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U. S. NAVAL MOBILE CONSTRUCTION BATTALION 62  
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From: Commanding Officer, U. S. Naval Mobile Construction Battalion  
SIXTY-TWO

To: Commander, Construction Battalions, U. S. Atlantic Fleet,  
Construction Battalion Center, Davisville, Rhode Island

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Encl: (1) MCB-62 1966 Command History Supplement

1. Enclosure (1) is forwarded in accordance with Reference (a).

  
J. A. O'REILLY  
By direction

COMMAND HISTORY SUPPLEMENT  
U. S. NAVAL MOBILE CONSTRUCTION BATTALION SIXTY-TWO

1966

Mobile Construction Battalion SIXTY-TWO was commissioned July 2, 1966. It took its numerical designation from the Naval Construction Battalion SIXTY-TWO of World War II fame.

The precommissioning detail of MCB-62 was established at Davisville, Rhode Island. The first Diary entry for the detail, dated Jan. 11, 1966, records that CA James A. Wilson reported for duty to be on board for commissioning of the battalion.

An advance party of fifty men, under the leadership of LTJG W. J. Vaudreuil, Jr., COMCBLANT Force Personnel Officer, arrived March 1 at Construction Battalion Center, Gulfport, Mississippi. On March 15, 50 more men arrived from Davisville, and the rest of the precommissioning detail--200 more men--reported at Gulfport April 1. Only those men of MCB-62 who were attending various schools at Davisville were at this time still in Rhode Island.

The job of the precommissioning detail between March 1 and July 2 was to prepare Gulfport's unused, World War II vintage barracks, mess halls and training facilities for use by the new battalions that would soon make the Mississippi Seabee Center their homeport. At the time, only MCB's 62 and 133 were scheduled to be commissioned at Gulfport.

The work done repairing, cleaning and improving the Seabee Center living quarters earned praise for the battalion from CDR Norman L. Martinson, Commanding Officer of the Center.

Enclosure (1)

On April 12, CDR Martinson also became Commander of the 20th Naval Construction Regiment, newly commissioned on that date. MCB-62 was the only battalion represented during the commissioning of the 20th NCR, except for one man assigned to MCB-133.

Rear Admiral Henry A. Renken, Commander, Service Forces U. S. Atlantic Fleet, put MCB-62 in commission July 2, 1966. CDR William J. Richeson took command of the new battalion. Also present at the ceremony was Rear Admiral Alexander C. Husband, Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, and Captain Spencer R. Smith, Commander, Construction Battalions, U. S. Atlantic Fleet.

From July 2 until the end of September, MCB-62's men busied themselves in technical training related to their construction specialties and in military training preparatory to their Vietnam deployment. The technical training was administered jointly by the 20th NCR at Gulfport, Class A, B, and C schools at Davisville and Port Hueneme, California, and by civilian industries in Gulfport and elsewhere.

On July 18, military training at Gulfport began with a one-week class of officers and chief petty officers. On August 8, the 20th NCR's Military Training Department, as new as any activity at Gulfport, began schooling classes of white hats in MCB-62. To take the training, MCB-62 was divided into four classes, each of which spent one week in classroom work and physical conditioning at Gulfport and one week at Camp Shelby, a Mississippi National Guard training facility about 40 miles north of Gulfport.

The advance party to Camp Lejeune, 93 men who would support the main body of MCB-62 when it went through military training there, left

Gulfport September 1. The men formed a provisional rifle company for their four weeks of military training with MCB-58.

On October 5, the last flight of the main body of MCB-62 arrived at Camp Lejeune. In the four weeks the battalion spent at Lejeune, specialized training was given to field and command post communications, crew-served weapons teams, counter-guerilla warfare and demolitions specialists, commissarymen and hospital corpsmen. The remainder of the battalion was trained in individual combat techniques. In addition, the entire battalion received marksmanship training, and every man participated in a three-day field exercise that climaxed the Lejeune training. On October 29, the airlift back to Gulfport began.

MCB-62's advance party to Hue Phu Bai, RVN, left Gulfport November 16 and 17 in two C-130 Hercules aircraft. The party's 115 men began the takeover of Camp Campbell from MCB-7.

Meanwhile, from the end of the Camp Lejeune deployment until just before the airlift to RVN, men in the battalion took two-week pre-deployment leaves.

From December 5 until December 13, two C-130 airplanes left each day carrying men of the main body from Gulfport to Hue Phu Bai. Each flight took approximately 50 hours, with stops at Travis AFB, Hickam AFB, Wake, Guam and Mactan, R. P.

The battalion's projects in Vietnam include offices, shops, storage buildings, refrigeration units and roads for the Marine Corps' Force , Logistics Support Unit; cantonments for the Third Marine Division, consisting of 500-man galleys, 120 living huts, eight heads, and four

showers each (MCB-62, as of January 16, 1967, is in the process of completing one cantonment begun by MCB-7, and will start two more during the current deployment); other 3rd Mar Div projects are shops, stores buildings, an exchange facility and bunkers.

Additional projects undertaken by MCB-62 are: an interrogation center in the city of Hue for use by the Army of the Republic of Vietnam; the asphalt paving of an LCU ramp at Hue; another LCU ramp with its accompanying causeway at Colco, about five miles northeast of Hue and five miles north of Phu Bai; the building of a road through Viet Cong-held territory from Phu Bai to an airfield to be built five miles east of Hue (this includes building a two-lane, 250-foot bridge over Dai Diang River); building Combined Action Company (CAC) living quarters, presently estimated at about 20 huts, in the area from the Phu Bai enclave 20 miles south to Phu Loc; building a field hospital for Alfa Medical Company, 3rd Mar Div; and redecking three bridges in the Phu Bai area.

Two major responsibilities of MCB-62 during this deployment are maintenance of all water, electrical and road systems in the Phu Bai military enclave and construction of a helicopter landing pad at Phu Bai Airport.