

The following nine (15) emails are conversations between Norm Hahn, Secretary, NMCB 62 Alumni Group, Gina Nichols & Amber DelaCruz, Naval History and Heritage Command, Chuck Fegley, Captain, CEC, Retired, Roman Hnatowski, EAC Retired, NMCB 62, Richard “Chico” Ruiz, PNC, Retired and Raymond “Rocky” Ruiz, PN2, NMCB 62. These emails are edited.

From: Nichols, Gina L CIV USN USNSM (USA)
To: Norm Hahn
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2019, 09:56:30 AM CST
Subject: RE: [Non-DoD Source] Fw: Pre Deployment training at Camp Lejeune our 1st and 2nd Deployment OP Orders and Seabees possibly getting an entry in their service record

Here it is: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=13ullaIi3aiKXVYqPuxBoA5vPtMciG5Ki>

Let me know if you have any issues with access. V/r, Gina Nichols, MA, CA, MLIS,
Head, Collections Department/Supervisory Archivist, U.S. Navy Seabee Museum, Naval History and Heritage Command, Office: (805) 982-6497.

From: SeabeeMuseumArchive To: normhahnjr@yahoo.com
Sent: Wednesday, November 13, 2019, 02:18:48 PM CST
Subject: RE: [Non-DoD Source] Fw: Pre Deployment training at Camp Lejeune our 1st and 2nd Deployment OP Orders and Seabees possibly getting an entry in their service record.
Mr. Hahn, I didn't find a mention of Camp Lejeune in the Operation Orders, but I did find three separate articles that cover MCB62's time there. One of them is a very descriptive FamilyGram, which is signed by the CO. I've attached all of them to this email.
v/r, Amber D. DelaCruz, MLIS, Archivist, U.S. Navy Seabee Museum, Naval Heritage and History Command, Office: 805-982-6191.

(2 attachments) MCB62news_1967LeJeune MCB62_1967LeJeune

From: Norm Hahn
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2019 11:57 AM
To: Nichols, Gina L CIV USN USNSM (USA)
Subject: Re: [Non-DoD Source] Fw: Pre Deployment training at Camp Lejeune our 1st and 2nd Deployment OP Orders and Seabees possibly getting an entry in their service record.
Hi Gina,
I didn't get any reports from you as yet. Are you going to wait until you can email them all? Thanks,
Norm. NMCB 62 Alumni Group secretary.

On Tuesday, November 5, 2019, 08:38:24 AM CST, Nichols, Gina L CIV USN USNSM (USA) wrote:
Hi Norm,
Tom finished scanning the monthly reports but the rest will need to wait until the classifiers have left at the end of next week. I'll send the reports to you later today.
v/r, Gina Nichols, MA, CA, MLIS, Head, Collections Department/Supervisory Archivist, U.S. Navy Seabee Museum, Naval History and Heritage Command, Office: (805) 982-6497.

From: Norm Hahn. **Sent:** Monday, November 04, 2019 8:16 PM

To: Nichols, Gina L CIV USN USNSM (USA)

Subject: [Non-DoD Source] Fw: Pre Deployment training at Camp Lejeune our 1st and 2nd Deployment OP Orders and Seabees possibly getting an entry in their service record

Hi Gina, No one has come back with any comments about the string of emails (below) regarding OP Orders for the NMCB 62 pre-second deployment training at Camp Lejeune. I'll take that to mean they all approve of what we have done so far. Good.

That leaves only the OP Orders for the training at Camp Lejeune prior to the 2nd deployment remaining to be located and scanned so we can publish them. If you have any photos or newspaper articles that would be wonderful. NMCB 62's 2nd deployment was Jan 68 to Oct 68, deploying to Danang, RVN. I've also attached two documents relating to the Camp Lejeune medical problems.

Do you have any timeline on when you will have someone do the research and copying? Please let me know.

As always, best regards and thanks, Norm. Norm Hahn, NMCB 62 Alumni Group secretary.

From: Norm Hahn **To:** Chuck Fegley; Roman Hnatowski; Gina Nichols; Raymond Ruiz; Richard Ruiz; Bill Hilderbrand. **Sent:** Tuesday, October 29, 2019, 05:13:19 PM CDT. **Subject:** Pre Deployment training at Camp Lejeune our 1st and 2nd Deployment OP Orders and Seabees possibly getting an entry in their service record.

Greetings to all, Thank you all for your patience. This is a continuation of our NMCB 62 pre deployment conversations. I've received an email 10-27-2019, from Captain Fegley saying he reported to NMCB 62 just prior to the 2nd Deployment to Danang and did not participate in the Camp Lejeune pre deployment military training and does not have that OP Order. He can confirm that the 3rd Deployment pre deployment military training was NOT at Camp Lejeune. He has provided an article from the Gulfport Daily Herald dated 2-24-1969 to confirm that. Accordingly, we must regroup and again call on the resources of Gina Nichols at the History and Heritage Command to do her due diligence to locate the OP Order and any other paperwork or newspaper article or photos sending NMCB 62 to Camp Lejeune for their 2nd deployment pre deployment training. That pre deployment training did happen at Lejeune. Now we need the pre- deployment documentation.

Regarding the individuals "proof" of that Camp Lejeune pre deployment training for the 1st and 2nd deployment it would be necessary to provide a document from a Command person directing the YN's and PN's to physically make those entries in each persons service record. I would again ask Gina Nichols to conduct a search for such a document. In the 50+ years since those deployments, no one can say for sure if the document exists. Additionally, since to our knowledge, no one who has been on those first two deployments has provided a copy of his service record showing that documented pre deployment training. Conversely, no one on those first two deployments has provided a copy of their service record that has no documented pre deployment training. A conundrum for those who have developed these diseases.

So, for now, we must wait until Gina Nichols and her capable staff does their research. As always, your comments are welcome and appreciated. Please forward this to anyone who may be of help. Thank you. Best regards, Norm NMCB 62 Secretary

From: Chuck Fegley To: Norm Hahn Cc: Roman Hnatowski, Gina Nichols, Raymond Ruiz, Richard Ruiz, Bill Hilderbrand. Oct 27, 2019 at 10:23 AM

Hi Norm.

As I previously wrote about Camp Lejeune military training, in my short 20 days in Gulfport before deploying to Danang in January '68, the 2nd NMCB62 Vietnam deployment, I didn't participate in and hadn't heard anything about military training at Camp Lejeune. My files actually begin in January '68. However in going through my files now I found this article regarding Military Training before our third deployment to Dong Ha in '69. I'm sorry, I have no names.

In summary, the full battalion most likely got military training at Camp Lejeune before the first two deployments (Phu Bai and Danang) and from then on it was conducted at Keesler/Camp Shelby with only a 150-man detachment going to Camp Lejeune for military training. Later, when I had the battalion, 150-men detachments went for cold weather, desert or jungle training during homeport.

Sorry I couldn't have been more help. Chuck (Fegley, Captain, CEC, Retired)

(1 attachment) NMCB 62Mil Tng 1969.pdf

From: Roman Hnatowski To: Norm Hahn, Oct 20, 2019 at 4:34 PM

Norm,

Can't even start to tell you how much all your efforts are appreciated. Even though we still have a ways to go, with your assistance we are moving by leaps and bounds in helping a number of Vietnam Seabee Vets who have been denied care and disability compensation due to administrative errors not of their own doing. Please keep your efforts going strong. I will personally try to get backing from the Navy Seabee Veterans of America (NSVA); let's see how committed they are to their own members. Thanks again and God Bless!

Roman (Hnatowski)

From: Roman Hnatowski

To: Richard Ruiz **Cc:** Norm Hahn; Raymond Ruiz,

Sent: Sunday, September 29, 2019, 05:26:15 AM CDT

Subject: Re: [Non-DoD Source] I want to publish your statement about Seabees getting a copy of their service record

Rich, Thanks, another piece of the puzzle. O Corps is the key and needs to get involved. Disappointed in the NSVA for being so silent, lots of expertise there to help the troops!

Next time I see Jim Fury (NSVA's National Commander) I'll ask what the NSVA's position is concerning this issue. Thanks again Chico! V/r, Roman Sent from my iPad

On Sep 29, 2019, at 1:42 AM, Richard Ruiz wrote: We (Rock & I) we're in the field training the whole 30 days. We had no access to records during those periods. Have no idea who was keeping track of who qualified on weapons. Maybe the gunner's mates? Our marine trainers? No temporary duty orders for Camp Lejeune were processed before departure or after return to my knowledge. What about flight manifests? That's about all I can help with. Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 28, 2019, at 8:22 PM, Roman Hnatowski wrote: Norm, You are truly fighting the fight! You are right a DD 214 wouldn't show s... from a shingle as far as Camp Lejeune. Some Bees went training to Camp Lejeune before each deployment. As far as I can determine the time they spent there does not have to be continuous or concurrent, but cumulative! As long as it totals 30 days, they should be good. It's a damn shame that except from Captain Hilderbrand we have virtually no assistance from the Officer Corps. I believe most of us not only complied with their instructions and orders, and in many cases

exceeded their expectations! What we need is our former COs, XOs, Admin & Training Os joining in righting a wrong, but that would take guts and be morally correct.

The Marines are known for taking care of their own, unfortunately the Navy and maybe even the CEC are not. Hope I'm wrong! Norm thanks for fighting even though you have nothing to gain personally, that is except for the sincere Thanks and Gratitude of your fellow Bees that served years before!

V/r, Roman

Sent from my iPad

On Sep 28, 2019, at 5:03 PM, Norm Hahn wrote: Greetings Gentlemen,

As you can see, I'm still working on an explanation of WHY our guy, or any Seabee, needs to get a copy of their personnel record, DD-214N to document their training, be it Camp Lejeune or any other training for that matter. Because without that individual documented info they are basically SOL for their illness / disability claims.

As you can see Gina Nichols from Pt. Hueneme has provided a few excellent paragraphs that I will use to clarify why individuals must get a copy of their service record in order to be successful with their claims. And we have a civilian person who can get their service record, for a fee.

What I would like to ask of you two, Ray & Richard are some kind of statement from you both that to the best of your knowledge the Camp Lejeune military training was entered into each person who was physically there for that training. Did you both do entries for enlisted and officer or did the YN's do the officers? If the YN's did the officers is there a YN you can email to ask if they made those entries in the officers personnel records? Rocky, you are an alumni group member so you can access the database.

Any assistance you can offer will be very much appreciated by those who are looking for this information. And any suggestions to make the process go smoother are also appreciated.

You can email this to anyone you feel can help us.

Thanks, Norm

Norm Hahn NMCB 62

Alumni Group secretary

Raymond Rocky Ruiz: Sep 28, 2019 at 4:45 PM

To: Norm Hahn, Roman Hnatowski, Richard Ruiz

If anyone can provide some guidance it would be Rich. To my knowledge it was necessary to document everyone's training with exact dates at each location. It's been way to long since I had anything to do with personnel records. I don't even have my own record. Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Nichols, Gina L CIV USN USNSM (USA)

To: Norm Hahn

Sent: Thursday, September 26, 2019, 12:40:23 PM CDT

Subject: RE: [Non-DoD Source] I want to publish your statement about Seabees getting a copy of their service record

Hi Norm, Here is the edited version:

We received an email from Roman Hnatowski, EAC, (Retired), in August 2019 and sent him the information he requested concerning the 1966 FEX at Camp Lejeune. For the last several years we have assisted numerous Seabee vets from various units concerning their time at Camp Lejeune, but the pace is increasing lately. I'm assuming the word has gotten out as we were inundated this summer with individual requests. As you point out, the government requires 30 days on the ground and most FEX that I have seen at Camp Lejeune run about 3 weeks. They need their DD-214s and as much of their service jackets as they can get if they plan to win their claim. One of the issues is that the National Archives isn't great on sending the entire file, but only a few pages, if that. Make sure they request their entire file and, if possible, go to the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis to do the research themselves. The National Archives runners are inundated and won't always scan everything or put in much effort into finding the files. They

also need their Deployment Completion Reports, cruisebook, and any supporting documentation to verify their claim. Any written statements from other witnesses are accepted too.

The issue is that there won't be any information on FEX at Camp Lejeune in any of the reports as the battalion only wrote monthly reports for deployments, not homeport. For that, we have to dig deeper into alternate documents and periodicals, etc. We do this as we get requests. Each one is unique and needs to be researched on a case-by-case basis. We keep digital copies of each request to speed up any similar request from the same unit/year, but when we get a new one we start from scratch again. We don't have the manpower to focus just on this issue but have to spread the wealth to others who need assistance as well.

Have a great day!! V/r, Gina Nichols, MA, CA, MLIS
Head, Collections Department/Supervisory Archivist, U.S. Navy Seabee Museum, Naval History and Heritage Command, Office: (805) 982-6497

From: Norm Hahn, **Sent:** Thursday, September 26, 2019 10:21 AM
To: Nichols, Gina L CIV USN USNSM (USA)
Cc: Roman Hnatowski; Raymond Ruiz, Richard Ruiz
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] I want to publish your statement about Seabees getting a copy of their service record

Hi Gina, Thanks for signing in to the website and providing info for your bio. It is much appreciated.

I want to put some of the info you gave me in your email into some of the NMCB 62 and the Operation Seabee Knowledge Facebook pages. I might also send it to the "Can Do" magazine and the Seabee Quarterly newsletter. Also to several of my buddies who maintain their battalions website.

The words you put out to me in your email are very important to the many Seabees who think their DD-214N is the magic answer to all their health problem claims. Before I do this, I want to send two paragraphs back to you and give you a opportunity to edit the parts I would like to use. Your email to me, dated Sep 17, 2019. Here it is:

(Beginning of Gina Nichols email of 17 Sep 2019) Hi Norm,

We received an email from Mr. Hnatowski (perhaps Roman Hnatowski, EAC, Retired) in August (2019) and sent him the information he requested concerning the 1966 FEX at Camp Lejeune. For the last several years we have assisted numerous Seabee vets from various units concerning their time at Lejeune but the pace is increasing lately. I'm assuming the word has gotten out as we were inundated this summer with individual requests. As you point out, the government requires 30 days on the ground and most FEX that I have seen at Lejeune run about 3 weeks. They need their DD-214s and entire files if they plan to win their claim. One of the issues is that NARA (what is the NARA?) isn't great on sending the entire file but only a few pages, if that. Make sure they request their entire file and, if possible, go to St. Louis to do the research themselves. The NARA runners are lazy (maybe not the word "lazy") and won't always scan everything or put in much effort into finding the files.

(I took out the middle paragraph of your email to me)

The issue is that there won't be any information on FEX at Camp Lejeune in any of the reports as they only write monthly reports for deployments, not homeport. For that, we have to dig deeper into alternate documents and periodicals, etc. We do this as we get requests. Each one is unique and needs to be researched on a case-by-case basis. We keep digital copies of each request to speed up any similar request

from the same unit/year but when we get a new one we start from scratch again. We don't have the manpower to focus just on this issue but have to spread the wealth to others who need assistance as well.
(Signed) Gina Nichols, MA, CA, MLISH (end of Gina Nichols email of Sep 17, 2019)

Thanks for all your help. Take care, Norm NMCB 62 Alumni Group secretary