



## Serving with D 6/71 in Vietnam

by **Glenn E. Strohl**, 1Lt, US Army Artillery, VN 1965-66

I was XO of Battery D, 6/71 when it deployed from Ft. Bliss to Vietnam in the fall of 1965. Battalion commander was Colonel R. Prilliman and Capt. Taft C. Ring commanded Battery D. We went by train to Oakland, then to Vietnam with one night of shore leave at Naha, Okinawa on the way. The Battalion went ashore from our ship, the General Hugh S. Gafney (or Gaffey), at Qui Nhon in late September/early October where an advance party had cleared some land inland along Rt. 1, and there we sat for 2-3 weeks until the Army decided what to do with us. We were sitting ducks in a narrow valley with the entire battalion situated on no more that 2 or 3 acres of land. Most of our equipment remained aboard a transport ship during this time.

We then got orders to deploy to Cam Ranh Bay, and Capt. Ring went down with part of his unit, along with the battalion HC staff to recon for unit sites. I brought the rest of the battery personnel a few days later via C130. The plane was so packed that I ended up sitting on the Chaplain's lap in the navigator's position.

Battery D was the northern most Hawk battery on the Cam Ranh peninsula, and was also the first Army Hawk Battery to become operational in Vietnam. We later moved north to Nha Trang where we occupied hill (580 I believe) just south of the town, the airfield, and 5th Special Forces HQ. From our hill, we overlooked the seaside villa of the infamous Lady Nhu. In 1966, space was cleared at the top of Hon Tre Island which lay 3-4 km offshore from Nha Trang. I did one recon trip out to the island, and conferred with a local ARVN officer to try to determine whether the villagers on the island were friendly or VC. Although the ARVN officer claimed to have lived all his life in the area, he didn't even know the island had people living on it! I was XO of Battery D, 6/71 when it deployed from Ft. Bliss to Vietnam in the fall of 1965. Battalion commander was Colonel R. Prilliman and Capt. Taft C. Ring commanded Battery D. We went by train to Oakland, then to Vietnam with one night of shore leave at Naha, Okinawa on the way. The Battalion went ashore from our ship, the General Hugh S. Gafney (or Gaffey), at Qui Nhon in late September/early October where an advance party had cleared some land inland along Rt. 1, and there we sat for 2-3 weeks until the Army decided what to do with us. We were sitting ducks in a narrow valley with the entire battalion situated on no more that 2 or 3 acres of land. Most of our equipment remained aboard a transport ship during this time.

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