

## History of the 1<sup>ST</sup> Battalion 83rd Artillery in the Republic of Vietnam 1966-1971

Headquarters, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion 83d Artillery received a warning order for deployment by Headquarters, Fourth United States Army, and dated 29 April 1966, through Commanding General, United States Army Artillery and Missile Center.

The Battalion started training on 5 July 1966 and completed training on 31 August 1966.

On 11 October 1966, this unit began embarkation of the main body of the troops. These people embarked for the Republic of Vietnam on 13 October 1966 at Oakland California aboard the MSTC troop's carrier USNS General E.D. Patrick. The voyage was completed without incident or accident on 31 October 1966 with the arrival of the Patrick at Vung Tau, Vietnam. The Patrick made an 8-hour or so stopover at Okinawa before arriving in Vietnam.

The Advance Party of the Battalion departed Tinker AFB, Oklahoma aboard MATS C-141 aircraft on 19 October 1966. They arrived Tan Son Nhut Air Base on 21 October 1966. There they were met by the Commanding General, II Field Force Artillery Base Camp for billeting.

On 22 October 1966, the officers and key non-commissioned officers of the advance party were briefed by the Commanding Officer and staff of the 54<sup>th</sup> Artillery Group.

### “B” Battery (narrative provided by Ed Thomas)

*“After arriving in Vietnam at Vung Tau in 1966 we went to Long Binh to await our howitzers, etc. We then deployed to Bear Cat. The official name of the installation was Camp Martin Cox, I believe he (Cox) was a SSG killed in action prior to our arrival.*

*During the summer of 67, we exchanged personnel with the 94th Arty, 9th Inf Div so the unit would not rotate en masse at the same time. B Battery was supporting fire for the 173rd Airborne Brigade, based in Bien Hoa. We also supported the 1st Inf Div, the 25th Inf Div and various ARVN units during various operations. Later, and I can't remember the month, we moved to Ham Tan and built a base camp from scratch. From Ham Tan the unit went to Bien Hoa and finally north.”*

### “HQ” Battery (narrative provided by Bill Taggart)

*“The Edwin D. Patrick arrived in Vung Tau harbor on Halloween 1966. We sat on deck that night watching tracers in the hills and left the ship the next day. We flew to Bien Hoa and then moved to Long Binh before HQ Battery deployed to Nui Dat a couple of weeks later along with SVC and A Batteries.*

*The name of the camp at Nui Dat was named after Msgt. Clarence E. Everett of the 83<sup>rd</sup> who was killed in helicopter accident on December 29, 1966.*

*At Nui Dat we were located near the Australian Task Force, the 161 Battery of the Royal New Zealand Artillery and a Battery of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion 35<sup>th</sup> Artillery (a 155mm SP unit).”*

## History of the 1<sup>ST</sup> Battalion 83rd Artillery in the Republic of Vietnam 1966-1971

Prior to 1 January 1968, HQ and Service batteries had been located at Nui Dat, just north of Vung Tau. "A" Battery was located at Nui Dat throughout its tenure, except for a few artillery raids of one or two day's duration in the area of Nui Dat. "A" Battery's mission during this period was GSR the 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Task Force. "B" battery was located at Ham Tan, some 50 to 60 kilometers east and slightly north of Vung Tau, on the South China seacoast. Their mission was GSR the 18<sup>th</sup> ARVN Division. They were the only American unit in this area.

"C" battery was initially located at Xuan Loc, about 30 to 40 kilometers northeast of Long Binh. "C" battery's mission was GSR for the 18<sup>th</sup> ARVN division. "C" battery also participated in a few artillery raids in the same general area. All elements of the battalion were located in the III Corps Tactical Zone.

On 1 January 1968, the Battalion disposition was as follows:

HQ, Service, & A battery – Nui Dat

B battery – Bear Cat/Ham Tan

C battery – Xuan Loc

Each Battery was in an 8-inch/175 configuration

On 27 January 1968, in anticipation for what turned out to be the "TET" Offensive, "B" battery was moved to Bien Hoa. Other than the forthcoming action, which was anticipated, the most significant point about this move was the distance involved. Until this time in the war, a heavy artillery battery had never moved such a long distance, some 85 miles, on a sustained road march. This feat was accomplished in one day, with no major maintenance problems.

A few days after the initial heavy Communist onslaught of the TET Offensive, "B" battery was split, with the 8" Howitzer Platoon displaced to FSB Hotel, about 10 kilometers east of Bien Hoa.

During this same period "A" and "C" batteries supported the ARVN troops who were in heavy contact in the vicinity of Baria, located just a few kilometers north of Vung Tau, and in and around Xuan Loc.

All batteries received noteworthy praise from their supported units for their speed and accuracy during these actions.

### "C" Battery (narrative provided by Ed Kloiber)

*"I was in the 1/83<sup>rd</sup> in 1968, I got there on the 4<sup>th</sup> or thereabouts of January, it took me about a week to get to the 1/83<sup>rd</sup> "C" battery. When I finally got there, our battery was located at Xuan Loc at a compound called Tommy L. Sills. From January to somewhere around the end March we stayed there as that was the time of the "TET" offensive of the North Vietnamese invading the south. Around the end of March or the beginning of April our battery deployed to Long Binh*

## History of the 1<sup>ST</sup> Battalion 83rd Artillery in the Republic of Vietnam 1966-1971

*and finally to Saigon where we loaded the whole battery on a LST and they sent us up North to Da Nang. From there we went up the Perfume River to Hue. At Hue we convoyed to the military base at Phu Bai. After a couple days there we convoyed to FB Boyd for one night, which was the stepping-stone for going on to FB Bastogne. Our purpose was to fire support into the A Shau Valley. We were there most of the summer and around September or October we left on an operation to Dong Ha along the DMZ to fire into North Vietnam to try to stop the infiltration of the north into the south. After about a week they sent us back to FB Bastogne and at the end of October we left FB Bastogne and set up shop at FB Boyd which is where I stayed till the end of my tour."*

On 4 February 1968, "B" battery was alerted for movement from Bien Hoa to the northern part of the I Corps Tactical Zone. On 8 February "B" battery converted its two 175mm guns to 8" howitzers.

On 10 February, "B" battery marched from Bien Hoa to Newport and was loaded on LST 1067, which was operated by Korean nationals. LST 1067 departed Newport on 11 February 1968.

During the trip, the radar of LST 1067 was inoperable, thus the crew was unable to locate themselves on their map. Inadvertently they crossed the DMZ. On 16 February, the LST was spotted by a US Navy radar plane 17 miles north of the DMZ. When spotted, the LST was within 10 miles of, and headed for, the North Vietnamese coast. Two American destroyers were summoned and the LST was directed to change course and sail back to the location of the two destroyers. The destroyers were about 20 miles offshore. The LST was then escorted south of the DMZ. On 17 February, the Battery disembarked Xam Tuan and moved south to Dong Ha on 19 February.

"B" battery road marched south on 20 February occupying firing positions at LZ Betty near Quang Tri. Two days later "B" battery moved further south to positions near Camp Evans, which was the location of headquarters for the 1<sup>st</sup> Air Cav Division.

A few days later "B" battery moved to LZ Nola. From there they fired support of the 1<sup>st</sup> Air Cav's final assault and ultimate relief of the USMC in the Imperial City of Hue. Following this action "B" battery returned to Camp Evans where they remained until mid April 1968.

In mid March, the Battalion (except "B" battery) received orders to move to the Northern I Corps Tactical Zone. Headquarters, service battery, and "C" battery arrived at Tan My Ramp near Hue on 22 March 1968. Headquarters and service battery set up base camp at Camp Eagle, then the location of the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division (AMBL). "C" battery occupied firing positions at Gia Le, part of Camp Eagle about ½ miles from battalion headquarters.

On 23 March 1968 "A" battery disembarked at Wunder Beach and road marched to FSB Nola near Quang Tri.

"C" battery retubed to all 175 mm guns then prepared to take up firing positions at FSB Bastogne. After several days delay, due to the 101<sup>st</sup> division's difficulty in taking the location (Bastogne), "C" battery relocated to FSB Bastogne. The occurred near the end of March 1968.

## **History of the 1<sup>ST</sup> Battalion 83rd Artillery in the Republic of Vietnam** **1966-1971**

The significant item on this move was that in spite of the FSB being secure, the 10-kilometer long trail leading to Bastogne was not secure. To move "C" battery to Bastogne it was necessary for Division to provide a tank company and an infantry battalion along with numerous gun ships and artillery FO's in the air. Despite the precautions, there were several KIA's and WIA's during the road march. "C" battery and the service battery's ammo train suffered WIA's.

Once "C" battery was on Bastogne the 101<sup>st</sup> began its A Shau Valley Interdiction Program, which lasted until early November 1968.

In mid-April, both "A" and "B" batteries participated in Operation Pegasus, referred to as "The Relief of the UMC at Khe Sanh." Both batteries were positioned along highway #9, west of Dong Ha. "A" battery was approximately 11 kilometers from Khe Sanh, at FSB Ca Lu. "B" battery was at LZ John, some 15 kilometers from Khe Sanh. Their mission was GSR for the 1<sup>st</sup> Air Cav Division's artillery.

Upon completion of this operation, "A" battery returned to the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne's area of operations and moved to position at FSB Birmingham between Camp Eagle and FSB Bastogne. "B" battery to LZ Jack. "C" battery continued to support the A Shau Valley operations from FSB Bastogne.

On 1 June 1968, the Battalion was assigned to Provisional Corps Artillery, later to become XXIV Corps Artillery.

On 2 July 1968, all of the firing batteries plus a control element from Headquarters displaced north to the vicinity of Dong Ha for Operation Thor, a massive artillery and air raid on entrenched NVA artillery and AAA positions north of the Eastern DMZ. Headquarters control element had the forward CP operational two and a half hours after going into position. "A" battery was located at Con Thien (A-4). "B" and "C" batteries were at Gia Lie (A-2). The Battalion together with an attached Marine 8" howitzer battery fired over 7,700 rounds north of the DMZ in a 5-day period.

On 8 July 1968, "B" and "C" batteries moved to Gia Le Combat Base. The tracked vehicles traveled to Hue by LCU and the wheeled vehicles moved by road. Both batteries were assigned the mission of GSR the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division (AMBL) Artillery.

On 9 July 1968 at Dong Ha, "A" battery was retubed to 175mm guns. The guns were loaded on LCU's on the evening of the 9<sup>th</sup> and sailed to Hue, arriving on the morning of the 10<sup>th</sup>. On the same day, the battery road marched to FSB Bastogne and was given the mission of GSR to 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division (AMBL) Artillery. Priority of fires were into the A Shau Valley.

On 11 July 1968, "B" and "C" batteries moved to FSB Panther II, now known as Arsenal, to support a combat assault on Leeches Island.

On 15 July 1968, "B" battery moved back to Gia Le Combat Base. On 19 July, the Battalion Headquarters was moved to Gia Le from its location in Camp Eagle.

## **History of the 1<sup>ST</sup> Battalion 83rd Artillery in the Republic of Vietnam** **1966-1971**

On 21 July 1968, "C" battery moved to FSB Boyd. On 31 July, the battery returned to Camp Eagle to retube to 175mm guns for further movement to FSB Bastogne in support of a projected operation called Somerset Plain to be conducted in the A Shau Valley. "C" battery was retubed on 1 August and road marched to FSB Bastogne. "C" battery remained 175mm guns from that time on.

On 22 August 1968, "A" battery returned to FSB Boyd where they retubed to 8" howitzers. They stayed 8" and have been quite active. Over the next few months they made moves as follows: 10 September FSB Boyd to FSB Anzio, 14 September to FSB Quick and return to Anzio, 24 Oct FSB Anzio to FSB Tomahawk, 2 November FSB Tomahawk to FSB Anzio, 18 November FSB Anzio to FSB Quick I, 20 November they moved from FSB Quick I to Tomahawk, 20 December they moved from Tomahawk to FSB Anzio and on December 26 from Anzio to Gia Le Combat Base where they closed out 1968.

On 31 October 1968 "B" battery road marched from Gia le to LZ Sally and remained there until December. On 10 December the battery moved to FSB Bastogne to support a one day operation "Eagle Gunner". They returned to FSB Boyd the same day. During this operation they fired 49 missions for a total of 403 rounds. On 11 December they moved back to LZ Sally and 15 December to FSB Jack. On 24 December they again returned to Sally to participate in a one day operation "Caisson VIII" during which they fired only one mission for a total of 13 rounds. On 27 December they moved to FSB Anzio where they finished 1968.

On 6 January 1969 "B" battery moved to FSB Quick I returning the same day to FSB Anzio. On 12 January they moved to FSB Quick II where they remained over night returning to Anzio the next day.

On 25 January 1969 "A" battery moved to FSB Bastogne to support Operation Sherman Peak.

On 25 January 1969 "C" battery moved to FSB Jack to support the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Division during Operation Dewey Canyon in the upper end of the A Shau Valley. The mission remained GSR 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division (AMBL) Artillery with priority of fire to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Division. This operation was projected to last five days but due to its success lasted until the middle of March.

On 5 February 1969 "B" battery moved to FSB Roy where it remained, with the exception of short term raids, until September 1969.

On 8 February 1969 "A" battery moved to Gia Le Combat Base where they remained until 11 March when they moved to FSB Bastogne.

On 15 April 1969 "A" battery departed FSB Bastogne enroute to FSB Blaze. On 29 April "A" battery departed Blaze for FSB Cannon within 10 kilometers of the A Shau Valley. This marked the most forward location from which heavy artillery units had fired on the A Shau Valley up until this time.

On 12 April 1969 "B" battery moved to FSB Quick II to support Operation Caisson XIV where they fired a total of 96 rounds in 34 missions. They returned to FSB Roy on the same day. On

## History of the 1<sup>ST</sup> Battalion 83rd Artillery in the Republic of Vietnam 1966-1971

25 April they again went to FSB Quick II for two days to support Operation Bristol Boots in the Ruong Rong Valley. They returned to Roy on 27 April. It was projected that the battery would move all the way into the Ruong Rong Valley, however, due to lack of contact on this operation the move never materialized.

On 19 March 1969 "C" battery moved from FSB Jack to FSB Boyd with the termination of the highly successful operation Dewey Canyon. They remained at Boyd until 24 March at which time they joined "A" battery at FSB Bastogne to support the 101<sup>st</sup> operations in the A Shau Valley and to cover construction on Route 547 from Camp Eagle to the floor of the A Shau Valley.

On 13 May 1969 at approximately 0200 hours "C" battery began taking incoming rounds (RPG and mortars). Because of a move scheduled for the next day the powder and projectile bunkers had been torn down and the ammunition exposed. The powder in # 4 gun pit began burning and late the projectiles began exploding. There were a total of 19 personnel wounded in this action including the battery commander and XO. It was estimated that only one or two personnel were wounded as a direct result of enemy fire, the rest were wounded when the burning ammunition exploded.

One of the wounded later died from his wounds to become the battalion's first fatality as a result of hostile fire. Three Silver Stars and two Bronze Stars w/"V" were the first awarded to the battalion up to this time. One of the awards, a Silver Star, was awarded to a medic injured while treating personnel. The medic, **Doc Paddleford**, later died from his wounds. The other two Silver Stars were awarded to the XO and an E-5 section chief who disregarded their own safety to move the two 175mm guns off their burning pads to a defilade location. This saved these two guns from being totally destroyed.

On 14 May 1969 "C" battery moved from FSB Bastogne to FSB Blaze where they remained until September 1969, with the exception of a 4 day one gun raid to FSB Cannon 13 – 17 June. Throughout this period the battery supported the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne operation in the A Shau Valley and missions in Laos. Several hundred rounds were fired on Dong Ap Bia (Hamburger Hill) during the fierce battle there.

### "C" Battery (narrative provided by Lionel Reckley)

*"I have read the history of the 83rd that you provided. Please note the following discrepancies. I may be a little cloudy, but I don't think so. I arrived I believe to C Btry 1/83rd FA in June of 1969. At that time C Btry, 1/83rd was at FSB Tomahawk, and all of the howitzers at that time were 8". Some time later, I do not recall, we were moved to FSB Nancy, where my howitzer was refitted from an 8" to a 175, I vividly recall this because after the retubing of my howitzer, C Btry was moved to FSB Barbara in support of operations in Cambodia. This I certainly remember because my howitzer broke down due to maintenance problems, and my gun section was left along the road side for most of the day, while the rest of the battery moved on to FSB Barbara. We were supported by ARVN APC'S on a hill above us. The Battalion Commander had flown in his helicopter and gave us salt tablets and water. Later we were towed to FSB Barbara".*

## **History of the 1<sup>ST</sup> Battalion 83rd Artillery in the Republic of Vietnam** **1966-1971**

On 19 June 1969 "B" battery at Roy received several mortar rounds at approximately 0200. The incoming continued through the night. Only two rounds landed in the firing battery area causing no damage. Several other rounds landed near the perimeter bunkers wounding six personnel, none seriously.

On 21 June due to a large threat in the area and an insufficient amount of security, "A" Battery moved from FSB Cannon to FSB Blaze. The Battery conducted a one-day, one gun raid to Cannon on 5 July and a one-day, two-gun raid to Cannon on 16 July. On 25 July the battery moved one Howitzer with FDC to FSB Currahee on the floor of the A Shau Valley to become the first heavy artillery piece to enter the Valley.

On 16 August "B" Battery moved one gun plus an FDC from FSB Foy to Gia Le. On 17, August it moved from Gia Le to FSB Blaze and on 18 August it moved from FSB Blaze to FSB Rendezvous in the A Shau Valley to become the second artillery piece in the valley. On the same day the gun from "A" Battery moved out of the Valley from Currahee to FSB Blaze.

Throughout the remainder of August and part of September "A" Battery and "B" Battery made a series of moves by infiltration that ended for "A" Battery on 9 September when the Battery Headquarters moved from FSB Blaze to FSB Roy and for "B" Battery when the Battery Headquarters moved from FSB Roy to Gia Le on 9 September and from Gia Le to FSB Blaze on 10 September.

The batteries remained in these locations until the 101st Airborne Division (AMBL) decided to move out of the A Shau Valley during the Monsoon season. "B" Battery moved from FSB Blaze to FSB Birmingham on 26 September and "C" Battery moved from FSB Blaze to FSB Bastogne 28 September. The sole reason for Bastogne being opened was so that "C" Battery could interdict the A Shau Valley throughout the monsoon season.

As of 30 September 1969 the Battalion had fired 149,617 eight-inch rounds and 87,314 175mm rounds since arriving in Vietnam.

During the month of October all the batteries remained static

In November the battalion remained static supporting operations from already occupied Fire Support Bases. On 10 - 16 November XXIV Corps Headquarters conducted the Annual General Inspection in the battalion. The unit came out with an overall satisfactory.

The month of December was no change over November. On 31 December 1969 "A" Battery retubed two of its carriages to 175mm. As the year closed the batteries were located as follows: "A" Battery had two eight-inch and two 175mm at FSB Roy; "B" Battery had four eight-inch at FSB Birmingham; and "C" Battery had four 175mm at FSB Bastogne.

On 6 Jan, "B" Battery moved two eight-inch Howitzers to Bastogne and "C" moved two 175mm guns to Birmingham. The purpose of this switch was to place the 175mm guns far enough away and the eight-inch close enough to a very hot target. After shooting several hundred rounds the

## History of the 1<sup>ST</sup> Battalion 83rd Artillery in the Republic of Vietnam 1966-1971

guns moved back to their former positions on 11 January. On 12 January "C" Battery retubed one gun to eight-inch in order to better provide a mutual support capability between "B" and "C" Batteries.

During this period the Commanding General XXIV Corps directed that heavy firing be conducted in the A Shau Valley. This required extensive ammunition resupply to FSB Bastogne. Members of headquarters and service battery were dispatched to both Bastogne and Birmingham for a period of four days to help move the ammunition.

On 14 January 1970 battalion attached two 175mm gun sections to "C" battery 2<sup>nd</sup> of the 94<sup>th</sup> to participate in a raid to FSB Anne. The guns rejoined the battery on 22 January.

On 19 January 1970 "A" and "C" batteries exchanged personnel between FSB Roy and FSB Bastogne. This was the first time in over a year that "C" battery was out of the field. The equipment remained on each FSB. On 21 January "C" battery moved from Roy to Camp Sally.

On 28 January 1970 two 175mm guns from "C" and two 175mm guns from "B" moved to a firing point located near FSB Jack. These four guns fired 1440 rounds of ammunition in a period of 65 hours into an area of heavy enemy activity, which was previously out of range of all artillery fire. This raid was terminated on 31 January and the guns returned to their respective batteries.

On 9 February 1970 two 175mm guns from "B" battery and two 175mm guns from "C" battery participated in a 3-day raid in the vicinity of FSB Jack.

On 1 March 1970 the Battalion was attached to the 108<sup>th</sup> Artillery Group.

On 7 March "B" battery made an artillery raid to FSB Veghel. The raid ended on 9 March and the guns returned to FSB Birmingham.

On 14 March 1970 "C" battery left Camp Sally and moved to Gia Le Combat Base.

On 13 April "A" battery received two enemy mortar rounds, which impacted in one of the gun pits. One man from Service battery ammunition section (**Larry Francis**) and one man from "A" battery (**Clifford Jerry Earnhardt**) were killed. Eight personnel in the area were wounded. There was no damage to equipment.

The 300,000 round fired by the battalion since arriving in Vietnam was fired by "A" battery at 0342 hours, 4 May 1970.

23 May 1970 "C" battery moved from Gia Le Combat Base to the foot of FSB Veghel. Since the firebase was not completed that day, only two 8" howitzers were initially moved. The other two 175mm guns; one went to Bastogne and the other to Birmingham. After the firebase at Veghel was completed the other two guns joined "C" battery at Veghel.

## **History of the 1<sup>ST</sup> Battalion 83rd Artillery in the Republic of Vietnam** **1966-1971**

On 11 June 1970 the battalion was reconfigured into three pure batteries. "B" and "C" were 8" howitzer batteries and "A" was a 175mm battery. On 12 June a raid was conducted under the command of the "B" battery CO. By using two 175mm guns from "A" at Veghel the unit was able to place fire on an area of heavy enemy activity. The raid was concluded in the evening of June 12.

On 15 June 1970 the battalion started another raid and more changes in the Battalion. "A" conducted a raid to the "bottom of the hill" at Veghel firing approximately 1,000 rounds. On the next day, 18 June "C" battery was once more reconfigured to be two 8" and two 175mm guns.

On 27 June 1970 the battalion began another raid; its mission was to destroy bridges on Route 547. Battery "B" moved to FSB Veghel and on 28 June "B" battery displaced to FSB Blaze. On the two day operation the battalion destroyed 7 bridges and made 14 road cuts.

On 30 June 1970 "B" battery had the misfortune of taking incoming rounds. Injuries to personnel were minor but a water tank was damaged when an RPG landed approximately 200 meters north of the mess hall.

On 5 September 1970 "C" battery started its move to from FSB Veghel to Gia Le Combat Base. Two 175mm guns from Veghel arrived Gia Le in the afternoon. One 8" howitzer arrived Gia Le the same day from Direct Support Maintenance. Plans were made that day to move "C" battery to Camp Sally on or about 22 September.

On 18 November 1970 one 8" howitzer from "B" battery was moved to FSB Bastogne to provide supporting fires for a Ranger Team in trouble in the vicinity of the Rao La River, 11 kilometers west of FSB Veghel.

On 19 November 1970 the Battalion delivered suppressive and defensive fires for Ranger Team Bills and the newly inserted "C" Area Rifle Platoon of the 2/17<sup>th</sup> Cav.

Firing throughout that day and night, sometimes within 500 meters of the troops moving on the ground, the 1/83<sup>rd</sup> was commended by the Troop Commander for highly accurate and responsive fires. The Battalion was called on to fire a 175mm/8" Time on Target (TOT) on an area in a ravine 100 meters west of the Cav's night defensive position (NDP).

On the afternoon of 20 November 1970 the Ranger Team and Area Rifle platoon were finally lifted out of the highly enemy infested area. During the three day "mercy" operation the Battalion expended approximately 1000 175mm/8" rounds of ammunition. Battalion had displayed the "spirit of the artillery" and earned a new-found respect for the 1/83<sup>rd</sup> from the grunts we supported.

On 24 November 1970 "B" battery's 8" at Bastogne returned to FSB Birmingham.

On 1 December 1970 "B" battery moved two 8" howitzers to support the "Rao La" operation of the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade of the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne division (AMBL). This operation was against two battalions of the 803<sup>rd</sup> NVA Regiment believed to have the mission of infiltrating the lowlands

## **History of the 1<sup>ST</sup> Battalion 83rd Artillery in the Republic of Vietnam** **1966-1971**

west of Hue to attack the surrounding areas during TET 1971. The two 8” howitzers returned to Birmingham the same afternoon.

On 4 December 1970 two 8” howitzers moved from Birmingham to a position approximately 500 meters northwest of FSB Bastogne to fire on “hard” targets in the Kathryn/Maureen area returning to Birmingham that evening.

On 12 December 1970 “C” battery moved two 175mm guns to FSB Nancy to support 1<sup>st</sup> ARVN Regiment and the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade of the 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Mechanized.

On 17 December 1970 “B” battery moved two 8” howitzers to FSB Anzio – they stayed overnight.

On 18 December 1970 “B” battery’s two 8” howitzers moved approximately two and a half kilometers northwest of Anzio on Route 545. They fired in support of a combined ARVN/US operation in the vicinity of FSB Pistol.

On 19 December 1970 “B” batteries two 8” howitzers returned to Birmingham. That evening “B” battery took enemy incoming rounds, with no casualties or damage.

On 24 December 1970 the Christmas Cease Fire took effect at 1800 hours. The Cease Fire lasted until 0600 hours 26 December.

Christmas Day 1970 the Battalion had a traditional Christmas dinner of turkey, dressing and pumpkin pie.

On 26 December 1970 the truce ended. Birmingham reported enemy incoming rounds with no casualties/no damage.

On 27 December 1970 at 2310 hours Camp Eagle received 5 rounds of 122 rocket fire landing approximately 1000 meters from Battalion CP. One man from the 101<sup>st</sup> was killed and 5 wounded.

On 31 December 1970 the Battalion celebrated New Years with fervent prayers for peace throughout the world. The spirits were flowing freely as we welcomed in 1971.

The Battalion fired approximately 106,000 rounds during 1970.

From 11 January to 14 January 1971 the Battalion received the XXIV Corps Annual General Inspection. All batteries and staff sections received satisfactory ratings.

On 25 January 1971 “C” battery moved their 175mm guns from FSB Nancy to Gia Le Combat Base.

On 29 January 1971 moved their guns from Gia Le to FSB Sally.

## **History of the 1<sup>ST</sup> Battalion 83rd Artillery in the Republic of Vietnam** **1966-1971**

On 1 February 1971 "A" battery moved from FSB Bastogne to FSB Veghel to support the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne operations in that area. "C" battery moved to FSB C-2.

On 24 February 1971 "B" battery moved from FSB Birmingham to FSB J.J. Carroll to provide support for the ARVN operation LAM SON 719. The Battalion fired 3,838 rounds in support of the operation. At 1605 hours on 27 February "B" battery received nine 122 mm rockets impacting outside of the perimeter wire.

On 8 April 1971 "B" battery moved from FSB J.J. Carroll to FSB Birmingham.

On 10 April 1971 "C" battery moved from FSB C-2 to FSB Rakkasan.

On 18 April 1971 the Battalion began supporting the ARVN operation LAM SON 720 which was directed against targets in the A Shau Valley. The Battalion fired 4,266 rounds in support of this operation.

On 4 May 1971 the Battalion was relieved of its tactical mission and ordered to begin processing personnel and equipment for redeployment and inactivation.

Since arriving in Vietnam the Battalion fired 385,739 rounds in support of Australian, ARVN and US operations.