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NEW SGM

(04-68-1.jpg: SGM Ritter has his wife pin on his new E-9 stripes while COL Ingwerson (Left) and LTC Dupont watch on.)

The 97th Engr Bn said aufwiedersehen to its SGM by presenting him with a new set of stripes. The new E-9 stripes were presented to SGM Gilbert Ritter by the 24th Engr Gp Cmdr, COL Glenn Ingwerson, and the SGM's wife, Audrey in a surprise promotion ceremony at the Bn HQs on 8 Apr 68.

CPT Thomas Meadows says that the conspiracy and secrecy involved in this promotion would give credit to the CIA. It ranged from Gp HQ to the SGM's wife with stops at the mess hall and Bn staff sections. The entire time this armada of individuals was working on orders, cakes, presents, champagnes, etc., the SGM was unaware that he was receiving his well-deserved extra star.

At the promotion party there were numerous conversations dealing with the SGM's promotion. Several of the conversations dealt with: How delighted everyone was that the 97th had the honor of promoting this extremely deserving NCO; How everyone was concerned as to whether or not the orders would arrive before he left for Vietnam. Needless to say the

morning they came in there were shouts of glee that even the new SGM heard, but could not discern. For the first time the SGM was at a loss for something to say as CWO Daniel Fisher read the promotion orders.

During the party SGM Ritter proved his marksmanship capabilities by hitting the fluorescent light fixture with the cork off the first bottle of champagnes.

SGM Ritter has served in the U.S. Navy as a Machinist's Mate in 1944 and 45. Among his many jobs since entering the service in 1944 has been a Track Vehicle Mechanic, Motor Maintenance SGT, Platoon SGT, Combat Construction Instructor, Operation SGT, and 1SG. He has served in such places as Alaska, Korea, France, Germany and the States.

He has been awarded the WWII Victory Medal, the Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal, the Philippine Liberation Ribbon the National Defense Service Medal with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster, the Good Conduct Medal with 1-4th award (clasp), the Army Commendation Medal, and the Commendation Ribbon with metal pendant. The Battle of Koeppern, however, stands out in the SGM's mind as the most heroic event of his career for which he has received no award.

SGM Ritter has been of invaluable service not only to the EM of the Bn in getting their military career

started off on the right foot but also to the officers through his expert instruction and example in military engineering and troop command.

SGM Ritter is presently on order to Vietnam where he will be stationed with the 18th Engr Brigade near Cam Rahn Bay. He will be replaced by 1SG Charles McKenzie formerly of Co A of the 97th.

TO KANSAS OR BUST

(04-68-2.jpg: Members of the 97th Engr Bn Advance Party board a jet airliner at Rhein Main Air Force Base for Ft Riley, KS.)

FRANKFURT, Germany – Approximately 40 military personnel and their dependents of the 97th Engr Bn serving as members of this unit's advance party for the redeployment to Ft Riley, KS, departed Rhein Main Air Force Base on Monday, 1 Apr. On Sunday morning, 31 Mar, those personnel with dependents and personal baggage were picked up by busses and taken to Frankfurt. On the day of departure, busses picked up the remaining personnel and their baggage in front of the company area and took them to the departure center at the Rhein Main Base. Later the same day the advance party boarded two commercial jets, some on a Trans-Caribbean jet liner and the others on a Pan American airliner.

The advance party, consisting of representative personnel from all of the companies of the Bn and other support sections of the unit, will report to Ft Riley on 26 Apr.

The OIC of the advance party who will supervise and control the advance party in the move to Ft Riley is 1LT Ross A Johnson. He will act as liaison and commander for the 97th until the main body arrives in Jul. Assisting LT Johnson in the administration and logistical phases of the preparation for initial reception of the main body are CW3 Kirby-Blaire, SFC Edward R Grabenstein, SP5 Denny L Thoren, and SSG Donn R Tolls.

Providing support and liaison to the advance party are the Commanding General of Ft Riley, BG Linton S Boatwright, the 138th Engr Gp, commanded by COL Frank A La Boon (the 97th Engr Bn will come under this unit), and A Co of the 67th Signal Bn. (Related stories and photos of BG Boatwright on pager 6 and COL La Boon on page 7).

Some of the tasks to be accomplished by the advance party are requisitioning of new equipment, establishing a supply and maintenance system, setting up this unit's billets and messing facilities for the main body, and, finally, to process all incoming personnel of the 97th.

Also redeploying to Ft Riley to be under the 138th Engr Gp will be the 83rd Engr Bn. The 83rd was the sister Bn to the 97th under the 32nd Engr Gp in France.

By the end of this coming summer the 97th Engr Bn will be established as a functional part of Ft Riley.

(04-68-3.jpg: SP4 Leonard Weinick of HQ Co, 97th Engr Bn carries the Advance Party's flay while boarding a bus for Rhein Main Air Base.)

RE-UP CORNER – WHERE'S THE GANG?

Were you having the best time of your life when you were drafted? Can you hardly wait to get back home with the old gang and take up where you left off? Or are you wise enough to realize that the old gang has long settled down to the serious business of earning a living and supporting a family? Before you leave your Army buddies and the challenging life of the service, let your Career Counselor explain the benefits of career service, which you have not yet experienced. You may be glad you did.

Congratulations to the men who reenlisted during the month of March and April:

SSG Curtin C Davis	Co D
SSG John M Dunivan, Jr	Co A
PFC Randy C Vandever	Co C
PFC John J Campbell	Co B
PFC L. B. Johnson	Co A
SP5 James E Pitts	Co C
SGT James E Lane	Co C
PFC Robert Salzano	Co C

CONSTRUCTOR

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community with a tentative schedule to play several of the native schools.

SP5 Kenneth O'Mellon of HQ Co was chosen the most improved player on the team. SP5 John Lund was chosen the most valuable player.

With the end of volleyball, the Bn is hot to go with softball. All companies are fielding teams. With weather such as we have now it should be a great season.

For those of you with wives that supported the teams during the season (there were many) we extend our appreciation and thanks to you as we do to other members of the 97th Engr Bn.

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(04-68-5.jpg: SP4 Weinick of HQ Co, 97th Engr Bn, slams home a point for the 'Spikers' against a strong General Depot team.)

[DID NOT TYPE 'A DAY FOR DECISION,' AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

[DID NOT TYPE 'PARADOX,' AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

[DID NOT TYPE 'CHAPLAINS CORNER - BE STRONG,' AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

[DID NOT TYPE 'A SOLDIER,' AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

[DID NOT TYPE 'TRAFFIC SAFETY MONTH,' AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

COMPANY A TOPS IN CFC

The combined Federal Campaign, the once-a-year campaign for 21 voluntary health and welfare agencies officially closed on 31 Mar 68. Contributions from the men of the 97th Engr Bn totaled \$604.69, with 95% of the Bn contributing. A Co proved to be the most generous with a total contribution of \$175.30. C Co was next with \$150 contributed.

Your participation in this campaign has helped your fellow members of the armed forces, their families and veterans, needy people throughout the world, and home-front health and welfare activities. The Dept of Defense, the participating agencies and the people they serve gratefully acknowledge your support.

[DID NOT TYPE 'EES TO STAMP INSPECTED MERCHANDISE,' AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

SPORTS CORNER

SFC Archie H Hayes, Sports Editor

(04-68-4.jpg: SFC Archie H Hayes.)

VOLLEYBALL NEWS

The Pirmasens sub-district volleyball league closed out at the end of March. The 97th Engr Bn was well represented in the final standings with HQ Co in 2nd place with a record of eight wins and one loss. 'Charging Charlie' of the 97th finished 3rd with a seven win and two loss record.

The majority of the players were a little unhappy because of such a short season. The 'Spikers' of HQ Co, however, are moving out into the surrounding

CLASSMATES? – NEW PERSONNEL IN THE 97TH ENGR BN

SP5 Baulding, Frank	Rockmart, GA
SP5 Larsen, Gary D	Pine Hill, NJ
SP4 White, Linden M	Sebeka, MN
SP4 Colby, Andrew	Chicago, IL
SP4 Houseman, John B Jr	Des Moines, IA
SP4 Phillips, Howard R	Blaisdell, NY
SP4 Keeley, John R	Seattle, WA
SP4 McKenna, Leroy V	Shawno, WI
SP4 Fish, John H Jr	Newburyport, MA
PFC Bolden, Earl C	Houma, LA
PFC Snyder, William R	Clio, MI
PFC Rowan, James E	Grand Rapids, MI
PFC Hutchens, Hugh L	Goshen, IN
PVT Morris, Forward M	Detroit, MI
PVT Noll, Robert W	Sommerville, NJ

SOLDIER OF THE MONTH

(04-68-6.jpg: SP4 Reid C Coleman.)

SP4 Reid C Coleman shown here after taking Soldier of the Month for April. He is a heavy equipment operator for B Co of the 97th Engr Bn. As an award for winning the competition SP4 Coleman won a \$25 check and three-day pass.

97TH ENGR BN PROMOTIONS

TO NAME
HQ Co

1LT	Sanchez, Jose
SGT	Armijo, George L
SP5	Dykstra, John F
SP5	Weinick, Leonard
SP4	Nash, Dana F
SP4	Pagano, Steffan F
SP4	Deatherage, Vern W
SP4	Ferguson, James C
SP4	Langford, James S
SP4	Crafton, Terry L
PFC	Harris, Willie E
PFC	Johnson, Vernon
PFC	King, John R

PFC	Scher, Ronald
PFC	Stephens, Walter J
PFC	Tolton, Norman L
PFC	Parrino, Vincent J

A Co

SP5	Burke, Michael A
SP5	Misner, Charles B
SP4	Bartlett, Bruce L
SP4	Staker, Lamar D

B Co

SP5	Moats, Lawrence L
SP5	Earl, Donald F
SP5	Johanson, Carl O
SP5	Kamps, Frederick K
SP5	Looney, James R
SGT	Bullins, James C
SP4	Sargent, Matt R
SP4	Kristoferson, Gary

C Co

SP5	Smith, John F
SP5	McMahon, William J
SP5	Lively, Jerry L
SP5	Price, David W
SP5	Musser, Ronald L
SP5	Banks, Willie J
SP5	Page, Benny H
SP4	Turner, James Jr
SP4	Lewis, John L
SP4	King, Calvin W II
SP4	Cathey, Billy W
SP4	Wallace, Larry G
SP4	Little, Larry G
SP4	Salzano, Robert C
SP4	LePeilbet, Michael A
SP4	Robinson, Leroy A
SP4	Ashworth, Charles W Jr
SP4	Martinez, Tiofilo
SP4	Jacobson, Michael N
SP4	Horn, Hal A

D Co

1LT Elliot, Gary
 SP5 Mathis, Willie E
 SP5 Smith, Dennis
 SP5 Severino, Steven P
 SP5 Wilcox, Clifford E
 SP5 Pinney, Gary S
 SP5 Schlottach, Jack W
 SP5 Archuleta, Edmund R
 SP5 Self, Wilson L
 SP4 Klitzke, Edward E
 SP4 Sharp, Ronald W
 SP4 Ocegueda-Verdin, Jose L
 SP4 Lauriault, Andre

'O' DEFECTS

By 2LT John Paul Kuspa

The 'Third Phase' Inspection Station had been in operation for over three weeks under the direction of SSG Milford D Williams when the Advance Party's departure wiped out the entire ordnance inspection team. At this time SSG Williams was on leave to pick up his newly arrived dependents, and the station coordinator and recorder SP4 Clinton L Olive had recently been admitted to the hospital at Muenchweiler. So that only left a few engineer inspectors on hand with no NCOIC and no recorder, when help arrived on 1 Apr 68.

LT Havel, of the 24th Engr Gp (Const) had personally hand picked ten men from the other units of the Gp to serve with the 97th Engr Bn. They came into this organization when they were sorely needed and have done an excellent job in helping the 97th prepare to deploy to Ft Riley in July. Here is a brief rundown on those names and faces, which have become all too familiar to most of the operators and mechanics of the 97th. They are the ones who have been checking maintenance accomplishments of first and second echelon mechanics.

Squad leader of the group is SP5 Clyde R Poindexter, from Cocoa, FL. He serves with the field maintenance platoon of A Co, 293rd Engr Bn (Const), as a senior engineer mechanic. This father of two (his wife gave birth to a son on Easter Sunday) has been in the Army for 63 months. He has assumed the fulltime duty of running the administration of the inspection

station, as well as helping to direct the efforts of the squad with SSG Williams.

Also from A Co, 293rd, is SP4 Kenneth R Crain, of Callville, WA. He works in company maintenance as an engineer mechanic and has been in the Army for 20 months. The other three engineer inspectors are from the 249th Engr Bn (Const), at Karlsruhe, from B Co, SP4 James B Hauson is a generator mechanic from Beloit, WI. SP4 Joseph Pratt is a D Co engineer mechanic from Shreveport, LA. Finally, from Columbus, GA, PFC Anderson Robinson is an engineer mechanic from C Co. He was an All State defensive end, also playing basketball, baseball and running track in 'off' season. Pratt also earned All State football honors, playing at offensive tackle.

The ordnance Inspection Team isled by SP5 Willie P Davis a 31-month veteran from New Orleans, LA. He is an ordnance mechanic from the maintenance platoon of the 370th Engr Co at Kaiserslautern. One of his teammates, SP4 David E Logan, is from Waynesburg, PA. He is an ordnance mechanic in the field maintenance platoon of A Co, 249th, and has served in the Army for 30 months. The remaining three members of the squad are from A Co, 293rd Engr Bn (Const) at Baumholder. SP4 Robert A Liberatore works in the company maintenance tool room and hails from Syracuse, NY. SP4 Darrol L Long from Pauleing, OH, works in field maintenance as an ordnance mechanic. Another ordnance mechanic in field maintenance platoon there is SP4 Earl Desmond. He is from New Orleans, LA.

This fine group of men has had to adjust rapidly to their new environment. They have had a tough job, one made no easier by the anxious equipment operator, nervous supervisor, and pressured motor officer who accompany each piece of equipment to be inspected. Two of this crew, SP5 Davis and SP4 Liberatore, will assist the CMMI-II Ordnance Team as 2404 recorders. This 'fifth squad' of the field maintenance platoon is here to help the 97th Engr Bn (Const). Lets take the opportunity to welcome them as full-fledged members of our battalion, and continue to make them feel a part of our 'going home' team.

ENGINEERS' CORNER

PIRMASENS, Germany – On 23 Apr 68, the heavy equipment platoon of C Co turned over at a final inspection the access roads and pavements project which they have been working on since 25 Sep 67. The general scope of the work consisted of constructing five concrete tank turning pads and stabilized access roads interconnecting the controlled humidity storage buildings. The project officer was 1LT Phillip L Nordstrom and the Project NCO was SSG Warren Anderson. Tuesday, 23 Apr 68 1LT Nordstrom guided the inspecting party over the project for the final inspection.

The earthwork portion of the project consisted of excavating or filling the subgrade as necessary to conform to specifications. When the subgrade had been prepared to the proper grade, compaction of subgrade was necessary prior to the placement of the sub base. Since the subgrade soil was a silt-clay soil, it was essential for the soil to be dry prior to compaction. Silt-clay subgrade has good load supporting characteristics when dry, however, negligible load support characteristics when saturated. When the sub base consisted of a non-frost susceptible sand-gravel gradation mixture. The sub base was then compacted with sheepsfoot rollers and finally mixed aggregate was spread on the road in two layers of equal thickness, the second layer being the surface course. Final compaction was accomplished with a steel wheeled roller.

The second platoon of Co C provided the concrete specialist support for the concrete turning pads. Five turning pads were constructed at critical points in the roadway where tanks will be making turning movements.

For the entire project, a total of 1171 man-days were expended in construction of the project. Equipment used in the construction ranged from scrapers, graders, and rollers to air compressors and Herman Nelson heaters. Consequently, a good knowledge of engineering techniques and capabilities of available equipment were essential.

The heavy equipment platoon with specialized support from the second construction platoon, Co C, has completed a fine job. Congratulations are in order for a job well done.

[DID NOT TYPE 'ORGANIZATIONS AT RILEY,' AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

FT RILEY COMMANDING GENERAL

(04-68-7.jpg: BG Linton Sinclair Boatwright)

Linton Sinclair Boatwright was born in Washington, DC on 29 Apr 20. He was graduated from the US Military Academy in 1941 and commissioned a second lieutenant of Artillery.

Until Nov 1943, he was stationed at Ft Bragg, NC, holding a variety of posts with the 578th Field Artillery Regimental and Group, to include those of regimental and group S-3, and group executive officer. He was then assigned to HQ, XII Corps Artillery, Ft Jackson, SC, where he served as assistant S-3 and then as S-2. Accompanying the headquarters to Europe in Apr 1944, he remained with it as assistant S-3 during its sweep across Northern France and into Germany, becoming its S-3 shortly after V-E Day.

From Jul 1945 to Jan 1947 he served with three separate field artillery battalions on occupation duty in Germany – the 974th, the 351st, and the 686th – holding the positions of executive officer, and S-3, and commanding the 351st from Mar to Jun 1946.

His next assignment was as assistant operations officer, G-5 Section, HQ, 3rd Army, in Germany; and in Feb 1947 he became assistant S-3 of the 7750th Displaced Persons Operations Group.

Returning to Ft Bragg in Aug 1947, he was assigned to HQ, V Corps, as assistant G-3, a post he retained as the headquarters moved to Korea in Aug 1950 as Chief of Plans Div, G-3. In May of the following year, he assumed command of the 37th Field Artillery Bn, 2nd Inf Div. This Bn was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for its actions during the Chinese Spring Offensive of May 1951. During Oct and Nov the battalion supported the 23rd Inf Regiment in its battle for 'Heartbreak Ridge.' The 37th Field Artillery was the most active battalion in the Korean War firing over two thirds of a million rounds; 320,000 rounds were fired during BG Boatwright's period in command.

In Jan 1952, having been awarded the Silver Star for gallantry in action, BG Boatwright returned to Ft Bragg once again, this time as Test Officer with the Field Artillery Div of Army Field Forces Board No. 1.

Here he tested the Army's first atomic weapon – the 280mm gun and later was appointed Chief of the Weapons Test Section, Field Artillery Service Test Div.

Two years later, in Feb 1954, he was selected to attend the Armed Forces Staff College in Norfolk, VA; and in Aug he was assigned to the Office of Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1, Dept of the Army, Washington, DC, as a personnel staff officer. Until Jul 1958 he held a number of such posts in the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, Dept of the Army, to include those of Chief, Personnel Action Br, Military Personnel Div, and Executive Officer, Personnel Actions Div.

He then left Washington to take command of the 1st Bn, 18th Artillery, Ft Sill, OK, a position held until Aug 1959, when he was selected to attend the Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA.

His next assignment, 12 months later, was to the Operations Div of the Joint Staff, HQ, Pacific Command, Camp H. M. Smith, Hawaii. In Jul 1963 he became Div Artillery Cmdr, 1st Armored Div, Ft Hood, TX, and in Aug 1964 he moved to the position of Assistant Chief, G-4, for both III Corps and the post of Ft Hood.

On Aug 1965, he departed Ft Hood for Nha Trang, Vietnam, as part of the newly formed HQ, US Army Task Force Alfa, currently known as HQ, I Field Force Vietnam. His initial assignment was as Assistant Chief of Staff G-4, and in Mar 1966 he assumed the position of Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3.

In Sep 1966 he became Commander I Field Force Vietnam Artillery, then from Nov 1966 until Sep 1967, BG Boatwright served as Deputy Cmdr General and Chief of Staff, I Field Force. He arrived at Ft Riley 28 Oct 1967, to take command of the post.

GROUP COMMANDING OFFICER

(04-68-8.jpg: COL Frank A La Boon)

COL Frank A La Boon is the Commanding Officer of the 138TH Engr Gp at Ft Riley.

COL La Boon comes to the post from Carlisle Barracks, PA, where he was attending the Army War College. He was born 30 Jan 1923, in Chickasaw, OK. He is married to the former Bonnie Boettcher of Annapolis, MD, and they have four daughters –

Michelle 16, Susan 11, Melissa 7, and Allison 4. The family resides at 331 Pershing Ave, Ft Riley.

After attending the Univ of Oklahoma for two years, COL La Boon entered the US Military Academy, West Point, NY. He graduated from that institution in 1945 and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Corps of Engineers.

His first assignment in the Army was as a platoon leader with the 6th Inf Div in Korea from 1945 to 1947. At the end of that time, COL La Boon was assigned to Sandia Base, NM, until 1951. From there he went to Ft Belvoir, VA to attend the Advanced Officers Course at the Engr School.

Upon completion of the course in 1952 he enrolled in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and was granted a Master's Degree in Civil Engineering in 1953.

COL La Boon returned to Korea where he served with the Korean Military Assistance Group and as Assistant Division Engineer with the 40th Inf Div. He left Korea in 1954 and returned to Ft Belvoir as a member of the staff and faculty of the Engineer School until 1956. He then was assigned as the resident engineer at Ramey Air Force Base in Puerto Rico.

From Puerto Rico, COL La Boon went to Ft Leavenworth, KS, to attend the Command and General Staff College for one year. In 1960, he was assigned to the Engineer Br, Office of Personnel Operations, Dept of the Army, Washington, DC where he served until 1963.

COL La Boon was commander of the 87th Engr Construction Bn at Ft Belvoir in 1963-1964. From 1964 until 1966 he was an engineer advisor to the Imperial Iranian Gendarmerie in Iran. At the completion of his tour of duty in Iran, he entered the Army War College.

His awards include the Bronze Star and the Army Commendation Medal.

[DID NOT TYPE 'RACING,' AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

THE ALASKAN CHAPTER

The 97th Engr Bn (Const) started off as the 56th Engr Bn (Separate) when this unit was placed on the inactive list of the Regular Army on 1 Oct 1933, the

97th's official birthday. The battalion was redesigned as the 97th Engr Bn (Separate) on 1 Jan 1938, and was initially activated for full military service at Camp Blanding, FL, on 1 Jun 1941. On 22 Feb 1942, the battalion was redesigned the 97th Engr Regiment (General Service), later to be renamed the 97th Engr General Service Regiment on 1 Aug 1942.

After initial training in basic military operations at Camp Blanding, to include some indoctrination in construction engineering fundamentals, the battalion, in Apr 1942 reported to Ft Lewis, WA. The 97th was embarking upon the most famous single project in its history as its first major assignment. The unit boarded ship and sailed to Valdes, AK, where a temporary camp was set up in the harsh winter. The men of the Regiment were forced to sit in their chilly environment for a full month because the extreme cold had frozen the ground, made trails impassible, and created many other natural obstacles.

The 97th was well equipped with bull dozers (24 of them), but only had one bulldozer operator and officer was available. His task of training and guiding enough men to man the dozers was soon accomplished.

In June, under the command of COL Samuel Whippel, the 97th Engineers set out to meet a construction engineering challenge. The 97th received orders to build a road from Slana to the junction of the of the road travelling south from Fairbanks. Although many major obstacles were confronted, the men were favored with nearly twenty four hours of daylight during the Alaskan Artic summer, and work progressed on a round the clock schedule.

Many bridges were needed during this construction, not only over rivers, but over dry land as well. Several times the 97th encountered spots where many tons of fill failed to cover seemingly bottomless pits of the Alaskan tundra. These became the sites of the 'land' bridges. Barriers of these and other types made it impossible to build the road according to plans; so the original plans were changed, and the road was rerouted. Despite the considerable lengthening of the road these changes involved, the project was completed on schedule. This done, the 97th Engineers embarked on a job, which gained world wide attention-the building of the Alcan Highway!

According to plans, the 97th was given the mission of constructing the northern end of the highway, the

500 miles from Fairbanks, AK south to White Horse, Canada. Much of this stretch of the North American Continent had never been visited by man. The 97th Engineers preceded both explorers and the survey teams that usually investigate new territory first.

The men of the 97th carried plenty of enthusiasm into the fight against the adverse conditions which prevailed. Work on the previous road project had nurtured the high morale and technical skill necessary to tackle the Alcan Highway's construction. These professional engineer soldiers finished the project ahead of schedule, arriving at White River in Sep 1943. After setting up a temporary camp awaiting the arrival of the Canadian section of the Alcan, the two groups finally met in an impressive ceremony that marked another monumental project finished by the engineers.

Upon accomplishing their important mission, the 97th prepared to return to the States; but a change of plans forced the unit to remain for yet another bitter Alaskan winter. The disappointed news cause low morale and was not helped by the Christmas day temperature low of 79 degrees below zero, the frozen water and fuel supplies, and the one death attributable to the widespread hardships imposed by the cruel winter.

When spring and the time to depart approached, the 97th was more than ready to bring to a close their successful Alaskan chapter.

[DID NOT TYPE 'COMPANY A PARTY,' AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

USAREUR ENGINEER

4 MAY 1968, PIRMASENS, GERMANY – The 97th Engr Bn Construction will be honored with a visit by BG Roy S Kelley, 7th Army Engineer.

BG Kelley was born near Bowling Green, KY, on 23 Oct 1915. He was graduated from the Bowling Green High School in 1932; attended Purdue Univ until 1937; and was graduated from the US Military Academy, West Point, NY in 1941 as a second lieutenant, Corps of Engineers. After World War II, he attended the California Institute of technology and was awarded an MSCE degree in 1948. Prior to entry into the Military Academy, he served two and half years in the

Kentucky National Guard and five years as an ROTC cadet.

BG Kelley first served in the 4th Engr Bn of the 4th Div at Ft Benning and Ft Gordon, GA, when the motorized division concept was being tested. After commanding a company of the 357th Engr Regt at Camp Pickett, VA, he joined the 358th Engr Regt at Camp Claiborne, LA and was commanding the 2nd Bn when the regiment moved to England in Jul 1943. In Jun 1944, his battalion landed on Normandy Beach as a part of the Provisional Engr Special Brigade Gp supporting the assault landings in France. It was later a part of the Military Pipeline Service constructing POL lines and facilities across France. When Antwerp fell, he moved the battalion to Antwerp and was engaged in rehabilitating the Port of Antwerp for military use.

After visiting the United States to marry Catherine Lahey, of Pelham Manor, NY, he returned to Germany as commander of a construction battalion, then joined the staff of the newly formed occupation police force, the United States Constabulary.

He returned to the US to attend the California Institute of Technology, then taught engineering at West Point for four years (1948-52) prior to attending the Command and General Staff College at Ft Leavenworth, KS. Upon graduation in 1953, he became Executive and Operations Officer of the 44th Engr Const Gp in Korea.

In 1954 he became Chief of the Construction Operations Br in the Tokyo HQ of Army Forces, Far East, serving there until his return to be Deputy District Engineer of the Army Engr District in Pittsburgh, PA at the time the original NIKE defenses of Pittsburgh and Cleveland were under construction.

Attendance at the Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, (Class of 1958) was followed by assignment as Chief, Military Personnel Div, and Office of the Chief of Engineers, where he later became the Dir of Personnel for the Corps of Engineers.

Leaving Washington in 1962 he became the District Engr, US Army Engr District, Baltimore, MD, commanding a District with large and diverse programs in both civil works and military construction in a six-state and the District of Columbia area.

In 1965, he became the Engineer of 7th Army I Stuttgart. When the headquarters of 7th Army and US Army, Europe were combined in 1966, he moved to Heidelberg to become the Dept Engr, US Army, Europe and 7th Army.

He was promoted to BG on 18 Aug 1967 and reassigned as the Engineer, US Army, Europe and 7th Army.

BG Kelley has been awarded the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster, and the Army Commendation Medal.

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