62nd Naval Construction Battalion

Historical Information

"Construimus, Batuimus"
"We Build, We Fight"

NAVAL HISTORY & HERITAGE COMMAND

62nd C.B.

NOTC - Davisville
AED - Huenema
Ready Date - 31 Mar'43
Left AED - 23 Mar'43
Location - ~~Pearl Harbor~~ Iwo Jima

LOG

2- 8-43 - Tentative assignment - John Rodgers - Keehi Lagoon.
3-24-43 - Entrained for Huenema from Davisville.
3-22-43 - Detached 62nd CB to Camp Parks.
4- 1-43 - 1 Apr'43 report of 62nd CB - Left San Fran 22 Mar. - arrived P.H. 29 Mar.
5- 3-43 - 3rd Reg. report - Entire 62nd CB, consisting of 26 officers and 988 men, arrived at P.H. This batt will handle local projects, taking over the work started by the 50th CB while awaiting transportation to Midway.
6-25-43 - 1 Jun'43 report of 62nd CB - located at Pearl Harbor.
1-28-44 - 62nd CB work has been in immediate vicinity of Pearl Harbor. (Capt. Porter's ltr to Adm. Morell dtd 4 Jan'44)
3- 6-44 - 62nd CB located at Navy Yard, P.H. and Red Hill according to 2nd Brig. report dtd 21 Jan'44.
4-22-44 - 1 Mar'44 report of 62nd CB - operating at Pearl Harbor and Kuahua Is., Oahu.
5-10-44 - 1 Apr'44 report of 62nd CB - operating at Pearl Harbor and Kuahua Is.
6-16-44 - 1 May'44 report of 62nd CB - operating at Pearl Harbor (Pearl City and Navy Yd) and Kuahua Island, Oahu.

62nd C.B.

7- 5-44 - 1 Jun'44 report of 62nd CB - Operating at P.H. and Kuahua Is.
9-11-44 - 1 Jul'44 report of 62nd CB - no info on operations and location.
8-28-44 - 1 Aug'44 report of 62nd CB - operating at Pearl Harbor, Kuahua, Oahu.
10-17-44 - 1 Sep'44 report of 62nd CB - operating at Pearl Harbor, Kuahua Is.and Pearl City all on Oahu. Report endorsed by 8th Reg.
10-18-44 - The 62nd and 133rd CB's assigned temp. additional duty with the 5th PhibCorp and 4th MarDiv respectively for training at Maui to commence 1 Nov'44. Seabees will accompany affiliated units in a future operation and upon completion of assualt ~~ex~~ duties are to report to Island Commander for assignment to the 8th Reg.(Cincpoa Sec. disp. 110905 NCR 810 to Comservpac dtd 11 Oct'44).
11- 1-44 - 1 Oct'44 report of 62nd CB - operating at Pearl Harbor and Kuahua Is. Estimated date of completion of present assignment is 1 Jan'45. Report endorsed by 8th Reg.
11-3-44 -- The 62nd CB is assigned to the 41st Reg.(CNO conf. ltr Op30-2CK15-UOT over (SC)P16-5 over Ser. 01348230 to Bupers and Cincpoa dtd 27 Oct'44).
11-15-44 - The 62nd CB as of 1 Nov'44 is assigned to the HANCBwhile on TAD with 5th Phib Corps awaiting assignment by Cincpoa to the 41st Reg. in the 9th Brg.(Comserforpac-flt Sec. ltr 55-CKW/apk over Ser. 001008 to CNO dtd 4 Nov'44).
11-28-44 - 62nd CB assigned to URIK. (Dirpacdocks 128 Sec. Ser 00465 to Comserforpacflt dtd 16 Nov'44)
12-13-44 - 1 Nov'44 report of 62nd CB - Report endorsed by 8th Reg. and H.A.B. Prepared for forward move during Oct. Was relieved by the 109th CB.
12-16-44 - 62nd CB located at Pearl Harbor and is in the H.A.B. (Com 14 Sec. Disp. to CNO 072103 dtd 13 Dec'44.
1-11-45 - 1 Dec'44 report of the 62nd CB - located at Pearl Harbor. Report endorsed by the 8th Regiment.

1-12-45 - The 62nd CB upon completion of temp add. duty with the 5th Amph. Corps will report to the Is. Com for assignment to the 41st Reg. in lieu of the 8th Reg.(HA/CB Sec. 1t HAB-06-HOB/mv over P16-4/00/MM over Ser. 03037 to OinC 62nd CB dtd 23 Dec'44).

1-12-45 - Commencing on or about 22 Dec'44 the 62nd CB will embark on previously designated ships for transportation to a destination for temp duty.(CO, 5th Amph. Corps Sec. ltr 1990-85(4) over AAG/jmh to OinC 62nd CB dtd 22 Dec'44).

1-16-45 - 1 Dec'44 report of the 8th Regiment - The 62nd CB moved from its former location at Red Hill, Oahu, leaving P.H. on 1 Nov and arriving at Marine Camp, Maalaea Bay, Maui on 2 Nov'44. A small detachment remained at Iroquois Pt., Oahu, until 22 Nov when they joined the Batt with the remainder of cargo and equipment. 1 officer and 16 men rejoined Batt on 23 Nov'44 upon completion of temporary duty assignment with OinC Pontoon Detachments. (Unl. men had been transferred to the 302nd CB and were re-transferred to this command) Copy of letter from OinC Dets 1035-1038 commends the officer and 16 men on the work performed by them in the invasion of Angaur.-

2- 6-45 - 1 Jan'45 report of the 8th Reg. - 10 officers and 551 men disembarked for forward area according to Corps Hdqtrs Troops, 5th Amph Corps' orders.

2- 7-45 - 1 Jan'45 report of the 62nd CB - location not stated. Report endorsed by 8th Reg.

4-2-45 - Narrative report of the 62nd CB on Iwo Jima operations from 15 Oct to 7 Mar:

1 Nov 44 - Move to Maui for train. under 5th Amph Corps.
25 Dec 44 - Embarkation of Hdqtrs., A & B Cos. on APA 195.
24 Jan 45 - LSTs sail in convoy from Hawaiian area.
27 Jan 45 - PA #197 and KA #67 sailed in convoy from Hawaiian area.
19 Feb 45 - " " " arrived off Iwo Jima.
20 Feb 45 - LSTs arrive off Iwo Jima.
24 and 25 Feb 45 - LSTs beach and unload.

Location - Iwo Jima 62nd C.B.

4-2-45 - Iwo Jima operations contl -
26 Feb 45 - Debarked PA #195. Work on Airfield #1 begun.
1 Mar'45 - Airfield ready for fighters.
7 Mar'45 - Detached from 5th Amph Corps and attached to Garrison Force, Iwo Jima.

5- 1-45 - The 62nd CB is located at Iwo Jima with Amph Corps. (Dirpacdocks P Sec Rep of 1 Apr'45)

5- 8-45 - The 62nd CB is located at Iwo Jima. (Dirpacdocks S.F. Sec Rep of 15 Apr'45)

5-17-45 - 1 May'45 report of 62nd CB - 62nd CB operating as a unit at Iwo Jima. 200 men transferred to Camp Parks on rotation leave during Apr'45. Report routed via 41st Reg & 9th Brig.

5-22-45 - 1 May'45 report of 41st Reg - 62nd CB attached to 41st Reg. The 62nd with 809 men on bd is operating as a unit on Iwo Jima. 200 men from 62nd CB left for U.S. on rotation leave during Apr'45.

6- 1-45 - 1 Apr'45 report of the 62nd CB - located at Iwo Jima. Report end. by 41st Reg and 9th Brg.

6-6-45 - The 62nd CB is located at Iwo Jima. (IsCom Iwo Jima sec disp 031027Z Jun to CNO)

6-12-45 - Expected availability date of the 62nd CB at Iwo Jima is 1 Aug'45. (OinC 9th Brg sec ltr 00137 dtd 28 May'45 to Conservpac)

6-18-45 - 1 Jun'45 report of the 41st Reg. - 62nd CB operating as a unit on Central Airfield constr at Iwo Jima.

6-19-45 - 1 Jun'45 report of the 62nd CB - Operating as a unit on Central Airfield constructn at Iwo Jima. Report routed via 41st Reg & 9th Brig.

7-10-45 - The 62nd CB located at Iwo Jima. (IsCom Iwo Jima sec disp 030753 July to CNO)

Location - Iwo Jima 62nd C.B.

7- 13-45 - Comservpac requests CincPac's approval to inactivate the 62nd CB on 1 Sep'45. (Comservpac conf ltr ser 07690 dtd 30 June to Cincpac)

8- 3-45 - 9th Brg ltr to Comservpac ser 0187 dtd 12 June contained recommendations for consolidation and reoutfitting of 9th Brg units including the inactivation of the 62nd, 106th Sec II, 95th CBs and 8th Reg. Cincpac 1st end ser 02878 dtd 8 July to Comservpac's ltr approved the inactivation of these units. In accordance with Cincpac's ltr, inactivate these units on the dates recommended by 9th Brg. Transfer enl personnel who have been out of U.S. cont for 21 mos to the nearest W.C. RecSta. Transfer other enl personnel to the 21st, 90th, and 133rd CBs. Dispose of all records of the 62nd, 95th, 106th Sec 2 CBs and 8th Reg. Inform Comservpac and all info addressees when inactivation has been completed. (Comservpac conf ltr ser 04110 dtd 31 July to CinC 9th Brg)

8-17-45 - Since the 9th Brg conf ltr ser 0187 dtd 12 June, the base has been expanded and addtl projects have been approved. Therefore, it is proposed to keep the 62nd CB and 106th CB, Sec 2 in tact until 15 Sep. The recommended dates of inactivation of remaining units will remain as given by the 9th Brg. Recommendations on a reduction in complement of CBD 1078 will be submitted about 15 Aug. (9th Brg conf ltr ser 0249 dtd 31 July to Comservpac)

8-20-45 - 1 Aug'45 report of the 62nd CB - located at Iwo Jima. Report via the 41st Reg and 9th Brg.

8-21-45 - Approval is granted to delay the inactivation of 62nd CB and 106th CB, Sec 2 to 15 Sept '45 as requested. (Comservpac conf ltr dtd 10 Aug '45 ser 04576 to CinC, 5th Brig).

9-13-45 - 1 Sept'45 report of 62nd CB. Report via 41st Reg & 9th Brig. Located at Iwo Jima.

Location - Iwo Jima 62nd CB

9-21-45 - 1 Sept'45 report of 41st Reg. 62nd CB in process of being inactivated. Batt. operating as a unit on Central Airfield Contruction at Iwo Jima.

11-16-45 - 62nd CB was inactivated, date not given. (Comservpac restr ltr ser 129-3-61 dtd 26 Oct'45 to BuPers).

2-4-46 - Final date of inactivation of 62nd CB was 30 Sept'45. (ComMarianas spdltr ser 1288 dtd 22 Jan'46 to Comservpac).

INACTIVATED

ON BOARD

DATE	OFFICERS	MEN	AUTHORITY
1 Jul'44	29	1050	MoR
1 Aug'44	28	1039	MoR
1 Sep'44	27	1052	MoR
1 Oct'44	27	1051	MoR
1 Nov'44	28	1039	MoR
1 Dec'44	28	1043	BNP625 & R
1 Jan'45	27	1033	MoR
1 Feb'45		1025	BNP625
1 Mar'45		1026	BNP625
1 Apr'45	27	1015	R & MoR
1 May'45	27	809	MoR
1 Jun'45	26	802	BNP625 & R
1 Jul'45	28	732	BNP625 & R
1 Aug'45	27	702	BNP625 & R
1 Sept'45		602	BNP625

62nd Construction Battalion (INACTIVATED)

DECLASSIFIED

62nd C. B.

Date	Organization	Location	Reference	Notes
5/31/44	–	Pearl Harbor, Kuahua Dt. Oahu.	–	Left U.S. March 1943.
7/22	–	FRAY – P.H.	Com 14 sec act disp. 060609 July	
10/12	–	5th phib Corps	Cincpac sec disp. 110905 act	Tender 5th phib Corps for training mission to begin 1 Nov.
11/1	–	(illegible)	Com. Base [illegible] (illegible)	
12/12	–	FRAY	Com 14/sec act disp. 072103 Dec.	Hawaiian Area Brigade.
6/4/45	–	Ulithi	Iwo Jima sec act. disp. 031032Z June	added.

62nd BATTALION

After forming at Davisville in December, 1942, the 62nd was sent to Hueneme for advanced training. The Battalion spent three weeks at Camp Rousseau, then went to San Francisco, whence it shipped out on March 24 for Pearl Harbor. The 62nd was on duty in Oahu for 19 months, then went to Maui on Nov. 2 for the Iwo Jima staging. Embarkation for the invasion began on Christmas Day, 1944, and by February 1, 1945, the last elements of the Battalion were aboard ship. The first landing party of the 62nd hit Iwo on Feb. 24, with the main body of the outfit coming ashore during the next three days. On VJ Day, the 62nd was still on Iwo Jima.

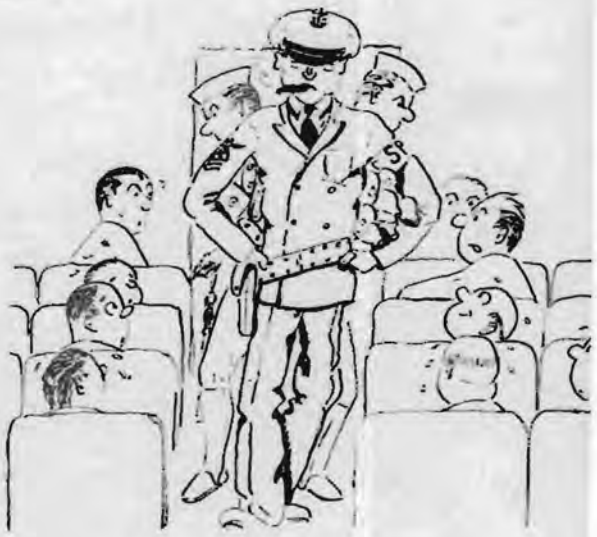
Boot to Hueneme!

By the time this Battalion book is off the press and in your hands, we will have spent almost three years in the Seabees. We will have traveled enough miles on foot, on ships and trains and planes to have been around the globe at least once. From an over all vantage point, we have had our ups and downs, our good and bad times, but we'll all agree that our first days in the service are the most memorable. Father Time has mellowed and tempered a lot of those early memories. Until today it's a pleasure to sit down with the gang and mull over the Boot Camp and Advance Training days. As you look over the pictures on the following pages you will see the groups of green and gullible rookies that are today seasoned veterans of this war. By no stretch of the imagination would we want to go through that ordeal again, but, we wouldn't give up our Boot Camp experiences for love or money.

A group of the finest construction men in the Middle West volunteered for service in the newly-formed Seabee legions and was called to active duty during the first days of December 1942. We bade goodbye to our loved ones and boarded trains in Chicago, Cincinnati, St. Louis, Cleveland, Milwaukee and way points, headed for a new life in the military service of our country. We didn't know "nothin' from nothin'" about this Navy life, but we were game and sure of our skills in the allied building trades.

The first jolt in the new life was suffered by our oldsters on Sunday, December 6, 1942 while we were enroute on our Boot Camp-bound trains. The papers came out with a War Department announcement in big black headlines that men over 38 years old would not be drafted. Several of the boys fainted dead away and the rest of them were suddenly very sick, but there was no turning back at that late hour.

As each of the bulging recruit trains steamed into Davisville Station, a covey of shore police, led by a hardboiled young chief, came aboard as the official greeting party. Not knowing a Chief from an Admiral, we were awed by the uniform and cowered at his bark of authority when we were ordered to stay in our places until a shake-down and inspection had been completed. A few of our fellows, veterans of the first World War, were wise to this bunk and gladly handed over their empty bottles to the nonplused SP's. Most of us were quick to dig out our cameras and whiskey and hand them over, feeling like naughty boys. The Chief and his party left each train loaded down with an ample supply of spirits, while we began to learn our lessons the hard way.



It was after midnight when we finally tumbled out of our warm coaches into Rhode Island's famous zero weather. A few stragglers lounging around the station platform leered at us and gave us the double shivers of the spine by yelling "YOU'LL BE SORRY" and "IT WON'T BE LONG NOW." Out of the night's blackness appeared another Chief just when we were beginning to wonder what came next. "Line up like four rows of corn, you jerks, and you know what I mean," he bawled at us. We began to shuffle into rows when "ON THE DOUBLE" came like a sharp report, and we got off the dime. Those of us that had never practiced the habit of being "on the double" caught on fast, and before we realized it the four rows of corn were entering Camp Endicott's famous barbed wire enclosure "On the double." We were a bewildered, puffing gang of Boots when we stumbled to a halt in front of supply building S-1, very wet and very muddy from our mile hike. Our first taste of Navy speed (?) came next, as we stamped our feet and threw our arms about in wild motions to keep from freezing to death while we waited for someone to remember to issue blankets and mattresses, and assign us quarters. When we were all numb from the cold and had just about given up hope, they gave us our issue. Off we trudged again in the black night, stumbling over lumber piles and dropping our gear in the mud in search of our barracks which were somewhere in "THAT DIRECTION." It was after three in the morning when we crawled between our blankets. So this was the Navy! We were sorry already.

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

Bottom Row, (left to right): Varner, Hornidge, Hall, Williams, Phillips, O'Brien, Kennedy, Katz, Flach, Scheips, Willis.

Second Row: Lockrone, Bowers, Ritchie, Billetter, W. H. Nichols, Harter, Walker, Surma, Herz, Wilson, Amundson, Babcock, Peters, Hooton, Bogenrief.

Third Row: Collogan, Rukavina, Oprita, Shaw, Hunt, Rivers, Abbey, Karwoski, Bunda, Dorris, Toben, Rivinius, Panhorst, Kinman, Reimer, Vaccaro.

Fourth Row: Sinner, Tappana, Lipsitz, Mullholland, Beaver, Benda, Bradley, Eldridge, DuRoss, Knauer, Westmeier, Conley, Wilkie, Babich, Kasowski, Bisko.

Fifth Row: Luer, McHugh, Eucker, Turner, Lindquig, Stefanko, Samikowski, Lucas, Bauman, W. D. Nichols, Misner, Herrmann, Osberg, Blackburn, Fish.

Top Row: Rose, Goeller, Hiatt, Scanlon, Salmon, Koich, Ball, Fredericks, Cornwell, Scherschel, Kiefer, Costello, Myers, Miller, Thorn, Nailey.

COMPANY A

PLATOON TWO—Bottom Row, (left to right): Hawkins, Mindak, Linhart, Hoot, Moyer, Loge, Bushey, Neal, Lochbihler.

Second Row: Kelleher, Nixon, Risser, Freise, Matz, Holland, Knight, Hinkle.

Third Row: Kleinschmidt, Leach, Poeppel, Cupp, Connell, Bush, Humble, Magsig, Lewis.

Top Row: Londin, Ingram, Bogie, Boscardin, Hood, McDonald, Pavlesich, Ramey, Ward.

PLATOON ONE—Bottom Row: Kline, Carle, Bills, Eck, Eaton, Watkins, Ormsby, Dove.

Second Row: Echt, Mackey, Pollvogt, Spike, Johns, Reiss, Hagman, Sandoro.

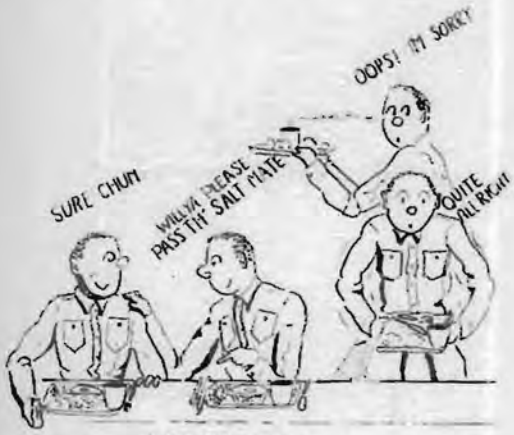
Third Row: Dinsmore, Shoun, Galliardt, Entsminger, Hoffman, Eisenbarth, Curnow, Ellis.

Top Row: Anderson, Ruegge, Sanders, Warrick, DeFouv, Havey, Dobbins, Dameron.

Our first day in camp started with a champion hog-caller rudely awakening us at five AM with "HIT THE DECK," then he turned the lights on to prove he wasn't kidding. But we were anxious to see this place called Boot Camp, our first experiences putting a lot of "Why" questions in our minds. With teeth chattering and uncontrollable knee action we pulled on our damp "civies" and began a search for what we had always known as a bathroom. We were all going around in circles when we decided that little house outside with sign "HEAD" painted on its door might be the out house! We almost tore the hinges off the door getting in there, it was the right place alright, and we began to understand why we were the "confused love children."

It was on this bitter cold morning of December 7, 1942 that the Sixty-second Naval Construction Battalion was officially born and christened the "Pearl Harbor Battalion." We were mighty proud of being organized on the first anniversary of the Jap sneak attack on Pearl Harbor.

'THE NAVY WAY'



'THE RIGHT WAY'

Our troubles mounted when we caught sight of that first chow line at breakfast, at least ten men wide, and a mile long. When we reached the serving table expecting ham and eggs, only to have a dab of beans and prunes dumped on our trays, we knew then it was time to write letters of protest to our congressmen and senators and maybe the President. We even decided it was a good idea to write Time magazine and expose this whole Navy that was treating us with so little concern. We'll never forget that first meal or how polite and gentlemanly we were to each other, no matter how black our thoughts might have been. Remember how we went around saying "s'cuse me" every time we bumped against someone, and, "Beg Pardon," or "Please Pass the Milk" and "Thank You." We were uncivilized mighty fast though, with all that sweet talk replaced in a few days with favorite salty expressions that most of us used on the slightest provocation. We were learning, but fast, the Navy way from the right way.

PEARL HARBOR

★ ★ ★

We arrived at Pearl Harbor on March 29, 1943, prepared to enter into the construction program of America's most important Pacific Naval Base. Almost from the first days we were engaged in work of paramount importance, and our outstanding assignment was the construction of complete repair and servicing facilities for submarines at the Pearl Harbor Submarine Base. The work was urgent and carried a high priority. Major buildings on this single project consisted of a large machine shop, shipfitters shop, pattern shop, foundry and several substations. Our electricians showed their skill when they made many changes in the electrical system, and installed numerous reinforced concrete duct lines and pieces of machinery and equipment. To relieve the critical shortage of housing facilities for men and officers, we constructed many barracks, BOQ mess halls and galleys. Landing craft and camp facilities at Waipio Point and the advance base reshipment depot at Iroquois Point had AA-1 priorities and included the erection of many quonset huts, shops and storehouses. We built huge warehouses, roads, an asphalt plant; we dismantled and re-erected massive oil storage tanks; in fact we engaged in every phase of construction in the books. Our men showed great ingenuity and resourcefulness at all times and gained the respect of other outfits and high ranking Navy officials. The many letters of commendation we received were warranted and appreciated. We compiled an enviable record at Pearl Harbor of which we can be justly proud.

Iwo

DEBARKATION

D-Day at Iwo Jima found us aboard our three different ships, rolling awkwardly in the rough swells a few hundred yards off Red Beach. By late afternoon casualties ashore were running high as every ship present took on the injured as fast as they could be loaded into slings and hoisted aboard. We stood by quietly watching this whole show and knew it would only be a question of time before we would wade into that bloody hell ashore.

Our men on the two LST's were eating supper on D-Day, when "General Quarters" was sounded through-out the convoy. Every man of us scrambled topside in time to see that Jap Kamikaze pilots were preparing to make suicide runs. The first Jap plane roared over the top of LST No. 943, through a barrage of anti-aircraft fire, making a successful crash dive into the bow of an LST close by, starting serious fires and killing several of the crew. We had hardly righted ourselves from this first surprise, when the second Jap flew toward our LST No. 943. As his plane leveled off for the death crash, the pilot must have decided he was a little too high, for he pulled hard on his stick, and skimmed over us at mast height. Our gunners were pouring lead into this Nip, and before he could make the last one hundred yards for his dive into the LST 884, he disintegrated into thin air. There was little time for cheering our gunners, for a third Jap plane was coming at our two LST's, and it looked like he meant to finish up this job that the first Jap had started. He was a little off our course as he came in, and selected a mine layer that was anchored starboard aft of our ships. He crashed midship, going through the bulkhead and into the ward room. We learned later that a number of Officers and men had been killed as a result of this crash dive and the ship was slightly damaged.

On D plus 2 the General Alarm was sounded again as a flight of Jap Bettys came in a few feet above the water. They again made several suicide hits, but the majority were knocked down by the accurate fire from our ships' anti-aircraft gunners. Our group of ships again escaped unharmed.

On D plus 5, LST No. 884 was the first of our group to land, hitting Green Beach at 2200. Four hours later they had completely unloaded all their equipment and dug in for their first night ashore.

LST No. 943 ground ashore on Red Beach No. 2 during the same evening but unloading operations did not begin until daylight of D plus 6.

On D plus 6, the group on APA No. 195 was transferred to an LST and hit the beach at 1930 that evening. Unloading started immediately but it was 0200 on D plus 7 before we shouldered our packs, to make the landing. A few yards up the beach we spread out, to dig in for the night. During the first hour, we dug our foxholes, everything was quiet and we had about decided that the Japs were afraid of Seabees, when their first volley of mortars exploded a few hundred yards above us.

We lay there for the next hour, hugging volcanic ash, and watched a ferocious Jap artillery attack that completely wiped out a large Marine fuel and ammunition dump. As the first light of day began to dawn, we got out of our shallow foxholes to get a good look at this island of Hell, and we all silently thanked God for watching over us.

THE LANDING AND

The dawn broke quietly our first morning on the beach of Iwo Jima, and we were still alive. Cramped and stiff we pulled ourselves out of the shallow foxholes to be greeted with scenes of incredible destruction; dive bombers screaming down out of the sky to launch their rockets on the hapless Japs and thousands of men piling the beaches high with supplies from the hundreds of ships off-shore. Evidence of the titanic struggle that had pushed forward from the beach was everywhere. Waves rolled up and crashed over our abandoned ships, tanks, and buffaloes, while the sea worked relentlessly on the beached Jap ships that our mighty guns had torn assunder from stem to stern. Towering above us was the famous "Hot Rocks," Mt. Surabachi, a grim reminder of Japan's fading power, with Old Glory waving gently in the breeze on the highest point. We had witnessed that battle from a distance; we knew the terrific losses our Marines had suffered capturing that Jap fortress.

Our meditations were broken up by the command to shoulder our packs. We slogged along through volcanic ash reeking with the smell of death, up off the beach, over the ridge and past Airstrip Number One to our assigned bivouac area. It was a debris-littered bomb-packed patch of no-man's land we had acquired. We spread out and began to dig our fox holes with the shell craters giving the lucky ones that reached them first a head start. Discarded shell cases, cartridge boxes, Jap fence posts and any scrap material available, were all collected and put to use in the building of our foxhole shelters. It was a rush job in order that we could be below the ground with a cover overhead before the eerie black night surrounded us.

The Marines had set up their artillery in and around our camp and they kept a barrage of projectiles hurtling over our heads day and night. During a period of twenty days, one gun alone (of the dozen or so located in our area) fired over three thousand rounds of steel at the Japs in the forward lines.

Fresh water was a problem from the time we landed. The water distillation crews set up their equipment in record time, but there were a lot of men and at first we were rationed to one canteen per man a day. We ate the famous "K" rations for the first few days, but none of us gained any weight on those dainty morsels. A cup of hot coffee was more welcome than a T-bone steak and when the ten-in-one rations were issued we cooked our meals in hobo fashion, ten to the pot. It was twelve days before our first crude shower was set up, and we were a dirty lot. Temporary galleys were set

B I V O U A C

up that improved the chow situation and the first loaf of bread from the bakery was fondly re-named "angel food cake." Our heavy old helmet that we had wanted to throw away many times took on a new importance. It was better than an entrenching tool for digging a foxhole, it was our cooking pot, wash basin, laundry tub and bath tub and was indispensable in the foxholes at night as a deluxe bed pan, when you took your life in your hands if you stuck your head above ground.

Our heavy equipment men began work on Number One Airfield the day we landed, before the full length of the strip had been secured by the Marines. Our men fought off banzai attacks, ducked from sniper's bullets and ran for cover every time the Nip mortars got a bead on our equipment, but pushed on with their work day and night.

Seven days after the repair and construction of the airfield had started, a crippled Super-fort on the way home from a bombing mission over Japan made an emergency landing. . . . Our fellows deserve a lot more credit than they have received for the fine job they did during those danger filled hours. In fact, it was a rough, tough period for all of us, but we came out of the mess better equipped to meet the action-packed days ahead.

62ND NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BATTALION

30 Dec 42	Commissioned at Davisville, R.I.
25 Feb 43	Advanced training (military and technical) completed. Departed Davisville, R.I. for ABD, Port Hueneme, Calif.
1 & 2 Mar 43	Arrived Port Hueneme, Calif.
22 Mar 43	Departed Port Hueneme for San Francisco, Calif.
24 Mar 43	Embarked on Matsonia at San Francisco.
29 Mar 43	Arrived Pearl Harbor, Oahu, Territory of Hawaii.
1 Oct 43	Moved from Aiea to Red Hill.
30 Oct 43	Battalion secured from Red Hill and left for the island of Maui.
25 Dec 44	First echelon boarded Lenawee for Iwo Jima.
	Remainder of Battalion departed for Iwo Jima on various dates between 12 Jan 45 and 1 Feb 45.
19 Feb 45	D-Day. First echelon arrived off Iwo Jima.
	Battalion landed at Iwo Jima between 24 Feb 45 and 13 Mar 45.
12 Apr 45	Moved to new "Camp Bola." (FDR Died)
	Main job of the Battalion while on Iwo Jima was the building of Central Airfield.
11 Sep 45	Battalion inactivated on Iwo Jima. (62nd NCB ltr ser 62CB/A3-1 of 11 Sep 45 to 9th NC Brigade, via 41st NC Regiment.)

Sixty Seconds

cb minute-men

WATER

OFFICERS
& CHIEFS
Immediate
Service
There is no charge
for HAIR CUTTING
62 CB
Personnel
Only
Barbers in this Shop are
Performing their duties on Assigned
FOR this REASON
NO TIPPING
IS PERMITTED