

# HISTORICAL RECAP



## 6th Battalion 33rd Artillery

*Servabo Fidem - "I will keep faith"*

The 33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery Regiment was originally activated as a component of the 11<sup>th</sup> Division of the National Army at Camp Meade, Maryland on 5 July 1918. Four short months later, on 11 November 1918, the Armistice ending World War I was signed in France and the unit was deactivated. It had not gone overseas and its only combat was with the mosquitoes in the Maryland countryside north of Washington, D. C.

On 1 November 1940 the battalion was reorganized as the 33<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery Battalion at Camp Ethan Allen, Vermont and assigned to the First Infantry Division. The battalion fought throughout World War II with the Big Red One, participating in eight major campaigns.

Algeria	Tunisia	Sicily
Normandy	Northern France	Rhineland
Ardenne-Alsace	Central Europe	

The unit made assault landings at Algeria, Sicily and Normandy landing at Omaha Beach on D Day

At the end of the war, the 33<sup>rd</sup> was in Czechoslovakia. The unit moved into Germany with the First Infantry Division and remained there as part of the occupational forces.

During World War II, the 33<sup>rd</sup> participated in 422 days of actual combat, firing 175,000 rounds of 105mm ammunition, taking more than 500 prisoners of war and sustaining 292 casualties. Decorations were awarded to 655 officers and enlisted men.

Unit decorations for World War II action area:

- Streamer, French Croix de Guerre, with palm, embroidered KASSERINE,
- Streamer, French Croix de Guerre, with palm, embroidered NORMANDY, for gallantry during the landing at Omaha Beach on D Day.
- Fouragere in the colors of the French Croix de Guerre (1939–1945)
- Cited in the order of the day of the Belgian Army for action at Mons
- Cited in the order of the day of the Belgian Army for action in the area Eupen-Malmedy.
- Belgian Fourragere (1940)

Excerpts from the history of the 33<sup>rd</sup> during World War II state:

“On 8 November 1942 at 0832 hours, Battery B fired the first American artillery rounds in the European Theater.”

“On 21 February 1943, Cannoneers of the 33<sup>rd</sup> at Kasserine Pass cut the time on fuses to one half second and fired like grape shot into Rommel’s Panzer Grenadier Regiment Africa.”

“In one 45 minute period on 4 August 1943 the Golden Lion’s guns poured 335 rounds of supporting fire into German units defending Tronia, Sicily.”

In 1955, the 33<sup>rd</sup> returned with the First Division to Ft. Riley, Kansas. In 1957 the unit was inactivated when the First Infantry Division was reorganized under the RCCID concept. On 20 April 1960, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Howitzer Battalion, 33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery was reactivated as part of the "Big Red One" and given the mission of training BCTs. In August 1961, the mission of the 2/33rd was changed to one of combat readiness. After successfully completing battery and battalion Army Training Tests the 2/33rd was declared combat ready.

The 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion 33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery was reactivated on 1 September 1967 at Ft. Carson, Colorado as Colonel Robert C. Hixon presented the unit colors to Battalion Commander LTC Frank R. Olcott. The battalion began training the first week of October. Much firing was done in sub zero degree weather and in four feet of snow. On 31 January 1968 the battalion sailed towards Vietnam aboard the USNS Upshur arriving at Red Beach, DaNang on 21 February 1968. The battalion's first round in Vietnam was fired by C Battery on 28 February 1968 from Marine Camp Brooks in support of the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division.

On 4 March 1968 the battalion deployed to LZ Sharon near Quang Tri. The first mortal casualties were suffered on 4 April 1968 when enemy artillery rounds slammed in to the A Battery position at Ca Lu at noon. Five men were wounded and two were killed. The battalion made its first air move on 2 May 1968 when A Battery was air lifted into the A Shau Valley. On 5 May 1968, a Recon Sergeant working in the field was wounded and two Service Battery bunker guards at LZ Sharon were wounded by incoming rocket fragments. Five Headquarters Battery personnel were wounded on 8 May.

LTC William W. Hicks assumed command on 1 June 1968.

The battalion fired its 100,000<sup>th</sup> round in Vietnam on 28 July 1968, 157 days after arriving in country.

In November 1968 the battalion headquarters elements displaced from LZ Sharon to Phu Bai.

LTC George R. Rowan, Jr. assumed command on 28 November 1968.

LTC Everett B. Hoper assumed command on 17 July 1969.

The Meritorious Unit Commendation was presented to the unit on 20 July 1969 for distinguished Vietnam Service between 21 February and 31 October 1968.

The battalion's inactivation began 6 November 1969 when B Battery was inactivated and its guns and equipment were transferred to the 1<sup>st</sup> ARVN Division Artillery. The ceremonies, attended by both American and Vietnamese officials, marked the first actual transfer of equipment in the Vietnamization of the war.

On 15 December 1969 a ceremony was held commemorating the firing of the 400,000<sup>th</sup> round by the battalion in Vietnam. Colonel Robert C. Hixon, CO, XXIV Corps Artillery, Colonel R. C. Cartwright, CO, 108<sup>th</sup> Artillery Group and LTC Everett B. Hooper fired the symbolic rounds from A Battery's position at Strong Point A-4.

LTC Ross L. Duncan assumed command on 1 January 1970 and the following day the battalion received notification that it would return to the Continental United States for inactivation as a result of Vietnamization of the war.

Major Donald B. Williams assumed command on 13 February 1970, and a few days later, on 21 February 1970, the battalion held its farewell review.

After serving in Vietnam for only a few days more than two years, the battalion's firing batteries occupied more than 50 positions from DaNang to the Demilitarized Zone and from the Laotian Border to the South China Sea. The battalion fired over 435,000 rounds supporting the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry, 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne, 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Divisions, separate Brigades of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne and 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Divisions, and the 1<sup>st</sup> ARVN Division as well as several ARVN Regiments and is credited with killing 378 (confirmed) and 98 (probable) enemy soldiers and destroying nearly 300 enemy structures including two complete enemy villages.

While in Vietnam, the battalion conducted 16 Fire Direction Officer Schools and 14 Forward Observer Schools for XXIV Corps Artillery, graduating a total of 156 Fire Direction Officers and 117 Forward Observers. The battalion also operated a flash central and fire support coordination center for the defense of Phu Bai Combat Base against enemy rocket attacks.

Battalion statistics for the period from 21 February 1968 to 28 February 1970:

Battery	Missions	Rounds fired
A	18,800	178,997
B	18,809	123,206
C	14,355	132,962
Total	51,964	435,165
Combat Casualties	Killed	4
	Wounded	27
Non-Combat Deaths		2
Moves		56
Days in Vietnam Action		738

*From historical report written by Captain Frank J. Kytte dated 16 July 1969 and Captain Lancy O. Burns dated 18 February 1970 with modifications by Clyde Lewandowski based on information from the National Archives*

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# **CHRONICLE                      6th Battalion 33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery**

**1-Sep 67**        Unit is activated

**27-Sep-67**      Personnel on Station Date

**Oct-67            Historical Report**

The battalion was activated on 1 September 1967, with LTC Frank R. Olcott taking command at ceremonies held on 29 September. Colonel Robert Hixon, 46th Artillery Group Commander, presented the unit colors to Colonel Olcott. Following the presentation of colors, Major Edward Rembecki and Captain William Sebert, both of battalion S-3, were presented Army Commendation Medals. Training for the enlisted men began on 2 October 1967. Staff Sergeant Johnny Whitt, CBR instructor and Specialist Five Robert Leonardis, fire director computer, were the first enlisted men promoted to their present rank in the battalion.

**2-Oct-67**        Basic Unit Training is commenced

**Nov-67            Historical Report**

General Harold K. Johnson, Army Chief of Staff, visited Ft. Carson November 3, 1967 and received a briefing on the battalion as part of his day long tour. LTC Frank R. Olcott, Battalion Commander, who spoke on the formation and training of the two-month old unit, greeted the four star general. Following the briefing in a field tent near the battalion motor pool, the general was shown 105mm howitzers being set up in formation by the firing batteries. The battalion fired its first shot on 6 November 1967 as SFC Leslie Roe of A Battery yanked the rope lanyard of a 105mm howitzer. A series of field problems and practice ATT's were also conducted during the month.

**13-Nov-67**      Advanced Unit Training is commenced

**Dec-67            Historical Report**

The freezing weather and heavy snow coincided with various field problems and the Army training test during December. Besides the two-day field junkets where tents were set up in four feet of snow, battalion soldiers also received their first classes on the M-16. Moving out to the rifle range with their new weapons, the men encountered several feet of powdery snow and 7 degree temperature while trying to find the targets. Also included during the firings was familiarization with all weapons in the battalion. In the latter part of the month, medical shot records were brought up to date and a satisfactory rating was received for the two-day battalion Army training test. After returning from the field on 20 December, equipment was stowed and most battalion soldiers departed for a two-week Christmas leave.

**6-Dec-67**        News Release    by Sp 4 Richard Benson

The 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery may be new to Fort Carson, but not short on combat decorations. Activated in September here, the unit was originally organized in 1918 at Camp

Meade, Maryland. In 1940 it was assigned to the 1st Infantry Division and it was during World War II that the battalion won all of its decorations for valor.

One particular instance is cited in a history booklet of the 1st Infantry Division, Artillery. In April of 1943, Second Lieutenant Geoffrey Ferris led a forward observer party into action near Beja, Tunisia. When he saw that the area was being swept by enemy fire, he ordered his men back and proceeded on alone. Lt. Ferris was mortally wounded trying to complete the mission and was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. Ferris Barracks at Erlangen, Germany is named in his honor.

During World War II the 33rd Artillery participated in eight campaigns from Africa to Europe. The unit was awarded three French Croix de Guerre's and the Belgian Fourragere for its combat action.

More recently, General Harold K. Johnson, Army Chief of Staff, visited the 6th during his November tour of the post. The four-star general was briefed on the unit by LTC Frank R. Olcott, Battalion Commander, and watched artillery pieces set up in practice formation.

The battalion fired its first shot since activation on 6 November 1967, as SFC Leslie Roe of A Battery pulled the lanyard of a 105.

**19-Dec-67** Army Training Test is successfully completed

**20-Dec-67** Personnel are released for leave

### **Jan-68 Historical Report**

The beginning of the month found most of the battalion soldiers still home on leave. As soon as the men returned from leave, the tempo increased as tactical equipment was loaded into boxes and put on vehicles. When all vehicles had been stenciled with code numbers and their loads secured, drivers took them to the post rail yards where they were driven onto flat cars for shipment.

Personal equipment was inspected and packed into duffle bags, with one sent ahead and the other carried on board ship by the individual. Intermixed with packing during the month, classes were held on Vietnam related subjects, final shots were given along with a physical proficiency test.

A massing of battalion soldiers took place on 30 January 1968, reviewed by General Michaelis, 5th Army Commander, and General Corcoran, Ft. Carson Commander. The following day found 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion soldiers on Colorado soil for the last time and the beginning of their odyssey to the Far East.

**2-Jan-68** Return from Christmas/POR leave

**3/6 Jan-68** ORI Phase I, 100% inspection of all TO&E equipment and station property by Ft. Carson (IG) ORI Team

**6/9 Jan-68** Vehicles are processed and equipment is packed and loaded for rail shipment

**10 Jan-68** Equipment Readiness Date (ERD/ESRD)

- 10 Jan-68** Vehicles and equipment (126 vehicles, 18 howitzers, 20 trailers and 12 conex containers) are shipped by rail from Ft. Carson to Beaumont, Texas with an escort detachment of 1 MSG and 4 EM
- 17/19 Jan-68** Operational Readiness Inspection Phase II, 100% inspection of all personnel and medical records is completed
- 19 Jan-68** Circle Red TAT (Equipment to accompany troops) is shipped from Ft. Carson to Long Beach, California
- 22/25 Jan-68** Battalion fires direct and indirect service practice with borrowed howitzers
- 25-Jan-68** USS James L. Likes with vehicles equipment and a 5 man escort sails from Beaumont, Texas.
- 2/29-Jan-68** Battalion continues POR and special RVN training.
- 30-Jan-68** Operational Readiness Inspection Phase III, in-ranks inspection of entire battalion by CG, 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division and Ft. Carson. Battalion is assigned 55% of its officers and warrants as well as 88% of its authorized enlisted strength.
- 30-Jan-68** Commanding General, 5<sup>th</sup> Army is briefed by Battalion CO, and inspects the Battalion in ranks.
- 31-Jan-68** Personnel Readiness Date
- 31-Jan-68** Main Body departs Ft. Carson for long Beach in 4 aircraft

Advance Party:	Pick-up point	Peterson Field
	Time	Afternoon of 5 Feb 68
	Destination	Bien Hoa, RVN
	Date due in country	15 Feb 68

Main Body:	Pick-up point	Peterson Field
	Method of transport	3 plane loads to Long Beach, California
	CAM 820	depart 0600 31 Jan 68 – arrive 0700 31 Jan 68
	CAM 821	depart 1300 31 Jan 68 – arrive 1400 31 Jan 68
	CAM 822	depart 2000 31 Jan 68 – arrive 2100 31 Jan 68
	One plane load from Stapleton International, Denver, CO	
Bus to Denver	depart 2015 31 Jan 68 – arrive 2230 31 Jan	
CAM 823	depart 2345 31 Jan 68 – arrive 0400 1 Feb 69	

Departure Point:	Place	Pier 13 at Long Beach, California
	Date	1 Feb 68

First leg:	Destination EDA	Okinawa 14 Feb 68
Second leg:	Destination EDA	Vung Tau ( <i>changed to DaNang enroute</i> ) 21 Feb 68
Total elapsed time of voyage 21 days		
Parent unit:	54 <sup>th</sup> Artillery Group located at Xuan Loc, RVN	
Host Unit:	7 <sup>th</sup> Battalion, 9 <sup>th</sup> Arty located at Bearcat, RVN	
Equipment:	Departed FCN	10 Jan 68 <i>FCN – Ft. Carson</i>
	Departed Beaumont	24 Jan 68
	No interim stops – 5 escorts accompanied	
Red TAT: (equipment)	Departed FCN	1500 hours 19 Jan 68 Will accompany main body ship
WABTOC: (personnel)	Departure long Beach Arrival in country	First week in February 68 Approx 28 days out of Long Beach
Advance Party Members:	CO S-3  PBO S-4 Pers. Off.	LTC Olcott MAJ Rembecki SGM Connors Mr. Fair SSG DeFillipo Mr. Hodges
HEADQUARTERS:	Asst. Commo Off Commo Sgt. Supply Sgt.	Lt. Joseph M/Sgt Whitfield SSG Dawson
A	Officer Supply Sgt. RTO	Lt. Dutcher Sgt. Reier Sp/4 Stracker
B	Officer Supply Sgt. RTO	Lt. Wade SSG Gronsberg PFC Warfield
C	Officer Supply Sgt. RTO	Lt. Hogen Sgt. Reagor Sp/4 Lard

SVC	Ammo. Officer	Lt. Sackett
	Maint. Officer	Mr. Cardinal
	Bn Food Svc. NCO	SSG Metcalf
	Supply Sgt.	Sgt. Burns
	RTO	Sp/4 Lesbee
	Mechanic	Sgt. Clark

Guard for rail loaded equipment

HEADQUARTERS	M/Sgt Younger
A	Pfc. Schultz
B	Cpl. Allen
C	Pfc. Munn
SVC	Cpl. Stark

### **Feb-68 Historical Report**

The 6/33<sup>rd</sup> joined the Navy for the first three weeks of February as it sailed across the Pacific enroute to Vietnam on the U.S.N.S Upshur.

After a few days at sea most of the artillerymen gained their sea legs and became used to the rocking and rolling of the ship. The Upshur made its first stop in Okinawa for a six-hour layover to refuel. Back on the high seas, the 6/33<sup>rd</sup> received orders re-routing it to DaNang. The ship arrived in DaNang harbor on 20 February 1968 in the afternoon and the following day the battalion loaded onto a Navy landing craft to come ashore. During the 45-minute ride to Camp Brooks, battalion soldiers got their first look at Vietnam as they passed through villages and rice paddies in the hilly countryside.

Battalion soldiers found the blowing sand their main problem as they took up residence in field tents at the Marine camp. Artillery pieces and vehicles arrived at DaNang harbor on the 25th, with the firing batteries moving out to their positions on the 27<sup>th</sup> of the month.

The battalion fired its first round in Vietnam on 28 February in support of the 1st Marine Division.

- 1-Feb-68** Main Body (432 Officers & EM) commanded by Battalion XO sails from Long Beach aboard USNS Upshur
- 2-Feb-68** With Tet Offensive and subsequent transportation backlog, Advance Party departure is delayed from 5 Feb to 9 Feb
- 4-Feb-68** Battalion CO and PBO depart Ft. Carson for Travis AFB and the Republic of Vietnam
- 6-Feb-68** Battalion CO and PBO arrive in Bien Hoa, Vietnam
- 7/8-Feb-68** Battalion CO arrives at Bearcat and is briefed by CO 7/9 Arty, the sponsor Battalion, inspects the proposed new Battalion area and meets the CO 54<sup>th</sup> Arty Group



- 9-Feb-68** CG II Field Force Arty informs CO that Battalion may be diverted north to DaNang. Diversion is confirmed by Arty Branch USARV at 1730 hours
- 9-Feb-68** Advance Party (25 Off & EM) departs Ft. Carson by MATS C-141
- 10-Feb-68** Battalion CO departs Bearcat for DaNang
- 10-Feb-68** While in flight, the advance party is diverted from Bien Hoa to DaNang
- 11 Feb-68** Advance party arrives in DaNang, joins Battalion CO at HQ III MAF
- 12/18-Feb-68** Advance party is in DaNang fighting for mission assignment and staging area.
- 17-Feb-68** Main body lands at Okinawa and departs the same day.
- 18-Feb-68** While at sea, the main body is diverted from Vung Tau to DaNang
- 19-Feb-68** Advance party arranges for staging area in Fleet Logistical Command compound, Red Beach, 5 miles north of DaNang
- 20-Feb-68** Main body arrives in DaNang harbor
- 21-Feb-68** Main body disembarks by LCM, moves by cattle car to Red Beach
- 24-Feb-68** Battalion is temporarily assigned OPCON 1<sup>st</sup> MARDIV. On opening of Highway One, prepares to move north to Quang Tri, OPCON 1<sup>st</sup> Can Div
- 25-Feb-68** USS James L. Likes arrives in DaNang with vehicles and equipment

**26-Feb-68 News Release CAMP BROOKS, DANANG**

The 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery, formerly assigned to the 46<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Group at Fort Carson, Colorado arrived in Vietnam 21 February and set up temporary quarters here at a Marine Camp outside of DaNang. Battalion soldiers arrived here after a 19-day voyage from Long Beach, California, aboard the USNS Upshur. Commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Frank R. Olcott, the artillery battalion was organized at Fort Carson in September 1967 and departed there in January of this year.

The unit was delayed in getting off the troop ship once it arrived at DaNang so that tents could be erected at the base. On the way to the base camp the men passed by villages with brightly colored temples, waving children, and roadside shrines thus getting their first look at the hilly countryside. Arriving at the camp, the men secured their tents by sandbagging them and building bunkers close by.

Battalion vehicles and artillery pieces arrived here 25 February, and are being readied for deployment. Initial plans call for the three firing batteries to support the 1st Marine Division in the outlying areas of DaNang.

**26/27-Feb-68** Equipment is unloaded with no major loss or damage. Batteries are deployed in support of 1<sup>st</sup> MARDIV. A & C Batteries emplace to the vicinity of Fleet Logistical Command and Red Beach, north of DaNang. B Battery convoys to Hill 55, approximately 15 Km southwest DaNang

**27-Feb/3-Mar-68** Battalion is OPCON 11<sup>th</sup> Regt (Arty), 1<sup>st</sup> MAR DIV

**28-Feb-68** 1615 C Battery fires the Battalion's first round in combat in support of the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division

### **Mar-68 Historical Report**

The beginning of March found the 6/33<sup>rd</sup> located at Camp Brooks in DaNang. The battalion shortly received orders sending it north, and on March 4th, following a sky rocket send off of incoming rounds, began a two day convoy to Quang Tri. On the first day battalion vehicles, along with borrowed five ton Marine trucks loaded with Conex containers, journeyed along Highway 1 through the Hai Van and along the coast.

After staying overnight in Phu Bai, the battalion passed through the city of Hue, which still lay in ruins following the Tet Holiday offensive. That afternoon, the unit arrived on the outskirts of Quang Tri, and set up headquarters at Landing Zone Sharon.

On 15 March, C Battery moved to Camp Evans with A Battery deploying to Ca Lu on 25 March. B Battery remained at Utah Beach on the Gulf of Tonkin. By the end of the month over 19,000 rounds had been fired since arriving in Vietnam.

**3-Mar-68** Highway One opens, Battalion is alerted to move by road from DaNang, through Hue, to Quang Tri, on 4-5 March

**4-Mar-68** Battalion, less B Battery, is subjected to 122mm rocket attacks at 0130 hours and 0715 hours while in the Fleet Logistics Command compound

**4-Mar-68** Battalion conducts road march 90 Km up Hwy #1 to Hue-Phu Bai with 125 organic vehicles, 18 howitzers and 16 ammo and water trailers. Because the unit is directed to deploy without cargo trailers, the battalion convoy is supplemented with 17 borrowed USMC 5-ton trucks

**4-Mar-68** While approximately 25 Km north of Hai Van Pass, the head of the column is subjected to a 5-minute attack by 82mm mortars

**4/8-Mar-68** Nine (9) Forward Observers attend the FO school at An Khe.

**5-Mar-68** Battalion spends the night at Phu Bai then continues its road march 85 Km from Hue-Phu Bai to Quang Tri. Battalion completes the 175 Km road march with all vehicles and trailers (one ¾ ton truck is towed in with convoy)

**5-Mar-68** Firing batteries are deployed south of Quang Tri. A Battery at LZ Betty, reinforcing 2/19 Arty; B Battery at Utah Beach, reinforcing 1/77 Arty; C Battery at LZ Jane reinforcing 1/77 Arty; Headquarters & Service at LZ Sharon. As

areas are subject to nightly rocket and mortar attack, the first priority is digging in, sandbagging and building overhead cover.

- 6-Mar-68** Battalion is assigned to 108<sup>th</sup> Arty Group, Dong Ha, OPCON 1<sup>st</sup> Cav Div. Mission: General Support, Reinforce 1<sup>st</sup> Cav Div Arty
- 15-Mar-68** LZ Sharon is subjected to enemy mortar attack. Approx 20 rounds land just outside the Headquarters Battery perimeter. LZ Jane is subjected to rocket and mortar attack. From here on, Battalion is subjected to recurring harassing attacks by rockets, mortars and small arms.
- 15-Mar-68** 0830 C Battery is alerted to displace from LZ Jane to LZ Evans. The move is completed at 1600 hours. Mission: reinforce fires of 1/21 Arty.
- 17-Mar-68** C Battery on LZ Evans is subjected to 5 rounds 122mm rocket. The Battalion has yet to suffer its first casualty as result of enemy action.
- 21-Mar-68** 0015 6/33rd guards at LZ Sharon bunker #19 report 3 rounds of incoming small arms fire at 15 second intervals.
- 25-Mar-68** A Battery displaces to LZ Stud, 3 Km north of Ca Lu and 12 Km east of Khe Sahn

**17-Mar-68 News Release QUANG TRI, Vietnam.**

The 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 33<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery, formerly of Fort Carson, Colorado, arrived in Vietnam 21 February, after a 19-day voyage from Long Beach, California, aboard the USNS Upshur. The 105 Howitzer Battalion fired its first rounds in country from the DaNang area but was later moved north to Quang Tri in the I Corps sector.

The unit was organized in September 1967 at Ft. Carson, Colorado, under the command of LTC Frank R. Olcott. While in training during November, the battalion was visited by General Harold K. Johnson, Army Chief of Staff, who viewed the firing batteries in a practice formation and talked with the gunners.

Since arriving in Vietnam the three firing batteries have fired nearly 8,000 rounds of harassment and interdiction fire as well as provided support of infantry operations. The battalion is presently assigned to the 108th Artillery Group under the operational control of the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile).

**Apr-68 Historical Report**

The battalion suffered its first mortal casualties Thursday April 4th, when they were hit by enemy artillery rounds during a daylight attack on A Battery at Ca Lu. Killed were PFC Douglas Fulcher, and PFC Lars Sundell. Five others were wounded during the attack that sent in four rounds during the noon hour. Ca Lu is located 13 miles east of Khe Sanh.

On 6 April, 1st SGT Ernest Graham of Headquarters Battery and mess sergeant SFC Ramon Santiago were presented Army Commendation medals for outstanding service with their former units. The awards were presented by Colonel David L. Jones, 108th Artillery Group Commander.

The month found the three firing batteries engaged in operations between Hue and Quang Tri, with A Battery moving into the A Shau Valley by air 2 May. By the end of April, the battalion howitzers had fired over 43,000 rounds.

With A Battery in the A Shau, C Battery at LZ Sally and preparing to move again and B Battery at FSB Panther south of Hue, the firing batteries are deployed in a right triangle with a base of 35 Km. and north-south leg of 95 Km. Meanwhile Headquarters and Service Batteries remain at LZ Sharon with the following responsibilities:

- (a) Battalion controls and checks firing data for the two non organic batteries on LZ Jane, (A/1/40 and A/1/77), checks data for 1 ARA Battery and controls six dusters on LZ Sharon. It provides (\*) air advisories for the area and coordinates with ARVN, the USMC Artillery at Quang Tri Air Strip and the LZ Defensive Coordinator for the defense of LZ Sharon.
- (b) It provides Class I, III and V support for the artillery elements on Jane (A/1/40 and A/1/77) and Class V for C/6/33 at LZ Sally.
- (c) Battalion provides a sling out team and support personnel to 2/19 Artillery (Rear) at Camp Evans for Class I, III and V support to A/6/33 in the A Shau Valley.
- (d) Battalion provides Class I, II and IV, plus administrative and maintenance support to its own widespread batteries.
- (e) Battalion has 1 LNO and 3 FO teams OPCON to 1<sup>st</sup> Cav Div Arty in the A Shau with the 3<sup>rd</sup> ARVN Regimental Task Force.
- (f)\* Battalion has one LNO and 3 FO teams with the ARVN Airborne Task force at LZ Vehegel OPCON to 1<sup>st</sup> Div Arty.
- (g) The battalions remaining 3 FOs are employed by C Battery in its DS mission with 2/17 Cav.
- (h)\* Battalion provides 1st CAV Div Arty with two full time aerial observers.
- (i) Battalion maintains a radio relay element at Camp Evans to facilitate quick response to the requirements of its wide spread elements.
- (j) Battalion maintains nine perimeter bunkers on LZ Sharon (\*) and recently established a counter rocket/mortar OP at Sharon control Tower.
- (k) Battalion mans a central supply facility and a rear supply and storage area for each of the firing batteries.

NOTE: Asterisked commitments were volunteered by the Battalion for training and experience.

**1-Apr-68** C Battery displaces from LZ Evans to LZ Betty (south)

**1-Apr-68** Battalion begins officer and enlisted infusion program.

**1-Apr-68** A Battery fires 314 rounds in a four minute zone fire, 3 deflections, Landing Zone preparation for 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade Airmobile assault SW of Khe Sahn. Later the battery fires three more preparations expending 811 rounds in 12 minutes. A Battery is highly commended for having out-shot the 1<sup>st</sup> Cav in both volume and accuracy.

**4-Apr-68** The Battalion suffers its first casualties. Incoming artillery fire (152mm) (*another account shows 152 crossed out and replaced by 130mm*) on A Battery's LZ Stud position results in 2 KIA and 5 WIA. PFC Douglas Fulcher, and PFC Lars

Sundell were killed while PFC Steven D. Swinny and PFC Jimmy L. Pipkins were among the wounded.

*(19 May 68 108<sup>th</sup> Artillery Group General Orders #6 shows Purple Heart awarded to PFC Bobby W. Brooks, PFC. Frank H. Filoon, Pipkins and Swinny)*

*“Just for a point of reference, I was assigned to the 7th Bn, 15th FA at Ft Bragg in October 1966 as the Chief of Bn FDC. We deployed to Vietnam in June 1967 and our Rear Base Camp was at Phu Cat with the 41st Arty Group. HHB and the Bn TOC moved up to LZ Uplift along with our B Btry (8" Howitzers) to support the 1st Air Cav Division. During TET 1968 I was promoted to E-7 and transferred to the 1st Bn, 30th FA and moved up north to I CTZ at Camp Evans. In late March 1968, A Btry, 6th Bn, 33rd FA was attached to the 1st Bn, 30th FA, 1st Air Cavalry Division for Operation Pegasus to save the US Marines at Khe Sanh. My Bn FDC Section was designated as the 1st Cav DIVARTY Forward and we controlled all of the Artillery for that operation out of LZ Stud. On 4 April I was standing in a chow line to eat lunch which was our first hot meal in 10 days. We were on a little hill at LZ Stud and A/6/33rd was just to the northeast of us about 300 meters when I heard rounds go overhead. I had heard a lot of incoming and outgoing rounds and I knew this was not good. Those two 130mm rounds landed on A/6/33rd FA and those rounds caused the first KIAs your unit suffered (PFC Lars P. Sundell & SP4 Douglas E. Fulcher). I'm fairly certain there were several that were wounded. The next two rounds landed behind us and hit the Re-Arm & Refuel Point for our 2nd Bn, 20th FA (ARA) Blue MAX. Quickly 2.75mm Rockets were going off in every direction plus the gas blivets were exploding. It was only a few years ago that we learned that a Blue Max gunship Hunter-Killer Team waiting to land and Re-arm/Refuel spotted the NVA FO team that was adjusting the fire and knocked them out. Also during that time I was volunteered by my Bn CO to be an Air Observer for a couple of days and I shot several Fire Missions with A/6/33rd FA and others. The story about how I was volunteered to be an AO involves me and the FDO for A/6/33rd FA. We'll have to chat about it sometime as you probably know who the FDO was for A/6/33rd FA.”*  
*Daniel P. Gillotti, Chief of Bn FDC 1st Bn, 30th FA*

*I found and talked with the FO that called in A batteries' fire mission that day that over 800 rounds were fired. I asked him if he remembered what the target was that day...he said it was at least a regiment of nva with trucks and a few tanks...not a lz prep ( we never fired anywhere near 800 rounds on a prep and we fired a lot of them...I talked to Lt. Mages, who was A Battery XO at the time and confirmed that was the target. Mages was a friend of the FO, Lt. Esch, and was told at the time what the target was...(we figured the shelling we took on the 4th, was retaliation!) Bob Eunson, A/6/33*

**4-Apr-68** Battalion's mission is modified: Direct support to 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade (-). Battalion controls fires of two 105 Battery's, one Platoon of 155 Howitzers, 1 Battery of

155 Guns (USMC), one Platoon of 8” Howitzers (USMC), four M-16 dusters and one Battery of Aerial Rocket Artillery.

- 5-Apr-68** C Battery displaces from LZ Betty (South) to LZ Sharon
- 6-Apr-68** Battalion provides 1 LNO (1LT Beach) and 3 FO teams (Springer, Oliver & Matte) to the ARVN Airborne Task force designated to link up with Marines at Khe Sahn.
- 6-Apr-68** At 1445 hours, A Battery fires its 10,000<sup>th</sup> round in combat
- 7-Apr-68** Chaplain holds memorial service for A Battery personnel who were killed on LZ Stud

**7-Apr-68 News Release QUANG TRI, Vietnam News Release**

Firing as many as 1,100 rounds per day, A Battery of the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery, took part in a combined forces drive to clear Highway 9 and re-establish a supply route into Khe Sanh. Under code name Pegasus, Army and Marine units, along with a South Vietnamese task force, began clearing the road on April 1st. On the fourth day of the operation, A Battery came under a surprise artillery attack, which killed PFC Douglas Fulcher, 21, of Tacoma, Va., and PFC Lars Sundell, 21, of Belmont, Calif., plus wounding five others, when an enemy round hit 35 meters from their gun emplacement.

In preparing landing zones for airmobile assaults by elements of the 1st Air Cavalry Division, the battery fired 811 rounds in 12 minutes and in another fire mission, 314 rounds in three minutes. Commanded by Captain Robert D. Parker, A Battery moved to its present location at Ca Lu, 13 miles east of Khe Sanh, on 25 March.

The battalion set up headquarters near Quang Tri, following a two-day motor convoy from DaNang on 4 March. On the first day of the journey, the convoy received incoming mortar fire, but suffered no casualties as it traveled along coastal rice fields on Highway 1. Battalion Howitzers rolled through Hue on the second day, while Marine infantrymen and Army tanks still pushed through the rubble filled streets of the former royal capital following the Tet Holiday offensive.

- 9-Apr-68** At 0200 hours, C Battery fires its 10,000<sup>th</sup> round in combat
- 11-Apr-68** C Battery’s “Vagabonds” displace to a position beyond the wire and 300m west of Battalion Headquarters on LZ Sharon. 2/8 Cav deploys an infantry company for the Battery’s protection.
- 12-Apr-68** As of 0001 hours, in 45 days of combat support, the Battalion has fired 28,345 rounds.
- 14-Apr-68** 1435 Easter Sunday the Battalion fires its 30,000<sup>th</sup> round in combat.

- 15-Apr-68** A Battery rendezvous with Headquarters at LZ Sharon enroute from the Khe Sahn area to LZ Jane
- 15-Apr-68** Battalion provides LNO (CPT Frazier) to 3<sup>rd</sup> Regt 1<sup>st</sup> ARVN Div, FO's are scheduled to follow.
- 15/18-Apr-68** One officer and seven enlisted men attend the FADAC Operation and Maintenance school at Americal Division's Headquarters in Chu Lai. Two of the EM are radio mechanics organic to the unit and attend the FADAC repair phase of the course.
- 16-Apr-68** A, Headquarters and Service Batteries are assigned the mission of reinforcing the 1<sup>st</sup> Air Cav Div Arty. B and C Batteries reinforce 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. Div Arty.
- 16-Apr-68** LNO and FO teams return from LZ Snake at Khe Sanh
- 16-Apr-68** A Battery displaces to LZ Jane, reinforcing 1/21 Arty
- 17-Apr-68** C Battery "Vagabonds" displace to Phong Diem, in the vicinity of LZ Evans, DS 2/17 Cav (101<sup>st</sup> Abn. Div). Battery deploys three FO teams (Campbell, Toups and Stevens)
- 17-Apr-68** B Battery finally leaves Utah (Wunder) Beach, rendezvous LZ Evans enroute to Gia Le to reinforce 101<sup>st</sup> Div Arty
- 18-Apr-68** C Battery "Vagabonds" displace from Phong Diem to LZ Sally, mission is unchanged
- 18-Apr-68** B Battery moves to Gia Le
- 19-Apr-68** Battalion assumes control of artillery on LZ Jane and is alerted to the possibility of employing TAC CP. Battalion controls the fires of 2-105 Battery's (A/6/33 & C/1/77) 1 Battery of 155 Howitzer (C/1/30) and one Platoon of 155 Guns (USMC)
- 19-Apr-68** B Battery displaces to FSB Panther. Mission is to reinforce 101<sup>st</sup> Div Arty
- 19-Apr-68** Battalion provides LNO (CPT Hawkins) and 3 FO teams (Springer, Matte and Hogen) to ARVN Task Force. The mission is to represent and adjust the fires of 101<sup>st</sup> Div Arty
- 21-Apr-68** Battalion recalls CPT Frazier, provides LNO Team (1LT Beach) and 3 FO teams (Stringer, Dutcher, Wade) to 3<sup>rd</sup> Regt 1<sup>st</sup> ARVN Div – OPCON 1<sup>st</sup> Cav Div Arty

**23-Apr-68** C Battery with an attached platoon of 155 howitzers displaces to LZ Belcher on Highway 1 midway between Evans and Quang Tri, continuing its mission of DS to 2/17 Cav, 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. Div.

**27-Apr-68 News Release** QUANG TRI, Vietnam Drive to open land route to Khe Sanh Firing as many as 1,100 rounds per day, A Battery of the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion 33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery took part in the successful drive to clear Highway 9 and re-establish a supply route to Khe Sanh. In preparing landing zones for airmobile assaults by elements of the 1st Cavalry Division, the battery fired 811 rounds in 12 minutes and in another fire mission, 314 rounds in three minutes. Commanded by Captain Robert D. Parker, the battery operated from Ca Lu, 13 miles east of Khe Sanh.

The battalion has set up headquarters near Quang Tri City following a two-day motor convoy from DaNang in early March. On the first day of the journey the convoy received incoming mortars but suffered no casualties as it traveled along coastal rice fields on Highway 1. Battalion howitzers rolled through Hue on the second day while Marine infantrymen and Army tanks still pushed through the rubble filled streets after the Tet Holiday offensive. The three firing batteries are presently engaged in operations between Hue and Quang Tri.

**28-Apr-68** Lt. Toups, C Battery FO, is wounded by enemy mortar fire while employed with 2/17 Cav. He is treated and returned to duty.

**28-Apr-68** C Battery displaces to LZ Sally, DS mission continues.

**28 -Apr-68 News Release**

Since arriving in Vietnam, Chaplain (Captain) Roger L. Bradley of Springfield, Mass. has found that his flock has increased in size immensely. In addition to the Sunday services for the 6/33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery soldiers, Chaplain Bradley visits the local hospitals and orphanages during the week. One of the orphanages he visits is run by Pastor Ngo Tan Phi of Tin Lanh Church, which is located on the outskirts of Quang Tri. Pastor Phi, who likes to be called Phillip by the Americans, takes care of 18 orphans plus five of his own children with the help of his wife on their one-acre plot. The 40 year old Vietnamese pastor takes great pride in his new concrete church completed with the help of local citizens and U.S. Army soldiers on their off duty time. Work is now in progress for a combination concrete home and orphanage next to the church. The Phi family and the orphans presently live in two separate bamboo structures in back of the church. During his visits, Chaplain Bradley brings everything from hymnals printed in Vietnamese to food and checkerboards for the kids.

**30-Apr-68** Battalion fires 24,934 rounds in the month of April.

**30-Apr-68 ORLL Highlights** (Operational Reports Lessons Learned)

Missions fired and ammunition expended during the period

Battery	missions fired	ammo expended
A	1,445	18,055
B	1,238	8,226
C	1,819	18,552



Totals            4,502                            44,833

Casualties for the 90 day period ending 30-Apr-68

Killed in Action	2
Wounded in Action	6
Non-battle dead	0
Non-battle casualties	2

Mail for the battalion is processed through 1<sup>st</sup> Air Cav Div APO 96490. Delays as much as ten days have occurred in using their facility due to the Movement of the APO with the 1<sup>st</sup> Cav Div Headquarters when operations are initiated in other areas. Plans are to route mail to a newly established APO at Quang Tri Airfield that is a 20 minute drive away.

### **May-68            Historical Report**

The battalion marked its first airmobile operation in Vietnam as A Battery was airlifted into the A Shau Valley on May 2nd. The battery supported the 3rd ARVN Regiment during the eight-day mission.

Also during the month, the Commanding General of the 101st Airborne Division awarded Bronze Star medals with "V" device to two forward observers from C Battery. Second Lieutenant Howard Campbell was awarded for accurately adjusting artillery fire from three batteries on a company of NVA soldiers dug in near Hue. Second Lieutenant Joseph Toups was awarded for helping load wounded soldiers on a medical evacuation helicopter while under enemy fire.

The battalion area was hit twice during May by enemy mortar and rockets. On May 5th, two Service Battery bunker guards were wounded by rocket fragments, and on May 8th, five men from Headquarters Battery were wounded by incoming mortar fragments.

**1-May-68**        Battalion has the mission of reinforcing the 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. Div Arty  
Hq & Svc Battery are located at LZ Sharon (YD 331 492)  
A Battery is at LZ Jane - Quang Tri Province (YD 375 435)  
B Battery is at FSB Panther I - vicinity of Hue (YD 785 166)  
C Battery is at FSB Sally - vicinity of Hue (YD 540 275)

**1-May-68**        C Battery fires its 20,000<sup>th</sup> round in combat while firing 1,700 rounds in a 24 hour period

**2/3-May-68**     A Battery conducts air mobile operation from LZ Jane to LZ Lucy (YC 425 948) 1 Km south of TaBat in A Shau Valley. Mission: reinforce ARVN DS Battery of 3<sup>rd</sup> ARVN Regt (As 3<sup>rd</sup> Regt has LNO Team (Beach) and three FO teams (Stringer, Dutcher and Wade) from this Battalion present to adjust U.S. Artillery fire. Mission is actually DS)

**2-May-68**        Commanding General 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. Div awards DSM with V device to Lt. Campbell, C Battery FO, for valor while service as FO with 2/17 Cav.

**5-May-68** Battalion Headquarters is hit with 4 rounds 122mm rocket. Two Svc Battery bunker guards, Pvt. Elwell and Sp4 Blanton, are WIA and medevaced.

*5/5/68 – Letters home - About 0600 this morning, I had just rolled over in my cot and was half asleep when I heard this big crack; just like lightning, right next to the tent. So, I continued rolling, right off the side of my cot. By that time, pieces of dirt and metal were falling on our tent so I reached for my steel pot and flak vest. I got them on and there was a pause, so I got into my trousers and boots. Just as I finished lacing the last boot, somebody yelled “MEDIC.” One of the medics, who sleeps next to me, and I ran out. There were 2 wounded guys laying on a bunker just to our front. One of them had his face cut up a little, so I grabbed his arm and ran a hundred yards to the medic bunker. Then, Mike Adams, another medic and I grabbed a litter and ran over to give the other medic a hand with the other guy. On the way, we had to hit the ground because more rockets came in. Just as we were getting there, the other medic and the wounded guy came running toward us. I guess they didn’t want to wait for the litter. Adams and I thought that another guy had been wounded at another bunker so we ran over there. On the way, we passed the Colonel who was heading out to check on the troops.*

*Fortunately no one else was hurt, so I went over to check on my own section. They were all safe, but a rocket had landed 5 feet from the tent they sleep in; the same one that I used to sleep in until last week when I moved in with the medics. It completely tore up the corner of the tent where I used to live and make all sorts of holes in their gear. But, at the time, they were in the radio bunker. Still no mail.*

*Mike Shires got back from the A Shau Valley today. He’s been out for a couple of weeks as a Forward Observer. The last 4 days he was really sick with the same thing we had and couldn’t keep any food down. He looks really pale and must have lost 30 pounds or so.*

**5-May-68** Battalion fires its 50,000<sup>th</sup> round in combat.

**5-May-68** SGT Zairns, A Battery recon SGT, on duty with C Battery FO team, is WIA and medevaced.

**7-May-68** A Battery conducts airmobile displacement from LZ Lucy (TaBat) to LZ Lillian (YC 496 856) 3 Km north of A Shau Village while supporting the 3<sup>rd</sup> ARVN Regt. during Operation Delaware/Lam Son 216.

**8-May-68** At 0200, Battalion Headquarters is hit by approx 15 rounds 82mm mortar. The attack results in 5 WIAs from Headquarters Battery (SGT Stephen C. Brown, Sp4 Leonard M. Buchanan, Sp4 Johnson, Sp4 Thomas and PFC Roussel). All are medevaced with the first two returned to duty the following day.

- 10-May-68** C Battery with 2 attached platoons of 155 Howitzer displaces from LZ Sally to a position on Highway 1 opposite Camp Evans, continuing its DS mission.
- 10-May-68** A Battery conducts airmobile displacement from LZ Lillian to LZ Stallion in the A Shau Valley.
- 10-May-68** A Battery displaces 2 howitzers by C123 from LZ Stallion to Quang Tri airstrip and by road to LZ Sharon. Battery (-) remains at LZ Stallion.
- 12-May-68** C Battery FOs, Lieutenants Toups and Gaddis, are WIA by enemy fire. Toups is medevaced.
- 12-May-68** B Battery (-) completes displacement by helicopter from LZ Stallion to LZ Evans then joins the remainder of the Battery at LZ Sharon.
- 12-May-68** C Battery displaces from its position on Highway 1 to LZ Sally. Mission continues.  
*5/12/68 – Letters home - We went on mail runs to Camp Evans 3 or 4 times last week. Yesterday, Mike Adams and I went down there to see a buddy of ours and checked for mail on the way back. There were 11 bags! I don't think we could have fit any more in the back of that jeep if we had an elephant to crush it down.*
- 20-May-68** A Battery is attached to the 1<sup>st</sup> Cav Division reinforcing the 2/19<sup>th</sup> Arty.
- 22-May-68** Notes from 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. Div Arty log *Fired prep for combat assault for B & D 2/501 Vicinity 5825. Units firing were C/6/33, B 1/321, C/3/18 & C/6/16. Rounds fired = 384 – 105mm, 343 – 155mm & 48 – 8”.*
- 23-May-68** C Battery moves from FSB Sally to FSB Forward near Hue (YD 868 275) supporting 2/17 Cav 101<sup>st</sup> Abn.
- 23-May-68** Notes from 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. Div Arty log *1745 hrs. Message from 6/33<sup>rd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> ARVN Div to DATOC. Hardhammer 15 requests following prep to be fired 0545 – 1700 hours. Grids 641148 – 663135. Firing element should come up on 5780 and contact Hardhammer 48 at 0545 hours.*
- 24-May-68** SP4 William E. Knox of HHB is killed when struck by a round fired from a 45 cal. service pistol that accidentally discharged.
- 26-May-68** Operation and Fire Direction Section of Headquarters Battery move to Gia Le near Hue (YD 802 144) to establish an operational fire direction control center for Phase III, Operation Nevada Eagle.
- 26-May-68** **News Release** QUANG TRI, Vietnam  
The 6th Battalion of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery marked its first airmobile operation in Vietnam as A Battery was airlifted into the A Shau Valley during Operation Delaware. Already veterans of

the drive on Khe Sanh, A Battery with its 85,000 pounds of equipment and men was lifted into the valley by Chinook helicopters that flew 17 sorties.

The battery supported the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) Regiment, which also has a 105 howitzer battery. The two batteries fired on motor convoys and anti-aircraft sites, recording secondary explosions from their hits.

After making a second airlift move in the A Shau, the battery was flown to Quang Tri and set up near battalion headquarters. "The airlift was of extreme value to us and the battalion in airmobile operations and logistics", said Captain Robert Parker, A Battery Commanding Officer, following the mission. "Morale was high... one and all enjoyed C-rations during the operation", added Parker.

**31-May-68** C Battery moves from FSB Forward to FSB Saber near Hue (YD 897 186) to support 2/17 Cav/101<sup>st</sup> Abn.

### **Jun-68 Historical Report**

The 1<sup>st</sup> of June saw a change of command for the ten month old artillery unit as LTC Frank R. Olcott was assigned to the G-3 Branch at USARV Headquarters in Long Binh. The new battalion commander, LTC William W. Hicks, came from a recent assignment as fire support coordinator at Provincial Corps in Phu Bai. Colonel Hicks spent his first week in command visiting the firing batteries in the field between Hue and Quang Tri.

During the month a "T-shaped" battalion headquarters was constructed on LZ Sharon by members of the survey section. The wooden tin roofed structure houses the S-1, Personnel, Mail Room, Message Center and Communications Officer with private offices for the Co, XO and SGM.

**1-Jun-68** LTC William W. Hicks assumes command.

*6/5/68 – Letters home - There is a little pill we have to take every day and we get a big orange one on Mondays. They tell us that they are malaria pills, but we know they really are birth control pills because one of the guys in the survey section got malaria about a month ago. We gave him about 300 of the little pills and 50 of the big ones, but he didn't get any better at all. They really can't be malaria pills, can they?*

### **10-Jun-68 News Release QUANG TRI**

William W. Hicks arrived at Landing Zone Sharon, headquarters for the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery on 1 June to become commander of the ten-month old unit. Former commander, Lieutenant Colonel Frank R. Olcott, has been assigned to the G-3 branch at USARV Headquarters in Long Binh.

A senior parachutist, Colonel Hicks received his commission after graduating from OCS at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma in 1953. Colonel Hicks served in Korea and was temporarily assigned to the 1/33, an Honest John battalion in Germany. Since arriving in Vietnam in September 1967, Colonel Hicks' most recent assignment was fire support coordinator at the newly formed Provisional Corps in Phu Bai. The new commander spent his first days at the 6/33<sup>rd</sup> visiting the firing batteries in the field between Hue and Quang Tri.

- 11-Jun-68** The 6/33<sup>rd</sup> (-) is detached from the 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. and assigned a mission of reinforcing the 12<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment, with A Battery remaining attached to the 1<sup>st</sup> Air Cav Div Arty and C Battery remaining attached to the 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. Div Arty.
- 11-Jun-68** SGT Edward W. Tucker is wounded.
- 12-Jun-68** B Battery moves from FSB Panther I to C-3 vicinity of Cam Lo (YD 146 616) with a mission of reinforcing the 1<sup>st</sup> Bn 12<sup>th</sup> Marine Regt.
- 16-Jun-68** C Battery is airlifted from FSB Saber to FSB Forward with a mission of reinforcing the 1<sup>st</sup> Bn 321<sup>st</sup> Arty, 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. The 6/33<sup>rd</sup> assumed the mission of GS of Provincial Corps Vietnam with A Battery reinforcing the 1<sup>st</sup> Air Cav Div Arty, B Battery reinforcing the 12<sup>th</sup> Marine Regt. And C Battery attached to the 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. Div Arty.
- 22-Jun-68** C Battery moves from FSB Forward to FSB Pinky vicinity of Hue (YD 686 253) continuing its mission of reinforcing the 1<sup>st</sup> Bn 321<sup>st</sup> Arty 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. Div Arty.
- 24-Jun-68** B Battery moves from Camp J.J. Carroll to LZ Stud, Quang Tri Province (YD 002 495)
- 27-Jun-68** C Battery is returned to battalion control with a mission of reinforcing 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. Div Arty.

**Jul-68            Historical Report**

The beginning of the month saw a large number of Lieutenants receiving their First Lieutenant Bar from LTC William W. Hicks, battalion commander.

On 28 July the battalion fired its 100,000<sup>th</sup> round since arriving in Vietnam. The round was fired by the gun section chief of A Battery at Landing Zone Sharon. The ceremony was short-lived as the battery received a fire mission from a forward observer flying in the hills near the firebase.

During the month the battalion was visited by Brigadier General Kruthers, Provisional Corps Vietnam Artillery Commander, who made an informal inspection tour of A Battery. The one-star general toured each of the gun pits and talked with the gunners and their crew chief during the twenty minute visit. Tent-frame living quarters for Headquarters and Service Battery were completed during July prior to the monsoon season.

*6-Jul-68 - Letters home - You should have been here to see the fireworks on the 4th. It was really fabulous! We had been ordered not to shoot any flares, but as soon as it got dark the guys on the perimeter started shooting them anyway. They shot red and white parachute flares and red, green and white star clusters constantly for an hour. We shot the single machine guns, the quad 50 caliber machine guns, and the anti aircraft dusters, too. It was so great, flares and tracers all over. But, then the flares started hitting the choppers so we had to quit. But, it was fun while it lasted. There was one time when the guys shot a whole case (24 I think) of green star clusters all at once. We thought all hell*

*broke loose and started for the bunkers before we realized that it was only our guys playing around.*

**8-Jul-68** 6/33<sup>rd</sup> (-) is attached to the 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. Div Arty for operations and logistical support only, with C Battery attached to the 1<sup>st</sup> Air Cav Div Arty for operations and logistical support only.

*9-Jul-68 – Letters home - Yesterday, the guys on the beer run brought back 8 pallets from Da Nang. That's 80 cases per pallet. So tonight the Colonel ordered that all the beer be turned in and issued out at 3 cans per man per night. Naturally, the guys hid the beer instead of turning it in. Only 50 cases came back and the colonel is smoking! Guys hid beer under the floors of their tents and in the wooden ammo boxes that we use for building bunkers. They are built right in and nobody will ever find them.*

**10-Jul-68** B Battery moves from LZ Stud to Wunder Beach, Quang Tri Province (YD 497 558) and assumes a mission of reinforcing 1<sup>st</sup> Bn 77<sup>th</sup> Arty 1<sup>st</sup> Cav Div Arty.

**11-Jul-68** C Battery is airlifted from LZ Pinky to FSB Bastogne (YD 620 090) continuing their mission of reinforcing 1/321 Arty, 101 Abn.

**26-Jul-68** B Battery moves from Wunder Beach to LZ Jane

**26-Jul-68** B Battery moves from LZ Jane to LZ Sharon. Upon arriving LZ Sharon, B Battery's mission is changed to reinforcing 2/19Arty, 1<sup>st</sup> Cav Div Arty.

**31-Jul-68** The 6/33<sup>rd</sup> reverts to control of the 108<sup>th</sup> Artillery Group with C Battery remaining attached to the 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. Div Arty, B Battery reinforcing the 1<sup>st</sup> Cav Div Arty, and A Battery reinforcing the 1<sup>st</sup> ARVN Div Arty.

**31-Jul-68** A Battery moves from LZ Sharon to FSB Saber (YD 897 186) to support the 1<sup>st</sup> ARVN Div, 54<sup>th</sup> ARVN Regt. during Operation Somerset Plain.

**31-Jul-68** **ORLL Highlights** (Operational Reports Lessons Learned)

Missions fired and ammunition expended during the period

Battery	missions fired	ammo expended
A	2,457	19,114
B	1,572	15,302
C	1,409	22,094
Totals	5,438	56,510

Casualties for the 90 day period ending 31-Jul-68

Killed in Action	1
Wounded in Action	9
Non-battle dead	1
Non-battle casualties	0

During the reporting period the unit had one LNO and three FO's under the operational control of the 1<sup>st</sup> Cav Div Arty and working with the 3<sup>rd</sup> ARVN Regt. From the beginning of the reporting period through 10-Jul-68 one LNO and 6 FO's were under operational control of the 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. Div with three FO's working with the 2/17, 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. and one LNO and 3 FO's working with the ARVN Abn. Task Force and the 101<sup>st</sup> Abn.

On 10-Jul-68 the LNO and 3 FO's working with the ARVN Abn. Task Force came under operational control of the 1<sup>st</sup> Cav Div Arty and worked with the 3/5<sup>th</sup> Cav until the end of the reporting period.

An additional expansion of the civic actions program was achieved when the Battalion Chaplain learned of the work being done by Pastor Ngo-Tan-Phi of the Tin Lanh Evangelical Protestant Church in Quang Tri City. The Phi family has taken in 19 children who have been orphaned by the Viet Cong atrocities and is providing for their education and support. The Chaplain has maintained a steady program of assistance to this work. Food supplies are taken regularly, wood for cooking and for construction has been provided, games have been collected and given to the children, Christian Literature has been provided, teaching supplies and articles of clothing have been collected and given to Pastor Phi. Through coordination with local SeaBees, the Chaplain has been able to obtain cement for the construction of a new building to house the Phi family and the orphans. The men of this battalion raised a total sum of 52,000 piasters for the purchase of roofing materials for the new orphanage building. In addition to material help, the Chaplain has been teaching a course in English to the children, preached in the Tin Lanh Church to an all Vietnamese congregation and baptized 13 Vietnamese Christians. This has developed into a full and productive civic actions project and will be continued through the next quarter.

### **Aug-68      Historical Report**

During the month the Operations Section was making final plans and preparations for a Forward Observer School on LZ Sharon, with classes to begin on 1 September. Also during the month, three South Vietnamese Army interpreters were assigned to the battalion. Headquarters, Service, and A Battery each received an interpreter to facilitate dealing with the South Vietnamese when the mission requires.

In August, First Lieutenant Joseph Springer was awarded a Bronze star Medal with "V" device for action on 12 April, when the ARVN Airborne unit he was with came under enemy fire near Landing Zone Snake.

**1-Aug-68**      The battalion has the mission of GS Provisional Corps Vietnam with Headquarters and Service Batteries located at LZ Sharon, Quang Tri Province (YD 331 492). A Battery is located at LZ Saber (YD 879 187) reinforcing the 1<sup>st</sup> ARVN Div Arty in Operation Somerset Plain. B Battery is at LZ Sharon reinforcing the 1<sup>st</sup> Cav Div Arty. C Battery is at FSB Bastogne (YD 621 091)

attached to the 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. with rear elements at LZ Sally (YD 640 275).

**6-Aug-68** 0400 Three enemy personnel probe the perimeter of A Battery. The battery expends approximately 600 rounds of small arms ammunition in repelling the attack suffering no casualties.

**12-Aug-68 News Release QUANG TRI**

The sound of the 105mm howitzer firing was loud as usual, but there was something special about the round. It was the 100,000<sup>th</sup> one fired by the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery since arriving in Vietnam nearly six months ago. The commemorative round was fired by the battalion's A Battery that has participated in Operation Pegasus, which opened a land supply route into Khe Sahn and in Operation Delaware in the A Shau Valley. The ceremony was cut short hardly before the smoke had cleared from the Howitzer when the battery received a fire mission from a forward observer flying in the hills near the LZ Sharon firebase. Two gun crews went into action sending the 100,001<sup>st</sup> round at "Charley".

**6-Aug-68** 0315 A Battery repels a ground attack by a force of unknown size, sustaining no casualties.

**20-Aug-68** C Battery is airlifted to LZ Sharon with a mission of GSR, 1<sup>st</sup> Cav Div Arty during Operation Jeb Stuart.

**21-Aug-68** B Battery moves to LZ Sally with GSR mission to 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. Div Arty.

**23-Aug-68** B Battery is airlifted to LZ Bastogne with mission GSR 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. Div Arty during Operation Nevada Eagle. B Battery's rear elements initially operated from LZ Sally, later displacing to Camp Eagle (YD 820 150)

**24-Aug-68** C Battery moves by LCU to Cua Viet (YD 346 694) and its mission is changed to GSR 12<sup>th</sup> Mar Div reinforcing 5/4 Arty /5<sup>th</sup> Inf. Div.

**28-Aug-68** 0005 C Battery receives 15 rounds of mixed caliber artillery resulting in no casualties or damage.

**29-Aug-68** A Battery receives small arms fire on their perimeter from a force of unknown size, suffering no casualties or damage.

**29 -Aug-68 News Release QUANG TRI 6/33<sup>rd</sup> marks first year of organization**

The snow covered fields of Fort Carson, Colorado are a far cry from the sweat soaked terrain of Vietnam where the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion 33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery marks its first year of organization. The battalion was organized on 1 September 1967 at the Mountain Post and trained during the winter months for Vietnam operations under the command of LTC Frank R. Olcott. A special interest was shown in the unit by then Army Chief of Staff, General Harold K. Johnson, who observed a training exercise by one of the firing batteries and later assisted in obtaining needed NCOs.

The artillerymen departed for Vietnam on the last day of January and arrived in DaNang 21 days later aboard the USNS Upshur. Shortly after the trucks and howitzers arrived the



battalion traveled north in the wake of the Tet Holiday Offensive to Quang Tri where permanent headquarters was established.

On 31 May LTC William W. Hicks assumed command of the battalion, which fired its 100,000<sup>th</sup> round in combat operations two months later.

The firing batteries have participated in two major operations in support of the 1st Air Cavalry Division and the 101st Air Mobile Division in the Northern I Corps sector.

### **30-Aug-68 News Release QUANG TRI 6/33<sup>rd</sup> reinforces former Fort Carson unit**

Two artillery units that trained at Ft. Carson have found themselves working together as the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion 33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery provides general support reinforcing artillery fire for the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the 4<sup>th</sup> Artillery in the Northern I Corps sector.

Shortly after arriving in Vietnam the 5/4<sup>th</sup> received the mission of supporting the 1/12<sup>th</sup> Marines from the sea-side location of Cua Viet on the South China Sea. Since the fire base was accessible only by river boat and in case of emergency the unit would have to be airlifted out, it was decided that the towed 105mm howitzers of C Battery 6/33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery would be more mobile than the self-propelled M-109 Howitzers of the 5/4<sup>th</sup>.

While at Cua Viet from 24 August to 3 September, C Battery fired 2,400 rounds in support of operations.

On 4 September, while still reinforcing the 5/4<sup>th</sup>, C Battery moved to "Charlie 2" Northwest of Dong Ha near Camp J. J. Carroll. During operations in the Con Thien / Gia Linh area, the 6/33<sup>rd</sup> fired over 5,500 rounds in support of the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (Mechanized).

At the present, the two artillery battalions are exchanging personnel to reduce the rotational losses in any given month. Many members of the 6/33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery find themselves wearing the Red Diamond patch again.

### **Sep-68 Historical Report**

Operations, Corps directed, Forward Observer School went into full operation with approximately two training sessions per month. The school is highlighted with field maneuvers and practical demonstration. Also instituted this month was the Fire Direction Officer School. This is primarily a classroom type school to be held once a month.

A Battery was air lifted from their position at LZ Saber as a result of high water levels from a typhoon. A Battery was supporting the 54th ARVN Regiment at the time of the airlift. B Battery, operating out of Fire Support Base Bastogne, is supporting the 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile), while C Battery supports the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) at LZ Sharon.

Survey Section replaced most of the tent type living structures of Headquarters Battery with more permanent wooden, tin roofed structures.

**2-Sep-68** The Battalion begins a one-week Forward Observer School for the artillery within XXIV Corps.

**4-Sep-68** C Battery moves by LCU to Dong Ha (YD 240 607) then by road to C-2 (YD 132 643) to reinforce 5/4 Arty.

**5/7-Sep-68** A Battery at LZ Saber is hit by Typhoon Agnes. By 1530 hours there are twenty-seven inches of water in the battery position. By 0715 hours on 6-Sep-68 the

water level is at fifty inches. At 1400 on 6-Sep-68 A Battery is airlifted to LZ Joe (YD 883 157). Due to water level and subsequent damage, the battery remains out of action for a total of three days.

*“In October 1968 the MACV briefer reported that for the past week “we forecast one to two inches of rain in I Corps and got 36 and 67/100 inches.”” From General Creighton Abram’s tape recordings as reported by Lewis Sorley in Vietnam Magazine, December 2005*

- 13-Sep-68** C Battery fires a total of 1,399 rounds during the period from 0800-1800 hours in support of 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade 5<sup>th</sup> Inf. Div.
- 16-Sep-68** The battalion starts the second Forward Observer School
- 20-Sep-68** C Battery moves to LZ Sharon with a mission of GSR 1<sup>st</sup> Cav Div Arty during Operation Jeb Stuart II.
- 30-Sep-68** Construction of semi-permanent sleeping quarters (wood floor, wood and screen sides and tin roofs) is completed in the battalion base camp.
- 3-Oct-68** C Battery is airlifted to LZ Jeannie (YD 551 392) leaving their rear elements at LZ Sharon
- 4-Oct-68** The battalion's mission is GS XXIV Corps with B Battery reinforcing 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. Div Arty, C Battery reinforcing the 1<sup>st</sup> Cav Div Arty and A Battery supporting the 54<sup>th</sup> Regt. 1<sup>st</sup> ARVN Div.
- 7-Oct-68** The battalion starts the third Forward Observer School with 10 officers in the class.
- 10-Oct-68** The battalion is placed in GS of XXIV Corps, reinforcing the 1<sup>st</sup> Cav Div Arty and 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. Div Arty. A & B Batteries are placed in GSR 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. Div Arty and C Battery GSR 1<sup>st</sup> Cav Div Arty.
- 15-Oct-68** A Battery moves to Los Banos (AT 833 994) GSR 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. Div Arty.
- 18-Oct-68** Battalion FDC is airlifted to LZ Joe and is operational the same day.
- 19-Oct-68** The battalion receives a warning to move Headquarters & Service Batteries to Phu Bai on or about 20-Nov-68.
- 21-Oct-68** The fourth Forward Observer School begins with 11 officers enrolled.
- 22-Oct-68** B Battery moves by air and road to LZ Boyd (YD 746 133)
- 24-Oct-68** The battalion conducts the first Fire Direction Officer School for XXIV Corps with 4 officers enrolled.

**29-Oct-68** B Battery is airlifted to LZ Panther II (YD 797 108) leaving their rear elements at LZ Boyd.

**29/30-Oct-68** A Battery fires 98 missions expending 3,746 rounds.

**31-Oct-68 ORLL Highlights** (Operational Reports Lessons Learned)

Missions fired and ammunition expended during the period

Battery	missions fired	ammo expended
A	1,588	33,424
B	1,487	16,940
C	2,479	17,815
Totals	5,554	68,179

Casualties for the 90 day period ending 31-Oct-68

Killed in Action	0
Wounded in Action	3
Non-battle dead	0
Non-battle casualties	0

During the reporting period the unit had one LNO and three FO's working for the 1<sup>st</sup> Cav Div Arty with further assignment to the 3<sup>rd</sup> ARVN Regt, 1<sup>st</sup> ARVN Div located at LZ Miguel (YD 485 205). Operation Lam Son 225 that started last May ended on 12-Sep-68 and Operation Lam Son 265 began on 13-Sep-68.

During the entire reporting period, the unit had three Forward Observers working with 2/17 Cav, 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. in the vicinity of Camp Eagle (YD 820 150). On 1-Aug-68 the battalion provided 1 LNO and 2 FO's for participation in Lam Son 245. The 2 FO's were released to battalion control on 11-Oct-68. From 20-Oct-68 through the end of the period, 2 FO's were committed to the 7<sup>th</sup> ARVN Cav operating in the vicinity of LZ Denise (AU 808 017).

On 21-Oct-68 the medical section of the battalion began a Medical Civic Action Program. This program is being carried out in the village of Ba Ben (YD 347 538) which is a refugee village consisting of 300 families forced to leave their homes within Quang Tri Province. The major health problem in the village is dermatological conditions in the children reflecting inadequate personal hygiene and poor local sanitation. In addition to the dermatological conditions, there exists a great deal of gastro-intestinal and pulmonary problems. Due to the relatively short time the program has been operational, personal hygiene is the only area in which the medical section has been active. The Battalion Surgeon and aid-men have been giving baths to the children and instructing parents on the purpose and use of soap. The medical team visits the village three times per week for about two hours; treating approximately 60 people each visit.

**1-Nov-68** Hq & Svc Batteries are located at LZ Sharon. A Battery is located at FS B Los

Banos (AT 833 999) reinforcing 2/320/ 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. Arty. B Battery is located at FSB Panther II (YD 797 108) reinforcing 1/321/101 Abn. Arty. C Battery is at FSB Jeannie (YD 551 393) reinforcing 1<sup>st</sup> Cav Div Arty. FDC is at LZ Joe (YD 883 157) to check the firing data for A & B Batteries.

- 4-Nov-68** The battalion commences the 4<sup>th</sup> XXIV Corps Forward Observer School with 13 officers, primarily newly arrived in country and assigned to 2/138 Arty.
- 7-Nov-68** C Battery is airlifted (20 sorties) to FSB Tombstone (YD 392 587) reinforcing 5/4 Arty with a mission of GSR the 12<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment.
- 11-Nov-68** The battalion starts the second Fire Direction Officer School for XXIV Corps with 13 officers attending.
- 13-Nov-68** 0130 LZ Sharon receives 15 rounds of 82mm mortar with no casualties or damage to the battalion.
- 17-Nov-68** B Battery is airlifted (19 sorties) to FSB Panther III (YD 811 079) continuing to reinforce 1/321 Arty.
- 19-Nov-68** Battalion Headquarters, Headquarters & Service Batteries move by road to Phu Bai (YD 893 139). Battalion Headquarters assumes control of the flash observation towers for the entire Phu Bai Base.
- 28-Nov-68** LTC George R. Rowan assumes command of 6/33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery replacing LTC William W. Hicks, who is assigned to USARPAC Headquarters in Hawaii.
- 5-Dec-68** B Battery returns to FSB Panther II with 19 helicopter sorties
- 13-Dec-68** C Battery is airlifted (23 sorties) to an unnamed FSB at (YD 266 440) (*possibly LZ Suzy*) adopting a direct support role for 1/61 Infantry, which commences an operation to reopen the Ba Long Valley.
- 15-Dec-68** C Battery's position is changed by several hundred meters when they move across a stream using an engineer float bridge.
- 22-Dec-68** The weather closes in with a heavy downpour and the water begins to rise at C Battery's position causing the float bridge to be unsafe to cross by morning.
- 24-Dec-68** C Battery is able to move back across the river when the rain slackens during the night. The same day, the battery is airlifted back to FSB Tombstone by CH-47 helicopter with a move requiring 38 sorties as the battery had over 4,000 rounds of ammunition resulting from the cancellation of a special three-day operation.
- 28-Dec-68** Battalion Headquarters receives the additional mission of receiving, requesting

clearance and forwarding to the 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. Div Arty all fire missions associated with the defense of Phu Bai.

- 15-Jan-69** The battalion begins occupying an OP on Hill 180 (YD 855 133) utilizing the recon Sergeants and RTOs from two FO sections. This hill is the best available OP for the Phu Bai area.
- 22-Jan-69** During the night, A Battery captures two suspects and a motorcycle on highway #1 adjacent to their position.
- 23-Jan-69** **Battery message to Headquarters** - A Battery engages VC with 100,000<sup>th</sup> round *On 23 January 1969, Captain Beach pulled the lanyard on "ACE" and sent A Battery's 100,000<sup>th</sup> artillery projectile screaming at "Charlie". Supporting ground forces in the vicinity of Short Timers Hill, the battery engaged 12 VC in the open resulting in one confirmed VC KIA. As darkness approached, Lt. Hanrahan, Forward Observer with D 2/327, requested illumination for the sweeping ground forces. At that time the H.E. mission was terminated. Illumination commenced and at 1815 hours the magic round was fired from LZ Los Banos. A Battery's first round fired in Vietnam was sent on its way 27 February 1968 from Red Beach near DaNang and 331 days later reached the present total expenditures for an average of 303 rounds per day. So, to I Corps, A Battery 6/33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery says shot 100,000<sup>th</sup> round "out".*
- 31-Jan-69** A Battery is alerted for a possible move to FSB Jeannie (YD 551 393).
- 31-Jan-69** **ORLL Highlights** (Operational Reports Lessons Learned)

Missions fired and ammunition expended during the period

Battery	missions fired	ammo expended
A	1,866	27,768
B	1,846	22,736
C	974	9,320
Totals	4,686	59,824

Casualties for the 90 day period ending 31-Jan-69

Killed in Action	0
Wounded in Action	2
Non-battle dead	0
Non-battle casualties	1

During the reporting period the unit had one LNO and five FO's committed. Three of these observers were attached to 2/17 Cav, 101st Abn. in the vicinity of Camp Eagle (YD 820 150). The remaining two observers were committed to the 3/7 Cav ARVN and operated in the vicinity of LZ Anzio (YD 932 072). The liaison section was provided to the 54<sup>th</sup> ARVN Regt. located at LZ Saber (YD 890 186). For the period 1-Nov-68 through 16-Jan-69 a forward observer performed

the duties of liaison officer for the 11<sup>th</sup> ARVN Artillery located at LZ Nancy (YD 451 402).

During the entire reporting period, units of the battalion were separated by at least 130 road kilometers. Battery A was the only firing battery habitually accessible by road. The road to Battery B was not secure and had to be cleared prior to use. To reach Battery C location at Tombstone by road required a transfer from wheeled to tracked vehicles at Wunder Beach (YD 488 560).

Since arriving at Phu Bai on 19-Nov-68, the battalion personnel have constructed or supervised the construction of a helipad, nineteen 16' by 32' sea huts, 34 blast walls around sleeping quarters, 33 fighting holes and one bunker on the perimeter as well as seven personnel bunkers to accommodate the 210 members of the unit.

During January 1969 the medical section began its second MEDCAP program. The first program in Ba Ben, near Quang Tri, had to be abandoned due to the relocation of the Headquarters to Phu Bai. The present program is being conducted at Nuoc-Ngot Orphanage, 237 Huykhthuc-Khang, Hue, which is under the direction of Sister Marie Pierre. The section visits the orphanage two times per week concentrating on the improvement of personal hygiene.

- 1-Feb-69** A Battery is located at FSB Los Banos (AT 833 999) reinforcing 2/320 Artillery. B Battery is at FSB Panther II (YD 797 108) reinforcing 1/321 Arty. C Battery is at FSB Tombstone (YD 392 587) reinforcing the fires of 5/4 Arty supporting the 12<sup>th</sup> Marine Regt.
  
- 4-Feb-69** A Battery displaces overland to Camp Evans (YD 534 315) reinforcing the fires of 2/319 Arty.
  
- 8-Feb-69** SP4 Torres of A Battery is injured when a retaining ring comes off a tire rim.
  
- 11-Feb-69** A Battery is airlifted to FSB Jeannie (YD 551 392) continuing to reinforce 2/319 Arty. using 12 CH-47 helicopter sorties
  
- 24-Feb-69** Command Sergeant Major Patrick F. Murphy assumes the duties of battalion command sergeant major replacing CSM Raymond J. Connors who is assigned to Ft. Collins, Colorado.
  
- 27-Feb-69** C Battery began an airmobile operation from FSB Tombstone. The battery is scheduled to move to FSB Cates (XD 927 437) but the first four CH-53 sorties are directed to Vandergrift Combat Base (XD 997 484). Thus during the night of 27-Feb-69, one howitzer and 60 men including the complete FDC are at Vandergrift Combat Base and five howitzers and 22 men are at Tombstone. Fire direction for the howitzers at FSB Tombstone is conducted over radio by A Battery at FSB Jeannie.

- 28-Feb-69** Two CH-53 sorties are provided to C Battery lifting two howitzers into Vandergrift Combat Base. The battery fires missions from both locations during the night.
- 1-Mar-69** C Battery receives eight CH-53 sorties. Six sorties move most of the elements at Vandergrift Combat Base to Cates and the other two sorties move two howitzers from Tombstone to Cates.
- 2-Mar-69** C Battery's remaining elements including the sixth howitzer move overland to Wunder Beach (YD 493 564), then overland to Dong Ha (YD 225 583), joining the convoy to Vandergrift Combat Base on 5-Mar-69.
- 3-Mar-69** B Battery begins to reinforce 2/320 Arty due to a unit boundary change.
- 8-Mar-69** C Battery's remaining elements are airlifted in two sorties to FSB Cates. C Battery is now reinforcing the 3/12 Marines
- 16-Mar-69** A possible friendly fire incident is reported. Records are unclear, but it appears that C Battery was involved.
- 19-Mar-69** Reports of the previously reported possible friendly fire incident are found to be erroneous.
- 20-Mar-69** An enemy artillery round hits the 24 Corps Field Grade Office Club. Battalion personnel man perimeter fighting holes. Sporadic firefights are observed 1,000 meters out.
- 22-Mar-69** The battalion commander inquires where the enlisted men are purchasing the cases of beer to consume at the movie when he had previously ordered that enlisted ranks E-5 and below were limited to purchasing 1 beer at a time.
- 22-Mar-69** Phu Bai receives twelve 122mm rockets with no casualties or damage to the battalion.
- 28-Mar-69** Eight 122mm rockets hit Phu Bai with no damage or casualties to the battalion.
- 25-Mar-69** Lt. Balthrop calls 108th Group regarding the casualty report on SGT Puckett asking what type of helicopter Puckett was flying in. Response is UH-1H
- 26-Mar-69** Lieutenant Berg is awarded the Bronze Star - approval for news release is granted this day.
- 27-Mar-69** 1LT Kytte is newly assigned
- 6-Apr-69** A Battery is airlifted to FSB Birmingham (YD 706 102) (17 sorties) reinforcing 2/320 Arty.

- 6-Apr-69** A Battery is airlifted to FSB Thor (YC 766 835) reinforcing the 1/321 Arty. (12 CH-47 sorties)
- 10-Apr-69** A Battery receives notice to move to LZ Birmingham within two days
- 10-Apr-69** A marine helicopter lifting supplies crashes into the C Battery area at FSB Vandegrift and one man is temporarily unaccounted for. All of the incoming C Battery ammunition and supplies are destroyed. SP4 Pomeroy is injured with shrapnel wounds to his right leg. All men are finally located.
- 11-Apr-69** B Battery is involved in a friendly fire incident when the base plate fails to break cleanly away from an illumination round. The firing data is found to be correct.
- 17-Apr-69** A Battery reports significant combat activity and enemy probes at LZ Birmingham last evening. Direct fire HE and illumination rounds were fired in defense.
- 17-Apr-69** CPT Kappella, BN FDO on shift, reports that A Battery fired one round that showered the perimeter. The FDC data was correct, but the gun fired DF1692 rather than the correct data of DF- - -

**18-Apr-69 News Release PHU BAI 6/33<sup>rd</sup> Arty Matches WW II Combat Record**  
 The 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery equaled its World War II combat record today by marking its 422nd day of action in Vietnam. Since February of last year the 6/33<sup>rd</sup> has supported American and Vietnamese infantry troops throughout the I Corps Tactical Zone. In an identical period during World War II, the 33<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery Battalion pushed across two continents, spearheaded the Normandy Invasion and fired the first American artillery round in the European Theater.

The 33rd Artillery was deactivated in 1957. It was reactivated in September 1967 at Fort Carson, Colorado and arrived in the Republic of Vietnam on 21 February 1968.

During World War II, the 33<sup>rd</sup> fired 175,000 rounds of 105mm ammunition, took 500 prisoners and suffered 292 casualties. They fought across North Africa and Europe in support of the 1st Infantry Division, participating in eight major campaigns and three assault landings. More than 600 men won decorations.

In the same number of combat days in Vietnam, the battalion has expended 268,659 rounds during 25,260 fire missions with nearly 100,000 more rounds fired than in World War II. Casualties numbered 25.

The unit's five batteries have crisscrossed the northern combat zone from DaNang to the DMZ and from the Laotian border to the South China Sea in 53 ground, airmobile and amphibious moves.

The battalion has supported the 1<sup>st</sup> Air Cavalry and 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Divisions, two Marine divisions, two-infantry brigades and three Vietnamese regiments in three campaigns.

Nearly 300 men of the 6/33<sup>rd</sup> have been decorated for action resulting in more than 400 enemy dead and 73 enemy wounded



**19-Apr-69** SGT Underhill and 11 men from HHB are assigned to disassemble LZ T-Bone

**20-Apr-69** Six men from HHB are caught off limits in Hue.

**30-Apr-69** **ORLL Highlights** (Operational Reports Lessons Learned)

Missions fired and ammunition expended during the period

Battery	missions fired	ammo expended
A	1,339	10,028
B	2,298	18,471
C	1,443	10,816
Totals	5,080	39,313

Casualties for the 90 day period ending 30-Apr-69

Killed in Action	0
Wounded in Action	2
Non-battle dead	0
Non-battle casualties	0

During the reporting period three FO's were committed to 2/17Cav 101<sup>st</sup> ABN and conducted operations from Camps Eagle and Evans and LZ Sally (YD 638 274). From 1-Feb to 23-Mar-69 two FO's supported 3/7 Cav ARVN operating in the vicinity of FSB Anzio (YD 934 072). FO's had also been committed to 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> ARVN Regt. and 2/34 Armor, 25<sup>th</sup> Inf. Div. One liaison section was continuously committed to the 54<sup>th</sup> ARVN Regt. located at FSB Saber (YD 898 187).

Elements of the battalion base camp at Phu Bai continued with an extensive construction program. During this reporting period the battalion constructed an extension to the mess hall, a battalion headquarters building, a dispensary, additional sleeping quarters, four 16' X 16' sea huts for use as orderly rooms and 141 blast walls to provide fragmentation protection to all sleeping quarters.

Three fire support bases were closed out by the battalion. C battery closed out FSB Tombstone while A Battery closed out FSBs Jeannie and T-Bone. The closing of each firebase required a minimum of ten personnel working for at least one week. Battery A was assisted in closing out FSB T-Bone by ten personnel from the battalion base camp at Phu Bai.

The MEDCAP program continued to operate at the Nuoc-Ngot Orphanage in Hue. The personal hygiene and overall health of the children in the orphanage has improved. During the past quarter the Battalion Surgeon's hometown newspaper published a week-long serial about the orphanage. The series resulted in many social groups and individuals in the U. S. offering support with 85 packages containing bedding, baby supplies, clothing, food, toys and infant formula received thus far. Liquid pediatric vitamins have been introduced and are

being administered daily. Future plans are being arranged for improvement in the living conditions within the orphanage.

**1-May-69** Headquarters and Service Batteries are at Phu Bai  
A Battery is at FSB Thor (XC 766 835) reinforcing 1/321 Arty 101<sup>st</sup> Abn.  
B Battery is at FSB Panther II (YD 797 108) reinforcing 2/320 Arty 101<sup>st</sup>  
C Battery is at FSB Cates (XD 927 437) reinforcing 2/12 Marine Regt.  
Forward Observer & Liaison Section commitments are:  
A Btry FO committed to A Troup 2/17<sup>th</sup> Cav near Camp Eagle  
A Btry FO committed to C Co 2/34<sup>th</sup> Armor at Ruoung Ruoung Valley  
B Btry FO committed to B Troop 2/17<sup>th</sup> Cav near Camp Eagle  
B Btry FO committed to 3<sup>rd</sup> ARVN Regiment  
C Btry FO committed to C Troop 2/17<sup>th</sup> Cav near LZ Sally  
A liaison section was committed to the 54<sup>th</sup> ARNV Regt. at FSB Saber

**3-May-69 Meritorious Unit Commendation** The citation reads:  
The 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 33<sup>rd</sup> artillery, 108<sup>th</sup> Artillery Group distinguished itself in support of military operations in the Republic of Vietnam during the period 21 February 1968 to 31 October 1968. The men of the battalion provided highly responsive and effective artillery support to all major Free World military forces operating in the XXIV Corps area of operations. This task included artillery support for two United States Army Divisions, two United States Marine Corps Divisions, one Army of the Republic of Vietnam Division and two separate United States Army Brigades. The personnel of the battalion demonstrated their versatility by moving by land, sea and air to meet the demands of combat support. The battalion has participated with distinction in every major campaign in the northern I Corps Tactical Zone. Further, the men of the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery, 108<sup>th</sup> Artillery Group, through their delivery of accurate and deadly artillery fire, materially assisted in the success of operations involving the relief of Khe Sanh and the reopening of Highway. The technical expertise and intense pride displayed by all members of the unit in delivering accurate artillery fire support contributed immeasurable to the Allied efforts in the Republic of Vietnam. The remarkable proficiency and devotion to duty displayed by the members of the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery, 108<sup>th</sup> Artillery Group are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect distinct credit upon themselves and the Armed Forces of the United States.

GENERAL ORDERS NUMBER 1575, dated 3 May 1969

For the commander, George L. Mabry, Jr.  
Major General, US Army  
Chief of Staff

**6-May-69 News Release** KHE SAHN C/6/33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery Destroys Enemy Bunker Complex  
Artillery fire leveled an enemy bunker complex and caused at least one enemy death Monday in action one mile north of here. Battery C, 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery scored nine direct hits and 65 secondary explosions destroying 18 bunkers and an undetermined number of buildings in a 7-hour barrage. Aerial observers late Monday reported one enemy dead among the

debris. A ground search was to be conducted today.

The battery's six howitzers poured more than 1,000 rounds of 105mm high explosive and white phosphorous ammunition into the area which is located near the Rao Quan River about ten miles from the Laotian border.

- 7-May-69** A Battery displaces to FSB Los Banos (YD 833 999) (15 sorties)
- 8-May-69** A & B Batteries begins reinforcing fires of the 1/321 Arty due to an AO change.
- 12-May-69** 0125 B Battery howitzer explodes with 4 men injured, 2 seriously.
- 1) PFC Kenneth Wadlow has traumatic amputation of left leg above knee and multiple fragmentation wounds.
  - 2) SSG Daniel D. Mitchell has multiple fragment wounds of face and legs with large fragment wound in left knee.
  - 3) SP4 Robert A. Farbo has multiple fragment wounds of chest and arms with right hand mutilated and most likely amputated.
  - 4) SP4 Robert W. Atwood has multiple fragment wounds of chest and abdomen with one large fragment hole in right side. Injured men are taken to 22<sup>nd</sup> Surgical Hospital at Phu Bai. Conversation with Chief of Section SSG Mitchell establishes the following: Crew on howitzer was SSG Mitchell - Chief of Section, SP4 Farbo – Gunner, PFC Wadlow - #1, SP4 Atwood – Asst. Gunner. Atwood states that an extractor was used on around that had jammed in the weapon and it blew up at that point. Investigation determines that the extractor tool had not been used correctly. The Battalion Co travels to all firing batteries to demonstrate the correct use of tool.
- 13-May-69** 0730 XO and all available Bn. officers participate in shakedown inspection of Bn. Area after \$180 is reported stolen from SP5 Cornett.
- 16-May-69** The FO team with B/2/17 displaces with the troop in support of the 1<sup>st</sup> Bde 101<sup>st</sup> Abn near Tam Ky (BT 325 215)
- 18-May-69** Lt. Milford visits XO. He states that C/2/17 had been on recon for Task Force Hotel in the western portion of 3rd Mar Div AO for last several days. During a 7 day time frame he alternated between A Shau Valley and 3rd Mar Div AO on screening and scouting mission. Two days were spent on the ground at LZ Ann. While at A Shau, he fired mission on hill just south of FSB Airborne against bulldozers and ammo boxes that were spotted from air. The next day went to hill with ground troops to check area out and found two bulldozers (1 of US origin and 1 of USSR) as well as 40-50 empty ammo boxes and many vehicle parts. The area was obviously an unloading point for NVA convoys. There had been VC or NVA in area when mission was fired the preceding day since rice had been dumped in the trail.
- 19-May-69** Battalion Surgeon Capt. Jobst visit to XO. Stated that Tnuk, the battalion dog, did not have rabies but distemper and that the rabies scare is officially over. At

present our dog population exceeds the maximum permissible of one per battery but the Battalion Surgeon recommends that we leave them with their present owners.

- 19-May-69** Today was Ho Chi Minh's birthday but the area was remarkably quiet except for B/2/138 firing maximum rate of fire for battery several rounds in the early morning.
- 20-May-69** C Battery displaced by air to FSB Mai Loc (Special Forces Camp YD 090 511) (16 sorties). The battery's new mission is to reinforce the 1/12 Marine Regiment
- 20-May-69** Lt. Hodder XO A 6/33 and Lt. McChristy AXO A 6/33 return to the Battalion area for visit from Los Banos.
- 20-May-69** C 6/33 moves from LZ Cates to Mai Loc with 6 guns up at 1400. As result of experience gained at B 6/33, Battalion Surgeon proposed that basic load of medical supplies be increased.
- 21-May-69** Battalion mail pouch is returned after theft by ARVN with one "confidential" document missing. C 6/33 reports ammo shortage due to someone's screw up. Lt. Harmon to be reassigned to C 6/33. 2 EM involved in vehicle accident while returning from Los Banos. Both are medevaced to 85th Evacuation in Phu Bai. Hernandez has large cut on forehead while Rundquist has possible minor fracture of his jaw. C 6/33 continues to be disorganized following occupation of position at Mai Loc.
- 23-May-69** Lt. Milford, C Battery FO, receives Air Medal.
- 25-May-69** 1LT Sloan, former AXO of C 6/33, made farewell visit to XO prior to reporting to HQ 108th as aerial observer.
- 26-May-69** 1LT Bynum, XO C6/33, visits about move from LZ Cates to Mai Loc. Lt. Hewlett, FO A/2/17, visits XO. He fired his first contact mission, got his first mortar tube, fired first perfect preparation and demolished an island since last trip to Battalion area. He left to go back to A Shau where in the vicinity of "Razorback" he had two hut and bunker complexes that tactical air was going after this afternoon.
- 27-May-69** A firing battery inspection of C Battery was conducted by XXIV Corps Artillery FBIT with a satisfactory rating received.
- 27-May-69** All individuals in Battalion rear report for urine test. Results indicate that only 75% had been taking Malaria pills. Sp4 Vosberg with Line Section at LZ Saber is involved in vehicle accident. While passing a 2 1/2 ton truck he collided with a Lambretta containing 5 Vietnamese Nationals. ARVN Captain Ngo Bach lost his

right arm and left leg. Others were treated and released. CPT Bernier to transfer to 1<sup>st</sup> Cav after his leave that begins May 30.

**29-May-69** Lt. Jachmann FO C/2/34th Armor visits XO. His unit is OPCON to 3/5 Cav and his LNO is Major Warren from 2/320 Arty, 101 Airborne.

**2-Jun-69** SGT Prince, C Battery Recon, was killed this afternoon in the vicinity of Tam Ky. He died instantly when he was struck by an AK-47 round in the heart at 1300 hours while participating in ground action with the Aerial Rifle Platoon of B Troop 2/17<sup>th</sup> Cav.

Lt. Pepper, FO B Battery FO with B Troop 2/17<sup>th</sup> Cav, was seriously wounded during the afternoon near Tam Ky while adjusting artillery fire from a UH-1D. He was evacuated to the 27th Surgical Chu Lai with laceration of lower left thigh, perforation of large intestine, fractured pelvis and a punctured urinary bladder. His condition fair and he will be sent to Japan.

**2 JUNE 1969:**

*At 1230H, the Aero-Rifle platoon B/2-17 Cav, was inserted into an LZ, vicinity BT210128 to conduct ground reconnaissance in the area. The area had been a source of ground fire throughout the day with numerous reported incidents. Immediately after moving from the LZ, the platoon came under heavy fire from a well-concealed enemy force. Gunships, ARA and tube artillery were all employed in support. The supporting fires were lifted and the platoon moved forward in the assault. The platoon was met with withering fire that inflicted moderate casualties and pinned down the element. Air and artillery were employed at close range and the decision was made to insert a reaction force to extricate the trapped platoon. At 1440H, a platoon from B/1-501 was inserted into the LZ to link-up and relieve the pressure on the Aero-rifle Platoon. At 1550H, the C&C helicopter, B/2-17 Cav, vicinity BT202129, was hit by 12.7mm AA fire and forced down, seriously wounding the Artillery FO aboard. (6/33rd Arty Lt. Pepper) The crew and aircraft were recovered without further incident. At 1700H B/1-5-1 enroute to the relief of the Aero-rifle Platoon, vicinity BT200127, engaged an enemy force firing from bunkers. The company quickly returned fire and reduced the enemy bunker accounting for 2 NVA KIA and 3 WIA; the unit suffering 1 US WIA. At 1745H, B/1-501 closed into the LZ thus completing the relief and reinforcement. The situation was stabilized and the Aero-Rifle Platoon became OPCON to B/1--501 for the night. The fighting had been extremely bitter throughout the afternoon and the outnumbered platoon had been pinned down a majority of the time from the well concealed and bunkered enemy. The unit had accounted for 6 NVA KIA and 1 WIA and had suffered 5 US KIA and 4 US WIA. First Brigade 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) Combat Operations After Action Report OPERATION LAMAR PLAIN dated: 15 September 1969*

The battalion is relieved of the commitment to provide a FO team to B/2/17 Cav.

- 3-Jun-69** Lt. Pepper's condition is slightly improved and SGT Prince's body is moved to Tam Ky.
- 5-Jun-69** 108th Arty Group CO and Battalion CO returned to 6/33rd area from Dong Ha for Memorial Services for SGT Prince.
- 15-Jun-69** LTC Rowan departs for emergency leave. Major Franklin Westmoreland takes over.
- 15-Jun-69** Lt. Milford reports that 5 LZ's were completed between LZ Cannon and the A Shau Valley and that a 6<sup>th</sup> was cancelled. A Cobra was downed by RPG on 10 or 11 June and the air rifle platoon inserted. 13 men were in when they came under attack by small arms, grenades and satchel charges. 3 NVA KIA & 1 SU KIA. 2 pilots were medevaced and the Cobra was destroyed on the ground. On 14-June he spent 13 hours flying in the area of Leech Island (YC 836 964) and adjusting artillery fire from FSB Brick without any real results.
- 16-Jun-69** SGT Hildesheim is promoted to SSG. The Phu Bai PX warehouse is hit by rockets and destroyed.
- 17-Jun-69** A firing battery inspection of B Battery is conducted by XXIV Corps Artillery FBIT with a satisfactory rating received.
- 17-Jun-69** John J. Burke was sent from the USS Repose to 106th Gen Hosp in Japan.
- 17-Jun-69** Battalion statistics to date:
- |                 |           | missions | rounds fired |
|-----------------|-----------|----------|--------------|
| Missions        | A Battery | 10,412   | 118,188      |
|                 | B Battery | 12,276   | 92,644       |
|                 | C Battery | 9,947    | 89,720       |
|                 | Total     | 36,635   | 300,552      |
| Moves           |           | 56       |              |
| Casualties      | Dead      | 4        |              |
|                 | Wounded   | 27       |              |
| Days in Vietnam |           | 484      |              |
- 18-Jun-69** Captain Brum, CO B/6/33, reports that B battery fires the 300,000th round in combat by 6/33. General Pixton fires the base piece at 1320. CPT Hutchinson is BC B 6/33.
- 19-Jun-69** A Battery located at FSB Los Banos receives three mortar attacks totaling approximately 15 rounds of 60mm mortar all landing outside the perimeter. The battery receives no casualties and fires counter battery. S2 reports that FSB

Tomahawk had been hit very hard by sappers during the night with 10 US KIA, 22 US WIA, 4 - M109 Howitzers and the XO CP were destroyed.

*Leo Militello, C 6/33rd battery recorder, recalled that they were on LZ Cates the night of 19-Jun-1969 and had preplotted all the target areas around FSB Tomahawk and Khe Sanh. C battery guns had been set up to fire missions around Tomahawk and shortly after firing their 7:00 pm H&I mission, the sky around Tomahawk lit up with enemy tracer and explosions. The guys from the unit at Tomahawk were on the radio begging for defensive firing around their perimeter. The 6/33rd attempted to work their way thru 3 or 4 levels of clearance to obtain the required clearance to fire, but were unsuccessful in getting permission. Finally a Captain from the 5th Mech ordered the 6/33rd Lieutenant to tell the battery to begin firing. Shortly after beginning to fire, 6/33rd battalion headquarters called with an order to cease fire. During an investigation held later, the 6/33rd Lieutenant's rear end was on the line until the 5th Mech Captain explained that he had provided the order to fire.*

- 19-Jun-69** An FO team from C Battery is committed to the 7<sup>th</sup> Cav.
- 21-Jun-69** An FO team from B Battery is committed to 3/3 ARVN
- 21-Jun-69** LTC Everett E. Hooper of Tampa, Florida takes command of the 6/33rd. Lt. Jachmann reports that he is still at FSB Blaze and working with 2/34th Armor. PFC James M Brown is medevaced from C 6/33 when his hand was badly cut by canister that was thrown to the side by #1 man during a fire mission.
- 26-Jun-69** Lt. Milford visits XO. He is getting his mail. On 21-Jun-69 a LOH was shot down outside Phu Bai and Lt. Milford and an Air Rifle platoon moved to the location. He then mounted the C & C ship and returned with 4 gunships to work over the area along with 4 USAF Phantoms and artillery. He went in north of Bastogne on 22-Jun-69 with Blues on the ground and discovered 4 – 80' X 10' bunkers that could have withstood direct hits by an 8" howitzer. The bunkers contained six periscopes, one rucksack, gas mask & clothing. SSG Lewis visits Battalion CO regarding moustache wearing. Battalion CO recommends that the NCO be transferred out of 6/33rd.
- 26-Jun-69** The battalion fires a 17 gun salute for COMUSMACV during XXIV Corps change of command ceremony.
- 29-Jun-69** Captain Williamson and 1LT Hodder are leaving for CONUS and Captain Bernier is going to the 1st CAV. A going away party for these officers is held. Battalion CO & XO visit Dong Ha to review alleged Friendly Fire incident involving C 6/33 and 1/12 Marines with "Recommendation for Elimination from Service" on 1LT McChristy.
- 29-Jun-69** **News Release** PHU BAI 300,000<sup>th</sup> round fired - by SP4 Charles O. Sterling

The 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery last week celebrated firing more than 300,000 rounds in the Vietnam War with the help of three of the most distinguished cannoneers ever to pull a lanyard.

XXIV Corps Artillery Commanding General, Brigadier General Allan G. Pixton fired a symbolic 300,000<sup>th</sup> round from B Battery's Landing Zone Panther II location near Phu Bai. 108th Artillery Group Commander Colonel Robert V. Lee Jr. did the honors for Battery C at LZ Mai Loc, not far from the Demilitarized Zone and XXIV Corps Artillery Deputy Commander Colonel John M. Jennings presided at LZ Los Banos on the South China Sea with A Battery.

The milestone projectiles, each labeled "300,000" left the tubes simultaneously at 1330 hours on 18 June the battalion's 484<sup>th</sup> day of combat. Each "cannoneer" received an engraved canister commemorating the event.

Firing at a 600 per day pace, the unit's 18 105mm howitzers have launched a total of 304,500 rounds in support of the Vietnamese and American infantry since 21 February 1968. The rounds have been fired from 56 locations across the Northern I Corps Tactical Zone. The battalion has supported the 1<sup>st</sup> Air Cavalry, 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne, 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne and 5<sup>th</sup> Mechanized Divisions, two Marine divisions and three Vietnamese regiments in three campaigns.

A Battery has been the most active unit, firing more than 119,000 rounds, including some 25,000 during the Khe Sahn siege in March and April 1968. B Battery has expended more than 95,000 rounds and C battery, more than 91,000. Fire missions total 33,500.

- 30-Jun-69** CPT Arnett assumes duty as CO C/6/33 as CPT Morgan leaves. CPT Watson is CO A/6/33.
- 6-Jul-69** 29 children from the orphanage were entertained at the headquarters area with 25 men participating in the four hour event which began with dinner and ended with ice cream and soda. Tours of the area and games with prizes occurred throughout the afternoon.
- 7-Jul-69** 16 rockets cause Battalion HQ to go on alert for the night.
- 8-Jul-69** Capt. Hall is temporarily in command of C 6/33 when Captain Arnett is hospitalized with fever unknown.
- 10-Jul-69** Battalion CO orders XO, emphatically stating that military discipline will be corrected as of now. 1) Cut-off uniforms will be confiscated on the spot. 2) Salutes will be rendered, 3) Headgear will be worn at all times. 4) Fatigue jackets will be worn except when working. 5) Persons will not walk about without jackets. 6) Persons in offices will wear tee shirts. 7) Persons sitting out of doors will rise and salute. 8) Officers will make on-the-spot corrections. 9) Military courtesy classes will be taught by the battery commander at least once weekly.
- 11-Jul-69** One liaison section is committed to the 54<sup>th</sup> ARVN Regiment for a two day operation.



- 11-Jul-69** *6/33<sup>rd</sup> Dong Ha training center YD8710 received 4 – 122mm rockets resulting in 3 ARVN KIA & 50 ARVN WIA. B/2/94, B/2/33 & 4/77 Arty fired counter mortar and counter rocket targets in defense. Notes from 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. DivArty log*
- 15-Jul-69** Major Renard is the newly assigned S-3
- 15-Jul-69** 1540 Battalion CO and CSM returned from A/6/33 position. From the air, CSM spotted a newly cut trail going to the perimeter wire and the OH23 returned to the position to notify CPT Watson.
- 15-Jul-69** 1650 Lt. Burnside visited the XO regarding a shortage of optical items for use on Hill 180.
- 15-Jul-69** 1702 A Battery reported that personnel out on joint patrol with the infantry had set off a booby trapped mine with 8 men injured and all medevaced. The mine detonated approximately 50 meters outside the perimeter wire killing one infantryman and wounding 4 others to include CPT McClosky CO D/2/327 with the following A Battery casualties: 1) Battery CO CPT Watson had fragment wounds to his right arm. 2) SGT Moore had multiple wounds to his right hand and shoulder and his left thigh. 3) SP4 Stempleski had fragment wound to his left thigh. 4) PFC Tomicick had fragment wound to his upper left chest.
- 15-Jul-69** CPT Toups visits the XO. He stated that he had been employed as an FO with a recon platoon with the 54<sup>th</sup> ARVN Regt. that had gone out southwest of Dong Ha within 5 Km of Panther II. He stated that he was not employed as an LNO but as an FO. He was released at 1700 hours 15-Jul-69.
- 20-Jul-69** The CO 108<sup>th</sup> Artillery Group presented the Meritorious Unit Commendation for the period 21-Feb-68 through 31-Oct-68 to the battalion. See 3-May-69 information.
- 20-Jul-69** *1<sup>st</sup> ARVN Advisor reported Hue received incoming rockets. B/6/33, A/2/138, C/2/138, B/2/94 and 4/77 Artillery fired counter rocket defense. Notes from 101<sup>st</sup> Abn. DivArty log*
- 24-Jul-69** The mission of C Battery is changed to reinforcing 3/12 Marines due to a change of AO.
- 25-Jul-69** Capt. Szawiel is awarded the Bronze Star for service
- 29-Jul-69** Capt. Nieland is the Battalion motor officer. 1SG Montague is acting CSM.
- 31-Jul-69** **ORLL Highlights** (Operational Reports Lessons Learned)
- Missions fired and ammunition expended during the period
- |         |                |               |
|---------|----------------|---------------|
| Battery | missions fired | ammo expended |
|---------|----------------|---------------|

A	3,536	13,626
B	5,782	22,548
C	1,752	20,964
Totals	11,070	57,138

Casualties for the 90 day period ending 31-Jul-69

Killed in Action	1 ??
Wounded in Action	6 ??
Non-battle dead	0 ??
Non-battle casualties	4 ??

During the period the battalion has been continuing a construction program that began in the last reported period. A newly constructed officers BOQ has alleviated the cramped living quarters. Chain link fence used as RPG screens has been placed in front of all perimeter bunkers in Delta Sector left which the battalion has the responsibility for. A new battalion ammo bunker was built and a combination guardhouse-message center is being built. Construction of a new Enlisted Men's Club has just begun.

The MEDCAP program at the NUOC-Ngot Orphanage continues to operate and packages of food, clothing, bedding, baby supplies, etc. from the States arrive almost daily.

**1-Aug-69** Headquarters and Service Batteries are at Phu Bai  
A Battery is at FSB Los Banos reinforcing 1/321 Arty 101<sup>st</sup> Abn.  
B Battery is at FSB Panther II reinforcing 1/321 Arty 101<sup>st</sup> Abn.  
C Battery is at Mai Loc Special Forces Camp reinforcing 3/12 MAR

FO commitments are:

A Battery FO is committed to A Troop 2/17<sup>th</sup> Cav near Camp Eagle  
A Battery FO is committed to C Troop 2/17<sup>th</sup> Cav near LZ Sally  
B Battery FO is committed to 3<sup>rd</sup> ARVN Regiment at A Shau Valley  
C Battery FO is committed to 7<sup>th</sup> Cav ARVN Regt at A Shau Valley  
C Battery FO is committed to C/2/34 armor near FSB Blaze

**1-Aug-69** 1SG Stephens reports to Battalion to be assigned at C 6/33. PFC Danny Walters is at 85th Evacuation Hospital for injury to his right leg - injured while popping a primer on bent 105MM cartridge case that would not chamber. MSG Gove reports that 6 men received minor fragmentation wounds from hand grenade while throwing it for familiarization on range. 2LT Butte and 2LT Wright are FOs

**2-Aug-69** Captain Szawiel departs for CONUS.

**4-Aug-69** 1LT McChristy moves to C Battery AXO. SFC Simone reports as A Battery mess steward.

- 10-Aug-69** 0925 SGT Lamaster from C/6/33 visits the XO about being apprehended in Hue. He says he was simply driving around the Citadel. He is queried about why he was leaving the Recon SGT job. He had asked 2LT Eichler for relief from position since he had been out for 7 months. He has checked with CPT Arnett for transfer back to the gun section and the BC approved it.
- 10-Aug-69** 1315-1500 LTC Bradbury, new Phu Bai Combat Base defense commander, and MAJ Sanders XO visit for briefing and tour. While at FDC, they learn of an ammunition incident at B/6/33. The Battalion Ammunition Officer is immediately contacted for details.
- 10-Aug-69** 1720 Ammo Officer visits XO. Says personnel were placing an ICM round back in fiber container after it had been in the ready rack for about 3 months. As personnel tried to put cap on fiber, propellant flashed and set fiber containing the ICM projectile on fire. 8 men sustained minor injuries with 2 sent to the rear for treatment. A portion of the fuse burned away in flash. EOD personnel evacuated the round for destruction. Lot LOP 24-6X of ICM has been suspended since primer did not go off, but 2 bags of powder plus igniter did. ASP personnel classified the incident as an ammunition malfunction and expressed an opinion that someone had to be smoking while packing ammunition. Lt. Westmoreland will make out an ammunition malfunction report on the incident.
- 11-Aug-69** B Battery displaces overland from LZ Arrow (Panther II) to LZ Blaze (YD 535 020) to support the fires of 2/319 Arty.
- 12-Aug-69** A battery moves overland from Los Banos to FSB Birmingham (YD 706 102) with a mission to reinforce the fires of 1/321 Arty.
- 13-Aug-69** Battalion received 4 incoming enemy rockets last night. Ammo supply concerns continue to be problematic. Trucks are not being allowed to travel the road. B Battery has 440 HE and 53 Illumination. LZ Blaze has 588 HE and 52 PD Fuze.
- 15-Aug-69** 1715 CPT Weaver, FDC, reported to XO that SP4 William A. Wallace of B Battery was injured while detonating a cartridge case primer. When it went off SP4 Wallace jumped backwards and fell, hitting his head on engineer stakes and rocks and suffering slight burns on chest and forearms. Wallace was sent to 85<sup>th</sup> Evacuation Hospital with second degree burns.
- 15-Aug-69** 1757 108<sup>th</sup> Group Aviation Officer called XO about delivery of ice cream to the battalion. Coordination is effected to have 15 gallons flown from Dong Ha to Phu Bai on 16-Aug-69.
- 18-Aug-69** 1455 MAJ Rutledge, 26<sup>th</sup> General Support Group Dept Log Officer, called XO about ice cream shortage. S4 called and directed to check ice cream issue at 26<sup>th</sup>

Group against battalion issue slips. Check showed that figures checked for the previous few weeks.

**18-Aug-69** 1600 CPT Kyttle and Lt. Westmoreland visited the XO regarding Headquarters and Service Battery merger. Log contains discussion details.

**23-Aug-69** Lt. Fry to replace 2LT Eichler as FO with C/2/34 Armor. Sp6 Abbott B 6/33 is scheduled to DEROS 24 Aug. 1LT Bailey leaves.

**24-Aug-69** Trip flares continue to be removed from outside the perimeter line each night.

**28-Aug-69** Ammunition and supply materials finally make the convoy to FSB Blaze.

**29-Aug-69** S-2 reports that ARVN agents report rated A-1 as follows:  
There will be extensive sapper attacks against US installations on 29/30 Aug 69. The sentinel on bunker D-2 discovered a Claymore facing the wrong direction and that a trip flare attached to it went off when it was picked up to be turned around. The mine itself caught fire and cooked off with negative casualties and damages. SGM Palmertree & SP5 Sterling depart tomorrow for commanders a call at 108th Arty group.

**1-Sep-69** **Organizational Day** is observed by the battalion.

The letter of instructions outlines the program for the day:

1. The battalion will celebrate "Organizational Day" Monday, 1 September 1969

The activities will consist of an assembly for reading of the battalion history, presentation of awards and competitive events and games. All events will be held in the northeast corner of the motor park picnic area unless otherwise stated.

2. Sequence of events is as follows:

a. Late breakfast 0700 - 0800 hours

b. Work call 0830 - 0930 hours

c. Assemble for reading of battalion history, new and old achievements by Bn XO, 1000 hours.

d. Competitive events 1015 - 1300 hours

e. Cookout. Refreshments 1300 - 1700 hours

MENU Barbequed Steak Barbequed hamburgers

Frankfurters Potato Salad

Relish Tray Club Salad

Beer Soda/6

3. Prizes will be awarded to individual team members, not by most points per battery, due to the number of FB personnel in the rear area. The prize will consist of one cold can of beer per winning member immediately after completion of event.

4. The Bn. CO and CSM will fly to C Battery arriving at approximately 1130 hours to congratulate the Soldier of the Month. They will visit B and A after departing C Battery. Each battery will have an assembly upon Bn. COs arrival.

5. Hq. Btry will make arrangements for and set up a PA system in the area where the formation is to be held.

### Competitive Events and Games

1. Tug of War. The best two out of three tries between Hq and Svc Btry, event to be held at battalion wash rack. Svc Btry to furnish one NCO to supervise and set up the event and all necessary equipment.
2. Three-legged Race. Minimum of two participants per battery. A Btry to furnish one NCO to supervise and set up event and all necessary equipment.
3. M-16 Contest. One or more representatives from each battery. A Btry to furnish one NCO to supervise and set up the event and all necessary equipment.
4. Alert Contest. One or more representatives from each battery will attempt to don steel pot, flak vest, protective mask and ammo bandolier while blindfolded with gear heaped in a pile. Hq Btry will furnish one NCO to supervise and set up the event and all necessary equipment.
5. Indian Wrestling. Representatives from each battery compete in round robin elimination. B Btry will furnish one NCO to supervise and set up the event and all necessary equipment.
6. Balloon Stomping Contest. Battery representatives are tied in pairs and attempt to stomp balloons tied to other contestant's ankles. The man who has balloons intact at the end wins. Svc Btry will furnish one NCO to supervise and set up the event and all necessary equipment.
7. Dizzy Bat Contest. Relay race where contestants first are spun around and lose equilibrium then fall over themselves trying to reach the relay man. C Btry will furnish one NCO to set up and supervise the event.
8. Volley Ball. Svc Btry will be responsible for setting up teams to participate and furnish equipment. 1400 to 1600 hours. Officers vs. EM. NCOs vs. EM. Winners playoff.
9. Horseshoes. Hq Btry will be responsible for setting up teams and furnish equipment. 1400 to 1600 hours.
10. Touch Football. Hq Btry will be responsible for setting up teams and furnish equipment. 1400 to 1600 hours. Officers vs. EM. NCOs vs. EM. Winners playoff.
11. Batteries will pre-designate personnel as much as possible to participate in events.

**2-Sep-69** Heavy rain continues throughout the day. The Battalion is thoroughly occupied with trying to prevent water damage to belongings, sandbagging roofs of billets and repairing wind damage. 101st ABN reports 50-70 MPH winds.

**4-Sep-69** 0800 Staff meeting is held in Bn. TOC. Battalion CO remarks:  
1) Bn. shuttle bus runs are not being made in a consistent manner.  
2) If a personnel change is contemplated, the BC should be informed prior to the change being made.  
3) Staff journals are to be maintained in detail.  
4) Personnel in Bn. rear area are to wear Battalion crest on right pocket flap.  
5) Survey points must be put in to A and B Battery locations.  
6) Wind damage to curtains must be repaired.  
Major Williams reports for duty as Battalion S3

**4-Sep-69** 1030 108th Arty calls UPO about death of PFC Larry Stephens A 6/33. Battalion aid station has negative information.

1800 Message received that Stephens was dead on arrival at USS Repose 1230 hours 1-Sep-69 Cause of death: subarachnoid hemorrhage secondary to intracranial aneurysm, Berry type.

- 5-Sep-69** Sp4 Thomas J. Hanson B 6/33 is medevaced to 85th E for heart condition.
- 6-Sep-69** 1135 Bn. CO, MAJ Westmoreland, B Battery BC departs for C Battery position at FSB Blaze. Brief inspection of area shows rains to have hit battery hard but that each individual is working, trying to repair damages and continue constructive efforts planned. SSG Hay and SGT Sime are in process of moving parapets around their howitzers. CPT Rimer reports that 2LT Fry is not being taken care of by C/2/34 Armor but that he was watching the situation. BN CO checks with Hq 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn 187<sup>th</sup> Inf. regarding a complaint about non-support of infantry requests for fire. No substance is found to exist on complaints. Bn CO and XO then fly to FSB Rendezvous for meeting with Bn CO 2/319<sup>th</sup> Arty but he is not there. Next stop is A/6/33 position at FSB Birmingham where Bn. CO inquires about status of information on missions requested and fired. Bn. CO visits Bn. Co 1/502<sup>nd</sup> Inf. on existence of difficulty with fire support of troops and no complaints are made.
- 6-Sep-69** 1230 CPT Hall calls from Bn. FDC. A Battery has 2 howitzers down. Tube #24269, Carriage #1771 is down for traverse mechanism. Tube #52818, Carriage #818 is down for sight mount and breech block. 1400 CPT Weaver called – howitzers at A Battery will be back up shortly. Difficulty with delivering ammo to firing batteries continues.
- 7-Sep-69** Major Richard L. Renard signs in as BN XO - HQ is still at Phu Bai.
- 10-Sep-69** CPT McDonald is promoted, Major Westmoreland departs
- 10-Sep-69** Lt. McDonald is promoted to Captain. Chaplain Carney said he would be at FSB Birmingham for Stephens' memorial service.
- 11-Sep-69** Stephens is promoted to SSM and Woolsey is promoted to 1SG.
- 13-Sep-69** B Battery displaces by air to FSB Rifle (YC 861 987) with 16 sorties. The mission is to reinforce the fires of 2/230 Arty.
- 13-Sep-69** A survey team departs by LOH for FSB Rifle. Comments : Battery B move to Rifle goes smoothly
- 14-Sep-69** A liaison section is committed to the 3<sup>rd</sup> ARNV Regiment at FSB Geronimo.
- 15-Sep-69** A headquarters hooch is partially destroyed by a runaway water blivet. Bn receives a call from MAJ Bondshu, Group S-1, saying that CPT Hutchinson's resignation was forwarded from USARV on 28-Aug-69

- 17-Sep-69** 0840 SFC Goodman departs by H-23 to seek the USS Repose and visit SFC Bosley.
- 21-Sep-69** Lt. Porter arrives for duty
- 25-Sep-69** Lt. Wood and Lt. Harmon leave to rejoin 2/138 Arty
- 28-Sep-69** A farewell party is held for CPT Garcia
- 29-Sep-69** An Australian Special Service Show "Midnight Movers" plays in the Bn. Maintenance building.
- 30-Sep-69** B Battery advance party heads to Cua Viet in preparation for battery move.
- 30-Sep-69** B Battery displaces by air to Phu Bai. Twenty seven sorties are required for the move.
- 2-Oct-69** PFC Hokes of A Battery receives burns on his arms and face when a stove blows up. He is treated by a physician at FSB Birmingham and returns to the battalion aid station by 3/4 ton truck.
- 3-Oct-69** B Battery displaces overland to FSB Nancy (YD 442 394) enroute to Cua Viet.
- 4-Oct-69** B Battery displaces overland to Cua Viet (YD 343 698) with a new mission of General Support XXIV Corps reinforcing support to the 12<sup>th</sup> Marine Artillery Regiment and reinforcing support to the 5/4<sup>th</sup> Artillery and also providing on call fires along the Cua Viet River.
- 5-Oct-69** The battalion receives frequent incoming small arms fire from a tree line in front of the berm at Headquarters in Phu Bai. Fire is friendly from RF-PF.
- 10-Oct-69** PFC Gulef comes in from Mai Loc for emergency leave. A birthday party for the CO is held in the officers club.
- 14-Oct-69** B Battery fires prep at 1045 hrs. and is credited with 1KBA, 3 hooches, 4 bunkers and 1 telephone destroyed, 1 secondary explosion. 257 He, 2 WP expended. 1400 hrs - second fire mission C Battery- Surveillance indicates 15 person VC/NVA FO party. Found abandoned equipment and blood trails.
- 19-Oct-69** A farewell party is held for Lt. Brewer.
- 22-Oct-69** SFC Williams is on a Navy hospital ship
- 23-Oct-69** A farewell party is held for CPT Toups and Lt. Ashenfelter

- 25-Oct-69** The battalion is relieved of the mission of reinforcing the fires of the 101<sup>st</sup> Div Arty
- 25-Oct-69** A Battery displaces overland to Cua Viet (YD 343 698) to assume the mission of B Battery.
- 25-Oct-69** B Battery displaces overland to FSB Nancy enroute to Phu Bai.
- 25-Oct-69** 2LT Porter is promoted to 1LT.
- 26-Oct-69** B Battery displaces overland to Phu Bai (YD 893 129). *Another note indicates that B Battery arrived at LZ Split Trail.*
- 27-Oct-69** B Battery stands down prior to deactivation.
- 28-Oct-69** FO teams from A & C Battery are committed to 3/5<sup>th</sup> Cav at Cam Lo.

**31-Oct-69 ORLL Highlights** (Operational Reports Lessons Learned)

Missions fired and ammunition expended during the period

Battery	missions fired	ammo expended
A	3,261	20,570
B	3,534	19,300
C	1,173	11,658
Totals	7,968	51,528

Casualties for the 90 day period ending 31-Oct-69

Killed in Action	??
Wounded in Action	??
Non-battle dead	??
Non-battle casualties	??

During the period the battalion enlisted men's club was completed and officially opened. Approval for construction of a new TOC was received and 75% of the material received. A new 100 Kw generator was installed at battalion base camp replacing the 36 Kw set.

*"In October 1969 General Creighton Abrams told General Wheeler, "They had some rainfall yesterday up in I Corps. Hue got 14 ½ inches, a new all time record high and Dong Ha got 7.2 inches." Wheeler's response was, "Practically a drought at Dong Ha." Even so, that was next to nothing at Phu Bai the same season. During the first nine days of the month, reported the MACV briefer, rainfall there totaled 59 inches, greater than any monthly total ever recorded over the past 30 years at any station in Vietnam. On one day alone, 22 inches of rain fell. By the end of the month, Hue Phu Bai wound up with 75.06 inches of rain, and it didn't rain at all on 14 days of the month." From General Creighton Abram's tape recordings as reported by Lewis Sorley in Vietnam Magazine, December 2005*

- 1-Nov-69** Headquarters & Service Batteries are at Phu Bai



A Battery is at Cua Viet (YD 343 698) reinforcing the 5/4 Artillery  
B Battery is preparing to deactivate (Keystone Cardinal)  
C Battery is at Mai Loc Special Forces Camp (YD 095 515) reinforcing the 5/4 Artillery

FO & Liaison commitments are:

A Battery FO is committed to 3/5<sup>th</sup> Cav near Cam Lo (YD 125 595)  
A Battery FO is committed to C/2/17<sup>th</sup> Cav near LZ Sally (YD 638 274)  
A Btry FO committed to 1/44<sup>th</sup> Arty near Cam Lo Bridge (YD 148 604)  
C Battery FO committed to A/2/17<sup>th</sup> Cav near Camp Eagle (YD 827 137)  
C Battery FO is committed to 3/5<sup>th</sup> Cav near Cam Lo  
One Liaison section is committed to 3/5<sup>th</sup> Cav near Cam Lo  
A Second Liaison section is committed to the 108<sup>th</sup> Arty Group to coordinate fires between 108<sup>th</sup> Arty Group FSCA and 1<sup>st</sup> Bde 5<sup>th</sup> Inf Div FSCC.

- 2-Nov-69** B Battery deactivation ceremonies are held at Phu Bai
- 6-Nov-69** B Battery howitzers and equipment are transferred to the 14th Artillery Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Division, Army of the Republic of Vietnam. The ceremony, attended by both American and Vietnamese officials marks the first actual transfer of artillery pieces to take place in I Corps in the continuing Vietnamization of the war.
- 5-Nov-69** C Battery displaces by air to FSB Fuller (YD 019593) using 20 Marine sorties.
- 8-Nov-69** Battery A displaces by barge and land from Cua Viet to Dong Ha Combat Base (YD 229 599). The battery's mission while at Dong Ha is to reinforce the fires of the 5/4<sup>th</sup> Artillery
- 8-Nov-69** A Battery has started moving - second barge is loaded. Orders received to destroy Qua Viet. Special Service Show arrives and plays for children from Hue orphanage in Battalion maintenance building.
- 9-Nov-69** Battery A displaces by land to Strong Point A-4 (YD 118 701) with a mission of general support to XXIV Corps reinforcing the fires of 5/4<sup>th</sup> Artillery.
- 14-Nov-69** Final packing and loading of HQ gear takes place for move to Dong Ha
- 15-Nov-69** HQ arrives Dong Ha Combat Base to area formerly occupied by 1/40 Arty
- 15-Nov-69** Service Battery displaces by road to Dong Ha
- 17-Nov-69** 2135 C Battery, located at FSB Fuller is hit by intermittent ground probes. Approximately 40 to 50 RPGs are received injuring 2 officers. One EM suffers a non-fatal heart attack. The enemy force is repelled by firing ICM, HE and Beehive direct defensive targets and organic small arms weapons to reinforce the indirect artillery fire on defensive targets. The wire is never breached.

*When the enemy attack began, FDC contacted the battery guns along the perimeter for a fire mission. All except gun 5 reported "ready to fire". Without all guns reporting, FDC could not order a fire mission, so Lt. Ferguson immediately ran over to gun 5 to check on the situation. He realized that the crew on gun 5 was not ready to fire and quickly bent down to reach the land line phone, then contacted FDC and told them that gun 5 was out of commission. As he bent down, his steel pot fell off and when he popped back up again without his helmet, he was hit in the head by a piece of shrapnel that caused massive bleeding. Sp4 Henry Vest, the 6/33 medic, was having a difficult time controlling the bleeding so Leo Militello, the battery recorder, ran over to the infantry company and called one of their medics, who was able to stop the bleeding. Vest stayed with Ferguson through the night. The mountain top was fogged in the next morning but finally the guys were able to direct a medevac pilot in thru the fog to pick up the wounded and take them to the hospital ship Repose. Militello*

*Lt. Dennis Butte was in charge of the Fire Direction Center during the evening shift on FSB Fuller. In the chain of command he was right after Mike Ferguson. On the night of the attack the other FDO took over the FDC while Butte went out into the battery with a PRC75 and adjusted the defensive fire missions. The steep slopes of Fuller made it difficult to bring the rounds close enough to do any good and extremely nerve wracking because of the difficulty of being close without putting a round on top of the hill or the unit. There had been reports of dinks in the wire although Butte personally saw none and had illumination going constantly. The unit was taking RPG rounds and Ferguson was out in the open and moving around the battery a lot of the time like Butte was.*

*Fuller had been socked in by fog for several days including the morning after the battle. The medevac ships would not attempt to come in to get the wounded, but "Spiderman", a pilot from a transportation unit, put his life on the line that day to pick up the wounded while Butte stood on the side of the cloud covered hill and provided directions to put him on the pad as the cloud cover prevented him from seeing where he was going. Butte would tell him to come up and what direction over; a process that was repeated many times until he touched down. After loading the wounded, "Spiderman" blindly left in the reverse manner he had used to get to the pad. Butte*

**18-Nov-69** XO briefs A/158 AVN about the need to evacuate casualties from FSB Fuller. Lt. Ferguson, PFC Merrifield and an infantryman are flown to USS Repose.

**18-Nov-69** Asst S-1 tells section that C 6/33 was attacked last night by sappers with 2 WIA and 1 heart attack.

*An Eerie Sucking Sound – November 18, 1969*

*By mid November 1969, atop Dong Ha Mountain there in the Republic of Vietnam, things had changed greatly from just a few weeks earlier. As time moved on, the weather became cooler, and there was beau coup (a lot) more cloud cover. I had mixed emotions about the whole situation. I loved being there and especially working DF. Yet, on an immediate and local level it seemed that the wind quit making the usual wooing sounds, but rather, it seemed to make an uncanny sucking sound as it blew down across Mutter's Ridge and the DMZ from the communist north or from Leatherneck Square to the east. All of a sudden we were the only Marines there on the mountain. The army had arrived in the next step of our president's plan of Vietnamization. My mixed emotions, or ambivalence was that I loved my job, but at the same time the situation sucked. It was kinda like playing sports such as football, and motocross. I loved the sports, both in high school and later years. I played hard too but you gotta pay the price. For instance, I've managed to have sixteen broken bones in thirteen separate incidents. I love the activities, but sometimes the situation sucked. And, that's how it was in Vietnam.*

*It really was an important job; after all, we were fighting to keep the aggressor communists of the north from taking over the country. Looking back upon it now from a different perspective, or point of view I can also see that America's expenditure of blood and bucks ended up helping to*

*stop the advance of communism on a world-wide level. We drained them and even the giant Soviet Union was defunct in twenty years.*

*During the day of November 17th, our own 1st Radio Battalion's SigInt efforts produced an incident very reminiscent of the one that greatly influenced the American victory at the Battle of Midway in WWII. In this particular event we found that a NVA regiment (my memory seems to tell me it was the 246th of the 304th Division) was in comms with an NVA arty unit. A combination that always spelled t-r-o-u-b-l-e for someone. Whenever any part of the 304th was on the move, somebody was going to die. And, amazingly it was them that always got hit way harder than us, but they'd just didi mau back across the DMZ, or into Laos. There they just regrouped, resupplied, rebuilt, and retrained with immunity their devastated elements, while awaiting for another time to create hate and discontent. We couldn't touch them there thanks to our all wise congress, who were greatly influenced by maggots like Tom Hayden and Jane Fonda, and their blind and self centered followers. People like that were responsible for much American blood.*

*So the big question was, who would that lucky somebody be? Well, we had a tri-nome indicator that signaled who the somebody was that would have the honors. It's just that we weren't exactly sure who the three number indicator indicated. Possibly the tri-nome was C2, a fire support base that was just a little to our east, or possibly the Khe Gio bridge near the southern base of our mountain. It could also be Camp Elliot at the Rockpile, but then again, it could be us as well. Not knowing who caused us all to spin the dials on our radios more intently and I was purposed to locate them with my Pig (PRD-1 direction finder) atop our bunker in the Pig Pen.*

*Every American unit in the whole northern "I" Corps area was alerted that something was up. Everyone was on standby to assist the "chosen somebodies." Every arty unit that could push out a round far enough with maximum charge was ready to participate. Every air unit was standing by to render assistance even though the cloud cover was heavy and no aircraft could drop bombs without possibly hitting the good guys.*

*Early in the evening, up in my Pig Pen, the speaker crackled, "All Stations, All Stations this is Florida Vacation Alpha with a message on Bravo Zulu; standby to receive traffic." Net control at Dong Ha had a target for us. In just a short minute's time, I was sending my own traffic back which was a really good shot/bearing on the enemy transmission whom I believe was the 81st Artillery Battalion. It seems that they were to provide artillery support for the 246th as that infantry regiment made its assault on the chosen somebody. But, who was chosen? We'd all find out soon enough.*

*I recall hearing the bru ha ha from the big boys (155mm and 175mm howitzers) at Dong Ha, Alpha 4, Charlie 2, and Camp Carroll as their big guns were firing on the enemy's 81st arty, at least on their radio operator. Seems like everybody was getting in on the action. So we thought we knew where their arty support was coming from, but we still had no location on the 246th, nor did we know who they were about to play "Patty Cake" with. For some reason I recall going back down into our operations bunker. Possibly because those big guns were impacting not too far from us, (danger close) and the rounds, especially the 175s from Camp Carroll were doing their "freight train impressions" as they passed just over our heads; just a slight mis-calc. or a short round would create beau coup "hate and discontent" right in our own perimeter. Some days I'd hear our 1st RagBag DF guy at Camp Carroll talking on our net radio frequency when the 175's, right near him, would start shooting in our direction, then he'd say something like "hey, Foxtrot (that's us at Fuller) you've got some 'Big Boys' heading your way," and sure enough, those 175 rounds would go roaring by. On this occasion, I recall being told across the radio that they were firing some kind of pattern to saturate the suspected target area with steel. Not being an artilleryman, was the term "shooting Iron Crosses" or something like that?*

*Regardless, for whatever reason, we were all in the bunker as Camp Carroll's 175's were doing their fly-by. Those of us who were not actually on the radio (seems like our Dancers were the ones spinning the dials) were playing Back Alley. I distinctly remember that at 2130 hours we were all actively discussing who was going to get hit. All of a sudden I remembered that all my "deuce*

gear” was in our sleeping bunker next door. That required my leaving the entrance to our bunker, traversing the ledge and going into the other bunker to retrieve my flak jacket and junk. I recall standing at the entrance and saying “who's it gonna be.” “Not us” came the consensus, though the Dancers weren't saying much, but seemed rather shook up. One step along towards the other bunker, just one step and all of a sudden a great big KA-WAAAM . A B-41 (RPG) impacted right on the other side of the bunker entrance where I was headed. I felt the concussion, but continued into the other bunker, after just a slight pause, during which time I yelled back into the Ops. bunker, “It's Us! As if they hadn't already figured that out. Those RPGs were not accurate at all past fifty to a hundred yards, but they could be used as an indirect fire weapon for distances out to nine hundred yards or so. After the retrieval of my combat gear, to include my M-79, I went back to the Operations bunker where my rifle was, and all the other guys. Then NVA 82 mm mortars started dropping in on us, but kind of spread out, not nearly as heavy as I expected.

My memory is sketchy here, because I remember at sometime being along our sandbagged wall awaiting an enemy assault, as well as being in the Operations bunker. I also remember that we could hear the wonderful sound of the flares as they'd pop overhead, but we just couldn't tell exactly where they were at because of the thick cloud cover. We were definitely “socked-in.” In the bunker with our radios we could tune in to any frequency, one of which I recall was the “basketball ship.” It was a large aircraft that kept orbiting overhead and dropping those large drum sized flares. He stayed there for hours always keeping a flare in the air, and when one would leave another would take his place. Sometimes when a flare would be dropped a little too far away, or it'd drift too far, one of our 81mm mortars would pop a flare and there would be more light. It was always really eerie though as the parachutes would float down through the clouds. Sometimes they'd be real close and we'd hear the sizzle, feel the heat, and smell the fumes as it'd float by, then sputter and extinguish, sometimes just right there. I remember getting the call to return to my Pig Pen to get some RDF shots. The Pig was the very highest point on the mountain, and I could see a full 360 degrees all around - for a few feet that is - because of the clouds, that's really eerie you know, people trying to kill you and not being able to see anything.

It was just a little after the NVA mortars started coming in on us that we got the word from Dong Ha that the enemy 246th regiment would no longer be supported in their assault by the assigned artillery unit. Seems that they had been decimated by American Artillery. Ha! That means that we had saved our own butts! Our own Radio Direction Finding had located and caused our own big guns and howitzers to deliver steel on the enemy so that they could not support the ground assault. Evidently the 82's that were falling on us were indigenous to the NVA 246th regiment, because the artillery unit that we had destroyed probably would have used rockets and howitzers.

Although the mortars fell throughout the night, and an occasional RPG came slamming into something, the expected ground assault never materialized into anything that caused major concern, because as soon as we realized that we were the lucky somebodies, every arty unit within range started pumping steel in patterns all around our perimeter. The crescendo was intense at first but abated after awhile. I was told that there were more than a hundred dud 82mm NVA mortar rounds with their fins sticking up the next day, that had been dropped into our perimeter by the enemy. Possibly they were defective, maybe they just weren't detonating in the rain, and moisture softened earth. I know there a lot that weren't duds.

The next morning, the 18th of November 1969 as the light stabbed through the heavy clouds, all enemy activity had been completely non-existent for a few hours. There were no KIAs of ours and the WIAs were staged by the LZ to be medevaced as soon as a bird could get in. We could hear them overhead, above the cloud cover just watching for a hole. There were several of them, just orbiting around.

Ah, a hole appeared and zoom, in no time at all a bird appeared and set down right on that little LZ. It was unlike any bird that I had seen yet in Vietnam.

There were still several birds up above us but out of sight as it was a very fleeting hole. The pilot disembarked as well as the one, possibly two passengers. Ha! I couldn't believe my eyes. It was

*some civilian pilot and a Donut Dollie in her pretty blue dress. Must have come up from Quang Tri, where the nearest Red Cross folks were. Now possibly there were two of them, but it doesn't seem like that "whirlybird" was big enough to carry a pilot and two people. Regardless, they were there for a very short time before an army officer ran up screaming "get out of here, get out of here!" We had WIAs staged by the LZ awaiting a medevac to find a hole in the clouds. One of the WIAs was a lieutenant with a piece of steel shrapnel in his forehead; we needed BBs and stuff as well. Finally a hole broke and that's what we got, a sightseeing Donut Dollie? My memory mainly sees the blue dress and the soldier running up with his arms waving; if she'd a stuck around, probably she would have seen several Harvest Moons. Chuck Truitt USMC 1<sup>st</sup> Radio Battalion*

- 28-Nov-69** SP4 Larry Heaslip returns from FSB Fuller for emergency leave.
- 30-Nov-69** 1LT Basehart reports for duty
- 2-Dec-69** 0945 A Battery at A-4 receives one incoming rocket with no resulting damage.
- 3-Dec-69** Leaver & Jachmann are promoted to 1LT. 1LT Leaver and SGT Lavessuer leave for FO commitment with 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn 2<sup>nd</sup> ARVN for a period of 5 days.
- 6-Dec-69** Lt. Poche arrives for duty. Captain Schulz left recently or is getting ready to leave.
- 8-Dec-69** Captains Blackman & Slater report for duty
- 11-Dec-69** Special Service Show "The Girls" is held in HQ Battery theatre.
- 15-Dec-69** A Battery Strong Point A-4 fires the battalion's 400,000<sup>th</sup> round in the Republic of Vietnam. A ceremony was held commemorating the firing of the 400,000<sup>th</sup> round with Colonel Robert C. Hixon, commanding Officer, XXIV Corps Artillery, Colonel R. C. Cartwright, Commanding Officer, 108<sup>th</sup> Artillery Group and LTC Everett E. Hooper firing the symbolic rounds.
- 24-Dec-69** A firing battery inspection of A Battery was conducted with a satisfactory rating achieved.
- 31-Dec-69** A change of command ceremony is held and Lieutenant Colonel Ross L. Duncan assumes command of the battalion. LTC Hooper returns to Fort Sill, Oklahoma to join the staff and Faculty Battalion.
- 2-Jan-70** A farewell party for LTC Hooper is held with photos taken by Vestal
- 5-Jan-70** Major Donald B. Williams assumes duties as BN XO.
- 14-Jan-70** 3 guns from A Battery move by road from A-4 to CB Elliott (XD 984 542) to participate in an artillery raid conducted by 8/4<sup>th</sup> Artillery.
- 13-Jan-70** The 3 guns from A Battery move by road from CB Elliott to Ca Lu (YD 012 455) continuing the artillery raid.

- 17-Jan-70** SP5 McGowan tells batteries to close publication accounts. XO goes to Quang Tri to assist in solatium payment for Artillery incident.
- 18-Jan-70** The 3 guns from A Battery move back to Strong Point A-4 when the artillery raid is completed.
- 18-Jan-70** SP4 Gilmore publishes "Lions Roar". SP4 Gilmore and 1LT Leaver work on the artillery incident report.
- 23-Jan-70** 1930 Strong Point A-4 (A Battery) receives eight incoming rockets with no damage.
- 24-Jan-70** Maps and classified documents are burned in preparation for inactivation. SGM Lucas & SFC Anderson are promoted
- 25-Jan-70** 1LT Okumura replaces 2LT Eichler as FO 2/17 Cav
- 25-Jan-70** 0900 Strong Point A-4 (A Battery) receives ten incoming rockets with no damage.
- 26-Jan-70** 0900 Strong Point A-4 (A Battery) receives ten incoming rockets with no damage.
- 26-Jan-70** 1130 Strong Point A-4 (A Battery) receives three incoming rockets with no damage.
- 27-Jan-70** Two guns from C Battery are airlifted to Dong Ha for an artillery raid to begin the next day.
- 28-Jan-70** An FO team is dispatched to work with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. 3<sup>rd</sup> ARVN Regiment north of FSB Fuller.
- 28-Jan-70** The 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion 33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery conducted an artillery raid having operational control of the artillery while 3/5<sup>th</sup> Cav assumed operational control of the security. The raid utilized four 175 guns from the 5/175<sup>th</sup> Marines and two howitzers from C Battery 6/33<sup>rd</sup>. Displacement was by convoy from Dong Ha to Ca Lu (YD 012 455) by 1315 hours. The raid terminated at 1100 hours on 31-Jan-70 and all units returned to their former locations except the 2 guns from C Battery that had been airlifted to FSB Fuller on 1-Feb-70. BDA assessment of the artillery raid with a combined effort of ARA, 175 guns and 105 howitzers was:
- |                            |    |
|----------------------------|----|
| Bunkers destroyed          | 30 |
| Bunkers damaged            | 4  |
| 50 cal positions destroyed | 2  |
| Huts destroyed             | 4  |
| Trails interdicted         | 3  |

Draw-bridge destroyed	1
Life raft destroyed	1
Foxholes destroyed	30
NVA personnel dispersed	4
Unknown number of trucks set afire	

**31-Jan-70** S-3 108th Group called to inform XO that 2 men were wounded at Fuller in RPG attack

**31-Jan-70 ORLL Highlights (Operational Reports Lessons Learned)**

Missions fired and ammunition expended during the period

Battery	missions fired	ammo expended
A	3,002	29,326
C	2,145	20,595
Totals	5,147	31,921

Casualties for the 90 day period ending 31-Jan-70

Killed in Action	??
Wounded in Action	??
Non-battle dead	??
Non-battle casualties	??

The battalion medical section continued its MEDCAP at Nuoc-Ngot Orphanage until 10-Jan-70 when the program was transferred to the 1/39<sup>th</sup> Artillery. During this period approximately one hundred packages from the States were distributed to the children along with \$100 in cash from the officers club.

**1-Feb-70** Headquarters and service Batteries are at Dong Ha (YD 225 597)  
 A Battery is at Strong Point A-4 (YD 118 701) reinforcing 5/4<sup>th</sup> Arty  
 B Battery had been deactivated earlier  
 C Battery is at FSB Fuller (YD 019 593) reinforcing 5/4<sup>th</sup> Arty

FO and Liaison section commitments are:

A Battery FO committed to 3/5<sup>th</sup> Cav near Dong Ha  
 A Battery FO committed to 2.17 Cav near LZ Sally  
 A Battery FO committed to 1/44<sup>th</sup> Arty near Cam Lo Bridge  
 A Battery FO committed to 5<sup>th</sup> Bn 2<sup>nd</sup> ARVN Regt near LZ Chesapeake  
 C Battery FO committed to A/2/17<sup>th</sup> Cav near Camp Eagle  
 C Battery FO committed to 3/5<sup>th</sup> Cav near Dong Ha  
 One liaison section was committed to 3/5<sup>th</sup> Cav at Dong Ha  
 A second liaison section was committed to 108<sup>th</sup> Arty group to effect coordination of clearance to fire between 108<sup>th</sup> Arty Group FSCA and 1<sup>st</sup> Bde 5<sup>th</sup> Inf Div.

**2-Feb-70** The FO team committed to 5<sup>th</sup> Bn. 2<sup>nd</sup> ARVN is released when the FO is medevaced as the result of an eye injury.

- 9-Feb-70** A snake is sighted under the HQ building and is taken under fire with M-79 and 45 cal pistol. The snake is wounded but not recovered.
- 12-Feb-70** Commanding Officers of XXIV Corps Artillery, 108<sup>th</sup> Artillery Group and 6<sup>th</sup> Bn 33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery participated in the ceremonial firing of the battalion's last round in Vietnam as A battery's position at Strong Point A-4 (YD 118 701)
- 13-Feb-70** Major Donald B. Williams assumes command of the battalion.
- 14-Feb-70** 0720 A Battery fires its last round in Vietnam  
1010 C Battery fires its last round in Vietnam
- 14-Feb-70** A & C Batteries are airlifted to Dong Ha to stand down for inactivation under operation KEYSTONE BLUEJAY. Members of the battalion also assisted airlifting C Battery 62<sup>nd</sup> ARVN Artillery to FSB Fuller to replace C/6/33. The three moves required a total of forty one Ch-47 sorties.
- 13-Feb-70** All documents marked "Secret" are destroyed and safes are turned in.
- 18-Feb-70** The LNO team with 3/5<sup>th</sup> Cav is released after an overlap period with the replacement team.

**18-Feb-70 News Release**

The 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery, originally organized as the 33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery Regiment assigned to the 11th Division at Camp George C. Meade, Maryland on 5 July 1918, was most recently reactivated on 1 September 1967 at Fort Carson, Colorado, where it underwent training.

The battalion landed at Red Beach, DaNang, 21 February 1968 and was assigned to the 108th Artillery Group. The battalion established its base camp at Landing Zone Sharon in Quang Tri Province. It moved to Phu Bai in November 1968 and moved again to Dong Ha in November 1969.

The unit is equipped with towed 105mm howitzers and supports Allied ground troops in I Corps Tactical Zone. Its batteries have been widely scattered over I Corps, and they have moved -- by air, land, and sea -- more than eighty times.

The battalion has participated in the following major operations: Somerset Plain, Delaware/Lam Son, Comanche Falls, Rice Denial, Alpeana Beach, Carolina Hills, Jeb Stuart III, North East Monsoon, Scotland I and II, Pegasus, Lam Son 245, Lam Son 225, Lam Son 265, Nevada Eagle, Jeb Stuart II, Kentucky, Marshall Mountain, Napoleon, Saline II, Maine Crag, Purple Mountain, Ohio Rapids, Massachusetts Striker, Kentucky Jumper, Cumberland Thunder and Republic Square.

Battalion civil affairs have included a weekly med cap at Nuoc Ngot Orphanage in Hue and assistance to the Sisters of the Immaculate Mary in Phu Loung, south of Phu Bai. The unit was awarded the Meritorious Unit Citation in General Orders No. 1575 on 3 May 1969 for distinguished Vietnam service between 21 February and 31 October 1968.



**21-Feb-70** The inactivation ceremony for the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery is conducted by 108<sup>th</sup> Artillery Group at Dong Ha Combat Base. Commanding Officers of XXIV Corps Artillery and 108<sup>th</sup> artillery group cased the battalion colors. Colonel Robert C. Hixon, Commanding Officer, XXIV Corps Artillery had also activated the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion 33<sup>rd</sup> Artillery in September 1967 when he was the 46<sup>th</sup> Artillery Group Commanding Officer.

**23-Feb-70** The LNO team with 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division is released.

## **6th Battalion 33rd Artillery - Commanding Officers**

LTC Frank R Olcott	12-Sep-67
LTC William W. Hicks	1-Jun-68
LTC George R. Rowan	28-Nov-68
LTC Everett E. Hooper	21-Jun-69
LTC Ross L. Duncan	31-Dec-69
MAJ Donald B. Williams	13-Feb-70

## **Operational Participation**

Somerset Plain  
Delaware/Lam Son  
Comanche Falls  
Rice Denial  
Alpeana Beach  
Carolina Hills  
Jeb Stuart III  
North East Monsoon  
Scotland I and II  
Pegasus  
Lam Son 245  
Lam Son 225  
Lam Son 265  
Nevada Eagle  
Jeb Stuart II  
Kentucky  
Marshall Mountain  
Napoleon  
Saline II

Maine Crag  
Purple Mountain  
Ohio Rapids  
Massachusetts Striker  
Kentucky Jumper  
Cumberland Thunder  
Republic Square.