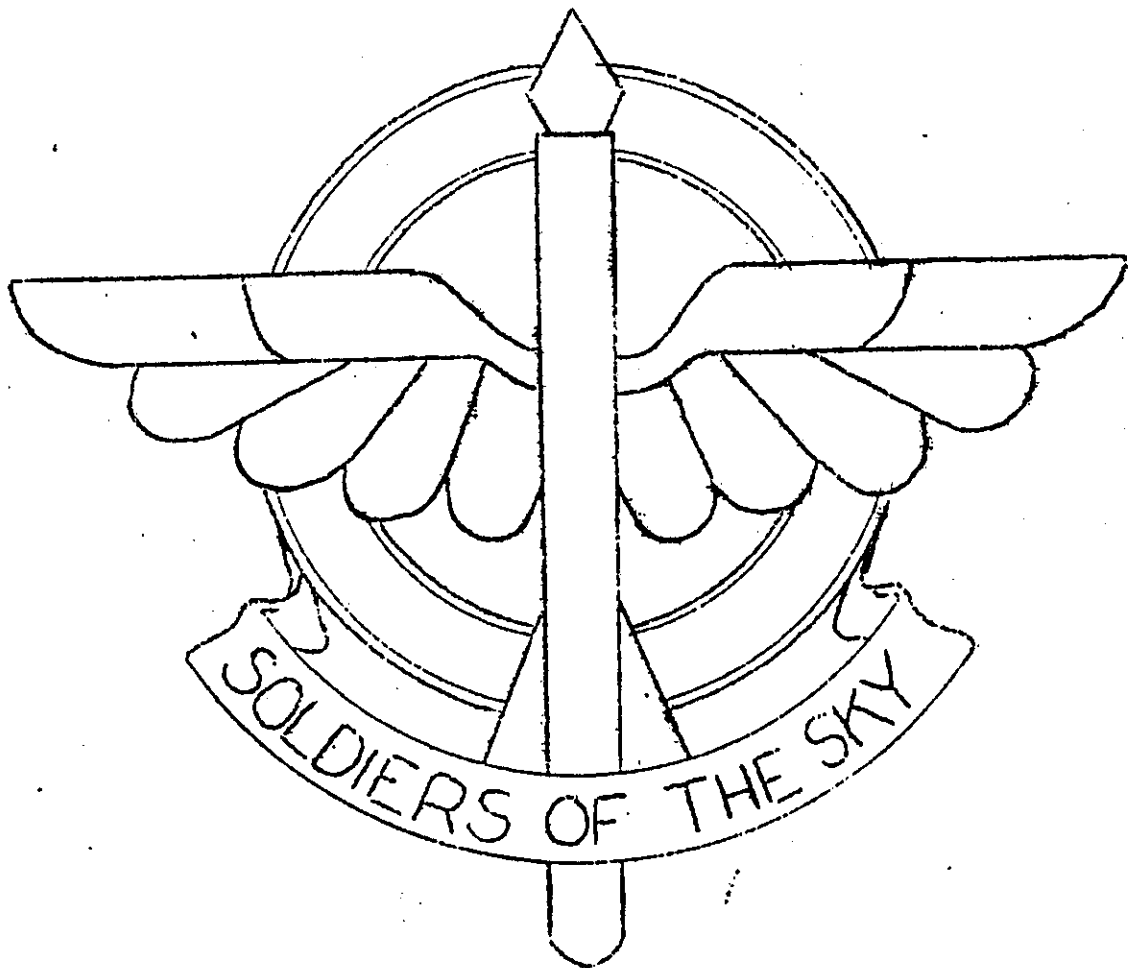
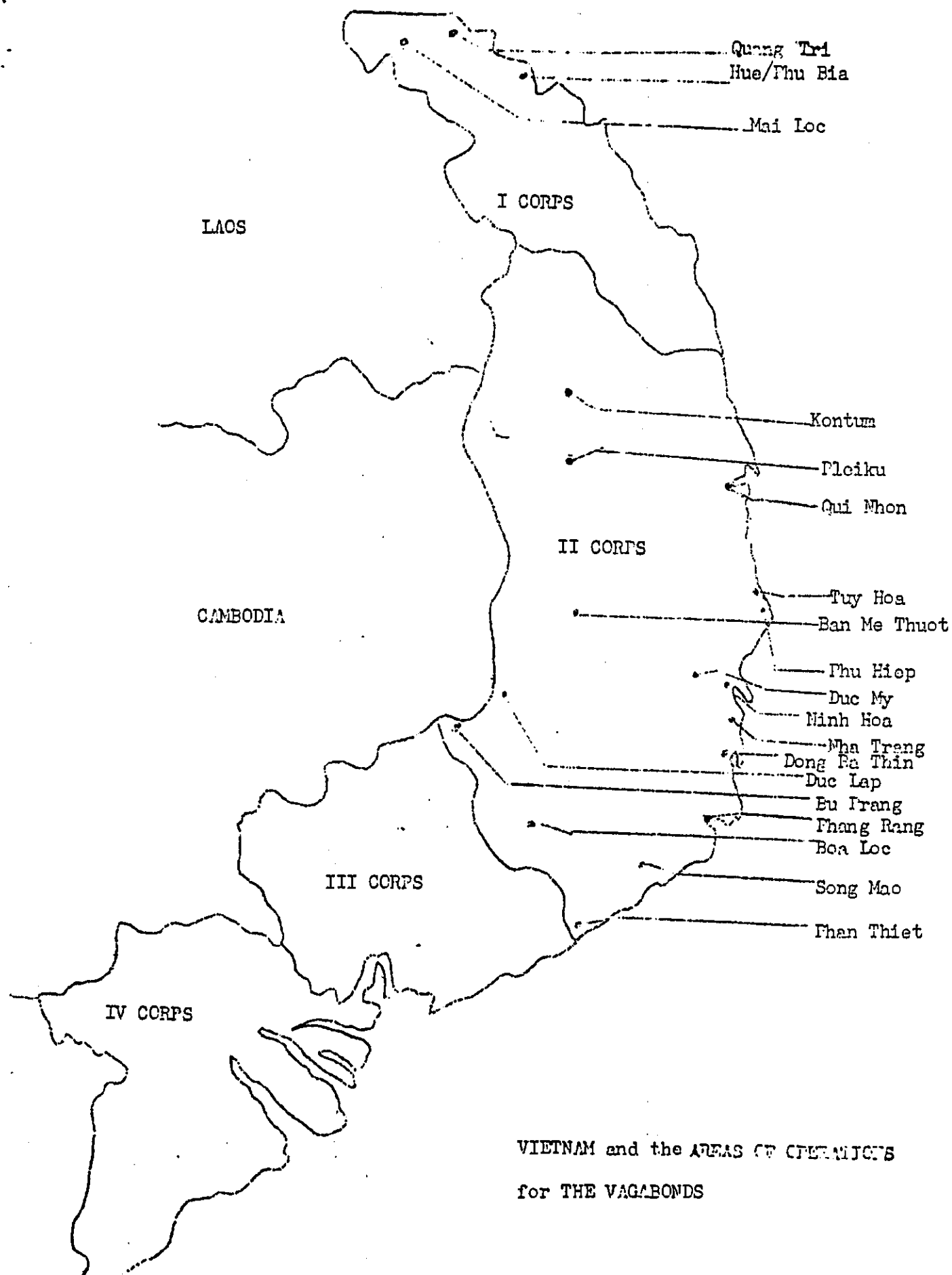


UNIT CREST  
10TH AVIATION BATTALION (COMBAT)



"VAGABONDS"



## HERALDRY

### Description of Unit Crest

The "Soldiers of the Sky" crest approved by the Institute of Heraldry, United States Army, and authorized for wear by members of this unit, consists of a gold colored metal and enamel insignia  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inches in height. The components are a blue annulate surmounted by a pair of gold wings with a black bolt barbed and flighted with gold. Beneath the basic insignia and crossing over the bolt is a gold scroll inscribed with "Soldiers of the Sky" in black letters.

### SYMBOLISM

The wings represent the aviation function of the battalion. The bolt also referred to as a "guard" is an arrow used with the cross bow and represents the military personnel transported by the battalion. The annulate, symbol of fidelity, refers to faithfulness to duty. The bolt and annulate also suggest the characters one and zero which corresponds to the battalion's numerical designation.

# ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>APO</u>
HQ, 10TH ABC	Dong Ba Thin, RVN	96377
HQ & HQ Co, 10TH ABC	Dong Ba Thin, RVN	96377
130TH MED DET O/A	Dong Ba Thin, RVN	96377
339TH AVN DET (DIV)	Dong Ba Thin, RVN	96377
<hr/>		
48TH AVIATION COMPANY (ASSAULT HELICOPTER)	Ninh Hoa, RVN	96240
286TH MED DET O/A	Ninh Hoa, RVN	96240
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92ND AVIATION COMPANY (ASSAULT HELICOPTER)	Dong Ba Thin, RVN	96377
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155TH AVIATION COMPANY (ASSAULT HELICOPTER)	Ban Me Thuot, RVN	96297
8TH MED DET O/A	Ban Me Thuot, RVN	96297
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192ND AVIATION COMPANY (ASSAULT HELICOPTER)	Phan Thiet, RVN	96317
198TH MED DET	Phan Thiet, RVN	96317
363RD AVN DET (DIV)	Phan Thiet, RVN	96317
<hr/>		
243RD AVIATION COMPANY (ASSAULT SUPPORT HELICOPTER)	Dong Ba Thin, RVN	96377
<hr/>		
281ST AVIATION COMPANY (ASSAULT HELICOPTER)	Nha Trang, RVN	96240

Company was assigned to the 10th Battalion and was promptly placed in direct support of the 3rd Battalion, 506th Infantry at Phan Thiet. 1 June 1968 brought the last transformation of the 10th Battalion as two units were added and two reassigned. New units were the 48th Assault Helicopter Company, which was given the primary mission of providing support for the 9th ROK Infantry Division at Ninh Hoa, and the 155th Assault Helicopter Company whose assets went to the 23rd ARVN Division, Special Forces, and MACV units around the Ban Me Thout area. Units departing the Battalion were the 61st Assault Helicopter Company and the 196th Assault Support Helicopter Company. These units were reassigned to the 268th Combat Aviation Battalion.

As of 1 June 1968, the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion was composed of the following units and their supporting detachments: Headquarters and Headquarters Company at Dong Ba Thin, the 48th Assault Helicopter Company at Ninh Hoa, the 92nd Assault Helicopter Company at Dong Ba Thin, the 155th Assault Helicopter Company at Ban Me Thout, the 192nd Assault Helicopter Company at Phan Thiet, the 281st Assault Helicopter Company at Nha Trang, and the 243rd Assault Support Helicopter Company at Dong Ba Thin.

With the composition of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion experiencing no changes during the remainder of 1968 and all of 1969, things began to change in the latter half of 1970. On 13 August, the 192nd Assault Helicopter Company moved from LZ Betty at Phan Thiet to Phan Rang AB, Phan Rang, RVN. On 15 October, the 163rd Reconnaissance Airplane Company located at Dong Ba Thin was welcomed back to the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion from the 223rd Combat Aviation Battalion. At the end of October

the 281st Assault Helicopter Company at Nha Trang closed out combat operations in RVN in preparation for deactivation. Deactivation ceremonies were held on 14 December 1970 at Headquarters, 10th Combat Aviation Battalion thus bringing to a close the "Intruder" service in RVN.

At the close of 1970, the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion was composed of the following units and their supporting detachments: Headquarters and Headquarters Company at Dong Ba Thin, the 48th Assault Helicopter Company at Ninh Hoa, the 92nd Assault Helicopter Company at Dong Ba Thin, the 155th Assault Helicopter Company at Ban Me Thout, the 183rd Reconnaissance Airplane Company at Dong Ba Thin, the 192nd Assault Helicopter Company at Phan Rang, and the 243rd Assault Support Helicopter Company at Dong Ba Thin.

With the beginning of 1971 the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion began a period of tremendous change. On 30 January 1971 the 155th Assault Helicopter Company completed its inactivation leaving Ban Me Thout without aviation support. To fill the void and provide the 23rd ARVN Division with needed air support a package of six (6) UH-1H and two (2) UH-1C aircraft were sent to Ban Me Thout from the 192nd Assault Helicopter Company. There they remained until 24 March 1971 when an identical package from the 92nd Assault Helicopter Company assumed the mission. Also in January the 48th Assault Helicopter Company was reassigned to the 223rd Combat Aviation Battalion at Dong Ha, RVN to support the ARVN push into Laos, "Lam Son 719". In early February 1971 A Troop 7th Squadron 17th Cavalry was attached to the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion and was moved to Phan Rang Airbase, RVN. Their primary mission was to support the 23rd ARVN Division. The last week of March 1971 three units from the 1st ARVN Division Airmobile were assigned to the 10th Combat Aviation

Battalion. They were A, B, C, and D Companies of the 227th Aviation Battalion. C Company was sent to Ninh Hoa to fill the role the 46th AHC left behind. B and D company were both stationed at Dong Ba Thin. On 17 July 1971 B/227th was reassigned to the 268th Combat Aviation Battalion and moved to Tuy Hoa, RVN. During the month of August, the 243rd Assault Support Helicopter Company, 8 August, and D/227th Aerial Weapons Company, 29 August were inactivated. December brought the final changes to the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion. On 1 December the 163rd Reconnaissance Airplane Company was inactivated, also on 1 December the 92nd Assault Helicopter Company began its deactivation and completed on 31 December 1971. Also in December the 192nd Assault Helicopter Company began its deactivation procedures. With the close of 1971 the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion consisted of the following units: Headquarters and Headquarters Company at Dong Ba Thin, 60th Assault Helicopter Company at Ninh Hoa, 192nd Assault Helicopter Company at Dong Ba Thin, and A/7/17 Air Cavalry Troop at Phan Rang. With the coming of the new year 1972 the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion will end its long and glorious record as one of the finest Aviation Battalions in the Republic of Vietnam. Shortly after 1 January 1972 the 60th AHC and A/7/17 ACS will be reassigned to other units and the 192nd AHC will complete its inactivation. By the end of January Headquarters and Headquarters Company 10th Combat Aviation Battalion will also complete redeployment proceedings. The many many members of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion through the years have been proud of their unit and the role it has played in the conflict in South Vietnam.

## Area of Operations

The designated area of operations for the 10th Aviation Battalion (Combat) is the seven southern provinces of the II Corp Tactical Zone. The following list is of those seven provinces in southern II Corp: Binh Thuan, Lam Dong, Ninh Thuan, Tuyen Duc, Quang Duc, Khanh Hoa, and Darlac. These provinces have a common border of almost 100 miles with Cambodia on the west, and they enjoy an eastern border of over 280 miles with the warm South China Sea.

The geographic regions of this area may be generally divided into the coastal plain, the mountain region, and the plateau region. The Vietnamese seacoast has an impressive length in proportion to the narrowness of the country. And it is the sea to which many of the people of Vietnam turn as their main food and economic source. The plentiful abundance of seafoods is sustained by the numerous fishing hamlets located all along the seashore. Salt is obtained from the ocean in several large multicolored evaporation farms scattered along the coast. The coastal plain occupies that narrow zone between the mountains and is itself varied in geomorphology. In some areas rich silica deposits dominate this zone, whereas in areas where rivers flow into the sea, wide alluvial deposits are prevalent. The rich silt deposits of these streams and rivers are mainly devoted to rice agriculture with as many as four crops per year being grown in some areas. Natural harbors are abundant along the coast and Cam Ranh is said to be one of the finest natural harbors in Asia. The primary coastal cities in this region are Ninh Hoa, Nha Trang, Phan Rang, and Phan Thiet. It is Phan Thiet that is reputed to be the nuoc nam center of Vietnam. This sauce is produced from salt-water fish and is used by the Vietnamese to season their food.

The mountain region extends generally along a north-south line and ranges up to over 6800 feet in elevation near Dalat. Dalat is the largest city in the mountain region and is surrounded by pine covered hills overlooking lakes some 4000 feet above sea level. This city was founded in 1893 by the famous French doctor Yersin, who recognized the site's health-giving qualities. The surrounding area is a famous hunting area for tiger, panther, leopard, elephant, stag, bear, peacock, pheasant, and jungle fowl. The city itself is very picturesque and shows the French influence in its building designs. Each chalet-style villa, with its carefully tended lawns and gardens of cannas, gladioli, hibiscus, roses, mimosa, bougainvillea, and others, stands in a park of its own. Cultivation in the mountain region is limited to small cleared areas that are sometimes on steep slopes. These are tended one or two years with no regard for conservation practices and then abandoned. The balance of this region is covered with dense multistory rain forests.

West of the mountains is the plateau region, and this zone comprises a good portion of Darlac province. The terrain is gently rolling hills and where not under cultivation is covered by a thick growth of grass that may reach eight to ten feet in height. Ban Me Thout is the principal city of the plateau region and is the hub of all major land and air routes in this western region. This city is also the traditional capital of the Montagnard tribes located in the plateau and surrounding mountain region. There are numerous tribes and tribal groups in this area, but the largest is the Rade whose influence extends from Kontum to Ban Me Thout.

Weather throughout the 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 the winds are southwesterly bringing rain to the plateaus and mountainous areas. The winter monsoon brings a northeasterly flow with rains predominately to the east of the mountains. The two coastal provinces of Binh Thuan and Ninh Thuan are generally unaffected by either season.

While these seven provinces are the general area of operations, the 10th AB(C) has on many occasions flown further north to Pleiku, Kontum, Phu Bon, Phu Yen, and Binh Dinh provinces to support operations in these areas.

## HISTORY

On 23 August 1965, the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 10th Aviation Battalion was activated at Fort Benning, Georgia. On 15 October 1965, a small advance party for the battalion arrived at Tin Son Nhut Air Base to determine the destination and assignment of the unit. The advance party was briefed at Headquarters, USARV and was notified that the 10th Aviation Battalion was assigned to the 12th Aviation Group. The location selected for stationing the new unit was Dong Ba Thin, a small strip of land on the western shore of Can Ranh Bay. When the advance party arrived on 17 October, they found the mainland side of the bay had been improved only to the extent that a small dirt airstrip and a Special Forces Detachment, B-51, were precariously perched on the only dry ground in the vicinity. Basically, the Dong Ba Thin area was a swamp with dense jungle vegetation, inundated by the heavy rains of the monsoon season. The advance party selected the initial site and started a clearing operation to further improve the area.

At 1000 hours on 28 October 1965, the MSTS McGraw docket at Can Ranh Bay and by 1500 hours the main body of the 10th Aviation Battalion had arrived at Dong Ba Thin. The total movement time had been 18 days. The new arrivals were greeted by Major Constance of the 117th Aviation Company Major Wiggins, of the 129th Aviation Company. The 117th and 129th were the first two companies to become members of the Battalion. The third unit to join the 10th Battalion was the 48th Aviation Company, which arrived at Phan Rang, approximately 25 miles south of Dong Ba Thin, on 26 November 1965.

On 25 December 1965, the 145th Airlift Platoon was assigned to the 10th Battalion with home station at Nha Trang, RVN. This platoon was assigned the mission to provide helicopter support and transportation for the Headquarters, 1 Field Forces, Vietnam.

As the year drew to a close the 10th Aviation Battalion was composed of the 48th Aviation Company, the 117th Aviation Company, the 129th Aviation Company and their supporting detachments, the 145th Airlift Platoon, and Headquarters and Headquarters Company.

The 10th Aviation Battalion was released from the 12th Aviation Group and assigned to the 17th Aviation Group on 1 March 1966. This action reduced the distance to the next higher Headquarters from 170 nautical miles to 15 nautical miles (Nha Trang versus Saigon), which materially improved the responsiveness of command and administrative actions.

On 10 March 1966, the 135th Aviation Company (FWLT) was assigned to the 10th Battalion under operational control of Headquarters, 1 Field Forces, Vietnam. The 281st Aviation Company was assigned to the Battalion on 14 July 1966 and was under the operational control of the 5th Special Forces Group located in Nha Trang. The 183rd Aviation Company (Reconnaissance Airplane) was stationed at Dong Ba Thin in late June and was assigned to the Battalion on 14 July 1966. With the addition of this unit, the ranks of the 10th Aviation Battalion had swollen to encompass six aviation companies engaged in almost every aspect of combat and combat support activity in the II Corps Tactical Zone.

As the calendar year 1966 came to a close, the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion was composed of the following units and their supporting detachments: Headquarters and Headquarters Company; 48th Assault Helicopter Company; 281st Assault Helicopter Company, 129th Assault Helicopter Company;

117th Assault Helicopter Company and the 180th Assault Support Helicopter Company.

During 1967, a year of effervescence, the Vagabonds underwent a complete transformation in organization. The 48th was lost to the 268th Combat Aviation Battalion effective 1 September 1967. The 61st Assault Helicopter Company arrived in Qui Nhon on 15 November 1967 and was welcomed and briefed by the Vagabonds at their new home at An Son. The 61st was declared operational on 20 December 1967 and was given the mission of General Support of II Corps. The 92nd Assault Helicopter Company arrived at Cam Ranh Bay on 23 November 1967 and was welcome and briefed that same day at Dong Ba Thin. The Company was declared operational on 12 December and two days later provided aviation support to the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division. On 1 September 1967 the 129th was released from the 10th Battalion and reassigned to the 268th Combat Aviation Battalion. The 10th Battalion was assigned a second Chinook company on 9 November 1967. This was the 243rd Assault Support Helicopter Company which made it's home in Dong Ba Thin. The 180th Assault Support Helicopter Company was with the 10th Battalion until 15 November 1967, at which time they were also reassigned to the 268th Combat Aviation Battalion. The 196th Assault Support Helicopter Company was assigned to the 10th Battalion to replace the 180th on 15 November and continued to operate from it's home base at Lane Army Heliport, An Son, RVN.

The year 1968 brought new additions to the Battalion and a few deletions. The 117th was reassigned to the 12th Combat Aviation Group effective 1 January 1968. On 15 January 1968, the 192nd Assault Helicopter Company was assigned to the 10th Battalion and was promptly placed in

## AWARDS

On 29 July 1967, IAW USAFV General Order 3837, the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion was awarded the Meritorious Unit Commendation for exceptionally meritorious achievement in the performance of outstanding service during the period from December 1965 to September 1966. The Battalion was cited for being the only aviation battalion in Vietnam having a completely mobile field headquarters and forward operating base; for its capability to displace to any location in the combat zone and undertake combat operations within twenty-four hours after receipt of an alert order; for its mastery of night and clandestine operations; and for attaining the highest monthly level of aircraft availability ever achieved in Vietnam.

On 15 August 1967, the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion received the Valorous Unit Award IAW USAFV General Order 4160. The Battalion was recognized for distinguishing itself by extraordinary heroism while engaged in military operations during the period 1 January to 24 March 1966 in Operations Jefferson, Van Buren and Harrison in the Tuy Hoa Valley. Flying incredibly long hours, the men of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion enabled Free World Forces to severely weaken a long established Viet Cong rule and to protect the local inhabitant's rice harvest. By making large friendly ground forces highly airmobile within their operational zone, the battalion was instrumental in preventing the Viet Cong from securing the rice harvest for their own use.

On 31 December 1967 IAW USAFV General Order 6715, the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion was awarded the Meritorious Unit Commendation (First Oak Leaf Cluster) for exceptionally meritorious achievement in the performance of outstanding service during the period 5 September 1966 to

31 March 1967. The Battalion was cited for deploying its field headquarters and aviation companies further, faster, and more frequently than any other Combat Aviation Battalion in Vietnam; for coordinating, planning and accomplishing missions which involved the extraction and reinsertion of a battalion sized unit with supporting artillery in the amazingly brief period of four hours; and, for executing the first battalion sized night operation without benefit of illumination. Also noted were the unit's achievements in the development, management and physical security of Dong Ba Thin Post which were attained without detracting from its tactical functions.

On 24 October 1968 IAW USARV General Order 4950, the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion was awarded the Valorous Unit Award (First Oak Leaf Cluster). The 10th Combat Aviation Battalion and its assigned units distinguished themselves by extraordinary heroism while engaged in military operations during the period 1 June to 20 June 1966 near Dak To. Charged with providing the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division and Army of the Republic of Vietnam elements with direct aviation support during operation Hawthorne, the men of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion not only accomplished their mission in an outstanding manner but also personally dealt the enemy crippling defeats as a result of their superb airmobility, combat assault proficiency and devastating firepower. Throughout the operation, the unit's personnel flew more than two thousand hours in performing over eight thousand sorties while airlifting in excess of eleven thousand troops and one million pounds of cargo. They conducted twenty-five combat assaults of platoon size and larger, and

their meticulous attention to detail and technical expertise ensured that there were no aircraft accidents despite the difficulties of hazardous terrain and severe weather. Through their exemplary courage, professional competence and relentless determination, they contributed immeasurably to the overwhelming defeat of the enemy during Operation Hawthorne. The men of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion displayed extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty which are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect distinct credit upon themselves and the Armed Forces of the United States.

## UNIT COMMANDERS

### HEADQUARTERS, HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

CAPTAIN ROBERT E. FITCHETT	1 January 1969 - 19 January 1969
CAPTAIN CHARLES H. FAIRCHILD	19 January 1969 - 9 June 1969
CAPTAIN RAYMOND S. ANGELI	9 June 1969 - 7 August 1969
CAPTAIN KARL W. MARROTT	7 August 1969 - 31 December 1969

### 48TH AVIATION COMPANY (ASSAULT HELICOPTER)

MAJOR VICTOR E. MICOL, JR.	1 January 1969 - 1 June 1969
MAJOR RAY H. EVANS	1 June 1969 - 2 December 1969
MAJOR ERNEST R. BOWLING	2 December 1969 - 18 December 1969
CAPTAIN MANUEL J. SILVA	18 December 1969 - 31 December 1969

### 92ND AVIATION COMPANY (ASSAULT HELICOPTER)

MAJOR CLAUDE T. IVEY	1 January 1969 - 12 March 1969
MAJOR ROBERT B. JAMES	12 March 1969 - 5 September 1969
MAJOR CHARLES W. QUATTLEBAUM	5 September 1969 - 31 December 1969

### 155TH AVIATION COMPANY (ASSAULT HELICOPTER)

MAJOR BOEBY L. MOORE	1 January 1969 - 25 June 1969
MAJOR DEAN M. OWEN	25 June 1969 - 23 December 1969
MAJOR GERARD H. LUISI	23 December 1969 - 31 December 1969

### 192ND AVIATION COMPANY (ASSAULT HELICOPTER)

MAJOR PAUL G. STRINGER	1 January 1969 - 26 February 1969
MAJOR ROY P. ELLIOTT, JR	26 February 1969 - 1 July 1969
MAJOR ROBERT H. KELLEY	1 July 1969 - 31 December 1969

The "Stagecoach" patch of the 155th Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter) has the following symbolism: The crossbow represents the Montagnard population in the local area of operations, the ARVN Flag represents support given to the 23rd ARVN Division, the helicopter is indicative of the type of support provided, the American flag represents the heritage of the members of the 155th, and the 13 stars on the flag represent the support of a new country, just as the United States was a new country. The call sign "Stagecoach" represents the carrying of troops and cargo over rough terrain as done by the stagecoaches of the old west.

The 155th Aviation Company (AH) was assigned to the 10th Battalion (Combat) on 1 June 1968 by General Order #38, 17th Aviation Group (Combat).

During 1969, the 155th supported the 23rd ARVN Division, Detachment B-23 and B-50 Special Forces, Darlac, Quang Duc, and Tuyen Duc provinces, and IFFV Artillery. In the years activities, the 155th compiled the following statistics:

Hours flown	27,256
Troops lifted	81,540
Sorties	130,615
Cargo hauled (tons)	1,395



TRADITIONAL CALL SIGNS

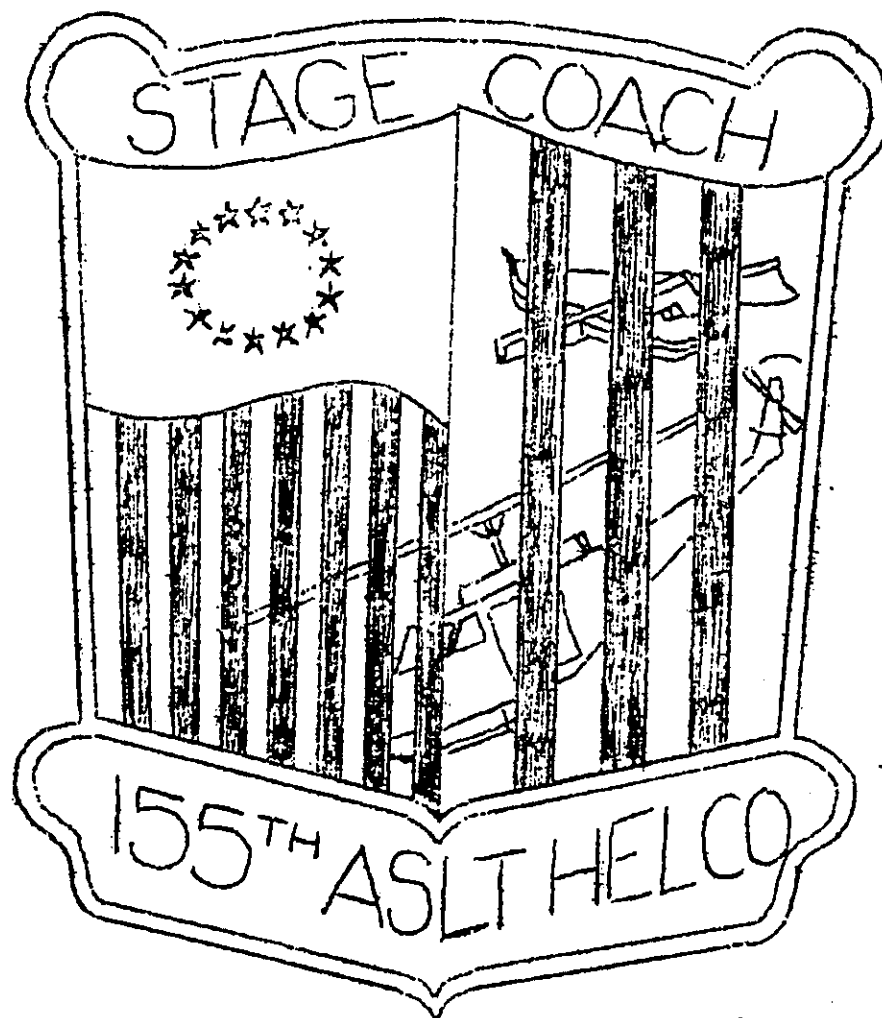
Liftships-----Stallions  
Gunships-----Sidekicks

## 92nd AC (AH)

The 92nd Aviation Company (AH) was constituted 6 August, 1964, in the Regular Army and activated at Fort Benning, Georgia. It was inactivated 1 January, 1967, in Vietnam. Then on 8 February, 1967, the 92nd Aviation Company was activated at Fort Carson, Colorado. The advance party arrived at Dong Ba Thin on 15 November, 1967, and the main body arrived at Cam Ranh Bay on 23 November, 1967, aboard the USNS General John Pope. The 92nd aircraft were processed at Vung Tau and ferried to Dong Ba Thin during the first week in December, 1967. The company was declared operational on 12 December, 1967 and two days later flew its first mission in Vietnam in support of the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division.

During 1969, the 92nd Aviation Company supported numerous and varied units throughout II Corps; 18th Engineer Brigade, B-51 Special Forces, Cam Ranh Bay Support Command, 5/22, 5/27, and 6/32 Artillery, Task Force South elements, 116th Engineer Battalion, 53rd ARVN Regiment, 500th Transportation Group, 70th Engineer Battalion, and others. While flying for these units, the following statistics were compiled:

Hours flown-----	27,873
Troops lifted-----	76,985
Sorties-----	118,147
Cargo hauled (tons)-----	2,788



TRADITIONAL CALL SIGNS

Liftships-----Stagecoach  
Gunships-----Falcon

## Battalion Operations

During 1969, the 10th Aviation Battalion (Combat) continued to support the ground forces of the seven southern provinces of the II Corp Tactical Zone. The following is of necessity a condensed presentation of the major operations and activities during the year. The reader should realize that many other missions were flown by our aircraft, but these missions, while being a necessary component of the overall scheme of events, do not by themselves constitute a significant activity.

Beginning the new year with an airmobile operation, the Blue Stars supported the 28th Republic of Korea (ROK) Regiment of the White Horse ROK Infantry Division by airlifting 555 troops, supplies and equipment. This operation netted 38 enemy KIA, 1 POW, and 12 captured weapons. From the 5-12 of January, the largest operation of the month took place. 742 troops from the 1st Battalion, 30th Regiment were inserted by the Blue Stars into the mountains northwest of Phan Rang. This action resulted in 30 enemy KIA and 9 captured weapons. From 19-26 of January elements of the 29th Regiment were placed into the mountains northwest of Ninh Hoa by the Blue Stars. The 474 troops inserted brought out 66KIA, 42 weapons, three (3) machineguns, mines, and a radio.

The new year started off with a bang at Camp Coryell, home of the 155th Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter). In keeping with the expected Pre-Tet offensive, Camp Coryell came under its first hostile attack of the year on 2 January 1969, when ten (10) rounds of 82mm mortar fire fell on or near the compound. Less than five (5) hours later, the base

was under attack again with four (4) rounds of B-40 rockets striking the compound. Both attacks resulted in negative casualties or damage to equipment or structures. Twice more during the month the 155th came under attack. On 6 January, fourteen (14) 82mm mortar rounds struck the compound, this time with devastating results. Six (6) UH-1H's were damaged as well as one vehicle. The attack of 8 January was intensified and 20 rounds struck the compound. Three (3) structures were damaged and two (2) men were wounded, one of whom died as a result of his wounds.

In January, the 192nd Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter) continued to work through AO McClain. It was a fast and furious start when on the 8th, the 3/506 moved into FSB Zewert. With assaults throughout the AO, everything went rather well. During the month, many night missions were required. One such mission was completed on the 29th. An enemy force of one battalion tried to over run a compound and village at Tuy Phong. 192nd gunships expended on various enemy positions from 0330 to 0730 hours. The saving of the village is credited largely to the Tiger Sharks for their close air support throughout the night.

Starting 1 January and ending 28 January, the 281st Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter) had as their main mission the support of MACV Recondo School. Basically these missions involved the insertion of LRRP Teams and the provision of necessary logistical support. Four (4) aircraft from the 281st were committed to the 268th Aviation Battalion at Phu Hiep to aid in operations in that area.

The 243rd Aviation Company (Assault Support Helicopter) gave general support to many units throughout the year. The Freight Trains were all over southern II Corps hauling everything from fresh vegetables and

food to artillery rounds and vehicular POL. Whole villages to include men, women, and children and all their pigs, rice, and household goods were displaced to a more livable environment. The individual units of Task Force South supported throughout the year included the 3/503rd Infantry 173rd Airborne Brigade in the Dalat/Dao Loc area, the 3/506th Infantry, 101st Air Cavalry Division in the Phan Thiet area, and the 23rd ARVN Division. The White Horse ROK Infantry Division received aircraft in the area surrounding Can Ranh and Minh Hoa. Occasional support was given to the ROK units in the neighborhood of Phu Hiep.

February found the Blue Stars continuing their support to the ROK's. With the aid of the 45th, the 28th Regiment launched airmobile operation YEN MA #7. The 605 troops airlifted into the Tuy Hoa valley came out with 30 enemy KIA, 4 POW's and 10 weapons. The 30th ROK Regiment got into the act from 6-15 February. Their airmobile operation, using 525 troops, was quite successful with 80 enemy KIA, seven (7) captured machineguns and numerous rounds of ammunition.

During February as well as other months throughout the year, the 92nd Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter) provided varied aviation support to almost everyone and went just about everywhere. This multiplicity of supported elements included 3/503rd Infantry, 2nd ARVN Ranger Group, 3/506th Infantry in Phan Thiet, 30th ROK Regiment at Dong Ba Thin and Senior Advisors of Tuyon Duc (Dalat) and Lam Dong (Dao Loc) provinces. Also supported were DSA II Corps, 18th Engineer Brigade, 116th Engineer Battalion, B-51 and B-55 Special Forces, Can Ranh Bay Support Command, 71st and 27th Artillery, 4th Infantry Division, and 191st Ordinance Battalion.

During the month of February, the 155th provided most of the aviation support for the Special Forces, Mike Force operation conducted in the area of the "Blue Star" compound. Operations were marked by heavy enemy contacts and frequent utilization of gunships to support the field units. Camp Coryell was relatively quiet with no major attacks during the month. On 23 February, the only attack of the month commenced and terminated after 20-30 rounds of 82mm mortar missed the compound completely and hence resulted in negative damage.

Operations in February around the Phan Thiet region got off to a slow start for the 192nd. However on 12 February, Outpost Sara came under siege by an estimated two (2) companies of VC/NVA. The Tigersharks were scrambled and due to their effective fire support, they were credited with helping turn back the aggressive enemy attack. During the early morning hours of the 22nd, LZ Betty came under an intensive mortar attack, followed by an aggressive ground attack. The attack continued throughout the night and finally subsided at dawn. The 192nd suffered five (5) WIA as a result of the encounter.

February brought the completion of a movie area for Headquarters and Headquarters Company in Dong Da Thin. A large Cinemascope screen was put into operation for better viewing of the wider motion pictures. A Korean tailor shop has also been opened in the company area to provide the personnel with needed military items such as decorations, fatigue caps, rank insignia, and tailoring.

The Blue Star area at Ninh Hoa was named "Werthington Compound," in honor of WO Laurence F. Werthington who was killed in hostile action

on 11 January, 1969. In March, the ROK's continued their airmobile operations with the 28th Regiment conducting one in the Tuy Hoa Valley. The results were 28 KIA's and four (4) captured machineguns. During the period 5-26 March, the 48th and the 29th ROK Regiment conducted two battalion-sized operations using the 1st and 3rd Battalions. This combined effort netted 77 KIA's, 20 weapons and one (1) radio. The 30th Regiment conducted a regiment-sized operation during March that terminated in the middle of April. In this large operation, the 48th, 92nd, and 243rd contributed much to its support.

Camp Coryell, home of the 155th, has become well known for the frequent rocket and mortar attacks that "Charlie" bombards it with. During the month of March, the compound was hit with six rocket and mortar attacks. A total of nine aircraft were damaged and four casualties resulted. The 1st attack of the month occurred on 25 March and brought the premature forced termination of a delightful company party. In this attack four (4) men were wounded by fragments from six 122mm rockets that hit the compound. These attacks did little to hamper the 155th in their support of TF Wood. In this operation 13 Combat Assaults were launched for the 5th Special Forces, five (5) for the 45th Infantry Regiment, and four (4) for Darlac Sector. The general AO for TF Wood was in the Bu Prang area.

In March, the 192nd continued to support elements throughout the Phan Thiet region. The pace was fast and furious. On the 8th of March, a 350 troop force from the 251st, 252nd, and 253rd Mike Strike Force was inserted into the AO Northwest of FSB Xewert. With the assistance of a 243rd hook, the entire operation was completed in less than four (4) hours.

On the 15th, Combat Assaults were run in the vicinity of Song Mao. On the 20th of March, LZ Betty received 14 rounds of 82mm mortar fire with negative casualties or damage to equipment.

The 243rd initiated a policy of keeping three (3) Freight Trains RON at Ban Me Thuot to be utilized by the 5th Special Forces and MACV in case of an emergency. This practice continued into April with the Aircraft remaining at BMT until having accumulated 25 hours of blade time, at which time they were replaced with fresh crews and aircraft. While in BMT, the crews stayed with the 155th Aviation Company (AH) and received maintenance assistance from them.

During the month of April, the Blue Stars supported three major operations for the Korean Regiments. From 15-24 April, the 28th ROK Regiment made an airmobile assault in the mountains northwest of Tuy Hoa. There were 1170 troops on the initial assault and the results were 128 KIA, 30 machineguns, and over 2000 rounds of ammo captured. The period of 9-24 April found the 29th ROK Regiment conducting their operations in the mountains southwest of Duc My. This operation resulted in 86 KIA's and 26 small caliber weapons. From 26 March to 4 April, the 30th ROK Regiment with a force of 842 men made an airmobile assault into the VC infested mountains northwest of Phan Rang Air Force Base. This operation cost the VC 152 KIA's two (2) POW's, 59 small caliber weapons and three (3) machineguns. For recreational purposes, the 48th became the first unit in the 10th Battalion to have an indoor movie theater. The recently completed building features a seating capacity of 300 people, a stage, and a projection room.

Camp Coryell came under attack twice during the month of April. The first attack on the 6th damaged ten helicopters and two (2) vehicles. On the 25th, the enemy fired ten rounds of 82mm mortars into the area and inflicted light damage to five company aircraft and one transient aircraft. During the second half of April, the 155th provided 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 this month.

On 8 April, the Polecats and Tigersharks of the 192nd inserted elements of the 3/506th Infantry into La Huong Phoung Forest. Their primary mission was to locate a suspected enemy base camp. On the 12th, elements of the 3/506th Infantry were inserted into four (4) LZ's simultaneously. The infantry surrounded and conducted a search of a village suspected of being a VC haven. On the evening of the 18th LZ Betty received an estimated 22 rounds of 82mm mortar fire. All rounds landed outside the perimeter and produced negative damage or casualties.

During the month of April the 281st Aviation Company (AH) supported "Project Delta" on operation Cass Park at a forward operational base in I Corps. Operating from the FOB were the second flight platoon and the armed platoon. Approximately 125 men were sent forward to the FOB.

Flanders, home of the 92nd Aviation Company (AH), and other Dong Ba Thin installations came under attack on 12 May. 47 confirmed rounds were received and resulted in five (5) vehicles, four (4) billets, and two (2) supply rooms receiving light damage. Additionally, two (2) persons received minor wounds from shrapnel.

May brought about the end of support of 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 TF Wood, 2 MSF, B-23 (5th SFG) and 45th Regiment (23rd ARVN Division). Camp Coryell came under attack a total of four times during the month of May. On the 16th, three of these attacks were launched resulting in light damage to four (4) aircraft and moderate damage to one (1) aircraft. One (1) EM was seriously wounded and was medevaced to Tuy Hoa. On the 22nd of May, 56 rounds of 82mm and 60mm mortars, 75mm recoilless rifle, and B-40 rockets were recieved. Four (4) aircraft were damaged, the PA&E section had five (5) buildings and nine (9) trucks destroyed, and one guard was slightly wounded. On 23 May, three (3) aircraft supporting B-50 (SF) were hit by ground fire causing one to be a total loss along with two (2) crewmembers and two (2) passengers.

On 12 May, LZ Betty at Phan Thiet received an estimated 12 rounds of 82mm mortar fire. There were negative friendly casualties and only minor damage to the active runway. Two days later on the 14th, LZ Betty was again under attack and received an estimated 20 rounds of 82mm mortar fire resulting in negative damage to the installation and no friendly casualties. The next day, the 15th, ten rounds of 60mm mortar and small arms fire was received. Spooky was on station and was employed. On that same day Polecat # 250 crashed into a river in the vicinity of Phan Rang airfield resulting in the death of the Aircraft Commander. The other crew members were able to swim to shore. On the 16th and again the 17th LZ Betty came under enemy fire. Spooky and the Tigersharks made the area too hot for "Charlie" to continue the attack.

During the month of May, the 281st Aviation Company (AH) continued its support of "Project Delta" in operation Cass Park. The forward operational base was moved from Hue/Phu Bia to An Hoa at the 1st of the month and operation Cass park was initiated. During the relocation of the FOB, the 2nd flight platoon was rotated with the 1st flight platoon. To fulfill the gun commitment in the Nha Trang area, two (2) Tigersharks from the 192nd were placed under the operational control of the 281st.

In May, the 281st Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter) was awarded the Navy Unit Commendation Medal for action with Project Delta in support of a combined arms operations in the I Corps area. Admiral Flanagan, Deputy Commander of Naval Forces in RVN, presented the award to Major Lynn, Commanding Officer of the 281st. Brigadier General Burdett, Commanding General of the 1st Aviation Brigade; Colonel Mahore, Commanding Officer of the 17th Aviation Group (Combat); Colonel Aaron, Commanding Officer of the 5th Special Forces Group (ABN); and Captain Henderson, Commanding Officer of the Cam Ranh Naval Air Facility, witnessed the presentation.

On 26 May, 1969, the 10th Battalion was redesignated 10th Aviation Battalion (Combat). All units within the battalion received similar redesignations that went into effect at the same time.

The 155th Aviation Company (AH) during its 2400 flying hours for the month of June, supported units in a total of 16 airmobile operations. The largest of these airmobile operations was an insertion of over 900 troops south of Ban Me Thout on the 21st. The 155th also provided two (2) stagecoach slicks and two (2) Falcon gunships in support of daily intelligence gathering "Sniffer" operations. These were instrumental in

obtaining intelligence and information concerning the enemy movements and build-ups in the surrounding areas. During a night support mission, 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. 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 the rescue aircraft.

6 June found LZ Betty receiving 6-8 rounds of 107mm rocket fire. One round scored a direct hit on a billet, killing three (3) and wounding (3) more.

During the month of June, the 281st Aviation Company (Assault) continued its support of "Project Delta" on operation Cass Park. On 2 June three (3) Intruders and two (2) Wolf Pack gunships were committed to the 129th Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter) at An Son. Two (2) UH-1C gunships from the 192nd Aviation Company (AH) remained with the 281st until 13 June when they were released and returned to Phan Thiet.

In June Task Force South added the 2/1st Armored Cavalry to the units in the Phan Thiet area. A vigorous program to increase the road security between Phan Thiet and Tuy Phong required the participation of most of the flyable Freight Train aircraft.

July found the Blue Stars from the 48th participating in the planning and execution of a combat operation for the 30th Regiment, 9th ROK Division. This operation involved the lifting of 891 troops and their combat equipment. Completed on the 17th of August the results showed 109 enemy killed and 49 weapons captured.

Starting the second half of the year off with a bang, the Side-kick gunships from the 92nd recorded 38 confirmed kills, 13 suspected kills, and a half dozen structures destroyed. The 92nd maintenance platoon has really been working since January. Aircraft availability never dropped below 76% for the slicks and fell below 70% only once for the gunships.

An enemy buildup quite similar to that which occurred just before the battle of Duc Lap in 1968 was evidenced by intelligence reports received from the Duc Lap - Bu Prang area. To increase information concerning enemy activities in the areas around Bu Prang and Duc Lap, the 155th conducted numerous sniffer missions in those areas in support of the 23rd ARVN Division and B-23 (Special Forces). Much valuable intelligence was gathered and many significant sightings were made. July marked the return of the 155th's support to B-50 operations. Also a commitment to the 2nd, 3rd, and 5th MSF (Mike Strike Force) was added at this time. With the added enemy buildup, the 92nd and the 281st found themselves present more and more often at Ban Me Thuot to lend a helping hand in providing adequate support to the ground units at Ban Me Thuot.

On 2 July, operation Cass Park II (Project Delta) was completed. All the aircraft and equipment of the 281st Aviation Company (AH) returned to Nha Trang by the 8th of July. The stay at home was short lived through, for on 28 July, a commitment of eight (8) UH-1H's and five (5) UH-1C's was initiated for Project Delta (B-52). The place for the Forward Operational Base (FOB) was again in I Corps. This time the 281st had the ground support of the Marines for local security.

On 12 July 1969, the 281st Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter) was presented the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm by Major General Quang of the VNSF. The award was given for performance with project Delta from June of 1966 to May 1969. Attending the ceremony was Colonel Mahone, Commanding Officer of the 17th CAG; Colonel Rheault, Commanding Officer of the 5th SFG (ABN); and LTC Stanley, Commanding Officer of the 10th Aviation Battalion (Combat).

In August, the 30th Regiment kicked off an operation in the mountains near Phan Rang. This was a two-phase operation that saw 1400 troops airlifted in the rugged mountains by the 48th Aviation Company. 81 enemy KIA's were the result. On the 22nd of August, the 48th supported the 3rd Battalion, 29th Regiment with a troop insertion in the area surrounding the Song Cho Valley, sweeping the entire area. During the closing days of the month, 655 troops from the 30th Regiment were air lifted into the same area to advance toward and meet their sister element. The 48th provided planning, command and control, daily resupply, night medical evacuation, and fire support.

On 9 August the 92nd Aviation Company (AH) established an impressive safety record. On that date 10,000 hours had been flown by the unit without an accident. By the last day of the month, this had grown into 161 days and 12,086 hours without an accident.

With August weather deteriorating, the 155th continued to fly a high number of hours. There were nine airmobile operations conducted during the month. The sets of sniffer missions were conducted daily in and around Darlac and Quang Duc Provinces for R-50 Special Forces operations.

These missions were given high priorities due to the need for gathering as much intelligence as possible on enemy movements and activities.

On 8 August, Tigershark gunships were scrambled to support elements of 3/506th Infantry who had engaged a squad sized element. The gunships expended on a bunker and got the joy of seeing a secondary explosion. On that same day a Ranger Team was engaged by a superior NVA force near Song Mao. Gunships provided close support as the Polcats made a rope ladder extraction while under intense hostile fire. The Tigersharks were scrambled six other times during the month to support elements of TFS who were in contact.

"Project Delta" on operation 3-69 kept part of the aircraft of the 281st busy until 28 August when Phase I ended. On 18 August 1969, support for Recondo School was initiated. Aircraft from the 92nd came up to work with the 281st on the first operation.

On August 6, the Headquarters area at Dong Ba Thin came under mortar attack. There were several people injured, among them the company commander for Headquarters Company.

On 22 August 1969, the 48th inserted the 3rd Battalion, 29th Regiment as Phase I of a two phase operation. Phase II commenced on 10 October with the insertion of the 30th Regiment 9th ROK Division reinforced with one battalion. The Regiment operated in the mountains southwest of Nha Trang and the operation known as Dong Bo 9, was terminated on 19 October.

On 16 September, the Battalion Tactical Operations Center was deployed to Ban Mo Thuot to augment the 155th Aviation Company.

September 2nd brought a close to the forward tactical site that the 92nd had been operating at Bao Loc. On that date, the forward element reunited at Flanders with the remainder of the Company. Flanders Army Heliport recieved a mortar attack on 24 September that resulted in two (2) aircraft receiving major damage, four (4) minor damage, and one (1) Platoon building receiving light shrapnel damage.

September at Ban Me Thuot was characterized by the presence of a great number of aircraft from throughout II Corps. In addition to 92nd, 243rd, and 281st aircraft, the 52nd Aviation Battalion in Pleiku was also sending down helpful aircraft. This was due to the need for providing increased tactical and logistical aviation support to units operating in the Bu Prang - Gia Nghia - Duc Lap - triangle. Sometimes as many as 35 additional aircraft were working in the BMT area each day.

Throughout September, the 192nd's main mission was to support Task Force South. Sniffer missions were conducted almost daily. The usual commitment for these missions was 2 slicks and 2 gunships. Routine resupply missions were daily conducted. Tactical Emergencies were common throughout the month and the Tigersharks were kept busy in response to the calls for help.

The 281st Aviation Company (AH) continued to support "Project Delta" on operations "3-69" Phase II which began on 8 September.

In September, the 243rd found they were sending more and more of their crews across the mountains to the Ban Me Thuot area in support of the 5th Special Forces, MACV, and 17th CAG. The weather in the BMT area became a serious handicap. Low ceilings and heavy rain made resupply of the fire bases around Bu Prang difficult and at times impossible.

Anti-aircraft weapons became more abundant as the NVA pressed the attack for Bu Prang. The area between Duc Lap and the Cambodian border became known as the "Volcano" because of the heavy anti-aircraft fire.

The Battalion Forward Tactical Operations Center was deployed to Gia Nghia in October in conjunction with and in support of the 23rd ARVN Division (LT) in the Quang Duc Province. On 27 October the Forward was displaced back to BMT to augment the 155th Aviation Company (AH).

The enemy intentions south of BMT became clear as it became evident that the enemy was on the move. Large sized units moved across the Cambodia border into positions South of Duc Lap. On 25 October, the enemy began his offensive. The 5/22nd Artillery, in preparation for the offensive, built six fire bases in the Duc Lap - Bu Prang - Gia Nghia Triangle. They were fire support bases Dory, Helen, Susan, Annie, Kate, and Martha. Units of the 10th Battalion, aided by the 52nd, were responsible for inserting, exchanging, and supporting the troops of these new fire bases. On 25 October, when the enemy began the offensive, Helen came under attack by a multi-battalion sized unit. By the 29th of October, the pressure had become so great on Helen that it was extracted in total. During the extraction a large size enemy force again attacked Helen inflicting heavy casualties. The extraction was completed on the 29th and that afternoon a regimental sized enemy element moved into Helen and claimed it as theirs. On the 30th, Martha was relocated to Duc Lap by aircraft from the 10th & 52nd Battalions under heavy mortar fire. The new base into which the troops moved was Mike Smith, a new FSB in Duc Lap. Kate then became the major target of the enemy. Enemy anti-aircraft positions were active all around the fire

base and on the 30th Kate came under sustained enemy ground attack by at least 500 NVA. Two Joker gunships from the 48th were diverted to Kate. One Joker was shot down, crashed, and was destroyed with no survivors. During that same day, three additional gunships and one CH-47 were hit by enemy fire in the vicinity of Kate.

While the major battalion commitment was in the BMT area, the 192nd continued with its support of TFS. On 3 October, two slicks and two gunships conducted a combat assault extraction for "C" Company, 75th Rangers. Other combat assaults were conducted for 2/1st Cavalry, 1/50th Mechanized Infantry, and again for "C" Company, 75th Rangers.

On 2 October Phase II (Trojan Horse II) of Project Delta on operation "3-69" terminated and Phase III started on October 11th. Both operations were conducted in the vicinity of Mai Loc and out of the security of Quang Tri. The MACV Recondo School began its training on 16 October with the Intruders as the aviation support. During the four (4) day field operation there were five (5) emergency extractions, two of which were accomplished at night.

On the 14th of November, the base at Dong Ba Thin came under mortar attack. In all, seven aircraft were damaged by the enemy. On the 25th, the 92nd opened a forward base at BMT composed of six slicks and two gunships. The aircraft at this forward base flew in the Bu Prang and Duc Lap area for about one month and returned to DBT just after Christmas.

Returning to the BMT area on the first of November, Kate was in desperate need of food and ammunition. An emergency night resupply into Kate was made by five slicks and four gunships from the 155th. On 1 November, Kate began receiving continuous artillery fire from Cambodia. In addition, the enemy was conducting massive ground and mortar attacks.

On the afternoon of the first, after all of Kate's guns were damaged or destroyed by enemy artillery the FSB was declared no longer capable of operation and plans were initiated to evacuate Kate. On the night of the 1st the troops of Kate were successfully extracted. Immediately, the aircraft at BMT extracted Annie and Susan under continuous fire. The main offensive now shifted to Duc Lap where Mike Smith began receiving 122mm rockets. Late in the morning of the 6th, friendly units set up a perimeter on the rim of the volcano overlooking Bon Sar Fa, south of Duc Lap. The activity at the volcano built up until aircraft performing resupply to the troops on the rim would always receive ground fire, either enroute to or from the volcano itself, and sometimes from within the center of the volcano.

During the first half of November, the Intruders from the 281st continued to provide support to "Project Delta" on operation 3-69, Phase III. This operation terminated on 11 November. On the evening of 4 November, a UH-1H from the 281st was reported overdue while on a flight from BMT to Nha Trang and presumed down in the vicinity of Duc My Pass. On that same day, aircraft number 68-15057 from the 192nd was also reported missing somewhere between Ninh Hoa and Ban Me Thuot. The aircraft had been on an administrative flight and contact was lost after it departed the 48th Aviation Company. An aerial search was initiated at first light using as many as six aircraft per day from the 48th, 92nd, 281st, and 183rd Aviation companies. This search lasted until 9 November with no trace of either aircraft or the crews. With all elements of the 281st rejoined on 16 November, the company aviation capabilities were directed in support of the Bu Prang - Duc Lap area defense.

The 155th was again tasked to provide major support for B-50 operations in December. The company's normal commitment for this operation was four (4) slicks, except from 8-11 December when the company was tasked for a total of eight (8) slicks and four (4) guns. From 15 December through the 19th, a special mission requiring two additional slicks was also provided for B-50 operations.

Beginning 10 December, the 281st supported Project Delta (Operation Yellow Ribbon) and conducted operations out of the FOB at Kontum until 31 December, 1969.

The latter part of the month was devoted to less war oriented pursuits with everyone looking forward to Christmas packages from home and a few days relaxation.

The Vagabonds had done a tremendous job by the end of the year as the following statistics compiled during 1969 will attest.

HOURS FLOWN-----	141,049
SORTIES FLOWN-----	417,280
TROOPS CARRIED-----	686,558
TONS OF CARGO HAULED-----	52,233