

133rd Naval Construction Battalion

Historical Information



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



133rd C.B.

NOTC - Peary - Davisville
ABD - Gulfport - Hueneme
Ready Date - 10 Mar'44
Left ABD - 1 May'44
Location - Pearl Harbor Iwo Jima

LOG

- 9-15-43 - CNO orders transfer of the 133rd CB about 31 Sep to NOTC Davisville. (Conf. Disp 151331 NCR 1186 from VCNO to Peary)
10-27-43 - CNO orders transfer of the 133rd CB about 31 Oct'43 to ABD ^Wulfport. (Conf. Disp. from CNO to Davisville 271853 NCR 8581 dtd 27 Oct'43)
5-19-44 - 133rd CB left ABD 1 May'44. (WRK)
6-20-44 - 133rd CB assigned to 3rd Reg. (2nd Brig. 34d end. dtd 10 May'44 on Hueneme orders NT-59/P16-4 dtd 27 Apr'44) Reported to 2nd Brig. 10 May'44.
7- 6-44 - 1 Jun'44 report of 133rd CB - operating at Keehi Lagoon.
8-11-44 - 1 Jul'44 report of 133rd CB - operating at Keehi Lagoon, Honolulu.
8-30-44 - 1 Aug'44 report of 133rd CB - no info as to location of operations.
10- 7-44 - 1 Sep'44 report of 133rd CB - operating at Keehi Lagoon, Oahu.
10-18-44 - 62nd and 133rd CB's assigned temp. additional duty with 5th Phib Corp 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 assault 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)

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- 11- 3-44 - 133rd CB is assigned to the 41st Reg. (CNO conf. ltr Op30-3CK15-UOt over (SC) P16-5 over Ser 01348230 to Papers and Cincpoa dtd 27 Oct'44)
11-15-44 -- As of 1 Nov'44 the 133rd CB is attached to HANCB while on TAD with 5th Phib Corps awaiting assignment by Cincpoa to the 41st Reg., in the 9th Brig.).
11-20-44 - 1 Oct'44 report of 133rd CB - operated at NAS Honolulu, Keehi Lagoon, Oahu during Sep'44.
11-28-44 - 133rd CB assigned to URIK. (Dirpacdocks 128 Sec. Ser 00465 to Comservforpacflt dtd 16 Nov'44)
12-16-44 - 133rd CB located at Pearl Harbor and in the H.A.B. (Com 14 Sec. Disp. to CNO 072103 dtd 13 Dec'44)
12-38-44 - 1 Nov'44 report of the 133rd CB - located at Oahu. Report endorsed by 3rd Reg.
1-12-45 - Upon completion of temp add. duty with the 4th MarDiv the 133rd CB is to report to the 41st Reg. in Lieu of the 8th Reg. (HANCB Sec. ltr HAB-06-HCB/mv over P16-4/00/MM over Ser. 03036 to the Cinc 133rd CB dtd 23 Dec'44).
2- 9-45 - 1 Jan'45 report of the 3rd Reg. - During Dec'44, the 133rd CB boarded ship for continued training and staging are attached to the HAB for administrative purposes only.
2-26-45 - 1 Feb'45 report of the 133rd CB - Batt in transit during Jan.
4-9-45 - 1 Mar'45 report of the 133rd CB - Battalion attached to 4th Marine Division & located at Iwo Jima. Landed on D-Day and D plus 1.
5- 8-45 - The 133rd CB is located at Iwo Jima and is assigned to 4th MarDiv. (Dirpacdocks S.F. Sec Rep of 15 Apr'45)
5-19-45 - 1 May'45 report of 133rd CB - located at Iwo Jima. Report routed via 41st Reg & 9th Brig.

Location - Iwo Jima133rd C.B.

- 5-22-45 - 1 May'45 report of 133rd CB - 133rd CB is attached to 41st Reg & is located at Iwo Jima with 878 men on board including 9 men in rear echelon.
- 5-1-45 - 1 Apr'45 report of the 133rd CB - location not given. Report routed via the 41st Reg and 9th Brg.
- 6-6-45 - The 133rd CB located at Iwo Jima. (IsCom Iwo Jima sec disp 031027Z Jun to CNO)
- 5-12-45 - Expected availability date of the 133rd CB at Iwo Jima is 20 Aug'45. (OinC 9th Brg sec ltr 00137 dtd 28 May'45 to Comservpac)
- 5-13-45 - Dirpadocks SF sec rep of 15 May shows the 133rd CB located at Iwo Jima - assigned 4th MarDiv.
- 6-19-45 - 1 Jun'45 report of the 133rd CB - located at Iwo Jima. Report via 41st Reg and 9th Brg.
- 7-10-45 - The 133rd CB is located at Iwo Jima. (IsCom Iwo Jima sec disp 030753 July to CNO)
- 7-16-45 - 1 Jul'45 report of the 133rd CB - located at Iwo Jima. Report via 41st Reg and 9th Brg.
- 8-14-45 - 1 Aug'45 report of the 133rd CB - located at Iwo Jima. Report via 41st Reg and 9th Brg.
- 9-13-45 - 133rd CB scheduled for forward move. (Direastpadocks relocation report dtd 20 Aug'45).
- 9-21-45 - 1 Sept'45 report of 133rd CB. Located at Iwo Jima. Report via 41st Reg & 9th Brig.
- 10-18-45 - 1 Oct'45 report of 133rd CB - located at Iwo Jima. 35 men rec'd as replacements.
- 10-24-45 - Effective upon departure of 41st Reg. from Iwo Jima on or about 29 Sept'45 the 8, 31 & 133 CBs are detached from 41st Reg. & will act as independent units pending attachment to higher construction battalion unitel (9th Brig sec ltr ser 0303 dtd 28 Sept'45 to 8, 31 & 133 CBs).

Location - Iwo Jima Guam133rd CB

- 11-14-45 - IsCom, Iwo Jima directs OinC, 133rd CB to transfer 133rd CB as 133rd CB, Sec 2 with 2 of pers. to CNAB, Oinato for duty. (IsCom, AGF, APO 86 sec ltr dtd 31 Oct'45 to OinC, 133rd CB).
- 11-20-45 - 1 Nov'45 report of 133rd CB - located at Iwo Jima.
- 12-7-45 - Comservpac directs that 133rd CB be inactivated. Can delay inactivation until it is desirable. (Comservpac dis 042045 Dec'45 to Guam).
- 1-3-46 - 1 Dec'45 report of 133rd CB - located at Guam. Report via 35th Reg. & 5th Brg. 133rd CB departed Iwo Jima 9 Nov'45 & arrived Guam 15 Nov'45.
- 1-28-46 - 133rd CB was inactivated on 27 Dec'45. (OinC, 133rd CB ltr dtd 27 Dec'45 to Bu-Docks).
- 1-29-46 - Final report of 133rd CB - located at Guam. Report via 35th Reg. & 5th Brig.

INACTIVATED

ON BOARD

<u>DATE</u>	<u>OFFICERS</u>	<u>MEN</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
30 Jun'44	31	1038	BNP625
1 Aug'44	31	1062	MoR
1 Sep'44	30	1071	MoR
30 Sep'44		1070	Recap
1 Oct'44	30	1070	MoR
1 Nov'44	33	1018	MoR
1 Feb'45	31	1009	MoR
1 Mar'45	31	976	MoR
1 Apr'45	29	951	BNP625 & R
1 May'45	30	878	MoR
1 Jun'45	25	860	MoR
1 Jul'45	28	833	BNP625 & R
1 Aug'45	27	811	BNP625 & R
1 Sept'45	25	848	BNP625 & R
1 Oct'45	31	751	BNP625 & R
1 Nov'45	9	298	BNP625 & R
1 Dec'45	24	768	BNP625 & R

133rd Construction Battalion (INACTIVATED)

133rd C.B.

DECLASSIFIED

<u>Date</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Notes</u>
6/6/44	-	FRAY oahu	Conf disp. 021711 May.	departed Thuenema may, et
9/12	-	4th Mar Div.	Com 14 sec act. disp. 060609 July. line pou rec disp 110905 Oct.	send to 4th Mar Div. Training at Maui to begin 1 nov.
11/15	(URIN)		est. B. note (air unit)	
12/12	-	FRAY	Com 14/sec act disp. 072103 Dec	Hawaiian area Brigade -
6/11/45	-	Unit	Two Jira sec act disp. 0310372 June.	added.

UNITED STATES NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BATTALION NUMBER 133
c/o FLEET POST OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

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The first construction job of the 133rd Naval Construction Battalion was at the Army's 10,000 acre Hancock County Bombing Range near Bay St. Louis, Mississippi. On January 10, 1944 two officers and sixty-five men were detached from the battalion and sent to the bombing range, a project which was designed to give the men actual building experience under field conditions.

The main project was the construction of highway bridges. Through rugged terrain that was practically covered with swamps, a total of six bridges were constructed during the three weeks spent on the project. The bridges varied in length from 20 to 80 feet and in width from 10 to 16 feet; they were all of crib type construction.

Rough logs 24 to 36 inches in diameter and 16 to 25 feet in length were cut with cross cut saws and snaked from the swamps with a truck winch. To remove the bark and square up the logs, adzes and draw knives were used with ample "elbow grease" from the men. Mud sills were put in place for a foundation and log cribbing was built over them. For flooring the bridges, Marston Matting was used since there was no lumber available. To obtain spikes for the job the men cut the 3/8 and 1/2 inch steel rods which came with the matting into the desired lengths.

The job also called for the re-vamping of five miles of telephone lines and poles, installation of two miles of new poles and lines and other miscellaneous electrical work. This job was done under trying conditions. The men had to set the poles and string the lines through snake infested swamps and rough country. The poles for the job had to be cut from trees as near the lines as possible and carried by means of lug hooks, as the terrain would not permit trucks to do the hauling.

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The next assignment of the 133rd Naval Construction Battalion was at Naval Air Station Honolulu, Oahu, T. H. The diversity presented by our building program at this station is clearly illustrated by a brief mention of some of the major projects: Grading operations on taxiways, runways, warm-up aprons, service aprons, parking areas and roads. Large precast concrete culvert storm drain systems were laid. Two precast concrete slab seaplane ramps were built at the waterfront. A 500,000 gallon capacity aviation gasoline tank farm was substantially completed and a distribution system for refueling seaplanes installed at the eight finger piers at the waterfront. Huge warehouses for aviation parts storage were constructed, as were a machine shop, fire station complete with towers, filling station and grease rack, beachmaster's office, several 250-man capacity frame barracks, an officers' mess, WAVES' quarters, and many large double-deck quonset barracks. Water lines were installed in both the housing area and aviation storage area. Electrical and plumbing crews made all installations in our projects as well as in the large 10-plane nose hanger. An outfall sewer extending well out to sea was installed. Pile driving for various waterfront installations was a heavy assignment. A casting yard that supplied pre-cast concrete items for all projects on the station was operated by this battalion continuously throughout our five-month stay at the station.

In the construction of taxiways and runways at the air station, 300,000 cubic yards of muck was moved and replaced with 350,000 cubic yards of coral fill; 500,000 square yards of subgrade was prepared for asphalt paving.

Seaplane Ramps: The under water portions of these ramps consisted of large precast concrete blocks weighing ten tons which were bedded on gravel subgrade. The exposed portion of the ramps were poured in the field as built. Precast blocks were handled by floating cranes and set in place by divers instead of using caissons to open up working area. This reduced considerably the time required in building as compared to ramps already in place. Pile drivers drove pile clusters for seaplane runway lighting standards and foundation piles for the docks in the repairbasin for small boats.

While at Naval Air Station Honolulu, eighteen men and one officer were temporarily detached from the battalion and assigned to a pontoon unit. This unit participated in the invasion of the Palau Islands operating pontoon barges for ship to shore transportation.

The third construction assignment of the 133rd Battalion was at Iwo Jima, where the Battalion landed D-Day as a Shore Party with the Fourth Marine Division. After our part in the invasion was completed work was started on various projects which included grading operations, hot mix and penetration paving of airfields and roads, operation of an asphalt plant and rock crusher.

Grading Operations: The Battalion moved 1,283,000 cubic yards of rough terrain for fill on Airfields 1 and 2; laid 4800 lineal feet of 24" drain pipe and 1100 lineal feet of 12" drain pipe; installed 4400 lineal feet of conduit; placed 3000 used oil drums and 1000 cubic yards of concrete for drainage system on Airfield 2. The equipment hours put in by our grading equipment averaged 2000 hours per unit.

Hot Mix Paving: The Battalion paved approximately 700,000 square yards of runways, taxiways, refueling and warm-up aprons, roads, etc. Most of this paving was done on Airfield 2, the longest runway to date in the Western Pacific - 1.86 miles long and 200 feet wide. The best day saw 13,700 linear feet of 10-foot wide strip go down; the best week netted 82,050 linear feet.

Penetration Paving: The 133rd Battalion did all the penetration paving on Airfields 1 and 2.

Asphalt Plant: The Battalion constructed and operated the only asphalt plant on the island. After the site was leveled the plant was set up and ready to run in two weeks by a crew of 45 men. An Asphalt storage capacity of 22,000 gallons was provided by supplementing the tanks which were supplied with a 14,000 gallon concrete asphalt melting tank. Two aggregates were used in the mix; aggregate number one was inch down crusher run rock which supplied 70% of the total mix; aggregate number two was sand which supplied 25% of the total mix. Five percent asphalt was used. The aggregate was of such quality that only one drier was required to gain an output as high as 132 tons per hour. By a heating torch method 420 drums of asphalt were emptied each day. The plant operated on a 13-hour-per-day basis, employing a total of 60 men. Average tonnage produced daily was 1238.5.

Rock Crusher: The Battalion erected and operated one of the two rock crushers on the island during our stay of seven months. The rated capacity of the plant was 70-100 tons per hour. Actual production for the month of July averaged 73 tons per hour. Total production from the day it went into operation, April 23, to Sept. 19 was 132,865 tons.

COMBAT ACTIVITIES

After the assignment as Naval Air Station Honolulu, the 133rd Naval Construction Battalion departed for the island of Maui and two months training with the Fourth Marine Division for the Iwo Jima Invasion. This was preceded by a week's training at the Army's Jungle Training Course of the island of Oahu.

During the invasion of Iwo Jima the Battalion served as a Shore Party for the Fourth Marine Division. This consisted of the following: Demolition men blasted beach obstructions to open up unloading points; bull dozers cleared debris on the beach and smoothed access roads for amtracks and ducks; supplies were unloaded from the landing crafts by hand or loaded into vehicles going inland; details established and operated dumps of ammunition, food, water fuel and other supplies; a vehicle maintenance group kept trucks, jeeps, tractors and other equipment running for the Marines; the surveyors and draftsmen were assigned to intelligence work keeping up-to-the-minute maps and reports for higher echelons; corpsmen worked with the evacuation station personnel; other details were assigned to security duty on the beaches. Part of the Battalion was sent in hand on the heels of the first assault waves. The rest followed, until the entire ^{UNIT} was ashore by four in the afternoon of D-Day. A list of the casualties we suffered during the campaign from 19 Feb. 1945 to 16 March 1945 follows:

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Officers</u>
Killed in action or died of wounds	36	2
Wounded and evacuated	138	4
Wounded and not evacuated	12	2
Sick and evacuated (Mostly combat fatigue)	44	4
Missing in action	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	233	13

Of the above, 6 officers and 126 men were wounded on D-Day; 2 officers and 36 men were wounded on D-plus-1. Most of the casualties were caused by enemy mortar and artillery fire; some machine gun and small arms fire was encountered on the beaches.

Sixty-one members of the Battalion were awarded Purple Hearts at ceremonies held by the Battalion; approximately one hundred and thirty-nine others who were evacuated and have not returned to duty with the Battalion are eligible for the same award. Ten members were awarded the Bronze Star for heroic service or meritorious achievement. In addition, numerous commendations have been received for outstanding duty performed by its personnel and for work accomplished by the entire unit.

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PLAIN

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ITINERARY OF THE 133rd NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BATTALION.

- 21 Sept. 1943 Transferred from Camp Peary, Williamsburg, Virginia to Camp Radicott, Davisville, R.I.
- 31 Oct. 1943 Transferred to ABD, Gulfport, Mississippi. Later to ABD, Buena Vista, California. Exact date unknown.
- 1 May 1944 Departed Buena Vista for Pearl Harbor.
- 10 May 1944 Reported to 2nd Naval Construction Brigade.
- 1 June 1944 Operating at Honolulu.
- 1 Nov. 1944 On temporary additional duty with 5th Amphibious Corps and 4th Marine Division for assault duties. Attached to Hawaiian Area Naval Construction Brigade for Administrative purposes.
- Jan. 1945 In transit. Landed at Iwo Jima D-Day and D plus 1.
- 1 Aug. 1945 Located at Iwo Jima.

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NOTE: This itinerary based on records available in G. R. Operations and Personnel Section of Bureau of Naval Personnel.

Date: 20 September 1945.

CHRONOLOGY

U. S. NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BATTALION 133

- 17 Sep 43 Commissioned at Camp Peary, Williamsburg, Va.
- 21 Sep 43 Departed Camp Peary.
- 22 Sep 43 Arrived Camp Endicott, Davisville, R.I. for advanced military and technical training.
- 31 Oct 43 Departed Davisville for Camp Holliday, Gulfport, Miss.
- 3 Nov 43 Arrived Gulfport. Continued advanced training.
- 25 Feb 44 Departed Gulfport for Port Hueneme, Calif.
- 28 & 29 Feb 44 Arrived in echelons at Camp Rousseau, Port Hueneme, Calif.
- 30 Apr 44 Departed Port Hueneme by train for San Pedro, Calif.
- 1 May 44 The Battalion was quartered aboard the transport Leonard Wood.
- 2 May 44 Departed San Pedro, Calif. for Pearl Harbor, Territory of Hawaii.
- 9 May 44 Arrived Pearl Harbor in the Hawaiian Islands.
- 31 Oct 44 The Battalion went to the advance base on the Island of Maui, T.H. There the Battalion was attached to the 4th Marine Division.
- 31 Dec 44 Departed Maui for Iwo Jima.
- 19 Feb 45 Part of the 133rd was in the first attacking waves at the invasion of Iwo Jima. The entire Battalion reached the beach by 1600.
- 9 Nov 45 Departed Iwo Jima for Guam, Mariana Islands.
- 15 Nov 45 Arrived Guam.
- 1 Dec 45 Battalion took over work orders of the inactivated 25th Naval Construction Battalion.
- 27 Dec 45 The 133rd Naval Construction Battalion was inactivated on Guam. (133rd NCB ltr ser 133NCB-01-TPC/rd of 27 Dec 45 to Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks.)

NOTE: After the initial landings on Iwo Jima, the 133rd Battalion worked on airfields No. 1 and No. 2 while still under enemy fire.

When the island was secured, the Battalion also built refueling loops, taxiways, hard stands, and parking areas.

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