

SECTION VII - Inventory of Unit Patches

The following roster is the VHPA Directory Committee's catalog of unit patches. IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT this patch collection rarely includes the physical cloth patch but does include high quality, color, photo copies and computer generated graphical images.

The VHPA Unit Patch Project was launched in 1995 by the VHPA Directory Committee to identify and record the individual patches pertaining to helicopter units and associated support units that served in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam Era (1961 to 1975). We estimate that more than 800 different helicopter unit patches were made during this period. The archive has grown to include unit calling cards, plaques and reproductions of patches. One of the goals of this project is to publish the collection in various media for the membership, interested individuals, other associations, and institutions. Subsets of the collection have already appeared in the VHPA Newsletter, the Membership Directories, and the Historical Reference Directory. When this collection is published, your patch may not be represented if we do not have a copy of it.

If you wish to help with the Unit Patch Project, send a high quality color copy of your unit patches to Jay Riseden, 4267 Bannister Road, Fair Oaks, CA 95628 or to VHPA Headquarters. PLEASE NOTE - WE DO NOT WANT TO BORROW YOUR PATCH, we only ask for a high quality color copy of it. If you find that your patch is already listed in the following roster of patches, please consider sending your copy anyway. There are considerable differences and variations in unit patch designs. Some of the copies on hand need to be upgraded as they are damaged or are of unsuitable quality.

Unit	Call Sign	Remarks	Source	Description
U.S. Army Patches				
1st BDE 1st CAV	Scouts?	Scouts	Bob Potvin	Reproduction two crew hanging out of OH-13 on white oval
1st AVN BDE		Brigade	Dick Detra	Subdued
1st AVN BDE		Brigade	Dick Detra	Fullcolor
1st TOW DET		Detachment	Clifford Letts	Tow Det attached to 604th patch has sight with black field
1st AVN BN 1 INF	Longhorns	All Platoons	Will Prater	Photo of all platoon emblems in officer's club
1st RADIO RE CO	Crazy Cat	Company	Gary Earls	Grey cat on winged white horse on blue shield
2nd SIG GRP	Satellite	Avn Detachment	Allen Andrus	White wings over MACV patch on red yellow black background
2/20th ARA	Blue Max		Mike Sloniker	Small cross on red oval w 2/20 on cannons
2/20th ARA	Griffin	Battalion Arty	Rick Freeman	Standing griffin w/ small 101st patch on black shield
2/20th ARA	Blue Max		Russell Warriner	Photo first version 1968
2/20th ARA	Blue Max		Russell Warriner	Photo reproduction of original patch
2/20th ARA	Blue Max		Russell Warriner	Photo griffin version with 1st Cav emblem
2/20th ARA	Blue Max		Russell Warriner	Photo reproduction of griffin version with 1st Cav emblem
3rd AHC	Chicken Man	Company	Carl Kimmich	1971-1972 white red chicken on 1st Cav patch
4th SIG DET	?	Signal Det	Dick Detra	Sig Corps insignia with av wings, avionics for 188th Avn.
4/77th ARA	Dragon/griffin		Mike Sloniker	Snake over AH-1 on red oval w/ARA 4/77
7th AIRLIFT	Snow White	Platoon	Josef Frey	Computer graphic white yellow winged 7 on blue shield
7th CAV AIRMBL	Garry Owen	Airmbl Inf	Gil Ferry	Horseshoe & saber with Garry Owen
7/17th AIR CAV	Ruthless Riders	Squadron	Mike Law	1967-1972 all personnel subdued spur w/lightning bolt
8th TRANS CO		CH-21 Company	Grover Thompson	8 with wings/tandem rotors on red shield.
11th ACR	Blackhorse	Armor Cav Reg	Gil Ferry	Modern patch
11th ACR ACT	Midnight Raider	1st Platoon	James Small	1st plt Air Cav Troop raider figure over red/white 66-67
11th ACR ACT	Thunderhorse	Air Cav Troop	John Plummer	Red/wte cross sabers w/UH1 & "blue 6" 71-72
11th CAB	Red Dog	Battalion	Daniel Miller	Patch of 11th CAG designated insignia 71-72
11th CAB	Red Dog	Bn Mess Section	Gary Goldsmith	Logo of 11th CAB officers mess 1970
11th CAB	Red Dog	Battalion	Gary Goldsmith	Emblem of 11th CAB officers open mess 69-70
11th BDE	Primo	Avn Section	Jim Graham	68-69 primo aviation ltd round black patch with "2"
12th CAG	Black Jack	Hq 12th Cag	Ottis Jack Purvis	Round blue metal pocket emblem w/buffalo head & avn wings 71
12th AVN GROUP	?	Group	Gil Ferry	Black yellow gragon with white wings on grey oval
17th AHC	Kingsman	Company	Mike Pate	Decal with 17th AHC and B/101st Avn Bn
17th AHC	Kingsmen	Company	Al Schibi	Original patch 67-68
17th CAV		Regiment	Brian Piggot	Metal pin designated insignia of 17th Air Cav Regiment
17th CAG	Eagles	Group	Woody Barnes	Reproduction patch
21st AVN CO	Bird Dogs	Fw Surv Company	Dick Detra	
45th MED DET	Dust Off	Med Det	William Kennington	White wing w/red cross on blue shield border white
48th AHC	Blue Star	Company	Lance Dickenson	Light blue star
48th AHC	Joker	Gun Platoon	Lance Dickenson	Batman character "the joker"
48th AHC	Blue Star	Company	William Kennington	Dark blue star over white banner
48th AHC	Blue Star	Company	Lance Dickenson	Calling card blue star at your service
48th AHC	Blue Star	2nd Lift Platoon	John Cesar	Red 2 on white shield with dice wild deuces 71-72
48th AHC	Blue Star	2nd Lift Platoon	John Cesar	Red 2 on white shield with dice wild deuces 71-72
48th AHC	Blue Star	Company	Joe Gomez	Dark blue star small banner with "skill not luck"
48th AHC	Joker	Gun Platoon	Joe Gomez	48th guns with face of batman character joker
52nd CAB	Flying Dragons	Battalion	Glen Salger	Reproduction green yellow red dragon on blue oval
52nd CAB	Flying Dragons	Battalion	Glenn Salger	1969-1970 green yellow red dragon on blue oval
52nd CAB	Flying Dragons	Battalion	George Crawford	Red green yellow dragon on blue field
52nd CAB	Flying Dragons	Battalion	John Grow	Red green yellow dragon on blue field
52nd CAB	Flying Dragons	Battalion	John Grow	Unit crest pin (designated insignia) fleur de lis over sword
57th AHC	Gladiators	Company	Richard Medore	Reproduction
57th AHC	Gladiators	Company	Stan Steenbock	Gladiator w/ blue background small 1st Avn Bde patch, 1967
57th AHC	Gladiators	1st Lift Platoon	Stan Steenbock	Red white blue shield with stars and stripes flt 1 plt 1969
57th AHC	Gladiators	2nd Lift Platoon	Stan Steenbock	CCC skull on blue shield "2nd airlift platoon" weak copy.
57th AHC	Cougars	Gun Platoon	Stan Steenbock	Cougar head on red field "team cougar" in red and black 1967

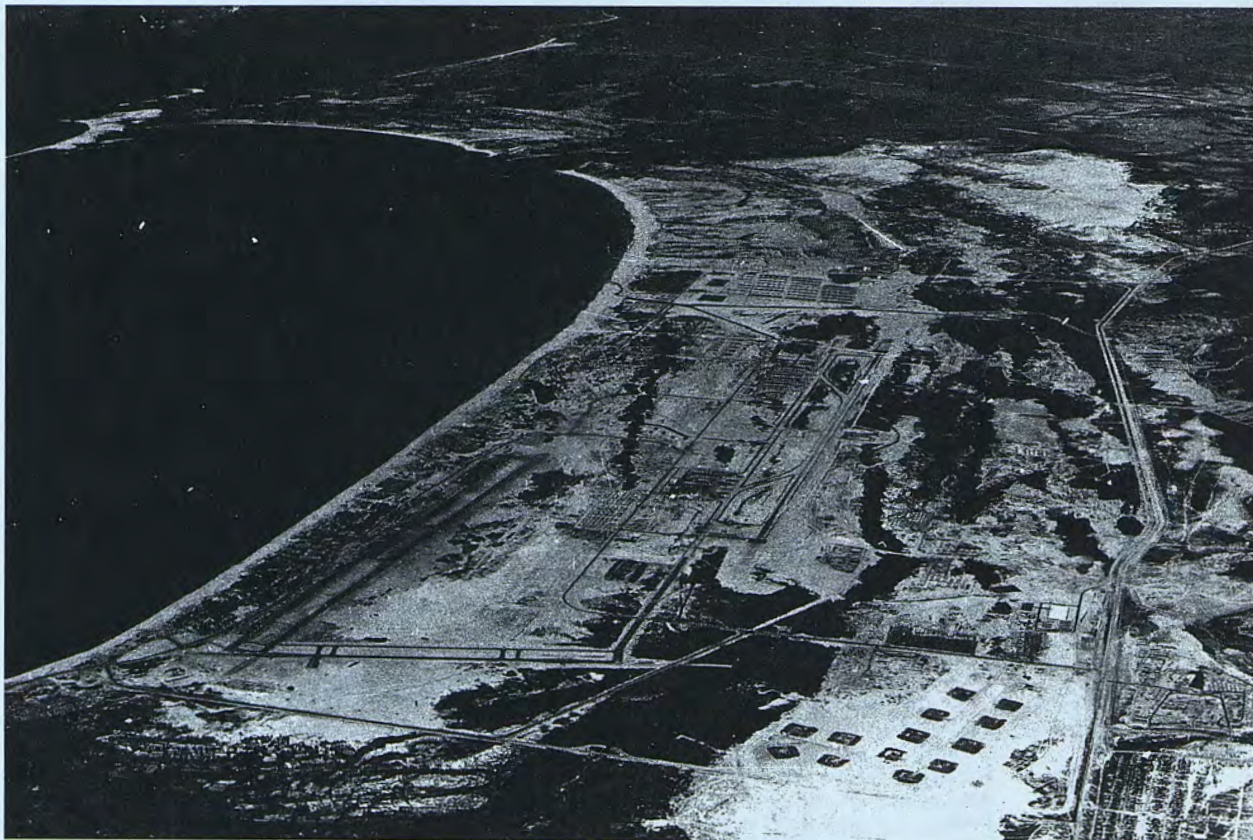
Unit	Call Sign	Remarks	Source	Description
57th AHC	Witch Doctor	Maint Platoon?	Stan Steenbock	Witch doc character on red field incomplete copy.
57th MED DET	Dustoff	Med Detachment	J.m. Grass	Shoulder tab w/"dustoff" in white numerals 57 over cross
57th MED DET	Dustoff	Med Detachment	David Gray	Poor photo of patch light green gold & black
57th TRANS CO		CH-21C Company	Joe Murphy	Yellow globe w/ black lines numerals 57 & wings on top
62nd AVN	Coachman	Company	Van Cunningham	1972 black/blue/red coach on orange diamond
65th ENGR BN	Rattlers	Gunner Platoon	Dick Detra	White wings blue field 25th Inf & MACV logo
68th AHC	Mustangs	Platoon	Jim Bodkin	Reproduction red/white reaper on white horse on black oval
68th AHC	Top Tiger	Company	William Kennington	Tiger on red grey shield w/ 68 tigers
68th MED DET	Dustoff	Med Detachment	Joseph Whisenhunt	Red croos on white shield w/wings and "68" "dustoff/white
71st AHC	Fire Birds	Gun Platoon	Jim Bodkin	Reproduction red green bird head w/yellow beak on blue oval
71st AHC	Fire Birds	Gun Platoon	Gil Ferry	Call sign "97" on bird head, original also A/501st Avn Bn
82nd MED DET	Dustoff	Med Detachment	J.m. Grass	White round patch w/ kangaroo & joey over red cross.
82nd MED DET	Dustoff	Med Detachment	J.m. Grass	OD round patch w/ kangaroo & joey over red cross.
82nd MED DET	Dustoff	Med Detachment	J.m. Grass	White round metal emblem w/ kangaroo & joey over red cross.
82nd MED DET	Dustoff	Med Detachment	J.m. Grass	Shoulder tab w/"dustoff" in white numerals 82nd over cross
82nd MED DET	Dustoff	Med Detachment	J.m. Grass	Calling card 82nd "med dustoff 88 CW2 J.M. Grass"
83rd MED DET		Med Detachment	John Brennan	83 Med Det caduceus and UH-1 on blue shield
92nd AHC	Stallions	Company	Woody Barnes	Reproduction patch
96th SIG DET		Det	Lee Page	96 Sig Det and Sig flags on red shield retouched copy
114th AHC	Knight	Company	Doug Wilson	Reproduction
114th AHC	Cobra	Gun Platoon	Doug Wilson	Original snake on blue/yellow shield
114th AHC	Kinghts	Company	Gil Ferry	Black winged chess knight over white and blue shield
116th AHC	Stingers	Gun Platoon	Glenn Salger	1969 "COL Kolars" beige background bee figure w/ machine gun
116th AHC	Bee Keeper	Maint Det	Glenn Salger	1969 yellow black red bee w/ wrench and rocket
116th AHC	Hornets	Company	Dick Detra	Wasp character behind shield wearing helmet
116th AHC	Stingers	Gun Platoon	Dick Detra	Stingers in yellow wasp over red field
116th AHC	Hornets	Company	Leonard Rutledge	Painted metal pocket tab
116th AHC	Yellow Jackets	1st Lift Platoon	Leonard Rutledge	Small painted metal pin
116th AHC	Yellow Jackets	1st Lift Platoon	Leonard Rutledge	Oval patch wasp on blue field
116th AHC	Hornets	Motor Pool	Leonard Rutledge	Oval patch black jeep on white field
116th AHC	Hornets	Company	Joe Duvall	Plastic enclosed metal pocket patch 1969
116th AHC	Wasps	2nd Lift Platoon	Joe Duvall	Plastic enclosed embroidered patch 1968
116th AHC	Yellow Jackets	1st Lift Platoon	Joe Duvall	Reproduction embroidered pocket patch 1988
116th AHC	Stingers	Gun Platoon	Joe Duvall	Embroidered pocket patch pocket patch 1968
116th AHC	Hornets	Company	Gil Ferry	Embroidered pocket patch w/ white diamond with hornet
117th AHC	Beachbum	Company	Mike O'Leary	Mailed fist w/lightning bolts on red/blue shield
117th AHC	Sidewinder	Gunplatoon	Mike O'Leary	Brown/yellow snake w/rocket pod on black shield
117th AHC	Sidewinder	Gunplatoon	Mike O'Leary	Calling card scanned image 67-68
117th AVN CO	Beach Bums	Company	Grover Thompson	Mailed hand with lightening bolts. "117th Aviation Co."
117th AHC	Warlords	Company	Marty Heuer	Unit emblem from 67-68 battalion RVN yearbook
117th AHC	Sidewinders	Gun Platoon	Marty Heuer	Unit emblem from 67-68 battalion RVN yearbook
118th AHC	Thunderbirds	Company	Jim Bodkin	Reproduction large white bird on drk blue background
118th AVN CO	Thunderbirds	Company	Jim Bodkin	Reproduction small white bird on blue shield/ It blue border
118th AHC	Thunderbirds	Company	Gil Ferry	Subdued version
119th AHC	Gators	Company	Jim Bodkin	Reproduction green tan red alligator on white shield
119th AHC	Gators	Company	Fidencio Ramirez	Green alligator as helicopter 69-70
120th AHC	Deans	Company	Claude Berry	Motar board hat w/wings and sword on black/orange oval
120th AHC	Razorbacks	Gun Platoon	Claude Berry	Stateside made red hog on blue/black oval
121st AHC	Tiger	Company	Paul Christiansen	Painted metal design on plaque 1969
123rd AVN BN	Griffins	Battalion	Gary Wineteer	White griffin on blue oval red/white border
123rd CAB		Battalion	Don Smith	Metal pin designated insignia
128th AHC	Tomahawk	Company	Jay Riseden	Gap in tomahawk plastic holder
128th AHC	Gunslinger	Gun Platoon	Jay Riseden	1st design plastic holder
128th AHC	Gunslinger	Gun Platoon	Jay Riseden	2nd design original 1968 Yosemite Sam w/blue hat
128th AHC	Gunslinger	Gun Platoon	Craig Mossman	3rd design 1969-1970 Yosemite Sam w/ brown hat
128th AHC	Witch Doctor	Maint Det	Craig Mossman	69-70 witch doc holding UH-1 and wrenches
128th AHC	Tomahawk	Company	Jay Riseden	2nd version in plastic holder
128th AHC	Gunslinger	Gun Platoon	Jay Riseden	1st design sew on version
128th AHC	Gunslinger	Gun Platoon	Jay Riseden	2nd design, decal of Yosemite Sam character
128th AHC	Gunslinger	Gun Platoon	Daniel Miller	3rd design 1971-1972
128th AHC	Tomahawk	Company	Daniel Miller	Gap in tomahawk subdued version 71-72
129th AHC	Bulldog?	Company	William Kennington	Shield with red and ligh gray background white lettering
129th AHC	Cobra?		Gil Ferry	Black outline of snake on yellow field od border
129th AHC	Bulldogs	Company	Ted Buisker	Shield w/ red and drk blue background white/yellow ltrs 67
134th AHC	Devils	Gun Platoon	Jack McDonald	68-69 round platoon patch helicopter with devil horns
134th AHC	Devils	Gun Platoon	Jack McDonald	68-69 red devil holding rocket "DEVIL 44" call sign
134th AHC	Demons	1st Lift Platoon	Rick Pemberton	Enlarged silk screen design post RVN service
134th AHC	Devils	Gun Platoon	Bruce Porter	Gun plt patch red devil with rocket 69-70
134th AHC	Devils	Gun Platoon	Bruce Porter	Demon company patch with gun plt tabs 69-70
135th AHC	Emu	Company	Wally Williamson	1st design bird w/six guns over Australian and US flags
135th AHC	Emu	Company	Ammon Webster	2nd design white wings over gold anchor/wreath on blue
135th AHC	Taipan	Gun Platoon	Ammon Webster	White/yellow snake around rocket on blue shield
135th AHC	Taipan	Gun Platoon	David Samuels	Snake entwined in rocket blue field red letters "27" 68-69
145th AVN BN		Avn Battalion	Harold Stanford	Vertical sword on red/blue oval w/ 145 Avn Bn
147th AVN CO	Hillclimber	Med Hel Company	George Reese	Photo elephant w/ rotors above flower tree and buffalo head
147th ASHC	Hillclimber	Company	George Miller	Green CH-47 character on sky blue field Vung Tau 1966

Unit	Call Sign	Remarks	Source	Description
147th AVN CO MH	Hillclimber	Med Hel	Tom Elliston	Photo of original patch 1965 elephant flower tree buffalo
155th AHC	Stagecoach	Company	Les Davison	1969 US flag RVN flag w/UH-1 and crossbow
155th AHC	Falcons	Gun Platoon	Les Davison	1969-1970 black falcon on lt blue background
155th AHC	Falcons	Gun Platoon	Les Davison	Black falcon on lt blue background
155th AHC	Stagecoach	Company	Ken Acker	US flag RVN flag w/UH-1 and crossbow 66-67
155th AHC	Stagecoach	Company	Ken Acker	Reproduction US flag RVN flag w/UH-1 and crossbow
155th AVN CO	Stagecoach	Company	John Grow	Original patch Ban Me Thuot 1966
155th AVN CO	Falcons	Gun Platoon	John Grow	Gun platoon patch after 1966
155th AVN CO	Falcons	Gun Platoon	John Grow	Grey white bird w/rocket pods original patch 1964-1966
155th AHC	Stagecoach	Company	Tom Mullen	US flag RVN flag w/UH-1 and crossbow 67-68
155th AHC	Falcons	Gun Platoon	Tom Mullen	Black falcon on yellow mailed fist gun platoon patch 67-68
155th AHC	Stagecoach	Company	Dale McClure	US flag RVN flag w/UH-1 and crossbow original patch
155th AHC	Stagecoach	Company	Bruce Acker	US flag RVN flag w/UH-1 and crossbow reproduction
159th AVN BN	Lift Master	Battalion	George Reese	Photo yellow drgon on red sash on blue yellow shield
161st AVN CO	Pelicans	Company	Marty Heuer	Copy of logo on plaque white yellow pelican on blue oval
162nd AHC	Vultures	Company	William Kennington	Vulture on dark blue background in red "STS"
162nd AHC	Vultures	Company	Tom Broadbent	1968-1969 vulture wearing helmet with watch in beak
162nd AHC	Copperheads	Gun Platoon	Tom Broadbent	1968-1969 vulture patch has "die bastards die copperheads"
162nd AHC	Vultures	Company		Vulture wearing helmet painted metal emblem
162nd AHC	Copperheads	Gun Platoon		Snake with rocket flying from mouth painted metal emblem
162nd AVN CO	Vultures	Company	Bill Rettenmund	Original square patch 1966 vulture on helicopter over spade
162nd AVN CO	Vultures	Company	Bill Rettenmund	Round blue patch vulture wearing helmet 162nd Avn Co (ASLT)
162nd AHC	Copperheads	Gun Platoon	Larry Talbert	Snake with rocket flying form mouth, metal pocket tab 69-70
162nd AHC	Vultures	Company	Larry Talbert	Pocket patch 69-70
163rd AVN CO	Road Runners	Company	Gary Earls	1970 blue shield w/ pink & purple road runner 101st logo
165th TRANS DET	CHFM	Maint Det	John Grow	Green UH-1 over sword above hands on blue grey shield
170th AHC	Bikini	Company	George Crawford	Female figure in bikini and 52nd CAB dragon 70-71
170th AHC	Bikini	Company	David Strom	Figure in bikini and 52nd CAB dragon 70-71 metal emblem
171st TRANS DET		Detachment	George Reese	Photo yellow hand holding brown CH-47 on white shield
173rd AHC	Robin Hoods	Company	Jim Kelly	Enamel metal logo from plaque
173rd AHC	Cross Bows	Gun Platoon	Daid Gray	Poor photo of patch red oval w/white skull & wings
174th AHC	Dolphins	Company	Mike Sloniker	Winged sword w/shark and dolphin figure on blue oval w/174th
174th AHC	Sharks	Gun Platoon	Mike Sloniker	White sharks teeth holding rocket pod/minigun on red
174th AHC	Witch Doctor	Maint Platoon	Butch Elliot	Reproduction 70-71 design
176th AHC	Musket	Gun Platoon	George Garrety	Original patch 1967 red VC body count 1-7-6 blue oval
176th AHC	Minutemen	Company	Max Mizejewski	Reproduction subdued
178th ASHC	Boxcars	Company	Dick Janousek	Original version red dice w/sixes on blue oval
179th ASHC	Shrimp Boats	Company	George Reese	Photo brown CH-47 slinging red figure w/ artillery piece
187th AHC	Blackhawks	Company	Thomas Connelly	1967 black hawk head on blue arrowhead w/white wings
187th AHC	Blackhawks	Company	Dick Detra	1967 black hawk head on blue arrowhead w/white wings
187th AHC	Rat Pack	Gun Platoon	Dick Detra	White rat character on blue oval
187th AHC	Mung's?		Daniel Miller	Shield shape blue field helo with teeth "mung's"
187th AHC	Crusaders	Company	Daniel Miller	Shield shape red cross over crossed lances 71-72
188th AHC	Black Widow	1st Lift Plt	Dick Detra	Black spider on red background 67-68 "1st"
188th AHC	Black Widow	2nd Lift Plt	Dick Detra	Black spider on red background 67-68 "2nd"
188th AHC	Spiders	Gun Platoon	Dick Detra	Red background no unit id hand drawn 67-68
188th AHC	Black Widow	1st Lift Plt	Bob Crow	Black spider/red background orange border 67-68 "1st"
188th AHC	Black Widow	Gun Platoon	Bob Crow	Spider on red background 67-68 "spiders"/yellow border
188th AHC	Spiders	Gun Platoon	Bob Crow	Hairy spider character red background no unit id 67-68
188th AHC	Black Widow	1st Lift Plt	Dick Detra	Red background 67-68 "1st"
188th AHC	Black Widow	2nd Lift Plt	Dick Detra	Red background 67-68 "2nd"
188th AHC	Spiders	Gun Platoon	Dick Detra	Red background same as lift platoon w/spider tab 67-68
188th AHC	Spiders	Gun Platoon	Dick Detra	Red background 67-68 "spiders" spider character
188th AHC	Caretaker	Maint Det	Dick Detra	Red background eagle with blue UH-1
188th AHC	Black Widow	Company	John Gurica	Painted metal pocket emblem "aim high" at bottom 67-68
191st AHC	Boomerangs	Company	Don Williams	Pocket patch 67-68 Bear Cat
191st AHC	Boomerangs	Company	Jack Tiesing	Pocket patch 68-69 Dong Tam
191st AHC	Bounty Hunters	Gun Platoon	Jack Tiesing	Red pentagon patch w/ white letters and gun fighter. 68-69
191st AHC	Boomerangs	Company	Marty Heuer	Unit emblem from 67-68 battalion RVN yearbook
191st AHC	Bounty Hunter	Gun Platoon	Marty Heuer	Unit emblem from 67-68 battalion RVN yearbook
192nd AHC	Polecat	Company	Carl Kimmich	1971-1972 damaged blue black shield on yellow green
192nd AHC	Polecat	2nd Lift Plt	Carl Kimmich	1971-1972 damaged skunk figure on purple triangle
195th AHC	Skychiefs	Company	Marty Heuer	Unit emblem from 67-68 battalion RVN yearbook
195th AHC	Thunderchickens	Gun Platoon	Marty Heuer	Unit emblem from 67-68 battalion RVN yearbook
196th ASHC		Company	George Reese	Photo green CH-47 slinging globe on blue and white oval
199th LIB	Fireball	Avn Section	Chris Kilgore	1968-1969 yellow circle w/winged orange fireball
199th AVN CO	Swamp Fox	Fw Surv Company	Woody Barnes	Brown fox head on green black background
200th ASHC	Pachyderms	Company	George Miller	Elephant head on blue and white pentagons Bearcat 1967
205th ASHC	Geronimo	Company	Harold Stanford	Grey/red headress w/CH-47 and crossed tomahawks
213th ASHC	Black Cats	Company	Tim Stott	Round painted plaque cat on CH-47 green field 67-68
213th ASHC	Black Cats	Company	Tim Stott	Round patch black cat on CH-47 green field 67-68
213th ASHC	Black Cats	Company	Bill Mac Dougall	Round patch black cat on CH-47 kelly green field 67-68
213th ASHC	Black Cats	Company	Tom Slaughter	Round green patch white border black cat on CH-47. 71-72
214th CAB	Cougars	Battalion	Marty Heuer	Designated insignia from 67-68 battalion RVN yearbook
214th CAB	Cougars	Battalion	Marty Heuer	Red/white/gray emblem from 67-68 battalion RVN yearbook
222nd CBT AVN BN	Sky Masters	Hq 222nd Cab	Ottis Jack Purvis	Blue shield/white trim letters eagle w/MACV emblem 1971

Unit	Call Sign	Remarks	Source	Description
229th AVN BN	Stacked Deck	Battalion	Mike Sloniker	Four aces on orange oval w stacked deck bn
229th AVN BN	Stacked Deck	Battalion	Russ Warriner	Four aces on orange oval w stacked deck bn
235th ARM HEL CO	Delta Devils	Gun Company	John Regan	Black triangle with devil head original unit patch
235th ARM HEL CO	Satan	1st Platoon	John Regan	Round blue patch with cobra over red devil head silhouette
235th ARM HEL CO	Gunslinger	Armament Section	John Regan	Yellow triangle with gun fighter "gun slinger"
235th ARM HEL CO	Delta Devils	Gun Company	John Regan	Black triangle with devil head RVN hand made
237th MED DET	DMZ Dustoff	Med Detachment	Phil Marshall	Reproduction 1990 white background
237th MED DET	DMZ Dustoff	Med Detachment	Phil Marshall	Original patch dark blue background 68-72
240th AHC	Greyhounds	Company	Marty Heuer	Unit emblem from 67-68 battalion RVN yearbook
242nd ASHC	Muleskinner	Company	Harold Stanford	Early version white mule on red yellow black shield
242nd ASHC	Mule Skinner	Company	Dick Detra	CH-47 has "muleskinners" on patch
243rd ASHC	Freight Train	Co & 620 Tc Det	Fredrick Ewart	Round white patch w/ green CH-47 as train on track 1969
269th CAB	Black Barons	Battalion	Dick Detra	Maltese cross on white field "aim high"
271st AVN	Innkeeper	Company	Dave Fesmire	Med Hel winged horse on red/yellow flag blue background
271st AVN	Innkeeper	Company	Dave Fesmire	Dragon w/ twin rotors on blue oval design 1971
271st AVN	Innkeeper	Company	Dave Fesmire	Winged horse on red/yellow flag blue background 1971
273rd HVY HEL CO	Super Hook	Company	Warren Silva	CH-54 silhouette on gray shield w/aviator wings 69-70
273rd HVY HEL CO	Super Hook	Company	Warren Silva	Calling card 273rd Hvy Hel Co. superhook 6 69-70 W. Silva
281st AHC	Intruder	Company	Joe Bilitzke	Red white orange shield w/UH-1 and triangle
281st AHC	Rat Pack	1st Lift Plt	Joe Bilitzke	Black shield w/orange band UH-1 and orange triangle
281st AHC	Bandit	2nd Lift Plt	Joe Bilitzke	Black arrowhead patch w/blue triangle and orange lightning
281st AHC	Wolf Pack	Gun Platoon	Joe Bilitzke	Three wolves around orange triangle w/UH-1 on red shield
281st AHC	Wolf Pack	Gun Platoon	Ed Duke	Red patch w/ 3 wolves behind yellow triangle w/UH-1
282nd AHC	Alley Cats	Gunplatoon	John Silberman	Reproduction black cat w/ machine gun on green rocket pod
282nd AHC	Black Cats	Company	Rich Dandera	Black cat silhouette w/ red eyes on yellow oval
283rd MED DET	Dustoff	Med Detachment	Les Davison	1969-1970 red cross on dk blue shield w/ white aviation wings
334th AVN CO	UTT	Armed Hel Co	Grover Thompson	Green helicopter red shield w/"334 UTT first with guns"
335th AHC	Ramrods	1st Lift Plt	Larry Eads	Cowboy head smoking a cheroot
335th AHC	Cowboys	Company	Larry Eads	Cowboy astride UH-1 roping VC
336th AHC	Warrior	Company	Paul Christiansen	Painted metal design on plaque 68-69
336th AHC	Warrior/t-birds	Company		Painted metal emblem
339th TRANS CO	Black Maria	Company	Bob Allwine	Red shield w/ hands holding O-1 & H-13, 1962 Qui Nhon
355th AVN	Workhorse	Company	Charlie Eliason	CH-54 black banner light blue
361st AWC	Pink Panthers	Escort Company	William Kennington	Pink panther head w/ brown helmet and goggles on blue
361st AVN	Pink Panthers	Escort Company	Dick Detra	Full length panther figure w/ top hat black back field.
361st AWC	Pink Panthers	Aero W Company	Mike Sheuerman	Reproduction round patch with full Pink Panther 68-71
361st AWC	Pink Panthers	Aero W Company	Mike Sheuerman	Reproduction round patch with Pink Panther head 71-72
393rd TRANS	Medicine Men	Detachment	Joe Underwood	Witch Doctor figure over crossed bones on red shield
409th TRANS DET		Detachment	Mike Sloniker	Winged sword w/shark and dolphin figure on blue oval w/409th
412th TRANS DET		Maint Det	Paul Kunkel	Maint for C/7/17 road runner w/lightening bolt 68-69
478th AVN CO	Wrenches			
503rd CHEM	Hurricanes	Company Hvy Hel	Jay Riseden	Early version green CH-54 yellow background
544th CHFM	Sniffers	Det	Chris Kilgore	Snoopy character w/ rotor and goggles on blue oval
602nd TRANS DET		Maint Det	John Brennan	Reproduction
604th TRANS CO	Highlanders	Detachment	Thomas Connelly	Brown UH-1 over orange RVN map on blue oval
608th TRANS DET	Devil Support	Ds/gs Maint Co	Clifford Letts	Painted design pleiku 71-72.
A/1/9 CAV	Apache	Trans Det	John Regan	Maint det for 235th AHC. round blue/yellow w/ 235th patch
A/2/17 CAV	Assault	Troop	Chuck Adkinson	Reproduction of 1969 pocket patch blue with gold lettering
A/3/17 CAV	Silver Spur	Troop	William Kennington	1969-1972 mounted cav trooper chasing VC on red/white oval
A/4/77th ARTY	Dragons	Lift Platoon	Ottis Jack Purvis	Round black patch w/yellow border white spur call sign 26
A/5th TRAN BN		Ara Battery	Joseph Footer	Green yellow dragon figure w/ rocket pod on red oval
A/25th AVN BN		Maint Company	Joseph Footer	White winged 5 on red circle Camp Eagle 70-71
A/25th AVN BN	Little Bears	Slick Company	Joseph Footer	White bear on blue circle
A/25th AVN BN	Little Bears	Slick Company	Dick Detra	White bear on blue circle
A/25th AVN BN	Little Bears	Slick Company	Brad Burkholder	White bear on lt/dark blue oval
A/101st AHB	Comancheros	Company	Mike Sloniker	Yellow blue white bandit character on red oval
A/101st AVN BN	Winged Warriors	Company	Paul Ashley	Blue shield w/ 101st Abn eagle over white wings 66
A/101st AVN BN	Warriors	Company	Chuck Slezak	101st eagle head over wings/cross rifle & lightning reprod
A/123rd AVN BN	Pelicans	Company	Don Smith	White pelican on black field round patch trim in gold
A/123rd AVN BN	Pelicans	Company	Leslie Hines	White pelican on purple field round patch gold letters
A/228th ASHB	Wildcats	Company	George Reese	Photo damaged blue CH-47 slinging world on red oval
A/229th AHB	Black Bandits	Company	Mike Sloniker	Raccoon character in winged triangle on yellow rectangle
A/229th AHB	Load Hackers	Company	Mike Sloniker	Green UH-1 character on orange oval
A/229th AHB	Black Bandits	Company	Ron Gayler	1970 racoon in blue triangle on red oval bordered black
A/229th AHB	Black Bandits	Company	Charlie Rains	68-70 round yellow patch racoon in blue/red triangle mask
A/229th AHB	Black Bandits	Company	Mike Sloniker	Rectangular patch w/raccoon & "if you ain't cav"
A/229th AHB	Load Hackers	Company	Mike Sloniker	Shoulder tab blue with black letters
A/229th AHB	Load Hackers	Company	Mike Sloniker	Round yellow patch w/ UH-1 character
A/377 ARTY	Gunner	Battery	John Penny	Eagle w/ rocket pod on blue oval
A/377 ARTY	Gunner	Lift Platoon	John Penny	Green UH-1 character hold arty piece on orange oval
A/377 ARTY	Gunner	Battery	Marcus Whitt	Unit patch acct nos 527 787 eagle w/rocket pods
A/377 ARTY	Gunner	Lift Platoon	Marcus Whitt	Acft nos 527 787 green UH-1 w'arty piece
A/501 AVN BN	Rattlers	Company	Harold Stanford	Yellow black white snake on black shield border red
B/1/ AVN	Rebels	Company	William Kennington	1965-1970 CSA flag w rebels 67 68 on white rectangle
B/1/ AVN	Rebels	Company	Shannon D. Clark	Confederate battle flag w/white border "68 69" and rebels
B/4/4 AVN	Gambler Guns	Company	Jay Riseden	Blue oval green huey over ace of spades "C" for UH-1C

Unit	Call Sign	Remarks	Source	Description
B/4/77 ARA	Toros	Battery	Paul Ashley	Round red patch bull with rockets from nose.
B/7/1 CAV	Dutchmaster	Scout Platoon	William Kennington	1968-1972? large grey/white bird w/ bloody saber on red/white
B/7/17 CAV	Pallbearer	Lift Platoon	Jim Donohue	Snoopy on yellow dog house "pallbearer" 1968
B/7/17 CAV	Undertaker	Gun Platoon	Mike Law	Snake over coffin "undertaker" 1968
B/25th AVN BN	Diamond Heads	Gun Company	Joseph Footer	Black yellow helicopter on black/white background
B/25th AVN BN	Diamond Heads	Gun Company	Dick Detra	Black yellow helicopter on black/white background
B/101 AVN BN	Kingsmen	Company	Al Schibi	Original patch 67-72
B/123rd AVN	Warlords	Scout Company	Tom Okerlund	68-69 skull/ wing gold helmet over rocket and M60 on lt blue
B/123rd AVN	Warlords	Scout Company	Jim Graham	Skull/ wing gold helmet over rocket and M60 on lt blue 68
B/159 ASHC	Varsity	Company	Hobie Hammond	Damaged green CH-47 on orange banner/ on green shield
B/159 ASHC	Varsity	Company	Hobie Hammond	Green CH-47 caricature w/ large tires large "V" on red oval
B/159 ASHC?	Varsity	Company	Gil Ferry	Identification is uncertain. OD rectangle w/white star "the varsity"
B/228th ASHB	Longhorns	Company	George Reese	Photo green CH-47 as steer character on white oval
B/228th ASHB	Longhorns	Company	Patrick Glass	Pocket patch 70-71
C/2/17 CAV	Condors	Company	Bob Holcomb	Reproduction round blue patch w/ condor on limb over sun
C/3/5 CAV	Lighthorse	Company	Rex Gooch	Pre 1971 scanned image horse head/sabers on red and white
C/3/17 CAV	Light Horse	Company	Tom Okerlund	Post 1971 horse head/cav sabers on red/white shield
C/3/17 CAV	Long Knives	Ar Platoon	Rex Gooch	Post 1971 photo cav trooper w/ bloody saber on red/white
C/3/17 CAV		Generic Cobra	Tom Okerlund	1968-1971 black yellow red snake over AH-1 on white oval
C/4/77 ARA	Griffin	Battery	Gary Earls	RVN calling card
C/7/17 CAV			Bob Mitchell	"try me" black horse head white mane 68-69 reproduction
C/16 CAV	Four Horseman	Ar Lift Plt	Dave Fesmire	Four horse heads on octagon orange-yellow outline and detail
C/16 CAV	Outcasts	Scout Platoon	Dave Fesmire	"low level hell" black mask over sabers on red oval
C/16 CAV	Mustangs	Gun Platoon	Dave Femire	1970-1973 2nd design snake over AH-1 "mustangs"
C/16 CAV	Darkhorse	Troop	Dave Fesmire	Black horse head on red background C 16 on white below
C/16 CAV	Four Horseman	Air Lift Plt	Dave Fesmire	Bright yellow outline and detail. larger than 29.
C/16 CAV	Darkhorse	Company	David Lane	
C/101 AHB	Black Widow	Company	Dick Detra	Black spider on gray oval 68-70 "69" on spider
C/101 AHB	Black Widow	Company	Dick Detra	Black spider on blue background diamond shape 70-72 Phu Bai
C/101 AHB	Black Widow	Company	Bob Crow	Spider on gray background oval shape 68-70 "38" on spider
C/101 AHB	Black Widow	Company	Bob Crow	Spider on blue background diamond shape 70-72 Phu Bai
C/101 AHB	Black Widow	Company	Dick Detra	Blue background diamond shape 70-72 Phu Bai
C/101 AHB	Black Widow	Company	Dick Detra	Gray background oval shape 68-70 "69" on spider
C/158th AVN	Phoenix	Company	Bb At Kc Reunion	Yellow bird on red RVN map on blue shield
C/158th AVN	Phoenix	Company	Gary Earls	1969 RVN hand made with call sign "36"
C/158th AVN	Phoenix	Company	Gary Earls	1969 made in USA
C/158th AVN	Phoenix	Company	Gary Earls	RVN calling card
C/159th ASHB	Playtex	CH-47 Company	Alex Kelly	69-70 CH-47 formed by letters chinook on red oval
C/159th ASHB	Playtex	Company	Alex Kelly	Reproduction round red patch w/CH-47 outline
C/227th AHB	Ghost rider	Company	James Willis	UH-1 over white ghost figure w/lightning on blue background
C/229th AHB	North Flag	Company	Mike Sloniker	Yellow flag on staff pointing north on orange oval damaged
C/229th AHB	North Flag	Company	Roger Baker	Photo of patch on flt jacket. 69-71
D/1/1 CAV	Saber	Troop	Gil Ferry	Round red/white patch w/cav trooper D missing?
D/1/4 CAV	Mustangs	Gun Platoon	David Lane	Blue patch with snake over AH-1
D/1/4 CAV	Darkhorse	Company	David Lane	Calling card
D/1/4 CAV	Mustangs	Gun Platoon	Mike Woods	Blue patch with snake over AH-1 1969
D/1/10 CAV	Shamrock Guns	Weapons Plat	Michael Lovett	Snoopy on dog house with mini gun red/white cav flag 70-71
D/1/10 CAV	Shamrock?	Scout Plat	Michael Lovett	"Viet cong hunting club" VC silhouette over RVN flag 70-71
D/1/10 CAV	Shamrock Guns	Weapons Plat	Gil Ferry	Snoopy on dog house with mini gun red/white cav flag 70-71
D/1/10 CAV	Shamrock	Gun Platoon	Rick Bush	Cobra over green shamrock orange field 1969
D/1/10 CAV	Shamrock	Gun Platoon	Rick Bush	Cav flag with snoopy on dog house with gun and skids, May 70
D/3/4 CAV	Centaur	Troop	Pooch Johnston	Loach silhouette over cross sabers 68-69
D/3/5 CAV	Charlie Horse	Troop	Van Cunningham	Post 1971 triangle in white circle w/charlie horse scouts
D/3/5 CAV	Kamakazi	Scout Platoon	Van Cunningham	Red bordered white circle with kanji characters
D/3/5 CAV	Warwagon	Scout Section	George Dyer	Tank like wagon on red/white cav flag, after Jan 1968
D/3/5 CAV	Crusaders	Gun Platoon	George Garrety	Original patch 1967 red cross on shield over yellow sword
D/7/17 CAV		Ground Troop	Ed Garrison	White dog holding crossed sabers on red shield 1969
D/158th AHB	Redskins	Company	Mike Sloniker	Black/yellow/red snake wrapped on tomahawk on blue oval
D/227TH		Aero W Company	William Kennington	"Guns" 227 and snake over AH-1 on grey oval
D/227TH	El Lobo	Company	Martin Beckman	Grey round patch snake over AH-1 "guns 227th" 69-71
D/227TH	El Lobo	Company	Martin Beckman	Grey round patch snake over AH-1 "guns 227th" 69-71
D/227TH	El Lobo	Company	Martin Beckman	Calling card "guns 227th ahb" AH-1 w/El Lobo 69-71
D/227TH	?	Gun Company	Carroll Fyffe	T-shirt design snake with crown. 1968
D/229TH	Smiling Tigers	Gun Company	Glenn Salger	Decal rectangle with patch detail/ Walt Disney productions
D/229TH	Smiling Tigers	Gun Company	Don Williams	Pocket patch 70-71
DIVARTY 4th DIV	Red Leg	Avn Section	Mike Stamilio	Yellow patch w/crossed cannon wings and red leg designed 68
E/723 MNT	Road Runner	Company	Leslie Hines	White round patch w/bird and "road runner co team"
F/1/9 CAV		Troop	Don Williams	Black pentagon shape sabers with "hunter killer" 70-71
F/4 CAV	Centaur	Troop	Daniel Miller	Red white cav flaf w/sabers and F 4
F/4 CAV	Centaur	Troop	Daniel Miller	Black/red shoulder tab worn after pu of gun/scout crew
F/4 CAV	Centaur	Aerorifle Plt	Daniel Miller	Black UH-1 over cross sabers od dark gray field
F/4 CAV	Centaur	Aero Weapons Plt	Mike Woods	Round patch w/AH-1 over sabers 71-72
F/4 CAV	Centaur		Mike Woods	Shoulder tab "hunter killer team" 71-72
F/4 CAV	Centaur	Troop	Mike Woods	Red white cav flag w/sabers and F 4
F/8/CAV	Blue Ghost	Troop	John Boyer	2nd design blue black shrouded skeleton on red/white oval
F/8/ CAV	Red 10-19	Scout Platoon	William Kennington	1968-1973 F Troop on red/white cav flag

Unit	Call Sign	Remarks	Source	Description
F/8/CAV	Blue Ghost	Troop	Greg Ross	Original design
F/8/CAV	Blue Ghost	Troop	Gregg Ross	2nd design
F/9 CAV	Kill	Scout Platoon	Mike Sloniker	White OH-6 over cav sabers on black oval
F/79 ARA	Blue Max		Mike Sloniker	Large cross on red oval w F/79 on cannons
F/79 ARA	Blue Max		Russell Warriner	Photo
HHT/7/1 CAV	King Bird	Headquarter Troop	Wayne Mazikowski	Black hawk on round subdued patch 69-72
H/10 CAV	White	Troop	Tom Butz	Cav troop on horse over AH-1 outline w/riders on the storm
H/10 CAV	White	Gun Platoon	Tom Butz	White 7 and cav sabers on red/white cav flag
H/10 CAV	White	Gun Platoon	Tom Butz	Shoulder patch
H/16 CAV	Sabre	Scout Platoon	Mike Sloniker	White OH-6 on black oval
HHD 25th AVN BN	Lobo	Detachment	Dick Detra	Wolf head blue field. "maint"
CCC RECON		Company	Stan Steenbock	White skull w/ green beret
DELTA GROUP		Group		Painted metal emblem
DELTA GROUP		Group		Metal clutch back pin
UTT		Company	Jim Bodkin	Reproduction yellow winged horse on red shield
U.S. Marine Corps Patches				
HML-167		Squadron	Seppo Hurme	Painted metal logo green dragon with rocket
HMM-261		Squadron	Bruce Lake	Round patch head of bull over 4 rotor blades and sunburst 1
HMM-265		Squadron	Bruce Lake	Round patch with red seahorse and shield blue field
HMM-361		Squadron	Seppo Hurme	Photo of painted insignia on sign at unit HQ
VMO-2		Squadron	Seppo Hurme	Eagle with stretcher and rocket
U.S. Navy Patches				
HA(L)-3	Seawolf		Roger Ek	Blue wolf character w/trident on white oval
HC-3 DET 104		Det TSN	Edward Hintz	Green CH-46 on yellow triangle
HC-3 DET 104			Edward Hintz	Black knight astride seahorse on blue/orange shield
U.S. Air Force Patches				
21st SP OPS SQ	Dustdevils	Squadron	Jim Henthorn	Devil head on twister on red circle
21st SP OPS SQ	Mach Timers	Squadron	Jim Henthorn	Blue H3 character on white shield
37th AARS	Jolly Green	Rescue Squadron	Gil Ferry	Green silhouette of green giant on white shield



This is an official U.S. Army photograph of the Chu Lai base camp and airfield taken May, 1969.

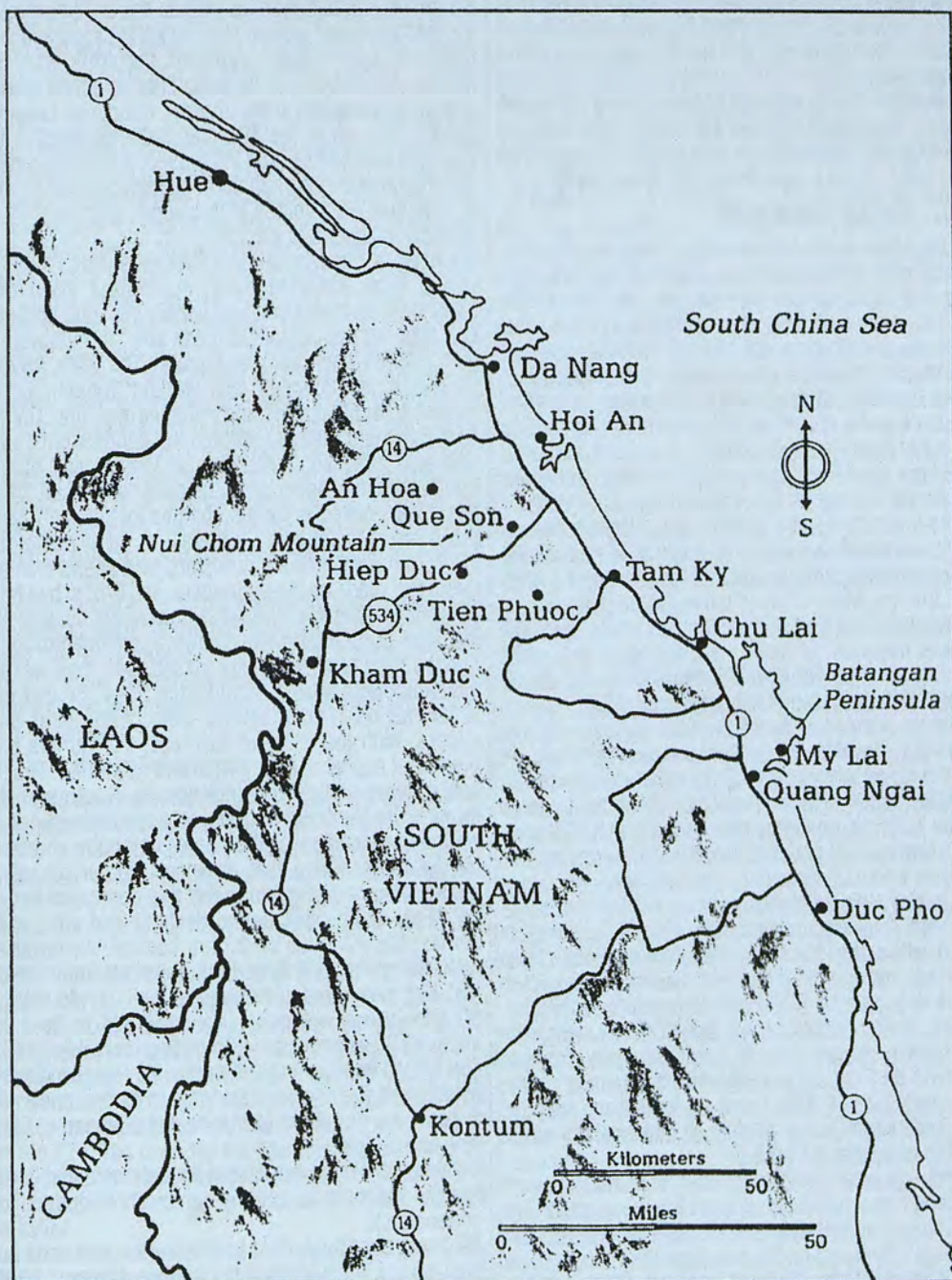
SECTION VIII - The Helicopter History of Southern I Corps

It is a custom for the VHPA Directory to present at least one major history and for the cover photos to relate to this history. These history presentations are not designed to be exhaustive treatises of the subject. Their primary purposes are: to be educational and informative to the memberships, to present a quality selection of the historical material available, and to serve as the base for another VHPA living history (that will be augmented over the years by any and all members).

References - The official Marine Corps Vietnam History, *U.S. Marines in Vietnam, The Landing and The Buildup, 1965*, and *The Expanding War, 1966*. Shelby Stanton *Vietnam Order of Battle* and *The Rise and Fall of an American Army*. The following ORLLs: 16 for Task Force OREGON and the Americal Division; 7 for the 16th Combat Aviation Group; 7 for the Americal Division Artillery; 3 for the 14th Combat Aviation Battalion; the Operation LAMAR PLAIN After Action Report, and about a dozen *Southern Cross* extracts. The VHPA thanks VHCMA members Les Hines, Chuck Carlock, and Dick Janousek and Americal Association member Jay Roth for the extensive Americal data. Vol. 2. of the Historical Reference Directory has the 14th CAB and 178th ASHC printed histories. Photos of the Chu Lai and Ky Ha bases are presented on pages 244 and 340

For the purposes of this VHPA history, Southern I Corps is defined as the area made up of Quang Tin and Quang Ngai Provinces plus the Que Son and Duc Duc Districts of Quang Nam Province. This area was also the Americal Division's Area of Operation (AO). The scope of this history includes the battles fought and the major units stationed in this area from a helicopter perspective.

A basic map of Southern I Corps



The Early Years

First Known Helicopter Operations - On 30 Aug 1962, the 93d TC Co complimented with 10 CH-34s from the VNAF 1st Helicopter Squadron supported Operation LAMSON II deep in the jungles of Quang Ngai Province. This is the first known use of American helicopters in Southern I Corps. The 93d unit history records: "A heavy ground fog covered the LZ for two hours after the pre-strike. Despite encountering heavy fire from the alerted VC and the loss of two CH-21's to enemy fire with the wounding of four crew members, the 93d successfully completed two lifts into the LZ. Of the 12 CH-21C's used, nine were hit by enemy fire and two were shot down."

Background - About Oct, 1961, the VNAF established a helicopter squadron at Da Nang. On 25 Jan 1962, the 93d TC Co flew off the USS Princeton to be based at Da Nang. In early 1962, the 8th TC Co arrived at Qui Nhon. Thus, all helicopter operations in Southern I Corps had to be supported from outside the area. HMM-163 traded places with the 93d in mid-September 1962 which brought Operation SHUFLY, USMC helicopters to support the ARVNs, to I Corps.

The ARVN Order of Battle - There were three major ARVN commands stationed in I Corps; the 1st Infantry Division in the upper two provinces, the 2d Infantry Division in the lower two and the separate 51st ARVN Regiment in Quang Nam Province.

The USMC Order of Battle - The 3d Marine Division and the 1st Marine Air Wing (MAW) were headquartered at Da Nang. The Marines established III MAF (Marine Amphibious Force) as a Corps level command for all their units. III MAF reported to MACV tactically.

Chu Lai Established

Background - With the Marines established at Da Nang and Phu Bai, with MACV wanting to bring more Marine combat units to Vietnam, with Da Nang airfield and port facilities already crowded, and with MACV interested in establishing a few more US military "enclaves" that could be supported from the sea and air even with limited ARVN security; the stage was set for the establishment of the third Marine base area. USMC LTG Victor Krulak, the CG of Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, on a 1964 inspection tour, selected the site. The naval officer with him agreed that the place looked good, but it wasn't marked on the map and pressed the general for a name. Krulak gave him the Mandarin Chinese characters for his own name, saying it was called Chu Lai; and the name stuck.

Approval - By anyone's standards, the speed with which the base at Chu Lai was approved, occupied and made operational is impressive. The following is a brief summary from the official Marine Corps history of 1965. On 8 March, the first Marine forces landed at Da Nang and on 10 April, they were augmented by additional forces to help establish their second enclave at Phu Bai. Discussions relating to their third enclave had been going on for months at the Pentagon level. On 30 March, the Department of Defense tentatively approved a SATS (Short Airfield for Tactical Support) for Chu Lai but the final decision was not made until the 20 April high-level Honolulu Conference which increased the U.S. servicemen levels in Vietnam by 42,000. The SATS concept was for a 2,000 to 3,000 foot by 72 foot runway but the final design resulted in an 8,000 by 102 foot runway so they called it a LATS (long). A civilian construction firm was supposed to assist with the construction and survey work but they were conspicuous by their absence.

The Landing - On 7 May, the amphibious force landed the 4 RLT (Regimental Landing Team) that included the Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 10 while the 2d ARVN Division provided initial security. The landing was not opposed and two companies moved in land some three miles to secure LZ ROBIN which overlooked Route 1. HMM-161 flew the rest of the battalion from the USS Princeton. Not only did HMM-161 have to support the RLT, but the Navy changed amphibious assault ships on this day; so HMM-161 had to move to the Iwo Jima. By the 12th, more than 10,925 tons of equipment and supplies had been unloaded and the shipping moved up toward Hue where HMM-161 off-loaded to be based at Phu Bai.

Remember The Sand - General Krulak described the Chu Lai Beach area "as great a challenge as any foreshore that I have ever seen. The sand is of powdered sugar consistency and no wheeled vehicle can negotiate it with success." By using all the beach matting on the ships plus more supplied by the 3d Marine Division, the work continued. The

sand played havoc with machinery. It worked its way into everything; bearings, brake linings, and clutches. Eventually the 3d Engineer Battalion in Da Nang contributed nearly all of its equipment to Chu Lai. **And the Heat** - The heat and humidity quickly sapped the strength of the work crews. During each 12-hour work shift, at least two full crews were necessary for each piece of machinery but the work continued on a 24-hour basis. The III MAF G-3 later remarked: "...no one will even know what the Chu Lai project did to men and equipment unless they were there."

The Situation in Quang Ngai Province

26 May, the ARVN 1st Battalion, 51st Regiment had one company patrolling a road near the small hamlet of Ba Gia in the Son Tinh district, west of Quang Ngai (about 20 miles south of Chu Lai). This district had not seen much fighting and was just another backwater area of Vietnam. The MACV Advisors were told that the VC in the region were a bunch of ragtag guerrillas incapable of sophisticated military action. However, the 1st VC Regiment carefully prepared their attack positions and established a series of strategically placed ambush zones designed to annihilate this battalion as well as the expected relief columns. When the lead company walked into the killing zone and was severely hurt, the battalion commander believed that this was little more than a hit-and-run ambush, so he dispatched a second company. Midway there it was bushwacked from another direction. Leaving a small reserve behind, the rest of the 500 man battalion went to the relief of its two engaged companies. The VC closed in from all sides and the battalion disintegrated under a hailstorm of grenades and automatic weapons fire. In less than 20 minutes it was wiped out; only 65 soldiers and three advisors managed to escape.

30 May, a three-battalion ARVN relief force finally sauntered out of Quang Ngai, escorted by a mechanized troop of APCs. The three battalions advanced on three widely separate approaches, intending to converge on the original ambush site. The VC were well prepared and had covered each approach route. The 39th ARVN Ranger Battalion moved to its objective area without incident but at 1400H started receiving recoilless rifle and machine-gun fire. The ARVN 2d Battalion, 51st Regiment tried to reinforce the Rangers but before it could move it was also attacked. When the 3d Vietnamese Marine Corps (VNMC) Battalion came under simultaneous attack, all three battalions were effectively locked in isolated battles for survival. Throughout the rest of the day each battalion's perimeter was hit by numerous ground assaults. VC 75mm pack artillery howitzers sent shells crashing into the broken forest that made up the perimeters. The 2/51st had fallen soldiers strewn all over the roadway. The APCs hammered the tree line with their heavy machine-guns and provided cover as the infantry withdrew. Some of the infantry fired back but others tossed away their weapons. The other two battalions were unable to pull back. Their circular defensive positions, hastily set up in fallen timber, were caving in as the VC pressed their attacks. With the onset of darkness, VC mortars began pounding the provincial capital of Quang Ngai and its airfield. The 39th ARVN Rangers had suffered particularly high losses. Swarms of VC charged forward through the shattered thickets, into the ranger lines, past the dead and wounded defenders of the center company and overran the battalion headquarters. Since that afternoon fighter aircraft had bombed and strafed the enemy positions and this continued throughout the night.

31 May, finally, just before daylight and after enduring 446 aircraft sorties, the VC broke off further combat. Airpower alone was credited with saving the RVN force from complete annihilation. The ARVNs had lost 392 men killed or missing as well as 446 rifles and carbines plus 90 crew-served weapons. They claimed to have killed 556 VC and captured 20 weapons but I Corps had lost all its reserve units and more. The 1st VC Regiment and the other VC forces in Quang Ngai had clearly established themselves as a force to be reckoned with!

1 June, the first flight of Marine A-4's landed at Chu Lai, the base was now operational.

8 June, the White House issued a statement that General Westmoreland has the authority to employ American troops to support ARVN force under attack.

30 June, the 4th Marines and its supporting units had killed 147 VC in the Chu Lai TAOR while suffering four dead and 23 WIA.

The First American and VC Battle Between Major Infantry Units

Before the Army guys get too excited, everyone needs to recall that the first Army Infantry unit to arrive in Vietnam was the 173d Airborne Brigade in May, 1965. On 27 June, the 173d and two ARVN airborne battalions used 144 helicopters in the largest airmobile operation to date and went into War Zone D. In July the 173d went back into War Zone D and in early August helped hold the Thanh Binh Pass in II Corps while the ARVNs lifted the siege of Duc Co. While these were important missions, the 173d did not make contact with the enemy to any great extent and thus history awards the "first battle" status to the Marines in STARLITE.

Background - On 6 Aug, III MAF received MACV permission to take the offensive against the enemy versus just patrol aggressively from their enclaves.

14 Aug, the 7th Marines arrived at Chu Lai. With two full regiments (a Marine regiment was roughly equivalent to an Army brigade) and their support units available, III MAF now had the guns and wanted to find the 1st VC Regiment before it decided to attack Chu Lai.

15 Aug, a VC deserter surrendered to the ARVNs and revealed that the 1st VC Regiment was at Van Tuong (on the Phuoc Thuan peninsula about 12 miles south of Chu Lai) with at least two of its battalions plus several support units. The I Corps staff and III MAF acted quickly on this information.

Operation STARLITE - By early on the 18th, M/3/3d Marines had established a northern blocking position between the Tra Bong River and the sea after moving by LVTs and a four mile march. I and K/3/3d Marines landed on GREEN Beach at 0630H and started inland from the south side of the VC area. Eventually the rest of the 3/3d and the 3/7th Marines would come over the beach. HMM-361 and HMM-261 used 24 UH-34s to put G/2/4th Marines into LZ RED on the north, E/2/4th and the battalion CP into LZ WHITE in the center, and H/2/4th into LZ BLUE on the southern end of a line behind the VC positions. UH-1E gunships from VMO-2 and Army UH-1B gunships from the 7th Airlift Platoon supported the helicopter landings. LZ BLUE was almost on top of the 60th VC Bn on Hill 43 and a serious battle developed around it and a cluster of fortified hamlets. A force of LVTs tried to resupply the force at LZ BLUE from the beach but was ambushed. A UH-1E was shot down. HMM-163 inserted the SLF (Special Landing Force) infantry from the Iwo Jima near GREEN. The fighting was heavy in several places during that day and into the night. When the force left the area on the 24th they had killed 614 VC, taken 9 POWS, collected 109 weapons at a cost of 45 Marine KIAs and 203 WIAs.

Mission Changes - Prior to STARLITE, the Marine helicopter units had performed a few combat assaults for the ARVNs and plenty of resupply, troop movement, and medevac missions for both the ARVNs and their own units, but from this point on combat assaults and combat support were the "order of the day" as the infantry units moved farther and farther from their traditional enclaves.

Ky Ha Established

Development - With the landing of MAG-36 on 2 Sep, construction of the Ky Ha Airbase continued at a quicker pace. When they arrived the helipad had been fully graded and about one-third of the matting laid. The MAG-36 squadrons remained at Da Nang until Ky Ha was operational. By the end of the month, HMM-362, HMM-364, VMO-6, H&MS-36, and MABS-36 were at Ky Ha. HMM-363 would stay at Qui Nhon for a few months.

Operation PIRANHA - III MAF wanted more of the 1st VC Regiment which intelligences placed on the Batangan Peninsula, about 22 miles. On 7 Sep, MAG-16 used 40 UH-34D's to assault one battalion into LZ OAK, four miles inland from the amphibious landing of another battalion. This was done in three hours. Then 16 UH-34D's went to Quang Ngai and began shuttling two South Vietnamese battalions into LZ BIRCH and PINE escorted by four Army gunships. Two Marine helicopters were hit by ground fire at these LZs. The next day the Marines found a large VC force in a cave which they blew after attempting to convince the enemy to surrender. They counted 66 VC bodies in the cave. Sadly two Marines died of oxygen starvation.

Marble Mountain Attacked - The MAG-16 helicopter base on Marble Mountain was attacked on the evening of 27-28 Oct by a VC raiding

party. They destroyed 19 helicopters and damaged 35 more, 11 of them severely. VMO-2 was practically wiped out. The Marines did not have enough UH-1E's even before the attack and this reduced III MAF's helicopter capabilities for a few months. The impact on the Chu Lai area was that MAG-36 had to pick up some MAG-16 missions.

Operation LIEN KET-10 - After conducting operations in Northern I Corps, one Marine and one ARVN battalion took to the hills 12 miles west of Chu Lai in the eastern part of the enemy's Do Xa base area on 29 Oct. They used 26 helicopters to lift the two battalions into their zones. The enemy was not there. The enemy seemingly refused to give battle during September and October.

Operation BLACK FERRET - On 3 Nov, two Marine and two ARVN battalions worked the Tra Bong River south of Chu Lai but the enemy was not there. MAG-36 used LZs CONDOR and ALBATROSS to insert their battalions.

Operation BLUE MARLIN I - On 10 Nov, the Marines landed a battalion five miles north of Chu Lai via amphibious techniques while MAG-36 inserted the 2d VMMC Battalion north of Tam Ky. Except for numerous booby traps, no other enemy presence was encountered.

The 1st VC Again - On 17 Nov, the 1st VC Regiment, with all three of its battalions that had been mauled in STARLITE, overran the Regional Force garrison at Hiep Duc, 25 miles west of Tam Ky as part of their monsoon season strategy. This district capital reported 174 of the 433 defenders missing and 315 weapons lost. Again the 1st VC was prepared for the reaction force and they had friends in high places; the 195th NVA Antiaircraft Battalion had emplaced 12.7mm heavy machine-guns on the high ground around Hiep Duc.

18 Nov, MAG-16 and MAG-36 prepared to lift two ARVN battalions into the area. A small hill about 500 meters north of Hiep Duc was selected for the LZ. As was the enemy's practice, they opened fire on the second lift by actually firing down on the landing helicopters. But the helicopter MAG's also had fast friends in higher places (the F-4 Phantoms of MAG-11 and A-4 Skyhawks of MAG-12). An Army fixed-wing aircraft had located the NVA guns and after a 20-minute wait for the Marine jets to work over the NVA guns, the helicopter lift continued. They also saw 1st VC units converging on the LZ and worked them over. For this operation, the Marines used 30 UH-34D's; 17 were hit, three badly damaged. One helicopter crewman was killed and three others WIA.

19 Nov, the ARVN fought hard and killed 141 VC while suffering 33 killed. The American advisors estimated the Marine air support had accounted for another 300 VC killed.

20 Nov, the 18th NVA Regiment attacked Thach Tru, 16 miles south of Quang Ngai. The ARVN defenders repulsed the attack, inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy.

22 Nov, while HMM-362 was lifting a Marine reinforcing force into Thach Tru, they lost a UH-34D plus a crew of four KIA.

Operation HARVEST MOON/LIEN KET 18 - On 8 Dec, III MAF and I Corps decided to go after the 1st VC Regiment in the Que Son Valley by sending the 5th ARVN Regiment with its 1st Battalion and the 11th Ranger Battalion west on Route 534 from Route 1 toward Hiep Duc. The ARVN expected to make Que Son before they made contact but at 1330H halfway to Que Son the Rangers were ambushed. In the first 15 minutes, they lost one third of the personnel and were overrun from a massed attack. HMM-161 lifted an ARVN battalion from Tam Ky to reinforce the surviving rangers.

9 Dec, two VC battalions struck the 1st Battalion and the 5th ARVN Regimental headquarters; both were overrun. Another VC battalion attacked the reinforcing ARVN battalion and it was time for the Marines infantry to get into this battle. HMM-161 and HMM-361 lifted two Marine battalions to the west and southeast of the ARVNs. At the same time the Marines linked up with the ARVNs, they also ran into a force of 200 VC. Marine air and artillery quickly killed 75 VC while the allies established a defensive position.

10 Dec, the SLF squadron, HMM-261, lifted another Marine battalion to an LZ near Cam La to block the VC withdrawal. As they landed they came under heavy 12.7mm fire from a hill 2,000 meters to the south. Even the UH-1E command ship was shot up. After a ten-hour struggle the Marines were able to secure this area.

11 Dec, the VC withdrew into the Phouc Ha Valley and B-52 strikes were flown against that valley during the next two days.

18 Dec, while finishing a sweep of the Phouc Ha Valley near Ky Phu,

the Marines encountered the 80th VC Battalion in strength. Supported by VMO gunships and accurate artillery fire, the Marines counterattacked. When the VC broke and ran, it became a turkey shoot. They left 104 bodies on the field. HMM-161, HMM-263, and HMM-361 plus VMO-2 from MAG-16 and HMM-362 and HMM-364 plus VMO-6 from MAG-36 supported HARVEST MOON. Even the CH-37C "Deuce" detachment lifted cargo and two Army 1st Cav Chinooks provided downed helicopter retrieval. Fifty-three helicopters sustained battle damage; two were destroyed. One Marine crewmember was killed.

1966

Operation DOUBLE EAGLE/LIEN KET 22 - This was the first large unit joint operation to span Corps boundaries. In all the Americans and the ARVN's committed the equivalent of three divisions hoping to do battle with the Gold Star or Sao Vang Division which consisted of the 18th and 95th NVA Regts, the 2d VC Main Force Regt, the 38th Independent Bn and about 11 separate enemy companies. It involved these commands: The ARVN I and II Corps, MACV, Field Force Vietnam (primarily the 1st Air Cav Div), the Seventh Fleet, the USMC Task Force Delta, the Special Forces, and the US Air Force. Each of the four major commands had their own name for their part of the operation as follows: The Army had operation MASHER, which became operation WHITE WING when Washington complained about the name, the Marines operation DOUBLE EAGLE, the ARVN I Corps operation LIEN KET-22, and the ARVN II Corps operation THANG PHUONG II. This joint operation's area included the southeastern part of Quang Ngai Province near the sea and the northeastern part of Binh Dinh Province. A line drawn between Duc Pho and the Ba To Special Forces camp would divide the OA near its center. Nearly half of Binh Dinh Province's 500,000 people were under varying degrees of enemy domination. This was an important "rice bowl" region. All the operations concluded on different dates but by 6 Mar 66 everything was finished. The operations claimed a total of 2,389 known enemy casualties.

USAF CH-3C helicopters reinforced the CH-37's of MAG-16 to move Marine 105mm howitzer during this operation. Started with infantry relocations around Ba To, the Marine helicopters supported several interior operations as well as the amphibious landing area. MAG-36 established a forward operating base just inland from the landing area and called it "Johnson City" after their commander, COL Johnson.

After wider and wider infantry sweeps of areas struck by B-52's, the Marines determined that the enemy had moved mostly south into Binh Dinh Province. There the 1st Cav would fight the 18th NVA Regiment and this would be the "main show" for this joint operation.

1st Marine Division

16 Feb, the 1st Marine Div headquarters arrived in Vietnam and was stationed at Chu Lai.

17 Feb, the Marines had pulled their units out of the first phase of DOUBLE EAGLE and were getting ready to reenter the HARVEST MOON area as part of DOUBLE EAGLE II.

1 Mar, when DOUBLE EAGLE II ended, the Marines had worked the Que Son Valley again but there were no main force enemy units to be found. They had killed 125 enemy from the various local units.

Operation UTAH - In early March, the ARVN's learned that the 21st NVA Regiment had recently moved into a region seven miles northwest of Quang Ngai City (an area north of the DOUBLE EAGLE I AO) centered near the hamlet of Chau Nhai. On 4 Mar, MAG-36 carrying the first elements of the 1st ARVN Airborne Battalion began landing near Chau Nhai and were taken under 12.7mm fire. Within ten minutes, all four of the armed VMO-6 UH-1E's were hit and one was forced down. The enemy fire shot down an F-4 trying to put in a napalm strike. Ten of the 20 UH-34's from HMM-261 and HMM-364 on the first lift were hit. MAG-36 ordered all its helicopters to report to Quang Ngai and by 1030H had the entire 1st ARVN Airborne in the zone. To everyone's surprise, the ARVN's on the ground met little resistance but the helicopters still received heavy fire. Next during a two plus hour lift, MAG-36, with one squadron from MAG-16, put a Marine battalion from Chu Lai into the battle. Several more UH-34's were hit and one crashed in the LZ. The heavy antiaircraft fire convinced everyone that a large enemy force was in the area. Soon two NVA battalions attacked the single Marine battalion at such close range that they could not use

supporting arms. The ARVN battalion was unable or unwilling to help the Marines and soon their situation became very serious. Finally after great individual effort, the Marines were able to pull back enough to bring in heavy artillery, gunships, and jets. The battle area expanded, more units were lifted in, more helicopters were hit and several were shot down.

7 Mar, the NVA force had moved out of the area leaving nearly 600 dead plus 5 POWs and 49 weapons (including three 12.7mm's). The Marines had 98 KIA and 278 WIA while the ARVN lost 30 KIA and 120 WIA. The sources does not summarize the helicopter statistics but they must have been huge by anyone's measure.

Bloody March - On 19 Mar, HMM-261 sent ten UH-34s to insert an ARVN force from Quang Ngai into An Hoa in the Binh Son District that had been overrun the previous night. Eight were hit on the approach to the LZ and only three were able to land. While the jets worked over the enemy's AA positions, HMM-261 reorganized and extracted the relief forces plus the few survivors.

Operation TEXAS - From March 20 through the 22d, Marine helicopters would lift and support five battalion assaults in the An Hoa area, all within ten miles of Quang Ngai. On several occasions the VMO-6 gunships found masses of enemy troops. A full HMM-363 UH-34 was shot down during one assault and ten Marines were killed.

Operation INDIANA - Was a three day "extension" to TEXAS fought just three miles from Quang Ngai near the village of Phuoc Loc. One Marine battalion was inserted to reinforce an ARVN outpost.

Operation KANSAS - Reports that the 2d NVA Division had returned to the Que Son Valley, so several recon teams were inserted and supported during the middle of June. VMO-6 and several MAG-36 UH-34s were heavily involved in this Operation.

1967

Background - By Feb, the enemy activity in Northern I Corps promised to become intense and MACV moved to reinforce III MAF. By inserting Army units into Southern I Corps, the Marines could shift their combat units that had been providing security for the Chu Lai area to the north.

Task Force OREGON

Activation - On 12 Apr 1967, MG William B. Rosson activated the Task Force as a provisional division-sized organization at Chu Lai.

14th CAB - USARV, the 1st Aviation Brigade, and the 17th CAG had been positioning Army aviation resources for the Task Force starting in the middle of 1966. The 14th Aviation Battalion at Nha Trang was converted from a fixed wing to a helicopter battalion during the April - September, 1966 period then it moved to An Son. The HQ unit relocated from An Son to Chu Lai in April.

The 3d Brigade, 25th Infantry arrives - as the first major combat unit to be assigned to the Task Force. All three battalions and the Brigade headquarters relocated to Duc Pho from the Pleiku area where they had been serving with the 4th Inf Div. While the exact dates for these unit relocations is not known, it had to be prior to 12 Apr.

71st AHC - The RATTERs and FIREBIRDS joined the 14th CAB on 18 April when they relocated to Chu Lai from Bien Hoa. They had been supporting the 196th Inf at Bien Hoa and continued to work with that Brigade when it joined the Task Force.

161st AHC - The PELCANS and SCORPIONS had joined the 14th CAB at An Son. They came to the Task Force with the battalion.

174th AHC - The DOLPHINS and SHARKS had joined the 14th CAB at the previous June. They came to the Task Force with the battalion and were based at Duc Pho.

176th AHC - The MINUTEMEN and MUSKETs joined the 14th CAB in February. Designed to support the 1st Bde, 101st ABN when it joined the Task Force, the 176th was initially based at Duc Pho.

178th ASHC - The BOXCARs joined the 14th CAB on 21 April when they relocated to Chu Lai from Phu Loi.

Clubs - Operation of EM, NCO and Officer's Clubs came under Army control on 26 April. The Marine Club Warehouse was the initial source of beverage supplies. The Exchange sub-depot took over the operation of the Marine Warehouse, and at the time of transfer, stocks were low and became critical in all clubs. It took two weeks before the clubs could be adequately restocked. During this reporting period no significant problems have occurred in supplying the clubs. During three months of

operation, the clubs have operated smoothly and profitably, with new club buildings being planned for the EM Club and remodeling in both the NCO and Officer's clubs.

28 Apr, the 2d Sqdn, 11th Armored Cav arrived at Chu Lai.

1 May, the Task Force Avn Officer requested that GCA facilities be installed to support the operation of the Duc Pho air-field. Foreseeing probable weather restrictions in the months to come and continuing night operations, a GCA capability for this facility was necessary in the interest of safety and completion of operational commitments. The project was programed to complete not later than the 18 August.

8 May, the JP-4 refueling area at Duc Pho became operational. This facility has 7 UH-1 refuel points and 1 CH-47 refuel point. It was installed by POL personnel of 1st Log Comd at Duc Pho using their equipment. On 21 May, a ten point refueling facility was put into operation on the beach at Duc Pho. This facility is operated by FSA Gallagher and supplies JP-4 to the helicopters from a bladder farm nearby. Small tanker ships supply fuel to the bladders through 4" hoses. The 1 1/2" discharge hoses were all furnished by the 176th AHC.

The 1st Brigade, 101st Airmobile arrives - at Duc Pho on 3 May from various locations in II Corps. By the 8th, the Bde HQ and at least two Bns (the 1/327th and 2/502d) had closed. With the arrival of this unit, the Task Force had two infantry brigades based in the Duc Pho area.

Operation MALHEUR - The 101st units were immediately dispatched into the mountains west and northwest of Duc Pho supported primarily by the 176th AHC. This first major airmobile assault of Task Force units was completed when 38 UH-1D's, 13 gunships, and 9 CH-47's lifted 1,220 combat troops of the 1/327th and 2/502nd Abn Bns plus two batteries of supporting artillery. In addition, regular support of other Task Force Units was maintained. Four-hundred-twenty-three (423) hours were flown to begin Operation Malheur I.

13 May, the first B52 strikes for the Task Force were conducted.

15 May, the 176th AHC were called upon to extract casualties for the 1/101st Airborne. The initial pick up ship, on landing, was hit by a mortar round and totally destroyed. In the subsequent action to extract wounded, a total of 11 UH-1D's and 7 UH-1C/B's from the 176th and 161st AHCs were committed. Eight of the slicks and all gunships were hit by intense ground fire. Five crewmembers were WIA. With the exception of the first ship, all reached secure areas before being forced to land. Five required extraction by CH-47. A total of 22 U.S. wounded were evacuated in the operation. Total casualties in the 14th CAB this day were 19 aircraft hit and 7 crewmembers WIA. This was by far the worst day ever suffered by the Battalion. In a later section the ORLL, (Operational Report - Lessons Learned) states that of the five of the damaged aircraft evacuated by CH-47 to the DS TC Company, three UH-1D's remained in direct maintenance for approximately 45 days for extensive sheet metal repairs and awaiting repair parts. Additionally, the airstrip at Duc Pho was completed on this date.

19 May, the 161st AHC began construction of aircraft revetments in their new area. Work progressed rapidly and the company closed there on 13 June. No loss in combat effectiveness was experienced by the move.

26 May, the maintenance base of the 174th AHC closed the Duc Pho area which greatly increased the capability of the company. Previously maintenance had been located at Lane AHP and English Field due to the tactical situation at Duc Pho.

29 May, the 71st AHC launched the first Firefly mission in the AO. Section advisors and/or Province Chiefs rode in the C&C ship. Since then the team has been very successful. In one night alone they destroyed 148 sampans, 13 structures and with 14 VC killed.

Intelligence Assessment - The first Task Force ORLL provides an interesting view of the enemy's reinforcements in Southern I Corps. Activity in the Duc Pho area during May was dominated by small to moderate contacts with NVA and Main Force units. On 19 May the 97th Bn, 2nd VC Regt was contacted resulting in 71 VC KIA (BC) and 21 weapons CIA. PWs and documents also located the 93rd Bn and the 2nd VC Regt Hqs. On 28 May PWs and documents taken from a contact resulting in 87 VC KIA (BC) and 19 weapons CIA, identified the 60th Bn, 1st VC Regt. A document taken during the above contact provided a detailed enemy appraisal of our employment of helicopter operations and outlined the measures which the enemy would employ to counter operations of this type. Emphasis was placed on surprise attacks and

preplanning to ambush reinforcements drawn into a suitable areas by small but deceptive attacks. Mine and booby trap incidents were frequent as Army Engineers worked to open Highway #1 and RF/PF outpost near RD areas continued to be harassed by the enemy. Contacts with NVA and Main Force units continued to be frequent during June although on a smaller scale than the previous month. Several medical installations were located and destroyed during the period and a Sr Capt identified as a Doctor from a hospital supporting MR-5 was apprehended. The source provided information on enemy medical practices and was evacuated to USARV for detailed interrogation. Prisoners captured during the period reported that their respective units were suffering heavy casualties. A PW captured on 28 June near Quang Ngai City stated that the 60th Bn, 1st VC Regt was reorganized into a reinforced company of approximately 140 men due to heavy losses in the Duc Pho Area. Acts of terrorism and assassinations were frequent during the month reflecting a desperate effort on the part of the enemy to maintain his weakening control of the population resources in the Duc Ph-Mo Duc area. In early July one returnee, 6 PWs and documents identified a newly infiltrated NVA AA Battalion. The unit (the 107th NVA AA Bn) left NVN in Jan 67 and arrived in Quang Ngai on 26 May. The weapons included 9X12.7mm AA HMGs. Food was a serious problem for the units as all the PWs were captured while searching for food. A steel-hulled trawler containing several thousand weapons and tons of ammunition and explosive was apprehended off the Cape Batangan coast on 14 July. Loss of this shipment of ordnance will have a serious impact on the enemy ability to conduct operations in the future. In addition to weapons and ammunition shortages the return of a 14 yr old NVA soldier during July indicated that the enemy faces personnel shortages in NVN. The youth stated that several boys of his age in his village were inducted into the army as all the eligible men between 20 and 30 had already departed for SNV. Search and destroy operations continued to locate enemy logistical installations training areas and PW camps. On 19 July a PW camp containing 22 friendly PWs was located. The PWs were diseased and suffering from malnutrition and 12 individuals were found in shackles. Reconnaissance of the area in and around the TAOR indicated that enemy density is high although he faces serious shortages in all classes of supply.

Operation Malheur II - On 8 June the 1st Bde, 101st Abn initiated phase II. During phase I it was frequently necessary to adjust the Task Force's aviation assets on a daily basis to support mass helilifts in conducting our combat assaults. It has proven advantageous to use the maximum number of helicopters to achieve maximum ground combat power in one lift.

Engineering Effort - When the extension of Task Force to remain throughout the 1967 monsoon season was announced in June, an urgent requirement for base camp construction came into being. Although sufficient non-Army engineers were available to perform the necessary construction, the planning design and layout remained the responsibility for the Task Force Engineer who was only staffed as a battalion.

The 196th Light Infantry Brigade arrives - By 9 June, the last of the 196th LIB elements closed at Chu Lai after having served around Tay Ninh since they arrived in Vietnam the previous August. This Brigade was the first permanent (meaning they would become part of the Americal Division) major infantry unit to join the Task Force. The 71st AHC was their primary support.

15 June, a convoy consisting of military and civilian vehicles traveled in a convoy from Chu Lai to Duc Pho marking the first time in over two and a half years that vehicles have been able to National Highway 1 between Mo Duc and Duc Pho.

17 June, action was initiated to provide a night vision device demonstration for aviation elements in the Chu Lai area. On the evening of 21 June a team from USARV demonstrated the Low Light Level Television Target Acquisition and Fire Control System the Night Sighting System for the M-5 Armament System, the 15 KW Xenon Heliborne Searchlight, and Stabilized Night Observation Device. Representatives from G2, G3, and aviation elements were present and agreed that such equipment would prove to be very useful in support of ground operations. The 14th CAB is scheduled to receive the Xenon Heliborne Searchlight as organic equipment in early August.

20 June, a fire virtually destroyed the Guadacanal ammunition dump.

24 June, at 0055H a mortar attack was initiated against the Duc Pho airfield complex. In a five minute span, seven rounds landed in the 174th AHC area. One round hit a troop tent killing two and wounding 36 personnel. Three UH-1D's and one UH-1C, located in "U" shaped revetments, were damaged. Approximately 35 personnel from the 409th TC Det were wounded. Emergency requisitions for personnel were submitted to the 17th CAG and higher commands. Temporary replacements were selected from other maintenance units within the 14th CAB, the 335th DS TC Co, and placed on TDY with the 174th AHC until replacements arrived. The fast reaction time in placing appropriate personnel on TDY with the 174th AHC enabled routine support to continue without any difficulty.

3 July, the 174th AHC participated in a combat assault at 0700H during which all aviators and crew members were required to wear gas masks. Prior to the combat assault Air Force A-1E's dropped a large concentration of CS gas into the area of operations. The combat assault and ground operation proved very successful and similar operations will very likely be conducted in the future.

Operation LAKE commenced on 6 July. The mission of this plan was to open, clear and secure National Highway 1 between Duc Pho and Sa Huynh. The 39th Engr Bn was given the mission to open the road and reconstruct or construct necessary bridging while one battalion of the 1st Bde, 101st Abn was tasked to conduct search and destroy operations in the vicinity of the engineer work parties. On 11 July National Highway 1 was opened between Duc Pho and the I Corps-II Corps boundary, thus accomplishing the mission of Operation LAKE.

15 July, at 0020H, two gunships and a flareship from the 71st AHC were scrambled to attack a North Vietnamese trawler driven shoreward by the Navy near the mouth of the Riviere de Sa Ky. They were relieved on station at 0130H by ships of the 161st AHC. At 0300H coordination was effected with the 2d Korean Marine Corps Brigade to air assault 492 ROK Marines into LZs to secure and capture the ship. By 0930H all troops were on the ground and the ship and cargo of arms and ammunition were in friendly hands.

15 July, the Task Force Oregon CG was designated an additional duty as Sub-Zone Coordinator, Southern Sector, I CTZ, and was provided with an augmentation of Marine personnel to assist in the accomplishment of this mission.

19 July, the 1st Bde, 101st Abn liberated 22 Vietnamese who had been held captive by the VC, some for as long as 29 months. Photos showing the decimated bodies of the Vietnamese were taken for dissemination in leaflet form in Quang Ngai Province. The purpose of the leaflet was to show the people the criminal acts being committed by the VC.

31 July, in preparation for Operation HOOD RIVER, C/2/11th Art (155mm Howitzer) was moved by helicopter to a firing position in vicinity of Ha Than CIDG Camp. This had to be done by Army CH-54A or Marine CH-53 helicopters.

Task Force ORLL Items

The following few paragraphs were extracted from the ORLL.

Information Office - A biweekly newspaper, *The Southern Cross*, was started. Later a quarterly four-color magazine, *AMERICAL*, was printed.

Use of Faulty Aircraft Sling Equipment - Due to several incidents involving faulty sling equipment in rigging external loads to CH-47 helicopters, an inspection team furnished by the 178th Aviation Company visited the artillery locations to examine the equipment in use. The inspection team reported that approximately 25% of the endless slings and 10% of the other type slings were faulty and needed replacing.

Efficient Use of CH-47 Helicopters - Due to the distance between the CH-47 helicopter company area and the southern portion of Task Forces TAOR, aircraft were assigned directly to the brigade to fly as directed by the respective brigade S-3 Air Offices. The impact of direct assignment of CH-47 helicopters to the brigades was characterized by a decrease in prior planning of helicopter loads. On-the-spot missions caused mis-utilization of aircraft. To remedy the situation, the aviation office was tasked to process all request for CH-47's and in turn pass the requests down to the 14th CAB S-3 in chronological order. There are control advantages to this system. Additional prior planning by the brigade S-3 Air results in more efficient use of aircraft and a lower number of flying hours for aircraft supporting each brigade.

Maximum Number of Helicopters for Combat Assault to Utilize the 1 Lift Per Landing Zone Concept - In the past, combat assaults were conducted by sending two or more lifts of helicopters into the same LZ with time intervals of 10 to 40 minutes between lifts. This interval enabled any enemy units in the vicinity of the LZ to muster anti-aircraft fire causing a hazard to subsequent lifts arriving in the same area. Also, it presented a control problem to the ground commander, because he was more vulnerable after the first lift was unloaded and prior to receiving the rest of his troops. By consolidation of lifts, using additional aircraft, the element of surprise was employed to the maximum and enabled the ground commander maximum ground support and control.

Effectiveness of Fire-Fly Mission - The 71st AHC conducted several Fire-Fly missions between the hours of 2100 and 0400 with very significant results. On two of the more successful missions, the VC were caught openly shipping supplies up and down inland waterways. The first incident accounted for 78 sampans destroyed.

14th CAB ORLL Items

During this period, the normal assignment was the 71st AHC as DS to the 196th LIB at Chu Lai, the 161st AHC as DS to the Task Force, the 174th AHC as DS to the 3d Brigade, 25th Infantry, the 176th AHC as DS to the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne, and the 178th ASHC as DS to the Task Force. The 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne has been employed as the primary maneuver brigade of the Task Force, conducting Operations Malheur I and II. All brigades, however, conducted daily airmobile combat assaults, extractions and resupply. Assault missions are normally controlled by a DS company reinforced when necessary by the 161st and on occasion other DS aviation units. Assaults involving 13 or more lift ships were habitually planned and controlled by the battalion. Along with the normal aviation commitments of Task Force, 14th CAB provided a total of seven UH-1D's and two UH-1C's to support III MAF G3 Air requests. The two armed helicopters used in support of MACV Operation Prairie Fire. This was a continuous commitment throughout a month. Two UH-1D's were assigned to support Company C, 5th Special Forces Group. Five UH-1D's were provided to Delta Operations in the I Corps area on alternating weeks.

During the periods 12-31 May and 18 June - 31 July, the 161st AHC provided 2 UH-1B gunships in support of Operation Prairie Fire.

During the period 1 May-31 July, the 14th CAB had 142 aircraft hit by hostile fire. Weather had a negligible impact on operations during this quarter.

On 24 July, HHD, 14th CAB began the move to a new CP location next to the 161st AHC. Personnel moved from tents into temporary buildings. The unit closed 26 July.

UH-1C gunships from the 174th AHC experienced roof, firewall and engine deck separation. Six of the eight UH-1C gunships were turned in to the direct support maintenance for repair. No mission ready float gunships were available to issue for the six in support maintenance.

Construction of cantonment areas, parking ramps, heliports, and improvement of unit roads was accomplished by assigned engineer support or by self-help. In April, a letter was forwarded to Task Force Engineer requesting a heliport, cantonment areas, and parking ramps be constructed. This request was approved and a work order was given to MCB 71, Seabees, for execution or the programmed construction. The 161st AHC's heliport contains 32 parking pads, an 8 point refueling area, and 140,000 square feet of M8A1 matting for the maintenance ramp. The parking ramps for the 71st and 178th Avn Cos required more than 140,000 square feet of M8A1 matting. The cantonment areas of the 161st AHC and HHD were constructed by the 9th Marine Eng Bn. A total of 89 "strong backs" (tent frames with floors - 16' x 32') were built of which 26 were covered with corrugated tin roofs. The Marine Engineers constructed required latrines, showers, water towers, and service roads in the cantonment area. Approximately 15 buildings (formally occupied by Marine units) were assigned to each the 178th ASHC and the 71st AHC. The remainder of each company is housed in floored tents without frames. A letter request was submitted to secure lumber, screenwire, nails and fixtures to construct frames on the existing tent floors for both companies prior to monsoon season. The request is under study at this time.

1 Aug, the 3d Bde, 25th Inf was redesignated the 3d Bde, 4th Inf but remained attached to the Task Force.

Americal Division

20 Sep, the Americal Div was established from Task Force OREGON.

29 Sep, the 14th CAB was called upon to provide gunship close air support, reaction force lift ships, and flareships to units of the 101st Abn Div who were engaged in heavy fighting. During the first encounter two UH-1D's were shot down while attempting to perform medical evacuations. Subsequently a gunship providing cover was downed and three more aircraft were shot down while inserting a lift force into the immediate area. All aircraft operating the area were subjected to continuous heavy automatic weapons fire. Tactical air and gunships support were provided until darkness and weather prevented further assistance. Since the area was still insecure and recovery was impossible those aircraft still on the ground were destroyed in place. In final tabulation for the day, the battalion had 22 aircraft hit, three UH-1D's and one UH-1B destroyed, eight pilots wounded and one crew chief KIA. This was the worst day ever suffered by the battalion.

The 3d Brigade, 1st Air Cav Div arrives - The Americal Division assumes OPCON of this Brigade on 1 Oct. Land on Ky Hoa Island was used as a helipad by the aviation elements that support the Brigade. At this point the Americal Division had four infantry brigades.

The 198th Light Infantry Brigade arrives - While the main body of the 198th LIB arrived in Chu Lai on 22 Oct, the maneuver elements were posted to Duc Pho. This gave the Americal Division its fifth infantry brigade. An in-country training program was conducted at Duc Pho until 15 Nov. The purpose of the program is to bring the 198th LIB to maximum combat readiness in a minimum amount of time. The 14th CAB prepared a program of instruction as a part of that Brigade's in country orientation and training in the planning for and utilization of available aviation support. Instruction was presented on Oct 21, 24, 25 and 27. Training subjects included battalion level lift planning, small unit lift planning, resupply operations with the UH-1D, gunship employment and CH-47 utilization and planning.

The 14th CAB ORLL - The following ideas are from the period ending 31 Oct. It mentions a shortage of CH-47 aviators in the 178th ASHC which had operated with as few as 55% of assigned aviators and at present has only about 71% assigned. It also mentions the misutilization of CH-47 helicopters because units continue to request and receive CH-47 aircraft of support lift requirements that could be accomplished by fixed wing aircraft or be moved all or part of the way by road convoy. In addition too much cargo is still being carried internally when in cases it would be feasible to rig for external lift. It also mentions that units have requested "Firefly" missions in mountainous terrain. The majority of these missions have been unsuccessful. The battalion concluded that Firefly missions are intended for and are most successful over flat terrain with waterway systems. Use in the mountains is impractical because the lights have insufficient range, navigation is difficult, increased engagement range results in low target destruction capability, target density is low, and aircraft are unable to maneuver adequately. The results do not justify the hazards and special problems encountered. It also presents an interesting paragraph on air delivered ordnance for LZ preparations. The experience of subordinate elements of the Battalion indicates that the use of high explosive bombs with extension fuses, (daisy Cutters) has given the best results on landing zones that are suspected of being mined, booby-trapped or rigged with helicopter traps. If approach and departure routes can be predetermined, it is also desirable to prepare these and the likely trouble spots with Daisy Cutters. The use of heavy ordnance on ridgeline landing zones is also desirable. The cratering effect of 500 pound bombs (or heavier) makes an ideal touchdown point for helicopters and eliminates hazards of boobytraps and mines. If the landing zone is suspected or known to have reinforced bunkers in or near it, the use of delayed fuse bombs can be very effective. The delay feature allows the bomb to bury itself from 10-20 feet in the soft earth prior to detonating. This normally has a devastating effect on underground tunnels and bunkers, collapsing most of them. The use of napalm has good effects on bunkers and built-up areas but should be used with discretion on areas that are dry and covered with heavy grass or foliage. If used in these areas it must be used very early in the preparation. This will allow time for any fires to burn out prior to troop insertion. The use of Cluster Bomb Units (CBU) during LZ preparation should be avoided. Although it is effective

ordnance against personnel and other targets, there are often unexploded bomblets left on the ground, which the enemy quickly converts into boobytraps for use against our forces.

C/7/17th Cav - The Division's first permanent air cavalry troop arrived in late Nov. Prior to this, the ACT from the 1/9th Cav which was attached to the 3d Bde, 1st Cav was the only air cavalry unit in the AO. C Troop was attached to the 14th CAB and OPCONed to the 196th Inf Bde. By 4 Dec the aircraft maintenance area was well enough established to allow the BLUE GHOSTS to support tactical missions. On 1 Apr 1968, this troop was redesignated F/8th Cav, the familiar name.

123d Aviation Battalion - was activated on 8 Dec to fulfill the normal division-level aviation requirements. The assets of the 161st Aviation Company were used to build the Headquarters Company as well as A and B Companies. This included the 406th TC Det and the 449th Sig Det. The PELICAN name transferred to A/123d Avn Bn while the former 161st weapons platoon transferred to B/123d Avn Bn. It was well into January before the full reorganization was completed.

A/123d Avn Bn - had the primary mission to provide tactical helicopter transport for the General Officers and their staff plus the major commands (e.g. Division Artillery, Engineers, the Support Command). This company would also support various Special Forces teams in I Corps as well as III MAF.

B/123d Avn Bn - started life with six UH-1B gunships and two UH-1Ds but the Americal CG directed that it be configured as an air cavalry troop. An Infantry Platoon was added and in the months that followed, the aircraft were changed over to AH-1Gs, UH-1Hs, and OH-6As. They were also known as the Aero Scout Company. WARLOAD was their callsign.

1968

This history takes advantage of a different source for some of the 1968 material. Most Army divisions published a Daily Sheet which carried a sentence or two about every enemy contact reported in their OA. The Americal published the *Americal Daily News Sheets*. The numbering system suggests that the Task Force started publishing Daily Sheet during April, 1967. The few samples printed in this history have been edited twice to select out mostly helicopter related information.

Vol. 2. No. 17 Monday May 6, Elements of the 1st Sqdn, 1st Cav killed 12 VC and detained 20 suspects in increased fighting yesterday. F/8th Cav saw the action in contacts seven miles northwest of Tam Ky in Operation Burlington Trail. F Troop killed seven VC, captured two suspects. Another element of the 1st Cavalry killed one VC and detained 12 suspects in operations seven miles southwest of Tam Ky. Late in the evening, elements at a base camp killed three VC while turning back an attacking force. F Troop killed another VC yesterday afternoon in Operation Wheeler/Wallowa two miles north of Thang Binh. The Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn working with soldiers of the 1st Bn, 20th Inf detained a total of seven VC suspects. The suspects were detained in five separate incidents in an area centered seven miles southeast of Duc Pho. The Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn killed one VC and detained three VC suspects during separate incidents south of Chu Lai in the afternoon. A 3d Bn, 1st Inf element killed two VC following a combat assault yesterday seven miles east of Quang Ngai. A platoon of the same company and APC personnel of the 1st Armored Cav flushed out two VC from rice paddies 11 miles northwest of Duc Pho. The VC were killed by door gunners of the battalion's command and control helicopter.

Vol. 2. No. 131 Wednesday August 28, F/8th Cav killed two NVA and two VC. Shark gunships from the 174th AHC responding to a call with an estimated VC company yesterday six miles east of Quang Ngai, destroyed ten fortified structures and two machine gun positions with rockets and machine gun fire.

Vol. 2. No. 134 Saturday August 31, Infantry and Cavalrymen of 198th Inf combined with Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn, killed six VC and captured one individual weapon yesterday in the Operation Burlington Trail area. The Aero Scouts flying in support of the 198th Inf yesterday killed three VC and captured one individual weapon. Later the Aero Scouts killed another VC southwest of Chu Lai. A gunship from Primo Aviation Limited killed one evading VC 12 miles north of LZ Bronco. Yesterday afternoon the C&C helicopter from the 3d Bn, 1st Inf detained one VC suspect 11 miles north of the Jungle Warrior's home. Action in the 1/1st Armored Cav's area of operations increased slightly yesterday as F/8th Cav killed two VC and detained two VC suspects.

Vol. 2. No. 137 Tuesday September 3, The Aero Scouts of the 123rd Avn Bn killed one VC and detained three suspects while flying in support of 1st Bn., 52nd Inf. soldiers south of Chu Lai. Action remained light and scattered in the 1/1st Cav's area of operations yesterday as F/8th Cav killed one VC and B/2/1st Cav killed one VC. C/1/1st Cav detained four VC suspects yesterday.

Vol. 2. No. 138 Wednesday September 4, The Aero Scouts of the 123rd Avn Bn and helicopters of F/8th Cav engaged and killed two VC in separate action south of Chu Lai yesterday.

Vol. 2. No. 141 Saturday September 7, Sharks of the 174th AHC killed two VC in separate actions eight and 10 miles west of the Province Capital. The Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn, led the day's total with 11 VC killed. Ten of the VC killed in action nine miles northwest of Quang Ngai were wearing Khaki uniforms. In that contact one M-1 carbine, one RPG, one AK-50, and documents were captured. Aero Scouts killed the other VC near highway 58 in the same site. The Aero Scouts also detained five suspects in the area west of Quang Ngai City. The 1/1st Armored Cav reported two VC killed by F/8th Cav, one in the Burlington Trail area and one in the Operation Wheeler/Wallowa area.

Vol. 2. No. 142 Sunday September 8, The Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn killed 16 VC and detained one suspect in the area west of Quang Ngai City. Yesterday afternoon the command control helicopter of the 1st Bn, 6th Inf, detained two suspects. One man was carrying a carbine which he threw away after spotting the C&C helicopter.

Vol. 2. No. 144 Tuesday September 11, The Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn killed one evading VC 12 miles south of LZ Bronco. F/8th Cav observed one evading VC 17 miles southwest of Tam Ky. The enemy was engaged, resulting in one VC killed. Near Chu Lai a 198th aerial observer spotted one VC killed by artillery. Early yesterday afternoon a Blue Ghost returning from a reconnaissance mission northwest of Chu Lai spotted one VC. The enemy was engaged and killed.

Vol. 2. No. 145 Wednesday September 12, The Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn began the day by detaining one VC suspect and finding one NVA killed by artillery. Later they engaged and killed eight NVA with the aid of artillery.

Vol. 2. No. 146 Thursday September 12, The 1/1st Armored Cav reported four VC killed yesterday in the Burlington Trail area. F/8th Cav accounted for three of the VC killed and C/1/1st Cav accounted for the other VC killed.

Vol. 2. No. 147 Friday September 13, The Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn killed a total of eight VC in four separate contacts yesterday 15 miles west of Quang Ngai City. Later the Aero Scouts killed an NVA and captured his AK-47 on mile southwest of the Ha Thanh Special Forces Camp. The Aero Scouts also detained two suspects west of Quang Ngai City. One of the suspects had blood on his clothing, but no wounds. Gunships of F/8th Cav supporting 198th ground troops, reported killing two VC and destroying four camouflaged enemy huts yesterday afternoon 15 miles west of Chu Lai.

Vol. 2. No. 148 Saturday September 14, The Aero Scouts gunships from the 123d Avn Bn killed five VC and four NVA soldiers while supporting Jungle Warriors of the 11th Inf Bde in Operation Champaign Grove west of Quang Ngai City.

Vol. 2. No. 150 Monday September 16, The first action yesterday morning netted one VC suspect detained as the Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn swooped down to detain the single suspect attempting to avoid detection. Later that morning Ready Rifles of the 1st Bn, 52d Inf located and detained two more suspects. As the Scouts continued their search for enemy, they spotted and killed one VC as he attempted to evade the helicopter. In later action the Aero Scouts engaged and killed four VC in the same area. Late yesterday evening Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn engaged an estimated VC company, resulting in 22 VC killed and three carbines captured approximately nine miles south of Chu Lai. Later one of the 3d Bn, 21st Inf companies called artillery, gunships, and air strikes on numerous sniper positions in the same area. A thorough search of the area disclosed numerous enemy fighting positions destroyed and one VC killed. The 1/1st Armored Cav's. Blue Ghost of F/8th Cav killed two VC yesterday after receiving automatic weapons fire near the Tra Khuc River 12 miles west of Quang Ngai.

Vol. 2. No. 151 Tuesday September 17, The 196th Inf Bde command and control helicopter killed three evading VC 19 miles west of Tam Ky (A/123d Pelican). The 11th Bde MPs and Sharks of the 174th AHC killed

four VC and detained one suspect five miles southeast of Duc Pho; as the gunships entered the area they spotted one VC evading to the west. The helicopters landed and the MPs took the VC under fire, killing him. Shortly afterward the gunships cornered four VC in a hut. As the MPs approached, the VC fled. The Sharks killed one of the fleeing VC and MPs killing the two VC and detained the fourth. The Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn working south of Chu Lai engaged two VC killing one. Four hand grenades were recovered from the VC's body. Yesterday the Aero Scouts detained two additional suspects.

Vol. 2. No. 152 Wednesday September 18, F/8th Cav killed one VC four miles east of Thang Binh. The Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn killed two VC in separate actions near huts located near the Tra Khuc river 15 and 16 miles west of Quang Ngai City. The Scouts also captured an M-1 carbine and detained one suspect in that action.

Vol. 2. No. 153 Thursday September 19, The Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn screening for the 3d Bn, 1st Inf killed four NVA in the same area. The 1/1st Armored Cav reported five VC killed, 15 huts and four bunkers destroyed by the 3d Bn, 16th Art, firing in support of Blue Ghosts of F/8th Cav in Operation Burlington Trail yesterday. The Blue Ghost later killed an additional VC in the same area.

Vol. 2. No. 155 Saturday September 21, About 17 miles west of Tam Ky, the C&C helicopter of the 2d Bn, 1st Inf engaged and killed one VC. Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn flying over the area being searched by the 1st Bn, 52d Inf. spotted one VC. The enemy was engaged and killed. Later they found on M-1 carbine in the same vicinity. The Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn received small arms fire from a group of VC yesterday afternoon northwest of Chu Lai. The Scouts returned fire, killing one VC. The 4th Bn, 3d Inf C&C helicopter detained four suspects in separate actions near a trail and huts two and three miles northwest of Duc Pho yesterday. Gunships of F/8th Cav killed an evading VC wearing a khaki uniform and detained one evading suspect in separate actions near the Tra Khuc River 15 miles southwest of Quang Ngai City.

Vol. 2. No. 156 Sunday September 22, The Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn flying in support of the 198th killed on evading VC northwest of Chu Lai yesterday.

Vol. 2. No. 157 Monday September 23, Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn killed seven NVA near the location of yesterday's action south of Ha Thanh. When a 1st Bn, 52d Inf company spotted several VC in the open, gunships in the area moved in killing one VC nine miles west of Tam Ky.

Vol. 2. No. 158 Tuesday September 24, The Aero Scouts of the 123rd Avn Bn killed six VC at the base of a hill 35 miles northeast of Duc Pho.

Vol. 2. No. 159 Wednesday September 25, The heaviest contact was in Operation Burlington Trail, as units of the 1/1st Armored Cav, F/8th Cav and a company of the 11th Bde's, 4th Bn, 21st Inf killed 92 NVA and captured one AK-47 rifle in contacts throughout the afternoon. The Gimlets accounted for 22 NVA, A Troop of the Dragoons killed 33 NVA, B Trp, killed 23 NVA and F/8th Cav counted 14 NVA dead. The C&C helicopter from the 3d Bn, 21st Inf engaged and killed one VC on a trail leading to LZ Center 21 miles west of Tam Ky. The Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn killed one evading VC nine miles south of Chu Lai.

Vol. 2. No. 163 Sunday September 29, Troops of the 1st Bn, 20th Inf operating with Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn accounted for six VC killed and five suspects detained yesterday. In the first action the two forces combined to kill four VC evading into a cave near a beach 10 miles northeast of Quang Ngai City. Blue Ghosts of F/8th Cav working with the 2d Bn, 1st Inf observed three evading VC. The gunship engaged the VC, killing all three 15 miles southwest of Hoi An. F/8th Cav. detained two suspects 15 miles north of Tam Ky.

Vol. 2. No. 165 Tuesday October 1, Soldiers of the 198th Inf Bde reported nine VC killed yesterday in their area of operations. Sunday evening an aerial observer spotted a group of 10 VC south of Chu Lai. Artillery was called in as the observer made adjustments. A search of the area yesterday revealed the effectiveness of the air adjusted artillery fire. Eight VC bodies were found at the site. The 1st Bn, 20th Inf combined with Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn yesterday morning in killing four VC and capturing two weapons near a bridge eight miles northwest of Quang Ngai City. Sykes Regulars and an Aero Scout gunship cornered and killed two of the VC near the bridge. A few minutes later the combined forces killed the other two VC who were fleeing from the scene. Old Guard soldiers of a 4th Bn, 3d Inf company found one VC killed while making a sweep across a trail three miles southwest of

Duc Pho. The VC had been killed earlier when helicopter gunships fired on the area. The C&C helicopter of the 4th Bn, 3d Inf spotted five military age males digging a grave beside a trail one mile southwest of Duc Pho. Blue Ghosts of F/8th Cav detained 14 VC suspects in an area centered 14 miles northwest of Tam Ky.

Vol. 2. No. 166 Wednesday October 2, Sykes Regulars of the 1st Bn 20th Inf combined with Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn to detain one VC suspect hiding atop a hill, five miles northwest of Quang Ngai City. Blue Ghosts of F/8th Cav killed one VC 15 miles west of Tam Ky.

Vol. 2. No. 167 Thursday October 3, In other action, a 196th Inf Bde aerial observer called in artillery on one VC, resulting in one VC killed 18 miles northwest of Tam Ky. Soldiers of the 198th Inf Bde and supporting gunships killed seven NVA and one VC and captured one individual weapon yesterday. The Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn spotted a group of NVA 10 miles east of Tam Ky yesterday morning. The gunships opened fire on the NVA before they could take any evasive action. The Aero Scouts then inserted infantrymen to search the area. Seven NVA bodies were found at the scene. Blue Ghosts of F/8th Cav killed three VC 12 miles northwest of Tam Ky.

Vol. 2. No. 168 Friday October 4, Shark gunships of the 174th AHC destroyed six structures and killed five VC in response to sniper fire, 15 miles north of Duc Pho. The Sharks also combined with troops of the 4th Bn, 3d Inf to kill one VC on a hillside, two miles east of Duc Pho. The helicopter of the Bde's S-2 Air, accounted for one VC killed near the Tra Khuc River, 14 miles west of Quang Ngai City.

Vol. 2. No. 169 Saturday October 5, In the first action of the day, Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn spotted two NVA in the Burlington Trail area. The gunships opened fire on the NVA who were hiding in the dense jungle west of Tam Ky. Both were killed.

Vol. 2. No. 170 Sunday October 6, Shark gunships of the 174th AHC killed one VC near a beach seven miles southwest of Duc Pho. Gunships from the 14th CAB killed one VC five miles southwest of Binh Son. In other action Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn detained one VC suspect near the Song Ve River, 20 miles southwest of Duc Pho. The 198th Inf Bde reported that Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn killed one NVA southwest of Tam Ky. Dragoons of the 1/1st Armored Cav reported two VC killed and two suspects detained in their area of operations yesterday. D/1st Cav accounted for the two VC killed in the Burlington Trail area. One of the VC suspects was detained by F/8th Cav and the other by A/1st Cav.

Vol. 2. No. 171 Monday October 7, The 1st Armored Cav reported three VC killed yesterday. The three VC were killed by F/8th Cav in the Operation Burlington Trail area.

Vol. 2. No. 172 Tuesday October 8, Soldiers of the 1st Bn, 20th Inf working with Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn killed eight VC in three contacts in an area centered 10 miles northeast of the province capital. The 3d Bn, 1st Inf C&C helicopter killed one VC near a village four miles north of Duc Pho. The 2d Bn, 1st Inf C&C helicopter killed one VC three miles south of Que Son.

Vol. 2. No. 173 Wednesday October 9, Yesterday morning Sykes Regulars of a 1st Bn, 20 Inf company combined with Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn near a trail 11 miles northeast of Quang Ngai City. In other action Old Guard soldiers of the 4th Bn, 3d Inf combined with Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn to detain four VC suspects eight miles south of Duc Pho.

Vol. 2. No. 174 Thursday October 10, Gunships of the 71st AHC firing in support of a sniffer mission yesterday killed one NVA 19 miles west of Tam Ky. Shark gunships of the 174th AHC killed two VC near Highway 1 in the 4th Bn, 3d Inf area of operations, one mile northwest of Duc Pho. In an area centered seven miles north of Quang Ngai City, Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn working with infantrymen of the 1st Bn 20th Inf detained two VC suspects in two separate actions.

Vol. 2. No. 175 Friday October 11, The Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn killed two VC south of Chu Lai yesterday morning. The gunships then went into search the area. The Aero Scouts detained three military age males in the area for interrogation. All three suspects were later classified as VC. The 1/1st Armored Cav reported one VC killed by F/8th Cav yesterday nine miles northwest of Tam Ky.

Vol. 2. No. 178 Monday October 14, Gunships from the 14th Avn Bn engaged a group of VC six miles south of Hoi An, killing two. Blue Ghosts of F/8th Cav, flying in support of the 4th Bn, 21st Inf, engaged and killed

one VC seven miles south of Hoi An. The 1/1st Armored Cav reported 10 VC suspects detained in the Operation Burlington Trail area yesterday. F/8th Cav detained two and A/1st Cav, detained eight.

Vol. 2. No. 179 Tuesday October 15, The Aero Scouts of the 123d Avn Bn detained one VC suspect yesterday afternoon in the Chu Lai area. F/8th Cav, accounted for the one VC killed in the Burlington Trail area.

16th Combat Aviation Group - Became operational in early 1968 at Marble Mountain Air Facility, Da Nang. In Dec, it was reassigned from the 1st Aviation Brigade to the Americal Div to provide control for the 14th CAB, the 123d Avn Bn and the 335th TC Co. The Headquarters company moved to Chu Lai.

1969

The NVA/VC Post Tet Offensive - generally consisted of a hundred rocket and mortar attacks across the country. For example, the Da Nang fuel and ammo dumps were largely destroyed by one of these attacks. On 22-23 Feb, the 2d NVA Div attacked LZ's Baldy, Bayonet, Hawk Hill, and Professional in the north and LZ's Gator and Buff plus Hill 10 in the south. Then it sent the 3d Regiment against the Special Forces/CIDG camp at Tien Phuoc. Initially, the Americal Div sent first one battalion and then the 196th Inf in the bitter fighting around Tien Phuoc that lasted until 22 March. The NVA bunkers had been built to cover the high ground with plenty of overhead cover and connecting trenches.

23 - 27 Feb, the 1/1st Cav accounted for a total of 238 VC/NVA KIA within an area 5 km south and 11 km west of Tam Ky City. One of the POWs was the VC battalion commander and from him the Cav learned the enemy's dispositions. This led to the *Battle of the Pineapple Forest*.

23 Feb, the 22d Regiment, 3d NVA Div moved into attack positions approximately 3 km southwest of the Quang Ngai City where elements of the 4th ARVN Regiment fought well and killed 117 NVA.

D Troop, 1/1st Cav - arrived by 6 Mar and was given an area on the east Chu Lai airfield recently vacated by a Marine A4 Squadron. With F/8th Cav and B/123th Avn (also known as the Aero Scout Company), the Division now had an air cav troop for each Brigade.

The Big Picture - In early 1969, General Abrams that the war of the big battalions be fused with pacifications and territorial security. With Vietnamization was a priority, several Army Infantry Divisions were ordered to establish long term combat operations where one American Bde and one ARVN Rgmt (more or less) would have a relatively fixed AO in which they would conduct primarily Search and Destroy operations against the main enemy units and provide security for the populated areas as a secondary mission. The end result was a "mobile defensive configuration" for the American units while the Vietnamese learned to use American fire support and military technology while taking over areas of responsibility. The Americal Div initiated three of these operations on 18 March plus a fourth in July. These Operations ran almost two years and became "business as usual" for the combat and combat support units.

Operation FREDERICK HILL - Began 18 March by the 196th Infantry and the 5th ARVN Regiment as a Search and Destroy operation in the highlands of Quang Nam and Quang Tin Provinces with the secondary mission to provide security and increased pacification efforts for the populated areas along the coastal plains. The 1/1st Cav would see significant action along the coast plain.

Operation GENEVA PARK - Began 18 March by the 198th Infantry and the 6th ARVN Regiment with the mission of securing the major lines of communications and the destruction of enemy forces posing a threat to Quang Ngai City or the Chu Lai complex. This was the central zone of the Americal AO.

Operation IRON MOUNTAIN - Began 18 March by the 11th Infantry and the 4th ARVN Regiment in the southern zone, Quang Ngai Province. Again the 1/1st Cav would see significant action along the coast plain.

Operation NANTUCKET BEACH - Began 20 Jul by the ? and the 4th ARVN Regiment as a continual Cordon and Search operation in support of pacification efforts south of Chu Lai in Quang Ngai Province.

Operation LAMAR PLAIN

The material presented in this history is a very small sample of a 32 page Combat Operations After Action Report dated 15 September 1969 with 11 enclosures covering another 24 pages. This source document effectively allows the reader to watch an infantry brigade move into Tam

Ky with all its supporting units (naturally, special attention is given to the helicopter units), conduct combat operations for 90 days for the Americal Division, and return to its parent division. Briefly, the Headquarters 1st Bde 101st Abn Div plus two battalions (the 1/501st and the 1/502d Inf) and its support units moved from near Phu Bai to Tam Ky. There they were given the 1/46th Inf from the Americal Div, told to clean up the area around Tam Ky, and sent against the 2d NVA Div located in Base Area 117 in Quang Tin Province. The significant supporting elements consisted of: most of A/477th ARA, B/2/17 Air Cav, initially A Company then B Company plus a gunship section from D/101 AHB, a CH-47 section initially from B Company then C/159 ASHB, a section from EAGLE DUSTOFF with a medical company from the 326th MED, and most of the 2/320th (tube) Artillery Battalion. The Operation started on 15 May and ended on 14 Aug 69. Primarily, they would operate from LZs Professional and Rustler. When it was all over, the casualties were: US 117 KIA, 333 WIA; NVA 524 KIA, 11 POWs.

Brigade Aviation Platoon - was to provide command and control, courier and visual reconnaissance aircraft. They were employed in pairs due to the high density of anti-aircraft fires. Doubling up of flights allowed decreased exposure time during logistical missions as well as reducing resupply time for any given unit. Additionally, a second or chase ship provided immediate suppressive fire should an aircraft receive ground fire or be downed.

A/477 ARA - provided close artillery support during LZ preparation and for ground troops in contact. The ARA was also used in coordination with LOH Reconnaissance teams from the Brigade Aviation platoon. This combination proved to be extremely effective in conjunction with visual reconnaissance missions. On occasion ARA gunships were used to cover medical evacuation aircraft, but only when gunship support from other resources was not immediately available or when such employment was consistent with the tactical operation. The fire support provided was excellent and timely as the section kept gunships on strip alert 24 hours a day. A combination of sound maintenance procedures and close control of operating hours kept availability in the 80% plus range. The enemy's willingness and capability to engage friendly aircraft dictated the lightly armed brigade LOH aircraft team, "white team", be augmented to continue its reconnaissance role. Normally, the "white team" would deploy with one LOH conducting tree-top reconnaissance while the second aircraft remained at altitude, marking locations and maintaining cover for the lower LOH. The higher LOH was normally equipped with a minigun and could place effective suppressive fire on isolated areas of ground fire to enable the low LOH to evade the area. The volume of ground fire encountered in the early phases of the Operation severely inhibited the concept of "white team" employment. Noting the success of the air cavalry's scout combination of a LOH a cobra, the 1st Brigade combined a "white team" with a section of ARA, thus maintaining the reconnaissance ability of the brigade aviation platoon and simultaneously employing ARA in an aggressive role immediately exploiting enemy sightings. The "white team" remained low with one ship at tree top and the second ship trailing and above the first. The ARA section orbited at altitude to support the reconnaissance element when required. This combination was extremely successful throughout the operation and was responsible for numerous enemy sightings, several confirmed enemy kills, innumerable hooches and bunkers destroyed and other reconnaissance activities.

Tac Air - provided tactical air support during the operation furnishing the ground commanders with preplanned and immediate airstrikes, "Skyspots", and "Beacon" airstrikes. Statistically the USAF flew 626 preplanned sorties, 189 immediate sorties, with a total of 880.7 FAC and VR hours and 397 missions delivering ordnance. The results: 94 enemy killed, 530 bunkers, 392 structures, six 12.7mm positions, two mortar positions destroyed plus 157 sustained fires and 70 secondary explosions were recorded. Whenever possible an artillery aerial observer accompanied the AF FAC. This technique allowed closer coordination of artillery and tactical air support.

1st Forward Support Supply Element (FSSE) - established its base of operation at Camp PAPE with the primary mission of resupplying the units in the field. They programmed and rigged from 10 to 30 CH-47 sorties per day plus established and operated refuel and rearm points for support and gunship helicopters.

B/2/17 Cav - provided aerial and ground reconnaissance, fire support

for troops in contact and a ready reaction force for downed aircraft or other emergency type missions. Whenever possible, the Cav was employed as an independent element with the mission of conducting extensive aerial reconnaissance in these zones not occupied by ground forces. On several occasions the Aero-Rifle Platoon ("BLUES") was inserted to exploit intelligence gathered from these reconnaissance missions. The troop proved indispensable as a reaction force for downed aircraft. Due to the high volume of ground fire and the number of aircraft being forced down in the AO, the troop was given the mission of maintaining four aircraft and the Blues on strip alert. On several occasions the quick reactions of Cav elements were instrumental in securing lives and equipment. The air cavalry troop operated as an entity rather than as fragmented sub-elements. Specific areas were assigned and the Troop Commander, operating under guidance by the Brigade Commander, could employ his flexible organization as a aerial/ground maneuver element, thereby making optimum use of his total assets, to include available artillery and Tac Air, to develop the situation. One control measure placed upon the Cav Troop Commander's assets was the Brigade Commander's final authority to commit the Blues. Because of the constant requirement to maintain a responsive ready reaction force, this control was absolutely essential. Special training was given to the Brigade Security Platoon in preparation for the special mission of downed aircraft security/recovery. Heretofore the platoon was primarily employed in static defensive roles, but the platoon could by virtue of this newly acquired skill, be inserted, to include by repelling, into a downed aircraft site for security and recovery rigging of the aircraft. This capability released the Blues for other missions. The air cavalry troop was used to conduct bomb damage assessment of B52 strikes. Their organic air assets permitted immediate response providing a more valid evaluation and subsequent exploitation than could be provided by insertion of ground troops. Employing organic aircraft organized as a Cavalry Team consisting one LOH armed with a mini-gun and two AH-1H gunships, B Troop was assigned mission by the brigade S2 Section. If a reconnaissance mission proved to be especially fruitful or the aircraft were engaged by ground fire, the Blues were inserted into the area to develop the situation. The Blues were also deployed to assess areas engaged by air strikes, ARA and artillery. They were also inserted to assess the results of ARC LIGHTS and to exploit the results. B/2/17th CAV accounted for 61 enemy killed during the operation while the Blues killed 10 additional enemy.

The 101st Assault Helicopter Battalion - provided a direct support company throughout the entire operation, with A Co supporting the Brigade from 15 May to 7 July and B Co supporting from 8 July through 14 August. Both companies provided dependable and responsive air lift support to the Brigade. Balancing operational and maintenance requirements, both companies provided a minimum of ten UH-1H aircraft daily in addition to one command and control aircraft. Mission ready aircraft averaged 80% plus throughout the entire operation. D/101 provided three gunships under the OPCON of the direct support company. These gunships were utilized on combat assault missions and for coverage of medevac missions.

2d Bn, 320th Artillery - provided direct support artillery with C/1/14 Arty from the Americal Division. The initial mission assigned the artillery was to relieve enemy pressure on LZ Professional. The immediate course of action was to develop a responsive counter battery fire plan. Another enemy activity which required immediate reaction was the intensive anti-aircraft fire throughout the AO. Tube artillery and ARA began to engaged suspected and confirmed AA locations on an almost instantaneous basis.

Pathfinders were habitually used for aircraft control at firebases and airheads as well as during airmobile operations. Additionally, pathfinders provided instruction to ground units on control/coordination aspects of Airmobile operations.

The USAF provided air transport for all elements of the Brigade with the exception of the 1st FSSE. The entire move to Tam Ky and Chu Lai was accomplished using 69 C-130 sorties over a three day period. Subsequent airlift capability, in the form of two C-123 sorties per day was also provided.

159th Assault Support Helicopter Battalion - initially provided one section from B/159 and later replaced by a section from C/159. The missions were scheduled and coordinated by the 1st FSSE.

Intelligence - Enemy units in the area of operations at the start of Operation had completed supply and retraining activities and appeared prepared for sustained offensive activities. Primary targets were population centers such as the Tien Phuoc USSF/CIDG Camp and Tam Ky City. Tam Ky City was threatened by one enemy regiment, one provincial infantry battalion, one provincial sapper battalion and three local force companies. The Tien Phuoc Camp and the surrounding areas were threatened by two regiments, one Province force infantry battalion and two local force companies. LZ Professional was in the early stages of a siege. Aircraft carrying supplies and ammunition into the LZ were receiving heavy ground fire consisting of .50 cal and small arms fire. On 15 May, a CH-47 was hit with .50 cal fire causing it to crash and burn on the logistics pad of the LZ. The LZ was subjected to enemy harassing fire daily, consisting of 60mm and 82mm mortar, 75mm recoilless rifle fire and .50 cal and .30 cal machine gun fire. Friendly ground units from the 146th Inf had been in heavy contact with enemy units in the area and had been forced to withdraw to the area around the LZ.

Operations - The initial phase was characterized by heavy contact against a determined, highly motivated and well entrenched enemy. Indicative of the enemy's tenacity was the large number of ground to air contacts reported during the early stages of the operation. Whenever 12.7mm AA fire was reported all assets were immediately diverted into the area to include tube artillery, gunships, ARA and most effectively, air strikes. The suspect area was literally inundated with ordnance, relying on overkill to destroy or neutralize the 12.7mm AA weapon. The brigade also identified the enemy tactic of on again, off-again and was doubly vigilant on the on-days which further neutralized the enemy's effectiveness. This tactic was particularly effective as the brigade accounted for eleven 12.7mm AA weapons destroyed in the first 22 days of the operation. As Allied operations intensified the enemy suffered heavy casualties and was forced to withdraw in order to reorganize, resupply and retrain. Accordingly, enemy operations changed to small size elements employing harassing and delaying tactics in order to cover their withdrawal. At the termination, there were indications of a new enemy offensive was being prepared.

Daily Activity - The source document contains page after page of great detail about how this fine airmobile infantry brigade used its helicopter assets with all its other forces to engage the enemy. Sadly, this history is only able to present the activities for one day.

2 June, Activity increased in the AO as the units reported scattered enemy contact with the Aero-Rifle Platoon of B/2/17 Cav becoming decisively engaged by a numerically superior enemy force and being reinforced later in the day by B/1/501. At 0740H, B/1/502, vic BT182996, captured 1 NVA with an AK47 during the conduct of an area sweep. At 0855H, B/2/17 Cav, vic BT214123, received ground fire from an enemy soldier; the element returned fire recording 1 VC KIA. At 0915H, A/1/502, vic BT180009, engaged 5 VC with small arms the enemy broke contact and fled leaving behind 1 VC KIA. At 1000H, D/1/502, vic BT180002, found a grave containing 1 VC KBA, and at 1015H, C/1-502, vic BT181001, found one grave with 1 NVA KBA. At 1230H, the Aero-Rifle Platoon, B/2/17 Cav, was inserted into an LZ, vic BT210128 to conduct ground reconnaissance in the area. The area had been a source of ground fire throughout day with numerous reported incidents. Immediately after moving from the LZ, the platoon came under heavy fire from a well-concealed enemy force. Gunships, ARA and tube artillery were all employed in support. The supporting fires were lifted and the platoon moved forward in the assault. The platoon was met with withering fire that inflicted moderate casualties and pinned down the element. Air and artillery were employed at close range and the decision was made to insert a reaction force to extricate the trapped platoon. At 1440H, a platoon from B/1-501 was inserted into the LZ to link-up and relieve the pressure on the Aero-Rifle Platoon. At 1550H, the C&C, B/2/17 Cav, vic BT202129, was hit by 12.7mm AA fire and forced down, seriously wounding the artillery LO aboard. The crew and aircraft were recovered without further incident. At 1700H, B/1/501 enroute to the relief of the Aero-Rifle Platoon, vic BT202127, engaged an enemy force firing from bunkers. The company quickly returned fire and reduced the enemy bunker accounting for 2 NVA KIA and 3 IWC; the unit suffering 1 US WIA. At 1745H, B/1/501 closed into the LZ thus completing the relief and reinforcement. The situation was stabilized and the Aero Rifle Platoon became OPCON to B/1/501 for the night. The

fighting had been extremely bitter through-out the afternoon and the outnumbered platoon had been pinned down a majority of the time from the well concealed and bunkered enemy. The unit had accounted for 6 NVA KIA and 1 IWC and had suffered 5 US KIA and 4 US WIA (E).

New techniques - To avoid the intensive ground to air fire, the technique of high overhead approach and departure was practiced which reduced aircraft exposure time. Another technique, relatively new to the AH company was the practice of flying logistics missions with two aircraft instead of single aircraft. This technique allowed one or the other aircraft to respond to a downed aircraft or to place suppressive fires in enemy firing positions.

16th CAG ORLL ITEMS

In the Operations section, the highlights showed that the units were conducting combat assaults that required the assets of two or more helicopter companies on an average once every four days. A majority of these were associated with ARVN and CIDG lift.

During the quarter ending 31 July, the 16th CAG experienced 25 mortar and rocket attacks and these attacks resulted in one WIA and three aircraft destroyed and one hanger destroyed. There were 18 such attacks in the quarter ending 31 October.

Hangers for the 132nd ASHC and 178th ASHC were completed 6 June. In the Maintenance section, the number of aircraft released from 335th TC DS AM back to the using unit has increased significantly; 84 in March, 145 in June, 147 in July, 124 in August, 148 in September, and 100+ in October. Additionally, 16th CAG coordinated with 34th GS and USAF to provide better delivery of aircraft parts shipped from the 241st Transportation Co (Depot) at Qui Nhon. Commencing on 25 July, 16th CAG was scheduled to receive one pallet of aircraft repair parts daily aboard a specifically designated AF C-123.

In the Safety section, the number of accidents and computed accident rate per 100,000 hours of flying time were: 8 and 47.6 for May, 4 and 15 for June, 2 and 11.5 for July, 3 and 16.1 for August, 3 and 18 for September, and 3 and 21.6 for October.

In the Flight Standardization section, the continuing program of coordinating the Chu Lai Air Space was described. The mix of aircraft (jet, single and multi engine fixed wing, and helicopters) plus the volume of each has caused many "near miss" situations. The coming monsoons and the decrease in verticle separation will add to the hazards. Also, the Chu Lai Air Base used instrument procedures which are suited primarily for jet aircraft but are not compatible with helicopter procedures. Other than GCA, no Nav-Aids are available that are compatible with Army equipment.

The Base Development section for the October report states that enlisted billeting continues to be a problem area within the 16th CAG. The units most severely affected are B/123d Avn Bn and E/723d Mnt Bn. B Company is split with one portion of the unit located on one side of Ky Ha AHP and the remainder of the unit on the other side. This creates command and control problems in addition to the overcrowded condition. E Company presently houses six enlisted personnel in their hanger facilities because of the overcrowded conditions. It also states that reconstruction began in October on the 174th AHC hanger that was destroyed in June but the program has been extremely slow.

In the Organization section, in October the 178th and 132nd ASHCs moved to the 14th CAB and Delta Troop, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry to the 123d Avn Bn. The October report states that the Aero Scout concept continued to be the primary method of employment for B/123d Avn Bn and that with the attachment of D/1/1st Cav, the Battalion in essence became an Air Cavalry Squadron. A Company provide general support lift aircraft for the Division. B/123d Avn Bn normally supported the 11th Inf Bde; D/1/1st Cav the 198th Inf Bde; and F/8th Cav the 196th Inf Bde. The 71st AHC, 174th AHC and the 176th AHC continued to support the 196th Inf Bde, 11th Inf Bde and 198th Inf Bde, respectively.

In the section reporting aircraft hits by enemy fire, for the quarter ending July 227 were hit and 182 ending October.

Since 15 Apr, the LOH Section of A/123d Avn Bn provided aerial support to III MAF for tactical reconnaissance and to MACV Senior Advisors at Tam Ky and Quang Ngai.

19 Aug, F/8th Cav's Infantry Platoon was inserted OPCON to the 4/31st Inf Bn, 196th Inf Bde and remained in that status for a period of eight days throughout the contact in the Hiep Duc Valley. The Blues

demonstrated their abilities in a variety of defensive and offensive actions and provided the 4/31st a reliable backup force for the maneuver companies. They reacted in an exemplary manner and were commended by the Battalion Commander.

20 Aug, F/8th gunships firing in close support of friendly units in heavy contact were credited with destroying two .51 cal AA positions and 66 NVA KIA were discovered during the ensuing sweep of the area in which the guns engaged enemy targets.

18 Sep, B Company's Aero Scouts VR Team discovered an enemy headquarters camp. Hootches built by the enemy were extremely large and Aero Scout gunships destroyed 17. Later air strikes, referred to the area by the Aero Scout Team, pounded the area extensively.

22 Sep, at 1000H the 71st AHC began inserting one company of the 3/21 Inf, 196th Inf Bde, in the vicinity of BT0423. The initial lift into the LZ received intense fire and one aircraft was shot down on the LZ, with both the aircraft commander and crew chief killed. During the ensuing action the 71st AHC was reinforced by the 176th AHC. The operation was successfully completed at 1800H but the 14th CAB suffering 2 KIA, 13 WIA, 2 helicopters destroyed and 14 damaged, of which 6 were shot down and later recovered.

22 Sep, B Company's Aero Scouts made three separate insertions of the Aero Scout Infantry into three different areas. The Infantry destroyed tunnels and booby traps, one infantryman received a minor frag wound. The results of the day included 4 NVA KIA and 12 VC KIA.

1 Dec, F/8th Cav scrambled to extract a Division LRRP team that was surrounded and in heavy contact. Just as the team arrived on station, the NVA force, estimated at 50 in number, attempted to rush the LRRP's position. The gunships engaged with VT rockets killing 12 and dispersing the rest. The LRRPs were then successfully extracted.

13 Dec, A VR team from D/1/1 Cav spotted a military aged male with pack and weapon. The individual was engaged and killed; when the LOH attempted to extract the weapon and pack, the aircraft received heavy fire. The VR team returned to home station, a heavy, VR team was committed and infantry was called for reinforcement. The infantrymen were inserted and immediately started a sweep resulting in eight kills and three POWs while the LOHs and AH-1Gs screened around them, killing another thirty enemy soldiers. The C&C aircraft called for and received an airstrike on some bunkers and also coordinated the use of C/1/1 Cav to seep in from the north. The C Troop Commander was picked up by a LOH, shown the best avenues of attack, and with this help, the armored element swept into the objective from the north killing fourteen more, and capturing twelve POWs. The entire operation reflected close team work between three different units acting as a team against the enemy resulting in fifty-two VC/NVA KIA and fifteen POWs with thirty fighting positions destroyed.

14 Dec, While on a screening mission for 2/1st Inf and F/17 Armored Cav in the northern portion of the AO, an F/8 Cav LOH spotted six NVA with weapons evading from the cavalry. The LOH immediately killed one, and when the remaining NVA engaged the LOH, the gunships engaged and killed the remaining enemy with rockets and minigun. The same pattern continued for the rest of the day with the ground cavalry flushing the targets and F/8 engaging them. Seventeen NVA KIA were accounted for in this manner.

1970

The material for this part of the history is from the 16th CAG's ORLLs.

13 Jan, B/123d Avn Bn performed a blocking and visual reconnaissance mission for a 1/20 Inf element that had been airlifted into the area and were sweeping toward the B Company team. The Infantry was inserted to detain suspects leaving the area ahead of the 1/20 Inf sweep. A total of ten NVA were detained; one Cpt, two Lts, and seven NCOs. Intelligence data from these prisoners was among the most valuable received by the 11th Inf Bde during the reporting quarter.

17 Jan, The B Company Infantrymen were inserted into an area just west of Hill 411 after the gunship team had engaged three NVA resulting in three NVA KIA. The Infantrymen immediately engaged two more NVA, resulting in an additional two NVA KIA. The Infantry then pursued an element of NVA, covered by the team LOH. The LOH observed and engaged another NVA, resulting in one NVA WIA that evaded capture. The Infantry captured packs and papers, and swept through an area that contained an old .51 caliber position, a small workshop, and several

booby traps. The same day, after the Infantrymen had been extracted, the gunship team answered a call from the Special Forces for gunship support on a contact mission in an area just southwest of Quang Ngai. The gunships engaged an unknown size enemy force, resulting in 10 NVA KIA, and one extremely large secondary explosion that sent debris 500 feet into the air and resulted in an additional 18 VC KIA.

Night Hawk system - During Nov 1969 and Feb 1970, the 123d Avn Bn was tasked to determine the feasibility of and organize the Night Hawk (NH) system. The NH system consists of an XM27 subsystem (Minigun) mounted on a firing stand and a Xenon light parallel mounted with a Night Observation Device (NOD). The system is employed by acquiring a target, which is illuminated by the infra red mode on the Xenon light by viewing the target in the NOD. The target is then illuminated with the white light while the gunner engages the target with the XM27. F/8th Cav was tasked to operate the NH system. The first system was completed on 5 Feb followed by the second system on 9 Feb. A third system is under fabrication and a fourth system will be transferred from USARV in the near future. B/123d Avn Bn has made significant revisions in its technique of employment as they began utilizing the XM-27 mini-gun kit on the OH-6A aircraft. This allows a team to be employed with one AH-1G and one minigun equipped LOH for fire support. Also included in the team are a low-flying recon LOH and a flexible number of UH-1H aircraft with Infantry. The advantages of this organization are numerous. The flexibility of this team allow the unit to increase its aircraft availability since valuable blade time on the AH-1G is saved which reduces maintenance time. Tactically, the minigun equipped LOH in effect, is an additional type aircraft in the unit's stable. The XM-27 equipped LOH allows instantaneous firepower to be directed at the enemy from a vantage point much close to the enemy than the larger AH-1Gs. The low recon LOH is better covered. The AH-1G remains the primary mode of firepower for the unit.

25 Jan, the 16th CAG received nine XM-59 systems. The tentative plan is to evaluate the employment of the XM-59 system from the UH-1H aircraft. The added firepower of a .50 caliber weapon at a high altitude may be another asset to the unit's growing flexibility.

3 Feb, While participating in a joint Vietnamese-American eagle flight, F/8th Cav combat assaulted the ground forces into a location occupied by an 82mm mortar crew who were preparing to fire on a friendly LZ. The entire enemy crew of twelve were killed and the mortar with all accessories and two AK-47 rifles were captured.

11 Feb, While working on a rice sampling mission in an area approximately 8 KMs north of the Ba To Special Forces camp, a reconnaissance team from B/123d Avn Bn killed eight VC and one NVA. The infantry platoon was inserted to check out the bodies and packs. The packs contained Russian first aid kits, sandals, cooking pots, rice knives and shovels. Later in the day, while conducting a contact/VR mission for the 11th Inf Bde, the team killed one VC and ten NVA.

12 Feb, The 71st AHC conducted its largest combat assault of the reporting period. The series of assaults were for the 196th Inf Bde and the 5th ARVN Regiment and were executed over a five day period with ten lift ships and gunship support. During the five days of assault operations, 1,500 troops were inserted into a five grid square location around coordinates BS9996. The 71st AHC conducted the complete operation with assistance from the CH-47 aircraft organic to the 14th CAB. This operation was carried out without incident and combined ARVN-American operation was a complete success.

23 Feb, Two Night Hawk aircraft engaged a large enemy force while on a night reconnaissance mission in the 11th Inf Bde area of operation. The action, which lasted for five hours, resulted in seventeen confirmed enemy KIA.

25 Feb, A combined force of Vietnamese and F/8th Cavalry infantrymen was lifted into the "Rice Bowl" west of New Hau Duc to check out a reported NVA hospital which later had been determined to have been abandoned only a few hours earlier. Large quantities of medical supplies and Japanese made plasma were captured and evacuated for redistribution among friendly Vietnamese.

9-10 Mar, On 9 March CH-47 aircraft positioned the bulk of the 6th ARVN Regiment and supporting artillery into a staging area near Ha Thanh. On 10 March early morning fog delayed the 176th AHC from making the first assault to establish a fire support base. At 1000 hours security troops were assaulted into the area. CH-47 aircraft delivered

the necessary artillery and supplies into the fire support base which were used to prestrike the LZs. Although the aircraft received hostile fire from the two LZs, none of the aircraft were lost. During the operation the 176th AHC moved 800 ARVN troops and contributed greatly to the success of the operation. A total of 1,215 Infantry troops, six 105 howitzers and crews and supporting engineer equipment were moved on 10 March by elements of the 14th CAB.

13 Mar, The 174th AHC, assisted by CH-47 aircraft, conducted a combat assault to secure and establish a new fire support base. The 174th then airlifted the 2/1 Inf Bn and the 4/3 Inf Bn into their areas of operation northeast of GIA Vuc to complete the first phase of the operation. The following day the final phase was completed when the 174th AHC assaulted 900 troops of the 4th ARVN Regiment into their area of operation. All of these moves were completed without a mishap or incident and greatly contributed to the success of the combined operation.

20 Mar, While working in the 2/1st Infantry Battalion area of operation, Night Hawk aircraft received heavy .51 caliber fire. After adjusting artillery fire, the Night Hawk aircraft moved into the area accompanied by two AH-1G aircraft. During the ensuing firefight, Night Hawk killed five and the AH-1G aircraft killed two of the enemy. The artillery unit was credited with two KIA.

1-3 Apr, Gunships of the 174th AHC were providing close fire support for Regional and Popular Force units in the vicinity of Quang Ngai City. In the afternoon of 1 Apr, the gunships located an estimated VC Company trying to evade west. They obtained clearance to fire and attacked the evading enemy. Their attack caused the enemy to seek cover and allowed the RF/PF units to engage them from a favorable position. On 3 Apr, they once again engaged an enemy force while in support of RF/PF units. The constant pressure of the attacking aircraft caused the enemy to withdraw from positions from which they had intended to launch attacks on Quang Ngai City. During these two actions, three aircraft were damaged and some crew members were wounded in action. The unit was credited with 80 enemy kills.

1 Apr, The 176th AHC supported the 5/46th Inf Bn in establishing FSB Hustler by lifting one company into the area to secure the landing zone at BS2903 followed by two additional companies. After security was established, CH-47 aircraft moved artillery and supplies into the landing zone. This artillery was used to prestrike a landing zone at BS2603 where one infantry company was subsequently inserted. Light enemy resistance was due, in part to the support rendered by the gunships. The assault was completed without incident.

10 Apr, While conducting a visual reconnaissance mission for the division in an area immediately west of the Hau Duc Special Forces camp, the B/123d Avn Bn team killed two NVA soldiers and destroyed eight native structures. Seven infantrymen were inserted to check the bodies which resulted in the capture of one AK-47 and one SKS rifle.

30 Apr ORLL - States that in order to provide the Americal Div with an additional visual reconnaissance capability the 16th CAG formed a provisional VR team for each brigade in addition to the normal air cavalry support. The team is comprised on one LOH with crew from the air cavalry unit supporting the brigade and two UH-1C gunships from the assault helicopter company supporting that brigade. The provisional team missions have a lower priority than normal assault gunship missions and depend on the availability of gunships due to combat assaults and contact missions. The teams are employed in the low coastal regions and the relatively uncontested areas due to the vulnerability of the crews if forced down by mechanical trouble or enemy ground fire. The provisional VR team therefore releases the air cavalry troops for employment in areas of greater tactical concern.

26 Aug, CH-47B #67-18445 from the 178th ASHC was extracting men who had just completed operation Elk Canyon at Kham Duc. The chinook had left Kham Duc with twenty troops and an internal load of 105mm rounds. They had flown 19 miles and were making an approach to LZ Judy, near FSB Mary Ann, when they were hit by an RPG and small arms fire or possibly 12.7mm heavy machinegun fire. CW2 York slumped over the cyclic stick when he was hit by small arms fire and the aircraft headed down. CPT Eric Reid controlled the aircraft as best he could as the cockpit filled with smoke. Ammunition in the cargo bay began to explode causing a body to fly into the cockpit and cover much of the console between the pilots. The CH-47 came down in the triple canopy

jungle near a forward position occupied by the Americal troops at LZ Judy. As CPT Reid ejected his door and jumped, the helicopter exploded. He fell down a small cliff after he came through the trees and was the only survivor. In addition to CW2 York, the 178th ASHC lost SP4 George Tefft, SP4 Joel York, and SP Hima McDougall.

1971

Background - The 23d Infantry Division continued to conduct combat operations but the heaviest contact with the enemy was in the northern sections. The major, almost two-year old Operations FREDERICK HILL (196th Inf in the north), PENNSYLVANIA SQUARE (1/1st Cav on the northern plain), GENEVA PARK (198th Inf in the center), IRON MOUNTAIN (11th Inf in the south), and NANTUCKET BEACH (southern plain) ended on 1 March. In reality, the AO's were simply realigned to reflect the tactical situation (generally the NVA went back into Laos to await the American's withdrawal) and the scheduled withdrawal of American units in the I Corps areas. By 7 May, all III MAF forces ceased combat operations which left only the 101st Abn and the 1st Bde (Mech), 5th Inf in northern I Corps. During March and April, the last set of named operations was initiated with CAROLINE HILL (196th Inf in the north), MIDDLESEX PEAK (196th Inf initially then the 198th Inf in the center), and FINNEY HILL (198th Inf initially then the 11th Inf in the south). The Division contributed the 11th Inf Bde, the 1/1st Cav, at least one Infantry and Artillery Bn, and the 14th CAB to support of Operation DEWEY CANYON II/LAMSON 719 but all these units, except the 1/1st Cav, returned by 7 Apr.

All named operations terminated effective 1 July but this did not change the realities of the tactical or the deployment situation. The 196th Inf Bde covered Quang Nam Province and would be the "stay behind" Brigade at Da Nang. The 198th Inf Bde covered Quang Tin in the center and the 11th Inf Bde had Quang Ngai in the south. Most of the fighting took place in the Que Son Mountains southwest of Da Nang in Quang Nam where the 196th Inf relocated during the spring and summer as the Marine Corps combat units were withdrawn. This rest of the area was relatively quiet as even the famous 31st NVA Rgmt was withdrawing west out of Quang Tin.

Division Withdrawal - Near the end of April, the Div started turning over FSBs to the ARVNs. The first Inf Bn departed in late May and another in late June. On 12 Aug, the Div was given its redeployment schedule. During September and October the Div, minus 196th Inf and its support units, initiated standdown activities. In the first half of October, the 11th Inf Bde Headquarters and three more Inf Bns departed. On 15 Oct all divisional combat activities ceased as the units had redeployed, stood down, or were back at bases getting ready to depart. In late Nov, the 198th Inf departed and on 29 Nov, the 23d Inf Div was deactivated.

Major Aviation Withdrawal

71st AHC - Departed 13 Sep.

132d ASHC - Departed 10 Oct.

14th CAB - Departed 27 Oct.

174th AHC - Departed 8 Nov.

176th AHC - Departed 10 Nov.

123d Avn Bn and its letter companies - Departed during Nov.

1972

The 196th Inf Bde remained at Da Nang as the "stay behind" brigade from the 23d Inf Div. It was supported by F/8th Cav and 178th ASHC in addition to the Brigade Aviation Section.

178th ASHC - Departed 2 Mar.

In late June, the 196th Inf and two of its battalions departed. The 196th Inf has the distinction of being the final U.S. Army combat brigade to depart. Since Nov, F/8th Cav had been attached to the 196th and with its departure, F/8th Cav was assigned to the 11th CAG. The 11th CAG at Da Nang was the only higher aviation command in I Corps.

On 23 August, the 3/21st Inf Bn, which had been part of the 196th Inf Bde, 23d Inf Div was the last U.S. Army ground combat battalion departed.

1973

F/8th Cav departed on 23 Feb.