G Battery 55th Artillery Compilation from materials saved into the Americal Division Veteran's Association data base.

Above is the G Battery 55th Artillery Battalion crest.

G Battery 55th Artillery Battalion Articles and related materials compiled from the Americal Division Veteran's Association (ADVA) database.

ADVA Historian for 2021 comments. Compilation documents have been made for veterans who might not have computer skills to search the extensive files for materials about their unit.

This document was made for veterans of G Battery 55th Artillery Battalion. This is a list of items that are also available to G/55 Artillery veterans, but are considered separate G/55th Artillery items and were not included in the compilation:

No issue of a G/55 Artillery Newsletter has been located to date.., "Photos related to the G/55 Artillery Battalion were inserted into this document from The Americal Division's Newspaper, the "Southern Cross". There are no known yearbooks that include names and photos of G/55th Artillerymen. Maps of the Americal AO are available, but not part of the compilation. Other general information that relates to all units of the Americal Division are in the ADVA data base.

There are photos related to the G/55th Artillery Battalion inserted into the document. These mainly came from the weekly "Southern Cross" newspaper.

There are Division and Artillery Operation Reports and Lessons Learned Reports. And Operation reports that can provide insight to why artillerymen were moving artillery pieces around so much. This was combined into a file for extracting information for the standard artillery units, but may not apply so well for the way G/55th Arty was assigned within the Americal Division.

At the end of this document I have inserted examples of Americal Division S2/S3 entries related to the G/55th Artillery Battalion to illustrate what might be available in the 50 months of Americal Division S2/S3 reports. We also have some S2/S3 reports from the 1/52nd, 1/46th, 1/6th, 4/3rd and 5/46th Infantry Battalions. Only the 1/52nd Infantry materials are computer searchable. Some examples may be prepared to illustrate what could be found in this reporting.

A connection will always exist between the veterans who served with Americal Division to the G Battery 55th Artillery Battalion veterans in the Vietnam conflict. Everyone who ever saw the Quad .50 caliber weapons firing can't forget.

The monument dedicated to artillerymen at Ft. Sill by the Americal Division Veteran's Association includes G/55th Artillery.

Stanton Order of Battle Vietnam reference book documentation on Battery G, 55th Artillery.

Battery G, 55th Artillery
(.50-caliber Machinegun)

Arrived Vietnam: 26 February 1968
Departed Vietnam: 31 July 1971
Previous Station: Ft Bliss

Authorized Strength	**1968**	**1970**
	142	114

Battery G of the 55th Artillery was a quad M55 mounted .50-caliber machinegun battery stationed at Chu Lai and was attached to the 23rd Infantry Division (Americal) after 13 April 1968. It provided convoy security, combat assault support and perimeter defense.

UNIT CITATIONS AWARDED
TO G Battery, 55th Arty

SOURCE: Department of the Army Pamphlet 762-3

Unit Citation and Campaign Participation Credit Register
(1960-1978) Dated: May 1980

Awards:

RVNGC24 Aug 69 - 31 Dec 69 DAGO 42, 1972
RVNGC31 Mar 70 - 30 Jun 70 DAGO 42, 1972
RVNGC1 Apr 71 - 30 Jun 71 DAGO 6, 1974
1st Section
VUA11-31 Aug 69 DAGO 43, 1972

ABBREVIATIONS:
DAGO: Department of the Army General Order
RVNGC: Republic Of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm Unit Citation
VUA: U.S. Army Valorous Unit Award

”SIXTY MINUTES OF TERROR AT MARY ANN” BY AL HEMMINGWAY mentions the presence of 4 men from G Battery 55th Artillery. And a great more detail about the action a LZ Mary Ann is in the book by Keith Nolan, entitled “**Sappers in the Wire**”.

Operations G Battery 55th Artillery Battalion participated in:

Operation Russell Beach
Operation Iron Mountain
Operation Elk Canyon
Vernon Lake II
LZ Liz Sapper Attack (7 June 1969)

list update could be continued using the Operation Reports and Lessons Learned (ORLL) report file created for the Americal Division artillery unit article compilation effort.

As this listing stands it is woefully short. G 55th Arty sections were embedded into LZs throughout the Americal Division AO. This would mean that G/55 participated in almost every Americal Division operation. I am not seeing G 55th Arty listed on many of the unit lists for the Americal operations. This might be because the G 55th Arty presence was often only a 4 man team.

This section is made up of articles from the Army Reporter.

The largest Army newspaper in the world

THE ARMY REPORTER is published weekly under the supervision of the Information Office. United States Army Vietnam and is an authorized Army publication. The command newspaper has a circulation of 85,000 and is printed by **PACIFIC STARS AND STRIPES** in Tokyo, Japan.

Opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. This newspaper utilizes the facilities of the ARMED FORCES NEWS BUREAU and ARMY NEWS FEATURES. Contributions are welcome and may be sent to: THE ARMY REPORTER, USARV-IO, APO 96375 or telephone Long Binh 4204/4311.

Americal

14Apr69-**Photo Caption - FOUR MEMBERS** of **Battery G, 55th Artillery** prepare a quad-50 for firing as a protective measure for road convoys. The battery, with 24 such truck-mounted weapons is the only quad-50 unit in the Americal Division.

Pacific Stars and Stripes An authorized publication of the U.S. Armed forces in the far east. Price 10 cents.

Field Enterprises
PACIFIC
STARS AND STRIPES

This newspaper is an authorized unofficial publication for U.S. Armed Forces assigned to the Pacific Command. Contents of Pacific Stars and Stripes are not necessarily the official view of the U.S. Government or the Department of Defense.

Columnists and cartoonists on this and other pages express their own opinions and these views are not necessarily shared by Pacific Stars and Stripes.

"Pacific Stars and Stripes" is published in four editions daily at Tokyo, Japan, APO San Francisco, 96503. It is distributed to authorized personnel for 10 cents daily, $2.50 monthly or $30.00 yearly, payable in advance per AR 230-1 and AFR 176-1. Second class postage paid at Post Office, San Francisco, Calif.

The appearance of displays in this newspaper concerning commercial publications does not constitute an endorsement by the Department of Defense, the Military Departments or the Commander-in-Chief, Pacific.

10Jun70-**Convoy Nightmare Erased As Units Clear Highway 1**

By SPEC. 4 PETER R. SORENSEN

FSB BRONCO, Vietnam (Special) - The highway is quiet save for the occasional puttering of a civilian vehicle. It is morning and the black asphalt has just begun to radiate the heat from a new day's sun. The roadsides are littered with undefinable rusted metal parts and the decaying skeletons of once lumbering vehicles. All bear silent witness to the landscape's treacherous past.

Highway 1, south from Duc Pho 15 miles to now abandoned Firebase Lowboy on the southern border of the 11th Infantry Brigade's area of operation was once a convoy commander's nightmare. "Ambush Alley" and "Engineer Pass" do not have any identifying road signs, nor do they appear on maps, but Americal Div. soldiers in the area can easily point out the real estate in transients.

Just south of Firebase Debbie Highway 1 assumes uncharacteristic curves and bends. Hills thickly covered with foliage and rocks rise up to the west. Also the west, the remnants of a destroyed French railroad parallel the road. At stretches foothills rise on both sides of the highway and dense vegetation has edged its way to the road's side.

"Before we started the 'minesweep-south" the NVA hit this section everyday with ambushes, mines and booby-traps," said Spec. 5 Richard D. Throm of **D Co., 4th Bn., 21st Inf.**

That was about four months ago. Now every morning, a team composed of infantry, engineers, artillery, armor and aviation insure that the highway remains open.

A light observation helicopter from the 11th Inf. Brigade flies a morning reconnaissance of the area radioing its finding to the sweep team. Gunships are on call, if needed.

C Co. of the 26th Engineer Bn., leads the column with a heavily-armed squad riding in a converted five-ton dump, "pressure-test truck." "We also sweep with mine detectors along the road and check culverts for mines each day," reported 1st Lt. Charles D. Butt.

A varying number of armored personnel carriers (APC) and "Sheridan" combat assault vehicles are scattered throughout the convoy, Said Sgt. Randall Fox, APC driver. "If we're hit, I swing in to face the action and put down a heavy base of fire for maneuver elements." **E Troop, 1st Cav.**, also places their armored tracks in stationary strategic locations along the route.

Sgt. Norman N. Roberts leads a reaction force of a squad of infantrymen from the **4th Bn., 21st inf.** "We're put down to engage enemy elements and seek out snipers. These men are all experienced, having spent a minimum of eight months in the field."

Artillery provides a forward observer in constant communication with batteries from surrounding firebases. **G Btry., 55th Arty.**, is represented by quad-mounted .50 caliber machine guns. "Our 'VC Eater' alternates mornings with another quad-.50, from Firebase Debbie. The quads can put down heavy fire and cover a lot of area. The last time we made contact, a couple of days ago, a '.50' expended 8,000 rounds," said Sgt. Steve Cole.

Each morning silence is ruptured by the roar of the column as it "recons by fire" through the once deadly gauntlet. "In four months of operation, we've been sniped at maybe six times," said Throm. From ambushes everyday, the enemy has been forced to retreat to feeble harassment of the section.

Pacific Stars & Stripes
03Jul71 Page 6
Saturday

6,000 GIs in Biggest One-Day Stand Down

S&S Vietnam Bureau

SAIGON – More than 6,000 U.S. Army troops in 39 units began stand down Thursday in the largest force ever to do so in a single day in Vietnam, the U.S. Command said.

The units included the first elements of the 1st Brigade, 5th Inf. Div. (Mech.) to begin stand down.

This brigade is the American unit nearest to the Demilitarized Zone between North and South Vietnam, and it occupies one fire base, Alpha 4, only two miles from the DMZ.

The force of 6,095 men that stood down Thursday also included elements of the 173rd Airborne Brigade which operates on the coast east of and in the northern portion of the central highlands.

The 1st brigade, 5th Inf. Div., supported the South Vietnamese invasion of Laos in operation Lam Son 719 in February and March and occupied the old base at Khe Sanh.

Its units standing down Thursday were the 1st Bn. 77th Armor, with 615 spaces; the 43 Inf. Platoon (Scout Dog); and the 77th Inf. Det. (Scout Dog), according to a U.S. Command communique.

Units of the 173rd standing down Thursday, and number of spaces where announced, were Hq. and Hq. Co., 173rd Airborne Brigade, 300; 3rd Bn., 319th Field Arty., 485; 2nd Bn., 503rd Inf., 920; 173rd Support Bn., 705; 173rd Eng. Co.; 75th Inf. Det. (Tracker Dog); 172nd MI Det.; and 534th Signal Co.

Another major unit standing down Thursday was the 7th Bn., 8th Field Arty., with 565 spaces, which is under control of the Third Regional Assistance Command.

The other units involved in the stand down, according to the U.S. Command were the 1st Bn., 44th Air Defense Arty.; Battery G, 65th Air Defense Arty.; 1st Chemical Det.; 5th Bn., 27th Field Arty.; Battery B, 7/29th Field Arty.; 77th Field Arty. Det.; 237th Field Arty. Det.; 241st Field Arty. Det.; 242nd Field Arty. Det.; 243 Arty. Det.; 244th Field Arty. Det.; 253rd Field Arty. Det.; 254th Field Arty. Det.; 255th Field Arty. Det.; 256th Field Arty. Det.; **Battery G, 55th Air Defense Arty**.; 2nd Civil Affairs Co.; Stratcom Telephone Management Agency; Stratcom Signal Support Det.; 201st Sig. Det.; Co. C, 459th Sig. Bn.; 542nd Sig. Co; 223rd Combat Support Co.; 47th Inf. Platoon (Scout Dog:; 58th Inf. Platoon (Scout Dog); 557th Inf. Platoon (Tracker Dog.)

A complete 9 page ORLL report for G Battery 55th Artillery was provided to the ADVA Vietnam era historian. Since this is only 9 pages it will be inserted into this document. The veterans of the Americal Division appreciate that Richard J. Russell a veteran of G/55 Arty shared this ORLL report with them March 2016.

NND873541

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
BATTERY G (MG) 55th ARTILLERY
APO San Francisco 96374

AVDF-ATGB 31 April 1971

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned (Battery G (MG) 55th Artillery), Period Ending 31 April 1971, RCS CSFOR-65.

TO: Commanding Officer
23d Infantry Division Artillery
APO 96374

1. Section 1. Operations: Significant Activities.

a. In November 1970, a Quad 50 was moved from LZ Siberia to OP Nui Vang. The squad, the gun, and ammunition were airlifted in three sorties to Chu Lai, where necessary maintenance was undertaken to bring the mount up to a level of 100% operational. The next day the entire mount was taken off of LZ Siberia because of an inability to obtain clearance to fire. Op Nui Vang was selected because of the existence of an IOS unit there to pinpoint targets for the Quad 50, and the absence of any villages in the proposed field of fire. The mount was airlifted to Chu Lai instead of the intended LZ, because the echelon of maintenance necessary could be provided only in the rear area. This was the only deviation from normal procedure.

b. At the end of January 1971, this unit was forced to laterally transfer sixteen (16) 5 ton cargo trucks and one (1) 151A1 Utility Truck to C Co., 23d S&T Bn., a trucking company organized to support operations in the northern section of Military Region I. Another 5 ton cargo truck was laterally transferred to the 1st Battalion 82nd Artillery, also in support of northern operations. The loss of these trucks forced ground mounting the Quad 50's on many firebases where the guns had been truck mounted previously. Ground mounting these weapons removed their mobility and greatly reduced their ability to provide perimeter security. It became clearly evident that two (2) ground mounted Quad 50's would be necessary to supply the same amount of security that one (1) truck mounted Quad 50 could provide.

c. As a result of this transfer of trucks, the squad that had been deployed in the rear as convoy security and CLDC security was ground mounted on LZ Bayonet. This mount was added in addition to the Quad already at this location because the loss of trucks brought about a situation where two (2) ground mounted Quads were needed to insure adequate perimeter security.

d. In February 1971, a Quad 50 was moved by air from LZ Aquarius to OP Shaw with complete crew and equipment. The gun was moved because the old base was being closed down, and there was a position for a Quad 50 on OP Shaw, a position held by 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry. the operation went smoothly except for maintenance problems with the mount. On the day that the original airlift was supposed to take place, t was discovered that a trunion pin was broken, resulting in the mount being unable to traverse electrically. The broken mount was lifted to OP Shaw, while a float mount kept in the motor pool was stripped and readied for shipment. Early the next morning, the stripped float mount was lifted to OP Shaw. The crew switched all the necessary parts from the broken mount to the stripped mount, and the broken mount was shipped back to the rear the next day. So, a potential failure was turned into a success as a result of the proper use of a float mount.

(continued)

(continued)

e. Also in February 1971, a Quad 50 was airlifted from OP Nui Vang to OP Woodstock in support of C Co., 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry. The position was in the middle of a known enemy supply route into the southern area of the division Area of Operation. In the first twenty-four hours that the gun was there, the hill received incoming mortars, RPG's, 51 caliber fire, and recoilless rifle fire. The quad 50 was the only form of perimeter security available on the hill besides small arms fire, and was instrumental in defending the position. The operation was successful, but a hill of 15-20 people doesn't seem to warrant a Quad 50. In March 1971 the mount was moved from OP Woodstock to OP Wink. OP Wink was a much better position for the Quad 50, because there was an IOS site there that could pick out targets for the weapon. The move was completely successful, and no extraordinary problems arose.

f. On 1 April 1971, the Quad 50 on OP Chippewa was hooked from its former position on the east side of the hill to a new position on the west side of the hill. This move was accomplished so that the gun could fire in conjunction with the IOS system there upon areas of known enemy activity. prior to the move, a load of building materials was airlifted to the site to erect a stable platform for the Quad 50 to fire from. The building materials were airlifted on 9 April 71, and the mount was hooked onto the new firing position on 11 April 71. The operation was successful, and no complications arose.

g. On 10 April 1971, the Quad 50 on LZ Center was air moved to LZ Hawk Hill with its entire crew and equipment. The move was accomplished by the use of three (3) sorties. When the mount arrived at Hawk Hill, it was immediately truck mounted and prepared for a convoy north to FSB Rawhide. At approximately 1130 hours on 12 April 1971, the truck mounted Quad joined the convoy of A Battery, 3d Battalion, 16th Artillery and proceeded north to FSB Rawhide. Because of the great distance between the gun at Rawhide and the rest of the unit, communications with the personnel there was impossible. To increase the control of this squad, an Assistant Section Chief was sent to the location on a permanent basis in addition to the Squad Leader. It was felt that the presence of the "Section Chief" would provide the necessary command and control to handle any problems of co-ordination or supply that might arise.

h. On 14 April 1971, the Quad 50 on OP Shaw was airlifted to Hill 270 with the entire crew and equipment. The move was brought about because Shaw was being closed out. The entire operation was a success, and no problems were encountered. The move was accomplished even smoother than usual because a crew of three people was lifted to Hill 270 the day before the move to prepare the position. As a result, shortly after the gun arrived the next day, the position was 100% operational and ready to fire. The use of a work crew prior to the actual move is a very valuable tool, and is sued whenever possible.

i. On 19 April 1971, the Quad 50 on OP Wink was airlifted to OP Nui Vang. The move was brought about because Wink was being closed out. Nui Vang was chosen so that the gun could work in conjunction with the IOS system there. The move was successfully accomplished in three sorties, and no problems were encountered.

(continued)

(continued)

j. On 23 April 1971, The Quad 50 on LZ Debbie was truck mounted to LZ Liz. A truck was sent from Duc Pho to Debbie to pick up the mount and carry it to Liz, where it was ground mounted. The move was accomplished quickly and efficiently, and was greatly aided by the outstanding support of the artillery battery on the hill.

k. On 23 April 1971, the Quad 50 from LZ Mary Ann was airlifted with the entire crew and equipment to Chu Lai. The move was accomplished because Mary Ann was closing out, and the mount was brought to Chu Lai for third echelon maintenance. No problems were encountered, and the move was completely successful.

l. On April 1971, the Quad 50 from LZ Pleasantville was airlifted to Hill 151. The weapon had been truck mounted, but the new position would make it necessary to ground mount it. Because of the excessive weight of the truck, airlifting was, for all practical purposes impossible. As a result, the gun and crew were lifted off and taken to Hill 151, and the truck was convoyed from Pleasantville to Chu Lai. A team of three men was sent to Hill 151 to prepare the position before the weapon arrived, and an assistant section chief and a driver were sent to Pleasantville to bring the truck back to Chu Lai. The use of these teams contributed greatly to the accomplishment of the mission.

30 April 1971

2. **Section 2. Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations, and Recommendations**.

Recommendations.

a. Personnel. none.

b. Intelligence. None

c. Operations.

(1) Indirect Fire with a **Quad 50**

(a) OBSERVATION: The use of the **Quad 50** as an indirect fire weapon brought about a high increase in deadlined mounts and use of repair parts.

(b) EVALUATION: The Quad 50 was designed for direct fire at aircraft targets. Using the weapon for indirect fire places an undue strain on the firing circuit because of the tension brought about by the weapon being forced to remain in a locked firing position. As a result, the rate of replacement of parts within the firing circuit is increased, and the mounts are consistently being deadlined. The relatively ineffectiveness of indirect fire from a Quad 50 is not worth the wear and tear brought about by such fire.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That commanders utilizing Quad 50's within their areas of operation should be discouraged from the use of the weapon for indirect fire.

(d) COMMAND ACTION: At the urging of G/55 personnel, commanders of bases with Quad 50's have stopped firing indirect fire.

(continued)

(continued)

(2) Emplacement of Quad 50's with IOS Systems.

(a) OBSERVATION: The Quad 50 can realize it highest potential when emplaced with an IOS system.

(b) EVALUATION: A Quad 50 stationed on a site with an IOS system can bring rapid and effective fire upon sighted targets. The fire can also be adjusted immediately by the use of a direct land line between the IOs crew and the machine gun crew. The use of the Quad 50 is much quicker and more effective against troops in the open than the use of indirect artillery fire. The time necessary to adjust artillery fire is much greater than necessary to adjust the machine gun fire. Unfortunately, the practice in the past has been to use artillery rather than the **Quad 50.**

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That the Quad 50 be utilized to a greater extent in the engagements of IOS-Sighted targets.

(d) COMMAND ACTION: The Quad 50 is currently being used with greater frequency in conjunction IOS systems.

d. Organization. None

e. Training

(1) Proper Training in Linking ammunition.

(a) OBSERVATION: A 50 caliber round was accidently discharged at one of our locations resulting in injury to one of the crew members while in the process of linking ammo.

(b) EVALUATION: Training in linking ammunition was found to be inadequate by the use of improper procedures. Individual was using a screwdriver to apply the necessary leverage to link loose 50 caliber rounds, resulting in an extremely unsafe condition.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That increased training be instituted to prevent further accidents.

(d) COMMAND ACTION: All Section Chiefs are given extra instruction in the proper procedure for linking ammo, and instructed to visit every squad to guarantee their usage of these procedures.

f. Logistics. None

g. Communications. None.

h. Material. None.

i. Other. None

RUSSELL L. LOHMANN
CPT, ADA
Commanding

Americal Inf. Div. **S C R A P B O O K** for fighting men too busy to keep their own! (scrapbook)

THE ARMY SCRAPBOOK for the Americal Division Edition 2.
Copy donated by Jack Head, Author and veteran of 4/21 Inf. Bn.

The cover page is blue in color with the Americal Inf. Div. patch shown at the left. The Scrapbooks were prepared by the Army. It appears that the cover page was set up on color paper. Articles taken from newspapers were cut out and placed on a sheet of paper with some art work. The cover page was more elaborate in that it included the unit patch. Articles appear to be taken from various publications from RVN and stateside and sometimes not.

This is printed at the bottom of the cover page:

TO ALL OFFICERS AND ENLISTED MEN
ISSUES OF THE "SCRAPBOOK" COVERING YOUR PERIOD OF DUTY IN VIETNAM ARE AVAILABLE TO YOU UPON YOUR RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES.
WRITE: u.s. ARMY COMMAND INFORMATION UNIT, WASHINGTON, D.C., 20315. PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR FULL NAME, RANK, SERVICE NUMBER, FORMER UNIT (DIVISION, BRIGADE, REGIMENT), STATESIDE ADDRESS WITH ZIP CODE AND INCLUSIVE DATES OF TOUR IN VIETNAM.

Prepared for the OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF INFORMATION, DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
by the U.S. ARMY COMMAND INFORMATION UNIT * WASHINGTON, D.C. 20315

(From 24September69-Southern Cross Vol. 2 No. 26 Page 3)
A W A R D S & D E C O R A T I O N S
BRONZE STAR WITH "V" DEVICE

PFC James Hadwin, 55th Arty;

This section contains articles that were printed in the Americal Division's newspaper, the "SOUTHERN CROSS". The first issues were published intermittently approximately monthly beginning with May 1968, then later in 1969 they were published weekly through until the division stood down in November 1971. Approximtely 118 issues have been located or around 40% of the newspapers published.

15Sep68-Southern Cross Vol. 1 No. 7. Centerfold spread Page 4-5
(Southern Cross patch) Division Artillery Supports Infantrymen (Artillery insignia)
Photo Captions-
(1) Forward observe calls in coordinates... (3rd Bn., 16th Arty.)
(2) FDC computes trajectory...(523rd Sig. Bn.)
(3) Another 155mm Howitzer is lowered on a remote LZ. (3rd Bn., 16th Arty)
(178th AHSC Chinook is shown lowering a howitzer behind the close in shot of a howitzer sitting on the ground).
(4) Weather data checked .... (523rd Sig. Bn.)
(5) Calculations complete, round is readied (523rd Sig. Bn.)
(Looking down the business end of a large howitzer as the gun crew set their sights.)

Page 5 Centerfold "Southern Cross" — Powerful protection comes in fours — September 15, 1968

(6) Powerful protection comes in fours (523rd Sig. Bn)
(view of soldiers standing at the rear of a **quad .50.** One man has "TOP CAT" on his helmet. Another has "SHAC" on his helmet. The land to their front looks pretty desolate with mountains in the horizon.)

(continued)

(continued)

Division Artillery, commanded by COL Lawrence M. Jones, Jr., has fired more than two million rounds in support of the Americal's combat operations in the southern I Corps.

Headquarters and Headquarters Battery has administrative and tactical control of all assigned artillery battalions, detachments, sections, and platoons in Divarty. Assigned directly to Divarty are the 3rd Bn., 16th Arty., 3rd Bn., 18th Arty., and the 1st Bn., 82nd Arty.

Air transportable

The 3rd Bn., 16th Arty. has three air-transportable batteries. This battalion operates throughout Americal's area of operation and has simultaneously operated from as many as seven fire bases. They have performed direct support missions for the 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav. Their 155mm Howitzers have a range of 14,600 meters and fire a 193-pound high explosive projectile, illumination, or propaganda.

The 3rd of the 18th Arty is an 8-inch Howitzer and 175mm gun battalion. Their three batteries give general support to the entire division area and reinforcing fire for the direct support battalions. Elements of this battalion have given support to operations outside the division--Dak To during the Tet offensive and the Hue-Phu Bai during their liberation.

Both the 8-inch and 175mm are mounted on track vehicles. A 200-pound projectile can be fired 16,000 meters from the 8-inch Howitzer, and a 150-pound high explosive or white phosphorous round can be launched over 32,000 meters from the 175mm gun.

(continued)

(continued)

15Sep68-Southern Cross Vol. 1 No. 7. Centerfold spread Page 4-5

Recent Arrivals

The 1st Bn., 82nd Arty., recently arrival from Ft. Lewis, Wash., became operational on Aug. 9. It is a composite battalion consisting of three 155mm Howitzer batteries and one 8-inch Howitzer battery. It is organized as a standard general support battalion for an infantry division. Its role is the same as that of the other two battalions.

Also assigned to Divarty are **G Btry., 55th Arty.** (Machinegun) and the 251st and 252nd Radar Detachments. The primary mission of the machinegun battery is to provide perimeter protection. The radar detachments give counter-mortar protection and information to further bring first-round accuracy on suspected enemy mortar, rocket, or artillery locations.

The searchlight Plt. of G Btry., 29th Arty., which is attached to Divarty provides illumination for all supported fire bases in the division area.

Important Sections.

Under Headquarters and Headquarters Battery are four important sections. The Ballistic Meteorological Section collects weather data for fire adjustment. The Surveillance Radar Section detects targets moving on the ground up to a range of 18,000 meters. the Aviation Section gives air intelligence, and the Communications Section provides the division commander with an alternate division communication network.

In addition to the units previously mentioned, there are other direct support artillery units which are organic to Americal's three brigades: the 6th Bn., 11th Arty, with the 11th Inf. Bde; the 3rd Bn., 82nd Arty, with the 196th Inf. Bde; and the 1st Bn., 14th Arty with the 198th Inf. Bde.

30July69-Southern Cross Vol. 2 No. 18 Page 3
Stork Stats
SGT DONALD R.
RAHM, 55th Arty., daughter born June 30, Seattle, Wash.

10September69-Southern Cross Vol. 2 No. 24 Page 3
AWARDS
&
DECORATIONS
BRONZE STAR MEDAL WITH "V" DEVICE

SP4 George Miller Jr, 55th Arty;

24September69-Southern Cross Vol. 2 No. 26 Page 3
A W A R D S
&
D E C O R A T I O N S
BRONZE STAR WITH "V" DEVICE
PFC James Hadwin, 55th Arty;

09Jan70-Southern Cross Vol. 3 No. 02 Page 2
A W A R D S
&
D E C O R A T I O N S
ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL WITH "V" DEVICE
SGT Donald R. Rahm, 55th Arty;

Proud Men Serving
Our
Action
Army

Photo

SFC Raymond
A. Boyles
16th Combat Avn Bn
Career Counselor

By MSG H. A. Bonesio

Thirty-two of the 38 reenlistees in the Americal Division during a one-week period were First Term soldiers.

Most of the new careerists chose guaranteed assignments or CONUS choice of station options.

Division Artillery retains **SP4 Perez Gonzales, G Btry., 55th Arty.**

Battery G's are powerful!

During World War II the **55th and 29th Artillery Regiments** saw extensive action on both fronts. The 55th Artillery, while serving in Europe, earned the Distinguished Unit Citation in the Ardennes as well as other honors in the Pacific. The crest, depicting the highly effective fire-arrow of pregun powder days, is an allusion to the highly effective fire of the unit's Quad .50 machine guns today.

The crest of the 29th Artillery alludes to the units landing on the beaches of Normandy, for which it was awarded the Distinguished Unit Citation. In this seaborne assault, the 29th Artillery was part of Combat Team 8, the first to land in the VII Corps sector on the Allied right flank.

Since its arrival in Vietnam, **Battery G** (Machine Gun) **55th Artillery** has been providing convoy security, combat assault support and perimeter defense to all organic artillery and infantry units within the Americal Division area of operations. Battery G (Searchlight) 29th Artillery was assigned to the 108th Field Artillery Group, Under operational control of Americal Division Artillery and has been providing target acquisition and battlefield illumination with 125,000,000 candlepower, 23 inch Xenon searchlights. Both units have had elements on 25 fire support bases throughout the Americal Division area of operations.

During June, 1969 3rd **Platoon/Battery G 29th Artillery** (Searchlight) was attached to Battery G 55th Artillery (Machine Gun). The platoon continued to enhance the security of isolated fire bases, provide target acquisition, and navigation aids. When co-located with the Quad. 50's immediate engagement was possible during attack.

Currently, in addition to normal duties, both units have begun new programs to further enhance their effectiveness. Battery G 29th Artillery has been extremely successful marking targets and gun runs at night when teamed up with Cobra gunships. Battery G 55th Artillery, under the auspices of the 198th Infantry Brigade, has initiated an extensive program of indirect fire into suspected enemy locations. To date the "Quads" have expended over 4,500,000 rounds since arriving in Vietnam and have combat assaulted on numerous occasions in direct support of Americal infantry and artillerymen.

Weekly recap

198th Bde. sees increased action

By SGT Tom Frey

CHU LAI, (198th IO)-Action increased this week in operation Middlesex Peak as the 198th Brigade infantrymen and gunships from the 23rd Infantry Division accounted for 20 enemy killed, 23 Viet Cong suspects detained and four enemy weapons captured.

Artillery accounted for seven Viet Cong soldiers killed during action early this week. **G Btry., 55th Arty.**, was credited with four of the enemy killed, while **Charlie Battery 1st Battalion, 14th Artillery** and **Alpha Battery 1st. Battalion, 82nd, Artillery** combined for the other three kills.

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Battery G stands down

By PFC Robert D. Hale

CHU LAI, (23d Inf. Div. Arty. IO) -- Standdown is a massive, difficult, and finally relieving task. **Battery G, 55th Artillery** moved off positions on 18 fire bases, more locations than most infantry brigades occupy at one time, to assume standdown posture.

The unit, organized in Hawaii in 1922, participated with honor in the Central Pacific, New Guinea and Luzon Campaigns of World War II. G-55 received the (Philippine) Presidential Unit Citation and the Distinguished Unit Citation for service in the Ardennes Campaign.

Battery G came to Vietnam on February 1968, as a Quad .50 caliber (machine gun) unit, and was assigned to the 23d Infantry Division (Americal) Artillery the following January.

The battery has provided convoy security, combat assault support and perimeter defense to organic artillery and infantry units in the Americal. Five-million rounds were expended as the unit participated in every division operation from 1968 to 1971.

By the time **G-55** reached standdown, it had occupied over 30 fire bases and OPs (observation posts) in the division AO (area of operations).

The inactivation and awards ceremonies took place at the Chu Lai Combat Center July 26. Following the reading of the deactivation orders, Brigadier General Bertram K. Gorwitz, assistant commanding general for support of the Americal, noted the many fine accomplishments of the unit during its tour in the Republic of Vietnam.

General Gorwitz honored the battery and its commanding officer, Captain Russell H. Lohman, with "I say to the officers and men of **G-55**, well done."

Articles from the

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Tien Phuoc

A TENSE SITUATION THAT FINALLY BROKE INTO ONE OF THE MAJOR CONFLICTS OF THE RECENT POST-TET OFFENSIVE

In the past month this battalion had it's share of fighting as battles raged all over South Vietnam. One of the more tense conflicts in the recent offensive was the battle of Tien Phuoc.

At 0200 hours on Feb. 23, the attack on Tien Phuoc was underway, as a large force of NVA soldiers fired rockets and mortars on and eventually overran the Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) outpost just south of the Tien Phuoc fire base camp.

SGT Alton Roundy, NCOIC of the Tien Phuoc VHF radio station said, "I was on duty early that morning when I happened to look out the window of my hootch towards the outpost. It looked like daytime up there, the exploding rockets and mortars lit up the sky so bright."

Immediately realizing the danger if the enemy gained control of the guns on top of the outpost, CPT Nguyen Ngoc Diep, CO of the CIDG forces in Tien Phuoc, called for artillery from Battalin Bravo.

After Bravo fired directly on the OP with WP, the local VC element tried to enter Tien Phuoc by way of the main gate, according to CPT Reginald P. Fontenot, Bravo chief honcho.

Things remained quiet until 0745 that same morning.

Motor sergeant, Ed Beaudin recalled, "Everyone was walking around still talking about the events that took place the night before when the first incoming artillery hit us."

That day no damage was reported in the battery area from enemy explosions or fire.

The next day rockets hit in the area of FDC and gun pit five, killing one man and injuring at least eight others.

Aware of the distinct possibility of an enemy offensive on Tien Phuoc, CPT Fontennot explains his batteries reactions, "We were expecting this kind of action, but we carried on as usual in the high standards of "Battlin Bravo."

While Bravo pounded the enemy positions around Tien Phuoc American and Vietnamese, special forces started out to reclaim the enemy held outpost no more than 750 meters from the Tien Phuoc perimeter.

Just minutes after leaving the compound, the patrol was hit with 122mm rockets. But the group continued up the steep hill to the outpost and secured the vital position on the hilltop.

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BEST MESS TOTALED OUT

The following day, the men were eating breakfast when the alarm was sounded and once again Bravo was under siege.

Forty people cleared out of the mess hall just 30 seconds before two 82mm mortar rounds struck dead center in the mess kitchen putting shrapnel holes in every utensil in the place.

SFC Alfred Walsh, Bravo's "Battlin Mess Sergeant" took charge of getting men out of the area.

SFC Walsh said, "It took us two and a half hours to extinguish fire, and that was only because of the determination of the men in the battery.

For those of you that weren't aware of this, Bravo Battery mess took the first 3/16th Arty. "Best Mess" award just one week before this tragic incident.

THE BATTLE CONTINUES

The next day, Feb. 25, enemy rockets and mortars continued to rain on Tien Phuoc.

Small mobile strike forces comprised of Vietnamese soldiers from Danang remained in an area just south of Tien Phuoc.

With elements of the 1st Bn., 52nd Inf., 198th Inf. Bde., and 3d Bn. 21st Inf., 196th Inf. Bde. moving in, a blocking force was set up to stop further enemy movement towards Tien Phuoc.

Continuous air strikes by both Marine and Air Force jet fighters pound away at an enemy position on a hillside 2000 meters from the Tien Phuoc perimeter.

At night when fighters were no longer effective Cobra gunships and a C-47 "Spooky" were used to deter an enemy advance.

THE BEACON

A small radar unit known as the Beacon operates inside the Tactical Operations Center (TOC) guiding jet fighters to their targets by transmitting a beam that is picked up by the aircraft's Beacon receiver. Air Force Sergeant Michael Walker monitors aircraft transmissions from his MRC-108 radio jeep.

3/16th SETS UP FSCC

A separate yet vital unit known as the Fire Support Control Center (FSCC) was organized and sent to Tien Phuoc under the direction of Battalion XO MAJ Francis Waskowitz.

According to CPT Douglas Gladfelter(S-2) also present at Tien Phuoc "The purpose of FSCC is to coordinate all the different units in the field and obtain both political and military clearance for air strikes and artillery fire in the Tien Phuoc area.

VHF IS SAVED

Tien Phuoc is assured of having adequate land line connections to Chu Lai only when VHF is on the air.

SGT Roundy explains VHF's dilemma, "When FDC took a couple of direct hits,, their land line to me was knocked out." Realizing FDC's precarious position, Roundy exposed himself during enemy rocket attacks to lay a new land line to FDC.

Meanwhile back at the radio station, rockets were landing behind the radio rig, knocking down antennas and setting fire to the POL dump which happened to be next to the VHF power generators.

"It looked like VHF was in serious trouble for a few minutes during hat second rocket attack, "said PFC Jesse Adkins whose unabashed and dauntless courage helped put out the fire in time to save the generators.

QUAD 50 MOVES IN

A squad of four men from the 3d section of 55th Artillery (Quad 50) was called to Tien Phuoc for the purpose of firing harassment and interdiction.

In their first three days at Tien Phuoc, the team fired over 20,000 rounds.

ENEMY ROCKETING CEASES

Short on supplies and badly hurt, the surviving members of the enemy intruders fell back to re-group and re-supply their forces.

Except for periodic firing of friendly artillery, peace and quiet reigned over Tien Phuoc for the next three days of restoration of equipment and buildings continued.

INFANTRY HIT HARD

A large number of NVA soldiers have reportedly been building up their strength and receiving supplies in an area a few miles east of Tien Phuoc. "We know they're out there;" said 1SG Ralph Lewis," They hit the CIDG or spec- **TIEN PHUOC Cont. on P. 4**

TIEN PHUOC (Cont. from P. 3)

ial forces, who call us for artillery support and we give it to them, but the enemy hits and falls back into his hole or tunnel so fast we can't pin them down to one location."

SPECIAL FORCES STRIKE

Special Forces Camp A-102 at Tien Phuoc houses the field TOC, through which all field operations to the Tien Phuoc area are monitored and directed.

Camp Commander CPT John Cleckner states, "Since Feb. 23, we have killed a total of 115 NVA and VC.

Within the 400 meter perimeter of Tien Phuoc itself, over 194 122mm, 140mm rockets, and 82mm mortars have struck according to CPT Cleckner.

Since the beginning of the offensive, 19 helicopters have been shot down around Tien Phuoc.

MORE ROCKETS

The lull came to an abrupt end on March 2.

"Everyone in the compound had finished eating breakfast just half an hour before the first incoming rockets hit, "said Battlin Bravo cook, Mike Swensen.

POL IS DESTROYED

After keying in on his motor pool the first time, SGT Ed Beaudin shrewdly moved just about all of this remaining POL to the special forces POL dump.

"I knew that if more rockets or mortars were fired at Tien Phuoc, I would be the recipient of a couple of them. It only stood to reason, my motor pool is in the middle of everything they want here, said Beaudin.

Sure enough, the first rockets to enter Tien Phuoc that morning landed right in the POL dump setting what was left on fire for the second time.

The generators of VHF were once again of main concern. Knowing the fire would not be put out this time, the generators were pulled to safety.

BATTERY COMMO HURT

"Rockets knocked out much of our ammo this time," said CPT Fontenot.

Under the direction of Chief of commo, SGT Julius Wright, the wire team continued to work flawlessly even under adverse conditions.

THE GUNS KEEP FIRING

The following day Bravo Battery was in the middle of a contact firing mission when more enemy rounds started dropping in.

In CPT Fontenot's words, "This is when the most heroic acts were performed, and that was by the gun crews themselves, they continued to fire."

MEDIC STANDS OUT

SP4 Alvinci Merske, medic at Battlin Bravo was the first man on the scene whenever a casualty was reported. Bravo XO, 1LT Jimmy Kilpatrick praises Merske's actions, "We all had trouble keeping up with him whenever a casualty was reported in the battery area, he was Johnny on the spot all the time."

On March 3, the last rockets hit Tien Phuoc. But the siege around Tien Phuoc continues as Americal infantrymen and artillerymen along with their Vietnamese counterparts hold their ground and continue to smash the enemy assault.

As CPT Cleckner so emphatically stated, "The enemy is still out there and they want Tien Phuoc."

BRAVO BUGLER

Providing the ultimate in exotic, tropical, rural enjoyment, Bravos second R&R facility opened during July with the appearance at LZ Young of the units 8" platoon. The new center, designed to offer a slightly more informal atmosphere than the parent facility at Ross, was established after the success and popularity of Bravos first R&R venture proved that the area could profitably support resort facilities.

While many resorts throughout the world feature target shooting with bows and arrows, rifles or shotguns, the LZ Young R&R Center provides target shooting on a Texas-size scale with 8" Howitzers and .50 caliber machine guns. Shooting during July featured some practice firing which netted some unexpected results. **An R&R Center .50 caliber test fired alongside a Quad .50 manned by members of G Battery, 55th Artillery in a target area including the latest safety devices.** The test firing proved serious for Bravo and machine gun crewman SSG Stokes and PFC Almond. An NVA Chieu Hoi'd the following day and reported that five members of his squad were downed in the shooting. ("How the hell did you find us?"

The carefree enjoyment at the LZ Young Center continued during the month with sandbag filling as always the most popular activity. "I've played baseball, quite a bit of basketball and went skiing once before I came in the Army", said one trooper, "but sandbag filling is one activity I never would have tried if I hadn't been lucky enough to spend my R&R here at Young. Nothing beats the satisfaction gained from seeing several hundred filled sandbags lying under the sun, and knowing that you have done it." the man's psychiatric discharge was pending at last report.

Sunbathing took on a new twist back at the Ross Center as several guard towers neared completion. Sunburn, the scourge of beach vacationers, should not be a problem at Ross, where guests reserve the towers for various intervals only at night. The management said deck chairs will not be provided by the center, but guests are welcome to bring their own.

Hotels have been springing up throughout Ross. No reservations are needed, but guests are expected to provide all the construction labor. Probably Vietnam's only outdoor drive-in movie theatre is located at Ross. Prices are charged by the truckload, but officials said all Mustangs will be admitted free of charge.

The new facilities apparently produced an increase in guests, as Bravo welcomed 15 new men during the past month. Working the guns are PFCs Taughrin, Smith, Summers, Flynn, Hall and Garritt. SFC Schaffer came on early in July as Chief of Smoke. FDC added SP4 Hansen, maintenance now features SP4 Williams and PFC Collins on the stoves, while SP3 Greenawalt moved into the Command Post as clerk. 1SGT Williams has arrived as the Center managers right hand man, while PFC Lohr joined the defense perimeter staff.

G Battery, 55th Artillery Battalion reference materials may be found in the Americal Division level artillery ORLL report file.

The Americal Division Veteran's Association obtained the 50 months of Americal Division S2/S3 Daily Tactical Operations Center reports from the National Archives in a five year effort. An additional five years was spent transcribing the documents so they are computer searchable. These documents are currently being shared with many veterans. Copies reside online at the AmericalFoundation.ORG web-site and also at the Americal Division portal at the online Vietnam Archives maintained by Texas Tech. University. Eight months was spent making a spreadsheet that can filter out entries by unit.

The filters are only set up for May 1968, May 1969, May 1970 and May 1971. I have inserted here examples of what might be found in the Division S2/S3 reports for 1/14th Artillery:

Filtered S2/S3 reporting for May 1968:

Unit	sub_unit	Date	Entry	Text
Quad50	All	680505	64	1/1 saw mort flashes at BT200291, eng'd (cont) with 90mm and **quad 50**
Quad50	All	680523	9	198th vic BT452039, reported that OP 76 received 12 rds of 60mm outside of their perimeter. The OP observed rockets being fired from BT444044. They are firing **quad 50's**.
Quad50	All	680523	31	All units notified that CLDC back to Green alert. Results of attack on CLDC area: Received 9x122mm rockets with 2 buildings destroyed. Arty fired on grids BT440047, BT399030, BT441042, BT441044, Gunships fired on Grid 4404 & **Quad 50's** fired on BT441046

Filtered S2/S3 reporting for May 1969

Unit	sub_unit	Date	**Entry**	Text
Quad50	*All	690515	**19**	(C) 11th Bde, Sgt Otto, C/19th Engr, BS914258 at 0920H. Ambushed on QL-1. Res: 1xUS KIA, 5xUS WIA (E). D/O compl at 0945H. G/S on station. (Info Only). **1xUS fr Duster,** 3xUS WIA (E) fr 173 ABN, 2xWIA (E) from 19th Engr.

Filtered S2/S3 reporting for May 1970:

Unit	sub_unit	Date	Entry	Text
Quad50	All	700506	67	11th Bde, Sgt Ward, E/3-1, BS504742 at 2115H. IOS at OP #1 detected 12xVC in a stat pos. Eng w/4.2" mort. Res: 2xVC KBM Probable/IOS. 411 eng en grid **w/quad 50's**. Obsr 2-3xsec explos.
Quad50	All	700526	16	11th Bde, Sgt Annas, A/3-1, Hill 411 at 0100H. Obsr 2xVC/NVA 200-300m W of bnkr line. Eng w/**quad 50xcal MG** & 81mm mort. Will sweep at 1st light.

Filtered S2/S3 reporting for May 1971:

Unit	sub_unit	Date	Entry	Text
Quad50	All	710505	30	(DELAYED) 196th Bde, LT LaJoy, C/3-16 Arty, AT880580 at 041500H. 2 ½ ton truck crashed into a civ veh disabling the 2 ½ ton. A recovery vehicle was dispatched and rec SAF fr UNSEF. **A quad 50** was sent & swept area w/neg res. NCD fr SAF.
Quad50	All	710506	55	11th Bde, Sgt Moore, 3-1, BS538731. At 2025H obsr flashlight and movement approx 200-250m W of Bnkr #12. Eng w/SAF and **quad .50** cal w/unk res. At 2035H radar obsr movement 200m N of Bnkrs #6&7. Eng w/SAF w/unk res. At 2040H radar obsr movement 200m SW of Bnkrs #18,19 and 20. Eng w/SAF w/unk res. Will sweep at first light.
Quad50	All	710511	5	198th Bde, LT Haslett, E/1-6, BT421046, (en) BT427039 at 110435H. Fr Hill 270 obsr 39xpax w/wpns, mov W, prox 400m to SW. Arty presently being fired. D/1-1 on station at 0507H. Hill 270 eng en w**/quad .50 cal fire** w/approx 2000-3000 rds. (Grid was cleared for fire by Ly Tin). D/1-1 recon by fire. Checked area w/neg res. D/1-1 broke station at 0523H. 71 Avn on sta at 0517H, checked area w/neg res. Hill 270 obsr 4-5xmuzzle flashes but acft did not obsr. Air Cav has been requested.
Quad50	All	710512	64	198th Bde, Sp Hatfield, E/(-)/1-6, BT421048, (en) BT425039 at 121935H. Obsr thru starlight scope 30xVC W-E. Hill 270 **w/quad 50 cal** and 4.2mm mort. Tra Bong expended 175mm & 8" arty. VC rtn w/a burst of AK47. Res: 1xUS WIA(E), D/O compl 2040H to 91st Evac. NH req and on site at 2040H. Broke at 2100H w/neg sightings. Had neg sight of packs or wpns. Prox was 900m. 2150H, en evad to E. Wnd by E/mort Sp Hatfield. 2130H, CPT Miley, FSE, 8x8", 8x175mm, 41x155mm, 39x105mm. Adj by Hill 270.
Quad50	All	710516	5	198th Bde, Sgt Tarry, E/1-6, BT421046, (en) BT427038 at 0250H. Obsr 12xVC w/packs & wpns to the SE, 900m. Mov NE to SW. Eng **w/quad 50 cal** MG & 4.2" mort. Fired 32x155HE, 9x105mm HE and 3x105 firecrackers. NH on sta 0330H broke at 0415H w/neg findings.

A page listing of the men who died while in service to the G Battery 55th Artillery from the Coffelt Data Base:

lname	fname	mname	rank	mos	age	incident	casdate	event	location
CLARK	RHONNIE	LEE	SGT	13F40	21	11/17/1968	17-Nov-68	ARTILLERY HILL (HILL 54) 10 KM E-SE OF TAM KY AFLD 19681117	BT396145
DENNIS	JERRY	ALLEN	SP4	16F10	20	10/03/1970	31-Oct-70	DUSTER HITS MINE, 7 KM WEST OF QUANG NGAI CITY 19701003	BS577725
HOWELL	CHARLES	DENNIS	SP4	16F10	21	03/22/1969	22-Mar-69	CH-47B 67-18461 AT LZ WEST, 9 KM EAST OF HIEP DUC VILLAGE	AT990250
REED	WILLIAM	VAL	CPL	16F10	19	06/08/1970	08-Jun-70	RECOILLESS RIFLE ATTACK ON LZ WEST 8 KM EAST OF HIEP DUC VILLAGE 19700608	AT991251
STAMAN	TERRY	LA VERN	SP4	16F20	20	03/22/1969	22-Mar-69	CH-47B 67-18461 AT LZ WEST, 9 KM EAST OF HIEP DUC VILLAGE	AT990250