

MCB SIXTY-TWO FAMILYGRAM

15 August 1970
Camp Haskins (South)
Danang, RVN

Dear Seabee Family;

One month to the day has passed since I assumed command of NMCB 62. It is a gross understatement to say that I was impressed with the battalion. From July 1963 to August 1968 I served with NMCB 10 and the Commander, Naval Construction Battalions, Pacific. In the latter organization I periodically inspected every Mobile Construction Battalion, detachment, detail and Seabee Team here in the Republic of Vietnam and in Thailand, including this battalion. Never during that time period did I see a battalion so well organized and performing so efficiently in all facets of the battalion's endeavors.

The accolades and honors awarded to SIXTY-TWO over the past two years are in recognition of the tremendous effort which has been exerted by all hands within the battalion. The two successive Best of Type awards, the Peltier Award and the Army Meritorious Unit Commendation are tributes to the esprit, devotion to duty and enthusiasm of each and every one of your Seabees.

The past month started off with the change of command ceremony. I think that it was entirely fitting that the announcement of SIXTY-TWO's selection as Best of Type for the second successive year and the awarding of the Army Meritorious Unit Citation were made at that ceremony since they were also a tribute to Commander Jones' leadership.

Turning now to the work. The work down in the Mekong Delta for the Vietnamese Navy River Patrol Boat bases is progressing very well. Detail ALBANY at Chau Doc, under the direction of LT Jerry Bruce, CEC, USN is presently just about half way done with the work which they have. We have been able to make some improvements in the camp there such as permanent fresh water showers and air conditioning of the mess hall/club which makes living conditions much more enjoyable. The Seabees of Detail ALBANY are truly living up to the reputation of the Seabees in putting up some high quality construction in jig time.

Detail HOLLYWOOD at Tan Chau under LTJG Don Keith, CEC, USN is also doing a magnificent job. In slightly more than one and one half months they have moved into the site, completed the temporary camp and brought the Vietnamese Naval Base to approximately 25 per cent completion.

Here in the 1st Military Region the level of intensity of work in the immediate Danang area is subsiding slightly while the number of details working away from Danang has increased. Detail BUFORD continues to build Route 4 south of Danang under the able direction of Senior Chief Equipment Operator Wood. And they are building that road in an outstanding manner at an awe inspiring pace inspite of constant harrassment from enemy mines. Unfortunately they have hit several more mines during the past month. Thank God no one was killed, however we have had seven men wounded since you last heard from CDR Jones. I know it is little consolation but we are doing everything within our power to protect your Seabee. The men of Detail BUFORD know that since we do not permit them to travel the road in anything but heavy vehicles the chances of surviving a mine detonation with little or no injuries are very high. Without exception, every man who has been

injured asked to go back on the job immediately. God bless them all. They are determined to build that road inspite of the enemy mines. By this time next month I hope to be paving that road and looking at the last ten days of work on it just ahead of us.

Detail JUNEAU is really looking at the last 20 days work ahead of them on Route 1 south of Danang. Chief Equipment Operator Jacobs and his crew also are performing in an outstanding manner. As CDR Jones wrote previously the men of SIXTY-TWO will be able to look back on this and the previous deployment and take justifiable pride in their excellent contribution to the construction of the first adequate highway system in the Republic of Vietnam.

A new detail, Detail NASHVILLE, was deployed last month to Phouc Trach (just east of Hoi An about 25 miles southeast of Danang). Under the direction of Chief Builder Charles M. Austin they are constructing an Advance Tactical Support Base for the Vietnamese Navy River Patrol Forces.

Equipment Operator First Class Reynolds is directing the efforts of Detail DECATUR in the construction of a Main Supply Route through the large complex of the Second Republic of Korea Marine Brigade north of Hoi An. This project is truly one of international cooperation in that the Korean Marines are hauling the rock which Petty Officer Reynolds is using to construct the road.

Here in camp at Danang the myriad of tasks which are required to support these construction operations continue in the fine efficient manner which has characterized SIXTY-TWO for several years. We moved here from Camp Hoover (across town) July 16-21. The move while somewhat disrupting to normal operations was made smoothly and efficiently under the direction of LCDR Gerdel, CEC, USN, the Executive Officer, and the battalion staff. It is truly a tribute to their dedication and performance right down to the last man, that Camp Hoover was turned over to the Vietnamese for use in an immaculately clean condition. Even more of a tribute was the OUTSTANDING grade which was given to our Supply Department during the annual supply inspection just three days ago. In three short weeks your Seabees moved into a new camp and consolidated the repair parts, tools, project materials and supplies left behind by a sister Construction Battalion with those we brought with us, meanwhile providing uninterrupted support of the construction operations here and in the Mekong Delta. This consolidation was performed so efficiently that in all but one area the inventory and stock control procedures proved out at or close to 100 per cent accuracy during the inspection.

I have continually stressed to your Seabees how proud I am of them. I only wish the vocal element of dissidence currently in vogue in the States could see the job they are doing out here. And not just the Seabees -- all the U.S. personnel are doing a bang up job. They know what they are doing is important to the United States and to the countries here in southeast Asia and to the world as a whole. They are proud of the job they are doing. And they make fine ambassadors of the American way of life. You have every right to be proud of them -- they truly deserve it.

It is indeed an honor and a privilege to command such a fine organization. Your support of your Seabee, your acceptance of the undesirable family separation and your understanding of their problems gives them the drive to carry on in such an outstanding manner.

Please feel free to write me personally if I may be of assistance. For those of you in the Gulfport area, my wife Cindy is also willing to help in anyway she can or at least help you to get the necessary assistance you require.

Until next month at this time I shall close with my best wishes
for your good health and happiness.

God bless you all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Frank M. Newcomb". The signature is written in a cursive style with some flourishes.

Frank M. Newcomb
CDR, CEC, USN
Commanding Officer

U.S. NAVAL MOBILE CONSTRUCTION
BATTALION 62
FPO SAN FRANCISCO 96601

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NAVY DEPARTMENT

AIR MAIL



THE OLSONS
713 COMERCIAL
~~PLAINVILLE, ILL.~~

Plainfield

60544

U.S. NAVAL MOBILE CONSTRUCTION BATTALION 62

FAMILY GRAM

15 September 1970
Camp Haskins (South)
Danang, RVN

Dear Families and Friends of NMCB SIXTY TWO:

The days are swiftly passing by. It seems that only a couple of weeks have elapsed since I last wrote you. We are all anxious for the swift passage of time so that soon we all may return to the arms of our loved ones and families. At the same time there is a feeling of desperation - desperation that time will pass so quickly that we won't be able to finish all of our work, especially the jobs which mean the most to us.

I know that some of you have heard talk of the battalion returning to Gulfport earlier than originally planned. At this point in time it is only talk. We are engaged in some preliminary planning in case that talk becomes fact -- prudence dictates such action. However, the fact that we are making these plans has in some cases been interpreted as firm confirmation of our early return. I do not desire to be a doom crier, but I have seen Seabees and their families build up their hopes and make definite plans based upon such talk or scuttlebutt. Then when things did not pan out as hoped, they were sorely disappointed and considerably upset with the Navy. We must continue on the basis of the original deployment schedule until it is officially changed by the Chief of Naval Operations. Rest assured, I will notify you by special edition of the Familygram as soon as we hear any word officially changing our deployment schedule. Until then look for your Seabee to be home for Christmas.

With the passage of time the monsoon season is quickly nearing. As a result we are pushing to close out those jobs which will be most affected by the wet weather.

Detail Juneau has completed the paving of Route 1 south of Danang this past week. All of us were saddened at the departure of Equipment Operator Chief Jacobs for emergency leave. He certainly earned the right to see that job completed. However we understand the situation and look forward to seeing him in Gulfport. Hope all is well at home, Chief.

Detail Decatur has completed the Main Supply Route at the Republic of Korea Marine Brigade Cantonment. The job seemed to grow larger the more Petty Officer Reynolds and his crew worked. And then the Korean General is a better horse trader than I so he wound up getting a helicopter port in addition to the road.

Equipment Operator First Class Schiedel and his well drilling crew have performed some minor miracles bringing in fine wells in the sand dunes and are now preparing to try their luck at Cam Ranh Bay. He says he's still trying to hit oil but every time he gets a good start the water starts flowing and spoils it all. That water at times is worth more than gold out here. There are about 1000 Seabees and Marines here at Camp Haskins who are thankful to Petty Officer Schiedel and his crew for bringing in another well and eliminating the requirement for water hours.

Detail Albany has continued their unbelievable rate of progress at the ACTOV base at Chau Doc. Within the next two or three weeks we will be transferring some of the men from Detail Albany to Detail Hollywood so that we can complete the entire base and all dependents shelters at Tan Chau prior to

our departure. A little over two weeks ago RADM Marschall, the Commander Third Naval Construction Brigade, toured all of the ACTOV bases in the Delta. He was very complimentary in praising the accomplishments of Details Albany and Hollywood. According to him they are the best run, cleanest Vietnamese River Patrol Boat Base construction projects in the Delta -- We knew that, but it is very nice to hear those words from the King Bee himself.

Detail Buford continues to push the construction of Route 4 in spite of the mines, foul weather, equipment breakdowns, etc. Regrettably six more mines have been hit, but thank God no one was injured seriously. I've talked to each of the operators involved shortly after each of the incidents and as I mentioned previously every one of them has insisted on going back to work. With spirit and dedication like that we cannot lose. We have started the paving of the roadway yesterday. The end is in sight, God willing and the monsoons hold off, We should finish right around the end of this month. Then the Vietnamese can return to their birthplaces and resettle that beautiful fertile valley.

All of this talk concentrates on the construction projects. However they involve directly only about 40% of the battalion. The unsung heroes are the support personnel here in camp. It is through their untiring efforts that we are able to keep up the pace on the jobs.

Chief Williams and his crew in the galley continue to serve the finest food this side of the Mark Hopkins Hotel. SIXTY-TWO is known as a "good feeder" and the reputation is well deserved. I wonder if the cooks' wives cook for their husbands when we are in homeport? It must be a real challenge.

The supply department and the administration personnel departments continue to quietly and efficiently provide the materials, supplies and administrative support so necessary to the continued functioning of the battalion.

You all can take great pride in your Seabees. They are serving our country superbly and I am proud to have the honor of being their commanding officer. It is hard to lead such a fine crew-- I have to run so hard in order to stay out in front of them.

May I again thank you for patient understanding and support of your Seabees. Your sacrifices and shouldering of all of the responsibilities at home while we are away are awesome tasks which are well appreciated by all of us. "Keep those cards and letters coming" folks, mail is about the second most important thing to us. The first is getting home to you. Please write me if I can be of assistance.

God bless you and watch over you.

Sincerely,

Frank M. Newcomb

Frank M. Newcomb
CDF, CEC, USN
Commanding Officer

U.S. NAVAL MOBILE CONSTRUCTION
BATTALION 62
FPO SAN FRANCISCO 96601

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NAVY DEPARTMENT

AIR MAIL

THE OLSONS
713 COMERCIAL
PLAINSVILLE, ILL.

