

INCOMING

**THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE 3RD BATTALION
15TH FIELD ARTILLERY REGIMENT TOWED
FT MCCLELLAN AND ANNISTON AL**

*Original
Newsletters
7th Battalion
History*

VOL. 11

NUMBER 4

1 OCTOBER 2024

3rd BATTALION



121st US ARMY RESERVE COMMAND

HHB & SVC BTRY
FT. MCCLELLAN

"B" BTRY
TALLADEGA

"A" BTRY
CULLMAN

"C" BTRY
GADSDEN

Commander's Corner

I was sitting around contemplating what I wanted to write about in this issue and it came to me how the Battalion's strength has increased with the addition of new members. The credit for this belongs to those of you who find former members and either sponsor them to join the group on Facebook or the direct method a phone call from yourself or from me. So another Fire Mission well done!

Everyone should've received their Reunion invitations by now and if you haven't then you need to contact me ASAP. I can be reached at 210-249-1818. The reason for the urgency is all RSVP's are due back to me by the end of October so that I can finalize meals with the caterer as they are paid for in advance.

I will be attending the annual AUSA Convention in DC again this year to scour the exhibits looking for all things related to Field Artillery to share those updates with you.

Last but not least, the Incoming Christmas Edition will be to you by the time we assemble for the Reunion on 30 November.

Stephanie and I are looking forward to seeing each and every one of you at the Reunion and remember to keep your powder dry.

Allons
LTC John Hoehne
FA Last Commander
3rd BN 15th FAR

Reunion News and Updates

3rd Annual Reunion for the 3rd Battalion FAR

Location: Oxford Civic Center
401 McCullars Ln, Oxford AL 36203

Date: 30 November 2024
Check-in Begins 1100 ~ Reunion Time: 1200-1600 hrs.

Fully Catered Meal Jim n Nick's
Two meats ~ Three Sides ~ Bread
Tea (sweet and unsweetened) and Water ~ Dessert Artillery Cake
Dress Code: Business Casual - St Barbara Authorized
Spouses are more than welcome to attend

Cost \$20 person Check, Money Order or Zelle
made payable John Hoehne Sr
(if sending via Zell my cell is 210-249-1818)

RSVP's are due back NLT 31 October 2024

If anyone comes without prior notice the cost is \$35 per person.



CPT Brad Waits 1983



Service Battery Battalion Ammo 1984

The CSM's Corner

Greetings to all you Red Legs and to your families. Before I get into the October message, I know a lot of you fine Artillery men, had different MOS before you came to the Battalion: some Infantry, some Tank, some logistical, some Engineers, Air Force, Marines, even some Navy, and Coast Guard. You came to this Battalion to be Artillery men; thus you put in the time, and effort to do just that, and for that you are to be commended. That type of dedication is what made the 3/15th FAR a great Battalion.

This is the Month for the ghost and goblins, please use extreme caution if you taking your children or Grandchildren trick or treating this year, as you well know there are some really, really sick people out there, so use caution. So I will close for now, may God Bless each and everyone of you.!!!

There is one last item I need to mention:

As we get ready to gather and enjoy our third Annual Reunion, I'm reflecting on how this is basically a military operation. It takes planning; coordination with caterers, photographers, venues, printers and us. It takes logistics to plan parking, food service and to move the banners, flags and other materials and properly set up the venue. Finally it takes finances. Yes. Money subsidizes your meal charges to keep your costs low, pays the photographer and the venue management and provides materials we all enjoy at each event. Donations would help keep our momentum going. LTC Hoehne has established a separate bank account for donations to ensure the money is properly tracked and used in support of Reunions and/or the printing and mailing of our newsletter, "Incoming."

To those who have already donated, my sincere thanks. For the rest of us, please consider making a check payable to LTC John A. Hoehne Sr, mailed to 9773 Blue Spring Rd, Mercersburg, PA 17236.

Thank each and everyone of you.
Donald Peak CSM (Ret)
3rd BN 15th FA.

A Story from the Past

It was FTX weekend like so many before at Pelham Range in the early 80's. The Battalion was conducting Live Fire Exercise along with Small Arms Range Qualification and Service Battery was keeping everyone supplied with Ammo, Fuel and BN Maintenance Support.

As the day progressed word began to circulate amongst Service Battery about a possible breach of the BN Trains perimeter at some point during the night. So the Trains went on full alert as the rumor was HHB would try to break through. Security required implementation of the interior roving guard. Around 2100 hours, the Battalion Trains perimeter was probed. It held, except, one individual was able to penetrate the security and was confronted in the center area of the trains by a member of Battalion Ammo.

The guard issued the standard, "Halt!. Advance and be recognized" The infiltrator ignored the Halt command and continued to move. That is when the Service Battery guard lowered his M203 grenade launcher at the infiltrator and issued the command to Halt again. When he didn't halt, the Service Battery Guard fired, hitting the infiltrator square in the chest with the 203 round (which fortunately turned out to be a dud). It did immediately drop the infiltrator to the ground, and left a red dye smear on his uniform. He still managed to escape, but was identified by the guard.

At that point, the guard was debriefed regarding the use of a dud from the 203 range, leading ultimately to tighter implementation of command and control over ammo management. When asked by the BC, "Why did you shoot him?", the guard replied ROE for internal security, if someone penetrating the perimeter doesn't stop, you shoot Sir as that is what you have always taught us.

Needless to say, no attempts were ever made to penetrate Service Battery's Trains perimeter ever again!

The Cannoneer

2 October 1977

THE CANNONEER

Vol. I, No. 4

3d BN, 15th FIELD ARTILLERY

2 October 1977

VIP VISITS UNIT

On 1 October 1977, the battalion was visited by MG Maurice W. Kendall, Commander of Readiness Region IV, a part of First U.S. Army which covers the southeastern United States.

General Kendall received a briefing from the battalion commander, LTC Philip E. Holladay, dealing with the unit's readiness posture, the recruiting, equipment and training objectives of the battalion.

The General stated that he thought the priorities of the battalion were exactly in order and wished us much success in accomplishing the goals which were outlined.

During the noon hour, MG Kendall spoke briefly to the members of the unit in "Holladay's Inn." He expressed his gratitude for the patriotic dedication each member of the battalion has expressed in joining the outfit and wished each one success in accomplishing our common mission.

NEW FACES

Each drill, the battalion looks a little different with some additional faces at the various jobs. We welcome (See "New Faces", Page 4.)

FORTHCOMING DRILL DATES

12, 13 November (Overnight)	0650 Hours
10, 11 December	0720 Hours
14, 15 January	0720 Hours

LIVE FIRE EXERCISE SCHEDULED FOR NOVEMBER DRILL

Let no one miss the word as it is being passed on: "The battalion will 'overnight' during the 12, 13 November drill." The training exercise during that drill will be the second live firing exercise in the history of the battalion in Alabama.

Personnel are expected to be at the Reserve Center at 0650 hours for the first formation at that time.

The commander's policy is that the mission on live fire exercises is so important and the risk of accidental injury too great to permit anyone to take alcoholic beverages or non-prescription drugs to the field. You are encouraged to comply with that rule.

MEET

OUR

COMMANDERS. . .

Second in our series of feature stories on Battery Commanders concerns 1LT Gerry Chalker, Commander of Service Battery.

LT Chalker is a native of Opelika, Alabama, but moved to Birmingham, where he graduated from high school. He received a commission through the ROTC program at Auburn University, where he graduated in 1971. Prior to coming with us, he was a platoon leader with the 310th Chem Co (SG).

In civilian life, the LT is Loan Officer for Anniston National Bank. He is active in the Heart Association and Jaycees.

He lives in Anniston with his wife, the former Prinnie Ingram. It is good to have him on our team.

RECRUIT A FRIEND

INTO

THE 3D BN, 15TH FA

FORTHCOMING DRILL DATES
(Reporting Times)

10, 11 September
(0720 Hours)
1, 2 October
(0720 Hours)
12, 13 November
(0650 Hours)

TRAINING "ON TARGET"

Every effort is being made to make training in the 3/15th FA both stimulating and rewarding for all the members. An emphasis will continue to be placed on MOS qualification and and learn-field artillery subjects in general.

In addition, basic military subjects will also be included. During the next drills, individual and crew served weapons qualifications will be central. An instructional team from the active army will provide some of the training.

This is a time learn- can be fun and exciting.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER. . .

My family and I were driving home recently from a trip which took us through southern Illinois. We had decided we wanted to enjoy some of the scenery along local highways rather than endure the endless miles of boredom on the interstates. We plotted our route according to the map we had at our disposal.

When we reached the Ohio River where we expected to cross a bridge into Kentucky, there was no bridge--only one little sign indicating the "Highway 19 Ends" right at the river bank.

While an old ferry took us across the river I began thinking of how much I have come to take for granted things which are available to me only at some cost to someone. I had just assumed that someone would have built a bridge across the river. They hadn't. And I guess I am glad.

See "Chaplain"
Page 3.

MEET OUR B. C.'s. . .

This month we are introducing the commander of Headquarters Battery, CPT Ray A. White. A native of Taylorsville, Georgia, CPT White was educated in the local schools there, and holds degrees from Jacksonville State and West Georgia College. In civilian life, he teaches biology and practical science at Anniston High School.

Obtaining his commission through ROTC, the captain spent four years on active duty including tours at Ft. Benning, Ft. Carson and Viet Nam, with the 173d Airborne Brigade. He wears the Combat Infantryman's Badge and is both Airborne and Ranger qualified.

He is married to the former Sherry Hethcox, and they have a daughter, Beth, who will soon be five. We are proud to have this expert leadership in our battalion.

DRILL DATES: { 12, 13 November
10, 11 December
14, 15 January

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 Chaplain's Corner

One of my "pet peeves" is the tradition which has come to us by which we come to think of God primarily as a sort of cynical old fellow who enjoys "socking it to us" mortals. The language we generally employ to explain damage done to property when some human cannot be blamed is to call it an "act of God."

On the other hand, when something good happens unexpectedly, we call that "good fortune," "luck" or "serendipity."

It is clear from the biblical revelation that God's primary characteristic is Love. Therefore, would it not be more accurate for us to attribute to God the good that happens to us, recognizing that in some way, it is His desire for us to find happiness and meaning in life?

Then, if we have to explain how some tragedy occurs, we might recognize that it was the result of some misfortune or simply a regrettable event, but one which God neither caused nor even enjoyed. In fact, the truth is that God shares our experiences of grief and suffering.

Even if this battalion can't take on the task of changing our American language, perhaps we can at least improve our own concept of God in such a way that we refuse to blame Him for events He did not cause, and we can give Him credit for the happy experiences He provides for us.

NEW FACES (from Page 1)

to the battalion the following individuals who have joined us in the two previous months:

CPT Meeler, CPT Edwards, 1LT Schaefer, CPT Moore, SGT Yeager, SGT McCain, SGT Turner, SGT McGill, SGT Martin, SGT Fortenberry, SP5 Suggs, SP5 Warren, SP4 Roebuck, SP4 Orso, SP4 Keener, SP4 Johnson, SP4 Thrash, SP4 Holman, SP4 Waites, SP4 Catlett, PFC Simmons, PVT Stevens, PVT McCormick, PVT Chapman.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THOSE WHO HAVE
RECENTLY BEEN PROMOTED

The following promotions have been extended to the individuals named below. We offer congratulations to each one:

SFC Brock, SFC Pratt, SSG Ivey, SSG Peak, SSG Sanford, SSG Thompson, SSG White, SGT King, SGT McClendon, SP5 Pitts.

VETERAN'S DAY OCTOBER 24

Even if the appropriate time to acknowledge the debt our country owes to those who have fought our nation's wars has become controversial, every one seems to agree that we should pay respect to our veterans at some time.

Our country has traditionally held to the moral ideal that warfare is a fundamental evil and an unreasonable method for resolving differences between nations. We have found it dramatically true, however, that practical necessity requires that we give ourselves to an even higher moral imperative, when called upon, to defend ourselves and those who are unable to defend themselves when attacked.

Our nation owes its very existence to a number of circumstances. Among these is the great host of individuals who have taken up arms, when asked to do so--most of the time, not really preferring to become warriors until circumstances required it.

Let's not forget these who have made sacrifices for our nation's benefit. We salute you in this battalion who are veterans--individuals in the tradition of our country's proudest and best.

RE-ENLISTMENTS
RE-ENLISTMENTS
RE-ENLISTMENTS

The following individuals are to be commended for re-enlisting for the 3d of the 15th Field Artillery:

MSG Presley, 3 years
SGT Glenn, 1 year
SGT Bryant, 1 year
SP4 Ringo, 1 year



*Left to right: CPT Rick Skinner,
CPT Tom Lynch, 1LT Brad Joy and
COL Bill Watson*



*AT-92 Charlie Battery Direct Fire
Range*



*CPT Morris Kay instructing during
School House of the Soldier AT-93 Ft.
McClellan*



*2LT Roy Hall Service
Service Battery Battalion Ammo
Officer 1984*



SPC Eric Morris, SPC Warren Askew

Bravo Battery's "Young Guns"



*Top L to R: PFC James May, PFC Swain,
PFC J. Baker, SPC W. Askew
Bottom L to R: PFC. Garrett, SGT Anthony
Staples, PFC M. Pope*



*Service Battery Formation - 3200
Area Ft McClellan 1983*

Big Guns Are Ready

Weapon Systems used by the 7th Battalion, 15th Field Artillery during the Vietnam War

When the 7th Battalion (Bn), 15th Artillery (Arty) prepared for deployment to Vietnam in late 1966, it was armed with 8-inch Self-Propelled (SP) Howitzers designated as the US Army model M110. The 8-inch howitzer was the most accurate artillery weapon system in the US Army's arsenal. It was capable of firing a 200 pound High Explosive (HE) projectile to a maximum range of 16,800 meters (10 miles). Its best known feature was its ability to hit "Point Targets" with consistent accuracy.

Many of the fire missions fired by the Indianheads of the Fighting Fifteenth were against heavily fortified and well-camouflaged enemy bunker complexes. In many instances, the infantry troops would walk right through an enemy bunker complex and would be caught in fierce enemy crossfire from the fortified bunkers. The most effective tactic to employ when this situation occurred was to pull the troops back and request a single-gun Precision Destruction Fire Mission. A trained Forward Observer (FO) could "walk" those big 200-pound rounds right in on top of the bunkers and neutralize them.

An 8-inch round tipped with a Delay or Concrete Piercing fuze was the most effective Bunker Buster in the Vietnam combat zone. However, because of the force of the large projectile, it was not safe to fire close to friendly troops as shell fragments could hit them. But in many instances the combat situation dictated the use of this weapon system near friendly troops after all the alternatives were considered.

The message sent to the troops on the ground during these situations was "Danger Close". This was not news to the Grunts (infantrymen), because when the enemy was about to overrun your position you will throw everything possible (including the kitchen sink) at him to stop him. "Danger Close" to the Grunts meant they could smell the "Nuoc Mam" fish sauce on the enemy's breath.

The M110 weighed approximately 52,000 pounds and was powered by a General Motors supercharged diesel engine with a top speed of approximately 35 miles per hour. A pump that ran off the main engine supplied hydraulic power. The hydraulic power was used to raise, lower, and traverse the tube, to lift and load the projectile into the breech, and to operate the huge hydraulic spade used to stabilize the weapon when it recoiled during firing.

The chassis, platform, and power train used for this weapon system were extremely versatile. In a matter of a few hours, an experienced Ordnance crew could remove an 8-inch Howitzer barrel and replace it with a 175mm Gun Barrel. In October of 1967, C Battery, 7th Bn, 15th Arty was located at LZ Pony and became the first element of the Battalion to have two of its Howitzers retubed as 175mm Guns. When configured with a 175mm Gun barrel the system designation was then called the model M107.

I'll attempt explain the differences between the two weapons in easily understood terms. The ballistic differences between a Howitzer and a Gun are that when an 8" Howitzer was fired, the round traveled along an "arching" trajectory until it hit the target. However, when a 175mm Gun was fired, it moved a 147 pound projectile at a very high velocity (approximately 3,000 feet per second), and consequently had a very "flat" trajectory.

With the addition of a 175mm Gun tube, the "Indianheads" were able shoot out to a range of 32,800 meters (20 miles) which was twice as far as the 8-inch Howitzers. Because of its high velocity, the 175mm Gun was used primarily against "Area Targets". Because of its high velocity the 175mm Gun had the reputation of being somewhat erratic. It could be temperamental if not used properly. But in the hands of a good gun crew, who serviced and maintained the weapon according to the specifications, kept the powder temperatures at a fairly constant level, kept the rounds clean, ensured a uniform depth of ram was achieved, kept the bore clean, and combined this with a good Fire Direction Center (FDC) crew and current meteorological data, you could in fact "hit the broad side of a barn".

A 175mm Gun barrel only had a life of 300 Full Service Rounds when firing the maximum charge of Zone 3, and would then have to be replaced. Later in the Vietnam war, new tubes with longer lives were introduced extending their use to between 700 and 1,200 Full Service Rounds at Zone 3. Needless to say, the 7th Bn, 15th Arty became quite adept at quickly changing barrels after firing over 360,000 175mm and 8-inch rounds. If you needed accuracy and a “Big Bang”, then you called for the 8-inch Howitzers. When you needed long range, you called on the 175mm Guns.

One fact you could take to the bank. . . when you called on the Indianheads of the Fighting Fifteenth for Heavy Artillery support you got “Deadly and Accurate Firepower.” Allons!

Written by: Dan Gillotti, 15th Historian



God of Hell Fire. 175mm gun. B/7/15 - 1971



*175mm “Ball Buster” at Ben Het - 1970.
Photo by Jay Livesay*



M110 Howitzer



*M107 in the LZ Diamondhead
Motorpool for maintenance.
Photo: Dave Holdorf*

Chaplain's Corner with Chaplain Wes Hodgins

The feast of “Ingathering” (Booths) was the last “feast” required in the Law of Moses. It was also the third “required-feast” for every able-bodied, adult male to be present at. It was to be held from the 15th to the 21st of the month of Tishri. (Sept-Oct) in our calendar. It was to be the “most-joyful” of all the feasts because it marked the end of all the harvests and the beginning of “rest” in preparation for the next planting season.

Within the Feasts given to Israel, God has revealed His plan for the redemption of mankind. God had called Abram out of idolatry in Chaldea. He “birthed” and called His people as a nation out of Egypt with the first Passover” At the feast of “Pentecost” God poured out His Spirit on all who would accept His Son as their Messiah, both Jew and Gentile! (see Isaiah 49:5-13) Here, at “Ingathering” God has pictured His gathering of His people out of the world groaning under the curse brought on by man’s sin. Jesus told His followers: :”I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, you may be also.”

Interestingly, these three “feasts” were required for all males. Spiritually, every man needs: 1. A birth. 2. A re-birth. 3. To be “gathered-in” to the presence of God Himself. At this season, may our hearts rejoice as we anticipate the soon “regathering” of God’s people to Himself; entering His “rest” with lasting peace.

-Chaplain Hodgins

LTC John A Hoehne Sr
9773 Blue Spring Rd
Megersburg PA 17236

