

Note: this summary of activities is a reconstruction of the information found on MSG Dan Fisher's Website hosted by Tripod. The site is no longer active nor is it maintained by any known person. This information collected from Dan Fisher's site did not include any summary of activities for 1968 or 1970.

The note from Dan Fisher which opened up this section on his site stated, *"This summary came to me with only the cover sheet, page four, and a general statement, included herein. I will attempt to get another copy of the full report!"*

## **Calendar Year 1969**

**SUBMITTED BY S-2, dtd January 1970**

### **CHAPTER I - ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION**

#### **SECTION I - MISSION**

**The mission of the 6th Battalion 29th Field Artillery is to provide direct artillery support to the maneuver elements of the First Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, and to reinforce the fires of other artillery units. Inherent in this mission is the Battalion's responsibility to provide its own target acquisition, communications, liaison, survey, ground transportation and logistics.**

#### **SECTION II - ORGANIZATION**

**The 6th Battalion 29th Artillery is organized under TOE 6-155G, which consists of TOE 6-157G as modified by MTOE 6-155G USARPAC 1/68, and TOE 6-157G as modified by MTOE 6-157G USARPAC 1/68. In addition to the assigned units of this command, the following units supported various operations in which the Battalion was involved; Batteries A and B, 2nd Battalion, 17th Artillery, Batteries C and D, 5th Battalion, 16th Artillery, Battery B, 1st Battalion, 92nd Artillery, one tube Battery C, 8th Battalion, 15th Artillery, Battery C, 7th Battalion, 15th Artillery, Battery A, 4th Battalion, 42nd Artillery, Battery B, 3rd Battalion, 6th Artillery, one section Battery A, 4th Battalion, 60th Artillery, Battery B (-), 29th Artillery, Searchlight, Batteries A, B, and C, 2nd Battalion, 9th Artillery, and Battery D, 2nd Battalion, 320th Artillery (ABN).**

#### **SECTION II - PERSONNEL**

**LTC William W. Maurer, in command of the 6th Battalion, 29th Artillery since August 1968, turned his command over to LTC Donald E. Sampson in March 1969. LTC Sampson commanded the Battalion until 19 August 1969, when LTC Lawrence R. Tassie assumed command.**

**On 31 December 1969, the Battalion Staff consisted of the following personnel:**

**Executive Officer: MAJ Myron F. Curtis**

**S-1: 1LT Robert D. Urbont**

**S-2: CPT Ernest Buys**

**S-3: MAJ Darrell G. Waller**

**S-4: CPT James C. Sharp**

**Communications: CPT Robert L. Nichols**

#### **SECTION IV - COUNTRY AND LOCATION**

**The area of operations of the 6th Battalion 29th Artillery during the calendar year was the Central Highlands of South Vietnam. This area is generally characterized by steep mountains covered with heavy canopied wooded areas. Visibility into these areas was severely limited and the establishment of fire support bases required demolition work to clear an area large enough to accommodate the firing batteries. Orientation of the maneuvering units on the ground was difficult. Artillery was utilized to good advantage for land navigation of those troops. Artillery smoke and illumination rounds were fire permitting the ground units to compute their position by intersection and resection method. At times adjustment fires by the Forward Observers were necessarily accomplished by sound since visibility was limited by the dense undergrowth.**

#### **SECTION V - OPERATION**

**The concept of Artillery employment in support of the 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division was to provide timely, close-in fire support to maneuver elements, effective counter mortar, counter rocket fires, preplanned preparations and blocking fires, fires on intelligence targets of all types, and night firing programs. During 1969, the Battalion operated a forward area tactical operations center co-located with the 1st Brigade forward tactical operations center at Dak To and again later in November at Ban Me Thout. From forward area tactical operation center, the Battalion Commander and the S-2/S-3 sections provided tactical command, control, and coordination for all artillery units in support of the 1st Brigade. Additionally, the forward command post coordinated air strikes, aerial artillery fires, and mortar fires.**

#### **CHAPTER II - THE 1969 PICTURE**

**During the first two weeks of January, activity was light in Kontum Province as the 6th Battalion 29th Field Artillery continues its operation in the Dak To area. On 21 January 1969, 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division terminated operations in that area and established a new Brigade Forward Command Post at FSB McNerney. Contact was very light and sporadic throughout the Brigade AO during the early part of February, however the maneuver elements found numerous huts, fortified positions, weapons, rice and ordnance storage areas. Artillery activity during this period consisted mainly of firing on intelligence targets and firing Night Firing Programs**

based on target data gathered by the maneuver elements. Extensive aerial reconnaissance missions were conducted by the battalion S-2/S-3 elements in order to pin-point selected enemy locations, trail and bunker complexes, bivouac areas and routes of movement. The information gathered during these aerial reconnaissance missions was used to prepare night firing programs.

On 15 February the 1st Brigade received the mission to move to the southwest Kontum City and conduct offensive operations against the 24th and 66th NVA regiments. Intelligence reports indicated that these enemy elements had been given the mission to attack Kontum City and interdict Highway 14. In order to facilitate command and control the 1st Brigade and 6/29 Arty deployed a Tactical Command Post to Plei Mrong. Contacts with enemy elements throughout the operations were numerous, but small. On 28 February, 1st Brigade terminated operations in the vicinity of Plei Mrong and moved the Tactical CP, maneuver elements, and artillery to the vicinity of Polei Kleng and subsequent deployment into the Plei Trap Valley area.

The 1st Brigade's mission at its new location was to block and destroy NVA transportation routes in the Plei Trap Valley. The 6th Battalion 29th Field Artillery, as the direct support battalion to the 1st Brigade, moved its operations center, with the Brigade TOC, from Plei Mrong to Polei Kleng to facilitate control of the operation.

The operation began on 1 March 1969 with the CA of A/3/12 Infantry into LZ Swinger. The LZ was considered of primary importance for artillery when the 155mm howitzers of C/6/29 Artillery were emplaced at that location the majority of the Brigade could be supported by their fires. A/6/29 Artillery began its move from Polei Kleng to FSB 20 of the same day. C/6/29 Artillery moved to LZ Pause on 1 March, and B/6/29 Artillery left Plei Mrong, spending the night at FSB Mary Lou. All artillery moves were completed by 3 March.

Late in the afternoon 3 March, A/3/8 Infantry made contact with an estimated enemy company. Initial contact was heavy and the RTO in the Artillery Forward Observer Party was killed in the first few minutes. Elements of 3/8 Infantry remained in contact with the NVA forces through 6 March. B/6/29 and C/6/29 Artillery fired a total of 4478 rounds HE, 58 FC rounds, and 8 CS rounds, primarily in support of the contacts and as preparations for the combat assault of reinforcements.

*Webmaster Note: My research concluded that this RTO was PFC Layne Michael Santos (The Wall: Panel 30 - Row 030). On August 11, 1999, identity confirmation was provided by Albert Jaquez, former A/3/8 Infantry, who also fought in this battle!*

At 0850 hours on 4 March, the air strip at Polei Kleng received 14 rounds of 122mm rocket fire, which destroyed the artillery resupply Class V waiting on the helicopter pad to be airlifted to the firebases.

The resulting fires and explosions not only destroyed approximately 900 rounds of 105mm HE ammunition but also the five remaining sorties to complete the move of B/6/29 Artillery. During the rocket attack the Executive Officer of B/6/29 Artillery was critically wounded.

*Webmaster Note: My research concluded that the XO was 1LT Ronald Leonard Warnett (The Wall: Panel 30 - Row 050). On July 1, 1999, identity confirmation was provided by Tom Lacombe, former B/3/12 Infantry, who has a group photo taken shortly before the Polei Kleng airstrip attack!*

*Note: At this point, I am missing a page, or pages, with this summary continuing from some point in August 1969.*

#### **SUMMARY CONTINUES:**

harassed by SA weapons fire 82 mortar but with minimum damage and few casualties.

The operation terminated on 25 August and operations were initiated south of An Khe to find and destroy elements harassing villages and the road. Elements of 95B were suspected of planning a major offensive in the vicinity of LZ Action. Again, an intensive firing program was initiated to preempt suspected enemy operations. The majority of the friendly initiated operations were platoon size. As the enemy was located by these elements intensive artillery fires were employed to destroy the force, and additional infantry elements were airlifted into the area to reinforce the unit in contact. This type of operation proved very fruitful because a large area was covered by sweeping forces. This resulted in numerous contacts and destruction of the enemy supplies and facilities.

As the operation continued it became evident that the 95B elements had vacated the area. Contacts were few and relatively insignificant. The operation was terminated on 25 September.

In response to intelligence indication a major enemy unit to the NW of An Khe, the 1st Brigade committed one Infantry Battalion, and one Artillery Battery to an area approximately 40km to the NW of An Khe. Maneuver elements conducted decentralized operations with platoon operations receiving major emphasis. Numerous contacts with 1-5 individuals, were made initially but the enemy chose to evade rather than stand and fight. Although contacts with the enemy became less frequent, facilities and equipment abandoned by the enemy were found throughout the area and were destroyed by the maneuver elements.

On 10 September the 6/29 Artillery was given the requirement, to attack an area east of FSB Hardtimes by indirect fire. Intelligence on which the program was based was provided by IFFV, 4th Infantry Division G-2, 1st Brigade S-2, and S-2 6/29th

**Artillery. Target lists, order of battle, SPAR activity, and terrain analysis were used to determine the location of the enemy known to be in that area. The intensive program lasted until 21 September.**

**On 5 October LZ Larry was attacked by an unknown size enemy force using 82mm mortars, B-40 rockets, small arms and satchel charges. Friendly casualties were 2 US KIA and 6 US WIA (1 Artillery). FSB Cecil fired counter-mortar fires resulting in 6 enemy KIA.**

**Enemy contacts continued to be light with small caches of weapons and food supplies being found and destroyed. The operation terminated on 15 October.**

**In early November the enemy threat to friendly forces in the Bu Prang/Duc Lap area was such that additional forces were considered necessary to contain and destroy the enemy. The 1st Brigade was alerted for movement to Ban Me Thout to relieve local ARVN elements destined for deployment in the Bu Prang/Duc Lap area. On 11 November, headquarters elements of the 1st Brigade and 6/29 Artillery moved to Ban Me Thout and established a tactical CP. While the main portion of the command and control operated in the Ban Me Thout area, the remainder of the Battalion continued direct operations in the An Khe area. A and B Batteries, 2/9 Artillery plus D Battery, 2/320th Artillery came under operational control of the 6/29 Artillery in the Ban Me Thout area. The type of operations conducted in this area consisted of search and clear, and security of QL 21. Since the enemy enjoyed freedom of movement, emphasis was placed on squad and platoon size RIF and saturation ambushes. These tactics proved effective, as the enemy refused to fight. Approximately 20km north of Ban Me Thout an extensive bunker complex was located indicating recent usage as a medical/dental facility, but enemy forces were not located. Along QL 21 enemy elements continued their sporadic convoy harassment. They remained out of range. On 9 December, emphasis was shifted to the south of Ban Me Thout; it proved to be the most profitable of the whole operation. Several small contacts resulted in 13 enemy KIA and 1 CIA. The POW stated that numerous enemy soldiers had been killed by artillery. On 16 December, a significant cache was found containing 60mm and 82mm mortar rounds, B-40's, hand grenades, TNT and 107mm rockets. The operation terminated on 29 December and the 6/29 Artillery Tac CP returned to Camp Radcliff. Operations in the vicinity of Camp Radcliff during the Tac CP's absence consisted of search and destroy ambushes, and LRP's in the immediate proximity of An Khe. the Battalion Rear CP, under the command of the Battalion Executive Officer, provided command and control for the batteries support of Task Force Bravo. Two significant incidents occurred during November and December. Camp Radcliff was attacked by sappers, losses resulting in 1 US KIA (AVN) and 3 US WIA. Equipment losses included 15 helicopters totally destroyed and 2 damaged. On 12 December Camp Radcliff received 6 82mm mortar rounds. All rounds landed in the 6/29 Artillery area. Damage was 1 US WIA and an RTT destroyed.**

#### **CHAPTER IV - SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

**The artillery fire provided by the 6th Battalion, 29th Artillery was instrumental in disrupting the enemy's scheme of maneuver.**

**In the Plei Trap Valley operation the blocking fires and the fires in support of contacts contributed to the success of this operation as was reflected by the 578 enemy soldiers confirmed KIA and the numerous miscellaneous equipment and weapons captured or destroyed in action.**

**In operations in the vicinity of An Khe the battalion expended a heavy volume of artillery fire that totally surprised and demoralized the enemy and pre-empted his intentions of attacking installations in the area of operations.**

**All contact missions and confirmed intelligence targets were always supported in the most expedient manner possible and many of the battalion's members distinguished themselves by months of continuous and in numerous instances, courageous service.**

**Finally, through Civil affairs actions many men in the battalion became directly or indirectly involved with the program and were privileged to get to know better the people of this country. As Med-Caps were performed and other projects were completed, both those helped and those helping benefited through mutual understanding, as well as improved conditions.**

**SIGNATURE: LTC ARTHUR F. LYKKE JR., COMMANDING**

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**NOTE 1: This information was transcribed from the official historical summaries!**

**NOTE 2: edited for spelling errors from original document (on MSG Dan Fisher's site) by PJB on 5 September 2018**