

July 25, 1998

Greg,

We would like to take a moment to express our heartfelt thanks for the warm response extended to us by the aviators of "A" 9/101 during our visit to Fort Campbell. The interest shown by you and the other Black Widow aviators for their historical heritage was outstanding. It will be a weekend that will be remembered forever, and a special thanks to Joe Scott, Brian Kraus and you Greg, for the hospitality and friendship you showed us during our visit.

It is difficult to convey to you just exactly what the events of that weekend meant to us. The barbecue at the airfield, the Welcome Home banner, and the dinner we attended was all part of a "Welcome Home" we never had the opportunity to experience. Even though it was 30 years later we couldn't imagine it feeling any better than it did. We were given a "Welcome Home" by you folks that was nonexistent in 1968, and for the first time, after many years, we finally got the chance to experience the pride of flying our unit colors in a parade. There were no parades, only the anti war demonstrations when we returned home.

At the barbecue your aviators, crew chiefs, wives, girlfriends and families showed a relaxed air of closeness. This relaxed atmosphere among pilots and crew chiefs was outstanding. We experienced very little of this during our tour in Vietnam, although there were a few exceptions. When you put your life on the line everyday, being close can make the difference between life and death, since you are watching each others backs. Lets face it, its hard to respect the rank when you can't respect the person. Its knowing where to draw that line that's important and you have that gift Greg. We commend you and all of the present day "Black Widows" for that positive change. We salute you and the personnel of "A" 9/101 who made the three of us proud to part of the "Black Widow" heritage.

Greg when we thanked you for everything you did for us you said it was "nothing" because you also enjoyed it yourself. That couldn't be farther from the truth. You stirred up a tremendous sense of pride and emotion that hadn't been there for a long time. You didn't just, schedule some events that weekend...., You sir... created memories, that we will have the rest of our lives. And for those memories the three of us will be forever grateful.

Its was an honor and a privlidge to have had the opportunity to meet all of you folks and we can only hope that our paths may cross again in the future.

Best of luck to all the men and women of A Company 9/101 and to you Greg on your new assignment to the NATO Command in Belguim.

Air Assault Sir

Veterans of the:

188th A.H.C. "Black Widows:

Dau Tieng, Vietnam 1967-1968

Your Friends Always

Dick Detra & Richard Cadreau

P.S.

As soon as its completed a copy of the history will be forwarded to the company for your unit database on lineage and if you could forward the name and phone number of that Sgt Major who served with the Black Widows in Nam and also a list of the regiment aviation units and their personal moniker, i.e Kingsman Commanchero's along with the Black Widow Hats and T-Shirts.

Please send to:

Dick Detra

[REDACTED]

Brisbane, CA. 94005-1576

P.S.S. Please except these gifts for your company personal as a small token of our appreciation

Info removed by VNCA

July 14, 1998

Greg,
Jack Johnson, Dick Carreau and I would like to express our heartfelt "THANKS" for the warm response extended to us by the aviators of "A" 9/1st during our visit to Fort Campbell. The interest shown by you and the other Black Widow aviators for their historical heritage was outstanding. We were given a "Welcome Home" that was non-existent in 1968, when we returned home from Vietnam. For the first time in 30 years we had the chance to fly our unit colors in a parade. There were no parades for us when we arrived home, only anti-war demonstrations. At the barbecue, your aviators, crew chiefs, wives, girlfriends and families showed a relaxed air of closeness. This relaxed atmosphere among pilots and crew chiefs was outstanding! We experienced very little of this during our tour in Vietnam, although there were exceptions. When you put your life on the line every day, being close can make the difference between life and death, especially because you are watching each others back. Let's face it, it's hard to respect rank when you can't respect the person holding that rank. It's knowing where to draw that line that's important and you have that gift Greg! We commend you and all of the present day "BLACK WIDOWS" for that positive change. We salute you and the sixty-four present day "BLACK WIDOWS", who made the three of us proud to be part of our aviation heritage. Good luck on your new assignment to the NATO Command in Belgium. Let the guys know that a copy of the completed history will be sent as soon as it's completed for your unit database on lineage. I request your help on the following:

- ① BLACK WIDOW HATS and T-Shirts (sent to me)
- ② The name and phone # of that Sgt Thayer who served with the BLACK WIDOWS in NVN.
- ③ A list of the regiment aviation units and their personal moniker, i.e. King of the Commanders

AIR ASSAULT SIR!!

Your friend,
Dick Detra



'Eagle Strike' battalion perseveres through tragedies

The 9th Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment was first organized as the 123rd Avn. Bn. in the Republic of Vietnam. It was activated and assigned to the 23rd Infantry Division (Americal) in the Republic of Vietnam. The battalion provided the Americal Div. with aviation support until it was deactivated Nov. 7, 1971 in Vietnam.

The 123rd Avn. Bn. was reactivated Dec. 16, 1985 at Fort Campbell, Ky., by combining the three aviation detachments from the infantry brigades with the 163rd Avn. Company (General Support) and Battery A, 377th Field Artillery (Avn.). Sept. 16, 1987, the 123rd Command Avn. Bn. was redesignated as 6th Bn., 101st Avn. Rgt. and was formally activated on Fort Campbell Nov. 3, 1987.

July 21, 1989, the 6th Command Avn. Bn. and one UH-60 assault helicopter company from each of the 4th (Co. C) and 5th (Co. A) assault helicopter battalions were provisionally activated as two battalions: 3rd Bn., 159th Avn. Rgt. (Corps) (UH-1) and 6th Bn., 101st Avn. Rgt. (UH-60).

December 19, 1989, under permanent orders 170-1, 6th Bn., 101st Avn. Rgt. was redesignated as 9th Bn., 101st Avn. Rgt. The 3rd Bn., 159th Avn. Rgt. was returned to divisional control as the general support aviation battalion and redesignated as 6th Bn., 101st Avn. Rgt. (UH-1).

This activation established the third assault helicopter battalion in the 101st Airborne Div. (Air Assault) Fort Campbell. The formation of this unit was significant in that it allowed the 101st Avn. Brigade to provide one assault helicopter battalion for habitual support for each of the division's infantry brigades.

Under this new concept of habitual support, each infantry brigade would not only receive an assault helicopter battalion but an aviation task force (TF). This package included one UH-60 assault helicopter battalion, one CH-47 lift company, one UH-1 platoon, one platoon of

pathfinders, one UH-60 Medical Evacuation helicopter and crew, and one UH-60E command and control helicopter and crew. Headquarters and Headquarters Co. of the assault helicopter battalion serves as the TF Headquarters with the battalion commander serving as the TF commander. The assault helicopter battalion also provides a Brigade Aviation Element (BAE), which includes two aviators and two pathfinders. The BAE serves as a liaison element between the infantry brigade and the aviation TF headquarters.

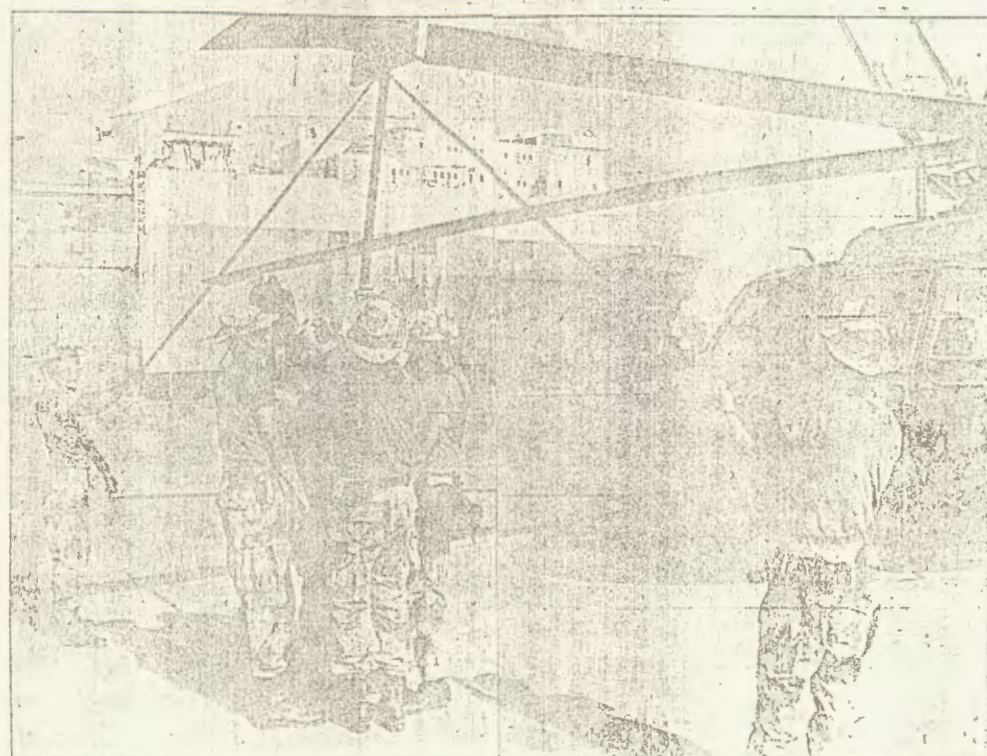
During 1990, TF 9-101 provided habitual support for 2nd Inf. "Strike" Bde. From this point on, 9th Bn., 101st Avn. Rgt. adopted "Eagle Strike" as its official motto.

Since the activation of the Eagle Strike battalion, the unit has been involved in numerous deployments to the Joint Readiness Training Center, La.; National Training Center, Calif.; Ocean Venture; and to Honduras in support of Joint TF Bravo.

As the Iraqi troops invaded Kuwait in August 1990, the 101st Avn. Div. (AAst.) was given the order to deploy troops in support of Operation Desert Shield. Although very young in its development, 9th Bn., 101st Avn. Rgt. was selected to command and experience its first "Rendezvous with Destiny." TF 9-101 was the first unit to deploy to Southwest Asia.

They again answered the call of the nation when Operation Restore/Continued Hope was ongoing in the country of Somalia. July 23, 1993 "Team Courage" was assembled to support ongoing operations of American forces already deployed to Somalia. Team Courage departed Fort Campbell Aug. 14, 1993, to a place which they wouldn't soon forget.

During its tour in Somalia, Team Courage encountered austere battlefield conditions. No one had predicted U.S. forces would encounter such a threatening environment. Up to this



American Eagle Cargo transport awaits as soldiers reposition the blades from a UH-60 Black Hawk before rolling the helicopter aboard ship. (File photo)

point, everything had been going very well except for some minor encounter with Somali gunmen.

Not even a month had gone by since Team Courage arrived in country, when they were marred with tragedy. September 2, 1993, while on a night reconnaissance mission, a unit Black Hawk came under fire by Somali gunmen. PFC Jason Ammons, who was a door gunner for that mission, received several injuries caused by small-arms fire. This was the start of what came to be a very difficult

situation for days to come.

September 25, 1993, while assigned as cover ship for a sniper mission, the crew of another Black Hawk was shot down by a rocket propelled grenade over the city of Mogadishu. The two pilots, CWO2 Dale Schrader and CWO2 Perry Alliman, survived the crash. Although they suffered injuries and burns from the crash, they managed to escape and evade Somali gunmen and make it to safety. The rest of the crew was not as lucky and perished in the explosion. PFC Matt Anderson and Sgt. Eugene Williams (door

gunners), along with the passengers on the mission, made the ultimate sacrifice for their country. The rest of Team Courage and their loved ones back home will ever forget their bravery and sacrifice.

October 3, 1994, while Rangers were engaged in a firefight and several 160th Special Operations Aviation Rgt. (Airborne) soldiers were shot down, Team Courage provided support by transporting the wounded from Pakistani Stadium to the 46th Medical Detachment hospital for treatment. Later during the

same month, a 9th Bri., 101st Avn. Rgt. crew rescued and returned to safety three Marines who had hit a command detonated mine. After others had tried and failed, this crew went in and recovered two soldiers inside the vehicle and though very difficult, also managed to free the driver who had both legs pinned under the vehicle.

As the unit comes to the end of its fifth year of dedicated and courageous history, Eagle Strike awaits its next Rendezvous with Destiny.

Happy 53rd Anniversary