3 March 1968

ANNUAL SUPPLEMENT TO THE UNIT HISTORY

561ST TRANSPORTATION COMPANY (TS)

APO 96269

For the 561st Transportation Company (TS), 1967 was a year of considerable change both where it worked at its site just north of the city of Saigon, and where it was stationed on Long Binh Post, about fifteen (15) miles to the northeast. Even though the company experienced three (3) changes of command; first, when Captain Jewell succeeded Captain Haines in March, then when Captain Hendrix took over in August, and finally in November when Captain De Vitto assumed command. Still, the unit as a whole, remained closely knit and accomplished many significant projects and goals, as well as carrying out its basic mission.

The beginning of the 1967 saw the company, along with the rest of the Battalion, bivouacked in the mud of Camp Camelot, still in tents. With less than three (3) months in country, there was much to be done, and it was obvious, by the end of the year, that a great deal had been done. The tents were gone and there were concrete floors to support the latest in military housing, the Adams Hut. The aluminum structure, while not the most luxurious, was certainly a vast improvement over the tent. It was now possible to keep reasonably dry and clean. A semi-permanent shower facility had been installed early, but the addition of a hot water capability toward the end of the year greatly increased its effectiveness as well as its comfort.

Again in the latter part of the year, under a new Battalion administration, the company was assigned and completed several special projects.

The most popular of these was the Battalion Theater which can accommodate several hundred people, and, with both a stage and a screen, can be used for almost any kind of entertainment. Movies have been shown about five (5) times a week, and live shows have been frequent. With a full roof, the Theater should be a blessing even during the monsoons.

Another of the company projects was the construction of a set of playground equipment for the use of a local orphanage. This was done with enthusiasm and was well received.

Probably the most noticeable aspect of change during the year was the worksite itself on the Saigon River. This transformed itself in 1967 from a stream operation to a full-fledged port operation. Although the Newport Army Terminal is capable of handling several types of vessels, the 561st worked only deep-draft ships. Our first pier site was Deep Draft #2, the first to be completed. After some moving around among the several deep draft sites, the company finally resettled on DD #2. Always enthusiastic and hard-working when it came to the company's mission of discharging cargo, the stevedores of the 561st always stood out when measured by the quanity of tonnage handled. They were recognized for this several times by the monthly "Outstanding Company of the Battalion" award which was presented to the company showing the best performances. Our nickname of "Tonnage Tigers" was earned and we are proud of it.

The quality and the spirit of the company was most obvious during the months of September and October when it had to work under the hardship of being grievously understrengthed. At one point in October, we

were down to 35% strength due to normal rotations and limited replacements. This situation was only temporary, but, in the meantime, it was hard work for eighteen (18) men to discharge five hatches simultaneously. But this they did and did well.

Toward the end of the year, Deep Draft #2 was designated as an exclusively backload site, where retrograde cargo would be loaded aboard empty ships. In practice, we were not kept busy at all times with backloading, and did do some discharging as well. We were, however, responsible for a large percentage of the backload operation for the Newport Army Terminal.

Thus, the exact status of our mission for the year 1968 is not as well-defined as it might be, but, considering what we were called upon to do in 1967, and the way in which we did it, there is no doubt that whatever we are assigned to do, we will do in a superior manner.

AVCA DNG 561 TC (27 Apr 68) 2nd Ind
SUBJECT: Delinquent Annual Unit Histories

COMMANDING OFFICER, 561ST TRANSPORTATION COMPANY (TERMINAL SERVICE), APO San Francisco 96269, 7 May 1968

THRU: Commanding Officer, 159th Transportation Battalion (Terminal), APO San Francisco 96269 pcm

TO: Commanding General, USASUPCOM, DNG (PROV), APO San Francisco 96337

In compliance with 1st Indorsement, subject as above, dated 3 May 1968 from your headquarters, the necessary copies of the Unit History are furnished.

JOHN C. DE VITTO
Captain, TC
Commanding