

## Currahee Fire Base

I guess I should let ya know that I was a driver/cannoneer/gunner on Quad 50s in da Nam, G 65th Arty, ADA, 1/44 Dusters outa Dong Ha. I only saw my rear area for a total of 3wks. during my tour. I never did meet my CO or First Sgt.. When the mount was on the guntruck we operated in crews of five with a driver, a Buck Sgt. squad leader, two cannoneers and a gunner. When in a ground position we had a four man crew, naturally we didn't need a driver and things were much less formal as to who did what. A regular day would consist of firing 2,500 rounds 4 to 5 times a night during MAD MINUTES and each crewman would pull 2 hrs guard duty along with firing. During daylight depending on our level of alert we would fire MMs and we would tear down all four guns, R&R, testfire, hump ammo and take care of the basics of survival while dodging incoming, snipers and ground attacks. As far as details or formations or inspections or any of that stuff the units we were attached to took care of those things, we didn't have time to. We worked our guns and almost never left them. I named the mount we had at Currahee the "GOOD LUCK CHARM" and believe u me everyone on the south side of the FB knew it to be true.....I never was treated like a cherry by any of the men in my first crew. I guess because my fifth day incountry and first time out on a Quad 50 we were running lead security on a 300 truck Marine convoy when the NVA ambushed us at KK Bridge on Hwy 9 just east of the Rockpile. It was not pretty and it took a whole buncha napalm to convince Chuck to didimau. I cannot remember ever being called a cherry by anyone in my crew.....cause a that first encounter with Chuck I got kinda mean and ugly, kinda hard to handle ya know? I quickly developed a f . . kit don't mean nuthin F . . kanA I wanna kill some F . . KIN GOOKS attitude and my higherups wisely recognized that I belonged in the bush, where at least I wouldn't be a danger to them. I always figured they sent me to the A Shau to get me killed. lol..... Spent the first three wks of March '69 workin' with Vinny's unit, 27th Combat Engineers, pullin security on their dozers and rome plows cutting Hwy 547. I killed a tiger that was birddoggin our camp one night while with them. Fourth week of March we dropped back to Camp Eagle and pulled our mount off the truck and they airlifted us to

FSB Eagles Nest in the A Chau. Our position was a pad cut on the NW face below the top of the mountain with just enough room for our mount and ammo. We had no bunker and slept on the ground on top and cut stairs in the side of the mountain to get down to our guns. We fired day and night covering all of the north end of the A Chau including Hamburger Hill. At that time HH had not started yet and our field of fire was unlimited, then they started giving us coordinates and no fire zones and we knew friendlies had been inserted into the valley below us. Then one nite the NVA hit FSB Burchtesgaden, just below us to the south in the same ridgeline and we sat there and watched and listened to them get overrun on our PRC 25 and couldn't move our guns to support them because of the position they had put us in on the side of the mountain. Man that really sucked baddddd. We knew when they ordered us to put our mount down there that it was a really bad position and we wanted to be on top where we could be mobile. Puff hung in there for a long time but didn't seem to affect the NVA's ability to get reinforcements to the top of the Garden. I wish we could have put some .50 cal on'em I know ole Chuck woulda felt that for sure. If I remember right the shooting started around 2300 and didn't stop until the NVA withdrew at dawn. Two days later they airlifted us down to Currahee on the valley floor. Into the jaws of the tiger. Heres a pic of our first day there, sorry I'm not in it I was behind the camera.....Raz

Walter is there anyway you can find out the date that the 2/11 pulled out of Currahee? I too had that last man out experience but at Currahee. The 2/11 had packed up and gone along with everyone else. So we pulled our gun mount to the highest point in the middle of Currahee. All that was left was one company of 101st grunts and the demolition people, cleaning up all the PSP and blowing up bunkers. We continued to fire our Mad Minutes just to let Chuck know that at least there was still a Quad 50 there to deal with if they were feelin kinda froggy. It took 2 wks to clean the FB up with a little over a hundred men there. We knew we were bait and if Chuck got serious, dead meat. Every man there was scared shitless, believe me. There was very little sleeping during that time and all were strung tight as a banjo. For some unknown reason Chuck didn't show and we were unmolested the whole two weeks. Our Quad was slung under the last bird

out and there was a collective sigh of relief throughout the Shithook.....we had survived five months in the A Shau. I salute all my Brothers that didn't.....I am including three pictures of Currahee. One from the air during the peak of hostilities and two at the end. Our Quad is the small black dot in the middle of the pics. Walter I could not believe how much firepower could be packed into a place not much larger than a football field. Over the yrs. I have tried to figure out an inventory. All I can remember is we had the Ace 8", 5-155s, 3 btrys 105s, a buncha 4deuce and 81mm mortars and our Quad 50. Like the Ace we were the only one of our kind in the A Shau. Unknown numbers of 106 and 90mm recoilless. If I remember right Chuck thought the north side was weak and hit it one night and walked right into one of the 90mm recoilless crews and an M60 position. We were told they left 91 in the wire.....Raz