



**18th Engineer Brigade
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PRESS RELEASE

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18th Engineer Brigade Battle Staff Ride

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LORRAINE, France – Senior leaders from the 18th Engineer Brigade toured World War II battle sites during a battle staff ride Sept. 27-29 to develop a more comprehensive understanding on the operational art of combat engineering.

Staff rides were developed to enable a commander and his staff to explore significant battle sites and reflect on what decision they would have made.

These tours require active participation by the staff in order to analyze past command and management decisions and judge the effectiveness of a decision.

As preparation for deployment to Afghanistan, 45 commissioned and noncommissioned officers learned from the experiences of engineers during the Lorraine Campaign fought by the U.S. Third Army during World War II.

These leaders explored sites along the Moselle River near Nancy, France, and rediscovered that all battles – past and present – require planning, reconnaissance and an understanding of the terrain.

Lt. Col. (retired) Jim Gabelman led the staff ride through where Third Army engineers followed the initial river crossing assaults and constructed bridges to enable supplies to reach the troops on the front lines.

Today engineers perform the same task, and when the 18th Eng. Bde. Soldiers emplace bridges in Afghanistan, the staff ride will help them to remember the consequences of poor planning.

At the end of the staff ride, leaders discussed some of the important factors that affected the battle in 1944. These included the planning of logistics on the battlefield, using reactive communications, applying strong leadership and remaining adaptable.

Although it is more than 65 years later and a different theater of operations, engineers of the 18th Eng. Bde. will work in all of these areas when they deploy.



Senior leaders of the 18th Engineer Brigade on a battle staff ride pose for a photo in front of a monument memorializing Sgt. Jacob Sadowski, a tank commander in the 37th Tank Battalion, 4th Armored Division. Sadowski was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for returning to his burning tank to assist his gunner in escaping at the cost of his own life. (Photo by Capt. Kathryn Werback, 18th Eng. Bde. Public Affairs)



Senior leaders of the 18th Engineer Brigade prepare to lay flowers in the Lorraine American Cemetery in St. Avold, France at the grave of Pvt. Archie Elder during the Battle Staff Ride Sept. 27-29. Elder died Dec. 3, 1944, during the Lorraine Campaign. He was a member of the 347th Engineer General Services Regiment, which was redesignated as the 18th Eng. Bde. in 1954. (Photo by Capt. Kathryn Werback, 18th Eng. Bde. Public Affairs)