

## 299<sup>th</sup> Brigade Engineer Battalion

On 17 March 2014, the 299<sup>th</sup> Brigade Engineer Battalion activated in conjunction with the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade Combat Team, 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division's official transition from the Armored Brigade Combat Team to a Stryker Brigade Combat Team. Despite the 299<sup>th</sup>'s recent activation, the unit is no stranger to Fort Carson or the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. The storied lineage of the Proven Pioneers encompasses numerous home stations and campaigns dating back to its ordinal activation on 1 March, 1943 at Camp White, Oregon. Since that time, the unit has proven time and again its place amongst the Army's greatest units. From the D-Day invasion, where the 299<sup>th</sup> became the sole unit to participate on both Omaha and Utah Beaches, to the Battle of the Bulge, to its 14 campaigns in the Vietnam conflict, and on the Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm and eventually their participation on Operation Iraqi Freedom and the capture of the notorious Saddam Hussein, the 299<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion continues to prove itself as an elite unit capable of performing any task under any condition; a credit to the great things the Proven Pioneers will surely accomplish as they take their place in the Army's newest Stryker formation.



Among the distinguished guests present for the 17 March, 2014 Reactivation Ceremony were battalion alumni including MG John Peabody, the Deputy Commanding General for Civil and Emergency Operations (USACE) and former commander of the 299<sup>th</sup>, SSG Gerald Heveron who served in the 299<sup>th</sup> from shortly after D-Day to the end of WWII, SGT Norman who earned a Bronze Star (V) with the 299<sup>th</sup> during the Vietnam War, COL (R) James Van Epps who commanded the 299<sup>th</sup> from 1985 to 1987 and several family members of deceased 299<sup>th</sup> alumni. The significance of this prestigious unit reactivating is evident in the more than nineteen battle ribbons attached to the 299<sup>th</sup>'s flag and as MG Peabody said, "It's a continuation of heritage in history. The battalion has always delivered; it's pretty powerful." That sense of power was evident in the battalion and its distinguished guests on 17 March as SSG Heveron, a veteran of WWII, stated the this ceremony brought back memories of those he served with in the Battle of the Bulge.