

CONSTRUIMUS BATUIMUS "WE BUILD, WE FIGHT"



8TH NCB

NMCB-8

8TH NCB



# NEWSLETTER



U.S. NAVAL MOBILE CONSTRUCTION BATTALION EIGHT

Volume 14 Issue 2

—Shiver-Me-Timbers—Another One—

April, 2015

—FROM THE PRESIDENT—

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

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

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

HARRY H MIDDAUGH UT  
NMCB 8 4/25/68  
DIED BUNG KAN THAILAND

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

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

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



WELL, HERE WE ARE getting ready for the reunion. It's hard to believe that September 28, thru Oct 2, 2015 is getting

close. I want to thank John and Sara Hoogendoorn, Ed and Judy Schreck, Troy and Dawn Branch and Ron and Lesley Sabbatis for all the hard work they have been putting in getting this ready. Please fill in the forms and get your hotel reservations ready as soon as possible. We would appreciate it if everyone could send in their registration forms as early as possible so we can get the best deals. I would also appreciate it if you could check with the website for phone numbers and address. Call some of your Seabee friends and give them the website address NMCB8.com. Tell them about the reunion and have them send in the registration forms. Another thought, invite some of your close friends, Veterans or not. I have brought friends, and they enjoyed the banquet and being around the group. One thing about our group, it's not dull. The stories are like watching Sergeant Bilco and McHale's Navy.

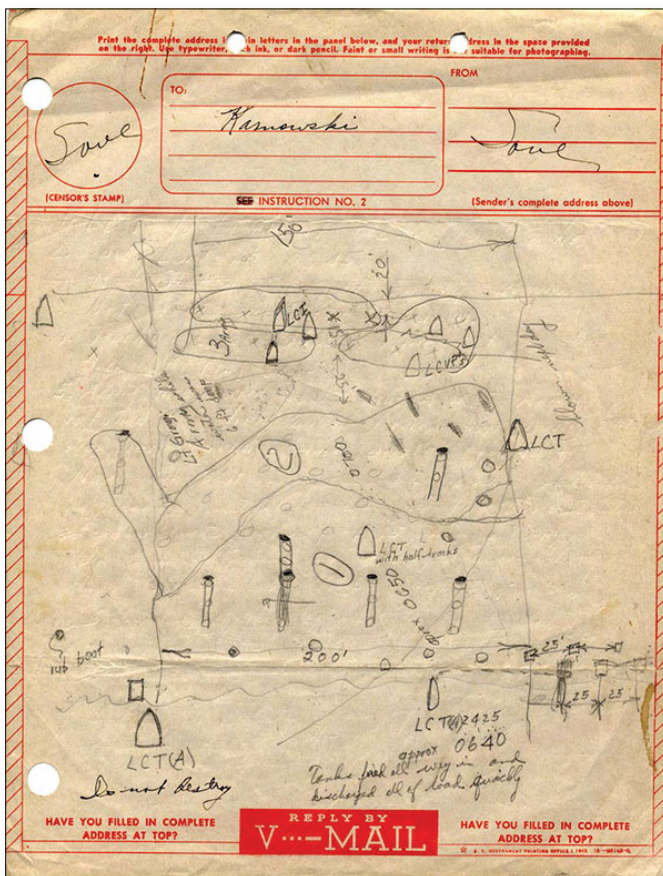
It takes a lot to put the reunions together, so please try to attend. We are all getting older, and there comes a point where you may not be able to travel any longer. Just a couple of reunions ago Tom Zopfi was there. He knew that that was the last reunion he would be going to. We missed him at the last reunion,

—Continued on next page.



From Last Reunion in Charleston, SC.

L-R; Janet & Bob Zweiers, Lucy & Charles Beck, Jim & Barb Poole.



The above sketch describes a layout on Omaha Beach (Normandy) during WW II—where the Seabees went ashore.

See Karnowski, next page.



but will always remember him and the stories we told together at that reunion. We have some pictures of Tom on the website at the reunion. This makes each reunion special. You may not think it means a lot to you, but some of your brothers need you. They remember the good times and close relationships we were fortunate to go through. And it means quite a bit for them to see you again. Again, please try to attend and send in the forms to Ron ASAP.

I want to let everyone know we have changed our website profile and have a professional organization putting this together. Pam Warr of Stonehill Productions is in the process of setting up and maintaining the web site. We will have our entire cruise books, photos, small videos and more incorporated in it. We had to expand the size to accommodate this, but we are now moving at a good rate. We need photos. Please scan and send them to me to forward off to Pam.

#### The Information We Need Is:

- What year?
- What company or jobsite and location?
- Name of personnel.

(Even if it's one name, we will try to locate the other names when we put this on the web). The idea is as we add this to the website, all our members will keep looking on the web to identify the missing names, and any info they may want to add. Once we start this we hope to add each month more pictures and names to the photos.

Again, we have to really thank Ken Bingham, our treasurer and Editor for doing such a great job. He has been working on various projects with the Seabees, and our organization could not operate without Ken.

Thank you, Ken. We all appreciate your help. I also want to thank Ron and Carol Dougal for their help. They have been track-

ing down all our members, calling people, and providing all our sign-in registration at the reunions, and maintaining our hospitality room. Again, without these people, we could not have the success that we have. Sometimes we take this for granted, but I want you both to know how much we appreciate your help. Thank You

Memorial Day is coming up. Let us not forget our fallen brothers. Something seems to be happening around the country. People seem to just think of it as a day off. Most people, especially the young kids today, don't even know what it stands for, and this is a shame. Most of us are involved with the American Legion, or VFW. This is a good time to get with the Veterans groups and put something together to try to speak and visit at the schools around the neighborhood.

Looking Forward to seeing everyone it Tulsa,

Arnie

#### TAX DEDUCTION DONATION

As I mentioned in the newsletter, we have hired a professional to maintain the web site. The estimated cost will be around \$1200.00 a year, we have paid around \$900.00 to set this up so far. I would like to ask everyone to DONATE a special check to the association to provide money for the web site. I know asking for money is hard but I am hoping some of our members that may be in a little better financial situation could help us. As a non-profit organization, we can send you a tax deductible receipt, this could really help. We plan to have various picture sections on the web categorized by company and year. The pictures will include names, places job site.

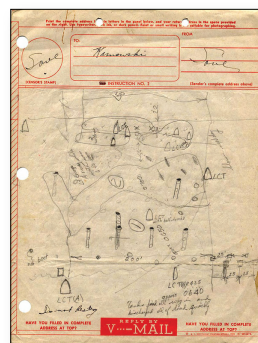
Please send any checks to Ken Bingham and let Ken know this is for special projects.

Your Seabee Brother,  
—Arnie



Once a Year at 11:11 am the sun shines perfectly on this Memorial at precisely 11:11 a.m. Each Veterans Day (Nov. 11), the sun's rays pass through the ellipses of the five Armed Services pillars to form a perfect solar spotlight over a mosaic of The Great Seal of the United States .

Karnowski—continued from front page.



During the invasion of Normandy, France, on June 6, 1944, a select number of Civil Engineer Corps (CEC) officers and Seabees in Naval Combat Demolition Units (NCDUs) numbered among the first Americans ashore to clear the beaches for the ensuing infantry assault. One of these CEC officers, 28-year-old reservist, Ensign Lawrence Stephen Karnowski, Tampa, Kan., would be awarded the Navy Cross for his valor that day amid the bloodstained sands of Omaha Beach.

Welcome new member  
—Francis R. Cornelius—  
MCB-8 1960-62, MCB-6 1958-60



Simon Camarillo, Jim Daniels and Richard Camacho are among approximately 200 veterans in Ventura County who belong to The Military Order of the Purple Heart. Photo by: Heber Palayo. —Note: Jim Daniels is a WW II , Korean, Vietnam Vet and member of our NMCB-8 Assoc.

### —Wounded In Battle—

#### Local Veterans Share Their Purple Heart Stories

By Alicia Doyle , Daniel Gelman 11/06/2014



HAVING SERVED IN WORLD WAR II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War, Jim Daniels proudly remembers enlisting in the Navy [Seabees] with the help of his father at age 16 in 1942.

“I talked to my father for two months before he agreed to go down and sign the papers that I was 17,” recalled Daniels, 88, of Port Hueneme.

Born in Willis Branch, West Virginia, Daniels did what came naturally for many

young men his age at the time.

“All my friends I ran around with were older than I was — when the war broke out they all enlisted,” he said.

Back then “the only other work was in the coal mines and I said I would never work in the coal mines,” Daniels added. “My dad understood.”

His 26-year military career included serving in the Pacific in World War II, on Guam, in Japan and at Port Hueneme, where he became an equipment operator with the Seabees.

He also wed and had two children—including one son, William, who joined the service in 1967.

On Jan. 31, 1968, Daniels earned a Purple Heart for injuries sustained during a rocket attack while serving in Vietnam.

Just days before Daniels was injured, a rocket propelled grenade hit his son while in a vehicle in Dong Ha.

“He was only 50 miles from me,” Daniels said. “I was hit 11 days later.”

Daniels visited his son on a hospital ship while he was recovering from serious injuries that grew worse by the day.

During this time, Daniels earned the rank of Master Chief, but it was conditional upon his returning to Vietnam for another tour.

With his son so sick, Daniels declined and retired with the rank of Senior Chief Petty Officer in 1969.

His son, who also received a Purple Heart for wounds he suffered in combat, died in 1973 from his injuries.

### —OLDEST LIVING VETERAN IN NEVADA—

CARSON CITY, NV -- After serving overseas in World War II and contributing to major projects in northern Nevada, one local veteran got special honors over the weekend.

Ivan Woodford has lived through 17 presidencies, several wars and a time when a gallon of gas was just \$0.07. He grew up on a ranch in southern California and enlisted in the Navy as a Seabee, part of the construction battalion in 1942.

“It’s something unexpected, but it’s something I’m kind of glad they are recognizing me in my old age because not too many people get to be 103,” Woodford said.

### THE NMCB-8 ASSOCIATION CONTINUES TO BE A CHEER-LEADER AND SUPPORTER OF THE CEC/SEABEE HISTORICAL FOUNDATION.



THE CEC/SEABEE HISTORICAL FOUNDATION continues to lead in supporting the Seabee Museum. Although the Seabee Museum is Navy owned and operated (all the paid staff at the Museum are Civil Service employees), the Navy is not permitted to fund new construction. The new building seen above, which now houses the Seabee Museum, was made possible through a \$12 million gift from the Seabee Historical Foundation to the Navy. This is only one of many reasons for us to support them—their newsletter consistently provides the latest information on what Seabees are doing today. They deserve our support.

CEC/Seabee Historical Foundation

P.O. Box 657

Gulfport, MS 39502-0657

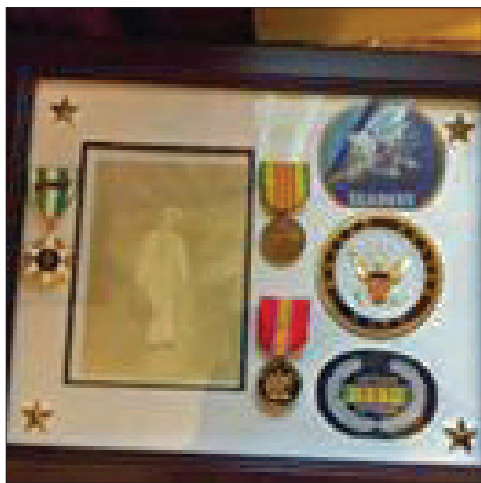
1-228-865-0480—info@seabeehf.org



*The Pentagon announced that its fight against ISIS will be called Operation Inherent Resolve. They came up with that name using Operation Random Thesaurus. —Jimmy Fallon*



*Mike Bonyng sitting proud.  
(If Mike was 10 years older all 3 would have the same haircut.)*



*48 years and my frame is finally done went through a car windshield uniform and medals were covered in my blood as I went through windshield 28 stitches and an extra 2 weeks added to my service. —James Stroud.*



*William Rahm. Another proud grandpa.*



*Walter Gilbertson back in the day.*

### **—Three & Four Vietnam Deployment Club—**

- LTJG Floyd Smith, 1967, 1968, 1969.
- LTJG Lou Drapeau, 1967, 1968, 1969.
- LTJG Lobera, 1967, 1968, 1969.
- LTJG Lou Beland, 1967, 1968, 1969.
- John Hampton. 1967, 68, 69.
- Larry Gordon, 3 deployments.
- Ken Bingham, 1967, 1968, 1969.
- \*John Hoogendoorn, 1967, 1968, 1969.

\*Ken, I served three deployments in Vietnam with MCB-8. I began with my first orders from boot camp, Great Lakes, Chicago, IL, in June, '67, with no additional training and landed in Chu Lai. Spent the remainder of the deployment and returned stateside with the battalion in fall of '67. I remained with MCB-8 on the last two deployments, '68 in Phu Bai, and '69 in Da Nang and Hue. When I returned to Port Hueneme in '69, the battalion was being decommissioned and I was assigned to Point Sur, CA until my tour was up. I was asked about re-upping and I asked where I would go. When I heard back to Vietnam, I said, "No thank you, three times is enough for me." —John Hoogendoorn, Electrician Lineman.



**T**HE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY will award the POW MEDAL to members of UCT-1 (*Underwater Construction Team-1*). Robert Dean Stethem (November 17, 1961 – June 15, 1985) was a United States Navy Seabee diver who was killed by Hezbollah militants during the hijacking of the commercial airliner he was aboard, TWA Flight 847. At the time of his death, his Navy rating was Steelworker Second Class (SW2). He was posthumously promoted to Master Chief Constructionman (CUCM).

**Note:** Next to Seabee Marvin G. Shields (MOH) at Dong Xoai, this is the most dramatic story that I have read by a Seabee in Vietnam. —*Ken B.*

## —THAT CRAZY AUSTRALIAN— Saving A Life And Gaining A Friend

*Story by JO2 Christine J. Caldwell*

8 July 1968

Dear Cdr. Quinn,

I received your most welcome letter and was pleased to hear you are up and going. When you speak of thanks for what you say saved your life, forget it. I would expect the same, and I know I would receive it from any one of you who shared our little adventure.

Six months earlier in Vietnam, two men, an Australian and an American, had met for the first—and last—time, and in a single day, a 19-year friendship began.

“I feel I owe him something. He saved my life. I didn’t do anything except cause him to risk his.”

The American—retired Capt. Robert E. Quinn, then a lieutenant commander and operations officer of the 32nd Naval Construction Regiment in Vietnam—was on a routine flight from Gia Le, headquarters of the 3rd Marine Division, to several camps of Marine and Army fighting units.

“An Army division had recently reinforced the 3rd Marine Division, and they needed more engineering support,” Quinn said. “I was escorting an Army engineer major and his sergeant major to each of these camps to determine what was needed and whether the Seabees or Army engineering units were best able to handle it.”

Quinn, the two soldiers, another passenger and six crewmen of an Army helicopter were flying to the first campsite, Camp Evans, when their aircraft was shot down in the southern suburbs of Hue.

“As we approached the city of Hue, we were hit. We were like sitting ducks in a firing range. I was so helpless.

Bullets came through the floor of the helicopter. The major was sitting in front of me. Two bullets went right through him and came out of his neck.”

The pilot landed the helicopter in a rice paddy near a South Vietnamese engineering unit’s compound.

“Unfortunately, the compound, at that moment, was under attack from the North forces who were in a line of bamboo trees on the other side of the rice paddy,” Quinn said. “We landed right between them. This crazy helicopter landed right in the middle of their little war.”

Minutes after they landed, a North Vietnamese soldier blew up the helo with a rocket. The two soldiers Quinn was escorting never got out of the helicopter, and everyone else, except the pilot, was wounded. Quinn’s left calf was blown off,

and he suffered hundreds of shrapnel wounds throughout his body—wherever his flak jacket didn’t cover him.

“When the helicopter exploded, all I knew was that my left leg suddenly went numb, and I was lying in the rice paddy with all that green slime oozing around. I couldn’t walk or run, so I had to crawl to the South Vietnamese compound.”

When all the helo’s survivors were safe in the compound, a medical evacuation chopper went in, and the men who could move on their own got on it first. According to Quinn, it was a full load, so the helo left. Quinn and an Army sergeant in the compound, who also could not move under his own power, were left behind.

“A second medevac chopper came in, and Army medics were running to get us when it started raining mortars. A mortar went off between me and a medic. It blew up and blinded the medic. The three of us were left behind because the minute the mortars started to come, the helicopter had to leave.”

During the first day, there were more efforts by medevac choppers, but every time the helos would get close, mortars would just start raining in, Quinn said.

The South Vietnamese compound was surrounded on three sides by six-to eight-story buildings which were occupied by the North Vietnamese.

“It was like being in a playground underneath an apartment building. They could look right in and see everything, and anybody who moved got shot at. Anytime a helicopter tried to come in, they would shoot at it and at the people in the compound. And, the ground troops in the bamboo trees could just lob mortars in,” Quinn said.

Unknown to Quinn and the soldiers, the day they left Gia Le was the first day of the Tet Offensive of 1968, a major attack by the North Vietnamese during which they captured the city of Hue.

“After the first couple of hours in that first day, rescue efforts stopped because we got lost in that mass confusion of the Tet Offensive.”

For two days, Quinn and the two soldiers tried to reach U.S. forces on the radio, but none of them knew the correct frequencies.

“We were stuck. We didn’t know who to get in touch with. We couldn’t tell anyone we were there. The South Vietnamese tried to get in touch with our people, but they didn’t have much success.”

An Australian, Army Warrant Officer Terry Egan, was advising a South Vietnamese fighting unit in Hue and heard the stranded Americans’ radio-calls.

“He learned there were some Amer....

—Continued in next newsletter



## —Update on the PUC for the 133rd NCB (Iwo Jima)—

We continue to work on behalf of the 133rd NCB (Iwo Jima) for the upgrade to the PUC (Presidential Unit Citation). Out of the 1,032 SEABEES that landed on D-Day Feb. 19, 1945, only about 75 are left. Before they are all gone please get involved and write your Congress-Person. —Ken B.

JULIA BROWNLEY  
26TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS  
<http://juliabrownley.house.gov>

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March 30, 2015

The Honorable Ray Mabus  
Secretary  
Department of the Navy  
1000 Navy Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20350-1000

Dear Secretary Mabus:

I write to respectfully request that the Department of the Navy review new evidence supporting an upgrade from the Naval Unit Commendation to the Presidential Unit Citation (PUC) for the 133rd Naval Construction Battalion (NCB) in World War II.

As you may know, the 133rd NCB, also known as the "Seabees", were integrated with the 4th Marine Pioneer Battalion, during the assault phase of the Iwo Jima campaign. While they fought together, side-by-side, the 133rd NCB did not receive the PUC that was awarded to the 4th Marine Pioneer Battalion; instead the 133rd NCB received the Naval Unit Commendation.

When I previously contacted the Navy about this discrepancy, I was informed that award decisions by the Secretary of the Navy are final and cannot be reconsidered unless new and relevant material evidence is presented that was not available at the time of the original decision.

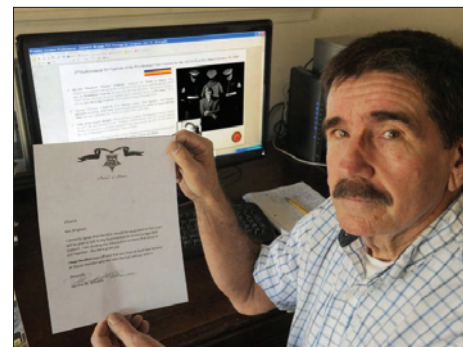
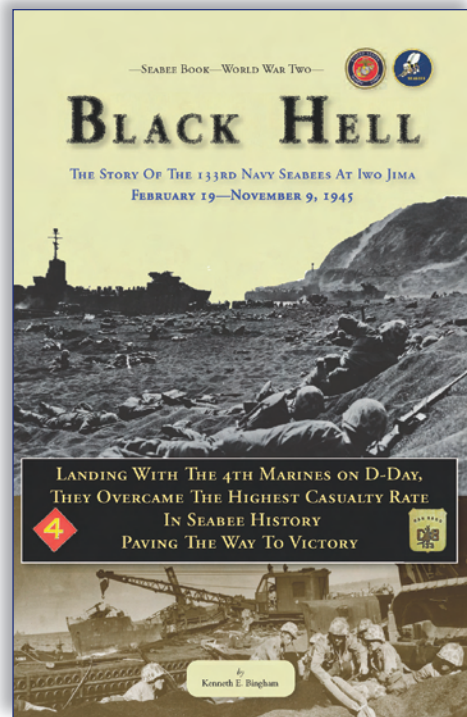
Attached is a new report supporting the upgrade from the Naval Unit Citation to the PUC for the 133rd NCB. The report includes written historical accounts from Marines who fought during the battle for Iwo Jima, as well as letters of support from senior battlefield commanders. I respectfully request that the Navy review these first-hand accounts, and give full and fair consideration to awarding the PUC to the Seabees who fought so valiantly and bravely for our nation in WWII.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. As the proud representative of Naval Base Ventura County, where the 133rd NCB trained, I fully support the efforts to give the 133rd all due recognition.

Sincerely,

JULIA BROWNLEY  
Member of Congress

Attachments



## On Iwo Jima Anniversary, One Fight Hasn't Ended

KEN BINGHAM HOLDS A COPY of a letter from Hershel Woodrow "Woody" Williams, the only surviving Medal of Honor Battle of Iwo Jima recipient, endorsing Bingham's effort to get an honor for the 133rd Seabees who landed on the island along with the Marines. Williams' photo and details are shown on the computer screen behind Bingham as part of a document he and others are compiling to help get the honor.

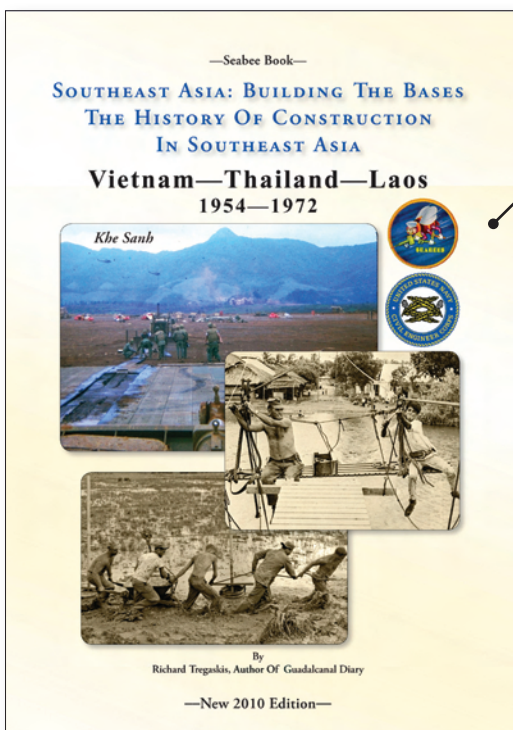
—By: Hannah Guzik, Ventura Star Newspaper.

*When I spotted a Navy captain on the street, I saluted and bellowed, "LST 395," which was the designation and number of the ship I served on during World War II.*

*The captain returned my salute and responded, "LMD 67."*

*"What's an LMD?" I asked.*

*"Large mahogany desk. —Michael Ciavolino*



**Southeast Asia: Building The Bases.**  
The History Of Seabee Construction in Vietnam. \$24.95

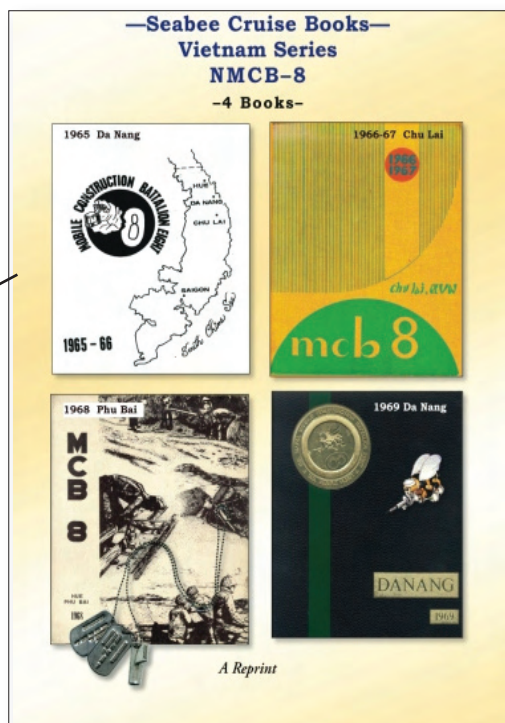
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New NMCB8 License Plate, designed and arranged by John Hoogendoorn.



New NMCB8 Assoc. Banner, designed and arranged by Jack Quinn Dennis.



New NMCB-8 Coins, designed and arranged by Rick Reese.

NMCB-8 Seabees' Association

1773 Tamarin Ave, Ventura Ca. 93003

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

To:



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



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## -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:

Ken Bingham, 1773 Tamarin Ave., Ventura Ca. 93003. If you have e-mail and want to make your update electronically, please do so.

Send updates by e-mail to; jorden2323@msn.com.

Thanks for your support!