

VOL. 1, NO. 8

QUI NHON, VIETNAM

FEBRUARY 23, 1967

PORT LANE GROWING INTO MAJOR PROJECT

Thirteen years ago it was used as a gun running port for the Viet Minh, who based their regional headquarters in an abandoned fort overlooking the picturesque harbor. Today Port Lane, Vung Ro is fast becoming one of the largest port construction projects in Vietnam.

In July, 1966 elements of the famed 101st Infantry Division (Airborne) pushed and fought their way through the thick jungle foliage in an attempt to flush out the Viet Cong. Soon after this the Screaming Eagles established a security screen while 45th Group Engineers began hacking out a beachhead.

Now, seven months later Port Lane is hardly recognizable. A huge temporary DeLong pier juts out into the calm waters of the South China Sea as engineers of B Company, 577th Engineer Battalion (Construction) finish up a 321-foot rock causeway close by.

Activity seems to be the keyword at this scenic bay 20 miles south of Tuy Hoa. Where the Screaming Eagles once tread only the Transportation and Engineer Corps remain.

Day and night B Company engineers, commanded by CPT Kenneth D. Jobe, continue to enlarge the recently constructed facil-

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19TH AIDS ORPHANAGE

Everything arrived in the nick of time for children at the Go Thi Orphanage, 20 miles northwest of Qui Nhon.

With the Tet season only one day away, gifts of clothing, blankets, linen, stationery, toys and food were delivered by members of the 19th Engineer Battalion (Combat). They were gathered by the battalion and CPT Donald Dawson, former chaplain of the 19th now serving in Japan.

Some of the gifts were donated by Sunday school children at Camp Zama, Japan, where CPT Dawson is stationed.

On the way to the orphanage, school supplies that had been collected by CPT Calvin Swearingin, present battalion chaplain, were left at the Tuy Phuoc School.

The Go Thi Orphanage is presently caring for 150

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84TH PUSHES MAINTENANCE

The 84th Engineer Battalion (Construction) has accepted the challenge of better maintenance by initiating a broadly-based program, "Maintenance for Production," aimed at equipment operators and their supervisors.

The program stresses operator "know-how" and diligence through formal instruction periods, informal sessions, awards, contests, inspections, widespread publicity of proper maintenance procedures, and effective supervision. Its object? To make the operator proud of his equipment and give him a desire to keep it running properly. Each month separate awards are given to the companies with the lowest ordnance and engineer equipment deadline rates (percentage of inoperable equipment).

To determine if this maintenance is being performed, supervisors are instructed weekly in the fundamentals of operator maintenance and vehicle inspection.

Each company has initiated a 24-hour-a-day organizational shop operation as part of the program.

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COMMANDER'S COLUMN

By COL George M. Bush

Operations in a hostile environment during the period of June, 1966 to February, 1967 have cost men of the 45th Engineer Group 7 killed in action, 70 wounded in action and 5 non-battle deaths.

Considering our frequent and continuous exposure to the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese Army, the comparatively light battle casualties can be attributed to the highly professional skill of our non-commissioned and commissioned officers and the alertness of our men. I am extremely proud of our men and their accomplishments in the face of a vicious and cunning enemy.

It is a sad thing to lose a fellow soldier and we all mourn the twelve we have lost. We also hope that our good luck and consummate skill will hold and that our casualties will continue to be light.

We shall do everything we can, consistent with our mission, to reduce casualties to the minimum. I believe there is considerable room for improvement in our safety program. The number of non-battle deaths and lost time accidents in the group suggests a highly-motivated alertness when exposed to the enemy but a relaxing of our guard when not so exposed. Each man in this group must be daily alert to the dangers inherent in driving vehicles, operating equipment and handling weapons and ammunition.

I want needless loss of life and limb reduced and I know I can count on all of you to do your part in the safety program.

39TH BUILDS BRIDGES AMID RAIN, BULLETS

Wind, rain, sniper fire and explosions plagued two platoons of Company A, 39th Engineer Battalion (Combat) as they worked around the clock to complete a 96-foot, M4T6 (aluminum decked) float bridge and repair two 38-foot dry spans on Highway 6B near Tuy Hoa.

Engineers built and repaired the bridges to upgrade the road to Class 50, so that tanks could be brought in for combat operations in the area.

The 3d Platoon of Company A, after finishing its work on the dry spans joined the 2d Platoon at the float bridge site and set up security for the bridge-builders.

Construction moved slowly at first because both approaches had to be built on marshy ground requiring a large amount of fill. Also, engineers had to remove M4T6 balk for the float bridge from an existing dry span.

Several hours after nightfall, the 3d Platoon security forces received

small arms fire from a cluster of houses about 100 yards from the bridge site. Reacting quickly, the platoon returned the fire and silenced it. Illuminating flares were sent up over suspected enemy positions, but a search of the area revealed nothing.

One hour later, the engineers heard mysterious explosions about 600 yards east of the site on Highway 6B. Work continued as the security force investigated the area, but again nothing was found.

At 9 o'clock the next morning -- almost 24 hours after the work had begun -- two tanks rolled over the completed bridge bound for La Hai. Company A returned to its base camp, leaving "Charlie" to sulk in the rice paddies muttering, "Curses, foiled again!"

15 PASS GED TEST

When officers of Company B, 19th Engineer Battalion (Combat) found that 60 percent of the men in their company did not have a high school education, they decided to find out why.

Talking to the men, the officers discovered that many of them desired a high school diploma, but weren't aware of the opportunities for obtaining one through the U. S. Army's General Education Development (GED) testing program.

Finally the GED test arrived and the sweating began. Seventeen men spent five nights in the company mess hall where the test was administered.

The happy tabulation showed 15 of the 17 men passed the test.

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PERSONAL GLIMPSES 35TH 'SANTA CLAUS' YEAR-ROUND VISITOR

Two combat engineers assigned to Company G, 19th Engineer Battalion (Combat) are from the same home town and have been together throughout their Army careers.

PFC Gordon Sandlin and PFC Richard Campbell met at Taft Senior High School in Hamilton, Ohio; both graduated in June, 1966. Both entered the Army Aug. 18, 1966 and went through basic training together at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. They were assigned to Company D, 2d Battalion, 1st Engineer Training Brigade at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri for combat engineer training. Both arrived in Vietnam Jan. 5 and are now assigned to the same company once again.

Sandlin and Campbell did not enlist under the Army's "buddy" system. But they enjoy each other's company and share common interests in cars, fishing and hunting.

* * *

A radio-teletype operator assigned to Headquarters Company, 45th Engineer Group, has a sideline -- barbering -- that keeps him busy trimming everyone from his barracks buddies to visiting generals.

PFC Robert H. J. Roybal of Pueblo, Colorado is the part-time barber who recently used the clippers on Brigadier General Charles M. Duke, Commanding General, 18th Engineer Brigade, who was visiting 45th Group units

Cutting the general's hair didn't make him especially nervous. "His hair was easy to cut," Roybal said. "It took me only six or seven minutes."

Roybal attended the American Barber College in Los Angeles, California.

Men of the 35th Engineer Battalion (Combat) acquired their own private "Santa Claus" during the Christmas holidays. Now it looks like "Santa's" gifts have become a daily, year-round occurrence.

"Santa" is Mrs. Jenkins of Worth, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago. She mailed a Christmas card addressed to "A GI in Vietnam" and asked to hear from someone serving in Vietnam. Two members of the 35th answered her request; now, there is a steady flow of mail in both directions.

Mrs. Jenkins talked to Worth residents and contacted two Chicago newspapers and Howard Miller, a Chicago disk jockey, asking for assistance in writing letters and sending packages to the men.

Today, the 35th gets letters and packages at every mail call. As Mrs. Jenkins writes: "The people want to do something -- their small part to help the fighting men in Vietnam. At least you know that some people know you're there and care that you are fighting for them."

ENGINEERS SEARCH SUSPICIOUS SAMPAN

Engineers don't often aid in the search of suspicious Vietnamese sampans, but one particular craft bound for Quang Nhai from Saigon was an exception to the rule.

The adventure began when 45th Engineer Group Headquarters received a call from Operation Markettime, Naval headquarters in Qui Nhon harbor, that a 60-foot mechanized sampan had been halted 70 miles north of Qui Nhon and was being escorted back for inspection.

It is the responsibility of the Navy and Coast Guard to run patrols up and down the coast looking for suspicious crafts. This particular sampan was ordered to halt and when it broke for shore, the Coast Guard patrol craft fired warning shots with its .50 caliber machine gun. The Vietnamese stopped.

Mr. Cabala, Naval Intelligence Officer, asked whether the engineers could bring a mine detector to probe for possible mines and grenades in the rice sacks. Three mem-

bers of Headquarters Company of the 45th -- CPT Marshall D. Ponko, assistant S-4 officer, 2LT Martin A. Kruming, information officer, and SP4 Charles W. Thurman, a clerk -- were there in a matter of minutes.

On hand to greet the five Vietnamese were armed guards from the Naval Base.

When the craft finally pulled alongside its Coast Guard escort, the engineers went aboard. Using copper wires and a highly sensitive mine detector, they worked for two hours.

The vessel was stripped to the hull but no explosives were found in the cargo of Lambrettas (motor scooters), rice sacks, medicine, batteries and wine.

There were no indications that it was carrying illegal supplies to the Viet Cong, but the engineers had done their part in keeping an ever present watch for suspicious crafts traveling up and down the South China Sea coast.

RADIOMEN AID IN RESCUE OF 4 MEN

Two radio operators assigned to Company B, 577th Engineer Battalion (Construction) played a major role in the rescue of four men trapped 14½ hours on a barge adrift in the South China Sea.

They are SP4 James W. Lawson and SP4 Kenneth R. Eshleman, who coordinate all sea traffic into and out of Port Lane.

The drama began at 4 p.m. one day when a freighter anchored in the harbor radioed that a barge, loaded with pierced steel planking (PSP), was adrift and had almost rammed the freighter. Two U. S. Navy "Mike" boats tried to push the barge toward shore, but it broke loose and kept drifting out to sea.

Two hours later, Eshleman requested tug support. The tug Telamonk got close enough for four men to board the barge and try to secure it to the tug. But rough

seas hurled the barge into the Telamonk; it rammed a four-foot hole into the tug's engine room before lines could be secured. The four men were stranded on the barge as the Telamonk returned to port for repair.

By 3 a.m., the barge was 10 miles south of Port Lane and drifting toward shore. Lawson and Eshleman radioed "Mike" boats and a fuel tanker to proceed to the barge area.

The barge finally went aground at 6:30 a.m. Men on the destroyer USS Allman saw possible Viet Cong on shore, and provided .50 caliber machine gun fire as a cover for the "Mike" boat that headed for shore. The four men were rescued.

The radio operators stayed with the barge rescue operation until 10:30 p.m., when the craft overturned. Thirty hours after the first call, Lawson and Eshleman could finally relax.

MOTOR STABLES PAYS DIVIDENDS AT 553D

"Motor stables," an everyday event at most Stateside posts, has been initiated in the war zone by members of the 553d Engineer Company (Float Bridge).

Motor stables is the daily inspection and maintenance of vehicles and other equipment in a unit's motor pool. From 5:15 to 6:15 p.m. each day, drivers and mechanics of the 553d insure that their equipment is fit for a long, hard day of use.

Statistics show that the 553d believes in efficient, up to date maintenance. An average of only 6.5 percent of all

engineer equipment -- generators, compressors and belts -- is "dead-lined" or out of operation, at any given time. Maintenance of ordnance equipment -- vehicles and all other items -- averaged a 9.5 percent deadline.

What's responsible for this impressive record? Mechanics credit it to several factors: efficient wrecker support and recovery of inoperable

equipment; performance of the company's 61 bridge trucks which, though in constant use, average only 6 percent deadlines; and good work by mechanics.

19TH AIDS ORPHANAGE

(Continued from Page 1) children and refugees. Operated by six Catholic sisters, it serves the young as well as any local persons who are without home or family.

Less than two years ago buildings that now house the orphanage were a Viet Cong stronghold. The roof of the tallest building served as a defense position from which the VC rained mortars and small arms fire on would-be attackers.

Chaplain Swearingin had a special gift for the orphanage on his most recent visit. He brought along CPT Edward G. Gutman, the battalion dental surgeon.

The children waited in line for the telltale examinations that would spell out which group had the fewest cavities.



FUR COAT VS. BIKINI—Kathy Laundry, a dancer in Las Vegas, Nev., nightspot, likes to be prepared. In case the fur coat gets too warm she's all set with a bikini underneath.

84TH GETS NEW SHOP

The field maintenance platoon of Company A, 84th Engineer Battalion (Construction), which has been in Vietnam since the initial stages of the American military buildup in May, 1965, will finally move into permanent quarters.

This platoon, which has completed over 2,200 jobs in its 21 months in Vietnam, will occupy a 10-bay building with a concrete floor. The new shop, together with an existing quonset that is used as a shop office, will provide adequate maintenance facilities for the critical work of this unit.

The mission of the field maintenance platoon is to perform direct support maintenance and provide repair parts for all units in the battalion. It consists of four sections: a headquarters or shop office; a machine shop and welding section; a repair parts supply section; and an engineer maintenance section handling generators, compressors, belts, vehicles and heavy equipment.

Of the 2,200 jobs completed, about 50 percent have been on engineer equipment, 30 percent on ordnance vehicles and 20 percent were handled by the machine shop or welding shop. The platoon has provided direct support for construction projects at An Khe and Bong Son, in addition to their normal area of responsibility in the Qui Nhon area.

The repair parts section has a particularly tough job in keeping up with the increasing demand for parts. When the company first came to Vietnam, this section was authorized to stock 1,000 repair parts. The figure has now jumped to 12,000 and is still rising.

35TH BRINGS TEXAS FORDS TO VIETNAM

Vietnam may be a long way from the Texas Panhandle, but that did not stop men of Company C, 35th Engineer Battalion (Combat) from installing a Texas ford on Highway 19 north of Qui Nhon.

Texas fords are so named because they are

used extensively in the Panhandle area to carry minimum flows and to per-

mit easy overtopping without damage when flash floods occur.

The 36-inch culverts run underneath a 300-foot concrete by-pass and enable traffic to run more smoothly over the well-

traveled route. Seventy cubic yards of concrete were used in the project.

In addition to the bypass a one-way "I" beam bridge built by the French still stands at the site.

"During the monsoons when water was two feet over the by-pass that old French span came in pre-

tty handy," said CPT David C. Cottingham, commander of C Company.

Company C is stationed 12 miles north of Qui Nhon while the battalion headquarters is located at Hammond.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

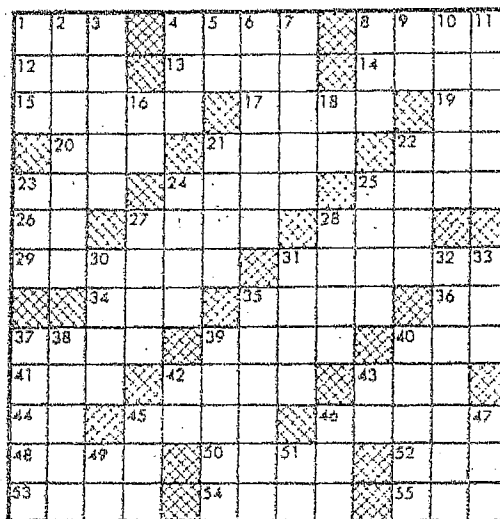
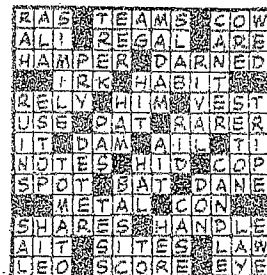
Answer to Previous Puzzle

ACROSS

- 1-Resort
- 4-Spreads for drying
- 8-Unit of Italian currency (pl.)
- 12-Pronoun
- 13-Mixture
- 14-Diluted
- 15-Old womanish
- 17-Sluggish
- 19-Parent (colloq.)
- 20-Born
- 21-Hurried
- 22-Writing implement
- 23-Creny (colloq.)
- 24-Observes
- 25-Festive
- 26-Indefinite article
- 27-Sense
- 28-Through
- 29-Gazed
- 31-Rush suddenly
- 34-Parent (colloq.)
- 35-Tilled land
- 36-Preposition
- 37-Newspaper paragraph
- 39-Recline in a lazy manner
- 40-Witty remark
- 41-Communist
- 42-Narrate
- 43-Possesses
- 44-Cooled lava
- 45-Pertaining to an era
- 46-Reveals
- 48-Former Russian ruler
- 50-Rail bird
- 52-Suffix: adherent of
- 53-Lampreys
- 54-Pitcher
- 55-Greek letter

DOWN

- 1-The uzial
- 2-Flag
- 3-Fairy in "The Tempest"
- 4-Pedal digit
- 5-Spanish article
- 6-Scatter
- 7-Shoe bottoms
- 8-Ordinance
- 9-Preposition
- 10-Repulse
- 11-Babylonian hero
- 16-French article
- 18-Hypothetical force
- 21-Sow
- 22-Separate
- 23-Dance step
- 24-Leak through
- 25-Microbe
- 27-Preposition
- 28-Knit
- 30-Imitated
- 31-Meeting room
- 32-Slackest
- 33-Newt
- 35-Ensnare
- 37-Angry
- 38-Plague
- 39-Rent



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PROMOTIONS AND AWARDS

PROMOTIONS

19TH ENGR BN

HHC

SSG Anthony M. Mihalic Jr
 SP5 Jimmie A. Fulton
 SP5 Roger J. Cummings
 SP4 Charles E. Smithhart
 SP4 Robert B. Barnes II
 SP4 Richard S. Allingham
 CO B
 SP4 Joseph T. White
 SP4 F. D. Shoun
 SP4 Michael G. Rogers
 SP4 Benito L. Tovar
 SP4 Charles Campbell

35TH ENGR BN

CO A

SP5 Robert A. Delewinski
 SP5 Salvador Vasquez

CO B

P5G Maurice Jeffers, Jr.

39TH ENGR BN

HHC

SSG James L. King
 SP5 Alva E. Hamrick
 SP4 Donald A. Hardin
 SP4 Ray L. Newstead
 SP4 Michael L. Sovich
 SP4 Joe L. Soza
 SP4 Jimmie W. Bates
 SP4 Carroll R. Herring
 SP4 Michael D. Jackson
 SP4 Tensley Couch
 SP4 James P. Cisewski

577TH ENGR BN

HHC

SFC Caroll Robins

CO D

SFC Alexander McBeth

AWARDS

Bronze Star with "V" Device

CPT Thomas A. Reardon,
 HHC, 19th Engr Bn
 SP6 John L. Streater, HHC
 19th Engr Bn

Soldier's Medal

SP4 Kenneth V. Smedley,
 CO A, 19th Engr Bn

Bronze Star

MAJ Harry C. Goodson III,
 HHC, 19th Engr Bn
 CPT Kurt S. Dzinich, Co
 D, 84th Engr Bn
 CPT Leonard C. Gregor,
 Co B, 19th Engr Bn
 CPT Randolph F. Orlovski,

HHC, 45th Engr Gp
 CPT Todd D. Stong, Co C,
 19th Engr Bn
 LLT Jon N. Ballard, Co B,
 84th Engr Bn
 LLT Bobby R. Hughey, Co
 D, 84th Engr Bn
 LLT Burgess L. Decker III
 697th Engr Co
 W4 John A. Bright, HHC,
 45th Engr Gp
 W3 Earl D. Young, HHC,
 84th Engr Bn
 SSG Harold L. Cortis, Co
 A, 577th Engr Bn

Army Commendation Medal-- 1st Oak Leaf Cluster

MSG Robert W. Schmidt,
 39th Engr Bn

Army Commendation Medal

LLT Frederic A. Bruton,
 577th Engr Bn
 LLT Dominick P. Bartenope
 HHC, 84th Engr Bn
 SFC Steve Zagorac, Jr.,
 577th Engr Bn

Air Medal -- 2d Oak Leaf Cluster

W1 Ludwig J. Albrecht,
 HHC, 45th Engr Gp

Air Medal--1st Oak Leaf Cluster

MAJ John W. Furrer, HHC,
 45th Engr Gp

Purple Heart

SP5 George E. Brenner,
 HHC, 39th Engr Bn

Good Conduct Medal

SP5 James F. Muszynski,
 Co D, 577th Engr Bn
 SP4 Gary W. Nemeth, Co D,
 577th Engr Bn

MAINTENANCE

(Continued from Page 1)

"Maintenance for Production" is beginning to show results. Since its inception in January, engineer and ordnance dead-lined equipment has declined 50 percent and 27 percent, respectively.

Supervisors hope that within a few months, the battalion deadline rates will be low enough to have virtually all equipment available for work.

PORT LANE GROWING

(Continued from Page 1)
 ities which handle close to 1,000 tons of cargo per day. One such facility is a 100,000 square foot hardstand area for in-transit storage being carved out of the mountainside. At present the cargo is being loaded directly onto trucks and hauled to storage points in Tuy Hoa. The storage area will permit more efficient handling of incoming supplies.

Running alongside the water the engineers are literally blasting out a 2,500 foot long roadway where sheer rock once existed. The one-lane road will connect the port area with the 119th Transportation Company on nearby Alpha Beach.

Crushed rock for the causeway as well as the road bed has raised a temporary problem, since the nearest quarry is 20 miles away. Solution? Build a quarry site and set up a rock crusher, which B Company is now doing.

Huddled alongside the overshadowing DeLong pier ships from as far away as Seattle, Washington await their turn to be unloaded. To aid in the off-shore loading the transportation outfits employ Mike boats, barges, LARCs and even LSTs operated by Japanese and Korean crews.

"There are anywhere from two to six vessels awaiting unloading during the course of a week," said LTC Thomas Benson, Commanding Officer of the 39th Transportation Battalion. Most of the ships originate on the West Coast (Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles) although they have come from the Gulf Coast and the East Coast.

As for the future, plans are under way for a 500-man-plus cantonment area.