

NAVAL MOBILE CONSTRUCTION BATTALION 121

On February 4, 1967, U. S. Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 121 was recommissioned by General Wallace M. Greene Jr., Commandant of the Marine Corps.

Naval Construction Battalion 121, the newly commissioned battalion's predecessor, had a short but impressive career supporting the 4th Marines during World War II. NCB-121 was activated May 10, 1943 at Camp Lejeune, N.C. where they performed a variety of construction duties until moving to Camp Pendleton, California, in August.

The battalion and other elements of the 4th Marines sailed for Hawaii in mid-January, 1944, to join a task force sailing for the Marshall Islands. Hopping from island to island the Seabees removed unexploded artillery shells and blasted coconut trees to clear space for Marine Corps artillery emplacements. Seabees also acted as ammunition and supply carriers at the height of the invasion. Victory had its price though; two Seabees killed and 59 wounded.

The next objective of the 4th Marines and NCB-121 was Saipan. The island was occupied by heavily entrenched Japanese forces. Seabees supplied men for beach security, infantry teams and combat patrol forces during the bloody invasion. This campaign also cost the Seabees dearly; 11 dead and 79 wounded in action.

After the Japanese surrendered, de-mobilization proceeded at a rapid pace. The Chief of Naval Operations on December 31, 1947, ordered NCB-121 redesignated Construction Battalion Detachment 1504 to close out four and a half years of glorious fighting and building achievements for the heroic Seabees of NCB-121.

After recommissioning ceremonies, NCB-121 underwent six-months of rigorous technical and military training. They deployed to Camp Lejeune, N.C. for advanced training in counter-guerrilla warfare, communications, tactics

and use of small arms and crew-serviced weapons in preparation for their deployment to Vietnam in early August, 1967.

During the battalion's first deployment at Phu Bai, just south of the imperial city of Hue, they demonstrated the pride and determination that had made their predecessors, MCB-121, famous. Supporting the United States military forces, MCB-121 built hundreds of living quarters and several galleys, maintained 27 miles of the vitally important Route 1, sent detachments to Site C-1 (near Dong Ha), Camp Evans, Van Ty and Hue and constructed many other varied projects. They fought rain, mud, heat, dust and the enemy to uphold the fine traditions of the Naval Service.

In April, 1968, MCB-121 returned to Gulfport to undergo further training before once again deploying to Vietnam.

Fly 'Old Glory'
June 14

THE SEABEE CENTER COURIER
"HOME OF ATLANTIC FLEET SEABEES"



Vol. II, No. 12

U. S. NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BATTALION CENTER, GULFPORT, MISSISSIPPI

Friday, June 9, 1967

First: DPPO Program

Construction Training Unit To Begin Duty

The Secretary of the Navy has authorized establishment of a Construction Training Unit at the Gulfport Seabee Center, according to an announcement by Congressman William M. Colmer.

The 100-man unit is scheduled for commissioning in the "immediate future." Its mission will be to provide academic and technical training to Seabees homeported at the Gulfport Seabee Center. Its first and most pressing assignment will be to train some four to five thousand Direct Procurement Petty Officers (DPPOs) during the next year at the Center. The Petty Officers will begin arriving at the Gulf Coast naval base during the first week of July and will continue to arrive at the rate of 100 per week throughout the coming fiscal year.

The DPPO program is a Bureau of Naval Personnel sponsored school organized to provide basic or boot training to newly enlisted Seabees who already possess construction skills. The DPPOs will remain at the Gulfport Seabee Center for a minimum of five weeks.

The school was formerly located at the Davisville, R. I., Naval Construction Battalion Center. Naval authorities, for the obvious reason of climate and space, decided to move the school to the Mississippi Gulf Coast base.

The Construction Training Unit will have a military complement of four officers and 96 enlisted men who will be permanently assigned to the local Seabee Center. A number of these people have already reported for duty and are enrolled in the Instructor Training Course at Keesler AFB, Miss.

MCB-74 Families Plan Film for 'Bees

Families of deployed MCB-74 Seabees will star in a movie scheduled for filming at 10:30 a.m. July 4. The 16mm color movie, with sound, will be sent to the battalion at its deployment site in South Vietnam.

The movie will show MCB-74 wives and children as they picnic in the recreation area across the street from the Center's headquarters building. Center Commanding Officer, Capt. Robert C. Engram, announced that the restriction on slacks and shorts is lifted for the occasion. Feminine attire should be in good taste.

Barbecue pits, volleyball and badminton equipment will be provided for the enjoyment of the families.

Each family will have an opportunity to appear in the film and to send love and greetings to its deployed Seabee.

MCB-74 families are urged to make plans now to attend the picnic so that they can participate in the family film.

MCB-74 Begins Tour In S. Vietnam

Mobile Construction Battalion 74 deployed to Vietnam during the past week. This is the third of five Seabee units to complete training at the Gulfport Seabee Center. The 750-man unit took up its overseas duties in the DaNang area of South Vietnam.

Led by Cmdr. Gordon W. Schley, the battalion was recommissioned Dec. 3, 1966. Seabees assigned to the unit began construction training several weeks before the battalion's formal recommissioning. They cleared underbrush and trimmed young pine saplings to create the Center picnic grounds across the street from Center headquarters. Their first major construction project was the Gulfport Teen Center, "The Porthole," dedicated last February. They also did much of the construction work at Camp Iti Kana, the Girl Scout camp just south of Maxie, Miss.

Many of the battalion's Seabees turned firefighters to battle fires in the pinewoods west of the Seabee Center last fall. They also aided city and Center firemen to put out a fire in a house just outside the east perimeter fence. The following evening many of them showed up with hammer and saws to help the owner rebuild his home.

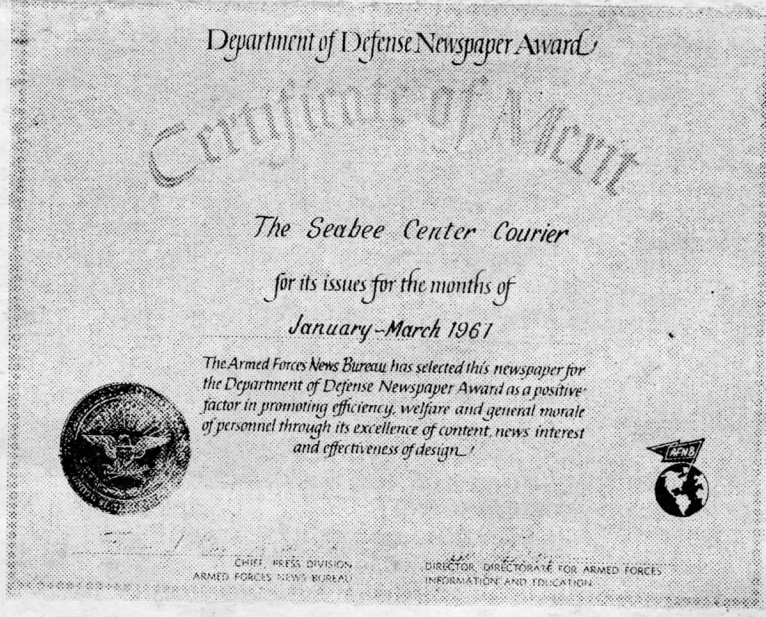
The 120-man advance party deployed in May to facilitate a smooth take over at the deployment site. The remaining 630 Seabees boarded eight flights of C-141 jet transports to make the 27-hour flight to Southeast Asia.

Some 100 families of MCB-74 Seabees remain in the Gulfport area.



LEAVING GULFPORT — Mobile Construction Battalion 74 Seabees board one of the eight giant C-141 jet transports at the Gulfport Airport to begin their 27-hour flight to Vietnam. Refueling and rest stops were made at Elmendorf, Alaska and Yokota, Japan.

Courier Wins Top Newspaper Award



DOD Names Center News For Early '67

Center Commanding Officer, Capt. Robert C. Engram, has received a letter from the DOD Directorate for Armed Forces Information and Education notifying him that The Seabee Center Courier has been awarded the Department of Defense Certificate of Merit for an outstanding service paper for the quarter, January-March 1967.

"This recognition of achievement is awarded each quarter to outstanding service publications which are selected for their general attractiveness, conformity with journalistic principles, and readability for the period. Judging is by the staff of the Armed Forces News Bureau Press Division headquartered in Washington.

Ten service newspapers were chosen for DOD Newspaper Awards for the first quarter of 1967. These were selected from more than 1500 official publications of the Armed Forces and represent letterpress, offset, multilith and mimeograph methods of reproduction as produced in the U.S. and overseas. The Seabee Center Courier topped the letterpress-stateside list.

"This is a deserving tribute to the editorial staff of the Courier," said Captain Engram. "Let's go for the big one and see if we can get the top award for the year," he quipped.

Courier editor during the period was Petty Officer Second Class, Journalist Jerry Marshall who

AWARD (Cont'd, Page 8)

★ Inside ★

Editorials	Page 2
Child Saved	Page 3
Summer Jobs	Page 6
Hurricanes	Page 7

Navy Officer Receives Army Medal

Lieutenant Gerald P. Julian, supply officer for Mobile Construction Battalion 121 has been awarded the Army Commendation Medal for duties at his former assignment.

He received the medal for services while assigned as aide-de-camp to the deputy commander for operations, Military Traffic Management and Terminal Service Headquarters, Washington, D. C. from September, 1965 through January, 1967.

Lieutenant Julian's thorough, meticulous and in-depth research and analysis of communications studies and decision papers were of invaluable assistance to the deputy commander for operations, according to the citation.

He formulated the concept and requirements for an automated data system for personal property traffic.

Booster Club Give 'Bees Tasty Send-Off

Deployment of Mobile Construction Battalion 74 during the past week gave the newly organized Seabee Booster Club the first opportunity to serve departing Seabees.

Hot coffee and doughnuts were served to some 630 Seabees by nearly 30 Booster Club members, 20th Naval Construction Regiment instructor wives, and wives of MCB-74 Seabees. Seabee Booster Club funds provided the fresh doughnuts. Generous instructor wives and MCB-74 wives supplied chocolate chip cookies and cold drinks.

Workers from the 20th NCR Instructor's Wives' Club were Mesdames Darrell L. Miner; Joseph E. Webber; James W. Beasley; Richard W. Williams; James W. Hughes; Larry R. Lawrence; Whitney Meyers; Samuel J. Dame; Donald E. Crawford and Richard K. Mullinnex.

On hand to help out with each of the eight flights were Mrs. Don Kaye and Mrs. R. R. Motley from the MCB-74 Wives' Club.

Coffee and doughnut servers from the Seabee Booster Club were Morlan M. Ray Jr., acting president; Alvin McGathen; Alton Ladner; Noland Walters; Alton Morris; William Miller; Samuel Mosley; George Duvaul; R. J. Dubuisson; Harold K. Braun, Edgar LaFrance, Alvin Burroughs, R. P. Eike, Mr. and Mrs. Floyd T. Weihing, Cmdr. and Mrs. E. M. Michael, and sons Larry and Peter.

Membership in the club is open to anyone who has a sincere interest in and a desire to help the Gulfport-based Seabees. Club dues are \$2 per year. For further information call the Public Affairs Officer, ext. 456.



Jump Inside MCB-121 Page 5

MCB-121 'Bees Take What Marines Offer



Fox-hole living offers best protection.

More than 600 members of Mobile Construction Battalion 121, under the command of Cmdr. B. E. Stultz, completed three weeks of advanced military training at the Marine Corps' Camp Lejeune, N. C. The battalion flew back to Gulfport on Marine C-130's May 25 through 27.

The Seabees took everything the Marines had in store for them and then some. The busy 'Bees also took time out from their busy schedule to build a Vietnamese Village and a VC Guerilla Camp.

Elements of MCB-6, (Davisville, R. I.), and MCB-128, (Gulfport), trained with 121.

Veteran Leatherneck instructors of the Infantry Training Regiment (ITR) taught the Seabees such things as squad tactics, techniques of ambush and ambush defense, camouflage, individual movements, infiltration skills, battalion movements and forced marches.

Seabees learned to fire M-79 grenades, 3.5 rockets, M-60 machine guns and 81 mm mortars. By the end of the training period the Seabees were on target with every weapon.

Specialized instruction on bridge building, field medical, field mess, mine warfare, NCO leadership and communications were featured in the program.

After two weeks of strenuous training the battalion launched Operation FEX, a three day field exercise during which the unit became a self-functioning, self supporting entity. The battalion set up and defended a camp perimeter for three days, warding off repeated attacks by Seabee graduates of the counter-guerilla warfare school.

Back in Gulfport, the battalion is readying itself for the annual CBLANT Administrative Inspection June 13 through 15.



How to inch under barbed wire is a tough job.



Firing grenades is part of assignment



MCB-121 Seabees get the feel of a forced march.

TRAINING TIME — Seabees from MCB-121 get a taste of live "ammo" (top photo), while at Camp Lejeune, N. C., and also do some 81-mm mortar firing (center), and find how to walk on those swinging bridges (bottom photo).