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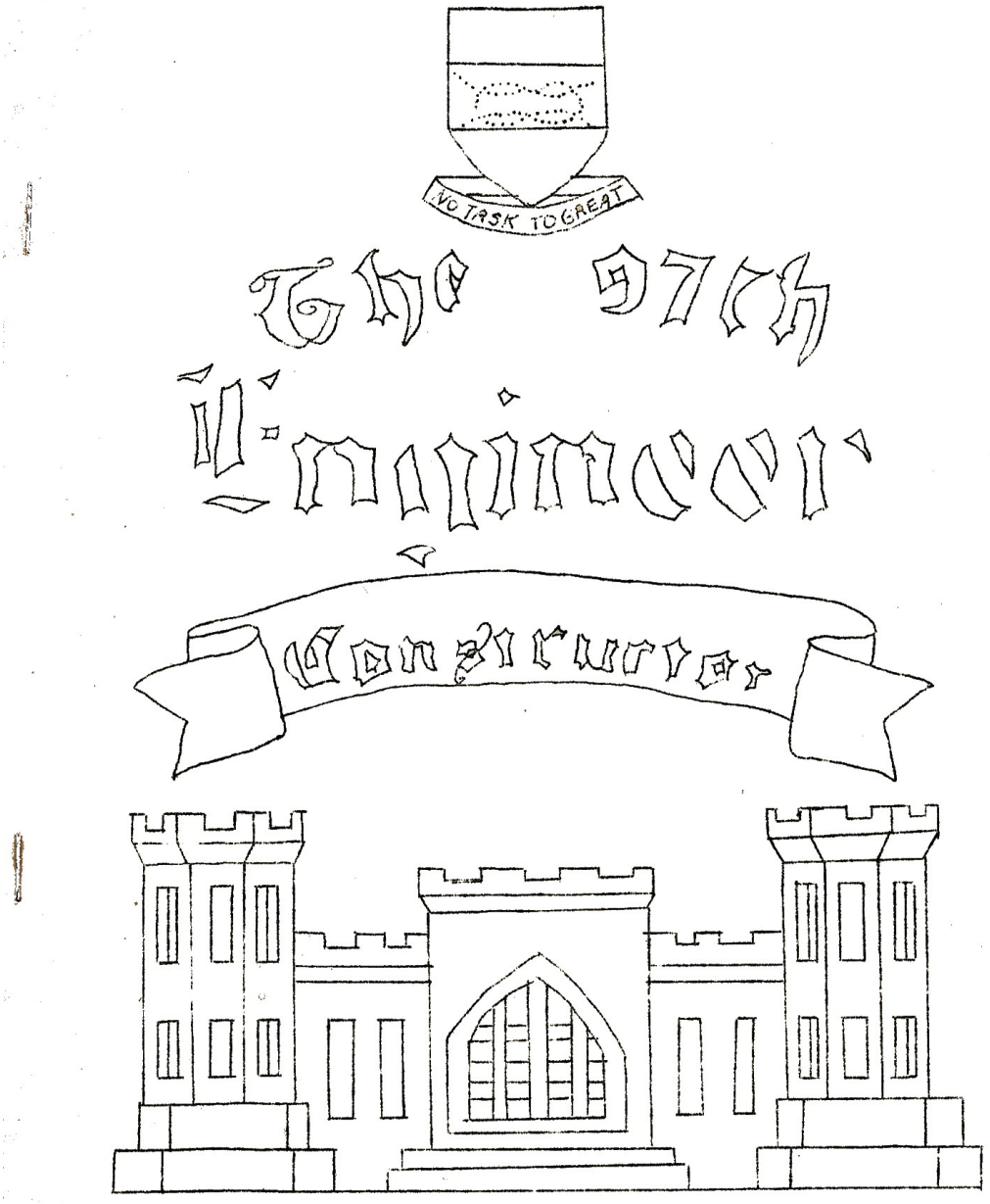

We received a gift copy of The Constructor newsletter, August-September 1971, from the last Battalion Commander before deactivation in 1971, Colonel Ancil R. Pressley. This last edition contains a cover and five printed pages of information considered of historical value (pages 1, 3, 5, 7 and 14). Page 14 was a repeat of the unit's history. Donald M. Ricks, Webmaster, 97th Engineer Battalion (Const), December 2013.

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Commanding Officer: LTC Ancil R. Pressley
Information Officer: CPT M.W. Cheatham
Editor: SP4 Michael R. Gonyaw

Reporters: SFC T.B. Thompson, SP5 Charlie Ford, PFC Gary L. Danforth, SP4 Gary L. Hamrey
Reproduction: SP4 Robert Schweigert, PVT Rodney Drummond

Anyone desiring to contribute material for the benefit of the 97th Engineer Battalion (Construction) is encouraged to do so to the Editor, SP4 Michael R. Gonyaw. All articles must be typewritten, double spaced and in the hands of the editor prior to the 10th of the month.

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1st Laser Shot Bullseye

WASHINGTON (AFPS) - The Army scored a bullseye the first time it fired a test round guided to the target by a laser beam.

Launched from a tower on an Army range at Redstone Arsenal, Ala., the round scored a direct hit on a stationary taget illuminated by a laser beam.

The Army hopes to prove through more tests that a laser guidance system will have both direct and indirect fire capabilities on missiles.

BN CO'S BIRTHDAY POLICY

Do you want to celebrate your birthday? Well here is the latest scoop from the Old Man's Desk! He too wants to see you celebrate your birthday. So from now on every man is to get a 3 day pass during the month of his birthday. There are as usual, a few stipulations, but nothing you men can not handle. The first is the pass has to follow regulation on pases, you know, not in conjunction with a holiday or tackled onto a leave. And the other little rule is you must have a clean shirt, you know, like no investigations or article 15's pending.

So lets keep straight for that one time of the year and let the 1st sergeant know you have a birthday to celebrate!!

FROM THE BN CO's DESK

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Donald M. Ricks, Webmaster, 97th Engineer Battalion (Const), December 2013.

ROCK QUARRY OPERATION OF "A" COMPANY

The Rock Quarry Operation is a long and dirty job. There are a good number of people who just take it for granted that when you need rock, you just go to your operations shop, get an issue slip, and draw your rock. In a sense this is true. But the Quarry Crew of Company A, 97th Engineer Battalion (Construction) say that there is a lot more to it than that. Let's take a look at what goes on out at the quarry site, which makes this rock available.

First of all, there has to be a reconnaissance of the area for the proper grade of rock and location to set up a quarry. After this has been accomplished, the quarry equipment has to be moved in, a headwall has to be constructed to provide a place to set up the rock crusher, and a ramp to back up to with the trucks in order to dump the rock into the hopper of the crusher has to be moved in also. The crusher has to be leveled and blocked so that it does not vibrate itself apart. This is a very important part of setting up the equipment. The elevators have to be set up to carry the finished products of the stock pile.

Company A was given fourteen days to get this part of the operation completed. The highly skilled troops of the quarry crew accomplished this in a period of eight days, and were ready to go into the part of producing rock.

There are several steps to this process of producing rock. First of all, you must strip the over burden For this at the present time, they are using a TD 24 Crawler Dozer. After the stripping, you must get the rock loose. So in comes a rock drill powered by a 600 CFM air compressor and the drilling begins. While this is going on, the company operations are coordinating with the battalion supply (S-4) for the preparation for blasting, by ordering dynimite, blasting caps, detonator cord, time fuses, and ignitors. They also have to contact the battalion operations (S-3) which in turn must get clearance from Range Control, Marshal Air Field and Post for a time and permit to blast. When all this has been completed, the blasting material is picked up from the Post Ammunition Supply Point and carried to the quarry site. When the drilling is completed, usually about fifty holes, ten feet deep, set in a diamond pattern, approximately five

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"A" COMPANY ROCK QUARRY

feet apart, the packing of the holes begin.

The packing of the holes consists of from seven to nine sticks of dynamite per hole, and tamped with a long wooden rod. The powderman and assistant wrap and tie the dynamite with detonator cord, which is then cut off leaving a tail of about two to three feet, then carefully puts the dynamite into the holes, and using the wooden rod to tamp it into place. After all the holes have been filled with either sand, mud, or just plain dirt, he then begins to tie the ends that were left to the one long piece of detonator cord. Now that this has been done, it is about time to blast. NO NOT YET! AT ALL TIMES, you must have a Safety Officer present. His duty is to check all holes to see that everything is correct. After he has finished checking, under his supervision, the time fuses are tested. Normally a short peice of approximately one foot is tested to make sure it burns at the right time speed. After he finds it to burn at the correct time speed (approximately 45 to 48 seconds per yard), he then gives the powderman the OK to connect the blasting caps to the time fuses. This should always be done with the utmost care. Always be sure to use a piece of time fuse that is long enough to allow you, and other individuals time enough to get out of the blast area. This is then connected to the detonator cord, and then finnally the igniter.

SAFETY! Never forget the last minute checks! Have the roads been blocked? Is there anyone in the area? Has equipment that might be damaged been moved to a clear area? Yes, everything is ready. Now the Safety Officer gives the OK to activate the ignitors. Then the three long calls "FIRE IN THE HOLE" is given. Then after all this preparation has been done, the blast finnally occurs. After a wait of about thirty minutes, the powderman then goes back to check his success, as this is no place to be if he had made a mistake! . No, there are no mistakes.

So the dozers start back to work, pushing the blast rock into a stock pile. After the rock is stock piled, there are 5 ton dump trucks being loaded by a 2½ yard scoop loader, or the crawler type crane with a shovel front. The trucks then take the blast rock to the crusher. Here they back up to a high headwall, and on signal, dump it into the hopper of a 75 ton "Eagle Crusher", which is the Jaw Type Primary Crusher. As the rock feeds through the jaws, which are set 3 3/4 inch, which means that is the largest rock that should pass through it. The rock crushed to this size by the jaws, then falls through the bottom to the conveyer belt. The conveyer belt then carries it to a bin unit, which is located on the secondary unit. The small particles of diet in turn are shaken loose and fall onto another conveyer belt, and are carried to a waste pile.

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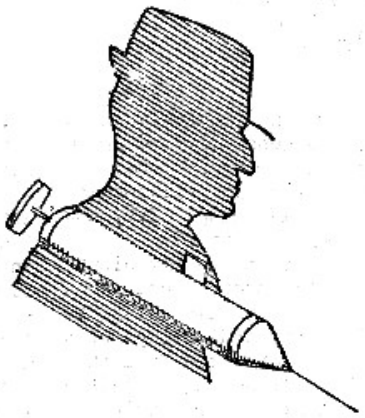
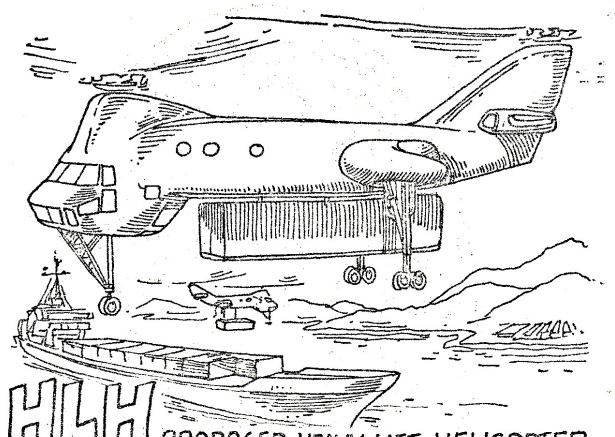
WANTED



DESCRIPTION : UNKNOWN

ALIAS : THE PUSHER

CAUTION ! ! ! This man may be armed . He is dangerous . He may not kill you , but he will gladly help you kill yourself.



HLH PROPOSED HEAVY LIFT HELICOPTER EXPECTED TO HAVE PAYLOAD LIFT CAPACITY OF 22½ TONS. ANF

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"A" COMPANY ROCK QUARRY

At the bottom of the bin unit, which the rock has now reached, is located what is called a recipsating feeder. This controls the flow of rock to another conveyer belt, which carries it to a shaker screen. This screen is constantly vibrating, and has 3 inch holes on it. The larger rock are shaken into a roll crusher of which is addjusted to 3 inches so the rock that you get, is classified as 3 inch rock. As it comes through the rolls, or through the screen, it is dropped into the chute, which is located over a conveyer belt. Then it is carried to the rock piles for issue.

Maintenance on the Crusher, as you can imagine, has to be very thorough. Especially during the hot dry dusty seasons. This time of season is hard on any piece of equipment, and every evening and morning the equipment has to be checked closely.

The crusher is under control of Company A, 97th Engineer Battalion, which is commanded by CPT Ted C. Hendrickson. The Quarry Site, which was set up starting May 2, 1970, is now operating five days a week. According to information we have, it is the only operating military quarry in the United States. The Quarry produces on the average of 250 yards of crushed rock per day and provides rock for all units on Fort Riley.

FORT RILEY "430"

By SP4 Michael R. Gonyaw

Indianapolis has the "500", France has LeMans, and Florida has Sebring, but none can match the daily double that takes place at Fort Riley.

The first race of the day is the "Mid-Day" feature race, better known as lunch time. Depending on the character of the driver, the race begins at 11:30. From all around Post engines roar, and tires squeal, as the race for home begins. There are no requirements such as size of engine, year of car, or even experience. If it moves it qualifies; one rule you must have a FRK sticker on your bumper. This race features the running start of LeMans, the long straight-away of Sebring, and even the flashing lights of the drags. This race even includes a break, at which time you are given a minimum of time to eat, and get back to the pits.

Then there's the return run, with emphasis made on making the formation before the whistle blows. Winners of this race are often awarded with such things as indigestion, speeding tickets, and minor mishaps.

But now for the clincher! The "Fort Riley 430". This is the ultimate in racing with twice the field of the mid-day race. Plus there are both male and female drivers, which both attracts to the race, and detracts to the drivers (many times it detracts). I guess

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THE 97th ENGINEER BATTALION

ITS HISTORY

The 97th Engineer Battalion (Construction) originally appeared on the rolls of the Regular Army on October 1, 1933 as the 56th Engineer Battalion (Separate). Over four years later, on January 1, 1938 the unit was redesignated as the 97th Engineer Battalion (Separate and it has retained this numerical designation ever since.

The battalion was first activated for full military service at Camp Blanding Florida on June 1, 1941 as the nation was preparing for the war which was soon to include the United States. Two redesignations occured within 13 months: on 22 Feb 1942 the unit was reorganized as the 97th Engineer Regiment (General Service) and on August 1, 1942, the official designation became the 97th Engineer Service Regiment.

At this time the regiment had been in Alaska a few months and was beginning to construct the Alaskan portion of the world famous Alcan highway. From This though but successful mission, the unit redeployed to New Guinea for the duration of World War II. For these operations in the American Pacific Theater during the war the regiment earned the Meritorious Unit Streamer.

After the war the unit was reorganized as the 97th Engineer General Service Battalion in the Philippine Islands where, on March 15, 1948, the unit was deactivated.

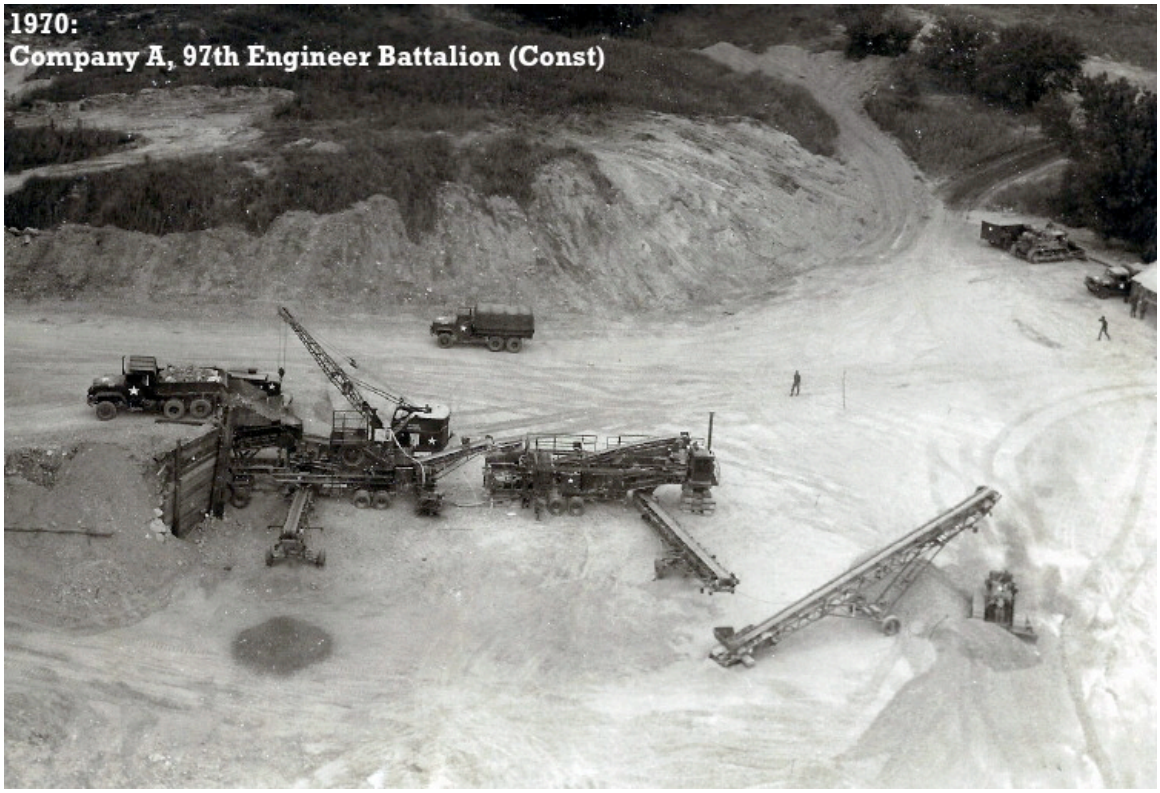
With the outbreak of a new war in Korea just two years later, the newly designated 97th Engineer Construction Battalion was activated at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri on October 1, 1950. Within a year the Battalion was notified for overseas shipment and on November 23 1951 arrived in Europe.

While serving in France the battalion had headquarters at Toul and Verdun, under first the European Command, Army Engineers and then the Advance Section of the Communication Zone, (ADSEC) United States Army Europe (USAREUR). Activities of the 97th Primarily supported the mission of the Theater Army Support Command (TASCOM) in forming a chain of supply posts linking the seaport towns of France with the main element of troops stationed in Germany. Fourteen years of continuous operations in France was the greatest duration for the 97th in any single location. Official notification was received on March 1, 1966 to relocate under United States Army Europe (USAREUR) to Pirmasins, Germany. While thoroughly engaged in construction projects necessitated by French Location (FRELOC), the main body of the 97th Engineer Battalion (Construction) arrived in Germany in March 1967. Later that year, on 20 December 1967 the order to redeploy to Fort Riley Kansas was received. When the main body of the 97th Engineer Battalion (Construction) departed in July 1968, it had completed nearly 17 years of service in the European Theater.

On October 2, 1969, Company C, of the 97th was notified that it was going on a temporary change of station to Fort Sheridan, Illinois for 60 to 90 days. After two weeks of preparation the advanced party departed Fort Riley. And on October 18, 1969 the main body arrived at Fort Sheridan and prepared to begin work on October 20, 1969. A few of the projects that were undertaken by Company C Were the demolition of buildings, repair work on existing buildings, construction of a PCPT field, installation of culverts and frainage ditches, plus clearing of underbrush. On the 15th of December the Company departed Fort Sheridan for Fort Riley with another interesting experience under its belt.

Since the 97th has been at Fort Riley they have completed many projects such as the junior high school track on Custer Hill, the upgrade and maintenance of tank trails, a Buffalo Corral, the annual support of the ROTC Program, and many smaller projects to help improve Fort Riley and the surrounding community.

A Company, 97th Engineer Battalion (Const) rock quarry operation,
starting 2 May 1970.
CPT Ted C. Hendrickson, company commander



No index provided. All individual names are highlighted. DMR