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2nd REDEPLOYMENT INFORMATION SERIES

RUGGED LIFE

(03-68-1.jpg: Muenchweiler, Germany – B Co looks on during a demonstration for escaping an ambush. Aggressor casualties lie in the road.)

On 19 Feb, B Co participated in the annual ORT (Operational Readiness Test) of the 97th Engr Bn. The men of B Co were well aware of the long, hard hours that confronted them on this ORT. Once in the field, each man knew that he would be required to live the rugged life of a combat soldier. Tents were to be put up, fox holes to be dug, and then there was the real test; the test of how well they were above to carry on their normal work and operations under combat conditions.

(03-68-2.jpg: First there is pitching tents.)

(03-68-3.jpg: Setting up utilities.)

(03-68-4.jpg: Security around the perimeter.)

“I feel as though I’m really in a combat zone” were the words of an excited soldier of B Co; he went on to say, “this training is really necessary. As I was lying in my pup tent last night, I realized that without this training I could not possibly survive the Vietnam War. I’m gong to take advantage of what’s being taught here, because I know one day I’ll be glad I was trained on this ORT to be physically as well as mentally ready.”

(03-68-5.jpg: Time out for C-rations!)

(03-68-6.jpg: The bridge must go across....What?)

(03-68-7.jpg: Taking a break for a classroom lecture.)

I was really curious to find out how many other men felt the way this one particular soldier did about the ORT, so I decided to pay more attention to each soldier’s immediate reactions while under operation. During the day, I noticed that the five-yard interval in the chow line and around the mess tent of B Co was respected by each man. At the sound of aircraft, I could see the tense look in the eyes of these men and I also noticed their readiness to respond to any type attack. At night I could hear the challenging words of those men on guard around B Co’s perimeter and I could see that to these men this ORT was no longer a

game, but a way of life, and this way of life could someday be their only means of survival.

(03-68-8.jpg: The 'Swap Fox's' gang that harassed the battalion all week.)

BURGY'S REMEMBERED

(03-68-9.jpg: 1LT Gary S Burgin (right) is presented a brass plaque and wooden nameplate by SFC Grayson Phillips and 1SG Charles McKenzie.)

The Field Maintenance platoon of A Co presented their former leader, 1LT Gary S Burgin, with a brass plaque and wooden nameplate on 9 Feb 68. With the entire company looking on at the afternoon formation, SFC Phillips made the presentation on behalf of the appreciative platoon.

1LT Burgin served as platoon commander in the Field Maintenance Shop for eight months before taking over as Company Cmdr of A Co, on 11 Jan 68. Entering into active service on 2 Jan 67, 1LT Burgin attended the Engr Officer Basic Course (EOBC) with Class 8 at Ft Belvoir, VA. After nine weeks at this course, he prepared himself for his future duties in maintenance by attending the Engr Equip Maintenance Officer Course (EEMOC) also at Ft Belvoir. Arriving at his first duty station, Pirmasens, Germany, Apr 67, 1LT Burgin was initially assigned to command the first platoon of D Co. There he stayed for six weeks until transferring to field maintenance in mid-May 1967.

The brass portion of the plaque was manufactured in the Field Maintenance Shop. It is shaped as an Engr Castle 7" high and 9" wide, and the brass is 1/8" thick. The front of the plaque has the Bn crest centered at the top. At the base of the award is mounted on a handsome wood triangular prism 2" high and 12" long. On its polished silvery face the nameplate, "Gary S Burgin," is flanked on the left by a 1LT's bar and on the right by an anodized Engr Castle, both on black felt fields. The following personal inscription is on the back face of the castle:

97 ENGR
GARY S "BURGY" BURGIN
From
F. M. Platoon 1967-1968

The award took 'Burgy' completely by surprise. The proud members of A Co understood as all LT Burgin could manage was a barely audible "THANK YOU.'

[DID NOT TYPE 'RE-UP CORNER, JOB BOREDOM,' AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE]

97TH EBC PROMOTIONS

<u>TO</u>	<u>NAME</u>
<u>HQ Co</u>	
SP5	O'Mellan, Kenneth F
SP4	Parrish, Woody W
<u>B Co</u>	
SP5	Cooley, Tommy
SP5	Redding, Eugene
SP5	Tanner, James E
SP5	Weldi, Michael D
SP4	Russell, Gregory A
<u>D Co</u>	
SGT	Howard, Frank Jr
SP4	Morris, Robert G

CONSTRUCTOR

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NEW NCOs

'Charging Charlie' have added two new NCOs to the company roster. During the ORT, both of them had a chance to exhibit their talents, and a fine job was done by both. Due to the fact 1SG Grindy has been appointed as the advance liaison man for the 97th Engr Bn in the upcoming move to Ft Riley, C Co was left without a 1SG. SFC Rod Ibarra having just arrived from Ft Benning, GA stepped into the shoes left vacant by 1SG Grindy and has carried on in fine tradition. Previously, SFC Ibarra was assigned to the 43rd Engr Bn at Ft Benning. SFC Ibarra reported to the 97th on 12 Dec 67, and is working on his 21st year in the service.

The second new member of the company is SSG Hornsby. SSG Hornsby filled the position left open by SSG Calido, C Co mess sergeant. SSG Hornsby reported to the Bn in Dec and was assigned to A Co before coming to 'Charging Charlie.' His assignment prior to coming to the 97th was at Ft Hood, TX. SSG Hornsby fed C Co in fine style during the ORT.

C Co is pleased to have both SFC Ibarra and SSG Hornsby in the unit. Actually, SFC Ibarra is not with us any more, he got killed in his tent during the ORT.

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WHAT PASSWORD?

Muenchweiler, Germany - During the ORT exercise C Co's most important job was security. Immediately upon arriving at the readiness test area security was established and maintained through the entire exercise. The key to movement thru C Co area was knowing the password. For example, at one of C Co's roadblocks an NCO from on Bn Staff section was held up and not allowed to pass because he did not know the password. Bn security had to go to this particular roadblock in order to identify the individual friendly. Another incident concerns a friendly four-man patrol that traveled part of the Bn perimeter one night. When this patrol was challenged by C Co personnel, their movement was halted because of not knowing the password. You can see how important the password method of identification is in security. It pays to know it; C Co knew it.

Perimeter security was very effective in the Co C sector. Probing action by the aggressors was repelled by alert Co C men. We won't mention the night two aggressors got inside the perimeter and killed the 1SG and one other NCO. Funny thing about these two aggressors - they had supper with us that same night. Strange War!!

KUSPA'S KILLERS

The sky held the last light of day over the encampment. Troops picked their way carefully through the forest, returning from the evening meal to start their vigil on the perimeter. Seven men endeavored by the glimmering light of the company CP, making ready for the night's battle with aggressors. The game was about to begin.

Slowly, the seven moved out. In the game of cat and mouse played between the aggressors and the men manning the perimeter, a different breed of cat was about to be introduced. The seven were Kuspa's Killers. The meanest men of A Co. Their missions, to get the aggressors before he could even get close to our lines.

The Killers passed the last outpost, manned by Snidley 'Whiplash' Snider, who silently held his own desire to move out. The Killers were now in no mans land. First was Greasy Creem, meanest of the bunch, who won the royal screw-medal with barked wine cluster for his action in defense of the A Bar. Next

came their leader, John Paul Kuspa, the lone Ranger in the group. Third was 'Grusome' Gehr, the only airborne type who never used a parachute. He was walking on his hands. Then came 'Hardluck Hermit,' who brutally captured fifty-three car radio antennas last Halloween eve. Next was 'Creeper' Kauppi, deadly with a 12-gauge slingshot at six paces. Then came 'Books' Bailey, only man to survive the revenge of the fearsome flu bird. Finally was 'Dead Eye Davis,' lone survivor of the gunfight at OK Corral.

Would they return from their arduous mission? Could their second john leader really read a compass? Could they stop the aggressors? The night held the answer....to be continued.

ENGINEERS' CORNER

Muenchweiler, Germany – On the final day of the annual ORT, D Co of the 97th Engr Bn, was awakened early in the morning to go out on a tactical march to the bridge site. The site was two miles from D Co's perimeter. Along the road the company was attacked by aggressive forces. Suffering only light casualties, however, the men were able to fight off the enemy and continue their march.

Arriving at the bridge site the company, again, was harassed by sniper fire but a strong and secure perimeter was set up immediately and the fire silenced. ISG Patrick A Raleigh got together his bridge team and began putting up the Bailey bridge (a through truss panel bridge supported by two main trusses formed from 10 foot steel 'panels.'). In approximately two hours and 15 minutes, ISG Raleigh and his men put together and dismantled the 60-foot span steel bridge, setting a record time for the battalion.

(03-68-10.jpg: Men of D Co working at a steady pace to set the record time in constructing the Bailey bridge.)

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

[DID NOT TYPE 'WHY ME?' AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

SPORTS CORNER

SFC Archie H Hayes, Sports Editor

(03-68-11.jpg: SFC Archie H Hayes)

VOLLEYBALL NEWS

PIRMASENS, GERMANY – On 11 Mar, D Co of the 97th Engr Bn served out the first ball to open the company level competition in the Pirmasens Sub district Volleyball League. Playing against C Co, 97th Engr Bn, D Co won one and lost two sets (the team that wins two out of three sets wins the game). Bad luck stuck with D Co, also, in their game with B Co of the 97th. B Co defeated them with victories in the first two sets. B Co, however, suffered a defeat against STRATCOM on 12 Mar. Other standings in the Bn are:

- C Co won over 2nd Field on 14 Mar. On 15 Mar, C Co won over B Co of the 97th.
- HQ Co stands at 2 and 1, defeating the WAC Det on 13 Mar and General Depot on 15 Mar. 45th Finance defeated HQ Co on 12 Mar.

Volleyball is considered by many to be 'the gentleman's game,' 'a thinking man's game' and both are possessed by the men of the 97th. They not only played with sportsmanship of high school and college students but also acted the part in outstanding manner.

With these commendable traits along with team effort, the 97th Engr Bn will be well represented in this year's Volleyball tournament. This will be a great challenge for the team members, since they have a task equally great in preparing their equipment for turn-in

[DID NOT TYPE 'PRIVILEGE—NOT A RIGHT,' AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

[DID NOT TYPE 'ABSENTEE VOTING' AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

[DID NOT TYPE '1968 PRIMARY ELECTIONS' AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

CLASSMATES?

SSG	McBrayer, John C	Bremmen, GA
SSG	Bower, Gary E Glen	Burnie, MD
SSG	Johnson, Francis W	Paisley, FL
SSG	Hill, Bryan M	Memphis, TN
SP5	Lighte, Norbert E	Milwaukee, WI
SP5	Fulmer, Leon R	Blythewood, SC

SP5	Mark, Raymond W	Houston, MN
SP5	Anderson, Lloyd R	Porterville, CA
SP5	Jeska, Gerry W	WI
SP5	Green, Mack Jr	Gadsden, AL
SP4	Spencer, Henry M	Abilene, TX
SP4	Smetain, John	Milwaukee, WI
SP4	Lancaster, Jerry L	Des Moines, IA
SP4	Richardson, Rodney	Adel, GA
SP4	Davis, Larry W	Bloomington, IL
SP4	Gilbertson, Steven	Seattle, WA
SP4	Brown, Garlan	Palestine, TX
SP4	Chase, Dale E	Brooklyn, MI
SP4	Burcham, Virgil J	Fancy Gap, VA
PFC	Alvarado, Tony G	La Puente, CA
PFC	Wilson, Kirk D	St Bonifadius, MN
PFC	Flagg, Brian C	North Adams, MA
PFC	Haldorsen, Roger C	Lombard, IL
PFC	Means, Earlie	Chicago, IL
PFC	Stubbe, David E	Fondulal, WI
PFC	Lund, Larry G	Vancouver, WA
PFC	Fay, George M Jr	Patterson, NY
PFC	Wilkey, James	Kingsport, TN
PFC	Crouse, Stephen M	Zephyrhalls, FL
PFC	Romero, Manuel G	Albuquerque, NM
PFC	Washington, Willard W	Tridell, UT
PVT	James, Robert	Byram, CT
PVT	Kendrick, Grady	Sparta, GA
PVT	Trallor, Michael W	Indianapolis, IN
PVT	King, John R	Middle, NY
PVT	Glenn, Gary J	Downey, CA
PVT	Myers, Frederick E	NY
PVT	Wojciechowski, Walter E	Hammond, IN
PVT	McKinley, Clyde S	Aurora, IL
PVT	Carroll, William E	Jackson, MS
PVT	Davis, Charles F Jr	Concord, CA

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

NEW CO FORD COMPANY

(03-68-12.jpg: (L to R) 1LT Marion G Workman Jr receives D Co's guidon from 1LT Ross A Johnson in change of command ceremony held 4 Mar 68.)

Pirmasens, Germany – On 4 Mar 68, 1LT Ross A Johnson turned the command of D Co over to 1LT Marion G Workman Jr. 1LT Johnson will be OIC going back to the states with the advance party to begin coordination of the move of the main body to Ft Riley, KS. Since he joined the 97th Engr Bn, 1LT Workman has held the positions of platoon commander and operation's officer for D Co.

The men of D Co joined together in conveying their sincere wishes to 1LT Johnson for success in his new job as well as appreciation for his fine leadership during his term as D Co Commander.

D Co welcomes 1LT Workman as its new CO.

FUN AT RILEY

[AN ARTICLE FROM FT RILEY, REPUBLISHED IN THE CONSTRUCTOR, MAR 68, ONLY HAS 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE AS FOLLOWS.]

FIELD HOUSES

At the Camp Forsyth Field House, the camp designated for the 97th Engr Bn, facilities include boxing, weight lifting, basketball and volleyball.

(03-68-13.jpg: LTC Albert A Dupont (left) congratulating 1LT Ross A Johnson on his fine accomplishment in earning his expert badge in rifle qualification. (It took three years!)

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