

## **COL Nelson A. Mahone, Jr. - Artillery OCS Class 90-43**

One of the first Army-trained aeronautical engineers, Colonel Nelson A. Mahone, Jr., completed his graduate study in Aeronautical Engineering at Princeton in 1950-1952 and then reported to the Army Aviation-Airborne R&D Office at Army Field Forces at Ft. Monroe in summer of 1952.

A Master Army Aviator with 5,800 flying hours (819 In combat) In a variety of aircraft types, Colonel Mahone held Rotary Wing and Fixed Wing instrument ratings, and was jet qualified. The 28-year Army Aviator was one of the first multi-engine instrument rated aviators in 1954 and one of the earliest Master Army Aviators in 1961.

While with the Air Mobility Division, OCRD, DA, during 1961 to 1964, he was responsible for coordinating and planning all aviation-related R&D, including aircraft, weapons, avionics, surveillance, and related systems. He was the DoD project officer on the tri-service, tripartite development and evaluation of the P.1127 aircraft (USRIG Harrier) where the Army was executive agent for DoD in the British, German, and U.S. development/evaluation.

During 1964-1965, he organized and trained the Army's first Aerial Rocket Artillery Battalion and developed the unit's tactics and techniques of employment as a brand new and vital part of the 11th Air Assault Division. This unit was composed of UH-1B helicopters modified to take various developmental weapons systems. When this division became the 1st Cavalry Division in 1965, he took the 20th Aerial Rocket Artillery Battalion to Vietnam where its success was proven in combat. During this period, he commanded the 20th for seven months In combat (1965-1966).

Returning to CONUS, Colonel Mahone became the LOH Project Manager during 1966-1969 during which time he had complete responsibility for the development, testing, procurement, and deployment to operational units of the OH-6 Cayuse helicopter and related programs. In 1969, Colonel Mahone returned to Vietnam where he commanded the 17th Combat Aviation Group, consisting of seven Aviation Battalions with over 600 RW and FW aircraft. His decorations include the Silver Star, four LOMs, two DFCs, the Bronze Star with "V", and 18 Air Medals.