



NMCB-8

NEWSLETTER



— U.S. NAVAL MOBILE CONSTRUCTION BATTALION EIGHT —

Volume 17 Issue 2 — Sept. 2017

— PRESIDENT’S COLUMN —

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 BUR3  
NMCB 8 5/13/67  
DIED CHU LAI VIETNAM

HARRY H MIDDACH U T  
NMCB 8 4/25/68  
DIED BUNG KAN THAILAND

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

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

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



GET READY FOR BOSTON. Our 2018 Reunion in Beantown will be here before you know it!

I want to thank Ron Sabattis for all the help he has provided with the

2018 NMCB8 reunion arrangements. Ron and I went back to Boston to select the reunion hotel and start putting the schedule of events and activities together. The reunion runs from September 24th, registration day, through the banquet on the 27th. The reunion packet is inside this newsletter and will also appear in future newsletters. In addition, the forms will be on our website by the end of September at [www.nmcb8.com](http://www.nmcb8.com). Click on Reunion.

Boston has a great history and our planning visit took us to many historical sites. We visited the USS Constitution in the Boston harbor, went on the Freedom Trail, traveled to Plymouth and saw the Plymouth Rock and the Plimoth Plantation (yes that’s the correct spelling) and along the way ate great Italian dishes and New England seafood. The “Best Western Adams Inn Quincy-Boston,” our reunion hotel, is located close to the Freedom Trail, restaurants, shopping, plus many historical sites including the homes of John Adams and John Quincy Adams, the Dorothy Quincy Homestead and more. The hotel will have a hospitality room as well as being the place where we will hold our Banquet on Thursday, September 27th. We are planning to have some real exciting guest speakers.

On September 25th we will board buses for transportation to two locations; first Plymouth Rock, then on to the Plimoth Plantation where we’ve secured an agreement to have a picnic/barbeque in the afternoon. The tentative plan is to leave the hotel around 9:00 AM, visit Plymouth Rock for a couple of hours then go to the Plimoth Plantation and spend the af-

—Continued on next page.

Rock Apes

—PHU LOC ROCK CRUSHER—

CAMP DE SHURLY HILL 494—1968

IN 1968 I WAS SENT TO THE PHU LOC ROCK CRUSHER. The quarry was cut out from the side of a hill—and not much there—quarry, crusher and our small camp. There were about 70 of us MCB-8 Seabees. One 3 man Marine sniper team came around now and then.

MCB-9’s deadly enemy experience, a few months earlier, kept us on alert. But no enemy activity happened while I was there. Upon arrival at the quarry

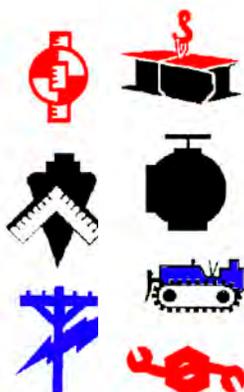


I met up with a fellow Seabee from my hometown. He was part of our battalion’s Security. We talked for awhile. He told me to come up to his position on the perimeter after dark. He said he wanted to show me something. After dark I hiked up the hill and found his M60 position. As I was settling in he said watch this. He threw a rock about the size of a salt-shaker. Within seconds the rock came back but at a faster speed. My friend then said “do you hear them?” The bushes were about 75 ft. in front of our perimeter wire along with the associated defensive weaponry; trip-wires/flares, dangling pebble-cans, claymores etc.



I heard a movement and asked him what it was. He told me they were large “Rock Apes”\* and there was a tribe of them.

—Continued on next page.



**President's Column—**

*Continued from front page*

ternoon visiting historical sites such as a 17th Century Village and home-site and the Mayflower II prior to our picnic/barbecue. Please look up the Boston Freedom Trail, Plymouth Rock, and Plimoth Plantation on the internet; it will give you an idea of all the great historic things you'll get to see and visit.

Use the enclosed forms and start making reservations. When you call the hotel make sure to use this code (MCB8 Reunion) for your discount and get your airline tickets early for the best rates. Again, the reunion dates are September 24-27, 2018. During the fall colorful foliage throughout New England will be on display, so get your reservation early for a car rental if you want to take some extra time to drive to New Hampshire and Vermont to see the color. Keep an eye on the website for all reunion information and updates. I don't know where the time is going, but this reunion will be here before you know it. Remember, there is a lot of work going into planning this reunion. We need all hands to participate. Make some phone calls to all our Seabee brothers and friends who may want to join us. Again, we will have all the reunion forms on the NMCB8 website by the end of September. Fill out the paperwork either from the website or on the forms in this newsletter and send them to Ron Sabbatis as we need to get an early count for transportation and planning purposes.

If you need any other information, please contact me via phone (562) 760-8314 or email [adcicerone@gmail.com](mailto:adcicerone@gmail.com)

*Arnie Cicerone, Pres. NMCB-8 Association*

**—GARRETT DURVEA, MEDICAL CORPS USNR.**

I worked with our wounded. The biggest job was to get them clean. That's one thing about being a Seabee. Aboard ship you bathe, wash down with antiseptic, and put on clean clothing before an action. In the Air Force you can take a bath before you take off. But when a Seabee gets hit, he's usually on a beach in the mud. Mud seems to be our element. When we die we die in the mud.

**—MORE MONKEY BUSINESS—**



In noting Seabee accomplishments in Vietnam, The National Observer reported a visit by Lt. Gen Victor H. Krulak to Monkey Mountain RVN. A group of Seabees were hard at work building a road for (as they are prone to say) the comfort of the US Marines (actually an access road to LAAM site—*Light Antiaircraft Missile*). Singling out a young Seabee, Lt. Gen Krulak asked straight-faced: "How do you tell these Seabees from the baboons?"

His answer—

*"The Seabees are smoking cigars sir."*

**Rock Apes—Continued from front page**

Grown Rock Apes can be 4.5—5ft. Recently, while searching on-line, I learned that other units had experienced these tricksters. Supposedly, one Marine was thrown by a Rock Ape at the ROCK PILE near Route 9. It's hard to imagine how any of the apes survived the war.

Below is the Story of MCB-9's experience, at Phu Loc—before MCB8 got there.—*Ken Bingham, editor.*

**I**N AN ACTION THAT WAS TYPICAL of the "fighter/builders" of the Navy Seabees deployed in Vietnam, 5 Seabees of MCB-9's Detail Echo gave their lives on 31 March 1968 in a valiant effort which saved the lives of many fellow Seabees.

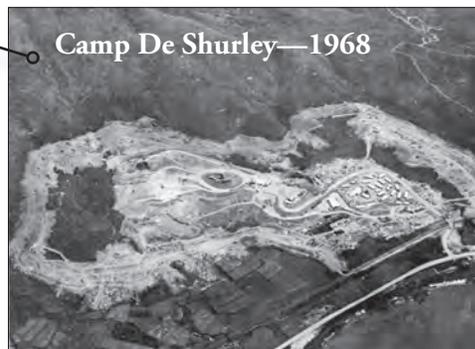
When their camp, located near [south of] Phu Bai, came under heavy mortar and recoilless rifle attack, the Seabees immediately manned an 81-mm mortar position and commenced and maintained counter fire despite the barrage of enemy shells landing near their position. The effective return fire destroyed at least two enemy gun positions and broke the attack.

During a second attack, five hours later, the Seabees again manned their mortar position and even though they realized the enemy had bracketed their position with mortars, stood their ground and, acting with concern for the entire camp, continued to return fire until the enemy scored two direct hits on their position. The Seabees, who gave their lives in defense of the camp, were instrumental in repelling the attack, the results of which would have been much more severe had the mortar crew abandoned their position, an action they would have been justified in taking. The Seabees were determined to defend and hold the camp which they had worked so hard to build. KIA:

- BUL2 Allen L. Mair Park City, UT*
- BUH3 James R. Retzloff Redding, CA*
- BUL3 George R. De Shurley Roswell, NM*
- CMH3 James F. Galati Philadelphia, PA*
- BULCN Mark E. Hodel Lodi, CA .*

The Seabee Camp at Phu Loc was subsequently named Camp De Shurley.

*A 1947 sighting by a French colonist refers to the animal as a L'Homme Sauvage (wild man). Vietnamese scholars refer to the animal as the Người Rừng ("forest man").*



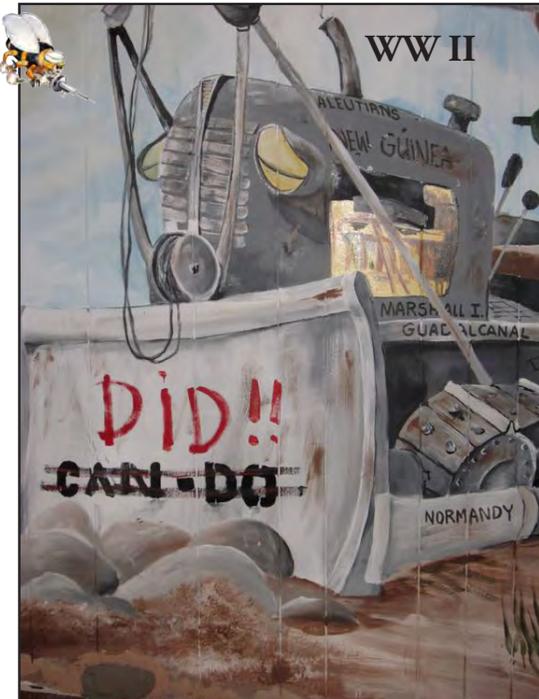
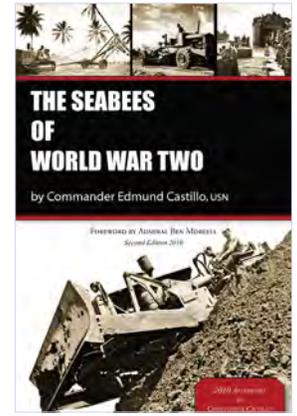
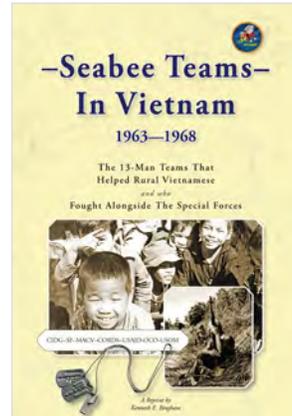
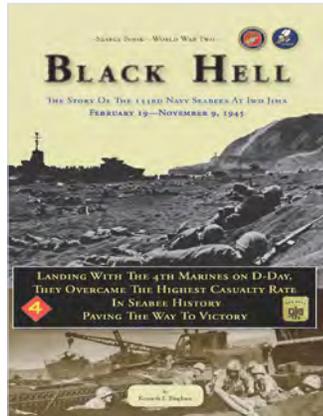
**“Hot Rod Lincoln”**

----I knew I could catch him, I thought I could pass  
 But don't you know by then we'd be low on gas  
 I had flames coming from out of the side  
 Feel the tension, man what a ride  
 I said “Look out boys, I've got a license to fly”  
 And that Caddy pulled over and let us by  
 All of the sudden she started knocking  
 Down in the dips she started rocking  
 I looked in the mirror. Red lights were blinking  
 The cops was after my Hot Rod Lincoln - Damn  
 They arrested me and they put me in jail  
 Called my pappy to throw my bail  
 And he said:  
 “Son, you're going to drive me to drinkin’  
 If you don't stop driving that Hot Rod Lincoln”

—Singer-songwriter Charlie Ryan, first released in 1955

**Below Are The Top Selling 3 Books Out Of The 31 Seabee Titles That I Have Published. They Are Available Through The Seabee Museum Store, Or On-Line At Amazon Books.**

—Ken B.



*Patrick Daniel Tillman, NFL, who became an Army Ranger, was killed April 22, 2004 in Afghanistan. If still alive, he wouldn't do the knee thing.*

**THIS IS A SCALE MODEL RESIN REPLICA OF THE SEABEE MONUMENT IN ARLINGTON CEMETERY. 8 INCHES TALL WITH A 5.5 INCH X 3.25 INCH BLACK BASE.**

**Available From  
 The Seabee Museum Store  
 805-382-2585  
<http://seabeesmuseumstore.org>  
 A Non-profit 501(c)**



*Civil Engineer Corps Officers School Basic students use a terrain model while giving an engineering reconnaissance brief during a five-day field training exercise (FTX), Aug. 22. (Photo by Amber Vaglica) (Article from recent Seabee Magazine. -kb)*



## —SEABEE SUBMARINE STORY—

by  
Richard Berry

IT WAS THE MOST EXPENSIVE VEHICLE I'VE EVER DRIVEN, it must've cost over fifty million dollars. Our group of plank owners in Mobile Construction Battalion Eight (Seabees) from Company D were assigned to build a two-story L shaped office building 40feet long with a 20 foot L. It would be one half of a mirrored image to be built by MCB7, who would relieve us. It would form a three sided quadrangle 40x40x40 (would that be a tridangle?)

The building site was a flat plateau about 40 feet back from the edge of a cliff that dropped about 20 feet into Guantanamo Bay Cuba. On the north-side was the admirals quarters not too far away but also with a great view of Guantanamo Bay. On the south-side a road from Main Street went down through a chiseled out opening in the rock Cliff that went down to the pier that stretched out into Gitmo Bay.

We Carpenters (builders) of company D were putting on ceiling joist and rafters on the second floor, high enough to see a submarine tied up to the pier, just below us. So at lunch break, Lindy and I decided to run down and take a look at the sub (Gordon Linder of Buffalo New York). We got down to the gang plank, and asked permission to come aboard. "Come aboard"... so up to the top of the gangplank, face aft, saluted the Jack-staff, saluted the OOD and stepped on board—"would you like to go out with us tomorrow—be here at 0700."

We checked with our crew chief Mel Schneider, who said "take the day off we are way ahead of schedule on this project." So the next day at 0700 up the gangplank, salute the jackstaff and OOD then down the main hatch at the calling "cast off the bow line."

We cruised out the relatively narrow but deep opening to Gitmo out to the Atlantic. On our starboard side was Leeward Point, where we helped build that new jet landing strip. On the port side, Windward point, a beautiful grassy flat plateau sticking out into the ocean. On the Fourth of July the whole battalion would take a well-deserved day off, we drank cold beer, played tug-of-war, drank beer, played horseshoes, drank beer, and watched giant manta rays skim through crystal clear water from the edge of the cliff.

Now that site is a federal prison, housing people who like to kill infidels—pity, it was a nice spot.

The ocean was split up into 20 square mile sectors for "war games" and Lindy and I were seated at the forward and aft fins. When we got our sector, the captain announced, "prepare to dive, dive dive dive." So we turned our wheels to 5° down bubble, and our whole world slanted and we slid quietly underwater. Level off at 150 feet. So when we reached 150 feet we turned our steering wheels back to zero bubble. Then the captain called us over to the plan table and showed where we were in our sector. Then he told me to go over to the steering wheel—it wasn't a helm, submarines don't sail they are driven. So there I was driving the USS Sonfish with 150 feet of water above me and 13,000 feet below in the Atlantic ocean! "Turn right to 240° - right to 240° sir." I was moving that iron giant with no apparent motion except my steering wheel and the compass needle in front of me. I was relieved when a destroyer started to make runs on us. In the distance the sound of her screws got louder, *sch sch sch sch*, until they were directly overhead

then cutta boom!! They dropped a percussion grenade as a simulated depth charge. It was the single loudest noise I ever heard and it had force! Like the scene strumming the guitar in "back to the future!" So the captain phoned upstairs and said give us a "fire in the hole" before you do that again so we can brace ourselves!

So from a different direction, *sch sch sch cutta boom*, "fire in the hole"... The captain said that's the last time they'll do that.

For the next seven hours we stayed in our sector and that destroyer never caught us. We had the run of the ship, chatted with the crew... really nice guys, and had a great chow.

On the way back, the captain allowed us up on the conning tower with two lookouts. We spotted the hills of Cuba when we were about 7 miles out to sea. It was a real adventure but back to being a "wood butcher" tomorrow.

*P.S. My Grand nephew, Tatum is a Seabee (had to do with his uncle). He was home on leave so my nephew said let's all get together and have a chicken dinner at White Fence Farm. I wore my "Seabee Can Do" hat for the occasion. On the way out, some young man tapped me on the shoulder and pulled me aside and said, "I was in the army in Nam and our group got trapped in a tight spot and couldn't get out, the Seabees came and got us out." Makes you proud to be a Bee.*

—Richard Berry— MCB-8, 1951-55

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**New LT JG Joins Tango Detachment** The Battalion's Tango Detachment on the Col Co Road complex has a new officer in Charge, LTJG J.A. Schroeder, CEC, USNR.



LTJG J.A. SCHROEDER, 1968

"New" because he recently assumed the duties, but new because he has been promoted to Lieutenant (junior grade) after being accepted to the Civil Engineer Corps. Feb. 14, 1967.

Having been in the Battalion since August 1967, the young officer has served in Headquarter Company as Personnel Officer and Battalion Project Coordinator in the S-3C position. Now in Alpha Company, LTJG Schroeder is OIC of Eight's famed Tango Detachment.

The detachment includes, bridge and cantonment construction serving the area northeast of Hue.

LTJG Schroeder duties involve solving problems of slope stabilization, overseeing crews that haul dredged sand and soil cement road surfaces as well as replace basic material for the complex project which encompasses the five northern miles of Col Co Road. This has been acclaimed a top priority project in the I Corp area.

With a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Chico State College, Chico, Calif.. LTJG Schroeder has used much of the knowledge acquired during his college years, especially in the field or soil cementing and sampling.

During the summer, while attending Chico State, the Canadian-born Navy Seabee once worked as a laborer and estimator for the Butte Creek Rock Company in Chico, Calif.



Seabee Combat Warfare Officer



Seabee Combat Warfare Enlisted

### Becoming a Seabee Combat Warfare Specialist

(SCW) is earned and is not a privilege. Earning a SCW pin is an amazing achievement in a Seabee's career and is important to gaining access to other opportunities within the Naval Construction Force (NCF).

The SCW program dates to a Master Chief's conference in 1992, which concluded that the Seabee community should have a warfare designation to recognize the Seabees' past accomplishments to the Navy.

The SCW insignia pin features an armed Seabee over a crossed sword and rifle atop oak leaves. The silver insignia is for enlisted personnel and gold is for officers.

To qualify to become a Seabee Combat Warfare Specialist is no easy task. To earn this pin the service member must complete Personal Qualification Standards (PQS) which include Seabee Combat Warfare volume I & II, Naval Construction Force 1&C, and Navy Safety Supervisor from the Navy's Non-Resident Training Course (NRTC) website. In addition, the Seabee must be within physical standards, qualified with the M-16 rifle or M-4 carbine, and must be currently assigned to a unit of the Naval Construction Force. The Seabee must also take a written exam and a field exercise. Upon completion of all prescribed training, a "murder board," committee of questioners who help someone prepare for a difficult oral examination, is usually held. Upon completion of the murder board, the final board which lasts about two hours is given. The boards are a way to measure confidence and gauge potential leadership within the Naval Construction Force. If nominees pass the board, they are given the title of a **Seabee Combat Warfare Specialist**.

—Seabee Museum Curator: Robyn King



### —CHAPLIN'S CORNER—

**As I sit down to write this,** Sally and I are in the midst of getting ready to make a trip to Guam. Our youngest son, Ben, is stationed there. He is a BM1 assigned to a sub tender. We are going for a 3 week visit.

I say all that to say, life has taken all of us on so many adventures. It is always hard to know what is around the next bend in the road. But, what I do know is that God knows, and he loves each one of us. His love and salvation are free for the taking. He just wants each of us to acknowledge Him as Lord of all and to seek to serve Him in all that we do.

Wherever life takes you, I wish you the best. And, know that He is with us every step of the way. —Billy Boggs

**HEROISM IS AN UNAVOIDABLE CLASH BETWEEN A SENSE OF FEAR AND A SENSE OF DUTY.**



**782 GEAR. REMEMBER?**



*Don't lose your present to your past.*

*People say that what we're all seeking is a meaning for life. I don't think that's what we're really seeking.*

*I think that what we're seeking is an experience of being alive, so that our life experiences on the purely physical plane will have resonances with our own innermost being and reality, so that we actually feel the rapture of being alive.*

—Joseph Campbell, *The Power of Myth*

—PERSONIFICATION OF INCOMING—

*Ken Bingham, editor*

I was asked a few times what it was like during incoming. Here's my take:

**MORTAR ATTACKS: (INVISIBLE WALKING GIANT)**

Mortar attacks are very personal. Hearing them leave the mortar tube and making their steady methodical march (walk) towards you is unnerving. One has a very clear sense, along with profound astonishment, of someone actually trying to kill you.

**RECOILLESS RIFLES: (?)**

I don't know. I was too worried about the accompanying mortars (invisible giant) walking through our camp to notice them. (See above)

**122MM ROCKETS ATTACKS: (Grim Reaper)**

Very *impersonal*. If one is to personify a 122 rocket, perhaps a smiling "Grim Reaper" riding one would do. They're often fired from about 8 miles away (they're faster than sound) and get your attention fast—wild banshees from hell. Someone told me—"don't worry about the ones you can hear, they already landed." Ya right.

**NIGHT FIREFIGHTS. (TECHNOLOGY ON METHAMPHETAMINES.)**

An *amazing* frenetic confusing display of deadly technology and armaments—tracers, explosions, artillery, cobra gun-ships (above our heads) "squirting" mini-gun streams all around—amazing and unforgettable. Beaucoup Adrenaline. Whoomp-Boom-wiz-buzz-bang-boom,ka-boom etc. etc.

All are Memorable.

*(However—it tends to raise one's threshold of what's "exiting.")*

Please send me your experience/perspective.

—Ken Bingham, editor

—BRIDGE CREW TAKES HOSTILE NIGHT FIRE—

*By J03 J.K. CURTIS*

*31 March 1968*

The ever-moving MCB EIGHT bridge crew was momentarily stopped shortly after midnight last Wednesday when hostile fire was received at the Col Co Road bridge site.

During the ensuing firefight, four men received slight shrapnel wounds. They were:

- BUH3 J.M. Beg**
- BUH3 G.E. Blanton**
- BUH2 R.J. Samper**
- CN D. Smock**



All were treated at EIGHT's sick bay and released for duty back at the bridge site.

The engagement began at 0030 after midnight while the crew was working under spotlights. They began to receive incoming rifle grenades and a hail of small arms fire. Taking defensive positions, the men began returning the fire which was coming at them from two sides, from the road and from the canal which the bridge is built over.

CN Smock fired 19 M-79 rounds back at the enemy. In the morning, the damage of the incoming rounds could plainly be seen on the crane and on the light bar, both of which exhibited bullet holes. One tire on the light bar was completely destroyed. Work on the bridge has continued, however, with the wounded men back on their jobs and displaying small bandages as evidence of the midnight conflict.



*Modern Seabees doing a Building-Clearing Exercise.*

**DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE  
DYSLEXIC, AGNOSTIC INSOMNIAC?  
HE STAYED UP ALL NIGHT WONDERING IF  
THERE WAS A DOG.**



From Jim Burke

I was in Da Nang East 1965-1966. Met some of you when you were in San Diego for the reunion you visited the Old Town Model Railroad Depot in Old Town.

Welcome Jim, MCB-8

## —BRIDGE BUILDERS ENJOY HEAVY OUTPUT—

### New 600-Foot [Bridge] Span Speeds On

July 1968, [Near Hue Phu Bai].

**BUILDING BRIDGES ON A SUMMER AFTERNOON** in the I Corp area of Vietnam is not much fun, or so it would seem. A vivid contradiction to this reasoning is a team of SEABEES on detachment from MCB EIGHT now camped at the Cornfield, outside of Hue, that builds bridges and culverts on the Battalion's biggest job, Col Co Road adjoining Hue and the Tan My Port Facility.

Under the leadership of BUC J. Niemeyer, these crews of bridge builders have racked up over 1500 feet of class 60 bridge structures since February 23rd. Their quantity of production is staggering in itself, but it is even more amazing considering the working conditions. As Chief Niemeyer puts it, "We have built under adverse weather, adverse equipment, and adverse living conditions and for a while, adverse eating conditions."

#### AMPHIBIOUS LANDING.

The chief's bridge crew commenced work during the recent Tet Offensive with their first job necessitating an amphibious landing on an unclaimed bank of the Perfume River to repair a badly needed bridge. In the months which have followed, the builders have experienced the frustration of constructing bridges only to have them sabotaged near or after completion. Two bridges have been rebuilt, one of them twice. BU2 M.L. Foertsch and BU2 R.W. Rowe, recently released for separation, were members of the crew when it worked on two shifts 24 hours a day on a project. For security reasons, the crew now works a single shift. The crew is currently working on the final stage of a 600-foot bridge. When completed, it will be one of the largest bridges in the Republic of Vietnam in addition to being the largest bridge ever built by MCB EIGHT.

#### 30 FEET A DAY.

Since the commencement of the project June 6, the six-man crew has worked 12 hours per day laying bridge timbers at a pace in excess of 30 feet per day. The bridge was open to pedestrian traffic July 1. The Bridge 10 crew has been working at a furious pace. The original completion date of August 1 has been moved up to July 14. During a recent day of work, the crew laid in excess of 44 feet of bridge. Chief Niemeyer cites this as a record for construction of this kind regardless of the size of the crew, working conditions or equipment. The cohesive crew has been groomed by the chief since the beginning of the deployment, and represents the best of the previous crews. All of these men are serving their first enlistment and none are above an E-5 rating.

#### CREW MEMBERS

Members of the bridge crew are BU3 K.M. Alexander, BU3 L.P. Palmer, BUCN R.E. Bailey, BUCN W.O. Dickerson, BUCN C.C. Kavanaugh and CN D. L. Smock. Their crew leader is BU2 C. Doshen Jr., BU2 G.E. Blanton insures that the materials and tools are on the job site, and BU2 R.J. Samper acts as assistant to the chief to coordinate the variable elements of the job including manpower, material and usable equipment. The crane operators are E02 R.G. Myers and E03 H.B. Hamilton. It is their job to drive the pilings. Working immediately behind these men is the decking crew headed by BU2 D.S. Ewald who is aided by BU2 H.W.

Throppe and BU3 D.C. Lind. The steel work is done by CN L.J. Cazina and CN S.E. Lofsgard.

The only shutdown of the day comes at noon when the men stop working for 15 minutes to eat what they refer to as "the best chow in the Battalion" which is prepared by CS2 T. Fratier.

These men are proud of the role they play and have deep respect for their leader, Chief Niemeyer. He expects the best from them, and rewards them for their performance with a very simple compliment—he respects them as men.



*BUC Niemeyer and Crew moved to rebuild Bridge No. 6 on Col Co Road after being burnt by enemy fire. —Photo by B.A. Farley*

#### DELTA CO. KEEPING COOL AT COL CO BRIDGE. 3/1968

The crew at the bridge site at Col Co Road has lately seen a lot of action from Chief Niemeyer and Charlie. It seems that Chief Niemeyer wanted to blow up a small bridge and ended up with half the road and some of the pipeline.

Chief Niemeyer has made a big hit with the UTs. The Crew experienced trouble with Charlie for four nights. Four men were slightly injured, but none seriously. SHIP OVER FOR THE BRIDGE CREW! The crew of BUL2 A.N. Vincent's short timers leave for Tam My today to perform construction in support of the NVA, that is, NSA. Good luck and take your flak jackets.

The office force consisting of assistant company Chief E.M. Nygaard and CN J .D. Williams, the company jerk [clerk], have almost finished remodeling the Big "D" Headquarters. They installed a ceiling in the office to combat the heat.

# YOU KNOW YOU'RE A VETERAN IF...

1. You can't fathom how people don't understand "military time"
2. You have a strong distrust for anybody named "Jody"
3. You can't watch most military dramas because they're so corny and wrong
4. You walk fast and your first step is always with your left foot
5. You still use the basic training "knife hand" to get your point across
6. People are always impressed by how ridiculously fast you eat
7. You laugh when you see people on Survivor cry after not seeing their family in 2 weeks
8. You clean your equipment before yourself
9. You don't carry things in your right hand
10. You still refer to everyone around you by their last name

FROM OUR FIRST NEWSLETTER—FALL 1999

BY OUR FIRST NEWSLETTER EDITOR

HARRY DAVIS

*Of the 118 people that attended the Vietnam Veterans of America West Coast Reunion in July at Port Hueneme, NMCB-8 led the way with a majority of the Seabees, friends, and family in attendance. The success of the reunion would not have been possible without the hard work and long hours put in by Gordon Gilmore, Ken Bingham, Harvest Gulevich, Bob Quinn, and Ed Kloster, to name a few, along with the support of the Vietnam Era Seabees through their kind invitation for "Eight" to join in with their west coast reunion. "BRAVO ZULU" to all who were involved.*

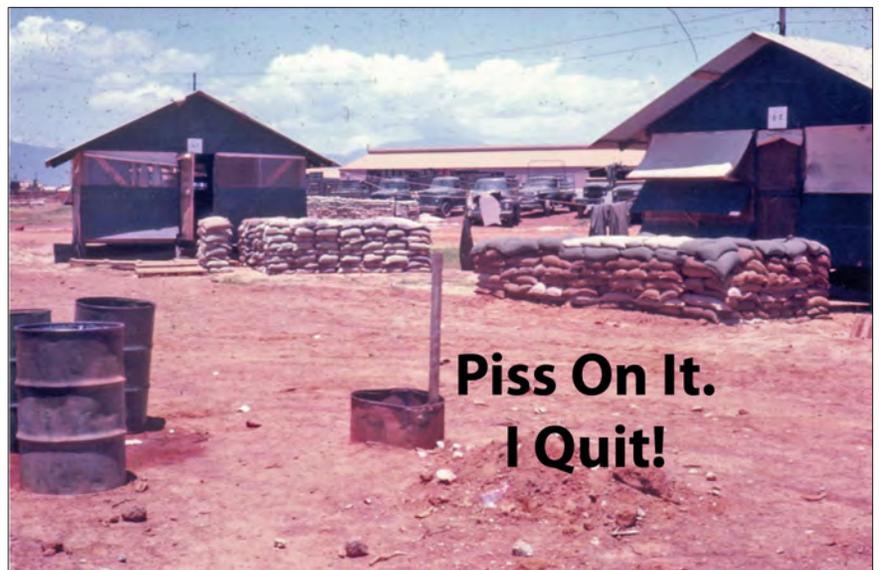
NOTE: Captain Harry Davis is still instrumental in the Newsletter. He reviews, makes comments and corrects mistakes. kb



*Dispatched trucks unload cement on Col Co Road and Vietnamese laborers spread the soil and cement. 40 such laborers are supplied to this job site. (Col Co Road job by MCB8 in 1968—or was it yesterday? kb) —Photo by R.F. COTTER*



*CAMP WILKINSON'S POWERHOUSE is kept in shape by (L-R) CE3 M.D. Beard, RM2 J. W. Dennis and RM3 F. Harris who are only part of the crew that daily operates the generator plant. — Photo by R.F. COTTER*



**May 13, 1967:** One man (Estok) was killed and seven were wounded following a night-time mortar and recoilless rifle attack on the NMCB 8 compound located at Chu Lai, Vietnam.

—NOTE ON PROGRESS—

By TEILHARD DE CHARDIN (1881-1955)

“The conflict dates from the day when one man, flying in the face of appearance, perceived that the forces of nature are no more unalterably fixed in their orbits than the stars themselves, but their serene arrangement around us depicts the flow of a tremendous tide—the day on which a first voice rang out, crying to Mankind peacefully slumbering on the raft of Earth, ‘We are moving! We are going forward!’

Mankind is divided to its very depths into two irrevocably opposed camps: one looking toward the horizons proclaiming with all its new-found faith, ‘We are moving,’ and the other, without shifting its position, obstinately maintaining, ‘Nothing changes. We are not moving at all.’ “These latter, the ‘immobilists,’ though, they lack passion, have common sense on their side, habit of thought, inertia, pessimism and also, to some extent, morality and religion. Nothing, they argue, appears to have changed since man began to hand down the memory of the past, not the undulations of the earth, or the forms of life of the genius of Man or even his goodness. Thus far partial experimentation has failed to modify the fundamental characteristics of even the most humble plant. Human suffering, vice and war, although they may momentarily abate, recur with age to age with an increasing virulence. Even

the striving after progress contributes to the sum of evil: to effect change is to undermine the painfully established traditional order whereby the living creatures was reduced to a minimum. What innovator has not re-tapped the springs of blood and tears? For the sake of human tranquility, in the name of Fact, and in defense of the sacred Established Order, the immobilists forbid the earth to move. Nothing changes, they say, or can change. The raft must drift purposely on a shoreless sea.

“But the other half of mankind, startled by the look-out’s cry, has left the huddle where the rest of the crew sit with their heads together telling time honoured tales. Gazing out over the dark sea they study for themselves the lapping of waters along the hull of the craft that bears them, breathe the scents borne to them on the breeze, gaze at the shadows cast from pole-to-pole by a changeless eternity. And for all these things, while remaining separately the same the ripple of the water, the scent of the air, the lights in the sky become linked together and acquire a new sense: the fixed and random Universe is seen to move. No one who has seen this vision can be restrained from guarding and proclaiming it.” Quoting this article is my way of “copping out” on my last article while serving with MCB-8. Yet in so many ways, these words from a prophet of our times, point to a crisis, of which all of us are a part. Each of us has some contribution to make in the paradox of our evolving world. The task is not an easy one.

My thanks to each man of MCB-8, with whom I have had the privilege to serve. Godspeed!

—LCDR J.F. HARRIS July 1968, Phu Bai RVN



... LCDR J. F. HARRIS ...  
EIGHT's Chaplain, '66-'68

camp: one looking toward the horizons proclaiming with all its new-found faith, ‘We are moving,’ and the other, without shifting its position, obstinately maintaining, ‘Nothing changes. We are not moving at all.’ “These latter, the ‘immobilists,’ though, they lack passion, have common sense on their side, habit of thought, inertia, pessimism and also, to some extent, morality and religion. Nothing, they argue, appears to have changed since man began to hand down the memory of the past, not the undulations of the earth, or the forms of life of the genius of Man or even his goodness. Thus far partial experimentation has failed to modify the fundamental characteristics of even the most humble plant. Human suffering, vice and war, although they may momentarily abate, recur with age to age with an increasing virulence. Even

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**Ron Kay is in the hospital with ALS (Lou Gehrig’s Disease). MCB8 wishes you all the best Ron—we’re thinking of you.**

**A SCALE MODEL REPLICA OF THE STATUE THAT STANDS OUTSIDE NEEDHAM THEATER AT NAVAL BASE VENTURA COUNTY, PORT HUENEME CA.— 10 inches Tall With a 6.5 inch x 4.5 inch Black Base.**

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A Non-profit 501(c)**

MONTH & YEAR	PLACE	EVENT
23 May 1942	Camp Allen, Va	Commissioned (1079 enlisted men & 32 officers)
9 Jul 1942	Dutch Harbor and Aleutian Islands	First deployment, constructed barracks at South Amaknak, first church in Dutch Harbor, a submarine base, radar station at Unalgu torpedo net across bay entrance to Adak, airstrips and facilities at Otter Point and Cold Bay. (Total of 78 different projects while in the Aleutians)
Aug 1943	Returned via Seattle to Camp Parks, Calif for training and then transferred to Port Hueneme.	Training at Camp Parks. Homeport at Port Hueneme, California.
Jun 1944	Hawaii	Two major projects this deployment: (1) Massive staging area including housing, shops, admin buildings and sewer and water lines at Iroquois Point. (2) At Red Hill constructed a railway, an X-ray lab, and a post office, among other things.
Feb 1945	Eniwetok	Preparation for the invasion of Iwo Jima.
19 Feb 1945 D- Day	Iwo Jima	26 NMCB EIGHT Equipment Operator participated in the first day's assault.
3 Mar 1945	Iwo Jima	Main Body of NMCB EIGHT landed on Iwo Jima. Jobs were a fuel storage system, roads, airstrips water supply by distillation of sea water, condensation of steam from ground vents and drilling.
Aug 1945	Hiroshima	Transferred from Iwo Jima for purpose of aiding naval forces.
Jan 1946	-----	De-commissioned as part of the demobilization of U. S. Armed Forces.
10 Sept 1951	Davisville, R.I.	Re-commissioned (800 men)



## World War II

Through Seabee Ingenuity the 55 gallon drum was used in hundreds of different ways from roofing tiles to culverts to a BBQ.

## Ken Burn's PBS TV, "Vietnam"

### Opinion

The first part of Ken Burns "Vietnam War" was thorough. However, it gave the "PASSAGE TO FREEDOM" a short shrift, and was understated in its importance.

The "Passage To Freedom" in 1954/55 resulted in close to a million North Vietnamese—mostly persecuted Catholics—being relocated to the South. Navy Ships and Seabees transported them and built refuge camps near **Tourane** (Danang) and **Vũng Tàu**.

"Passage To Freedom" was a large commitment by the U.S., to the Vietnamese, and was one of the beginning actions where our sense of responsibility and commitment to the South began. Moving 6.5% of the North's population to the South was with good intentions and forever locked our histories together.

The TV series correctly put the Viet Nam War in context of the "Cold War." Many movies and stories leave this important context out—as if Vietnam began in a vacuum. —Ken Bingham, Editor

In May 1978, diplomatic sources said eavesdropping devices were found in an embassy chimney shaft. Wires connected to the bugs went down a vertical shaft into a tunnel that led to a nearby Soviet apartment building. The sources, who demanded anonymity, said a U.S. Navy Seabee crawled into the tunnel and a "Soviet character at the other end discouraged any further progress."

The above story was a cover for the CIA. It was the CIA that found the Russian in the tunnel—not a Seabee. KB



By Rick Clark.

These insignia of Seabee and Phoebe are both Walt Disney creations, the former expressly for the 78th Naval Construction Battalion.

Seabee



## World War II





*A Seabee has no room for error as he carries a sharp, heavy coil of barbed wire while working on the "Da Nang Line."*

**IN THE MIDST OF A CATCH-AS-CATCH-CAN WAR** that has placed a premium on mobility and speed, a World War I style line of defense is creeping inland from the South China Sea Coast just south of Da Nang.

An eight-man team of Seabees from the U.S. 62nd Navy Mobile Construction Bn. is working on the last segment of a 16-mile stretch of barbed wire and cleared earth which Allied military leaders hope will help stem the tide of any new Communist attacks on the city or the vast complex of military installations around it.

It has been rough work. The Seabees have been plowing their bulldozers through swampland and heavy jungle to clear a field of fire on both sides of the double fence of barbed wire. The "Da Nang Line" will be studded with armed watchtowers, with eight checkpoints to handle the north-south flow of military and civilian traffic.

Some military men say the barrier, much like the ones guarding the Iron Curtain in Europe, is out of place in Vietnam; that it will be difficult to defend against any sizable attack and that the guard towers would be sitting ducks for enemy snipers hiding in the thick cover flanking the cleared strip.

Its sponsors, however, point out that it provides an obstacle to enemy rocketeers trying to sneak within range of the city. The barrier runs roughly 15 miles south of Da Nang.

To get into position with their five to 10-mile-range missiles, any Communists approaching from the south would have to cross it or make a long hazardous trek to out-flank it, making their way through the heavily patrolled mountain country, to the west.

It may work, if only as a warning system.

—NOTE: *It Didn't Work; neither did The McNamara Line up near the DMZ.*—Ken Bingham, Editor.

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### SEPTEMBER 9, 1943: BEFORE DAWN, INITIAL ALLIED LANDINGS TOOK PLACE AT SALERNO, ITALY.

For these landings, the 12-mile beach was divided into two parts. The north section was invaded by the 46th British Division that landed from tank landing ships with the aid of the 1006th Seabee Causeway Detachment (CBD 1006). The south section was invaded by the American forces that also landed on causeways laid down by Seabee pontoon crews. The Germans, however, were prepared for battle at Salerno. The landing ships carrying the Seabees and their pontoons took a frightful beating. Many pontoon strings were sent ashore

and blown up on the mined beaches. Allied ships guarding the beaches were bombed by German guided missiles, dive bombers and torpedoes, and shelled by German submarines and patrol craft. During the first 10 days of battle, the Seabees bivouacked on the Salerno beaches while they unloaded ships, built unloading-slips and roadways, and cleared traffic—doing it all while under constant fire. CBD 1006 suffered 28% casualties. Lt. Carl M. Olson, CEC, officer in charge (OIC), CBD 1006, and seven of his men were killed in action during this conflict. The Allies won the battle at Salerno, and Seabee operations were invaluable in the great victory.



SALERNO, ITALY —WW II

*Looks like a knot developing around the Seabee's foot.*



SALERNO, ITALY —WW II

— Best Western Adams Inn Quincy-Boston —



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Reservations: (617) 328-1500 x5

[www.bestwestern.com](http://www.bestwestern.com)

— ROOM RATE INFORMATION —

Arrival: September 24, 2018 / Departure: September 28, 2018

Our room rate for single and double \$179.00 per/night

When making your reservation use code MCB8 SEABEE

Hotel room rates are subject to applicable state and local taxes (currently at 11.7%) in effect at time of check-out. Rates are based on a two adult occupancy. Any additional adult is \$10.00 per person.

Free Internet WI-FI

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Breakfast Included.

Please make your hotel reservations as soon as possible, you can cancel up to 24 hrs prior to arrival

A free shuttle to and from the airport is available. After getting your luggage just call the hotel 617-328-1500 x1 average wait time about 15 to 20 min. **Unfortunately the shuttle is not wheel chair accessible**

— RV PARKING —

**No over-night camping on the hotel premises—you must be a registered hotel guest.**

You may research it on your own but the closest RV park I could find was 40 min. away.

We can park in the hotel parking lot providing space is available.



**NMCB 8 REUNION 2018 REGISTRATION FORM (1)**

**Best Western Adams Inn Quincy-Boston**

**September 24 through September 27, 2018**

\*Member Name \_\_\_\_\_

Guest Name \_\_\_\_\_

\*Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

\*Phone number(s) \_\_\_\_\_

\*Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact \_\_\_\_\_

Planned Arrival \_\_\_\_\_ Planned Departure \_\_\_\_\_

Please read and sign the following

I understand that the 2018 reunion is a non-alcohol sponsored event. Any alcoholic drinks that I purchase during the four-day event from the hotel, caterers or other sources will be at my own discretion. I agree to hold harmless the NMCB-8 2018 Reunion: its directors, officers, reunion planners, and membership for any and all acts, or consequences from my conduct or the conduct of my guests. I also authorize the release of all photos of the event for future publications by the association. All weapons are prohibited from all nmcb-8 functions. I further understand that all meals are at my expense.

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

Using Registration Form #2 and Make checks payable to (NMCB-8 2018 Reunion)

Mail completed forms and payment to

Ronald Sabbatis

606 Capitola ave

Capitola, California 95010 Ph. 831-359-0073 email [sabagus@charter.net](mailto:sabagus@charter.net)

**Please fill-in everything marked in red\*, it will be used to update our Roster**

**If this is a change of information check here ( )**

*Go To Our Website For More Info: <http://www.nmcb8.com>*

# REGISTRATION FORM #2

September 24 through September 27, 2018

## All Fees are Per/Person

NAME:			
	<b>Cost per Person</b>	<b># of Persons</b>	<b>Total</b>
Registration Fee	\$25.00 X		
	<b>Cost per person</b>	<b># of Persons</b>	
NMCB-8 Banquet	\$60.00 X		
	<b>Cost per person</b>	<b># of Persons</b>	
Buss Trip to Plymouth Rock, Plimoth Plantation and Bar-B-Q	\$55.00 X		
	<b>Cost per person</b>	<b># of Persons</b>	
Bar-B-Q only after 5:00 PM Provide your own transportation	\$25.00 X		
		<b>Total</b>	

**Deadline for Registration is September 1, 2018**

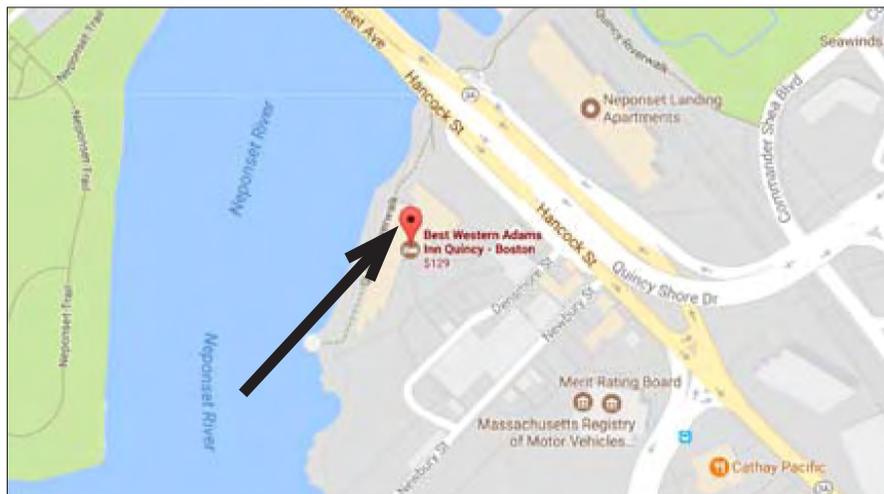
**Make Checks Payable to (NMCB-8 2016 Reunion)**

**Mail completed forms and payment to**

Ronald Sabbatis

606 Capitola ave

Capitola, California 95010-----Ph 831-359-0073-----email [sabagus@charter.net](mailto:sabagus@charter.net)



# —ADAMS INN BANQUET—

Thursday September 27, 2018

No host Bar from 6:00 to 8:00 / Dinner at 7:00

Adams Inn Garden Salad

+



Grilled Chicken Breast w/ Sun Dried Tomato Vinaigrette Sauce

&

Marinated Flank Steak w/ Mushroom Demi-Glaze

&

Seafood Scampi (Shrimp, Scallops and Swordfish) with  
Herbed Garlic White Wine Butter Sauce Pasta

+

Vegetable Medley

+

Roasted Potatoes

+

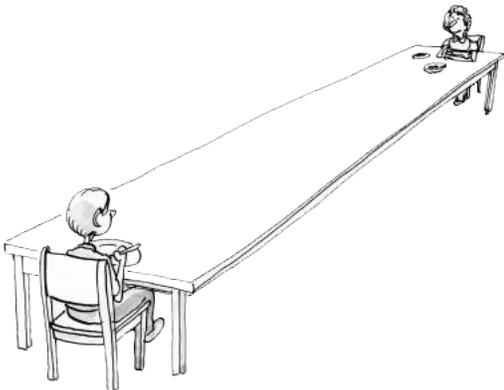
Rolls and Butter

+

Coffee and Tea Service

+

Dessert: Strawberry Shortcake



“Having dinner together brings us closer.”

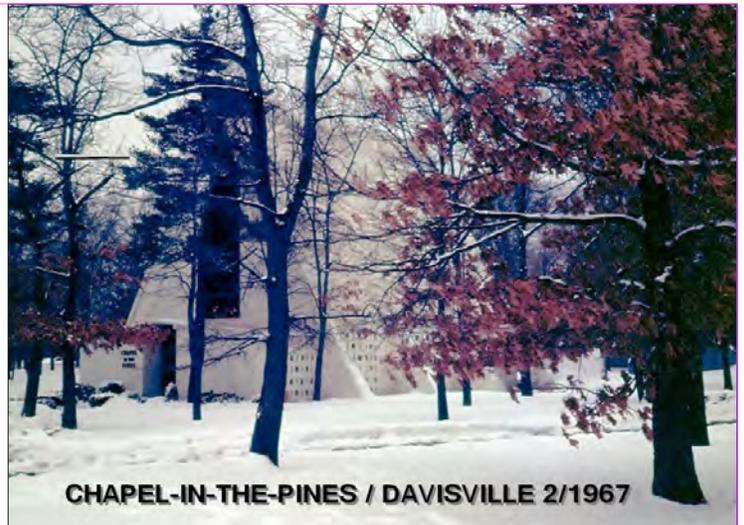


To guarantee a successful dinner party, always invite society of similar caliber.

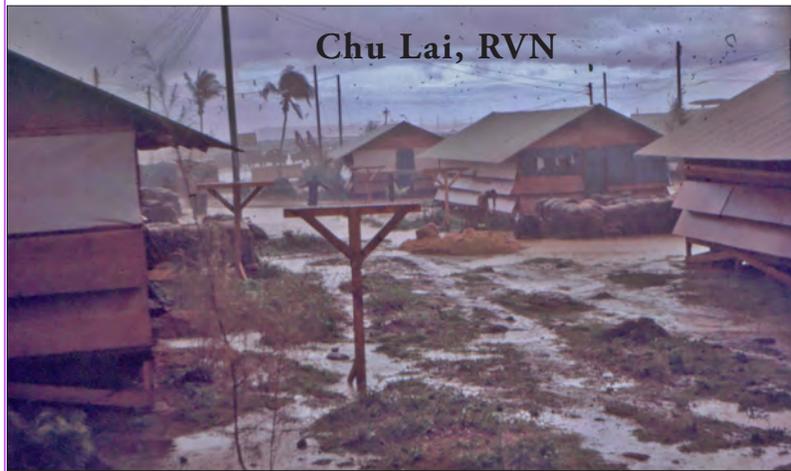




3 / 1967  
DAVISVILLE  
BARRACKS / CHOWHALL



CHAPEL-IN-THE-PINES / DAVISVILLE 2/1967



Chu Lai, RVN

***NEXT MCB8 REUNION***  
***SEPTEMBER 24-27, 2018***  
 —Boston Mass.—  
 24th, Arrival Monday, Registration.  
 25th Tues. Bus To Plymouth Rock/Plantation & B-B-Q.  
 26th Wednesday, Free Day To Explore Boston.  
 27th Thursday, Association Meeting & Banquet.  
*[28th Friday, Departure.]*

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

To:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

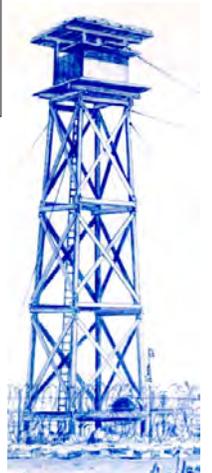
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone & E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**-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](mailto:jorden2323@msn.com).  
 Thanks for your support!

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



By Artist/Architect  
 Rick Clark.