

# 19<sup>th</sup> Special Naval Construction Battalion

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*Historical  
Information*



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



NCTC - Peary  
 ABD - Davisville  
 Ready Date - 25 Jan'44  
 Left ABD - 4 Jan'44  
 Location - Lien-4- Finschafen Hollandia

LOG

- 12-15-43 - Budocks requests transfer of the 19th (Sp) from Peary to ABD Davisville on 25 Dec. (Budocks ltr to CNO dtd 15 Dec'43)
- 1-11-44 - 19th (Sp) left ABD Davisville 4 Jan'44. (ABD Davisville O4TWX1753 Jan'44)
- 5-11-44 - 1 Apr'44 report of 19th (Sp) - no info on location except 1st End. of report was by USNB Finschafen.
- 6-15-44 - 1 May'44 report of 19th (Sp) - endorsed through Finschafen.
- 6-29-44 - 19th (Sp) is located at Finschafen as of 31 May'44. (Comserfor7flt Sec. ltr A-9 over Ser BP-001407 to Dirpadocks dtd 8 Jun'44)
- 7- 7-44 - 19th (Sp) - 1/2 batt at Finschafen. 1/2 Batt alerted to go to Biak Is. (Comserfor7flt Sec. ltr A9-4 over Ser 00673 to Budocks dtd 14 Jun'44)
- 7-19-44 - 1 Jun'44 report of 19th (Sp) - located at Finschafen.
- 7-27-44 - 19th (Sp) is in two sections. 1st Section is at Finschafen and 2nd Section to be transferred to Biak Is. To be addressed as two sections. (Comserfor7flt Sec. ltr A5-4 Ser 00666 to 19th (Sp) dtd 12 Jun'44)
- 8-23-44 - 1 Jul'44 report of 19th (Sp) 2nd Sect. - location not stated. 1st Endorsement by Naval Advance Base Unit Two.

19th Special - 1st Section

- 8-29-44 - 1st Sect. located at Finschhafen; 2nd sect. located at Biak ( Comserfor7flt Sec. disp. 090924 NCR 14203 tp CNO dtd 9 Aug'44)
- 8-29-44 - 1 Jul'44 report of 19th (Sp) 1st Sec. 19th CB(Sp) split into two sections 10 Jun'44.
- 9-12-44 - 1 Aug'44 report of 19th (SP) 1st Sec. - Endorsement by Comserfor7flt states that this Batt is to return to the South Pacific command. Location not indicated.
- 9-13-44 - 1 Aug'44 report of 19th (SP) 2nd Sect. - located at Biak.
- 9-15-44 - "Cancel previous directives leaving 2nd Echelon of 19th (Sp) at Woendi. One Co. to remain Woendi after 15 Oct your 110012. One Co. return to Finschafen 15 Oct. Lt.(jg) Arthur recommended OinC of one Co. to remain at Woendi." (Comser7thFlt conf. disp. 120326 NCR 7170 dtd 13 Sep'44 to CNE Finschafen and Biak).
- 10-27-44 - One-half of the 19th (Sp) assigned to Cub 12 for operations at KING I. (Comserfor7flt Sec. ltr to Budocks 331 over Ser BP-001873 dtd 6 Oct'44 - Call No. 13668)
- 10-27-44 - Sect. 1 & 2 of the 19th (Sp) now separated - authority requested for approval of P.O. for the 2nd Sect. (Comser7flt Conf. Disp. to CNO 160234 NCR 9398 dtd 20 Oct)
- 10-30-44 - 19th CB (Sp) 1st and 2nd Section approved effective 25 Oct'44. (CNO conf. disp. to Comseronsopac Sec. 241633 NCR 1437 dtd 25 Oct'44).
- 11-8-44 - 19th(Sp), 1st Sect. is located at Finschafen. (Comserfor7flt Sec. ltr A9-4 over Ser BP-001882 to Budocks dtd 12 Oct'44 monthly report for Sep'44)
- 11-29-44 - 19th (Sp), 1st Sect. is located at Hollandia. (Comserv7flt Sec. Disp. to CNO 150133 NCR 18921 dtd 24 Nov'44)
- 11-30-44 - 1 Sep'44 report of 19th (Sp) 1st Sec - operating at Hollandia.
- 12-8-44 - 1 Nov'44 report of 19th (Sp) 1st Sec. - no info on location.

- 12-12-44 - When the 1st Section of the 19th (Sp) is transferred to Hollandia and with the detachment of Lt. Comdr. McMullen, CinC of  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the 15th (Sp), these two units are hereby combined into one detachment to be known as the following:  
 U.S. Naval Construction Battalion (Sp) Detachment, TRIM,  
 U.S. Naval Bases, Navy 3115  
 CinC to be Lt. J. J. Heggie.  
 (Comserv7flt Conf. ltr P16-5 over Ser 02353 to CinC  $\frac{1}{2}$  of 15th (Sp) and 1st Sec. of the 19th (Sp) dtd 24 Nov'44)
- 12-28-44 - 19th (Sp) 1st Sec. located at Finschafen - to go to Hollandia about 15 Nov'44. (Comserv7flt Sec. report for Oct'44 dtd 20 Nov'44).
- 1-4-45 - USNCB(Sp) Det. TRIM and CbD NUDE will be assigned a number if to exist longer than 4 months. Number given by request from CNO. (CNO conf. ltr Op30-2CK14-rc over (SC)P16-5/QR9 over Doc. 146249 over Ser. 01435130 to Com7flt dtd 21 Dec'44).
- 1-13-45 - 19th (Sp) 1st Sec. at Hollandia with 1st Sec. 15th (Sp). (Comserv7flt Sec. Report for Nov'44 dtd 15 Dec'44)
- 2-7-45 - 41st CB (Sp) established from C.B. Special Detachment TRIM composed of  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the 15th (Sp) and 19th (Sp). Comserv7flt will assign a complement to the 41st (Sp) and reduce the complement of 15th (Sp) and 19th (Sp) accordingly. (CNO conf. ltr Op30-2CK14-rc over (SC)P16-5 over Doc. 1511'3 over Ser. 035830 to Comserv7flt dtd 23 Jan'45).
- 2-13-45 - 1 Dec'44 report of the 19th (Sp) 1st Sec. and 15th (Sp) 1st Sec. (Combined report) The two units were merged on 26 Nov'44 for operational and administrative purposes under the title USNCB (Special) Detachment, TRIM.
- 2-13-45 - 1 Oct'44 report of the 19th (Sp) 1st Sec. - 70 seamen were transferred in to this batt.

19th (Sp) 1st Sec.

- 3-30-45 - 1 Jan'45 report of the 15th and 19th (Sp)s 1st Secs. - located at Hollandia.
- 3-31-45 - 1 Feb'45 report of the 15th and 19th (Sp)s 1st Secs. - located at Hollandia.
- 4-2-45 - 1 May'45 report of the 19th (Sp) Sec.1 - located at Hollandia & has been combined with the 15th(Sp) Sec.1 to form the 41st (Sp).

Location - ~~Woonid~~ Leyte - Samar

- 10-30-44 - The establishment of the 19th (Sp) 1st and 2nd Sections approved effective 25 Oct'44 (CNO conf. disp. to Comserfor7flt 241633 NCR 1437 dtd 25 Oct'44).
- 10-30-44 - The 19th (Sp) 2nd Sec. is located at Woonid. (Comserfor7flt Sec. disp. 130349 NCR 12037 to CNO dtd 25 Oct'44).
- 11-6-44 - 1 Sep'44 report of 19th (Sp), 2nd Sect. - located at Bisk. Endorsement by Comserfor7flt states that due to the requirements for forward movement in this area, the 2nd Section will not be returned to rejoin the 1st Sect. of the 19th (Sp) as previously planned. The 2nd Sect. will be sent forward as a separate unit.
- 11-8-44 - 19th (Sp), 2nd Sect. is located at Woonid. Assigned to CB (Sp) Detachment with  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the 6th (Sp) for KING 2 operation. (Comserfor7flt Sec. ltr A9-4 over Ser BP-001882 to Budocks dtd 12 Oct'44 monthly report for Sep'44)
- 11-29-44 - One-Half of the 19th (Sp) located at Tacloban, Leyte. (Comserv7flt Sec. Disp. to CNO 150133 NCR 18921 dtd 24 Nov'44)
- 12-28-44 - 19th (Sp) 2nd Sec. - arrived Leyte in late Oct'44 and assigned to CB Det. (Sp) with  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the 6th (Sp). (Comserfor7flt Sec. report for Oct'44 dtd 20 Nov'44).
- 1-13-45 - 19th (Sp) 2nd Sec. at Samar with one-half 6th (Sp). (Comserfor7flt Sec. report for Nov'44 dtd 15 Dec'44)
- 2-13-45 - 1 Nov'44 report of the 19th (Sp) 2nd Sec. - Completed loading on transport on 18 Oct'44. Batt in transit from 18 Oct'44 to 4 Nov'44. Now located on Leyte.
- 2-14-45 - 1/2 of the 19th (Sp) is available for assignment to Samar. (CNO Sec. ltr to distribution list Ser. 0039230 dtd 3 Feb'45).
- 2-15-45 - The 19th (Sp) 2nd Section is at Samar with 1/2 of the 6th (Sp). (Comserfor7flt Sec report for Dec'44 dtd 15 Jan'45).

19th (Sp) - 2nd Sec.

- 3- 2-45 - The 19th (Sp) joined the 12th Reg. about 1 Nov'44 at Samar. Movement of all regimental and naval base units to Guiuan was begun on 9 Dec'44. (Because the expected compl. date of the Army airstrip could not be met due to poor soil conditions an area in southern Samar Is. near Guiuan was scouted and found suitable for an airstrip and also preferable for other intended installations. Hence, on 9 Dec., it was finally decided to build all naval facilities at Guiuan. (Historical Report by the 12th Reg. on Naval Base Leyte - Comserfor7flt Conf ltr A12 over BP-0172 dtd 7 Feb'45 to Budocks)
- 3-14-45 -- Comserfor7flt conf. spdltr Ser. 0380 to CNOB Leyte Gulf dtd 2 Mar'45 - 19th (Sp) Detachment hereby detached from its presently assigned duties. Shall report to CNOB Leyte Gulf for duty with Commander Construction Forces Leyte-Samar.
- 3-20-45 - Comdt NOB Tacloban orders the 19th (Sp) Detachment to further report to the CO, NavSta Guiuan, Samar for duty with Const Forces headed by the Comdr Const Forces and Sr Brg Comdr. (Comdt NOB Tacloban ltr P16-3(1) over Ser 1032 dtd 11 Mar'45 to OinC 19th (Sp) Detachment)
- 3-27-45 - 1 Dec'44 report of the 19th (Sp) 2nd Sec. - Report was endorsed by NavSta, Guiuan, Samar.
- 4- 3-45 - 1 Jan'45 report of the 19th (Sp) 2nd Sec. - located at Tacloban as of 1 Jan.
- 4- 7-45 - The 19th (Sp) Detachment reported to the CO NavSta Guiuan, Samar on 14 Mar'45-- ordered to further report to the Comdr Const. Forces for duty. (1st end. on CNOB Leyte orders NS/P16-3(1) over Ser 1345 dtd 14 Mar'45)
- 4-20-45 - 1 Feb'45 report of the 19th (Sp) 2nd Sec. - located at Guiuan. Report endorsed by 3rd Brg.
- 4-21-45 - Comserfor7flt Sec Rep for Feb'45 shows 2nd Sec. 19th (Sp) assigned to CB Detach. consisting of 1/2 of 6th (Sp) and 2nd Sec. 19th (Sp).

Location - Samar

19th C.B. (Special) -- 2nd Sec

- 4-25-45 - Ref (a) of ltr suggests that section designations of CB (Specials) 7, 10, 15, and 19 be cancelled due to the fact that the first section of each of these batts has been inactivated. In accord therewith, it is requested that there be no further ref to sec. nos. of subj units and that the active sections with their corresp complements henceforth be designated CB (Special). (CNO Restr ltr Ser 214730 dtd 18 Apr'45 to Supers)
- 5- 1-45 - The 19th (Sp) is located at Calicoan, Samar. (Comserfor7flt Sec Rep of 1 Apr'45)
- 5- 2-45 - The establishment of a CB (Sp) Detachment by combining 19th (Sp) 2nd Sec and 1/2 6th (Sp) is hereby cancelled. The OinCs in each case will report to CNOB Leyte Gulf for oper. duty and to Comserfor7flt (Comdr Const Forces) for adm. (Comserfor7flt Conf ltr Ser 0916 dtd 26 Apr to CO NavSta Samar)
- 5-4-45 - 1 Mar'45 report of 19th (Sp) 2nd Sect.- located at Samar. End. by 3rd Brig.
- 5- 8-45 - The 19th (Sp) is located at Samar. (Dirpacdocks S.F. S\_c Rep of 15 Apr'45)
- 5-16-45 - 1 Apr'45 report of 19th (Sp) - located at Samar. 5 colored replacements received on bd during Mar'45. Report end. by 3rd Brig. 2nd Sect.
- 5-17-45 - 1 May'45 report of 19th (Sp) - located at Samar. 19th (Sp) left U.S. on 4 Jan'44. Report routed via 3rd Brig. 2nd Sect.,. The 19th (Sp) 2nd Sec has participated in the following operations: Finschafen, 14 Mar'44; Biak, 18 Jun'44; Leyte, 29 Oct'44.
- 6-21-45 - 1 Jun'45 report of the 19th (Sp) - located at Leyte-Samar. Report via 7th Brg.
- 6-27-45 - Comserfor7flt has requested the establishment of a CB Regiment to consist of the following CB Specials now assigned duty at NOB Leyte Gulf: 5th (Sp), 19th (Sp), 1/2 30th (Sp), 33nd (Sp), and 33rd (Sp). Accordingly, establishment of the 50th CB Regiment is authorized and is to be effective when directed by Cincpac. This Regiment to report to the 3rd Brg for adm purposes. (CNO conf ltr ser 0251730 dtd 22 June to Com7flt)

Location - Samar

19th C.B. (Special)

- 7-18-45 - 1 Jul'45 report of the 19th (Sp) - located in Samar area. Present on board complement is 15 officers and 435 men. Report via 5th Brig.
- 7-27-45 - The 19th (Sp) is located at Calicoan, Samar. Batt is attached to the 7th Brg but no Regiment. (COT 7th Flt Sec rep of June)
- 8-13-45 - The 19th (Sp) is assigned to the Olympic Operation. (Com7flt conf report on CB org anization in Leyte-Samar area ser 04396 dtd 26 July to CNO)
- 8-21-45 - 1 Aug'45 report of the 19th (Sp) - located at Leyte-Samar. Report via 7th Brg.
- 9-18-45 - 1 Sept'45 report of 19th(Sp) - Located in Samar area. Report via 50th Reg & 7th Brig.
- 10-25-45 - 1 Oct'45 report of 19th(Sp) - located in Samar. Report via 50th Reg. & 7th Brig.
- 12-7-45 - Comservpac reqs Comphilseafon to inactivate 19th(Sp). (Comservpac restr disp 060115 Dec'45 to Comphilseafon).
- 12-20-45 - 1 Nov'45 report of 19th(Sp) - located in Samar. Report via 50th Reg. & 7th Brig.
- 1-30-45 - 19th(Sp) was inactivated 27 Dec'45. (OinC, 34th Reg. ltr ser 01411 dtd 27 Dec'45 to OinC, 19th(Sp)).

INACTIVATED

<u>ON BOARD</u>			
<u>DATE</u>	<u>OFFICERS</u>	<u>MEN</u>	<u>AUTHORITY</u>
1 Jun'44	31	916	MoR
1 Jul'44	2nd Sect. 14	443	MoR & BNP625
1 Jul'44	1st Sect. 16	470	MoR
1 Aug'44	1st Sect. 16	475	MoR
1 Aug'44	3rd Sect. 14	434	MoR
1 Sep'44	19	469	MoR
1 Oct'44	16	470	MoR
1 Nov'44	17	468	MoR
2 Dec'44	18	531	MoR
1 Jan'45	18	517	MoR
1 Apr'45	15	508	BNP625 & R

19th Construction Battalion (Special) 1st Section (INACTIVATED)

<u>ON BOARD</u>			
<u>DATE</u>	<u>OFF.</u>	<u>MEN</u>	<u>AUTHORITY</u>
1 Aug'44	14	434	MoR
1 Sep'44	13	433	MoR
30 Sep'44		427	Recap
1 Nov'44	13	434	MoR
1 Dec'44	13	437	MoR
1 Jan'45	13	434	MoR
1 FEB'45	12	435	MoR
1 APR'45	11	441	BNP625 & MoR
1 MAR'45	11	434	MoR
1 May'45	11	442	MoR
1 Jun'45	18	439	BNP625 & R
1 Jul'45	15	435	BNP625 & R
1 Aug'45	16	425	BNP625 & R
1 Sept'45	16	423	BNP625 & R
1 Oct'45	13	320	BNP625 & R
1 Nov'45	22	391	BNP625 & R
1 Dec'45	18	293	BNP625 & R

19th C.B. (Special) ~~2nd Section~~ (INACTIVATED)

19th CB Special

Date	Organization	Location	Reference	Notes
6/19/44	-	Finechafen ZORON	C.B. report 1 June.	Left U.S. Jan. 1944.
7/8	-	Section 1 - ZORON Section 2 - NUDE	ComSecw/Ch Jct. Sec. Act. Disp. 090924 aug.	
9/19	-	Sec 1 ZORON	ComSecw/Ch Jct. Conf. disp. 120726 Sept.	Cancel 2nd section at Waendi.
9/30	-	Sec 2 "K2"	ComSecw/Ch Jct sec disp. Sept. 290921.	Report Co. Naiku for duty at K2
10/25	-	Sec 2 PIDA (Waendi)	ComSecw/Ch Jct sec act disp Oct 130349.	Change name to PIDA.
11/22	-	1/2 rd AVIO		(not done)
11/25	-	1/2 - OSSO 1/2 - TRIM	ComSecw/Ch Jct see act disp. Nov 150133.	CP30-03578- that same as 23 H1.

(Continued report on 19th CB Special - 290921 - see 290921)

19th Special Page 2

Date	Organization	Location	Reference	Notes
1/29	-	✓ "Lyte Gulb Nav Sta Samar 0350-4100	ComSecw/Ch Jct see 260558 Mar 50th regt	present location & assigned

CP30 next serial 214730 of 14 April - 1st section inactivated. No section (begin to now.)

## ~ FOREWORD ~

On April 3, 1944 the 30th Special United States Naval Construction Battalion was organized and commenced training at Camp Perry, NCTC, Williamsburg, Virginia. It was a rainy day but the weather failed to dampen the spirits of that newly formed group of one thousand men—strangers for the most part—as they embarked upon their new and uncharted career. These men have worked and played together; amid the sweat of labor and the laughter of fun and frivolity they have lived together these many months, united in the service of their country.

Following a period of intensive training the battalion moved to Camp Thomas, Davisville, Rhode Island. In July 1944 the 30th Special Battalion was split into two sections. The first section, comprised of companies A and D, plus half of Headquarters, shipped to Lido Beach, New York, for transport to the European theatre. The second section remained at Camp Thomas for further duty. Later we were shipped to Hueneme, California, and then to the South Pacific, finally arriving at Calicoan, a small island off the tip of Samar in the Philippines. Here we remained through the rest of the war, merging after the war with the 19th Special Battalion.

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In October 1943, the 19th Special United States Naval Construction Battalion was formed. This was followed by two months of intensive training and drilling, grouping and regrouping—finally, late in November the battalion was commissioned. Again came training, three weeks of it. Then orders! Move! It was on Christmas Day 1943 that we loaded aboard a train bound for Camp Thomas. Here we remained for a few days and finally on January 4, 1944 amid sleet and snow, we were loaded aboard a ship for points unknown, and what was to prove to be a long tour overseas filled with work, sweat, and some play.

The weather became warmer and then hotter. Then we found ourselves passing through the Panama Canal, Pacific bound. The first stop was Finchs-halen, New Guinea. Here we spent four grueling months working in heat and tropical rain. Then the battalion was split into two sections, the first section remaining behind, the second section moving on to Mios Woendi Island, opposite Biak.

It was October 1944 that we moved again. This time it was a big push—the invasion of the Philippines. On D-Day we went in with the help of a tropical typhoon and made camp at San Antone, Samar. Here we remained until January of 1945 when once again we broke camp and came to Calicoan—being the first Special Battalion ashore.

## 19th SPECIAL BATTALION

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After that uneventful sixty-seven day trip through the Canal on the good ship, "Cape Bon," and a short tour of duty at Langamak, New Guinea, the 19th Special was split into two sections.

The second section left Finchhafen, New Guinea on June 10, 1944, and after a short stop at Hollandia, where we loaded those water distillation units in a mighty rough sea, we put into Mios Woendi Island on June 18. Since there was still fighting on nearby Biak, only daylight operations were permitted. The 19th, being the only stevedore outfit on the island, had plenty of work to do, and at the end of our four months' stay the captain of the base presented our outfit with a fine letter of commendation.

October 18, 1944 saw us pull stakes and head north to take part in the Leyte invasion. Our transport, the liberty ship, Joseph Blackburn, dropped anchor off San Antone, Samar, the 28 of October.

The first of two typhoons arrived at San Antone that day, too. It caused considerable damage to the Blackburn, but there were no serious injuries to any of the men. The first of over two hundred and fifty air attacks came the very next day . . . still no casualties. In fact, we did not lose a man due to the air raids during the entire operation.

Samar looked like any other Pacific island except that it seemed to have more than its share of mud and rain. No one will ever forget how we used to trudge to work through that knee-deep mud past all sorts of trucks, dozers, and other equipment stalled beyond repair. And remember those caribou holes, fellows?

Just after the first of the year, when things had begun to settle down to a normal pace, and the air raids were over, we received the word to pack our gear and move southward to Calicoan Island. We made the forty-five mile trip down the coast of Samar in small groups until all of our four hundred and fifty some men had been transferred to Calicoan.

There was no time for us to take a month off and build our camp, so we did that when we were not stevedoring—and we stevedored twenty-four hours a day. But our camp went up, and in grand style. Our food was the best on the island, too.

In athletics we have had some teams we are mighty proud of. Remember that softball team on Woendi, and the basketball and baseball teams on Calicoan? That basketball team was the Calicoan Champ!

Since leaving the States we have earned several letters of commendation through our handling of all the different types of cargo that have been shipped overseas. There have been tense moments, but by sticking together and working side by side we have been able to gain a fine name for ourselves.

DECLASSIFIED  
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ITINERARY OF 19TH (SP) CONSTRUCTION BATTALION

FIRST SECTION

25 Dec. 1943 Transferred from Camp Peary, Williamsburg, Va. to ABB, Davisville, R.I.

4 Jan. 1944 Left ABB, Davisville.

1 Apr. 1944 Monthly Report of this date gives no information as to location except first endorsement of report was by USNB Finschafen.

31 May 1944 Located Finschafen.

10 June 1944 Battalion split into two sections, the first section to remain at Finschafen, the second section moving to Biak Island.

15 Nov. 1944 On or about this date the first section was transferred to Hollandia.

26 Nov. 1944 The first section of the 19th (Sp) CB and first section of the 15th (Sp) CB merged on this date for operational and administrative purposes under the title USNBC (Special) Detachment TRDA.

1 May 1945 Monthly Report for this date shows location Hollandia and name changed to 41st (Sp) CB.

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NOTE: This information based on records available in the C.B. Operations and Personnel Section of the Bureau of Naval Personnel.

6 Sept 1945

To facilitate  
Administrative Handling  
Classification changed  
from:

RESTRICTED

Signature



1st NAVAL CONSTRUCTION SPECIAL BATTALION

WE SUPPLY FOR VICTORY

*of 2017*



Lanny Ross

Theatre







