

THE 187TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY

During these, the final days in the history of the 187th Assault Helicopter Company, it is only just to honor the name "Crusaders" by reliving a few moments of its proud past.

Since the 187th was activated on 1 September 1966 at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, it has become, through the efforts of hundreds of officers and men, a combat ready, highly trained, integral part of the airmobile concept.

The initial arrival of the 187th to the Republic of Vietnam was on 9 March 1967 and by 1 April 1967 the 187th was flying combat missions out of Tay Ninh.

Throughout the year 1967 the 187th continued to distinguish itself against a strong, organized enemy force at places like "Parrots Beak", "Iron Triangle" and "Hobo Woods".

During the years of 1968 and 1969 the 187th continued to carry on the tradition of the "Crusaders". Although combat losses were sometimes high, the mission was always completed. The high mission readiness was a direct reflection on the high morale and professional attitude of the crews and support units.

The year 1970 found the "Crusaders" flying long and hard hours into Cambodia. The 187th was the first assault helicopter company in the 1st Aviation Brigade to enter Cambodia.

An impressive record of over 6000 hours of combat flying time into Cambodia without a casualty or injury due to combat was the result of and a direct reflection on the professional attitude maintained by the "Crusader" crews.

The "Crusaders" began 1971, their fifth year in Vietnam, still supporting ARVN units throughout the Third Military Region, and on 29 July a new home was adopted at Di An Base Camp.

We all acknowledge that the complete story has not been told here.

Many men made the supreme sacrifice to their country while serving with their unit in Vietnam. Many others offered themselves for the sacrifice but were not chosen; always; no matter how personal the cost, the 187th Assault Helicopter Company has maintained its high standards, continued to perform its mission, and always maintained a high combat readiness. We entered the conflict in Vietnam as a new unit under the name "Black-hawks" and will leave it as a highly successful organization with the designation of "Crusaders". It will be a long time before the members of the 187th Assault Helicopter Company or any of the many units which we have supported will forget the shield, cross, and crossed lances of the "Crusaders".