

BOB DAVIES

Bob, I'm not the only person who has collected this material, many others have been involved. Many thanks for your help and material.

I am still learning about my companies involvement in R&W. I will share this info with anyone who wants it. I am also trying to get all of the history typed into my computer and on disc. This project is for a Company Release @ Fairlawn in 98.

As I come of more I will add a see for you, Thanks again for your help.

Sincerely

Bob Abbers  
CE "GOT" 155<sup>th</sup> AHC



ANNUAL SUPPLEMENT

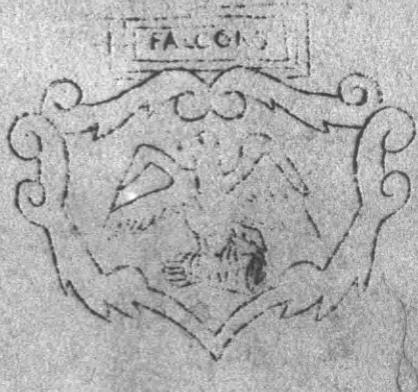
UNIT HISTORY

155 AVIATION COMPANY (ASSAULT HELICOPTER).

1 JANUARY - 31 DECEMBER

1969

A YEAR OF SERVICE



VHPA 73

ANNUAL SUPPLEMENT  
HISTORY OF THE  
155TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96297  
1 JANUARY 1969 - 31 DECEMBER 1969

Written By  
WO1 BRUCE L McINNES  
UNIT HISTORIAN

Approved By  
GERARD H. LUISI  
MAJ, IN  
Commanding

FORWARD

Serving in direct support of the Free World Forces and the Army of the Republic of Vietnam, the 155th Aviation Company is similar to the many other aviation units of the same size and structure. Formed originally as Co A, 1st Aviation Battalion, 1st Infantry Division at Fort Riley, Kansas, the unit arrived at Vung Tau, Vietnam on 1 May 1965. Moving immediately to Ban Me Thuot, with an aircraft complement of 24 UH-1D's the advance party was welcomed by LTC Delbert Townsend, Former Commander of the 52nd Aviation Battalion. After much preparation and many training hours through which the men of Co A became proficient in the new and demanding techniques of flying in a combat zone, the company was declared operational on 1 Jun 65. On 20 Nov 65, Co A was redesignated as the 155th Aviation Company (Air Mobile Light). Unofficially the 155th was directed by 1st Aviation Brigade to designate itself the 155th Assault Helicopter Company. At that time that designation was in effect for all Air Mobile Light Aviation companies throughout Vietnam. In 1969, the 155th was directed to redesignate itself the 155th Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter).

From the first, the 155th's two airlift platoons were known as the "Stage Coaches", while the Armed Platoon was called the "Falcons". Under these names the men of the 155th have spread their reputation for accomplishing their mission while maintaining the highest of safety standards and aircraft availability throughout Vietnam. Flying from Saigon in the south to Dak Pek and I Corps in the north, from the coastal plain to the Cambodian border, the Stage Coach - Falcon team has flown over 115,000 hours in support of the allied forces combating the threat of Communism in southeast Asia.

This history is dedicated to all those men who have served and are serving with the 155th Aviation Company and its attached unit since its arrival in the Republic of Vietnam, with special tribute to those officers, warrant officers and enlisted men who gave their lives for a free world.

PART I

MISSION AND RESOURCES

Mission

The mission of the 155th Aviation Company is (1) to provide tactical air movement of combat troops in airmobile operations, (2) to provide tactical air movement of combat supplies and equipment within the combat zone, and (3) to provide combat assault support to combat troops.

ORGANIZATION

The 155th Aviation Company is organized under TOE 1-77G and has the following units attached:

8th Medical Detachment

255th Quartermaster Detachment (KD), POL

343rd Aviation Support Detachment

## CAMP CORYELL

Camp Coryell, home of the 155th Aviation Co (AH), and the facilities and atmosphere it provides are largely responsible for the success of the 155th. The 155th Company area, designed for tactical convenience, is abundant with banana trees, flowering plants and in general has a green garden-like atmosphere. There are three up-to-date, well equipped clubs in the company area to provide entertainment and relaxation for the personnel of the company. Sports facilities are present within the area, affording personnel the opportunity to play soft-ball, basketball, and volley ball. Most treasured of the recreation-oriented facilities is the large swimming pool located in the center of the 155th area. A cool swim after a hard, hot day is one of the best morale builders available.

## IN MEMORIAN

1965

1. PFC Michael E. Davis	21 Oct 65
2. WO1 Joseph S. Huyler	21 Oct 65
3. SP5 William J. Johnson	21 Oct 65
4. 1LT Harold A. Preisendorfer	21 Oct 65

1966

1. WO Eugene W. Caswell	27 May 66
2. WO Michael N. Coryell	30 Nov 66
3. PFC Richard E. Dabney	27 May 66
4. WO Raymond L. Ford	29 Mar 66
5. PFC Gregory L. Miller	20 Dec 66
6. WO Phillip C. Smith	29 Mar 66
7. PFC James Walker	30 Nov 66
8. WO Wilmer J. Willingham	30 Nov 66
9. SP4 John W. Woods, Jr.	30 Nov 66

1967

1. Sgt Keith D. Griffin	16 Mar 67
2. WO1 Terrance Nelson	23 May 67
3. SP5 James G. Patterson	16 Mar 67

1968

1. WO Wallis W. Smith	19 Apr 68
2. 1LT Dennis E. Painter	19 Apr 68
3. SP5 James Miculus	19 Apr 68
4. SP4 Frank L. Freedle	19 Apr 68
5. WO1 Paul N. Larson	19 Apr 68

6.	WO1 Herbert Hayashida	19 Apr 68
7.	SP4 John R. Brooks	19 Apr 68
8.	SP4 Oran B. McCordol	19 Apr 68
9.	1LT Fred O. Pratt	26 Aug 68
10.	WO1 William P. Harwood	8 Sep 68
11.	WO1 Redlich S. Koppel	8 Sep 68
12.	WO1 Richard C. Pugh	28 Dec 68
13.	SP4 James D. Budahazy	24 Jun 68
14.	SP5 William Eister	6 Feb 68
15.	SP4 Edward Milan	4 Mar 68
16.	SP4 James Swann	4 Mar 68
17.	SG Robert Pinkston	13 Mar 68

1969

1.	WO1 Ronald McGary <i>McCravy</i>	3 Jan 69
2.	SP4 Richard See	8 Jan 69
3.	WO1 Terry L. Crawford	27 Feb 69
4.	SP5 Armando Ramirez	23 May 69
5.	PFC Santiago Quinitana	23 May 69
6.	SP5 Rich R. Medaris	5 Nov 69
7.	SP5 John A. Payne	5 Nov 69
8.	SP4 Richard G. Bauer	5 Nov 69

..... this history dedicated to the men of the  
155th; to those who fought and lived and to those who fought and died,  
to those who gave much and to those who gave all.

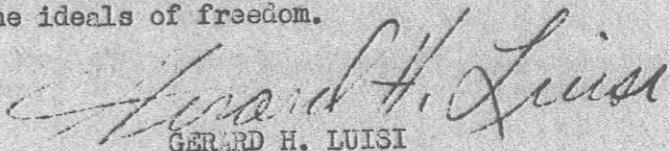
PREFACE

On 26 December 1969, I assumed command of the 155th Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter). Since that date, I never cease to be amazed by the professionalism, dedication and Esprit De Corps that exists within this unit.

A unit history is non-existent without the daily, often times mundane, activities of flying. These missions run the gauntlet from VIP support, command and control to providing a transportation service to indiginous tribesman. Periodically though, the ultimate test for any unit must be experienced-combat. Throughout the pages of this history for 1969, the officers and men of the 155th continually met the test and never faltered in denying the communist forces victory.

No unit is comprised of machines and equipment, but rather a unit consists of men. These men, for the most part non-careerest, come from all walks and stations of life. Their education, ethnic background and religious beliefs may differ but as soldiers they have arrived in the Republic of Vietnam and made this unit what it is-a cohesive, aggressive team.

It is to these men, who daily make history, that this document is dedicated. It is also dedicated to future members of the 155th so that they too may see what their predecessors accomplished and enable them to continue carrying forward the ideals of freedom.

  
GERARD H. LUISI  
Maj, IN  
Commanding

## REGIONAL ANALYSIS

### TERRAIN

The II Corps Tactical Zone, in which Ban Me Thuot is located and in which the 155th Aviation Company renders the majority of its support, covers an area of 32,725 square miles or 49% of the land area of South Vietnam. Its western border is 342 miles long and in common with Laos and Cambodia. The eastern border is approximately 400 miles of coastline bordering the South China Sea. The area is 40 miles wide in the north and 342 miles wide in the south. This area is politically divided into the provinces of Kontum, Binh Dinh, Pleiku, Phu Bon, and Phu Yen in the 22nd ARVN Division Tactical Zone, and Darlac, Khanh Hoa, Quang Duc, Tuyen Duo, Nuhn Thuan, Lam Dong, and Binh Thuan in the 23rd ARVN Division Tactical Zone. Geographically, this area may be divided into three major areas.

1. The coastal plain is a narrow strip of long flat, often marshy terrain not more than twenty miles wide from the sea inland. This area is formed by a series of numerous river deltas interrupted by a rock ridge line running steeply to the sea. This area is almost entirely under cultivation, with four rice crops a year.

2. The mountain region extends from north to south almost the entire length of the II Corps Tactical Zone. Elevation range from 3,000 to 8,000 feet, with the eastern slopes quite steep and the western more gradual. Rain forests cover three quarters of this area with most of the remainder covered with open, deciduous growth. Cultivation is limited to small, cleared areas on relatively flat land. Flying in this area is very hazardous with forced landing areas practically non-existent, ceilings frequently very low and winds unpredictable.

3. The plateau region is located west of the mountains and is comprised of the Kontum Plateau in the north and the Darlac Plateau in the south. This

region has altitudes ranging from 1,000 to 3,000 feet with gently rolling hills and much open area. Where the soil is not under cultivation, a thick growth of grass, to a height of eight to ten feet, covers the ground. Where adequate drainage is provided, this area will support four vegetable crops yearly.

The principal cities of this area are Phan Thiet, Phan Rang, Nha Trang, and Qui Nhon on the coastal plain; Dalat in the mountains; and Ban Me Thuot, Pleiku, and Kontum on the plateaus. The major routes of this area are:

Route #1 Saigon - Danang (coastal route)

Route #11 Dalat - Phan Rang

Route #14 Saigon - Ban Me Thuot - Pleiku - Kontum

Route #19 Pleiku - Qui Nhon

Route #20 Saigon - Dalat

Route #21 Ban Me Thuot - Nha Trang

The Republic's major rail line parallels Route #1 along its entire length with one spur line from Phan Rang to Dalat. The logistical and communications complex at Cam Ranh Bay is located between Phan Rang and Nha Trang.

#### WEATHER

Weather throughout this area can be divided into the summer monsoon, June through September, and the winter monsoon, November through April, with the months of May and October as periods of transition. During the summer monsoon the wind is southwesterly, causing cloud buildups on the western slopes of the mountains. This results in a rainy season for the plateaus and mountainous areas during the summer months while the coastal provinces have clear skies and good flying weather. The winter monsoon brings a northeasterly flow with the conditions reversed. The coastal provinces of Binh Thuan and Ninh Thuan are little affected by either monsoon and have generally clear weather the year round.

Average rainfall in the mountain and plateau areas is 90 inches, and on the coastal plain 87 inches. The temperature on the coastal plain ranges from the mid 70's to the high 80's during the rainy season and low 80's to high 90's during the dry season. The mountains and plateaus experience temperatures from the mid 60's to mid 80's during the wet season, and low 60's to low 80's during the dry season. Winds are normally gusty at 10-15 knots with velocity increasing with altitude. Surface winds up to 25 knots are frequently encountered.

#### INDIGENOUS POPULATION

The II Corps Tactical Zone has a population of approximately 2.5 million people, or just over 20% of the population of the Republic of Vietnam. The majority of this population is located along the coastal plain in the vicinity of the cities. The majority of these people are Annamese.

The mountain and plateau regions are inhabited chiefly by Montagnard tribesmen. There are thirty-nine major tribes and some 150 subordinate tribal groups of these people living in the highlands of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. Ban Me Thuot is the traditional capitol of these people. The II Corps Area is inhabited by approximately 500,000 Montagnards. The largest tribe in this region is the Rade, whose influence extends from Kontum to Ban Me Thuot.

155 in Vietnam - 1969 - The Enemy  
1 January - 31 March

The new year started off with a bang at Camp Coryell, in keeping with the expected pre-Tet offensive. At 2100 hours on 2 January 1969, Camp Coryell came under its first hostile attack of the year when ten rounds of 82mm mortar fire fell on or near the compound. This attack resulted in negative casualties or damage to equipment or structures. On 3 January, at 0150 hours, less than five hours after the first attack, four rounds of B-40 rockets struck the compound, also with negative damage or casualties.

On 6 January, Camp Coryell again came under enemy mortar attack, fourteen rounds of 82mm mortars struck the compound from unknown enemy positions. Six UH-1H's were damaged and one vehicle damaged in the attack. Attacked again on 8 January at 2310 hours, by an unknown size enemy force using 82mm mortars, twenty rounds struck the compound, damaging three structures and wounding two men, one of whom died as a result of his wounds.

During the month of February, Camp Coryell was relatively free from enemy attacks. However, on 23 February, at 0100 hours, 30 rounds of 82mm mortars impacted on the compound from unknown enemy locations. Negative damage resulted from this attack.

In March the tempo picked up again, with Camp Coryell receiving six mortar and rocket attacks. The first on 4 March, occurred at 2310 hours. Twenty mortars were fired with no casualties and no damage. Later that night, on 5 March at 0130 hours, fourteen rounds of 75mm recoilless were received, damaging five aircraft. At 2145 hours on 12 March the 155th again came under light attack. Negative damage resulted from the two B-40 rockets received. The same night, at 0045 hours on 13 March, we were attack again. This time seven rounds of 82mm mortars struck the compound, resulting in damage to 5 UH-1H's and UH-1C.

On the morning of 21 March at 0130 hours, fifteen rounds of 75mm recoilless rifle landed in the compound, damaging one UH-1C. On Sunday, 23 March, the

155 was attacked in the midst of a company party. As personnel were broiling steaks and opening beer, six rounds of 122mm rockets landed in the compound. Four enlisted men were wounded during this attack.

During the entire year of 1968, Camp Coryell came under attack 28 times. During the quarter 1 January to 31 March 69, there were 12 enemy attacks directed at Camp Coryell, a 40% quarterly increase.

155 in Vietnam 1969 - The Mission  
1 January - 31 March

The 155th Aviation Company during the period 1 January - 31 March 69 continued to provide support for the 23rd ARVN division and other units with operations in Lam Dong, DarLac, Tuyen Duc, Khanh Hoa, and Phu Bon provinces.

In addition, the 155th supported Special Forces, and 4th Infantry Division elements in the Pleika-Kontum Province area.

Highlights of the period were:

On the third of January a 155 aircraft crashed into a mountain between Ban Me Thuot and Dalat, after going IFR in low clouds. The pilot died in the crash and the aircraft commander, crewchief and gunner were seriously injured.

On 5 January the 155th participated in a multibattalion combat assault just north of Ban Me Thuot. Providing ten slicks and four guns, the company airlifted 611 troops in 309 sorties in support of the 23rd ARVN Division and 2/35, 4th Infantry Division.

On 17 January the 155th provided nine slicks and two guns to the 45th ARVN Regiment, 23 ARVN Division for a combat assault south of Ban Me Thuot.

The assault was continued on 18 January because of weather delays the previous day with six slicks and two guns. The 155th lifted 1041 troops in 446 sorties during the two day operation. Following up with daily logistic and gun support, the 155th Falcons were credited with 6 enemy killed By Aircraft and four structures destroyed.

During the January - March quarter, the 155th provided combat assault support to units of B-23 (SF) and 45th Infantry Regiment (ARVN) in areas near Gia Nghia, Nhon Co, Duc Lep, Iac Thion, Bu Prang, Buon Ho, Buon Block, and Quang Nhieu. The result of the 155 support activities for the quarter ending 31 March are as follows.

HOURS FLOWN	6,235
SORTIES FLOWN	21,317
PASSENGERS	32,015

CARGO (TONS)	433
ENEMY KIA	72
STRUCTURES DESTROYED	24
SAMPANS DESTROYED	1
POW CAPTURED	1
EMERGENCY MEDIVAC	11

Growth Of The 155  
1 January - 31 March 1969

In order that the 155th keep up with the ever-increasing workload and provide for optimum support capability, in addition to improving conditions for assigned personnel, the followin programs and projects were initiated during this quarter.

Penoprimering of the refueling area and airstrip

Continued improvement in perimeter defenscs

Stepped up bunker construction

Renovation of the company dayroom

Expansion of 8th Mod Dot laboratory facilities

Increased emphasis on personnel training program

Initiation of night flight training program to increase each individuals' night proficiency and provide increased overall mission readiness capability.

155 In Vietnam 1969 - The Enemy  
1 April - 30 June

On 6 April 1969, at 2320 hours, Camp Coryell came under enemy attack. Fourteen rounds of 82mm mortars, fired from unknown enemy locations, struck the compound, damaging eight UH-1H aircraft and two UH-1C gunships. Also damaged were two vehicles.

Again, on 25 April, the 155 was the target of enemy attack. Ten rounds of 82mm mortars struck the compound, damaging four UH-1H aircraft, two vehicles and two structures.

During the month of May, Camp Coryell fell victim to enemy mortar attack on only two dates, being hit three times in the same day in one instance. On 16 May, at 0005 hours, 14 rounds of 82mm mortar struck the compound, fired from unknown positions. Three UH-1H's and two UH-1C gunships were damaged at this time. One EM was wounded and medevaced. At 0130 hours, five rounds of 82mm were received, this time with negative damage. Again, at 2000 hours, the 155 received incoming mortars, 15 in number. In addition, small arms fire was directed at the compound. The POL storage facility received minor damage as a result.

On 22 May, at 0115 hours, Camp Coryell came under combined mortar and sapper attack. A total of 56 rounds of 60 and 82mm mortars, B-40 and B-41 rockets, and 75mm recoilless struck the compound. A small sapper team entered the compound in the PA&E area, and were able to damage or destroy eight structures and nine vehicles. Two aircraft received major damage, and two received minor damage. One civilian guard was slightly wounded.

June of 69 was the first month since September of 68 that the enemy failed to attack Camp Coryell. The 155 remained alert, however, because of the continuous attacks on Ban Me Thuot City and outlying areas.

155TH IN VIETNAM 1969 - THE MISSION

1 APRIL - 30 JUNE

In April, the 155th flew its aircraft in its normal support role for units throughout II Corps Tactical Zone.

The second half of April, however, was marked by a tremendous upsurge of enemy activity. This resulted in the 155th providing aircraft for 22 combat assaults for B-23, (SF) 45 Regiment, 23rd ARVN Division, and Darlac Sector. The 155th also began supporting B-50 Special Forces in their operations. Most of the support for Task Force Wood, operating in the vicinity of Bu Prang, came from the 155th.

May brought about the end of our support to Task Force Wood, with 155th "Stagecoach" Slicks and "Falcon" Gunships removing the last of TFW's troops from the Bu Prang area on 18 May. A total of 18 combat assaults were conducted throughout May in support of TFW, 2 MSF, B-23 (5 SFG) and 45 Regiment (23 ARVN Division).

On 23 May, three ships supporting B-50 (SF) were hit by ground fire, causing one to be a total loss with the loss of two crewmembers and two passengers. The company had a total of eight aircraft damaged on combat missions in May.

During the month of June, in addition to steady daily support of units in its normal area of operations, the 155th provided aircraft for a total of 16 combat assaults. The largest of these occurred on 21 June, when the 155th provided 5 slicks and two guns, moving over 900 troops to an area southwest of Ban Me Thuot.

The 155th also provided two Stagecoach slicks and two Falcon gunships in support of daily intelligence-gathering "Sniffer" operations.

Although Camp Coryell did not come under enemy attack in June, Ban Me Thuot City and outlying hamlets and installations were hard hit by the

enemy. These attacks necessitated the launching of four gunships and a flare ship on round-the-clock support of the besieged villages South of Ban Mo Thuot at Lac Thien.

During one of the night support missions, a command and control aircraft with several passengers on board ran into IFR conditions on approach to Lac Thien airstrip. The aircraft crashed into the lake and overturned. Miraculously, no one was injured, although the aircraft was completely destroyed. In a daring rescue, the 155th commander hovered near the wrecked aircraft and allowed the wet survivors to board his aircraft.

Statistics for support provided April-June 1969, are as follows:

Sorties	19,838
Hours	6,968
Cargo (Tons)	210
Passengers	32,689
Enemy KIA	71
Structures Destroyed	13