

CONSTRUIMUS BATUIMUS -- "WE BUILD, WE FIGHT"



8TH NCB — NMCB-8 — 8TH NCB



NEWSLETTER



U.S. NAVAL MOBILE CONSTRUCTION BATTALION EIGHT

Volume 14 Issue 3

—HAPPY HOLIDAYS—AGAIN?—WHEW!—

November 2014

—FROM THE PRESIDENT—



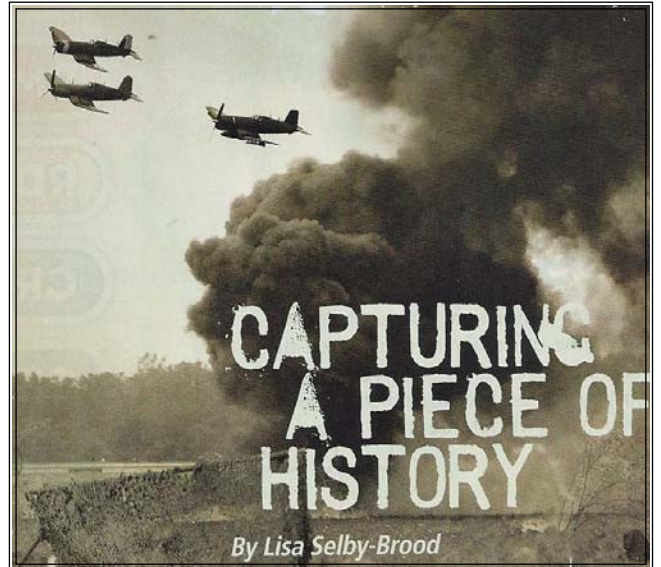
I WANT TO THANK all that came to the Charleston, South Carolina 2014 reunion. I can't believe it's possible that each reunion gets better. It's very special to

having members attending for the first time and seeing the joy in their expressions as they reacquaint themselves with their Seabee brothers. We really have something special. Let's all remember that, at times, our shipmates need support in the way of coming together to remember the good times and forget the bad ones. It's also sad that some of our brothers are no longer here to attend the reunion. We miss them, but will never forget them.

Again, I want to thank Billy and Sally Boggs, Ron and Leslie Sabbatis, Troy and Dawn Branch, and Ron and Carol Dougal. They all went well beyond the call of duty to put this reunion on.

The festivities were fabulous. The American history in the Charleston area with our special tour of the H.L. Hunley Museum was just spectacular. Even the weather changed its mind for the picnic and gave us a great day to have a terrific party. I only wish that alligator came out of the pond. The banquet with our special guest speaker Nicholas Warr was the highlight of the evening. I just finished Nick's book "Phase Line Green". What memories. It brought back many similar situations I experienced. I was captivated by some little remarks in the book. It took me back to the war in a way that I never thought possible. Nick, I carried that PRC 25. Our call sign was Rockfish Delta Three. That call sign will remain in my head for the rest of my life. I enjoy reading about American history, but I never read or cared for Viet Nam war books and movies, but I hope our Seabee brothers read this book. We

Continued next page.



—VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT—

WHEN THE NATIONAL COURT REPORTERS Foundation first explained its involvement with the veterans history project through the library of congress in 2003, I jumped at the chance to transcribe a real-life interview with a war veteran.

I'm a history buff. My favorite things to watch are the history channel and PBS and I could give you a pretty good rundown on World War I and World War II. Participating in the *Veterans' History Project* seemed like the perfect opportunity.

The first few veterans' interviews I transcribed were on cassette tape, which tells you how long I've been transcribing. In many ways, the challenges are the same as those you run into every day with your normal work. Sometimes you can't hear clearly. Sometimes the interviewer doesn't ask the greatest questions. And most of the time you have a fair share of research to do, so it's like a typical day at the office. Doing the research for me was enjoyable, as I was able to use some actual books on my shelves (I'm sure google would have been faster) to find very specific locations of battles and major events.

Continued next page.



JAMES O MILLER UTP2
NMCB 8 2/16/67
DIED TAM KY VIETNAM

RAY L WILLIAMS BUR2
NMCB 8 3/13/67
DIED CHU LAI VIETNAM

MICHAEL D ESTOK BUR3
NMCB 8 5/13/67
DIED CHU LAI VIETNAM

LOREN F STUDER SWP2
NMCB 8 5/31/68
DIED TAN MY VIETNAM

RUDY P KRISMAN
NMCB 8 7/10/68
DIED PHU BAI VIETNAM

WILLIAM C LEGAT BU1
NMCB 8 10/30/69
DIED DANANG VIETNAM

HARRY H MIDAUGH UT
NMCB 8 4/25/68
DIED BUNG KAN THAILAND

all served with the Marines and being there with them was one of my greatest honors. They are, without a doubt, the best fighting force in the world. One of the ribbons we are authorized and honored to wear is the Marine Corps Insignia attached to our Viet Nam Medal.

Marilyn and I arrived at the Reunion on Monday night and we looked for a place to eat. It was amazing that we stopped at this restaurant and went in, and all of a sudden I heard Rockfish Delta Three. There was Billy and Sally Boggs, Ron and Leslie Sabbatis, and Bruce and Sandy Swenson all having dinner. What a great surprise.

As I've said before, Ken Bingham needs some stories along with photos for the newsletter so keep them coming as many of you have done in the past.

Well, I have good news. My wife Marilyn is a court reporter. She told me her group, the National Court Reporters Association does a veterans history project. They provide a service, through their foundation, for veterans to tell their stories and it will be transcribed. I have attached an article explaining all about it.

The National Court Reporters Foundation transcribes veterans' histories from streaming audio or video and those doing the work of transcribing earn continuing education credits. If you would like your story transcribed contact NCRA.Org/Vets for information. It's called the Veterans History Project. Let them help you with your story and then get a version Ken can put in the newsletter.

We will have the minutes of the meeting, association reports and other information on the web site along with a video of the Charleston banquet. Please go to the web site at NMCB8.com.

—Arnie

Veterans History Project—Continued From Front Page.

What isn't typical is the stories you hear.

Most of the histories I have done have been World War II, which is my favorite war to study. What surprised me was that the interviews were all so different. One man was interviewed by his young granddaughter. One was done quite professionally, and the audio was excellent. One was done at somebody's home, and there were trucks driving up and down the road (which you could see in the video), but his experiences were so interesting I didn't seem to mind.

Some are short, maybe 10 pages. One of the interviews I transcribed was almost 50 pages. This man was in the Battle of the Bulge. I could have just sat and listened to him talk all day.

I can't stress how important it is to get these stories transcribed. Yes, there are benefits to getting involved in this program. Court reporters can earn PDCs toward their overall continuing education total, and students who transcribe can earn a free membership with NCRA. In addition, this type of work will certainly be good literary practice for people planning to take a certification exam.

However, the program is important on a broader level. I gained a real understanding and respect for our work as Guardians of the Record and Keepers of the Spoken Word. If the Library of Con-

gress had not asked for these interviews and stories, the stories of so many people who were involved in the U.S. wars would be lost. And without people like us to take the audio and turn it into a written record, it would be difficult for scholars to study and learn from those stories.

World War II veterans are dying at a rate of between 600 and 1,000 a day, according to figures from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Soon they will all be gone, and the door will close on another chapter of history that we could have helped capture if we would have just tried.

Here is what I hope: First, if every court reporter would transcribe just one history, we could make a real difference in the amount of historical documentation that is available. Second—and I think everyone who has transcribed for the Veterans History Project would agree—once you've done one, you will want to do another.

The most poignant story I remember was the only one I did of a Vietnam War veteran. Maybe this one sticks with me so much because it was my generation's war, the unpopular one, the one that took decades to understand and to come to terms with. As this brave veteran recounted an incident where soldiers were helping rescue civilians as a school in Vietnam was burning to the ground, I wrote his interview with tears pouring down my face.

He said: "As I watched these screaming mothers trying to pull their children from this burning building, I realized that we are no different from them. They were just people, just like us, just like Americans, just like anyone else." (That's not verbatim, but that was the gist of what he was saying.)

I urge you if you have not already done so, please transcribe just one oral history. I am sure you will want to do more.

Lisa Selby-Brood, RPR, is a court reporter with Kanabay Court Reporters in St. Petersburg, Fla. She can be reached at Lisa@Kanabay.com.

For information on NCRF's program to transcribe the histories of veterans, visit NCRA.org/vets.

**DID ANYONE OUT THERE DO FOUR
DEPLOYMENTS TO VIETNAM?**

Who did three?

Let me know. kb

jorden2323@msn.com

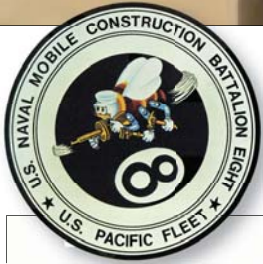
(I met one CB from MCB-3 that did 5)

***And Don't Forget Our Website at:
<http://www.nmcb8.com/>***

—OUR RECENT REUNION—

Oct. 13-17th, 2014—Charleston S.C

DETACHMENTS FROM NMCB8 mounted-out and converged on Charlston S.C. for a reunion. Individual squad rushes were led by Company Commander Ron Sabbatis. Once the objective was secured, they quickly assembled at their EM Club (what else?) and commenced with the war-stories and good times—evidenced by the images below.



Back row L-R, Nicolas Warr, Pam Warr, Rick Reese, Ron Sabbatis, Sally Boggs.
Middle row L-R, Marilyn Cicerone, Ann Reese, Leslie Sabbatis.
Front row L-R, John Davenport, Billy Boggs, Arnie Cicerone.



Marilyn and Arnie Cicerone.

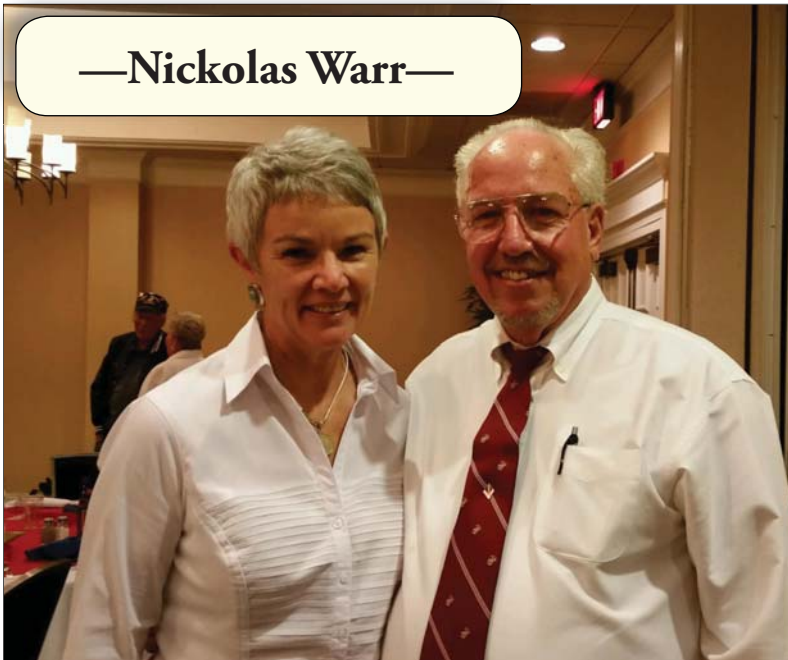


Robert Zwiers winner of the 50/50 (then donated his winnings back to MCB-8)

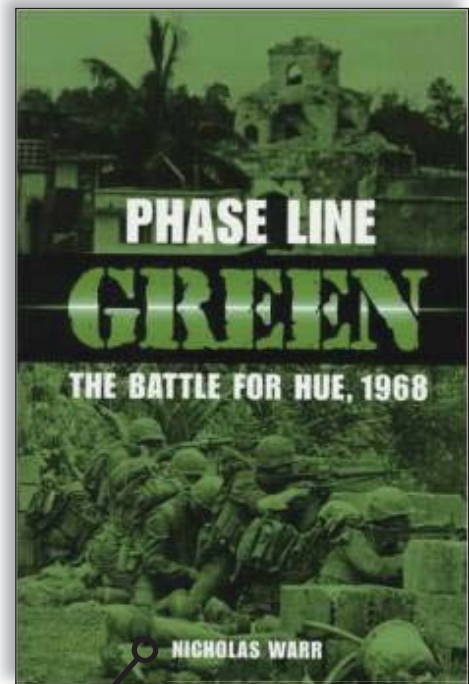
THE NEXT REUNION IS DURING THE WEEK OF SEPT. 28, THRU OCT. 1, 2015, TULSA OKLAHOMA.



L-R: Gilbertson Gil, Billy Boggs, Sally Bogs, Ron Sabbatis



Nickolas Warr & his wife Pamela. Nick—A Marine Lt.—was the guest speaker at the banquet.



Phase Line Green. The bloody monthlong battle for the Citadel in Hue pitted U.S. Marines against an entrenched North Vietnamese Army force. By official accounts, it was a tactical and moral victory for the Marines and the United States. But here survivor Nicholas Warr describes with urgency and outrage the Marines' savage house-to-house fighting--ordered without air, naval, or artillery support by officers with no experience in that type of combat.



Back Row L-R; Katherine Stroud, Charles Beck, Richard Michana, Charles Beck, Bruce Swenson, Donald Glass, Debbie Glass, Sylvia Davenport, James Davenport, Ron Sabbatis, Nickolas Warr, Pamala Warr, Joe Setting, Rick Reese, Walter Gilbertson.
Front Row L-R; Lucy Beck, Barry Cote, Billy Boggs, Arnie Cicerone, Annie Reese, Sally Boggs.



John Hoogendoorn (helping out with merchandise sales). The two people who are hosting the 2015 years reunion are John Hoogendoorn (580-262-0813) and Ed Schreck (479-254-0038). The next Reunion is the week of Sept. 28, thru Oct. 1, 2015, Tulsa Oklahoma.

John H. (above) is the recipient of the Purple Heart from action in Gia Le Combat Base, Phu Bai, RVN, 1968.



Luncheon Planners L-R, Annie Reese, Sally Boggs, and Leslie Sabbatis.



Marie Wine, Basket Maker, and Sally Boggs. (Marie was our luncheon entertainment.)

12-13-42- 10-28-45 627-8548
 5 Islands - Left the Islands 4-14-45 the
 day Roosevelt died - Worked on the California
 the Tenn. after the Battle of Iwo Jima in
 the Helms

Born in 1922. I don't do much
 traveling. - "Thank you"

Eugene P. Smith

And thank you too Eugene—from all of us.



—Welcome—
 New Members

GENE OLSON—Remer, MN.

RICHARD MICHNA—Vero Beach, FL

ROY C. LINDOW—Seminole, FL

RICHARD L. BOOTHBY—Gulf P., MS.

JAMES BROCKWAY—FORTWORTH, TX



—SEABEE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP—
 ASSOCIATION INC.

P.O. BOX 667
 GULFPORT, MISSISSIPPI 39502

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
 GEORGE REIDER, Chairman
 January 23, 2013

DEAR NMCB 8 ASSOCIATION,

Thank you and the members of NMCB 8 Association for your generous gift of \$500.00 to the Seabee Memorial Scholarship Association. You can be assured that for many of our Scholarship recipients the financial support offered by the Association literally make the difference between going to a college or university.

RADM, CEC, USN (Ret.) DAVID J. NASH, Chairman of the Board

RADM, CEC, USN (Ret.) JAMES V. BARTLETT, JR., Vice Chairman

[Many more names listed]

NOTE: Scholarships serve deserving children of "Fallen Seabees" and other Seabees' children. Please donate.

—MCB8 Staff

Hi, Everybody.

Hope you all had a wonderful Veterans' Day on Tuesday. Keith and I went downtown and watched Las Vegas' Veterans' Day Parade. I have 2 comments: WOW, and why weren't the Seabees represented?! Every other branch of the military and TONS of veterans' groups plus dignitaries and politicians were there in FORCE (the parade had over 100 entries and took 2 hours). It was AMAZING!

So what do you think of our very own MCB-8 Vietnam Vets being in NEXT YEAR'S parade (11/11/15)? From what I could see from the website, there is no entry fee for military groups; looks like there are corporate sponsors. Perhaps we could organize one of our reunions around it, instead of having it in October. Our temps are still in the high 70s here. Las Vegas is nice in the fall. What do you think? —Love, Keith & Maryann McGee



The Seabee above must truly be an "Equipment" Operator!

Contact Info:

<http://www.veteransparadelv.com/parade-route>



Can anyone add names to these men? (From MCB-8 Facebook).

THE NMCB-8 ASSOCIATION CONTINUES TO BE A CHEER-LEADER AND SUPPORTER OF THE CEC/SEABEE HISTORICAL FOUNDATION.



New Port Hueneme Seabee Museum compliments of the CEC/Seabee Historical Foundation.

CEC/Seabee Historical Foundation
P.O. Box 657
Gulfport, MS 39502-0657
1-228-865-0480 — info@seabeehf.org

ALL SEABEE UNIT ASSOCIATIONS, along with their Newsletters—including this NMCB8 Newsletter—will eventually come to an end—but not the CEC/Seabee Foundations' Newsletters. Through their work—and with support like ours—our Seabee history will be honored in perpetuity. Please donate to this most important of Seabee Organizations (The CEC/Seabee Historical Foundation) to ensure our history is passed on.

—kb

DEAR KEN
 IT WAS GOOD TO TALK TO YOU
 AGEADE. I HOPE THINGS ARE
 WELL WITH YOU
 WE ARE ALL DOING GOOD
 HERE. LOOKING FORWARD
 TO THE REUNION HOPE TO
 SEE YOU THERE.

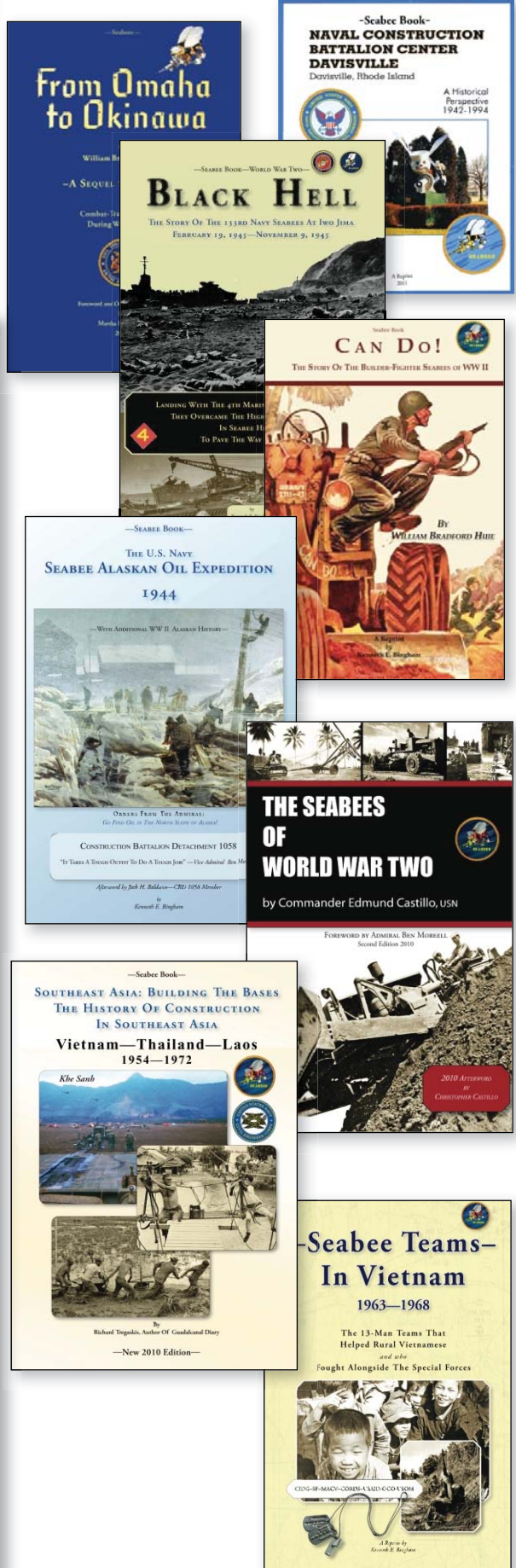
 THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP
 WITH THE CRUISE BOOKS

 RUSTY J. HAGGS

From Don - De Groot
 DEAR KEN

 THANKS FOR
 THE BOOKS
 Hope All is well
 with you
 Dues enclosed
 PS I'm still looking
 for the four plaques
 on the newsletter
 header if you
 ever hear of
 them
 THANK
 D

SOME OF THE BEST
 SELLING BOOKS.



—Seabee Book Sales—

THE MONEY I RECEIVE from on-line book sales (Amazon) covers the cost of the books that the Seabee Museum Store sells. The Store informs me that our Seabee books are doing well. I have published over 30 Seabee book titles—all of them on Amazon.com. The Seabee Store carries just the more popular ones. (See sample books on right)

When we first began selling books we were ranked 19 out of 36 of the Store Vendors. The last time I checked, we were ranked number 9 out of 36 for Store Vendors.

The main idea here is to get the Seabee history out. Volunteers have scanned all of the Cruisebooks—to CD—from WW II through Vietnam. We are now close to publishing/republishing every main Seabee Book ever printed, along with new titles.

You can help. Pass the word about Seabee history books. Or, buy some for family and friends. You will be supporting the CEC/Seabee Museum, and you will enjoy reading them.

—BOOKS SOLD ON AMAZON.COM—

2,841 Books sold on-line.
 \$12,889.43 in Royalties.



(805) 382-2585
 Email: seabeesmuseumstore@live.com
 http://www.seabeesmuseumstore.org/

NOTE:
 Buying through the Seabee Museum Store is the preferred method. However, if need be, go on Amazon Books and search under SEABEE BOOKS; either way all proceeds go to the CEC/Seabee Historical Foundation.
 —Ken Bingham, MCB8, 1966-69



And he's got a Seabee hat on.

James Stroud From Facebook



Hi Ken I was with MCB 8 from 1963 right after I got out of boot, when I arrived in D'ville the battalion had just left for the Ice, I stayed in D'ville until they returned, we went to Camp LeJune for training and then left for Greece. We boarded the General Alexander Patch for Germany, when we

arrived we went to Rhien Main Germany to hop a flight on a C130 to Athens Greece. In Greece we built a transmitter and receiving site, I learned a lot while there, operating a dozer a front end loader and a Pettibone fork lift, it was great experience. When we returned to D'ville I went to Iceland for a year MCB8 went out to the West Coast I should have stayed with them even though I enjoyed my time in Iceland. I missed the guys from 8. I re-uped in 1966 where I joined the re-commissioning of MCB 71, after training again for the 4th time for me at Camp LeJune we went to Nam in 1967, we went to Chu Lai where I worked out of the asphalt plant operating the north west 6 crane. When MCB 8 got hit one time the chief and I went over to where 8 was, as the chief knew some people over there. I met up with Charlie Malone who I had been friends with while I was with 8. I never saw him again as we never had a chance to go over there again. That's my time with MCB 8. We had a chief in charge of us in "A" co. his name was Cousin, the first class was Murphy, that's it for now talk to you later.

— James Stroud



MCB-8 MEMBER BREAKDOWN

—388 Members Total—

WW II era— 9

1950's era— 39

1960's era—340



—HOOCH MUSIC— POINTS HOMEWARD

In this dirty old part of the city
Where the sun refuse to shine
People tell me there ain't no use in trying
Now my girl you're so young and pretty
And one thing I know is true
You'll be dead before your time is due
Watch my daddy in bed and tired
Watch his hair been turning gray
He's been working and slaving his life away
He's been working so hard
I've been working too babe
Every night and day

*We gotta get out of this place
If its the last thing we ever do
We gotta get out of this place
'Cause girl, there's a better life
For me and you....*

*Written by Barry Mann and Cynthia Weil.
Recorded as a 1965 hit single by The Animals
(This song is iconic for Vietnam Vets.)*



Note:

We encourage you to send in your favorite lyrics when you were on deployment—some of you already have. kb

VIETNAM 1965



Bob McCarley overlooking Happy Valley (Vietnam) 1965 (Facebook).

SKIP COX OFFERS GREAT SEABEE PLAQUES FOR YOU.



...Regarding plaques, they are cut on a scroll saw. Takes about 12 hrs. to make one. plaques are \$75.00 each. 2 types are available:

1. One says Can Do at the bottom.
2. The other says NMCB-8 (or any other CB unit)

Members can send \$75.00 To:

Skip Cox
2846 Tansy Avenue
Middleburg, FL 32068

Chaplain's Corner – November 2014 by Billy Boggs

Hi everyone,
For all of ya'll who made it to Charleston, I hope you had a wonderful time. And, if I did not tell you, welcome to South Carolina, and ya'll come back!! It was a great time, and we missed you folks that did not get to make the trip. As you probably know, Charleston is known as the Holy City because it was founded on the principle of religious freedom and because there over 400 churches in that fair city.

While we were there I could not resist the urge to marvel at the grandeur of the architecture of some of these churches, some over 200 years old! The timeless arches, the deep rich color, the strong granite. At one point I could not help but think about all the money spent on such ornate structures. At first, one might think that all that money might be spent helping the poor with clothing, soup kitchens and/or shelters. As I contemplate this issue it seems to me that what these timeless structures, in all their might and beauty, represent something much larger than we can imagine. What they signify to me is man's way to recognize the wonder and grace of our God. They are to give us hope in this often desperate world.



It would be my hope for each of us in our own communities to seek out a church, a temple or a synagogue to thank God this holiday season for his grace and unending love.

I wish for you all a wonderful holiday season!!

—Yours in Christ,
Billy



Wrecked 2-man Japanese sub on Guadalcanal beach, near the 4th Special NCB Camp.



ACTIVITIES IN JALALABAD, AFGHANISTAN

Sponsored or facilitated by The La Jolla Golden Triangle Rotary Club Foundation San Diego-Jalalabad Sister Cities Foundation.

—RICK CLARK— And The Rotary Club Project In Afghanistan

Here is a link to a twelve minute video that Rick Clark made a couple of years ago about the ten year Rotary Club journey in Afghanistan.

Go to YouTube and type in: —“Rotary in Afghanistan LJGT”—

Or use:

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rEn4rh8t3DE>)

“No way did we think, at the beginning, that we would be able to do so much there.

“I designed 6 projects (Pro Bono) that we built there. The school, originally designed for 1,000 kids, now has 9,000 going to it! We also did a guest house, *International Learning Center*, and Dormitory for girls at the university.

“The last project was the *FELC* (Faculty Education Learning Center) which is in use 7 days a week. The lady Fary whom you will meet in the video is currently in Jalalabad on her 25th trip there” ... —Rick Clark



A close-up of girls in one of the courtyards. (They had no school before we built this). This has 26 classrooms and there are now 9,000 students going to it in shifts.



This is our latest ... It is a computer learning center and auditorium at Nangarhar University, a few miles from our Rotary school.



A young Ensign, R.D. Clark (Rick Clark), from Chu Lai RVN deployment 1967.

Rick deployed to the Chu Lai, RVN deployment in 1966/67.

Rick then deployed for a second time (1968)—as the Battalion Engineering Officer—to the bombastic Gia Le Combat Base (Phu Bai) 1968.

He currently lives in San Diego and is a partner in the architectural firm—Schuss-Clark.



—Making a Difference—

by
Richard Berry
MCB8 Plank-Owner



IN THE MOVIE, “Bridge Over The River Kwai”, The senior British officer, Lieutenant Colonel Nicholson (Sir Alec Guinness) is leaning on the handrail of a well constructed timber bridge. In the background you can hear the *click-click* of the boots of the Japanese Colonel getting near. They wish each other, “good evening Colonel.”

Then Sir Alec says “tomorrow will be 28 years to the day, that I have been in the Army, I don’t suppose I’ve been home in more than two months in all that time.”

And he goes on—

*“One wonders, from time to time, what is the sole purpose of his existence, if being there made any difference.”
(A question we should all ask ourselves.)*

From my own point of view, the years spent in MCB-8 made a difference, I helped on projects that counted.

And in a broader view, all those guys in MCB8 who started out as boys and turned into men, who helped build *Leward Point Jet Landing Strip*, and all those *Married Enlisted Quarters* in Gitmo and Morocco, moving Quonset Huts up the hill for relocation, the *Mine Rework Building*, the *Underwater Seaplane Ramp* in Bermuda, the roads, the sidewalks, etal, made a difference. On a broader view, all Seabees from the time of Admiral Ben Morecell, and that John Wayne movie made a difference. We are the only members of the U.S Military “*DEDICATED TO CONSTRUCTION NOT DESTRUCTION.*”

—Rich Berry, BU2—MCB8 Plank Owner

P.S.: Ken, Harry, et al,

I just turned 84 years old, and the roster of Plank Owners is dwindling.

I look foreword to going on to that next “Level” where I hope to continue buidling as needed, I only hope it’s not a “High-Heat-Resistant” structure.” —Richard Berry



—Died—

April 23, 2014

Edwin William Miller “Bill”
Goshen News
ELKHART — Edwin W.

“Magic Man” Miller, 71, passed away at 12:43 a.m. Tuesday at Elkhart General Hospital.

He was born April 23, 1942 in Fort Wayne, to Edwin W. and Helen K. (Hullinger) Miller.

On Oct. 20, 2000 in Las Vegas, Nev., he married Darlene J. (Hostetler) Larimer. She survives along with a son, Erik.

W. Miller, Elkhart; a stepdaughter, Kimberley Lehman, Elkhart; a step-granddaughter, Mackenzie D. Lehman, Elkhart; and a step-grandson, Peyton J. Lehman, Elkhart. Also surviving are three sisters, Judith A. (Mort) Dalman of Fort Wayne, Marian K. Ritchie and S.J. Salem, both of Elkhart.

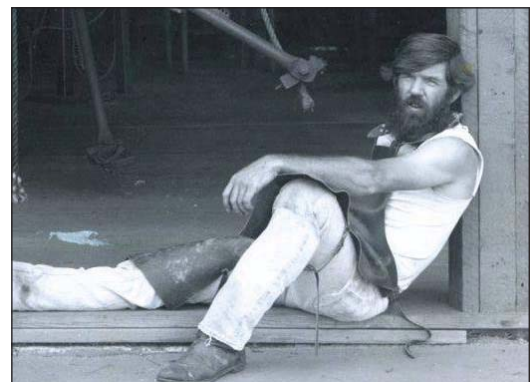
He was preceded in death by his parents.

Bill was a U.S. Navy veteran and Seabee who served in Vietnam He enjoyed fishing, collecting guns, wood-working, gardening and doing magic shows. He dearly loved his grandchildren. Bill was employed as an electrician and a transport driver for Hoosier Rapid Transport.


There will be two hours of visitation for family and friends prior to the 3 p.m. celebration of life service Saturday at Walley-Mills-Zimmerman Funeral Home, Elkhart. The U.S. Navy Honor Guard will present the flag at the end of the service.

Elkhart Cremation services is entrusted with arrangements.

Note: Bill Miller was an outgoing colorful Seabee. While on deployment in Vietnam, he attempted to transfer to the Israeli Army to help fight in their War. kb



Jack—Please Explain.



—IN MEMORIAM—
 —In Remembrance Of Those Who Served With Us—

April 23, 2014
 Edwin William Miller—“Bill.”



*My Mom says that things
 are so miserable back home
 that she doesn't worry
 about me anymore.*

**TREASURY REPORT IS AVAILABLE
 UPON REQUEST. —kb**

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 THE U.S.A**

— NMCB-8 ASSOCIATION STORE —

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**High Quality Collectable Coin—
 Only \$12.00 each plus S&H**
 Please Add S & H as follows:
 1-10 coins = \$5.00
 10-20 coins = \$7.95
 20 or more = \$10.00



1964-1967



1967

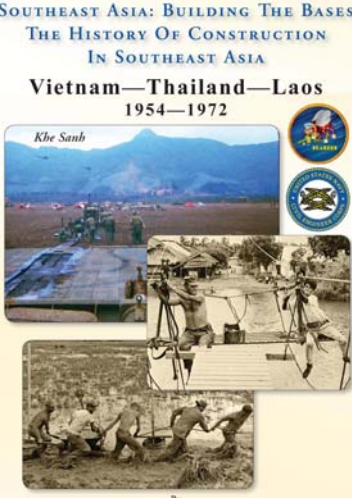
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—Seabee Book—

**SOUTHEAST ASIA: BUILDING THE BASES
 THE HISTORY OF CONSTRUCTION
 IN SOUTHEAST ASIA**

**Vietnam—Thailand—Laos
 1954—1972**



By
 Richard Tregaskis, Author Of Guadalcanal Diary

—New 2010 Edition—

Southeast Asia: Building The Bases.
 The History Of Seabee Construction in
 Vietnam. **\$24.95**

A Wonderful 15 minute Historical Over-
 view of MCB-8's four Vietnam deploy-
 ments. Created by Rick Clark (LTJG).
 Includes 100's of images and great accom-
 panying music of that era. **\$12.00**

New!



Send check plus \$5.00 (S&H) to:
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1773 Tamarin Ave.
Ventura Ca 93003



From Their Cruisebook



W. T. POWERS, Commander
C.E.C. U.S.N.R.— OIC

The 8th NCB Alaska— WW II

UNALASKA AND THE “U. S. S. BOTTLENECK”

ANYONE WHO HAS EVER EVEN MADE A STOPOVER at Dutch Harbor will have no trouble remembering the ferry crossing from the “Sheep Ranch” side of Amaknak Island to Unalaska. The ferry was nothing more than a barge, pulled and guided by cables, which almost invariably had a long line of vehicles waiting on either bank for its service. The distance between shores could not have been more than 200 feet, but so much time was lost waiting for the ferry that it soon came to be known as the “U. S. S. Bottleneck.”

Our main reason for using the ferry was to get to the town of Unalaska. This town, the largest in the Aleutians, had a pre-war population of almost 3000. Most of the populace had been Aleuts; they had been evacuated a week after we arrived. As we knew it, the town consisted of little more than a hodgepodge of deserted, run-down shacks in which these people had lived. It had a small general store, two or three novelty-shops, and a theatre with a capacity of nearly two hundred persons. A tiny lunch room sold fresh coffee, pie, and (when they were available) fresh eggs. The price for all three was a mere \$1.25. The two bars constantly did a rush business. The Unalaska Bar, better known as “Blackie’s,” was a relic of old-time Alaska. Nobody minded the price of Blackie’s whisky—everyone was able and willing to pay fifty cents a shot—but each drink meant waiting out a long line which circled from the entrance past the bar, out the exit, and around the building (sometimes around the block) back to the entrance again. One happy feature of Blackie’s place was that regardless of how drunk a man got, there was never enough room for him to fall down.

A little school house, a home for children, a small cannery, and a colorful Russian Orthodox church built in the time of the Russian ownership of the Aleutians, were about the only other structures that went to make up the settlement.

More complete information about Unalaska during the days when it was a flourishing trading center may be found in “Son of the Smoky Seas,” a book written by a native of the town, Nutchuk.

THE STORY OF THE “U. S. S. R. S. TURKSIB”

A Russian ship crashed on the rocks bordering on Unimak Pass, a link between the Pacific and the Bering Sea, in November, 1942. Soon American ships were by her side in the treacherous, gale-churned waters. On one of these ships came a lieutenant and five enlisted men from the Eighth.

Until February, along with the Russian crew, these men worked desperately aboard the ship, salvaging its valuable cargo and trying to save it from sinking. They ate and slept with their Allied comrades and worked side by side with them to accomplish their common purpose. The old tub, for such it really was, had seen better days, but could still be used for transporting lend-lease material. The presence of large amounts of dynamite in the hold didn’t make the job any safer, and the continuous rough weather didn’t make it any easier, but all men stuck to the work at hand.

Thanksgiving and Christmas were celebrated; but not with vodka flowing on the decks. Borsht, dark bread, cheese, bacon, and coffee were the regular items on the menu, and they soon lost all glamor. But if the Soviets emphasized winning the war and minimized the need for delectables, why complain? Stalingrad was yet to be defended and this dynamite might help. So it was, “Pass me another bowl of borsht, Tovarisch. If you can stand it so can I.”

And stand it they did until the final crack-up in February. The elements proved too formidable for the frail old vessel and all hands were ordered by the American salvage officer to abandon ship. The Russian captain stayed at his post and was washed overboard. All others reached shore via breeches-buoy and then trekked eight miles through a driving blizzard to a Coast Guard Station. The Russians were later removed to Dutch Harbor and hospitalized.

OUTPOSTS

While stationed at Dutch Harbor the Eighth Battalion handled practically all the advance base construction in the Aleutian Islands. In all cases except one the officers and men landed on undeveloped beaches where no shelter or housing existed. There were eight such projects.



From Their Cruisebook



GUANTANAMO BAY

SEPTEMBER 1961-JUNE 1962



After we pulled into Guantanamo Bay, the "T" opened her huge bow doors and disgorged a steady flow of dozers, jeeps, and other vehicles for the deployment.



"I'm Andreano, and you'd better listen up. Get moving, Morgan; stop scowling, Johnson; keep your hand on the rail. Fritter; square that hat away, Novak; and you'd better get your seabag, Smith."



The best-loved "weekend killer" was the field exercise. On all too frequent occasions came the summons to head for the hills, replete with packs, weapons, 782 gear, and fortified by those wonderful C-rations.

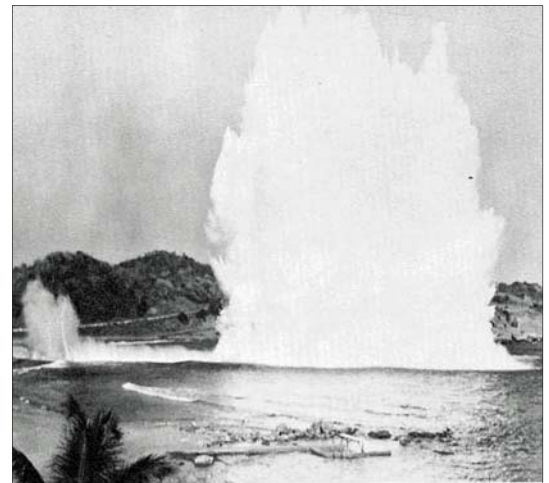
For 24 hours or so, Eight's Seabees had the rare privilege of chasing Air-dales around the cactus, bug, and scorpion-infested hills of Gitmo. Of course, the main lesson—that of defensive readiness—was well learned.



Iowa mortar men



Life in the boonies was great.



In the warm waters of Windmill Beach proceed the military incumbents of an Underwater Demolition Team, guests of the Battalion during the spring of '62. Their packs produced the "slight ripple" observed above.

NMCB-8 Seabees' Association

1773 Tamarin Ave. Ventura Ca. 93003

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