

39TH COMPLETES LINK IN QL-1

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CHU LAI (39th Bn) - The month of February, 1970, marked a milestone for the 18th Engineer Brigade, 39th Engineer Battalion (Const) and the 137th Light Equipment Company. The final stretch of Highway QL-1 in Quang Ngai Province has been paved. As the last load of asphalt came out of the "Barber Green" paver, the last two stretches of

the highway were joined south of LZ Max, the 137th's base camp. Cameras appeared and cheers went up. For the men of the 137th, the project on which they had been working since April, 1969 with the 39th had come to a dramatic end.

During the process of up-grading and paving the highway, the 39th met and overcame all adversities, among them the weather. The monsoon rains caused several large

washouts and many soft culvert sites had to be repaired or replaced. The 137th was assigned the task of performing the paving operation. Thus a paving crew, not organic to the TO&E, had to be formed and trained.

While the paving operation was the final finish to the project, the 137th was also involved in the other aspects of the operation. A vast amount of planning and preparation was

applied to achieve completion of the project. The first platoon and the third platoon provided the sub-base and base course laydown crews. A finish crew did most of the final grading and rolling.

Just before paving, the surface was shot with an asphalt prime coat which provided a bond between the asphalt paving and soil underneath. This, plus general equipment support to the project, was provided by the

support platoon.

A project of this magnitude required much coordination of manpower and equipment. With 176 pieces of equipment, 186 operators and support personnel, and four to five phases of the operation being accomplished simultaneously, this proved to be no small task.

QL-1, a fine example of their individual professionalism and dedication.

Engineers' Foil Assassins' Plot

CHU LAI (39th Bn) - Company C, 39th Engineer Battalion, found itself in the middle of an assassination plot. Recently, local civilians from Trach Tru, a small village near Landing Zone Max, Company C's base camp, brought word that there was a group of Viet Cong in the village bent on assassinating the village chief.

A two platoon reactionary force was dispatched to investigate. When the Viet Cong element in the village spotted

the engineers coming, they fled through the adjacent rice paddies. Company C set after them in hot pursuit and in the resulting engagement was credited with one enemy killed in action.

By this time the operation had been coordinated with nearby infantry and gunships. When these units arrived on the scene, the pursuit operation was turned over to them. The engineers had put a stop to the Viet Cong's terrorist activity.