

Ticklish

By LCpl. Ray Wilkinson

PHU BAI — Two Marines were almost "tickled to death" during Operation Chinook.

Lance Corporals Richard S. McKereghan and Melvin L. Smith of "I" Company, Twenty-Sixth Marine Regiment, were manning a listening post about 25 miles northwest of Phu Bai.

"We were on a partly grassy plot interspersed with sandy areas. I sat down and felt something tickle my right calf," said McKereghan. "I looked down and there were the three prongs of a 'Bouncing Betty' mine detonator staring at me," he said.

The two Marines dug up the mine and called for engineers to remove it from the area.

Smith then moved to about 25 feet away to sit down.

"Between my legs was a small tuft of grass," Smith said. "I felt something tickle the inner side of my left leg. I immediately thought — another mine. Sure enough, there in that tuft of grass was the detonator of another 'Bouncing Betty.' I said a few rapid prayers right then," the 3rd Division Marine added.

Both McKereghan and Smith now are mighty careful where they sit down.

They're both mighty "ticklish" Marines; being so saved their lives.