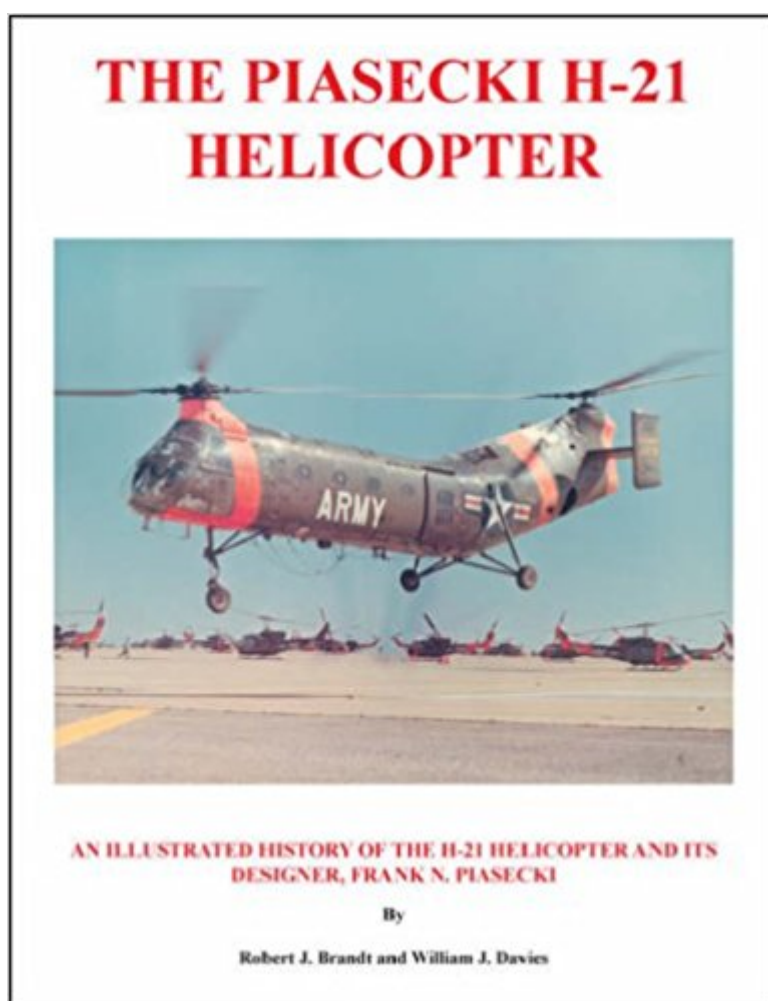


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The Piasecki H-21 Helicopter: An Illustrated History Of The H-21 Helicopter And Its Designer, Frank N. Piasecki



Synopsis

The only comprehensive illustrated history of Frank N. Piasecki and his H-21 advanced technology helicopter. The Piasecki H-21 became the first successful tandem-rotor cargo helicopter to enter mass production. Its innovative and unique design became the basis for the development of both the CH-46 and CH-47 helicopters, which remain in service to this day. The book covers the early life of Frank N. Piasecki and the development of his first helicopter, the single-rotor PV-2. Soon the XHRP-1 (Experimental, Helicopter, Transport, Piasecki, Model One) would appear and it was this helicopter which successfully demonstrated the feasibility of the tandem-rotor helicopter design. Successive improvements soon led to the HRP-1 and the more advanced HRP-2 which were flown by the US Marine Corps and US Coast Guard. The US Air Force expressed a need for a rescue helicopter that could operate in the extreme cold environment of the Arctic and issued a request for proposal. Frank Piasecki responded to this request with his H-21 tandem-rotor helicopter design. The Air Force liked what it saw and soon the H-21A "Workhorse" was in production for the US Air Force and the Royal Canadian Air Force. The rapidly expanding US Army Aviation Program saw the H-21 as a solution to meet its requirement for a helicopter capable of carrying an infantry squad. Soon the H-21C, now named "Shawnee" following the Army tradition of naming its helicopters after American Indian Tribes. The H-21 was soon in service with France, Germany, Sweden, Japan, and Burma. The H-21, now known as the Vertol 44, entered civil airline service with New York Airways. Five US Army helicopter companies, flying H-21 helicopters were deployed to Vietnam during 1961-62. These pioneering US Army helicopter companies proved that helicopters were capable of operating successfully in combat. This success soon led to the rapid expansion and use of helicopters in Vietnam. The Frank N. Piasecki and his H-21, both long overlooked, are nevertheless true pioneers in the history of rotary-wing flight.

Book Information

Paperback: 176 pages

Publisher: Trafford Publishing (October 31, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1425137075

ISBN-13: 978-1425137076

Product Dimensions: 0.5 x 8 x 10.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars 6 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #909,689 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #83 in [Books > Arts & Photography > Vehicle Pictorials > Aviation](#) #539 in [Books > Engineering & Transportation > Transportation > Aviation > History](#) #1702 in [Books > History > Military > Aviation](#)

Customer Reviews

Printed in UNCOATED paper which unfortunately seriously affects the reproduction quality of the photos (of which there are literally hundreds), the book gives a rather biased view of the H-21's development and troubled operational history. And I say "biased" because the type's many operational shortcomings are generally glossed over by the author. In fact by reading the book someone could even get the impression that the "flying banana" was a very successful helicopter type (Newsflash: it wasn't). Ah and the "Congolese/Zairean" (or CIA; take your pick) H-21s are not even mentioned... Neither are the very interesting crash tests conducted by the US Army in the 60s to test various methods of protecting the crew and cargo in the event of a crash. To sum up a very disappointing book, unfortunately most likely to be the only one ever published on the H-21.

The Piasecki H-21 was the first heavy lift helicopter adopted by the USA and was used by the Army and Air Force. Compared to the other helicopters of the 1940-1950's the H-21 was a husky machine capable of carrying 15 passengers or a sling load weighing 2 tons. The shape of the fuselage inspired the nickname "Flying Banana". This book has a detailed history of the H-21's development and its operations in many parts of the world.

I build plastic models and this book will come in handy. I do wish the book had some color pictures in it though but can't complain too much since not much literature out there on the H-21.

What a great H-21/Vertol 44 reference. A lot of info and tons of pictures, drawings, most taken from the helicopter manuals. Great great book.

My husband loves this and was very pleased with Prime's quick delivery. He wanted it for a project that he was in the middle of, and the timely delivery was much appreciated.

The interesting history of the twin-rotor H-21 is well-covered here. I particularly liked the developmental details and the various proposals made to the armed forces and foreign governments. It also provides brief histories of the various US Army units that operated the type in

the early days of the Vietnam war. Foreign users are also mentioned as well as US Air Force use as a rescue craft (its original mission). My only complaints are regarding layout and printing. All the photos are in black and white and the reproduction of some could be much better. But considering the lack of recognition early helicopters receive from publishers, I'm just happy we have this book available.

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