MOBILE CONSTRUCTION BATTALION FOUR 1958-1960

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MOBILE CONSTRUCTION BATTALION

FOUR

U.S. NAVAL MOBILE CONSTRUCTION BATTALION FOUR

SEABEES

1958 - 1960

UNITED STATES NAVAL

MOBILE CONSTRUCTION BATTALION FOUR

Fab Four

INVADES:

PORT LYAUTEY, MOROCCO

ROTA, SPAIN

ROOSEVELT ROADS, PUERTO RICO

CAMP LEJEUNE, NORTH CAROLINA

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EDITOR - WM. HOWARD, JO3, USN

A MESSAGE FROM THE "C.O."

Cruise Books are intended to record events and associations during a period of time so that in future years we can look back and relive in nastalgia the pleasent past and look with pride at our accomplishments. FAB FOUR has had many pleasent moments and outstanding accomplishments to record in this 1958-59 Cruise Book.

The history and traditions of the Seabees grows longer and brighter with each passing year and the officers and men of this Battalion can be justly proud of their contributions to this history. During the Port Lyautey-Rota deployment the Battalion shared in the support of the Sixth Fleet and in that role all hands had a part in the defense of the Free World. During this time MCB-4 continued to reign as Outstanding Battalion of the Atlantic Fleet for the fifth consecutive year.

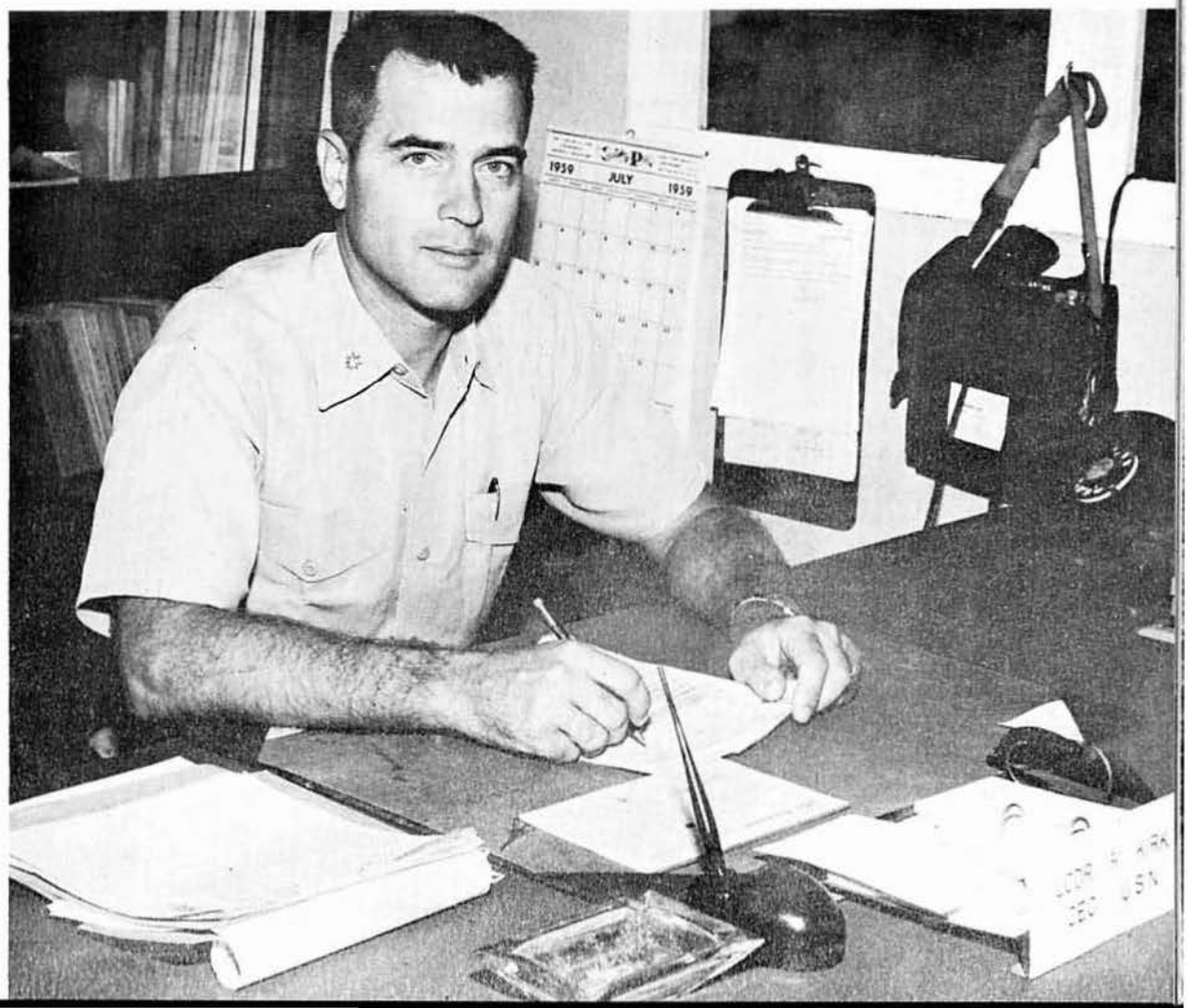
In Port Lyautey, Rota, Puerto Rico, and Camp Lejeune, the officers and men of MCB-4 have expended great effort and many months away from home to do the jobs so necessary in support of the Fleet and in increasing our skills and crafts.

I am proud to have shared in the events recorded in this volume.

A MESSAGE

In the Navy the best duty station is always the one you just left or the one you are about to go to. Using this as a yardstick, MCB-4 has had a lot of good tours since we were commissioned years ago. There is more, however, than an old Navy proverb behind our many good tours. They didn't just happen, they were made by the men who went on them and we, in "Fab FOUR," have always been blessed with an abundance of good men. In the years to come when you leaf through these pages and recall your old comrades, you can be justly proud of the outstanding way you helped them complete many important projects in Port Lyautey, Spain, and Puerto Rico. Meeting the challenge of an important military construction program will always be exciting and interesting. I consider myself among the fortunate few for having shared this experience with you in MCB-4.

FROM THE "EXEC"



INTRODUCTION

Today, the Fighting Seabees of World War II fame are still landing at the shores of foreign countries and territories. How ever, in keeping pace with today's Navy, the Seabees are supporting guided missile Squadrons, nuclear submarines, giant air craft carriers and advanced electronic and nuclear programs. The Mobile Construction Battalions continue to perform outstanding construction feats while preparing and training for the event of mobilization.

It was with the advent of World War II that the Bureau of Yards and Docks realized a need for uniformed men to perform construction in combat areas. It had become apparent that the services of contractors and their civilian workers engaged in building naval projects at numerous overseas points could not be employed for construction work in combat zones. In the first place, under military law their status as civilians prevented them from offering resistance to an enemy with out becoming liable to summary execution as guerrillas in the event of capture. Further, civilian workers lacked the training necessary to defend themselves. This

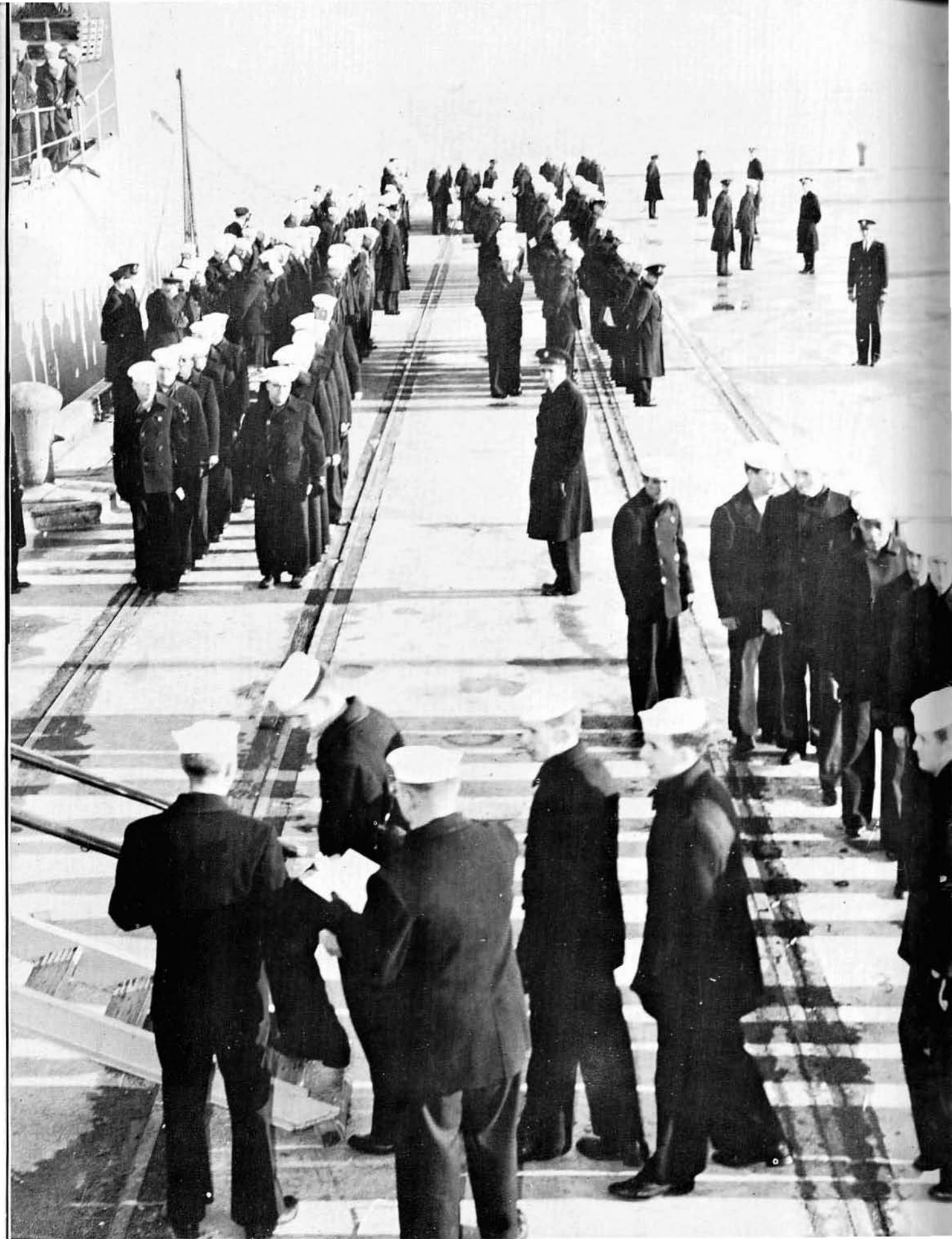
SEABEES

was grimly demonstrated at Wake, Cavite and Guam where some civilians were killed and many more captured. Because of the pressing need for military construction personnel, the Bureau of Navigation (now the Bureau of Naval Personnel), on 5 January, 1942, granted a request made by Admiral Ben Moreell Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, that a naval construction regiment consisting of three battalions be formed. Until 1954, the birthday of the Seabees was considered to be 28 December, 1941, the date that Admiral Moreell submitted his request. In November, 1954 the official birthday was changed to March 1942, the date on which the term "Seabee" was authorized.

Mobile Construction Battalions were first established in July, 1949, to be used for advanced base construction and for participation in special task force projects.

Thoughout 1950 and 1951, Mobile Construction Battalions were organized until a total of five battalions had been commissioned in the Atlantic area; these were MCBs ONE, FOUR, SIX, SEVEN and EIGHT. (MCB EIGHT was disestablished in 1955.)

Today the men of MCB FOUR can look with pride upon the accomplishments of their Battalion during the past nine years. It is the intent of this Cruise Book to record the events of U.S. Naval Mobile Construction Battalion FOUR during the period from October, 1957, until January 1960. This period covers the Battalions deployments at Port Lyautey, Morocco, Rota, Spain, Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico, and the military exercises at Camp LeJeune, North Carolina.



Speculation had already begun regarding the next deployment site as the men of MCB FOUR baked in the Bahama sun during the latter stages of construction on Eleuthera. Finally, it was announced that the Battalion would be going to Port Lyautey, that mysterious place in far-off Africa. Such was the enthusiasm that followed that we were able to endure the end-of-deployment push on Eleuthera. To add to the excitement of the forthcoming African tour it was announced that the Battalion would have a detachment in Rota, Spain.

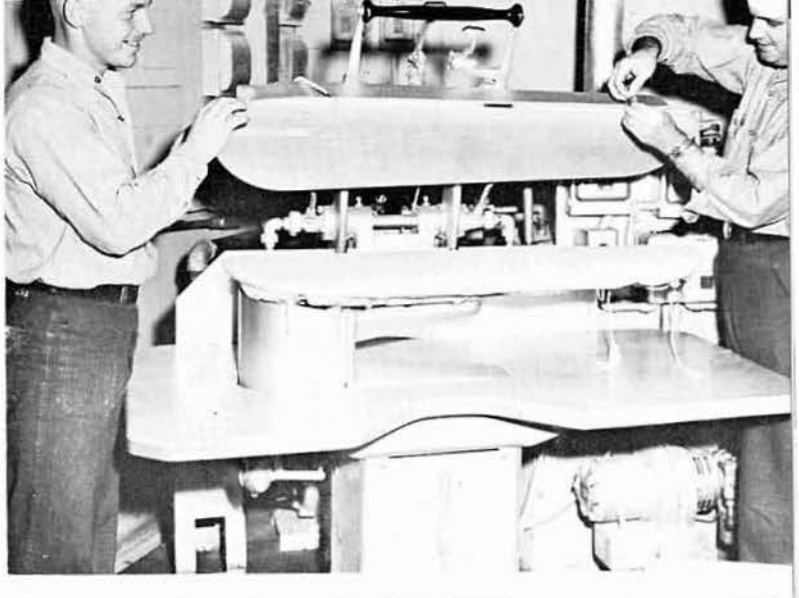
At last an LST (in two trips, two weeks apart) returned the Seabees of MCB FOUR to the "home port" of Davisville for much awaited leave, military training and preparations for the next deployment. As always, while back in Davisville, there were many personnel changes. So we waved fond farewells to the friends that we had made on Eleuthera, the "new kids" came to be known as the "old salts" and new arrivals were indoctrinated in the ways of MCB FOUR.

THE EIGHTEEN DAY TRIP TO LYAUTEY ABOARD THE WAHKIAKUM COUNTY COULD BEST BE DESCRIBED AS "BORING FUN" FOR THE MEN OF FOUR. THERE WAS MUCH TIME FOR RELAXING AND CLOWNING.

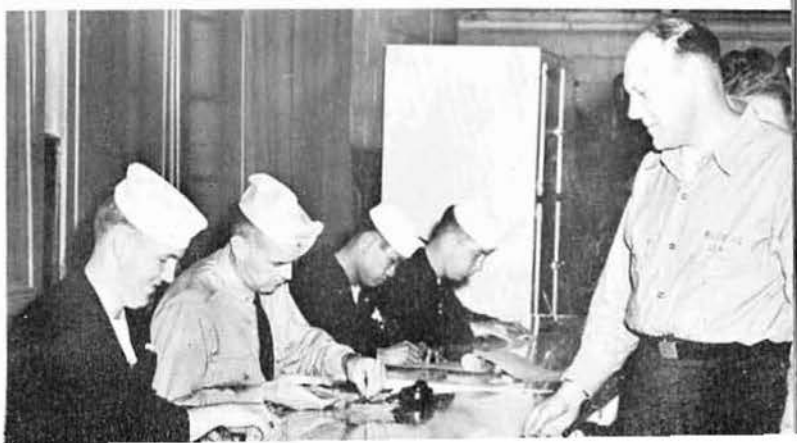
All too soon, we had expended the initial leave period, and completed CTU classes and military training. Kriss Kringle came and went, offering us hardly a glance, and then Father Time arrived upon the scene, swinging his scythe. This meant only one thing: time had run out for us too, and we knew the resounding sorrows of moving out once more. It was on 9 January, 1958, when LST 1162 (Wahkiakum County) opened her holds and swallowed MCB FOUR -- lock, stock and bulldozer.

Eager anticipation continued to build up during the ensuing eighteen days, filled with sleep. correspondence courses, novels, card games and bull-sessions. Then on the 26th of January, the blue Mediterranean appeared, flanked on the right by the rolling hills of Morocco and on the left by Spain. As we lay at anchor that day off Gibraltar, excitement increased. The next day, however, our Moroccan deployment was officially underway as we sailed up the Sebou River and later off-loaded (in the rain, naturally).

Artisanat Moderne



Many things happened during the first two weeks in Morocco. First of all, we were welcome by several members of MCB FOUR who had preceded the Battalion in order to relieve MCB SEVEN Detachment KILO and set up camp security. Secondly, on 27 January, Detachment HOTEL was formally commissioned. Commissioning took place at morning quarters for the group of men headed up by Lieutenant William W. Gentry. Two days later DET HOTEL departed for Spain. Thirdly, along with unpacking, was the job of rehabilitating the living area, shops and office spaces. Then came the assigned construction projects, our primary reason for being in Morocco.



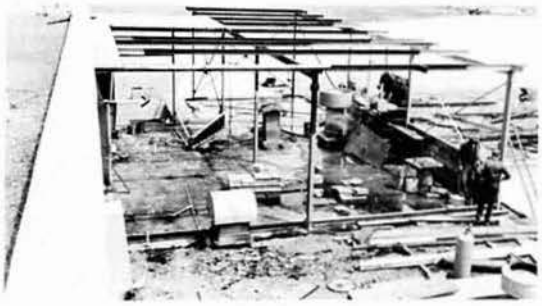
WESTLAND

LCDR David M. Feinman
Operations Officer

We were assigned more than twenty construction projects. Our work in Port Lyautey was supplemented by many pleasures, continental styles. There were still a handful of men in FOUR who had been in Port Lyautey during the Battalion's 1955 deployment. To these men go the credit for our indoctrination in Moroccan customs. Most of these were of a cautionary nature since extreme enlightened us on the do's and don'ts. But (and more important), they did not fail to excite our sightseeing lusts by telling of the many strange and interesting things to be seen outside the gates.

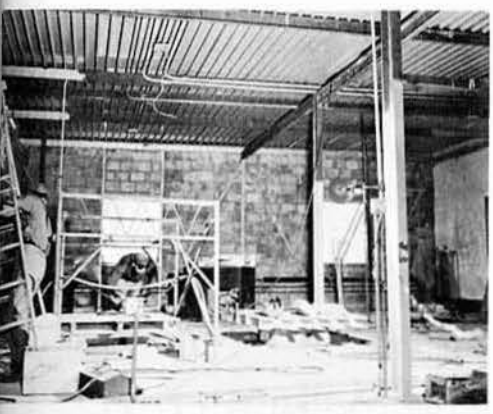
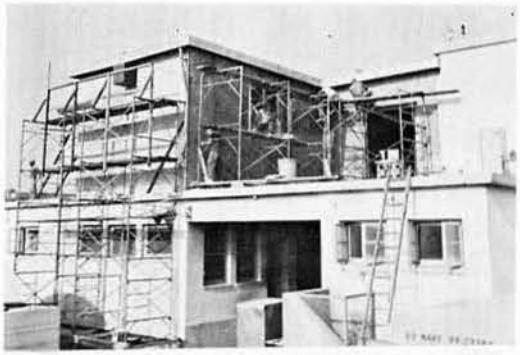
"FOUR" DISPLAYED

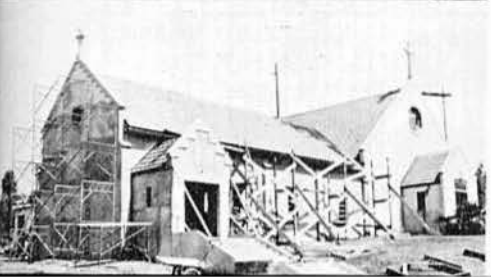
PICTURED ABOVE AND BELOW ARE PROGRESS PHOTOS OF FOUR OF THE MANY PROJECTS FOUR COMPLETED AT LYAUTEY. ACROSS THE TOP IS DEPICTED THE JOB AT PUBLIC WORKS CARPENTER SHOP. A WOODEN STRUCTURE WHEN WORK WAS BEGUN, THE FOUR-MEN DISPLAYED ACUTE WORKMANSHIP AND TECHNICAL ABILITY IN CONSTRUCTING A CONCRETE BLOCK STRUCTURAL SHELL AROUND IT. THE ROOF WAS EXTENDED, THE EXISTING SIDES REMOVED, A SPRINKLER SYSTEM INSTALLED AND ADDITIONAL INTERIOR PARTITIONS WERE INSTALLED. THE WIRING OF THE BUILDING WAS MODIFIED TO CONFORM TO THE NEWLY EXPANDED STRUCTURE. ROW TWO DEPICTS THE JOB DONE ON THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL EXTENSION. THE PROJECT INCLUDED CONSTRUCTION OF A TWO-ROOM EXTENSION, FEATURING REINFORCED CONCRETE COLUMNS AND BEAMS, STUCCOED BLOCK WALLS, BUILT-UP ROOFING ON CONCRETE SLAB AND ELECTRICAL, HEATING AND PLUMBING EXTENSION FROM EXISTING BUILDING. PORT LYAUTEY'S OVER-CROWDED SCHOOL CONDITION WAS GREATLY ALLIEVIATED AS A RESULT OF THIS CONSTRUCTION PROJECT BEING COMPLETED.

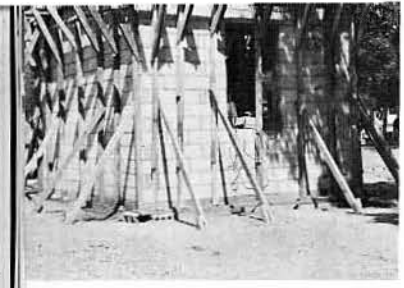


FINE ACCOMPLISHMENT

BELOW, THIRD ROW, IS PICTURED THE WORK DONE ON THE NAS TERMINAL BUILDING ADDITION. THIS PROJECT INCLUDED CONSTRUCTION OF A STEEL FRAME, THREE-ROOM ADDITION ON THE ROOF OF THE EXISTING TERMINAL BUILDING. OUTSIDE WALLS WERE CONSTRUCTED OF FOUR-INCH TILE BLOCK STUCCOED; INSIDE PARTITIONS WERE MASONITE. FOUR'S WORK ON THIS PROJECT, AT FIRST GREATLY HINDERED BY UNAVAILABILITY OF CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS, EVENTUALLY GREATLY ACCELERATED TO MEET ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE. BOTTOM ROW SHOWS THE NAS CHAPEL EXTENSION, COMPLETION OF WHICH PROVIDED A THORN IN THE SIDE FOR LYAUTEY-BASED PERSONNEL FOR SOME TIME PREVIOUS TO FOUR'S ARRIVAL -- AND WORK. A STUCCOED BLOCK ADDITION TO THE EXISTING CHAPEL WAS CONSTRUCTION, A TILE ROOF ADDED, ANDHEATING, PLUMBING, AND ELECTRICAL COMPONENTS EXTENDED FROM CHAPEL. A TESTIMONIAL TO FOUR-MEN'S EXPERT HANDICRAFT.

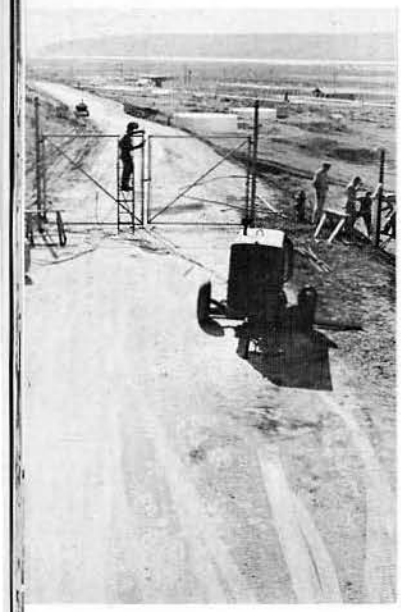







PROJECTS ASSIGNED TO MCB-4 IN PORT LYAUTEY AND NEIGHBORING BASE ESTABLISHMENTS. AN EXAMPLE OF SOME OF THE SMALLER JOBS, THOUGH NO LESS DEMANDING OF EXPERT WORKMANSHIP, IS THE PUMP-HOUSE BUILDING CONSTRUCTED TO HANDLE MODIFICATIONS TO THE WATER SYSTEM AND NEARBY BOUKNADEL. IN ADDITION TO THIS, 700 FEET OF 6-INCH AND 100 FEET OF 8-INCH WATER PIPE WERE LAID AND INSTALLED TO PRESENT UTILITIES.

EXTREME LEFT SHOWS THE COMPLETED TACAN HARDSTAND CONSTRUCTED AT NAS. THE PROJECT INCLUDED MUCH EARTHWORK BY THE DRIVERS, CONSTRUCTION OF A CONCRETE HARDSTAND, INSTALLATION OF APPROXIMATELY 4000 FEET OF POWER AND CONTROL CABLES AND CONSTRUCTION OF A 900-FOOT ACCESS ROAD. TO THE RIGHT, IS THE NEARLY COMPLETED PERIMETER ROAD WHICH MCB-4 CONSTRUCTED AT ONE OF THE BASE FACILITIES. IN ALL, THE PROJECT REQUIRED WORK ON APPROXIMATELY 12,000 FEET OF ROAD, WITH SURFACING OF APPROXIMATELY 8,000 FEET.

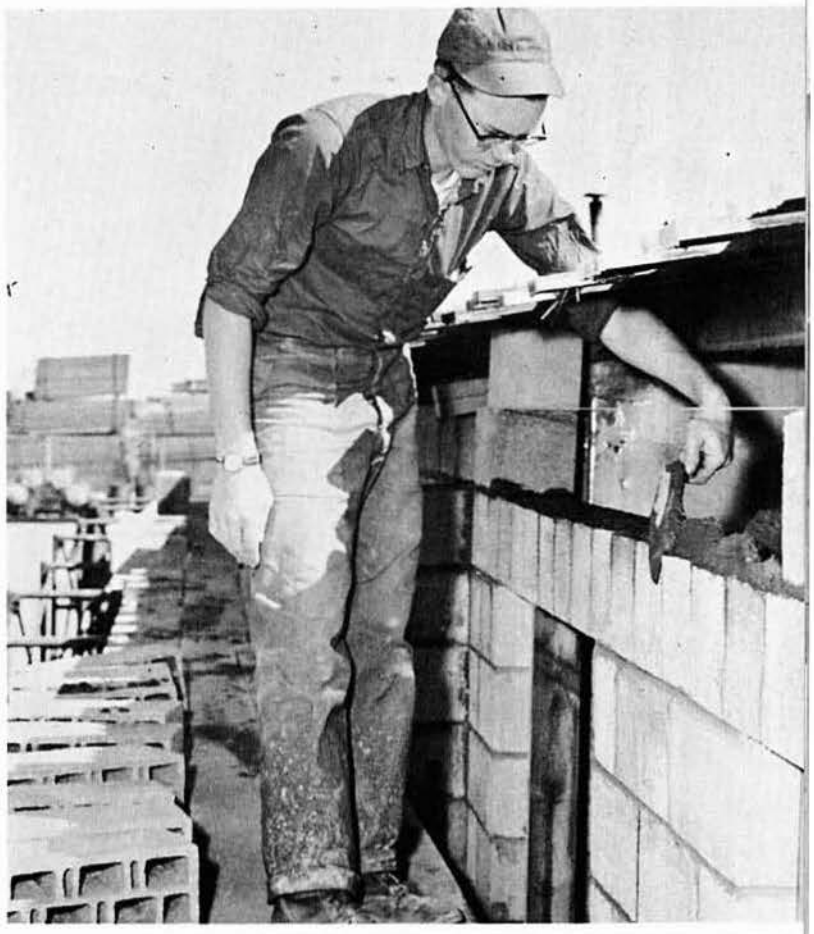


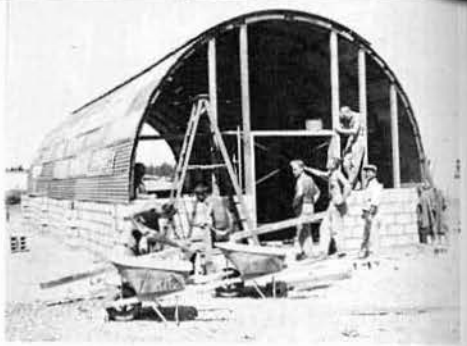
EXTREME LEFT SHOWS MEN AT WORK AT THE POL TANK FARM SITE, WHERE THEY MADE SEVERAL ADDITIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS. A 900-FOOT MACADAM ROAD WAS CONSTRUCTED, AND ABOUT 1,200 FEET OF PIPELINE WERE INSTALLED. AT RIGHT IS THE WORK ON THE SIDEWALKS AND CURBS AT NEARBY SIDI YAHIA INSTALLATION. AFTER THE NECESSARY EXCAVATION WORK, THE BUILDERS COMPLETED LAYING SIDEWALKS AND CURBS AROUND THIS RELATIVELY NEW BASE.

EXTREME LEFT IS ANOTHER SHOT OF THE WORK BEING DONE IN THE POL TANK FARM VICINITY AT NAS. THIS SOMEWHAT ROUGH LOOKING ROAD WAS LATER SMOOTHLY SURFACED. AT RIGHT IS SHOWN FURTHER PROGRESS ON THE LAYING OF SIDEWALKS AT SIDI YAHIA. PREVIOUS TO THIS PROJECT'S COMPLETION, THE PEOPLE STATIONED THERE WERE "UP TO THEIR ANKLES IN MUD" DURING THE RAINY SEASONS.

We were intrigued by the ill-clothed sheep and cattle hearders, many of whom subsist on any plant or animal life that they can obtain in their daily travels. We were impressed by the primitive Berbers and their works of art in brass and carpetry. And we soon learned that each city is divided into three sections: the French section, the most modern of the three sections, the Arab section, called the Medina, and the Jewish section, called "le souk".

Meanwhile, on the job construction hummed, and the Battalion trained its personnel in professional and military aspects. The Marines provided instruction and indoctrination in the Battalion's part of the base defense organization.





PERSONNEL OFFICE

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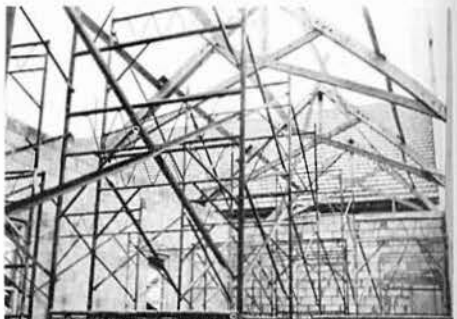


And then there was the dressy side in which we participated in formal review ceremonies. There were two distinct high lights in our military program during the Port Lyautey deployment. The first one was the change of command which took place in March, when Commander George G. Cornwell, Jr., was relieved as Commanding Officer by Commander James A. Wright, Jr. We will long remember Commander Cornwell as he was piped over the side by Chief Boatswain Mate Bebensee, and then made his official departure from the outfit on a bulldozer. The second highlight came after, and as a result of, the Administrative Inspection by Captain (now Rear Admiral) Henry G. Clark, Commander, Naval Construction Battalions, U. S. Atlantic Fleet. The Battalion was rated, for the fifth consecutive year, Outstanding Battalion in the Atlantic Fleet.

MILITARY MEMOIRS OF AFRICA

ALONG WITH OUR PROFESSIONAL LABORS ON THE JOB IN LYAUTEY CAME THE MILITARY DRESSINESS OF PERSONNEL INSPECTIONS, PASS-IN-REVIEWS, AND THE LIKE. FOUR-MEN CAN BE SEEN SEEN STRUTTING ON THE DRILL FIELD, POSSESSIVE OF THAT "REALLY SQUARED-AWAY" APPEARANCE THAT EVERY COMMAND STRIVES TO ACHIEVE IN ITS MEN. TWO ESPECIALLY HIGH-LIGHTED ACTIVITIES IN THIS ACCORD WERE THE CHANGE-OF-COMMAND CEREMONY IN MARCH, WHEN COMMANDER GEORGE G. CORNWELL, JR., RELINQUISHED HIS "CHAMPION'S" REINS TO COMMANDER JAMES A. WRIGHT, JR., AND THE ANNUAL ADMINISTRATIVE INSPECTION BY COMMANDER, CONSTRUCTION BATTALIONS, U. S. ATLANTIC FLEET.

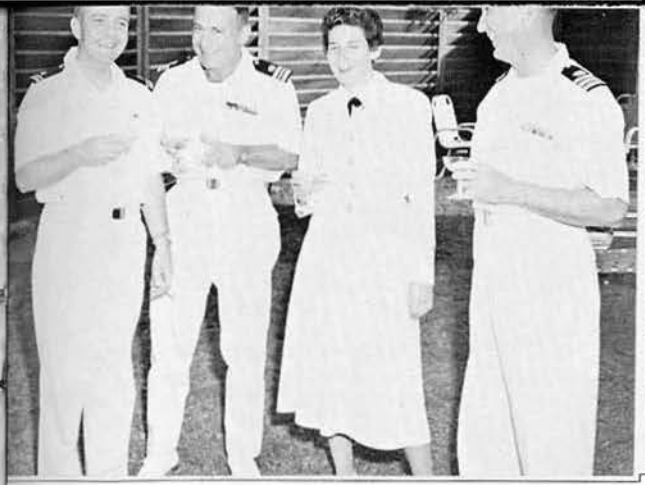
THE BEE S CELEBRATE THEIR BIRTHDAY

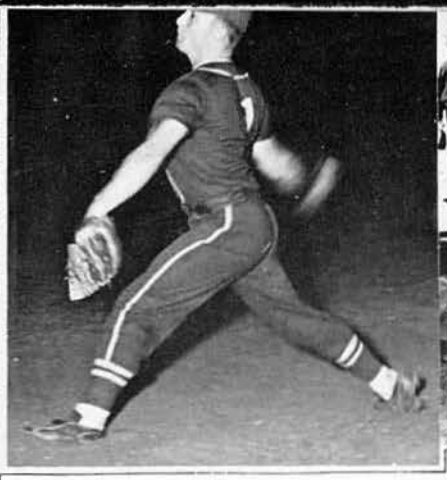
MARCH IS AN IMPORTANT MONTH FOR THOSE OF THE SEABEES, ESPECIALLY THOSE SEABEES OF MCB FOUR. FOR WITHIN A FEW DAYS OF EACH OTHER COMES THE OBSERVANCE OF THE BIRTH OF THE CIVIL ENGINEER CORPS, THE BIRTH OF CONSTRUCTION BATTALIONS, AND THE BIRTH OF MCB FOUR. NEEDLESS TO SAY, THIS IS AN IDEAL OCCASSION FOR A GIGANTIC BLOWOUT (IF THERE BE NEED FOR A CAUSE), AND FOUR TOOK UTMOST ADVANTAGE OF SUCH OPPORTUNITY WHILE IN LYAUTEY. THE SCENE OF FRIVOLITY WAS THE ENLISTED MEN'S CLUB, AND THE 500 BEES AND GUESTS THAT ATTENDED WERE ENTERTAINED AS SHOWN IN THESE PICTURES. HOLDING COURT OVER THE GAY HAPPENINGS WAS QUEEN ROSETTE WILLIAMS, AND SHE ATE, AS THE OTHERS, CHARCOAL BROILED STEAKS "AS THICK AS YOUR ARM". JOE WICK'S 13-PIECE BAND, ON THE ROAD FROM ENGLAND, SUPPLIED THE MUSIC FOR THE FESTIVITIES.

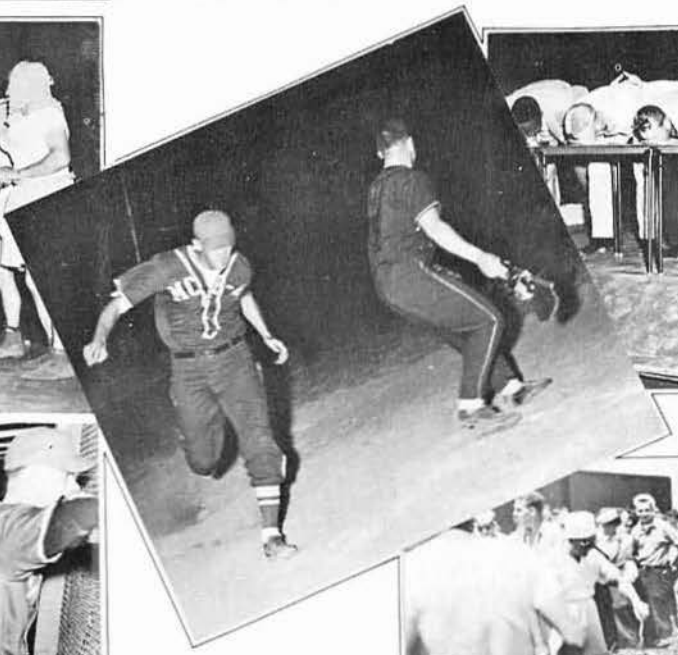
THE PICTURES BELOW AND FOLLOWING SEEM TO PROJECT HAPPINESS RIGHT OFF OF THE PAGES THEY ARE A PART OF, AND PROBABLY BECAUSE OF THE FACT THAT TIMES WERE NOT SO BAD AT THAT. FOR INSTANCE, THE DANCE BEING PLAYED BY MEMBERS OF THE "FAB FOUR PLUS ONE" COMBO, ALL MEMBERS OF MCB-4 AND DERIVING THEIR NAME FROM THE "FABULOUS FOUR" SLOGAN -- OUR DOCTOR AND DENTIST SEEM QUITE NATURALLY RELAXED IN THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE BOQ -- THE OFFICERS AND ENLISTED MEN GET TOGETHER IN A SKIT FROM "FELLOWS' FOLLIES" FOR '58" ENTITLED "MORNING QUARTERS IN MCB-444 -- EIGHTBALLS OF THE FLEET SINCE 1954" -- THREE FELLOWS FROM MCB-7 DETACHMENT KILO, WHOM WE RELIVED, BEFORE BEING INTEGRATED INTO FOUR -- A GROUP OF MEN FROM "A" COMPANY (AND THE "SKIPPER") ENJOYING THEMSELVES AT A COMPANY PARTY -- INDUSTRIOUS ATHELETES COMPETING IN A SACK RACE AT THE BATTALION'S FOURTH OF JULY PARTY -- AND OFFICERS AND GUESTS DURING A GET-TOGETHER AT THE BOQ.

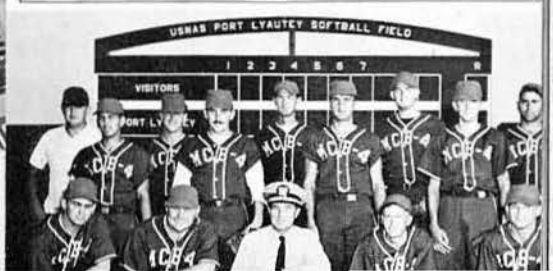
TOO MUCH WORK IS NOT THE WAY,

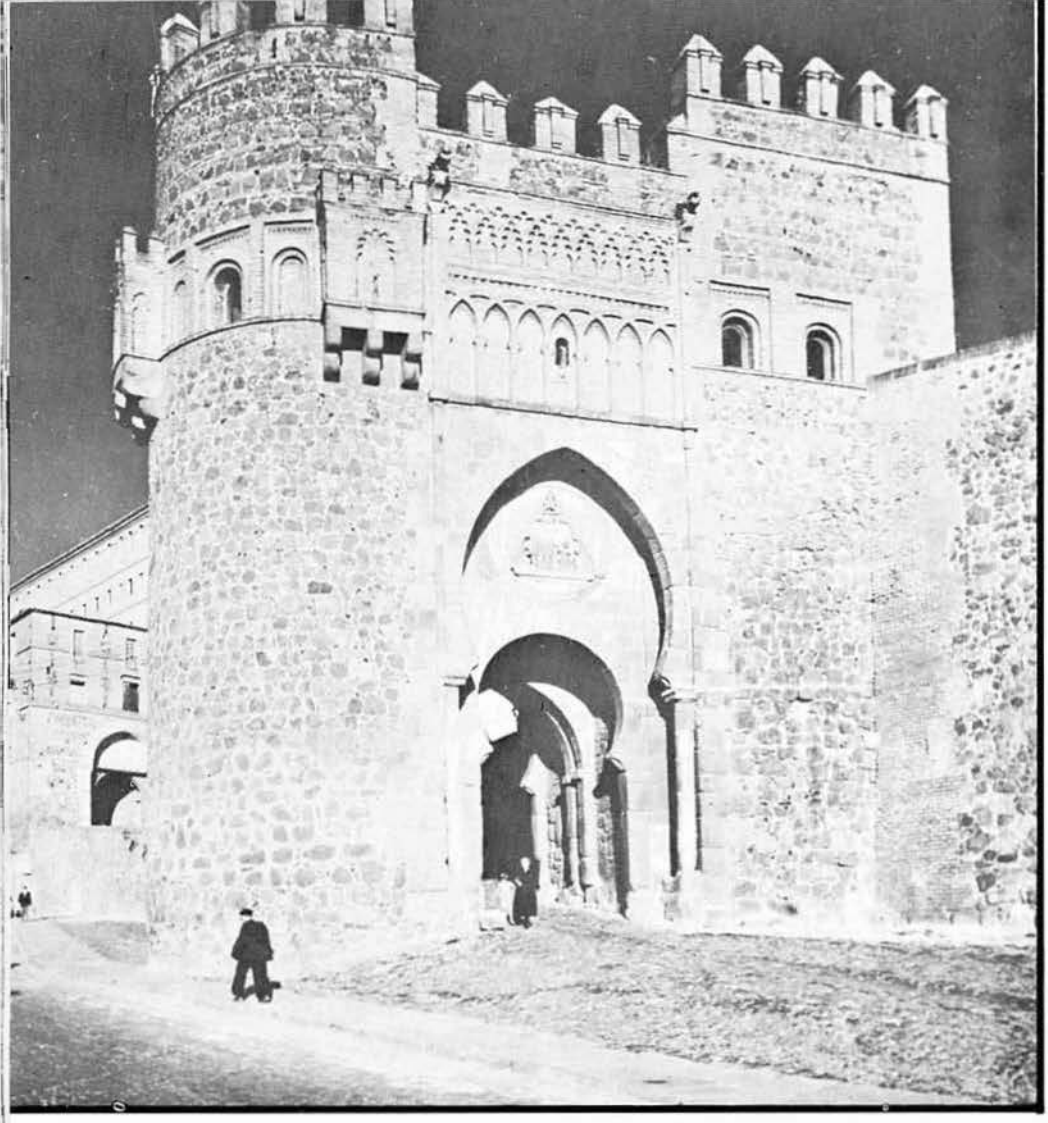
BEES CAN HOLD THEIR OWN IN PLAY








USNAS PORT LYAUTEY SOFTBALL FIELD
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
VISITORS
PORT LYAUTEY

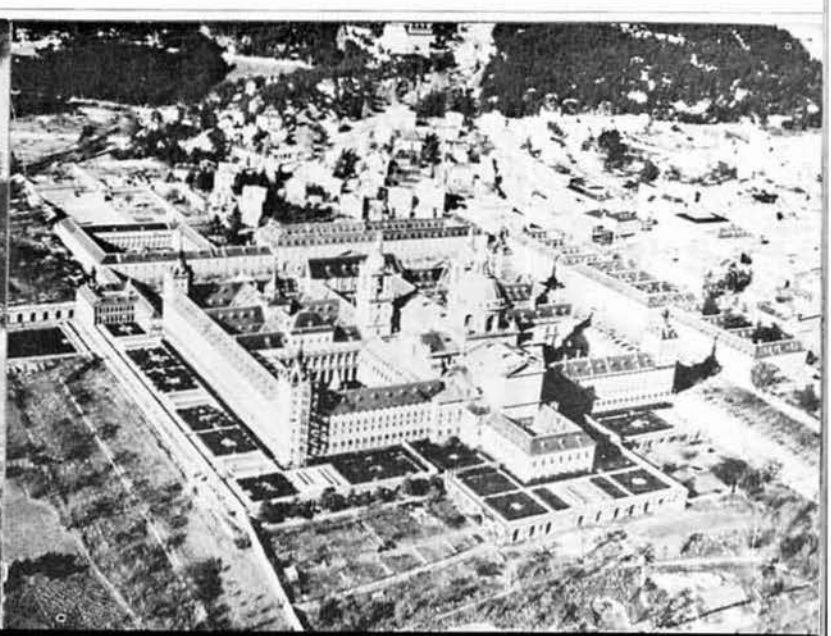


MCB-4 In ROTA, SPAIN

DETACHMENT HOTEL

Rota, in the province of Cadiz, is a small, typical Andalusian town which has long been a seashore resort for many people of the larger surrounding towns. Located near the southwest corner of Spain on the Bay of Cadiz, it neighbors the cities of Puerto de Santa Maria, Jerez de la Frontera, Sanlucar and Cadiz, and provides homes for many Americans at the Naval Base at Rota. The Rota area is hot and dusty for six to eight months of the year with a landscape and climate similar to southern California. Winters in this sector are rainy, damp and frequently bone-chilling.

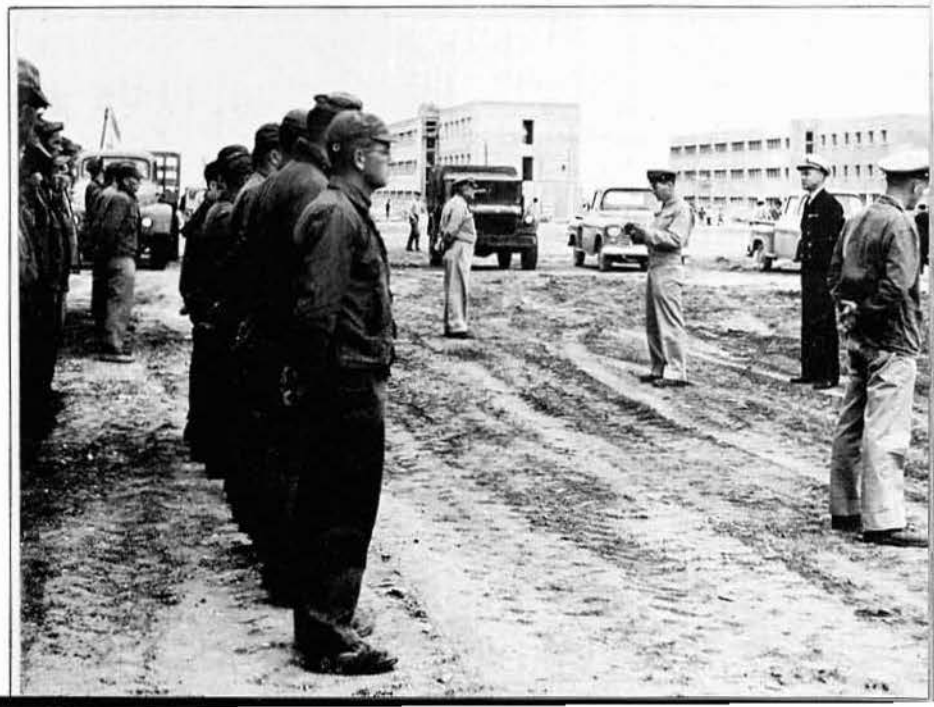
On the 30th of January, 1958, Lieutenant William W. Gentry arrived with forty eight men at Rota as Detachment HOTEL of MCB FOUR. Detachment HOTEL found that their new home was "new" in the literal sense of the word. At the time of arrival only three of the barracks, the mess hall, the Navy exchange and a make shift supply compound had been completed. Grass had not yet been seeded around the barracks, and the mess hall doubled as a movie and beer hall at nigh. DET HOTEL cleaned up around and inside the newly constructed barracks, and set up headquarters in one wing.



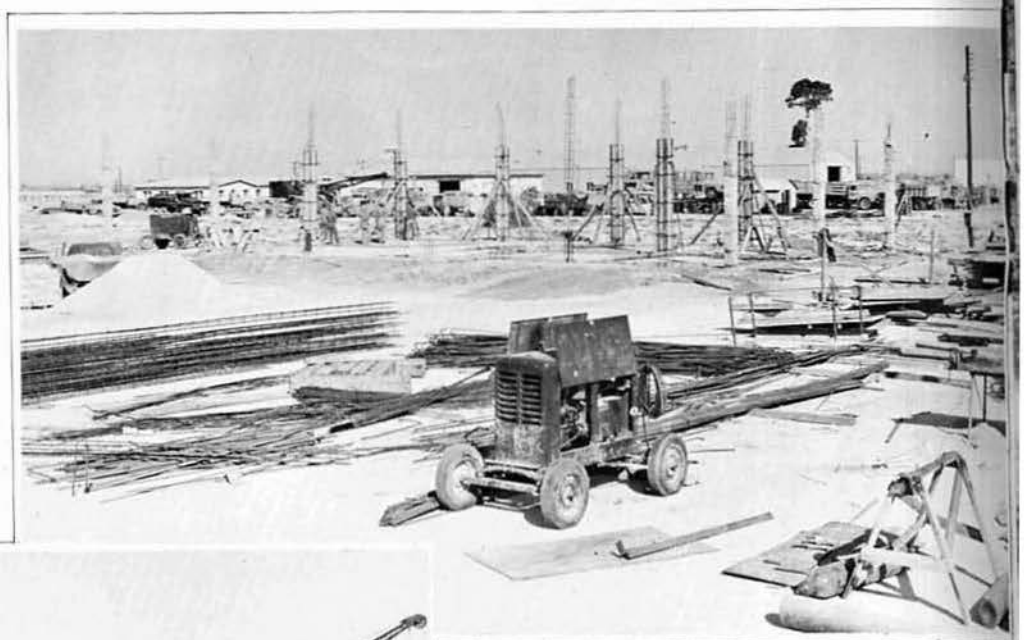
In a short time, project work had begun. A supply compound was set up, the equipment made ready and construction commenced on the gym and the chapel. Later a dehumidified warehouse was added to the construction program.

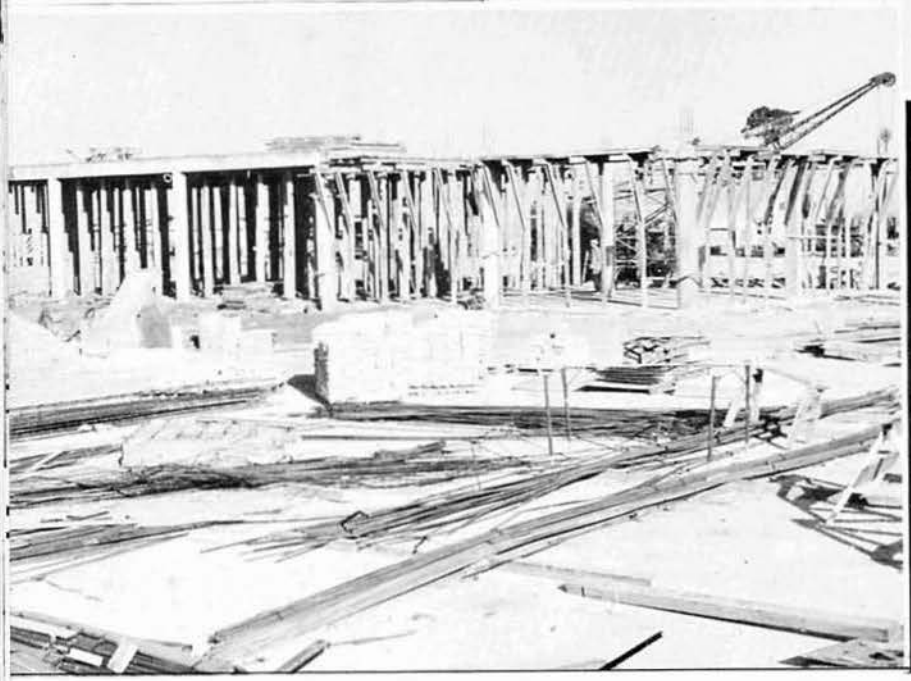
As time in Spain lengthened, so did the visitors' knowledge of Spanish customs, dances and language. Free time was spent with indoctrination into the Spanish Culture, and sight-seeing forays were centered around the bull fights, the beaches, the country sides and the historic towns.

Lieutenant Gentry was later relieved by Lieutenant John F. Hall, as Officer-in-Charge until September, when Lieutenant Junior Grade William F. Bell took charge of the Detachment. Upon completion, the Battalion left in Rota a beautiful chapel, a much-needed recreational building with gymnasium and bowling alleys and a dehumidified warehouse.

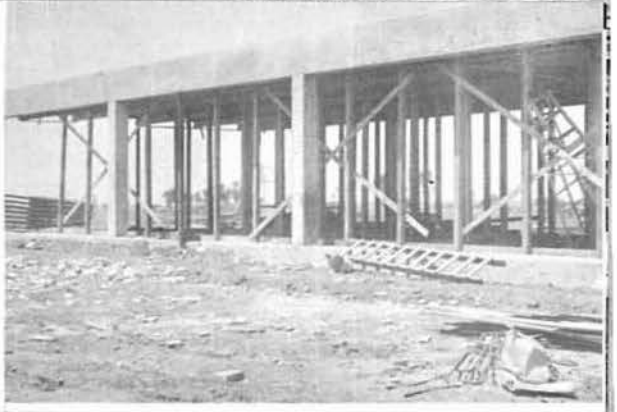


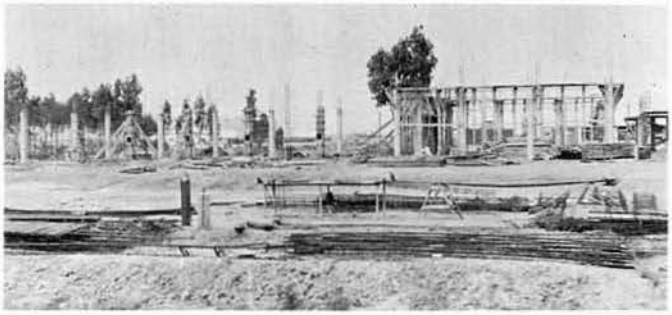
ONE OF DETACHMENT HOTEL'S THREE MAIN PROJECTS IN ROTA WAS THE CONSTRUCTION OF A 40-FOOT BY 100-FOOT DEHUMIDIFIED WAREHOUSE. THE PROJECT WAS SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO CONFORM TO LOCAL CONSTRUCTION PRACTICES, AND UTILIZED, AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE, SPANISH PRODUCED MATERIALS. THE WALLS ARE OF HOLLOW TILE WITH A CEMENT PLASTER APPLICATION AND HAVE THREE DOUBLE DOORS FOR ACCESS. LABOR-WISE, IT IS ASTOUNDING HOW MUCH WORK COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED BY A MERE HANDFUL OF MEN IN SUCH A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME.

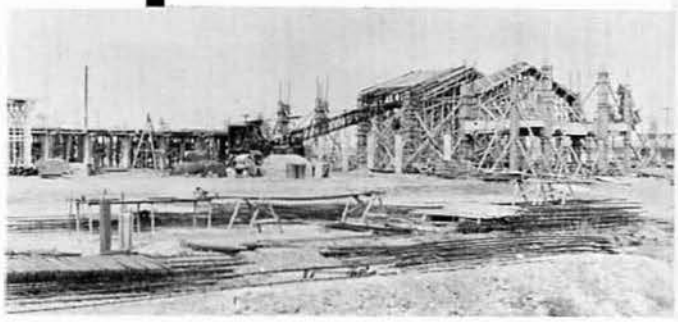




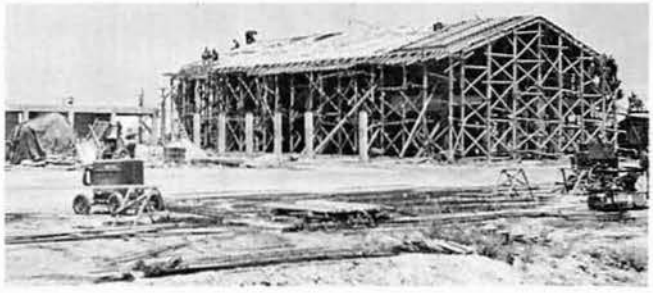
PROJECT: WAREHOUSE



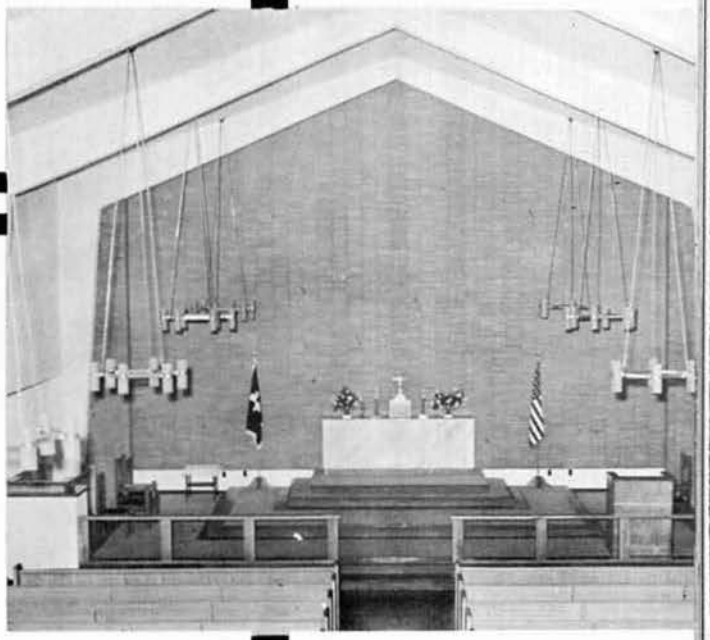


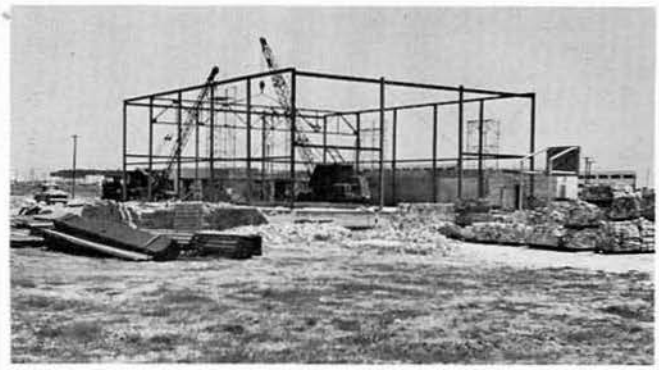


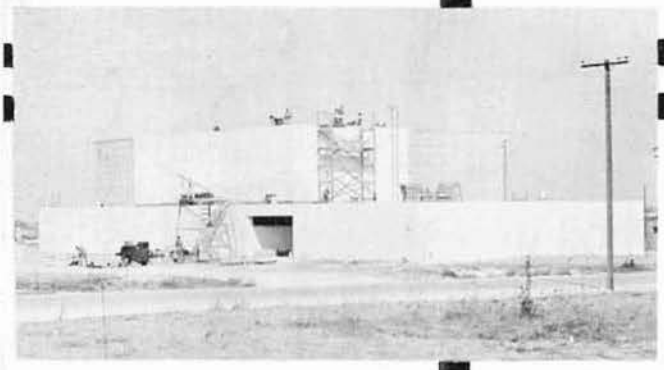
PROJECT: CHAPEL AND EDUCATIONAL WING



THE MEN OF MCB-4 DETACHMENT HOTEL WERE THE RECIPIENTS OF PROFOUND EXPERIENCE IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF WHAT SURELY APPEARS TO BE THE MOST UNUSUAL CHAPEL THE NAVY POSSESSES. NOT MERELY A SIMPLE HOUSE OF WARSHIP, THIS CHAPEL VERY MUCH RESEMBLES MORE A CATHEDRAL, WITH ITS STAINED GLASS FACADE, AND BELL TOWER SMARTLY ADDING TO THE BUILDING'S BEAUTY. THIS BUILDING WAS SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO CONFORM TO SPANISH ARCHITECTURE AND CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUE. THE CHAPEL NAVE HAS A LIGHT WEIGHT CONCRETE HIP ROOF SUPPORTED BY REINFORCED CONCRETE FRAME WITH HOLLOW TILE MASONRY WALLS. THE WALLS ARE COVERED WITH CEMENT STUCCO AND PLASTER. THE HIP ROOF OF THE NAVE HAS ARABIC ROOF TILE WITH A MOPPED FELT VAPOR BARRIER APPLIED TO THE CONCRETE TO ELIMINATE MOISTURE CONDENSATION. THE EDUCATIONAL WING IS OF FLAT ROOF CONSTRUCTION UTILIZING HOLLOW TILE PANS FOR LIGHT-WEIGHT CONCRETE CONSTRUCTION. THE ENTIRE BUILDING HAS CORK FLOOR TILE AND ACOUSTIC CEILING TILE WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE GENERAL UTILITY ROOMS, WHICH HAVE TERRAZO FLOOR TILE AND CERAMIC WALL TILE. ALL MATERIALS EXCEPT MILLWORK, MECHANICAL FIXTURES, PIPING, CONDUIT, AND REINFORCING STEEL WERE PROCURED IN SPAIN.







PROJECT: GYMNASIUM

THE "HOTEL" MEN WERE NO LESS SUCCESSFUL ON THIS, PROBABLY THE LARGEST PROJECT IN SPAIN, THAN ON THEIR OTHER COMPLETIONS. THE EXPANSIVE GYMNASIUM, COMPLETE WITH ALL ITS RECREATIONAL FACILITIES, WILL UNDOUBTEDLY WITHSTAND QUITE AN ERA OF CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUE IMPROVEMENTS AND VARIATIONS WITHOUT BEING OUTMODED. THIS BUILDING, TOO, WAS DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY TO UTILIZE LOCAL CONSTRUCTION METHODS, AND CONFORM TO SPANISH ARCHITECTURAL TREATMENTS. THE OFFICE AND, BOWLING ALLEY PORTIONS ARE REINFORCED CONCRETE FRAMES WITH LIGHT WEIGHT CONCRETE HOLLOW TILE PAN FLAT ROOFS. MASONRY WALLS OF HOLLOW TILE WITH A STUCCO-PLASTER APPLICATION GIVE A TRUE FINISHED WALL. INTERIOR FLOORS ARE COVERED WITH LOCAL TERRAZA FLOOR TILE FOR A MAXIMUM UTILIZATION OF SPANISH PRODUCED MATERIALS. THE GYMNASIUM PORTION HAS A STRUCTURAL STEEL FRAME, STEEL ROOF TRUSSES, METAL ROOF DECK COVERED WITH FIBER-GLASS INSULATION AND BUILT-UP ROOF. HOLLOW TILE MASONARY WALLS COVERED WITH PLASTERS ARE UTILIZED. THE NORTH WALL OF THE BUILDING HAS OPERABLE STEEL WINDOWS. FOUR BRUNSWICK SEMI-AUTOMATIC BOWLING ALLEYS WERE INSTALLED.

FUNDADOR
PEDRO DOMECQ

ROSY ROADS

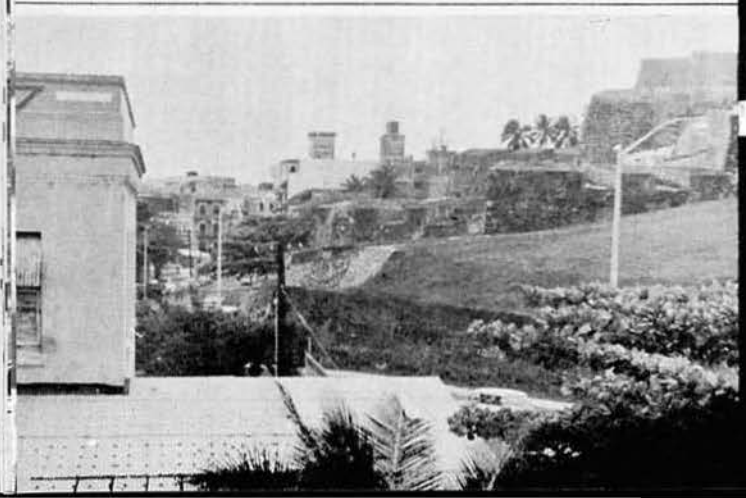
"FOUR" IN PUERTO RICO

Although Puerto Rico is a Commonwealth of the United States it is surprising how little is known by the average American of this vacationing wonderland. From the romantic sketches of the tropical beaches, sky-lined by majestic palms and pounded by green surfs, to the proud, residing mountains, checkered with native villages this is a country where there is pleasure by simply "seeing" it.

The island is about 100 miles long and 35 wide. It is located at the Northestern end of the Caribbean Sea having been discovered on November 19, 1493, by Christopher Columbus on his second voyage to the New World. At the time of the discovery, Puerto Rico was a frontier, serving as a point of contact between the Taino Indians of the Greater Antilles and the ferocious Carib tribes that inhabited the lesser Antilles.

San Juan, capital of the Commonwealth, is one of the oldest cities in the Western Hemisphere. The section known as Old San Juan was settled at its present site in 1521, after having been moved from the original settlement which was founded across the bay. Old San Juan is situated just off shore from the main island. During the past two decades of Puerto Rico's dynamic development the suburb of Santurce, located just across the channel, has grown to meet the town of Rio Piedras nearly seven and one half miles away.

The business section of Old San Juan as well as the sightseeing points of interest are crowded into a small area roughly seven blocks square. The old narrow streets patterned centuries ago, are full of character and historical significance, but are not well adapted to today's automotive traffic. Sightseers are best rewarded by making their tour on foot. Particularily interesting in observing San Juan, as most of the other cities around Puerto Rico, is the influx of traditional American go-go-go with the easy-going and casual Spanish mode of living. The architectural styles range from the quaintest of Old-Spanish design to the radically modern.



Our first view of Puerto Rico was that of San Juan's shores at a very early hour one morning. It was enthralling, with the lights spread out for miles and miles, and the mountains peaked in the background. The view showed promise of a pleasant time to come.

OPERATIONS UNDERWAY

When the men of FOUR boarded the USNS Henry Gibbons in Davisville on a chilly January morning in 1959, the usual stateside activities once more came to an end for the Battalion. This time we were destined for Puerto Rico, a first visit for the Battalion to that lovely island.

After a day stop-over in San Juan, we proceeded to Roosevelt Roads, arriving there the following day. Our first impression of the base was of its expansive greatness--which would bear with us even after having departed, for this one thing was everyones impression. Our introduction to the Seabee Camp site was a muddle of many "Ooohh's" and Aaahh's", as well saw the modern conveniences we were to be afforded for living. The barracks were quite different from our previous tents, or even quonset huts for that matter, and the camp itself was laid out on a hill-side, with sidewalks and beautiful lawn. This was a welcome change from the living accommodations usually found on deployment.

Heading the priority list for seven assigned projects was the completion of a AUW Shops Building. The structure, similar to one previously completed in Morocco, was begun by MCB-6, our predecessor in Roosevelt Roads. We were to be chiefly concerned by installing the air conditioning system, technical collateral, communications lines, emergency generation accommodations, mechanical and electrical utilities, water distribution system, and erection of a security fence.

In addition 30,000 cubic yards of fill were also to be placed before the building, and roads, parking areas and sidewalks to be constructed.

ALL RATES BEGIN TO FUNCTION

Our next project was to completion of the POL Pipeline facilities. Among other things, the job was to lay 2900 feet of twelve inch diesel oil and fuel lines, and 9450 feet of AvGas lines, with connections to tanks.

FOUR also was to work on the Guided Missile Unit Compound, paving a sizeable area in 4-inch, 6-inch, and 8-inch thicknessess of concrete. Improvements to G.M.U. were to include partitioning of a present structure into office spaces, insulation of other areas, and construction of 20-foot and 85-foot learn-to's on one of the buildings.

Perhaps the most interesting project the MCB-4 was to undertake on this deployment was the planned construction of a television studio for a closed-circuit station on the rapidly expanding Roosevelt Roads base. An existing structure-originally an underground anti-aircraft and harbor command post during the War--was to be rehabilitated and converted to suitable studio purposes.

Another project entailed the moving of 26,000 cubic yards of earth for the construction of approximately 33,000 square yards of roads. Also required were 8-inch, 10-inch, and 12-inch water lines leading to one side of the extensive base area's BOQ, to the Shops Building, and to the reservoir.

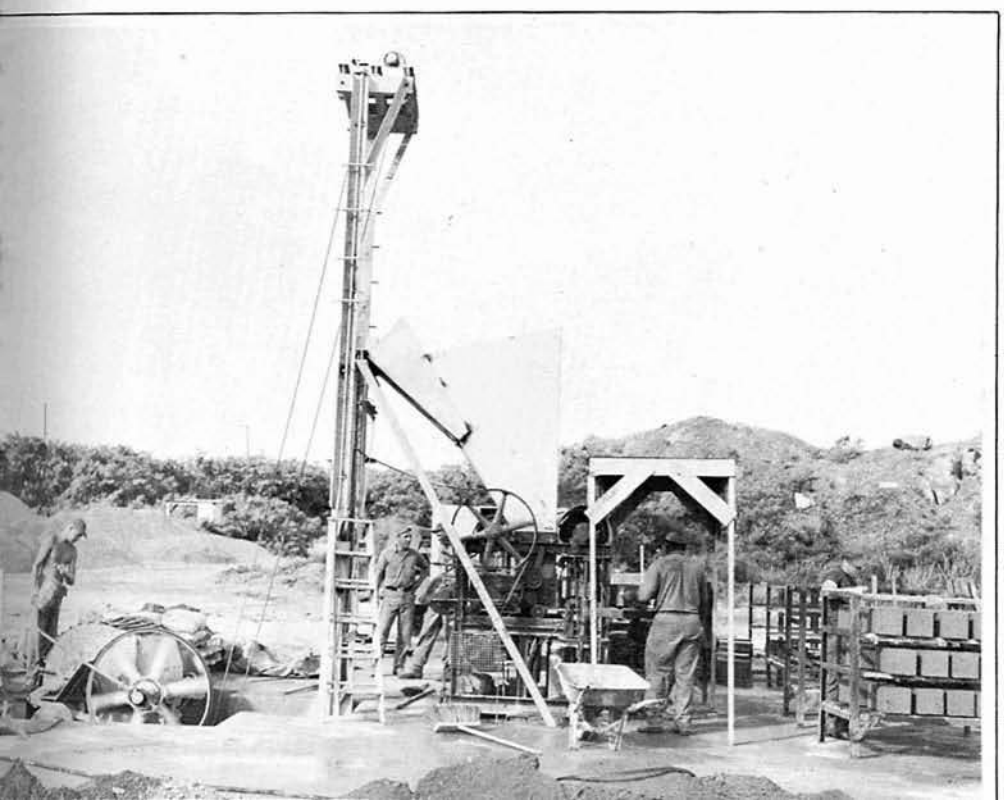
The largest project undertaken was the construction of twenty-eight equivalent units of replacement housing for enlisted personnel and dependents. The two types of buildings were: two story, two bedroom concrete block and slab, eight apartment structures: and two story, three bedroom concrete block and slab, four apartment structures.

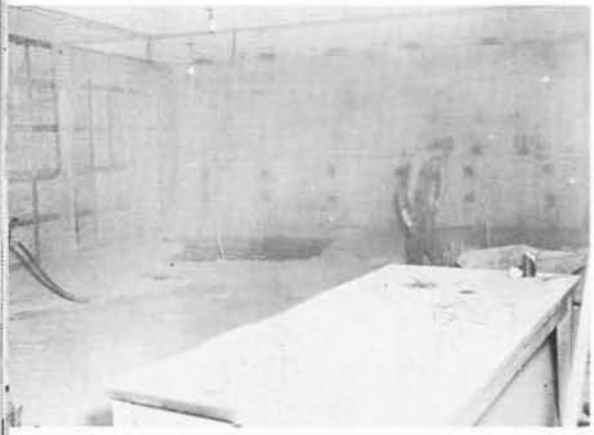
Work was begun immediately and as time advanced, things took definite shape in Roosevelt Roads. Problems were solved as they presented themselves, and fab FOUR provided the Operation Department with impressive figures for their progress charts.

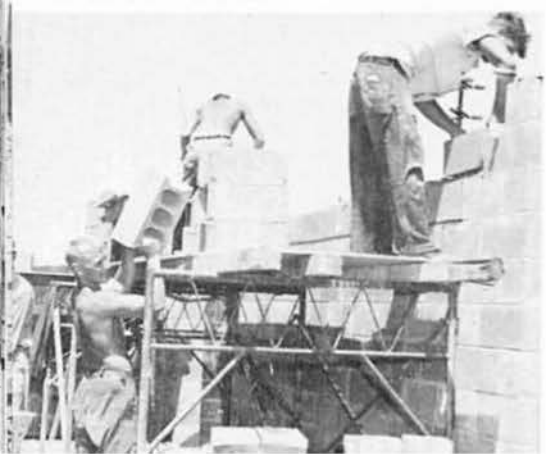
As usual, in the Spring of the year, we began again to prepare for the annual Administrative Inspection--highlight of our military activities. In 1959 we received two Admiral's inspections--one by Rear Admiral Thomas Burrowes, Commander Service Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet; the other by Rear Admiral Henry G. Clark, Commander Construction Battalions, U.S. Atlantic Fleet.

Inspection parties were not the only parties to be known by the men of MCB-4 in Puerto Rico. There were company parties on the beaches, Battalion parties both on the beach and in the club, and liberty parties constantly out in conquest of the enchanting Spanish atmosphere. FOUR become a close-knit group of men in constant companiionship, and deriving their Antilles impressions and recordings side by side.

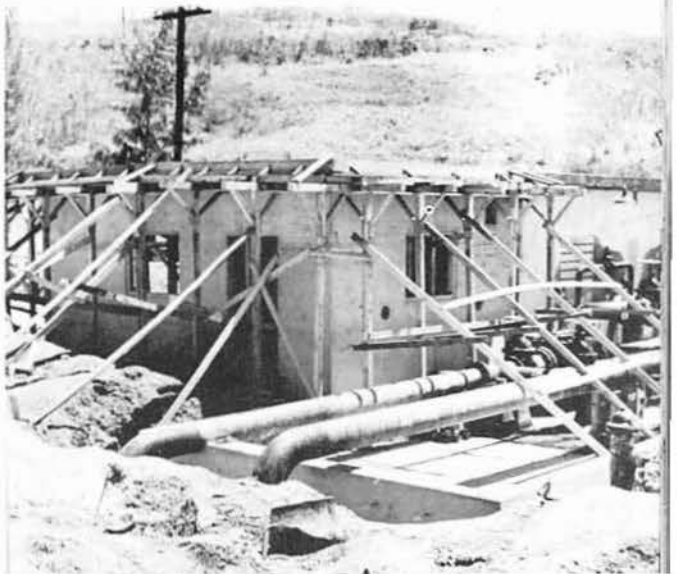
PROGRESS QUICK; HOLDS STEADY







"FOUR'S" PROJECTS IN ROSY ROADS

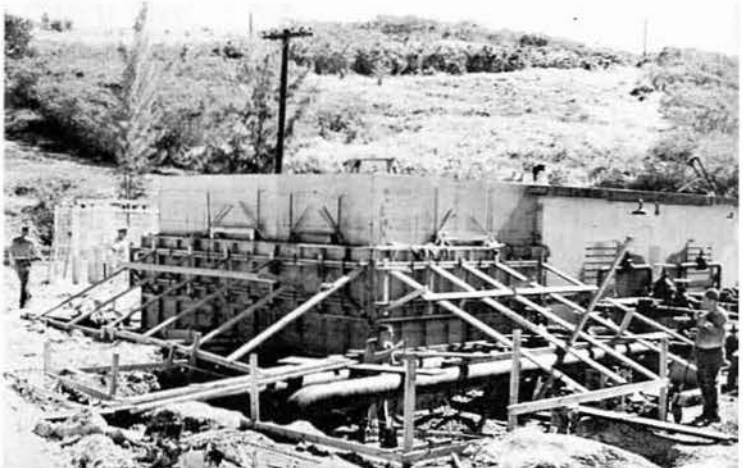


AS IN ANY CONSTRUCTION WORK,

ACCOMPLISHMENT IS PROPORTIONAL TO

EXTENDED EFFORT.

"FOUR'S" RECORD SPEAKS FOR ITSELF.



FOUR'S" WORK NOT PRODUCT OF AUTOMATION- IT TOOK FACES

DIESEL

1958
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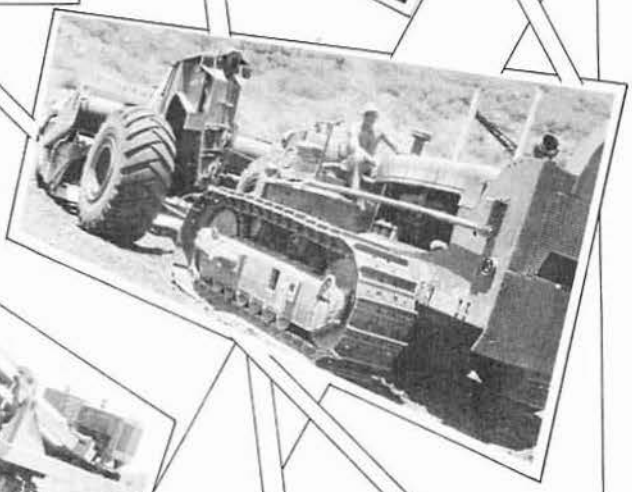
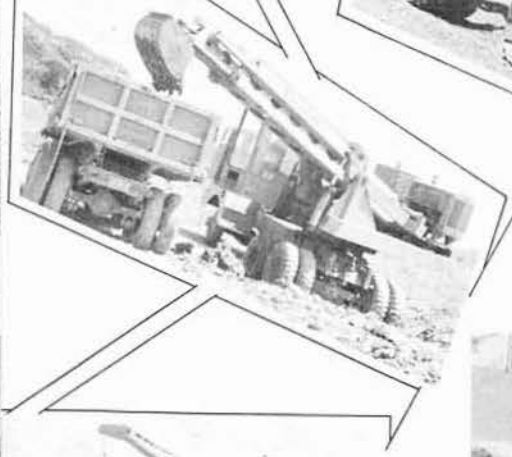
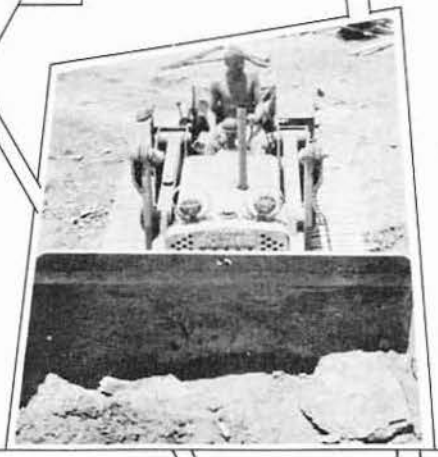
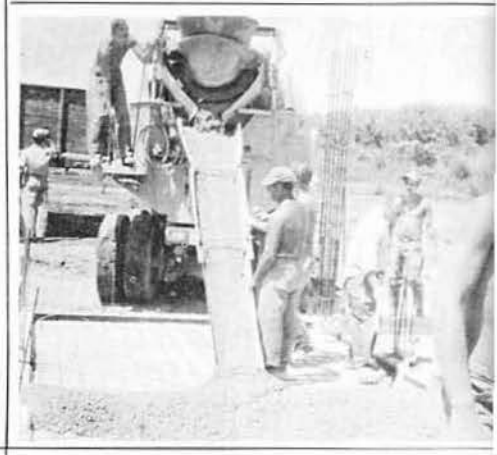
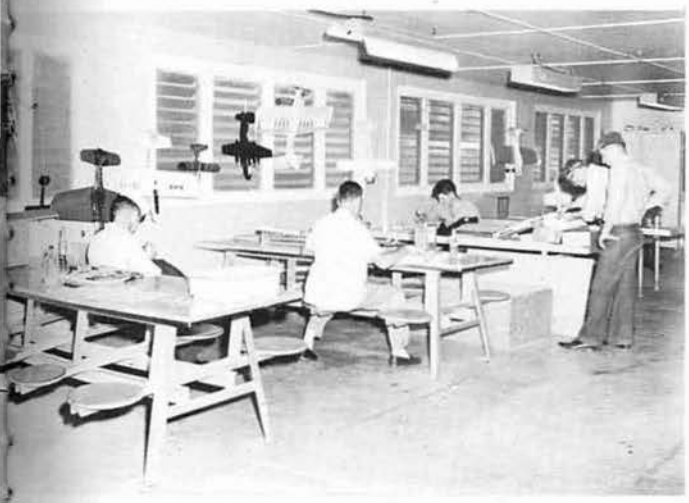
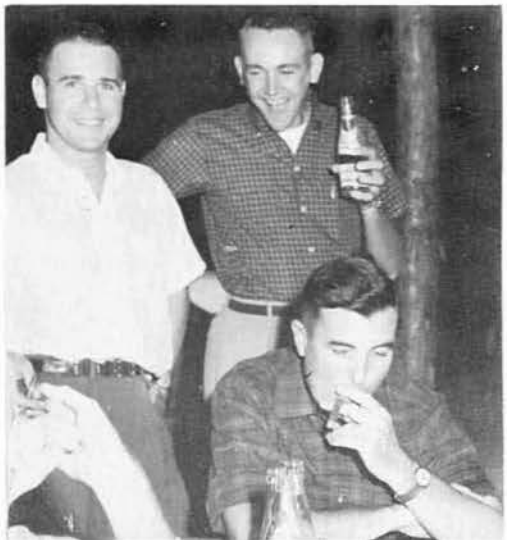




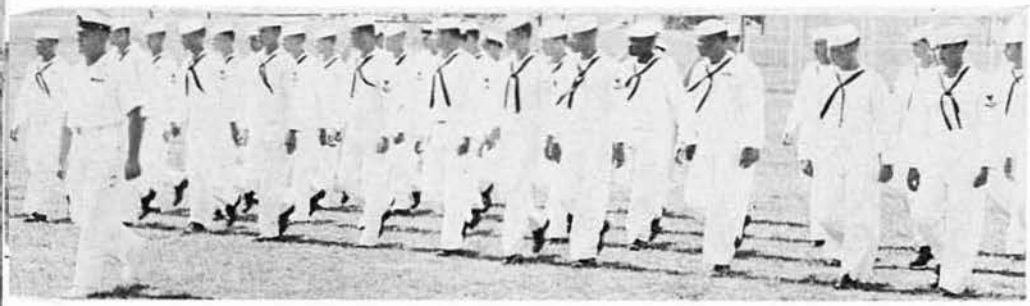


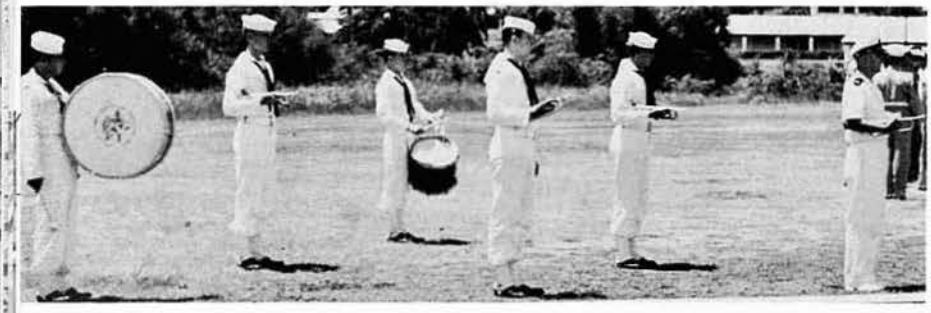


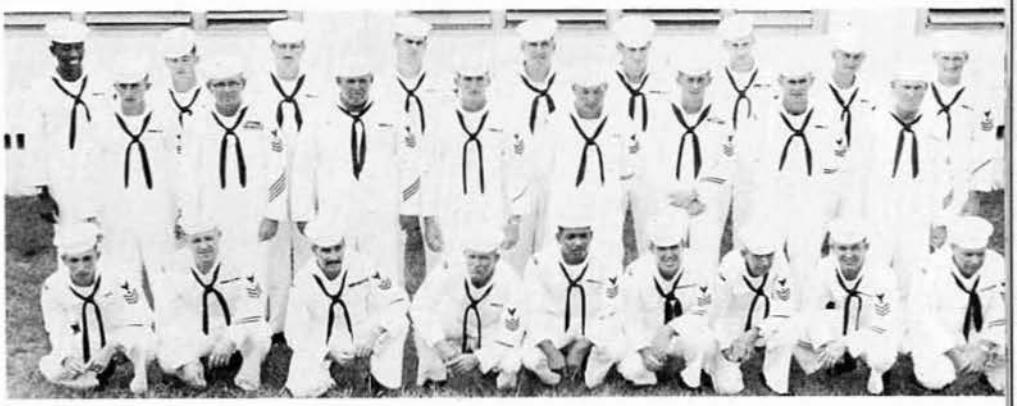


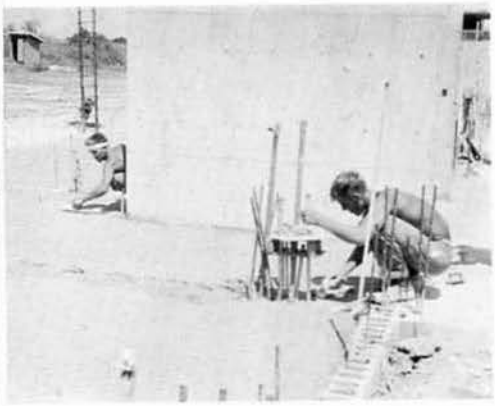


ROSY ROADS MILITARY MANUEVERS









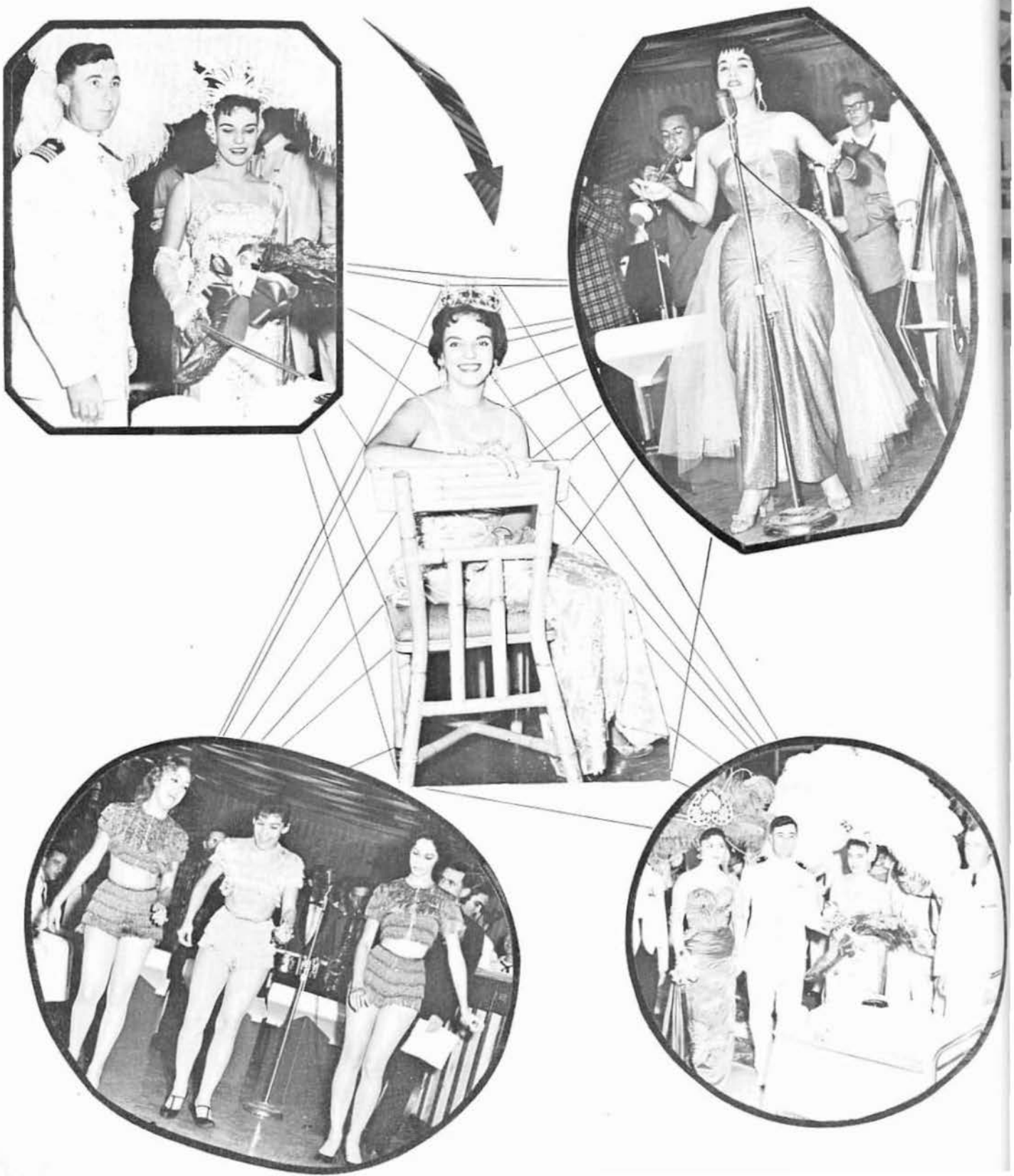
And Good Times Were Had By All

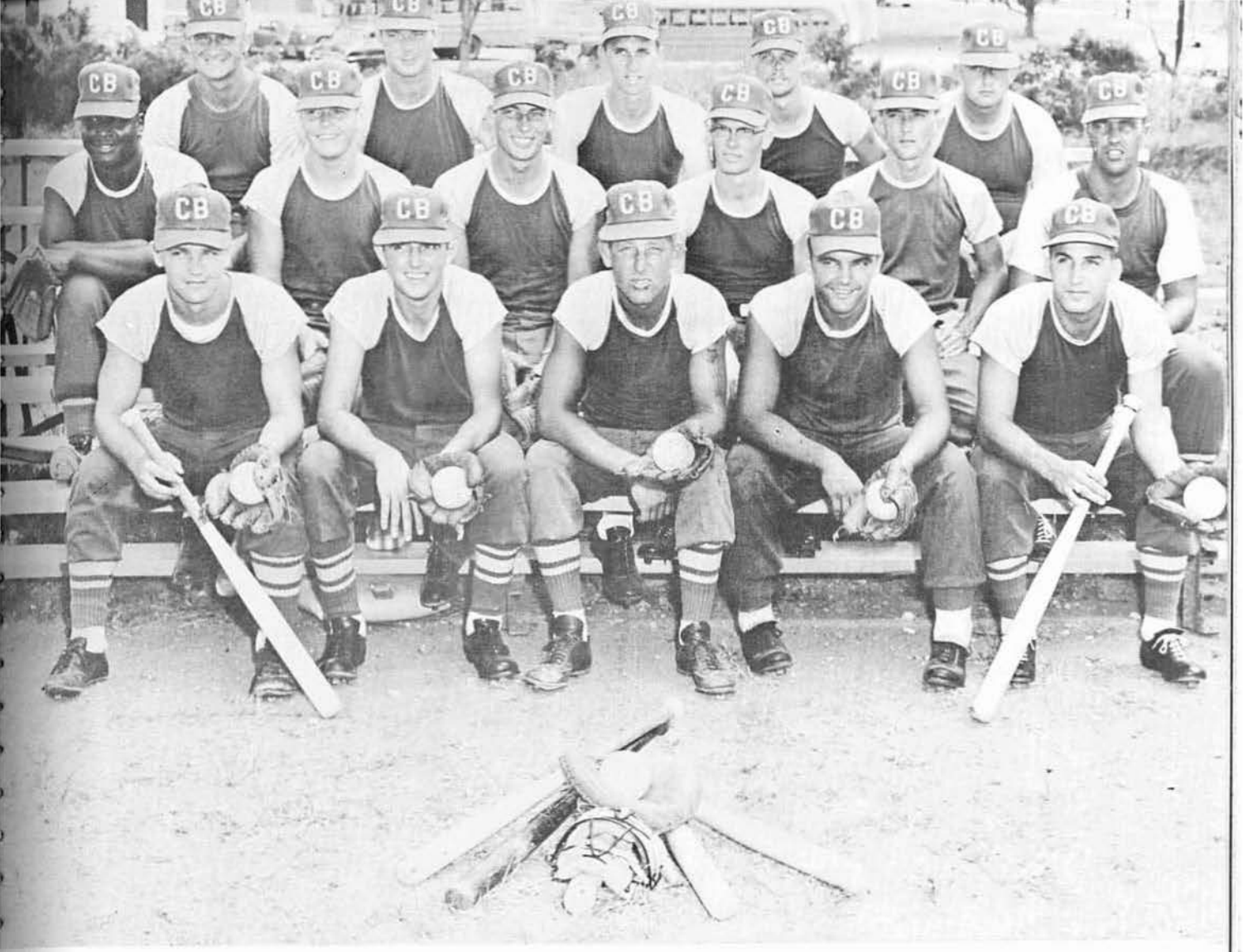
BATTALION ACTIVITIES INCREASE AS TIME (AND PROGRESS) MARCH ON

Time passed and progress continued, as the men were really "putting out" on their jobs. The Drivers moved earth, ditched, scraped, dozed, graded; the Builders hammered, sawed, chiseled, planed, trued, layed blocks, plastered; the Steelworkers welded, chipped, tied, installed, sweated; the Surveyors surveyed; the Cooks cooked; the Yeoman and Personnelmen typed and filed; the Utilitiesman plumbed; everyone was working and doing the job. And it showed. It showed at the fuel pier as where an outstanding job had been done laying the pipeline, and it showed on the road to the tank farm where the long pipe had been laid. It showed at the housing project site, where the housing units were rising steadily; the products of keen workmanship. It showed at the AUW Shops Building site, where enough fill and been added and smoothed to bring the grade in the entire area up about four feet. Everywhere were signs that the Battalion was fast approaching completion of the assigned work, and would soon be once more packing up in preparation for the journey home ward.

QUEEN HOLDS HIGH COURT

PROSECUTES MOURN AND UNHAPPINESS

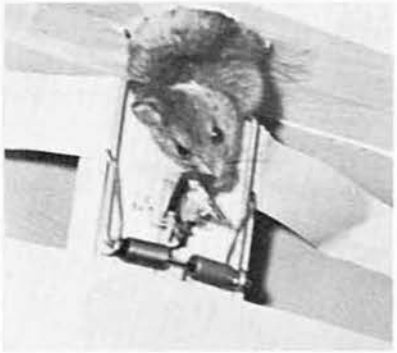




MCB-4's
CHAMPIONSHIP SOFTBALL SQUAD
AT ROOSEVELT ROADS
— 1959 —

DEPARTURE

APPROACHED



QUICKLY

"FOUR" TRAINS FOR WAR... DEPARTS FOR FIELD INFANTRY TRAINING AT CAMP LEJEUNE

On October 2, 1959, five "flying box-cars" from Marine Air Group 25 air-lifted over half of the Battalion to Camp Lejeune

over half of the Battalion to Camp Lejeune
North Carolina. The huge planes returned the next day and picked up the remainder.

This time the Bees carried a full field pack, a M-1 Rifle, in addition to the usual Seabag. A Rear Echelon with LT John R. Wear as Officer-in-Charge was left in Davisville to keep the home fires burning.

Our mission for the six-week training course at Camp Lejeune as explained by Major C. I. Sheehan, Officer-in-Charge of Military Training at Davisville was to educate and train the Seabees for defensive combat. The latest concept of modern warfare, creates a new role for the Bees.

They are now to be a fighting, as well as a building unit, able to defend our position, unaided in event of enemy attack.

Monday morning, October 5, saw the first day of training begin - as did all our five days at the Rifle Range - with 0500 reveille.

The chow was good, the Colonels grass was green (and easy to keep off of) and about 1/3 of the crew qualified as Marksmen on the Rifle Range before we were transported to Camp Geiger the following Saturday.

At Geiger the sight of the Marine trainees double-timing around the area on Saturday morning did little to raise the troops' morale. However, the barracks at Camp Geiger, unlike those at the Rifle Range, contained foot and wall lockers.

MEN ADAPT TO FIELD TACTICS, RESORT TO INGENUITY, EAT FIELD RATIONS

THE STORM IS OVER

The first two weeks at Camp Geiger were spent in Basic Infantry Training. The troops hip-hopped everywhere, and "early to bed it is" was common for the first few days. Classes were held on almost every conceivable infantry tactic, and simulated combat targets were provided to make the actual firing phase more interesting.

We were instructed in reading compass and maps, and to make overlays from them. In addition there were classes in bayonet and hand-to-hand fighting, field fortifications and the architectural design of the modern foxhole. Also we learned some of the more stimulating stories making the rounds of Camp Lejeune, as seen through the eyes of the instructors.

The fourth week found FOUR past the halfway mark, and moving into the specialized schools phase. Some 31 of the men had attended a five-day course in Leadership and in Techniques of Military Instruction the preceeding week, and more were sent to a two-weekcourses on the same subject during weeks four and five. Thirty Builders were sent to Field Engineering School, at Courthouse Bay to learn methods of demolition, booby-trapping, and the planting and uncovering of mines.

The Field Communications Class in Montford Point was composed mostly of Construction Electricians, although a few Draftsmen, Builders and Surveyors also attended.

It was here that additional classes in Field Kitchen (Commissarymen) and Field Medicine (Hospital Corpsmen) were held. The Weapons schools was held at Camp Geiger with classes at the "Race-course" in the 3.5 Rocket Launcher, the Machine Gun, the 106 "Recoilless" Riflel (wow!) the 81 MM Mortar and in Advanced Infantry Training. The "gunners" learned enough about their particular weapon to handle it competently in a combat situation.

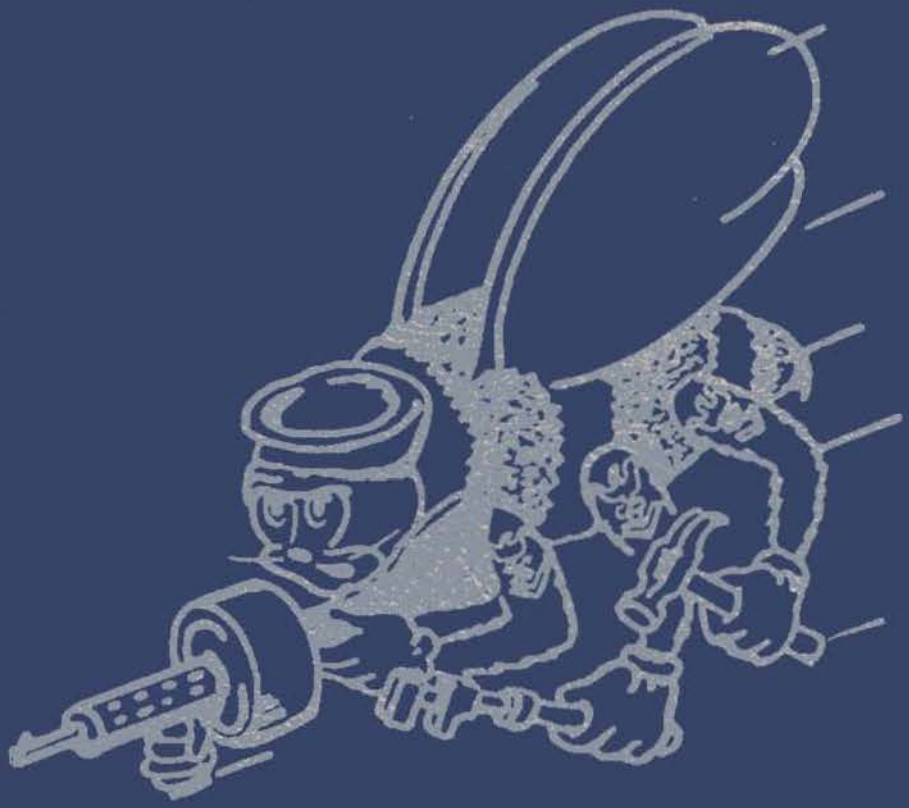
The fifth week saw the "brown-baggers" (and the P.I. fraternity), visualizing the familiar scenes of Davisville as the schools ended and attention was given to Advanced Infantry Training.

Our sixth week contained a day-and-one holiday, for the Marine Corps' Birthday and Veteran's Day, plus the big battle problem. The combat hardened Bees moved into the field early Thursday morning, meeting a crack force of Marine aggressors.

Behind us is the endless marching from class to class, the field messes, the sirprisingly edible Charlie rations, the constant rifle cleaning, the crawling under barbed wire, and foxhole construction.

Above all, we accomplished our mission ready, willing and able to continue the tradition ofthe "Fighting Seabees."

BEES VICTORIOUS,

RETURN HOME

- NOTES -