



NMCCB-8 NEWSLETTER



— U.S. NAVAL MOBILE CONSTRUCTION BATTALION EIGHT —

Volume 17 Issue 1 — April 2017

— PRESIDENT’S COLUMN —

JAMES O MILLER UTP2
NMCCB 8 2/6/67
DIED TAM KY VIETNAM

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

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

HARRY H MIDDACH UT
NMCCB 8 4/25/68
DIED BUNG KAN THAILAND

LOREN F STUDER SWF2
NMCCB 8 5/31/68
DIED TAN MY VIETNAM

RUDY P KRISSMAN
NMCCB 8 7/10/68
DIED PHU BAI VIETNAM

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



I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE A MINUTE AND SALUTE OUR 75TH SEABEE BIRTHDAY it was a great honor to be a member of the best military group in the

world. If you get a chance, please look at the March 2, 2017 Official Online Magazine of the Seabees. Our Chief Daniels is cutting the cake at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library during the Seabee Ball.

Boston here we come! Set your dates September 23 through 28, 2018. I just got off the phone with Ron Sabbatis, and we have been looking at various places located in Boston. Ron has found a great location close to everything. The plan is we intend to visit Boston around the end of May to wrap up some loose ends, and secure the Hotel. Our agenda will consist of a day trip to the Plymouth Rock and Plantation. We also plan to have a trip to the Freedom Trail and end up at the USS Constitution, “Old Ironsides.” Boston has a great deal of American history the USS Salem (CA139) is located at the Quincy Shipyard Museum. Be prepared for great Seafood along with great Italian in the North End of Boston. Keep your eye on the website. Before you know it we’ll be putting all the information about the reunion up soon. I have been in contact with Ron Dougal. He will be working with all our East Coast members to start getting them ready to help out with this reunion. Ron reminded me that the Port of Davisville in Rhode Island is only 1hour 30 minutes from Boston.

I want to thank Ken Bingham again. I hope everyone realizes the work he has accomplished with our newsletter and treasure to the organization.

Please keep your dues up to date.

—Arnie Cicerone, Pres. NMCCB-8 Assoc.



OKINAWA, Japan (Feb. 17, 2017) Construction Mechanic Constructionman Matt Adams, NMCCB 5, traverses a mud-filled pit while participating in the endurance course at the Jungle Warfare Training Center (JETC) aboard Camp Gonsalves in Okinawa, Japan. JWTC exposes Marines and Seabees to training situations and environments unique to the Indo-Asia-Pacific region which sustain operational readiness and enhance forward deployed capabilities.

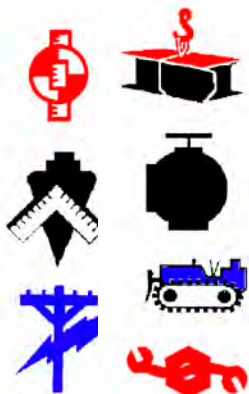
—Photo by Adam Henderson

Vietnam—1.2 miles below the DMZ

1967: A detachment of Seabees (MCB) 4 was assigned the task of building underground bunkers, defensive positions, and galley and storage facilities for a United States Army Special Forces unit at Con Thien, Vietnam. Con Thien was located approximately two kilometers south of the DMZ.

At first, the Seabees conducted their construction work on a nearly normal daily routine and were able to complete the initial portion of their projects without harassment. On May 8, however, Con Thien came under attack by an estimated two reinforced North Vietnamese Army battalions. The enemy fired an estimated 600 to 1,000 rounds of mortar at the camp.

The assault on the camp was successfully repelled by Seabee, Marine, and Special Forces personnel. After the attack, the Seabees returned to their construction work, but the camp continued to be harassed by enemy mortar and small artillery fire. From the time of the first attack to the time the entire detachment of 25 Seabees was evacuated on May 13, eleven of the Seabees had been wounded. The construction work for the Special Forces camp was later completed by another detachment of Seabees from the same battalion.





The US Marine Corps toast their Seabee road makers with this sign after the Seabees named one of their miraculous roads on Bougainville the "Marine Drive Hi-way." Shown shaking hands across the sign are Navy Seabee Chief Boatswain's Mate Earl J. Cobb (left) and Marine Corps Corporal Charles L. Marshall.



Seabee sign at the Bougainville Navy Yard in the Solomon Islands, Jan. 2, 1944. (Photo courtesy of the U.S. Navy Seabee Museum)

ON AUG. 7, 1782, THE BADGE OF MILITARY MERIT, now known as the Purple Heart, was established by Gen. George Washington. In honor of that, we'd like to recognize the first Seabee killed in action that received such an honor.

Chief Machinist Mate (Acting Appointment) Henry Thompson, a native of Chariton, Iowa assigned to C Company 6th Naval Construction Battalion and then a 1st Class Petty Officer, was killed in action on Oct. 14, 1942 in Guadalcanal. Two Japanese battleships, Kongo and Haruna, had over the course of 80 minutes, unleashed a barrage of 14-inch shells upon the camps set up at Henderson Field, striking a foxhole where Thompson had taken station, collapsing it and entrapping him and five other Seabees. While five of the Seabees were rescued, Thompson died as a result of suffocation. Thompson was awarded the Purple Heart, among other recognitions, and meritoriously promoted to Chief Petty Officer. —U.S. Navy Seabee Museum



The picture above shows Seabees showing their pride in the New England Patriots and being proud of being from New England. Good Stuff. —Middleboro Jones



Compare this picture with the one above it. The most we ever wore was flac-jackets and helmets in Vietnam—and often with neither.



John North with Doug Jolly.



L-R; "Doc" Smock, John North and Jack "Okie" Williams.

Note From Dan Eppellett.

Doc Smock saved the day for one of the bridge crews during the 68 deployment, he was sleeping in a truck away from the sleeping crew when they came under attack and were pinned down. The security people didn't return fire, they were young inexperienced and afraid to return fire and give away their positions. Doc awoke and grabbed a rocket launcher [M-79] from the truck and returned fire causing the VC to retreat. John Markham told

me this story. He was on the bridge crew. I was also able to hear it from Doc a year or so before he passed away. He lived in Springfield Mo. Larry Nicks dropped me off at his place and I was able to spend an afternoon with him. He had just had one of his lungs removed do to cancer.

Doc had done a hitch with the Marines before he joined the Seabees and so was more familiar with the weapons.

"DEVOTED TO CREATE FROM THE WASTES OF DESTRUCTION."

From The "FOREWORD" of the WW II 8th NCB Cruise Book

AMERICA has shaped her destiny through the ingenuity of methods that were a radical departure from the standard techniques. This peculiarly American trait—the ability to ingeniously improvise a successful method of accomplishment when the standard method is inadequate, led to the organization of the "Seabees,"

Among the many lessons the United States Navy learned from disasters such as those at Wake, Cavite, and Guam, was the fact that civilian workers could not be expected to pitch in and defend successfully what they built. It was to remedy this situation that on December 28, 1941, the first Naval Construction Battalions were officially authorized.

Through the untiring efforts of Rear Admiral Ben Moreel, the father of the "Seabees," a blunt and brilliant chief of the Navy's Bureau of Yards and Docks, the Seabees" came into being.

During the entire World War I the Navy spent less than two million dollars on its shore installations. During just the first two years of WW II more than a thousand times this amount on advanced bases alone. Previously, the Navy never had to fight from bases that were under enemy fire; it had never found it necessary to scramble from island to island to set up advance bases from which to carry on the attack against the enemy.

"The ships that count," runs a Navy adage, "are the ships that have bases." Never was its truth more painfully evident than during the first months of the war. In order to strike the enemy with the full might of a two-ocean fleet and air-arm, the Navy needed hundreds of bases, a global girdle of supply and repair stations. This was the task and duty given the "Seabees"—the job of

creating at strategic points throughout the world the bases from which the Navy could pursue the war.

The manner in which these men, hastily formed outfit of callous-palmed, cursing construction workers, performed that duty is now a matter of record and of history.

In the beginning they were something of an anomaly amidst the ceremonies and gentleman customs of the Navy, but they soon earned a reputation as the most resourceful team of builders, dock-walloper's, and repairmen ever seen in this or any other war, and they made themselves a lusty new tradition of building and fighting which brought them the respect of every other branch of service. When the final of WW II is written, it will tell of the contribution of the "Seabees," the United States Naval Construction Battalions, who, in the midst of destruction, by surpassing feats of planning, building, repairing, salvaging, and lighting, erected a concrete and steel foundation for final victory.



"My client pleads celebrity, Your Honor."

—KILROY WAS HERE—
A BIT OF WWII HISTORY LESSON

We all knew of him. Here's the story.

HE IS ENGRAVED IN STONE in the National War Memorial in Washington, DC- back in a small alcove where very few people have seen it. For the WWII generation, this will bring back memories. For you younger folks, it's a bit of trivia that is a part of our American history. Anyone born in 1913 to about 1950, is familiar with Kilroy. No one knew why he was so well known-but everybody seemed to get into it. So who was Kilroy?

In 1946 the American Transit Association, through its radio program, "Speak to America," sponsored a nationwide contest to find the real Kilroy, offering a prize of a real trolley car to the person who could prove himself to be the genuine article. Almost 40 men stepped forward to make that claim, but only James Kilroy from Halifax, Massachusetts, had evidence of his identity.

'Kilroy' was a 46-year old shipyard worker during the war who worked as a checker at the Fore River Shipyard in Quincy. His job was to go around & check on the number of rivets completed. Riveters were on piecework & got paid by the rivet. He would count a block of rivets & put a check mark in semi-waxed lumber chalk, so the rivets wouldn't be counted twice. When Kilroy went off duty, the riveters would erase the mark. Later on, an off-shift inspector would come through & count the rivets a second time, resulting in double pay for the riveters.

One day Kilroy's boss called him into his office. The foreman was upset about all the wages being paid to riveters, & asked him to investigate. It was then he realized what had been going on. The tight spaces he had to crawl in to check the rivets didn't lend themselves to lugging around a paint can & brush, so Kilroy decided to stick with the waxy chalk. He continued to put his check mark on each job he inspected, but added 'KILROY WAS HERE' in king-sized letters next to the check, & eventually added the sketch of the chap with the long nose peering over the fence & that became part of the Kilroy message.

Once he did that, the riveters stopped trying to wipe away his marks. Ordinarily the rivets & chalk marks would have been covered up with paint. With the war on, however, ships were leaving the Quincy Yard so fast that there wasn't time to paint them. As a result, Kilroy's inspection "trademark" was seen by thousands of servicemen who boarded the troopships the yard produced.

His message apparently rang a bell with the servicemen, because they picked it up & spread it all over Europe & the South Pacific.

Before war's end, "Kilroy" had been here, there, & every where on the long hauls to Berlin & Tokyo. To the troops outbound in those ships, however, he was a complete mystery; all they knew for sure was that someone named Kilroy had "been there first." As a joke, U.S. servicemen began placing the graffiti wherever they landed, claiming it was already there when they arrived.

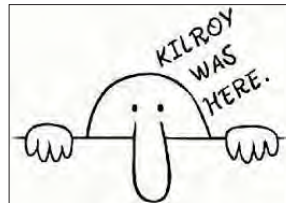
Kilroy became the U.S. super-GI who had always "already

been" wherever GIs went. It became a challenge to place the logo in the most unlikely places imaginable (it is said to be atop Mt. Everest, the Statue of Liberty, the underside of the Arc de Triomphe, & even scrawled in the dust on the moon.

As the war went on, the legend grew. Underwater demolition teams routinely sneaked ashore on Japanese-held islands in the Pacific to map the terrain for coming invasions by U.S. troops (& thus, presumably, were the first GI's there). On one occasion, however, they reported seeing enemy troops painting over the Kilroy logo!

In 1945, an outhouse was built for the exclusive use of Roosevelt, Stalin, & Churchill at the Potsdam conference. Its' first occupant was Stalin, who emerged & asked his aide (in Russian), "Who is Kilroy?"

To help prove his authenticity in 1946, James Kilroy brought along officials from the shipyard & some of the riveters. He won the trolley car, which he gave to his nine children as a Christmas gift & set it up as a playhouse in the Kilroy yard in Halifax, Massachusetts.



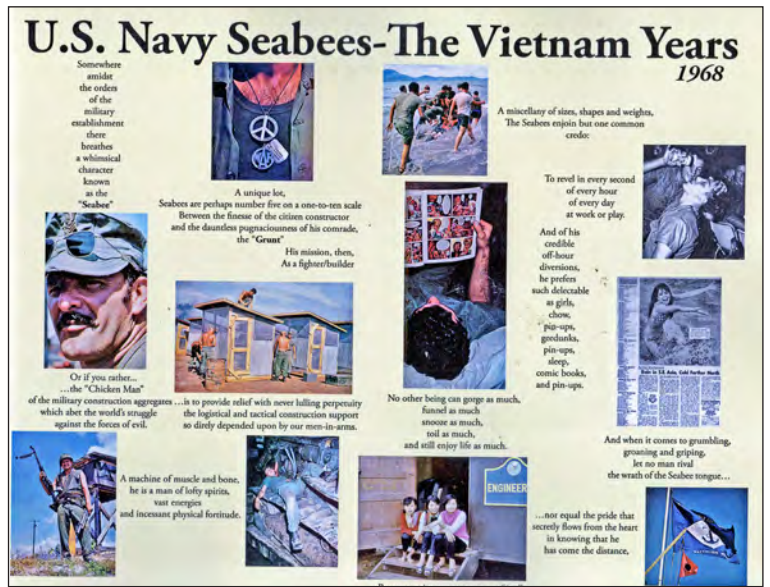
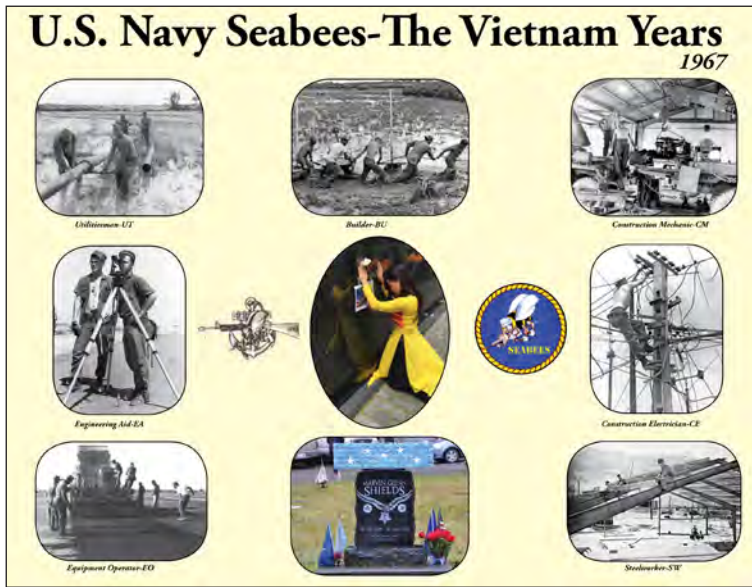
Subject: Return of cruise book and photos
From: Thomas Angier (dads.rescue555help@yahoo.com)
To: jorden2323@msn.com;
Date: Wednesday, January 4, 2017 1:49 PM

Ken,

Just wanted to let you know that I received the cruise book and photos yesterday 1/3/2017. Thank you for the DVD on the Antarctic I haven't viewed it yet.
Please be assured it will never be copied
That last news letter was really great. With all the photos from the reunion and the ones from me. You really did a great job.
Again many thanks for all you do for the association.

Till we meet again in 2018
Best wishes
Tom Angier

*KEN,
AS YOU SEE I WAS
TRYING TO E-MAIL YOU BUT
HAD A PROBLEM TO DO WITH
MY COMPUTER.
AGAIN THANKS
Tom*



—New Vietnam Seabee Books By Terry Lukanic MCB 74—

Three more volumes coming soon.

THE IDEA FOR THIS BOOK BEGAN FERMENTING IN 2008 after an e-mail conversation with my former Commanding Officer, Captain Dave Schlesinger. We had been lamenting the fact that so few people knew about the Navy Seabees and even fewer knew what the Seabees do. The conversation closed with Capt. Schlesinger remarking “Perhaps one day someone will write a book about what we did in Vietnam.” That began the eight year process of collecting data, stories and photos of the many achievements and accomplishments by the U.S. Navy Seabees, not only in Vietnam but all of Southeast Asia.

The project began by merely collecting data with no clear concept of the format or style the book would take. After several years of collecting the information that I believed to be relevant, the style and layout of the book you see began to take shape and has generally remained as is with few modifications.

At the beginning of the layout process I still had no idea how large the final book would become. I began by composing the events of 1968 followed by 1967 and then 1969. It became apparent that this would either become a book that was too large and cumbersome to hold and read or would have to be broken up into multiple volumes.

The final product encompasses 5 volumes totaling in the neighborhood of 1500 pages with nearly 3,500 photographs. Data was collected from Battalion Cruisebook and Deployment Completion Reports, U.S. Naval Forces Vietnam Monthly Historical Summary as well as Stars & Stripes Newspaper and All Hands Magazine. Additionally the book contains memories and stories as related by the men who were ‘boots on the ground’. These personal stories range in length from a few sentences to several pages. All are unedited and in the Seabees’ own words. They know the stories better than I so there was little need to change or edit them in any way.

2017 saw the completion of the book, and I must say, it’s been quite a ride. I’ve become friends with so many men that I otherwise never have become acquainted with. We are certainly ‘Brothers from different Mothers’. What appears on the pages of the five volumes of

this book was not authored or written by me. Yes, I compiled the information but this book was written by the 27,000 Seabees who served in Southeast Asia from 1963 to 1972, including those that gave all—the men that sacrificed their lives.

I hope you enjoy the book as much as I have enjoyed compiling it. For those Seabees that worked on the many projects listed, participated in the many Civic Action projects, and attended the off-hour activities included in words or photos, it is my sincere hope that a sense of pride ensues and only good feelings and memories come to the forefront.

It would take many, many pages to say thank you to all who have contributed to the compiling of this book. So I say thank you to all who have offered encouragement and the gift of stories and photos to make the book what it has become. However, there are some who I absolutely recognize for the efforts they expended to help with the book.

Captain Dave Schlesinger, CEC, USN, for planting the idea for the book

Ken Bingham MCB-8, for the untold hours spent at the Seabee Museum archives as my ‘eyes and ears’ scanning Deployment Completion Reports

Don Howlett MCB-10, for the time and effort to research the information on the 170 fallen Seabees.

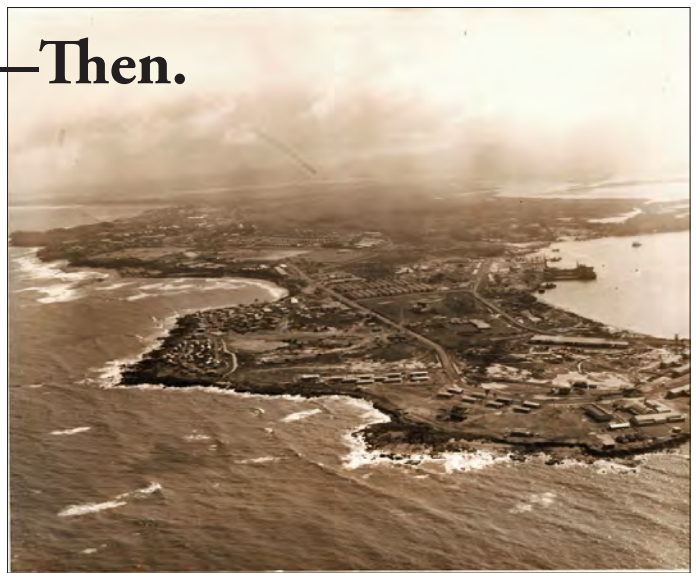
The staff at the Seabee Museum, for providing timely information and direction when asked.

**For copies contact:
terry@seabee-rvn.com**

Chu Lai—Vietnam—Then.



Select all
Print
Inspect element
View source



Chu Lai Area—Now.



Tam Ky—can you believe it?



Ali Barba's Line Crew—Nam 1969 (Danang).

Ken,

Just wanted to let you know that I received the cruise book and photos yesterday 1/3/2017. Thank you for the DVD on the Antarctic I haven't viewed it yet.

Please be assured it will never be copied

That last news letter was really great. With all the photos from the reunion and the ones from me. You really did a great job.

Again many thanks for all you do for the association.

Till we meet again in 2018

Best wishes

Tom Angier



"The kid's good."

You can get all four MCB-8 cruise books (compiled into one book) at: <https://www.amazon.com/Seabee-Cruise-Books-Vietnam-NMCB-8/dp/1461035589>

Or, you can read them for free at our web-site at: <http://www.nmcb8.com> —kb

NOVEMBER 2016

Hi Ken,

Re: OCTOBER NEWS LETTER

I HAVE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING YOUR NEWS LETTER FOR OCTOBER AND OPERATION DEEP FREEZE. IN YOUR NEWS LETTER YOU DOCUMENTED ACTIVITY FOR SEABEE'S MESS DURING 1963-1964. I WAS PART OF THAT EXPLORATION AS WELL STATIONED AT BIRD STATION. I THOUGHT I KNEW EVERYONE BUT DIDN'T RECOGNISE ANY OF THE GUY'S IN THE PICTURES. IN 1964 WE WENT TO RUDA SPAIN WHICH YOU DIDNT MENTION. IN SEPT. 1965 WE WENT TO VIETNAM WHERE I STAYED UNTIL MAY WHEN I WAS DISCHARGED.

Sincerely
 Bill Ambot - EQUIPMENT OPERATOR
 519 RIVER RD
 HISBON CA 0635
 860.889.5009

A WWII Advert



"Seabee" Balaban and his father helped build many a Studebaker in peacetime

Letters

VC STAR Newspaper Feb. 15, 2017

Seabee miscarriage of justice

The 72nd anniversary of the Iwo Jima landing is fast approaching. For over 20 years, veterans and friends of the 133rd Naval Construction Battalion (Seabees) have tirelessly pursued an award upgrade to the Presidential Unit Citation for their action on Iwo Jima — to no avail.

The 133rd performed heroically side-by-side with the Marine Pioneers that did receive the citation. The 133rd, in addition to its Marine duties on the beach, was also tasked with building and upgrading the Iwo airstrips. An estimated 25,000 airmen lives were saved returning from Japan in damaged aircraft.

The Navy has consistently stated that World War II commanders cannot be second guessed after 72 years. But the Awards Board's decision was incorrect and part of a 72-year-old ethical blunder. The 133rd landed in the first wave with the Marines at 9:20 a.m. Feb. 19, 1945. During the invasion, it was integrated into — and joined at the hip with — the Marine Pioneers; it wore Marine uniforms and carried the same weapons.

It is the only unit that landed in its entirety that did not receive the Presidential Unit Citation. It received more casualties than its Marine Pioneer counterparts in the same exact area.

Senior on-site Marine officers (witnesses) agree that the 133rd Seabees should receive the award and have written supporting letters, including the last surviving Medal of Honor Marine, Hershel Woodrow "Woody" Williams.

Lt. Col. Oliver North produced an entire TV program highlighting this miscarriage of justice.

We ask the citizens of Ventura County for their assistance. Please write to President Trump and ask him to intervene and overrule the Awards Board's decision.

They trained at the Port Hueneme Seabee Base, then named Camp Rousseau, in infantry and trade skills before shipping out to Hawaii for Marine training. From there, they sailed to Iwo Jima.

There's not many left. Please assist. They deserve It.

Ken Bingham, Ventura

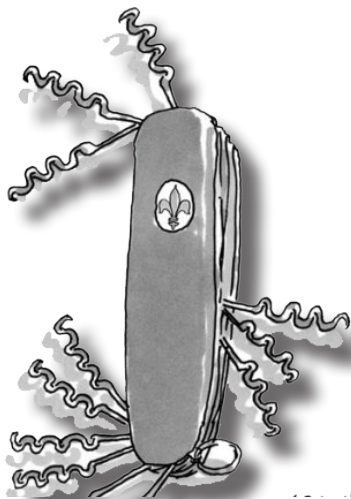


75th Seabee Anniversary Commemorative Coins Are Available

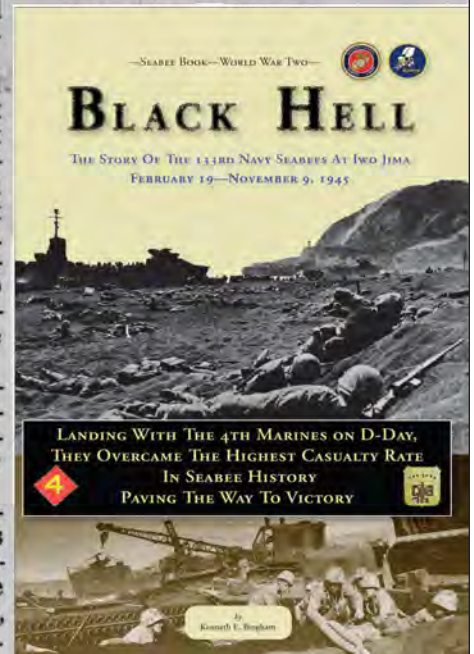
At The PORHUE Museum Store.

805-382-2585

<http://seabeesmuseumstore.org/store>



French Knife



—FORREST CLIFTON HENRY—
Camarillo, CA



Passed away at St. John's PV hospital, Camarillo [CA] Feb. 14, 2017 at age 88. He died of multiple complications from agent orange poison, stationed in Vietnam with the Marine Corps. Forrest had been bedridden for several years and taken care of by his loving wife Helen and son Nathan. We are thankful he is out of pain and with our lord.

Forrest was born Feb 6, 1929 in Ensley, Alabama. He was a beloved husband, father and friend. He is survived by his loving wife Helen of almost 59 years, son Nathan, brother-in-law John Gutierrez, sister-in-law Carol (Dick) Ferguson, Aunt Louise (Larry) Pitts, Niece Emily Kendrick. The following Cousins, Ted Stribling and family, Durell (Sugar) Stribling and Gail (Ken) Golighthey.

—After Forrest parents passed away he lived in boarding houses and worked in South Carolina repairing tankers. As a skinny kid he could fit through the hole of the tanker where a grown man could not. He also worked at various jobs in Texas. When Forrest turned 17 and completed High School his brother James helped him to sign up in the U.S. Navy Seabees. He had a wonderful 24 year career and always called it his second home. Forrest was a Chief Petty officer, UTC, E-7. He served in the Korean and Vietnam War and received many commendations. After Forrest Honorable service he was transferred to the Fleet Reserve Association on Oct. 6, 1970.

"We served together in Chu Lai Viet Nam in 1966. Chief Henry was a good chief and person. On off hours, and when in base camp, he would hold a class in the sport of FENCING.—interesting guy. "En garde" Chief! —Ken Bingham, CE2

—CHAPLAIN'S CORNER—
by Billy Boggs

AS I SIT DOWN TO WRITE THIS, I find myself in the season of Lent. Actually this is Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, which is the day that in most protestant churches ashes of the palm branches from last year's Palm Sunday are placed on the foreheads of the participants to the accompaniment of the words "Believe in the Gospel and that you are from dust and to dust you will return." This begins the 40 days till Easter which is the "High Holy Days" of the protestant church. Spring is somehow derived from the word Lent, now who would have guessed that?

Well, I love all the seasons for they each bring a special flavor to the year. But, it is hard for spring not to be the favorite. It brings life after the cold winter with birds and flowers, green leaves and grasses that change color daily. The air is moving from cold to warm, and the days are getting longer too. I guess for me the best thing about spring is the gift of new life and the realization that Jesus gave us a new covenant and that He defeated death. Through Him we have eternal life, which is the greatest gift of all. It is my hope that we will turn our actions toward forgiveness and love for each other as we move through this season of Lent, remembering to love our neighbor as ourselves.

In the love of Christ, —Billy

—John E. North—



John E. North 73, of Huron, died on February 14, 2017, at the VA Hospital in Sioux Falls.

He will be inturned at the Black Hills National Cemetery at a later date.

The family will be having a private service and has entrusted arrangements to the Osthus Funeral Home of De Smet.

IT IS WITH MUCH SADNESS that I report of the passing of my friend John North, the men in B Company and especially those in the hut B4 on the 1968 Phu Bai Deployment will always remember John.

John loved the men of Eight and always looked forward to our Reunions. John suffered from MD and as the years wore on it became more difficult for him to attend Reunions, his last was Branson MO in 2010, but he was always there in spirit during the ones that followed. John's mission in life was to help people as many who read the newsletters know. John made his home in the Mid West city of Huron SD. He worked for the Bureau of Reclamation from which he retired.

In the Mid West there are many large meat and poultry packing houses, these places are very labor intensive and most Americans won't do these kinds of jobs so they import people from around the globe on work visas. Most of these people speak little or no English and some have children while they are working here. Since these parents have limited English their children have a hard go trying to get an education. John was a mentor to some of these children and some became very successful with degrees in electrical and chemical engineering and so a word of mouth network existed among these workers that if only their child could be helped by him maybe he could have a chance at the American dream.

I spent some time in Huron with John back in 2010 and while there witnessed these people coming to him for help of one kind or another, "What ever you say John whatever you say" To these people John North was a God, and so I know he is with God now.

—Dan Epplett

*Behind Me - dips Eternity-
Before Me - Immortality -
Myself - the term between -*

- Emily Dickinson

—U.S. Army Airborne & Special Ops Museum—
Honors Seabees

By Drew Brooks, Military Editor

FORT BRAGG IS THE HOME OF THE ARMY'S AIRBORNE and special operations forces, but on Sunday afternoon, those units took a back seat to a little publicized Navy force that has had a big impact over the last seven decades.

On the 75th anniversary of the creation of the U.S. Naval Construction Battalions — better known as C.B.s, and more commonly, as Seabees — officials unveiled a monument to the units outside the U.S. Army Airborne & Special Operations Museum in downtown Fayetteville.

The Seabee monument, according to museum leaders, is the first dedicated to a Navy unit. It was sponsored by the Seabee Veterans of America Island X-6, Fayetteville.

“This was one of the most wonderful things I’ve ever seen,” said Aldo Del Rosario, who traveled from Summerton, South Carolina. He served in World War II as a construction mechanic 3rd class. “Very few people know about the Seabees.”

U.S. Navy Capt. Steve Hamer, assigned to Navy Expeditionary Combat Command at Little Creek, said that despite not being well known, the Seabees have a proud history and heritage.

“For all those Seabees who have served in our Navy past and present — we owe you a great debt of gratitude,” he said. “For Seabees gathered here today, we honor your legacy, we thank you.”

Hamer said toughness is in the DNA of units who train and deploy from Fort Bragg.

But the Seabees, the Navy’s fighter-builders, are also ingrained with a fighting, can-do nature, he said while relating the story of Construction Mechanic 3rd Class Marvin Shields.

While serving alongside Special Forces in Vietnam, Shields — although wounded — provided invaluable support to fend off a Viet Cong attack. He carried a more critically wounded man to safety and, hours into a fierce firefight, volunteered to accompany the Special Forces commander in an attempt to destroy an enemy machine gun position.

Shields and the commander, 1st Lt. Charles Williams, successfully destroyed the enemy position, but Shields was killed while the pair attempted to return to safety. Both men were later awarded the nation’s highest honor for valor, the Medal of Honor. Shields is the only Seabee to ever receive the medal.

Hamer said Seabees remain closely linked to special operations forces, continuing to support their needs around the globe.

“It is certainly a fact that more and more frequently Seabees are among the first on the ground behind the scenes enabling the impact of special operations,” he said.

Hamer said Seabees have partnered with all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces and many international allies and continue to contribute globally to military operations, building forward bases, fixing runways and participating in a number of other projects.

“Seabees are responsible for a wide variety of military construction and humanitarian efforts in times of peace and in times of war,” he said. “Seabees have the uncanny ability to deliver when it matters the most.”

—FROM THE MCB 128TH 1969 CRUISE BOOK—

by Jerry Emison

From the beginning to the end you hear of materials.
Concrete for the pads, plywood for the huts,
Cables for the wiring, pipe for the tanks,
Laterite for the road, lumber for the frames.

Yet . . . when you stop with some welcome slack
And tip back the cup with genuine Kool Kan water
And you wonder what makes it all go . . .
Where is the real motor,

Your mind's eye focuses on the one material
That gives it all definition.
The men who work beside you, who drink with you
Who stand quarters before sunrise with you -
They are the reality of it all.

When all is forgotten about Quang Tri [Vietnam]
These men will still hang around in memories,
And to these men this book is dedicated.

—Jerry Emison -

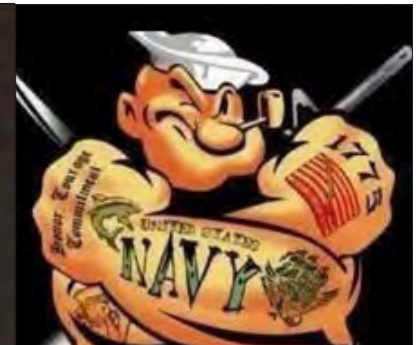
—MCB-8 1968—

WHILE IT IS KNOWN THAT NOTHING could outshine Col Co Road project for its priority and labor Force, men of U.S. Naval Mobile Construction Battalion of EIGHT have left several other indelible marks in South Vietnam. For the past eight months this SEABEE Battalion has been ready and able to full responsibilities from its camp base at the Gia Le Combat Base and north across the ancient city of Hue to Col Co Island.

Before Col Co Road was brought forward to overshadow the other priority projects. NMCB EIGHT'S men answered emergency bridge repairs in the city of Hue soon after the February TET Offensive.

In 27 hours, the Hue Bridge as repaired across the Perfume River into the northwest corner of the city. To provide a bypass around Hue, a 15-man bridge-building crew led by BUC J.J. Niemeyer constructed a 60-foot link across the city's moat outside the northern sector.

—From MCB-8 Cruise Book 1968





I WAS THE YOUNGEST OF THE FOUR BERRY BOYS, and my younger years I was influenced by my older brothers—except that I took up self taught gymnastics at the local YMCA.

It wasn't until I joined the Navy at age 20 that I learned to "flap my own wings." My oldest brother Ed told me never to volunteer for anything—he was wrong. He went through Great Lakes before I did.

I volunteered to be the Company Postman, this meant going

to the front of morning chow line, then over to the post office to pickup company (292) mail, take it back to the barracks, sort it, and be ready to stand on the barracks table and pass it out to the guys—while smelling a few.

I got to know most of the guys by name, and develop a lot of friendships, some lasting a lifetime.

I used to walk across that same barracks table on my hands (for show off).

On our day of physical testing, I did 15 chin-ups and 300 sit-ups and this was recorded in my "Jacket."

I volunteered for "The Smoker" (boxing) but they never found anyone in my weight class—my average weight was 150 pounds. I *kinda* think that it had something to do with not being able to find a challenger.



Battalion Inspection Gitmo 1952. (COM CB LANT)

I also volunteered for the close order drill team and after Attrition, I became the Drill Team Commander, and was passed the Navy Saber that I showed to my Buddies.

I was surprised that none of them never went to the gym after evening chow, it was a short walk away, but they lounged around the barracks until lights out.

There were tumbling mats, free-weights, and an old set of parallel bars that I spent hours on. One evening I was the only guy in the gym—as usual—and I clamped on 100 pounds of weight on a short bar, and did a "Clean and Jerk" from the floor to over my head, with one arm. I was in good shape.

Those 89 other guys in Company 292 voted me company "Honor Man"

At graduation parade, "My" platoon did a show in front of the class, doing such moves at 10 count manual of arms, to the wind march! Queen Anne salute etc. Then I dismissed them and climbed



Billy Dean Gorden

up the reviewing stand to sit with the Admiral, my parents and the other seven company honor men, with my saber I told you it might be long!

Two years later at battalion inspection in Gitmo, I was called front and center, and Comm CB Lant pinned a good conduct metal on my tunic. That was a real honor to be singled out with an electrician, a heavy equipment operator, among 950 MCB8'ers who were the finest, "Boys changing to Men" that ever existed. Still later in my four year hitch in the Seabees I went to see the executive officer, "Smilin Jack" I told him I checked Navy Regs and found that each CB Battalion could send two men to Bayon, N.J. for Deep Sea Diving Training, and I wanted a volunteer for that job. He said "Oh I didn't know that, but you cant go, your going back to Port Hueneme for Advanced Builders School."



Ed Mayre

Found out Bob Smith, and Henderson went to Bayon and learned the latest on the new, "Scuba Diving," and helped direct concrete pour, under water at that sea plant ramp in Bermuda, and got \$50 a month extra hazardous duty pay.

In Port Hueneme I was made a Company Commander in charge of ninety guys, fresh out of, "Boots" In those three months I learned most of their names, and assigned, work details' punched their T>S> Cards, and answered questions like "whats it like being out in the fleet?"

Just do your job then I would march them to and from school. "Your eyes ahead, your shoes are tight, your balls are swinging from left to right, sound off -1 2 --

When I got discharged, I got a job as a 3rd year Carpenter Apprentice from the union. The first day on the job, I nailed in 1 x 8 pine board on three sub-floors, to impress the straw boss, I pounded in a 100 pound keg of 8 d nails in one day by myself. When I told him what I did he said "Yea, well heres another keg." Welcome to Civilian Life!

—Dick Berry—BU2 MCB-8. MCB-8 Assoc. Plank Owner.



Freddie Battsie— KC (Casey Matuzar).



—Saturday Evening Post (WW II)—

Based on the actual experience of a Navy Seabee and his GMC "DUCK" during the attack at Salerno Italy.



1964-1967



1967

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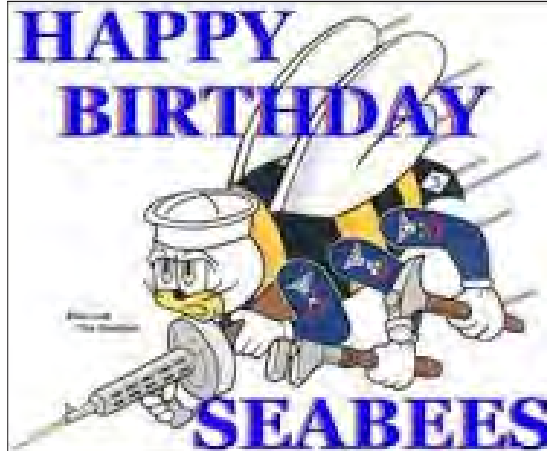
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Seabees in Iraq



Back in the day—WW II.

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

To:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone & E-mail: _____

Note: The above numbers denotes your membership dues status (Month-Year). (Due date)

-NMCB-8 Association Roster Update-

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.