

62 THE BEST; WINS "E"

"We're the best!" With this exclamation Commander John Paul Jones Jr. beamingly congratulated MCB 62 on winning the Atlantic Fleet Best of Type Battalion Efficiency "E" for fiscal year 1969.

"Now everyone in the Navy knows we're the best SEABEE Battalion in the Atlantic Fleet," CDR Jones told his men during a Battalion formation August 3. "I've known it since I took Command of MCB 62 a year ago."

Following the Captain's exuberant remarks to his men, Lieutenant Commander Charles E. Fegley III, Executive Officer, and Master Chief Constructionman Melvin A. Bell, Battalion Chief, raised the

Efficiency "E" pennant to fly next to the MCB 62 flag in front of the Camp Barnes administration building.

The bright red banner with a black circle, known as the meatball, is one of the most coveted symbols of excellence any Navy unit can win. It is awarded each year to the ships and units judged best of their respective types.

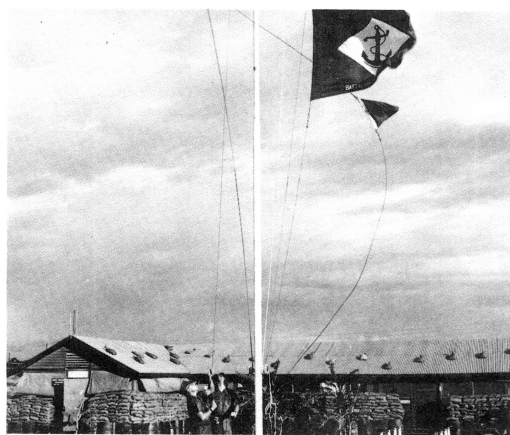
A message from Commander Service Force, U. S. Atlantic Fleet, notified MCB 62 August 1 of the selection as top Atlantic Fleet SEABEE unit. MCB 6 was cited as runner-up. MCB 10 was named in July as the Pacific Fleet's best construction Battalion.

Judging for the highly competitive Efficiency "E" is based largely on the operational performance of the SEABEE Battalions during their deployments. Administrative inspections, evaluations of operational commanders, work completed and Battalion operational reports are all considered.

Performance and attitude in homeport and stateside administrative inspections are also factors in determining the top Battalion.

Winning the "E" marks the culmination of a year of concerted effort by the officers and enlisted men of MCB 62. CDR Jones set the

(Cont'd on Page 8)



62 FLIES MEATBALL -- Lieutenant Commander Fegley and Battalion Master Chief Bell raise the "meatball" pennant to show that 62 has won the Atlantic Fleet Battle Efficiency "E".



RIBBONS AWAY -- Rear Admiral John G. Dillon (left) and Major General William K. Jones let the wind take the ends of a ribbon after it was cut by Colonel Nguyen Am (center) to officially open the Cam Lo Bridge.

Bridge at Cam Lo Open for Traffic

The Cam Lo Bridge, MCB 62's biggest structural project to date, was officially opened for military and civilian traffic during ribbon cutting ceremonies on July 5.

Following speeches by American and Vietnamese dignitaries attending the ceremony, Colonel Nguyen Am, Quang Tri Province Chief, cut the bright yellow ribbon held by Rear Admiral John G. Dillon, Commander, Third Naval Construction Brigade, and Major General William K. Jones, Commanding General of the Third Marine Division.

With RADM Dillon at the bridge opening was Captain Albion W. Walton, Commander, 32nd Naval Construction Regiment.

Vietnamese officials on hand for the ceremony included COL Am, Captain Nguyen Van Rao, Chief of the Cam Lo District, Le Van Xang, Cam Thai Village Chief and Nguyen Khan, People's Representative from the village of Cam Thai.

In his remarks before the assemblage of dignitaries, 62 SEABEES and the people of Cam Thai, MAJ GEN Jones stated that he looked upon the Cam Lo Bridge as "a symbol of the progress that the people of Vietnam have made

(Cont'd on Page 3)

For the third time since MCB 62 was commissioned in July of 1966 the Battalion has celebrated its birthday in the Republic of Vietnam.

On Sunday, July 6, MCB 62 SEABEES were treated to a day off from work, free beer, a barbecue-style supper, athletic events and a Special Services show in honor of the Battalion's third anniversary.

No reveille was blown and no early morning musters were taken as the SEABEES forgot about their usual six-and-a-half-day-week routine and slept as late as they wished.

A brunch was served from 7:00 in the morning until 12:30 to per-

mit the late risers to have morning chow at their convenience.

One of the major events of the day was a softball game between Battalion officers and chiefs and enlisted men. The enlisted men won by a score of 18 to 12.

Volleyball, basketball and horseshoes were also available for sports enthusiasts.

Free beer and soda were available throughout the day and Battalion men consumed more than 80 cases of beverages during the softball game alone.

As the beer and soda disappeared, a new use was discovered for the wagons full of ice and water in which the drinks had been kept. Battalion officers and chiefs were taken as "prisoners of war" by some SEABEES and unceremoniously dumped into the cold water.

As the victims stepped from the wagons, they received snappy salutes from their captors.

Several of the officers, realizing the futility of resistance, merely climbed aboard a stretcher thoughtfully provided by Battalion corpsmen to be transported for their turn in the wagon.

A spirit of fun and conviviality prevailed, however, and even Commanding Officer, Commander Jones, and Executive Officer, Lieutenant Commander Fegley, were given a chance to

cool off after the ball game.

Afternoon festivities continued with a rock and roll group provided by 62's Special Services Office and a barbecued chicken dinner complete with all the trimmings.

After the evening meal Commander Jones and Battalion Chief, Master Chief Constructionman Melvin A. Bell, officiated at the traditional cake cutting ceremony.

The celebration continued into the night as some men gathered to watch the movie "Barbarella" while others heard Chief Utilitiesman James Cobb and his country-western musical group, the Southern Gentlemen, perform at the Acey-Ducey Club.

MCB 62 is the namesake of the Sixty-Second Naval Construction Battalion whose "Minutemen" gained fame during World War II as one of the hardest groups of that new breed of fighting man, the SEABEE.

MCB 62 was commissioned on December 20, 1942 at Davisville, (Cont'd on Page 3)

SIXTY-TWO SEABEA CON

Vol. IV No. 5

Mobile Construction Battalion Sixty-Two

July, 1969

Battalion Celebrates Third Birthday; Order of the Day: Rest and Relax

SEABEE KILLED

Memorial services were held in Camp Barnes on July 1 for Glen C. Ludban, 22, an Equipment Operator Third Class killed in action June 30.

E03 Ludban was killed when he stepped on and detonated an anti-tank mine while working with a highway repair crew. Two U.S. Army men received shrapnel wounds in the incident on Vietnamese National Route #9, about 14 miles west of the Dong Ha Combat Base.

Lieutenant Richard R. Crowe, MCB 62 Chaplain, conducted the early-morning services in the Camp Barnes Chapel July 1. More than 200 Battalion men attended.

Ludban enlisted in the U.S. Navy as a Seaman Recruit in June of 1967. He reported for duty with MCB 62 in September, 1967. With the Battalion in Danang, South Vietnam during 1968, Ludban was serving his second deployment in the combat zone at the time of his death.

A native of Garrett, Ind., Ludban is survived by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles J. Ludban, and by a brother, Gary M. Ludban, all of 910 South Randolph St., Garrett.

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Editorial

Education Vital

Attainment of a higher and higher level of education as the necessary goal of young Americans is not simply a romantic concept based on democratic principles. Hard statistics compiled by the Department of Labor reveal that, while a high school diploma is generally a minimum requirement for a job, some college is rapidly becoming a must.

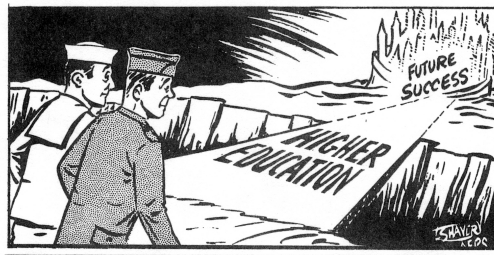
Educational requirements in most jobs are steadily rising. For instance, two years of college is now required for nurses, bookkeepers, accounting clerks, policemen, surveyors, draftsmen and laboratory technicians.

Four years of college are needed for auditors, accountants, industrial engineers, dieticians and many other professional jobs.

As industrial life becomes more complex, educational standards are forced up. Today, five out of eight American workers 18 or older finished high school. One out of five young workers completed college.

With this trend in the labor field, it is important to begin improving your job potential. See your education office today. Education is a vital necessity.

-AFPS



Chaplain's Communique

By LT R.R. Crowe, CHC

In this world there are people of assorted shapes, sizes and natures. Abraham Lincoln is reported to have said, "God must have loved the poor people, for he made so many of them." It's almost certain that God must have loved variety, for he made many different types of people. What a dull place the world would be if he hadn't.

Yet, much of the prejudice and bigotry extant today springs from these very differences. We have a bad habit of making friends only with those who are "our kind of people", whatever that means. We usually knock those who are most unlike us. We gather in little cliques and clans and put down everyone who is not in our group.

This is something like the joke about the Quaker who said to his wife: "I think the whole world strange but thee and me -- and sometimes I wonder about thee." We tend to think that we are perfect and everyone else is a mistake God made. There was no mistake except in our thinking.

Many of us also seem to think that we are self-made men. We act as though we are responsible for our brain capacity, the health of our bodies and the color of our eyes, hair or skin. We strut around belittling others and feeling superior to them. We despised the Nazi doctrine of a superior race, yet we secretly believe that we ourselves are superior.

God made each person as he saw fit and all were good in his sight. When we look down on God's creation we are actually finding fault with God.

This kind of prejudiced thinking is something like a tall guy looking down his nose at a shorter guy and thinking, "You're dumb to be so short." It just doesn't make sense. We have no control over inherited body characteristics like height, basic intelligence, place of birth or race.

How stupid it is to boast about something we have no control over. Whatever we are, whatever we have, God is responsible. The scripture says, "For who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now, if thou didst receive it, why boast as if thou hadst not received it?" 1 Corinthians 4:7

Many of our human relations problems could be straightened out if people simply became aware of certain facts. God made people different because he wanted a variety of people. No one is better than anyone else per se. Some people try harder to better themselves, but even this drive to be better is somehow given to us. Enjoy all men and be thankful that God put us all here to enhance each others happiness.

Love thy neighbor as thyself.

SIXTY-TWO SEABEACON

U.S. NAVAL
MOBILE CONSTRUCTION BATTALION SIXTY-TWO
CAMP BARNES, DONG HA COMBAT BASE
REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

Commanding Officer-----CDR J.P. Jones Jr.
Executive Officer-----LCDR C.E. Fegley
Public Affairs Officer-----LT R.R. Crowe

EDITORIAL STAFF

Dennis J. Holder, JO2-----Editor
Michael W. Woolley, JOSN-----Staff Writer
Peter G. Kamishlian, PH1-----Photographer
D. Solomon Bryant, AN-----Photographer

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A View From The Bridge

by CDR J.P. Jones Jr.

In the August 1968 issue of the Seabeacon, the first issue in which I wrote for this column after assuming command of NMCB SIXTY-TWO, I closed the column with the following paragraph.

"It is my goal, in fact it is my responsibility as your Commanding Officer, to leave no stone unturned in an effort to bring this fine Battalion to an even higher level of readiness, and all the way up to the Battle Efficiency 'E'. As all of you know, the toughest five per cent of a job is the last five per cent. MCB 62 has come a long way down the road to perfection in the first two years of existence. But the toughest five per cent



CDR Jones

remains to be accomplished. It can be done, and I promise to do my part. At the same time, I charge each and every one of you to do your part. With determination and attention to detail we can succeed."

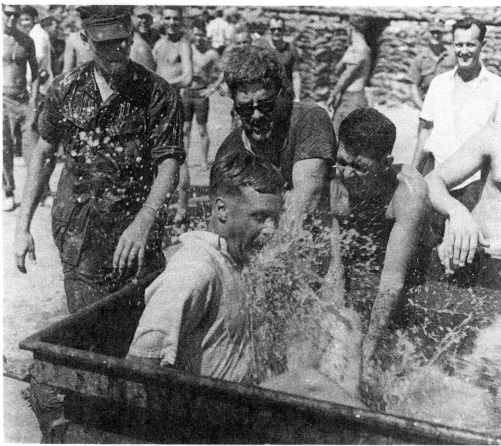
Now, twelve months later, the goal has been achieved and the "Meatball", the traditional Battalion Efficiency "E" Pennant, flies beside the Battalion flag here in Camp Barnes.

I set the goal a year ago, and charged each of you to meet the challenge and be the best.

Setting the goal was easy. The hard part fell to you, to all of you from Construction

Recruit to Master Chief; from Warrant Officer to Lieutenant Commander. And you came through with flying colors. Your perseverance, uncompensated hard work and tireless devotion to duty in homeport and in Vietnam

has been a constant inspiration to me over these past twelve months. I'm proud of you, I congratulate you, and I extend to you a sincere "Well Done". Keep up the outstanding work and let's make it two in a row.



COOPER COOLS IT -- Lieutenant Commander Robert A. Cooper, Battalion Supply Officer, takes his turn in a wagon filled with ice water during the Battalion birthday celebration July 6.

SEABEACON Spotlight

Gunnery Sergeant Heads Security; Searches for Antique French Bell

When Marine Gunnery Sergeant Charles A. Schlader, military advisor for MCB 62, deployed with the Battalion to Dong Ha, he found himself in familiar territory. Immediately he began a search for something which he left behind when he was Med-evacuated out of RVN in 1966 - an 80 pound French church bell.

With 62 since December of 1968, GYSGT Schlader is responsible for the Battalion's mi-

litary security organization.

In 1966 Schlader was serving as a platoon leader with the 2nd Battalion, Fifth Marines in Chu Lai and, later, in Con Thien and Vandergrift Combat Base in Northern I Corps.

While on patrol north of Con Thien to check on damage done by mortar rounds, GYSGT Schlader and his men came across a destroyed brick building containing a large church bell. The bell weighed about 80 pounds and was etched with a portrait of the Madonna. An inscription on the bell stated that it was cast in France in 1917.

The bell was placed on a tank to be brought back to Dong Ha. As Schlader and his patrol were returning to the base they were attacked by an enemy ambush of undetermined size which opened up on them with automatic weapons. As a result, the Gunney and 13 other men were Med-evacuated.

It was later learned that the tank which had carried the bell had hit a mine. The bell had somehow disappeared.

Now, three years later, GYSGT Schlader is back and searching for the bell, believing it to be somewhere in the Dong Ha area.

Schlader has no definite plans for the bell. He merely wants to relive a few memories and assure that the persons who now have the bell know its history.

The Gunney finds himself with little time to devote to his search. Almost all of his time is taken up by his duties as Battalion military advisor.

Here in Vietnam the

Gunney works with the Battalion Security Officer, Lieutenant Junior Grade H.P. Beasley, to insure that the men who stand watches over Camp Barnes security sectors are competent and alert. Much of his time is spent going around to 62's many detachments to check their security situation. He also acts as a liaison with all Marine units in the Dong Ha area.

GYSGT Schlader, a native of Ashland, Pa. who now makes his home in Vista, Cal., began his Marine career in April of 1951. After recruit training at Parris Island he was assigned as a rifleman to the 1st Marine Division at Camp Pendleton, Cal. In 1953 he transferred to the 3rd Marine Division and was stationed in Hawaii.

1954 saw the Gunney acting as an Admiral's aide and an instructor to midshipmen at the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md. His next duty station was Norwich, Conn. where he served as a recruiter.

Since that time he has served as an instructor at the Marine Corps School in Quantico, Va., with the 3rd Marines in Okinawa, with the 9th Marines as part of the Thailand Expedition and with the 5th Marines in Vietnam. Before joining 62 he was Senior Instructor at the Marine Corps School at Camp Pendleton.

In addition to various service and campaign ribbons and medals GYSGT Schlader has been awarded the Presidential Unit Citation Ribbon, the Bronze Star with Combat "V", the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with a silver star and a Purple Heart with a gold star, denoting the second award.

Breaux-Mides

Battalion Green Sox Softballers Emerge on Top of Base League

The high-flying MCB 62 Green Sox extended their unbeaten string to ten games to capture first place in the Dong Ha Combat Base Softball League.

The SEABEE softballers were two games ahead of their nearest rival, Battery F, 26th Artillery, when the league was halted. Force Logistics Support Group Bravo, the league sponsor, changed location, causing termination of action.

The first place finish betters the efforts of last deployment's team which ended up in the second spot in the tough Camp Tien Sha Softball League in Danang.

Torrid hitting by Denny Bloomingdale and Gene Gorham and the superb pitching of Whit-

ney Meyers and Bruce "Doc" Jennings powered the Green Sox to their unbeaten season.

After winning the first two games, MCB 62 made it three in a row with a 12-4 triumph over Bulkfuel. Meyers survived a shaky first inning before the big bats went to work. Jennings slammed a three-run homer and Gorham drove in three runs with a double and single.

Jennings took over on the hill and was the winning pitcher in a 16-8 decision over 972.

Bloomingdale had a home run and two singles and Gorham rapped two triples and a single to pace 62's 15-hit attack. Jennings aided his own cause with a three-run home run.

An eight-run second inning paved the way for the SEABEES' 15-2 win over Communications. Round trippers by Bloomingdale and Ron Battistoni were the big blows for 62.

Two more home runs by Bloomingdale and one by Gorham provided winning pitcher Meyers with all the hitting support he needed as the Green Sox grabbed an easy 14-1 triumph over the FLSG Bravo Officers.

Down 4-0 in the third frame, 62 put together a nine-run outburst and eventually downed Special Services 14-10 for victory number seven. Gorham's two-run home run, a three-run double by Bloomingdale and a two-run single by Don Haskins were big hits in the inning. Bloomingdale finished with three hits and Haskins, Gorham, Meyers and Carl Orfuss added two safeties each.

Victory number eight came as the SEABEES edged Maintenance 3-2 behind the strong hurling of Meyers. Bloomingdale's two-run homer evened the score in the fifth and Meyers won his own game with a solo shot in the sixth.

Bloomingdale put on a power display as he clubbed three home runs and two triples in five trips to lead 62 to a 15-4 romp over Bulkfuel. Jay Blatchley, Meyers, Orfuss and Mike Bertucci had two hits each and Ken Ulander slammed his first home run.

Home runs by Gorham, Jennings and Jim Swank led the way to a 13-7 win over 972 for 62's tenth straight triumph. Gorham and Bloomingdale each had three hits.

For the season, Meyers fashioned a 7-0 ledger on the mound and Jennings won all three of his decisions. Bloomingdale ended the year with nine home runs while Gorham and Jennings clouted three each.

Navy Slates Driver Training To Cut Down Traffic Fatalities

At a time when thousands of Navy men are fighting in Vietnam, the largest single cause of Navy deaths remains at home.

During 1968, 500 Navy men were killed in traffic accidents, compared to 460 Vietnam combat deaths for that year. One out of every four Navy fatalities in 1968 resulted from traffic accidents.

To combat this problem, the Chief of Naval Operations recently established a Private (off duty) Motor Vehicle Safety Program. As a part of this program, all Navy military personnel will be required to complete the National Safety Council's Defensive Driving Course.

Since introduced by the National Safety Council in November 1965,

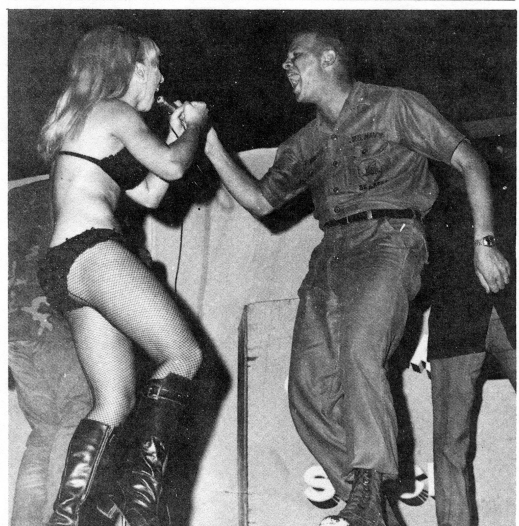
An ex-serviceman has eight years to complete his education with the aid of GI benefits.

For full-time study, payments are \$130 a month for 36 months.

the Defensive Driving Course has proved very effective in the driving safety programs of several Navy commands and many other organizations. The course consists of eight one-hour classroom sessions, designed to teach the driver how to anticipate, recognize and avoid hazardous driving situations.

The course will be mandatory for all personnel now on active duty, and will be added to the curriculum of all Navy schools training officers and enlisted men entering the service.

The Private (off duty) Motor Vehicle Safety Program, administered by the Chief of Naval Material, is the first Navy program designed solely for the off-duty driver. It will be in addition to existing programs, which are primarily intended for men driving official Navy vehicles while on duty status.



THE FEGLEY FRUG -- Commander Charles E. Fegley, 62's Executive Officer, rocks out with Miss Vicki Weaver of the Sugars and Spice entertainment group. The group performed for 62 on July 25.

Best of 12 Battalions; 62 Gets "E"

(Cont'd from Page 1)

Battle Efficiency "E" award as a Battalion goal when he took command on July 30, 1968.

As the Atlantic Fleet's Best of Type Battalion, MCB 62 will fly the meatball pennant for one year and will become eligible to compete for the Peltier Award of the Society of American Military Engineers. This award is given annually to the best Mobile Construction Battalion in the Navy, selected from the Best of Type winners in the Atlantic and Pacific Fleets.

Battalion enlisted men will wear "E" patches on the right sleeves of their blue and their white Navy uniforms.

With the award to MCB 62, the meatball goes to a Gulfport, Miss. based Battalion for the second consecutive year. MCB 74 was the top Atlantic Fleet SEABEE unit in fiscal 1968.

The five Gulfport Battalions compete with seven MCB's based in Davisville, R. I. for the Best of Type "E".

Public Speakers' Seminar Offered

The third Navy Public Speaking Seminar is scheduled for November 22 at the Shamrock Hotel in Houston, Texas.

It is open to all Navy men, officer or enlisted, on active duty. The seminar will cover the role of the Navy speaker in community relations.

For information on enrollment, contact the Office of Information, Navy Department, Washington, D.C. 20350.

Civic Action Team Member July SEABEE of the Month

Builder Third Class James E. Thomas, formerly of Delta Company and now a member of MCB 62's Civic Action Team, has been named as SEABEE of the month for June.

In a letter from Commander Jones BU3 Thomas



VIETNAMESE GIVE A DAM -- Vietnamese workers construct a cofferdam at the Cam Vu pumping station. 62's Civic Action Team enlisted their aid in the repair of the station.

CIVIC ACTION TEAM REPAIRS PUMPS PROVIDES IRRIGATION FOR CAM VU

One of the major projects completed by 62's Civic Action Team so far this deployment is the repair of a water pumping station at Cam Vu, a few miles north of the Cam Lo Bridge.

Built by the Australians in the early 1960's to provide irrigation for farmland northeast of Dong Ha, the pumping station was taken over by enemy forces before a canal system was completed. At this same time a large number of Vietnamese civilians were forced to flee the area which had become a free-fire zone.

Now that the Cam Lo Valley has been taken by friendly forces, a large resettlement program has been instituted by the American military working in conjunction with the Vietnamese government.

As the refugees began moving back into the Cam Lo area to begin rebuilding their homes and farms the completion of the pumping station became of primary importance. The job was given to MCB 7, the SEABEE Battalion which formerly occupied Camp Barnes, who turned it over to 62 at the end of 7's deployment. The project was then undertaken by 62's eight-man Civic Action Team in early April.

Despite continuing enemy activity in the Cam Vu area the Team,

led by Lieutenant Junior Grade Eugene A. Graves Jr. made daily trips to the pumping station to make the necessary repairs. At the station they found six 14-inch pumps in repairable condition.

The first job was the removal of water, seaweed and other foreign matter from the crank-cases of the 65-horsepower engines which operate the pumps. The engines were stripped, thoroughly cleaned and rebuilt. Needed parts were either salvaged from a junk pile nearby or made in 62's machine shop.

Besides cleaning the engines the Civic Action Team also cleaned the station's sump pits, hooked up the fuel tanks, installed pressure gages and valves on the air pumps and sealed various small leaks in the pumping equipment.

The station itself, sitting on a cliff overlooking the Cam Lo River, had been used as an enemy stronghold. Old ammunition and shell casings as well as dirt, water, cans and other trash which had accumulated since the enemy occupation had to be removed.

A new tin roof was built twice. The first roof built by the Team was ripped off during a storm. Team members stepped in immediately after the storm to rebuild the roof.

All metal parts of the station including the air and water tanks and engines were painted.

The next task was the removal of approximately 55 cubic yards of mud and refuse from the pump and inlet structure beneath the water line at the base of the cliff. The Team const-

Ops Officer, Gerdel, Soon to be New XO

Lieutenant Commander David H. Gerdel will be MCB 62's new Executive Officer starting in early November when he relieves Lieutenant Commander Charles E. Fegley, III.

LCDR Gerdel, who joined 62 at Camp Barnes on June 25, is now acting as Battalion Operations Officer. He is relieving 62's former Operations Officer, Lieutenant Commander William A. Heine.

LCDR Gerdel's takeover of the second-in-command position with 62 sees him making a giant step from the

below-freezing temperatures of Antarctica, Greenland and Alaska to the sub-tropical heat of Vietnam.

Before entering the service LCDR Gerdel, a native of Deland, Fla., spent his summer vacations from college working in Greenland and Alaska for the USA Snow, Ice Permafrost Research Establishment of Wilmette, Ill. He has also served as officer in charge of Byrd Station, Antarctica.

LCDR Gerdel attended Duke University in Durham, N.C. where he majored in Civil Engineering.

One of the main jobs undertaken by the Research Establishment was the testing of military explosives in snow. LCDR Gerdel spent a total of about 18 months in these frigid regions.

After graduation in 1960 he attended Officer Candidate School in Newport, R.I. Shortly thereafter the newly Commissioned Ensign went to Port Hueneme, Cal. where he studied at CEC Officers' School.

The U.S. Naval Ordnance Plant in York, Penna. was Gerdel's first duty station. There he worked as assistant to the Public Works Officer.

The far east was LCDR Gerdel's next career step as he served with the Military Advisory and Assistance Group in Taiwan as an advisor to the Chinese Navy.

After Taiwan LCDR Gerdel saw service in the southern polar regions with the Antarctic Support Activity. It was here that he commanded Byrd Station.

Gerdel then traveled to warmer climates to serve as Public Works Officer at the Naval Mine Defense Laboratory in Panama City, Fla.

His last duty station before joining 62 was the south east division of the Naval Facilities Engineering Command in Charleston.



SANDBAG BLUES -- 62 SEABEES place sandbags on the roof of their hut in preparation for a storm which struck Camp Barnes in July.

