

Enclosures:

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|---|------------------|
| 1. Unit History | 15 Dec 1969 |
| 2. Unit History | 10 Jan 1970 |
| 3. Unit History | 20 Jul 1970 |
| 4. D-R-A-F-T Unit History (Unknown date, suspect Spring 1971) | |
| 5. Historical Summary of 158th Avn. Bn. | 30 Nov 1971 |
| 6. History | Approx. Jun 1972 |
| 7. List of Battalion Commanders | Apr 1977 |
| 8. Change of Command Program | 1978 |
| 9. Yearly History Report | 1981 |
| 10. Lineage and Honors | 30 Dec 1987 |
| 11. Coat of Arms for 158th Avn. | 24 May 1988 |
| 12. Distinctive Unit Insignia for 158th Avn. | 24 May 1988 |
| 13. Change of Command Program, 160th SOAR | 28 Jun 1989 |

ENCLOSURE 1

UNIT HISTORY 15 DEC 1969

MISSION

The mission of the 158th Aviation Battalion (AH) is twofold:

1. To provide tactical mobility for combat troops, supplies and equipment of the 101st Airborne Division (AMBL) during the conduct of combat and combat support operations.
2. To provide security for airmobile forces and to participate in offensive, defensive and delaying actions as part of a highly mobile combined arms team.

Unit History File.
EIA

UNIT HISTORY

ACTIVATION AND ORGANIZATION

1 JULY 1968 TO 31 DECEMBER 1968

158TH AVIATION BATTALION (AH)
101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION (AMBL)
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96383

by

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15 SEPTEMBER 1969

228-08.1051

ENCLOSURE 1

UNIT HISTORY 15 DEC 1969

FOREWORD

The esprit of a unit can often be traced directly to an awareness of its members of that particular unit's history. Pride in one's organization, and a motivation to enhance a unit's prestige are two of the most important reasons for a study of past events. With these basic tenets in mind, this Unit History of the 158th Aviation Battalion (AH) is presented.

In a larger sense, however, it is for the future members of this command and the 101st Airborne Division's overall record that we have prepared this history.

PREFACE

This is a history of the 158th Aviation Battalion (AH), 101st Airborne Division (AMBL), for the period 1 July 1968 through 31 December 1968. Events which took place prior to 1 July 1968 or after 31 December 1968 are not included. This history includes the activities of the units assigned to the 158th Aviation Battalion (AH) during its activation and organization. From lessons learned in the past it will focus the reader's eye on the ever reaching "challenge" before us.

The appreciation of the author is extended to S-3 staff, the other staff officers, the personnel of the subordinate units for their assistance in providing the information for this history.

CHAPTER I

GERNEAL

The 158th Aviation Battalion (AH) was activated 25 July 1963 by General Order Number 244, dated 25 July 1968 at Fort Carson, Colorado, under the command of Major Maurice Dougherty. Organized from the existing 246th and 247th Aviation Companies at Fort Carson and at Fort Riley, the unit was assigned command and control elements and the needed additional personnel and equipment for its eventual deployment. HHC, A, B, and D Companies were stationed at Fort Carson, while C Company remained at Fort Riley. Their training began on 9 September 1968.

The mission of the newly formed unit was to train the individual aviators, crews and supporting personnel in airmobile operations on a section, platoon and company and coordinated battalion level.

On 1 October 1968, the command of the 158th Aviation Battalion (AH) was assumed by LTC Peter C. Withers from acting commander LTC John P. Stapleton. During the 13 weeks of the training program the battalion, using the infantrymen of 1/137th and 2/137th, began to master the airmobile concept. Overcoming the logistics problems of obtaining their equipment, the 158th was ready for its ATT, which was administered by the sponsoring headquarters, the 20th Aviation Battalion, during the period 13-15 November. Following the successful ATT, the battalion began intensive training on its weaker areas and then the packing for its deployment.

KEY BATTALION PERSONNEL

LTC PETER C. WITHERS

LTC Peter C. Withers, the Commanding Officer of the 158th Aviation Battalion (AH), is a 1952 graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point. Following graduation he attended the airborne course at Fort Benning and soon afterward came a tour in Korea. LTC Withers entered flight school in San Marcos, Texas, and earned his wings at Fort Rucker in 1955.

In January of 1956 he was found at Headquarters, 7th Army, in Germany, where he remained until returning to COMUS for the Infantry Officers' Career Course in 1959. Chosen to attend the CV-2 Caribou transition course, LTC Withers then went to Fort Benning where he had various assignments flying this aircraft. He later was involved in ferrying a group of Caribous to Southeast Asia, via the Atlantic route; an exciting trip which took 7 days. In September of 1964 LTC Withers arrived at Fort Carson and was assigned to the G-3 Section and later appointed to the General Staff. In 1966 he attended the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, and following this a short tour at Fort McPherson. Returning to Fort Carson in 1968, LTC Withers assumed command of the 158th Aviation Battalion (AH) and deployed with them on the advance party in January 1969.

A son of Army parents, LTC Withers is a native of Fort Bliss, Texas.

MAJ ELDON L. SMITH JR.

Major Eldon L. Smith Jr., the Executive Officer of the 158th Aviation Battalion (AH), entered the Army on 13 July 1956 and attended the Basic Officers' Military Orientation Program at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, where he served as a TAC Officer until April 1957. MAJ Smith received his wings on 1 September 1957 and went on to advanced fixed wing training and instrument school at Fort Rucker, Alabama.

Following his aviation training, MAJ Smith was assigned to another company at Fort Benning, Georgia, and then went to USAPR&DC in Greenland. In June 1962 he attended the Engineer Officers' Career Course until April 1963, then he was assigned to Fort Hood, Texas, where he served with the 2nd Armored Division, the 502nd Aviation Battalion, and the 17th Engineer Battalion.

In February 1965 MAJ Smith was to be found in Germany serving with both Aviation and Armored units. From Germany MAJ Smith went to Vietnam where he served as Commanding Officer of the 281st Aviation Company. Upon his return to CONUS he attended the Command and General Staff College, and following that he had a short tour at Fort Campbell, Kentucky.

In August 1968 MAJ Smith was assigned to the newly formed 158th Aviation Battalion (AH), and deployed with the unit on the advance party in January 1969.

MAJ Smith is a native of Plainview, Texas.

CHAPTER II
MAJOR ORGANIZATIONS & KEY PERSONNEL

HHC, 158TH AVN BN (AH)

HHC was activated on 25 July 1968 at Fort Carson, Colorado, under the Command of 1LT John E. Heidenreich, AT. The mission of Headquarters is to furnish command, control, staff planning and supervision for the 158th Aviation Battalion (AH). HHC provides the personnel, and their support for the Headquarters of the 158th Aviation Battalion (AH), and assist the subordinate companies in the accomplishment of their mission.

On 25 August 1968 MAJ John D. Robinson, IN, assumed command of HHC, and on 1 October 1968 he surrendered the Guidon to MAJ Harold R. Williams, CE.

COMPANY A, 158TH AVN BN (AH)

Company A, 158th Aviation Battalion (AH) was activated on 18 July 1968 at Fort Carson, Colorado, under the command of MAJ Maurice F. Dougherty, CE. The mission of Company A is to provide tactical mobility for combat troops, supplies, and equipment during the conduct of airmobile operations. Company A adopted the callsign "Ghostrider".

159TH TRANSPORTATION DETACHMENT

The 159th TC Detachment was activated on 18 July 1968 at Fort Carson, Colorado, under the command of 1LT Jerry L. Chandler, TC. The mission of the 159th TC is to perform direct support aircraft maintenance, avionics, and supply support for Company A, 158th Aviation Battalion (AH).

COMPANY B, 158TH AVN BN (AH)

Company B was activated on 18 July 1968 at Fort Carson, Colorado, under the command of MAJ Tommy W. Thorton, AT. The mission of Company B is to provide tactical mobility for combat troops, supplies and equipment during the conduct of airmobile operations. Company B adopted the callsign "Lancer".

168TH TRANSPORTATION DETACHMENT

The 168th TC Detachment was activated on 18 July at Fort Carson, Colorado, under the command of MAJ James J. Hughes Jr., TC. The mission of the 168th TC is to perform direct support maintenance, avionics, and supply support for Company B, 158th Aviation Battalion (AH).

COMPANY C, 158TH AVN BN (AH)

Company C was activated on 25 July 1968 at Fort Riley, Kansas, under the command of MAJ John J. Jenkins, FA. The mission of Company C is to provide tactical mobility for combat troops, supplies and equipment during the conduct of airmobile operations. Company C adopted the callsign "Phoenix".

273RD TRANSPORTATION DETACHMENT

The 273rd TC Detachment was activated on 25 July 1968 at Fort Riley, Kansas, under the command of MAJ William Ankenbrandt, TC. The mission of the 273rd is to perform direct support aircraft maintenance, avionics, and supply support for Company C, 158th Aviation Battalion (AH).

COMPANY D, 158TH AVN BN (AH)

Company D was activated on 25 July 1968 at Fort Carson, Colorado, under the command of MAJ Calvin T. Gibson, IN. The mission of Company D is to provide security for airmobile forces within the battalion, and to participate in offensive, defensive, and delaying action as part of a highly mobile combined arms team. Company D adopted the callsign "Redskin".

169TH TRANSPORTATION DETACHMENT

The 169th TC Detachment was activated on 25 July 1968 at Fort Carson, Colorado under the command of MAJ James I Mc Dowell, TC. The mission of the 169th TC is to perform direct support aircraft maintenance, avionics, and supply support for Company D, 158th Aviation Battalion (AH).

Despite icy fingers and frozen steel, the maintenance crews worked late into the night keeping aircraft operable.

After the ATT was completed, the men of the 158th Avn Bn (AH) worked even harder to prepare for their deployment to the 101st Abn Div in Vietnam.

The final preparation was the Organizational Readiness Inspection conducted in three phases during December, January, and February. The ORI covered all battalion and individual company files, records, and equipment. It also included personnel records, clothing for Vietnam, and a final in-ranks inspection before departure for Vietnam. The 158th Aviation Battalion (AH) received an overall rating of excellent on the ORI.

APPENDIX 1 (CHRONOLOGICAL LISTING OF IMPORTANT EVENTS 25 JULY 1968 THROUGH 31 DECEMBER 1968) TO THE UNIT HISTORY OF THE 158TH AVIATION BATTALION (AH)

- 25 JULY 1968 ----- General Order Number 244 Organized the 158th Aviation Battalion (AH).
- 17 AUGUST 1968 ----- 20 Aircraft from the 283rd Avn Co. and 158th Avn Bn paid tribute to BG and Mrs. Mc Govern in a fly-by over the main post parade field.
- 9 SEPTEMBER 1968 ----- The 158th Avn Bn (AH) began 13 weeks of training for deployment to Vietnam.
- 1 OCTOBER 1968 ----- LTC Peter C. Withers assumed command of the 158th Avn Bn (AH).
- 13-15 NOVEMBER 1968 ----- The 158th Avn Bn (AH) received Excellent rating on ATT.
- 9-20 DECEMBER 1968 ----- Phase I of ORI conducted for 158th Avn Bn (AH).