

198th Infantry Brigade

Unit History

The American Division History - How the 198th played its part.

Malheur I, Malheur II, Hood River, Benton, Cook, Wheeler

Early operations conducted by Task Force Oregon included Malheur I and Malheur II, Hood River, Benton and Cook. On September 11, 1967, Operation Wheeler was launched against elements of the 2nd North Vietnamese Army Division working in the area northwest of Chu Lai.

On September 22, 1967, Brigadier General Samuel W. Koster assumed command of the task force, replacing Major General Richard T. Knowles, and three days later Task Force Oregon became the Americal Division, composed of the 196th, 198th, and the 11th Light Infantry Brigades, even though the latter two organizations were still training in the United States.

Operation Wheeler continued and on October 4, 1967, the 3rd Brigade 1st Air Cavalry Division joined Americal and immediately launched Operation Wallowa in the northern sector of the division's area of operations. Operations Wheeler and Wallowa were combined on November 11, and Operation Wheeler/Wallowa was conducted by the 196th Brigade (which replaced the 101st Airborne's 1st Brigade in Operation Wheeler after that organization departed for the II Corps tactical zone) and the 3rd Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry.

An official change of colors ceremony was held October 26, and the Americal Division became the seventh Army division fighting in Vietnam. General Koster received his second star during the same ceremony.

On October 22, the 198th Light Infantry Brigade arrived in Vietnam from Ft. Hood, Texas and deployed to Duc Pho where it received combat training from the battle hardened soldiers of the 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry. The 198th currently is in charge of the defense of Chu Lai base camp and airstrip.

Wallowa

Operation Wheeler/Wallowa became the responsibility of the 196th Infantry Brigade and the 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry. The 1/1 had been operating in the general area since September 1967, and officially became part of the Americal Division on January 10, 1968. The 198th Infantry Brigade remained responsible for securing the immediate area around Chu Lai.

The 11th Light Infantry Brigade joined Americal on December 20, and moved to Duc (Duc Pho) for training. The "Jungle Warriors" later conducted combat operations in the Duc Pho area.

Operation Burlington Trail

On the same day that Operation Norfolk Victory began, another operations was begun by the 198th Infantry Brigade north of Chu Lai. Operation Burlington Trail had the goal of opening the road from Tam Ky to Tien Phuoc, a Special Forces outpost and district headquarters in Quang Tin Province. The mission of constructing the road was given to elements of the 39th Engineer Battalion who were provided security by units of the 198th.

April 20 marked the first anniversary of Task Force Oregon, and General William C. Westmoreland spoke at ceremonies in Chu Lai.

On the same day the 198th Brigade assumed control of Operation Wheeler/Wallowa from the 196th Brigade, which was temporarily placed under the operational control of the 1st Air Cavalry Division.

Under the operational control of the III Amphibious Force in Da Nang, the Americal Division has been summoned to distant areas outside the division's area of operation on several occasions.

Shortly after the Brigade was released from the 3rd Marine Division, one battalion (2nd Battalion - 1st Brigade) was deployed to the aid of the besieged Special Forces camp at Kham Duc. One company from the 198th Infantry Brigade (A Company 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry) also was sent to Kham Duc, where a successful extraction was later performed.

On June 23, 1968, Major General Charles M. Gettys assumed command of the Americal Division following interim commander Brigadier General George H. Young, Jr.

Golden Fleece

On September 21, the heaviest contact was in Operation Burlington Trail, as units of the 1st Cavalry, F Troop, 8th Cavalry, and a company of the 11th Brigade's 4th Brigade, 21st Infantry killed 92 NVA.

Operation Golden Fleece in which the 196th Brigade helped Vietnamese harvest more than one million pounds of rice in the Que Son Valley, also began during September, ending two months later.

October brought more rice as the "Chargers" of the 196th killed 22 VC and captured 12,425 pounds of rice on the 26th. "Guardians" of the 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry gathered 6,800 pounds of rice in three separate caches 24 miles west of Tam Ky.

In November, the two longest running Americal Operations, Wheeler/Wallowa and Burlington Trail, ended. The former, which was primarily conducted by the 196th Brigade, accounted for 10,020 enemy dead and 2,053 captured weapons in its one year existence. Burlington Trail, in which the 198th Brigade with help

from the 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry; 26th and 39th Engineer Battalions, succeeded in opening the road from Tam Ky to Tien Phuoc, recorded 1,948 enemy dead and 545 weapons captured.

Both operations ended on November 11.

On November 16, units of the 198th Brigade accounted for 41 VC killed in the Chu Lai area. A recon patrol member LRP observed VC moving down a trail 10 miles north of Quang Ngai City. The 1st/82nd Artillery placed eight inch shells right on target.

On November 17, a 1st/14th Artillery battery along with the 198th Brigade killed 32 VC when the enemy launched a mortar, recoilless rifle, and ground attack against the Binh Son District headquarters.

In action west of Tam Ky and north of the Tien Phuoc Civilian Irregular Defense Group camp, 196th Brigade soldiers netted 44 of the enemy on November 21.

Pacification/Vietnamization

On July 21st, the Americal Division concluded Operation Russell Beach on the Batangan Peninsula 20 miles south of Chu Lai. The massive pacification effort was concluded with the resettlement of more than 12,000 refugees on the peninsula after it had been cleared of enemy bunkers and sanctuaries.

But the overall pacification effort in the area continued as an intensive drive to upgrade small hamlets and villages north of Quang Ngai City.

With the summer months came intensified "Vietnamization" of the war effort and proliferation of joint Americal and South Vietnamese Army operations. US-ARVN tactical operations were increased and the three regiments of the 2nd ARVN Division worked as direct counterparts with the Americal Division's three brigades.

As the pacification effort increased in the 11th and 198th Brigade areas, intensive Communist pressures were beginning to be felt in the Que Son and Hiep Duc valleys 30 miles south of Da Nang.

Thousands of artillery rounds pounded the NVA bunker complexes during those last days of August. Scores of tactical airstrikes echoed through the Hiep Duc and Que Son Valleys. Countless times, 196th Brigade infantrymen pushed forward against pockets of fierce enemy resistance. The Marine advance from the east placed an increased strain on the NVA forces. Slowly, the enemy began to withdraw to the north toward the rugged Nui Chom ridgeline. The American units pursued determinedly. By August 29, the major sources of enemy resistance in the Hiep Duc vicinity had been irreparably crushed.

Hiep Duc had been spared! No casualties or significant damage had been reported from the refugee center. The 196th Infantry Brigade had preserved Hiep Duc and cost the enemy over 1,000 dead.

In September salt became the topic of discussion to the south of Chu Lai as elements of the 198th Brigade's 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry uncovered more than 2872 tons. It was extracted from its communist storehouses and distributed throughout the area by the Government of South Vietnam.

Later that month Brigadier General Wallace L. Clement, assistant Division commander (maneuver), left the Americal for an assignment with Military Assistance Command Vietnam headquarters. Colonel John W. Donaldson, Division chief of staff, became the new assistant Division commander. Colonel Donaldson was promoted to brigadier general on October 1.

Rice denial operations achieved tremendous success. On November 19, the 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry, captured 20,000 lbs. of rice. Numerous other large caches of enemy salt and rice were found.

On November 21, Colonel Joseph C. Clemons assumed command of the 198th Infantry Brigade. Colonel Thomas H. Tackaberry became the Division Chief of Staff, a position formerly held by Colonel Clemons.

ICIPP

A new pacification program was initiated. Two battalions, 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry and 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry of the 198th Brigade were partially committed. In the Infantry Company Intensified Pacification Program (ICIPP), platoon and squad size US elements live, work with, and train Vietnamese Regular Forces and Popular Forces in their hamlets. This program is designed to help organize, build, and provide continual security in hamlets and villages against local VC forces, guerilla units and VC/NVA main forces.

Education plays an important role in the overall pacification effort. New schools were constructed throughout the division area of operation.

A new strain of rice was introduced into southern I Corps.

Touch and go in Hiep Duc Rescue

Incoming small arms fire, rocket propelled grenades, 60mm mortar fire and satchel charges erupted in the early morning hours of April 1, as an undetermined number of VC were repulsed following a futile attempt to penetrate Landing Zone Bayonet, headquarters of the 198th Infantry Brigade. Artillery, mortar and gunships teamed up to saturate the outer perimeter of Bayonet with deadly fire.

The soaring temperatures of southern I Corps in June did not stop soldiers of the Americal's three brigades as they accounted for 184 enemy killed. The heaviest action of the month remained in the area 22 miles northwest of Tam Ky in Operation Frederick Hill. Soldiers of the 196th Brigade operating in that area were accredited with 60 enemy soldiers killed.

On June 5, Colonel John Insani became the Americal Division Chief of Staff, replacing Colonel Albert G. Hume.

During the latter part of June, a company of 11th Brigade soldiers uncovered one of the largest enemy rice caches ever found in the I Corps Tactical Zone. The men of Company C, 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry, conducted an intensive, nine-day search operation that produced 97,500 pounds of enemy rice along the coastline, ten miles north of Duc Pho.

Brigadier General Theodore Mataxis became the Assistant Division Commander (Maneuver) on June 29, following Brigadier General Edwin L. Powell.

During the month of July units of the Americal Division, teamed with units of the 2nd ARVN Division, air assaulted the Kham Duc area near the Laotian border. The joint operation is establishing a fire base and re-opening an airstrip at Kham Duc.

"Born in Battle," The Americal continues to battle the enemies of freedom "Under the Southern Cross."

198th Light Infantry Brigade

The 198th Infantry Brigade was formed in the Organized Reserves in Erie County, Pennsylvania, on June 24, 1921. The unit became an organic element of the 99th Infantry Division.

The unit was reorganized and redesignated as the 3rd Platoon of the 99th Cavalry Recon Troop, and on November 15, 1942 was ordered to active military service at Camp Van Dorn, Mississippi. During World War II, the troop fought with the 99th Infantry Division and received campaign credit for operations in the Rhineland, Ardennes-Alsace and Central Europe. The troop was also cited by the Belgian Army for action at Elsenborn and in the Ardennes, and was awarded the Belgian Fourragere. The 99th Cavalry Recon Troop was inactivated on September 29, 1945 at Camp Myles Standish, Massachusetts, and assigned as a reserve component of the 99th Infantry Division.

On August 1, 1962, the 99th Cavalry Recon Troop was relieved from its assignment to the 99th Infantry Division and withdrawn from the Army Reserve. At the same time, the 3rd Platoon of the Troop was converted and redesignated as Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 198th Brigade, and allotted to the Regular Army. This, then was the unit which began training at Fort Hood in May 1967. During this training, jungle fighting techniques and air mobility were emphasized.

In October, 1967, the brigade shipped from Oakland, California, to Da Nang, Vietnam. After arriving in Da Nang, the "Brave and Bold" soldiers boarded troop ships for transportation to Chu Lai, where they arrived on October 22, 1967. Four days later they became a part of the reactivated Americal Division.

On March 18, 1969, the "Brave and the Bold" of the 198th Brigade and the 6th ARVN Regiment embarked upon Operation Geneva Park. The mission was to eliminate the enemy forces within the area of operation while stressing pacification and combined US/ARVN operations. This operation is still in progress.

1st/52nd Infantry

The 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry was formed and activated on May 15, 1917 at Chickamauga Park, Georgia as an Infantry Regiment. The original personnel came from the 11th Infantry Regiment. Shortly thereafter, the 52nd Infantry went overseas to France with the 6th Division as a part of the Allied Expeditionary Force of World War I. Upon the return of the 6th Infantry Division to the United States, the 52nd Infantry was inactivated for a short time.

On May 5, 1942, the 52nd Infantry was redesignated as an Armored Infantry Regiment, and on July 15, 1942 was assigned to the 9th Armored Division at Fort Riley, Kansas. The Battalion went overseas with the 9th Armored Division and fought valiantly in three campaigns in World War II. In October, 1945, the Battalion was again reorganized as the 11st Armored Infantry Battalion, 52nd Infantry. Upon redesignation, it was assigned to 71st Infantry Division and then later reassigned to the 9th Armored Division.

In May, 1969 the Battalion was assigned to the newly activated 198th Infantry Brigade as a regular infantry battalion (1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry).

During the period from September 30 to October 26, 1967, the Battalion conducted a permanent change of station movement from Fort Hood, Texas to the Republic of Vietnam with the 198th Infantry Brigade.

During the Vietnam campaign, the unit has distinguished itself in combat operations, destroying enemy bases of operation, capturing weapons and ammunition caches, and denying the enemy use of infiltration and logistical routes in the 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry area of operations. The unit has maintained the high status of its motto: "Fortis et Certus, the Brave and the True."

1st/6th Infantry

In the spring of 1812, three months before war was declared, Congress constituted the infantry regiments. The first of the new regiments was designated the 11th. After the war, the Eleventh Regiment became the Sixth Infantry.

The sixth Infantry participated in eleven Indian campaigns, as well as the Mexican War.

In July, 1848 the Regiment's mission was in the West, protecting supply trains, scouting, and engaging the Indians. In March, 1862 the Regiment was committed to battle again, fighting as part of the Army of the Potomac, and earning seven additional battle streamers.

After the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, the 6th Infantry was sent to Cuba where it participated in the battle for Santiago.

In France during World War I, the regiment joined the 5th Division for battle in the Arnould Sector.

On May 17, 1967 the battalion was reorganized as a standard Infantry Battalion and was assigned to the 198th Infantry Brigade. The 6th Infantry was the first element ashore, arriving at Chu Lai in October to participate in its thirty-fifth campaign and ninth war.

After a brief initial operation south of Duc Pho, the Battalion was assigned the mission of securing the installation at Chu Lai.

The Regulars have participated in Task Force Oregon, Task Force Miracle, Operation Wheeler/Wallowa, Operation Burlington Trail, and has had the mission of protecting Americal Division Headquarters and Chu Lai Defense Command from enemy ground mortar and rocket attacks. The 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry has been awarded one Valorous Unit Citation for its victory at the battle of Lo Giang in 1968.

5th/46th Infantry

The 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry was originally constituted in May 1917 and formally activated in June of the same year at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana, from elements of the 10th Infantry Regiment.

During World War II, the 46th Infantry Regiment became an Armored Infantry Battalion. The 46th Infantry served with the 5th Armored Division throughout the war, and before its deactivation in 1945, it had won five battle streamers. The unit was decorated with the Distinguished Unit Citation and the Luxembourg Croix de Guerre.

In January, 1968, the 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry received its redeployment orders and was assigned to the 198th Infantry Brigade, Republic of Vietnam, in March, 1968.

Since that time the unit has been engaged in combat operations. The men of the 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry are known as "The Professionals."

H Troop, 17th Cavalry

On May 10, 1967, the Department of Defense announced: "A new infantry brigade will be sent to Vietnam." The new unit, the 198th Infantry Brigade, was formed from units of the 1st and 2nd Armored Divisions, Fort Hood, Texas. Of these units from "Hell on Wheels" and "Old Ironsides", Troop H, 17th Cavalry was one. On October 22, 1967, Military Sea Transports brought the 198th and Troop H to Da Nang. Upon arrival, the troops and equipment boarded troop ships and headed for Chu Lai.

Troop H, 17th Cavalry is presently assigned to the 198th Infantry Brigade and operates in the Brigade's area of operation. The troop performs its mission with the goal of finding the enemy and defeating him wherever he is found. Its success has been proven in its outstanding record of accomplishments while serving with the Americal.

Chu Lai

Chu Lai, South Vietnam is located 56 miles south of Da Nang on the South China Sea and serves as the headquarters of the Americal Division. The sprawling base complex utilizes some 17,000 men to provide the necessary logistical support to the infantrymen in the field.

Division Awards

Combat Infantry Badge

Authorized to each individual for each separate war in which the following requirement has been met; personnel who have satisfactorily performed duty while assigned or attached as a member of an infantry unit of brigade or smaller size during any period such unit was engaged in active ground combat.

Vietnam Service Medal

Awarded for service in the Republic of Vietnam, with one service star for each campaign.