

# SEABEE NEWS SERVICE

PREPARED BY THE BUREAU OF YARDS AND DOCKS FOR BATTALION NEWSPAPERS AND BULLETIN BOARDS

ISSUE NO. 12

1 MARCH 1944

## SEABEES LAND K.O. PUNCH ON SOLOMON ISLANDS JAPS

Fighting Seabees led American and New Zealand combat troops ashore in a surprise assault on the enemy-held Green Islands to complete the Allies' conquest of the Solomon Islands, according to front-line reports from Frank Tremaine, United Press war correspondent with the invading troops.

"American Seabees spearheaded the attack", Tremaine radioed.

Seizure of the Green Islands, just off the northern tip of Bougainville, gave the Allies an air base site only 135 miles southeast of Rabaul, Jap stronghold on New Britain, and about 800 miles from Truk, the Japs' mid-Pacific "Pearl Harbor".

This latest amphibious operation, following the capture of Rooke Island closed a ring of steel around more than 22,000 Jap troops trapped on Buka, Bougainville, and other islands of the northern Solomons.

"Starvation and disease certain to ensue from military blockade render their position hopeless," an official communique said. "With their airfields destroyed and their barge traffic paralyzed, the relief of these scattered garrisons is no longer practicable and their ultimate fate is sealed.

"For all strategic military purposes," the communique continued, "this completes the campaign for the Solomons.

This first-reported instance of Seabees leading assault troops ashore came as a fitting climax to the Fighter Builders' record in the Solomon Island campaign starting with the completion of Henderson Field during the bloody battle for Guadalcanal.

## SEABEE-REBUILT TARAWA AIRFIELD 'ONE OF FINEST'

The poorly constructed Japanese airfield on Tarawa, blasted into uselessness by aerial bombardment and the heavy guns of the Pacific Fleet, has been transformed by hard-working Seabees into "one of the finest landing strips in the Central Pacific", a United Press dispatch, datelined "Headquarters, U. S. Forces, Tarawa Island", reported.

"Although Marines scored the first victory of Tarawa, the famed Seabees since have scored another by expanding the poorly constructed Jap airfield", the UP report said.

Since the island was secured last November, after 60 hours of the bloodiest

fighting of the war, the Seabees have built new barracks, constructed roads and lengthened and improved the battered airfield after rebuilding its shattered installations, the UP noted.

#### 14TH CONSTRUCTION BATTALION RECEIVES PRESIDENTIAL CITATION

Officers and men of the 14th Construction Battalion, as an integral part of the First Marine Division, Reinforced, during the opening stages of the Solomon Islands conquest, have received the Presidential Unit Citation for their "out-standing gallantry and determination."

The Citation, signed by Secretary of Navy, Knox, read:

"The officers and enlisted men of the First Marine Division, Reinforced, on August 7 to 9, 1942, demonstrated outstanding gallantry and determination in successfully executing forced landing assaults against a number of strongly defended Japanese Positions on Tulagi, Gavutu, Tanambogo, Florida and Guadalcanal, British Solomon Islands, completely routing all the enemy forces and seizing a most valuable base and airfield within the enemy zone of operations in the South Pacific Ocean. From the above period until 9 December, 1942, this Reinforced Division not only held their important strategic positions despite determined and repeated Japanese naval, air and land attacks, but by a series of offensive operations against strong enemy resistance drove the Japanese from the proximity of the airfield and inflicted great losses on them by land and air attacks. The courage and determination displayed in these operations were of an inspiring order."

Cmdr. Thomas F. Reilly, CEC USNR, was Officer-in-Charge of the 14th, the second Seabee battalion to land on Guadalcanal and the second to receive the Presidential Citation.

The award entitles all officers and enlisted men who took part in the actions mentioned in the citation to wear the Presidential Citation Ribbon.

First Seabee battalion to be so honored by the President, and the first Seabees on Guadalcanal, was the Sixth Construction Battalion.

#### DOUBLE TROUBLE

A snake or a bomb--take your choice.

That was the predicament in which R. N. Elliott, EM1c found himself one day on Guadalcanal.

Elliott dived into his foxhole as Jap planes roared overhead. The first bombs had begun to fall, when he saw the coiled reptile facing him in the bottom of the foxhole.

The Seabee's first reaction was a strident yell and a prodigious leap that carried him out of the shelter. "It makes me shiver to just look at one of those critters," he explains. "I didn't have to think twice to know I'd rather risk a bomb than hold hands with a snake!"

As the Seabee stood unprotected in the open, however, there was a terrific explosion nearby, and a huge geyser of earth and jungle spouted up. The Jap bombers flew off and then circled to return.

And the Seabee jumped back into his foxhole, spending the remainder of the raid crouched in one corner of the shelter, while a Guadalcanal snake, warily coiled, watched him from the other.

### MUST 'AVE BEEN 'ELL

Cmdr. J. P. Blundon, now military training officer at Camp Parks, has a reputation for being one of the most careful officers ever assigned to duty on Guadalcanal.

As officer-in-charge of the Sixth Seabee Battalion, which followed the Marines in the initial assault on Guadalcanal, Cmdr. Blundon was extremely careful to avoid situations where he would be called upon to give a password to a wary sentry.

The reason was very simple--Cmdr. Blundon couldn't--and can't--pronounce the letter "L."

"The Marines had had trouble with Jap scouting parties who somehow had obtained the password," Cmdr. Blundon said. "The result was that the sentries would be caught unguarded and often killed. The Marines remedied the situation by using passwords like 'lollapalooza' --the Japs can't pronounce the letter 'L'. Orders were given to the sentries to shoot anyone who fumbled the pronunciation. The Japs and I sure had a tough time with it!"

### HUNGRY SEABEE'S FLYING TACKLE NABS GRENADE-TOTING JAP

Crashing into a bayonet-and-grenade-carrying Jap who had been hiding in the heavy jungle underbrush, an unarmed Seabee, Herbert R. Wagner, MM3c, knocked his foe to the ground with a flying tackle, cracked him over the skull with a gasoline lantern, and gouged his eye until the squirming Nip screamed surrender.

The Seabee, who had gotten up at 0400 to go on duty in the galley, irately complained to mates who had been roused by the commotion that he didn't like to be bothered before breakfast. After having the bayonet-inflicted cuts on his arms and head taped up, he continued on his way to chow.

### CHIEF OF ATLANTIC FLEET PRAISES SEABEES

"You have every reason to be very proud of (the Seabees') achievements on every front," wrote Admiral Royal E. Ingersoll, USN, Commander-in-Chief of the Atlantic Fleet, to Vice Admiral Ben Moreell. "Their work under me--at Iceland, Argentina and Bermuda--had been simple compared with their deeds under fire, yet the construction at these places would not have been finished yet had we not had them."

## REPAIR BLASTED FIELD AS PLANES WAIT TO LAND

Overhead, anxious pilots scanned the airfield on "Island X". Their gas-tank gauges were dropping fast. Each time the planes dipped down, the ground crews frantically waved them away from the landing strip. The airmen couldn't stay up much longer.

They had been coming in to refuel when an explosion had wrecked the field. A plane loaded with depth charges had made an emergency landing, caught fire, and, just after the crew escaped, blew up, tearing up the matting and covering the strip with wreckage.

Even as the last pieces of debris descended, 73rd Battalion Seabees were on the scene with trucks, patrol graders, and other repair equipment. As the circling pilots watched, they hustled the wreckage away, tore twisted matting loose, hastily laid new surfacing.

In exactly twenty-two minutes the Seabees had the field in shape for traffic. The waiting planes landed safely...but, as their crews breathed with a sigh of relief, "just in the nick of time".

## NOT ON THE TABLE D'HOTE

Seabee Mike Salonisen arrived at Kodiak only a few days too late to greet his brother who had been stationed in the Northern base for some time and had just embarked for the States.

Killing a few free hours by shopping for trinkets, Mike bought a carved image and then, with some of his mates, went into a restaurant. The waitress admired the trinket so the Seabees autographed it and gave it to her.

As she read the names she asked, "Which of you is Salonisen?"

"I am," answered Mike.

"I thought so," said the little waitress, "I'm your sister-in-law! Your brother and I were married just before he left. Hi ya, brother!"

## SEABEE DOUGHBOYS TOPS

A lemon meringue pie, said by its bakers to weigh less than nothing, won first prize for the 120th Battalion in a Bakers' Contest sponsored by "Stars & Stripes" in North Africa.

The Seabees took top honors in a field which included the best the Army and the regular Navy had to show. The 120th also garnered a second prize for some tasty rolls and still another second-place award for an assortment of luscious pastries.

The Seabees' pie-baking champions are Carl Geyer, Bkrlc; James McCormick, Bkrlc; John Charnosky, Bkrlc; Charles Bray, Bkr2c; and Victor J. Miller, Bkr2c.

## NEW MEDAL FOR GROUND FORCES

The Bronze Star is the newest decoration which may be won by Seabees for action against the enemy. It can be awarded to anyone in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps or Coast Guard who distinguishes himself "by heroic or meritorious achievement or service, not involving participation in aerial flight."

The ribbon for the new Bronze Star is red, with a vertical blue stripe in the center, both the blue stripe and the ribbon ends piped in white.

## NAVY AND MARINE CORPS MEDAL TO SEABEE

Frank L. O'Brien, SF3c, has been awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal for rescuing a drowning mate. The official citation, signed for the President by Secretary of Navy, Knox said, in part:

"Observing that the man was about to drown, O'Brien, in company with another member of the detachment, unhesitatingly fought his way through the heavy surf and, although he himself was near exhaustion, succeeded in returning his helpless comrade to a point where he could be reached by a lifeline. His cool courage and complete disregard for personal safety were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.

## ALL ALONE--OH YEAH! SAYS CHIEF

Walking hand in hand along one of the crowded avenues in midtown Washington, D.C., Seabee Chief Machinist's Mate, W. L. Stearns, of Camp Peary and his bride of one day, a WAVE, were rudely awakened from their marital bliss by two sharp reports.

Stearns saw a driver of a passing car slump over and as the car continued up the street, a gray-haired man and woman jump from the car. Going into action immediately, he reached into the slowly moving automobile, shut off the ignition, and then turned just in time to grasp the right hand of the gray-haired man.

Further investigation showed that the man, later identified as Robert I. Miller, a prominent Washington lawyer, had a gun in his right-hand overcoat pocket.

Miller was indicted by a coroner's jury for the slaying of the driver of the car, Dr. John E. Lind, famed Washington psychiatrist.

"We were just married yesterday," Stearns said morosely as he stood in the hallway of the homicide bureau with his bride. "This is the way we're spending our honeymoon."

## FIRST AGAIN

A detachment of Seabees arrived at Finschhafen aboard the first Liberty ship to enter that combat zone. The sound of Australian artillery could be plainly heard when the ship anchored.

## EASY

Army Aviation Engineers, with whom the Seabees often work, had built an airfield in the jungle interior of New Guinea.

They knew the Japanese were close, but they didn't have any real word of them until a native walked into camp and wanted to know the Americans' strength.

"We asked him why he wanted to know," related Lt. Col. John F. Rand of the Aviation Engineers. "He naively explained that a Japanese had given him ten sticks of tobacco to find out our strength. He figured the best way was just to ask us."

### SEABEES PLAN TO JOIN POST-WAR JUNGLE EXPEDITION

As soon as the war is over, at least two Seabee CPO's and a lieutenant plan to join a new expedition hunting for Paul Redfern, the American aviator who vanished into the South American jungles some seventeen years ago.

From talks with an English lumberman who has been in South America 35 years and has spent \$15,000 in the search for Redfern, the Seabees, who for months were stationed at a lonely outpost fringing the darkest part of South America, have become convinced that Redfern is still alive. They believe he is living with some of the hostile native tribes nearly 700 miles deep in the jungle.

The Englishman plans to make his next search with helicopters. The Seabees are hopeful that it won't get under way until after the war so they can join him.

### JAP BOMBER SCORES HIT IN SEABEE CAMP; TWO SEABEES KILLED

Two Seabees were killed, two seriously wounded and eleven others received various minor injuries when night-flying Japanese bombers dropped a stick of approximately six heavy bombs into the 60th Construction Battalion's camp area. One of the bombs exploded in a tree top and showered the area with shrapnel and wood splinters.

Further casualties and damage were averted only by the courage and initiative of Willard Van Handel, CBM; Raymond Petersen, CM3c; Vance Downey, CCSTd; and Charles De Frates, S2c, who left the protective shelters of their fox-holes and extinguished gasoline fires caused by the exploding bombs. De Frates single-handedly rolled a blazing drum to a safe distance from the gasoline dump and then joined with the others in smothering the flames.

Commending the four Seabees, Cmdr. J.C. Tate, CEC USNR, OinC of the 60th, noted that their action before the second run of the enemy aircraft "doubtless saved the lives of many of their shipmates (and much) valuable government property and was "exemplary of the courage of our entire Seabee personnel".

Cmdr. Tate also cited the Medical Department for the speedy and efficient manner in which they handled the wounded despite the adverse conditions and without regard for their own personal safety.

In a forwarding letter to the battalion's monthly report, Cmdr. H.H. Micou,

CEC, USNR, OinC of the 17th Construction Regiment, praised the accomplishments of the battalion which was done under extreme pressure in order to meet the fixed dates of completion and in spite of the handicaps due to sickness and injuries from enemy action.

### 34TH GOES NATIVE

Seabees of the 34th Battalion have gone native--but only insofar as their housing is concerned.

After several months at their "Island X", the Seabees discovered that the excessive rainfall and high humidity was extremely hard on their canvas tentage. Tents pitched in the jungle or other shaded places rotted in a few months while those in open areas lasted only a little longer. The major portion of their tents were leaking badly and, with no replacements available, the Seabees decided something had to be done before they were washed out to sea.

Seeking a suitable substitute, their eyes alighted on the natives' palm-thatched huts, which even when constructed by the primitive inhabitants would withstand more than a year of the tropical deluges.

With a few Seabee revisions, such as floorings and the use of nails instead of jungle vines, several barrack-sized native-type huts were erected.

Comfortably dry in their "South Sea Island" barracks, the 34th loudly proclaims the advantages of their quarters as compared with the regulation framed tent or Quonset hut.

[Note: The four stories which follow first appeared in the Canberra, Australia, Courier-Mail. They are reprinted here because of their unusual interest to Seabees all over the world.]

### SEABEES CREDITED WITH "MONUMENTAL ACHIEVEMENT OF HIGH-PACED NAVAL ENGINEERING"

Milne Bay, only 18 months ago a sleepy backwater town with port facilities barely adequate to handle the cargo of the monthly trading schooner, is today a monumental achievement of high-paced naval engineering," says the Courier-Mail, Australian newspaper published at Canberra.

Milne Bay is probably the biggest individual Seabee job in the Pacific... It had come to rival even Moresby as a key base. Every week tens of thousands of tons of war stores are landed on its jetties and distributed to the widening New Guinea front by land, sea, and air."

### SEABEE BOASTS PROVED BY PERFORMANCE

Seabees are not modest men," writes Osmar White, Australian newsman, "Just as a commando will tell you how excellent he is at slitting enemy necks, so will a Seabee boast to you that no job of military engineering is either too big or too small for him, or any conditions too tough for its accomplishment on schedule.

"The bulldozer commandos work with a swagger and a competitive spirit which is the sign of irrepressible morale. They get as big a kick out of punching tough country as crack combat units get out of smashing an enemy stronghold. Their equipment is magnificent, but they have not lost the art of improvisation. They ride their tractors and scoops and power shovels as proudly as modern cavalry rides its tanks.

"They are an integral part of the Allied pattern for victory."

"SEABEES ADVANCED AMERICAN AIRPOWER 150 MILES IN ELEVEN DAYS," SAYS  
AUSTRALIAN NEWSPAPER

"I met the Seabees for the first time in...the strategically important Russell Islands," wrote combat correspondent Osmar White in the Canberra, Australia, Courier-Mail, "Not long after I landed there was a heavy Jap raid. Seabee bulldozers and scoops roared and snorted out of the cocoanut groves to repair the runway even before the wind had blown away the fumes of high explosives above the craters.

"Two days after a Marine Raider Battalion had captured Segi--strategic point on the Blanche Channel approaches to Munda--I went in to Rendova on an American destroyer.

"The ship passed Segi at midnight, with the crew at general quarters because of the reported presence of enemy sneak bombers.

"I--and everybody else--was amazed to see the whole Segi area bright as day with arc lights.

"Again ignoring enemy bombers, Seabees were at work on round-the-clock shifts, ripping a fighter strip out of the cocoanut groves.

"In spite of the rough, swampy nature of the land, it went into use exactly 11 days after the Japanese were evicted from the plantation.

"In that 11 days American airpower was advanced exactly 150 miles toward Rabaul, and it was possible to provide continuous fighter cover for the troops at the most critical stage of the operations against Munda and Bairoka Harbour."

SEABEES 'BULLDOZER COMMANDOS', SAYS EYE-WITNESS

"One corps-d'elite of jungle busting has already come into being--the Seabees," wrote Osmar White, war correspondent for the Canberra, Australia, Courier Mail. "The 'bulldozer commandos' are contributing as much to Pacific Victory as the shock troops who win the beach-heads at a new landing.

"So far, the war in the Pacific has been a war fought nine-tenths against terrain and only one-tenth against the Japanese. Its sharpest lesson to Allied commanders has been this--you can't blitz the Jap without blitzing the jungle at the same time. The road to Tokyo must be built before it can be trodden."

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## CHIEF'S QUICK THINKING SAFEGUARDS WATER SUPPLY

B. S. BUSH, CMM, of the 14th Battalion--stationed for many months on Guadalcanal--is seriously considering applying for a patent--just as soon as he discovers how to grow banana trees in the temperate zone.

A 4-cylinder pump, indispensable to the operation of the Battalion Water Purification system, was brought to him for repair. It was a rush order, because without water purification the Seabees were exposed to the many diseases lurking in the dangerous island water.

The packing, which kept the water from leaking out the shaft of the pump, had worn out and had to be replaced. Such packing is regularly made of lead, which, along with dozens of other replacement materials, was not available on the island. But Bush remembered the word "substitute." Collecting banana fronds, he stripped the fibers from the stem, added a quantity of greases, and inserted the improvised packing into the pump. It worked.

Today Bush is wondering if he hasn't devised an indestructible pump packing. The pump was bequeathed to a Marine detachment; and today, many months later, the water purification equipment there is still operating,--still using a pump packed with banana frond fiber!

## SEABEES IN NORTH EUROPE THEATER PRAISED

From the northern European theater comes evidence that Seabees there also know what "Can Do" means.

The acting commander of a fleet air wing of the U. S. Atlantic Fleet Air Force commends the 97th battalion for a "splendid job" and goes on to say: "Starting immediately upon their arrival they established a night and day pace of achievement never seen outside of a well supervised, well organized, conscientious body of men."

## TEAMWORK

Six Army enlisted men are attached to Seabee Detachment 1015, now on duty on "Island X".

### SHIPS THAT PASS

There have been many instances of father and son meeting each other overseas, but sometimes they re not so lucky.

John Davis, Sr., CM1c of the 94th battalion was aboard one ship entering a tropical port, while his son, Torpedoman John Davis, jr., 21, of the U. S. submarine service, was aboard an outbound sub which passed in the harbor. Father and son have not seen each other since December 15, 1941.

## SEABEES FIRST TO UNLOAD SHIP ON BOUGAINVILLE

According to a report from Cmdr. Roy M. Harris, CEC, USNR, OinC of a Seabee battalion which participated in the initial landing operations on Bougainville

Island, the builders were the first unit to complete the unloading of their ship the first day of the invasion.

### JUNGLE BEASTS IGNORE "GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY"

A detachment of Seabees stationed in British Guiana found no Japs, but they had more than their share of trouble with the wild animals which heavily populated the dense South American jungles. The men carried large, well-sharpened knives at all times, and when in the "bush" wore side-arms. Their vigilance paid dividends...one morning they felled a 150-pound jaguar lurking within the camp pump house.

Tropical weather was another foe. During a twelve-month period the Seabees had 154 inches of rain.

### HARDLY TACITURN

The Fourth Special's Communication Office won't be forgotten very soon down on Guadalcanal. Operating under the impressive title of Koli Point and Point Crus division, Guadalcanal Telephone Company, a subsidiary of the Solomons Islands Telephone Company, the "Can Do" office handled a total of 63,942 calls in six months.

All installations were made underground, including line drops, some 57,000 feet of wire being laid in the camp area. This, according to the highly authoritative "Guadalcanal Beachcomber," is the only underground telephone system on Guadalcanal. Lt. A.J. Mumford, CEC, USNR, was in charge, and G.J. Spring, EM1c, served as wire chief for "Can Do", which was the Fourth's exchange name.

### VARIABLE DEPTH

When asked about the depth of a foxhole, one of the veteran Seabees of the 14th answered:

"Mac, it keeps getting deeper and deeper! The first time you dig it maybe three, four feet down. But every time a bomb lands anywhere near you, early next morning you're out there with a shovel--digging her deeper!"

### SEABEES CONTRIBUTE TO NATIVE FUNERAL

CBMU 503, stationed at an advanced base, in addition to its other duties supervises a gang of native laborers, one of whom recently died from natural causes.

With an impending native funeral, the Seabees quickly rose to the occasion and constructed a "stateside" casket, including the customary hardware and complete to the finishing by the paint shop.

Although the deceased was only a laborer, with such an ornate casket, the funeral services were those befitting a high village chief, and were attended not only by the native populace but by high-ranking Navy officers.

## CAN YOU TOP THIS?

Detachment 1012 challenges any other Seabee outfit to beat its record for being scattered. At one time, the detachment found itself in six different locations on both sides of the equator and working on projects in both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

## HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN DISHWASHER ON "ISLAND X"

Seabees of the 73rd Battalion have manufactured their own dishwashing machines from raw materials which included discarded oil drums, piping, wire baskets, and discarded metal frames.

Steam from distillation units solves the sterilization problem. These give about twenty-five pounds of pressure and use less fuel than ordinary field mess kit sterilization units.

The same distillation units also furnish steam for sterilization of galley and bakery equipment.

## ADD OIL DRUMS

A new and novel use for empty oil drums--for the packaging of shop materials and supplies--has been devised by Carpenter J. R. Smith, CEC, USNR, in charge of shop work on equipment for the 75th Construction Battalion.

The head of one end of a drum is cut out with about a three-inch ledge around the opening. The drum is then filled with spare parts, welding rods, tools and other valuable small equipment. The head of another drum is then welded over the opening and the drum marked.

The drums are easily handled and protect the material from weather, sand and pilferage.

## USE OLD BOOT TO FIX GENERATOR

When the rear main bearing of the generator supplying their radio transmitter burned out, 42nd Battalion Seabees effected a quick repair although proper materials were unavailable. The replacement bearing-lining was fashioned from a piece of leather cut from a discarded boot. It already has given satisfactory service for six months.

## SEABEES BUILD SURGICAL EQUIPMENT

Undaunted by the lack of proper equipment and materials, Seabees of CBMU 503, stationed at an advanced base, constructed a complete fracture table, including all accessory adjustments required for the setting of various types of bone fractures. Their work earned the praise of medical officers and a personal commendation from Vice Admiral Ben Moreell, CEC, USN, Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks.

Tools consisted of wrenches, hacksaw and welding torch; bolts and pipes

were the materials; and an illustration from a surgical supply catalogue, their only working drawing. So detailed was the table that it included shop-made rollers for easy movement.

V. I. Card, CMM, was in charge of detail of the Seabees who constructed the table in record time.

### 30TH SEABEES DONATE \$12,000 TO WELFARE FUNDS

Seabees of the 30th Battalion, stationed at a South Atlantic base, have been commended by Rear Admiral Lewis B. Combs, USN, assistant Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, for their "splendid spirit" in donating \$10,000 to the U.S. Navy Relief Society.

A check for \$2,000 was also sent to the Commandant of the Naval Base to be used for welfare work at the base.

The funds represent the profits of various battalion enterprises.

### CEC OFFICER AND SEABEE CITED FOR EXEMPLARY COURAGE

Volunteering to assist in unloading survivors of bombed landing craft from rescue ships and carrying them to first-aid stations despite exploding shells and shrapnel, Lt. (jg) Russell H. Matson, CEC, USNR, and Louis Fox, SF2c, attached to a Seabee detachment that landed at Sicily on "D" day, have been commended for "exemplary conduct" by Captain Leonard Doughty, Jr., USN, Commander Naval Advanced Bases Sicily.

"Your efficiency and courage in the face of danger probably resulted in the saving of lives (and) your excellent services are worthy of special commendation", Captain Doughty's citation read.

### NOTHING TOO GOOD FOR THE 55TH

The 55th Battalion boasts a pile driver operated by a motor salvaged from a bombed truck. The pile driver, driven by scrap, is built of solid mahogany, probably worth several thousand dollars in the States.

### SEABEE RESCUES INJURED PILOT FROM SEA

A quick-thinking, quick-acting Seabee, Murrell L. Roberts, Cox, of the 47th Battalion, was credited with saving the life of a badly-wounded fighter pilot, trapped in the cockpit of his plane which had crashed into the sea.

Working on an airstrip, bordering the sea, Roberts saw the plane splash into the waters about 100 yards offshore and, without hesitation, dived into the surf and swam rapidly towards the sinking plane.

Unable to release the unconscious airman from the cockpit, Roberts held the pilot's head above water until the arrival of further assistance and then helped to bring the flyer safely to shore.

The pilot, later identified as Lt. (jg) Samuel J. Bertuzzi, USNR, was found to have suffered several shrapnel wounds of the chest and thighs.

In a letter of commendation to Roberts, Cmdr Robert W. Van Stan, CEC, USNR, Officer-in-Charge, noted that Roberts' "quick thinking and speedy performance..saved the life of the pilot.."

#### SEABEE OFFICER BRAVES STRAFING TO RESCUE ENLISTED MAN

How a Seabee officer, Lt. Andrew J. Riley (CEC) USNR, dived over the side of a landing vessel during the storming of a Sicilian beach and swam ashore to rescue one of his men who had been blown off a bulldozer was revealed by Will F. Hooter, MM2c, now convalescing at the Charleston, S. C., Naval Hospital.

"We had just gone into the beach at Gela," Hooter related, "and I had run the 'dozer on to the beach. A near miss from a Nazi bomber landed thirty feet away, blowing me off my machine.

"Although I came to only a few minutes later, Lt. Riley already was standing over me. Seeing what had happened from the deck of the LST, he had ripped off his shoes and helmet, handed his papers to someone else, dived off the ship, and swam ashore to help me.

Even though he was still barefoot and soaked to the skin, he pitched in on the job of unloading the LSTs as soon as he was sure I was O.K.

"Believe me, you really appreciate an officer like that," the Seabee continued. "The men in our outfit swear by Lt. Riley. They'll go anywhere with him."

#### SEABEES ONLY ONES CAPABLE OF COMPLETING PROJECT SAYS ADMIRAL

Rear Admiral C. T. Durgin, USN, Commander Fleet Air, Quonset Point, has commended the 11th Battalion, its Officer-in-Charge, Cmdr. Douglas Jardine, CEC, USNR, and Cmdr Arthur Perry, CEC, USNR, for the efficient and expeditious manner in which they installed special facilities for use by the Fleet Air Detachment.

Noting that the facilities were urgently needed and included targets for a special new type of firing, Admiral Durgin, commented that "the project could not have been completed in any other way in sufficient time to meet the urgency..except by use of the construction battalion unit."

Admiral Durgin's commendation also paid tribute to the "high caliber and quality of the construction battalion personnel."

#### GENERAL COMMENDS 60TH BATTALION

60th Battalion Seabees have received the commendation of Brigadier General Julian W. Cunningham, U. S. Army, Commanding "X" Force, for superior construction of an air field, roads, and other public works while attached to his task force.

Noting that a strip suitable for transport planes was constructed by the

Seabees in 13 days after landing on the island, General Cunningham also praised the 60th for their generous and willing assistance not only in the construction of required installations but in other projects..of value to the Force..

#### BARBECUED BOAR AND BEER, NEW SEABEE DELICACY

Thanks to a liberty-day hunting party organized by some of their mates, the 120th Battalion recently enjoyed an outdoor barbecue at which the principal attraction was more than a ton of succulent wild boar.

The hunters were Lt. M. A. Walker; CEC, USNR; Jack Sannino, SF2c; Raymond Bagen, CSF; William Marshall, MM2c; Edward Crawbuck, Cox.; Kenneth Crowe, SC1c; and a local guide.

Traveling fifty-five miles to an Arab village, the Seabees hired twenty natives to round up the boars. The Arabs would beat a noisy advance through the brush and the boars would come running out to be shot down by the hunters. On a previous hunt Sannino had been charged by an injured and growling boar, so the party was not surprised to see some of the natives suddenly take to the trees.

Back at camp with a catch of seven boars--roughly 2100 pounds of meat--the Seabees topped things off by rolling out a supply of American beer with which to wash things down.

#### WATER-TENDERS WORK FAST ON INVASION ISLE

Five hours after the first distilling machine was unloaded on a newly-occupied South Pacific island, Seabee Frank K. Laney, SF1c, and his crew of 14 were supplying drinking water to the invading troops, according to a report received from Sgt. Walter C. Cochrane, a Marine Corps combat correspondent.

Besides distilling the water, the Seabees rigged up tanks at each chow line and set up "open house" for men who wanted to do their laundry and bathe in fresh water.

#### SEABEES TOPS, SAYS CHAPLAIN

These Seabees--many of whom are over forty years old, are fathers, have sons in the service, and never had to get into the fight--are doing more than any other group to win this war in the Pacific. Ask any marine, soldier, or sailor who has been out here. I am not a Seabee chaplain, but I often conduct services for them. And it is a rare privilege.

The writer was Chaplain Amos B. Horlacher, USNR, who is stationed in the South Pacific. His comment appeared as part of a letter published in a recent issue of "The Link", official monthly organ of the Service Men's Christian League.

#### MEET YOU AT LULU'S PLACE

Lulu's Place is easy to find. It is between Snuffy's Flop House and Sloppy Joe's, right in the middle of a South Pacific jungle.

The residents of all three establishments are Seabee Chiefs, attached to

a battalion in the tropics. The imaginative occupants have named all the tents in "Chiefs' Country" in fond memories of happier days. Some of the other residences are Acecy Ducey, the Ogre's Nest, the Arkansas Razorback, and Snafu Temple. The Chiefs' chow hall goes by the name of the Did Do Diner.

### WHERE YA THINK YA GOIN' --- TOKYO?

Traffic cop trouble on Guadalcanal?... "Brother--you ain't kiddin'!" That's the response of members of the 14th Battalion. Here's their story:

"When we first reached Guadalcanal the only roads through the jungle were native trails.

"So we went to work. We took our bulldozers and big shovels and road grading equipment out into that wilderness and hacked out the first mud roads.

"We worked under the burning sun and in pouring tropical rains. We worked through air raids, invasion threats and Mosquito blitzkreigs.

"We surfaced those roads with gravel scooped from the bottoms of jungle rivers. We smoothed them, and manicured them, and tamped them down until they were as safe and comfortable as a State Highway--why we even put in four-lanes at some spots!

"Well, what happens? For months we work along, dreaming of the day when we'd be speeding along those highways at 50 or 60 miles per hour. Then we get 'em finished--and along comes the Army and puts M.P. Traffic Patrols on our roads to enforce traffic regulations and speed limits. Now if we put on a little of that speed of which we used to dream--we get pinched.

"What a war!"

### LST CAPTAIN TO 45TH: "NAVY SHOULD BE PROUD OF SEABEES"

"We of the Navy should be proud to include such a stalwart body of MEN in our Navy", wrote Lt. Harry A. Swartz, DV(S)USNR, Commanding Officer of an LST, in commending men and officers of the 45th Battalion who defied the fury of an Aleutian williwaw to salvage valuable supplies and fuel oil from his beached vessel and then made emergency repairs necessary to refloat the badly-battered landing craft.

"These Seabees battled the adverse weather and sea, got wet, cold, hungry, and tired without physical or mental reservations, in order to help us", Lt. Swartz' commendation said.

### 38TH DISREGARDS EARTHQUAKE

While a mild earth tremor shook the huts of the 38th Battalion, some of the Seabees slept on peacefully. Others attributed the rumbling and shaking to a passing tractor.

"Then suddenly," reports the "Stinger", the 38th's newspaper, "it seemed that the dozer had run smack into a hut and it was over. The sensation was so

real that the occupants ran out to see where the "cat" had crashed the hut."

There were no casualties or damage.

#### SEABEES PERFORM HAZARDOUS JOB IN THE ALEUTIANS

When a badly ruptured storage tank containing high octane gasoline began spilling its contents around an important area and endangering the lives of many, armed guards were placed around the affected spot and Seabees called upon to handle the hazardous task of repairing the break.

Seabees W. W. BAGWELL, CSF; L. E. WRAY, CMM; D. K. SMITH, CM1c; H. B. O'KEEFFE, SF1c; J. E. WRIGHT, SF2c; O. K. WINGET, MM2c; J. E. SPRINKLE, SF3c took on the job.

Due to the nature of the structure, it was necessary for the men to crawl on their stomachs through a gas filled tunnel to reach valves enabling them to direct the flow of gasoline out of the damaged tank.

The tank was leaking badly, saturating the ground with the highly explosive fluid and spreading dangerous combustible gas deeper and deeper into the important area.

These men hurriedly constructed a truck filling stand, at a safe distance from the tank and again risked their lives by going back into the danger zone to operate a pump which drew the gasoline through the pipeline to their hastily built filling stand.

All the tank trucks on the base were called into action and by pumping the gasoline from the tank to the filling stand, some 115,000 gallons of this valuable fuel was salvaged; necessitating night and day operation until the tank was emptied.

Then came the equally dangerous task of extracting the damaged section and replacing a new section, which through diligent effort was successfully accomplished in ten days.

As a result of this "can-do" spirit, thousands of dollars worth of precious fuel was saved, and thousands of dollars more of possible damage to permanent improvements circumvented, to say nothing of the possible loss of many lives.

#### TWELVE MORE SEABEES CITED FOR BRAVERY AFTER AMMUNITION DUMP EXPLOSION

Twelve more Seabees, attached to the 11th Construction Battalion, who disregarded the dangers of impending explosions to fight the fires caused when an ammunition dump exploded and took the lives of at least one CEC officer and nine enlisted men, have been commended by Admiral William F. Halsey, USN, and Major General Rush B. Lincoln, U. S. Army, Commanding Officer at an advanced base.

The Seabees, detailed as members of the combined Army, Navy and Marine Corps Fire Department, were: Lloyd Harrison, Slc; Floyd Henson, EM3c;

Chester Patten, S1c; William Roach, CM2c; Charles Froelich, SF2c; Raymond Phillips, Ptr2c; Kelly Bryant, SC3c; Solomon Borden, Flc; Elmer Ward, Pir3c; Carl Anderson S1c; John Alger, M1c; and Paul Day, SK2c.

General Lincoln's citation noted that despite the fact that several members of the fire fighting brigade were injured by shrapnel, the men extinguished the fires and thus were responsible for saving two piers and a large quantity of the ammunition.

In commending the Seabees, Admiral Halsey praised them for their "meritorious devotion to duty" and complete disregard for their own safety although fully aware of the possibility of another and larger explosion.

Recently, Admiral Halsey commended Cmdr. Francis M. McCarthy, CEC, USNR, formerly Officer-in-Charge of the Second Special Battalion and seven Seabees, who disregarded the exploding shells to rescue servicemen injured in the explosion.

#### CUT TIME ESTIMATE MORE THAN ONE HALF

Further proof of the high efficiency of the Seabees of the 42nd Battalion is borne out by the records of a specific project requiring construction of two Army type Kodiak hangars.

Time estimates from Army engineers, who had constructed several hangars of this type, ranged from 20,000 to 35,000 man-hours per hangar. The Seabees of the 42nd erected the first hangar in less than 12,000 man hours and the second in less than 10,000 man hours.

#### "WHISTLING WILLIE" OUSTS "WASHBOARD CHARLIE"

Possessor of a unique place in the "memoirs" of Seabees who served on Guadalcanal during the early days of the campaign was an evil-minded Jap nuisance raider who would fly over the American base all night, driving the boys into their foxholes, and then drop one puny missile, or perhaps none at all, before scooting for home.

But, according to the Associated Press, "Whistling Willie" has now dropped out of the running in the Yanks' South Pacific Unpopularity Poll.

"Honors" now go to "Whistling Willie From Dili" (Dili, harbor town on north coast of Portuguese Timor). Other favorites are "Sad Sack From Fak Fak" (Fak Fak, enemy base, on Dutch New Guinea); "Honest John From Ambon" (Ambon, naval base on Amboina Island in Dutch East Indies); "Lousy Louie From Pentoei" (Pentoei, an airdrome near Koepong on Dutch Timor); and "The Old Bore From Langgoer" (Langgoer, enemy base on the Kai Islands).

What really handed American servicemen in the area a laugh, however, was a report turned in by the pilot of a heavy bomber after blasting a Jap airstrip. It read.

"Beg to report honorable airstrip has lost face."

## SHORT SPORTS SHOTS

Biggest fistic upset so far this year was Al (Bummy) Davis' one round KO of former lightweight champion Bob Montgomery..Davis, 1 to 5 underdog, dropped Montgomery twice with barrage of left hooks..referee stopped bout after 1:03..Davis, suspended "for life" by NY commish after fouling match with Fritzie Zivic in November, 1940, entered Army three months later ..discharged summer of 1942 because of perforated eardrums and chronic skin disease..since returning to civilian life, Bummy has had 14 fights, all outside NY..Lots of interest in International bouts held at Algiers.. Americans won 13 out of 16 titles against French, British amateurs and pros..only KO winner was French sailor Marcel Cerdan, welterweight..Guadalcanal championships also got good notices in stateside papers..Lefty Gomez returned after long tour of Mediterranean says servicemen are interested in sports..bombs scared him.. Mel Ott won NY Sports War Bond Popularity Contest beating Lou Gehrig..vote produced \$2,634,675 in bond pledges..\$25 pledge entitled buyer to one vote..Gil Dodds set new 4:09.5 Hunter Mile record at Boston..week later won Baxter Mile at NY's Garden in 4:08..slow last quarter cost him new record..Cmdr. Oscar E. (Swede) Hagberg, recently sub skipper in Pacific, appointed Navy Academy football coach.. Sammy Baugh, according to N.L. statistics, outpassed other football pros, completed .577 of passes thrown..Don Hutson, Green Bay's great end, won pass receiving title for third year in row..trapped 46 passes for total gain of 776 yards and eleven touchdowns..also ran all-time records to 384 receptions, 83 touchdowns scored on passes and 6,310 yards gained..Giants' Bill Paschal won ball-carrying crown with total gain of 572 yards in 147 attempts..Spud Chandler accepted for limited service..medicos found "limitation of movement" in right arm, same one he used to win 20, lose 4 with World Champion Yanks..Army also took Marius Russo from Yankees.. Judge Landis says baseball will not ask players deferment..1-Aers include Lou Boudreau, Cleveland Indians manager; Giants Dick Bartell; St. Louis Browns' Al Milnar; Howie Krist, Cards; Dixie Walker and Bobby Bragan of Dodgers; Joe Beggs, Cincinnati; Mickey Livingston, Phillies; Pete Suder, Phillie "A's"..Rejectees include Ken O Dea, Cards' catcher, Al Smith, Indians' veteran southpaw..Ole Bronko Nagurski, Chicago Bears' fullback and tackle, 4-F..Dutch Clark, famous football great, and Sammy Angott, N.B.A. lightweight champ accepted for duty..Pvt. Harry Walker, formerly with Cards, reported ill at Fort Riley..Willie Pep, holder of featherweight title, discharged from Navy..Joe Orengo and Eddie Joost reported retiring from baseball for duration..Army's basketball team won 12 games without defeat..Leading Naval hoopsters at Great Lakes and Norfolk..Great Lakes' swim star, Bill Smith, set new 200-yard swim record of 1:53.9..Bobby Jones' grand slam feat, winning U.S. and British open and amateur championships in one year voted greatest all-time achievement in sports..Babe Ruth's all-round placed him second..Bob Coleman, Boston Braves' coach in '43, appointed manager replacing Casey Stengel.. Syndicate finds \$1,010,000 bid insufficient to buy Brooklyn Dodgers..The "Wild Horse of the Osage", Pepper Martin, now 42, signed to play infield for Cards..Lee Handley, will attempt comeback with Pirates after two years' inactivity..Frank Hayes, catcher, traded from Browns to Phillie "A's" for two rookies and cash..Outfielder Pete Fox signed contract with Boston Red Sox..Army announces Joe Louis will give series of exhibitions to overseas troops.

## 38TH POST OFFICE DELUGED

Since the 38th Battalion reached "Island X", the Seabees have written approximately 200,000 letters. During a recent week, the mail count totaled 1,113 messages home, which meant that each of the battalion's censors had to wade through 159 letters daily.