Battalion Newsletter

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U.S. NAVAL MOBILE CONSTRUCTION BATTALION EIGHT

Bravo Company

Bravo Company is continuing work on several projects and has commenced work on others since the last newsletter was published. At the present time we have 16 crews working on 23 different jobs in the Chu Lai area.

The most spectacular job we have finished was right in our own camp when the electrical crew set up two 90 foot poles for our new MARS station. The installation of these two poles and the antennas on them has greatly improved our phone patch capability and enable many more men to talk to their families at home.

Our UT crew recently made an unusal request, underwater face masks. It seems that they were busy laying a sewer line into the bay and the tide came in before they could finish the job. With the aid of Special Services they were able to continue with the job. Applications for divers are now being accepted in the company office.

At the Seabee Birthday celebration on March 5th RM2 Jack Dennis received the Purple Heart for minor injuries received when a truck in which he was riding hit a mine last January. He gets kidded about his "minor injuries" quite a bit. It seems that he was seen limping around with a splint on one big toe shortly after the incident. Also Bravo Company distinguished themselves on the Seabee Birthday by placing second in the athletic field day competition.

The company is now planning its first party, to be held on the beach some Sunday after Mr. Roberts returns from R&R. The actual date will depend upon the word getting to whoever is responsibile for the weather, that the rainy season is over?

BURIED TREASURE, PERHAPS? — UTP2 Roger D. Paine, UTW3 Daniel R. Epplett, UT1 William A. Wilson (standing) and UTP3 Eric E. Davis (kneeling), install under slab plumbing at EIGHT's First Forces Hospital project.

FLSG - BRAVO REEFER PADS — CN Douglas E. Jolley, RD2 James W. Beavers, CES2 Kenneth L. Vanemmerick, CESCN Roger G. Salvado, and CN Dennis A. Minard begin moving a section of direct buried cable at the Force Logistic Support Group Bravo Reefer Pads project.

CO's NOTES

This is the second paper we have put out during this deployment which is aimed at our families back home, and it will be the last one for which I will be priviledged to write as the commanding officer.

After serving nearly two years with EIGHT, I now move on to a new duty station. It is sort of like leaving home - - - exciting to be going somewhere new, yet sad to leave those one knows so well. They don't come better than EIGHT and the good fortune to have been a part of the Battalion will always remain engraved in my fabric.

To each wife and family who receives this paper, I want to tell you that the men in EIGHT are doing a particularly exceptional job. We all know you wives, children, parents and friends miss them, but along with missing them you should be very proud. These men serve their country each day facing long hours, mud, rain, blistering heat, frequent discouragement, harassment by the enemy, and absence from you. At a time when others carry signs in protest, your men bear arms in behalf of our country. At a time when others are heckling speakers, your men are building new structures on the face of a strange and poor land, are treating the illnesses and injuries of its people. At time when others sleep securely in our land of no war, your men are doing their countrymen's work and sometimes rouse from sleep ready to defend their lives. I'm proud of them and I hate to have to leave these Seabees.

I send my sincere best wishes to each member of each EIGHT family. I ask God's blessing on you all, and to our many friends in these families, my family, and I look forward to the next time we meet with you.

A MILKY FUTURE — UT1 Clemente C. Campat, UTA3 Robert H. Parker, UTA3 Samuel E. Mitchell, and UTP2 Jerry E. Hanks begin work on the Dairy Plant which will soon be supplying fresh milk, ice cream, and cheese to the military personnel in th Chu Lai area.

CHARLIE CO.

The construction effort is now moving in high gear in Charlie Company. Our people even have time for games. The latest one is called "The Concrete Schedule". The rules are very strict and the loser pays highly. The practiced player can win by getting concrete to the right job site within one hour of the scheduled time. In playing the game, there are many obstacles which must be overcome. These include outguessing the weather, instinctively knowing when the batch plant will break down, finding lost or broken down transit mix trucks or getting the batter boards reset on time. When a player becomes too skilled at the game and makes too many pours, he is given a handicap: a radio which either doesn't work or has a very short range. With no radio, the obstacles grow and it is very difficult to get the concrete schedule changed. To date Charlie Company has been winning almost all the time.

Green and his concrete crew have been doing a good job getting the concrete placed when it arrives. They are beginning to specialize in Butler building pads and their forming technique is quite good. They are also a very inventive crew. First notion to arise was a special rebar screen chair. This didn't work too well and they ended up being used as tie downs for wire mesh. A second idea came from Smith and is a vibrating screen. This is an outstanding idea and really saves a lot of elbow grease. The latest idea to come from the crew is using a discarded section of helicopter rotor blade as a float. With aluminum channel as a handle, this new item does an effective job. Keep the ideas flowing.

The newest high rise job is a four story control tower for MAG 36. The crew of Wilson, Means, Young, Bailey, Bruce, Radcliff, and Brocks under the leadership of BUL2 Alexsich is doing a fine job. Working conditions are often difficult considering rain, wind, and a bit of sway at the top floor, but progress has never slowed. Would you believe they even have real GLASS for the windows?

Charlie Company is still very active down at the NSD barracks area. Haskell kept a crew busy painting showers, while generously spattering each other. Whitten and Rupp are now busy installing partitions, doors, fascia boards and soffits on the previously "completed" job. It is beginning to look like the company will be working in this area for the remainder of the deployment.

Eighteen down and two to go. This is the score for BUR2 Gagnon and his crew erecting quonset huts at FLSG-B. There is a double quonset to be used as a PX whose condition was doubtful for some time, but SW1 Leach came in and "straightened" things out. Most of the huts include a great deal of finish work requiring the men to show their carpentry skills. This job should be wrapped up in a few days.

The company has entered the Butler building business in a big way. There is a side-by-side three building complex going in at First Hospital Company under the supervision of SWE2 Haskell and SWE3 Paxon. There is an end-to-end double Butler soon to be erected at FLSG-B Organic Supply. SWF2 Robertson will be supervising the erection of a single Butler building for FLSG-B Truck Company, once the pads are in. Progress is made on these projects come rain or shine. In Chu Lai, it is mostly rain.

LET THE WORLD KNOW — As visitors enter the gate to U. S. Naval Mobile Construction Battalion Eight's camp in Chu Lai, RVN, he immediately becomes aware that this year marks the observance of the Seabees and Civil Engineer Corps Anniversary. The 4×8 foot sign was painted by Seaman Yoshiro Hata and Seaman Roger P. Hawn, both of the Battalion Security platoon. (L-R) Seamen Hawn, Daniel C. Harman, Daved L. Inskeep, Hata (behind sign) and Clifford H. Collins, Jr.
(Official Navy Photo)

CN Henry I. McCormick, BUR3 Albert W. Black Jr., BUL3 Kenneeth L. Evans, and BUR3 Richard E. Soucy positioning a timber pile for a crane to set up and start driving. The piles, measuring 50' in length, weighing 5,000 pounds and numbering 59, will provide the support for vehicle traffic over the bridge designed to accomobate 35 tons.

RIGHT ABOUT THERE — EAD3 Ralph H. Freiert prepares to hammer a spike into a section of Building siding at the First Forces Hospital project. BUL3 Arthur P. Brooks Jr., UTB2 Carl D. Elbon, and BUL3 Lavern P. Cookson assist.

BIG "D"

The 'Bees' of Delta Company are rudely awakened by the, all too familiar, sound of reveille. Finally conquering the urge to hide under his covers and let the day pass him by, the sleepy-eyed Seabee slides from his rack and slowly begins to dress. A quick glance outside shows him that the sky is dark and no stars are in sight, a sure sign of a sunless day. He curses under his breath as he takes out his mud-covered rain gear and putting it on, he leaves his hut for morning muster.

After being dismissed from quarters he, now fully awake and aware of the mist-like rain, finds his ride waiting to take him to the job site.

As the various modes of transportation depart from the MCB EIGHT camp, they fan out to deliver the men to scattered parts of the Chu Lai area.

BU1 Rosensweig arrives at the 1st Forces Hospital site with his crew of 'Bees'. Even before the sun radiates it's first light through the thick gray clouds, the men break out their tools and continue where they left off the day before.

The setting is different but the scene is the same at all of Delta Company's job sites. There's Chief Stenger and BUR2 Cunningham at the Dairy Plant; BUR2 Rahn at the 7th Marines; Chief Kuit and his crew at the revetments; and Chief Atwood in charge of seven jobs at Force Logistics Supply Group Bravo.

It's more than working just to keep busy and as the men's sweat mixes with the rain, they can take pride in the fact that their labors will be of great service to the cause we support.

The hospital job: an eight Quonset hut complex, a water tower, and a helicopter pad will make it safe to land casualties within yards of the operating table. This hospital, when completed, will service the entire Chu Lai area.

The 7th Marines needed an Officers' compound and some strongbacks repaired; Delta Company answered the call.

The Dairy Plant will be cranking out 1000 gallons of reconstituted milk in a single hour, 3000 gallons of ice cream, and 2000 lbs. of cottage cheese a day. Enough dairy products to feed an "army".

The reefer pads, grease rack, Butler buildings, and fuel dispensing tower at FLSG-B will keep the Marine trucks rolling when they are completed.

The revetments, being constructed at MAG 12, will protect planes from being destroyed on the ground in the event of an attack. Twenty-two yards of sand and 350 bolts are required in each ten foot section of the 4800 foot project. That totals about 168,500 bolts all tightened by the hands of men from Delta Company.

Delta Company's labors add up to what this war is all about. Helping the other guy to live the kind of life he wants, free from oppression and the horrors of war. Delta Company joins hands with the other companies in MCB EIGHT, and all the other fighting units in Vietnam, in doing it's best and sometime's better than it's best to insure victory and a lasting peace.

So when the Seabee, weary from his day of work, hears the last sweet tones of taps, his eyes close and he rests peacefully, knowing that he's doing his share to make this world of ours a little better place in which to live.

"A LITTLE BIT TO THE RIGHT" — BUL2 Anthony D. Vincent (foreground) and BU1 Sidney Rosenswig (background) hold onto the guidelines while a crane lifts a section of the 2500 gallon water to the top. The construction project is being built at the First Forces Hospital.

"HURRY UP FELLAS," says CN Alfred M. Escobar as he holds up the rafter while BUH3 W. E. Baker and BUR3 M. D. Estok prepare it for installation, at one of the Big 'D' Construction projects at 7th Marines.

BUL3 J. G. Braubaker, BUL3 F. A. Vigil, BUL3 R. A. Archer, and SN D. D. Lovelis, members of the D Company Construction crew at First Hospital work on the construction of the covered walks between the buildings.

EASY. .... EASY! — BUL3 Kevin W. Mallet lifts a section of the siding for the MAG 12 Revetment Project while BUH3 Robert M. Rodriguez and SWE3 Eugene T. Gargano assist him. BUL3 Earl E. Joller and CES2 Robert J. Dellostritto wait to put it in place.

"H" CO. CHATTER

Some say we're the backbone of the Battalion. The "bullets, bombs, and butter" as it were. Headquarters Company provides the logistic support that enables MCB EIGHT to be both an effective construction and fighting force.

In Administration and Personnel, the paper work that keeps the Battalion running like a fine Swiss watch is handled capably by a staff of 18 men. Day in and day out, correspondence, reports, and service records are processed in record time.

Supply, with the largest staff in H Company, has the monumental task of anticipating and furnishing the necessary staples enabling EIGHT to be there "firstest with the mostest".

If you asked the men what the most important department in H Company was, they'd probably say Disbursing because that's where the money is. Every two weeks, it handles a payroll that could pay a small army, which in fact, it does.

The Public Affairs Office writes the words that keep both the Battalion and the outside world informed of the task that EIGHT is accomplishing daily while the Photo Lab supplements their work by providing the pictures to tell the story completely.

Perhaps the most direct link between the Battalion and their loved ones back home is the Post Office. Each day, bags of mail are brought in, sorted, and distributed by a small force of three men.

The lighter side to life here is furnished by the efforts of Special Services. Management of the clubs, securing entertainment for the Battalion, and providing recreational equipment ranging from horseshoes to bows and arrows are only a few duties that Special Services embraces.

Maintaining and supplying the armament for EIGHT is the very important job of the Armory. Everything from .45 cal. service pistols to mortar tubes are in stock, in case we need them.

Communications, the Bell Telephone of MCB EIGHT, provides the phone network that snakes it way throughout the camp while at the same time furnishing the MARS station facilities so that the men can actually hear the voices of their family, nine thousand miles away.

Operations coordinates the Battalion's mission here in Vietnam by supervising and administrating the projects with the technical advice of Engineering plus Planning and Estimating.

Sickbay, composed of both the Medical and Dental Departments, has the very responsible job of the care and maintenance of the Battalion's most important resource, the men.

And last, but far from least, the Galley. Faced with the sizeable task of providing more than 2500 hot meals a day, the small staff of 17 men rise to the challenge admirably. In the four months that EIGHT has been in-country, very few, if any, complaints have been heard about the efforts of our chefs.

As one can see, Headquarters Company has a varied and vitally important function within the greater framework of MCB EIGHT.

Chief Allard Signs For Six

Engineering Aid Senior Chief Richard N. Allard, of 31 Frankman Terrace, Southbridge, Mass., re-enlisted for another six years in the Navy, February 19th.

Senior Chief Allard reported to U.S. Naval Mobile Construction Battalion EIGHT, August 26, 1965. Since that time, he has made one eight-month deployment to DaNang, Vietnam, and is presently in Chu Lai.

SHIPS FOR SIX —Engineer-Aid Senior Chief Richard N. Allard signs his name on the dotted line adding six more to the nineteen years he has served in the U. S. Navy.

WHERE IT ALL BEGINS — EAD3 Richard A. Price and EAD3 Roger L. Bewick study a prospective plan for a future MCB EIGHT project, one of the vital roles of the Battalion's Engineering Department.

The mission of the Seabee Battalion is a vital link in the chain of strategic, tactical and logistic armed forces efforts. The Battalion adds construction support to the armed forces, and maintains a mobilization posture at all times.

While in Vietnam, the Battalion is busy constructing bridges, living quarters for Marines, road construction for military vehicles and many other projects.

The Senior Chief, who oversees the Battalion's Engineering Department, is married to the former Miss Maria Bayas, of Guayaquil, Ecuador. They have two children, Richard, Jr., 2, and Ernest, 9 months, and they reside in Southbridge.

Senior Chief Allard first enlisted in the Navy, August 31, 1951, and his medals include, the National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, The Vietnam Service Medal, Antarctic Expeditionary Medal, the Good Conduct Medal with four awards and the Navy Unit Commendation Ribbon.

A MONUMENTAL JOB — SKSN Gary K. Smith and SKSN William J. Baumann work at keeping the supply channels within MCB EIGHT moving at a smooth pace.

SEABEE

PARADE REST! — The Battalion looks on as Brigadier General W. A. Stiles addresses the men during the recent Seabee Anniversary celebration.

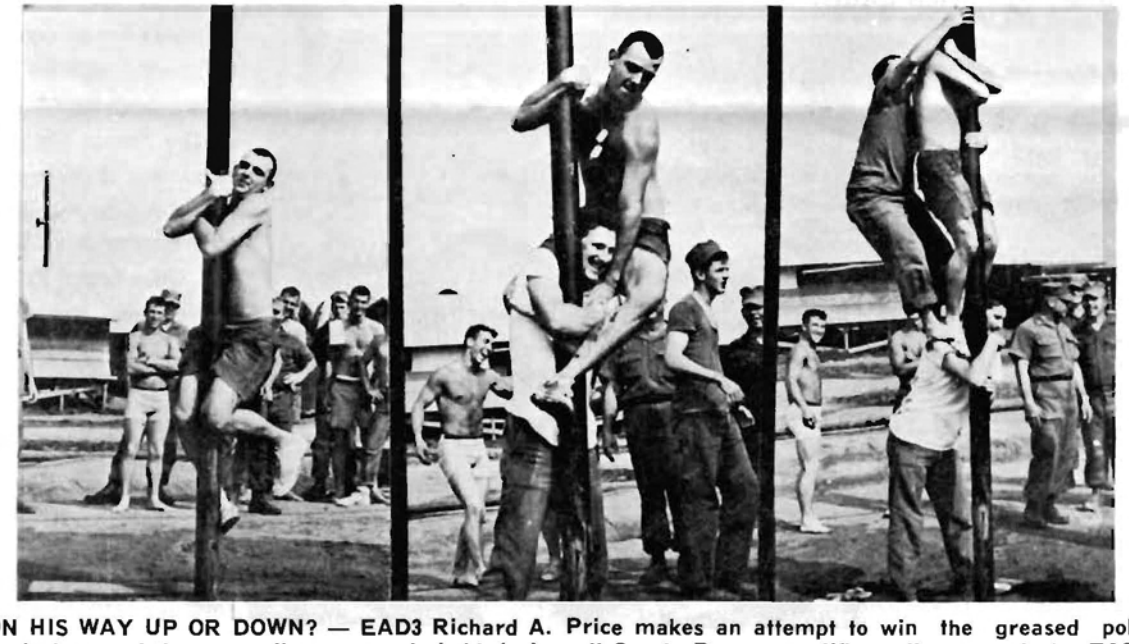
DOWN YOU GO! — SN Patrick E. Mcguire on the shoulders of SN Harry L. Hansen deals a crushing blow to the opposing team of Seamen Daniel C. Harmon and David L. Inskeep. Aiding in the strategic maneuver is SK3 Bruce M. Tuttle.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, SEABEE! — CS2 Huston S. Butler hands out the first piece of the 381 1/2 pound birthday cake baked for the occasion.

In the midst of an ever present war, the Seabees of MCB EIGHT took time out on the fifth day of March to have a birthday party.

Joining other construction battalions around the world, the 'Bees of EIGHT celebrated the 25th Anniversary of their founding along with the 100th birthday of the Navy's Civil Engineer Corps.

The festive day was marked by several highlights. A cake, 381 1/2 pounds light, was created by the men of the Galley and consumed within a short time by the men of the battalion. Purple Hearts were awarded to RM2 Jack W. Dennis, BUR2 Daniel F. Dugal, SWF3 Jack D. Nicpon, and BUL2 Lionel A. Richard for the injuries they incurred in a mine incident near Highway One. EON2 Merritt J. Haff was the recipient of the battalion's "Seabee of the Month" award. Brigadier General W.A. Stiles.



ON HIS WAY UP OR DOWN? — EAD3 Richard A. Price makes an attempt to win the greased pole contest, one of the more slippery events held during all Sports Day ..... When all seems lost, EAS3 Harold H. Burris Jr. lends assistance ..... Only to be joined a moment later by EAS2 William A. Jordan who apparently thinks that a human ladder may do the trick. By the way, they didn't make it.

CHU LAI RVN