

PHU BAI DEPLOYMENT ENDS

the



hard



hat



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Vol. 1, No. 6

CAMP WILKINSON, PHU BAI, RVN

SEPTEMBER 1968

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Hedges 68

Col Co Road—Deployment's Project

Seabees Push Progress

By EAI A. J. Sander

Squeaky maneuvered his '24' carefully around the shell hole in the soil cement and opened it up on the straight stretch to the first causeway. Thatched huts shuddered as he roared on through the Vietnamese village, then faded quickly out of sight in the rolling dust cloud and gathering darkness. The villagers had long since lost their fear of the thundering monster, and had resigned themselves stoically to the unending stream of heavy equipment passing back and forth thru their village.

Late in February the first trickle of men and equipment began moving on this single lane roadway, and in the months after, the trickle became a stream and then a torrent. Tonight 2000 cubic yards of dredged sand would be moved from RMK's dredge site, three miles south along Col Co Road, to the fill section Squeaky was now rapidly approaching.

The powerful twin headlights of the '24', illuminated the first of a long straight line of survey stakes marching off into the night beyond his bouncing beam. Controlling 90 tons of steel and sand traveling 25 miles an hour at night, requires skill and concentration, there is no time for any thoughts other than placing the sand in an even lift along that line of stakes. Hands and feet work smoothly together, not a second is lost. Eyes cast from front to rear, side to side. With one hand on the steering wheel, the other in rapid succession flicks on the bowl flood light, he reaches for the automatic shifting lever and gears down as the left foot moves over and eases in the powerful synchronized rear engine.

"What's that movement there in the rice paddy?"

No time to wonder, with hardly a break in movements, Squeaky negotiates a curve with his left hand, sets the bowl with his right, and begins to tighten the cables which lift the apron. Sand begins to tumble out in front of the cutting blade, spreading itself out on the sides in a neat 6 inch lift as the action of the ejector and speed of the rig combine to throw the sand out and away from the bowl.

Suddenly Squeaky's pinpoint world is ripped apart by a

shattering explosion. An intense, searing blast bursts in the night, creating a macabre tableau of man, gear shift, control panel, hydraulic lines, and goose neck enclosed in a bubble of light. Too late, Squeaky throws his arms up to protect his face. Hot shrapnel had already penetrated his skin, breaking off bits of teeth and bone — one sliver entering his right eye, blinding him.

The rifle grenade had exploded at the top of the goose neck, less than three feet from his face. The grenade had done its damage to machine as well as man.

All is quiet now but for the labored breathing of Squeaky lying in the mud, and a soft swishing beyond the head light beam, where a lone Viet Cong quietly makes his way along a dike to the distant tree line.

Squeaky, EO2 Larry E. Hansel, is an equipment operator with Mobile Construction Battalion Eight, one of 13 Seabee Battalions now deployed in Viet Nam. He is now back in the State fighting another war — the personal war he wages to retain his vision.

His Euclid TS 24 has new hydraulic lines now, and another Seabee climbs up onto the drivers seat each night to carry on the work of building a road. From 6:30 AM to 5:30 PM the big machine will run, from 5:30 to 6:00 it will idle, while the night shift operators check tires, fuel, and oil, then it will rumble away into the dust, and the fill boss will make another tally in his note book.

The Seabees of MCB 8 have built their road now. A highway where once there was a trail. In seven short months they have raised a road 10 feet up out of the muck of rice paddies, using rice paddy soil to confine the sand slopes and prevent the monsoons from washing away their road.

They matched their road to bridges that Seabee builders constructed working around the clock. Then they tied it in to a section of road built by another road crew from MCB 8 who had worked from Hue north. Their road stretched 7.2 miles when they finished and along its winding length 17 culverts and 5 bridges had to be installed.

Some bridges were built 2 and 3 times. In one case the V.C. blew out a bridge 2 days after it was built. In another instance the Viet Cong ambushed a builder crew while they worked at night. An estimated enemy force of 15 men crept up to within 50 yards of the Seabee builders and opened fire. Four men were wounded in the first few seconds, the rest pinned down and unable to return fire. One Seabee, although wounded, managed to crawl to his M79 and, under intense enemy small arms and grenade fire, returned such accurate fire that the enemy was forced to seek cover, allowing the rest of the Seabees to get their weapons and drive off the Viet Cong.

The men who built Col Co Road will soon move on back to the States for retraining, back to civilian life or to other jobs with the Seabees. Their road will accommodate two lanes of traffic from the Tan My Port Facility to Hue. Convoys of military traffic carrying war supplies will roll quickly

(Continued On Page 7)



Bridge No. 10 on Col Co Road (top), normally 8 to 8½ feet above water level, resembles a floating pontoon crossing during the Hue flood of Sept. 5 and 6. Col Co Road (bottom) snakes its way across water-filled rice paddies. The flood reached heights of over 11 feet above normal in some areas.

For Chu Lai Deployment

NUC Ribbon Citation Includes EIGHT

NMCR EIGHT, together with 14 other mobile construction battalions, has recently been awarded the Navy Unit Commendation ribbon by the Secretary of the Navy through the 30th Naval Construction Regiment.

The citation reads:

The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in commending THIRTIETH Naval Construction Regiment for services set forth in the following citation:

For exceptionally meritorious service in providing construction support in the Republic of Vietnam from 1 Sept. 1966 to 31 July 1967; exercising outstanding technical competence, zeal and determination in the

face of seemingly impossible obstacles of adverse weather conditions and rugged terrain, the 30th Naval Construction Regiment planned and executed major construction operations estimated at over \$25,000,000 which produced virtually required facilities, primarily in the I Corps tactical zone.

Working around the clock, the Regiment completed the critically needed tactical 4,500-foot runway and runway and associated facilities at Chu Lai; built the LST/LSU facilities at Cua Viet and Dong Ha; performed vital construction for the 3rd Marine Amphibious Force, Special Forces and other Free World forces in the I

Corps tactical zone; and completed cantonments, administration buildings and communications structures for Gamewarden and Market time bases in I, III, and IV Corps areas.

The establishment of the tactical support functional component system provided significant contributions to the combat achievements in the I Corps tactical zone and gave tangible evidence of the foresight and professional ingenuity of the Regiment. The outstanding perseverance, professional competence and devotion to duty displayed individually and collectively by the SEABEES of the 30th NCR in the execution of their assignments, reflect great credit upon themselves and the

U.S. Naval service.

All personnel attached to and serving with the 30th NCR — including U.S. Naval Mobile Construction Battalions ONE, THREE, FOUR, FIVE, SIX, SEVEN, EIGHT, NINE, ELEVEN, FORTY, FIFTY-EIGHT, SIXTY-TWO, SEVENTY-ONE, SEVENTY-FOUR AND ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-THREE, during the period designated above, or any part thereof, are hereby authorized to wear the Navy Unit Commendation Ribbon.

Authority is hereby granted for eligible personnel to wear the NUC Ribbon, unit to display insignia and appropriate service record entries to be made.

EIGHT Answers YFU 'SOS' Call

By LTJG R. D. Clark
Engineering Officer

"Hey, Mike! Isn't that the causeway leading to Col Co Road?"

"Yes, Sir, Captain."

"And isn't that water gushing over the top?"

"Uh... Yes, Sir!"

"And isn't that a ship on the rice paddy side?"

"Uh... Yes, Sir. It sure looks like one!"

"Oh... uh... Mike, what's that ship doing on the rice paddy side?"

"I'm not sure, Captain. The road was closed today, so it must have snuck through."

"Ri-i-ight!"

Thus initiated the story of the little grey YFU 24 and the battle against time.

It all began on Thursday, 5 September, 1968. Hue, as well as much of the coastal region of the South Vietnam I Corps, was hit by a raging typhoon. Water levels rose as much as 11 feet due to some 14 inches of rain in 36 hours. The mighty Perfume River surrounding Hue flooded houses and shops, roads and fields. It eroded banks and carried tons of debris torn loose by winds gusting over 55 miles per hour. In the path of the churning current and mass of refuse, was a little grey U.S. Navy YFU (Yard Freight Utility) boat. It wasn't exactly little, however, as it measured 120 feet long by 38 feet wide and weighed 220 tons. The waves broke it away from its mooring Thursday night and carried it helplessly over a causeway and down a canal several thousand feet. This canal, however, leads directly to the paddy fields. By Saturday morning, the crew had navigated the craft back up to the causeway, but the water was receding rapidly! To avoid a permanent U.S. monument on the landlocked side, it had to be moved across the causeway... and moved soon!

U.S. Naval Support Activity Detachment nearby dispatched two tugs and two LCMs (Landing Crafts Medium), but, of course, they couldn't do anything from the opposite side. So... the SEABEES of another Navy unit, Mobile Construction Battalion EIGHT, cast off their Clark Kent builders' outfits and flew to the scene.

The water, which had once risen to some four or five feet above the surface of the causeway, had already receded to the roadway level. A crane with clam bucket and two bulldozers furiously began the task of opening a gap in the concrete and stone structure. And the LCU waited.

A hole five feet deep by 40 feet wide was carved by 3:00 o'clock Saturday afternoon.

Meanwhile, however, the water had found a lower level. The chance must be taken to get the boat through! It cranked up its engines and backed off for a run. Closer... Closer... starting through the gap... closer... THUMP! STUCK!

"Well, what have you got in mind now, Mike?"

"Uh... How about praying for rain, Captain?"

"Ri-i-ight!"

The clam bucket chopped and scooped its way into the night with the threat of enemy fire prevailing.

"Pop... zi-ing! Pop... zi-ing!" Sure enough — enemy fire! Did this stop the 'BEES of EIGHT? No, Sir! They kept chopping and scooping away.

Daylight evolved and it became apparent that blasting was necessary. Explosive Ordnance Demolition (EOD) experts were brought to the scene and detonated charges, loosening the concrete and rock. The shovel kept chopping and scooping, the water kept falling and the law of diminishing returns grew closer. Another attempt had to be made soon. The YFU again cranked up its engines and backed off for a headstart. Closer... Closer... Faster... starting through the gap... halfway... two-thirds... cheers all around... THUMP! Stuck again!

"Well, what now, Mike?"

"Uh... how about lifting it across, Captain?"

"Ri-i-ight!"

Actually, this didn't sound like such a bad idea. Again, the bulldozers tugged, the tugboats and LCMs pulled, the YFU churned and the crane lifted.

"Rear... Scrape... Squish... Inch by inch, it continued through. Then, nothing! The time was 5:20 p.m., and darkness was near. Another YFU was rushed to the "happening." It backed in and tied up.

"All right, all together now... bulldozers, crane, LCMs, tugs, YFUs... and Hope!" The stern edged its way through... further... further... FREE! Immediately, dump trucks and bulldozers began filling the gap. It was back to trafficable conditions less than three hours later. NMCB EIGHT had come through again!

"Well done, Mike. What now?"

"Well, Captain, I've been thinking about this new SEABEE motto, see, and..."

"Ri-i-ight!"

(Author's note: The story you have just read is true. The names have been changed to protect the innocent. Any resemblance to the names or statements is merely coincidental.)



CLAM BUCKET removes rock and broken concrete from hole carved in Col Co Road causeway by stranded YFU.



BULLDOZER AND TUGBOATS were used to get the YFU across the causeway and into deeper waters after being swept over by typhoon winds.



YFU IS FREED and construction begins to restore the causeway to its original pre-typhoon condition.

Another 'Well Done'

Capt Walton Praises Battalion

PHU BAI — MCB EIGHT has been commended by Captain A.W. Walton, Commander, 32nd Naval Construction Regiment, for its efforts in the rescue of the U.S. Navy YFU-24 Sept. 7.

Typhoon Beth had pushed the craft on the canal side of the Hue causeway. The efforts of MCB EIGHT men and machines, as well as the assistance of an EOD team, was required to free the craft.

For the outstanding job done by these men of the Battalion, the Command received the following message:

"Your outstanding feat of recovering the YFU-24 from prob-

able loss behind the Hue causeway is in true keeping with SEABEE 'Can Do' spirit and ingenuity. My congratulations to the men of EIGHT who worked so diligently to accomplish this mission." — CAPT WALTON

Alpha Company personnel spent an estimated 30 hours working to free the craft. Personnel who contributed to the effort were: EO2 R.A. Glauze, EO2 F.M. Howard, EO3 C.E. Briggs, EO3 W.H. Hiers, EO2 E.L. Krewitz, EO2 H.D. Alexander, EO2 E.F. Waddle, EO3 A.S. Holister, EO1 E.D. Guillroy and EO1 G.A. Fish, all under the direction of EQCM J.R. McCully.

Pappy Allen Goes Strong At 63!

"Pappy Allen" quietly celebrated his 63rd birthday Sept. 6 in the Battalion's Central Tool Room (CTR) with a bowl of ice cream and cookies.

William Eugene Keaweake-kahaliokomoku Allen Sr., the oldest member of MCB EIGHT, is a proud native of Honolulu, Hawaii. Being credited with 22 years of Naval service and eight years in the U.S. Army, he has served on six carriers, nine destroyers and one battleship. He also served aboard a tug as an electrician's mate (EM3).

While in the Army in the mid '30's, CE1 Allen was climbing trees and stringing wire for Communications. In 1939, Pappy Allen left the Army and enrolled in Electricians' Apprentice School at Pearl Harbor.

After the Pearl Harbor catastrophe, he worked on the ships at the Shipyard Naval Base, Pearl Harbor. His jobs during this period and for the years to follow, have included fire control wiring for guns, installation and testing of radar equipment, installation of generators and wiring of main propulsion panels on ships.

It was in 1951 that Pappy joined the SEABEES. He was assigned to MCB-1, then MCB-301, in Korea. In '53, he served with Public Works in Adak, Alaska. The next four months were spent in duty in Nome. Then with a Special Detachment out of Davisville, R.I., he traveled to the South Pole serving under Admiral Dufek for 18 months.

From '55 to '57, Pappy Allen worked in Navy Intelligence in the Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia area before serving with other construction battalions. In addition to serving with MCBs 3, 5, 9, 10 and 11, he was with MCB-6 one year in French Morocco.

Overseas duty has included Okinawa, Guam, Samoa, Greece, and Embassy duty with Admiral Brown in Naples, Italy. After serving as Inspector with the GLCC in Naha, Okinawa, CE1 Allen reported aboard MCB EIGHT.

CE1 Allen is currently supervising the Battalion's Central Tool Room operations which have recently been concentrated in mounting-out procedures.

Pappy Allen's father, Eugene K., is 91 years of age and resides in Honolulu as a retired warrant electrician. Pappy's ancestry is linked to Hawaiian, Scotch and Irish on his father's side, and Spanish and Irish on his mother's side. Married three times, he boasts seven sons and five daughters. The oldest is 44 and the youngest is 6.

While in his youth, CE1 Allen attended Parochial high school with the Brothers of Mary in Hawaii. He was also enrolled in the ROTC program there and achieved the rank of cadet Colonel.

Pappy was raised at Parker Ranch, Hawaii, known as one of the largest beef ranches in the world. With EIGHT, he serves with "Go-Power," and will continue to do so until March 28, 1972. And then what? He may stay on with EIGHT, if asked again!

—JOE A.L. Gonzales



RADMS A. C. Husband, Commander NAVFACENCOM, discusses results of day's visit at reception in EIGHT's 'O' Club. (l-r) LTJG L. C. Drapeau, LTJG R. D. Laime, RADMS Husband, CAPT A. W. Walton, COM32NCR (background) and CDR R. J. Westberg, EIGHT's CO.

PAYROLL SAVINGS MAKES DREAMS PAY OFF

GET WITH IT — STAY WITH IT!

Hospital Comes Alive

Civic Action Provides Medical Facility

The Phu Luong Hospital, erected with the help of individuals from the Battalion, was dedicated Thursday, Sept. 5.

Although Typhoon Beth had begun its short-lived rampage, at 1030 that morning Colonel T. Bowens, Committee Advisor for CORDS; Colonel Thanh, Province Chief; Commander R.J. Westberg, MCB EIGHT Commanding Officer; Lieutenant Commander J.F. Harris, MCB EIGHT Chaplain; Lieutenant M.A. Pero, Alpha Company Commander; Lieutenant (jg) F.R. Smith, Material Liaison Officer; EA2 R.R. Stephens Jr.; SW2 M.D. Cibak; BU3 R.E. Monks; and EA3 A.B. Akagi met with village officials to proclaim the cooperation of the two governments in building this community hospital.

The Phu Luong area, with its 50,000 people, will be served by this highly efficient, condensed facility. The medical facility will include an operating room, an X-ray room,

a pharmacy, and an intensive care ward. The hospital will be furnished with complete living facilities for the doctors and nurses.

The design was the result of EA2 Stephens' and EA3 Akagi's work in their spare time. Using their college architectural training, Stephens and Akagi designed the hospital for convenience, ventilation, and economy.

These designs went from the Engineering Office to the contractor. Vietnamese tradesmen with some technical help from SW2 Cibak and BU3 Monks transformed these plans into concrete and wood. On many occasions work would stop as the Vietnamese contractor and Akagi, with the help of the Battalion's interpreter, Huynh Thanh Long, would discuss ways to solve material shortages.

The designs had to be redrawn many times to show these changes. Even though these and other problems arose, the hospital took shape. In his dedication address, CDR

Westberg said, "On behalf of MCB EIGHT, I commend you for your vision, your ambition and your determination which is making this hospital become a reality. If the determination you are displaying today in carrying on with this dedication ceremony in the face of typhoon winds and driving rain is any indication, I have no fear that you will not be able to complete the project."

These people will have given \$12,000 to make possible this hospital to serve the community. The completion date is set for December of this year. In CDR Westberg's words, "We in MCB EIGHT are proud to have been able to contribute to so worthwhile an undertaking which promises to be a real help to the people of Vietnam."

"I wish you all good fortune in carrying the job through to completion and I hope I will be able to return next spring and find the job done and the hospital in operation."



THE HOSPITAL DESIGN required several structural techniques previously unique to the Vietnamese builders, shown here placing formwork for roof beams. Photo by PH3 R.F. Cotter



EA2 R. STEVENS VISITS THE HOSPITAL SITE. Makeshift formwork and braces were made utilizing all sizes and shapes of available lumber. Photo by PH3 R.F. Cotter



BEGINNINGS OF A VIETNAMESE CIVILIAN HOSPITAL — Forms go into place (above) for concrete beams used to support the hospital's roof. Vietnamese workers put the concrete forms together (below). —Photo by PH3 R. F. Cotter



WORKING CLOSELY WITH VIETNAMESE LABORERS, EA2 R. R. Stephens Jr., who helped design the hospital, visits the job site in the refugee village of Phu Luong. The hospital wings are staggered for improved ventilation, and are designed for an 85-bed capacity.

Photo by PH3 R. F. Cotter

M.E.R. Program's New Recipe for Better Living

By LTJG R.D. Clark

Better Huts and Showers has recently published a new recipe for Monsoon Parties. Unlike usual holiday gatherings, these celebrations generally require months of preparations. The "Minimum Essential Requirements" for such a bash consist of a 24-hour operation. It is recommended that more than one shift of cooks be used.

To begin, a capable head chef must be chosen, preferably a Chief Petty Officer who is calm, collected and doesn't become easily upset should his final product be smashed or damaged by the guests, party-crashers, or typhoons before use. Next, you need about 51 diligent, hard-working, PATIENT cooks who have worked their way up through the ranks of gourmetism. They must have the talent and desire to create true works of art, and must relish repetition.

Utensils required consist of the following:

- 1) One open-air oven with automatic thermostat
- 2) Four circular board slicers
- 3) Eight saw blades (some of the ingredients contain a rather hard bone)
- 4) One saw sharpener (capable of continuous use)
- 5) 51 pounders (for tenderizing)
- 6) 15 inner tubes for hinges (preferably Firestone, but Goodyear will give a bit saltier flavor)
- 7) Five Jeep exhaust valves for center punches (the Captain's jeep is ideal, but may be augmented by the XO's, Operations Officer's or any other jeep that's still around camp)

Assemble all utensils in two teflon pre-cut yards (to prevent the product from sticking to the camp) and begin the mixing operation.

- 1) Cut 16,231 slices of 4 x 8 plywood, 1/2" in thickness (do not expose to weather as they may become soggy and hard to handle)
- 2) Add 98.4 miles of 2 x 4 (if not available through Sears and Roebuck Mail Order

House, may use 2 x 6, 2 x 8, 2 x 10, 2 x 12, 4 x 4, 4 x 6, 4 x 8, 4 x 10, 4 x 12, 8 x 18 or anything else, providing it is trimmed to a 2 x 4 size)

- 3) Insert 91,212 cups of common nails (these add a most chewy crunch)
- 4) Sprinkle in 624 shower heads (to keep the batter moist)
- 5) Cut 724 holes (if angel-food style is desired)
- 6) Surround with 166,000 square feet of insect screen (to keep any trapped bugs from getting out. Note: flies and mosquitos add a very meaty flavor)
- 7) Add 1,247 gallons of perspiration and 17 books of curse words
- 8) Pour batter into laterite pan, stir vigorously with one Chief Petty Officer adding several change orders, and cover with 17,156 sheets of tin
- 9) Place in oven and let simmer at 100-110° Fahrenheit for approximately 30 days. Note: To prevent tidal waves in batter should it be subjected to tornados, monsoons or TYPHOONS, secure firmly with rope, wire, or 60 penny nails
- 10) Remove gently with forklift and rinse with several days of rainwater

To add a real party flavor, trim with 12,480 feet of pipe and 101,300 feet of wire (the pipe and wire may be bent to create many interesting designs). A sparkling suggestion is the placement of 3,240 light bulbs to culminate the finishing touches.

What do you have? Chaos, you may say. Negative! You have 181 four man showers, 156 four man latrines **BETTER BUILT** and 371 Southeast Asia Huts **BETTER PRE-CUT** for the comfort and enjoyment of the United States Army by the **SEABEES** of U.S. Naval Mobile Construction Battalion EIGHT.

Now just sit back and wait for your guests to arrive.



PRE-CUT LUMBER IS STACKED by (l-r) SK3 C. A. Shea and BU2 J. P. Burke to be used in the quick assembly of SEA (Southeast Asia) huts for U.S. Army units. The job is part of EIGHT's "Minimum Essential Requirements" Program. —Photo by PH3 R. F. Cotter



CHARLEY COMPANY'S PRE-CUT YARD was kept in operation 24 hours per day. The lumber was cut to exact size and stacked for use by the assembly crews. Photo by PH3 R.F. Cotter



ALL PRE-CUTTING is done in Camp Wilkinson's pre-cut yard for the construction of showers and latrines for the Army. Production lines swallow the camp as Battalion personnel work 'round the clock for maximum output. —Photo by PH3 R. F. Cotter



NO PIPES, NO WATER! UTI R. L. Tenholder and unidentified helpers install water pipes in showers. Charlie Company crews worked extra hours to build huts, heads and showers. —Photo by PH3 R. F. Cotter

the hard hat EDITORIAL PAGE

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MCB EIGHT's Good Year

From the road to Hue (Route One) to the road to Col Co Island (Col Co Road), MCB EIGHT has served its best in the Northern I Corps' Hue-Phu Bai area.

No sooner had the monsoon seasonal rains left and the smoke of the February Tet Offensive cleared, than the Battalion began its reconstruction and construction projects. First on the list, was salvaging vital Battalion supplies awaiting convoys on the Hue sand ramps.

It was during these early-deployment days that the Battalion's men came to know and awe the beauty of the ancient city of Hue—an aging one-time imperial center. Bridges, which had long served as vital links across the Perfume River into the city and across the moats surrounding the stone-walled citadel, had been either damaged or destroyed.

So it was, on Feb. 26 at 2200, Delta Company's bridge crew began round-the-clock construction of a 30-foot timber span across the Perfume. Repairs were complet-

ed at 0130 Feb. 28. And the pace was set for this industrious group; a rapid frantic pace found prevalent from Hue to the LST and LCU facility at Tan My Port.

The "road" to Tan My resembled a rough country trail in the States narrowing to one lane in areas and swallowed by waterways and rice paddies.

In the midst of bridge-building, an entire construction complex was created and developed to become the Battalion's most productive site. Col Co Road proved the dedication, drive and spirit of all concerned... and Typhoon Beth proved the durability of the road Sept. 5.

MCB EIGHT's accomplishments have been recorded in message commendations from Captain J.M. Hill, former Commander, 32nd NCR and General R.E. Cushman Jr., III Marine Amphibious Force, MAC-V and by compliments of visiting Rear Admirals W.H. Heaman, COMCBPAC; J.V. Bartlett, COM3NCB; and A. C. Husband, COMNAVFAC and Chief of Civil Engineers... And our accomplishments stand for the future of Vietnam and the Battalion.

—JO2 A. L. GONZALES

CO's Column

EIGHT Completes Another Great One

By CDR R. J. WESTBERG

As this issue of the hard hat is read, the days left until the end of the deployment are reduced to a very few. Therefore I will use this column to express my appreciation for the fine work done by all in MCB EIGHT during this deployment. When I say "all," I include our families and friends, for your loyal support, your letters, and your prayers have contributed immeasurably to the success of the Battalion's efforts.

Although I have been with the Battalion for only the last three months, I have had a chance to witness all of the products of the Battalion during this deployment and I have seen the Battalion respond when called upon. So it is with knowledge and experience that I recognize the achievements of MCB EIGHT, and I commend all of you for it.



CDR Westberg

To those who will be leaving the Battalion on our return to Port Hueneme, I regret seeing you go, but wish you the best of luck in your new endeavors. Your efforts will have to be good to be able to follow the kind of records for achievement which you have set.

To those who will be remaining with MCB EIGHT, I look to you to be the nucleus of talent and experience around which we will continue to build on the fine reputation of MCB EIGHT.



RED CROSS
IS ALWAYS THERE
WITH YOUR HELP

Chaplain Harris To Leave Soon

LCDR James F. Harris, MCB EIGHT's Chaplain is soon to leave the Battalion for duty at the Naval Auxiliary Air Station, Whitingfield, Fla. attached to Pensacola.

Describing himself as a "general practitioner interested in many things," he has served the Battalion since October of '66. Prior to joining the Battalion, Chaplain Harris was stationed at the U.S. Naval Station in Adak, Alaska and the U.S. Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, N.C. He has been in the Naval Reserve since 1961.

This has been LCDR Harris' first tour with a SEABEE Battalion. In March, the Catholic Chaplain received his gold leaf, ranking him a Lieutenant Commander.

LCDR Harris holds a Master of Arts in Theology and a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy from St. Mary of the Lake Seminary near Chicago, Ill., his hometown.

This deployment, the active Lieutenant Commander has served EIGHT as Civic Action Program coordinator in the Hue-Phu Bai area. He has coordinated two aspects of the program: that of civic action and medical aid trips to the surrounding villages.

During the Chu Lai deploy-

ment, LCDR Harris initiated and conducted support enabling the Vietnamese to construct a school/orphanage complex. This year, he has again been industrious in organizing the construction of a Vietnamese civilian hospital with complete facilities. In addition, for the major part of the deployment,

LCDR Harris served as Public Affairs Officer.

To the men of EIGHT, Father Harris has been a guiding source of energy personifying empathy, charity and sacrifice. EIGHT won't soon forget the efforts and accomplishments of this creative man, nor will he be easily replaced.

EXECUTALK

At the Crossroads

By LCDR J. T. PATTERSON
Executive Officer

The end of a very successful deployment is just around the corner. Soon we will be back with the loved ones and almost all of us will be taking a few weeks of well deserved leave. We will be able to relax and enjoy the pleasures of CONUS living.

I cannot help but recall, however, the sign that I've seen at the exits of many of our state-side military activities. It reads something like "You are about to enter one of the most dangerous places on earth—the public highway." I'm the first to admit

that the immediate reaction is to take the slogan with little seriousness, especially after having just returned from a combat zone. The simple truth is that the highways are dangerous. It is a fact that



LCDR Patterson

motor vehicle accidents are the leading killer of homeported SEABEES. Certainly, the free-ways are not as frightening as some of the dangers experienced in a combat zone, but this routiness associated with driving is probably a source of danger itself. It's been a while since we've driven on a crowded highway at fast speeds. This is one more reason why we should all be continually alert while driving. Becoming too relaxed while sitting in the driver's seat of your car is a sure invitation for disaster; not only for you, but others in the car with you or in other vehicles on the same thoroughfare. And by all means, think defensively! The guy driving the other car could be as dangerous as old Charlie.

Again, I hope each and every one of the Men of EIGHT a happy, relaxing and safe leave period. It would certainly be ironic and a waste to return from a combat zone healthy only to become a highway statistic. At least that's the way it looks from the XO's point of view.

"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 inexorable regularity."

striving after progress continues to the sum of evil: to effect change is to undermine the painfully established traditional order whereby the living creatures were 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 gazing and proclaiming it."

Quoting this article is my way of "copping out" on my last article while serving with MCB-S. 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-S, with whom I have had the privilege to serve. God-speed!

—LCDR J.F. HARRIS



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Mount-out Underway

CTR Prepares Conex Boxes

As the Battalion has neared the end of another deployment, people have been dreaming of home, but CTR has been doing more than just dreaming of HOW to get home.

GE1 William E.K. "Pappy" Allen and his crew are putting all the gear that has been brought in-country into metal conex boxes or banded on pallets. This is no easy task when one must contend with over 260 conexes and pallets that will not be treated with loving care. To insure that these pallets will survive the trip, CE1 Allen has built specially designed heavy-duty pallets that will be used for our next deployment. To do the job, it has taken the pre-cut yards, two builders and two saw sharpeners working this last month to keep the schedule for shipping. Oct. 2 is the last day that conexes will be opened. Before the last flight for home departs the big boxes will be on their way to Port Hueneme.

In order to continue work on the projects, all the Battalion's tools will be turned in and packaged during a three-day period. To complicate the situation, MCB-121 will be issuing tools to their personnel so that no man-days will be lost. This is the most important aspect of rotation. For a smooth rotation 100 per cent control and coopera-

tion must be exercised by LTJG F. R. Smith, Material Liaison Officer, and his counterpart in MCB-121.

These boxes are important only if they contain something of value, and this is the job of SK2 Don L. Overbay. As Embark Petty Officer, he must inventory everything that is packaged. That in itself is a tremendous job, but the Transportation Control Movement Documents (TCMD) must be made for each

pallet and conex. In order to meet the deadline date, Overbay has been working from 0630 to 2200 and will be doing so for the remainder of the month.

After the conexes and pallets are taken to Da Nang by LCUs, they will be shipped by Military Sea Transport Service (MSTS) to the States with four members of MCB EIGHT along to insure that the shipment is not separated or misplaced for the 19-day trip to Port Hueneme.

As Projects Race on...

This deployment has had a speedy culmination after what seemed like a long beginning. The months have passed quickly because of the Battalion's involvement in its projects. The projects have been many and their completion stands as a monument to the versatility, skill and energy of the men serving with EIGHT this deployment.

For Bravo Company, completion of many of these projects has meant working in the role of "sub-contractors" for electrical and mechanical work on projects assigned to the other construction companies. When work in rate was completed, Bravo personnel have worked out of rate to accelerate the

completion date on a project.

At Col Co Island, Bravo Company crews, under the direction of CECS K.H. Galusha, have installed both electrical and water facilities in the cantonment built for the NSA Detachment based there. In addition, UTC C.C. Campat, and his crew erected two 10,000-barrel petroleum tanks on schedule while working out of their rate.

At the Cornfield Detachment, Bravo personnel have installed and now maintain a booster station which is used to pump petroleum from Tan My to points north of Hue. The installation of the pipeline began in March and by May the first pipeline

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JUNE SEABEE

SK2 Smith Rates Top



SK2 G. K. SMITH
June Seabee of the Month

Storekeeper Second Class Gary K. Smith has been named MCB EIGHT Seabee of the Month for June. Smith was cited for his capable and efficient handling of Battalion operating target amount accounts, correspondence, material receipt control and requisitioning.

The citation read in part "... You have proven capable of assuming what is the key clerical job in the Supply Department. ... The work of your subordinates has also been capably managed. ... You have demonstrated effective leadership by insuring that requisitioning and paperwork was accomplished in a timely and accurate manner. As a result of your outstanding conduct, for example, able leadership, mature outlook and overall excellent performance, it is my pleasure to designate you as Seabee of the Month for June 1968."

For his efforts, Petty Officer Smith received a Battalion plaque, a \$25 U.S. Savings Bond and a Letter of Commendation, the second such letter he has received this deployment. The first was in recognition of his efforts in coordinating the movement of men and materials in the initial phases of the deployment.

Congratulations are also in order for Smith's Beneficial Suggestion Adoption. For his participation in the Incentive Awards Program he received a cash award of \$100. His suggestion entitled "Uniform Requisition Files and Logs for NMCSB" has been adopted under COMCBPAC Instruction 4235.5 of 9 May 1968 and will be implemented during fiscal year 1969.

Full Time With Bravo

Versatility has been the key work in Bravo Company this deployment. Besides doing their assigned tasks, many of our crews have had to fill in on jobs of primary concern to a different rating.

We worked with Alpha Company laying soil cement on Col Co Road, with Delta Company in a joint tank building project for a fuel farm at Tan My and even CE's joined UT's in laying the pipeline which stretches from Phu Bai to Col Co Island.

All these tasks have meant long hours, hard work, and even, in some cases, enemy harassment. But Bravo Company was "on it."

From the Commanding General down to the lowest private of the Army and Marines in the Phu Bai-Gia Le cantonment, they have felt the results of the efforts of Bravo Company. Every time they turn on a light, or take a shower they are seeing the results of Bravo's work.

Now that the deployment is nearing an end, all our thoughts are turning to home. But there will, however, be those who remember with pride the work behind us. And we will remember those left behind in Vietnam whose "Thanks" is still felt in our hearts. The "Can Do" spirit is still our proudest tradition. "Well Done" Bravo Company.

—RM2 J.W. DENNIS

Security Sees First Tour Action

The first deployment of the new Bravo Company has seen the Security Platoon guarding bridges during the Tet Offensive of February, setting up perimeters and defenses for detachments, riding shotgun on convoys and building defenses to guard Camp Wilkinson, our home base.

During Tet, the men of Security guarded the camp perimeter and patrolled the surrounding hillsides. Then, as the Tet Offensive subsided, groups of men were sent to Hue to protect the SEABEES who performed emergency repairs on the bridges and roads. As the tactical situation improved, Security's men were sent on convoys as shotgun riders to bring back much needed supplies from the Hue Ramps. The Shore Party lines were vacated shortly thereafter by members of the other companies, necessitating take over by the "combat-ready" platoon.

As time and numerous rocket attacks passed, the 82nd and 101st Airborne Units moved in front of our lines. NMCSB-8 details then left camp for the outlying work sites, and with them, Security.

One of the largest details, the Sierra detail at the Tu Do Stadium in Hue, absorbed most of our men for their defensive needs. Eight bunkers were even-

tually completed, and many strands of concertina laid. As work progressed, the stadium began to look more and more like a fortress. Bunkers were perched on the high walls giving it an almost medieval look.

The Rat Patrol was organized out of this detail. It consisted of a "Six-By" with an M-60 mount and about four men. The purpose was to sit on Col Co Road and guard the night crew who hauled fill across the road. The detail was disbanded in June. Many members of Security had been living with the detail since its formation. Tents had been their shelter.

After the Sierra detail, came the Bridge Five, Cornfield, and Tango detail. The Rat Patrol was relocated at the Cornfield where night operations continued.

At the Tango site, a mortar team was organized to give illumination to the detachment and surrounding units. Again, bunkers were built and watches

stood by security personnel to replace the group VIII's for construction work.

As the detachments were disbanded, our men went to work on our base perimeter. Eight new bunkers were constructed and several miles of concertina were strung. A tower watch, gate guard and bunker watches were also maintained.

Besides our roving Security units, we have maintained a mortar team that has done an outstanding job in supplying illumination to our camp and outlying units throughout the deployment.

It hasn't been all work, however. We had a lively baseball team. Even though we didn't win many games, we had the loudest rooting section. Our company party will also be remembered by all, along with the many good friends that were made.

It is agreed by everyone that this has been a good deployment.

—SN D.C. LIND

Special Assignment

Detail at Dong Ha

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion EIGHT became mobile, in part, for the seventh time this deployment as LTJG G.A. Metcalf, Officer in Charge, led a detail of some 50 men to Dong Ha to construct strongback huts for various elements of the Army located in the area.

The project, part of an overall program, Minimum Essential Requirements (MER), is an effort to get the troops out of the mud. For the detail, this means construction of 126 strongback huts before returning to the main body at the end of this month. At the rate of six huts each day, the schedule can be met. MCB-11 is furnishing the lumber and other materials

needed for the accelerated pace. Quarters and messing are provided at the MCB-7 camp for the NMCSB-8 personnel, officially referred to as Construction Detail Whiskey. Some traveling to job sites is necessary as many of the huts will be built in Quang Tri.

Assistant Officer in Charge, BUCS Patrick M. Stenger, heads a crew of 7 Alpha, 14 Bravo, 16 Charlie and 16 Delta Company personnel at the construction site. Necessity will require some men to work out of their rate part of the time in order to accelerate the construction of the huts. Namely, CE's and EO's will be helping the builders drive nails when they aren't engaged in their respective skills.

Col Co Road

(Continued From Page 2)

ly to forward combat areas because of their work. Some time soon the Vietnamese Lambretas and buses will have this road to themselves. One day, a small Vietnamese boy will look up at the strange blue and white sign along Col Co Road and ask his father what the words mean. Dim memories stir the lines on the old man's face as he softly says:

"Better Built By MCB 8"

—C.B. HALL, ET3

Softball Success

'H,' 'A' Teams Match Records

Alpha Company's softball team members walked off with a 5-0 victory over Alpha Company Sept. 1 to end the season's play. The win ran "H's" record to 11 wins and 3 losses and also put Alpha's record at an identical 11 and 3 mark.

The season was played in two halves with Alpha taking the first half with a 5 and 0 record. "H" Co., playing a fine ball game the second half, came out on top with a 7 and 3 showing.

The tail end of the league saw Bravo Co. compile an overall record of 6 and 7, and Echo and Delta each closing out the season with 4 and 9 records.

Catcher Duren of "H" Co. led the league in hitting averages with a .444 mark. Centerfielder Napolitano finished with .386 and leftfielder Baucom rounded out the "H's" hitting attack to .377.

Sarnes and Bennett of Headquarters carried their pitching load as Sarnes compiled a 7 and 1 record while Bennett had 3 wins in 5 decisions.

Alpha was carried at the plate by first sacker Froreich with a .333 average, followed by third baseman Evans at .333 and catcher Reidburn with a .263 mark.

Huggins and Pozzi were on the mound for Alpha with the former running up an 8 and 3 record. Pozzi came through when he was needed and had a 2 and 0 mark.

Bravo Co. came on strong at the end of the season as the team won four of its last five games. Infielder Laird led their attack with a .296 mark at the plate. Catcher Vortman with .286 and shortstop-pitcher Leier with .270 rounded out the team's hitting.

Bingham, Leier and Earls handled Bravo's pitching load. Bingham and Leier each had two victories in three decisions while Earls had one victory in four tries.

Delta's hitting average was led by centerfielder Linenberger with a .311 average followed by second baseman Ampan at .306 and pitcher Oliver at .279. Oliver was the workhorse on the mound for the Big "D" as he ran up a 4 and 8 record.

Hemsley led Echo's average at the plate with a .353 mark

followed closely by rightfielder Alumbaugh with .345. Second sacker Scott rounded out their attack with a .241 average. Doc Hemsley carried Echo's pitching duties and compiled a 2 and 8 record.

The Battalion team ran their season record to 11 and 0 with an 11-3 victory over MCB-121's advance party Sept. 11.

Evans, Keane and Napolitano have carried the hitting load for the Battalion. Leier and Ampan have produced many fine defensive plays at shortstop and second base.

Huggins, Sarnes and Oliver have had the pitching load with Hemsley spot-starting from time to time. Huggins has hurled a no-hitter and a one-hitter, and has an overall 3 and 0 slate. Sarnes and Oliver also stand at 3 and 0 while Hemsley has gained one victory in relief and one as a starter.

Alpha has come alive in the basketball league and now leads with a 6 and 2 record. Sarnes' H Co. team trails with a 4 and 3 mark, followed by Bravo at 3 and 3. Linenberger's H Co. team brings up the bottom with a 1 and 6 record.



IN BASKETBALL ACTION — Headquarters and Bravo Company teams often met at the court. (l-r) CN R. A. Healey, SN R. R. Harp, CM2 Z. J. Weimer, CE2 J. M. Laird and SK3 T. D. Duren play a serious game after supper.

Alpha Co.

Test Given Col Co Road

With this month, came a durability test of Col Co Road and how it would wear during coming monsoon rains.

Typhoon Beth struck the Northern I Corps Sept. 5 carrying winds up to 55 mph and swept into the Hue-Phu Bai area including Camp Wilkinson. Although the storm lasted only 36 hours, it poured 14 inches of rain in the area.

The calm canals became raging rivers, and green rice fields between the City of Hue and Col Co Island became brown oceans of water. Many bridges had water rushing over them. A causeway built by the French, which was recently asphalted, had its asphalt peeled off by the raging torrents. Sections of the road's shoulders, which were not yet completed, were damaged.

Some bridge approaches, on which the Soil Cement Crew worked very hard, were also washed out.

A dozer and a P&H crane sitting at the Cornfield rock-off loading facility (which is normally eight feet above the water level) had water over their tracks.

At the North LCU Ramp, a pile hammer and leads were submerged in three feet of water

and, when retrieved, had grass, moss, weeds and rice stalks hanging all over them. The hammer section was filled with mud.

Although the typhoon caused tremendous flood waters to rage through Hue, the damage done to Col Co was minor. The main reason for only the minor damage is that Col Co Road was not built for temporary use; it was built to maintain the ultimate peacetime supply line from the Tan My Port facility to the mainland.

Another LCU ramp in north Hue, which is a current project for Alpha Company and is expected to be operational before EIGHT leaves, has recently begun. There will be 30,000 cubic yards of fill hauled to the ramp before completion. Equipment has been transferred from other "In Country" Battalions to help speed up the efforts to complete the job on time.

Alpha Company welcomes MCB 121's advance party to Camp Wilkinson. Typhoon Beth had a cool and wet reception for them, but MCB EIGHT bids them a warm welcome! The EOs of MCB 121's "A" Company have started to coordinate with EIGHT on current MCB EIGHT projects. The mechanics are also beginning to familiarize themselves with the shop facilities and EIGHT's current equipment.

—EO3 G. A. FROEICH

Bravo's Projects . . .

(Continued From Page 7)
was completed. A second line is scheduled for completion by the end of September. UTC R.C. Blake is the project chief assisted by UT1 J.L. Jackson, crew leader.

Earlier this month, 14 UTs and/or CEs joined Detail Whiskey on a detachment assigned to the Dong Ha area to help with the high priority MER program.

Within Camp Wilkinson, Bravo Company consumes 30

per cent of its total force to provide electricity and water, trash service and maintain sewage facilities. It isn't a glamorous task, but it is necessary.

While Bravo Company hasn't been a prime contractor on too many jobs this deployment, it has filled a vital gap in special construction assignments: specifically, in the areas of electricity and plumbing. Bravo's willingness to adapt to the job at hand has provided the Battalion with a versatile company that "Can Do."

—CN J. E. ALUMBAUGH

Charlie Co— Okinawa To RVN

Charlie Company, composed basically of personnel recently returned from Okinawa where they had been constructing a permanent SEABEE base, are on the job again. This time, they are constructing prefabricated huts as part of the MER (Minimum Essential Requirements) Program. This program is designed to get the Army out of the mud before the monsoon season.

To accomplish this, the men of Charlie Company work around the clock, in eight hour shifts. BU1 Alexander and crew work from 0700 to 1500, SW1 Robertson's crew rip and cut from 1500 to 2300, and BU1 Cummings and crew keep the saws warm during the graveyard shift. SW2 Warzecha and his steel workers work in their rate by banding the pre-cut kits together. These crews have four saws in the yard; three radial arm and one ripping saw. BU3 Richardson has no idle hands trying to keep all these blades sharpened at CTR. The Army has 371 of these hardback kits on order, and many of these have already been completed. The Army has picked up several dozen kits. Output varies between 20 and 30 units per day.

BU3 "Gomer" Cockery and BUCN Dillon took a rotary-winged flight to LZ Sally for the purpose of helping the Army assemble their first strongback. LZ Sally is an Army landing zone established by the 101st Airborne. One might call it a good example of "if it ain't broke, don't fix it."

Typhoon Beth, in her rage, removed the tin roofs from the stockpile of heads and shower buildings, and the accompanying heavy rains washed out 80 feet of 60-inch culvert, which BU2 Barr and crew replaced. In addition, they had to reconstruct the framework for the headwall section which was filled with washed sand and laterite. There is nothing like harassment from a typhoon and nothing like the thrill of going home!



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