



STRIKE

Vietnam War Weekly History



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Issue: 222

Brief History of the 501st, 502nd and 2nd Brigade (101st ABN DIV)

The 502nd, or "five-oh-deuce", was activated July 1, 1941 at Fort Benning, Georgia as the 502nd parachute infantry battalion, as an experimental unit formed to test the doctrine and tactics of parachute assaults. The 502nd entered combat in World War II on June 6, 1944, by jumping into NORMANDY, with allied forces landing on D-Day and the Battle of NORMANDY. Between 1945 and 1964. A major reorganization took place on 3 February 1964, when the 2nd Brigade of the 101st Airborne was activated at Fort Campbell, replacing the 1st Airborne Battle Group, 501st Infantry Regiment. The reorganization from the battle groups to brigades and battalions placed two battalions of the 502nd in different brigades of the 101st.



The 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry was in the 1st Brigade with 1-327th and 2-327th Infantry. Which deployed to Vietnam and arrived at Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam on 29 July 1965, they were commanded by the most notable commander LTC Hank "The Gunfighter" Emerson.



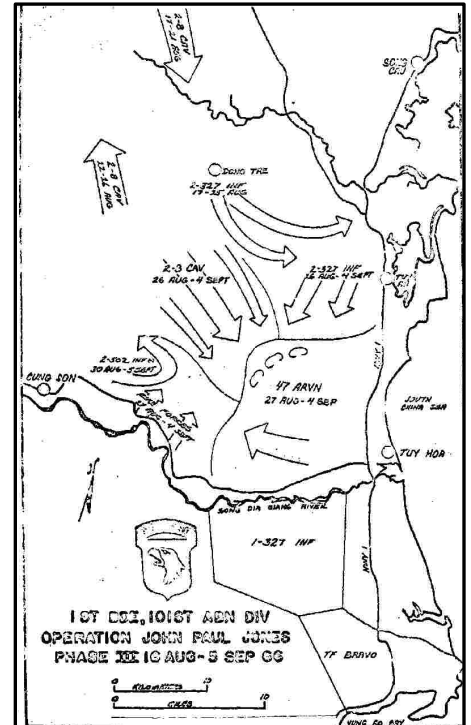
The new 2nd Brigade's original organic battalions were the 1st and 2d Battalions, 501st Infantry, and the 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry. December 1967 the 501st, 502nd and 2nd Brigade deployed by C-141 aircraft and arrived at BIEN HOA Airbase on 13 December 1967. Over the next five years, Soldiers of the "Ready to Go" Brigade participated in twelve campaigns, compiling of a distinguished combat record as well as an enviable reputation for success in the rehabilitation of a war-torn nation. The Brigade redeployed to Fort Campbell in April 1972.



During this week, in the span of 8 years since the 501st Infantry Regiment, 502nd Infantry Regiment and 2nd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division deployed in support of the Vietnam War the following are from After Action Reports, Staff Duty Logs, and Personal Accounts. (* All items have been reproduced from the Unclassified / Declassified Holdings of the National Archives.)

30 August 1966

Operation JOHN PAUL JONES: 2-502 IN BN (-) was lifted into PHONG HAU AO to provide a blocking force for elements of the 188 Regiment escaping to the south. A/2-502 IN conducted RECONDO CHECKERBOARD Operations northeast to XUAN SONE with negative contact; B/2-502 IN continues to secure BDE (-) perimeter; C/2-502 IN moved southwest to search high ground north of NGAN DIEN (CQ 897471) with negative contact; Recondo Platoon conducted a heliborne assault from vicinity PHONG HAU to CAM THAC (CQ 999396) and swept north to CQ 005447 with negative contact. (DA, HQ, 2-502 IN, After Action Report, Operation JOHN PAUL JONES; 10 September 1966)



30 – 31 August 1967

2-502 IN BN continued preparation for Operation STRIKE FORCE with 2-502 IN BN (-) making an airmobile movement to HA THANH airstrip on 31 August. (HQ, 2-502 IN; Daily Staff Journal or Duty Log; 30-31 August 1967)

30 August 1968

A/1-502 IN conducted RIF, vicinity YD5132, resulting in 1 VC KIA and 16 VCS captured. Recon made contact, vicinity YD6830, they engaged 2 VC, but they fled. B/1-502 IN killed 2 VC, wounded 2 VC, while operating, vicinity YD6438.

30 August 1968

Operation NEVADA EAGLE: D/2-502 IN found a downed chopper which was shot down on 6 April (YD635075)

30 August 1969

Operation CLAIBORNE CHUTE: A/1-502 IN vicinity YD395236 found 5 bunkers that showed no signs of recent use. B/1-502 IN conducted local patrols with negative results. C/1-502 IN also conducted local patrols with negative results. At 1815H, D/1-502 IN spotted 1 NVA moving east to west and engaged with sniper fire. Results: 1 NVA KIA, 1 AK-47, 3 loaded AK-47 magazines. Recon platoon provided security for the CP at FSB O'REILLY.

30 August 1970

101st ABN DIV continued realignment of forces and responsibility in preparation for the northeast monsoon by repositioning maneuver battalions and passing responsibility for FS/OB BIRMINGHAM from the 2BDE to the 1BDE. The 1-501 IN BN and the 2-502 IN BN passed from the operational control of the 3BDE to 1BDE. The 1-501 IN BN moved from the MEXICO/GLADIATOR area to FS/OB BIRMINGHAM to secure the firebase and conduct Local patrol operations. The 2-502 IN BN terminated operations in coordination with the 3rd Regiment (ARVN) at FS/BARNETT and moved to CAMP EAGLE to begin battalion refresher training. (Operational Report – Lessons Learned, 101st ABN DIV (AM), Period Ending 31 October 1970)

30 August 1970

Operation TEXAS STAR: A/1-502 IN, 1st platoon, 2nd squad found a tunnel entrance about two months old. Inside they found a room with nothing except a sump hole.

30 August 1970

Operation TEXAS STAR: 2-502 IN BN returned to CAMP EAGLE for a well-earned rest and a chance to catch up on some training.



31 August –
1 September 1967

Operation STRIKE FORCE: Locations: I Corps, QUANG NGAI Province; LANG DI; QUYET THANG; Type/Objective: Airmobile raid to liberate U.S. and VNAF POWs; Units: USA – Task Force Oregon – 101st Airborne Division: 1st BDE (2-502 ABN).

Mission: 2-502 IN BN conducts airmobile raid on D-Day, H-Hour to liberate US and Vietnamese PWs held captive at LANG DI (BS123513) and QUYET THANG (BS316535) PW camps.

Concept of the Operations:

1 - LANG DI (Camp #2): At H-Hour (010841H September) A/2-502 IN lifts off HA THANH Staging Area, conducts airmobile raid on LANG DI PW Camp, liberates US and VN prisoners, and extracts to HA THANH.

2 – QUYET THANG (Camp #2): On order, B/2-502 IN lifts off HA THANH Staging Area, conducts airmobile raid on QUYET THANG PW Camp, liberates US and Vietnamese prisoners, and extracts to NA THANH. C/2-502 IN provides security force and blocks entrance and egress routes to the north, south and east. Following extraction B/2-502 IN and C/2-502 IN will extract to CARENTAN Base.

3- One platoon Recondos will provide Eagle Flight, and reinforce A/2-502 IN, B/2-502 and C/2-502 IN as necessary. The remainder of the elements will be on ground alert at HA THANH.

31 August 1967

Operation STRIKE FORCE: At 0700H the “Strike Force” airlifted from CARENTAN base to HA THANH airstrip to stage for the following day’s operation. The battalion had come in from Operation BENTON on the evening of the 29th and was sent out again on Operation STRIKE FORCE with very little warning in the middle of its 4-day stand-down. (DA, HQ, 2-502 IN After Action Report, Operation STRIKE FORCE; 04 September 1967)

31 August 1968

A/1-502 IN was the only unit to have contact; they killed 1 VC, vicinity YD6830.

31 August 1969

Operation CLAIBORNE CHUTE: A/1-502 IN established a patrol base vicinity YD383244 and conducted local patrols to YD380244 with negative results. B/1-502 IN, 1st platoon vicinity YD361277 spotted 2 NVA at 1730H crossing the river. Enemy were engaged with negative results. C/1-502 IN conducted local patrols with negative results. D/1-502 IN vicinity YD407254 found an old bunker that appeared to have been slept in by individuals recently. 1-502 IN, Recon platoon continued to provide security at FSB O'REILLY for the 1-502 IN BN CP.

31 August 1970

Operation TEXAS STAR: B/1-502 IN, 1st platoon found a lookout position with a semi-automatic weapon and a poncho inside. No signs in the area of recent use.

31 August 1971

1-501 IN BN relieved in FB RIFLE AO by 2-501 IN BN and assumed responsibility for FB TOMAHAWK.



31 August –
29 November 1971

1-501 IN BN had the dual mission of securing ASP 107 at DA NANG and the TOMAHAWK AO. A rotation of the companies was established to allow the units a break. Every two weeks, the company at DA NANG was rotated. This system was augmented with the company of the fire base receiving refresher training. This system was maintained until 15 November 1971, then over date of the firebase. On 15 November 1971 the AO and FB TOMAHAWK was turned over to Vietnamese reaction forces. The commitment for securing the ASP 107 at DA NANG remained on the battalion until 29 November 1971.

01 September 1966

Operation JOHN PAUL JONES: A/2-502 IN discovered 15 huts and several groups of fortifications in the vicinity of XUAN SON, however the unit had negative contact; C/2-502 IN began to sweep back to the northeast and had negative contact; Recondo platoon continued to sweep north but had negative contact. (DA, HQ, 2-502 IN, After Action Report, Operation JOHN PAUL JONES; 10 September 1966) (HQ, 2-502 IN BN; After Action Report; Operation JOHN PAUL JONES; 10 September 1966)

01 September 1967

Colonel J. H. Cushman assumed command of 2d Brigade, replacing Colonel J. D. Mitchell. (HQ, 101st ABN DIV; Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 January 1968)



01 – 04 September 1967

The early days of September were rest days for most of the 1BDE with two exceptions. The 2-502 IN BN participated in Operation STRIKE FORCE, a raid on two enemy prisoner of war camps. Although both camps had been moved about two weeks prior to the raid, sixteen Vietnamese were liberated, and the camps were destroyed.

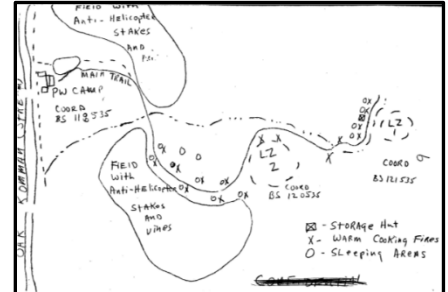
Meanwhile, the 1-327 IN BN participated in Operation COOK from 4 to 9 September in the northern portion of the SONG BE RIVER Valley. This brief mission resulted in six enemy killed and the capture of two weapons. (Operation STRIKE FORCE and Operation COOK Overview)

01 September 1967

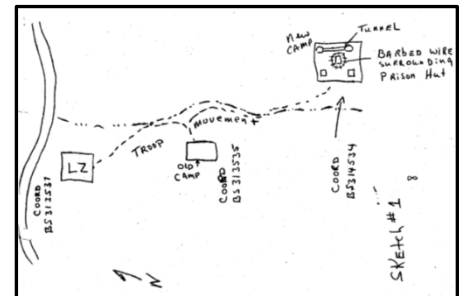
Operation STRIKE FORCE: 2-502 IN BN (-) made airmobile assaults on two POW camps, after liberating occupants they were then extracted back to the HA THANH Airstrip and then back to Base Camp.

01 September 1967

Operation STRIKE FORCE: AT 0840H, A/2-502 IN lifted off HA THANH airstrip for its assault on LANG DI POW Camp. The entire company was moved in one lift and arrived over the reported location of the camp at 0900H. The assault element set down, and immediately the source (DONG LANG, a former POW) indicated that this was the wrong place. The POW camp was 3 kilometers up stream (north). While the rest of the company remained aloft, the commander and his element were extracted, and a second assault was made in the location chosen by the source as the true site of the camp. LZ's were chosen on the spot, and the insertion completed. The source led the company down a trail, through a recently occupied battalion size bivouac, and finally to the POW camp, which was almost deserted. Four prisoners remained, but all guards had fled. Later three more prisoners came in but it was learned that the US had been removed earlier. A/2-502 IN extracted to HA THANH.



B/2-502 IN, supported by C/2-502 IN now lifted from HA THANH to assault Camp #1. In order to avoid the same mistake made by A/2-502 IN, the B/2-502 IN Company Commander decided to overfly the target area so the source could positively identify it. This the source failed to, but again he indicated that the camp (QUYET THANG), was a short distance away, and he could guide them right to it. Continuing north, he picked out what he said to be the correct location, and LZ's were immediately chosen nearby. On landing, B/2-502 IN moved a short distance, then was guided to the camp by an indigenous youth that they met on the trail. The camp was empty and deteriorated, but the boy said a new camp was being built down the trail. B/2-502 IN soon located the new camp, which was also almost empty, but 5 prisoners remaining. Interrogation revealed that all US personnel had been moved during the last month. One VC with Mauser was spotted and apprehended, and 5 more people picked up in a tunnel near the camp. During this time two platoons of C/2-502 IN were inserted in the vicinity. When the camp had been destroyed, all elements moved to PZ's and were extracted back to CARENTAN Base Camp. When B/2-502 IN and C/2-502 IN (-) had been safely extracted the rest of the Battalion began airlifting from HA THANH to CARENTAN, and closed by 1900H, ending Operation STRIKE FORCE. (DA, HQ, 2-502 IN After Action Report, Operation STRIKE FORCE; 04 September 1967)



01 September 1968

Heavy contact marked the beginning of the month, with elements of the 101st ABN DIV and the 82nd ABN DIV 3BDE inflicting 39 casualties, capturing three enemy, and taking 49 weapons. "Ground Pounders" of the 2BDE maintained relentless pursuit of the enemy, killing 10 and seizing hastily abandoned equipment, including 300 gas masks and 180 RPG rounds. (Rendezvous with Destiny Magazine; Volume 1, Number 4; Winter 1968-1969)

01 September 1968

An ambush by D/1-502 IN engaged 1 VC, vicinity YD6730, resulting in 1 VC KIA and a weapon. Recon was sent to vicinity YD7231, where log bird had fired on 3 NVA. Recon had 1 NVA KIA, 1 NVA and 1 VC captured.

01 September 1969

Operation CLAIBORNE CHUTE: A/1-502 IN, B/1-502 IN, C/1-502 IN and D/1-502 IN conducted local patrols and constructed PZ's for battalion extraction. The 1-502 IN BN was to move to FSB BIRMINGHAM on 02 September.

01 September 1970

Operation TEXAS STAR: A fixed wing Nighthawk spotted two sampans in the water at grid 804078. 81mm mortars fired 20 rounds HE. B/1-502 IN, 3rd platoon, 2nd squad found a trail at 778079 running east to west. The trail is 1 1/2 feet wide and shows signs of recent activity. A/1-502 IN, 3rd platoon, 3rd squad found two 6x2 very old bunkers at 835032. There was a fresh trail in the area. No signs of recent activity were observed, and the bunkers were destroyed. B/1-502 IN, 1st platoon, 3rd squad found two caved in bunkers and five caved in fighting positions about 6-8 months old at 758040. A/1-502 IN, 3rd platoon at YD823046 observed four enemy going into the brush. ARA pink team, and flare ships were employed with negative results.

01 September 1971

During this period the 1-501 IN BN conducted search and attack operations in its assigned area of operation and occupied FB TOMAHAWK with responsibility for the AO. In addition, the battalion was responsible for securing ASP 107 in DA NANG throughout the month of September. This was accomplished by rotating companies at two-week intervals through refresher training, field operations and securing ASP 107. The battalion conducted refresher training during September for B/1-501 IN, C/1-501 IN, E/1-501 IN and D/1-501 IN. 1st platoon. E/1-501 IN, Mortars provided support for the battalion from FB TOMAHAWK. (1st Battalion (Airmobile), 501st Infantry; Annual Supplement to the History; 1 January 1971 – 31 December 1971)



02 September 1968 1-502 IN BN had no significant contact but the Battalion continued to encounter many BBT's.

02 September 1969 **Operation CLAIBORNE CHUTE:** Due to the proximity of typhoon Doris all elements of the 1-502 IN BN remained in their NDP locations.

02 September 1970 **Operation TEXAS STAR:** Report from PHU THUY that RF, PF's found a bunker with two VC in it. Five RF, PF's were wounded, and both VC killed. Captured were one rifle and one AK-47. Bunker was destroyed. 1-502 IN BN continued Operation TEXAS STAR in section Golf making maximum use of SP and NA with negative results.

02 September 1970 2-501 IN BN moved by air from the canopy east of RIPCORD to PHU BAI COMBAT BASE and began preparation for an assault into the TENNESSEE area in reaction to intelligence and contacts developed by ranger teams. The battalion passed form the operational control of 3BDE to 1BDE. (Operational Report – Lessons Learned, 101st ABN DIV (AM), Period Ending 31 October 1970)

03 September 1966 **Operation JOHN PAUL JONES:** A/2-502 IN was helilifted to 10,000 meters to the east to secure the high ground vicinity BQ9849. Both A/2-502 IN and C/2-502 IN had negative enemy contact. 2-502 IN BN, Recondo platoon returned southeast to TAC CP and encountered a booby trap vicinity BQ955433 resulting in 4 US WIA. (DA, HQ, 2-502 IN, After Action Report, Operation JOHN PAUL JONES; 10 September 1966) (HQ, 2-502 IN BN; After Action Report; Operation JOHN PAUL JONES; 10 September 1966)

03 – 06 September 1968 Combat operations were halted during Typhoon Bess, which brought heavy rains and gust of wind up to 40-60 knots. During the period 040200 Sept – 061400 Sept, a total of 19.02 inches of rain fall on CAMP EAGLE (YD 808162), the Division Base Camp. All combat aviation missions were cancelled during this period. After the heavy rains stopped the RF/PF forces and 1-501 IN BN conducted several Eagle Flights over the flooded coastal lowlands in an attempt to locate enemy forces. Civil Affairs teams were very active as they distributed tons of needed food, clothing and construction materials to the local Vietnamese who had suffered economic and physical damage to their property.

03 September 1968 A/1-502 IN found 2 VC bodies in a bunker, vicinity YD6232. B/1-502 IN found about 3000lb of rice. Recon found 2 VC graves.

03 September 1968 **Operation NEVADA EAGLE:** A downed gunship was discovered by A/2-502 IN (YD598084).

03 September 1969 **Operation CLAIBORNE CHUTE:** 1-502 IN BN moved to FSB BIRMINGHAM and assumed the AO from 2-501 IN BN. A/1-502 IN conducted a C/A from FSB BIRMINGHAM to YD803057. B/1-502 IN conducted a C/A from FSB BIRMINGHAM to YD764084. C/1-052 IN (-) moved to FSB ARSENAL. C/1-502 IN, 2nd platoon moved to POHL BRIDGE and the 1st platoon moved to FSB ARROW. D/1-502 IN moved to FSB BIRMINGHAM.

03 September 1969 Artillery incident involving A/2-11 ARTY and C/2-502 IN. A/2-11 ARTY firing direct fire defensive targets when shell fragments hit and wounded 2 US INF Soldiers, wounds minor, did not require MEDEVAC. (HQ, 101ST ABN DIV ARTY; Operation Report; Period Ending 31 October 1969; 15 November 1969)

03 September 1969 **U.S. Army helicopter UH-1H, tail number 68-15537:** Aircraft was number eight in a flight of fourteen. The flight was assigned the mission of executing eight combat assaults in support of 2BDE. The first mission involved the extraction of one rifle company. The first seven aircraft landed in the pickup zone and departed without incident. At large tree approximately 60 feet tall was directly north of the touch down point. Each aircraft commander turned his aircraft approximately 20 degrees to the left, which allowed sufficient clearance between the rotor disc and the large tree, allowing a safe departure on the north northwesterly heading. Aircraft number 8, upon approach the pickup zone, was instructed to utilize a right down wind and right base traffic pattern, due to artillery fire impacting southwest of the pickup zone. Because of inadequate spacing, resulting from the change of the approach pattern, the aircraft commander executed a go around and 360 degree turn to the west. The second approach was successful, and the loading of the five passengers was accomplished. The aircraft, upon departure from the pickup zone, did not execute a 20 degree turn to the left, and subsequently followed a flight path more northerly in direction than the preceding aircraft in the flight. As the aircraft executed a maximum performance takeoff, the main rotor blades made contact with a tree, 60 feet tall, ten inches in diameter, a located 40 meters forward of the takeoff point. It is surmised that the aforementioned blade strike resulted in an instantaneous decay of rotor RPM to a level unacceptable for continued climb out. The aircraft then turned left approximately 10 degrees, with a slight loss of altitude, whereupon the underside of the aircraft and the tail boom passed through the top of a bushy dead tree approximately 40 meters along the flight path from the point, the left synchronized elevator was torn form the tail boom, and remained suspended in the upper limbs of the tree. The aircraft continued approximately 70 meters along its flight path in a nose low altitude, making contact with the top of the jungle canopy, down the side of a ravine, with the final point of impact being in a stream 10 meters wide, the depth of the water being approximately 4 feet. Final impact was in a nose low altitude, with an estimated 20 kts forward motion. Upon impact, the transmission and main rotor system were thrown forward, collapsing the cabin roof, with the rotor head coming to rest in the pilots compartment of the aircraft , the cabin portion was immediately engulfed in flames, and as a result, all nine personnel aboard perished in the crash and resulting fire.

03 September 1970 **Operation TEXAS STAR:** A/1-502 IN, 3rd platoon, 3rd squad engaged two NVA at grid YD83505, at range of 20-28 meters with small arms fire resulting in one NVA KIA, one AK-47 and bandolier of ammo captured. There were no friendly casualties.

03 September 1970 2-501 IN BN moved by Ch-47 to LZ Ann and began assaulting into the TENNESSEE area by UH1H. D/2-501 IN secured the firebase for the insertion of B/1-321 ARTY. (Operational Report – Lessons Learned, 101st ABN DIV (AM), Period Ending 31 October 1970)



04 September 1966

Operation JOHN PAUL JONES: A/2-502 IN made contact with an unknown size force vicinity BQ99517 resulting in 5 NVA KIA and 2 RPD machine guns, 3 AK-47 submachine guns and numerous rounds of ammunition captured. One platoon of B/2-502 IN was inserted as a follow up force into the area occupied by 2nd Squadron, 8th Cavalry. This platoon had contact with one VC resulting in one VC KIA and one US carbine captured. C/2-502 IN conducted a heliborne assault on multiple LZ's located vicinity CQ020495 and CQ026847 with negative contact. (DA, HQ, 2-502 IN, After Action Report, Operation JOHN PAUL JONES; 10 September 1966) (HQ, 2-502 IN BN; After Action Report; Operation JOHN PAUL JONES; 10 September 1966)

04 – 09 September 1967

Operation COOK. Search and destroy mission conducted by B/2-502 IN as part of Task Force OREGON in the villages and hamlets around the DUC PHO area, QUANG NGAI Province, approximately 320 miles' northeast of SAIGON. One of the radio operators uses two radios to call in an air strike and a helicopter to evacuate a wounded soldier.



04 – 05 September 1968

1-502 IN BN had no contact was made, C/1-502 IN replaced company A/1-502 IN on AN LO BRIDGE security.



04 September 1969

Operation CLAIBORNE CHUTE: A/1-502 IN conducted SRRP and RIF operations. A/1-502 IN, 1st platoon found 8 60mm mortar fuses and a firing position for a mortar. B/1-502 IN conducted SRRP and RIF operations to YD763074 with negative results. C/1-502 IN continued to provide security for POHL BRIDGE and FSB ARSENAL, and closing operations at FSB ARROW. D/1-502 IN continued to secure FSB BIRMINGHAM. 1-502 IN BN, Recon platoon moved to FSB BIRMINGHAM. C/3-5 CAV escorted a convoy between FSB BIRMINGHAM to FSB Blaze and also occupied security positions along QL547.

04 September 1970

Operation TEXAS STAR: A/1-502 IN, 1st platoon, 1st squad at grid 744053 found a NW-SE trail, one foot wide with sandal prints two to three days old heading SE. A/1-502 IN at grid YD804057 spotted two sampans. People got off and moved east.

04 September 1971

A/1-501 IN (-) MBA to ARSENAL AO, OPCON to 2-501 IN BN.

05 September 1966

Operation JOHN PAUL JONES: A/2-502 IN had contact with unknown size enemy force at BQ999517 resulting in 1 NVAC and 1 NVA KIA and 1 AK-47 captured. Another contact with 7 enemy later that day produced negative results. At 051830H September 1966, B/2-502 IN was relieved of security for BDE (-) perimeter by 1-22 IN BN and conducted a heliborne assault at BQ980598 with negative contact. C/2-502 IN conducted a heliborne assault on multiple LZ's located at CQ012513 and conducted RECONDO CHECKERBOARD too northeast with negative contact. (DA, HQ, 2-502 IN, After Action Report, Operation JOHN PAUL JONES; 10 September 1966) (HQ, 2-502 IN BN; After Action Report; Operation JOHN PAUL JONES; 10 September 1966)

05 September 1966

Operation JOHN PAUL JONES: Frustrated by the lack of results, General Person terminated Operation JOHN PAUL JONES. (Weekly Sum, 14-20 Aug 66, 1st BDE, 101st Abn Div; AAR, Opn JOHN PAUL JONES, 1st BDE, 101st Abn Div, p. 4; Combat Operations, Steaming the Tide, May 1965 to October 1966, John M Carland)



05 September 1966

Operation SEWARD: This Operation was conducted from 5 September to 25 October in PHY YEN Province. The operation was conducted in four separate phases: Phase I was conducted in the area northwest of TUY HOA, Phase II was at TU BONG, Southwest of VUNG RO BAY, Phase III was a return to the area northwest of TUY HOA and Phase IV was conducted in TUY AN District, North of TUY HOA.

This operation began with the 2-502 IN BN deploying with A/2-502 IN and C/2-502 IN pushing north where B/2-502 IN had established a blocking position after conducting a heliborne assault to an LZ located at DQ980561. On the night of 04 September, the 2-502 IN BN, Recondo platoon was located at the TAC CP as the Battalion reserve, while the Heavy Mortar Platoon was at TUY HOA South on standby alert. (DA, HQ, 2-502 IN, After Action Report, Operation SEWARD; 28 October 1968)



Paratroopers guard Viet Cong suspect captured during SEWARD

05 – 08 September 1966

Operation SEWARD: This operation began with the battalion deployed with A/2-502 IN and C/2-502 IN pushing north where B/2-502 IN had established a blocking position after conducting a heliborne assault to an LZ located at BQ980561. On the night of 05 September, the Recondo platoon was located at the TAC CP as Battalion reserve, while the Heavy Mortar platoon was at TUY HOA south on standby alert. This action continued to 08 September, with all companies making light contacts and capturing assorted weapons and equipment. (HQ, 2-502 IN; After Action Report, Operation SEWARD; 28 October 1966)

05 September 1967

Operation COOK: 2-502 IN BN with 1 Company of Mike Force OPCON made airmobile assault into SEBRET AO & Commenced Operation COOK. (HQ, 2-502 IN; Daily Staff Journal or Duty Officer's log; 05 September 1967)

05 September 1967

Operation COOK: A/2-502 IN at BS498685 received several rounds of small arms fired at helicopter, 2 AW & several SA continued mission engaging area with gunships with negative results. A/2-502 IN at BS505677 encountered numerous punji stakes on LZ continuing mission, 4 WIA will be evacuated. Recon at BS498644 spotted 2 VC in camouflage fatigues crossing river moving west, negative results. A/2-502 IN at BS494687 spotted 7 VC moving along ridge line also spotted several bunkers, calling airstrikes, negative results at this time. Mike Force's aircraft received several rounds of sniper fires believed small arms fire; airstrike employed. Mike Force at BS482703 engaged 4 VC carrying weapons fired up VC fled west. Mike Force at BS452713 found 15 US rockets, type fired by helicopters, 15 rockets destroyed. Mike Force at BS484713 engaged 1 squad VC wearing brown uniforms all carrying weapons at least one BAR was moving S/W, fired up found blood trails searching area, negative results at this time. (HQ, 2-502 IN; Daily Staff Journal or Duty Officer's log; 05 September 1967)

05 September 1969

Operation CLAIBORNE CHUTE: A/1-502 IN conducted SRRP and RIF operations to YD760083 with negative results. B/1-502 IN conducted SRRP and RIF operations to YD763084. C/1-502 IN continued to provide security at FSB ARSENAL, FSB ARROW, and POHL BRIDGE. D/1-502 IN continued to provide security for FSB BIRMINGHAM. 1-502 IN, Recon platoon conducted SRRP to YD606073 with negative results.

05 September 1970

Operation TEXAS STAR: Operation TEXAS STAR was terminated, and Operation JEFFERSON GLEN began. The final results for Operation TEXAS STAR were: 37 US KIA, 290 US WIA, 288 Medevac'd. Enemy casualties known are 228 KIA, 61 KBA and 2 PW's. 2/502 IN performed in an outstanding manner and moved anxiously into Operation JEFFERSON GLEN.

05 September 1970

Operation TEXAS STAR: A/1-502 IN, 1st platoon, 2nd squad found nine positions three with overhead cover about 12 months old. Positions were destroyed. A/1-502 IN, 3rd platoon, 3rd squad at grid YD831032 found a bunker 4-5 months old with one fighting position and a trail leading to the east. The bunker was destroyed. There were no signs of recent activity. D/1-502 IN, 1st platoon had movement 40-50 meters west of their location. Illumination was employed but nothing was sighted.



During this week, in the span of 8 years since the 501st Infantry Regiment, 502nd Infantry Regiment and 2nd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division deployed in support of the Vietnam War the following awards were awarded to the service members during combat operations.

1 x Silver Star Medal (1 x Posthumously)
6 x Bronze Star Medal (5 x Posthumously)
1 x Army Commendation Medal
7 x Purple Heart Medal (5 x Posthumously)
2 x Died of Wounds
6 x Died from Non-Hostile Injuries or Illness

31 August 1968



1LT James J. Jenks Jr. (C/2-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received while a Platoon Leader returning to night defensive position after reinforcing outer perimeter when area received friendly fire from inside the perimeter defensive position in the THUA THIEN Province, Republic of Vietnam.

31 August 1970



SGT Richard E. Toney (C/1-502 IN) died from wounds from battle near THON HA LO, 8km South East of Hai Lang on 22 February 1968 from small arms gun fire in the QUANG TRI Province, Republic of Vietnam.

01 September 1968



1LT John F. Hay (B/1-502 IN) action in combat earned him the Purple Heart Medal for military merit and for wounds sustained as a result of enemy or hostile actions. (HQ, 101st ABN DIV, General Orders Number 6027, 20 May 1969)



02 September 1968



PFC George V. Szczepanczyk (B/1-501 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death while on combat operation when hit by fragments from hostile booby trap in the THUA THIEN Province, Republic of Vietnam. PFC Szczepanczyk was admitted to the military hospital, transferred to USS Sanctuary where he was placed on the VSI list and subsequently expired.

02 September 1971



SP4 Gordon L. Kimmel (B/1-502 IN) died of wounds sustained on 27 August 1971 from booby trap 1km NW of Marble Mountain Airfield in the THUA THIEN Province, Republic of Vietnam

03 September 1965



1LT George W. Burkheart (HHC/2-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death during hostile action when he was hit by hostile small arms fire while on reconnaissance patrol in an Military Region and Province Unknown, Republic of Vietnam.



03 September 1969



SP4 Neal D. Epifanio (B/1-502 IN) was killed while a passenger on a UH-1H 68-15537 military aircraft on a military mission when the aircraft hit a tree on liftoff from pick-up zone and crashed and burned in the QUANG NAM Province, Republic of Vietnam.

03 September 1969



SGT Gary L. Evans (B/1-502 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal (Posthumously) for military merit. SGT Evans was killed while a passenger on a UH-1H 68-15537 military aircraft on a military mission when the aircraft hit a tree on liftoff from pick-up zone and crashed and burned in the QUANG NAM Province, Republic of Vietnam.

03 September 1969



CPT Richard C. Miller (HHC/1-502 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal (Posthumously) for military merit. CPT Miller was killed while a passenger on a UH-1H 68-15537 military aircraft on a military mission when the aircraft hit a tree on liftoff from pick-up zone and crashed and burned in the QUANG NAM Province, Republic of Vietnam.

03 September 1969



PFC Louis T. Mills (D/1-502 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal (Posthumously) for military merit. PFC Mills was killed while a passenger on a UH-1H 68-15537 military aircraft on a military mission when the aircraft hit a tree on liftoff from pick-up zone and crashed and burned in the QUANG NAM Province, Republic of Vietnam.

03 September 1969



CPL Leroy Rutherford (D/1-502 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal (Posthumously) for military merit. CPL Rutherford was killed while a passenger on a UH-1H 68-15537 military aircraft on a military mission when the aircraft hit a tree on liftoff from pick-up zone and crashed and burned in the QUANG NAM Province, Republic of Vietnam.

04 September 1965



1SG Frederick C. Brander (A/2-501 IN) action in combat earned him the Purple Heart Medal. For wounds sustained as a result of enemy or hostile actions.

05 September 1965



SGT Lawrence E. Jackson (C/2-502 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from head injuries while on combat patrol when the patrol was ambushed by hostile force a Military Region and Province Unknown, Republic of Vietnam.

05 September 1966



PFC Mack A. Knight (A/2-502 IN) was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from gunshot wounds to chest and abdomen received in hostile ground action in the PHU YEN Province, Republic of Vietnam.



05 September 1966



PFC Russell B. Walker (HHC/2-502 IN) died from an accidental homicide incident in the PHU YEN Province, Republic of Vietnam. PFC Walker was awarded the Army Commendation Medal.



Prepared by Ryan P. Niebuhr



STRIKE HISTORY (Citation's and Awards):

31 August 1968



SGT Dan J. Evans (A/2-501 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for distinguishing himself by outstanding meritorious service in connection with ground operations against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam period of 1 January 1968 to 31 August 1968. Through his untiring efforts and professional ability, he consistently obtained outstanding results. He was quick to grasp the implications of new problems with which he was faced as a result of the ever changing situations inherent in a counterinsurgency operation and to find ways and means to solve those problems. The energetic application of his extensive knowledge has materially contributed to the efforts of the United States mission to the Republic of Vietnam to assist that country in ridding itself of the communist threat to its freedom. His initiative, zeal, sound judgement, and devotion to duty have been in the highest tradition of the United States Army and reflect great credit upon him and the military service. (Bronze Star Medal Citations & Certificate)

03 September 1965



1LT George W. Burkheart (HHC/2-502 IN) was awarded the Silver Star Medal (Posthumously) for gallantry in action 1LT Burkheart distinguished himself by exceptionally heroic action on 3 September 1965 while serving as a reconnaissance platoon leader in the Republic of Vietnam. Engaged in a search and destroy operation near the village of BINH KHE. Lieutenant Burkheart and his entire platoon became pinned down by intense enemy small arms fire while crossing an open rice paddy. Realizing that continued hostile fire would inflict heavy casualties upon his men, Lieutenant Burkheart continually exposed himself while moving from position to position shouting words of encouragement and directing fire on the enemy positions to his immediate front. On a number of occasions he exposed himself to direct hostile fire in order to observe the enemy and direct fire. Twice Lieutenant Burkheart exposed himself to direct the movement and adjustment of machine guns, and the second time he was mortally wounded. By his brave action, personal example, and obvious concern for his men, he so inspired them that they were able to overcome the numerically superior Viet Con force. Led by his example, the platoon moved forward and occupied their objective. Lieutenant Burkheart's conspicuous gallantry in action was in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflects great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army. (HQ, USAV; General Orders Number 554; 14 September 1965)

03 September 1968



MAJ Sidney Shachnow (HHC/1-502 IN) was awarded the Silver Star Medal for gallantry in action while engaged in combat operations against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam on 3 September 1968. Major Shachnow distinguished himself while serving as the S3 Officer for the 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry during a combat operation. During the early evening hours, Major Shachnow was conducting a light aerial reconnaissance of the battalion area of operations when he spotted a cooking fire. Major Shachnow, knowing that there were no friendly forces in the area, immediately placed fire on the objective. After a thorough aerial search of the area, he located a sampan, which was partially hidden in a hanging bush along a river bank. He then directed the pilot to fly very low over the target in an effort to locate possible enemy Soldiers. Spotting two enemy Soldiers, Major Shachnow personally marked the enemy's location with tracer rounds. Oblivious to his own safety, he maintained an exposed position and continued to order repeated passes over a hedgerow concealing the remaining enemy Soldiers. As the enemy began evasive action, Major Shachnow fired on them and directed the helicopter to land in preparation for an attack on the enemy's position. A thorough search of the area revealed that Major Shachnow had discovered an enemy base camp of well-fortified and camouflaged bunkers containing vast quantities of rice. Major Shachnow's extraordinary heroism in close combat against a Viet Cong force was in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflects great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army. (DA, HQ, 101st ABN DIV, General Orders Number 40; 4 January 1969)



ACRONYMS

ACAV: Armored Cavalry
ACD: Air Cavalry Division
AD: Americal Division
AD: Airborne Division (Would be after numeric numbers)
AO: Area of Operations
ARA: Aerial Rocket Artillery
ARCOM: Army Commendation Medal
ARVN: Army of the Republic of Viet Nam (also known as the South Vietnamese Army (SVA))
BDE: Brigade
BN: Battalion
BSM: Bronze Star Medal
BBT: Booby Traps
CA: Combat Assault
CANOPY: Heavily Wooded Terrain
CAV: Cavalry
CO: Company
CP: Command Post
DIV: Division
DSC: Distinguished Service Cross
DZ: Drop Zone
ENG: Engineer
FSB: Fire Support Base
HQ: Headquarters
IED: Improvised Explosive Device
IFFV: I Field Force Vietnam
IN: Infantry
KBA: Killed by Air or Artillery
KHA: Killed by Hostile Action
KIA: Killed in Action
KNHA: Killed by Non-Hostile Action
LZ: Helicopter Landing Zone
MI: Military Intelligence
MOH: Medal of Honor
MP: Military Police
NDP: Night Defensive Position
NVA: North Vietnamese Army
OBJ: Objective
OP: Observation Post
PAVN: People Army of Vietnam
POW: Prisoner of War
PF: Popular Forces
PZ: Helicopter Pick-up Zone
Recon Platoon: Reconnaissance Platoon
RIF: Reconnaissance in Force
RF: Regional Force
ROK: Republic of Korea
RVN: Republic of Vietnam
SA: Situational Awareness
SIGINT: Signal Intelligence
SSM: Silver Star Medal
STRIKE FORCE: 2d Battalion, 502d Infantry
SVA: South Vietnamese Army
TF: Task Force
TOC: Tactical Operations Center
USARV: United States Army Vietnam
USARPAC: United States Army Pacific
WIA: Wounded in Action
WHA: Wounded by Hostile Action
WNHA: Wounded by Non-Hostile Action
"V": Valor
VC: Viet Cong

