

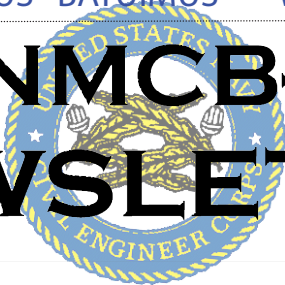
1942

CONSTRUIMUS BATUIMUS —"WE BUILD, WE FIGHT"

1969



NMCB-8 NEWSLETTER



— U.S. NAVAL MOBILE CONSTRUCTION BATTALION EIGHT —

June, 2026

Next Reunion—September 21–24, 2026. Colorado Springs, CO

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



IT SEEMS THAT EVERY TIME I GET TO TEL AVIV, it is time for another Seabee letter. I am back here inspecting another Boeing 777 freighter conversion aircraft. My job itself is not too difficult, but getting here and back is the hard part. Years ago, it seemed easier flying to Vietnam in a bucket seat than it does now flying business class with a full bed, hot meals, wine, champagne, and television. I suppose getting older has something

to do with that.

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

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

I recently spoke with Ken, and we are hoping for a strong turnout at our next reunion with MCB-11. Once again, I want to thank Larry for all the work he does for our MCB-8 group. Please visit the website for detailed reunion information.

I know the costs of airline tickets, hotels, and travel in general have gone up, and many of us are on tight budgets. Travel also becomes more difficult as we get older. Still, the reward of being with our old outfit is worth it. For a few days, we are back among friends, sharing the camaraderie that has stayed with us through the years. In some ways, it makes us feel young again. Less than one percent of the population serves in uniform. That service creates a strong and lasting sense of pride, especially for those of us who served as Seabees.

Our next reunion with MCB-11 will be held in Colorado Springs, Colorado, September 21–24, 2026. Please make every effort to attend. We especially encourage members in the Colorado area to participate. Even if you cannot attend, please consider calling a fellow Seabee and encouraging him to reconnect with the group.

Registration forms are posted on the website. Please register early so we can get an accurate count. If you need assistance, contact me at 562-760-8314, Pacific Time. I am available any day, at any time.

Reunion information is available through the MCB-11 Association and NMCB-8 website. Ken and I are also working on providing financial assistance to members who would like to attend but may need some help with the cost. If you need assistance, please send me an email at adcicerone@gmail.com, and we will see what we can do.

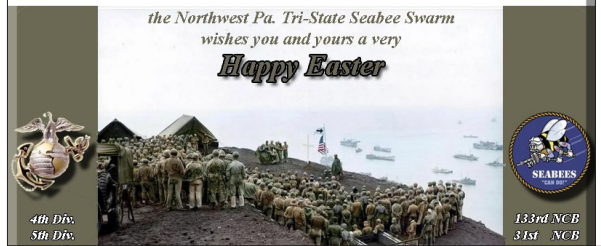
For members who are financially able to help, please consider sending a donation to Ken for this purpose. Remember, your donation is tax deductible. —Arnie



Dear Ken,

I should've sent this email five years ago to let you know that Dr. Jim Smith passed away on April 7, 2021. He had Alzheimer's. He was very proud of being part of MCB8 end of his service in Vietnam. He had good memories of all the men that he served with including you. I have enjoyed reading the newsletters for MCB8 but it's time to take Jim off of your list to save postage and printers ink! —*Best regards, Judy Smith.*

In April of 1945, Marines & Seabees attend Easter Sunday services atop Mount Suribachi provided by Chaplain Alvo Martin on Iwo Jima



Hi Ken,

My name is Steve Drapeau and my Dad, Louis Drapeau, served with NMCB-8 in Vietnam.

I found your info on the NMCB-8 online newsletter, and since it looks like you're in Ventura where my Dad is from, I figured I would contact you.

6 years ago my Dad was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. However, he has been doing extremely well, comparatively. But, he has difficulty remembering certain events, of course, and communicating (finding words, expressing thoughts).

He never spoke much about his time in Vietnam, though I did hear a few stories, and he was extremely proud of his service. I always wanted to ask more questions, but now it's become too late.

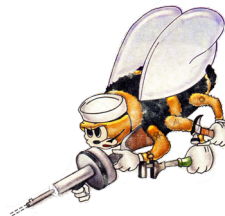
So, I'm looking to connect with anyone that served with him, just to hear more about the deployments, etc.

I'm hoping he would be willing to attend the reunion this year, but again, he has a hard time socializing with the challenges in communication that are present.

In any case, thank you in advance.

All the best,

Steve Steven Drapeau <sddrapeau@gmail.com>



My father, Louis Drapeau was born in Fort Smith, AR in 1944, where his father was stationed there in the Army. He was raised in Ventura, CA and graduated from Ventura High School in 1962. He went on to attend Stanford University where he majored in Mechanical Engineering.

Graduating in 1966, he joined the Navy Seabees where he spent 4 years and deployed to Chu Lai in 1967, Phu Bai in 1968, and Danang in 1969. He is extremely proud to have served with MCB-8, and often speaks of the "Can Do" spirit that was exemplified by all those he served with. He still wears the Rolex he purchased during R&R in Thailand too!

After his time in the Navy, he took the same "Can Do" spirit and applied it to the 2 years he spent at Stanford Business School, along with his subsequent 30 year career at Arthur Andersen in San Francisco. After Arthur Andersen, he spent 20 years in various financial roles in the Bio-tech industry.

He has always loved the outdoors, cycling, Civil War history, and keeping his 1995 Dodge Ram in tip-top shape. For the past 6 years, he has enjoyed traveling all over the world—from Japan to Africa and back. I was fortunate enough to travel with him to Normandy this past April to see WWII history firsthand.

"When the going gets tough, the tough get going" is what he used to say to me growing up, and nobody I have ever met exemplifies this and the "Can Do" spirit more than him. Cheers!



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



JUDGE'S GRANDSON HONORED

Lt. (j.g.) Louis C. Drapeau III, a third generation Ventura County resident, salutes Rear Adm. William Heaman after receiving the Navy Commendation Medal Thursday at the Seabee Center at Port Hueneme, The

lieutenant is the son of Louis Drapeau Jr., and grandson of Justice Louis Drapeau, a retired Appellate Court judge now an acting Superior Court judge in Ventura.

Attention: I believe that we are missing from our records a MCB8 Seabee that was killed during our 1967 Chu Lai Deployment. A split rim tire exploded in the A company shop leading to massive head injuries. He didn't use the required tire cage thus causing his death.

Do you know his name and have information about him? If so, please email it to me.

Ken Bingham, jorden2323@msn.com.

I put the above query in the last Newsletter. Here's what I received, below:

The person killed was actually a ROK Marine attached temporarily to MCB-8 to recover from his wounds.

Ken, I hope you are doing well. I just received your newsletter and thank you very much. Great job as always. Please feel free to send me my newsletter by email to bandclerke@gmail.com.

I was surprised to learn at our Pensacola Florida reunion that 2/3 of the Vietnam veterans are now deceased. Such a very high mortality rate. I'm sure you're keeping as busy as always. If you ever get the Florida give me a call. Best regards, Bill Clerke

Dear Ken,

Please e-mail the NMCB 8 Newsletter to me in the future. You and the rest of the crew are doing a great job and I always enjoy reading the different articles.

Fondly, Patty Patterson (*Wife of Joe Patterson.*)

RON DIVIN: I was on Hill 55 in '68 when at night the NVA blew the river bridge providing support to Hill 37 which they were attempting to overrun. The ensuing combat was intense but that is not my story. Literally prior to dawn the CBs came in on trucks and big choppers with huge equipment and timber allowing tanks, ammo trucks and infantry to cross in support of Hill 37 by early evening that same day. I was on the Hill 37 side of the river where we were providing fire cover and communication. The CB's did not flinch or stop under mortar, rocket and small arms fire doing their tasking in good order. They even made sure my squad had water, ammo and sea rations to last the next day and night. The tankers and supplies got through and my unit was sent to the base of Hill 37 to block the NVA - after two days and one night all was good. The CBs came right with us using their heavy equipment to generate cover.

Bottom line, IMO = CB's have 'green blood' just like Marines!

CAUTION: NOT TO BE USED FOR IDENTIFICATION PURPOSES		ANY ALTERATIONS IN SHADED AREAS RENDER FORM VOID	
CORRECTION TO DD FORM 214, CERTIFICATE OF RELEASE OR DISCHARGE FROM ACTIVE DUTY This Report Contains Information Subject to the Privacy Act of 1974. As Amended.			
1. NAME (Last, First, Middle)	2. DEPARTMENT, COMPONENT AND BRANCH	3. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (Also, Service Number if applicable)	
BINGHAM, KENNETH EDWARD	NAVY-USN	### ## 3818	
4. MAILING ADDRESS (Include ZIP Code)			
7657 LEMUR ST VENTURA CA 93003			
5. ORIGINAL DD FORM 214 IS CORRECTED AS INDICATED BELOW:			
ITEM NO.	CORRECTED TO READ		
24.	SEPARATION DATE ON DD FORM 214 BEING CORRECTED: 03 12 69 SER: 62980-26-6168-IGP// SERVICE NUMBER: B11 49 36// COMBAT ACTION RIBBON, NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION, MERITORIOUS UNIT COMMENDATION, NATIONAL DEFENSE SERVICE MEDAL, VIETNAM SERVICE MEDAL with/FLEET MARINE FORCE COMBAT OPERATION INSIGNIA, REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM MERITORIOUS UNIT CITATION (GALLANTRY CROSS COLOR with PALM), REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM MERITORIOUS UNIT CITATION (CIVIL ACTIONS FIRST CLASS with PALM), REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM CAMPAIGN MEDAL (with 1960 device)//		
	X	X	X

1. Combat Action Ribbon
2. Navy Unit Commendation
3. Meritorious Unit Commendation
4. National Defense Service Medal
5. Vietnam Service Medal with Fleet Marine Force Combat Operation Insignia
6. Republic of Vietnam Meritorious Unit Citation, Gallantry Cross Color with Palm
7. Republic of Vietnam Meritorious Unit Citation, Civil Actions First Class with Palm
8. Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with 1960 device

I recently asked the government to update my DD-214 to include any medals I, and MCB8, may have earned during my three Vietnam deployments with MCB-8: Chu Lai, Phu Bai, and Da Nang, from 1966 to 1969.

My goal was simply to gather my military history for posterity and for my family history. I was surprised to learn how many awards were connected to our MCB-8 deployments.

I am listing them here so other members who deployed during those years will know what they may also be entitled to.

I do not know which specific years each medal represents, since the records I received did not list the years. I listed them on the right(above) for your convenience.

My next step is to actually get the physical medals—if they exist anymore.

Vietnam-Era Awards and Ribbons	
1. Navy and Marine Corps Combat Action Ribbon Ribbon only; no medal.	
2. Navy Unit Commendation Ribbon only; no medal.	
3. Navy Meritorious Unit Commendation Ribbon only; no medal.	
4. National Defense Service Medal Ribbon and medal.	 
5. Vietnam Service Medal with Fleet Marine Force Combat Operation Insignia Ribbon and medal; FMF combat device shown on ribbon.	 
6. Republic of Vietnam Meritorious Unit Citation, Gallantry Cross Color with Palm Unit citation ribbon only; no medal.	
7. Republic of Vietnam Meritorious Unit Citation, Civil Actions First Class with Palm Unit citation ribbon only; no medal.	
8. Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with 1960 Device Ribbon and medal.	 

Note: Item 1 is the Navy/Marine Corps Combat Action Ribbon. Unit citations are shown as ribbons; medals are shown where applicable.

MCB/NMCB 8 was awarded the **Navy Unit Commendation** for outstanding service in Vietnam during 1966-1967. During this period, the battalion performed vital construction and



support work for U.S. forces, including major work at Chu Lai, where the Seabee camp was later known as Camp Miller. Members of MCB/ NMCB 8 who were assigned to the battalion and present during the cited award period are authorized to wear the Navy Unit Commendation ribbon permanently. Those who joined the battalion after the cited period would not normally wear it as a personal entitlement unless their records show they qualified."

—I Hope That The Above Helps You.—
Ken Bingham, Editor, Treasurer



Colonel John Walter Ripley will posthumously be awarded the Medal of Honor.

A life defined by service, leadership, and an unwavering commitment to mission is being formally recognized for actions taken during the Vietnam War.

As a senior advisor to the 3rd Vietnamese Marine Corps Infantry Battalion near Dong Ha, South Vietnam, then-Captain Ripley faced a rapidly advancing North Vietnamese offensive in April 1972. Recognizing that a key bridge over the Cua Viet River had to be destroyed to slow the attack, he repeatedly climbed beneath the bridge while under continuous enemy fire to emplace hundreds of pounds of explosives.

Hanging from the bridge's steel girders for hours, Ripley positioned and prepared the charges before successfully destroying the span. His actions helped blunt the enemy advance and provided critical time for South Vietnamese forces to regroup and defend the region.

Known to generations of Marines as "Ripley at the Bridge," his actions became an enduring example of courage, initiative, and selfless service.

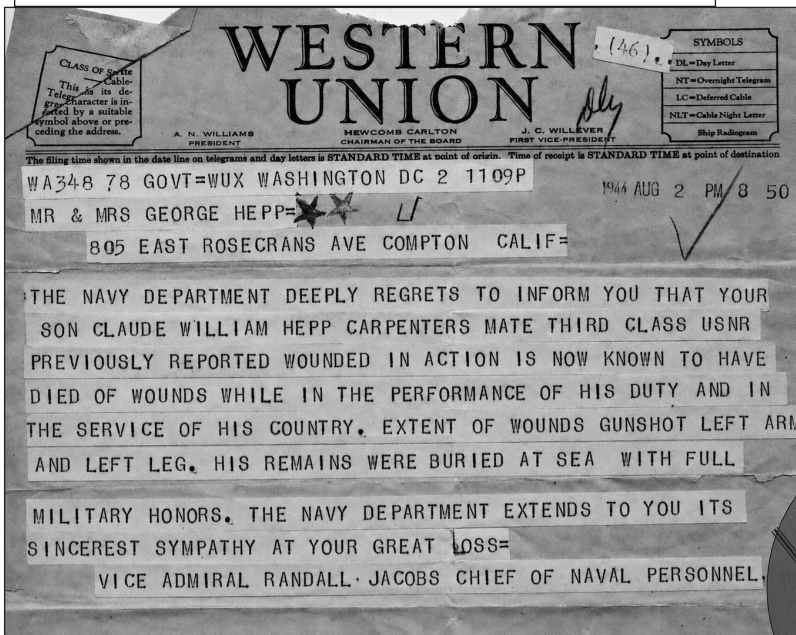
Dear Ken,

My name is Victor Johns. I joined the MCB-8 in the spring of 1964 and became the Company Clerk of C Company for about a year. My first deployment was to Spain. I had to request a Captain's Mass to get into the field to do my rate as a builder. It took two seamen to fulfil the tasks of Company Clerk, after training both of them for three weeks.

I came back to the U.S. in December of 1964, at that time there was no way any person should cross the Northern Atlantic Ocean by ship. My next deployment was to the Advanced Party, and we (my unit) were never told where we were going. We were issued rifles, ammo, and equipment. We became the first battalion from the East Coast, specifically Davisville R.I, to enter Vietnam in the summer of 1965. We returned around May of 1966. While I was in Vietnam, I passed the E-5 exam, but at that time it was required to have a year remaining. I did not, and I was not going to extend the 6 month to receive it. I separated in August 21, 1966.

Unfortunately I cannot go to the Reunion, as I cannot sit that long on an airplane, and I lost my wife 3 months ago. I have donated the MCB-8 plaque and some Vietnamese currency to the Seabee Museum at Port Hueneme, which they graciously accepted. I have spent the remainder of my life in Alaska and have worked as a General Contractor for 41 years.

Additionally, please drop me from the mailing list for getting the hard copy of the Newsletter, as I receive them digitaly in my email. —*Respectfully, Victor L. Johns*



TOP: *The Seabees built that bridge—sure was a robust one.* kb

In Memory of Claude W. Hepp, 18th Seabees, 2nd Marine Division. Severely wounded by Gunshot to Arm and leg, on Saipan, D-Plus-2, Later died of wounds aboard a Hospital Ship. Buried at Sea. REST IN PEACE!



A Seabee Marine. There were many Seabees that wore the Marine uniform—kb

You Served, They Could Benefit.



The Navy Seabee Foundation offers exclusive opportunities for the children and grandchildren of those who served in the esteemed Naval Construction Forces, including Seabees and Civil Engineer Corps (CEC) Officers. Seabee Scholarships can be used for a four-year bachelor's degree, a two-year associate's degree, or a technical education (CTE) program, our scholarships are tailored to support their aspirations. Eligibility includes active duty, reserve, retired, and honorably discharged members.

Contact

**P.O. Box 391
Springfield, VA 22150
Phone: 703-690-7672**

—Donation— Address

**PO Box 657
Gulfport, MS 39502**

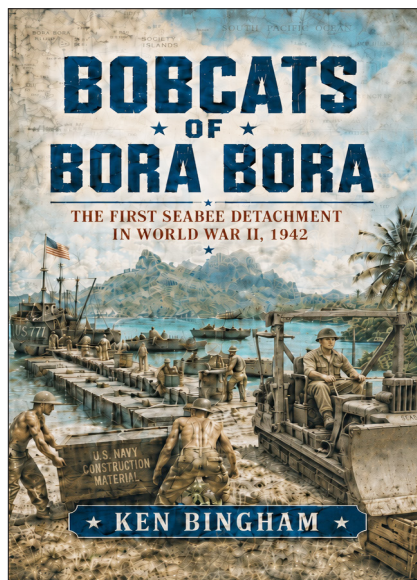
WW II

THE BOBCATS AT BORA BORA

OPERATION BOBCAT, THE FIRST SEABEE DETACHMENT, AND THE PACIFIC LOGISTICS WAR

A BASE WHERE THERE HAD BEEN NONE

THE FOLLOWING IS AN ABRIDGED EXCERPT FROM A SECTION OF THE BOOK I AM PREPARING FOR PUBLICATION.



When American forces arrived at Bora Bora in February 1942, the island offered a beautiful lagoon and a serious military problem. Its reef-protected anchorage could shelter ships, but there was no modern harbor, no heavy road system, no cranes ashore, and no developed waterfront ready to receive the parts of a naval base. The island had strategic value precisely because of where it sat in the South Pacific. The United States needed to protect the long ocean road to Australia at a time when Japanese advances had shaken Allied confidence across the Pacific.

The men sent to begin solving that problem became known as the Bobcats, after the Navy code name for Bora Bora. Their task was not glamorous, but it was urgent: construct a fueling station and supporting facilities quickly enough to help ships, aircraft, and convoys operate across enormous distances. In practical terms, they had to build the means of building. Heavy machines could not simply be driven off a transport and onto a prepared pier. Fuel tanks, pipe, lumber, generators, vehicles, ammunition, and tools all had to be landed before the island had the facilities normally needed to land them.

This was the central contradiction of Operation Bobcat. The convoy carried a base in pieces, but those pieces were packed aboard ships floating offshore from an island with no modern cargo-handling system. The first Seabee problem was therefore not simply construction. It was logistics: how to bring an industrial project ashore where the shore itself was not yet ready.

The Strategic Emergency

The decision to establish Bora Bora as a fueling base followed the shock of Pearl Harbor and the rapid Japanese advance through Southeast Asia and the western Pacific. Australia became a vital Allied base and staging area, but the sea route to Australia stretched across thousands of miles. Warships, auxiliary vessels, and aircraft required fuel, water, ammunition, repair facilities, and stores. Without intermediate bases, ships could not remain useful for long in the vast Pacific.

Bora Bora offered several advantages. Its lagoon was naturally protected, its reef entrance could be defended, and its position was useful to Allied movement across the South Pacific. In January 1942, American planners approved a joint Army-Navy operation to occupy and defend the island. The Navy would build and operate the fueling and harbor facilities; the Army would help defend the base. The schedule was severe. In peacetime, such a project would have taken months of survey, staging, and planning. In early 1942, it had to be done in weeks.

Who Were The Bobcats?

The Bobcats occupy an important but sometimes confusing place in Seabee history. The Navy had used civilian construction workers on overseas projects before the war, but forward wartime areas created a legal and military problem. Civilians could not be expected to defend what they built, and if they did take up arms they risked being treated as unlawful combatants. Rear Admiral Ben Moreell, Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, pushed for uniformed construction units made up of skilled builders who could work under military command and defend themselves when necessary.

On December 28, 1941, Moreell requested authority to create naval construction units. On January 5, 1942, the Bureau of Navigation authorized the recruiting of experienced construction workers and the organization of a construction regiment.

But Bora Bora could not wait for normal organization and training. To meet the immediate need, the Bureau of Yards and Docks formed Construction Battalion BOBCAT around the First Headquarters Construction Company, originally prepared for an Iceland assignment. The unit also included general-service recruits and was initially far smaller than a later full-strength construction battalion.

Lieutenant Commander Harold M. Sylvester, CEC, USN, reported the unit organized and in service at Charleston, South Carolina, on January 21, 1942. Six days later, on January 27, the men sailed for Bora Bora. They were officially associated with the First Construction Battalion name, but they were not the same as the later full-strength First Construction Battalion formed for other South Pacific work. The Bobcats were eventually redesignated the First Construction Detachment. They called themselves Bobcats before the word Seabee had even been formally approved on March 5, 1942.

Arrival And Unloading

Task Force 5614 reached Bora Bora on February 17, 1942. The lagoon gave the convoy protection from the open sea, but not a port. Cargo had been loaded in haste, and not always in the order needed for practical unloading. Equipment needed first could be buried beneath material needed later. A crane might be needed to unload the crane; a bulldozer needed a landing place before it could improve the landing place. The Bobcats had to break the entire operation down into small workable steps.

Their answer was improvisation. They used modular steel pontoon units that could be joined into floating structures. These pontoons became working platforms, barges, and a causeway between ships and the undeveloped shore. Men cleared brush, shaped rough ramps, prepared coral fill, and slowly improved the beachhead. Each improvement allowed heavier equipment to come ashore; each piece of heavy equipment then made further improvement possible.

Fifty-Two Days To Bring A Base Ashore

The unloading of the convoy took fifty-two days. That figure should not be read only as delay. It measures the difficulty of creating cargo-handling capacity while cargo handling was already under way. Bora Bora had to receive the material for a fuel depot, seaplane and harbor facilities, camps, roads, storage areas, defenses, and utilities before it possessed the ordinary infrastructure of a base.

Once a land-based crane finally reached shore after more than two weeks of labor, the operation gained momentum. Bulldozers and other heavy machines could be moved into position. Roads and work areas could be cut and graded. Fuel storage tanks could be erected, pipelines laid, generators installed, shops organized, and camps improved. The labor was hard and often primitive. Tropical heat, coral cuts, insects, infection, water shortages, and long shifts were part of the job. The men had to make the base function because the war required it, not because the island was ready for them.

The defensive work was also demanding. Heavy guns had to be placed to cover the reef entrance and approaches to the island. With no prepared roads to the gun positions, the Bobcats used cables, winches, anchors, and careful rigging to move heavy steel upward by increments. This was construction under military pressure, but it was also construction that required judgment. A failed cable or anchor could turn a difficult job into a fatal one.

The Fuel Depot And The Airfield

The fuel depot was the heart of Operation Bobcat. The Pacific war was fought across distances so large that logistics became a weapon in itself. A carrier task force without fuel could not reach the fight. A destroyer without water, repair support, or ammunition became less useful each day it operated far from a base. Bora Bora helped reduce those distances. Its tanks, pipelines, cargo areas, and harbor facilities became a forward node in the supply chain that helped keep ships moving.

Bora Bora also became a school in advanced-base construction. The operation taught hard lessons about loading cargo in the order it would be needed, using floating infrastructure where no port existed, and relying on skilled tradesmen who could repair, adapt, and keep working when plans failed. Later Pacific campaigns benefited from these lessons. The Bobcats did not make Bora Bora perfect. They made it useful, and in wartime that was the point.

The island's wartime development later included the Motu Mute airfield, built with coral as a practical runway material. Coral construction became a familiar Seabee method in the Pacific because it was available, workable, and could be compacted into usable roads and runways. Company A of the Third Naval Construction Battalion later reinforced the original detachment, adding capacity to the continuing work. The wartime airfield left a lasting mark on Bora Bora's postwar aviation history.

A Quiet Legacy

The Bobcats remained on Bora Bora until September 1943, after the forward edge of the war had moved west. A small group stayed behind to help train a maintenance unit, and the departing Bobcats were diverted to the Samoan Islands, where they became a Naval Construction Company assigned to the 22nd Marines, Reinforced. Their later service included general construction and assault engineer and demolition roles during the Marshall Islands campaign. The detachment was eventually inactivated at Camp Parks, California, in June 1944.

Bora Bora itself remained in service until after the war and was disestablished in June 1946. Its guns never fired in anger, but that does not make the base unimportant. A defended base that is never attacked may have done its work simply by existing, supporting movement, and making attack less likely. Today, Bora Bora is known for its lagoon, reefs, and tourism. Beneath that beauty is another layer of history: the story of the first Seabee detachment, the men who brought a naval base ashore where no port existed, and the early proof that skilled builders in uniform could help carry American naval power across the Pacific.

The Bobcats did not win a battle in the usual sense. They built the conditions under which ships could sail, aircraft could operate, and later battles could be fought. That is why Operation Bobcat deserves a place not only in Seabee history, but in the larger history of how the United States learned to move, supply, and sustain a war across the Pacific.



1942. The guns protected Bora Bora's harbor, fuel depot, seaplane facilities, and airstrip from possible Japanese attack. Bora Bora was never attacked, but the base became an important refueling and logistics point in the South Pacific.



Bell P-400/P-39 Airacobra being brought ashore in the Pacific during World War II. This image illustrates the type of difficult unloading and base-building work faced by early naval construction forces, including the Bobcats/Seabees at Bora Bora.

References: U.S. Navy Seabee Museum, Civil Engineer Corps and the First Seabees, Building the Navy's Bases in World War II, Seabee Magazine, Confluence of War.

MCB 11 & NMCB 8 - 2026 Reunion Registration Form

Circle 11 or 8

REGISTRATION: Received on or before 8/20/2026 - \$325 each x _____ = \$ _____
Late registration received on or after 8/21/2026 - \$340 each x _____ = \$ _____
TOTAL COST \$ _____

If **Cancelled** on or before 8/20/2026 = Full refund
after 8/20/2025 = Full refund minus any prepaid expenses/deposits.

If you cancel, don't forget to call the hotel and cancel your room reservation.

Registration Covers:

- ✓ **Monday** Evening Welcome Reception with meal
- ✓ **Tuesday** Bus rental, tour guides and entry fees to the Garden of the Gods and Olympic Museum. Also, lunch at GOG Trading Post and dinner at the Airplane Restaurant.
- ✓ **Wednesday** Business Meeting and evening Banquet
- ✓ **Thursday** Check-Out
- ✓ All associated taxes and gratuities, excluding hotel room charges.

Please complete and return ASAP with your check or money order.

Provide the name of each person attending.

1. Name: (Last) _____ (First) _____

2. Name: (Last) _____ (First) _____

First Name(s) you want printed on ID badge. 1. _____ 2. _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

Emergency Contact*: _____ Phone: _____

(*Someone who **will not** be at the reunion with you.)

SPECIAL NEED(s) – Dietary, Transportation or other: _____

Make check or money order payable to MCB 11 Association

Mail to: MCB 11 Reunion Committee
P.O. Box 4647
Lago Vista, TX 78645

Check these web sites for updates
MCB 11 - <http://www.mcb11.com>
NMCB 8 - <https://www.nmcb8.com/>

We have had mail deliveries take longer than expected. Please let us know by email or phone when you put your Registration form in the mail.



MCB 11 Association 2026 Reunion

Colorado Springs, CO

September 21 – 24, 2026



Colorado Springs is a city with an abundance of things to see and do. It is home of the Olympic Training Center and Museum, Garden of the Gods and many other wonderful sites.

Members of NMCB 8 will be joining us again this year. We will share both the hospitality and banquet rooms.

The reunion will officially start with registration at 3:00 PM on Monday, September 21, followed by a welcome reception and lite meal.

Tuesday

Following breakfast, we depart the hotel at 9 AM to begin a guided bus tour of the City with a stop at the Memorial Park to view the Veterans Memorial and the North American Fallen Firefighters Memorial.



We then travel to the Garden of the Gods, voted the Number 1 city park in the US. There will be photo-stops with majestic Pikes Peak as a backdrop. Lunch will be at the state's oldest and largest Trading Post with time for souvenir shopping.

Next, we depart for the US Olympic & Paralympic Museum, that offers a timeless experience by capturing the history of Team USA at the Olympic and Paralympic Games, as well as the hopes and dreams of future generations.

We conclude our day with dinner at the Airplane Restaurant near* our hotel. There is a section of a Boeing KC97 Tanker as part of its seating. See aerial map next page.

Wednesday

The business meeting with a Quilts of Valor (QoV) presentation starts at 9:00 AM. Everyone is invited to attend the QoV presentation. That is followed with the MCB 11 election of officers and voting on a reunion location for 2028.

At 4:00 PM we will start taking individual pictures followed the banquet.

Thursday

Following breakfast, we will say our good byes until next year in Louisville, Kentucky.



Hotel Information

Radisson Colorado Springs Airport
1645 N. Newport Road
Colorado Springs CO 80916

The rate is \$139++/night, full buffet breakfast included. The cut-off date for this rate is **Friday, August 21, 2026**. Requests received after that date will be considered on a space availability basis.

Reservations can be made either on-line or by phone.

<https://www.choicehotels.com/reservations/groups/HD28R3>

To make reservations by phone, call 719-597-7000. Tell them you are with the “**MCB 11 Association**”.

If you are flying to Colorado Springs, the hotel has a complimentary shuttle bus. Call the hotel 719-597-7000.



Overview of Radisson Hotel and The Airplane Restaurant

For more information goto : <https://mcb11.com/Reunion2026/frame.htm>

NMCB-8 Seabees' Association

7657 Lemur St. Ventura Ca. 93003

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

To:

—America's 250th Anniversary—

By Billie Boggs

As we celebrate the historic 250th anniversary of our country, we are given a profound opportunity to pause and reflect. Looking around today, there is just so much to be thankful for and so much to be proud of. From a small, daring collection of colonies to a global beacon of liberty, the American journey is a testament to what is possible when a people are united by the ideals of freedom.

It is a milestone that naturally makes one wonder: what if the patriots of 1776 could see America today? After they had given it all to win our liberty—enduring freezing winters, hunger, and overwhelming odds—what would they think of the nation they birthed? I believe they would look at this vast, diverse, and prosperous country and know that their immense sacrifices were worth it.

They would see that the torch of liberty they lit has been carried faithfully by every generation that followed. As Seabees, we had a vital role in maintaining our freedom, and for the veterans of MCB8, that duty was forged in the heat and mud of Vietnam. When our battalion flag flew over places like Camp Faulkner in Da Nang, Camp Miller in Chu Lai, and the battle-tested grounds of Phu Bai, we weren't just pouring concrete. We were building the lifeline for freedom.

True freedom requires continuous defense, and the "Eight Ball Battalion" answered that call. As Seabees of MCB 8, we put our lives on the line and followed orders to help preserve our freedom. Whether continuing to work through the misery of the Monsoons, building Tin City in Da Nang and the milk plant in Chu Lai, trudging through the mud and driving pilings to build a pier on the Song Han River, our men stepped up. We lived out our "Can Do" spirit under enemy fire, earning the Navy Unit Commendation because we built where others couldn't and fought when we had to.

The true reward for that service is visible in the communities we returned home to protect. Everywhere I go today, I meet great and good people who make our nation great. It is in the everyday kindness, hard work, and resilience of ordinary Americans that the spirit of our country truly lives—the very spirit MCB 8 sacrificed to protect.

As we look forward to the next chapter of the American story, let us remain proud of our MCB 8 Seabee heritage, thankful for our blessings, and always dedicated to the defense of our great nation.

With compassion for our past and confidence in our future, Seabees forever.—*Billy*