

CHAPTER VII POST WORLD WAR II

Following the War, the Battalion was organized as the Division Engineer Battalion for the 46th Infantry Division, Michigan Army National Guard. As earlier with the famous 32nd Division, the Battalion was once again an integral part of a functional combat Division.

The Battalion's historic home station is officially the Upper Peninsula and it seems that at one time or another, has had units in most every major U.P. town to include: Baraga, Calumet, Gladstone, Ironwood, Ishpeming, Kingsford, Iron River, Marquette, Manistique and Sault Ste. Marie.

Today the Battalion organization is: [1](#)

HHC	Ishpeming
Company A	Calumet
Detachment 1 Company A	Baraga
Company B	Ironwood
Detachment 1 Company B	Iron River
Company C	Gladstone
1437 Bridging Company	Sault Ste. Marie



As they were 40 years ago, the men of the Battalion are still proficient in erecting the Bailey Bridge. The bridge is still considered critical to the unit's mission. Credit: SP4 Ron Hess



Although the M4T6 raft is considered technologically obsolete, large stocks of the bridge assure its wartime use, and they require the 107th to continue to be proficient in its construction. Credit: SP4 Ron Hess



The Battalion construction section has a limited construction capability. Above, they are assembling a steel warehouse at Camp Grayling.
Credit: SP4 Ron Hess



The Battalion is still a "combat" battalion. After carefully installing the demolition charges, an engineer squad "cooks them off" and completely destroys a set of bridge abutments. Credit: SP4 Ron Hess



An engineer squad installs a concertina wire barrier. Credit: SP4 Ron Hess



To prepare for the State mission of riot control, annual civil disturbance Exercises are held. Credit: SP4 Ron Hess

MOBILIZATIONS

The Guard has always had a dual role, that of a reserve for the Army in time of National war and as a State force that the Governor can use in a variety of emergencies. The strike duty in the 1890's was a classic case in point. Following World War II, there have been a number of state activations. Those that follow are the most prominent:

DECEMBER 26 - 29, OPERATION MONA LAKE

As a result of an ice jam in the channel between Mona Lake, near Muskegon and Lake Michigan, nearby residents were threatened with severe flooding. The huge ice jam had blocked up 300,000,000 tons of excess water in the lake. The jam extended 400 feet out into the Lake Michigan and in places was 10 to 12 feet thick. After a call-up by the Governor, the men of the Battalion placed 1,000 pounds of dynamite and ammonium nitrate into selected charge holes and blasted a clear channel into the open lake. The flooding was relieved and the operation a complete success. ²



Members of the battalion on patrol in Detroit.

JULY 23 - AUGUST 6, 1967, DETROIT RIOTS

The Battalion saw dangerous duty during the infamous Detroit Riots. Like nearly all of the Michigan National Guard, the 107th was just starting the second week of Annual Training when the order for the call-up came. After a long motor march to the city, the Battalion performed critical duties that eventually led to controlling the roving mobs that had been smashing, looting and setting fires. The men of the 107th rode fire trucks to protect them from sniper fire, protected vital utilities, guarded police stations and manned road blocks. In many areas, the only buffer between rioting and order was the 107th! ³

NOVEMBER 13, 1975, ONTONAGON WOOD CHIP FIRE

Elements of the Battalion rendered vital support in battling a Persistent fire in the wood chip piles of the Hoerner-Waldorf Company in Ontonagon. Fed by high winds, sparks from the fire endangered the entire town, threatening a repeat of the 1896 disaster. ⁴

AUGUST 25 - OCTOBER 25, 1976, GREAT SENEY FIRE

The Battalion's longest activation was the Seney fire. The fire started by a lightning strike in the Manistique State Forest, just south of Seney Wildlife Refuge. As a result of extremely dry conditions and high winds, the fire eventually spread to the Seney Refuge, where it became a full fledged forest fire. In spite of the full efforts of approximately 1,100 fire fighters from the State and Federal governments, the fire burned nearly 76,000 acres, making it the worst in Michigan in nearly 63 years! The 107th assumed the mission of forming a guard task force, providing critical motor transport for fire fighters into the fire area, messing the entire crew, hasty combat construction of roads and bridges in the fire zone, and controlling guard helicopter assets for aerial inspection and monitoring. At the fire's height, 147 men of the 107th were on duty, and by fire's end, 550 men of the Battalion had seen fire duty. ⁵

JANUARY 14 - 16, 1978, AU TRAIN ICE JAM

The Battalion repeated its Mona Lake success in blasting ice jams again, now at the AuTrain River on Lake Superior's south shore. A severe lake gale had forced large blocks of ice into the mouth of the river, causing an ice jam that threatened to damage railway and highway bridges as well as caused inland flooding. Within hours of being activated, elements of the Battalion put 5,200 pounds of ammonium nitrate slurry in 116 charge holes to blast an underwater channel through ice windrows 30 feet thick. As with the Mona Lake mission, the results were successful. ⁶

JANUARY 26 - 28, 1978, SNOW EMERGENCY

During a heavy blizzard, elements of Headquarters Company and Company C rendered critical assistance to the citizens of their local communities. Guard trucks transported police, fire, hospital and other emergency personnel over roadways rendered impossible to other than clawing four-wheel drive heavy trucks. ⁷

THE 107th ENGINEER HIGHWAY

There are many unique ways of commemorating the accomplishments of an organization, but surely one of the most unique is the 107th Engineers Highway (M107), running from Silver City into the heart of Porcupine Mountains. In 1954, the highway was dedicated to memory of the 107th during a special ceremony. At approximately the midpoint of the seven mile long highway stands a historic memorial to the organization. When the highway was dedicated, one veteran recalled that 'we like the thought that is is small in length, but passed through a rugged terrain. It fits our outfit perfectly, as while we were small in numbers, we were big in rugged engineering accomplishments.'



A helicopter delivers the demolition charges as the troops prepare 116 charge holes.

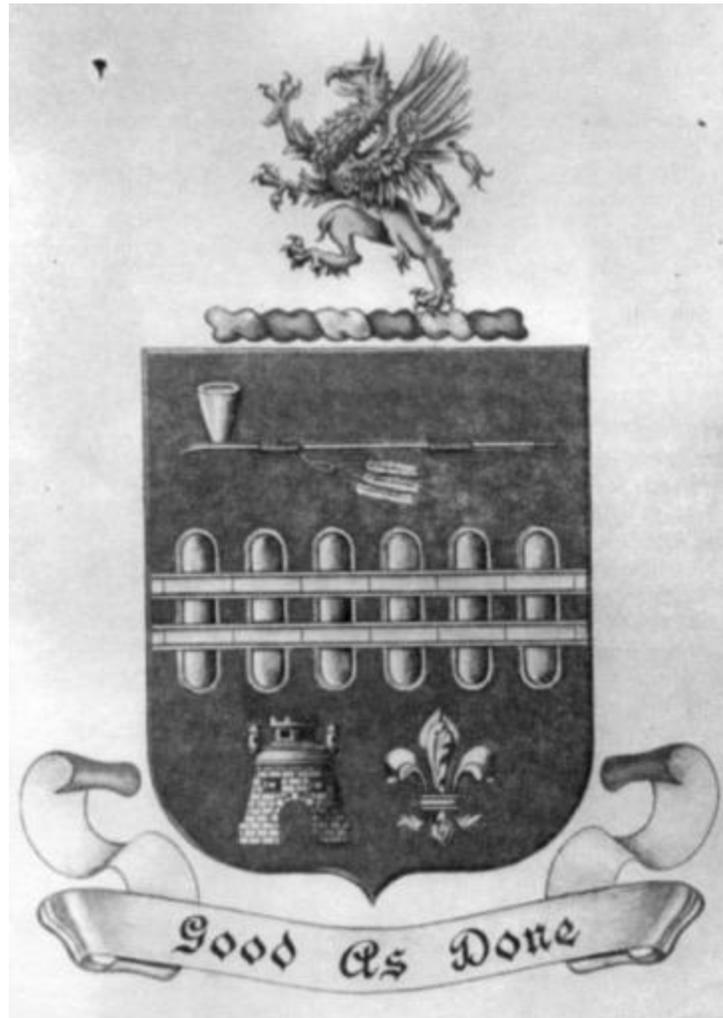
Credit: SP4 Ron Hess



A test shot determines the explosive charge requirements. Credit: SP4 Ron Hess



The ice windrows at Au Train frequently exceeded 25 feet. The threatened M-28 highway bridge is in the upper left. Credit: SP4 Ron Hess



The Griffin at the top symbolizes all units of the Michigan National Guard.

The colors are red and white, which are traditional of the Corps of Engineers. The figure at the top of the crest is, in Indian language, a calumet. It signifies our origin as the Calumet Light Guard. It also means peace pipe, war pipe or tready pipe, and indicates the various conditions under which we have served.

The center design is symbolic of a floating treadway bridge. It represents our service in World War II and specifically refers to the Victor Bridge, which our organization built across the Rhine River and which was the longest tactical bridge built.

The castle is taken from the design of the Spanish-American War Campaign Medal and is that of the Morro Castle, a famous Cuban landmark. It signifies our service during that War.

The floral design is that of a fleur des lies...a design well known and used throughout France. It alludes to our service in France during World War I, when as a part of the 32nd 'Red Arrow' Division, we broke every line the Germans held.

Our motto is a simple one. 'Good As Done.' It is how we accept each task given to us.



'107th SNORTIN' BULL'

The famous 'snortin' Bull' typifies the hard-working, hard-fighting spirit of the Battalion. Originally designed by a member for the S-2 section during World War II, older versions carry the 254th logos. This example is a special version for the 107th Engineer Association.