

157th CIVIL ENGINEER SQUADRON

LINEAGE

157th Civil Engineering Flight
157th Civil Engineer Squadron

STATIONS

Pease ANGB, NH

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

Maj. George M. Sawyer, #1972

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

On 1 November 1969, the Civil Engineering Section, a part of the 157th Support Squadron, was upgraded to become the 157th Civil Engineering Flight with responsibility for maintaining and constructing physical facilities supporting the Group's operations. An integral part of the new Flight was a 72-man "Prime BEEF" (Base Emergency Engineering Force) team, comprised of experienced construction tradesmen ready for 28-hour deployment to any place in the world.

Two months later, the 157th Civil Engineering Flight teamed up with Maine's 101st Civil Engineering Flight to provide construction services for the United States Air Forces in Europe, with 15-day active duty training assignments at Spangdahlem and Bitburg, West Germany. A year later (April 1972), the 157th CE Flight was airlifted to Ramey Air Base, Puerto Rico — one

of 14 Air National Guard engineering flights helping the Air Force modernize its facilities there.

In 1971, the 157th Civil Engineering Flight found themselves in Spangdahlem and Bitburg, Germany—bases that welcomed NHANGers well into the 1990's. Here they initiated a construction support program for U.S. Air Forces in Europe. The project involved nine Air National Guard organizations and continued throughout the summer months. More than 160 airmen and officers from the New Hampshire and Maine ANG comprised the first contingent of engineers providing construction services. A year later in April 1972, the Engineers had their second major deployment in as many years, this time to Ramey AFB, Puerto Rico, where an 87-man force provided expertise to complete some 24 construction projects.

During March and April, the Civil Engineering Flight went to Panama for annual training.

In January, the CE Squadron went to Eglin AFB, Fla., receiving Rapid Runway Repair instruction. Out in Hawaii, our Security Police assisted counterparts at Hickam AFB.

The 157th made Air Guard history in April 1987 when the CE Squadron was assigned to the Department of Immigration and Naturalization Service in Texas. For the first time an ANG unit was assigned to INS, helping construct a 40 x 100-foot building at the Border Patrol Headquarters.

Our Engineers deployed to Jamaica for 18 days in April, repairing massive damage caused by 1988's weather monster, Hurricane Gilbert. The focus of their effort was to rebuild a local school.

No single story of 1989 could top the announcement made on January 5, 1989, confirming the recommendation of the Realignment and Base Closure Committee that Pease Air Force Base would be shut down. To be sure, the unit moved ahead with an ambitious flying schedule while wondering about its very future in Newington. That month, the Civil Engineers flew to Anderson AFB, Guam and rehabilitated an existing dormitory there. In May, some 110 NHANGers deployed to RAF Mildenhall, assisting the 513th Airborne and Control Wing (ACCW). Alaska was the destination in October, where 157th personnel spent a week training with the 168th Air Refueling Squadron at Eielson AFB.

Things started out quietly enough. Spring and summer 1989 saw an extensive project for installation of curbing, sidewalks, and pavement repairs. At that time, Base Civil Engineer Maj. Al Robertson advised, "Check with Civil Engineering before leaving your POV overnight for more than three days in any of our lots in May, June or July. Travel around the Guard area on drill weekends during this period might best be accomplished by walking."

Other key expenditures and additions to the Air Guard base included a \$350,000 Communications Center and an alert crew facility. Work began in October 1990 on the \$420,000 alert facility, a gutted and completed renovated B259. From a mission standpoint, the unit's SIOP alert commitment would continue uninterrupted until 1992.

Meanwhile the Engineers again found themselves in the school repair business, this time

rebuilding an elementary school in San Andres, Panama, an Operation "Fuertos Caminos" project. Germany was also the focus of two deployments. Some 43 Engineers completed 16 days of annual training at Ramstein and other air bases. The organization later sent 50 to Honduras. Another 60 men and women deployed in August to Bitburg

The new year opened with what arguably could be called one of the worst ice-storms in New England history. While the coast was spared, inland Maine and New Hampshire communities were utterly devastated as tens of thousands of trees were damaged or destroyed. Roads were blocked and communities went without power for weeks. In the midst of this natural disaster, the 157th Civil Engineers were called to Gilford. Armed with six chain saws, they cleared hundreds of fallen trees from town roads, enabling rescue crews to move in and restore electricity.

2009 Staff Sgt. Steve Chasse digs a drainage trench while Tech. Sgt. Andy Petrin measures its depth. This work was done during the 157th Civil Engineering Squadron's deployment to Camp Pride in New Durham from April 30 to May 5. Camp Pride is a special needs camp sponsored by the Lions Club where about 40 CE members and 10 civilian and retired members spent time "sprucing up" the camp. Some of the work accomplished was grading the main road and lake access road, cutting and clearing a tent platform site, cutting and clearing the archery range site, checking electrical and water systems, installing a sump pump and repair leaking fixtures in the arts and crafts building, fixing front road and trim trees just to name a few.

2009 For Troopers in reserve units, mandatory two-week training periods are the order of the day. Reservists know that they will have to leave their families during the year and head out to their local training facilities. For some members of the Air National Guard, they may find themselves in another part of the world for their Deployment for Training period. Members of the New Hampshire Air National Guard's 157th Civil Engineering Squadron found themselves at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay for their yearly DFT period and are not running short of real-world conditions to prepare themselves for possible overseas deployment. Since arriving on island at the beginning of August, they have immersed themselves in almost non-stop work, completing a number of projects in a short period of time. "We have kept very busy here. As a matter of fact, the other day [Navy] Capt. [Carl] Knuckles told us that in the first four days we were here, we completed about 10 days worth of work," said the noncommissioned officer-in-charge for the DFT, Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Bill Russell. Although not the first location for the unit, which provides a gamut of services from construction to electrical and plumbing repair, Joint task Force Guantanamo is proving an important training tool for the Airmen. "It is great coming down here, even if for two weeks, because we are helping out everyone here in Guantanamo, not just the JTF," added Russell, who has more than 20 years with the Air National Guard. Air Force Lt. Col. Mike Busby, the commander of the 157th, enjoys what Guantanamo provides for his Troopers. The location has not only provided real-world training for the unit, but it also gives them the chance to experience an environment that differs greatly from their home state. "When we come down, we have to deal with elevated temperatures, being away from home and even the living conditions. Those are the things that are going to make the difference when we deploy," said Busby. The list of projects the team has been involved with have ranged from the relatively small, such as swapping out some electrical panels at the public works self-help building, to slightly more labor intensive projects like resurfacing the roof of the naval station's hospital. "Our guys were out at the hospital, the first week we were here, working on

their roof. It gives my guys the opportunity to complete a job that not only gave my guys roofing experience but also saved the base nearly \$50,000 in contractor costs,” praised Russell, a nine-year active duty veteran. In addition to resurfacing the hospital roof, they are also putting the finishing touches on a new gazebo, running electrical lines to the structure so that they will be able to hook up lights and a ceiling fan. For Busby, who has been in the unit for more than 20 years as both enlisted and officer, this kind of on-the-job training is the type of thing that not only boosts the morale of his Airmen but also provides them with invaluable training that his unit has been lacking over the last few years. “Over the last 10 years we have lost many personnel because they want to get out and do their jobs instead of preparing for inspections and other things that we have had in years past,” said Busby. Air Force 1st Lt. Carrie Smith, an engineering officer, echoed Busby’s emphasis on the training as a great tool to enhance morale and teamwork within their unit of approximately 90 personnel. “It is great that we get to come down here and have the opportunity to use equipment that we may not have back at home station. Our guys get to come down here and interact with one another and build on teamwork. We don’t have to send our guys off to school to get the same training we are able to do down here,” praised Smith. Busby also recognizes the importance of overseas DFTs for his unit. He has noticed over the last 10 to 15 years the demographic of his unit has become younger. This leaves him with a force that may not hold the same jobs in the civilian world as they do in his unit. “Years ago we had a lot more people that were doing their jobs outside of the military, so that lent us a great deal of expertise and knowledge for our guys to draw on,” reflected Busby, who spent nine years enlisted as an electrician. Air Force Airman 1st Class Mark Quinn, left, and Air Force Tech. Sgt. Andre Petrin, right, of the 157th Civil Engineering Squadron, load a concrete picnic table base onto a forklift as they repair tables at Windmill Beach as part of their two week Deployment For Training.

Air Force Order of Battle

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Sources

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