

U.S. ARMY

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This **MONTH** in  
military history...

- 1775: Continental Congress approves construction of first naval force.
- 1777: Washington attacks British at Germantown. Both sides suffer heavy losses.
- 1812: William H. Harrison defeats British & Indians at Battle of Thames, Ontario.
- 1918: Alvin York leads group of 7 men in killing over 20 Germans and capturing another 132 during the Meuse-Argonne offensive.
- 1921: The Unknown Soldier is selected to be entombed at Arlington National Cemetery.
- 1942: U.S. defeats Japanese in Battle of Cape Esperance.
- 1944: Aircraft from USS Ranger sink/damage 8 German ships at base in Norway.
- 1944: Japanese begin *kamikaze* attacks during the Battle for Leyte Gulf; decisive Allied victory in Leyte Gulf in same month.
- 1962: Cuban Missile Crisis.
- 1965: 1st major operation in Vietnam begins when 1st Cavalry Division joins with South Vietnamese Marines.

# The ASC History News Letter

## The 401st Army Field Support Brigade

The 401<sup>st</sup> Army Field Support Brigade formally traces its lineage to 16 October 2006 when it was activated as the first MTOE AFSB. While the 401<sup>st</sup> has official lineage from 2006, the unit has a longer TDA history in SWA. The 401<sup>st</sup> traces its history back to the 1997 activation of the Combat Equipment Group-Southwest Asia, charged with expanding War Reserves in the Persian Gulf region.

While the unit created APS sets in Qatar and Kuwait, it underwent a series of name and organizational changes. CEG-SWA was renamed the AMC Forward-SWA in 2000 when the unit assumed responsibility for the Logistics Assistance Program and LOGCAP in SWA. AMC Forward-SWA was redesignated the Army Field Support Brigade-SWA on 1 Oct, 2004. At the time the AFSB-SWA consisted of the Brigade HQ's in Qatar; AFSBn-Qatar; AFSBn-Kuwait; AFSBn-Afghanistan; and Pre-positioned Watercraft at Kuwaiti Naval Base. The unit began war

support operations in SWA in Oct, 2001 with support to US Forces in Afghanistan. The HQ moved from Qatar to Kuwait in the fall of 2002 as part of the ramp up to OIF.

The AFSB-SWA was deactivated on 16 October 2006 when the 401<sup>st</sup> AFSB stood up. In 2008 the brigade headquarters forward deployed to Bagram Airbase, Afghanistan. In 2010 the battalions in Kuwait and Qatar transferred to the 402d AFSB in order to allow the 401<sup>st</sup> to focus on the surge in Afghanistan. The 401<sup>st</sup> now controls AFSBn-Bagram and AFSBn-Kandahar under its control as well as all other AMC assets in Afghanistan.

Since arriving in Afghanistan in 2008, the 401<sup>st</sup> has provided support above the BCT level and to allied forces across Afghanistan. This support included the fielding of MRAP, the Afghan Surge, and steady support during the slow drawdown of forces. While sustaining the Warfighter remained as a continuing critical mission,

the 401<sup>st</sup> is now focused on retrograde of non-mission essential equipment from the theater in preparation for the projected end of combat operations by the end of 2014. Retrograde goals have been impacted by exceptionally difficult winters and the closure of the Pakistan ground lines of communication.

Despite the challenges, the 401<sup>st</sup> AFSB continues to be the "First to Make a Difference" for our forces in Afghanistan.



## The Louisiana Purchase of 1803

The story of the U.S. Government's interest in Rock Island begins with the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, which has been described as the greatest real estate deal in history. In 1803 the United States paid France \$15 million for the Louisiana Territory--828,000 square miles of land west of the Mississippi River at a cost of less than .03 cents per acre. The lands acquired stretched from the Mississippi River to the current Idaho, and from the Gulf of Mexico to the Canadian border. The Louisiana Purchase nearly doubled the size of the United States, making the U.S. one of the largest nations in the world. The land purchased in 1803 had a long history of ownership by Native Tribes, the Spanish, and the French. The first European settler was Rene-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle in 1682, who established Louisiana and created a trade control hub at the mouth of the Mississippi River.

Living on the Frontier was difficult and the early settlers were not the families needed for a permanent population. Most of the early inhabitants to the area were soldiers, slaves, clerics, and convicts (both male and female). Settlement of this new French land soon took a backseat to the prevailing French and Indian War from 1754-1763. After her eventual defeat, France ceded

western Louisiana and New Orleans to Spain, and lost Canada and eastern Louisiana to the British.

Now under Spanish control, the transformation of frontier to buzzing metropolis still failed to happen. In fact, most of the inhabitants of the Louisiana area were still French. Spanish officials were slow to move leaders and residents into the area, and when Government officials did arrive, they were quickly rotated through, leaving little leadership continually present. This lackadaisical Spanish ruling opened the door for another country's strong leader to claim the Louisiana territory. In this case, it was a reclaiming; French leader Napoleon Bonaparte seized the land legally by the 1800 Treaty of San Ildefonso, although Spanish signing of the treaty was forced.

Once again French owned, the Louisiana area became of pressing interest to the United States. Fearing that American trade on the Mississippi might be negatively affected, Presi-

dent Thomas Jefferson decided to make the French an offer they could not refuse. Little did the American administration know that, due to financial debt and an ongoing slave revolt in Haiti, France had already decided to sell all of Louisiana. This culminated in American ownership of the Louisiana area. The land deal was signed in April 1803, ratified by the Senate in October, and marked by formal ceremony in March 1804 in St Louis. Contrary to the Spanish, the United States was quick to send explorers into the new territory, the best known being Lewis and Clark. However, by 1805 Zebulon Pike was exploring the upper Mississippi and reported back that he had found a "Big Island," the future site of Rock Island Arsenal.



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