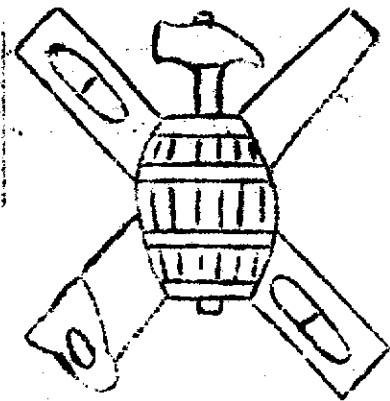


ENGINEER



79TH ENGINEER GROUP

Vol. I, No. 6

LONG BINH, VIETNAM

May 6, 1967

27TH BUILDS AIRFIELD IN OPERATION PORTSEA

Engineers of the 27th Engineer Combat Battalion, working side by side with the men of the 1st Australian Task Force on Operation Portsea, completed construction of an airfield at Xuyen Moc, 55 miles south-east of Saigon.

The airfield, consisting of a 2100 foot runway turn-arounds and a parking apron, will handle C-123 aircraft serving the Xuyen Moc District Headquarters.

Construction of the airfield was only part of the engineer's mission on the recently terminated Operation Portsea. The only road into the remote area had been seriously damaged by frequent enemy action. American and Australian engineers worked together to replace numerous culverts, fill huge craters, and construct Bailey Bridges across the large streams. This joint effort by two friendly nations permitted the 1st convoy of Free World vehicles to roll into Xuyen Moc.

At Xuyen Moc the Australians and Americans continued cooperating on more than construction tasks. An Australian surgeon, CPT Victor Bampton, teamed up with the surgeon of the 27th Engrs, CPT Paul N. Stewart, and set up shop in the small district dispensary. Before long, a line of vil-

(Continued on page 6)

SONG BE AIRLIFT

A massive airlift was flown recently to kick off Operation Harvest Moon in War Zone D in the heart of Viet Cong territory.

The airlift, which is the first of its kind in the II Field Force area of responsibility, transported over 400,000 lbs of heavy engineer equipment from Bien Hoa Air Base to Song Be Airfield near the base of Nui Ba Ra Mountain, 71 miles NE of Saigon. Transported along with their equipment were combat engineers of Company C, 168th Engineer Battalion and mechanics from the 557th Engineer Company (LE).

The 79th Group engineers worked side by side with US Air Force personnel, loading and unloading supplies and equipment at both bases during the airlift. The Air Force flew 23 sorties in support of the engineer mission, using C-130

(Continued on page 6)

LODGE'S FAREWELL MESSAGE

"As I leave South Vietnam after more than 30 months as American Ambassador, I want to say good bye to all of you who serve the United States of America here with such bravery, such competence, and such devotion.

"Whenever I had the chance during my travels in Vietnam, I extended thanks to each of you on behalf of the United States Government, I now do so again. You have responded magnificently to every challenge and done your duty with conspicuous gallantry and great courage. You represent America at its best, and it has been a rare privilege for me to be associated with you. I leave Vietnam convinced that while the road ahead is still difficult, your success is assured and the aggression will be repelled.

"I wish I could shake the hand of each of you. I pray the day will soon come when you return to the United States to receive a hero's welcome and to be reunited with your families. You deserve the best that America can offer. God bless you all."

FROM: Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge - 24 Apr 67.

Commander's Column

WHEN DO YOU PRAY

By Chaplain (LTC) Lincoln H. Barr

A helicopter pilot and crew risk their life to courageously rescue a downed pilot. A GI leaves his protected foxhole to pull his unconscious buddy to safety. A truck driver stops to help a disabled jeep.

This is the epitome of the American fighting man at his best. The individual's self-sacrifice breeds a strength of unity, comradeship, and accomplishment that is unsurpassed. The history of American Independence has been a history of co-operation, and this has called for a little bit of extra effort from each individual.

The recently completed Operation Portsea is a fine example of individual teamwork and unit co-operation. Australians and Americans worked side by side on a common mission. The two units worked as one and successfully completed their mission. In addition, an Australian and an American doctor joined together to set up a MEDCAP program for the nearby villagers. Their joint effort earned the undying gratitude of the people of the village.

The late John F. Kennedy asked us what we can do rather than receive, and his insight has not lost its significance. A current Army attitude asks not "What can I get out of the Army," but "What can I get out of." An attitude such as this destroys the basis of effective teamwork. Cooperation is reciprocal. Assistance rendered is usually returned in kind. Too many people will divorce themselves from a

(Continued on page 6)

The newspaper tells me that a sixteen year old girl returning home from school took a short cut through a swampy area. She was caught in a patch of quicksand which started to engulf her. It was the kind of experience that is a bad dream, from which we awake in the morning perfectly safe and sound. But this was not a bad dream. This was a real experience and Marilyn was scared. When she began sinking, she tried to fight forward to solid ground - only to go deeper in the muck.

She sank deeper and deeper. Neighbors finally heard her screams and summoned two policemen. One of them hit a soft spot and immediately, he too, was in up to his shoulders. The other sank to his waist before clutching at swamp grass. These men worked from one clump of grass to the next until at last they reached Marilyn. It took twenty minutes to pull her out.

The newspaper clipping which tells this story adds one remark made by Marilyn. I want to pass it on to you. She said, "I'd sunk to my neck; then I began praying to God." Isn't that just like many of us, we get sunk in trouble up to our necks, and then, and only then, do we begin to pray to God.

Marilyn's remark revealed the character of Marilyn's prayer life. Do you and I wait until we're sunk to the neck before we begin to pray.

PERSONNEL OO

OO GLIMPSES

You, as a member of the US Armed Forces in Vietnam, will never have a better opportunity to save for the future. High pay and low expenses make this the chance of a lifetime to provide money for when you want it.

If you're like most of us, you don't save enough money. You try, but something always comes up. Perhaps R&R expenses. A new watch. Clothing. It seems there's always something.

Well, there's a way thousands of soldiers are saving money successfully. They purchase US Savings Bonds through the Payroll Savings Plan.

Buying Savings Bonds is the easy way to save. Your finance clerk does all the work for you. He takes the money out of your pay automatically every month. You don't see it, you don't miss it, you don't spend it. There is no limit to the amount you may save. The bonds await you when you get home - to cash in for instant money or to hold to maturity.

See your finance clerk before next payday.

SF OUTPOST AT TON LE CHAN

After one hundred years of "progress", the modern fighting man finds himself using the tactics and plans of his ancestors in the American-Indian Wars.

West of the source of the Saigon River, near the Cambodian Border, the newest outpost in the Indian War has been built by the 27th Engr Bn. Substitute the old log fence with earth berms and heavy bunkers, and change the old stables to a C130 airfield and the picture is complete.

Construction of this new Special Forces Camp began with the arrival of the first elements of the 27th Engr Bn. Company B began clearing the dense growth of jungle and rubber trees. Company C built bunkers of Conex containers, complete with firing ports. The Special Forces Camp resembles an old frontier fort of the US Long Rifles. Its function has hardly changed: It serves to protect the surrounding inhabitants if the area is attacked. It provides billet space for the garrison. The fort is an outpost allowing speedy deployment of troops to remote trouble spots. It is a symbol of force in an area that would otherwise be claimed by the enemy. Finally, the Special Forces Camp provides a strong point for the Vietnamese CIDG and their Green Beret Advisors to cut off the flow of enemy men and supplies.

The clear and hold mission of the 27th Engr Bn is a good example of the Vietnam "Indian" War.

NEWLY BUILT BAILEY BRIDGES CHO MOI CREEK

Spanning the murky waters of Cho Moi Creek, 5 miles northwest of Saigon on Route TL 15, is a newly constructed Bailey Bridge built by a platoon of engineers from Company B, 86th Engineer Battalion.

The 90 foot double single panel bridge was constructed by the combat engineers atop the rusty relic of an existing bridge that was declared unsafe for heavy vehicular traffic which has constantly used the old bridge.

Engineers of the 573rd Engineer Company convoyed the materials to Cho Moi on their bridge trucks, arriving under the watchful eyes of hundreds of villagers. Closing the bridge to traffic, the 86th Engineers under 1LT John P. Allen of Beckey, Virginia, began construction of the new Bailey as many enterprising Vietnamese youngsters began operating ferries with their wooden boats, while others took the opportunity to show the engineers their swimming ability.

A major problem faced the bridge builders because they were erecting their Bailey right on the failing bridge with each end on the embankments at the ends of the bridge. The existing bridge being

(Continued on page 6)

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BLACKHORSE "THRONE" MORTARED

The Blackhorse Base Camp at Long Giao was mortared by the Viet Cong recently, and when the smoke cleared, one of its newest buildings was totally demolished and officially declared a combat loss.

The serious loss was a brand new 4-hole latrine built under the careful supervision of the 27th Engineer Battalion. Fortunately, there was no one in it at the time and it was the only building on the compound which was touched by the mortar attack. However, the building was so badly damaged that no one will be using that throne in the future.

The latrine was a self-help project constructed by the 2nd Squadron of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, guided by the 27th Engr Bn. Replacement has been given top priority.

HA

DOZER ASSEMBLY LINE

An assembly line was set up recently in a remote area of War Zone D by combat engineers of the 168th Engineer Battalion.

Given the mission of constructing an airfield at a distant location, cut off from highway access by torturous miles of Viet Cong controlled jungle, the engineers of Company C, 168th Engr Bn completely dismantled a D-4 bulldozer and flew the pieces into the forward area by Chinook helicopter. When the dozer arrived, it consisted of a basic carcass, two tracks, a blade, a belly pan, a gas tank and two hydraulic blade-control cylinders.

In less than 24 hours, the engineers and their makeshift assembly line had transformed the pile of components into an operational bulldozer capable of the work required to complete the tactical airfield. The operation is under the forward command of CPT Richard B. Kepner, Johnson City, New York, Commanding Officer, Company C, 168th Engr Bn.

GROSSWORD PUZZLE

Answer to Previous Puzzle

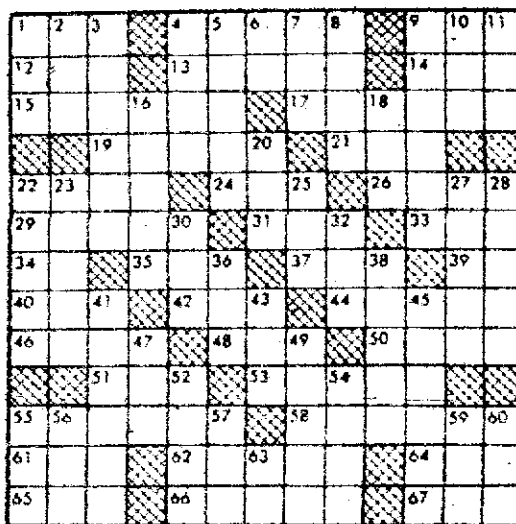
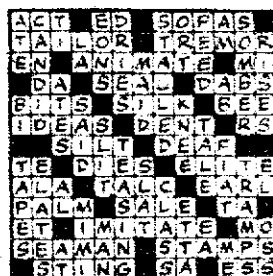
ACROSS

- 1-Priest's vestment
- 4-At that place
- 9-Edible seed
- 12-Sign of zodiac
- 13-Girl's name
- 14-Ordinance
- 15-Parent
- 17-Give
- 19-Singing voice
- 21-Offspring
- 22-Festive
- 24-Bow
- 26-Direction
- 29-Walks unsteadily
- 31-Emerge victorious
- 33-Pronoun
- 34-Conjunction
- 35-Carpenter's tool
- 37-Soft food
- 39-Exists
- 40-Gratuity
- 42-Long, slender fish
- 44-Flash
- 46-God of love
- 48-Knock
- 50-War god
- 51-Recent
- 53-Hurry
- 55-Buy back
- 58-Squanders
- 61-Exist
- 62-Experience
- 64-Electrified particle
- 65-Snail (colloq.)
- 66-Spirited horse
- 67-Sob

- 3-Container
- 4-At that time
- 5-Long-legged bird
- 6-Spanish article
- 7-Communist
- 8-Man's name
- 9-Carpenter's tools
- 10-Consume
- 11-Reverence
- 16-Cures
- 18-At present
- 20-Quarrel
- 22-Irritate
- 23-Norse gods
- 25-Plunge
- 27-Glisten
- 28-Trials
- 30-Sink in middle
- 32-Scold
- 36-Armed conflict

- 38-Piece of dinkerware
- 41-Meditate
- 43-Cheer
- 45-Peaceful
- 47-Bishopric
- 49-Adhesive substance
- 52-Dampens

- 54-Hurried
- 55-Rodent
- 56-Period of time
- 57-Small rug
- 59-Click beetle
- 60-Vessel's curved planking
- 63-Compass point



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MODERN ARMY

By SSG Gary L. Flaherty

Do you want a new assignment and enough money to take the vacation you have always wanted? Well, if you are a first term RA or AUS, then the money and assignment are both available. I'm talking about the VRB. Now a person may reenlist for an assignment anywhere in the world and still be eligible for the VRB. After reenlisting, you may depart for that new assignment upon completing 5/6 of your overseas tour, which is ten months in-country.

Don't forget, all personnel who are E-6 and below with less than 7 years service may now reenlist for a stateside assignment and be stationary for a period of at least one year. For this option, a normal overseas tour must be completed.

Why not talk with your reenlistment NCO today and find out more about these options. If you desire to talk with the 79th Group Career Counselor, just tell your unit reenlistment NCO and he will make an appointment.



HORNE IS APRIL SOM

Specialist 4 James H. Horne, Company D, 588th Engineer Battalion has been selected April's Soldier of the Month for both the 588th Engr Bn. and the 79th Engineer Group.

SP4 Horne of Erwin, NC, entered the Army in February of 1966, taking his basic training at Fort Gordon, Ga. He then joined the 31st Engr Bn at Fort Bliss, Texas, after taking his engineer instruction at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri.

SP4 Horne was given the award for his exceptional military knowledge, efficiency, and the carrying out of military duties.

The 79th Group gives the award to the most outstanding soldier from all of the Group's units. The award consists of a \$20 check from the 79th Engr Gp and \$10 and a 3 day pass to the Vung Tau R&R Center from the 588th.

SCHAUER IS COMPANY SOM

PFC Joseph D. Schauer of the 547th Engineer Platoon (MD) has captured the 79th Engr Gp separate companies Soldier of the Month.

PFC Schauer of LaVerne, Calif. is a Map Distribution Specialist. He entered the Army in July of 1966 and took his basic training at Fort Ord Calif. He has been in Vietnam since last Dec.

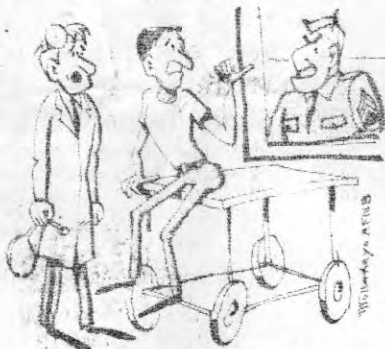
PFC Schauer was given the award for his exceptional military efficiency, knowledge, and carrying out of duties.

LAI KHE AIRFIELD REBUILT

The Lai Khe airfield has returned to full operation after being rebuilt by Company C, 86th Engineer Battalion. Lai Khe, a vital base camp housing the 3rd Bde of the 1st Division, is a jumping point for Northern operations and handles a large turnover of supplies and materials.

The C-130 capacity airfield had to be rebuilt because of the heavy wear and tear due to continuous traffic. The original pierced steel plank was taken up and the base was completely regraded. A waterproofing compound of liquid asphalt was sprayed over the whole area to prevent erosion and to create a firm base. The surface of the runway was laid with MX-19 solid matting.

It is important to note that through carefully planned construction, air traffic of the Caribou-Bird Dog class continued uninterrupted during the major portion of the work missing only a few days while the field was being graded and sprayed.



"NOW JUST WHERE IS
THAT PAIN IN THE NECK?"



SMILE PRETTY—Las Vegas showgirl Pat Decker is our pin-up of the week and obviously enjoys her work.

GIBBONS CAPTURES 86TH SOM

Specialist 4 Edward M. Gibbons, Company C, 86th Engineer Battalion has been selected Battalion Soldier of the Month for April at the 86 Engr HQs.

Specialist Gibbons is from Youngstown, Ohio. He entered the Army in October of 1963 and took his basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. He has been in Vietnam since last October.

SP4 Gibbons received his award for exceptional military knowledge, efficiency, and bearing. He receives \$10 and a three day pass to the Vung Tau R&R Center.

FROM PAGE 3

CHO

MOI

narrow, the engineers had to use a cutting torch so the long Panel Bridge transoms would fit into the narrow space in which they were required to work.

The 86th Engrs, using their heads as well as their muscles, were able to complete the 90 foot bridge in a matter of hours, leaving a higher class bridge capable of handling a much greater volume of military and civilian traffic.

Continued

AIRFIELD

FOR

PORTSEA

lagers with ailments ranging from skinned elbows to tuberculosis was waiting to see the medics, on the first MEDCAP program ever run in this remote district.

The vehicles with the red kangaroos and the white stars have disappeared from Xuyen Moc. But the people of that remote agricultural district will remember the engineers as they carry their produce to market over the new road, and watch the big twin-engined airplanes bring in food, clothing, and tools to help bolster their meager economy.

*Rock from
our pit!*

BREWER
168TH SOM

Specialist four John E. Brewer, 20 has been named the 168th Engineer Battalion Soldier of the Month.

In taking April's honors, Specialist Brewer, of Fremont, Nebraska received a check for \$18.75 from the 168th Engr Bn.

SP4 Brewer is a combat construction specialist in Company B of the 168th Engineers. He arrived in Vietnam in March of 1966.

The Soldier of the Month award is given for exceptional military knowledge, efficiency, and carrying out of duty.

Commander's
Column
Continued

problem because their attitude is one of "That's his worry, not mine." But it is everyone's worry. We are united in our goal, let us also be united in our effort.

In the military situation of Vietnam, we have to be our brother's keeper. This refers not only to a respect of discipline and responsibility, but also to that intangible band of loyalty that produces a buddy when help seems lost. "Esprit de Corps" is excellent if it does not exclude unit to unit cooperation in a common goal. In our present military effort, let cooperation be the key to our goal.

FROM PAGE 1

SONG BE
AIRLIFT

cargo planes for 20 of them.

Three flights of C-124 aircraft were flown to transport D7E bulldozers which are being used to build another forward airfield 67 miles north-east of Saigon. This is the first time that C-124 planes have been called upon to land in a forward combat area, making it possible for the combat engineers to perform their mission in Operation Harvest Moon.



BRUSHING UP—Pat Grisham gets her scrub brush ready to make everything ship-shape for the boating season at Corpus Christi, Tex.