



# NMCB-8 NEWSLETTER



VOLUME 8, ISSUE 2

REUNION 2008, PIGEON FORGE, TN - REGISTRATION FORMS INSIDE

JULY 2008



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## REMEMBER OUR FALLEN COMRADES

### From Your President



Some members may have received notice from the Seabee Museum regarding a special offer for buying inscribed commemorative bricks to form the Victory Plaza walkway at Seabee Base at Port Hueneme, CA. During the Viet Nam War, 174 Seabees were killed in action. Seven Seabees from NMCB-8 died during this timeframe. Three died from enemy fire, one from natural causes, three from accidents in RVN, and one from an accident while serving with NMCB-8 STAT Team 0808 in Thailand. It has been decided that your Association will be purchasing bricks for EIGHT's seven fallen Seabees. The cost for these bricks will be \$125 each for a total cost of \$875.00 and will be taken out of the treasury general fund. If you have not received any information concerning this offer, and you would like to purchase a brick personally, you can contact the Foundation's President, William C. Hilderbrand, CAPT, CEC, USN (Ret), at 228-865-0480 or check the website is <http://www.seabeehf.org>.

The NMCB-8 reunion is almost here. This year it is September 25-28<sup>th</sup> in Pigeon Forge, TN. For your convenience, reunion packages are included in this newsletter. With the price of the airlines going up daily, it is wise to get this booked as soon as possible. Please note Troy's new address and phone number:

Troy Branch  
222 Watkins Chapel Road  
Morristown, TN 37803  
423-581-0230

This new address is reflected in the registration form in the current newsletter. If you have already sent in your registration to Troy's old address, it will still be received, but please make a note of his new address and phone number for future reference.

I will be looking forward to seeing everyone at the reunion. If you are in contact with some old shipmates from EIGHT, or any old Seabees regardless of where they served, invite them along. All Seabees are welcome.

**Arnie**

## WANTED A NEW EDITOR

After nine years and 20 issues, your newsletter is looking for a new editor. This is the next to last edition that I will publish. My final issue will be the post reunion issue. I have enjoyed the experience, particularly during the early years of the newsletter's existence when we were trying to build up membership, and many new members were eager to stories of the things they did when they were in the Seabees. I made a lot of new friends through the newsletter and met many of them at reunions over the years. I would like to thank personally those of you who contributed to the newsletter's success over these past nine years. Now it's time for someone else to enjoy the privilege of being its editor.

During my tenure, I tried to instill the idea that this was your newsletter and that I wanted to publish your stories. Unlike many homegrown newsletters you receive today, I tried not to make it a reflection of the internet. It would have been easy if I just went on line, picked off a few articles of interest, interspersed them with jokes, and published the occasional picture I receive from someone. I've tried to keep it EIGHT's newsletter, a place where you could share original thoughts; ideas and memories with fellow Seabees who served with you in the battalion.

Many of the stories came from you and your friends; others I got from the cruise books that have been published over the years of EIGHT's existence.

The rate at which I am currently receiving interesting stuff and tidbits from folks has slowed down. I find it harder to put together an interesting newsletter each time I sit down at the computer. I'm running out of steam and it's time for a change of watch.

I hope the next editor can come up with some new approaches. The newsletter doesn't have to be as elaborate or in the same format I use. In addition to content, in the past two years, it has become a vehicle for communication for the location and times of our ongoing reunions. That may be all we need, a way to communicate and

publicize the details of our next reunion. If sharing stories is not your cup of tea, maybe just finding out about reunions is all that needs to be published.

It is difficult to continue a good newsletter without input from Association members with their stories and experiences. Except for the President's report, the Skippers corner and a few articles coming in once in awhile from Rich Berry, a frequent contributor, and one or two others, sources of interesting articles have essentially dried up. In the early years I had a stream of articles and pictures continually being sent to me by many different people, and it made it easy and enjoyable to put a newsletter together three or four time a year. Maybe you are running out of steam too.

So if there is anyone out there who wants to give it a try, please come forward. Believe me, I have thought long and hard about this decision and I will feel bad if someone does not take over as Editor.

Your association needs a newsletter to survive. If we cannot communicate with each other it will soon fade away like the "old Soldier". The newsletter is the glue that binds us together as fellow Seabees from the past, and it needs to continue publication if we are to be a viable Association in the future.

Please, will someone step up to the plate.

**Harry Davis**  
**Newsletter Editor**

## A WORD ABOUT DUES

Please note the mailing label attached to the back 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**. Please do not send checks to me.

Dues are \$10/year or \$100 for a life membership. To bring your membership up to date, submitting a check for \$10 will be sufficient.

**NMCB-8 REUNION 2008  
REGISTRATION FORM  
September 24 – September 28, 2008**

(Please print all information)

**Member name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(List name as you wish it to be on ID badge)

**Guest name (s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Address City State Zip

**E-mail address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency contact:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Phone Number

**Planned arrival:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Planned departure:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Day/date Day/date

**Date(s) served in NMCB-8** \_\_\_\_\_ **Craft** \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE READ AND SIGN THE FOLLOWING:**

I understand that the 2008 reunion is a non-alcoholic sponsored event. Any alcoholic drinks that I purchase during the four-day event from the hotels, caterers or other sources will be at my own discretion. I agree to hold harmless the NMCB-8 2008 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 publication by the association. I further understand that all meals other than the Dixie Stampede and the NMCB-8 Banquet are at my expense.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Deadline for registration is August 15, 2008.**

**Mail completed forms and payment to:**

**Make checks payable to:**  
**"NMCB-8 2008 Reunion"**

**Troy F. Branch**  
**222 Watkins Chapel Road**  
**Morristown, TN 37803**  
**Phone 423-581-0230**

**NMCB 8 REUNION 2008**  
**REGISTRATION FORM (cont)**  
**September 24 – September 28, 2008**

(Please print all information)

<b>Registration Fee</b>	\$ 20.00 per member	\$ 20.00
<b>Events</b>	<b>Cost Per Person</b>	<b># of Persons      Total</b>
<b>Steak Cookout</b>	\$ 10.00	
<b>Comedy Barn</b>	Adult	\$ 20.00
	Child 11 & under	\$ 6.00
	Child in Lap	Free
<b>NMCB – 8 Banquet</b>	\$ 33.00	
<b>Merchandise</b>		
<b>T-Shirt w/Pocket</b>	Small	\$ 15.00
	Medium	\$ 15.00
	Large	\$ 15.00
	X-Large	\$ 15.00
	XX-Large	\$ 15.00
	XXX-Large	\$ 15.00
<b>NMCB-8 Ball Cap</b>	\$10.00	
Total		

**Note, if you have special dietary needs:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail completed forms and payment to:**

**Troy F. Branch**  
**222 Watkins Chapel Road**  
**Morristown, TN 37803**  
**Phone 423-581-0230**

**Deadline for registration is August 15, 2008.**

## NMCB 8 REUNION 2008 ITINERARY

### Wednesday, September 24, 2008

Reunion check-in (Advanced Party)	Ramada Inn Hospitality Room	12:00 PM – 10:00 PM
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### Thursday, September 25, 2008

Reunion check-in (Main Body)	Ramada Inn Hospitality Room	8:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Comedy Barn "Side Splitting Family Fun"		7:30 PM – 10:15 PM

### Friday, September 26, 2008

Steak Cookout at Patriot Park, Pigeon Forge	3:00 PM – 6:00 PM
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### Saturday, September 27, 2008

NMCB – 8 Banquet	7:00 PM – Midnight
Photos      Smoky Mountain Convention Center at the Ramada Inn	

The Gatlinburg, Pigeon Forge, Sevierville, Tennessee areas are loaded with many choices for free time activities. The ladies will enjoy spending time at any of the three outlet malls. There are specialty shops galore. Putt-putt golf, bumper boats, and bungee rides are available. Cave tours, hiking trails, and beautiful scenic drives await the nature lover. There are several restaurants within walking distance of the hotel.

### Accommodations

Ramada Inn, 4010 Parkway, Pigeon Forge, Tennessee 37863. Call for reservation 1-800-523-3919. Check out their webpage at [www.smokymountainresorts.com](http://www.smokymountainresorts.com)

Sunday – Thursday	\$ 46.94 (tax included)
Friday – Saturday	\$ 77.11 (tax included)

**When making room for reservations, be sure to say you are with the "NMCB – 8 Reunion" to get the special rate.**

We have 122 rooms reserved at the Ramada. Try and make your reservations early. If the Ramada Inn fills up you may be housed in one of the sister hotels nearby for the same rate. Come early if you like. These special rates are available all week long.

There are great campground choices in the area. For those planning to come by land yacht, we will receive a special rate at the Twin Mountain Outdoor Resort. It is just a few minutes from the reunion hotel and offers full hookups from \$ 32.00 to \$ 36.00 a night tax included. To make a reservation call 1-800-848-9097. Make sure you mention you are with the NMCB – 8 Association reunion.

There are also many major timeshare accommodations throughout the region.

### Local transportation is on your own.

Fun Time Trolley – Schedule: daily 8:30 AM – Midnight, 25¢ each time you board. There are over 100 stops throughout Pigeon Forge. You can also go to Gatlinburg, Splash Country, or Dollywood. Handicap Van available with reservation.

Airport destinations

Knoxville	approximate driving time	45 – 60 Minutes
Ashville, NC	approximate driving time	1.5 - 2 Hours
Nashville	approximate driving time	3 Hours
Chattanooga	approximate driving time	3 Hours

Traveling I-40, take Exit 407 to Dollywood, Pigeon Forge, and Sevierville.

## Skipper's corner

*Bob Westburg relieved Jack O'Leary as CO of NMCB-8 at 1100 hours on the 16th of July, 1968 at our camp in Phu Bai, RVN. He remained CO until NMCB-8 was decommissioned in December of 1969.*

It has now been 40 years since I relieved Jack O'Leary as Commanding Officer in 1968. It is hard to believe so much time has gone by. Even after that much time, I still have good memories of our tours in Vietnam. All of the construction projects, the community service jobs, and the friends we made in the Battalion.



Coming up soon is another NMCB-8 reunion in Pigeon Forge, the same place as the last one. It is a great place to visit with a lot to see and do. Also it is a time when you can meet again and spend time with those you know and worked with.

It is surprising how we run into Friends from NMCB-8. Recently I was talking to a man in Eureka, near where I live. He said "I remember you from NMCB-8 in Vietnam". His name is Dewey Alexy from E Company and now lives in Eureka. We both belong to a dance club and I see him every week. It is really a pleasure to talk with him and hear of his experiences in NMCB-8.

I often take time to look through the 1968 and 1969 Cruise Books. It makes it easier to remember the many men who served in NMCB-8 and the projects we worked on. It brings back memories of the excellent construction jobs by the Men of EIGHT. I don't know of any which were not done well or as I might say "Better Built by Eight". I thank all of the members of NMCB-8 for making my tour one of the best of my career.

**Bob**



## AND NOW YOU KNOW....

**Editors Note:** Rich Berry is a frequent contributor to the newsletter. He was in MCB-8 when it was commissioned in 1951 and served with the Battalion until 1955. He's a world traveler having visited over 40 countries. He and his wife Doris live in Lakewood, CO.

While stationed at Davisville, RI in 1953-54 and between oversea assignments, I took a night school course in public speaking at Brown University in Providence. Every night after chow I caught the bus and came in in "civvies". On the final night I came in "dress blues", to the surprise of many of my classmates. We each had to give a speech on any subject. Mine was the origination of the navy uniform that I was wearing. I had researched it at Brown's Library earlier. It went like this:

The U.S. Navy blues uniform is a direct takeoff of the British "sailor suit". The three white stripes of piping around the flap collar and cuffs were to commemorate Admiral Nelson's three victories in Egypt, Talfagar, and the Nile. The rest of the uniform was for water survival. The flat hat and white crown hat were to be used for floatation by flopping down on the water and trapping air.

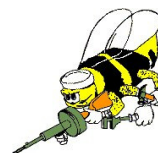
The large flap collar was to be used as an easy grip to pull off the jacket, also the single cuff button with an extra wide button hole was easy to undo.

The pants with those miserable 13 buttons also had extra wide eyelets and could be quickly undone with one pull (as often happens). And of course the bell-bottoms, to quickly kick your feet through the pant legs.

You were also supposed to tie the pant legs at the bottom of each leg, and flop it over your head to trap air. The special tight woven wool fabric was not made to make you itch, but to trap air better.

Thank heaven that uniform is outdated, and also thank heaven it wasn't originally designed after the Scottish kilt!

**Editors Note:** Rich has contributed over 8 articles over the years to the newsletter. I am sure there are those of you out there that have personal, and sometime funny stories, about your days in the Seabees. Send them into me and I guarantee they will be published for all to read.



# MY NAME IS OLD GLORY

Written by Howard Schnauber ©1994

*I am the flag of the  
United States of America.  
I fly atop the world's tallest buildings.  
I stand watch in America's halls of justice.  
I stand side by side with the Maple Leaf on the world's longest undefended border.  
I fly majestically over institutions of learning.  
I stand guard with power in the world.  
Look up and see me.*

*I stand for peace, honor, truth and justice.  
I stand for freedom.  
I am confident.  
I am arrogant.  
I am proud.*

*When I am flown with my fellow banners,  
my head is a little higher,  
my colors a little truer.*

*I bow to no one!  
I am recognized all over the world.  
I am honored - I am saluted.  
I am loved - I am revered.  
I am respected -- and I am feared.*

*I have fought in every battle of every war for more than 200 years.  
I was flown at Valley Forge, Gettysburg, Shiloh and Appomattox. I was there at San Juan Hill, the trenches of  
France, in the Argonne Forest, Anzio, Rome and the beaches of Normandy, Guam, Okinawa,  
Korea and Khe San, Saigon Vietnam.*

*Know me,  
I was there.*

*I led my troops, I was dirty, battle worn and tired,  
but my soldiers cheered me, And I was proud.  
I have been burned, torn and trampled on the streets of countries I have helped set free. It does not hurt,  
for I am invincible.*

*I have been soiled upon, burned, torn and trampled on the streets of my country. And when it's by those whom  
I've served in battle -- it hurts.  
But I shall overcome -- for I am strong.*

*I have slipped the bonds of Earth and stood watch over the uncharted frontiers of space from my vantage  
point on the moon.  
I have borne silent witness to all  
of America's finest hours.  
But my finest hours are yet to come.*

*When I am torn into strips and used as bandages for my wounded comrades on the battlefield,  
When I am flown at half-mast to honor my soldiers,  
Or when I lie in the trembling arms of a grieving parent at the grave of their fallen son or daughter,  
I am proud.*

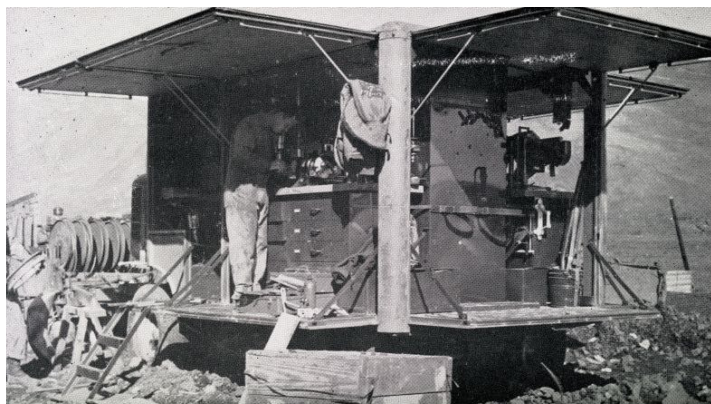
## MY NAME IS OLD GLORY LONG MAY I WAVE



## FROM WORLD WAR II .....



Flume box and pipe line built at Sitka Alaska to provide fresh water for the Naval Air Station. This work was done by the 22nd NCB. *(Official U. S. Navy Photo)*



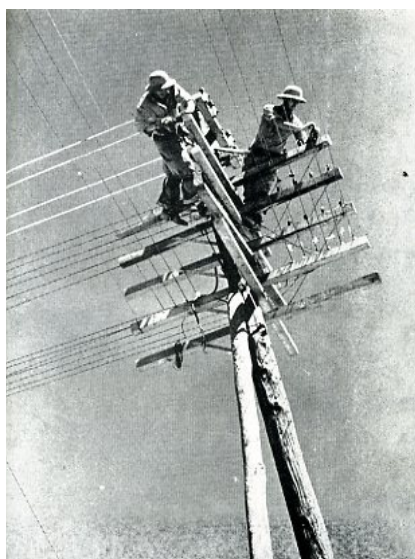
A complete portable machine shop-only one of its kind in the Aleutians. The operator is Chief Machinist's R.G. Halstead, Kelso, WA. *(Official U.S. Navy Photo)*



Marine Drive, Bougainville. Marine Pfc Earl E. Brill, Pittsfield, ME, thumbs a ride along a Seabee built highway. *(Official U.S. Marine Corps Photo)*



Like any other great highway, the roads to Tokyo are built with heavy equipment. Here is a 40-ton roller on an airstrip in the Solomons. *(Official U.S. Navy Photo)*



Seabee electricians have strung millions of feet of wire in the Atlantic and Pacific. Much of the wire now being used in the Pacific has been captured from the Japs. *(Official U.S. Navy Photo)*



There is nothing Seabee's can't do with an empty gasoline drum. Here the empty drums are being converted into a roof for a jungle machine shop. *(Official U.S. Navy Photo)*



## TO VIETNAM .....



In the summer of 1967, the men of Delta company construct revetments in Chu Lai in support of the First Hospital Company.



Led by Father Jim Harris, Eight's Medical Civil Action Program brought much needed medical relief to the people on the Island of Ky Xuan during the Chu Lai deployment in 1967.



Concrete work in progress at the Marine Corps Logistic Command, during the Danang deployment in 1969.



Pouring concrete during the Danang deployment in 1965.



The men of Eight played a large role in making the Civil Action program in Danang during the 1965 deployment a resounding success. Here much appreciated nourishment is fed to the good kids at a school near the Camp.

**SEABEES "CAN DO"**



## TO IRAQ



Builder 2nd Class Bruce Schmiderer, assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion Fifteen (NMCB-15) helps to build a playground at a school in Al Hillah, Iraq. (Official U.S. Navy Photo)



Seabee Deivis Carnieri holds his daughter Isabella, 6 months, as he kisses his wife Yvonna at Naval Base Ventura County in Port Huemene on Monday. He and others in NMCB-3 have spent the past 10 months getting advanced training and instruction in preparation for their deployment. (Ventura County Star Photo)



Seabees from NMCB-1, Task Force Sierra pour concrete into a foundation during a deployment to Iraq Feb. 21, 2008. (Official U.S. Navy Photo)



Ensign Majid Awad from NMCB-7 shares cookies and hugs with Iraqi children in Najaf, Iraq. Seabees are working with residents of a small Bedouin village on the outskirts of Najaf to build a school and to implement improvements to the village water, electricity, and sanitation facilities. (Official U.S. Navy Photo)



Iraqi children in Najaf, Iraq, wave to a convoy of U.S. Navy Seabees.

**SEABEES "CAN DO"**

# Seabee Memorial, Washington, D.C.



## IN MEMORIAM

*In remembrance of those who served with us.*

*Sue Lewis advised us that Jimmie Lewis, her husband, passed away on October 30, 2007 in Gulfport, MS.*

## THE BINNICALE LIST

Jack O'Leary is recovering from a recent illness. He has assured me, however, that he will be attending the reunion.

## PICTURES FROM THE PAST



The colors of NMCB-8 were presented to Capt. W. C. G. Church, Commander, Naval Construction Battalions, U.S. Atlantic Fleet during the Battalion's recommissioning ceremony on Nov. 1, 1960 at Davisville, RI. Observing the presentation were RADM B. E. Moore, COMFAIR Quonset, and LCDR Archie Floyd, Commanding Officer of MCB-8.



In the last issue of the newsletter was a picture of the starboard side of a Seabee recruiting trailer at a recruitment stop with a crowd of curious "civilians" standing around. It traveled around the country passing out information about joining the Seabees. This view shows what was pictured on the opposite side.

**SEABEES "CAN DO"**

## NMCB-8 SEABEES' ASSOCIATION

241 Windrose Drive  
Port Ludlow, WA 98365

President ..... Arnie Cicerone  
Treasurer ..... Ken Bingham  
Past Presidents ..... Gordon Gilmore  
Ken Kerr  
Rick Reese  
Recruiting ..... Ron Dougal  
Newsletter Editor ..... Harry Davis

Web Page: <http://www.nmcb8.com>

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



SEABEES "CAN DO"



## 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: **Harry Davis, 241 Windrose Drive, Port Ludlow, WA 98365.** If you have e-mail and want to make your update electronically, please do so. Send updates by e-mail to ***nmcb\_8@msn.com***. ***Thanks for your support !***