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"Houston Center, Army 18923, FL 400, starting descent. Request clearance to Robert Gray AAF." A portion of the report on how an Army tactical unit by its resolve established **new world aviation records** for climb, sustained flight and maximum altitude.

Major Brownie D. West

EVER HEAR AN Army aircraft report 40,000 feet? [CW2 Thomas G. Yoha](#) reported FL 400 (flight level 40,000) to Houston Center during an international record setting flight in Army OV-10A #67-18923. The 293d Aviation Company (SA), 55th Aviation Battalion (Cbt), Ft. Hood, TX, conducted flights on 8 and 9 June 1971 which represented the first attempts ever made by an Army tactical unit to establish official world performance records. Previous records set in Army aircraft were limited to joint military / manufacturer attempts.

CPT Richard J. Steinbock was copilot on the flights which successfully culminated 4 months of effort in coordinating, planning and preparing for the historical events. In accordance with AR 95-28 a request for authority to establish performance records was forwarded by the 293d on 29 February 1971. Reasoning, as stated in the request, was to carry out Department of the Army and

Mr. A. Earl Hansen, observed the installation of equipment to register performance and he officially monitored each flight.

The Mohawk performed superbly as anticipated. On 8 June 1971 aircraft #923 took off at 0650 hours from Robert Gray Army Airfield at Ft. Hood, TX, and climbed to 3,000 meters (9,843 feet) in 2 minutes 46 seconds. An altitude of 6,000 meters (19,685 feet) was attained in 5 minutes 46 seconds. A third climb record was set at 9,000 meters (29,528 feet) in 11 minutes 14 seconds. At approximately 33,000 feet a compressor stall caused CW2 Yoha to shut down #2 engine and return to Robert Gray.

After a thorough engine inspection 923 took off the following afternoon and climbed to a maximum altitude of 39,880 feet. A sustained flight record was set at 36,352 feet. These records are not astounding when compared with records

stop watches and movie cameras to record performance. Mr. James Morority, AVCO Lycoming field engineer, and Mr. Carl Herrington, field representative, assisted in preparing the engines.

The two best L-15 engines available were selected and installed on aircraft 923. SSG Ray E. Okerson's turbine engine mechanics visually inspected each engine and conducted performance tests. They adjusted each engine for peak performance and determined the maximum available power which was to be safely utilized on takeoff.

Under the guidance and supervision of LTC Thomas Birriel-Carmona, chief flight surgeon, III Corps and Ft. Hood, elaborate plans and procedures were outlined to prepare the crew for safe flight into rarefied atmosphere. Air Force regulations prohibit flights above 25,000 feet in aircraft without pressurized cabins. OV-10As do not have pressurized cabins but boast