

1970

UNIT HISTORY AND ANNUAL SUPPLEMENT  
55TH AVIATION BATTALION (COMBAT)  
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 55TH AVIATION BATTALION (COMBAT)  
Fort Hood, Texas 76544

55-AVN-CO

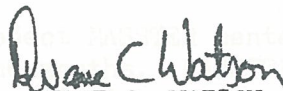
13 April 1971

SUBJECT: Unit History and Annual Supplement

Chief of Military History  
Department of the Army  
Washington, D. C. 20315

UP of paragraph 61, AR 870-5, the attached report is submitted.

1 Incl  
Unit History and Annual  
Supplement

  
DWANE C. WATSON  
LTC, Infantry  
Commanding

airframes, engines, avionics and sensors. At the same time the unit provides it's own motor pool and all related ground handling equipment needed to support the twin turbo-prop Mohawk aircraft.

The men of the 293rd are handpicked and each aviator has an average of over 850 flying hours in the Mohawk. Vietnam has played an important role in the selection of the pilots for the 293rd. Every pilot in the unit has been in Vietnam for at least one tour of duty and combined, the pilots have served in every Corps area in Vietnam.

The purpose for the 293rd being formed at Fort Hood is centered around Project MASSTER for which they are to provide surveillance support. The Mohawks have flown support for all of the Project MASSTER tests. Over fifty percent of the missions were flown at night when the Mohawk's surveillance equipment is most effective. During night flights the Mohawks use their infrared and Side Looking Airborne Radar to detect heat emitting targets and moving targets in a low intensity environment.

May was a busy month for the aviators of the 55th Aviation Battalion. On 2 May, crews and aircraft were sent to Allen Military Academy to set up a static display for the Academy's Open House and 50th Anniversary. It was 11 May when the battalion received orders to deactivate the 161st Transportation Detachment, which provided the only direct support maintenance for this organization. Subsequently, the property of the detachment was turned in with no shortages. CPT Thomas Mix was the detachment commander at the time of the deactivation. The detachment was deactivated with only four days notice and there were no reports of survey or statement of charges. Also on 11 May, a tornado struck the city of Lubbock, Texas and the battalion was alerted to dispatch helicopters to the grief stricken city.

Providing emergency relief and deactivating units were not the only events that marked the month of May for the 55th Aviation Battalion. A demonstration and display were set up for the 40th Joint Civilian Orientation Conference and foreign Military Attaches that visited Fort Hood. The battalion also provided a static display and conducted an airmobile assault demonstration on Armed Forces Day, 16 May.

The month of June was another busy month for the 55th Aviation Battalion. It was in this month the battalion had it's annual AGI. Headquarters and Headquarters Company and the 181st Aviation Company received an excellent rating on their AGI. The 293rd was not inspected because it had just been formed. June was the month that CSM Howard N. Wilkinson gave up the reins as the 55th Aviation Battalion Sergeant Major to CSM James B. McPherson. At the end of June Project MASSTER started the MASSTER II Test Exercise and again men and equipment from the battalion participated in the test. June ended with Hurricane Celia tearing up the Texas Coast town of Corpus Christi and surrounding areas. Men and aircraft were sent to the disaster area to provide aero emergency evacuation for numerous civilian personnel. The battalion sent medical teams, mess teams, and many items of equipment to help the victims of one of Mother Nature's temper tantrums.

November was a dark month for the men of the 55th Aviation Battalion. It was on the 30th day of November that the battalion had its first aircraft accident that resulted in the death of three crew members, CW2 Guy Andrews, CW2 Stuart Hundere, and SP5 Gary Harelstad. The accident occurred while supporting Project MASSTER during a night mission.

With the end of the year drawing to a close, the men of the 55th Aviation Battalion continued to support Project MASSTER and the III Corps and Fort Hood Headquarters.

UNIT HISTORY AND ANNUAL SUPPLEMENT  
55TH AVIATION BATTALION (COMBAT)  
Fort Hood, Texas 76544

1 January 1970 to 31 December 1970

The following individuals occupied the positions indicated on dates shown.

CO, 55th Aviation Battalion (Combat)

<u>NAME &amp; GRADE</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>
LTC ARNOLD R. CARRILLO	1 Jan 70	31 Dec 70

XO, 55th Aviation Battalion (Combat)

<u>NAME &amp; GRADE</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>
MAJ ROBERT S. KAY	1 Jan 70	2 Jan 70
MAJ ELDON K. BALL	2 Jan 70	7 Aug 70
MAJ BERNIE L YOUNG	8 Aug 70	31 Dec 70

CSM, 55th Aviation Battalion (Combat)

<u>NAME &amp; GRADE</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>
CSM HOWARD N. WILKINSON	1 Jan 70	4 Jun 70
CSM JAMES B. McPHERSON	5 Jun 70	31 Dec 70

S-1, 55th Aviation Battalion (Combat)

<u>NAME &amp; GRADE</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>
CPT JOHN L. MELLOR	1 Jan 70	3 Mar 70
1LT RICHARD C. GARTRELL	4 Mar 70	3 Aug 70
CPT FREDERICK W. WARD	4 Aug 70	31 Dec 70

S-2, 55th Aviation Battalion (Combat)

<u>NAME &amp; GRADE</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>
CPT ASA D. CRENSHAW	1 Jan 70	31 Dec 70

S-3, 55th Aviation Battalion (Combat)

<u>NAME &amp; GRADE</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>
MAJ BERNIE L. YOUNG	1 Jan 70	7 Aug 70
CPT ROGER D. KINCAID	8 Aug 70	31 Dec 70

UNIT HISTORY AND ANNUAL SUPPLEMENT  
55TH AVIATION BATTALION (COMBAT)  
Fort Hood, Texas 76544

1 January 1970 to 31 December 1970

The following individuals occupied the positions indicated on dates shown.

S-4, 55th Aviation Battalion (Combat)

<u>NAME &amp; GRADE</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>
CPT FILEMON VILLANUEVA JR.	1 Jan 70	1 Feb 70
CPT BENJAMIN RODRIGUEZ	2 Feb 70	6 Jul 70
CPT JOHN E. JENNINGS	7 Jul 70	31 Dec 70

HHC, 55th Aviation Battalion (Combat)  
(Commanding Officer)

<u>NAME &amp; GRADE</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>
CPT STEVEN S. McCAN	1 Jan 70	25 Jan 70
LLT RAY P. SANDERS	26 Jan 70	5 Feb 70
CPT FRED C. CLARK	6 Feb 70	31 Dec 70

(First Sergeant)

<u>NAME &amp; GRADE</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>
LSG JAMES W. REED	1 Jan 70	31 Dec 70

STANO Det, 55th Aviation Battalion (Combat)  
(Commanding Officer)

<u>NAME &amp; GRADE</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>
CPT JOHN L. MELLOR	4 Mar 70	26 Aug 70
CPT THOMAS E. BRUNS	27 Aug 70	31 Dec 70

(First Sergeant)

<u>NAME &amp; GRADE</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>
LSG ISAAC STEEN	17 Mar 70	20 Sep 70
LSG ORLANDO DAVISSON	21 Sep 70	31 Dec 70

UNIT HISTORY AND ANNUAL SUPPLEMENT  
55TH AVIATION BATTALION (COMBAT)  
Fort Hood, Texas 76544

1 January 1970 to 31 December 1970

Pathfinder Det, 55th Aviation Battalion (Combat)  
(Commanding Officer)

<u>NAME &amp; GRADE</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>
1LT DON W. AYERS	15 Mar 70	15 Dec 70
1LT JOHN D. BEGLEY	16 Dec 70	31 Dec 70

293rd Aviation Company (SA)  
(Commanding Officer)

<u>NAME &amp; GRADE</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>
CPT MALCOLM GRAY	1 Feb 70	12 Apr 70
MAJ BROWNIE WEST	13 Apr 70	31 Dec 70

(Executive Officer)

<u>NAME &amp; GRADE</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>
CPT MALCOLM GRAY	13 Apr 70	31 Dec 70

(First Sergeant)

<u>NAME &amp; GRADE</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>
PSG CURTIS RUSSEL	1 Feb 70	23 Aug 70
1SG CLAUDE J. SIMS	24 Aug 70	31 Dec 70

181st Aviation Company (Aslt Hel)  
(Commanding Officer)

<u>NAME &amp; GRADE</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>
MAJ ELDON K. BALL	1 Jan 70	2 Jan 70
MAJ ROBERT S. KAY	3 Jan 70	31 Dec 70

UNIT HISTORY AND ANNUAL SUPPLEMENT  
55TH AVIATION BATTALION (COMBAT)  
Fort Hood, Texas 76544

1 January 1970 to 31 December 1970

181st Aviation Company (Aslt Hel)  
(Executive Officer)

<u>NAME &amp; GRADE</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>
CPT RAYMOND S. ROBINSON	1 Jan 70	24 Sep 70
CPT ROBERT W. NIELSON	25 Sep 70	22 Nov 70
CPT MORGAN E. SHRCDE	23 Nov 70	31 Dec 70

(First Sergeant)

<u>NAME &amp; GRADE</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>
SFC OTIS CALVERT	1 Jan 70	10 Jan 70
LSG WADE WALKER	11 Jan 70	4 Aug 70
LSG WILLIAM E. SHANK	5 Aug 70	31 Dec 70