

The History of NMCB SIXTY-TWO

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion SIXTY-TWO is a proud unit with a noble heritage. Originally organized of construction workers from the Midwest on 7 December 1942, and commissioned in Davisville, Rhode Island on 30 December 1942, the Minutemen first won fame at Pearl Harbor where they built many of the facilities at the Submarine Base. Later, after landing on Iwo Jima, they repaired and maintained captured enemy airstrips. The Battalion eventually moved to Japan where it was disestablished on 15 December 1945.

Since reestablishment at Gulfport, Mississippi on 2 July 1966, the Battalion has deployed to VietNam four times to provide construction support for American forces. The Battalion has also deployed to Puerto Rico, Diego Garcia, Guam, Spain and Okinawa.

The Battalion first deployed to VietNam in November 1967 and was assigned to the Hue-Phu Bai area. One of its most important projects was the heliport complex essential to the helicopter operations in the northern I Corps area. Working on an unfavorable site against monsoon weather the Minutemen placed many acres of soil cement and steel matting for the helicopters. Hangars, living huts, fuel berms, drainage facilities and roads were also built.

The Battalion's second deployment in January 1968 sent SIXTY-TWO to Camp Haskins, DaNang. Besides constructing bulk fuel tanks, roads and bridges, the Battalion started Medical Civic Action Programs and deployed the first of many Seabee Teams.

The third deployment to DongHa in March 1969 found us involved in a wide variety of projects. The most important was the upgrading of 39 miles of highway in the Lines of Communication program. Two other large projects were a 448 foot bridge across the CamLo River

and a 560 foot bridge across the MieuGiang River. After returning home to Gulfport the Battalion performed urgent repairs to CBC, Gulfport and the surrounding communities which had been damaged by Hurricane Camille.

During the final deployment to DaNang in May, 1970 the first priority mission was the projects contributing to the program of Accelerated Turnover to the Vietnamese. The Battalion also upgraded highways, built living facilities for the Marines and constructed two river patrol boat bases in the Mekong Delta.

The "E" award for Best of Type, Atlantic Fleet Battalion was awarded to SIXTY-TWO in fiscal years 1969 and 1970 for outstanding performance. SIXTY-TWO also won the Peltier Award twice in that same two year period. In 1972 SIXTY-TWO was named runner-up for Best of Type, Atlantic Fleet Battalion.

After the VietNam era, SIXTY-TWO went to Puerto Rico in 1971 and was assigned as Atlantic Fleet Alert Battalion. The Battalion conducted an active Civic Action Program as it had done in VietNam. After returning to homeport the Battalion prepared for what would be the most challenging peacetime construction effort ever undertaken by a battalion: the Naval Communication Station on the British island of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean.

The sixth deployment to Diego Garcia in July, 1972 saw SIXTY-TWO completing the Naval Communication Station. The Minutemen also built the world's first coral aggregate slip-form paved runway which can handle any aircraft in production. Other projects included warehouses, a sewage lagoon, living quarters and power and desalinization plants.

SIXTY-TWO's seventh deployment to Guam started in September, 1973. Construction projects included a new Chief Petty Officer's Club, a

headquarters building for the 30th Naval Construction Regiment and earthwork for the Naval Magazine. SIXTY-TWO had details in Alaska, Midway Island, Japan, the Phillipines and a Seabee Team on Truk Island.

During the eighth deployment to Rota, Spain the Battalion again served as Alert Battalion. Construction projects included the ordnance area security zone improvements, rehabilitation of a BEQ, an ASTAC facility, Seabee camp rehabilitation and the Air Cargo Apron. Other projects were aggressively pursued at detail sites in Holy Loch and Edzell, Scotland; Gaeta, Italy; La Maddalena, Sardinia and Sigonella, Sicily.

During the last deployment SIXTY-TWO provided construction support to a variety of sites in the Western Pacific. The main body, in Camp Shields, Okinawa, saw command of the Battalion change hands from CAPT D. L. Conner to CDR C. E. Fegley III. Projects included a BEQ rehabilitation, an Avionics Storage Building, the relocation of a gymnasium, several air-conditioning plant installations, a road and pipeline upgrade, an LST Ramp and two parking lots. In addition, substantial improvements were made in material condition of Camp Shields. The Battalion responded quickly to the Typhoon Pamela damage on Guam by sending a disaster recovery detachment. The Battalion had six details providing support in Misawa, Iwakuni, Atsugi, and Yokosuka, Japan, a large detail in Subic Bay, Republic of the Phillipines and a detail in Diego Garcia. The details, which comprised nearly a third of the Battalion, were responsible for many improvements to existing facilities as well as new construction which gained attention for quality and quantity.



Capt. D. L. Conner
Commanding Officer
February 1974-May 1976

Taken from "WESTPAC 76"
Cruise Book. Pages 14 - 17



Cdr. C. E. Fegley III
Commanding Officer
May 1976-Present

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