

1968

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
55TH AVIATION COMPANY (ARMY)
EIGHTH UNITED STATES ARMY
APO 96301

29 March 1969

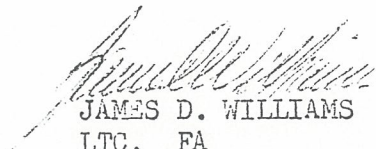
SUBJECT: Letter of Transmittal

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1. References:

- a. AR 870-5
- b. USARPAC 870-5
- c. EUSA Reg 870-5

2. Attached as inclosure 1 is the annual supplement to unit history for the 55th Aviation Company (Army), K-16, Korea.

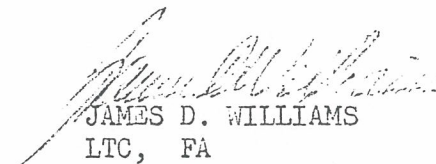

JAMES D. WILLIAMS
LTC, FA
Commanding

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- 1 - Commander-in-Chief, United States Pacific Commanding
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- 1 - Commanding General EUSA, ATTN: EAGO-MH, APC SF 96301
- 1 - Commanding Officer, Special Troops, ATTN: EAST-IO, APO US Forces 96301

D E D I C A T I O N

During my assignment with the 55th Aviation Company, I've enjoyed serving with and witnessing the excellent performance of the men of this unit. It is to those members, officers and enlisted men alike, to our predecessors who served before us, and to the men yet to join this proud unit and carry on in the highest traditions, that I respectfully dedicate this unit history for the Calendar Year 1968.


JAMES D. WILLIAMS
LTC, FA
Commanding Officer

UNIT HISTORY

The 55th Aviation Company was first activated in March 1951 as the 8085th Flight Detachment at Taegu, Korea. It moved from Taegu to Seoul in June 1951. The 8085th Flight Detachment was redesignated as the Eighth United States Army Aviation Detachment in January 1957. On 24 June 1960, the unit was designated as the 55th Aviation Company (Army) with an authorized strength of 14 officers and 70 enlisted men. The primary mission designated the unit was to render general aviation support to Headquarters UNC, EUSA, KMAG, US Embassy, and governmental agencies of the Republic of Korea.

During the period 1 January 1968 to 31 December 1968, the unit continued to accomplish its mission of providing aviation support to all major headquarters of Eighth Army. The unit was organized under TOE 1-137D and MTOE 1-137D with an authorized strength of 30 officers and 163 enlisted men. Under the Company Headquarters are five platoons. Operations, Service, Rotary Wing, Fixed Wing, and the Aerial Surveillance Platoon provide the organizational structure of the Company. Major Glenn E. Miller began the year as Commanding Officer. Prior to his rotation to the United States, he relinquished command to Major James D. Williams on 3 September 1968.

In January, with the seizure of the USS Pueblo, the unit was tasked to provide aviation support for many high level dignitaries including presidential trouble shooter, Cyrus Vance, then Deputy Secretary of State. During this same period, the Aerial Surveillance Platoon received two ground stations for the SLAR which gave the unit the capability of simultaneously showing on the ground the same data being produced in the aircraft.

During the Summer months, the unit received six U-21A turbine engine aircraft to replace the four, piston engine, U-8D and U-8F aircraft. Transitions to the new aircraft were made smoothly with the assignment of two IP's and the presence of a Beech Technical Representative. The aircraft have given the unit a greater cargo and passenger carrying capability, along with a decrease in flying time between airfields.

The 55th Aviation Company is located 8 miles southwest of Seoul, Korea in the middle of the Han River. As past history will reveal, the unit has been forced to evacuate the island during the flood season each Summer. Due to a flood control project, the unit was not plagued with a similar problem during the past summer.

The unit did have the distinct pleasure of having two IG's during the year; one being a rescheduled IG in January caused by the postponement due to the previous summer's flooding, the second being our annually scheduled IG in August. With a CMMI in May, the unit was kept quite busy, but also quite happy, since all were successfully passed.

In October, the unit was involved in the Eighth Army Field Exercise, "Focus Lens". In addition to it's normal mission of providing air support, the unit was responsible for operating a heliport which provided courier service between Pyong-taek and Seoul, as well as coordinating traffic of other aviation units involved in the field problem. The coordination and planning brought praise from higher headquarters and proved to be well worth the effort demonstrated by all personnel involved.

During December, the unit found itself involved in two very important and rewarding operations. With Bob Hope on his way, the unit was required to provide aviation support to the delight of all members of the Company. The volunteers definitely outnumbered the missions, which provided the Operations Officer with an unusual problem. The second important mission was supporting the return of the Pueblo crewmen. This made everyone's Christmas a good bit brighter.

By 30 December 1968, all personnel of the unit were anxiously awaiting the coming of the New Year with the realization that the biggest and best year during the history of the 55th Aviation Company was over, and each man standing tall and proud of the fact that he was part of that history--THE YEAR 1968.