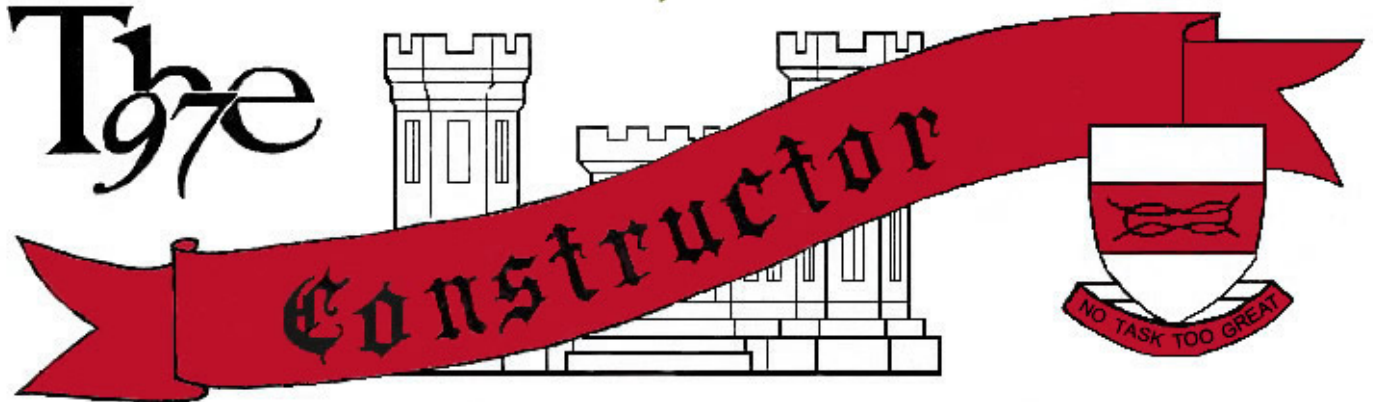


Fort Riley, Kansas



Transcribed by MAJ (Ret) Larry L. Castleman
Re-published by CPT (Ret) Donald M. Ricks, Webmaster, 97th EBC



NEW CO FOR 97TH

LTC Fred W Aron, Jr replaced LTC Thomas E Gioiosa as Commanding Officer of the 97th Engr Bn (Const) during ceremonies at the Engr Parade Field 28 Feb 70. LTC Gioiosa will begin a second tour with the Military Advisory Command, Vietnam (MACV) in Saigon.

COL Robert M Rufsvold, Commanding Officer, 138th Engr Gp, presented LTC Gioiosa with the Army Commendation Medal for his outstanding performance in leadership while with the 97th Engr Bn.

Despite heavy wind and rain, the ceremony came off as scheduled. The colors of the 97th, rain-soaked by this time, passed from LTC Gioiosa to COL Rufsvold and then to the new commander, LTC Aron.

The new commanding officer of the 97th LTC Fred W Aron, Jr, began his military career with the Corps of Engr in 1952 as a graduate from the Univ of Pennsylvania ROTC program. After completing the Engr Officer Basic Course at Ft Belvoir, VA, he was assigned to the 407th Engr Bn (Combat) at Ft Campbell, KY for a four-month period.

From Feb 1953 to Jan 1956, LTC Aron was assigned to the 293rd Engr Bn (Const) in Baumholder, Germany. Upon returning from overseas he was stationed on the St Laurence Seaway in NY for over two years. During this period he was the project engineer for the excavation of the Long Sault Canal, the construction of the dikes and the construction of the international suspension bridge and shift chief for the construction of Eisenhower Lock.

In 1958 LTC Aron returned to school at the Univ of Michigan where he received a Master of Science of

Nuclear Engr. Prior to departing for Korea in Aug 1960, LTC Aron attended the Associate Engr Career Course at Ft Belvoir, VA. In Korea, he was the Engr Plans Officer for Eighth Army. Upon returning to CONUS, LTC Aron spent the next two years with the Army Nuclear Power Program station with the Nuclear Power Div, Ofc of the Chief of Engr in Washington, DC.

In Aug 1962, he departed for his second three-year tour in Germany; this time it was in Stuttgart. LTC Aron was the Seventh Army Engr Tng Officer for one year and the VII Corps Engr Plans and Intelligence Officer for the remaining two years.

The next assignment was with the Lawrence Radiation Laboratory at Livermore, CA for a two-year period until 1968. LTC Aron worked on both developing the phenomenology of nuclear testing and the design of nuclear weapons system. During this tour at Livermore, LTC Aron attended the Command & General Staff College, Ft Leavenworth, KS.

Leaving for Vietnam in Jan 1969, LTC Aron served as the Deputy Asst Chief of Staff Services and the Chief of Engr Services Div in HQ, 1st Logistical Cmd and the Asst Chief of Staff, Services in the Cam Ranh Bay Support Cmd.

Returning from Vietnam, LTC Aron came to Ft Riley where he assumed command of the 97th.

LTC Aron and his wife, Ruth have two children, Jill, who is seven and Susan, two years old.

97TH ENGINEERS COMPLETE F.T.X.

The 97th Engr Bn (Const) began a five day Field Tng Exercise (FTX) Mon, 9 Feb. During the exercise the battalion continued to work on the various projects at Ft Riley while the base camp was put under simulated combat conditions.

According to LTC Thomas E Gioiosa, the battalion took on the additional job of improving and protecting the tank trails while continuing their construction on post.

“We constructed a prefabricated bridge on Tank Trail ‘Green’,” said LTC Gioiosa, “and built several tank by-passes on Tank Trail ‘Red’.” The bridge was removed during the final day of training.

A Co served as an advance party and secured the area for the rest of the battalion to move in. A Co continued their work in the rock quarry during the exercise, supplying rock for the POV parking lot and other projects.

B Co continued working on the buffalo corral, a project that should be nearing completion. When completed the viewing stand will be of a more permanent nature and able to hold more visitors.

In addition to this, B Co worked on the pre-fab shelters at Custer Hill. At least one foundation was poured during the exercise. The shelter program, which has been going on for five months, is in line with the completion of the “home” of the 24th Division.

Co C built the pre-fabricated bridge during the FTX. The semi-permanent structures was set up quickly and proved strong enough to take the heaviest Army equipment. The bridge spans a dry-weather gulch and was almost 60 feet long. The steel and wood structure was taken down during the final day of the exercise.

D Co, continued work on both their projects during the FTX, both the dog-kennel project and the post stockade. Delta is constructing a sanitation unit at the Ft Riley Rod & Gun Club dog-kennels to insure proper cleanliness of the area. In addition to this their welders are working to put in a new floor of solitary confinement cells at the post stockade. The cells are being pre-fabricated at post engineers and then rapidly installed for security measures.

All in all the Field Tng Exercise proved that the 97th could continue construction projects under simulated combat conditions and do them well.

GREETINGS FROM LTC ARON

LTC Fred W Aron, CE, Commanding

It is a great honor to assume command of this battalion. It has been one of my great desires in life to command a construction battalion and it has now become a reality. I am looking forward to working with the battalion during the forthcoming year.

We certainly have a great deal to look forward to, such as; The Annual General Inspection (AGI) in March; an Army Tng Test (ATT) in the spring; more tank trail construction; increase in R. and support;

support of the summer ROTC program are many more challenging tasks. This organization has always accomplished all its assigned missions in accordance with its motto "No Task Too Great," and therefore, I am sure we shall continue to perform in an outstanding manner.

NEW CO FOR HEADQUARTERS

2LT Paul W Counts took command of HQ Co, 97th Engr Bn, during ceremonies on 16 Feb. The former CO, 2LT Terry W Wolfe, is leaving for Vietnam in Mar 70.

2LT Counts is a graduate of Center College in KY and Engr Officer Candidate School at Ft Belvoir, VA. He served with the 97th as Personnel Officer for the past five months.

GENTLEMEN OF BRAVO

The upcoming AGI (Annual General Inspection) is affecting military wives as well as the men. Mrs Clay Duncan, of B Co, 97th Engr Bn, was again called upon to be the seamstress for the 2nd Platoon. She dutifully went to the sewing machine to put on patches and stripes free of charge, as she has done for most of the last 16 years.

This time however she received a pleasant surprise when the platoon presented her with a dozen red roses, a box of candy and a thank you from all the men involved.

Time and time again many of us seem to take quite a bit of life for granted, and even the things people do for us. Congratulations to the men of the 2nd Platoon, Co B for not taking a favor for granted and showing their appreciation.

HHC MAKES IT THREE IN A ROW

HQ Co was given this "Best Company Award" for the third month in a row for being the outstanding company in Feb. HHC was 47 points ahead of Delta who was in second. A, B, C and D Co were all fairly close together in their point totals.

The "Best Company Award" is given each month to the best overall company in the battalion. Points are

computed for evaluation of assignment; maintenance; appearance of the mess hall, day room and company area; accident free miles; reenlistment rate; Soldier of the Month; news releases; athletics; and outside inspections.

Minus points are given for court martials, accidents, D.R.'s and AWOL.

The results for Feb are as follows:

HHC	231
D Co	184
B Co	171
A Co	166
C Co	157

CONSTRUCTOR

The Constructor is an authorized Army Newspaper published monthly by HQ, 97th Engr Bn, Ft Riley, KS 66442, under the staff supervision of the Information Officer. Contributions from readers are solicited but publication depends upon the discretion of the editor. Views and opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Dept of the Army.

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 Reporters: SP4 Burt Hobart, SP5 Richard West, SP4 Richard Smith & SP5 Josef Curio
 Reproduction: SP4 Larry Heaslip & PVT Mike Byrd

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

[DID NOT TYPE 'RE-EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS FOR VETS,' AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

[DID NOT TYPE 'ALL THE "FINE YOUNG MEN",' AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

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

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

[DID NOT TYPE 'SPECIAL SERVICES FOR FUN,' AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

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

[DID NOT TYPE 'GET 150-DAY "EARLY OUT" BY JOINING DC POLICE FORCE,' AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

[DID NOT TYPE 'GOLDEN RASPBERRY GOES TO GIBSONS,' AS NOT 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

[DID NOT TYPE 'AN ANSWER FOR EVERYTHING,' AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

NEW INSIGNIA FOR 97TH EBC



It looks as if the 97th Engr Bn (Const) is in for a new shoulder patch.

The colorful patches will replace the WW II vintage USAREUR insignia used by the 97th for the past 18 years.

It is noted that the insignias do not make any change for the 97th as far as attachment to the US Army Europe (USAREUR) is concerned.

According to CW2 Joseph L Guy, the insignia is that of the Engr Cmd for the Seventh Army now in Europe.

For a preview of how the patch will look in color follow this guide on the above example.

1. Red
2. Blue
3. White

The patches will be made available through regular supply channels when they arrive.

RECENT PROMOTIONS

TO 1LT
Terry W Wolfe HHC

TO E-9
George E Murray HHC

TO E-6
Henry A McGilbery, Jr Co C
Charles N Tates Co C

TO E-5
SGT Adolph A Lewis, Jr HHC
SP5 Vincent Bonura HHC
SP5 Gerald D Williams Co A

TO E-4
SP4 James Kelly Co D
SP4 Paul W Mulvee Co D
SP4 George LeForshee Co B
SP4 Donnie E Hornburg Co B
SP4 Joseph Blas Co C
SP4 Wimmington Merritt Co C
SP4 Bobby Williford Co C
SP4 Tom Bressie Co D
SP4 Dearld Ellenberger Co D
SP4 Dennis Cole HHC
SP4 Daniel A Young HHC
SP4 Wayne B Cousins HHC
SP4 Roger Z Montgomery HHC
SP4 Louis Reichelderfer HHC

TO PFC [Could not read some of the companies]
Donald G Stellings
Charles R Ware
Robert C Watrous
Richard C Wills
Wesley R Dean
Harry Deloach
Phillip E Golden
Cecil D Marsh
Joseph S Roberts

David W Sloniker	
Michael Byrd	
Curtis E Bryan	
Robert L Comeau	HHC
Randal L Hasty	HHC
Dennis P Kabriel	HHC
Dennis A McGuire	HHC
Henry E Shelnut	HHC
Curtis E Bryan	HHC

SP5 Hinkle expressed hope that The Constructor could continue to serve the 97th and put open door policy ideas for the paper.

“Anyone who would like to drop by the PIO Office and contribute articles,” Hinkle said, “We would be more than happy to have them.”

“Reporters are always needed in each company for a monthly article in the battalion newspaper,” Hinkle continued, “Since The Constructor serves as a history of battalion activities, it’s important that each company be fairly represented.”

[DID NOT TYPE ‘SURVEYING IS FOUNDATION FOR ALL CONSTRUCTION,’ AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

[DID NOT TYPE ‘FIRST DIV COMES HOME TO RILEY,’ AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

[DID NOT TYPE ‘VA GIVES TIPS ON GI BENEFITS,’ AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

[DID NOT TYPE ‘DEDUCTIBLE EXPENSES,’ AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

NO BEST COMPANY FOR JANUARY

NEW EDITOR FOR PAPER

SP5 Larry Hinkle will be taking over the job as Editor of the battalion newspaper, The Constructor, beginning with the Mar issue. SP4 Thomas Livesay, Editor for the past seven months, will be going to Germany.

There will be no “Best Company Aware” for the month of Jan due to a re-evaluation of the rating system.

According to CPT Delbert E Duncklee, Executive Officer of the 97th Engr Bn (Const), the system is being “looked into” for improvements to make it fair for all the companies.

[DID NOT TYPE ‘UNCLE LONG,’ AS NO 97TH HISTORICAL VALUE.]

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