

HISTORY
OF
213TH AVIATION COMPANY (ASSAULT SUPPORT HELICOPTER)

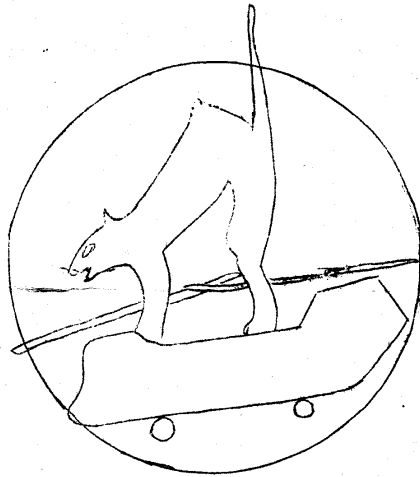
1 April 1969 to 30 June 1969

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MAJ JOHN E. CARROLL

COMMANDING

213TH AVIATION COMPANY (ASSAULT SUPPORT HELICOPTER)

APO SAN FRANCISCO 96289

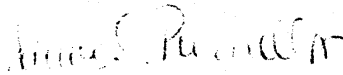
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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

All dates, orders, and events indicated in this text were authenticated. All statements including facts, figures, and percentages made in this text were verified either from conversation with responsible individuals or extracts from authenticated records.

The author has received all comments with prudence and feels there is no doubt as to their validity and accuracy.


JAMES S. PURWELL JR.
WOL, USA
Unit Historian

I. MISSION

The mission of the 213th Aviation Company (Assault Support Helicopter) is to provide tactical airlift of troops and supplies in combat service support and combat support operations. There has been no change in the mission during the last quarter.

The 213th has been placed in habitual direct support of the 1st Infantry Division, the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, the 199th Light Infantry Brigade and the 9th Infantry Division.

II. ORGANIZATION

On 28 January 1969 the 329th Transportation Corps Detachment was inactivated under the provisions of USARPAC GO 771, dated 22 November 1968. Simultaneously, the personnel and equipment from the detachment were integrated into the 213th under MTOE 1-258G, USARPAC 1/68, dated 28 October 1968. Thus the overall capability remains the same, but with all personnel and equipment combined into one unit instead of two.

III. COMMAND AND CONTROL

Major John E. Carroll, present commander of the 213th, entered the Army in January 1953 as an enlisted man. He received a direct reserve commission in September 1957 and was discharged from the enlisted ranks and called to active duty as a commissioned officer in August of 1961. He attended Army Aviation Flight school in 1962. He has attended the rotor wing instrument qualification course at Ft. Rucker and the Infantry Officer Advanced Course at Ft. Benning. His overseas tours include Germany from February 1956 to December 1958, Hawaii from March 1963 to September 1965, Vietnam from February 1966 to February 1967 (also with the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion) and from August 1968 to the present. He has fifteen years of civilian education including a year at Penn State and two years of college through the Army. He has been awarded two Distinguished Flying Crosses, a Bronze Star, Air Medal with 14 OLC, Good Conduct Medal w/2 loops, NDSM w/OLC, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal with 4 campaign stars and the Vietnam Service Medal. He is authorized to wear the Valorous Unit award and the Meritorious Unit Commendation Medal.

IV. OPERATIONS

The 213th Aviation Company (Aslt Spt Hel), in the second quarter of 1969, continued their regular support of the 1st Infantry Division in addition to supporting the 199th Light Infantry Brigade, the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, II Field Forces Artillery, the Capitol Military Assistance Command, the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), the 9th Infantry Divisions, the Royal Thai Volunteer Forces and the First Australian Task Force.

On the 9th of April, the "Black Cats" passed a major milestone in their history. They completed 365 days and 14,128 hours of accident free combat flying. Also on the 16th of April, another milestone was reached. During a troop move for the 1st Infantry Division from Di An to Fire Support Base Lori, they exceeded a total of 400,000 personnel carried since arrival in country in January of 1967.

On 21 April, a new technique for reducing the extremely dusty conditions in both the pick up and drop zones was initiated. The fire buckets were used to put ten (10) sorties of water in dusty areas effectively reducing the dust hazard.

On 28 April, while supporting the 199th Light Infantry Brigade, Black Cat 551 was on approach to Fire Support Base Barbara when a rocket position was discovered. Sergeant Robert A. Scullin of the 11th CAB Pathfinder Detachment was aboard 551 and noted something 200 meters to the south of Barbara that looked out of place. Later, after returning to Barbara, he asked the pilots, WO Edward Miller and CW3 Larry Kelly, to fly over the same area they had before. While the crew, SP4 Jerry Kuenzel, SP4 John Richardson, and SP4 Timothy Miskell observed the area, Sgt Scullin relocated the position and identified the items as rockets, there were two (2) 107mm rockets laying on the

ground and three more poised and arranged for firing. Sgt Scullins alertness undoubtedly saved the lives of numerous civilian personnel in the Saigon area.

On 22 May a fire bucket mission was called for and responded to by CW2 Timothy Harristhal and 1Lt Curtis Challburg. An enemy mortar had set an ARVN ammo dump afire just off the Ton San Nhut active runway. Amidst exploding small arms and artillery rounds from the dump, two passes were made with the firebuckets to no avail. The Saigon fire chief eventually declared the area to be too dangerous, and called the Chinook off. After shutting down, the pilots found that two rotor blades had been damaged by the blasts.

The same day a "Black Cat" aircraft piloted by WO1 Gregory Powers and 1Lt Troylis Gordon sling loaded 8,000 pounds of captured Viet Cong rice from a wooded area near Fire Support Base Gela. The rice was taken to Lai Khe.

On 23 May another aircraft was hit by enemy fire just south of the mushroom area (XT 5030). Pilots CW2 Timothy Harristhal and 1Lt Curtis Challburg were resupplying an element of the 1/4 Cav of the 1st Division and were departing their location and climbing out when they took two rounds of automatic weapons fire; one in the right main fuel cell, the other in the aft pylon area. It was the fourth aircraft to be hit in that area in as many weeks.

On 29 May there was an early morning welcoming ceremony for the new group commander, Colonel Leo D. Turner. In the awards ceremony that followed, the 213th Avn Co was presented the meritorious unit citation for action during the period 13 February 1967 to 15 October 1967 by Brigadier General Allen M. Burdett Jr., commanding general of 1st Aviation Brigade. In the same ceremony, the Distinguished Flying Cross was awarded to CPT Patrick McCombs for action in the "Battle of Oran". Sp4 Richard A. Shapiro was presented the Bronze Star with "V" device, while SP5 Robert W. Gerard and SP4 Leroy E. Gordon were each

presented the Air Medal with "V" device. These awards were also for the "Battle of Oran".

On 1 June, unit day activities (honoring the formation of the unit on 1 June 1966) provided members of the unit with a brief run down of the history and some future plans. A barbecue and swim party followed, with sunburns and good times for all.

On June 2 "Black Cat" 546, piloted by CPT William Uhlemeyer and 1Lt Robert Strickland and crewed by SP5 David Sadowski, SP4 Kenneth Grant, and SP4 Timothy Lange, was in the process of extracting a captured rice cache northeast of Fire Support Base Gela. After the load had been attached to a one hundred foot sling and pulled up through the trees, the aircraft started to move forward for take off but was taken under intense enemy fire from almost directly below. Several rounds of rifle grenades were exploding immediately under the aircraft and then a .30 caliber automatic weapon began firing. The aircraft was moved out as rapidly as possible and then smoke began billowing out of the aft pylon area. An immediate precautionary landing was made to an open rice paddy and the aircraft was checked for fire. No fire was discovered, but it was found that the oil return line from the combining transmission had been severed by a round and this oil was causing the smoke. CPT Uhlemeyer elected to fly the aircraft a few kilometers to fire support base Gela and shut down. A maintenance aircraft was dispatched to Gela with a new return line and "546" was flown back to Phu Loi for some extensive sheet metal work. Sixteen entry holes were found in the rotary wing assemblies and fuselage but miraculously no one was hurt.

The next day, a second attempt was made to extract the rice cache. A hunter-killer team was dispatched to the area to fly cover for the "Black Cat"

aircraft and during the preparation recon, a Viet Cong base camp and a second cache of rice were discovered less than two hundred meters from the first cache. The rice was moved to Lai Khe and later to Di An.

On 12 June Major John E. Carroll took over command of the 213th from Major John P. Ladd. Major Carroll is a former "Black Cat", executive officer and was last assigned as 11th Combat Aviation Battalion S3.

Throughout the second quarter of 1969 the Black Cats continued to instruct supported units in methods of rigging equipment for aerial delivery by means of a Mobile Training Team. Classes were presented to the 1st Infantry Division, the 199th Light Infantry Brigade and other units throughout the III Corpsarea. The purpose of this training is to familiarize ground personnel with the CH-47 helicopter, its capabilities and limitations, in addition to instruction on the preparation, rigging and hooking of external loads. The effectiveness of these classes has been demonstrated by a reduction in the number of dropped loads due to improper rigging or faulty sling equipment.

As of 30 June the 213th Avn Co had compiled a flight record of 447 days and 17,389 hours of accident free combat flying.

While performing its primary mission of airlift support for the ground commander, the 213th Avn Co accomplished the following:

<u>Month</u>	<u>Sorties</u>	<u>Passengers</u>	<u>Tons</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Tons/Hour</u>	<u>Aircraft Availability</u>
April	5,411	20,620	9,413	1,187	7.9	85%
May	5,359	18,225	9,587	1,192	8.0	78%
June	4,957	21,254	7,990	1,230	6.5	75%

A/C RECOVERIES:

<u>Month</u>	<u>A/C Recovered</u>
April	10
May	34
June	37

V. MAINTENANCE

The 213th continued to be faced with a shortage of qualified and experienced maintenance personnel. Personnel losses caused by rotation were necessarily replaced by newer people lacking combat environment experience and experience with the CH-47.

Throughout the second quarter of 1969, Black Cat maintenance personnel achieved an outstanding aircraft availability rate, averaging 79.33% (14.33% above the DA norm) while they were 39 men short of authorized strength. The aircraft also flew well over the DA military flying hour program, averaging 1,203 hours per month. The DA norm is 960 hours per month.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS

A. Awards and Decorations, 1 April to 30 June 1969.

1. Awards Submitted: 205
2. Awards Received: 183
 - a. Distinguished Flying Cross: 4
 - b. Bronze Star: 8
 - c. Bronze Star with "V" Device: 2
 - d. Air Medal with "V" Device: 6
 - e. Air Medal: 109
 - f. Army Commendation Medal: 60
 - g. Purple Heart: 1

B. Area and Facilities Improvement: The following is a list of construction projects that have been completed, are in progress, and those that are proposed:

1. Completed:
 - a. Underground bunker in EM area
 - b. Remodeled Tech Supply

- c. Remodeled Supply room
- d. Rebuilt secondary defensive bunkers
- e. Improved defensive wire and gates
- 2. In Progress:
 - a. Remodeling orderly room
 - b. New bunker in maintenance area
 - c. General repairs in company area
- 3. Proposed:
 - a. New bunker in EM area
 - b. New bunker in NCO area
- 7 e. Continued repairs and improvement of company area
- C. Rest and Recuperation Program: An average of 16 quotas are allotted to this unit each month. Based on this figure an average of 3 officers and 13 enlisted men depart monthly on out-of-country R&R. Priority is based on an individual's time in country. A total of 48 men utilized the R&R program during the second quarter of 1969.
- D. Infusion Program: The Black Cats lost one man through infusion but gained one in return during the second quarter of 1969.
- E. Extension and Reenlistment Program: From 1 April to 30 June 1969 a total of 24 men extended their tours in Vietnam and 3 reenlisted.

VII. ROSTER OF KEY PERSONNEL AS OF 30 JUNE 1969.

Commanding Officer	MAJ John E. Carroll
Executive Officer	CPT Patrick McCombs
First Sergeant	SFC William B. Lovett
First Flight Platoon Leader	CPT William Uhlemeyer
Second Flight Platoon Leader	CPT Frank Sedowicz
Operations Officer	CPT Harold E. Winters
Maintenance Officer	CPT Jon R. Anderson

VIII. CURRENT COMPANY STRENGTH AS OF 30 June 1969.

<u>Authorized</u>			<u>Assigned</u>		
<u>Off</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>EM</u>	<u>CPT</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>EM</u>
15	26	228	11	20	187

SAFE-CONDUCT PASS TO BE HONORED BY ALL VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND ALLIED FORCE



MANG TÂM GIẤY
THÔNG HÀNH
này về cộng tác
với Chánh Phủ
Quốc Gia các bạn
sẽ được :

- Đón tiếp tử tế
- Bảo đảm an ninh
- Đãi ngộ tương xứng

Thiệu

NGUYỄN VĂN THIỆU
Tổng Thống Việt Nam Cộng Hòa



TẤT GIẤY THÔNG HÀNH NÀY CÓ GIÁ TRỊ VỚI TẤT CẢ CƠ - QUAN
QUÂN CHÍNH VIỆT - NAM CỘNG - HÒA VÀ LỰC - LƯỢNG ĐỒNG - MINH.

GIẤY THÔNG-HÀNH



SAFE-CONDUCT PASS TO BE HONORED BY ALL VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND ALLIED FORCES

이 안전보장패스는 월남정부와 모든 연합군에 의해 인정된 것입니다.

รัฐบาลเวียดนามและหน่วยพันธมิตร ยินดีให้เกียรติแก่ผู้ถือบัตรผ่านปลอดภัยนี้.



