

"WELCOME TO EAGLE COUNTRY"
IF YOU WANT IT DONE
ASK THE 101ST

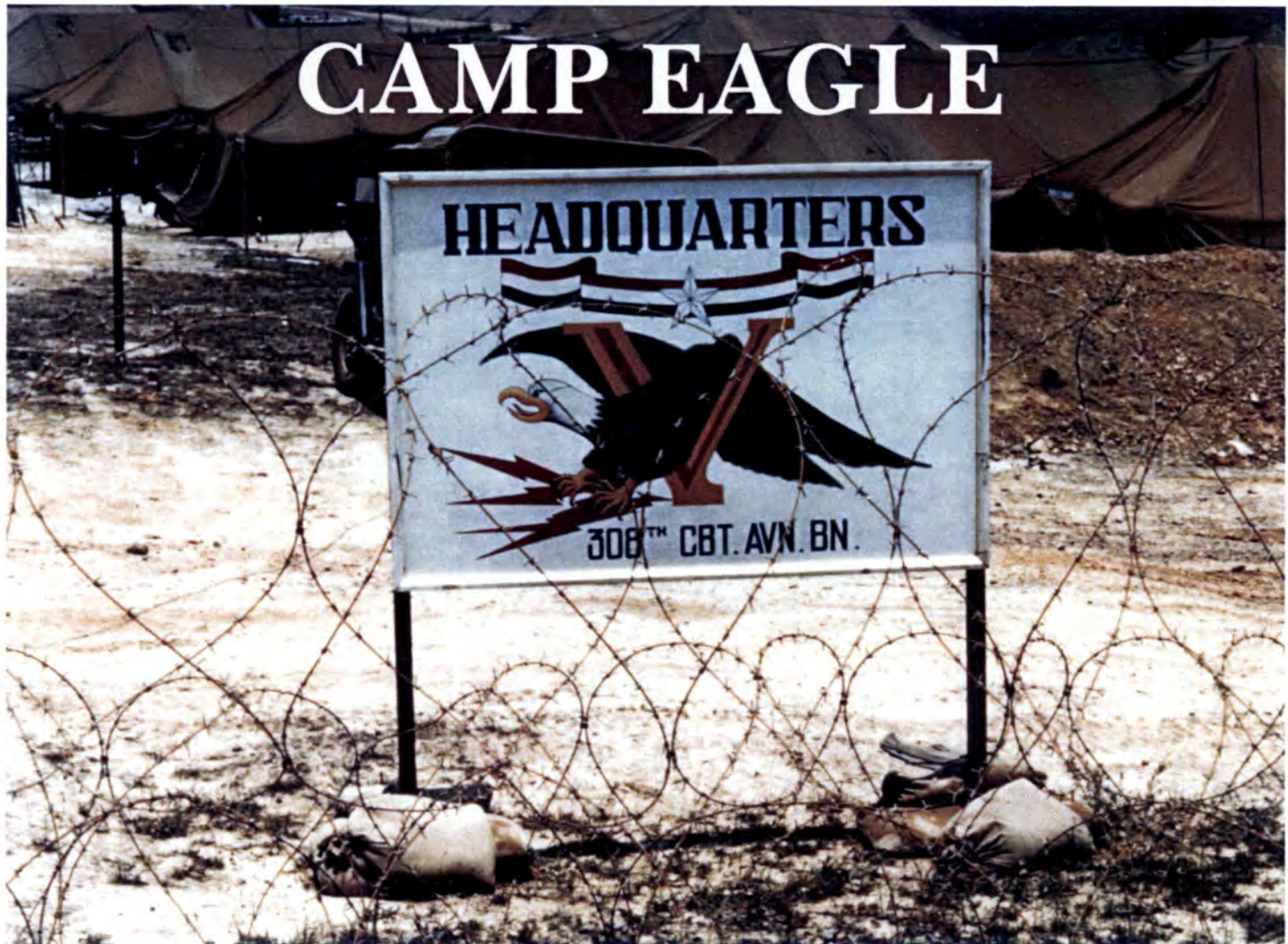


Photo by Colonel Hank Dreher - Black Adler 5, Black Widow 6



(B) I Corps AAE: Action undertaken by the I Corps AAE during the period 1 May 1968 through 31 July 1968 that are worthy of note follow:

1. Increased VNAF support of ARVN combat operations. Close liaison between the I Corps AAE, I Corps G3 Air Advisor and Air Force Advisory Team #5 (AFAT 5) has resulted in a marked increase of VNAF helicopter support of ARVN combat operations. VNAF helicopters have participated with 16th Gp Aslt Helicopters in all ARVN combat assaults during this reporting period with the exception of one operation where the LZ's were not capable of accommodating CH-34 helicopters.
2. Increased helicopter support for Province Advisors. Senior Advisor of Quang Nam Province and Quang Tin Province are now being supported daily by helicopters OPCON to the Commanding Officer, I Corps Advisory Group. Senior Advisors of Quang Tri, Thua Thien, and Quang Ngai Provinces are receiving helicopter support from Provisional Corps Vietnam and the American Division on a daily basis. This arrangement for helicopter support of Province Senior Advisors was approved by the Commanding General, III MAF and has resulted in a marked increase of helicopter flying time available to Province Senior Advisors.

(C) AAE, FMAW: The AAE, FMAW was actively engaged in the planning and execution of the following significant activities:

1. A UH-1 pilot exchange program between FMAW and 1st ACD (1/9th CAV) was effected during the period 1 May - 10 June 1968. The purpose of this program was to evaluate operating procedures of the 1/9th CAV for possible adoption by Marine Forces. Although Marine reports were critical on some areas of operational procedures, they recommended that the exchange program be continued.
2. Operation Duckblind, which was in the planning stage for two months, became operational on 15 July 1968. The Army has provided two officers and one EM to give technical assistance, equipment support, and crew training to the Marine personnel involved in the operation.
3. Operation Thor: Army aircraft were used to support this operation as required visual reconnaissance aircraft requirements were beyond the capabilities of Marine assets.
4. The AAE is presently involved in a study to determine the visual reconnaissance/observation requirements for the 1st and 3rd Marine Divisions.
5. Conducted briefings for Marine Staff Personnel on the intelligence gathering capabilities of the OV-1 and the capabilities of the OH-6 observation helicopter.

Source: US Army, Institute of Heraldry

Source: Operational Report of Headquarters, 16th Combat Aviation Group for Period Ending 30 April and for the period ending 31 July 1968.

Headquarters and Headquarters Company

The unit began to pack and crate immediately after receiving a verbal movement order.

The major problem encountered was a lack of time in which to pack and move property. The unit packed in three days. In addition the initial plans were based on sea move. On 11 March 1968 the unit was informed it would move by air. A readjustment in planning was made and unit's first C-130 sorties departed 15 March 1968.

In addition to the lack of adequate time, the unit encountered a problem in obtaining proper banding and crating material. The unit was able to borrow limited amounts of padding and wrapping paper from various units in Bien Hoa area, however, this did not meet the needs of the unit.

The following C-130 sorties were flown:

- a. 15 March 1968 - 3
- b. 16 March 1968 - 11
- c. 17 March 1968 - 6

The S-1 Section of the 308th Combat Aviation Battalion was notified on 9 March 1968 that the battalion would be transferred to the I Corps area. Upon receipt of this information, the S-1 Section took action to organize materials, office equipment, files, and personnel for the deployment. Records and files pertaining to the 117th, 195th, and 135th Assault Helicopter Companies were transferred to their new battalions. All S-1 files, records, publications, furniture, etc., were organized into essential and non-essential items. All essential items that were necessary for the operation of the S-1 section at Cong Ly Street were organized, but not packed in order to keep the section operational until movement was accomplished. All non-essential items were packed by the S-1 personnel in two of the three CONEX containers allocated to the section. The third CONEX container was packed just prior to departure with essential items for the operation of the S-1 section. The 1/4 ton truck assigned to the S-1 section was also prepared for movement. All equipment organic to the S-1 section was accompanied by at least one member of the section. Specialists Lord, Aiken and Hansen accompanied the CONEX containers to Hue-Phu Bai where the containers were unloaded and their custody given to other members of this organization. The S-1 vehicle, driven by 1LT Smith, had as passengers MAJ Roberts, 2LT Boulay, and SP5 Bazan. Movement from Cong Ly Street began at approximately 2300 hours 14 March 1968 with movement of the CONEX containers. The S-1 vehicle left Cong Ly Street at approximately 0200 hours 15 March 1968. When the S-1 vehicle arrived at the 8th Aerial Port the S-1 CONEX containers had already boarded the C-130 for movement. There was approximately a 24 hour delay before the remainder of the S-1 personnel departed Bien Hoa Airbase. The S-1 1/4 ton truck, separated from its trailer, departed at approximately 2200 hours with MAJ Roberts, 1LT Smith and SP5 Bazan. 2LT Boulay followed with the trailer. All personnel had arrived Hue by early morning 16 March 1968. Personnel proceeded to Camp Eagle approximately 0700 hours 17 March 1968. Upon arrival, all sections worked together to erect tents, install latrines and showers and dig fox holes. The S-1 section equipment was unpacked on 20 March and the section was partially operational the following day.

Upon notification of the movement order, the S-4 Section made necessary coordination to obtain the required number of CONEX containers for shipment of supplies and materials. A total of 53 CONEX containers were obtained and distributed to staff sections and other elements of Headquarters and Headquarters Company. Each section was responsible for maintaining an informal inventory list of items placed in their CONEX containers.

The CONEX containers were marked with the Unit Identification Code and owning section. The next step was to segregate the essential items from the normal operating items to insure early arrival at the destination of the essential items.

The next action was to prepare Transportation Movement Control Documents and coordinate with the 8th Aerial Port Squadron at Bien Hoa. The 8th Aerial Port Squadron representative determined all section equipment was air transportable.

The movement of CONEX containers, personnel, and vehicles to the 8th Aerial Port at Bien Hoa began approximately 2000 hours, 14 March 1968. Five tractor trucks with stake and platform trailers began shuttling CONEX containers to the 8th Aerial Port on 15 March 1968. WO Skelton, from the S-4 Section, was located at the 8th Aerial Port to assist in loading and to insure all items of the shipment were loaded and transported to their destination.

The first C-130 sortie departed at 0230 hours on 15 March 1968. A total of three sorties departed Bien Hoa on 15 March 1968.

In addition to CONEX containers, some vehicles and personnel were moved on each sortie when space was available as determined by the load master of each C-130. The essential items were shipped on these first sorties.

No other sorties were begun until approximately 2000 hours on 15 March 1968. A total of eleven (11) sorties were completed by 0400 hours on 16 March 1968. Once again, operations were at a standstill until approximately 1930 hours on 16 March. At this time the six remaining sorties were dispatched. The 20th and final sortie departed Bien Hoa at 0200 hours, 17 March 1968. At this time all CONEX containers, pallet loads, organic vehicles, and personnel had departed with the exception of 1 3/4 ton and trailer which remained with the rear party.

17th Assault Helicopter Company

The 17th AHC was alerted to move on 7 March 1968 with no firm dates established nor definite guidance finished on specific locations. On 9 March a liaison party from the 308th Combat Aviation Battalion, including the commanding officer of the 17th Assault Helicopter Company, departed from Bien Hoa for Hue Phu Bai. On the same date an advanced party from this unit, consisting of representatives from the unit and detachments and a 1/4 ton vehicle with radio, departed for Da Nang.

On 12 March 1968 the unit was informed that the first C-130 sorties would depart on 16 March and a sea shipment would depart on 20 March. At this time preparations to pack for the ultimate move and to segregate released from flying operational missions and relieved of the commitment for perimeter security. On 17 March the first C-130 sorties departed, and on 19 March the last C-130 sorties were completed. The first flight of UH-1's departed on 18 March and arrived at Camp Eagle on 19 March. The second and final flight of UH-1's departed on 19 March and arrived at Camp Eagle on 20 March.

200th Assault Support Helicopter Company

The 200th ASHC began to Camp Eagle at 0600 hours 19 March 1968 by air and by sea. The air movement party moved from Bear Cat to Bien Hoa by unit vehicular transportation on 19 March 1968 for further air movement by C-130 to Hue Phu Bai. Unit organic vehicles moved by road convoy and closed at the Aerial Port at 1735 hours 19 March 1968. A total of 28 C-130 sorties were required to move 500,000 lbs of unit cargo. There were two C-130 sorties on 19 March and 26 C-130 sorties on 20 March 1968. The first sortie departed POE at 2315, 20 March 1968.

The sealift party departed Bear Cat on 20 March 1968 and arrived POE on 21 March 1968. Total weight to be sea lifted was estimated at 400 short tons. The rear maintenance detachment arrived at Phu Bai by CH-47 on 20 March 1968.

Due to the relative few problems encountered by movement personnel of the 200th ASHC during the unit move, no recommendations are submitted.

159th Assault Support Helicopter Battalion

The mission of the 159th Assault Support Helicopter Battalion is to provide tactical air movement of combat troops, supplies and equipment in airmobile operations within combat zone.

The 272nd Assault Support Helicopter Company was assigned to the 308th Combat Aviation Battalion on 6

June 1968, the 308th Combat Aviation Battalion was assigned to the 101st Air Cavalry Division effective 1 July 1968. The 308th Combat Aviation Battalion was redesignated the 159th Assault Support Helicopter Battalion on 20 July 1968 with an effective date of 1 July 1968. Operational control of the 17th Assault Helicopter Company and 188th Assault Helicopter Company was released to the 101st Assault Helicopter Battalion, 160th Combat Aviation Group on 20 July 1968. The 159th Assault Support Helicopter Battalion consist of:

- (1) Headquarters and Headquarters Company
- (2) Company A, 159th Assault Support Helicopter Company (Formerly 200th Assault Support Helicopter Company),(16-CH47A)
- (3) 611th TC Detachment (Deactivated on 1 July 1968, Reactivated as, Aircraft Maintenance Team KF, TBA.)
- (4) Company B, 159th Assault Support Helicopter Company (Formerly 272nd Assault Support Company), (16-CH47B)
- (5) 362nd TC Detachment. (Deactivated on 1 July 18, Reactivated as, Aircraft Maintenance team KF, TBA.)

Aircraft availability in Company C, 101st Assault Support Helicopter Battalion, formerly (188th Assault Helicopter Company) has improved greatly during the period. This improvement is the result of a very aggressive maintenance effort within the unit. Light discipline continues to limit the night maintenance program; however, the unit has been able to partially overcome this problem through improved management and supervision of the maintenance man-hours available.

Services of the 339th Transportation Company (ADS) have become more available since becoming established at Red Beach. Maintenance and repair parts support from this unit had been an important factor in the improved aircraft availability rates CH-47 repair items continue to require excessive order and grip time which has had a marked influence on Company aircraft availability rates.

Aircraft should not operate between 50 feet and 1500 feet unless transitioning for landing for landing or climbing to cruise altitude. If weather conditions preclude flight above 1500 feet, nap-of-the-earth techniques should be utilized to reduce hit probability.

Source:

Operational Report of 308th Combat Aviation Battalion for Period Ending 30 April 1968
159th ASSAULT SUPPORT HELICOPTER BATTALION 101st Air Cavalry Division
Operational Report of 159th Assault Support Helicopter Battalion for period ending 31 July 1968,
RCS, CS, FOR-6

The 188th, 17th, and 200th had two civilian contractors from DYNA-ELECTRON assigned to each unit for technical support. The 272nd ASHC was assigned to the 308th on 6 June 1968. Listed under casualties were the six personnel from the 17th who went Missing in Action during Operation Delaware on 21 April 1968. These men would be the only MIA's lost in combat operations.

Source: Operational Report, 308th CAB, After Action Report, 30 April 1968.

Footnote:

On April 21, 1968 during Operation Delaware, Captain Floyd W. Olsen, Aircraft Commanders WO1 Robert C. Link, pilot, SP5 Frankie B. Johnson, Jr., crew chief, SP4 Larry C. Jamerson, door gunner, SSGT Lyle E. MacKendanz, and SP4 James E. Creamer, and passengers were aboard a UH-1H helicopter (tail # 66-16029) which was flying a combat mission. The aircraft remained with the Combat Assault aircraft during most of the operation until it was required to depart from Phu Bai, with rigging equipment for a recovery mission at LZ Veghel. During the flight, Captain Olsen acknowledged a radio transmission which stated the aircraft's secondary mission: the recovery operation at LZ Veghel had been canceled due to the tactical situation and the inclement weather conditions. Following acknowledgment of the canceled mission, the aircraft was lost. Search and Rescue forces failed to locate the missing aircraft and tried unsuccessfully to make radio contact. Ramp checks of all airfields and camps in the area were conducted; no further contact was made with Captain Olsen.

On May 25, 1968, U.S. forces located the tail boom of the missing aircraft in the grid coordinates YD 481033 approximately 30 kilometers southwest of Hue and five kilometers west of Route 547, Thua Thien Province. On May 27, 1968 ARVN units found SP 5 Johnson's identification tag in a truck approximately one kilometer south of the tail boom wreckage. Every aviator's worst fear was crashing in those triple canopy jungled mountains and being captured. The loss was felt not only by the 17th, but the entire 308th Combat Aviation Battalion.

In July 1993, the incident was investigated by the JTF-FA. Two witnesses were interviewed and led the team to the site where the tail boom had originally been seen. Very little wreckage was remaining. In that area, during the war, the local population departed and those now present were not living in the area at the time of the incident. This incident is mentioned in Group 559 Vietnamese documents accurately noting the number of people in the UH-1H helicopter and that all 6 were dead. Also listed was the Vietnamese unit which shot down the helicopter, thus the follow-up is unilateral for the SRV to locate documents and/or witness related to the incident.

All of these Americans are still missing and unaccounted for from the Vietnam War. LTC Olsen's sister is a League member.

Source: Ann Mills Griffiths, Executive Director
National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia

16th Combat Aviation Group (CAG)

On 1 August 1967 the Army's Falcon Combat Aviation Group was activated at An Son 17 miles northwest of Qui Nhon and was attached to the 1st Aviation Brigade.

The new group was an offshoot of the 17th Group in Nha Trang which since its activation 17 months ago had grown from three to six battalions including the newly formed 212th and 268th.

The addition of the Falcon group was expected to shorten the chain of command and ease the administrative burden now existing on the 17th Group Headquarters. The idea was to take over from three to five of the combat Battalions administration, staff planning, and control problems.

At the time it was activated LTC Joseph W. Waterbury assumed command.

The 16th CAG, during this period, was under operational control of CG, III MAF with the organizational mission of providing command (less operational control), administration, technical supervision and professionalism of all non-divisional US Army units in the I CTZ.

The units first quarter operations were characterized by the utilization of the group's assets to provide aviation support throughout the I CTZ. Major activities were high-lighted by divisional operations along the mountain ranges bordering the coastal plains from the Khe Sanh to Ba To. In support of these divisional operations the three battalions of the group were actively involved with combat assaults, troop lifts, resupply, repositioning of artillery units (including the 155 HOW battery by use of the CH-47B helicopter) and extensive use of the group's visual reconnaissance and surveillance capability.

16 th CAG	
HHC	Da Nang
14 th CAB	Chu Lai
212 th CSAB	Da Nang
308 th CAB	Camp Eagle

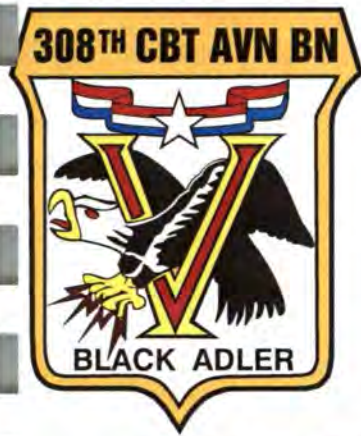
The group's three Army Aviation Elements (AAE's), provide necessary liaison and timely recommendations concerning the most effective and appropriate utilization of Army Aviation to the CG III Marine Amphibious Force, CG First Marine Air Wing, and the CO I Corps Advisory Group.

A warning order attaching the 308th Combat Aviation Battalion was received on 9 March 1968. The order called for the 308th Battalion to be detached from its parent unit, the 12th Combat Aviation Group and be attached to the 16th Combat Aviation Group effective 15 March 1968, with operational control invested to the 101st Airborne Division. Attachment became effective as the units passed North of 14 degrees 30 minutes North latitude. The 308th Combat Aviation Battalion completed its move from the III Corps area to the vicinity of Hue Phu Bai in the I Corps area and was declared fully operational on 12 April 1968.

With the exception of the time spent in moving the 308th CAB from III CTZ to I CTZ, the Group's units were continually engaged in combat aviation support activities. Other items such as civic action projects and training were integrated into daily activities.

Below are significant activities, during operations involving the 308th CAB, 14th CAB, and the 212 CSAB:

1. Increased support of Prairie Fire operations from the Phu Bai FOB and the evacuation of Kham Duc Special Forces Camp.
2. Establishment of radio relay, and command and control aircraft support for Prairie Fire operations.
3. Flight Following and Air/Fire Support Coordination instructions for ICTZ were updated.
4. Helipad directory for I CTZ was updated.
5. Coordinated helicopter support of 1st Marine Division operations Mameluke Thrust, Allen brook, and Swift Saber. These operations involved the clearing of areas 15 - 20 miles around Da Nang.
6. Coordinated helicopter support of Operation Eager Yankee in the TF X-Ray coastal area. This operation involved extensive helicopter borne operations in the 3rd Marine Division area.
7. Re-evaluation of aerial surveillance (OV-1) aircraft missions to effect improved support for PCV.



308th (COMBAT) AVAITION BATTALION

ARRIVED VIETNAM: 20 DECEMBER 1967

DEPARTED VIETNAM: 1 JULY 1968

PREVIOUS STATION: FORT CAMPBELL

The 308th Aviation Battalion ("BLACK ADLER") was part of the 12th Aviation Group and was stationed at Bien Hoa before becoming attached to the 16th Aviation Group on 16 March 1968. From March - April 1968 it moved to I CTZ, and was in Camp Eagle by 12 April 1968. Under the operational control of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Mobile), its assets were utilized to assist in building the 159th Aviation Battalion and the 101st Aviation Battalion. The following companies served with the 308th Aviation Battalion in Vietnam:

188th Assault Hel. Co.



17th Assault Hel. Co.



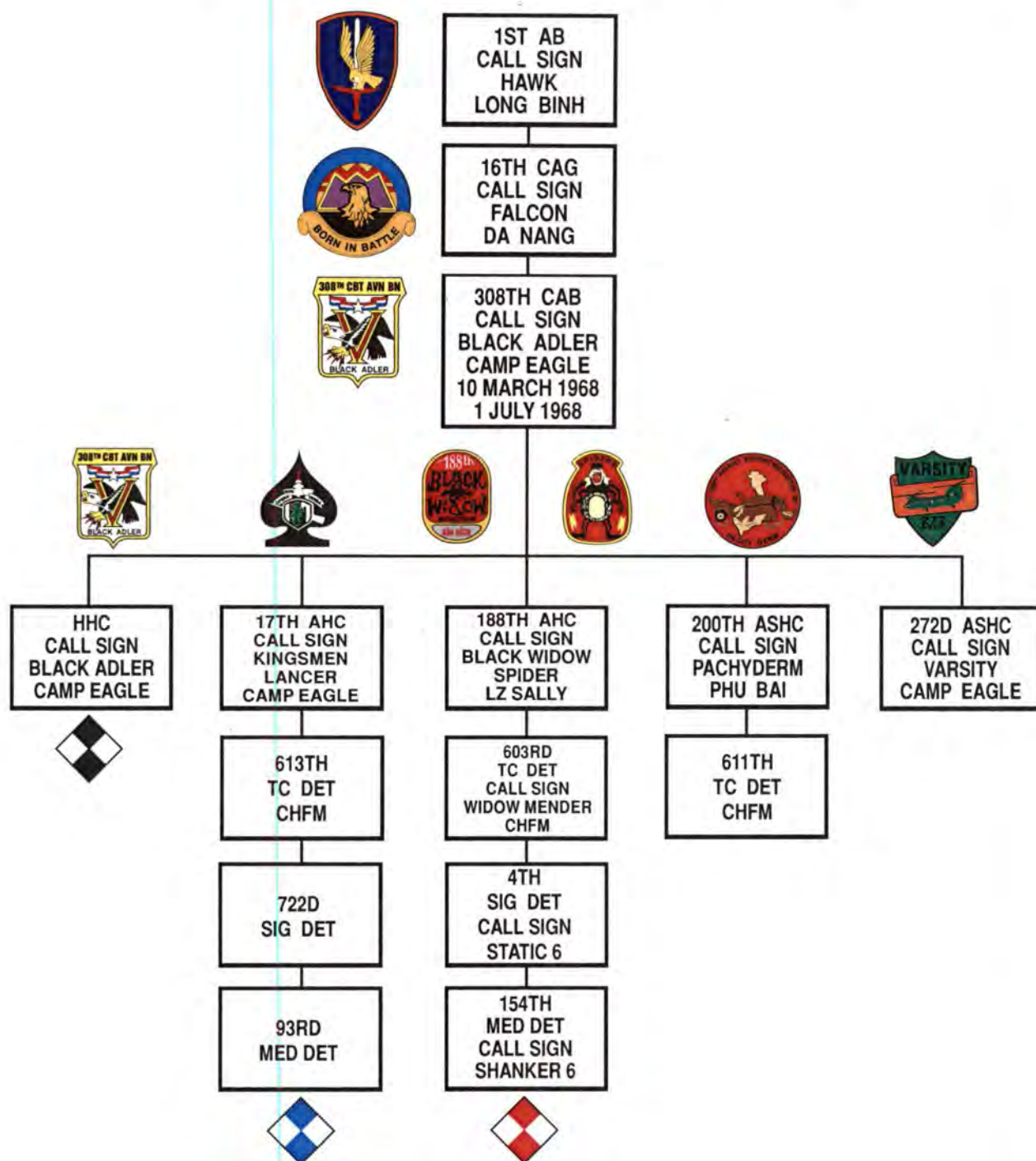
200th Assault Support Hel. Co.



272nd Assault Support Hel. Co.



ORGANIZATIONAL CHAIN OF COMMAND



The 308th CAB aircraft markings consisted of a diamond divided diagonally to form four diamonds, each company was assigned a distinctive color within the diamond configuration for visual identification.

LISTEN UP

1ST AB - 1st AVIATION BRIGADE, LARGEST ARMY COMBAT COMMAND IN VIETNAM.

AHC - ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY

ASHC - ASSAULT SUPPORT HELICOPTER COMPANY

CAB - COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION, I CORPS

CAG - COMBAT AVIATION GROUP

CHFM - CARGO HELICOPTER FIELD MAINTENANCE

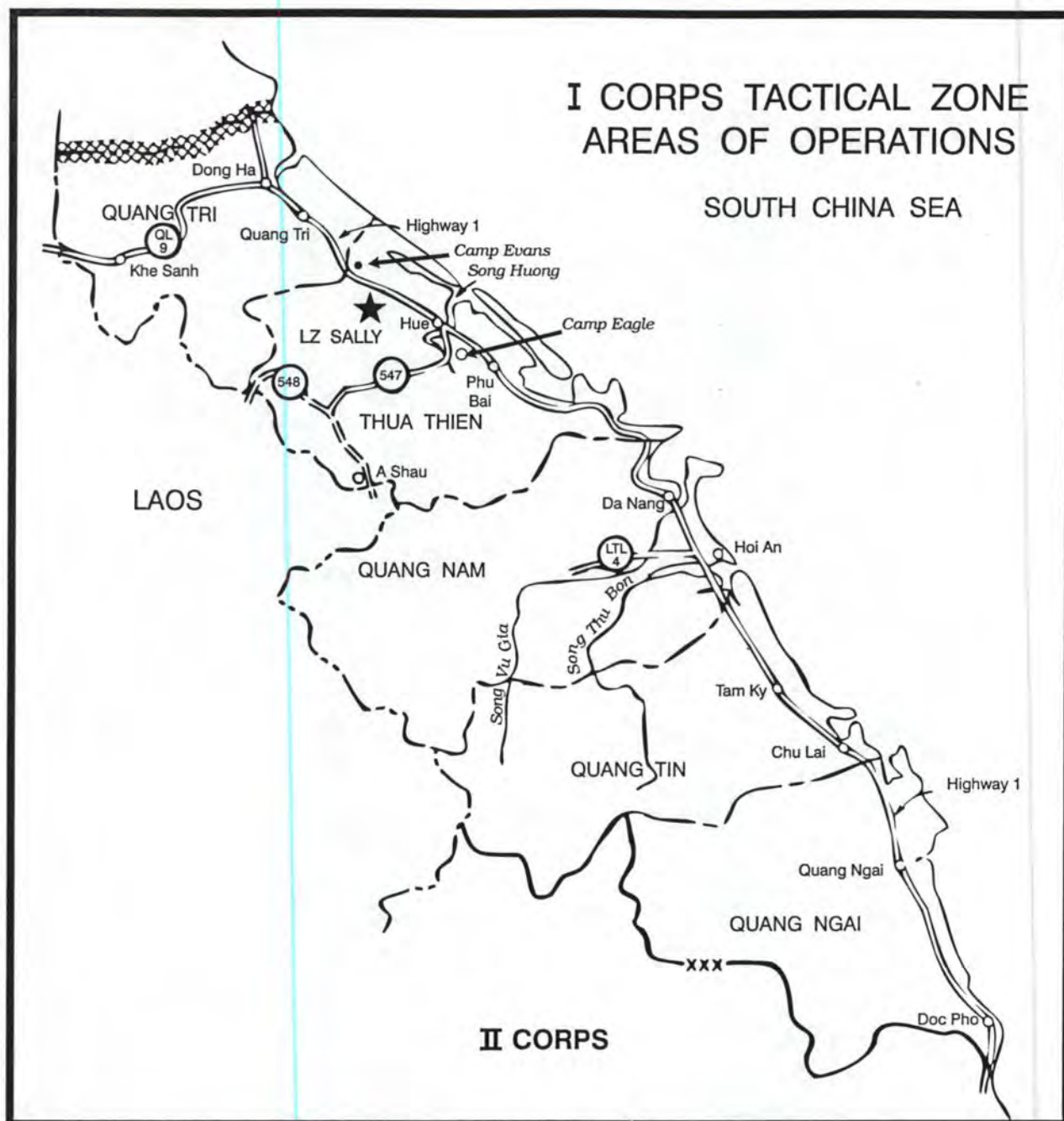
HHC - HEADQUARTERS AND HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

MED DET - MEDICAL DETACHMENT

SIG DET - SIGNAL DETACHMENT

TC DET - TRANSPORTATION COMPANY DETACHMENT

SOURCE: 16th CAG (ORLL's) 30 April 1968, 308th CAB Quarterly Report, Operational Report 30 April 1968



STATIONS

LZ SALLY

COORDINATES: YD642274

HUONG TRA DISTRICT, Population 57,545

THUA THIEN PROVINCE (Home of the A Shau Valley) Population 172,119

10 MARCH 1968 - 1 JULY 1968

AREA OF OPERATION, NORTHERN I CORPS / LAOTIAN BORDER

308th
YD 811155

The mission of the 308th Combat Aviation Battalion is to provide command, control, staff planning, administrative support, and pathfinder support for three to seven transport aircraft and/or helicopter companies.

The 308th Combat Aviation battalion became operational on 10 February 1968 at Bien Hoa, RVN and consisted of the following units located as shown from 10 February to 8 March 1968.

The battalion began combat operations on 10 February 1968 with the 17th, 117th, 135th, and 195th Assault Helicopter Companies in general support of III ARVN Corps, the Royal Australian Task Force, and U.S. Infantry Divisions operating in the III Corps Tactical zone. The companies were committed daily to tasks varying from combat support missions to reinforced battalion size combat assault operations. During this period, daily requirements for air craft were 10 lift, one command and control, and 4 armed helicopters each for two assault companies; and 8 lift and 10 armed helicopters for a special-mission company.

1.	Headquarters and Headquarters Company	Bien Hoa, RVN
2.	17 th Assault Helicopter Company	Long Binh, RVN
a.	613 th TC Det	Long Binh, RVN
b.	722 nd Signal Det	Long Binh, RVN
c.	93 rd Med Det	Long Binh, RVN
3.	117 th Assault Helicopter Company	Bien Hoa, RVN
a.	140 th TC Det	Bien Hoa, RVN
b.	256 th Signal Det	Bien Hoa, RVN
4.	135 th Assault Helicopter Company	Black Horse, RVN
a.	614 th TC Det	Black Horse, RVN
b.	68 th Signal Det	Black Horse, RVN
c.	87 th QM Det	Hoa Tam, RVN
5.	195 th Assault Helicopter Company	Long Binh, RVN
a.	609 th TC Det	Long Binh, RVN
b.	366 th Signal Det	Long Binh, RVN

After 8 March 1968 the 308th Combat Aviation Battalion consisted of the following units and their strengths:

SUBORDINATE UNIT	OFFICER		WO		6M	
	AUTH	PDY	AUTH	PDY	AUTH	PDY
HHC	20	17	3	3	90	122
17 th AHC	15	17	52	41	152	154
613 th TC	1	1	1	1	70	75
722 nd Sig Det	0	0	1	1	8	10
188 th AHC	15	10	52	42	152	146
603 rd TC	1	1	0	0	70	65
154 th Med Det	1	1	0	0	8	7
4 th Sig Det	0	0	1	1	8	11
200 th ASHC	13	8	25	17	143	143
611 th TC	1	1	1	0	80	75



Symbolism

Scroll and Star: Colored in traditional red, white and blue, signifying the stars and stripes: symbol of the United States untiring and unyielding efforts to aid the Republic of Vietnam in its struggle against communist aggression.

The V: The large yellow V with the red strip, colors of the Republic of Vietnam, symbolizes Vietnam and its bid for victory. Additionally, the V represents the country in which the 308th Combat Aviation Battalion was activated and organized.

The Eagle: The traditional eagle of the United States symbolizes strength, agility, mobility, keen vision and swift violent striking power as indicated by the bolts of lightning. The 308th Combat Aviation Battalion was initially organized to support the "Screaming Eagles" of the 101st airborne division; thus, the eagle and the name "Black Adler."

The Move North

Advance Party

Maj Henderson, the senior member of the advance party, departed 16th Combat Aviation Group 9 March 1968 and coordinated with LTC Steen, the new 308th Battalion Commanding Officer. On 10 March, the advance party proceeded to Gia Le Naval Construction Battalion Camp and located the assigned base area. Cpt Olsen and two NCO's were assigned to plan base development for the 17th AHC. Sgt Riggins was assigned to plan and layout the Battalion Headquarters site. Coordination was effected with Cpt Dickey, FSE, 1st Bde, 101st Division was contacted for transportation requirements to move unit cargo, conex and palletized loads to Eagle site for 308th CAB and to LZ Sally for 188th AHC. Initially, sufficient transportation, 5 ton S&P tractor-trailers, were available for movement of cargo from Hue-Phu Bai; however, the vehicles were controlled by the local Fleet Logistical Command (FLC) on daily dispatch by that support organization and later mission requirements of higher priority curtailed availability. Two days effective use of the 10 plus S&P's was completed. The third and fourth day only 2 ½ ton capacity, were utilized to the fullest for continuous movement. Support from FLC was marginal due to commitment in the local area. The fifth day of the cargo movement from Phu Bai, assistance was gained from the 220th RAC and the 131st SAC with 5 ton trailers. This assisted in completing the 188th AHC Movement to LZ Sally and the 17th AHC and the 308th HHC to Eagle site. However, through extensive use of unit vehicles, 200th ASHC moved its cargo rapidly by unit transportation to its site at Phu-Bai Airfield. The main problem encountered was the lack of on site unloading capability. One forklift at Eagle for use by the 17th AHC and 308th HHC, and one at LZ Sally for the 188th AHC presented a major unloading problem that caused delay in turn around time for the trucks making the cargo runs. Quite often this resulted in only two trips per day. By the close of the sixth day, the majority of cargo for all units was on site or en route.

The Step Child

Upon arrival from Fort Campbell, Kentucky on 20 December 1967 the 308th Combat Aviation Battalion (CAB), was activated and assigned to the 12th Combat Aviation Group (CAG), 1st Aviation Brigade at Bien Hoa with Headquarters located at the HONOUR-SMITH compound. When ordered north to I Corps with units at Camp Eagle, LZ Sally and Phu Bai, we were still assigned to the 12th CAG but were attached to the 16th CAG at Marble Mountain Air Field, Da Nang and placed under Operational Control of the 101st Airborne Division's Screaming Eagles.

The Problems:

Administration- The 101st Airborne Division wanted no part of it, but naturally asked for numerous reports. The 12th CAG ignored us and the 16th CAG reluctantly supported us. As the XO I never heard from the 12th CAG after we left Bien Hoa. Unless we called or flew to Da Nang the 16th CAG never contacted us or came to see us. Our Battalion Commander, LTC Steen was their S-3 prior to the 308th Command.

Aircraft and Aircraft related maintenance- Anything that could not be accomplished by the companies and/or our detachments had to be done at Red Beach in Da Nang. That was also true for the 101st Aviation Battalion.

Vehicular and other ground equipment- This was the biggest Bug-A-Boo, everything was sent north to Camp Evans where Tash Force Lane (an Army Reserve Unit), attached to the 1st Cavalry Division (Air Mobile), was located. I know the 188th AHC came up short on a lot of small generators and we were LOW on the priority list.

BLACK

ADLER

FLYER



Volume 1, Number 4

Tuesday, June 25, 1968

188th, 17th, Kill Six VC, Capture One

June 19-- While on a mission covering a Medivac in the mountains west of Camp Eagle Warrent Officer George Talley, New Orleans, La. noticed something out of place in the jungle below.

"It looked like a ladder going up into a tall tree," said WO Talley.

After the Medivac had been completed he returned to the area. The ladder was still in place as WO Talley flew over the area, but when his wingman followed it was gone.

As he made a strafing run over the area the concealed enemy opened fire with automatic weapons.

The "Lancer" team then opened up with rockets and miniguns, firing into the area until the enemy fire ceased.

Going down for a look WO Talley spotted a bunker that had taken a rocket hit. Laying nearby were five bodies in NVA uniforms.

HUE, June 22-- When a young enemy soldier attempted to elude capture in a nearby village today he was not counting on the "Kingsmen's" quick-acting CO.

Maj Daniel Addiss, Ft Myers, Fla, commanding officer of the 17th Aslt Hel Co, was flying the Command and Control ship on an operation lifting infantry into a village suspected of containing NVA.

Smoke rounds had been fired into the village in an attempt to drive out the enemy troops.

When one man tried to run across a field to another village the major brought his ship down and hovered in the path of the running man until he was exhausted and forced to surrender.

The young soldier was turned over to the infantry for questioning.

Maj Addiss has been CO of the 17th for about two weeks.

June 19-- While flying from their revetments to the main airstrip at LZ Sally for maintenance two "Spider gunships" of the 188th Aslt Hel Co, encountered a Vietnamese man in a heavily loaded sampan on the river.

The second ship, under the command of WO Joe Walker, Torrence, Cal., went down to investigate.

When the gunships approached the man in the boat was reportedly frightened, heading for shore. Diving from the sampan he swam to shore and attempted to run away.

WO Walker rolled in. The running Vietnamese began firing his AK-47 at the helicopter. SP4 Harry Kim, Vista, Cal., crew chief, and Sp4 Natividad Duran, Savinal, Tex., killed him with the door guns.

WO Walker then fired a rocket into the boat, causing a secondary explosion and destroying the craft.

Watch
This
Space

272nd Hauls
Pontoon Bridge

Two CH-47 "Chinooks" from the 272nd Aslt Spt Hel Co lifted a pontoon bridge into a jungle site this week.

The aircraft, under the command of Maj Valentino Panzitta and Maj Harold Stansell, picked up the four pontoons and two bundles of aluminium planking at a Camp Eagle site, lifting them into a supposedly secure LZ.

The 272nd arrived only recently in Vietnam. The lift of the pontoon bridge was reportedly the first of its kind in the I Corps area.

Major Johnson Is New 308th Battalion X.O.

Maj Jack O. Johnson, Des Moines, Iowa, recently assumed duties here as executive officer of the 308th Cbt Avn Bn.

Maj Johnson was commissioned a 2LT through the ROTC program at Iowa State University, in 1954. Later in the year he attended the 39 week Artillery Officer Basic Course at Ft. Sill, Okla.

He then underwent flight training, staying on at Ft. Rucker, Ala., after graduation as an instructor.

Maj Johnson was assigned to Vietnam in 1964, serving as an aircraft commander with the first armed helicopter company to arrive here.

He was wounded in action in Feb. '65 and subsequently evacuated to the U.S., spending 10 months in Fitzsimons General Hospital, Denver.

Following his release from the hospital he was assigned to the

U. S. Army Aviation School at Ft. Rucker.

Maj Johnson has attended the Army Command and General Staff College, Ft. Leavenworth, Kans.

Maj Johnson has been awarded the Purple Heart, the Army Commendation Medal with "V" device, the Air Medal, Air Medal with "V", the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm.

Prior to assuming his duties here Maj Johnson served as company commander of the 188th Aslt Hel Co at LZ Sally.



Beginning next week R&R will be featured in a weekly column of news collected especially for the benefit of men ready to go.

You'll learn what to do to apply, requirements for certain spots and things of general interest about R&R.

The "BLACK ADLER FLYER" is an authorized weekly newspaper published by the Public Information Office of the 308th Cbt Avn Bn, APO SF 96383. Views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army.

Commanding Officer.....LTC Charles S. Steen, Jr.
Information Officer.....2LT Charles R. Boulay
Editor.....Sp4 Jack T. McDaniel

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT



HEADQUARTERS

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT
THE

COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE 308TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION
HAS AWARDED THIS CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT

TO

SP5 GREGORY P. ALLEN RA 54 371 364

FOR

MERITORIOUS SERVICE DURING THE PERIOD 16 MARCH 1968 TO 28 JUNE 1968

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND IN THE REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM

THIS

30TH

DAY OF

JUNE

19 68

Charles H. Steady
COMMANDING

Permanent Change of Station 188th Assault Helicopter Company

On 7 March 1968, the 188th Assault Helicopter Company was notified of a movement of the complete company with all TO&E equipment.

The advanced party, consisting of the Supply Officer, Service Platoon Leader, and representative of the Operations section, left Dau Tieng on 9 March 1968 for the new location, Landing Zone Sally. The necessary equipment for the advance party, which included tents, poles, a jeep, trailer, rations, and other necessary items, was shipped forward by CH-47 on 10 March 1968.

11 March 1968 marked the start of packing. All sections of the company began to load their organic equipment into conex containers. The three flight platoons were in the best position to be loaded first while areas such as the mess hall and the 603rd maintenance Detachment had to maintain operation in order to insure feeding of the troops and maintenance of the aircraft.

The next two days, 12 and 13 March 1968, were devoted to packing and loading. The mess hall ceased operation after the evening meal and likewise night maintenance was terminated. By dark on the night of 13 March approximately 40% of the company was entirely packed. This 40% was composed mainly of the equipment in the flight platoons, operations, orderly room, and officer, NCO Clubs' stock. The 188th completed its last III Corps Mission at Noon on 13 March 1968.

The first sortie of the combined air and sea move appeared in the form of a C-130 at the Dau Tieng Airstrip on 14 March 1968 at 1000 hours. With the aid of an Air Force loading team, conex's and pallets were shuttled from the company area to the loading ramp. It was at this point that the first major drawback was encountered, a lack of forklifts. Much time was spent coordinating the use of the three forklifts available to us. An additional setback was the fact that the Air Force would not work after dark. This situation was magnified when the forklift, organic to the company, was deadlined.

The first flight of helicopters left Dau Tieng at 1300 hours on 14 March. It included five UH-1H and two UH-1C helicopters plus crew equipment and rations for five days. It should be noted that the gunships were disarmed so that they carried only about 25% of their ordinance. The 25% was retained to provide a temporary cover for downed aircraft from the flight.

On 15 March, more C-130's arrived and subsequently, the day was spent loading these aircraft. An individual from the company went along on each C-130 to secure the cargo in the event that the aircraft was diverted and unloaded at an en route destination.

A new method was devised for shuttling loaded conex containers and pallets to the airfield. It was found that three pallets or conex containers could be placed on one five tone tractor-trailor. By using five of these vehicles a steady loading of C-130's was assured.

Also on this day, the second flight of five slicks and two guns left Dau Tieng. The Company Commander left with the second flight as more than 50% of the equipment was loaded on the Air Force transports.

The majority of the company was packed and ready to be loaded on 15 March. Tents were removed and general police of the area began. The Maintenance Detachment was still palletizing its equipment, but by nightfall most of this had been accomplished. In addition, the sea move was prepared in order to meet the convoy date of 16 March. Items included in the sea move were signal vans, and various other items not transportable by air.

At 0700 hours on 16 March, the sea move convoy left Dau Tieng for the terminal at New Port. After the convoy left Dau Tieng, the only personnel remaining were those ferrying the remainder of the flyable aircraft and rear party. On this day, 80% of the equipment had been loaded, the company area was in a high state of police, and everything was running smoothly.

In excess of 90% of the equipment was moved when the Executive Officer left with the seven flyable slicks and three gunships at 1300 hours on 17 March 1968. With the departure of the third flight, approximately 12 personnel remained behind to crew the aircraft that were still down.

After an intermediate stop at Dong Ba Thin, the third flight landed at Landing Zone Sally at 1200 hours, 18 March 1968.

At the destination, convoys began moving equipment from Hue-Phu Bai to LZ Sally. The first convoy began on 14 March and moved all the air shipments to LZ Sally by 20 March. The convoy from the sea move arrived at LZ Sally on 29 March 1968.

Upon reorganization and relocation to the I Corps in mid March, the battalion was attached to the 16th Combat Aviation Group and placed under the operational control of the 101st Airborne Division. Retaining the 17th AHC, the battalion received the 188th AHC and the 200th ASHC, giving the battalion a composition of two assault companies (UH-1 aircraft) and one Assault Support Company (CH-47). Aircraft requirements in support of the 101st Abn Div have been 6 cargo helicopters, 20 lift, 2 command and control, and 8 armed helicopters daily. Support rendered the division included company size assaults, combat resupply, command and control, pacification and psy-ops, chemical dispersion, long range patrolling, security reaction force, armed convoy escort, reconnaissance, and close air support, in addition to aircraft recovery and parts transport for the division's organic aviation. During the period 19-21 April 1968, the battalion was the principal Army aviation support to the division in Operation DELAWARE, which established a new fire support base to provide artillery fire on infiltration routes within the A Shau Valley. Aviation support included company size airmobile assaults, lifting a total of 1180 troops during the initial phase of the operation. The battalion also provided general support for the division with a minimum of one assault helicopter company and 6 CH-47 helicopters per day throughout the operation.

The first assigned mission was flown for the 101st Airborne Division by the 188th Assault Helicopter Company 18 March 1968. The Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 308th Combat Aviation Battalion, became operational on 31 March 1968. The 17th Assault Helicopter Company became fully operational on 12 April 1968, the 188th Assault Helicopter Company on 4 April 1968, and the 200th Assault Support Helicopter Company on 10 April 1968.

Shortage of the two authorized UH-1D helicopters negated the command and control capability of this headquarters during battalion air assaults. Subordinate units were tasked to provide command and control aircraft until this unit received one UH-1D helicopter.

Aircraft Maintenance

Units encountered dusty terrain conditions upon the initial deployment into their respective areas of operation. The initial shortage of soil stabilization (penepime) was eventually overcome; however, for one month engine and related rotating controls and control surfaces received abrasive wear. A highly effective FOD program was developed and is being monitored to lessen damage. Penepime is continuing to be placed on helipads and revetment areas as it comes available.

Light discipline has an effect on the amount of night maintenance that can be accomplished in the 188th Assault Helicopter Company Area. The major maintenance effort was accomplished during daylight hours; however, aircraft availability has been marginally acceptable. As the local enemy situation improves, night maintenance will be increased.

Initially, the direct support company providing maintenance and repair parts support for units of this battalion was located one and one half flying hours distance. To overcome the number of flying hours that would have been expended on maintenance and parts runs, a consolidated run was scheduled to service all three units three times a week utilizing a CH-47 of the 200th ASHC. This method of resupply was effective. At the end of this reporting period, another direct support company, at a closer location, has received the support mission for the battalion aircraft. This reduction in distance should substantially improve the support.

LZ SALLY



Photo by: CW2 Curt Knapp, Aviation Section, HHC, 2nd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) November 1968

Home of the 2nd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division "Screaming Eagles" (referred to as the Puking Buzzards) from March 1968 through March 1970 when it was handed over to the 1st ARVN Division. LZ Sally was named after the wife of a 1st Cavalry Company Commander. During the 188th's time at LZ Sally it was a tent city and a much smaller base camp. (Source LTG John H. Cushman, Commander, 2nd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division)

Points of Interest

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Southeast Main Gate B. North Gate: Backdoor C. PK17- 1st ARVN Division Compound D. Highway 1 E. Song Bo River F. An Loi Bridge G. Saigon to Hanoi Railroad | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 188th, 603rd, 154th Medical Detachment and 4th Signal Company Area 2. 603rd Maintenance Area 3. 188th Motor Pool 4. Helicopter Revetments 5. US Navy MCB4 SEABEE's 6. C Battery 2/11 Artillery (155mm) 7. Dirt Pit, Dump and Small arms target range 8. 101st Military Police Detachment 9. 2nd Brigade Headquarters, TOC and VIP Pad 10. Hdqts and Hdqts Company 11. 1st Battalion, 501st Infantry "First Strike" 12. 2nd Battalion, 501st Infantry "First Strike" 13. 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry "Geronimo" 14. 1st Battalion, 321st Artillery 15. C Company, 326th Engineer Battalion 16. 47th Scout Dog Platoon 17. B Company, 326th Medical Detachment 18. 2nd Platoon, Company A, 801st Maintenance BN. 19. 501st Supply Company 20. 265th Radio Research Company 21. 34th Public Information Detachment 22. 7th Airforce Detachment 23. Access Road 24. POL 25. Brigade Aviation Section |
|---|---|

LISTEN UP: (Available upon request, Black Widow guided tours to the following locations)

DANANG - 65 MILES SOUTH
KHE SAHN - 36 MILES NORTHWEST

DMZ - 32 MILES NORTH
A SHAU VALLEY - 23 MILES WEST

Development of 188th AHC Base Camp - LZ Sally

LZ Sally was set up in the Huong Tra District of Thua Thein Province. The Province was 450 miles north of Dau Tieng and dominated by sand dunes, coastal plains, and rugged mountainous terrain. It would take some time to learn what tactics were needed to fly in this new area of operation (1). The major operational target areas during our time at LZ Sally was the elimination of enemy forces in the Con Thien - Gio Linh area north of Dong Ha; the opening of Route 9 with the subsequent relief of Khe Sahn Combat Base; and an assault into the A Shau Valley. The 188th would play a major role in the A Shau Valley campaign.

Five slicks and a Spider Light Fire Team, commanded by Black Widow 4, Lt. Frank Linster, made up the first flight of aircraft to arrive at LZ Sally. On arrival, Lt. Linster reported to the Commander of the 2nd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division Task Force, Col. John Cushman at the Tactical Operations Center (TOC). As he pointed towards a Vietnamese Cemetery, outside the existing perimeter, Col Cushman advised Lt. Linster to use as much room as he wanted for the 188th Company area. The small group of twenty-four men set up a hasty perimeter using concertina wire and trip flares. The perimeter was moved further out once the entire company and detachments arrived. For physical security, the 188th would man nine fighting positions each night, with three men per bunker. Sett up shop during the dry season meant dealing with and eating a lot of dust. LZ Sally was a tent city and our GP medium tents fit right in. Permanent Sea Huts weren't constructed until October 1968, during the C/101 time frame.

Besides the small individual bunkers being constructed next to each person's immediate living quarters, two major bunkers were constructed in the midst of the company area. One for the soldiers and the other for our 154th Medical Detachment. The 154th Medical Detachment's bunker was completely below ground. Steel railroad rails and ties were scrounged from the Saigon - Hanoi railroad line which traversed through the base camp. An underground Tactical Operations Center was built. The 603rd set up shop next to the new "WEB" airstrip. Revetments were constructed along the airstrip and in a crescent shaped configuration just outside the company area. Once again, the 188th would be stationed in a remote area where living conditions would be very basic, at best.

Our new cast of players would include the 101st Airborne Division, the 1st Cavalry Division, the 3rd Brigade 82nd Airborne Division, the 1st and 3rd Marine Divisions, the 1st ARVN Division, MACV-SOG (Military Assistance Command Vietnam, Studies and Observation Group) better known as CCN (Command and Control North) and our old friends, the 5th Special Forces Group. Our primary focus would be the direct support for 101st Airborne Divisions's 2nd Brigade, which consisted of the 1/501, 2/501 and the 1/502 Infantry based at LZ Sally. The 188th was directly involved supporting Operations, Carentan I and II, Delaware, Nevada Eagle, and cross boarder Prairie Fire/ SOG Missions.

As the last of the 188th helicopters closed on LZ Sally, Hanoi Hana came up on our radio frequency and "Welcomed the 188th Assault Helicopter Company Black Widows to LZ Sally." She informed us, in so many words, that we would not be a factor in the struggle between the communist forces and the puppet government of South Vietnam.

- (1) Vietnam Studies, The War in the Northern Provinces 1966-68, Department of the Army

Comments on the Relationship with the 2nd Brigade, 101st Airborne

On March 1, 1968, the 2nd Brigade Task Force, 101st Airborne Division, began to occupy LZ Sally, 11 kilometers WNW of Hue City. The brigade task force, elements of which had been fighting between Hue and Quang Tri since its arrival just before Tet '68 broke on 31 January, was together again for the first time since it left Cu Chi.

One of the first units to join us at LZ Sally was the 188th Assault Helicopter Company with its slicks and gunships. That was the beginning of a remarkable team effort.

The lowland plains north and west of Hue were infested with North Vietnamese Army formations. These NVA units had infiltrated into South Vietnam from the north. In January, they had occupied the villages. In the Tet

offensive they had entered the city of Hue. After having been driven out of Hue, they were now moving about the countryside. The roads were insecure, the district towns were beleaguered, and many villages and hamlets were under VC and NVA control.

Four months later, by the end of June 1968, the NVA was gone and the process of digging out the last of the remaining VC units was under way.

LZ Sally was on rising ground with good drainage and firm soil. Around a short laterite airstrip there was ample room with open fields of fire beyond, and we had an access road to QL 1. No point in our AO was more than 10 miles distant, thus no more than a few minutes away by helicopter. On the hard laterite surface of the old airstrip we could operate a brigade supply point. We had a brigade clearing station into which "dust-off" helicopters could take the wounded men of the brigade for treatment and further evacuation if necessary.

The 2nd Brigade Task Force won by applying three basic principles: Work closely with the Vietnamese. Scour the area with its companies putting constant and unrelenting pressure on the enemy day and night. And at every opportunity quickly encircle him so tightly that he could not wriggle out of the trap — this was the "cordon operation" in which choppers brought in troops to encircle the enemy in daylight and then illumination from flare ships and artillery lit up the area so that he could not escape.

The battle of Phuoc Yen was a classic example of the tactic. About noon April 28, the 1st ARVN Division's Black Panther Company, under the 1st Battalion, 501st Infantry, at the village of Phuoc Yen in a bend shaped like a stocking in the Song Bo River six kilometers from LZ Sally, made contact with what was estimated to be a battalion sized force.

The 188th AHC immediately joined the 2nd Brigade in establishing a cordon, inserting A/1-502 into an LZ to the east of the Black Panther Company to establish a blocking position. A/1-501 moved overland to a blocking position on the river bank to the west. B/2-501 conducted a combat assault and occupied a blocking position on the river bank to the southeast of the village. Three Popular Force platoons plus 25 militia of a nearby hamlet established blocking positions on the river to the east. A/1-502 drove to the river's edge to the north of the village. By dark all units had joined their flanks and the cordon was established.

During the night of 28 April, constant illumination was provided by CH-47 and UH-1 flareships. 105mm, 155mm, and 8" howitzer rounds impacted within the cordon. During the early morning hours of 29 April the enemy tried three times to rupture the left flank of A/1-502. These attempts were repulsed with a heavy volume of fire and courageous determination by the men of A Company. During the day of April 29, the brigade reinforced and tightened its encirclement, which was sealed throughout the night of 29 April under continuous illumination. On the 30th, B/1-501 conducted a combat assault to an LZ in the northern sector of the cordon and replaced the Black Panther Company.

In the early hours of 1 May, during a short break in the illumination caused by the time lapse between the expended flareship going off station and artillery illumination being placed over the cordon, the enemy made an all-out effort to penetrate the area occupied by A/1-502. This attack was repulsed by intense fire. At 0800 hours, a psychological warfare team began broadcasting appeals to surrender which resulted in 16 NVA surrendering. Afterwards, TAC air and artillery fires were resumed and during the afternoon friendly elements shifted their positions in order to tighten the cordon. B/2-501 relieved A/1-502 in place, and A/1-502 was extracted to LZ Sally.

The cordon remained in place throughout the night of 1 May and all of 2 May. Early 3 May, the enemy made another futile attempt to break out of the cordon. A 55 gallon drum CS drop was made over the village from a CH-47 after which further appeals were made by loudspeaker for the enemy to surrender. Companies B/1-501 and A/2-501 made the final sweep of the village overcoming small pockets of resistance and completed the cordon operation.

We had lost 8 US and 2 ARVN killed, 44 US and 12 ARVN wounded. The enemy had lost 429 killed, 107 prisoners (the highest prisoner count ever in a Vietnam action), and 117 weapons captures. Also captured were the radios and signal operating instructions of the 8th Battalion, 90th NVA Regiment, which was totally eliminated.

The Second Brigade and the 188th Assault Helicopter Company had executed a classic.

Lieutenant General John H. Cushman, U.S. Army, Retired, Commanding Officer 2nd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division

Events That Turn Commanders Head's Gray

On the morning of April 2nd, 1968, a small group of six vehicles from the 188th Assault Helicopter Company rolled out of LZ Sally, under the command of 1st Lieutenant Frank Linster. At the junction of Highway 1, we joined the 101st Airborne Division convoy headed south to Da Nang. We encountered a 3/4 ton truck that had run off the road and proceeded to pull it out of the ditch. LT Linster was standing in the ditch, directly in front of the truck. . . BAD IDEA! As the chain came tight, the driver gunned the engine as he released the clutch. The truck exploded up the embankment lifting LT Linster through the air, planting him on his back side in a tangle of concertina wire. We literally had to cut him loose. His injuries required a brief stop in Phu Bai, for treatment of the puncture wounds in his ass and a tetanus shot. LT Linster learned a very big lesson that day!! As we approached the Hai Van pass, the highway narrowed to a single lane, as it wound its way to the summit. As the column moved forward, sniper fire erupted to our right front. Bailing out of the trucks, we sought cover along the drainage ditch until the ALL CLEAR was sounded. The snipers were taken under fire by jeep mounted 106mm recoilless rifles. Due to sporadic sniper fire, the 60 mile drive took 12 hours. We pulled into the Tien Shaw Navy Base, stowing our gear and weapons in the barracks we would call home for the next week. The Permanent Change of Station move north from Dau Tieng, along with the heavy fighting during Tet had left everyone physically and emotionally spent.

The next morning, LT Linster informed us that it would take some time to locate everything we needed and that we should enjoy our leave in Da Nang. SP/4 John Moore, SP/4 Dennis Pierpoint (A.K.A. Point), and SP/4 Dick Detra (A.K.A. Cherry Boy) grabbed the lone 3/4 ton Dodge truck and headed for the bar. Once we were settled in at one of the local bars, a beautiful Vietnamese bar girl approached us. She showed us numerous photos of herself and shared her dreams of becoming a movie star. Moments later a merchant seaman named Blackie, told John that he was the spitting image of his son. After a few drinks, he took us on board the SS Cortez to meet the Captain and crew. To our surprise the entire cargo consisted of Black Label beer and whiskey. When we left the ship, we were feeling no pain as we drove through the Navy Shore Patrol (SP) check point at the ship yard's main gate. After passing through the Army Military Police (MP) check point, Cherry Boy swerved into the wrong lane. John and Point were screaming at him to get over before we collided head on with a tractor trailer coming towards us. It was too late to avoid hitting the row of barrels positioned in front of the ARVN Police (AP) check point. Barrels were flying in all directions until we hit the last one, which was filled with concrete. The collision caused damage to the left front quarter and bumper. The AP's stood in awe as we sped past them.

Cherry Boy was approached by one of our Warrant Officers the next morning, informing him that if the damaged truck wasn't repaired before we got back to LZ Sally, he could expect an Article 15. He pulled into the Army motor pool across the road and made a deal with a couple of mechanics. They would replace the left front quarter and bumper for twenty cases of beer. Leaving the 3/4 ton with the mechanics he was picked up by John and Point in a deuce and a half. When they arrived at the bar, Blackie told us that the Captain was having a dinner in our honor and wouldn't it be nice to bring some women on board. Point and Cherry Boy, after negotiating a price, convinced the bar girl to come along. The only draw back was that we had to bring her younger brother along.

We made it safely through the three check points and parked the deuce and a half a short distance away from the ship. As we made our way up the gangway, several of the Vietnamese workers observed us as we boarded the ship. As we entered the galley, we introduced our guests to the Captain and crew. A stateroom adjacent to the galley would be used as our little love nest. The plan was for everyone to take turns, beginning with you know who. The cook had baked a number of apple pies for us to take as well. The party was well under way when one of the crewmen, standing night watch, ran into the galley. Everyone gathered around as he told the Captain that three jeep loads of AP's and MP's and SP's were headed towards the ship. The workers had rattled us out! Point pounded on the stateroom door, yelling at John that it was time to leave. Since it was John's turn in the love nest, he refused to come out. He figured that Point was joking and disregarded the story about SP's boarding the ship. Point and Cherry Boy bolted through the galley, grabbing four apple pies, en route to the gangway. In their haste to board the ship, the SP's paid little or no attention to the two soldiers who were disembarking. As for John, with Blackie's help, he was able to elude capture. Noticing that the deuce and a half was gone, he made a bee line for the main gate. He desperately tried to hitch a ride as he watched the girl and young boy being escorted

off the ship. As they headed in his direction, John knew he was going to the brig. At the last moment a truck pulled in front of the jeeps, blocking their view. The driver motioned for him to get in and offered to take him back to Tien Shaw. Lying in their bunks, fully clothed under the covers, waiting for the SP's to arrive, Point and Cherry Boy knew in their hearts that John had been arrested. Suddenly, the barracks door flew open. John, nearly out of breath, came scrambling down the aisle to his bunk. After discussing our escape, we realized how lucky we were not to have been caught and court martialed.

In the morning, we were surprised to find twenty cases of Black Label beer in the back of the deuce and a half, under a tarp. Compliments of the Captain and crew of the SS Cortez. We definitely fired up the mechanics at the motor pool when we unloaded the 20 cases of Black Label beer. Cherry Boy thanked them once again for saving him from an Article 15. The rest of the day was spent loading our trucks at the various supply depots.

Our supply Sergeant and Sergeant Larry Gray borrowed a Navy reach in cooler and a Marine generator so our beer and sodas would be nice and cold. A number of our guys had put up the money to purchase the beer and sodas. At the Army supply depot our supply Sergeant was informed that he didn't have the proper paper work to requisition a wrecker, badly needed by our maintenance people. In the confusion of trucks coming and going, Larry leisurely walked down the long row of wreckers, picked one. He proceeded to get in, fired it up, and drove off. (A) Once loaded, our orders were to form up at the Marine truck assembly area adjacent to Highway 1. By the end of the fourth day, we were loaded with everything we could requisition, beg, borrow, or steal.

On the morning of the seventh day, the Colonel in command of the convoy told LT Linster that we were being extended one more day. LT Linster explained that he was given a direct order by his commanding office, Major Jack Johnson, to be back at LZ Sally no later than nightfall of the seventh day. (B) The Colonel's response was that he would revoke those orders. LT Linster turned and walked back to the rear of our trucks, motioning everyone to gather round, to discuss our options. Another problem surfaced. Since beer and soda were NON COMBAT ESSENTIAL, we were ordered by the Marine load master to unload all of it. Beer and soda were not authorized north of Hue. We all decided that we had only one option, to get the beer and soda back to LZ Sally or it would be our collective asses!!!

Our plan was put into action, as Sergeant Larry Gray's deuce and a half crashed through the main gate, with the rest of our trucks close behind. The Marine guards looked on as we sped through the gate. (C) LT Linster figured that if we drove wide open and did not encounter sniper fire or an ambush, our speed would carry us through the kill zone. Our luck held, as we made our way through the Hai Van pass unscathed. Just north of Hue, several Vietnamese children threw hand grenades at our passing trucks. The only damage we sustained were a couple of blown rear dual tires on one of our deuce and a halves. Our mad dash back to LZ Sally had only taken 2 ½ hours. Nothing of our exploits ever came back to haunt us. Thanks to our C.O.'s bending of the rules, everyone in the company would be enjoying a cold beer or soda tonight and for many nights to come. (D)

- (A) LT Linster was busy appropriating a total of eight new trucks using phoney tags. The original unit information stenciled on the front bumpers was painted over with the 188th unit information.
- (B) Lt Linster was sure that the CO would give him a bad rating if the convoy wasn't back on time.
- (C) The driver of the 5 ton, 30 foot low boy refused to drive the vehicle on the return trip. LT Linster took over and drove the 5 ton low boy as fast as he could go, ordering the lead jeep to keep pace ahead of him.
- (D) The Battalion XO, Major Henry Dreher, got word of our little caper from a couple of bird dog pilots stationed at Da Nang, who had served under him in Korea. He never mentioned the incident to the Battalion CO, LTC Steen.
- (E) Commander's comments on following page.

(E) Commander's Comments

In the process of exchanging information during the development of the unit history, I found out the details of this trip to Da Nang thirty-one years after the events took place. My comments to Dick Detra were to the effect "That there are many things that I didn't know about and I'm glad that I didn't know about them at the time. If I had known, I probably would have had to take action that would have put people in jail and caused my relief of command. But now — it just shows how wild and crazy things were when we were trying to survive and make the best out of what we had."

Now, let me address my actions with respect to having cold beer in our area of LZ Sally. When I met with the command group of the 101st Airborne Division, I was fully aware of the order to have no alcohol north of the Hai Van Pass. This would be virtually impossible since young officers, Warrant Officers, and crewmen on very mobile helicopters could very easily get into Da Nang and load up at the PX. I put out the word that in the 188th we would have cold beer on a limited basis available in the "clubs" we set up for the men. We would dispatch a helicopter to the Da Nang PX and they would load a pallet of beer (144 cases) into one of our slicks. A pallet would fit very nicely into the cargo compartment and we would land the slick in the middle of our company area and move the cargo to our club area.

This was done to keep the fact that we had beer away from the rest of the infantry that surrounded our living area. Some how the word got out and in the middle of the night we were infiltrated by a bunch of infantry troops that made off with about half of our supply of beer. Now, I couldn't complain to the Brigade Commander about his troops taking something that shouldn't be there in the first place, so we consolidated our supply and had to put guards on it 24 hours a day.

Later, I learned that Col Cushman was aware that we had beer in our area and he elected to not take any action so long as we did our job and kept things quiet. Since we lived with and supported the 2nd Brigade almost exclusively, we were very close to the infantry troops we took into battle each day. There were a few times that we even flew out a couple of beers a piece to a night defensive position along with the evening meal for the grunts.

Source: Jack O. Johnson, Black Window 6, December 1967 - June 1968

Loss of Life Hurts - This Loss Hurt Very Much

At 1300 hours on 18 May 1968, First Sergeant Pearl Ackley (TOP) held a company formation. During the formation he assigned various details and then marched the group to the north end of the company area in order to have a police call of the area. During the police call, TOP entered the service platoon tent and found PFC Leroy McKeever sitting on a bunk. It appeared that McKeever had been drinking, so he asked him why he wasn't at his assigned place of duty. His response was, "TOP wasn't his First Sergeant." At that time TOP instructed him to go to the orderly room and stand by. At 1325 hours, after arriving back at the orderly room, TOP tried to reason with McKeever, but was told that he wanted to talk to his, 603rd Detachment First Sergeant, Joe Helvey and the Commander, Captain Thomas Castro. TOP instructed McKeever to sit down in the orderly room until he could locate SFC Helvey. He then informed the company clerk, SP/4 Mike Vickroy to watch McKeever and to accompany him if he had to use the latrine to insure that he returned to the orderly room. Shortly after TOP's departure, McKeever got up and walked outside the orderly room with Vickroy a few steps behind. Having just arrived, SFC Helvey ordered McKeever to stand by the conex container located next to the orderly room while Vickroy called the XO, Captain John Schaibly. The company commander, Major Jack O. Johnson, was on R&R at the time, leaving Captain Schaibly in command. At 1345 hours, McKeever left the front of the orderly room and headed for the command bunker on the company's perimeter. He arrived at the command bunker with a loaded M-16 rifle. He then confronted several of the security guards and told them to "keep the fuck away" or "he would kill them." The sergeant of the guard, SP/5 Dan Wooley talked McKeever into clearing his weapon and cautioned him about threatening people with a loaded weapon. He tried to talk some sense into McKeever. His response was that he was upset over being repeatedly denied personal leave and was tired of these people "fucking with him." He then headed for bunker 85 located a short distance from the command bunkers. One of the guards followed McKeever to see what he was up to. As he approached, McKeever placed a round in the chamber of his M-16 and told the guard to go back to the command bunker. When McKeever entered bunker 85, Wooley tried to call the 101st MP detachment by the base main gate, but was unable to get through. Now besides the loaded M-16, McKeever carried a bandolier of M-16 ammunition over his shoulder and several grenades. As he passed the command bunker, McKeever tossed the bandolier and two grenades up to one of the guards standing on top. As he passed, he threw his weapon to Wooley and said that "he was turning himself in." Thinking that the incident was over, Wooley cleared the weapon and headed to the orderly room to turn in McKeever's M-16. SP/4 Jackson, who was headed for the perimeter, crossed paths with McKeever and noticed he was holding a grenade in his right hand. He yelled to McKeever, "Don't do it! Don't do it!" Then Jackson and SP-4 Harris grabbed him and tried to get hold of the grenade. After a short scuffle, McKeever got loose. Harris asked him, "what's going on?" He said, "I'm going to fix a couple of people who have been messing with me!" Then Harris made another grab for the grenade resulting in McKeever stepping back and pulling the pin on the grenade.

When he reached the orderly room, he was met by SFC Helvey and confronted about the incident on the bunker line. McKeever, at this point, started to yell and threaten Helvey, drawing a group of on-lookers. Inside the orderly room, a crew chief, taking care of some personal business, heard someone yell, "He has a grenade." Captain Schaibly, Vickroy, and the crew chief ran out the back door of the orderly room as the on-lookers heard the destructive sound of the grenade arming itself and scattered in all directions. McKeever held out the grenade, not realizing that it was about to detonate, to SFC Helvey. Helvey froze, making no attempt to run. The explosion tore through both men, sending body parts flying in all directions. Shrapnel fragments hit SP/4 Camp in the back, SP/4 Jackson was hit in the lower chest and the crew chief in the right thigh.

Vickroy, Harris, and several others tried to help Helvey, who was still alive, until medics from B Company 326th medical Battalion arrived. McKeever, who took the brunt of the blast, lost his right arm and right leg and was pronounced dead at the scene. Helvey and Jackson were medevaced in one of our Hueys to the 22nd Surgical Hospital in Phu Bai two hours and forty-five minutes later, he died from multiple fragmentation wounds and excessive hemorrhaging of his right femoral artery, at 1705 hours. Jackson, Camp, and the crew chief were treated for their wounds and returned to the company.

Footnote:

At Dau Tieng, while under the influence of alcohol, McKeever threatened SP/4 Dan Scribner and in another incident, SP/4 Richard Kaplan, with a loaded weapon. This resulted in McKeever being taken off flight status, busted down to PFC and being transferred into the 603rd TC Detachment. The one person he did confide in was SP/4 Neal Haber. McKeever left two letters with Vickroy to hold for him prior to the murder/suicide. If McKeever had been transferred out of the unit, for medical help, after these two incidents, maybe this would never have happened.

Source:

Department of the Army, Criminal Investigation Command, Office of the Provost Marshall, 101st Airborne Division.

Second Footnote:

As Commanding Officer of the 188th at the time this incident took place, I was shocked and very saddened at this turn of events.

I was within a few days of Change of Command when the 308th Battalion Commander, LTC Steen, gave me permission to go on a 5 day R&R to Bangkok. I had been in country nine months and in command for six months without a day off and was in need of a little break. We had tactically supported the 2nd Brigade in virtually cleaning out the area of operations of all major NVA/VC units. Some time off was warranted before I turned over command of the unit to Hank Dreher and moved to Executive Officer of the 308th Combat Aviation Battalion for the last three months of my tour.

As I was preparing to leave the company area, I looked out of the orderly room (tent) and I saw a 2 ½ ton truck racing across a series of rice paddy dikes, bouncing into the air, and crashing down with great force. Keeping trucks in good repair was critical to our company and this type of driving was unacceptable.

I ordered someone to get the driver and bring him to me. It turned out to be McKeever and I chewed him out as he should have been for his treatment of our equipment. He left the orderly room and within fifteen minutes I had boarded one of our helicopters and was flown to Da Nang for a flight to Bangkok. When I returned from R&R I reported into the HQ's of the 16th Combat Aviation Group. Our Senior Aviation Headquarters, where everyone broke the news of the incident at the 188th Headquarters. I was not aware that anything had happened until I got back. I got one of the 16th CAG helicopters to fly me back to LZ Sally immediately and found the unit to be in a really depressed mood.

McKeever should have been moved out and sent to a hospital long before this incident. I was unaware of the number of times he had threatened others in the 603rd Detachment with loaded weapons at Dau Tieng and LZ Sally. All of the details of his prior bizarre behavior came out during the CID investigation that followed the deaths of McKeever and Helvey.

I feel sure that McKeever was out to frag me with the grenade he had, but met SGT Helvey on his way to the orderly room. The loss of anyone under circumstances like this hurts deeply because it's so unnecessary when there were plenty of other NVA/VC troops out there trying to do harm to us.

Change of Command — A New Commander's Thoughts

On June 10, 1968, Major Jack O. Johnson handed over command of the 188th to Major Hank Dreher. The first time that I saw LZ Sally, I was truly amazed. Right in the middle of this base camp was an old French Airfield. I am certain that it was on all the VC and NVA maps . . . what a reference point and target! The company area and our part of the perimeter was relatively flat, low ground with a large boomerang shaped rice paddy in the middle. The living areas were meager, GP medium tents, which were well sand bagged.

The work areas (maintenance, mess, medical, motor-pool, etc.) Were well laid out and adequate. We had showers, but no hot water. The helicopters, although dispersed and revetted, were sitting targets, yet we never lost any on the ground. Our sector of the 2nd Brigade perimeter left a lot to be desired, both in tactical capability and fortifications. There was a small rise to the south east that obscured long range observation. The Brigade S-3 assured me that they had it well covered with artillery and mortars. We never had to put them to the test. Our gun emplacements and defensive firing positions may have withstood a minor probe, but we would have been asking for a lot of help if it had been prolonged and massed. Once we received the material to build the DePuy bunkers, I was much more confident. There were several reasons why I decided to take command of the 188th.

1. I knew all the brigade and battalion Commanders that the 188th supported.
2. The 188th was at a separate location and I like to get as far away from the flag pole (Battalion) as possible.
3. The 188th did have a much lower availability aircraft rate than the 17th and I knew I could get it higher. At the change of command on 10 June 1968 we were at 45-50% or less, within two months we hit 100%. Of course, I have to tip my hat to our 603rd maintenance officer, Major Murry Parker, for that. I left the C/101 Black Widows after the Change of Command on 10 December 1968. When I was waiting to leave country, I ran into Warrant officer Tuttle and a few of the other Spider pilots in Saigon. They were there to pick up some Cobra's. It was like Christmas and kids with new toys and they damn well deserved them. When the Spiders became D Company 101st Aviation Battalion (HAWK) the gunships stayed at LZ Sally even though they belonged to D/101 at Camp Eagle.

I cannot undo the past and, therefore, will not speculate on or comment on what I would change. I will say that I wish I had done more for the Enlisted Personnel. I commanded four Aviation Units during my three tours and the 188th/C/101 Black Widows were, by far, the finest and hold the fondest memories.

As a Commander, I felt that the crew chiefs were the most dedicated, hardest working, and least recognized personnel in all of Army Aviation in Vietnam. The helicopter they crewed was their aircraft and they took great pride in taking care of it. While I always pre-flighted my aircraft, there were many times that this was probably unnecessary because the ships were in "A-1" condition even with the amount of flight hours being flown. The thing that I revered most about my pilots is that they followed me whenever I lead them and went where ever I told them to go . . . we never aborted a mission.

Colonel Hank Dreher (Retired)
Black Adler 5 188th/C/101 Black Widow 6

Command and Control North

by LTC Frank Linster

During my first tour in Vietnam, I flew 1105 hours of combat time, including hours in support of CCN (MAC-SOG) missions. The Black Widows were assigned to fly CCN missions two to three days a week.

One of these missions was to extract a Special Forces (SF) A Team from the jungle. It was scheduled to be a routine extraction. Our slicks were rigged with ladders and McGuire Ropes. The SF Team was located on a plateau. As we were approaching the pick-up zone (PZ) the team was spotted and had to move off of the plateau. When this happened we were approximately 20 minutes from their location.

When we arrived at their new location there was not enough room to land the helicopter on the ground, so we decided to use the ladders for pick-up. When we dropped the ladders they were too short and did not reach the ground. At that time I had my helicopter hovering over the treetops. My Crew Chief, SP/5 Mike Willie, told me if I was real careful and moved the tail boom to the left I could lower the helicopter closer to the ground, but I would have my tail rotor between two trees. Once this maneuver was accomplished the SF A Team started to climb up the ladders, one on each side of the aircraft. As the weight on the ladders increased, I was required to add power to keep my helicopter from settling into the trees. Once I had reached my maximum power setting, the aircraft started to settle into the trees. As my main rotor blades were within inches of hitting the trees, I radioed to the SF A Team that I had to leave and our second helicopter would pick-up the rest of the team. The SF A Team radio operator told me to leave because all of the team members were on the ladders. I informed them to hold on because I would have to drag them through the trees. Their response was, "what was I waiting for, the NVA was coming into the clearing." Once again, we came under heavy small arms and automatic weapons fire. We were very lucky to have our Spider gunships with us on this mission as they laid down a deadly volume of suppressive fire. The SF A Team, our Door Gunner, and Crew Chiefs all were helping with suppressive fire from their weapons. If anyone had wanted to contact us on the radio, we would never have heard to call because of all the weapons firing on full automatic, better known as "rock and roll." The action by our gunships allowed us to escape by the skin of our teeth. The ledge of the plateau was a short distance away. Once we cleared the trees, I could see the SF A Team members throwing branches away that had gotten caught on their TA 50 equipment. Little did I know, each A Team member had used D-rings to clamp themselves on the ladder so they wouldn't fall off as I dragged them through the trees, and in case they were wounded in the extraction.

As we were flying back to base camp, eight of the twelve A Team members had to stay on the ladders. They could not crawl up the ladder because of the wind force as we were departing the area at 100 knots. We needed to get as much distance between the enemy and us because they had 50 caliber machine guns with them as the Team informed us as we departed.

The eight A Team members who were sitting on the ladders created a problem for them because the ladder bars were only one inch in diameter and was cutting off the blood flow to their feet. We had to find a place to land and get these men off the ladder before we caused permanent damage to their legs. We sent one of the back-up slicks to locate a safe landing zone (LZ). We had to disregard radio silence on this mission because the welfare of our Team members was more important. We did not snatch them from the jaws of the enemy just to have them injured on the flight home. Our search for a relatively safe LZ was successful. The abandoned base camp at Khe Sahn was selected. Our advance slick had made several passes over the base camp and no one had bothered them. As we approached Khe Sahn, the advanced slick landed so their crew members could help the SF guys off the ladders. Their legs were asleep because of low blood flow. I was required to hover the aircraft about 75 feet off the ground while the first two SF team members were taken off the ladder. This was repeated a total of four times until we had everyone off the ladder. We then landed ourselves to let the SF's medic check out the condition of his team members before continuing on to LZ Stud.

After we had refueled, we returned to Mia Loc and debriefed the SF Battalion Intelligence officer. After the debriefing, we were allowed to check our aircraft for battle damage. Once again, the luck and skill of the Black Widows and Spiders aircraft and crews held true to form. We did not have a single bullet hole in any of the aircraft.

Operations

During these listed combat operations, the Black Widows lost eighteen men killed in action, and 75 wounded in action . . . about 1/3 of the company and assigned detachments. On June 12, 1967, Spider Light Fire Teams saw action in the IV Corps AO while working with the 116th Stringers.

III Corps Area of Operations		
Operation	Date	Major Unit Supported
Great Bend	13 June - 26 June 1967	3 rd Brigade, 9 th Infantry Division
Can Givoc	19 June - 20 June 1967	3 rd Brigade, 9 th Infantry Division
Manhattan	23 April - 7 June 1967	25 th Infantry Division
Ahina	13 May - 18 May 1967	25 th Infantry Division
Kawela	11 June - 25 June 1967	25 th Infantry Division
Kolekole	14 May - 17 December 1967	2 nd Brigade, 25 th Infantry Division
Barking Sands	14 May - 17 December 1967	1 st Brigade, 25 th Infantry Division
Diamond Head	14 May - 17 December 1967	3 rd Brigade, 25 th Infantry Division
Cau Song Be Special Forces Camp	September/October 1967	5 th Special Forces B-34-CIDG
Shenandoah II	27 September - 19 November 1967	1 st Infantry Division
Game Warden	November/December 1967	Navy Seal Team I
Task Force 116		
Atlanta	18 November - 23 December 1967	25 th Infantry Division
Yellowstone	1 December 1967 - 24 February 1968	25 th Infantry Division
Saratoga	8 December 1967 - 11 March 1968	25 th Infantry Division
Coronado IX	1 November 1967 - 22 February 1968	3 rd Brigade, 9 th Infantry Division
Rapid Fire V (Cambodia)	8 December 1967 - 24 January 1968	5 th Special Forces B-36
Camden	17 December - 31 December 1967	3 rd Brigade, 25 th Infantry Division
Ranch Hand	1967	7 th Air Force (Agent Orange Spraying)
Tet '68	31 January - 18 February 1968	25 th Infantry Division
Resolved To Win	January/February 1968	25 th Infantry Division
Toan Thang	1 February - 10 March 1968	25 th Infantry Division

II Corps Area of Operation

Operation	Date	Major Unit Supported
Hong Kil Dong	9 July - 31 August 1967	9 th Republic of Korea (ROK) (White Horse) Division and the ROK Capital (Tiger) Division

I Corps Area of Operation

Operation	Date	Major Unit Supported
Carentan I	8 March - 31 March 1968	101 st Airborne Division
Carentan II	1 April - 17 May 1968	101 st Airborne Division
Delaware/ Lam Son 216	19 April - 17 May 1968	101 st Airborne Division
Nevada Eagle	17 May - 1 July 1968	101 st Airborne Division
Ranch Hand	1968	7 th Air Force (Agent Orange Spraying)
Prairie Fire (Laos)	April/June 1968	CCN - SOG
Allen Brook	4 May - 24 August 1968	1 st Marine Division
Mameluke Thrust	4 May - 24 August 1968	1 st Marine Division
Swift Saber	4 May - 24 August 1968	1 st Marine Division
Eager Yankee	May/June 1968	3 rd Marine Division

Battles

III Corps

1.	June 24, 1967	Mortar attack on Dau Tieng air Field (The Web)
2.	August 30, 1967	Iron Triangle, Ambushed while inserting 4/9 Manchus
3.	November 9, 1967	Mortar and ground attack on 188 th Company area and perimeter at Dau Tieng
4.	January 1, 2, 1968	Tactical emergency, FSB Burt was being hit with massive human wave attack
5.	January 13, 1968	Mortar and ground attack on the 188 th company area and perimeter
6.	Tet '68	In support of the 25 th Division's 3/4 Cav assault to reopen Highway 1 and relieve the siege on Bien Hoa Air Base, Ap Cho, Cu Chi City

I Corps

1.	April 28, 1968	Phuoc Yen, commonly referred to as The Stocking because of its appearance from the air
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Reorganization

On July 1, 1968, the 188th was deactivated and designated as C Company 101st Aviation Battalion 'Black Widows.' The Spiders became one of the platoons in the newly formed D Company (gunships) 101st Aviation battalion. Even though D/101 was located at Camp Eagle at this time, the Spiders stayed at LZ Sally to support the C/101 Black Widows. The Black Widows left LZ Sally in April of 1969 and set up shop at their final station, Phu Bai.

The Black Widows and Spiders had built a reputation for getting the SOG and 5th Special Forces teams into and out of some very precarious situations and were often asked for directly to support covert operations. Listed below are the C/101 operations in Northern I Corps.

Black Widows Operation in I Corps 101st Airborne Division (C/101)

Nevada Eagle (Thua Thien Province) (*During Nevada Eagle, the 188 th , 17 th , 200 th , and 272 nd were redesignated as part of the 101 st Airmobile Division, and our new C/101 Black Widows would take over the fight.)	2/68 - 2/69
Somerset Plain (Ashua Valley)	8/4 - 8/21/69
Lam Son 261	9/68 - 4/69
Kentucky Jumper (Thua Thien Province)	3/69 - 8/69
Massachusetts Striker (Thua Thien Province)	4/69 - 8/69
Apache Snow (Ashua Valley)	5/69 - 6/69
Lamar Plain (Tam Ky)	5/69 - 8/69
Montgomery Rendezvous (Ashua Valley)	6/69 - 7/69
Richland Square (Thua Thien Province)	8/69 - 9/69
Republic Square (Thua Thien Province)	8/69 - 12/69
Saturate (Thua Thien Province)	10/69 - 12/69
Randolf Glen (Thua Thien Province)	12/69 - 3/70
Texas Star (Thua Thien Province)	4/69 - 9/69
Jefferson Glen (Thua Thien Province) (Jefferson Glen - Last major US operation in Vietnam)	9/70 - 10/70
Lam Son 719 (Ashua Valley/Laos) (*Lam Son designates Vietnamese Operations.)	3/71 - 5/71
Lam Son 810 (*Lam Son designates Vietnamese Operations.) (101 st Airborne Division was last US Army Division to leave the combat zone in February, 1972. The C/101 Black Widow's were there to the end.)	9/71

Source: Donald Pratt Museum, Fort Campbell, Kentucky.

III Corps Statistics

The Black Widows became operational on June 15, 1967

	June	July	Aug.	1967 Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	1968 (TET) Feb.-March (1)
Sorties Flown	4165	7799	7519	8379	9399	6614	7528	5257	9754
Flight Total	1949	2422	2247	2797	3197	2336	2574	2052	3785
Flight Hours D (H) Model	1583	2114	1990	2225	2373	2267	2106	1647	No Data
Flight Hours B (C) Model	366	308	257	572	824	469	468	405	No Data
Passengers Carried	8704	11365	10885	13194	19608	12695	14068	7147	14418
Cargo Tons	178	1123	1106	119	151	178	92	269	169
VC KBAA	32	--	2	12	16	1	8	7	47
Structures Destroyed	1	1	--	20	9	12	3	1	24
Sampan Destroyed	13	--	--	2	4	2	9	2	2
ACFT Combat Damage	**60	4	14	9	6	12	32	15	27
ACFT Hit	11	14	14	9	6	12	32	42	53
US KIA	***3	8	1	1	2	1	--	--	--
US WIA	21	--	10	1	5	12	1	7	1
MED EVAC	23	21	38	22	26	11	32	72	No Data
Combat Assault Missions	8	1	3	24	20	21	23	3	No Data

**Includes 29 lost as a result of mortar attack 24 June

***KIA's from May

(1) February - 10 March, 1968 - report format changed - did not list MED EVAC or Combat Assaults. **Listen Up:** Record keeping within the company was not very accurate on the number of aircraft hits . . . 188th Aircraft took beaucoup hits on numerous operations that were not reported. This can be confirmed by the men who flew in the unit.

Source: 269th Combat Aviation Battalion Operational Reports Lessons Learned, June 1967 - March 1968

III Corps and I Corps Statistics for the 308th CAB

The Black Widows became operational on April 4 , 1968

Since the Permanent Change of Station move to Camp Eagle occurred during this quarter, the totals are broken down between the III Corps Area of Operations and the I Corps Area of Operations. The 308th did not list totals for each individual company, only the Battalion. The original cast of players were the 188th Assault Helicopter Company (Black Widow's/Spider's), the 17th Assault Helicopter Company (Kingsman/Lancers), and the 200th Assault Support Helicopter Company (Pachyderms) (Chinook). The 272nd Assault Support Helicopter Company (Varsity) (Chinook) was assigned to the 308th on June 6, 1968. The Black Adlers were part of an Aviation build up in northern I Corps to provide air support for the 101st Airborne Division and other major Army units moving into this area of Operations. The original Black Widows and Spiders who had deployed with the company, rotated back to "The World" in April, 1968.

308th Combat Aviation Battalion

Camp Eagle, RVN, APO 96383

	III CORPS 10 Feb - 12 March	I CORPS 1 April - 30 April	Total
1. Battalion Combat Assaults	1	0	1
2. Company Combat Assaults	47	33	80
3. Flying Hours	9,231	5,964	15,195
4. Passengers	41,760	31,675	73,435
5. Cargo (tons)	991	6,896	7,888
6. Sorties	26,212	20,852	47,064
7. Aircraft Damaged (hostile)	40	50	90
8. Damaged (operational)	2	1	3
9. Aircraft destroyed due to hostile act	4	1	5
10. Aircraft missing due to hostile act	0	1	1
11. U.S. KHA	2	1	3
12. U.S. WHA	9	7	16
13. U.S. missing due to hostile action	0	6	6
14. VC KBA (BC)	37	134	171
15. Structures Destroyed	90	24	114
16. Sampans Destroyed	5	0	5
17. Aircraft recovered (CH-47)	N/A	10	10
18. Medical Evacuations	195	142	337

Source: 308th Combat Aviation Battalion Operational Report, 30 April 1968

I Corps Statistics
308th CAB - 159th ASHB - 101st AHB

During this quarter the 308th was redesignated as the 159th ASHB on July 1, 1968. On that same day the 188th became C Company 101st Assault Helicopter Battalion. Our sister company, the 17th, became B/101 of the newly formed Battalion. The 200th ASHC became A Company and the 272nd became B Company of the newly formed 159th Assault Support Helicopter Battalion. This quarterly report covered the 188th through July 1, 1968 and C/101 for the month of July. The 188th Black Window's along with their sister units were instrumental in establishing the 101st Airborne Division as the second Airmobile Division in the US army. This transition symbolized the change from parachutes to helicopters for the 101st Airborne Division. A new Black Window era had arrived.

May 1, 1968 - July 31, 1968	
Sorties Flown	18,281
Troops Lifted	38,531
Cargo Lifted (tons)	1,113
Enemy KIA	102
Structures Damaged	91
Structures Destroyed	51
Sampans Damaged	3
Sampans Destroyed	4
Aircraft Confirmed Lost	4 UH-IH
Aircraft Damaged	4 UH-IC, 17 UH-IH

Source: 159th Assault Support Helicopter Battalion Operational Report, 31 July 1968.

Killed in Action

Location on Vietnam Memorial Wall

Name	Date	Panel	Line	State
188th AHC:				
Richard L. Moore	5-17-67	20E	17	Illinois
Jerry I. Beckham	5-19-67	20E	39	Oklahoma
Harold E. Fetner	5-20-67	20E	58	New York
Joseph W. Allwood	7-31-67	24E	53	Florida
Henry C. Cauthen, Sr.	7-31-67	24E	54	Mississippi
Rodney O. Davie	7-31-67	24E	54	Illinois
Douglas R. Noel	7-31-67	24E	55	North Carolina
James R. Poggemeyer	7-31-67	24E	56	Nebraska
Wayne G. Van Lant	7-31-67	24E	57	California
Robert M. Wallace	7-31-67	24E	57	Ohio
Paul E. Williams	7-31-67	24E	58	Illinois
Alfred J. Smith	8-30-67	25E	72	New Jersey
James T. Donahue, Jr.	9-22-67	26E	111	Illinois
Frank R. Kerbl	10-7-67	27E	65	New Jersey
Ellis M. Bailey	10-11-67	27E	87	Texas
Jimmie W. Green	10-13-67	27E	100	Florida
Boyd E. Morrow	10-13-67	27E	102	Pennsylvania
Robert W. Watts	11-22-67	30E	67	Kentucky
Joe D. Helvey	5-18-68	62E	18	Oklahoma
Leroy McKeever	5-18-68	62E	21	Missouri
C CO 101st AVN:				
Harry Kim	8-5-68	49W	15	California
Richard S. Riley, Jr.	10-24-68	40W	30	New Jersey
David L. Sparks	10-24-68	40W	30	Colorado
Wilofard A. McClain II	3-28-69	28W	74	Texas

Killed in Action

Location on Vietnam Memorial Wall

Eric V. Pulliam	3-28-69	28W	75	Maryland
Name	Date	Panel	Line	State
Ronald F. Ricciardo	3-28-69	28W	75	New York
Willard D. Richardson	8-21-69	19W	90	Tennessee
Joe Carl Shaw	8-21-69	19W	90	New Mexico
Ronald Boysen Baker	2-10-70	14W	119	Pennsylvania
Norman F. Paley	11-24-70	06W	82	Ohio
Robert T. Callan	12-16-70	06W	124	Ohio
Philip D. Sharp	5-23-71	03W	52	California
Steven J. Minkler	7-18-71	03W	110	Washington
Rudolph Stevens	7-18-71	03W	110	Louisiana
Jay Steven Aston	7-18-71	03W	109	Ohio
Former Black Widows:				
Charles C. Windeler, Jr.	4-5-72	02W	130	Georgia
Dan C. Kingman	5-24-72	01W	30	Nebraska

Wounded in Action

This list is not complete

Name	Date
James Stepp	5-19-67
Arnold D. Amorso	6-19-67
Alfred L. Snook	6-19-67
Joseph B. Matt	6-19-67
Stan Moody	6-19-67
Gerard L. Cabigon	6-20-67
George T. Andrews	6-24-67
Roger E. Blankenship	6-24-67
Rodney O. Davie	6-24-67
Edward A. Desisto, Jr.	6-24-67
Lewis T. Hodge	6-24-67
Leroy J. Lamb	6-24-67
Jimmy D. Moody	6-24-67
Don C. Sparks	6-24-67
Gary J. Walker	6-24-67
Hubert Arrowood	6-24-67
James R. Grindstaff	6-24-67
David J. Bryan	6-24-67
Joseph W. Wittner	6-24-67
Humbert A. DeGregory	6-24-67
Jack J. Cooley	6-24-67
Larry T. Sanford	8-7-67
Paul Giving	8-7-67
Richard Cadreau	8-7-67
Victor M. Sebastiano	8-9-67
Gregory L. Brantley	8-16-67
Emery J. Pope	8-18-67

Wounded in Action

This list is not complete

Name	Date
Ross Scott	8-27-67
Charles J. Restivo	8-30-67
James Trueblood	8-30-67
William Sondey	8-30-67
Harold E. Camp	9-15-67
Jesse Johnson	10-10-67
Alfred T. Lagle	10-20-67
Allan R. Dluski	10-25-67
Robert L. Davis	11-3-67
Maurice Charboneau	11-9-67
Phillip Snodgrass	11-9-67
James W. Searcy	11-9-67
Charles M. Graham	11-9-67
Howard Liston	11-9-67
Ed Pettinato	11-9-67
Leo S. Howell	11-9-67
Leroy Lamb	11-17-67
Danny Wooley	11-22-67
Tom Bartleson	11-22-67
Dennis Wolfe	11-25-67
Donald Scribner	12-15-67
Ronald Carpenter	1-1-68
William Stubbs	1-4-68
Gerald Dohrt	1-4-68
John Newcomer	1-4-68
Tim Wingerd	1-4-68
Wesley Gager	1-7-68
Charles Patrick	1-31-68

Wounded in Action

This list is not complete

Name	Date
Geoff Handel	2-12-68
Gary Main	4-6-68
Harold Fugate	5-10-68
? Jackson	5-18-68*
Harold Camp	5-18-68
Harry S. Warren	5-22-68
Robert Spradlin	5-25-68
Robert E. Waggoner	5-27-68
Leo F. Williams III	6-2-68
Freddie Cowens	6-8-68
Doug Spies	7-4-68
Robert Burton	8-5-68
Lonnie Heidtke	4-13-69
Bill Crouch	5-8-70
Roger Caffrey	11-24-70
David Carter	11-24-70
Robert J. Pike	11-24-70
James G. Jarvis, Jr.	5-14-75

*Note: On May 18, 1968 during a murder/suicide incident, five people were wounded by shrapnel in the company area at LZ Sally. Three names unknown.

Combat Slang

No matter what your unit patch was, the troops always hung some sort of nickname on every combat patch designed. They have done it for everyone that has been designed and there is no getting around the humorous approach which, fortunately, the American soldier insists on taking toward life. It made for healthy interaction between commands in the Vietnam Combat Zone. The 1st Aviation Brigade patch, proudly worn by the Black Widows, was commonly referred to as, "The Chicken on a Stick." A few other favorites are listed below:

1st Logistics Command, "The Leaning Out-House"
1st Infantry Division, "The Big Dead One"
Fourth Infantry Division, "The Funky Fourth"
Ninth Infantry Division, "The Flower Power"
25th Infantry Division, "The Electric Strawberry"
101st Airborne Division, "The Pucking Buzzards"
199th Light Infantry Brigade, "The Bloody Pussies"

Chopper Gunner

Words by John Nordenstrom

Music from The Green Berets

Fighting soldiers in the sky
chopper gunners raise hell and die
fighting Charlie and kickin' ass
while all the pilots are smokin' grass

Chorus: Silver wings upon my chest
make me one of America's best
100 men shot at today
and maybe 3 got away

Trained to live off broads and booze
with my M-60's we cannot lose
for we can fight or fly away
and we don't wear no damn beret

Chorus

Back at home my girlfriend waits
her chopper gunner has met his fate
he went down in a burst of flame
Sin Loi Ol' buddy, that's the name of the game

Chorus

Now when my little boy is grown
don't send him out there all alone
out in the jungle with them damn things
just so he can get his wings

188th Theme Song at LZ Sally

Sung to the tune of Johnny Cash's, "There is a Gray Stone Chapel at Folsom"

There was a grey stone chapel at Folsom
but at Sally there was a grey stone crapper

Chorus

We're movin' on, we're movin' on

Hear the beat of a thousand feet
it's the 188th in full retreat

Chorus

We'll soon be gone, we're movin' on

When the VC come
we'll be on the run

Chorus

We're movin' on, we're movin' on

Oh, Black Widow 6 was doin' fine
till he landed his skid on an ole land mine

Chorus

He'll soon be gone, he's movin' on

Mascot by Dick Detra

Soon after June 24's devastating mortar attack, which damaged 29 of the 31 hueys, a change of command took place. Our new XO, Maj. Joe Sites, was directed by battalion to do three specific things. First, build up morale; second, get the troops' billets, bunker line, and airfield revetments in order; and last, but not least, teach the rudiments of formation flying.

With the help of the local Vietnamese day hires, the XO's first order of business was the appropriation of two young puppies. The German shepherd he named SPIDER and the golden short hair mix he named WEB. Home base for our new mascots was the XO's hootch. When the pair began roaming about the area, the aviators welcomed Spider and Web with open arms and plenty of hand-outs. It was common knowledge that the Vietnamese enjoyed dinning on dog meat, but our new mascots were taken off the menu.

It gave the flight crews a warm feeling after a long day of flying, being shot at, or maybe even shot down, to happen upon Spider or Web casually wagging their tails. Whenever the XO was scheduled to fly "Ass and Trash" (slang term used by aviators for LOG flights), he made a point of bringing Spider along for a little flight time.

One afternoon the XO slipped out of the orderly room, jumped into the parked jeep out front and fired it up. Spider was relaxing under one of the rear wheels trying to stay cool and was unaware that he had picked a bad place to hang out. The XO put the jeep into reverse and hit the gas resulting in a high pitched, blood curdling bark as the jeep rolled over Spider. It was a sad day for the Black Widows as Spider was buried along the bunker line with full military honors.

There were a few Regular Line Officers (RLO) and a West Point type who liked to refer to our Warrant Officers as being only "Half an Officer." This attitude resulted in an under current of resentment which, from time to time, caused problems within the company. The 2nd Flight Platoon had a good mix of pilots, crew chiefs, and door gunners, and were lead by the respected and well like 1st Lt. Charlie Maurer. One of the 2nd Flight Platoon Warrants decided to acquire a spider monkey from the local Vietnamese and wanted, in a subtle way, to give it back to the RLO's who were always on their case. To put a little spin on the CO's call sign, CW2 George Jones named the 2nd Platoon mascot, "Phuquer 6." Secured to one of the hootches by a long parachute cord, the monkey had freedom to move about the area. From the beginning, the monkey seemed a little strange and wasn't adapting well to Army life. Besides frightening the hootch maids, who refused to enter any of the tents within his reach, he spared no one from his frequent out bursts, biting, and shit throwing antics. He sought the safety of the rubber trees after being chased out, and, on a few occasions, thrown out of 2nd Platoon hootches.

As time went by, he kept getting worse . . . something along the lines of a raving, deranged, rabies-induced monkey from hell. Before Spiders demise, the monkey would constantly try to mount the male dog. He would also enjoy sitting on your shoulder and vigorously try to hump your ear. Something drastic had to be done . . . so on the night before our exodus north, CW 2 Wesley Gager volunteered to put the monkey out of his, and our, misery. As the monkey watched from his perch high up in a rubber tree, Wesley took aim with his M-2 carbine and blew the 2nd Platoon mascot away. The monkey was then deposited into the closest "honey pot" (used for burning shit), and was cremated.

In March, 1968, shortly after the heavy fighting of Tet '68, the Black Widows moved 450 miles north to a barren grave riddled piece of ground called LZ Sally, home of the 2nd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division. Web was stowed away aboard one of the C-130's transporting our men and equipment into our new northern I Corps Area of Operations. Web blended into his new surroundings as the Black Widows went about the task of transforming, from scratch, a defendable defensive position and their new home.

On May 18, 1968, a disgruntled SP/4 Leroy McKeever made a decision which would result in the unit's only fragging incident. From the time he had arrived at the Unit in October, there were many tell tale signs that he was unstable and should be removed from duty. His request for an emergency leave had been denied, along with being demoted from SP/5 to SP/4 by our CO, Major Jack Johnson, who was at that time out of the country on R&R. The XO, Captain John Schaibley and SFC Joe Helvey, confronted McKeever a short distance from the orderly tent. After a heated discussion prior to which McKeever had removed the safety pin from a grenade, McKeever loosened the grip on the grenade he was holding in his hand and a distinctive "POP" was heard. There was a blur of activity

as everyone scrambled for cover with the exception of SP/4 McKeever and SFC Joe Helvey who froze. The explosion tore into both men sending body parts flying in all directions. Web, drawn to the sounds and smells of the explosion, happened upon one of the larger body parts, a forearm, snatched it up, and headed for the mess tent. Once inside, those present were shocked to see what Web was chewing on. Captain Harley May pulled out his .45 caliber pistol and shot Web dead on the spot . . . another sudden and violent casualty of that crazy war.

The Juicers and the Heads

Marijuana found its way into the company shortly after setting up shop at Dau Tieng. It was cheap and readily available. Vietnamese of all ages, in and round Camp Rainier, tried to sell marijuana to the GI's. The going rate at that time was twenty dollars for a kilo (2.2 pounds). When the company moved north to LZ Sally, marijuana was sold by the carton. The Vietnamese would remove the tobacco from Marlboro and Kool cigarettes and replace it with marijuana. The packs of cigarettes were resealed and reinserted into the carton which was also resealed and sold for ten dollars a carton. You could also trade c-rations, soap, or anything of value, since that's how the Vietnamese usually did business, for the product.

There were those in the ranks who welcomed the chance to try something new, especially if it was against Army regulations. Like alcohol, marijuana helped take the edge off after flying in combat. When the flight crews called it a day, after flying long hours, they were ready for a hot shower, a cold beer, cocktail, or, in some cases, a soda and a joint. Everyone in the company was rationed two beers and two sodas a day. The heads would trade their beer ration to the juicer's for their soda rations. To hide the pungent aroma of the marijuana, the heads usually smoked close by the honey pots. There was always a light show going on at night outside the perimeter as flares, fire fights, artillery fire, gunships, Puff the Magic Dragon, or B-52 Arc Light strikes lit up the sky. Marijuana wasn't smoked in excess in the unit and when you got up at 0-dark thirty each morning, the heads didn't have to deal with the hangovers the juicers felt each morning. Knowing the need to be alert in combat, none of the heads flew under the influence of marijuana.

While at Dau Tieng, there was an incident involving one of the door gunners and 1st Sergeant Ramon DePalm, Sr. One night while inspecting the bunker line, this individual asked TOP if he wanted to share a joint with him inside one of the bunkers while he was on guard duty. Needless to say, TOP immediately called the 25th Infantry Division MP's and had the young soldier arrested and taken away. He was brought up on charges of cultivating, possessing, and using marijuana at his Court Martial hearing. Plants were found under his hootch in the company area. For this individual, the story has a happy ending because in 1967 the United States Military Penal Code did not list marijuana as a prohibited substance. So, the charges were dropped and the case dismissed. TOP made life a living hell for this individual until he finally unloaded him to the 116th AHC during one of our many infusions.

The "Widow's Web" Officer's Club

LZ Sally

The archway in front of the main entrance to the Officer's Club tent at LZ Sally consisted of a pair of crossed main rotor blades. Painted on the floor just inside the entrance was a 101st Airborne Division patch which

was commonly referred to as the "Puking Buzzard" by the 188th pilots. There was a standing rule upon entering the club. If anyone failed to stomp on the Buzzard, they would have to buy the house a round of drinks. When the Black Widows became C/101, the rule was reversed; anyone stepping on the Buzzard would have to buy the house a round of drinks. This rule always generated free drinks, usually from Newbies and Officers from other units. This rule lasted until late 1968 when the C/101 pilots started to accept the 101st as one of us. One of the reasons the Black Widows had hard feelings towards the 101st was that they wanted to take any money that the club had over \$10,000. That money would be transferred to the 101st Club Organization. So, the pilots ate and drank up everything they had over the \$10,000 limit.

Thunderclap

Shortly after arriving at LZ Sally in early June, 1968, to the then 188th AHC, a young RLO 1LT Bob Faires, fresh from flight school, was introduced to the Black Widow **Thunderclap**. This introduction took place in the old Widow Web, the "officers' club" in a good ole GP medium tent with the crossed rotor blades at the entrance. Although I don't believe there is a specific recipe for this famous drink, to the best of my memory (and anyone who has chugged one of these concoctions certainly has a legitimate reason for poor memory) it starts off with a 12 oz beer can which has had the top cut out with a P-38 can opener (we didn't have glasses). Next, who ever happened to be tending bar then began pouring in an ounce or so of what ever booze was behind the bar . . . a little vodka, a little gin, rum, tequila, bourbon, etc. . . . until it was about two inches from the top, then it was topped off with beer! I was told all the new guys had to chug a Thunderclap to prove they were worthy of becoming a Black Widow. Fortunately, I was not going to have to take this test alone because also arriving about the same time was a big strong WO1 named Eric Pentilla (BW 44). (I believe Eric played football at University of Washington or Washington State University; I don't remember which.) I believe the bar tender that evening was RLO Frank Linster (BW 4). On this occasion, it not only became an initiation, but a contest; the RLO against the wobbly one! By the time this initiation was to take place, most of the guys were already half looped and began cheering their man . . the WO's for the wobbly one, the RLO's for me. One of the RLO's shouted, "Come on Bob, show 'em how a real officer does it!" So, I proceeded to chug my Thunderclap and some how managed to get it down without gagging! Eric was much smarter than I, and after a couple of small gulps, put his down to the dismay of all the crusty CWO's. The RLO's all cheered and someone said, "Hell, that's nothing, he can finish Eric's Thunderclap, too!" and shoved the rest of Eric's drink up to my face. Someone told me later I finished that one off, too I don't remember. I was scheduled to fly Peter Pilot (PP) the next morning I believe with WO Bill Crawford (BW 46). After waking me up the next morning, he kept telling me he could find someone else to fly with as I staggered out to the A/C. I kept saying I would be alright as soon as we got up in the air and I got some fresh air. He told me to buckle in the right seat while he completed the pre-flight. I really thought I was going to be OK, but when those old Huey blades started

rotating and that cockpit seat started bouncing up and down, I had to make a quick exit to talk to Ralf down at the bottom of the skid! Needless to say, BW 46 had to call Ops and request a new PP. Looking back, I truly feel I was lucky I didn't die from alcohol poisoning. I think Doc Hanna gave me something that helped me live. I don't ever remember being sick for the rest of my tour . . . no germs in their right mind were about to invade my body! A couple of days later when I sobered up, I did receive counseling from BW 6, Major Henry Dreher, on the proper conduct of an officer. Ironically, a few months later he had to chug a mini Thunderclap of his own at his promotion party to get to that silver oak leaf at the bottom of the glass. Actually, it wasn't a Thunderclap (he outlawed those), it was a full glass of Drambuie, I believe. But, who in the world could believe a story like this? Anyone who drank one and a half **Thunderclaps** surely wouldn't have enough functioning brain cells to remember all this stuff!

When Major Hank Dreher became CO, he started using a 12 ounce A&W root beer mug, which he brought with him to the company, for promotions. The house would pour 12 ounces of the promotee's favorite liquor into the mug, then drop his new rank into the mug sending it to the bottom. He had to drink 12 ounces of liquor before he received his new rank. For those non-drinkers in the unit, 12 ounces of Coke would be used.

Another gimmick the pilots came up with was a hole cut into the side of the tent and a target painted around it using the hole as the bulls eye. After drinking a beer, they would try to throw the empty through the hole. As the evening progressed, there were more cans piling up on the inside of the club than the outside.

