1 minor injury (XOXO of 6 March 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16; Aircraft accidents 1966, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2; DD/S, Monthly Report for February/March 1966, p. 2, online at 1818029/196511; Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 23 March 66, in: UTD/CIA/B8F1; photos can be found in: UTD/Hickler/B24F5+B32, in the John Anthony collection preserved at TTU; and in: Air America Log, vol. II, no.1, Jan. 68, p. 1);
- repaired by January 68 (see photo); on 24 March 68, a fast moving thunderstorm of more than 70 knots passed thru Vientiane’s Wattay airport, damaging the rudder, vertical stabilizer, flaps and so on of C-7A “393”; repaired (XOXO of 24 March 68, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); made an emergency landing at Ban Houei Sai (L-25), Laos, on 5 August 68, when the right landing gear collapsed, “393” coming to rest on the nose gear, left main gear and the right wing tip; temporary repair accomplished at L-25 and ferried to Vientiane on 17 August 68 for permanent repair (XOXO of 5 Aug. 68, in: UTD/Hickler/B25Ft4; F.O.C. of 15 August 68, in: UTD/ LaShomb/B14; Accident report, in: UTD/Hickler/B24F7; photo in UTD/Hickler/B33); repaired; based at Vientiane 16-30 June 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/ Hickler/B8F7B); on 29 January 70, “393” taxied back into UH-34Ds H-30 and H-34 after landing at Sam Thong (LS-20); repaired (XOXO of 29 Jan. 70, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F10); current on 1 July 70 (Leary, The aircraft of Air America, p. 20); current on 3 August...
C-7A 401 somewhere in Laos in the early sixties, in Army brown colors without titles or radar nose (UTD/Wiren/B2)

C-7A 401 somewhere in Laos in the late sixties, silver, without titles or radar nose (UTD/Wiren/B2)

C-7A 401 at Long Tieng in 1971, all silver, with titles and a radar nose (UTD/R. E. Stuart)

DHC C-7A Caribou “401” 63 29 June 64 US Army 61-2401

**Service history:** used out of Vientiane on USAID contract AID-439-342 since 29 June 64 to 1 Oct. 64 (Availability list, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F8; Aircraft status as of 7 July 74, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); on 4 November 64, “401” had brakes problems
Caribou “401” after a hard landing in 1964/5, taken by Joe Hazen
(with kind permission from Joe Hazen)

and returned to Vientiane (L-08), where it was repaired (XOXO of 4 Nov. 64, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F8); on 5 June 1965, Joe Hazen flew “401” as “Victor Control” near Sam Neua, Laos, when out of “401” he directed the pick-up of US Navy Lt. Ilg by Air America UH-34Ds, while A-1s from the USS Midway protected the crash site; a slide, showing “401” in camouflage colors and another one, showing it all silver, both without titles or radar nose, are in UTD/Wiren/B2; a photo of “401” with radar nose, probably taken in the late 60ies, was published in: Love, Wings of Air America, p. 100; based at Vientiane in April 65 (Aircraft list of April 65, in: UTD/Walker/B12F3), also between 3 May 65 and 27 October 65 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memos of 3 May 65, 22 May 65, and 27 October 65, all in: UTD/Walker/B12F3+4); used out of Vientiane under contract AID-439-342 in November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), on 8 April 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), on 4 May 66 (Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2), on 1 May 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2), and still on 15 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 Aug. 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); the USAF Assignment records (reel AVH-7) note for that period: C-7A 61-2401 GI (= returned from outside the USAF) from CNA (= US Army) to LOG HQ, Wright Patterson, on 67120; GF / Reconciliation on 67151, which probably means: transferred from the US Army to the USAF, Logistic Air Command, Headquarters, Wright Patterson AFB, on 30 April 67, but administratively, it was decided on 31 May 67 to let the aircraft with its user Air America; in use out of Vientiane at least between 26 August 65 and 3 April 72; made a hard landing at Hong Sa (LS-62A) in Laos on 31 March 66 (XOXO of 31 March 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16; Aircraft accidents, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2; a photo of this accident can be found in the John Anthony collection preserved at TTU); this is the accident reported by A. Rich for Ban Hong Sa (LS-62A), Laos, on 3 April 66; there were no injured (Log book of A. Rich, in: UTD/Rich/B1); on 29 February 67, a local person walked into the propeller at PS-11 and deceased immediately (XOXO of 29 Feb. 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B26F16); flew Tainan-Hong Kong-Danang-Vientiane on 4/5 August 68 and Tainan-Hong Kong-Danang-Vientiane on 22/23 June 71 (Log book of L. H. Maxwell, in: UTD/Maxwell/B1F6; Flight crew member monthly movement report of A. J. Zarkos, in: UTD/Zarkos/B1F8; and Log book of R. L. Wofford, in: UTD/Wofford [Sm.C. 6]); photo in UTD/Hickler/B28; a photo of an
unknown accident, where the rear belly of “401” was severely damaged, can be seen in UTD/Hickler/B32; rapidly lost altitude and undershot the runway at Sam Thong (LS-20), Laos, on 20 November 67, damaging the left main landing gear, the left prop and wing and the belly (XOXO of 20 Nov. 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F8; Accident report, in: UTD/Hickler/B24F3; Minutes ExCom-AAACL/AAM of 28 Nov. 67, in: UTD/CIA/B8F2); repaired; based at Vientiane 16-30 June 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); on 1 September 69, empty butane bottles and seal drums fell from the aircraft during take-off from Sam Thong (LS-20); the PIC had applied take-off power, while the AFD was still in process of tying down pallets (XOXO of 1 Sept. 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F9); received extensive battle damage to the left main landing gear, wing skin, nacelle and fuselage in Laos on 28 December 69; repaired and returned to service on 6 January 70 (Minutes ExCom-AAACL/AAM of 6 Jan. 70, in: UTD/CIA/B8F4); in the Air America documentary; current on 1 July 70 (Leary, The aircraft of Air America, p. 20); current on 3 August 70 (Aircraft time, in: UTD/CIA/B29F4); on 5 September 70, “401” was ordered by the Pakse-customer to evaluate an unnumbered site in the Pakse (L-11) area for C-7A operations, landed there, but ended up in the mud; later, it was pulled out and repaired (XOXO of 5 Sept. 70, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F10); at Bangkok on 16 December 70, at Long Tieng (LS-20A), Laos, in 71 (photo in UTD/R. E. Stuart [Sm. Coll. 5]); all silver; based at Vientiane 1-30 July 71 (F.O.C. of 1 July 71, 15 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); damaged by ground fire over Laos on 10 December 71, while making a drop, damaging the left wing and the fuel cell; repaired (Minutes ExCom-AAACL/AAM of 11 Jan. 72, in: UTD/CIA/B9F7); seen at Hong Kong on 24 March 72 with Air America titles (Aviation Letter 66, May 72, p. 4); at Udorn on 6 April 72; current on 7 July 72 (Airframe time report, in: UTD/CIA/B29F9).

Fate: shot down at coordinates XC 485 330 near Saravane (L-44), Laos, on 23 November 72 during a para-drop mission, killing the PIC, Captain John M. Bannerman, First Officer Charles J. McCarthy, as well as Air Freight Dispatchers B. Somchai and Suthi Chimpaibul; the aircraft had been on a scheduled flight from Pakse (L-11) to a forward drop zone and return, operating under the provisions of Contract F04606-71-C-0002 (XOXO of 23 November 72, in: UTD/Hickler/B27F2; Accident report, in: UTD/CIA/B61F14; Board of Review report dated 19 January 73, in: UTD/CIA/B34F5; Memorial; UTD/Leary/B1 for 23 Nov. 72; Memorial file, in: UTD/LaShomb/B16F3).

DHC C-7A Caribou “404” 67 64 US Army 61-2404

Service history: received after 1 April 64; used out of Vientiane on USAID contract AID-439-342 (AAM aircraft availability of 1 April 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B8F4; Aircraft status as of 7 July 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1);

Fate: ferried Vientiane-Udorn on 5 June 64 (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B6F12); returned to the US Army as 61-2404 on 5 June 64 (Aircraft status as of 7 July 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); became 61-2404 with the USAF on 1 January 67; transferred to the South Vietnam AF as ? on ?

DHC C-7A Caribou “443” 37 5 June 64 US Army 60-5443

Service history: received on 5 June 64; used out of Vientiane under contract AID-439-342 (Aircraft status as of 7 July 64, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); flown by Ed Eckholdt several times between 12 June 64 and 25 August 64 (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B6F12); flown by Richard Crafts out of Vientiane on 3, 4, 5, 16, and 21 July as well as several times between 8 and 22 August 64 (Log book of
R. Crafts, in: UTD/Leary/B44F6); piloted by Fred Walker, “443” coordinated the T-28 attack near route 42 north of LS-21/95 at the southeast corner of the Plain of Jars, Laos, on 18 August 64 and the rescue of Air America pilot William A. Zeitler who had been shot down there in UH-34D H-19 (UTD/Leary/B1 for 18 Aug. 64); seen in the mid 60s camouflaged, but without a radar nose, photo in UTD/Hickler/B32.

**Fate** returned to the US Army as 60-5443 before 1 November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1); became 60-5443 with the USAF on 1 Jan. 67; transferred to the US Army, Kwajalein Missile Range in ?; stored since 1986; del. ex Kwajalein to Darryl Greenameyer, Oakland, CA, as N9016L on 6 February 87; regd. in Feb. 87; arrived at Oakland on 8 Feb. 87; seen there on 18 Feb. 87; regd to Gilbert P. Mose, Calabasas, CA, in February 88; regd. to Deutsche Aviation, Tulsa, OK, in July 88; regd. to Fowler Aeronautical Service, Van Nuys, CA, in December 88; at Van Nuys, CA, on 1 Jan. 89; operated by Chieftain Air, Lanseria, South Africa, in 1989; returned to Fowler Aeronautical Service, Van Nuys, CA, on 29 Jan. 90; was at Van Nuys on 6 Sept. 90 for maintenance; sold to Newcal Aviation Inc, Little Ferry, NJ, in?; sold to Pen Turbo Aviation Inc., Rio Grande, NJ, on 7 November 94; regd. on 20 Dec. 94; owner current in 1995; stored at Cape May, NJ, on 29 Oct. 94 and on 4 March 95; reregistered as N90162 to Pen Turbo Aviation Inc., Rio Grande, NJ, in 95?; at Cape May County Airport, NJ, on 21 September 95; still there on 26 Jan. 99 as N9016L (Aviation Letter, no.387, p. 43); current with Pen Turbo Aviation Inc., Rio Grande, NJ, as N9016L in March 2004 (request submitted to the FAA on 13 March 2004 at [http://162.58.35.241/acdatabase/]).
3) Caribous bailed in 1965:

DHC C-7A Caribou “430” 20 65? US Army 60-5430

Service history: a slide in UTD/Wiren/B2, probably taken in the early 60ies, shows “430” in dark colors; flown by Richard B. Crafts from Udorn to Vientiane on 25 February 65 (Log book of Richard B. Crafts, at: UTD/Leary/B44F6); and by Ed Eckholdt Vientiane-Udorn (“ferry”) on 27 February 65 (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); based at Vientiane in April 65 (Aircraft list of April 65, in: UTD/Walker/B12F3), also between 3 May 65 and 27 October 65 (Planned Aircraft Assignments, Memos of 3 May 65, 22 May 65, and 27 October 65, all in: UTD/Walker/B12F3+4); flown by Joe Hazen on 4 April 1965 and on 18 April 1965 (e-mails dated 9 January and 20 February 2005 kindly sent to the author by Joe Hazen); on 23 July 65, Ed Eckholdt flew the “Milk Run South” in “430” (Log book of Ed Eckholdt, in: UTD/Leary/B44F13); used out of Vientiane under contract AID-439-342 in November 65 (Aircraft status as of 1 Nov. 65, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), on 8 April 66 (Aircraft status as of 8 April 66, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1), on 4 May 66 (Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2), on 1 May 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herb/B2), and still on 15 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 Aug. 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); the USAF Assignment records (reel AVH-7) note for that period: C-7A 60-5430 GI (= returned from outside the USAF) from CNA (= US Army) to LOG HQ, Wright Patterson, on 67120; GF / Reconciliation on 67151, which probably means: transferred from the US Army to the USAF, Logistic Air Command, Headquarters, Wright Patterson AFB, on 30 April 67, but administratively, it was decided on 31 May 67 to let the aircraft with its user Air America; in use out of Vientiane at least between 29 August 65 and 14 February 72; on 1 January 66 Joe Hazen ferried “430” Vientiane-Danang-Hong Kong-Tainan and then back the same way on 9 January 66 (E-mails dated 31 December 2004 and 1 January 2005 kindly sent to the author by Joe Hazen); on 22 July 67, “430” taxied into C-46 B-138 at Vientiane; there was only light damage which was easily repaired (XOXO of 22 July 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B27F1); the right main landing gear was damaged on landing at Na Khang (LS-36) on 31 August 67; repaired (XOXO of 31 Aug. 67, in: UTD/Hickler/B27F1; Minutes ExCom-AAACL/AAM of 12 Sept. 67, in: UTD/CIA/B8F2); lost the right hand aileron during final approach to Long Tieng (LS-20A) on 19 May 69, but landed successfully, damaging the aileron; the aircraft had been flown by PIC J. W. Russell, F/O J. W. Hitner, AFD Russada, and AFD Somporn; repaired and returned to service on 22 May 69 (XOXO of 19 May 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F9; Minutes ExCom-AAACL/AAM of 27 May 69, in: UTD/CIA/B8F3); was at Tainan for maintenance in June 69; returned to service on 22 June 69; current on 1 July 70 (Leary, The aircraft of Air America, p. 20); current on 3 Aug. 70 (Aircraft time, in: UTD/CIA/B29F4); flew Tainan-Hong Kong Vientiane on 4 Nov. 70 (Log book of L. H. Maxwell, in: UTD/Maxwell/B1F6; UTD/Wharton/B1F2, and Log book of R. L. Wofford, in: UTD/Wofford [Sm.C. 6]); still assigned to contract AID-439-342 for use out of Vientiane 1-30 July 71 (F.O.C.s of 1 July 71 and 15 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); damaged by ground fire over Laos on 10 December 71, while making a drop, damaging the right wing and the fuselage; repaired (Minutes ExCom-AAACL/AAM of 11 Jan. 72, in: UTD/CIA/B9F7); the wings and the fuselage were damaged by ground fire over Laos on 24 March 72; repaired and returned to service on 27 March 72 (Minutes ExCom-AAACL/AAM of 14 April 72, in: UTD/CIA/B9F7); current on 7 July 72 (Airframe time report, in: UTD/CIA/B29F9) and in December 72 (Airframe time report, in: UTD/CIA/B32F1);
maintained by Air America Vientiane at least on 1 January 73, 1 March 73, 1 July 73, and 1 August 73 (Assigned, maintained aircraft, in: UTD/CIA/B32F1 and /B31F10); received battle damage over Laos on 10 March 73; repaired (Accident note to the USAF, dated 12 March 73, in: UTD/CIA/B32F1); at Bangkok for IRAN 26 March-27 May 73, but assigned to Vientiane under contract F04606-71-C-0002 between 16 April and 1 May 73 (F.O.C. of 16 April 73, in: UTD/Kaufman/B1F14); in use out of Udorn under contract F04606-71-C-0002 at least 1 Nov.-31 Dec. 73, 1-28 Feb. 74 (F.O.C. of 1 Feb. 74, in: UTD/CIA/B51F1), and 1 April-31 May 74 (F.O.C. of 1 Nov. 73, 1 Dec. 73, 1 April 74, and 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C); a photo of “430” can be found in the John Anthony collection preserved at TTU (no. VA031026).

Fate: probably returned to the USAF in June 74; to 0-05430 of US Army / Missouri Air National Guard, Springfield, Aviation Classification Repair Activity Depot (AVCRAD), in 75/6; active in August 90; sold to the National Museum of Naval Aviation, Pensacola, FL, as N6154Z, on 4 December 92; current in 1995; not registered in March 2004 (request submitted to the FAA on 13 March 2004 at http://162.58.35.241/acdatabase/).

4) Caribous bailed in 1966:

DHC C-7A Caribou “750” 207 66 US Army 63-9750

Service history: not yet current on 4 May 66 (Aircraft status as of 4 May 66, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F2); mentioned in the Vientiane Flight Crew Manning list of October 66 (in: UTD/Leary/B56F1); used on 1, 2, and 3 May 67 to train Air America pilots Dieckman, Rogers, and Olsen (Memo of 3 June 67, MFD-VTE to DFD, re Training Flight Time Record for May 67, in: UTD/Walker/B11F3).

Fate: no longer current on 1 May 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); probably returned to the US Army or USAF in 1967

5) Caribous bailed in 1968:

DHC C-7A Caribou “193” 138 68? USAF 62-4193; previously with the US Army

Service history: flown on 23 February 68 Vientiane-Udorn-Moung Cha-Long Tieng and then out of Long Tieng as directed by ASB-044 (believed to be the CIA) before returning to Vientiane the same day (Vientiane Daily Flight Schedule for 23 February 68, in: UTD/Walker/B13F3); flown on Air America service by Allen Rich on 3 March 68 and on 8 March 68 (Log book of A. Rich, in: UTD/Rich/B1F1).

Fate: not current on 1 May 68 (Aircraft status as of 1 May 68, in: UTD/Herd/B2); probably returned to the USAF in 68 as 62-4193/KA; preserved at the USAF museum at Wright Patterson AFB, Dayton, OH, since Nov. 88?
6) Caribous bailed in 1969:

Caribou “583” at Wattay Airport in 1969
(with kind permission from Dan Gamelin)

DHC C-7A Caribou “583” 144 June 69 USAF 62-12583

Service history: at Saigon on 1 December 68, when still with the USAF (Crew member duty report of H. F. Miller, in: UTD/Miller/B4F6); not current on 15 June 69 (F.O.C. of 15 June 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); used by Air America out of Vientiane at least between 24 June 69 and 9 October 69 (Log book of R. L. Wofford, in: UTD/Wofford [Sm.C. 6]); used out of Vientiane under contract AID-439-342 on 15 August 69 (F.O.C. of 15 Aug. 69, in: UTD/Hickler/B1F1); flown by First Officer James Hitner out of Vientiane (L-08) at least on 7 and 8 October 69 (Aircraft Flight Logs, in: UTD/Hitner/B1F2).

Fate: returned to the USAF as 62-12583 on 15 October 69 (Implementation Order dated 15 October 69, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no. 29); given to the South Vietnam AF as “YN:622583” in ?; at Bangkok on 6 January 73 (Aviation Letter, no. 75, p. 2).
7) Caribous bailed in 1970:

Implementation Orders dated 15 Oct.69, 21 Oct.70, and 23 Feb.72 to contract AID-439-342 (all in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no. 29)

DHC C-7A Caribou “171” 110 27 Oct. 70 USAF 62-4171 of 483 TAW, Cam Ranh Bay, to LOO, XY-service, on 70296 (= 23 Oct. 70)

Service history: assigned to Air America on 22 October 70 (Implementation Order dated 21 Oct.70, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no. 29); arrived at Udorn for operation under contract 342 on 27 October 70 (Message dated 28 Oct. 70, in: UTD/CIA/B49F2); but was in use out of Vientiane at least between 2 December 70 and 16 June 71 (Log book of R. L. Wofford, in: UTD/Wofford [Sm.C. 6]); flew the King of Laos in 71, displaying the Lao emblem (photos in: *Air America Log*, 1971); made a gear up landing at Sam Thong (LS-20), Laos, on 19 March 71 (XOXO of 19 March 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B25F11; photos in UTD/Anthony/F6; a photo of the same accident, but with titles and serial blacked out in Davis, *Across the Mekong*, p. 147); the aircraft was later repaired.

Fate: returned to the USAF on 30 June 71 (F.O.C. of 1 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); given to the South Vietnamese Air Force in ?

DHC C-7A Caribou “195” 141 22 Oct. 70 USAF 62-4195

Service history: according to the USAF Assignment Records (reel AVH-14), C-7A 62004195 of 483TAW, Cam Ranh Bay, was transferred to TL (user outside the USAF) on 70292, that is on 19 October 70; assigned to Air America on 22 October 70 (Implementation Order dated 21 Oct.70, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no. 29); in use out of Vientiane at least between 16 November 70 and 24 June 71 (see also Log book of R. L. Wofford, in: UTD/Wofford [Sm. C. 6]).

Fate: returned to the USAF on 30 June 71 (F.O.C. of 1 July 71, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7B); given to the South Vietnamese Air Force in ?
8) Caribous bailed in 1972:

DHC C-7A Caribou “439” 32 23 Feb. 72 USAF 60-5439

Service history: assigned to Air America on 23 February 72 (Implementation Order dated 23 February 72, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no. 29); C-7A “439” damaged Porter N152L by its prop wash, when “439” took off from Pha Khao (LS-14) on 11 March 72 (XOXO of 11 March 72, in: UTD/Hickler/B27F2; Report of the pilot of “439”, in: UTD/CIA/B29F2); in use out of Udorn at least between 29 March 72 and 9 June 72 (Log book of R. L. Wofford, in: UTD/Wofford [Sm. C. 6]; Crew member duty report of H. F. Miller, in: UTD/Miller/B4/F6); current with Air America on 7 July 72 (Airframe time report, in: UTD/CIA/B29F9).

Fate: returned to the USAF in 1972; not current with Air America in December 72 (Airframe time report, in: UTD/CIA/B32F1).

DHC C-7A Caribou “441” 35 23 Feb. 72 USAF 60-5441

Service history: assigned to Air America on 23 February 72 (Implementation Order dated 23 February 72, in: UTD/Bisson/B5 microfilm reel no. 29); the fuel cell and the interconnect line in the right wing were damaged by ground fire over Laos at coordinates TG 846164 near Long Tieng (LS-20A) on 28 March 72; repaired and returned to service on 7 April 72 (XOXO of 28 March 72, in: UTD/Hickler/B27F2; Minutes ExCom-AACL/AAM of 14 April 72, in: UTD/CIA/B9F7); current on 7 July 72 (Airframe time report, in: UTD/CIA/B29F9).

Fate: returned to the USAF in 1972; not current in December 72 (Airframe time report, in: UTD/CIA/B32F1).

9) Caribous bailed in 1973:

DHC C-7A Caribou “762” 13 Jan. 73 USAF 60-3762

Service history: not current in December 72 (Airframe time report, in: UTD/CIA/B32F1); received and current in January 73 (Airframe time report, in: UTD/CIA/B32F1); a photo in Love, Wings of Air America, p. 50, shows “762” in camouflage colors; on 2 February 73, “762” received battle damage over Laos; repaired (Accident note to the USAF, dated 3 Feb. 73, in: UTD/CIA/B32F1); maintained by Air America Vientiane at least on 1 March 73, 1 July 73, and 1 August 73 (Assigned, maintained aircraft, in: UTD/CIA/B32F1 and /B31F10); in use out of Vientiane under contract F04606-71-C-0002 at least 16 April-1 May 73 (F.O.C. of 16 April 73, in: UTD/ Kaufman/B1F14); in use out of Udorn under contract F04606-71-C-0002 at least 1 Nov.-31 Dec. 73, 1-28 Feb. 74 (F.O.C. of 1 Feb. 74, in: UTD/CIA/B51F1), and 1 April-31 May 74 (F.O.C. of 1 Nov. 73, 1 Dec. 73, 1 April 74, and 1 May 74, in: UTD/Hickler/B8F7C).

Fate: probably returned to the USAF in June 74; transferred to the US Army / Hawaii Air National Guard on 27 July 75; transferred to the US Army, Kwajalein Missile Range in ?; stored since 86; del. ex Kwajalein to Darryl Greenameyer, Oakland, CA, as N9014W on 15 Feb. 87; arrived at Oakland on 18 Feb. 87; sold to Gilbert P. Mose, Calabasas, CA, in February 88; regd. in Feb. 88; sold to Deutsche Aviation Inc, Tulsa, OK, in July 88; regd. in July 88; sold to Fowler Aeronautical Service, Van Nuys, CA, in December 88; at Van Nuys, CA, on 1 January 89; leased to Chieftain Air, Lanseria, as N9014W in January 89; sold to Newcal Aviation Inc, Little Ferry, NJ, on 19 December 89; sold to Fowler Aeronautical Service, Van Nuys, CA, on 29 January 90; at Tucson, AZ, on 6 April 93; reg. canx on 2 Sept. 94; sold to Garamut Exploration
Services, Vanimo, Papua-New Guinea, in September 94; regd. as P2-VTC on 2 Sept. 94; del. thru Cairns on 13 October 94; photo in Propliner, no. 61, p. 8; crashed on approach to Kiunga Airport, Papua-New Guinea, on 1 July 95; written off.

III) USAF Caribous known to have been used by Air America personnel:

DHC C-7A Caribou “184” 126 - USAF 62-4184

Service history: used in Vietnam by H. F. Miller as a dead head to Saigon on 28 Nov. 68, probably still with the USAF (Crew member duty report of H. F. Miller, in: UTD/Miller/B4F6)

Fate: not current on 15 June 69; returned to the USAF as 62-4184; coded "KC" with the USAF, at Saigon on 18 March 71; transferred to the US Air Force Reserve in ?; stored at AMARC, Davis-Monthan AFB, since Jan. 90 (?), storage code CM-008; regd. to Newcal Aviation Inc, Little Ferry, NJ, as N700NC, on 17 Jan. 86; sold to Union Flights, Sacramento, CA, in July 86; entered service in December 86; photo in Propliner, no. 32, p. 44; leased from Alcohol Aviation Fuels Inc.; sold to Skydive California, Lake Elsinore, CA, on 28 Sept. 94; at Salinas, CA, on 16 Oct. 94; photo in Air-Britain News, 94, p. 796; reg. N702SC reserved in 95, not taken up; canx in Jan. 96; sold to James A. Munson, Kenai, AK, as N700NC, in September 95; rereg. as N702SC in December 96, operating as South Central Air Inc; was destroyed on 30 January 97 after engine problems en route to Kenai, AK; last contact was 2 miles NW of Sparrevohn, AK, airfield; written off, when attempting an emergency landing.

IV) Errors published in some other publications:
- The C-7A, that was allegedly shot down en route to Savannakhet in Feb/Mar/Apr 73, (Howard Boyles and his co-pilot were missing; 1 kicker was killed when he jumped without a parachute; the other kicker survived; the aircraft was destroyed; see: Robbins, Air America, pp. 227-29) was not a C-7A, but C-123K “374”, which was shot down by ground fire (a missile) near Thakhet East (L-40), Laos, 150 miles south east of Vientiane, on 9 February 73, at 7.32 hours local time, when en route from Vientiane (L-08) to Savannakhet (L-39) with 12,000 pounds of general cargo; pilot Howard H. Boyles Jr. and his co-pilot Jack W. Cavill are missing; kicker Prasit Chaichana was killed when he jumped without a parachute; the other kicker, Sourinh, parachuted from the aircraft and survived (Accident report, in: UTD/CIA/B62F1).
- There was never a DHC-4 B-852, as Air America received only B-851 and B-853 in June 62.
- There was never a C-7A 382, this was an error for 392.

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