



NMCB-8 NEWSLETTER



— U.S. NAVAL MOBILE CONSTRUCTION BATTALION EIGHT —

May, 2020

(Hunting And Gathering Will Commence On August 1, 2020)

— PRESIDENT'S COLUMN —

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

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

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

HARRY H 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



I HOPE EVERYONE IS SAFE in the midst of this corona virus. We have decided to postpone the Port Hueneme reunion this September/October till further notice [See alternative “All Seabee Reunion” on page 7 that Troy Branch helped organize.]

We intend on having our own MCB-8 reunion at Port Hueneme just as soon as it is safe and the base is open. Ron Sabattis and I plan to visit the Hotel accommodations and banquet facilities to provide the best available deals. Please keep in contact with the web site. I have been a little behind with the web site but everything is back on track.

Remember there is a lot of work that goes into the reunion. We need all hands to participate by making some phone calls to all our Seabee brothers and friends who may want to join us. Remember this is back at our base. It may be the last time we get back there. Please go to the web site where we will have all the reunion forms as soon as we get the official date. Fill out the Reunion paperwork and send it to Ron, as we need to get an early count for transportation and planning purposes.

I want to thank all our members for their support, and a special thanks to Ken Bingham. I hope everyone realizes the work and time he puts in with our newsletter and is a treasure to the organization. I also have been receiving many calls on the Member list. The password “8cando”

Our organization is a nonprofit corporation. As we lose members, our cost stays the same. Our biggest cost is the newsletter and mailing. I am asking any of our members if they could send a small donation to the group. Make the donation out to NMCB8 and send to Ken. *Ken Bingham, 1773 Tamarin Ave., Ventura Ca. 93003.* 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 form in this newsletter. —Arnie

If you have email and want to make your update

electronically, please do so. Send updates by email to; Ken B. jorden2323@msn.com

Celebrating THE Life OF

Roger Mechels

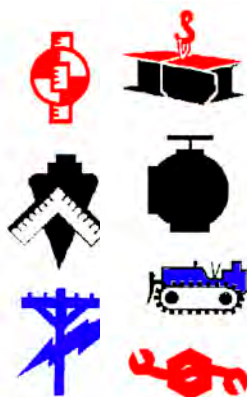
May 24, 1941 - August 11, 2018



—ROGER MECHEL—

Age 77, of Ramsey, MN, born May 24, 1941, passed away August 11, 2018. Preceded in death by his loving wife, Irma; parents, Edward & Ruth Mechels; brothers, Doug Mechels (survived by Lois) & David (Marge, also deceased) Mechels. Survived by children, Russell (Sandra) Mechels & Denise (Jeff) Harvey; grandchildren, Kallie Birkholz, Lainey Halstead, Joseph Mechels, Micheal, Matthew, and Jessica Haivey; great grandchildren, Xavier Pearson, Weston Granger, Lillyann & Malakai Harvey; brothers, Dean (Jerri) Mechels, Leonard (Nicel) Mechels, Dale (Gloria) Mechels; sister, Patricia (Lawrence) Nelson; brothers and sisters-in-law;

—Continued next page



—Continued from cover page

—ROGER MECHELS—

many nieces, nephews and special friend, Lynda Petrie. Roger graduated from Long Prairie High School in 1960. He proudly served his country in the United States Navy Seabees from 1961-1965, was a founding member of the Ham Lake Fire Department from 1969-1991 and retired from MNDOT as an Intermittent Supervisor from 1972-2007. Roger enjoyed socializing at their lake home, fishing, telling his life stories, and helping to care for his grandchildren.

Damaged Tractor. McMurdo Sound Antarctic Jan. 1963.



Tank Assembly. McMurdo Sound Antarctic Jan 1963.



Navy Buddies
Left to Right
Roger Mechels
Bob Mapel
Earl Day
at Navy SeaBee Museum
Approximately
Aug. '2000



Rte. 1 Vietnam, I Corps. (*Street With No Joy.*)



Naval base to rename main gate for fallen Seabee

Naval Base Ventura County Port Hueneme and the Naval Facilities Engineering and Expeditionary Warfare Center will honor a fallen Seabee by renaming the base's main gate in his honor.

The Sunkist Gate at Ventura Road and Sunkist Street will become

the Knott Gate in honor of fallen Seabee Steelworker 3rd Class Eric Knott.

Originally from the Nebraska community of Grand Island, Knott reported to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 4 in Port Hueneme. After his training, he was de-

ployed to Iraq, where he was killed by indirect fire on Sept. 4, 2004, while fabricating gate parts during Operation Iraqi Freedom. He was 21 years old.

The renaming of the gate — the main one at the base — will take place on March 5. [2019]

MEET THE SEABEE WHOSE BULLDOZER SMASHED A JAP PILLBOX...



Here on



AURELIO TASSONE MM1c HAS A STORY FOR YOU!

Note: John Wayne also did this in the movie "The Fighting Seabees."

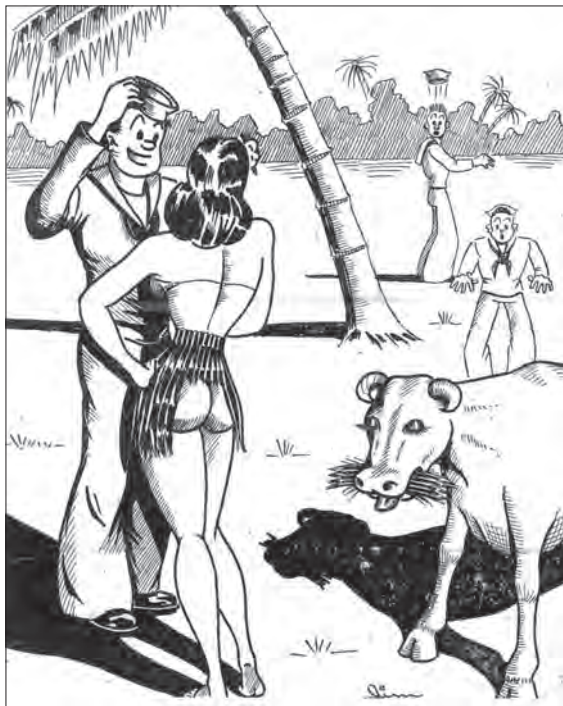


ON OCTOBER 27, 1943, a party of 8 Seabees and their commanding officer from Company A of Naval Construction Battalion (NCB) 87 landed by LST on the island of Mono, an hour after the assault on the island had begun. Mono Island is part of the Treasury Islands within the country of the Solomon Islands, and was considered key to the planned invasion of Bougainville, 28 miles to the north. Company A landed with two bulldozers and a jeep, which they were to use to cut a road along the jungle beach. They were accompanied by an engineering reconnaissance group of 25 men from Headquarters Company, and assigned to the Eighth New Zealand Brigade, which was engaged in heavy fighting upon their arrival.

The assault troops were bombarded by enemy bombing, mortar and machine gun fire, and were taking a heavy toll from the Japanese. In particular, a well-concealed and strongly built Japanese pillbox containing a cannon and machine guns was constructed near the position of the LST, and holding up advance from the beach. The party of Seabees was led by Lt. Charles E. Turnbull, who ordered Machinists Mate First Class Aurelio Tassone to engage the pillbox with his 24-ton, D-8 bulldozer. Tassone raised the blade on his bulldozer to act as a shield, and made the slow approach to the pillbox. Lt. Turnbull followed on foot, 10 feet to the side and behind the dozer, and armed with a carbine to provide covering fire. Under continuous heavy fire, Tassone drove his bulldozer toward the pillbox and lowered the blade, tearing into and crushing the barricade, covering its occupants with tons of earth and logs. For their actions and bravery, Turnbull and Tassone were later awarded the Silver Star.—*Navy³Museum*



Aurelio Tassone and Lt. Charles E. Turnbull atop the D-8 dozer, which Tassone named "Helen" after his wife



WW II Cartoon from the CAN DO News.



Basecamp

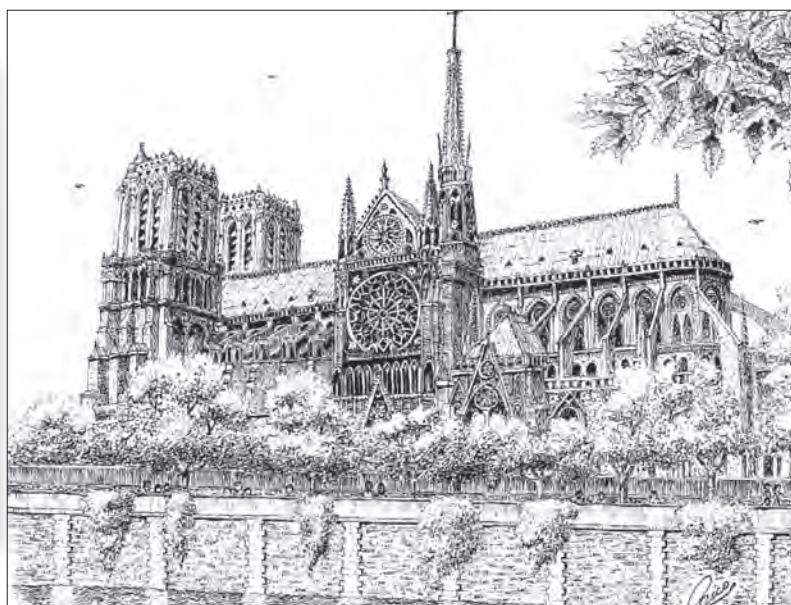
"Boots On The Ground?"

Your editor Ken Bingham, Sunday afternoon off—Danang RVN 1969

Regarding Joe Henley

1 January 2020

My father is/was very proud of being a Seabee. Even in a small southern Indiana town, he managed to find 3 or 4 other Seabees to swap stories with. Unfortunately, he can no longer enjoy reading the NMCB-8 Newsletter so please remove him from your mailing list. However, ~~this~~ CAN DO spirit will never be removed!
Laura Henley. (daughter)



NOTRE DAME ARTISTRY BY RICK CLARK, ARTIST/ARCHITECT.

Restoring an Icon

Alexander Number Three, a Pope of much renown
Laid the stone in River Seine in midst of Paris town
Eleven Sixty Three it was, the dawn of Gothic pride
Notre Dame of Paris, France . . . as regal as a bride
Two hundred years of sweat and toil brought forth a jewel sublime
Rose windows & her buttress arms appeared before their time
Emperor Napoleon was crowned as France's guide
Quasimoto rang her bells and Esmeralda sighed
An Iron image it became, eight centuries to shine
Then tragic fires spread through her roof of ancient oak and pine
When restored she'll gleam again for every girl and boy
We pray you'll have a cheerful time, this season of great joy.

*Rick & Nilsa Clark
2019*



The Seabee insignia was created by Frank J. Lafrate (left) in 1942, who at the time was a file clerk at the Naval Air Station in Quonset Point, RI.

Hi KEN, RON AND ARNIE, hope you are doing well. We are in uncharted waters and I think it is a time that we all take time to pray for guidance. One of our ministers sent a prayer for us to pray. Maybe you could get this out to our members.

Billy

Please continue to PRAY for those who are sick and those who are caring for the sick. Look for opportunities to SERVE others in need around you and seek God to help you be aware but not anxious, prepared but not panicked, and trusting in faith and not fear. Think about all the opportunities God has given you to exemplify the fruit of the Spirit right now as we plow through this pandemic! LOVE those around you. Find the JOY in all things. Be the PEACE in the craziness. Have PATIENCE with all people in all things. Show KINDNESS to those you come in contact with. Be GOOD to those who need it. Have SELF CONTROL in all things. FAITHFULNESS AND GENTLENESS are necessities in the mix. Some will be tough, but we got this!!

—Billy Boggs

53rd NCB 1946

SEABEES WITH THE 53RD NCB constructing a tower to hold an automatic camera as part of Operation Crossroads. The towers were built on an island near Bikini Atoll to document the Atomic Bomb explosion. Photo courtesy of U.S. Navy Seabee Museum.

The Bikini Atoll in the Pacific's Marshall Islands was the test site where the U.S. military released two atomic bombs in the summer of 1946.

The project, dubbed Operation Crossroads, required 42,000 men (37,000 Navy personnel); a combination of sea, air, and land units; and a small contingent of civilian scientists who ultimately made up Joint Task Force 1. The tests were planned to study the effects on ships, equipment, material, animals, and sea life. Before the fleet of men arrived, an advanced party of Seabees from the 53rd Naval Construction Battalion (53rd NCB) arrived in March to conduct the initial survey for the mission. They determined only essential buildings and facilities were required and constructed instrument towers, radio beacons, magazines, photo reference crosses, observation towers, seismic huts, bombing targets, and a recreational space with a max occupancy of 7,000 personnel.

The Seabees were present in every step of the process to ensure all administrative tasks were on course. In August, the 53rd NCB was disbanded and members transferred to Construction Battalion Detachment 1156 to help with cleanup operations.



Modern Seabee At Falluja Iraq



Seabee Carlos Hernandez showing the ropes to an Iraqi.



WW II Seabee Recruiting Truck

BOOK FOREWORD.

“RIGG HAS DONE SOMETHING most authors of ‘war stories’ are totally incapable of doing in *Flamethrower*...he has neatly tied all three levels of conflict into a single package (i.e. tactical, operational and strategic) and done so in a magnificent manner...And in the cases of both General Kuribayashi and Corporal Williams (the two main characters of the book), as with every combatant on Iwo Jima, Rigg shows that neither was a saint nor a sinner. Each had his own flaws that have been masterfully researched and documented by the author.”

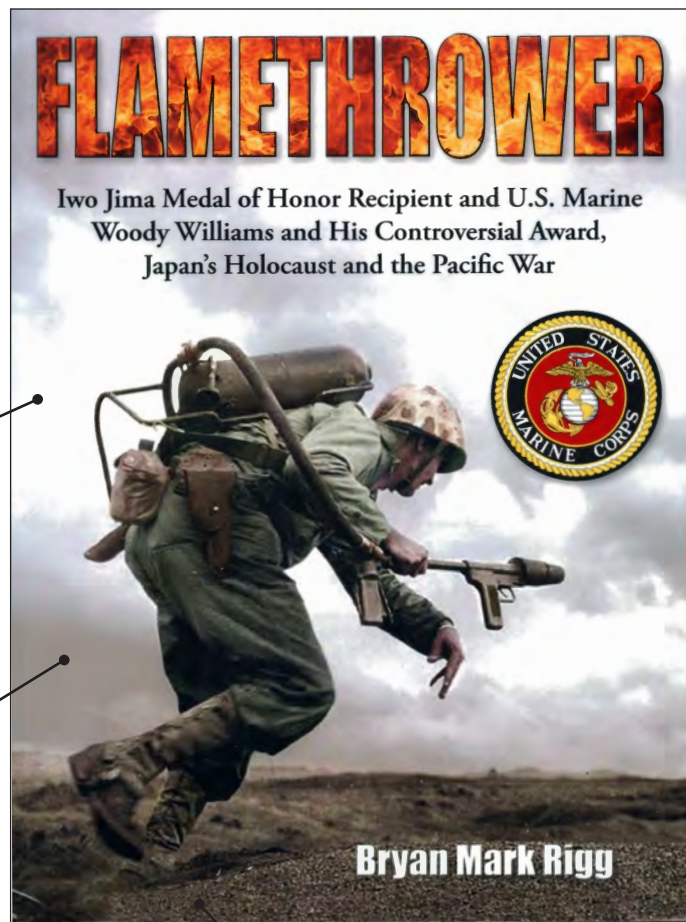
—USMC 31st Commandant, General Charles C. Krulak (1995-1999), author of *Operational Maneuver from the Sea* and godson of Lieutenant General Holland M. “Howlin Mad” Smith.

[Note: MCB 8's deployment (1965/66) was to Chu Lai Vietnam. Chu Lai in Manderin Chinese means Krulak—thus General Victor Krulak named Chu Lai after himself. (There was no name for that area before the U.S. arrived) —kb]

BOOK FOREWORD.

RIGG'S BOOK *FLAMETHROWER* is insightful and reaches deep on many levels into the history of WWII—in context of the island hopping campaign in the Pacific. Rigg guides us into the history, culture, psychology (and pathology) and philosophy of the two opposing sides—the fanatical Japanese army against the unbeatable U.S. Marines. Rigg explains the *painful bravery* of men in battle with uncanny and unflinching detail and background ... The main player ... is the MOH recipient, Woody Williams—the now last surviving medal of honor recipient from Iwo Jima. Rigg brings the colorful personal history of the brave Marine-flamethrower Woody to life in a special way—from the farm, to boot camp, Guam, Iwo Jima and back again—all very compelling. One of the legacies Rigg gives us in his book, is the undeniable necessity and rightness of the atomic bombings. There was no other ethical way of ending the war with the Japanese. He explains it all very well—and to me it's the last definitive word about Iwo Jima.

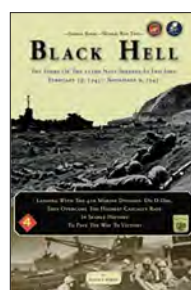
—Kenneth E. Bingham, author *Black Hell: The Story of the 133rd Seabees that landed with the 4th Marine Div. on Iwo Jima*



—GREAT READING—

This is a great history book and SEABEES are mentioned in several places. —kb

For ordering, go to: Amazon Books



—WW II SEABEE/MARINES—

“SEABEE BATTALIONS WERE SOMETIMES REDESIGNATED AS MARINE CORPS BATTALIONS, AND WORE MARINE CORPS UNIFORMS WITH US NAVY SEABEE INSIGNIA. BELOW IS A LIST OF THE SEABEE-MARINES.

1st Naval Construction Detachment (Bobcats): 3rd Battalion, 22th Marine Regiment
 18th NCB: 3d Battalion 18th Marines (Engineer Regiment) – 2d Marine Division
 19th NCB: 3 d Battalion, 17th Marines (Engineer Regiment) –1st Marine Division
 25th NCB: 3d Battalion, 19th Marines (Engineer Regiment) – 3d Marine Division
 121st NCB: 3d –Battalion, 20th Marines (Engineer Regiment) – 4 th Marine Division
 142nd NCB: 3 rd Battalion, 16th Marines (Engineer Regiment) –5th Marine Division
 53rd NCB: Naval Construction Battalion, 1st Marine Amphibious Corps.



WW II SEABEE/MARINE in Marine Uniform.

(Note: CB insignia above Marine insignia)

INDIVIDUAL GROUPS SPONSER BY NSVA DEPT. OF TENNESSEE

ALL SEABEE REUNION

REGISTRATION FORM (1)

PIGEON FORGE, TN

25 OCTOBER – 29 OCTOBER 2020



Member Name: _____

Guest Name: _____

Home Address: _____

Phone Number (s): _____

Email Address: _____

Emergency Contact:: _____

Planned Arrival: _____ Planned Departure: _____

Please read and sign the following:

I understand that the 2020 reunion is a non-alcohol sponsored event. Any alcoholic drinks that I purchase during the four-day event from the hotel, caterers or other sources will be at my own discretion. I agree to hold harmless the SVA Department of Tennessee, its directors, officers, reunion planners, and membership for any and all acts, or consequences from my conduct or the conduct of my guests. I also authorize the release of all photos of the event for future publications by the association. All weapons are prohibited from all functions. I further understand that all meals are at my expense.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Using Registration Form #2 and Make checks payable to: NSVA Dept. of TN

Mail completed forms 1 & 2 with payment to: Harry Ray McPeek
P.O. Box 5454
Sevierville, TN 37864-5454

For additional information, please contact: Harry Ray McPeek, 865-776-1051;
Troy Branch 865-924-9023; David Howard 972-837-3919

If this is a Change of Information, check here ()

Please fill-in everything, it will be used to update our Roster.

NSVA DEPT. OF TENNESSEE - ALL SEABEE REUNION

REGISTRATION FORM (2) - GROUP CODE SVA 20

PIGEON FORGE, TN

25 OCTOBER - 29 OCTOBER 2020

Grand Smokies Resort Lodge

2385 Parkway * Pigeon Forge, TN

1.800.843.6686 * 865.453.4106

www.SmokiesLodge.com

****Contact Lodge for Reservations****

Make checks payable to NSVA Dept. of TN

Name: _____

Positions held/Island: _____

Spouse/Guest Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email Address: _____ Contact Phone Number: _____

Special Needs? _____

Here is the Flyer for
The Resort

YOU MIGHT MENTION
THAT MYSELF + RAY
MCPECK WERE THE
ONES THAT DID THE
2006 + 2008 REUNIONS
WE WILL HAVE OUR
OWN HOSPITALITY ROOM
MLB & RAY WAS ALSO
IN MCB 121 WHO WILL
JOIN US AS WELL AS ALL
SEA BEES — Troy Branch

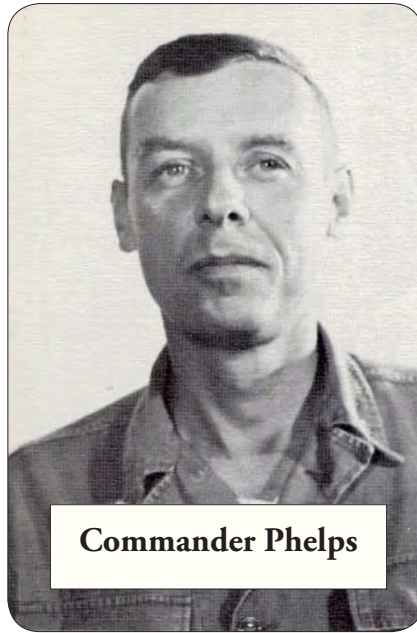
| DATE | REGISTRATION DEADLINE 21 OCTOBER 2020 | COST | #OF PEOPLE | TOTAL COST |
|------|--|--|------------|-------------|
| | Grand Smokies Resort Lodge | \$50.45 per night, including Tax (Pay Hotel) | | |
| | Hotel Breakfast Buffet purchase at the Hotel Desk Open 0800 to 1100 | \$9.75 Ea. including tax | | (Pay Hotel) |
| | Wednesday Banquet Dinner - Hickory Smoked Pulled Pork or Bar-B-Que Chicken Salad, Baked Potato, Country Fried Orka, Bread and Rolls, Desert: Blackberry Cobbler with topping | \$20.00Ea. | | |
| | FOR PRICING DISCOUNT MUST USE REUNION — **GROUP CODE SVA 20** | | | |
| | 50/50 Tickets - \$1.00 ea. Or String of 6 Tickets - \$5.00 | | | |
| | Convention Registration Fee Pay to NSVA DEPT. OF TN | \$15.00 Ea. | | |

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$

Please make checks payable to: **NSVA DEPT. OF TN**
PO BOX 5454
SEVIERVILLE TN 37864-5454



—FROM THE MCB-8 CRUISE BOOK—
DANANG VIETNAM 1965

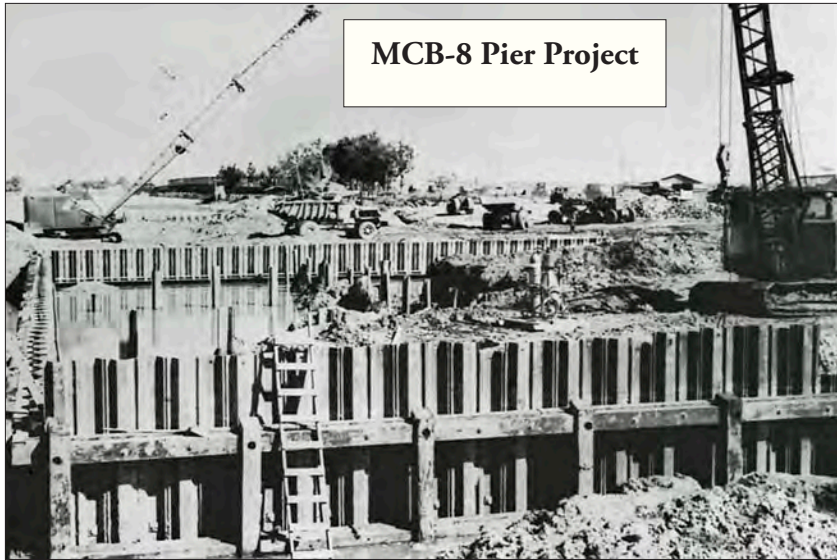


Commander Phelps

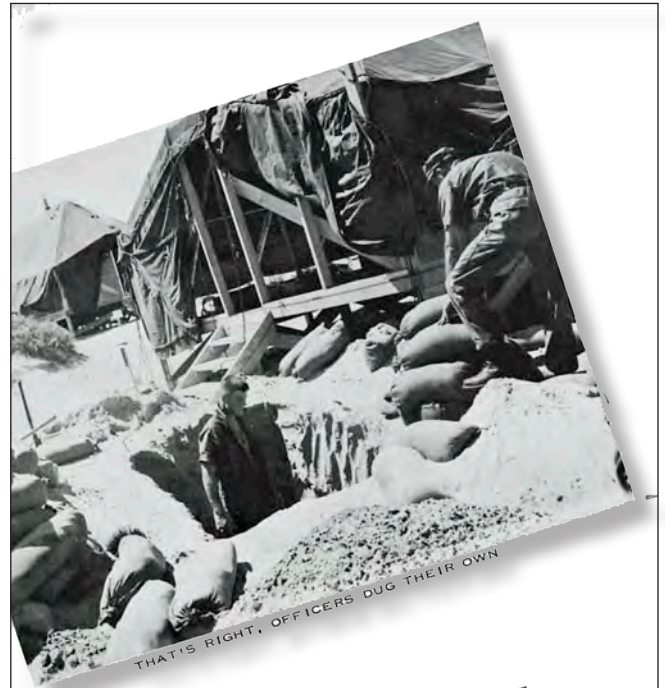


CUSTOMS AND THEN

Note: M14's. Next 3 Deployment used M16's.



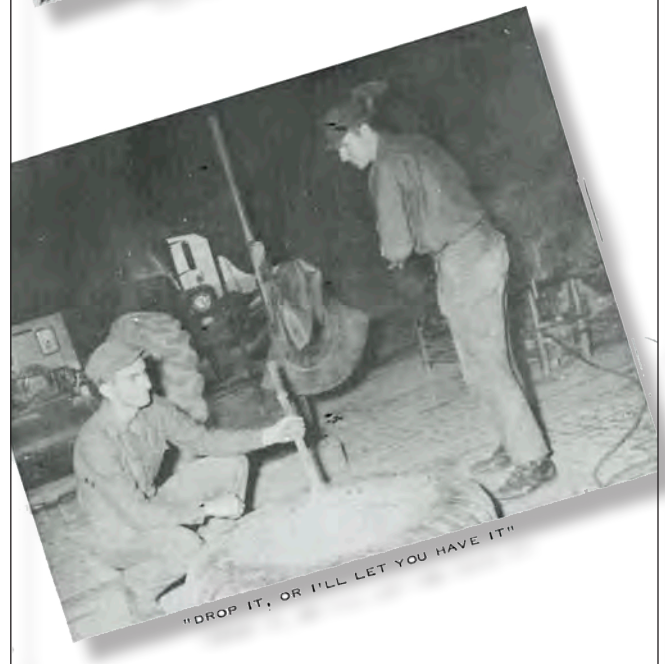
MCB-8 Pier Project



THAT'S RIGHT, OFFICERS DUG THEIR OWN



Blown Bridge needs Fixing.



"DROP IT, OR I'LL LET YOU HAVE IT"

—FROM THE WW II 8TH NCB CRUISE BOOK—ALASKA AND IWO JIMA—



W. T. POWERS
Commander C.E.C.
U.S.N.R.
Officer-in-Charge



WW II, 8th NCB,
Dutch Harbor

UNALASKA AND THE "U. S. S. BOTTLENECK"

Anyone who has ever even made a stopover at Dutch Harbor will have no trouble remembering the ferry crossing from the "Sheep Ranch" side of Amaknak Island to Unalaska. The ferry was nothing more than a barge, pulled and guided by cables, which almost invariably had a long line of vehicles waiting on either bank for its service. The distance between shores could not have been more than 200 feet, but so much time was lost waiting for the ferry that it soon came to be known as the "U.S.S. Bottleneck."

Our main reason for using the ferry was to get to the town of Unalaska. This town, the largest in the Aleutians, had a pre-war population of almost 3000. Most of the populace had been Aleuts; they had been evacuated a week after we arrived.



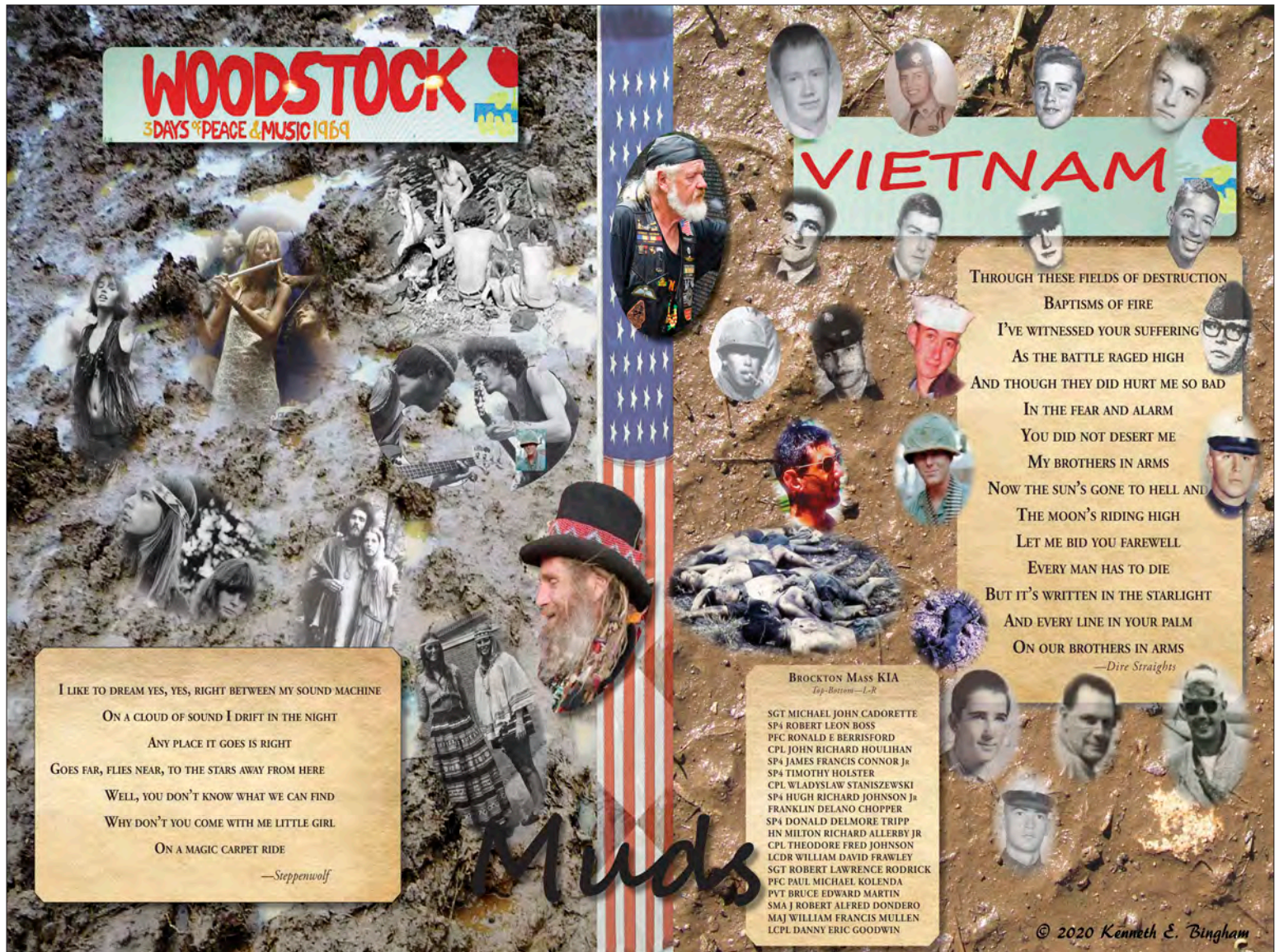
Marston Matting

WW II, 8th NCB,
Building out Iwo Jima



WW II, 8th NCB,
Building out Iwo Jima





Above, Honoring My Home Town Vietnam KIA Vets (19) Brockton Mass.

During one of our first reunions, Commanding Officer P. A. Phelps (1966-67), gave a speech contrasting the MUD in VIETNAM versus the MUD in WOODSTOCK. I never forgot his message —*kb*



A U.S. Navy artist's depiction of Seabees erecting tents on cold, windswept Adak Island in the Aleutian Chain as P-38s and B-25s fly in the distance. Here the 12th Construction Battalion created roads, airfields, sewers, floating drydocks, base housing, and other facilities.

**“UNHAPPINESS IS THE HUNGER TO GET.
HAPPINESS IS THE HUNGER TO GIVE.”**
Majesty of Calmness by William George Jordan 1898

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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



*By Artist/Architect
Rick Clark.*

