

*Russell van...
Emerson
7/27/68*

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 59th INFANTRY PLATOON (SCOUT DOG)
11th INFANTRY BRIGADE, 33d INFANTRY DIVISION
APO San Francisco 96217

AVDF-3A-11H

5 September 1971

SUBJECT: History of 59th Infantry Platoon (Scout Dog)

It was constituted as the 59th Infantry Counterfire Platoon on 12 February 1951 in the Regular Army and was activated on 20 April 1951 at Fort Benning, Georgia. The unit was inactivated on 20 October 1951 in Korea after participating in the summer-fall offensive campaign. It was redesignated as the 59th Infantry Platoon (Scout Dog) and was activated on 2 January 1960 at Fort Benning, Georgia in compliance with General Order number 341, Third U.S. Army, Fort McPherson, Georgia. On May 2, 1968 the unit moved from Fort Benning and departed for South Vietnam to be deployed with the 11th Infantry Brigade of the 33d Infantry Division under the command of Col. Cran K. Henderson. We moved to our new home at Fire Support Base Bronco just outside the hamlet of Duc Phu about 70 km south of Chu Lai, RVN. On about 13 March 1971 we moved to LZ Hawk Hill, 34 km south of Da Nang to assist in the mission of the 40th Infantry Platoon (Scout Dog) and returned to Fire Support Base Bronco on about 10 April 1971 to resume our task with the 11th Infantry Brigade. On 5 June 1971, the unit was moved to Chu Lai, RVN when the FOB Bronco was given to the Army of the Republic of Viet Nam and we continued support of the 11th Infantry Brigade from our new home. On 21 September 1971 the 59th Infantry Platoon Scout Dog was deactivated in Chu Lai, RVN.

The Commanding Officer was 1Lt Homer J. Still, Tulsa, Oklahoma and the Platoon Sergeant was P3G Jose M. Rodriguez, Puerto Rico.

The 59th Infantry Platoon was designated to detect foreign presence outside a unit. We have been called "Professional Pointers" and our unit has two other unit sayings: (1) "Hell on Paws" and (2) "Paw Power".

The 59th IFSD has had two incidents of importance to the platoon under the present commander. The first being two of the oldest dogs in Vietnam belonged to this unit. The dogs were Andor and Little Duke, their handlers were SGT William W. Whitehouse III and SP4 Gregory Strauch. At the time of deactivation the unit still had in its possession one dog that came to Vietnam with the unit and was still doing its job in the field, his name is Frita. His handler is Acting Sergeant Jonas W. Norsham. The greatest experience of the unit was on 16 August 1971 when Duke and his handler, SP4 Robert S. Wilson were searching a trail as point element of D Co. 1/52 Inf and Duke detected and sprung an ambush that was believed to have been able to wipe out the entire company. Duke was wounded but lived and his handler was unhurt. Because of the bravery of this team SP4 Wilson was awarded the Army Commendation with V device and Duke was put up for the Bronze Star and Purple Heart and the battalion was so impressed by Duke and his great effort that they named a new Landing Zone - LZ Duke after him. The unit is very proud of the accomplishments of not only Duke and SP4 Wilson, but all of its "Professional Pointers".