

History of the

242d Aviation Company (Aslt Spt Hel)
269th Aviation Battalion (Combat)
12th Aviation Group (Combat)

1 January 1969 - 31 December 1969

Prepared by
CW2 Lawrence M Cain
Unit Historical Officer

Approved by:



ALLAN W HAMMERECK
MAJOR, FA
Commanding


Republic of Vietnam APO 96353

FORWARD

The mission of the 242nd Aviation Company (Aslt Spt Hel) is to provide tactical and logistical airlift for the movement of troops and supplies. The 242nd primarily supports the 25th Infantry Division but also supports other free world forces throughout the III Corps area of Vietnam.

Muleskinner aircraft provide hot chow, much needed ammunition and other necessary supplies to "grunts" defending remote fire support bases. Ground units can depend on the 242nd for timely and accurate delivery of items essential to continuation of the defense of the South Vietnamese people.

The officers and men of the 242nd Aviation Company are true "Disciplined Professionals" and are proud to be associated with the allied effort in Vietnam.


ALLAN W HAMMERBECK
MAJOR, FA
Commanding

HERALDRY



The Unit Crest for the 242nd Aviation Company (Aslt Spt Hel) depicts a mule with two rotor heads strapped to it's back, and the word "Muleskinners" inscribed above it.

The muletrain and muleskinners of old were noted for their ability to move heavy loads over rough and difficult terrain. Today's Muleskinners are noted for the same ability, but the slow moving muletrain of the past has been replaced by a tandem rotor helicopter known as the CH-47 "Chinook".

UNIT BACKGROUND

1969 started out as a good year for the "Muleskinners" when, in January, they received the Boeing/Vertol 20,000 flying award. Then tragedy struck in the form of a vicious enemy sapper attack on the "North Forty" Chinook parking area. One crew member was killed and 5 wounded with aircraft losses totaling 9 destroyed, 3 with major damage and 2 with minor damage. Around the clock work by the dedicated men of the 242d returned the unit to a fully operational status in 10 days.

In May of 1969, the "Muleskinners" received another achievement award from Boeing/Vertol for attaining 30,000 CH-47 "Chinook" flying hours.

On the 19th of August, Major Mas M. Nakajo, the 5th commander of the 242d, flew to Long Binh to accept a safety award from Col. Leo Turner, Commander, 12th Aviation Group (Combat). The "Muleskinners" had flown 10,000 accident free hours in direct combat support of free world forces in the III Corp. area of Vietnam.

The Annual General Inspection Team descended upon the 242d the 26th of August and found unit paperwork and troop welfare and morale maintained at the highest level and made special mention of many of the inspected areas. The following day, in ceremonies in the company area, the 242d received its 6th commander, Major Allan W. Hammerbeck. Major Mas M. Nakajo departed for the states to assume duties at the US Army Aviation Test Facility, Edwards AFB, Calif.

In September, the 242d lost its last remaining original aircraft. Aircraft number 017 was turned in for retrograde on the 3rd with 1800 hours.

October 25 marked the third anniversary of the activation of the "Muleskinners" and elaborate festivities were held in celebration of the event. The various activities were witnessed by distinguished guests Major General Allen W. Burdett, Commanding General 1st Aviation Brigade,

and Major General Harris H. Hollis, Commanding General 25th Infantry Division, Major Allon W. Hammerbeck Grandass Extraordinaire" of the "Muleskinners", installed the honored guests as honorary "Muleskinners".

On 4 November, the 242d survived its most thorough inspection to date, the annual CMII. Team members had nothing but praise for company personnel and gave the unit a clean bill of health.

On the 7th of December, Col John J. Hughes, Commanding Officer, 12th Aviation Group (Combat), accompanied by the orchestrations of the 25th Infantry Division Band, presented the "Muleskinners" with his famed "Double Crossed Corn Cob Pipe" award for the completion of 12 months and 13,680 flying hours without an accident.

The years activities were closed out with a wide Christmas party on the 20th of December and the traditionally fine Christmas dinner on 25 December.

COMMAND
AND
CONTROL.

MAJOR MAS M NAKAJO
FIFTH COMMANDER OF THE 242D AVIATION COMPANY (ASLT SPT HEL)

Major Nakajo entered the Army in March 1948 at Fort Ord California where he attended his basic training. After completion of his basic, Major Nakajo was assigned to the infantry school at Fort Benning, Ga. where he underwent Airborne training.

From "jump school" Major Nakajo was assigned to the 82d Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, N.C.

After this assignment he returned to Fort Benning for ranger training and was subsequently assigned, in the early 50's, to the 3rd Ranger Company (Airborne) in Korea.

Upon returning from Korea in 1952 Major Nakajo was again assigned to the 82d Airborne Division at Fort Bragg. When in 1953 he went through Special Forces training under the 77th Special Forces Group.

Cargo Helicopter Pilot Training was next in line for the Major and in 1954 he received his aviation warrant at Fort Sill Oklahoma. From Fort Sill he was assigned to the 93rd Trans. Co. (light) at Fort Riley Kansas.

In 1957 Major Nakajo not only received a direct commission as a U.S.A.R 2d Lt. T.C. but was also sent to San Marcus Texas for fixed wing transition.

Advanced fixed wing and instrument school followed at Fort Rucker Alabama in 1958 where he remained as a member of T.A.T.S.S.

Major Nakajo then attended the T.C. career course and AMOC in 1963 at Ft. Belvoir, Va. In July 1963 he received an "R.A." commission in the Field Artillery. In 1964 Major Nakajo was assigned to the United States Military Academy at West Point.

From August 1965 - August 66 Major Nakajo spent his first tour in RVN with the 1st Cav Division.

Upon returning to the U.S. Major Nakajo was assigned to the USAAVNS Test Board and eventually became a CH-47 P.T.C. Flight Commander. In 1968 he returned to RVN on the Army Concepts Team (CH-54) and for the period of 23 March 1969 to 27 August 1969 Major Nakajo served as the fifth commanding officer of the 242d Avn Co (ASH).

While he was serving as commander, the 242d received the 1st Aviation Brigade Safety Award for achieving 10,000 accident free flying hours.

When Major Nakajo left the unit, he was assigned to the U.S. Army Aviation Test Facility at Edwards A.F.B. California.

MAJOR ALLAN W HAMMERBECK
THE SIXTH COMMANDER OF THE 242D AVIATION COMPANY (ASLT SPT HEL)

Major Hammerbeck entered the Army as an enlisted man on February 8, 1958 and attended basic training at Fort Carson, Colorado.

Upon completion of his training, Major Hammerbeck was assigned to a transportation corps unit in New Orleans, Louisiana until August 1959 when he started Field Artillery OCS.

1 March 1960 was graduation day and he began his commissioned career as a Second Lieutenant, forward observer and executive officer of a 105mm battery until December 1960.

From December 1960 through September 1961, Major Hammerbeck attended fixed wing aviator training at Fort Rucker, Alabama. After flight school he was assigned to Fort Benning, Georgia as a fixed wing aviator until February 1963 when he was reassigned to Fort Wolters, Texas for the rotary wing qualification course.

In April of 1963 he was assigned to the 3rd Infantry Division at Kitzengen, Germany, where he served as a brigade aviation officer until May of 1966.

Upon his return to CONUS, Major Hammerbeck was assigned to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, as a platoon leader with the 196th Chinook Company in preparation for assignment to the Republic of Vietnam. In February 1967 the 196th arrived in RVN and Major Hammerbeck began his first tour.

On May 13, 1967, Major Hammerbeck was shot down and after three months of hospitalization, ranging from Vietnam, Japan and to Fort Gordon, Georgia, he was released to attend the Field Artillery Career Course at Fort Sill, Oklahoma and Fort Bliss, Texas.

In July of 1968, upon completion of the career course, he was assigned as the operations officer and aviation command adjutant at Fort Sill until returning to Vietnam, where he is presently serving as Commander, 242d Aviation Company (Assault Support Helicopter) "Muleskinners."

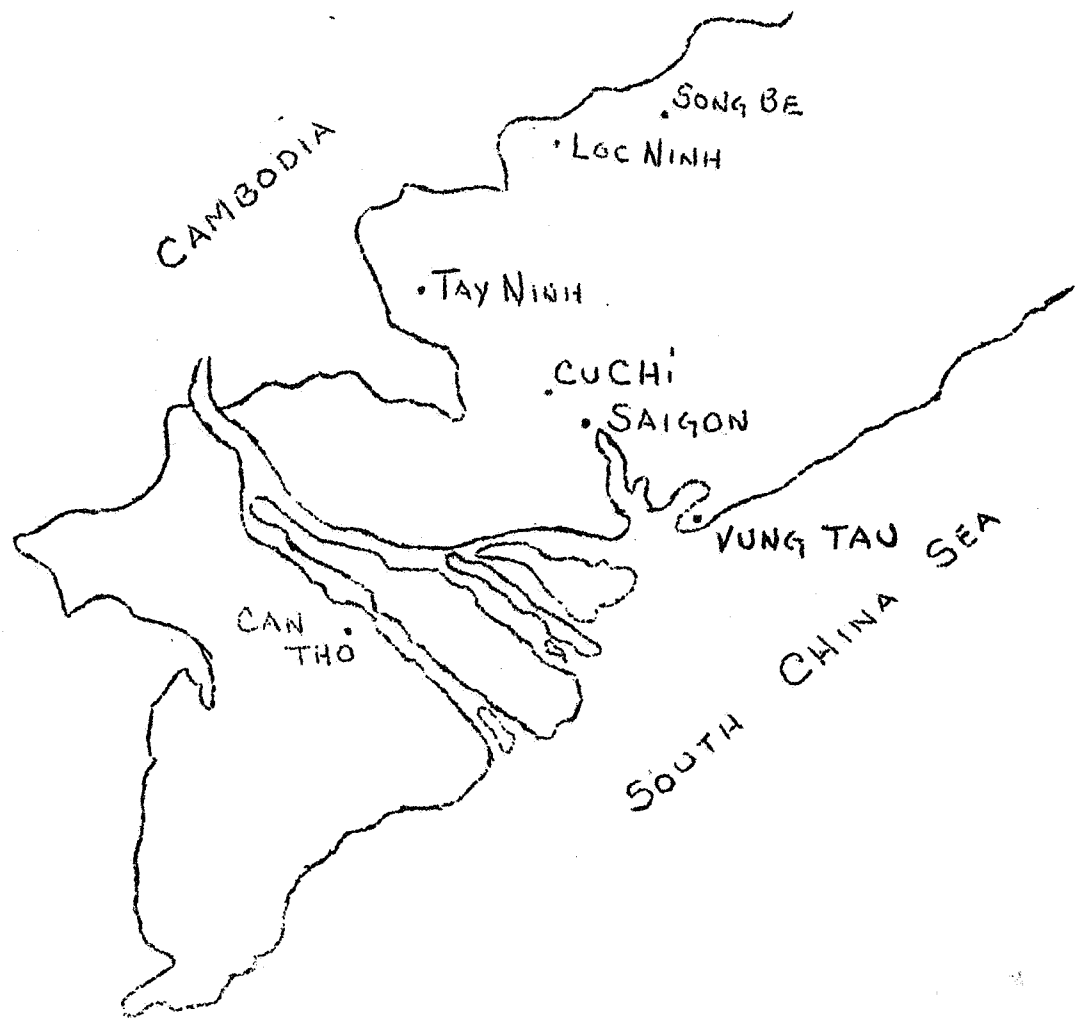
During his time in the service Major Hammerbeck has continued his studies with the American University, University of Maryland and the University of Oklahoma.

Major Hammerbeck is married and his family is presently residing in Jacksonville, Florida.

UNIT OPERATIONS

The 242d Avn Co has flown missions over a wide area in the III Corps area of Vietnam. Muleskinner aircraft have supported units as far north as Song Be and as far south as the Delta regions below Saigon. The Muleskinners have worked near the Cambodian border in Tay Ninh Province to the coastal regions on the South China Sea.

The terrain, for the most part, is level. The region along the coast from Vung Tau north is mountainous. The mountain at Tay Ninh and the mountain at Song Be provide prominent landmarks that aid in navigation. Thick jungle and rubber plantations cover most of the area to the north of Cu Chi and the remaining area consists mainly of rice paddies.



OPERATIONS STATISTICS

	SORTIES	CARGO (TONS)	PAX	HOURS
1-31 Jan	4,288	5,558	18,020	1,228
1-28 Feb	3,182	5,889	12,553	999
1-31 Mar	3,173	5,245	14,058	1,046
1-30 Apr	4,103	3,253	15,421	1,314
1-31 May	4,388	7,987	17,504	1,202
1-30 Jun	4,114	7,239	15,468	1,256
1-31 Jul	3,964	7,842	16,361	1,242
1-31 Aug	3,954	7,206	18,384	1,280
1-30 Sep	3,772	7,506	14,298	1,180
1-31 Oct	4,323	8,189	15,154	1,094
1-30 Nov	4,109	8,254	13,992	1,057
1-31 Dec	<u>4,505</u>	<u>10,003</u>	<u>16,403</u>	<u>1,167</u>
	47,875	83,271	187,551	14,065

SORTIE: Any flight between two points.

CARGO: Desired maximum cargo per task is 4 Tons

PAX: Passenger

HOURS: Flight hours

EQUIPMENT

The CH-47A (Chinook) helicopter is a twin-turbine engine, tandem-rotor aircraft. Its maximum gross weight is 33,000 pounds. The following data is provided for information:

a. Overall Dimensions:

- (1) Length (rotor tip to rotor tip max) 98' 3.25"
- (2) Width (rotor diameter max) 59' 1.25"
- (3) Height (max) 19'

b. Cargo Compartment Dimensions:

- (1) Length 366"
- (2) Width 90"
- (3) Height 78"

c. Fuel:

- (1) Type JP/4
- (2) Capacity: 621 gal (4036 lbs)
- (3) Consumption 300 gal per hour

d. Endurance: One hour and 40 min with 30 min fuel reserve

e. Airspeed - Planning Figures

- (1) Empty 100 knots
- (2) Loaded 80 knots

f. Allowable Combat Load (ACL) - Internal or External 8000 lbs

g. Troop Capacity: Normal

- (1) US 33
- (2) ARVN 46 (seat belts for 33 only)

REFLECTIONS

HONOR ROLL

SP4 ISAAC STRINGER

KILLED IN ACTION 26 February 1969

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

CW2 TOMMY WALLACE

CW2 BRENT HEDGRATH

BRONZE STAR

CPT GARY ROUSH
CPT SEAN WALSH
CW3 JOHN BANKS
CW2 SCOTTY CLARK
CW2 JAMES L CRAMER
CW2 SIDNEY SHOWS
1SG GEORGE MILLER
SFC WILLIAM COOK
SSG PAUL FULK
SP6 JIMMY KEEL

CPT ROGER LONDY
CPT THOMAS DAVIS
CW2 WILLIAM FINLEY
CW2 JOHN CRAMER
CW2 BEN GRAY
1SG WALTER KNOTT
SFC WILLIAM CLEMENTS
SFC BOBBY BRADLEY
SP6 RICHARD PARKER
SP4 ISSAS STRINGER (POSTHUMOUS)
LARRY GILLASPIE (POSTHUMOUS)

AIRMEDAL W/V DEVICE

SP5 RODNEY ROGERS
PFC LUIS RAMIREZ

SP4 JAMES JAMROS

PURPLE HEART

SP5 JERRY BROUGHTON
SP4 JOHN LABELLE
SP4 PATRICK MARCHONIE
SP4 ANNAN CRADDOCK

SP5 BRUCE QUAKENBUSH
SP4 GERALD BAKER
SP4 LARRY LAMORE

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL

CPT LAVERN AUSTIN
CW3 WALBY CARLTON
CW3 C. V. MILLS
CW2 GERALD ELEAM
CW2 JAMES SPENCER
CW2 FRED DIEL
CW2 FERRY JACKSON
SSG VINCENT SAVOLSKIS
SSG ALBERT LAMAR
SSG ANDREW TAYLOR
SGT BILLY ABNEY
SGT JAMES TAYLOR
SGT JAMES BROWN
SP5 GARY HUMBERSON
SP5 JOHN HENDON
SP5 DAVID MURRAY
SP5 BRUCE QUACKENBUSH
SP5 JOHN BOHAN
SP5 JOHN B. DAWELL
SP5 ALBERT PATTERSON
SP5 ALLAN WILSON
SP4 JAMES BURLE

CPT MICHAEL RYAN
CW2 THERON PATTEN
CW2 CHARLES HOLLEN
SFC BOBBY BRADLEY
SFC JAMES THOMAS
SFC JOHN WYMAN
SFC LEONARD PICKHARTZ
SSG JAMES TWEED
SSG CORAL WILKERSON
SGT DOWNEY
SP5 DWIGHT BECKMAN
SP5 SAM DIGGS
SP5 LLOYD BRADFORD
SP5 RALPH ELWELL
SP5 LLOYD BRADFIELD
SP5 ROBERT JEWELL
SP5 DANNY REYNOLDS
SP5 JOHN BOHAN
SP5 ALBERT PATTERSON
SP5 BUSTAVE SLACK
SP5 ROBERT BANE
SP4 MILO WINTERSTEEN

AIRCOM (cont'd)

SP4 CECIL B. RCROFT
SP4 JOHN HEINDEL
SP4 JAMES TWEEDY

SP4 LARRY ANDERSON
JAMES McCLASLEY

AIR MEDAL

CPT GEORGE McGEE
CPT GARY MILLETT
CPT LAVERY AUSTIN
1LT MARSHALL BENNETT
1LT THOMAS DAVIS
CW2 TOMMY WALLACE
CW2 RAY STEVERSON
WO1 MICHAEL STEPHAN
SFC MYRON TARBELL
SSG ALBERT LAMAR
SP/5 ARTHUR LOCKLEAR
SP/5 GARY HUMBERSON
SP/5 BRIGIDO VALENZUELA
SP/4 ROGER ASAEW
SP/4 MICHAEL SCHOLZ
SP/4 FRANCIS MORALES
SP/4 JOHN TROUT
SP/4 WILLIAM BRYANT
SP/4 MICHAEL CURRY
SP/4 ANDREW ELDER
SP/4 RONALD YOUNG
SP/4 RONALD HOFFMAN
SP/4 LARRY GILLASPIE
SP/4 GILBERT MEDINA
SP/4 ROBERT MILEY
SP/4 PIO ALVARADO
SP/4 JAMES COUNIS
SP/4 HENRY ESCALERA
SP/4 ALBERT MCALLISTER
SP/4 DANNY REYNOLDS
SP/4 LLOYD PARKER
SP/4 DONALD ROSS
SP/4 DENNIS PFEIFFER
SP/4 JAMES JOHNSON
PFC JAMES MARTIN
PFC THOMAS MARTIN
PFC DANIEL PETRABE

CPT MICHAEL MEDELROS
CPT THOMAS ALGER
CPT ROGER OLNEY
1LT SEAN WALSH
CW2 FRED DIEL
CW2 BRENT HEDGPETH
WO1 IRVING TOWNSEND
SFC BOBBY BRADLEY
SSG JESSE HOPKINS
SP/5 ALTON MITCHELL
SP/5 BILLY BAKER
SP/5 JOHN BOHAN
SP/5 CHARLES VICKERY
SP/4 CARL GULLICKSEN
SP/4 PATRICK MARCHIONE
SP/4 JERRY SHELTON
SP/4 FLOYD JONES
SP/4 BURTON THOMSEN
SP/4 RODGER FRASER
SP/4 JIMMY ROBERTS
SP4 JOHN HIENDEL
SP/4 ROBERT ROGERS
SP/4 ISSAC STRINGER
SP/4 GREGORY BURDITT
SP/4 ROBERT MILEY
SP/4 DENNIS FORAND
SP/4 JERRY BROUGHTON
SP/4 KENNETH SCHILLER
SP/4 DAVID REECE
SP/4 JOHN FICK
SP/4 JESUS TORRE
SP/4 JERRY REDBURN
SP/4 ROY MEELEK
PFC JOSE PURDOM
PFC EDGAR KRAULE
PFC DENNIS MILLER

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 1ST AVIATION BRIGADE
8TH MILITARY HISTORY DETACHMENT
APO San Francisco 96384

AVBAHI

2 April 1970

SUBJECT: Annual Historical Supplement

Commanding Officer
242d Aviation Company (Assault Support Helicopter)
ATTN: Historian
APO 96353

1. Your annual historical supplement for 1969 has been received by this office and found to be unsatisfactory.
2. In general your annual historical supplement is good. However, you have neglected the narrative portion of the most important chapter in an annual historical supplement--unit operations.
3. This chapter should include a chronological discussion of unit operations. If there were no operations of a significant nature conducted by your unit, then describe operations which illustrate the various types of tasks your unit performs.
4. I request that you submit a supplement to your annual historical supplement, containing information requested in par 2 above, to the headquarters enumerated in par 1, appendix II, 1st Aviation Brigade Regulation 870-1 NLT 30 April 1970.
5. If you require any assistance, call me (Long Binh 2530).

HENRY R. VANETTI
CPT, IN
Commanding

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
242nd Aviation Company (Aslt Spt Hel)
APO San Francisco 96353

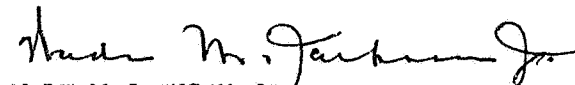
W-DYD-AA

15 April 197

SUBJECT: Annual Historical Supplement

Commanding General
1st Avn Bde
ATTN: AVBA-MH
APO SF 96384

Enclosed is an operations supplement to the 242nd Aviation Company's annual historical supplement.



WADE M JACKSON JR
1LT, SC
Administrative Officer

1 enclosure

The 242nd ASH Company's operations during calendar year 1969 covered a broad spectrum. Mainly concerned with missions of resupply the Muleskinners have proven to be equally capable of flying combat assaults and night combat essential missions.

Support of the 25th Infantry Division has continued to be the primary function of the 242nd. The "Tropic Lightning" Division area of operations in III corps has been reinforced with many fire support bases moved in by Chinooks of the 242nd. Among them was Fire Support Base Sedgewick, also known as Mole City. During the early part of the year the Muleskinners moved the 3rd Bn, 9th Inf into new bases, and in August we were responsible for the total extraction of that unit. In a unit deployment of that magnitude, the 242nd is responsible for heavy lift as well as the troop lift requirements.

Firebase Handle is another name to be remembered by the Muleskinners. Guarding a strategic point on the Oriental River, Handle received daily sorties of supplies and ammunition from Chinooks of the 242nd. In addition to continual resupply, the Muleskinners were responsible for the total insertion and extraction of the firebase.

Another extremely important mission assigned to the 242nd is the resupply of U.S. servicemen living on Nui Ba Den. High atop III corp's famed "Black Virgin" mountain lives a small group of men of the 25th Division. Their mission is to operate a radio relay and electronic surveillance post. Supply routes to this unit are definitely limited by

terrain and enemy activity. The responsibility for resupply belongs to the Muleskinners, and six to eight times a day, an aircraft with the insignia of a bucking mule can be seen making its way to the top of the cloud covered mountain. Sorties of Class I to Class V are sent up "Via hook" to ensure the continuance of this vital operation.

The morale of the ground troops is always uplifted at the sight of a Chinook bringing in beer, soda, and mail. During 1969, the Muleskinners provided morale boosters of an unusual nature. Forty-one band concerts were held at various field locations throughout the year. Transporting the band and its equipment were CH-47's from the 242nd ASH Co.

Operation Holly was one men of the 25th Infantry Division are not likely to forget. When the Bob Hope USO Show visited CU CHI in December, over 7,200 men were moved in to see the performance. Responsibility for the majority of the move fell to the Muleskinners, and in twelve hours, more than half the troops had been transported.

At times the 25th Division calls upon the Muleskinners for other than Direct Combat Support missions. Combat assaults, C.S. gas drops on known or suspected enemy locations, napalm drops, and emergency resupply to units under attack are some of the various missions the 242nd is called upon to perform. Supported units can count upon a muleskinner being airborne within thirty minutes of their call.

The 242nd ASH Co is not limited to solely supporting the 25th Infantry Division. Many other U.S. Army units in III Corps have become

familiar with the sight of a bucking mule. Allied forces in III corps such as the Royal Thais, Australian Forces, ARVN, and RVN Navy also require the 242nd to resupply patrol boats and other river craft with necessary POL, heavy equipment and rations. During these missions, the men of the 242nd are called upon to fly remote river locations in the midst of hostile territory to render the required support.

As the year 1969 drew to a close, the 242nd ASH Co had logged almost 15,000 accident free flying hours. No matter what the requirement, the men of the 242nd rose to meet it. During the year, missions and requirements have changed, but the Muleskinners have always proven their ability to adapt to any new challenge. The men of the Muleskinners have never ceased to earn admiration and respect from the units they serve.