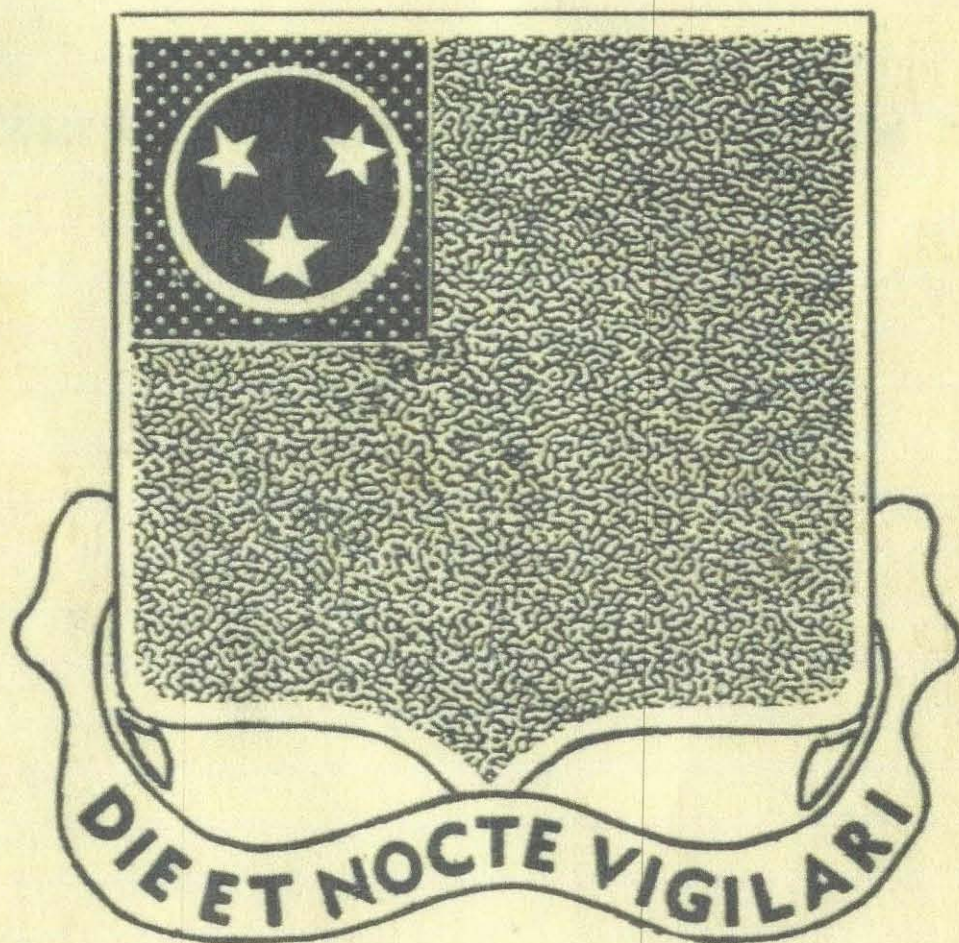


526th AAA

MISSILE BATTALION



History

of the

526th Antiaircraft Artillery Missile Battalion

Compiled and Edited

by

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BATTLE HONORS OF THE 526TH AAA MISSILE BATTALION

BATTLE HONORS:

World War II

Aleutian Islands (With Arrowhead)

As per authority: GO 70, WD, 1945; GO 116, WD, 1946;
GO 72, DA, 1948

HISTORY OF THE
526TH ANTI-AIRCRAFT ARTILLERY MISSILE BATTALION

The history of the 526th Antiaircraft Artillery Missile Battalion began with the constitution and organization of the 71st Artillery Regiment, of the Coast Artillery Corps, located in the Coast Defense of Boston, Mass.

Constituted on 2 May 1918 and organized 10 May 1918, elements of that regiment have been redesignated, inactivated, and activated until 30 September 1949, when orders for the organization of the present unit were published.

The parent unit (71st C.A.C.) was demobilized on 6 March 1919 at Camp Devens, Massachusetts, reconstituted and redesignated the 71st Coast Artillery Regiment on 1 July 1940, with the 1st Battalion concurrently activated at Fort Story, Va. (other elements of the regiment were activated on 3 January 1941 at Fort Story, Va.)

On September 1, 1943, the regiment was broken up and the First Battalion was redesignated and reorganized as the 71st Antiaircraft Artillery Gun Battalion. Later on 10 January 1945 the 71st Antiaircraft Artillery Gun Battalion was reorganized and redesignated the 526th Antiaircraft Composite Battalion. This unit was reorganized and redesignated as the 526th Antiaircraft Artillery Gun Battalion on 1 September 1945.

Redesignated 526th Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion (Gun) on 3 August 1953, the battalion was further redesignated as the 526th Antiaircraft Artillery Missile Battalion on 13 February 1954.

Battle honors for the 526th AAA Missile Battalion were earned in the Aleutian Island Campaign of World War II.

Inactivated after World War II, the unit was reorganized as the 526th AAA Gun Battalion, under the AAA expansion program, on 30 September 1949 at Fort Bliss, Texas, being assigned to Fourth Army and attached to the 35th AAA Brigade. Shortly afterwards, under the command of Major ~~██████████~~ ^{George H. Best} the ranks began to fill with basic cadre from the 79th AAA Gun Battalion. These cadre underwent twelve weeks of cadre training before enough men were obtained to start unit training.

On 10 January 1950, authorization was granted to organize a Medical Detachment from members of Headquarters Battery. In February, Major ~~██████████~~ ^{Oscar W. Lancaster} assumed command of the 526th and the battalion started six months of grueling, specialized training in the desert around El Paso, Texas.

On December 18, 1950, orders were received to move the battalion to Fort Totten, New York. Christmas was spent loading equipment on flat cars and trucks. The guns and personnel were transported by rail, while the fire control equipment went by convoy.

The battalion arrived at Fort Totten on the 29th of December, 1950. All equipment was emplaced ready to fire. The battalion along with the 69th AAA Battalion were the first Antiaircraft Artillery in the defense of New York City.

On 29 October 1951, Battery A occupied the first permanent site at Englewood, New Jersey.

Lt Colonel ~~██████████~~ ^{James A. Kelley} assumed command of the 526th on 10 February 1952 when Major ~~██████████~~ ^{Joseph KoshoFFer} became battalion commander for a short period. Lt Colonel ~~██████████~~ ^{Malley} relieved Major ~~██████████~~ ^{KoshoFFer} on 10 September 1952, and remained with the battalion until 3 April 1953. He was placed on D.S. to the 52d Antiaircraft Artillery Brigade, Fort Wadsworth, New York at this time, being relieved on 21 May 1953 by Lt Colonel ~~██████████~~ ^{Willis T. Lind}

On 1 November 1953, Lt Col ^{and} [redacted] was succeeded for a short period of time by Lt Col ^{CARL F. ChIRICO} [redacted]. Lt Col ^{ChIRICO} [redacted] commanded the Battalion until 10 December 1953 when Lt Col ^{Robert W. Molloy} [redacted] assumed command.

It was during the command of Lt Col ^{Molloy} [redacted] that the 526th AAA Gun Battalion was converted to the 526th AAA Missile Battalion (NIKE) and occupied sites at Fort Hancock, New Jersey. In December of 1953 NIKE package-trained personnel, both officers and enlisted men, began arriving from the 1st Guided Missile Group at Fort Bliss, Texas to begin conversion of the 526th AAA Gun Battalion. The package personnel supplemented with personnel already in the battalion began the momentous job of building revetments, mounds for antennas, tunnels for underground cables and emplacing the Radar and Launcher equipment. These activities were conducted during the winter months of 1954 and were hampered by snow and cold weather; however, the job was accomplished quickly and efficiently. On the 14th of February 1954 the 526th Gun Battalion was officially converted to a missile battalion. On the 14th of May 1954 Battery C of the 526th AAA Missile Battalion became operational and the second Missile Battalion in the United States to become tactical. For the first time the AA defenses of metropolitan New York, with its nine million inhabitants was protected from enemy air attack by the newest of AA weapons, the NIKE guided missile. Following Battery C on 14 May 1954, Battery B became operational on 24 May 1954, Battery A on 28 May 1954 and Battery D on 4 June 1954.

For the next several months the 526th Battalion continued participating in the AA Defense of New York and dressing up the temporary sites. The battalion played host to many distinguished visitors which included General Lewis, former Commanding General of the Army Antiaircraft Command,

General [REDACTED], present ARAACOM Commander, Generals [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], General [REDACTED], Commanding General of the First Army, and about 500 West Point Cadets.

On the 22d of September 1954 Colonel ^{molloy} [REDACTED] left the Battalion for an overseas assignment and Lieutenant Colonel ^{WALTER J. WELLMAN} [REDACTED] assumed command.

During the past fourteen months the battalion has continued in perfecting its mission which is participation in the air defense of New York and the New Jersey area. During April of 1955 Battery D of this battalion was the first of our units to occupy a permanent NIKE site near a civilian community located at Holmdel, New Jersey. Since then, the site under the leadership of Captain [REDACTED] has progressed far, both tactically and in community relations with the township of Holmdel. Also during April of 1955 Batteries B and C of the 526th battalion moved to permanent sites on Fort Hancock, New Jersey. In October of 1955 Battery A moved and occupied a permanent site near the town of Oldbridge, New Jersey.

Though we are constantly saying farewell to old friends, their presence is still felt in the spirit and high morale they left behind, and the new officers and men are quick to become part of the proud tradition of this battalion. Though our duties many times are tedious and the hours are long, this spirit never dims, because all realize that the ultimate mission of the battalion is to make our frontiers safe for democracy.