

383rd Quartermaster Detachment (Aerial Supply) Qui Nhon (Quin Nhom), Cam Ranh Bay, and Bien Hoa

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The group photograph is the group of men that took the 383rd QM Detachment from Ft Lee, Virginia to Vietnam in the summer of 1965. The photograph was taken just before they shipped out. They were first located in the Qui Nhon (Quin Nhom) South Vietnam area as a Provisional Air Delivery Company. In late 1966 they were moved to Cam Ranh Bay and became a valuable platoon of the 109th QM Co. (Air Delivery). Lastly in December 1967 they were moved by 1st Logistical Command to Bien Hoa to establish a separate Provisional Air Delivery Company.

In May, 1965, a group of men were taken from the 109th Quartermaster Company, then at Fort Lee, Virginia, to form the nucleus of the 383rd Quartermaster Detachment. One month later the 383rd received orders for Vietnam. While there the 383rd had a long and distinguished history. In November, 1966, the 383rd was reattached to the 109th QM Company at Cam Ranh Bay, and remained an important platoon of the 109th until it moved to Bien Hoa in December, 1967, in order to start another Air Delivery Unit.

In 1967 the 383rd, while attached to the 109th, played a key role in Operation Junction City resupply airdrops. Operation Junction City with the 173rd Airborne was the only official Combat Parachute jump in the Vietnam War. Spc 4 James Linville, SGT Harris, and Spc 4 Harvey did a parachute jump during the resupply missions.

Just a month after the 383rd went to Bien Hoa the Siege of Khe Sanh started on the 21st of January 1968. The 383rd, 109th and 623rd all played a major role in the airdrops delivering over 8,000 tons of supplies by parachute and extraction systems that set a record of most tonnage ever airdropped into *actual combat* for a 30 day period. A record that still holds to this day.

At Bien Hoa the 383rd was but a single platoon, it was augmented with a platoon of riggers from the 549th QM Company (Air Supply) in Japan, a platoon of riggers from the 173rd Airborne, and another platoon from the 101st Airborne. After The Battle for Khe Sanh and the A Shaw Valley airdrops in April 1968 the 549th, 173rd, and 101st platoons returned to their respective units.

Very little history or documentation has been recovered for the 383rd, but important documentation has been recovered the past few years with contributions by Ret. Warrant Officer Lowel Hamel, James Linville, and Doug Flenniken. The 383rd was deactivated on March 20, 1972, while still in the Republic of Vietnam.

Retired CW4 Lowel Hamel (1st SGT. of the 383rd 1967 - 1968) lead an effort to nominate and approval was granted for the 383rd Quartermaster Detachment induction into the Quartermaster Corps' *Distinguished Unit of the Regiment*. Award was presented 18th day of June 1999. A photograph of the award ceremony not available.

The 383rd is still inactive.¹

¹ <http://www103.pair.com/adsd/riggers/airdrop.html>