

CONSTRUIMUS BATUIMUS -- "WE BUILD, WE FIGHT"



8TH NCB — NMCB-8 — 8TH NCB



NEWSLETTER

U.S. NAVAL MOBILE CONSTRUCTION BATTALION EIGHT



Volume 11, Issue 3

—Reunion Again?—

October 2011



Rear, 1 to r: R. Cunningham, P. N. Heslip, R. W. Chilton, G. H. Schuster.
Front, 1 to r: K. A. Reber, R. E. Wachtler, M. D. Estok.



1. 14 May 1967—A Viet Cong unit attacked the NMCB EIGHT Camp using 82mm mortars and 57mm recoilless rifles. Six Seabees were wounded, one mortally. BUR3 Michael D. ESTOK died of wounds about two hours after the attack. All were subsequently awarded Purple Hearts.

—After Action Report

—FROM YOUR PRESIDENT—

I RECEIVED A CALL FROM RICK REESE THE OTHER DAY and it was a shock. After years of looking for Mike Estok's son, Rick finally located him. His name is Mike Estok. Mike (Sr.) was killed in Chu Lai on May 13, 1967. He was to leave Viet Nam within a few days but his life was cut short by a Viet Cong mortar attack on our camp. I want to say thanks to Rick Reese for a good job finding Mike's son Mike (Jr.).

Mike Estok (Sr.) has always been with us and never forgotten. We hoped one day we could meet his son and tell him about his father. Rick Reese invited Mike's son to our reunion in Las Vegas. We will meet Mike (Jr.) at the reunion. We have added Mike (Jr.)

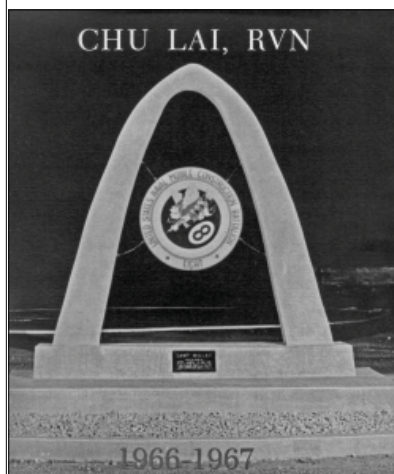
—Cont. on next page



Arnie on his way to a detachment in the NAM

—Cont. from page 1

—FROM YOUR PRESIDENT—



as an honorary member of NMCB8 association and hope he and his family enjoy being part of our NMCB-8 organization.

Mike and I lived in the same hut in Chu Lai; his bunk was across from mine. Mike and I were also together on detachment with the Marines. Mike had returned back to camp before me; I was still on detachment up in the mountains, and only had

a few weeks left. I was counting the days. This was my second tour in Viet Nam and I was getting on edge, it happens with all short timers. I was up in the mountains and asked the Chief if I could get back to the main camp where it was safer, big mistake. Anyway the chief sent me back and Mike and I were together again in the hut. I was only there about a ten days when I fell off the revetment pouring concrete. Unfortunately I broke my heels and back and was medivaced to the Chelsea Naval Hospital, in Boston, MA. (Note: The other important person that was sent to the Chelsea Naval Hospital was President John Kennedy as an Ensign when his PT boat was blown up.) I heard about Mike when I was in the hospital. I could not believe that it happened.

When I moved to California 28 years ago I looked up Mike's mother and father I talked to Mike's mother and she told me Mike's father passed away. They lived in Palm Desert at that time. My wife and I drove out to have lunch with her and I gave her some photos of Mike.

Of all of the people present when we deployed, I can remember Mike's mother and father at the airport as we got on the aircraft to leave for Viet Nam. I remember Mike talking with them. We were all in a happy mood—finally we were on our way. I didn't think about it at the time what it must feel like as a parent seeing your son going off to war and having that last memory of seeing him alive. Now I have two sons in the military. When I see them in their uniforms it brings this poignant memory back.

I need help. Please send copies of photos of Mike Estok, memorabilia and notes we can put in the scrapbook. We will present this to Mike and his family at the reunion.

I want to remind all of you not to forget the dates for the reunion September 26-29, 2012; less than 12 months away. Start calling all members and make plans. Also, check the NMCB-8 website for additional reunion information.

—Thanks, Arnie

—Also Remembering James Miller, KIA—



CAMP DEDICATION

On Sunday, July 9, EIGHT's Chu Lai cantonment was named Camp Miller after James O. Miller who died in a mortar attack at Tam Ky on February 6.

f. 6 February 1967-UTP2 James O. MILLER was mortally wounded at the NMCB EIGHT detachment site at Tam Ky when an 82mm mortar round exploded about five feet outside his berthing hut. MILLER died several hours later after being evacuated to a hospital in Chu Lai.

—After Action Report

Michael David Estok

Builder 3rd Class
United States Navy
PERSONAL DATA
Home: San Bernardino, California
DOB: Sunday, 05/26/1946
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Married? No
Religion: Christian Science

MILITARY DATA

Service: United States Navy
Comp: Regular
Grade: E4
Rank: Builder 3rd Class
ID No: B818430
MOS: BUR - Builder (Concrete)
LenSvc: Between 1 and 2 years
Unit: Not recorded

CASUALTY DATA

Start Tour: Not recorded
Cas Date: Saturday, 05/13/1967
Age at Loss: 20
Remains: Body Recovered
Location: Quang Tin, South Vietnam
Type: Hostile, Died
Reason: Artillery, Rocket, Mortar - Ground Casualty
Last Update: May 1968

ON THE WALL

Panel 19E Line 105

See Page 8 for James Miller



SAVE THE DATE !



Las Vegas

September 26-29, 2012



Ron Sabbatis in the Nam

Yes, it's that time of year again. The dates for the 2012 reunion are listed above. The committee will do a recon trip in January to finalize all plans at the Palace Station Hotel. As of now, the usual events are planned. We are adding a ladies luncheon on Friday. It will be a great way to get our spouses together for some fun and friendship.

Any feedback from the membership is welcome. You may have thought of something that we can all benefit from. We will give you the details on registration, banquet, ladies luncheon, etc. in January's newsletter.

—Ron Sabbatis





—Attention Please—

The NMCB-8 Association Has Partnered With Ken Bingham To Sell Seabee Books.

See: <http://www.seabeebooks.com>

—No Cost To The NMCB 8 Association—

All Sale Proceeds Go To The
CEC/Seabee Historical Foundation



—Walter Gilbertson's—
Burn remedy

SOME TIME AGO I WAS COOKING SOME CORN and stuck my fork in the boiling water to see if the corn was ready. I missed and my hand went into the boiling water.... A Friend of mine, who was a Vietnam vet, came into the house, just as I was screaming, and asked me if I had some plain old flour... I pulled out a bag and he stuck my hand in it. He told me to keep my hand in the flour for 10 minutes which I did. He said that in Vietnam, there was a guy on fire and in their panic, they threw a bag of flour all over him to put the fire out...Well, it not only put the fire out, but he never even had a blister!!!!

... Long story short, I put my hand in the bag of flour for 10 mins, pulled it out and did not even have a red mark or a blister and absolutely NO PAIN. Now, I keep a bag of flour in the fridge and every time I burn myself. Cold flour feels even better than room temperature flour.

I use the flour and have never ONCE had I ever had even a red spot/burn mark, or a blister! I even burnt my tongue once, put the flour on it for about 10 minutes ... the pain was gone and no burn.

Try it . . . Experience a miracle! Keep a bag of flour in your fridge and you will be happy you did!

—Walter Gilbertson

—From Tom Barba—

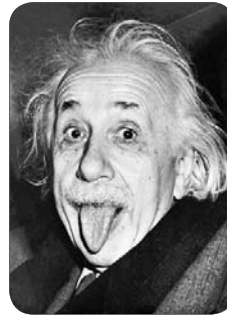
I am fine, please update to my new email. Tbarba2@tampabay.rr.com. Happy 4th. Had to cancel last reunion, wife has hydrocephalus and surgeon installed a shunt in her head to drain excess fluid. This has been going on since June 2010. She is coming around as of this date. It will take time to get her memory back, but she is strong and can't wait to travel again.

—Best Tom Barba

—FROM YOUR EDITOR—

We have a few members that have chosen to receive their Newsletter by e-mail. If you rather receive it by e-mail, rather than by postal, let me know by e-mail. The benefits would be: earlier delivery, color copy, and postage savings for MCB-8. Also, if you are missing back copies of the MCB-8 newsletter you can find them on our website;

<http://www.nmcb8.com>



JOHN NORTH CONTINUES TO BE A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION. In spite of his physical ailments he remains positive. John has helped many veterans. His lawyer like mind and good memory has served them well. John is a retired lineman and electrical foreman. He has worked in many parts of the U.S. He has also worked overseas. Thanks for all of your help John. And thanks for being the "MEMORY" for NMCB-8!

—From all NMCB-8 members

— ABOUT MCB-8 DUES—

Please note the mailing address space of your newsletter. Next to your name, you will see a date (month & year) denoting when your membership should have been renewed. The word "LIFE" next to your name denotes a life member and no renewal of membership is necessary. If your membership has expired but you would like to renew it in order to continue receiving the newsletter and keep up on the latest reunion information and other news, please submit payment by check to NMCB-8 ASSOCIATION. Send checks to Ken Bingham 1773 Tamarin Ave, Ventura, CA 93003.



"That reminds me—I'm invited to an officers' dance tonight!"

—OUT OF THE BOX—

HEY, CHAPPY, I'M OUT OF THE BOX! This bit of dialogue came from a guy named Kelly, a Marine Major, who had come to Vietnam to see what it was all about.

When I first heard it, I knew I would be dealing with an up-tight Irishman from the old neighborhood with something hostile on his mind.

You see, Kelly was really a policeman, who took leave of absence from the Chicago force, reserve command in-country. Kelly had an M.A. in education, but he wanted to be where the real action was. At least that's what he said. So he pounded a beat as a private detective, and now he was out here for a little more action.



“What do you mean, Kelly, you're out of the box? I haven't been in one for months myself. We give general absolution here anyway.”

In the distance there was an air strike going on, but we continued to talk of continuing emergencies, Eucharist, and boxes.

“Yeah Chaps, but I got an everyday emergency. I'm divorced and remarried with a couple of kids and another on the way. My present wife is Italian. You mean I can go to Communion because of this little emergency—because of this place, even though I have an Irish mother and two wives?”

“Kelly, I don't want to know your life story; all I want to know is if you want to go to Communion or not. And, if you do, I'll simply declare you an emergency; and there won't be any need for boxes.”

“But Chaplain, my whole life is an emergency.”

“Okay, so you learned something new today. You want an Italian holy card or something?”

We sat around and went to Communion together. We had some old “C” ration crackers together. We both had emergencies that more than likely would perdure for some time.

Is it only all those dirty people out there searching who are running? Retreating into quiet corners of existence where risks are few is also running. Both are racing for a place.

Suddenly, the air strikes were loud again. It was an emergency that would perdure, and I was glad.



WHAT A TIME WE LIVE IN. What a time I live in. In yesterday's mail I received a newsletter of the opening of the new Seabee museum and, last night, Sally and I went to one of our grandsons' football games. In the news letter were words and pictures of our past, things we have accomplished, marks we, and so many others of us, have left on so many parts of our world. At the ball game we watched as a young man [our grandson] turned in mid air to catch the ball and ran for a touch down. As I sat down to write this note, I could not help but think of how God blesses us in so many personal ways.

I am profoundly aware of all the conflict and unrest there is in our world right now. I also know that there are Seabee battalions building roads, bridges, runways, schools, hospitals and who knows what all, all over the world. This is accomplished with training, planning, dedication, discipline, hard work, sweat and I mean a lot of sweat. But I am also aware of the fact that God blesses us with miracles, day in and day out.

It is my hope and prayer that each of us looks for and sees the touchdowns.

—God bless...Billy

—OUR WEBSITE—

Are you aware that your Association has a web site? Posted on the web site are all of the newsletters that have ever been published (21 in number). Deployment completion reports, and pictures are also included. In addition, there is a list of all Association members and their states of residence. So navigate the site and see what you can find. The web address is: <http://www.nmcb8.com>. See you on line!

Time To Get Famous

Please e-mail me your story—typed if possible.

It doesn't have to be 100% true; just close. Include pictures too. We like pictures!

If possible, use your real name if it's safe to do so.

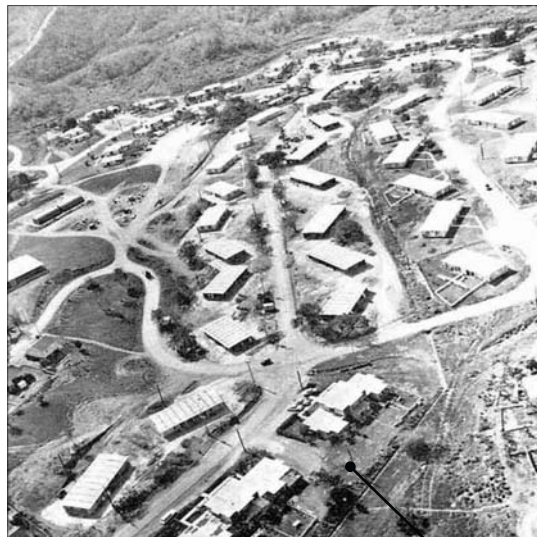
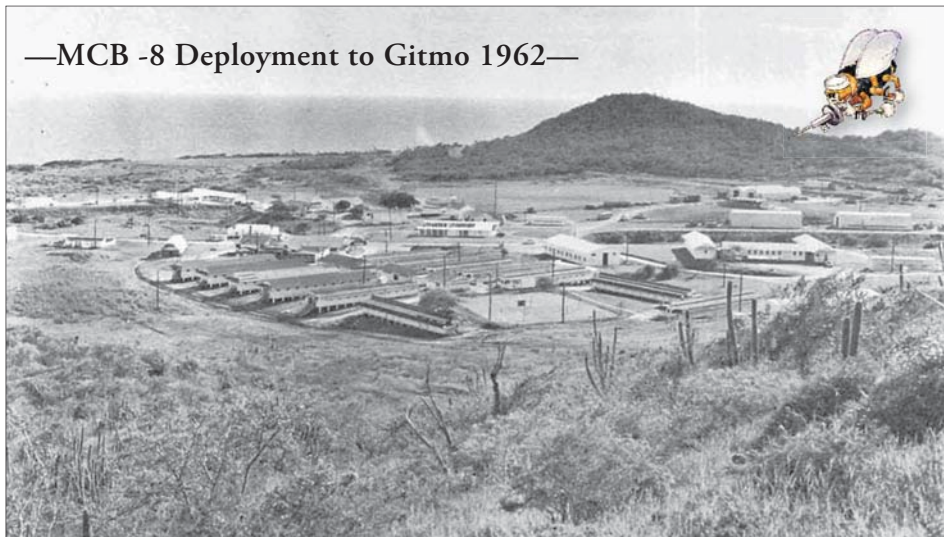
e-mail to:

jorden2323@msn.com



“What will it take to put one of you two into a brand-new Eterna-5000 today?”

—MCB -8 Deployment to Gitmo 1962—



MAIN PROJECT FOR EIGHT AT GUANTANAMO BAY Was Construction Of 58 Units Of Dependents Housing At Villamar.

The Advance Party had prepared three pads and started the project rolling prior to the arrival of the main body. Work began well, but then nature intervened in the form of rain, rain, and more rain, and Villamar became a sea of soggy saturated mud.

Thereafter, progress came rapidly. Only 13 completed at the end of November. Villamar construction jumped to 27 by the end of December. 45 at the end of January, 65 at the end of February, 78 at the end of March, 91 at the end of April, and 100 by the end of May. The project was completed almost a month ahead of the originally scheduled date of 28 June 1962.



At Camp Lejeune



46 years before Al-Qaida arrived at Gitmo, MCB-8 Seabees were "tortured" by Marines as part of routine "SERE" training (Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape.) (I believe this CB re-enlisted)



Seabee Luke says ya ain't shit if you don't have one of these .75 Cal in your holster!





—WW II 133rd NCB Iwo Jima Vet—
—“Dusty” Ward—

Machinist’s Mate, Third Class



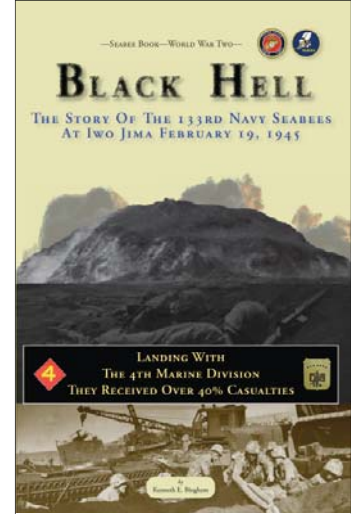
—Landing with the 4th Marines, we received over 40% casualties. —I got forty or fifty foot from them when a mortar landed just where the three of us had been standing. Of course it killed the major and the lieutenant colonel of the Marines, and it blew me from that forty or fifty foot away clear on down, head first, into my foxhole.—



Ken & Dusty



Jeanne & Dusty



Dusty Ward and Jeanne met up with Ken Bingham at the new Port Hueneme Seabee Museum. Jim Danaiels showed them around. Dusty shared his Iwo Jima exploits. His story—along with other Iwo stories— will be in the upcoming book (above right).

—FELLOW MCB-8 SEABEES, PLEASE DONATE TO OUR SEABEE MUSEUM—
HICCUPS IN THE ECONOMY HAVE AFFECTED THE MUSEUM’S PLANS TO SERVE US AND THE PUBLIC.

—OUR NEW SEABEE MUSEUM AT PORT HUENEME—

EACH YEAR THE BOARD, VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF WORK TIRELESSLY to preserve the history of the CEC and Seabees. To continue our work in the CEC/ Seabee community, we need your support. Please consider making an annual donation today.

On behalf of the CEC/ Seabee Historical Foundation, thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Captain Bill Hilderbrand, CEC, USN (Ret.)

CEC/Seabee Historical Foundation President

Customized bricks are also available for \$125.00.

A name of your choice will be molded into the brick and displayed at the new museum (“Forever”).



New Seabee Museum



CEC/Seabee Historical Foundation

P.O. Box 657

Gulfport, MS 39502-0657

1-228-865-0480

info@seabeehf.org

—THE NAVY IS NOT PERMITTED TO PAY FOR MUSEUMS—

—PLEASE DONATE—



—IN MEMORIAM—

—In Remembrance Of Those Who Served With Us—

- D.D. DRAKE WW II 16TH NCB) (100 YEARS OLD) DIED
- MIKE BUCKSTAHLER OF CASA GRANDE, AZ DIED OF STROKE ON 9-9-2011.



Memorial Bricks Were Ordered For Our Fallen Shipmates as Follows:



James O. Miller UTP2
NMCB-8 2/6/67 Died Tam Ky Vietnam

Ray L. Williams BUR2
NMCB-8 3/13/67 Died Chu Lai Vietnam

Michael D. Estok BUR
NMCB-8 5/13/67 Died Chu Lai Vietnam

Loren F. Studer SWF2
NMCB-8 5/31/68 Died Tan My Vietnam

Rudy P. Krissman EO2
NMCB-8 7/10/68 Died Phu Bai Vietnam

William C. Legat BUI
NMCB-8 10/30/69 Died Danang Vietnam

Harry H. Middaugh UT
NMCB-8 4/25/68 Died Bung Kan Thailand



The Bricks Will Be Placed in Front Of The New Museum

James Olen Miller Utilitiesman 2nd Class

PERSONAL DATA

Home of Record: Colorado Springs, CO
Date of birth: 06/10/1940

MILITARY DATA

Service: United States Navy
Grade at loss: E5
Rank: Utilitiesman 2nd Class
ID No: B601470
MOS: UTP: Utilitiesman (Plumber)
Length Service: 00
Unit: NMCB-8, 3RD NC BDE, USNAVFORV



CASUALTY DATA

Start Tour:
Incident Date: 02/06/1967
Casualty Date: 02/06/1967
Age at Loss: 26
Loction: Quang Tin Province, South Vietnam
Remains: Body recovered
Casualty Type: Hostile, died outright
Casualty Reason: Ground casualty
Casualty Detail: Multiple fragmentation wounds

URL: www.VirtualWall.org/dm/MillerJO01a.htm

ON THE WALL Panel 14E Line 130

Vietnam

—Did You Know?—

Vietnam

- One soldier, PFC Dan Bullock was 15 years old.
- 997 soldiers were killed on their first day in Vietnam .
- 1,448 soldiers were killed on their last day in Vietnam .
- 31 sets of brothers are on the Wall.
- Thirty-one sets of parents lost two of their sons.

—Submitted by Rick Clark

—Seabee Battalions 7 and 40— To Be Decommissioned

GULFPORT -- The “Magnificent Seven,” a battalion of nearly 600 Seabees, will be eliminated by September 2012 as a cost-cutting move, officials said.

This will be the third decommissioning for Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 7 since it was organized in 1942.

The battalion has been at the Gulfport Seabee Base since it was recommissioned a third time in 1985, and has seen deployments around the world, Rob Mims, public affairs officer for NCBC, told the Sun Herald.

The Navy also plans to eliminate NMCB 40 in Port Hueneme and Point Mugu in California.

Daryl Smith, spokesman at the Seabees’ national headquarters in Virginia, said that battalion will be decommissioned after returning to Port Hueneme from deployment to the Pacific in August.

Smith said the cutback in the naval construction force is part of a series of reductions across the U.S. military.



—The Song Of The Manly Men—

Heard from the wild and the desert,

Echoing back from the sea.
Faint o’er the din of the city

Floats the song of the men that are free.
There’s a lilt in the strenuous chorus,

There’s joy in our labouring when
We hear o’er the babble of weaklings

The song of the manly men.

‘Tis heard ‘mid the ringing of anvils,

‘Tis heard ‘mid the clashing of steel.
When ‘the hosts go down together,

And the shell-slashed legions reel.
‘Tis heard from the mine and the furrow ;

From prairie, and mountain, and glen;
Like the roll of the drums in the distance

The song of the manly men.

The fool in his ignorant bondage
May sneer at their fashion and speech,

The fop and the feather-bed workman
Make mock of the lesson they teach.

The demagogues rant in the market
Of things high removed from their ken:

What are words— empty words—in the balance
With the deeds of the manly men?

They are vertebrate, keen, and courageous,

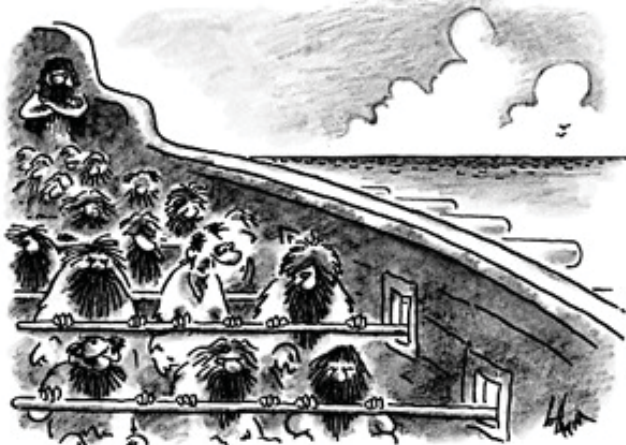
These toilers, who raise the refrain ;
Their work swept away by disaster—

Undaunted, they build it again.
Yet ye fawn on your quacks and your idols,

Your dreamers and mountebanks—then,
When your country is suffering shipwreck,

You’ll fall back on the manly men.

Frank Hudson —1908



“May I sit by the window?”

—Getting Bin Laden—

What happened that night in Abbottabad

By Nicholas Schmidle

SHORTLY AFTER ELEVEN O’CLOCK ON THE NIGHT OF MAY 1ST, two MH-60 Black Hawk helicopters lifted off from Jalalabad Air Field, in eastern Afghanistan, and embarked on a covert mission into Pakistan to kill Osama bin Laden. Inside the aircraft were twenty-three Navy SEALs from Team Six, which is officially known as the Naval Special Warfare Development Group, or DEVGRU. A Pakistani-American translator, whom I will call



Ahmed, and a dog named Cairo—a Belgian Malinois—were also aboard. It was a moonless evening, and the helicopters’ pilots, wearing night-vision goggles, flew without lights over mountains that straddle the border with Pakistan. Radio communications were kept to a minimum, and an eerie calm settled inside the aircraft.

Fifteen minutes later, the helicopters ducked into an alpine valley and slipped, undetected, into Pakistani airspace. For more than sixty years, Pakistan’s military has maintained a state of high alert against its eastern neighbor, India. Because of this obsession, Pakistan’s “principal air defenses are all pointing east,” Shuja Nawaz, an expert on the Pakistani Army and the author of “Crossed Swords: Pakistan, Its Army, and the Wars Within,” told me. Senior defense and Administration officials concur with this assessment, but a Pakistani senior military official, whom I reached at his office, in Rawalpindi, disagreed. “No one leaves their borders unattended,” he said. Though he declined to elaborate on the location or orientation of Pakistan’s radars—“It’s not where the radars are or aren’t”—he said that the American infiltration was the result of “technological gaps we have vis-à-vis the U.S.” The Black Hawks, each of which had two pilots and a crewman from the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, or the Night Stalkers, had been modified to mask heat, noise, and movement;

the copters’ exteriors had sharp, flat angles and were covered with radar-dampening “skin.”

The SEALs’ destination was a house in the small city of Abbottabad, which is about a hundred and twenty miles across the Pakistan border. Situated north of Islamabad, Pakistan’s capital, Abbottabad is in the foothills of the Pir Panjal Range, and is popular in the summertime with families seeking relief from the blistering heat farther south. Founded in 1853 by a British major named James Abbott, the city became the home of a prestigious military academy after the creation of Pakistan, in 1947. According to information gathered by the Central Intelligence Agency, bin Laden was holed up on the third floor of a house in a one-acre compound just off Kakul Road in Bilal Town, a middle-class neighborhood less than a mile from the entrance to the academy. If all went according to plan, the SEALs would drop from the helicopters into the compound, overpower bin Laden’s guards, shoot and kill him at close range, and then take the corpse back to Afghanistan.

The helicopters traversed Mohmand, one of Pakistan’s seven tribal areas, skirted the north of Peshawar, and continued due east. The commander of DEVGRU’s Red Squadron, whom I will call James, sat on the floor, squeezed among ten other SEALs, Ahmed, and Cairo. (The names of all the covert operators mentioned in this story have been changed.) James, a broad-chested man in his late thirties, does not have the lithe swimmer’s frame that one might expect of a SEAL—he is built more like a discus thrower. That night, he wore a shirt and trousers in Desert Digital Camouflage, and carried a silenced Sig Sauer P226 pistol, along with extra ammunition; a CamelBak, for hydration; and gel shots, for endurance. He held a short-barrel, silenced M4 rifle. (Others SEALs had chosen the Heckler & Koch MP7.) A “blowout kit,” for treating field trauma, was tucked into the small of James’s back. Stuffed into one of his pockets was a laminated gridded map of the compound. In another pocket was a booklet with photographs and physical descriptions of the people suspected of being inside. He wore a noise-cancelling headset, which blocked out nearly everything besides his heartbeat.

During the ninety-minute helicopter flight, James and his teammates rehearsed the operation in their heads. Since the autumn of 2001, they had rotated through Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, and the Horn of Africa, at a brutal pace. At least three of the SEALs had participated in the sniper operation off the coast of Somalia, in April, 2009, that freed Richard Phillips, the captain of the Maersk Alabama, and left three pirates dead. In October, 2010, a DEVGRU team attempted to rescue Linda Norgrove, a Scottish aid worker who had been kidnapped in eastern Afghanistan by the Taliban. During a raid of a Taliban hideout, a SEAL tossed a grenade at an insurgent, not realizing that Norgrove was nearby. She died from the blast. The mistake haunted the SEALs who had been involved; three of them were subsequently expelled from DEVGRU.

—Continued in Next Newsletter

Modern Day Seabees

—Builder Constructionman—

Ashley Lauer Naval
Mobile Construction Battalion 3,
Detachment 4 Bagram, Afghanistan
“An Average Day In Afghanistan”

A YEAR AGO, I DIDN'T THINK I WOULD FIND MYSELF in Afghanistan, holding an M-16 and doing construction. When work begins, you tend to forget that you're in a war zone and focus on getting the job done. Out here, we are working alongside Afghan nationals who are building a barracks while we build our Super B-Hut, both for the CJSOTF (Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force) soldiers to comfortably sleep.



All of our meals are prepared by two local villagers, and eating real Afghan food has made me appreciate the diversity in different types of cultures. While working, we must also be in the combat mindset, seeing as at any second a fire fight or mortar attack can happen.

Out here, we are secluded from established bases, so many supplies needed are air-dropped.

The first drop I ever saw was today when a C-130 dropped 16 boxes of supplies that were parachuted from the plane. Then the Army soldiers go out in a convoy, set up security and pick them up.

For now, the living conditions aren't anything luxurious — sleeping on cots and washing in shower tents — but we are also building a shower facility as a side project for the soldiers. Knowing that we are all here to better Afghanistan is great motivation to work hard every day, to stay safe, get the job done and get everyone back home to their families.



Navy Seabees walk toward the Regimental Combat Team 3 Combat Operations Center on May 13 at Camp Leatherneck. The sailors said there will be no down time for them in between projects while in Afghanistan. (U.S. Marine Corps photo)



—Construction Mechanic—

Nolan Ryan
“Drudgery. Routine. The Daily Grind.”

WHATEVER YOU WANT TO CALL IT, the time we spend awake makes up 70 percent of our lives. How this time is spent will ultimately define us. Some are painters. Some are doctors. Some sell used cars. And although our areas of expertise may differ from one individual to the next, our goals are one and the same. We all seek fulfillment.

So, where do I fit into this vast technological ecosystem that we, as people, call day-to-day life? I am a construction mechanic in the United States Navy Seabees. My bread and butter lies in having the knowledge and know-how to diagnose, correct and, wherever possible, prevent Civil Engineer Support Equipment, which is a fancy way of saying automotive and construction equipment, from malfunctioning. At times, the job is tough, but most things worth doing will rarely come easy.

My clock reads 3:45 a.m. on another chilly morning in Afghanistan. The repetitive beeping has all but driven me to seize the day, but as Ben Franklin and, later, my dad would say, “Early to bed, early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise.”

It's still a work in progress, so I drag my feet to the gym.

An hour and a half passes before I am back in time to freshen up for breakfast and make my way into work. It is here that the day really begins. Vehicles need to be dispatched. Repair parts have to be ordered. Deadlines are creeping up, and time waits for no man. When a free moment arises, I find solace in knowing that thousands of miles away from all of this, my wife and baby boy are sleeping soundly under a roof I have provided for them.

For this, I am eternally grateful, and so I return to work.

The clock now reads 2:30 p.m. Our workload is steady yet manageable, and the once-chilly morning is now a sunny afternoon. The rumbling motors of dozers and dump trucks moving in and out of the maintenance shop come and go as the vehicles are carefully inspected for an upcoming convoy. Each hour of operation is being monitored. Each gallon of fuel is being noted, but at the end of the day these seemingly meaningless details serve a higher purpose.

Soon enough, the convoy will be out in harm's way and we, as mechanics, will have done everything in our power to ensure the safe arrival of our friends inside. Nothing is guaranteed in this lifetime, but our best efforts never hurt.



For Video on Seabees in Afghanistan see:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B5nZIDHlJV4>

SEABEE MEMORIAL, WASHINGTON, D.C

NMCB-8 Seabees' Association
 1773 Tamarin Ave. Ventura Ca. 93003
 ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



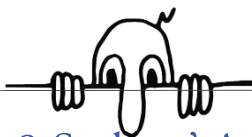
Sculptor - Felix de



To:



Note: The above numbers denote your membership dues status (Month-Year). (Due date)
 Example 1-10 = Due Jan. 2010



NMCB-8 Seabees' Association

1773 Tamarin Ave. Ventura Ca. 93003

- PRESIDENT ARNIE CICERONE
- TREASURER KEN BINGHAM
- NEWSLETTER EDITOR KEN BINGHAM
- PROOF READERS RICK CLARK/HARRY DAVIS
- RECRUITING RON DOUGAL (9 YEARS)

Past Presidents Gordon Gilmore, Ken Kerr, Rick Reese
 Previous Editor Capt. Harry Davis (9 years)



-NMCB-8 Association Roster Update-

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone & E-mail: _____



The mailing list and roster for the NMCB-8 Association needs to be continually updated. Only through a current roster can we ensure your receipt of the newsletter and information of current and future reunions. If you have had a change of address within the past year, you can update this information by filling out the above form. Please include your e-mail address, if you have one. Detach the form at the dotted line and return to:

Ken Bingham, 1773 Tamarin Ave., Ventura Ca. 93003. If you have e-mail and want to make your update electronically, please do so. Send updates by e-mail to; jorden2323@msn.com.

Thanks for your support!