

Battalion Newsletter

Vol. 1, Edition 4

MAY 1967



SEABEE 25TH ANNIVERSARY



**U.S. NAVAL MOBILE CONSTRUCTION BATTALION
EIGHT**



In an awards ceremony held May 14th, four medals were presented by CAPT A. R. Marschall, COM30NCR. (L-R) LCDR G.R. Gilmore received the Bronze Star; LTJG E. R. Reilly, the Navy Commendation Medal; and Chiefs R.E. Baird and C.R. Frash, received the Purple Heart for wounds received the morning of May 13th.

AWARDS

Four medals were presented, during a Battalion formation, Sunday, 14 May, by Captain A. R. Marschall, Commander 30th Naval Construction Regiment.

The Bronze Star was presented to LCDR G. R. Gilmore. It was presented for meritorious service while serving with EIGHT, in the Viet Cong attack of October 1965 in DaNang, particularly for his assistance in the defense of the camp from a position directly exposed to enemy fire. He efficiently discharged his duties so as to greatly enhance the effective, organized defense of the camp.

The Navy Commendation Medal was awarded to LTJG E. R. Reilly, for his outstanding performance of duty while serving as "A" Company Commander on two RVN deployments. In a meritorious manner, he directed the operation of all transportation and construction equipment, often conducted while subject to enemy fire and land mines, and commanded his company with such skill and leadership, that individual performance on the job surpassed that normally encountered.

Two Purple Heart Medals were presented to Chiefs R. E. Baird and C. R. Frash, for wounds received when the campsite came under mortar fire, in the early morning hours of May 13th.

TAM KY DETACHMENT

Twenty-seven miles north of EIGHT's camp lies the city of Tam Ky where presently the Battalion has a forty man detachment involved in the construction of three cantonments. Under the leadership of ENS L. C. Drapeau, the group will be deployed at the site until the end of EIGHT's deployment.

These cantonments will be occupied by an engineering battalion and two ARVN groups. The units presently under construction include berthing spaces, galleys, washrooms and water wells.

Among the problems that have been encountered was a material shortage. Using the ever-present Seabee ingenuity, however, the men of EIGHT employed the useless remnants of the Ho Chi Minh Railroad in constructing a much needed batch plant.

With the batch plant completed, construction of the cantonments began at a rapid pace, with existing structures being removed to make way for the new buildings.

At this writing, work on the projects is proceeding at a favorable pace and prospects for the future are bright.

CO's NOTES



CDR J.F. O'LEARY

My remarks this month are directed to the good wives, mothers and fathers of the men in this Battalion. I well realize that it is far more difficult for those of you at home who wait and worry and wonder and pray for us while we do our share over here, than it is for us who are actually here. We have our work and long hours of it to keep our minds occupied and help the time pass by quickly and we have the good fellowship and companionship of each other to ease the loneliness that comes from being away from our loved ones. These are, of course, no substitute for being with you, but they do help. For those of you at home, the wait is much more difficult.

I realize too that sometimes we don't make it any easier for you. We become very much involved in our work and activities here and don't write as often as we know we should. On the other hand, we become rather annoyed if we don't think you're writing enough. We

also don't make as much use of our MARS set-up as we might by calling you more often because it may mean hours of waiting and finally disappointment by not being able to get the call through.

But in spite of all this, don't ever for a minute think that we really don't care. I have only to see the expression on each man's face as he talks of going home to be able to assure you that you are very much in our thoughts and in our hearts.

So I know I speak for all of us when I say that we're sorry we haven't done a little better from our end. In spite of it, we do appreciate very much those of you who have been true and faithful to us, who have kept our morale at a point that only letters from home can keep it and who ask nothing more, I know, than our safe return. You are the real backbone and heart of this fine Battalion and without you we would be worth very little indeed.

Thank you!

ALPHA PARTICLES

This past month has proven to be one of "action" for "A" Company. One of the more significant events was the assistance given to our neighbor, MCB 71, on their heloport project. A total of approximately 100,000 cubic yards of laterite and sand were moved on the project in a "round the clock" operation. A "well done" is extended to all the equipment operators and the mechanics who participated.

The "not to be outdone" mechanics of the Heavy Equipment Shop, led by Chief "Ole" Ohlinger, had their share of limelight recently too. They have succeeded in piecing back together an Eimco tractor that seemed destined for the scrap heap. It had served to support the Heavy Equipment bulletin board for the past 6 1/2 months, but on 17 May, "Old 622" rolled out of the shop under its own power, (and 30th NCR said it couldn't be done!)

Over at the Dairy Plant project, "Dusty" Brakeville and his crew of "water-seekers" may finally have struck water, so we may see milk made yet.

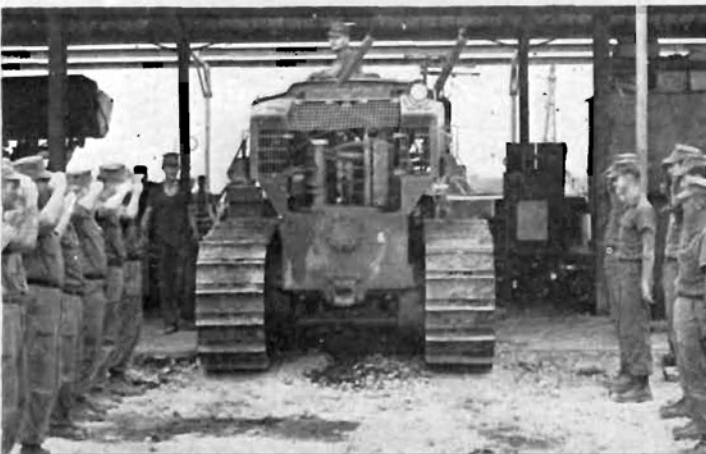
Out at the MATCU-67 pad, the soil cement portion of that job has been completed, and preparations are being made to complete the surrounding asphalt treated aprons. Although plagued with equipment problems, the crew at MATCU-67 has done an outstanding job in their first attempt at laying soil cement.

Chief Frash and his crew of "rock busters" are busily preparing to put the newly acquired rock crusher into operation. Although not apparent to the inexperienced eye, a lot of hard, back-breaking work has gone into the crushers in an effort to prepare them for the months ahead.

A "Welcome Aboard" is extended to all of the new men reporting to "A" Company. Also included are the "not so new" faces of those men completing a tour with Seabee Team 0805. Welcome back, and congratulations for the precedent you have set and the feats you have accomplished.

Very seldom has "A" Company had the opportunity to step into the spotlight or work on a "glamorous" job that it could call its own. Let's all remember that MCB-8 could not have accomplished any of its projects without the aid of the men in Alpha Company. Site preparation, building and tank erection, ditching, hoisting and moving are among the many services rendered by us.

A final note—we are nearing the end of the deployment and thoughts are turning to sweethearts, wives, and families. Let us save room and give some thought to the relieving Battalion, and do everything we can to leave them with a good camp, shops, and equipment. They will appreciate it and we can feel proud in saying: "We tried our best".



"SPUTTER, PUTT, PUTT, COUGH" — An Eimco tractor, once considered beyond all repair, is driven out of the Alpha Company Heavy Shop. The vehicle was put back into running condition by a crew led by CMC K.L. Ohlinger.

BRAVO BITS

Under the able direction of our new Company Commander, LTJG F. Symanosky, Bravo Company has accomplished quite a bit of work since the last newsletter.

Our project for the barracks at NSD is electrically complete and very nearly finished utility-wise. Now under construction for NSD is a beautiful paneled chapel, a fire station (nearly complete) and an auto maintenance shop.

Also completed, except for a water main from their well, is the project for IWCS. This project means better and increased communication throughout Vietnam.

Another new project, the biggest one so far for Bravo Company is now in the middle stages—two hangars for MAG-12. This job calls for nearly every type of electrical work of which we are capable. The underslab electrical work was completed three days ahead of schedule despite temperatures in the vicinity of 110 degrees at the job-site.

The UT's are nearing completion of the Dairy Plant, which will mean milk and ice cream for the entire Chu Lai area. The only question in anybody's mind has been: "Where are they going to put the cows? There isn't any barn!"

Again this month we have another detachment in Tam Ky. Their project is to construct a camp for the ARVN troops there. Presently we have four UT's and two CE's on the detachment.

Not to be forgotten this month is the base maintenance crew. Keeping the camp clean and running smoothly is a nearly thankless job for those behind the scenes. The hard work accomplished by these CE's, UT's, and BU's keeps the rest of us in the field on the projects, and adds to the comforts of our off-hours.



"WAIT, MY FINGER ! ! !"
(L-R) CES3 R.G. Salvato and CN D.E. Jolley install wiring in the newly-erected fire station at NSD.

"I SAID WE'LL DO IT MY WAY"—CEW3 B. R. McCormick discusses some of the disadvantages of using a shaky ladder to CEW2 E. W. Miller, while SN M.W. Harvey, continues the task of wiring the covered passageways at the First Forces Hospital.

1942-1967

SEABEE

25th

ANNIVERSARY

Charlie Chats

This past month was one that the men of Charlie Company will long remember. It was a month when Charlie Company's reputation as a top notch construction company was pushed even higher. It was a month when Charlie felt the deft but sharp touch of the enemy, which showed us how important we are and inspired us to even greater heights.

Among the significant happenings occurring were the completion of a string of three timber bridges on Rt. No.1, the finishing touches on the water distribution system at NSD and the completion of an officers club at FLSG-B. This last job, built by BU1 R. M. Essex and his crew, is especially worthy of note.

In other areas, "C" Company men are hard at work on such projects as the hangars at MAG-12, the NSD Chapel and a 3.5 ton Ice Plant. BU1 D. A. Gagnon and his crew are turning to, in sandstorms and under a burning sun at the hangars, with strong hopes of completing it before the deployment is over.

BUH2 M. L. Foertsch is erecting the framework of the chapel now, and despite material shortages, is doing an outstanding job.

The Ice Plant is taking shape, under the careful hand of BUL2 J. D. Kidd, and after seeing the job he did on the MCB-8 CPO Club, we have no fears that his newest job will be done in the same excellent style.

BU1 E. E. Bromley and his crew, fresh from their bridge building work, have been handed another important task, the construction of three 10,000 barrel POL tanks at NSD.

All in all, it has been a hard yet memorable month for the men of Charlie Company, and although they don't relish many more like it, they will never forget it.



HE'LL NEVER GET OUT OF THAT — 'Bees of Charlie Company make one of many cement pours at their hangar project for MAG-12. (L-R) BU1 D.A. Gagnon, on truck; BUH3 R. J. Samper, BULCN L.W. Steele, SWF3 L. F. Studer, in hole, and EAD2 R. H. Friert, holding the shovel up.

THE BIG "D"

As the deployment nears its conclusion, everyone in Delta Co. is looking forward to going home. However, before this can be done, a considerable amount of work remains to be accomplished by the big "D". In progress are several long term projects that should be completed before we board the big silver birds for home.

The First Forces Hospital is continually growing in "scope" and proving additional work for Delta Co. Additional wards, medical facilities and cantonments are all under construction by BU1 Bissing, BUL2 Vincent and BUL2 Richard and their crews. BUR2 Cunningham and his crew have also constructed six culverts for the hospital road system.

The MAG-12 hangar has finally appeared on the Chu Lai skyline. With the structural steel raised and in place, the aircraft maintenance hangar is really taking shape. Delta Company's own "human fly" SWE2 Herbert, along with SWC Gilman, BU1 Rosensweig, BUL2 Potter and the whole gang have done an outstanding job to date.

The NSD Dairy Plant job continues to grow in "scope". First it was just the building shell and concrete deck (5 Butcher buildings worth). Then a set of living quarters followed by a 300 barrel water tank (to be filled by Alpha Company's first well in Chu Lai). Now the word is out that we are going to complete the interior and install the equipment, which was originally slated to be done by civilians. Chief Stenger and his crew are anxious to get to it.

One of the big "D"'s unglamorous jobs is the MAG-36 Helopad repairs. Taking up thousands of sq. feet of matting, the grading of the sub base and re-laying the aluminum mat is arduous and frustrating work to say the least. Chief Kuit and some of the old revetments crew like Morehouse, Wagner, Hcke and a few others are discovering that re-laying matting in the middle of the Helopad is like putting together a jigsaw puzzle that doesn't quite fit together. However undaunted, Chief Kuit is showing the boss that he can "hack it" with only 30,000 sq. feet to go.

The big "D" has heard nothing but good reports on its men in Tam-ky. Led by Billy Boggs; Gilbertson, Sabbatis, Kavanaugh, Reese, Capps, Vigil, Zopfi, Setting and Neel are working for ENS Drapeau, constructing ARVN cantonments. Keep up the good work!

With the big R&R coming up (Port Hueneme, that is), some of us will be fortunate enough to visit some far eastern city for a second time. LT Pero for example, went to Hong Kong just a few short weeks ago. (Could he have been the cause of all that rioting? No! He went with the Chaplain!!!) It looks like LT Perc will be going to Bangkok late in June, this time with Doctor Hazouri?! We wonder if Bangkok can handle that pair.



THE OVERSEER—BU1 S. Rosenswig, (R), looks over the hangar project, which his crew is working on for MAG-12. The only question is, "Do they have a complete hangar?"

HEADQUARTERS HOT LINE

Spring has arrived in RVN, and the fancy of "H" Company is rapidly turning to thoughts of . . . well, home.

The weather is growing warmer by the day, with the thermometer hovering in the low 100's. Believe it or not, we are beginning to long for the days when a cool monsoon rain fell every day.

With redeployment back to the States firmly locked in the sights of the men of EIGHT, all the loose ends of an "in-country" deployment are beginning to be tied up. The rule of thumb in "H" Company seems to be "Don't start any big projects now, unless you want to finish them during your leave period in CONUS".

Mount-out boxes for the office equipment are being built, painted and stenciled by the day. Up in Supply, Chief Keel and his men know better than to put anything on order now, because it will surely arrive as we are winging our way back to the Land of Liberty, on the great silver bird.

In Personnel, liberty cards and chow passes are being made up for use by the men of EIGHT upon arrival in Port Hueneme.

Disbursing is beginning the monumental job of preparing final per diem payments and writing pay checks, which will be handed to the men upon touch-down in God's Country. That is, after they've kissed the ground, raised their hands to the "friendly" skies and shouted "Hallelujah!".

Meanwhile, back here "in-country", the Reactionary Platoon of "H" Company has just completed two weeks of military training. Every once in awhile, however, unscheduled "drills" are held in the dead of night, just to keep them on their toes.

On Monday, May 22nd, "H" Company began a program of physical fitness, following morning quarters. Now, instead of needing a morning cup of coffee to wake up, you need one to calm down. Maybe the command was worried about the rise in cases of "secretarial spread" which had been noted recently in "H" Company.



"YES SIR, I THINK THIS IS THE WAY—(L-R) YN3 John Miller, BU1 W.C. Legat, ENS P. E. Loberg, and EAD3 F. H. Johnson do a little base maintenance on a sidewalk by their Ops Office. A TM was called in to pour the three feet of cement.



WHEN I SAID SHOOT HIM, I MEANT . . . First Sergeant W. A. Todd, EIGHT's Security Advisor, points out instructions to a squad of men from the elite Reactionary Platoon, during one of their many drills.

Seabees of the Month

The ranks of the MCB EIGHT "Seabees of the Month" have swelled over the past two months, with the addition of BUL2 Howard G. Potter for March and CMA2 James W. Whitlow for April to the coveted roster of achievement.

BUL2 Potter's certificate read in part:

"During the homeport deployment, you served as a Fleet Training Instructor. In teaching the subjects of concrete, concrete forms and special timber bridges, your performance was exceptional.

"While serving with the advance party at Chu Lai, Republic of Vietnam, and subsequently working at the Second Light Anti-Aircraft Missile Battalion, the construction performed by you and your crew was superior in both quantity and quality."

CMA2 Whitlow's award stated



BUL2 H. G. POTTER

in part:

"Since assuming the duties as Petty Officer in Charge of the Security Platoon in March 1967, you have displayed a natural ability for handling men and a keen knowledge of administrative procedures normally found at the Company Chief level.

"In addition, you developed a Security Condition Yellow defense plan which was later adopted. The training program you instituted on your own to ensure immediate response from Security Platoon personnel during this condition is another indication of your dedication to duty.

"The manner in which you constantly seek out new and better ways to improve the effectiveness of the Security Platoon is particularly noteworthy and the mature attitude you exhibit when dealing with your men has significantly increased their morale and quality of performance."



CMA2 J. W. WHITLOW

NEW CHIEF FOR EIGHT

Perhaps the most important step in an enlisted man's Naval career was taken by Equipment Operator First Class Charles R. Frash, when he joined the select ranks of the Navy's Chief Petty Officers on April 30th. His promotion was accompanied by an inspiring ceremony held in the Chief Petty Officer's Club at EIGHT's cantonment, Chu Lai, Vietnam.

The ceremony began with Frash squaring away the Chief's Club in preparation for his own court martial, which was presided over by Master Chief D. W. Babb. Among the charges brought against Frash were impersonation of a CPO and making derogatory remarks about the CPO's of EIGHT. Having been found guilty of all charges brought against him, Frash was led through the various channels of initiation, which included the walking of a nail-studded plank and the traditional CPO branding. Following the ceremony, Chief Frash was awarded his certificate of promotion by Commander J. F. O'Leary, EIGHT's Commanding Officer.

Chief Frash began his Naval career in March 1952 with his recruit training at San Diego. Since then, he has served with Amphibious Seabee Battalion ONE, Mobile Construction Battalion FIVE, Naval Air Station, Corpus Christi, Texas and the U. S. Naval Schools of Construction at Port Hueneme.

Chief Frash is married to the former Ann A. Cocco of Redwood City, California, and is the father of six children, Mary Ann Richard, Ronald, Patrick, Roger and Robert. The Frash family resides in Port Hueneme.



THE LINE NEVER DWINDLES, as steaks are served at the May 21st Battalion picnic, on the Battalion's beach. Everything was cooked to a 'well-done', including the Seabees.

PAY RAISE PROPOSED

A \$500 million military pay proposal has been sent to Congress by President Johnson.

The increase calls for a flat 5.6% across-the-board boost in basic pay for all military personnel and small increases in quarters allowances for some.

The President recommended that the increases take effect on 1 October 1967.

At the same time, he took note of the "searching review of the principles underlying the military compensation system" underway within DOD for the past year, and said "When these



THIS IS THE WAY WE...? Five go go girls and a band from Australia entertained the Battalion recently, demonstrating many different dances. (All pictures, but this one, were censored)



MY SON TAUGHT ME—LT H. R. Schoolcraft, Supply Officer, prepares to do a little earth-moving, which it was, in the lower supply yard.



HE THINKS HE'S IN HAWAII — LT R. D. Roberts, walks away from a 90mm tank, that found it's way to the 'O' Club. Some say it was bought for a case of beer.

studies have been completed, I will recommend further changes in the Armed Forces pay system.

The new increases in basic pay range from \$5.10 per month for raw recruits to \$112 per month for 4 star officers.

President Johnson said: "For our military personnel, pay alone can never reflect the full measure of our debt. On the battlefields, in outposts where there is tension but no battle, in the vast defense installations of our country, these men and women protect our national security. We must assure them and their families that they will be compensated for their service on a scale which is comparable to that of their 2.5 million civilian co-workers. As civilian pay goes up, so should the pay of the Armed Services."



"I'M GOING TO BE FIRST"—YNC M. S. Kofoed looks on as CDR O'Leary cuts the ribbon opening the bar in the newly-constructed CPO Club, overlooking the South China Sea.



JUST CALL 'EM "SPIKE"—Lieutenant Commander Gordon R. Gilmore, slams the ball over the net and past Steel Worker (Erector) Third Class Benjamin F. Levy from MCB FORTY during the Chu Lai Invitational Volleyball Tournament held at EIGHT's camp.

Westmoreland Sends

The Battalion received many messages from commands "in-country" extending best wishes on our birthday and expressing their appreciation of the work we are doing in Vietnam. The following message was received from General W.C. Westmoreland, Commander of US Forces in Vietnam.

"On the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of the Civil Engineer Corps and the 25th Anniversary of the Seabees, I congratulate you and the officers and men of your command for the outstanding job which they have accomplished in the Republic of Vietnam.

"You have continued the tradition which the Seabees established during the second World War, when they won fame by their island hopping construction and ability to go anywhere, anytime, in support of the United States Navy and Marines.

"In Vietnam, no task has

been too great, no time limit too short, for Mobile Construction Battalions as they built airfields, hospitals, roads, port facilities, and Special Forces camps, to name only a few of your many projects. When the occasion demanded, you left your tools and construction and fought alongside Marines and soldiers to repel enemy attacks.

"One of your number is among the fourteen Americans who have been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor in the Republic of Vietnam. When not occupied on the job, you have conducted Civic Action programs to assist the Vietnamese people in their efforts to improve their conditions of life.

"In the difficult days which lie ahead, I am certain that you shall continue your record of outstanding accomplishments and amply fulfill your motto: 'Can Do'."

Wasn't Once Enough?



LTJG Paul B. Fitzgerald and LT Michael A. Pero Jr. patiently await a tire repair truck as they experience their second flat tire in one day on Route One.



WHAT'S SO FUNNY ABOUT JOHN'S?—LTJG F. J. Syminsky, (L) expresses his desire to be at John's; and LT R.D. Roberts, who was celebrating his 29th (?) birthday, breaks into an approving grin.

GEE, IT WAS A JEEP—An Army tank, displaying the red figure 8 on its bow, Seabee Anniversary stickers, and Seabee decals on the crews helmets, rumbles into camp, up to the 'O' Club, and believe it or not, the refreshments were offered free by the Officers.



STAFF

No material herein should be construed to represent the views or opinion of the Commanding Officer or the Navy Department.

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UP A LITTLE FOR THE CHOPPERS—BM2 B. F. Longaker checks an M-14 that jammed on the line, during shooting practice held by the Battalion recently.

Commanding Officer

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