

# SEABEE NEWS SERVICE

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## NEW UNITS FORMING

Some of the recruits pouring into the Seabees as a result of reopening of enlistments to get 32,000 more men are going into new truck operating and advance supply depot battalions. The work they'll do isn't new, but designation of battalions for such duty is.

The truck operating battalions will be similar to the Army's transportation groups and will have a complement of 34 officers and 1,204 enlisted men, compared to the normal complement of 1,082. There will be 750 truck operators to a battalion, supplemented by a nucleus of veteran Seabees.

The supply depot units, varying in size from a full battalion down to 175, will bring together tire repair and parts warehousing groups that heretofore operated as casual drafts or small detachments.

Boot camp, as most of the seasoned Seabees remember it, also is revised for the newcomers. Those scheduled for truck operating battalions will get three weeks of technical training immediately after reporting to camp. Their military training will not start until the battalion starts training as a unit.

A number of construction and special (stevedore) battalions, CBMU's, stevedore detachments and casual drafts also will be formed from the ranks of the recruits.

## DREDGING IN REVERSE

The 113th Battalion's PT detachment used "high pressure" methods to refloat two PT boats which had been driven hard aground by a hurricane.

The boats were broadside to the beach and above high water. Towing them off by ordinary means meant possible damage to the thin hulls, so the Seabees literally washed them out. Even enemy air raids failed to halt work. Directing a high pressure stream of water from a 500 gallons-per-minute fire pump, they excavated under the hulls, formed a deepening pool.

With the aid of a bulldozer which cleared away the piling sand and deepened the pool, they waited for the next high tide and towed the boats off without damage.

The detail was led by Lieut. H. F. Liberty, CEC, USNR, OinC, and Lt. (jg) T. M. Knovel, CEC, USNR, Executive Officer.

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## MUST'VE DUG DEEP

CSF P. J. Parks and his stevedore detail of 15 men from the 73rd Battalion hit the beach on D-Day to unload ammunition, food and medical supplies.

The party landed late in the afternoon and as night drew on, dug in at a location near the front lines. All night the Seabees huddled in their foxholes and listened to rifle and machine gun bullets whine overhead.

Crawling out of their dugouts the next morning, the bleary-eyed men were greeted by an amazed group of front-line Marines. The Marines were no more amazed, however, than the Seabees were when they learned they had spent the night in "no man's land." In fact, at one time, after a series of attacks and counterattacks, their bivouac had been 50 yards behind the Jap lines!

### PARDON, SIR!

Seabee William R. Grove spent fifteen months sweating it out to make CCM and then discovered he had been a commissioned officer since October 1, 1943!

Ensign Grove enlisted in the Seabees in the spring of '42 and applied for a commission a few months later. The application was approved after he had shipped out, but in the process of being transferred from his battalion to duty with a regiment, the Seabee never heard about it. The battalion assumed the regimental personnel office had notified him; the regimental office, not having been informed of Grove's status as an applicant for a commission, never checked his name against the periodical lists of appointments. It took fifteen months to discover the error.

Ensign Grove was finally sworn in on December 27, 1944.

## STRAIGHT FROM MARS!

The flailing mine detonator which Marines and 127th Battalion Seabees have rigged up looks like it came straight from Mars.

The flail idea in mine detonation isn't new. It has been in use in this war for several years, particularly during the British campaign in Africa, but the Marines and Seabees had nothing but a medium tank and some scrap when they started -- and no models or drawings to work from.

They built a protruding frame work from the front of a Sherman tank, installed two revolving drums to which the heavy chain flails were attached with wedge-type cable sockets. The driving mechanism was made from truck drive shafts and universal joints and pulleys, cast from a salvaged airplane propeller.

The supporting frame is composed of pipe, angle, channel, strap and plate welded. The frame is attached to the tank's hydraulic ram by a link mechanism which permits ready raising and lowering. Plate was used as armor to protect the differential assembly, and power was taken from the tank's main propellor shaft and transmitted through the driving mechanism to the drums.

The device was tested through two formidable minefields -- and came out still flailing, with all mines detonated.

Its builders called the device "The Scorpion."

### GALA PERFORMANCE

Word had gotten around quickly that the chaplain had been able to borrow a projector from a neighboring unit. Eagerly, the men assembled in a cleared area.

The machine arrived minus a plug. One was dug up but it didn't fit. Another appeared from somewhere and filled the bill.

The first blurry images projected on the portable screen made it apparent that the projector was too far from the "stage." It was moved forward as far as the wires would allow, but it was still too distant. So the portable screen, set up on an oil drum, was moved closer to the projector -- almost in the middle of the audience.

The show started, but the sound equipment mostly gasped and wheezed. The men watched the film patiently, straining to catch the barely audible dialogue.

After a few minutes someone noticed the film was spewing itself out of the machine. The projector was turned off, but the part of the film which had already been run through was a gnarled mass of celluloid. Untangling it took more than a half an hour. The audience waited patiently.

A rustle of anticipation ran through the throng as the operators signaled they were almost ready. Groans replaced smiles as a gust of wind caught the white screen, toppling it face down in the mud.

Some of the men went to the galley, got buckets of water, washed down the screen, and set it up on the oil drum again.

The show went on. Everything was all right -- except that the sound, which had been faltering all along, gave up the ghost entirely in the last two reels.

But the Seabees remained to watch. It was their first show in the Philippines.

### BY WAY OF CHINA

Life has many pitfalls, Art Williams of the 101st discovered, and one of the largest and deepest awaited him in the Marianas.

Art was working the night shift, operating the front 'dozer of two on road work.

The operator on the second machine, who could see Williams clearly in the light of his headlamps, turned to glance backward a moment. When he looked ahead again, Art had completely disappeared!

Pulling his dozer up sharp, the driver hopped to the ground -- to find himself on the edge of a large pit. Art and the other dozer were at the bottom, considerably jolted but undamaged.

The pit had been hidden by a crust of earth and the bulldozer's weight had carried it through.

Some of Williams' mates now are accusing him of trying to dig his way home.

### EXPLOITED

The sweat rolled off their backs but the two Seabees dug on. An hour's work with a pick and shovel had already produced such fine souvenirs as a rusty knife and a half-rotted gas mask. Harold D. Sears, S1c, and Tony Micsovszky, S1c, attacked the debris of the one-time Jap pillbox on Guam with renewed vigor.

An unknown serviceman strolled over and watched with interest. As the Seabees moled deep into the earth, he shouted words of encouragement. With an audience to watch them, Sears and Micsovszky swung their pick and shovel still harder.

The serviceman was impressed. He went so far as to get down in the hole with them. As they stopped to rest, he pawed idly in the dirt they had overturned. He picked at a piece of paper and straightened up with an exclamation of surprise, holding aloft an American one hundred dollar bill! Carefully he brushed the dirt from the bill, put it in his wallet, and walked away.

### MAKING IT HOT FOR 'EM

Two Army officers, a CEC officer, and a Seabee of the 73rd Battalion, transformed a high pressure pump, normally used for fire-fighting, into a "super" flame thrower which spelt doom for two seemingly-impregnable Jap machine gun nests and their crews.

After repeated heavy mortar and machine gun fire as well as attack by the regulation Army-type flame-thrower had failed to dislodge the strongly-entrenched enemy, the Army officers, First Lts. G. A. Schrader and W. S. Hamilton, sought the aid of Lt. (jg) Frank D. Schwarz, CEC, USNR, and CSF Glenn E. Franklin.

The four, working together, devised the "super" flame-thrower by making several "improvements" on the Seabees' high pressure fire-fighting pump. The improvised

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flame-thrower worked; the Jap strong point--and the Japs--were wiped out.

The pump now has two tiny Jap flags painted on its side in recognition of its accomplishment.

### HAD ENOUGH

To a few Japs, apparently, the idea of surrender is not entirely alien. At Anguar, in the Palaus, one was so anxious to give himself up he swam out to a pontoon barge to do so.

Darting up behind the barge, he began frantically waving his hands. Surprised Seabees grabbed carbines. The Jap leaped back in the water -- but fast.

Then it dawned on the mates that perhaps the Nip had wanted to be captured. Some of them went to the end of the barge and hauled the shivering fugitive over the side.

### GONE NATIVE

From the Marianas, Seabee Joe Leone wrote home, enclosed a picture of a bushy-haired, bearded man who had a wild look about him.

"The censor returned the photograph," said the battalion newspaper, "explaining that pictures of natives are taboo."

Leone rushed to the censor, demanding justice. "That photograph," he beefed, "is of one of my mates!"

### MOBILE WELDING UNIT BUILT BY CBMU

A Jap d.c. generator and a salvaged six-cylinder Dodge engine and transmission mounted on a ton-and-a-half Ford truck frame have provided CBMU 558 with a mobile welding machine suitable for such welding and burning jobs as making culvert sections out of old oil drums, and heavy equipment repair and renovation.

Filling in the details, Lt. R. N. Clark, CEC, USNR, OinC, reported the electrode holder was made from a six-inch brass bolt, a piece of brass bar 1 1/2" x 1 1/2", and a screw-type holder. Cutting tips, he said, were fashioned from the carbons of discarded searchlights. Electrode and ground leads were made from #1 extra flexible welding cable.

Two leads in parallel are used to carry the load. The lugs used to connect the leads to the machine came from the jackets of two fifty-calibre bullets.

A field rheostat was made from Nichrome wire, and a slider has been used for the variable voltage settings. The rheostat, along with the electrode, are mounted on a

plywood panel attached to the truck frame.

The machine has an approximate output of 350 amperes.

### CLOTHES MAKE THE MAN

Seabee Walter Kazlowski knows one mate who won't collect any more souvenirs -- or if he does he'll make sure they aren't wearable ones.

The Seabee, Tipistro Alloro, a Filipino mess attendant, was walking along the beach at Cape Gloucester wearing a Jap fatigue hat when some natives spotted him. Mistaking the diminutive Filipino for a bona-fide Jap, the natives came after him brandishing picks and shovels. Alloro took off for the Seabee galley and managed to scramble in just ahead of his blood-thirsty pursuers.

By dint of fast and persuasive talking, the Seabee cooks were able to convince the islanders that Alloro was an ally, not a Jap. Said Kazlowski, "We never saw that fatigue hat again."

### NO JOKE ON THEM

It was late Fall, 1942, and the monthly meeting of the Fort Stockton, Texas, American Legion Post was drawing to a close. Some of the veterans' wives were bantering with their husbands. "Why didn't you fellows finish this job the last time?" one asked. "If you had, we wouldn't be sending our sons out to fight."

"I think they ought to leave our sons at home," another woman said, "and make you old timers finish the job anyway."

Up spoke Shelton King of nearby Imperial, Texas, whose son had recently gone overseas with the Army Air Force, "Let's go anyway and help the boys do the job right!"

The next day twelve Legionnaires appeared at the nearest Navy recruiting office and soon eleven were Seabees.

"Why the Seabees?" said King, now a CCM. "Because we were told we'd be sent overseas -- and quickly."

The 48-year-old veteran, now in the Marianas, reported nine of his ten original colleagues are still on active duty and two are stationed near him.

### SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

The Jap transformer they'd found had a 110-volt indicator on one side and a 350 designation on the other, so 101st Battalion electricians began monkeying with the equipment to step it up to the 350-volt figure.

The connections completed, one of the men picked up a volt meter to test the flow of juice. CPO Bob Raichien grabbed him just in time. The gents, he explained, had exceeded their fondest expectations: they'd transformed the 110-volts not to 350

but 3500.....enough to deliver up any number of crisply toasted Seabees.

The somewhat shaken electricians aren't likely to forget the chief's pointer: in stating high voltage, the extra zero is usually left out.

#### OFFER ACCEPTED

More than six thousand miles from home, S. A. Lamson, CM2c, scanned the classified advertising section of his home town paper, discovered his wife had offered his favorite hunting rifle for sale for \$50!

Lamson hurried to the battalion post office, purchased a \$50 money order, and wrote:

"Dear Mrs. Lamson....I noticed your ad. Please find enclosed fifty dollars in GI lettuce with which to purchase said gun and please deliver it in person."

#### CARPENTER STRIKER?

Chairs, benches, shelvings, cabinets, and other extras in the 101st Battalion's sick bay all are the product of the battalion's medical officer, Lt. Charles V. Williamson, MC, USNR.

Because he didn't want to "bother" the hard-pressed Seabee carpenters while they were busy constructing a new camp and other installations, Lt. Williamson designed and built his own furnishings in his spare time.

The job probably was an easy one for the officer who, in civilian life, makes a hobby of scale modeling -- "especially on model trains."

#### 24 HOUR MAIL SERVICE!

That woebegone, letdown feeling that comes of seeing a locked post office door when you know you have mail has vanished from the 23rd Battalion.

Joseph M. Cotter, MaM1c, keeps the battalion post office open on a 24-hour schedule to take care of the men whose duties prevent their completing their post office business during regular hours. "It's the only post office I know of in the service open day and night," Cotter says--and the Seabees cheer. Helping Cotter are H. D. Cosgrove, MaM1c, and Robert W. Simonds, MaM3c.

In a recent 24-hour period they wrote 585 money orders totaling \$42,000---a record for two and a half years of battalion operation, Cotter says. Recent figures from the fleet postal officer shows that, in proportion, Seabees receive more mail than any other branch of the service, and Cotter is going to see that they get it.



## THIS WON'T HURT A BIT!

It's the patient who sits in the driver's seat in the dental office of Lieutenant Harold F. Shields, DC, USNR, on duty with a battalion in the Marianas.

Burned-out American tanks answered Lieutenant Shields' lack of dental chairs. The tank seats were removed, head-rests welded on, and the new chairs were moved into the battalion dental office.

### THE MALE BEAUTIFUL?

Charges of ballot-stuffing, broken pledges and outright betrayal howled through the rigging like a typhoon as an aftermath of a mock election on shipboard to select the "most beautiful man" from the Seabees, soldiers and Marines on board.

Loudest cry of "fraud" came from C. O. "Tex" Borcharding, MM1c, of the 117th Battalion, who was riding toward certain victory in spite of his opponents' good natured ribbing that he "had a face like a prune and his teeth don't fit." At the last minute of balloting, Tex's campaign manager, finding himself with a victory-certain bloc of ballots, cast them for himself!

The Army's voters pressed mock charges of coercion when Sgt. Jack Reed won. The dogfaces said Reed had threatened to cancel liberty for any GI who failed to vote for him. The Marines echoed the Army when PFC Albert E. Ford won. Ford, they said, knew much about a poker game in which four royal flushes turned up in one deal.

### NAVAL FIREPOWER MORE THAN QUADRUPLED SINCE 1940

Radical changes in armament of modern fighting ships over those built prior to Pearl Harbor have permitted the Navy to increase the firepower of its combatant vessels, based on total tonnage of the Navy, including auxiliaries and Coast Guard, to nearly five times what it was on July 1, 1940.

This fleet of combatant ships, auxiliaries and Coast Guard vessels can fire nearly 2,000 tons of shells in a 15 second firing run, all conditions being normal, a Navy Department announcement said.

As examples of the increase in firepower, the Navy disclosed that the modern battleship, USS Iowa, packs a wallop 92 per cent greater than that of the pre-war USS Texas; the heavy cruiser, USS Baltimore, commissioned in 1943, has 123 per cent more firepower than the USS Pensacola class, commissioned in 1930; the light cruiser, USS Denver, commissioned in 1942, could outshoot the USS Omaha, before the latter's modernization, by 110 per cent; and the USS Sumner class of destroyers lay down a

barrage 216 per cent greater than that of the old four-stacker class of 1918.

All comparisons, the Navy noted, are based on gunfire alone and do not include the additional firepower of torpedoes, depth charges and ship-based aircraft. Comparisons of pre-Pearl Harbor ships are based on their armament prior to modernization of July 1, 1940.

### DAY SHIFT RECORD

The stevedore gang of hatch boss, B. S. Hudson, BM1c, of the 12th Special Battalion, recently set an island tonnage record by loading 711 tons on a ship during the day shift. The cargo was rolling stock.

#### C'EST LA GUERRE

CPO Woolverton of the 101st had a ready explanation when the news was flashed that his wife had given birth to twins.

"The president," he said blandly, "has called for increased war production!"

#### B-29 PAINTER, FIRST CLASS

Charles H. Anderson, SF3c, is painting noses--noses of B-29's. Anderson, who paints as a hobby, was the answer to the airforce's question when he agreed to paint names and figures on Superforts based in the Marianas. His latest creation, a curvaceous and scantily-clad beauty, decorates the nose of the bomber piloted by Army Captain Eugene G. Mahoney.

#### DEPEND ON THE MARINES!

The Marine officer drove into the 101st Battalion's reservation, pulled his jeep-load of boxes up in front of the Chaplain's office and solved a problem that plagues state-side smokers daily.

"I have," said the officer, "several cases of smoking tobacco out here in my jeep for your boys." Just like that!

He explained that his outfit had more than it needed and "the boys thought you Seabees might enjoy some of it."

And all for free!

#### PRESTO-- A TRANSPORT!

There were only two Liberty ships at hand when a Marine Air Group needed

transport. The emergency matter was placed with CBMU 582 and one day before sailing time, the Seabees had converted the cargo carriers into transports for the job. Chief Carpenter Cecil H. Holsinger, CEC, designed and supervised construction of skeleton-framed bunks in tiers of threes and a carpenter detail headed by Thomas D. Hughes, CCM and Frederick F. Kraus, CCM, did the work to add one-third bunk space provided in the 'tween-decks area.

### TAIN'T CRICKET

A British newsman sent to cover the Persian Gulf Command football championship contest between two GI teams, sent in a rather bewildering report to his editors, who published the story of the game in this fashion:

"We sent a man to view the match and give us his impressions of what went on. He was quite enthralled but simply did not understand.

"The teams lined up, he says, about 30 yards apart. He distinctly saw a ball between the two formations, but somebody gave this a savage kick and everybody lost interest in it.

"The opposing sides rushed at each other and grappled hotly. After an exciting period of pincers movements being essayed, the ball was discovered lying, wan and unattended, in midfield. Conscience stricken, the players huddled over it again.

"After an involved and furious five minutes, a whistle blew and both sides checked their casualties. The ball had moved fully five yards. At this point one team gathered around its captain and had a debate. They talked for quite a while. Then the neglected ball was brought into play and a man was seen to run with it. Soon the ball was seen to be but a few yards from the goal line.

"This seemed to be the crux of the match. A moment of tense excitement. Instantly both teams sat down on the field and had a nice rest, consuming light refreshments. In the end, one side won handsomely.

### THROUGH CHANNELS

A Seabee chaplain in New Guinea can't be dead sure what his congregation of native Koreans is hearing, but it must be good for attendance at Church services has increased 50 per cent in a month.

Lt. Benjamin L. Davis, CHC, USNR, finds it necessary to give his sermon

first to a Japanese internee who knows English, and then the Jap gives it to a Korean who knows Japanese. It marks the first time in years that 300 Korean Christians who comprise the congregation have been able to attend services.

### YOUNGSTERS APPRECIATIVE

Leavings from the 99th Battalion's mess hall for months have gone to the hog lot of an island school for under-privileged children.

Just before the Christmas season, CCS John D. Calvin was searching for holiday decorations for the mess hall. An employee of the school heard about it. A few days later 46 beautifully woven Christmas wreathes arrived. The children had made them from palm and banana leaves and sent them as a gift for their Seabee benefactors.

### TIP TO SEABEES:

If the little woman is encountering difficulty keeping your house in repair because of the shortage of stateside repairman, she may take a hint from Mrs. Sandy Moore, of Wichita, Kansas, wife of a 101st Battalion Seabee.

In need of a plumber Mrs. Moore called the shop of a Mr. Frederick who said that it would be some time before he could get there and added: "can't your husband fix it temporarily?"

Mrs. Moore explained it would be impossible since her husband was in the South Pacific, a remark which interested Mr. Frederick who replied that he had a son in the South Pacific, too.

Mrs. Moore answered: "Yes, I know, he's in my husband's outfit, in the same company."

Mr. Frederick, father of Ken Frederick of the 101st, made the repairs immediately.

### SPECIES: SAD SACK

Seabee Emmett Estes Bean, SK1c, is still in a quandry about a little animal he found in the jungles of the Solomon Islands.

Bean asked his mates to help him determine what the animal was. He was assured the animal was a baby rat, possum, raccoon or squirrel!

He finally decided it was a "Sad Sack." Then, because the critter didn't seem to enjoy his new surroundings and would only eat English walnuts and fresh pineapple, the storekeeper freed him into the jungle.

## SHORT SPORT SHOTS

**SIGNALS OFF.....**War Department's new selective service directives may have sounded death knell of professional sports for duration.....Hereafter, says Army announcement, all athletes rejected by local draft boards will be subjected to special scrutiny by WD, which pointed out "the inconsistency of rejecting an athlete for an ailment which is not sufficiently serious to prevent him from participating in professional games".....Cases of athletes rejected by local board will be forwarded to adjutant general accompanied by all pertinent information which was used as basis for proposed rejections.....WD said that in cases where athletes were not fit for combat duty they would be placed in limited service.....Meeting of major league baseball owners early in February will hear Ford Frick, president of NL, report on "factual information" received during conferences with Maj. Gen. Hershey, Selective Service Director; Paul V. McNutt, War Manpower Commissioner; and other high government officials.....Prospects are that Frick will tell them they will have to use men under or over draft age or close down for duration... Pro football owners keeping mum.....Among recent inductees: Stan Musial, Cards' outfielder, Bill Fleming, Cubs' pitcher; Tommy Heath, catcher for Columbus and Browns; Claude (Buddy) Young, Illinois grid and track star; "temporarily" rejected: Ray Mack, Indians' second baseman, married and father of two, was accepted for limited service, last summer, has been working in Cleveland war plant; Steve Van Buren, Philly Eagles' halfback and former LSU star; classified 1-A: Manuel Ortiz, world bantamweight champ, and Willie Mosconi, world pocket-billiard titleholder.....

**PREFERS PULPIT TO TRACK.....**Galloping Gil Dodds, the plank-pounding parson and America's No. 1 miler, closed out his running career with victory in Boston YMCA 2-mile.....Probably one of the greatest trackmen in history, Dodds hit peak in 1944, winning 10 races at three different distances, including the two fastest indoor miles on record.....Best mark was his American indoor record of 4:06.4.....Had beaten every prominent miler he met except Swedish star, Gunder Hagg.....Married and father of one child, Dodds will tour West and Southwest.....Rumor is he'll enter Navy as Chaplain after return.....

**HATS OFF.....**A parachute troop lieutenant until discharged after an injury suffered while bailing out, Frank Mancuso, catcher for the Browns, says he was offered "good raise in pay" but had written the War Department that he was in good condition and "eager to re-enter the Army".....As of now, offer has been rejected.....

**JUST ONE MORE TIME.....**S/Sgt. Joe Louis, world's heavyweight champ, quoted as saying that he'll defend title only once after the war and that Billy Conn would be his opponent.....Louis feels Conn deserves "first crack at title as he is No. 1 contender and gave me my hardest fight".....Joe is now attached to Camp Shanks, a part of the NY POE, and gives GIs their final U.S. lessons on physical conditioning and self-defense.....

**DISA AND DATA.....**Kentucky's quintet, previously regarded as leading collegiate team, toppled from unbeaten ranks by Tennessee, 35-34, in major upset.....Notre Dame also pulled surprise by stopping Great Lakes after sailors had hung up 17 straight.....Iowa and Army now rated as top teams; Hawkeyes have streak of nine straight, while Army unbeaten last year, has won four straight and now has overall streak of 20 in row..... Casey Stengel will manage Kansas City Blues in '45.....Billy O'Connell, 17, swam 22 miles non-stop in Dover, Kansas, pool.....Sammy Snead, discharged from Navy last September after serving 26 months, quit winter golf tournaments because of bad back; will resume in spring.....Ray Mangrum won Tuscon open golf.....Montreal leads National Hockey League, with Detroit second.....Pilot Officer Phil Marchildon, former Athletics pitcher, POW in Germany.