



MEDAL OF HONOR

Vietnam War Media Packet



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MEDIA KIT



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Vietnam War honorees



U.S. ARMY

I WILL ALWAYS PLACE THE MISSION FIRST ★ I WILL NEVER ACCEPT DEFEAT ★ I WILL NEVER QUIT ★ I WILL NEVER LEAVE A FALLEN COMRADE



MEDAL OF HONOR

Captain Hugh R. Nelson, Jr.



Hero Biography and Battle Narrative



Hometown: Charlotte, North Carolina

Unit: 114th Aviation Company (Airmobile Light)

Last entry into service: Sept. 24, 1963



Capt. Hugh R. Nelson, Jr., distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a member of the 114th Aviation Company (Airmobile Light) on June 5, 1966, near Moc Hoa, Republic of Vietnam. Nelson was the acting aircraft commander of a Huey helicopter on a search-and-destroy reconnaissance mission when it was struck by a large volume of enemy fire that rendered the aircraft virtually uncontrollable.

With great difficulty, Nelson and the pilot were able to crash-land the aircraft without lateral controls. At some point after the crash, Nelson exited the aircraft and went to the aid of his wounded comrades. Proceeding to the other side of the aircraft, he found his dazed and wounded crew chief still trapped inside. After removing the specialist and placing him on the ground, Nelson climbed into the severely damaged helicopter to assist the door gunner, who was still strapped inside and unable to move.

While Nelson tried to free his comrade, the insurgents engaged the aircraft with a heavy volume of automatic rifle and small-arms fire at a range of approximately thirty feet from the aircraft. Despite the heavy enemy fire, Nelson continued his gallant efforts, freeing the trapped door gunner despite being hit by enemy fire. Upon removing the wounded door gunner from the aircraft, he forced the specialist to the ground and, without regard for his own life, used his body as a shield to cover his comrade from the intense enemy fire. Nelson was hit several times as he sacrificed his own life to save his comrade.



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Battle Narrative (continued)

His selfless sacrifice allowed his wounded comrade to use a smoke grenade to signal supporting aircraft in the area that there were crash survivors. The supporting aircraft responded immediately, preventing the insurgents from advancing on the downed aircraft and successfully rescuing the three wounded crew members.

Nelson's conscious decision to sacrifice his own life for that of his comrades saved the lives of his three fellow crew members that fateful day. Nelson's distinctive accomplishments are in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon him, his unit and the United States Army.



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114th Aviation Company (Airmobile Light)

The company was first activated at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, in 1956 as the 64th Transportation Company (Light Helicopter). Members of the unit completed H-34 transition in July 1956. In August and September 1956, the 1st platoon was on temporary duty at Fort Carson and Camp Hale, Colorado, undergoing cold-weather and mountain-flying training. While there, the platoon participated in Operation Cold Spot with two battalions of the 1st Infantry Division from Fort Riley, Kansas. On Dec. 6, 1956, the 64th Transportation Company and the 544th Transportation Detachment (CHFM) were transferred to Fort Hood, Texas. On Feb. 1, 1958, after little more than a year at Fort Hood, both the 64th Transportation Company and the 544th Transportation Detachment were again transferred – this time to Fort Knox, Kentucky. Soon afterwards, the 64th Transportation Company was deactivated and reactivated as C Troop (Air), 17th Cavalry.



Effective Jan. 16, 1963, under the provisions of General Order Number 6, Headquarters United States Army Armor Center, Fort Knox, Kentucky, C Troop (Air), 17th Cavalry, was deactivated and reactivated as the 114th Air Mobile Company. On Feb. 8, 1963, under the provisions of General Order Number 15, Headquarters United States Army Armor Center, Fort Knox, Kentucky, the 96th Signal Detachment (Avionics Maintenance) was activated and attached to the 114th Air Mobile Company. Effective March 16, 1963, under the provisions of General Order Number 33, Headquarters United States Army Armor Center School Troops, Fort Knox, Kentucky, the 83rd Medical Detachment was attached to the 114th Air Mobile Company. Effective May 7, 1963, the 114th Air Mobile Company, the 96th Signal Detachment and the 544th Transportation Detachment were assigned to the United States Army Support Group, Vietnam, and officially arrived at Vinh Long, Republic of South Vietnam, on May 10, 1963.

In July 1963, the 114th Air Mobile Company at Vinh Long joined with the 93rd Transportation Company (Light Helicopter) at Soc Trang and became part of the newly constituted Delta Aviation Battalion (Provisional) headquartered at Can Tho. Effective June 4, 1964, under the provisions of General Order Number 17, Headquarters United States Army Pacific, the 114th Air Mobile Company was redesignated the 114th Aviation Company (Air Mobile Light). On Sept. 30, 1964, the 114th Aviation Company (Air Mobile Light) was assigned to the 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat), the successor of the Delta Aviation Battalion (Provisional).



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114th Aviation Company (Airmobile Light)

On July 2, 1966, under the provisions of General Order Number 41, Headquarters United States Army Vietnam, the 114th Aviation Company (Air Mobile Light) came under the control of the 1st Aviation Brigade, United States Army Vietnam, and was redesignated the 114th Assault Helicopter Company. In October 1969, the 114th Assault Helicopter Company was released from assignment to the 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat) and reassigned to the 214th Aviation Battalion (Combat).



On the Feb. 29, 1972, the 114th Assault Helicopter Company ended its nine-year tour of duty at Vinh Long. Departing the Republic of South Vietnam on Feb. 29, 1972, the 114th Aviation Company was assigned to Panama, where it served with distinction, including involvement in many mercy missions and disaster-relief operations. The 114th was deactivated at Fort Clayton, Panama Canal Zone, in October 1987.

During its nine-year deployment to Vietnam, the 114th Assault Helicopter Company participated in 16 campaigns and was presented with the following unit awards:

- Presidential Unit Citation, for action Aug. 27-28, 1965
- Valorous Unit Award, for action on June 26, 1964
- Valorous Unit Award, for action April 4-6, 1965
- Meritorious Unit Citation, for action July 1, 1963 to June 20, 1964
- Vietnamese Gallantry Cross with Palm, for action May 5, 1963 to June 30, 1964
- Vietnamese Gallantry Cross with Palm, for action March 1, 1964 to March 26, 1967
- Vietnamese Gallantry Cross with Palm, for action March 27, 1967 to May 18, 1968
- Vietnamese Gallantry Cross with Palm, for action Dec. 15, 1969 to Oct. 10, 1970



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