

2nd Naval Construction Battalion

*Historical
Information*



*“Construimus, Batuimus”
“We Build, We Fight”*



2nd C.B. (4th Detachment or 1st Sec)

- 4- 7-42 - The 4th Detachment, composed of Cos C and D and 1/2 Hdqtrs Co of 2nd CB, embarked at Norfolk for overseas destination.
- 5- 8-42 - Arrived Upolu Island.
- 4- 1-43 - The April MoR showed that 1 off. and 110 men of the 4th Detachment had been assigned to a Marine Unit, the 5th Defense Batt Reinforced, on Funa Futi.
- 5- 1-43 - Report of this date showed 2 off. and 207 men on Funa Futi, 97 men and one off. from the 5th Detachment (or Second Sec) of the 2nd CB having joined the Seabee Detachment there.
The unit on Funa Futi was known as the 2nd Naval Construction Battalion Detachment, 5th Defense Battalion. Also known as the Funa Futi Detachment.
- 7-15-43 - On or about this date the Fourth Detachment moved to Tuituila, leaving 22 men on Upolu Island.
- 1-11-44 - The Funa Futi Detachment reported back to the Fourth Detachment on Tutuila.
- 3- 7-44 - The entire 2nd CB with exception of 116 men arrived at Camp Parks. The 116 men left on Tutuila to await transp arrived at Camp Parks approx 1 month later.

(Above Itinerary prepared by Lt Mavis from the old cards)

2nd Construction Battalion (INACTIVATED)

2nd C.B. (5th Detachment or 2nd Sec.)

- 4- 6-42 - The Fifth Detachment of the 2nd CB, formed of Cos A and B and 1/2 HQ Co, en-trained at Norfolk for embarkation point, San Diego, Calif.
- 4-13-42 - Left U.S.
- 4-28-42 - Arrived at Tutuila.
- 6- 1-42 - On or about this date the Fifth Detachment moved from Tutuila to Wellis Is.
- 6- -43 - Sometime during this month the Fifth Detachment ret'd to Tuituila.
- 3- 7-44 - The entire 2nd CB with exception of 116 men arrived at Camp Parks. The 116 men left on Tutuila to await transp. Arrived at Camp Parks approx 1 month later.

(Above Itinerary prepared by Lt Mavis from old cards)

5/30/44

Camp notes
(3-44)

6/13/44

Inactivated C.B. report
1 June.

Second Construction Detachment

On April 8, 1942, the Second Construction Detachment, numbering about 500 men and 12 officers, sailed aboard the USS Neville from the Naval Operating Base, Norfolk, Virginia, bound for Tongatabu (Code BLEACHER) in the Tonga Islands. Reaching Tongatabu on May 10, the detachment faced a two fold job: building a fueling station and an air base. However, improperly planned ship loading resulted in a lack of sufficient equipment and rendered the detachment unable to handle the second of these tasks. U. S. Army Engineers assumed responsibility for the construction of Tongatabu's Fuaamotu Airfield. However, Seabees later helped in the final stages of the construction. Meanwhile, the Seabee detachment turned its attention to the tank farm. This comprised, upon its completion, twenty-two 10,000 -barrel tanks for oil and fuel, and twenty-six 500-barrel gasoline tanks.

In addition to their main job, the Second Detachment built a seaplane base with a coral ramp and also a 250-building Army hospital, gun emplacements, warehouses, and camp facilities. A special job was constructing and installing an improvised concrete bulkhead for the aircraft carrier USS Saratoga. Despite the shortage of equipment, most of the assignment was complete nine months after the initial landing.

Toward the end of 1942, however, the strategic importance of Tongatabu was diminishing. Tank farms were needed farther west. In November, the Second Detachment began dismantling Tongatabu's tank farm for shipment to Wallis Island on the western edge of the Samoan group. The arrival of Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit 511 on Tongatabu aided this work. Huts were dismantled for relocation. Allied New Zealand forces took over the airfield and hospital. The main body of the Second Construction Detachment, 350 men and 9 officers, departed from Tongatabu on February 23, 1943 and five days later arrived at Efate in the New Hebrides. About 160 men and officers remained behind on Tongatabu and became known as the Edit Detachment.

Third Construction Detachment

from On March 30, 1942 the Third Construction Detachment entrained for Camp Allen, Norfolk, Virginia, in strength of about 500 men and 12 officers, for Oakland, California. From Oakland the detachment sailed on April 12 for Port Vila, Efate Island (Code ROSES) in the New Hebrides and arrived on May 4.

Air bases were urgently needed to halt the Japanese march down the Solomons. The Japanese construction effort centered on an airfield

on Guadalcanal. The Guadalcanal field was the tip of a thrust southward aimed at cutting off Australia and New Zealand from American supply. The march of events now threw the Seabees of the Third Construction Detachment into a construction race with the enemy.

On Efate, the Third Detachment took over construction of an airstrip begun by the 4th Marine Defense Battalion. Marine builders had completed 2,000 feet of the field. Twenty-four days after the Seabees arrived, the island strip measured 6,000 feet of compacted coral. On May 28, 1942, planes of the 20th Marine Aviation Squadron landed to christen the Efate airfield for support of New Caledonia and the Fiji Islands.

However, the seizure of the burgeoning Japanese air salient on Guadalcanal was of a strategic importance overriding all else. For this, an air base within close striking distance was necessary. Accordingly, Espiritu Santo (Code BUTTONS), the northernmost island of the New Hebrides, became the site of an intensive building effort of the Third Detachment.

On July 8, 1942, a group of Seabees from the Third Construction Detachment, accompanied by a Marine antiaircraft battery and a company of infantry, left Efate, and on the same day arrived on Espiritu Santo and began excavating for an airfield. Given a 20-day

deadline, the Seabees, in one of the construction marvels of the war, carved out and coral-surfaced a 6,000-foot airstrip. They met the 20-day deadline. A fighter squadron broke in the new field on July 28, and the next day B-17 bombers landed. On the last day of July, 1943,¹⁹⁴³ bomber aircraft took off from Espiritu Santo and bombed the Japanese base on Guadalcanal. This was the first massive United States aerial bombardment of Guadalcanal and supported the ensuing landings of United States Marines, Army troops, Seabees and other Navy personnel.

For the phenomenal achievement at Espiritu Santo, the Third Construction Detachment later was awarded the Navy Unit Commendation.

In the meantime, the main body of the Third Detachment continued construction operations on Efate Island. There the Seabees completed a seaplane base at Havannah Harbor, which included two coral ramps, buoys for seaplanes, piers, nose hangars and a seaplane shop. By January, 1943, the detachment completed a 4,000-foot fighter strip and a second 6,000-foot bomber strip. The broad assignment of building a major advanced base also included a 600-bed hospital, quonset hut camps, warehouses, pontoon piers and barges, gasoline and oil tanks, and gun emplacements. On Efate, the Third Construction Detachment also built housing for 2,700 men and officers.

Merger of the Second and Third Construction Detachments

The Second Construction Detachment joined the Efate base-building after their arrival from Tongatabu on February 28, 1943. Then, on April 14, the Second and Third Construction Detachments were simultaneously inactivated and merged again to form Naval Construction Battalion 1.

Meanwhile, back on Tongatabu the 1st Battalion's Edit Detachment was dismantling the fuel tank farm and shipping the components to Wallis Island. On August 20, 1943, the Edit Detachment left Tongatabu and arrived on Wallis Island in the Samoan Island group. In the unhealthy climate of Wallis Island, the Edit Detachment completed the rebuilding of the tank farm with the assistance of Seabees from the 3rd Battalion. On December 1, 1943, the detachment left Wallis Island and joined the main body of the 1st Battalion on Efate.

As 1943 wore on, battalion medical reports reflected more and more the health-destroying effects of extended duty on the tropical islands. Of the original battalion complement of approximately 1,000 men, 138 had, by December, 1943, been evacuated to the United States. Widespread malaria, filariasis, dermatological ailments, and operational fatigue reduced stamina and lowered morale. Moreover, in late 1943, duty more and more was routine, enervating maintenance. Vital

base-building was now far to the west as the war pressed in on the Japanese Empire. For the highly-skilled volunteers of United States Naval Construction Battalion 1, who had been pioneers in the historic construction effort in the South Pacific, maintenance work was increasingly a trial of body and soul. Such work could be performed as well by one of the new construction battalions or construction battalion maintenance units being staged in the United States.

These factors led to the decision to return the 1st Construction Battalion to the United States. The battalion, numbering approximately 800 men and officers, left Efate in the middle of February and reached San Francisco on March 7, 1944. The same day, they arrived at the nearby Construction Battalion Replacement Depot, Camp Parks, California, for rest and rehabilitation.

There on June 13, 1944, Naval Construction Battalion 1 was inactivated. It had served the United States gloriously for over two years. Many of the men and officers served another tour of duty with other battalions. At Camp Parks, a large block of men and officers were assigned to the reorganized United States Naval Construction Battalion 12

United States Naval Construction Battalion 1

Second and Third Detachments

With the advent of World War II, the United States Navy determined that there was a crucial need for advanced naval bases along the South Pacific supply line connecting the Panama Canal with Australia and New Zealand.

To build these advanced bases, the Navy began recruiting skilled construction workers, the men who later became the famed Seabees. About a thousand of these men were assembled at the Naval Construction Training Center, Camp Allen, Norfolk, Virginia, and were formed into United States Naval Construction Battalion 1. The battalion was commissioned at Camp Allen on March 15, 1942.

A week or so later, the battalion was split into two detachments, destined for two separate Pacific islands. The Second Construction Detachment was formed from Companies A and B and half of the headquarters company. The Third Construction Detachment embraced Companies C and D and the remaining half of the headquarters company.

For all practical purposes the two detachments henceforth operated independently of each other until April 14, 1943, when they merged once again to constitute Naval Construction Battalion 1.

Prepared by: C. W. Matthews
Completed: August 26, 1969

United States Naval Construction Battalion 2

Early in 1942, strategic planners in the War Department developed a scheme for establishing "strong, mutually-supporting defensive positions at Samoa, Fiji and New Caledonia as essential for protecting the air and sea communications between the United States and Australia, for defending the island areas of the mid-Pacific and for base areas for the eventual offensive against Japan."

Within the Samoan group of islands the operation was designated STRAW. Here the defense was concentrated on Tutuila, American Samoa (STRAWSTACK). Tutuila was considered weak because of the presence of several undefended islands close by. Wallis Island (STRAWBOARD), a French mandate some 350 miles westward, was included in the Samoan group for tactical purposes. New Zealand-mandated Upolu (STRAWHAT) in Western Samoa was also included in the proposed development. On these and other islands, separate detachments of the 2nd U. S. Naval Construction Battalion built airfields, seaplane bases and harbor facilities along with necessary camps, supply depots, roads and the utilities required to operate them.

The 2nd Battalion was commissioned April 3, 1942 at the Naval Construction Training Center, Camp Allen, Norfolk, Virginia. Two separate detachments were formed: the 4th consisted of C and D Companies and one-half of Headquarters Company, under command of Lieutenant George E. Wells, Jr., CEC, USNR, and the 5th detachment was composed of A and B Companies and the other half of Headquarters Company, commanded by Lieutenant John T. Pendergrass, CEC, USNR. No one was designated as officer in charge of the entire battalion at this time; however, after the arrival of the detachments at Samoa, Lieutenant Commander Richard C. Holbrook, CEC, USNR, public works officer of the Naval Station at Pago Pago, Tutuila, was given command of the 2nd Battalion as additional duty commencing in June, 1942 by order of Major General Charles F. B. Price, USMC, commanding general of the defense forces in Samoa.

The Fifth Detachment

First to depart Camp Allen was the 5th Detachment; its 507 enlisted men and 10 officers boarded trains April 5, 1942 and arrived at San Diego, California April 10. They boarded the USS Harris April 12 and departed the next day. The detachment arrived at Pago Pago, Tutuila, American Samoa on April 28 and spent the next month quartered in the ship while negotiations were conducted with the French administrators of the Wallis Islands. In the interval, the Seabees provided stevedore manpower for unloading other ships, and assembled the detachment gear as it arrived on other incoming vessels.

The detachment departed Pago Pago May 29th and arrived at Uvea, Wallis Islands June 1. After six days for unloading the Harris and setting up a tent camp, the detachment commenced construction of the airfield and, equally important at that time, a system of roads from the beaches to the construction and camp sites.

During the next year, the detachment built a bomber field with a 6,000 by 250-foot runway, taxiways, plane revetments, two nose hangars, a machine shop, underground ammunition magazines, and 25,000 gallon aviation gas tank. In late 1942, a 5,000 by 250-foot fighter strip was completed, with taxiways, 18 plane revetments and a nose hangar.

An additional urgent project was a seaplane base with a 2,400 by 150-foot taxiway, a 200 by 70-foot ramp, concealed parking areas, camp facilities and a 25,000 gallon gas tank.

Other projects included: storehouses for dry and refrigerated storage; a 72-bed hospital; 70 miles of roadway; camp, administrative and operational structures; and a marine railway.

By March 1, 1943, the 5th Detachment of the 2nd Naval Construction Battalion had essentially completed its basic directive at Uvea and the requirements were more for maintenance and operation of utilities. Long-overlooked military training was provided. In April, 1943, 71 enlisted men were detached and sent to reinforce the Naval Construction Detachment with the Marine's 5th Defense Battalion at Funafuti. After

being relieved by Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit 504, the 5th Detachment, now numbering 360 enlisted men and 10 officers, embarked aboard the USS John H. Couch on June 21, 1943 and arrived at Tutuila June 23.

The detachment was afforded no respite, however. They immediately were dispersed to take over and complete construction projects at Leone, Tafuna, Utulei and other locations which were being performed by the departing 11th U. S. Naval Construction Battalion.

Lieutenant Pendergrass had relinquished command of the detachment to Lieutenant Harold E. Reardon, CEC, USNR on May 8, 1943 after the former had been promoted to Lieutenant Commander and designated officer in charge of the 2nd Battalion, following the departure of Lieutenant Commander Holbrook.

Among the projects taken over and completed by the 5th Detachment on Tutuila were: grading and surfacing of a 300 by 5,000-foot fighter strip at Leone; industrial housing including 28 buildings and utilities at Tafuna; three 50,000 gallon concrete gasoline storage tanks at Blunt's Point; one 27,000 barrel and one 13,000 barrel fuel storage tanks at Utulei; a reinforced concrete filter center, six frame buildings, administrative offices, and 16 by 80-foot mess hall and galley at Mormon Valley; a reinforced concrete building for an automatic dial telephone exchange at Fagaalu Valley; and a sewage disposal system for Mobile Base Hospital No. 3. Projects subsequently added included a radio beam station at Leone, an AACS radio station at Oletele Valley, and a dam for the water supply of Mobile Hospital No. 3.

These and a number of other lesser projects occupied the 5th detachment until February 24, 1944 when they were joined by their sister detachment aboard the SS Sommelsdijk, a Dutch merchant ship, to return to the United States.

The Fourth Detachment

The 4th Detachment of the 2nd U. S. Naval Construction Battalion departed Camp Allen on April 7, 1942, two days after their companion detachment left. They, however, went directly aboard two ships, the USS McCawley with elements of the 3rd Marine Brigade, and the USS Bellatrix (AKA-20), on which they sailed April 8. Their destination, Upolu (STRAWHAT), Western Samoa, was considered a potential invasion target of Japanese forces. The 4th detachment, consequently, was assigned to beach defensive positions on landing at Upolu on May 8. Any Japanese forces that might have been there had evacuated and no Japanese counterinvasion developed so the detachment was able to immediately and peacefully set about its construction tasks--airfields, an extensive seaplane base, administrative, operational and camp structures, and harbor facilities to support them.

The Seabees constructed a 4,000 by 200-foot runway near Faleolo which was completed by July 1942 and subsequently enlarged to 6,000 by 350 feet by January 21, 1943. Supporting facilities built by the detachment included taxiways, parking aprons for about 58 aircraft, two nose hangars, and structures for quarters, shops, administration and supplies.

Construction of the seaplane base included five 30-foot wide seaplane ramps of rock filled with concrete surfacing; six mooring buoys for seaplanes; a nose hangar; and all necessary storage and housing. The ramps were completed by the end of September.

Among the other projects completed by the Seabees of the 4th Detachment on Upolu were a 20 by 600-foot wharf of lava rock surfaced by concrete; ammunition magazines; and structures for a hospital, including 12 quonset huts, operating and dental buildings and seven barracks for personnel.

The 4th detachment's manpower was sharply reduced when on September 25, 1942 they detached two officers and 120 enlisted men to form the nucleus of a construction detachment for service with the Marine's 5th Defense Battalion in Operation FETLOCK at Funafuti.

These Seabees were commanded by Lieutenant (jg) L. H. Harris, CEC, USNR.

Like the 5th Detachment, the 4th had completed its major construction assignments by April 1943 and underwent belated military training. There was increasingly less emphasis on construction. Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit 505 arrived to relieve them on May 20, 1943.

The 4th Detachment's forward echelon of 145 men, under Lieutenant Duncan, departed aboard the SS Eads on June 27, 1943 and arrived at Tutuila June 30, to be joined by the rear echelon under Lieutenant Commander Wells which arrived at Pago Pago aboard the SS Couch on July 1. A small detachment of 22 men, commanded by Lieutenant Christian C. Febiger, CEC, USNR, remained at Upolu to complete some road construction and to assist CBMU 505 in its takeover of maintenance.

On Tutuila, the 4th took over projects at the Convoy Escort Repair Base that had been initiated by Naval Construction Battalion 11, including, pier construction, waterfront facilities, shops and utilities, a recreation area, a boat jetty, a floating drydock berth, site drainage, coral dredging and operation of a quarry.

On August 4, 1943 further inroads were made on the manpower of the 4th Detachment when two officers, a warrant officer and 97 enlisted men were sent to reinforce the construction detachment with the 5th Marine Defense Battalion at Funafuti. These men arrived at Funafuti on August 17th and Lieutenant George E. Wells, Jr. took command of the expanded forces there.

The detachment's labors at the Convoy Escort Repair Base continued while an additional task of construction steel warehouses at Utelei Malae, Tutuila, got underway in September.

Command of the 4th Detachment passed to Lieutenant Commander Edwin A. Duncan, CEC, USNR, on October 9, 1943 after its first officer in charge, George E. Wells, was appointed officer in charge of the battalion. On November 27, some six weeks later, Lieutenant Edwin C. Granberry, CEC, USNR, became officer in charge of the

4th Detachment after Lieutenant Commander Duncan replaced Lieutenant Commander Wells as officer in charge of the battalion. At this time, Lieutenant Febiger took over as officer in charge of the Funafuti Detachment with the 5th Defense Battalion, Fleet Marine Force.

With their tasks essentially completed by the end of 1943, the men of the 4th Detachment, 2nd U. S. Naval Construction Battalion, finally joined their counterparts of the 5th Detachment when, on February 24, 1944, both detachments boarded the SS Sommelsdijk for the return to the United States.

The Funafuti Detachment

The tactical developments of mid-1942 led strategic planners to designate the island of Funafuti, Ellice Islands, just south of the Japanese-held Gilbert and Marshall Islands, as a site for an advance air base from which to reconnoiter and launch assaults against the enemy.

In Operation FETLOCK, the Marine's 5th Defense Battalion, Reinforced, occupied Funafuti on October 2, 1942, accompanied by a construction detachment of two officers and 120 men which had been transferred from the 4th Detachment on September 25. This organization of Seabees, commanded by Lieutenant (jg) L. H. Harris, CEC, USNR, was identified by a number of designations, but the most frequently used was Naval Construction Detachment, 5th Defense Battalion, Reinforced, Fleet Marine Force.

The Funafuti Detachment immediately commenced construction of an airfield with a 5,000 by 250-foot landing strip which was operational within a month, and which they had enlarged to 6,000 by 600-feet by the Spring of 1943. The airfield project included revetments, taxi strips, and shop, administrative and housing facilities.

The original small force from the 4th detachment was reinforced in April, 1943 by 71 additional men from their parent detachment, and again on May 10, 1943 by an officer and 97 men from the 5th Detachment at Uvea.

Seaplane base facilities included a 30-foot wide ramp and small boat landing, shops, fuel storage and related necessities. Other projects included a 76-bed hospital, a floating drydock for PT boat repairs, Marine warehouses, housing and a system of roads for industrial, airfield and camp area.

Throughout 1943, the Funafuti detachment continued base construction and improvements including lengthening of the airfield runway, provision of revetments, improvement of seaplane base facilities and the lagoon taxiway, and construction of radar buildings and a nose hangar.

Lieutenant Harris was relieved on August 17th by Lieutenant George E. Wells as officer in charge of the Funafuti detachment. The command was again changed November 27, 1943 when Wells was appointed officer in charge of the 2nd Battalion and Lieutenant Christian C. Febiger took over as officer in charge of the detachment at Funafuti.

Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit 517 arrived December 10, 1943 and the detachment from NCB 2 began turnover of its uncompleted jobs to them. They departed January 6, 1944 aboard the LST 172 bound for Tutuila. On arrival there January 11, the Funafuti detachment was disestablished.

Return of the 2nd

The entire manpower of the 2nd U. S. Naval Construction Battalion was destined to end their services without working or traveling as a complete unit. The SS Sommelsdijk did not have enough space to accommodate all the men of the battalion as well as those of the veteran 1st Naval Construction Battalion which was also slated for return aboard the decrepit Dutch vessel. Consequently, 116 men--58 from each detachment--were left behind as a rear echelon to await transportation. The SS Somelsdijk sailed February 24 from Pago Pago and arrived March 7, 1944 at San Francisco to a tumultuous welcome as one of the first homecoming Seabee battalions after which the Seabees were transported to Camp Parks, Pleasanton, California. The 116 men who had remained

2nd NCB----sheet 8-8-8-8

at Tutuila arrived at Camp Parks a month later.

Original plans called for appropriate leaves for the men, then reorganization and reoutfitting for another tour overseas. However, requirements for manpower by other outgoing battalions led to the decision to inactivate the 2nd U. S. Naval Construction Battalion. On June 7, 1944, Lieutenant Abe Zimmerman, the acting officer in charge of the battalion reported that his unit was in the process of being decommissioned..

U. S. Naval Construction Battalion 2

Officer In Charge

3 Apr 42 - Jun 42	None designated
Jun 42 - 15 May 43	*LT/LCDR Richard C. Holbrook, CEC-V(S), USNR
15 May 43 - 6 Oct 43	LT/LCDR John T. Pendergrass, CEC-V(S), USNR
9 Oct 43 - 27 Nov 43	LCDR George E. Wells, Jr., CEC-V(S), USNR
27 Nov 43 - 29 Mar 44	LCDR E. A. Duncan, CEC-V(S), USNR
29 Mar 44 - 15 Apr 44	LT Edwin C. Granbery, CEC-V(S), USNR
15 Apr 44 - Jun 44	LT Abe Zimmerman, CEC-V(S), USNR

* Appointed by Commanding General, Defense Force, Samoan Islands

Executive Officers

3 Apr 42 - 8 May 43	None designated
8 May 43 - 27 Nov 43	Records do not indicate
27 Nov 43 - Mar 44	LT E. C. Granbery, CEC-V(S), USNR
Mar 44 - Apr 44	LT Harold E. Reardon, CEC-V(S), USNR
Apr 44 - Jun 44	LT W. B. Abbott, CEC-V(S), USNR

5th Detachment

(Companies A and B and $\frac{1}{2}$ Headquarters Company)

Officer in Charge

3 Apr 42 - 8 May 43	LT/LCDR John T. Pendergrass, CEC-V(S), USNR
8 May 43 - 29 Mar 44	LT/LCDR Harold E. Reardon, CEC-V(S), USNR

Executive Officer

3 Apr 42 - 8 May 43	LT Harold E. Reardon, CEC-V(S), USNR
8 May 43 - Mar 44	LT Abe Zimmerman, CEC-V(S), USNR

4th Detachment

(Companies C and D and $\frac{1}{2}$ Headquarters Company)

Officer in Charge

3 Apr 42 - 9 Oct 43	LT/LCDR George E. Wells, Jr., CEC-F(S), USNR
9 Oct 43 - 27 Nov 43	LCDR Edwin A. Duncan, CEC-V(S), USNR
27 Nov 43 - Mar 44	LT Edwin C. Granbery, JR., CEC-V(S), USNR

Executive Officer

9 Oct 43	LT Edwin A. Duncan, CEC-V(S), USNR
9 Oct 43 - 27 Nov 43	LCDR Edwin C. Granbery, Jr., CEC-V(S), USNR
27 Nov 43 - 11 Jan 44	LT Albert E. Hill, Jr., CEC-V(S), USNR
11 Jan 44 - Mar 44	LT Christian C. Febiger, CEC-V(S), USNR

2nd Construction Battalion Detachment,
5th Defense Battalion, Reinforced

Officer in Charge

2 Oct 42 - 14 Aug 43	LT(jg) L. J. Harris, Jr., CEC-V(S), USNR
17 Aug 43 - 9 Oct 43	LCDR George E. Wells, JR., CEC-V(S), USNR
9 Oct 43 - 11 Jan 44	LT Christian C. Febiger, CEC-V(S), USNR

Executive Officers

2 Oct 42 -	No record
17 Aug 43 - 9 Oct 43	LT Christian C. Febiger
9 Oct 43 - 11 Jan 44	LT(jg) John C. Bascom, CEC-V(S), USNR

RESTRICTED

ITINERARY OF 2ND NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BATTALION (FOURTH DETACHMENT OR FIRST SECTION)

- 7 Apr 42 The Fourth Detachment, composed of Companies C and D and one-half Headquarters Company of 2nd CB, embarked at Norfolk for overseas destination.
- 8 May 42 Arrived Upolu Island.
- 2 Oct 42 Two officers and 120 men of the Fourth Detachment arrived on Funa Futi, assigned to 5th Defense Battalion Reinforced.
- 1 May 43 Report of this date showed two officers and 207 men on Funa Futi, 97 men and one officer from the Fifth Detachment (or Second Section) of the 2nd CB having joined the Seabee Detachment there.
- The unit on Funa Futi was known as the "2nd Naval Construction Battalion Detachment, 5th Defense Battalion." Also known as the "Funa Futi Detachment".
- 15 Jul 43 On or about this date the Fourth Detachment moved to Tutuila, leaving 22 men on Upolu Island.
- 11 Jan 44 The Funa Futi Detachment reported back to the Fourth Detachment on Tutuila.
- 7 Mar 44 The entire 2nd Construction Battalion with exception of 116 men arrived at Camp Parks. The 116 men left on Tutuila to await transportation arrived at Camp Parks approximately one month later.

Date of inactivation unknown.

NOTE: The above itinerary is based on the records available in the CB Operations Section of the Bureau of Naval Personnel.

15 October 1945

RESTRICTED

ITINERARY OF THE 2ND NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BATTALION (FIFTH DETACHMENT OR SECOND SECTION)

- 6 Apr 42 The Fifth Detachment of the 2nd CB, formed of Companies A and B and one-half headquarters company, entrained at Norfolk for embarkation point, San Diego, California.
- 13 Apr 42 Left United States.
- 28 Apr 42 Arrived at Tutuila.
- 1 Jun 42 On or about this date the Fifth Detachment moved from Tutuila to Wallis Island.
- June 43 Sometime during this month the Fifth Detachment returned to Tutuila.
- 7 Mar 44 The entire 2nd CB with exception of 116 men arrived at Camp Parks. The 116 men left on Tutuila to await transportation. Arrived at Camp Parks approximately one month later.

Date of inactivation unknown.

NOTE: The above itinerary is based on the records available in the CB Operations Section of the Bureau of Naval Personnel.

15 October 1945.

2nd Naval Construction Battalion

Chronology

- Mar 1942 2nd NCB was commissioned at Camp Allen, Virginia
- 06 Apr 1942 5th Detachment (which consisted of Alfa, Bravo and half of Headquarters companies equating 507 men, 6 officers) deployed to San Diego from Norfolk.
- 07 Apr 1942 4th Detachment (which consisted of Charlie, Delta and half of Headquarters company) deployed to Upolu, in the Tonga Islands from Norfolk, Virginia. The air base, harbor facilities, and numerous buildings were constructed on Upolu.
- 13 Apr 1942 5th Detachment departed San Diego for Tutuila in the Tonga Islands.
- 28 Apr 1942 5th Detachment departed Tutuila for Wallis Island on the western edge of the Samoan group.
- 01 Jun 1942 5th Detachment arrived at Wallis Island. A causeway, bomber field, fighter strip, seaplane taxiway, and numerous buildings were constructed at Wallis Island.
- 02 Oct 1942 2 officers and 120 men of the 4th Detachment deployed to Funafuti from Upolu. Where an airstrip, roads, seaplane ramp, dry-docks, and other buildings were constructed.
- 22 Apr 1943 Wallis Island was subject to aerial bombardment injuring 4 Seabees.
- 10 May 1943 60 men from the 5th Detachment left Wallis Island and went to Funafuti.
- 21 Jun 1943 5th Detachment departed Wallis Island to go back to Tutuila.
- 15 Jul 1943 The remaining personnel from the 4th Detachment (except 22 who stayed on Upolu) deployed to Tutuila.
- 17 Nov 1943 Japanese air raid on Funafuti killed 2 members of the 2nd NCB.
- 11 Jan 1944 The 2 officers and 120 men at Funafuti met up with the rest of the 4th Detachment at Tutuila.
- 26 Feb 1944 2nd NCB deployed from Tutuila to the United States. 116 men stayed behind on Tutuila to await transportation.
- April 1944 Remaining 116 men arrived at Camp Parks.

U.S. Naval Construction Battalion 2

Officer In Charge

3 Apr 1942 - Jun 1942	None designated
Jun 1942 - 15 May 1943	*LT/LCDR Richard C. Holbrook, CEC-V (S), USNR
15 May 1943 - 6 Oct 1943	LT/LCDR John T. Pendergrass, CEC-V (S), USNR
9 Oct 1943 - 27 Nov 1943	LCDR George E. Wells, Jr., CEC-V (S), USNR
27 Nov 1943 - 29 Mar 1944	LCDR E. A. Duncan, CEC-V (S), USNR
29 Mar 1944 - 15 Apr 1944	LT Edwin C. Granbery, CEC-V (S), USNR
15 Apr 1944 - Jun 1944	LT Abe Zimmerman, CEC-V (S), USNR

*Appointed by Commanding General, Defense Force, Samoan Islands

Executive Officers

3 Apr 1942 - 8 May 1943	None designated
8 May 1943 - 27 Nov 1943	Records do not indicate
27 Nov 1943 - Mar 1944	LT E. C. Granbery, CEC-V (S), USNR
Mar 1944 - Apr 1944	LT Harold E. Reardon, CEC-V (S), USNR
Apr 1944 - Apr 1944	LT W. B. Abbott, CEC-V (S), USNR

5th Detachment
(Companies A and B and ½ Headquarters Company)

Officer in Charge

3 Apr 1942 - 8 May 1943	LT/LCDR John T. Pendergrass, CEC-V (S), USNR
8 May 1943 - 29 Mar 1944	LT/LCDR Harold E. Reardon, CEC-V (S), USNR

Executive Officer

3 Apr 1942 - 8 May 1943	LT Harold E. Reardon, CEC-V (S), USNR
8 May 1943 - 29 Mar 1944	LT Abe Zimmerman, CEC-V (S), USNR

4th Detachment
(Companies C and D and ½ Headquarters Company)

Officer in Charge

3 Apr 1942 - 9 Oct 1943	LT/LCDR George E. Wells, Jr., CEC-V (S), USNR
9 Oct 1943 - 27 Nov 1943	LCDR Edwin A. Duncan, CEC-V (S), USNR
27 Nov 1943 - Mar 1944	LT Edwin C. Granbery, Jr., CEC-V (S), USNR

Executive Officer

9 Oct 1943	LT Edwin A. Duncan, CEC-V (S), USNR
9 Oct 1943 - 27 Nov 1943	LCDR Edwin C. Granbery, Jr., CEC-V (S), USNR
27 Nov 1943 - 11 Jan 1944	LT Albert E. Hill, Jr., CEC-V (S), USNR
11 Jan 1944 - Mar 1944	LT Christian C. Febiger, CEC-V (S), USNR



**NO
LOGO
AVAILABLE**

1-2-3-1



NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BATTALION (STRAW BATH)



NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BATTALION (STRAW HAT)





