

# Revealing the Untold Stories of Gunship Pilots: An Attack Helicopter Warrior Remembers Vietnam

When it comes to the Vietnam War, the stories of brave soldiers who served on the ground often take center stage. However, there is a group of heroes whose tales often go unnoticed – the gunship pilots. These fearless aviators, who controlled powerful attack helicopters, played a crucial role in the fight against the Viet Cong. In this article, we dive into the fascinating world of a gunship pilot and their experiences during the Vietnam War.

## A Day in the Life of a Gunship Pilot

Imagine soaring through the sky in an AH-1 Cobra helicopter, armed with an arsenal of weapons including rockets, machine guns, and grenade launchers. For the gunship pilots, this was their reality every day. Their mission? To provide close air support to ground troops, locate and destroy enemy targets, and often engage in dangerous aerial combat.

From the moment they woke up to the time they climbed into the cockpit, gunship pilots faced the overwhelming pressure of protecting their fellow soldiers on the ground. Long hours of meticulous planning, constant readiness, and nerve-wracking anticipation were all part of their routine.

### Gunship Pilot: An Attack Helicopter Warrior

**Remembers Vietnam** by Robert F. Hartley (Kindle Edition)

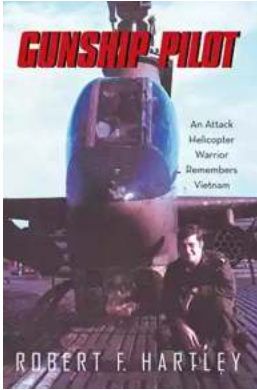
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Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 358 pages



Once in the air, gunship pilots became the eyes and ears of the soldiers on the ground. They flew low and fast, braving intense enemy fire, to provide valuable reconnaissance information. Often, they would be the first ones to engage the enemy, raining down fire and destruction from above. Their unparalleled maneuverability allowed them to navigate through treacherous terrain, blasting away at any enemy forces they encountered.

## **The Psychological Toll of War**

Fighting in a war zone takes its toll on any individual, both physically and mentally. Gunship pilots were no exception. The constant exposure to violence, the loss of comrades, and the fear of not making it back home weighed heavily on these warriors.

Though their powerful helicopters would sometimes make them feel invincible, the reality of war was always lurking below the surface. The sound of incoming rounds, the sight of a fellow pilot going down in flames - these were haunting memories that would forever bear upon their minds.

The psychological stressors associated with serving as a gunship pilot were significant. Some pilots struggled with PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) long after the war ended, while others found solace in sharing their stories with fellow veterans.

## Remembering the Fallen Heroes

Every gunship pilot had their own unique story, and it is important to honor their bravery and sacrifice. Through their unwavering courage and dedication, these pilots played a significant role in turning the tide of the war.

Today, many Vietnam War veterans are coming forward to share their experiences. By shining a light on the stories of gunship pilots, we can gain a better understanding of the Vietnam War and the heroes who fought on all fronts - on the ground and in the air. These stories serve as a reminder of the price paid for freedom and the unwavering spirit of those who answered the call of duty.

The stories of gunship pilots are often overshadowed by those of soldiers on the ground, but their contributions to the Vietnam War were immense. These brave aviators demonstrated unrivaled skills, resilience, and bravery as they embarked on dangerous missions to protect their fellow soldiers.

Today, we must remember and celebrate the gunship pilots, ensuring that their stories are never forgotten. Their memories serve as a testament to the courage and sacrifice required to ensure liberty and justice prevail in the face of adversity.

### **Gunship Pilot: An Attack Helicopter Warrior**

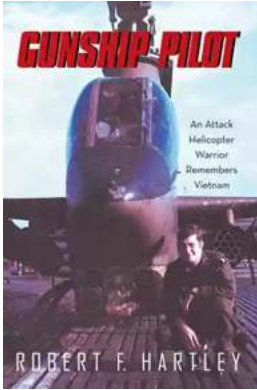
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It was 1968 and Robert Hartley was on his first combat mission in Vietnam as copilot of a helicopter gunship. As he and his platoon leader flew over the A Shau Valley, a Chinook helicopter engulfed in flames suddenly came into view. Hartley noticed tiny black smoking objects exiting the tail ramp of the aircraft. Seconds later, he realized those objects were men escaping the flames and plunging to their deaths. It was in that moment that he silently wondered, How the hell did I get here?

Mr. Hartley was still wet behind the ears when he was tossed into the cauldron of Americas most unpopular war as an attack helicopter gunship pilot. As he shares a gripping, birds-eye view of battles that took him from the Demilitarized Zone in the north to the Mekong Delta in the south, Mr. Hartley compellingly details how he learned to rely on his superior training and equipment to follow through with his mission to kill the enemy and save the lives of his fellow soldiers below.

Gunship Pilot provides an unforgettable glimpse into two combat tours of duty in Vietnam as a helicopter pilot soaring high above rice paddies and jungles attempts to fulfill his duty of protecting Americas warriors on the ground.



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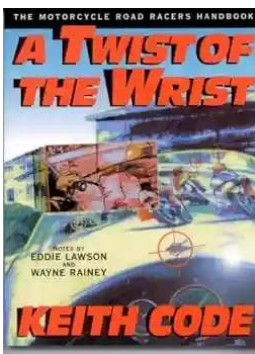
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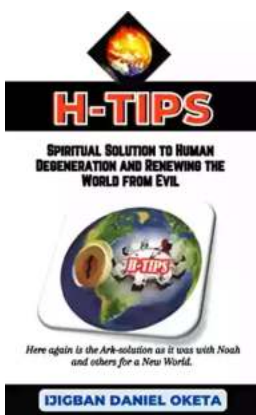
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