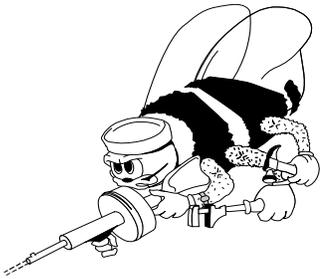


MCB 2 Reunion Association

Volume 8, Issue 2

January 20, 2010



SEABEES

A Newsletter for Former US Naval

Mobile Construction Battalion 2 Personnel

and host to CBD 1802, CBD 1804, CBMU 1, CBMU 101 and CBMU 577

It's Dues Time!

Check your status on the Good Guy List!

Pete and Scott Are Checking Hotels in Port Hueneme

Three hotels are in the hat for selection and Pete and Scott are there as this Newsletter is being mailed. We will make a decision which hotel is our reunion hotel in the very near future. But this trip is expensive and our paid membership is down, so check the Good Guy List. If your name is not there, please send your dues to allow us to mail the next Newsletter. If you can send a

See *Checking on Hotels* (Continued on page 2)

Happy New Year!

By the time you get this, Christmas 2009 will be gone, New Year's 2010 will be here and gone, and it will be my personal prayer that 2010 will be a much better year for all of us.

Scott and I will be traveling to Port Hueneme the end of January (weather permitting) to look over hotels and find the best location for our 2011 reunion. Every consideration will be given to accessibility, lodging, restaurants, enter-

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1) **Checking on hotels**

little bit extra, thanks as it will really help.

We are also checking on tours and fun outings while in Port Hueneme. Certainly, the Regan Library is on our tour list but we are also checking on dinner cruises and other side trips. Of course, the primary trip will be to the Seabee Museum and that will probably be on Friday with a tour of the Seabee base so we can see all the changes made since we were there 55 years ago.

So, start making plans to be with us in late September 2011 in Port Hueneme. We will again have allowance for early arrival and late leaving at our reunion rates for those that would like to tour the surrounding area before or after our reunion. The nearby towns of Santa Barbara and Solvang; the nearby wine country; museums of fine art, vintage cars or maritime heritage are all available that we won't have time to visit as a group but are well worthwhile to tour while you are so close.

See you there, and please help with the arrangement expenses however you can.
Scott

(Continued from page 1)

tainment and costs. We hope to have an all-day tour to the Reagan Library and maybe a BBQ that evening, but these are the details we are working on.

I'm looking forward to another great reunion and the opportunity to tour our new museum and coming away with great memories. I hope everyone will be able to come and join with us in 2011 at Port Hueneme!

God bless you all and God bless America!

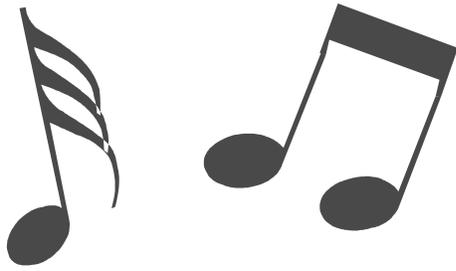
Pete Elliott

SEABEES

January - June

Dates to Remember

Jan. 5, 1942	Bureau of Naval Personnel authorizes formation of Construction Battalions.
Jan. 27, 1942	Bobcat detachment sent to Bora Bora, Society Islands, first Navy construction unit sent to overseas duty.
Feb. 1, 1944	Seabees land with Fourth Marine Division on Kwajalein.
Feb. 19, 1945	Seabees land with 5th Marine Division on Iwo Jima.
Mar. 2, 1867	Civil Engineer Corps established.
Mar. 5, 1942	SEABEE BIRTHDAY!
Mar. 19, 1942	Civil Engineer Corps officers given military authority over construction units.
Mar. 22, 1945	Seabees ferry General Patton's armored units across the Rhine River into Germany.
Apr. 1, 1945	Seabees land on Okinawa.
April 8, 1942	Doolittle Tokyo raid.
April 9, 1942	Bataan falls.
May 8, 1942	Battle of the Coral Sea
May 8, 1945	V-E Day, Germany surrenders.
June 4, 1942	Battle of Midway.
June 6, 1944	Seabee land at Normandy as Naval Combat Demolition Units.
June 15, 1944	Seabees land on Saipan.
June 30, 1943	Seabees land with 9th Marine Division, Solomon Islands.

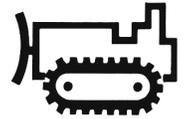


Notes from our members:

From **Dan (Mary) Millet**: Enclosed is my check for **Dan's** dues. Take the extra and put it where needed the most [thanks!]. **Dan** is recuperating at home from his open heart surgery. It was a double by-pass and will be a long healing process, but we will get there. Thank you for sending the full refund of our deposit for the Myrtle Beach reunion. We both are looking forward to going to Port Hueneme in 2011..... from **Howard Doyle**: I hope everybody had a great time in Myrtle Beach. I had every intention of being there but the problem with being a family man is that family affairs interfere with personal desires too often. Maybe next time. [I hope so! You missed a really good time.] Enclosed is my check for dues and a bit more to spend for whatever is needed [thank you very much]. I can't tell you how much I have appreciated your emails through the years. I look forward to them. Keep up the good work..... from **Joe Sitkowski**: [sent two door prize certificates for dues] Now I'm paid up until 2014! Thanks! [thank you, **Joe**]..... received a card from the President of The Seabee Memorial Scholarship Association for the \$50 contribution made by **Ivan Smith**, our bus driver in Myrtle Beach. The hat was passed for **Ivan** after taking us to the Carolina Opry and he graciously donated it back to MCB 2 for the Scholarship Association. Thank you, **Ivan**..... from **Dave Budworth**: Here's a check for my dues [thank you!] from **Vernon Blakeslee**: I hope this note finds you in good health [it does, thanks]. Enclosed is a check for two white Seabee flags, two blue Seabee flags, and two US flags, plus my dues. If I owe more, please let me know [no, you are in good shape with this check, **Vern**. Thanks!]...... from **George Rosenfold**: Enclosed is my long overdue check for dues [thank you!]. I was in CBMU 1 at K-3 in



Korea from 1953-1954. I hope all you guys and gals had a great time at the reunion in Myrtle Beach..... received checks for dues from **Frank Mingo, Stephen Yunger, Ivan Majetic, Warren Flading, Tony DeLeon, Bob Colquhoun, Wayne Heple, John Brown, Marvin Guetling, Don Jones** [plus a Door Prize Certificate], **Richard Swallow** and **John Recklitis**. [thank you all very much!]..... from **Ruth (Alexander) Hamilton**: I'm sorry that I must write to tell you that **Alex** passed away on October 20, 2009. This summer he was in the hospital more than he was at home. We always enjoyed the reunions that we attended. Keep up the good work. [thank you for notifying me. It is so sad to lose a loved one and you both will be missed at our reunions.]..... from **Althea Herr**: It sounded like the reunion was great, as usual. You guys do a great job getting everything organized. I was sorry to read about **Emil Krygier**. I am doing fine and hope all of you are also. Enclosed are my dues for the Newsletter [thank you, but you don't need to do that. However, it is much appreciated.] Thank you very much for your assistance. Take care!..... from **Al Erb**: [**Al** had called me asking about his dues status and we had a nice visit.] As discussed, enclosed is a check for my dues making up for lost time. Nice talking with you and stay well..... from **Charles Johnson**: [sent a check for dues plus some extra. Thanks!] **Richard Fairbanks**: This is probably my last communication with you. I volunteered into the Seabees in May 1943 in Lawrence, Kansas. I attended boot camp in Camp Perry and became a part of the 100th Battalion. I spent some time in the Marshall Islands and then got to visit Guam for two years. I came back in 1952 into the 100th Battalion and later into CBD 1804..... from **Tony Marcella**: Here's my check for dues plus a little extra [thanks]. Keep up the good work..... from **Alfred Bryant**: Sorry I am late with my dues but I've had some health problems. Hospital, etc. Enclosed is my check to bring me up to date [thanks]. Keep up the good work..... from **Ken Chew**: It's time to renew my membership and be on your Good Guy List for 2010. I enjoy reading the Newsletter. Keep up the good work. Enclosed is a check for my dues and something extra for the museum [thank you] from **Roy Peak**: I need an



(Continued from page 3)

up-to-date membership roster, alpha and ZIP [on the way]. Enclosed is money to cover postage..... from **Bill Morin**: Everyone in MCB 3 had a great time at the reunion and thank you for taking us in like we were part of MCB 2. Enclosed is a picture I took of the Seabee float we take to parades around here. We try to get as many WWII vets on it as possible. Thanks again and hope to see you guys in Port Hueneme. We are planning on it! PS: I didn't see my name on the Good Guy List. I paid in Myrtle Beach [I remember that. I had made a note on my roster copy and had neglected to post it in the computer. There were a few others also that were omitted from the GGL. I think it is up to date now, and thanks to all for the dues]..... from **Ted Devit**: [enclosed a check for dues and thanks] Can you let me know if my dues are up to date or if my dues are paid beyond this year [you are paid through 12/31/13]..... from **Paul (Pat) Schell**: Thank you for your letter. You're right, the hospital is not the way to spend time in Myrtle Beach, especially not when we had been looking forward to the Seabee Convention for so long. We really looked forward to seeing everyone. Our plans changed a little but we still had a nice trip thru the South. We're returning the check for the banquet dinner refund. Just put it back in the kitty [thank you]. We look forward to the reunion in Port Hueneme in 2011. We're already making plans to be there..... from **Jack Sims**: [**Jack** sent a nice newspaper coverage of a fallen soldier that I will include in this Newsletter (see page 5).] Some time back you posted an item similar to this same type of article. I saved this one because he's a home-grown boy from out here in Southern California. Maybe you could post this some time also..... I have received Christmas greeting cards from **Gene & Jo McDonagh**, **Stoney Serrett**, **Doug & Shirley Emond**, **Mal & Marge Pearson**, **Arlin & Betty Hardwick**, **Bill & Shari Wisnowski**, **Mary Dick** [with a check], **Harold Wardenburg**, **Tony & Maryann DeLeon**, **Rich & Carol Nelson** and **Opal Neusetzer**. Thank you all!.... from **John Stock**: Check enclosed for dues plus a little extra [thank you]. Please send me a new roster if you have one available. It would be much appreciated [on the way!]. Great news about the



next reunion location. **Mary** and I are already planning the trip. Hope the new museum will be complete by then.... from : **Opal Neusetzer**:

Has the world started spinning faster? I can't believe that I've been in my new location a year on the 31st. I hope you and your family are well [we are, thanks]. It was good to read in the last Newsletter that **Stoney Serrett** made it to the reunion with his two daughters. I had a Christmas card from him, too. Later, I must write you of a funny but great thing that happened to **Paul** at Port Hueneme in '91 when we were in California to keep the baby at the hotel for our son to attend a ball while he was serving as a doctor in the Navy and stationed at 29 Palms..... from **Richard Coulson**: [Ordered some flags on-line] Enclosed is my check for the flags and dues. Apply the extra wherever you see fit [thanks]. Have a Merry Christmas. I am very proud to be able to call you my friend [thank you, **Richard**]. I really enjoy your e-mails. [and on the envelope was a US stamp of **John Wayne**, may God rest his soul.]..... from **Bill Wilcoxen**: I almost forgot my dues again, so here's my check for dues and please send two US flags and two Seabee flags, one white and one blue [on the way and thanks]. There is a little extra for postage or whatever. I hope you enjoyed the holidays. We sure did..... from **Jack Wilson**: A happy new year to you and the rest of the 'Bees. I want to stay on the Good Guy List, so here are my dues and some extra [thank you]. We are lucky to have a good man like you on the job [well, thank you very much]. Keep up the good work..... from **Jack Schrader**: Enclosed is a check to keep me on the Good Guy List and some extra for whatever you need it for [thanks much]. While on the subject of Good Guys, also some Good Girls, I want to thank the good sports for helping me celebrate my birthday, one which I'll remember for a long time. I received lots of pictures which I really appreciate because I was too busy to take any for myself. I also see that I was honored quite a few times in our Newsletter. Thanks again for all the good times and maybe we can honor someone else at our next reunion. Thanks for all the work you do for us, **Scott**, and I wish you and **Rachel** a good year [thank you!]..... That's it for now! **Scott**





At the end of the memorial service, Strom salutes Dahl's casket. The next day, a procession would move the body to Riverside National Cemetery.

Picture above from an 8-page newspaper tribute to Army Specialist Michael Dahl Jr. killed in Afghanistan which was sent to me from Jack Sims. Spc. Dahl was from Moreno Valley, California.

This picture to the right is of the Japanese shrine at Atsugi that was converted to a chapel by the Seabees of MCB 2 in 1951. I don't remember who submitted this photo, so let me know who you are when you see this!

Thanks.



I WANT TO BE A NAVAL AVIATOR

The following was published in the December 2001 issue of the QB Beam (Quiet Birdmen). Supposedly, it was written by a fifth grader. It was taken from the Naval Aviation Museum newsletter.

"I want to be a Naval Aviator when I grow up because it's a fun and easy thing to do. Naval Aviators don't need much school. They just have to learn numbers so they can read instruments. I guess they should be able to read maps so they can find their way if they are lost. Naval Aviators should be brave so they won't be scared if it's foggy and they can't see or if a wing or motor falls off they should stay calm so they'll know what to do.

Naval Aviators have to have good eyes so they can see through clouds and they can't be afraid of lightning or thunder because they are closer to them than we are. The salary Naval Aviators make is another thing I like. They make more money than they can spend. This is because most people think airplane flying is dangerous, except Naval Aviators don't because they know how easy it is. There isn't much I don't like, except girls like Naval Aviators and all the stewardesses want to marry them, so they always have to chase them away so they won't bother them.

I hope I don't get air sick because if I do, I couldn't be a Naval Aviator and then would have to go to work.

Party Animal!

Jack wakes up at home with a huge hangover after the night of his office Christmas party. He forces himself to open his eyes, and the first thing he sees is a couple of aspirins next to a glass of water on the side table. And, next to them, a single red rose! Jack sits down and sees his clothing in front of him, all clean and pressed. Jack looks around the room and sees that it is in perfect order, spotlessly clean. So is the rest of the house.

He takes the aspirins, cringes when he sees a huge black eye staring back at him in the bathroom mirror, and notices a note on the table, "Breakfast is on the stove, I left early to go shopping -- Love you, Jill"

He stumbles to the kitchen, and sure enough, there is hot breakfast and the morning newspaper. His son is also at the table, eating. Jack asks, "Son! ... what happened last night?"

Jack's son answers, "Well, you came home after 3 a.m., drunk and out of your mind. You broke some furniture, puked in the hallway, and got that black eye when you ran into the door!"

Jack says, "So, why is everything in such perfect order, so clean? I have a red rose, and breakfast is on the table waiting for me."

His son replies, "Mom dragged you to the bedroom, and when she tried to take your pants off, you screamed, "Leave me alone, lady, I'm married!"

From Bill Morin: Here is a picture of the Seabee float we take to parades around Manchester, NH. We try to get as many WWII vets on it as possible.



The Good Guy List

For 2010

Vance Adams, Vern Ammentorp, David Anderson, Basil Arnold, Pat Badgett, Mike Barron, Frank Betonte, Vernon Blakeslee, John Bloem, Alexander (Cat) Borys, Bob Bowdler, Don Bradley, John Brown, Alfred Bryant, David Budworth, Wayne Bulgerin, Ralph Burnley, Pat Carey, Bennie Carlson, Ken Catchpole, George Chang, Chuck Chapman, Ken Chew, Bob Colquhoun, Howard Cornwell, Richard Coulson, Marvin Dalby, Paul D'Angelo, Stan Dauer, Joe DeFranco, Jim De Keyser, Tony DeLeon, Ted Devit, Mary Dick (for all the Good Guys), Robert Doezie, Tom Dowd, Howard Doyle, Harrell Edmondson, Doug Emond, Al Erb, Ralph Evans, Richard Fairbanks, Richard Farbo, Frank Fibich, Warren Flading, Forrest Foland, Jack Foster, Bill Frazier, Harold Freeland, Claude Garcenot, Robert Gardner, Ron Glasser, Robert Graf, John Grasz, Frank Gresser, Gerald Grubb, Marvin Guetling, George Gustin, Gordon Gwathney, Pauline (for Charlie) Hagemann, David Haines, Les Hall, Roger Hamilton, Arlin Hardwick, Bob Hart, Ralph Heitt, Duane Henrichson, Wayne Heple, Althea (Jerry) Herr, Don Hofstetter, Ben Hollar, Ray Hooter, Charles Ingalls, Vic Jaccino, Ambros Johnson, Charles Johnson, Don Jones, Mike Kazarian, Denise King (for her Dad, Don Truskey), William Knight, James Krause, Ervin Lampe, Ron Landrum, Herbert Liverman, Dale Lundstrom, Ivan Majetic, Anthony Marcella, Norris McDaniel, Gene McDonagh, Don McLain, Bobby McMillan, Grant Millard, Dan Millett, Chuck Minert, Frank Mingo, William Morin, Hance Morton, Paul Muma, Richard Muns, Eugene (Wes) Nelson, Richard Nelson, Ray Nethercott, Opal (for Paul) Neusetzer, Joseph O'Brien, Mel Olson, Billy Partridge, Don Pastell, Mal Pearson, Ben Pedrotti, John Petronka, Norm Pratt, Ralph Presson, Cecil Price, Sam Ragusa, Robert Rasmussen, Gary Rawlings, John Recklitis, Dale Rogers, George Rosenvold, Thomas Roy, C. Edner Rudolph, Paul Schell, Jack Schrader, Stoney Serrett, Bill Sharp, William Sigmund, Fred Simon, Joe Sitkowski, Ray Sorrentino,

Tom Stapleton, Lee Stevens, Stiles Stevens, Larry Stevenson, Dan Stewart, George Stewart, John Stock, Willis Struecker, Dan Svendsen, Richard Swallow, Doug Thorp, Richard Todd, Wayne Turley, Lionel Vidrine, Richard Walters, Billy 'Doc' Ward, Harold Wardenburg, Bud Wheless, Rodney White, Walter Whitney, John Wilborn, William Wilcoxon, Marshall Williams, R. G. 'Pete' Williams, Scott Williams, Fred Wilmarth, Jack Wilson, Dwight Yetter, and Stephen Yunger.

Everyone listed here has their dues paid at least through 2010, some much longer. If you don't find your name on this list, then maybe you have forgotten to send in your dues recently. All dues are paid through the calendar year, January 1 through December 31 (no dues card sent out). This list is as of January 8, 2010. There are currently 158 paid up members from a mailing list of 463. If dues have never been sent, they do not receive the Newsletter. There are 735 names on the full member roster (22 pages). (SW)

Need a Membership Roster?

If you have a need for an up-to-date membership roster, drop me a line with a couple of bucks and I'll send you one. We currently have 753 names and addresses of former CBD 1802, CBD 1804, CBMU 1/101, CBMU 577, and MCB 2 personnel, so this is a pretty thick directory (22 pages). Glad to have all aboard! And, if you would like a directory sorted by ZIP numbers, let me know. You can see who lives close to you or use it when you travel. And keep sending those cards and letters – especially the ones with checks!
Scott Williams

Our Fallen Comrades

Alexander W. Hamilton	10/20/09
Charles S. Trimarchi	9/6/09

May they live on in our memories.

Old Sailors

Old Sailors sit and chew the fat
'bout how things used to be,
of the things they've seen and places they've been,
when they ventured out to sea.

They remember friends from long ago
and the times they had back then,
of the money they've spilled and the beer they've swilled
in their days as sailing men.

Their lives are lived in days gone by,
with thoughts that forever last,
of Dixie cup hats and bell bottom blues,
and the good times in their past.

They recall long nights with a moon so bright
far out on a lonely sea,
and thoughts they had as youthful lads,
when their lives were unbridled and free.

They know so well how their hearts would swell
when the flag fluttered proud and free,
and the stars and stripes made such beautiful sights
as they plowed through an angry sea.

They talk of the bread Ol' Cookie would bake
and the shrill of the bo'sun's pipe,
and how the salt spray fell like sparks out of hell
when a storm struck in the night.

They remember mates already gone
who forever hold a spot
in the stories of old when sailors were bold
and lubbers a pitiful lot.

They rode their ships through many a storm
when the sea was showing its might,
and the mighty waves might be digging their graves
as they sailed on through the night.

(Continued on page 9)

Their sailing days are gone away,
never more will they cross the brow,
but they have no regrets for they know they've been blessed
'cause they honored their sacred vow.

Their numbers grow less with each passing day
as their chits in this life are called,
but they've nothing to lose for they've paid their dues
and they'll sail with their shipmates again.

I've heard them say before getting underway
that there is still some sailing to do,
and they'll exclaim with a grin that their ship has come in,
and the Lord is commanding the crew.

Anonymous

Who to contact about your dues

Scott Williams, Sec'y/Treas.
MCB 2 Reunion Association
725 Summer Ridge Dr.
Villa Rica, GA 30180
(770-456-4246)

e-mail: williash@aol.com

make checks payable to:
Scott Williams/MCB 2

Dues are \$20/year
January - December

This is what keeps us going
and enables us to send this Newsletter.

The Commander and Staff

Our leadership consists of:

**Commander
Pete Elliott**

Staff:

Joe DeFranco

David Haines

Vic Jaccino

Bill Knight

Rich Nelson

Roy Peak, Vice Commander

Malcolm Pearson

John Petronka

Stoney Serrett, Commander Emeritus

Scott Williams, Sec'y/Treas./Publisher

Some more pictures from our Myrtle Beach reunion, pages 10-12



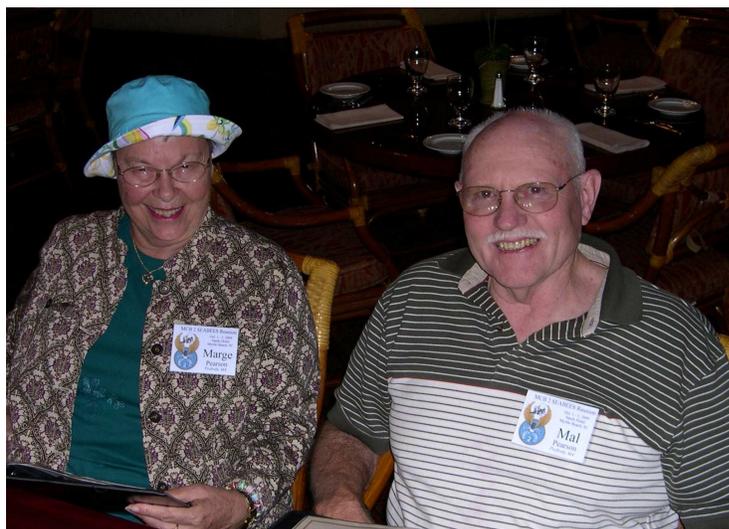
Arriving in Myrtle Beach for the 2009 reunion!

L-R: Scott Williams, Rachel Williams, Lee Stevens, John Petronka, Stoney Serrett, Geri Petronka.

Dinner our first night in Myrtle Beach! About 30 of us gathered to have an excellent meal.



Arlin & Betty Hardwick



Marge & Mal Pearson



And we had another excellent dinner at the Giant Crab! Here is Stoney with his two daughters, and if you look close, you can see Lee Stevens on the left edge, Mary Ragusa in the white blouse on Stoney's right with Bill Hilderbrand behind Stoney talking with Vic Jaccino and Rachel Williams



At the Giant Crab were some old buddies and their wives. Above L-R: Evoline Gardner, Ruth Morin, and Mary Ann DeLeon.

Right, L-R: Tony DeLeon, Bill Morin, and Bob Gardner.

Everyone had a great time here and later at the Carolina Opry.





Three Musketeers....
 Stoney Serrett, Mal
 Pearson, and Pete Elliott.



Enjoying our banquet dinner! The room was decorated in honor of fallen soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines and all in red, white and blue with a large poster of a US flag on each table.

Above, reading clockwise: Don & Virgie McLain; Nancy & Larry Stevenson; and Old Smiley, Cecil Price.



First Echelon of 357 men from the 6th Seabee Battalion arrived at Guadalcanal September 1, 1942.

Can-Do at Guadalcanal

The Seabee story of Guadalcanal begins on the afternoon of August 20, 1942, when 45-year old Commander Joseph P. Blundon (CEC, USNR) arrived in a PBY off Lunga Point and promptly reported to General A. A. Vandergrift. "I guess I was the first Seabee to go under fire," Commander Blundon recalled. "The Marines had been on Guadalcanal thirteen days, and they had a tiny beachhead around Henderson Field. While I was reporting to General Vandergrift, the Jap bombers came over and I hit my first foxhole. A few days later my Sixth Seabee Battalion arrived, and we assumed full responsibility for the completion and maintenance of Henderson Field.

The Japs had cleared an area 300 by 5600 feet, but it was by no means finished. The Japs were shelling the field with Howitzers, as well as bombing it night and day, and it was our job to keep the holes filled up while we finished the grading, laid Marston mat, built hardstands and revetments, and helped solve the fuel and ammunition problems. We had very little equipment. General Vandergrift assigned us a section of the beach to defend against the Jap landings and we figured we could defend the beach and still do the job at Henderson Field.

We realized at the outset that the battle was going to turn on how fast we filled up holes and how fast we could develop that field. When the Jap bombers approached, our fighters took off, the bombers blasted the airstrips, and then if we couldn't fill up those holes before our planes ran out of fuel, the planes would have to attempt to land anyway, and they would crash. I saw seven of our fighters crack up in one bitter afternoon. From "our" point of view the battle of Guadalcanal was a race between the Jap artillery and the air force and the Sixth Seabee Battalion. We played our cards fast. We pitched our camp at the edge of the field to save time. We dug our foxholes right up alongside the landing area.

We found that a 500 pound bomb would tear up 1600 square feet of Marston mat, so we placed

packages of this quantity of mat along the strip, like extra rails along a railroad. We figured out how much sand and gravel was required to fill the average bomb or shell crater, and we loaded these measured amounts on trucks and placed the trucks under cover at strategic points. We had compressors and pneumatic hammers to pack the fill into the craters. We organized human assembly lines for passing up the pierced plank and laying it. Then when the Jap bombers approached, every Seabee including even our cooks, manned his repair station.

Our crater crews were lying in their foxholes at night at the edge of the strip. The moment the bombers had passed over, these men boiled out of the holes and raced for the craters. Every man had to keep his eye peeled for Jap strafing planes and, when the Jap dived in, our men dived for the close-at-hand foxholes. We found that 100 Seabees could repair the damage of a 500-pound bomb hit on an airstrip in forty minutes. In twenty four hours on October 13 and 14, fifty-three bomb and shells hit the Henderson airstrip. During one hour on the 14th we filled thirteen bomb craters while our planes circled overhead waiting to land. In the period from September 1, to November 18, we had 140 Jap raids in which the strip was hit at least once.

Our worst moments were when the Jap bomb or shell failed to explode when it hit. It still tore up our mat, and it had to come out. "When you see men choke down their fear and dive in after an unexploded bomb so that our planes can land safely, a lump comes in your throat and you know why America wins wars". Shell craters are more dangerous to work on than bomb craters. You have a feeling that no two bombs ever hit in the same place, but this isn't true of shells. A Jap five-inch gun lobs a shell over on your airstrip and blasts a helluva hole. What are you going to do? You know, just as that Jap artillery man knows, that if he leaves his gun in the same position and fires another shell, the second shell will hit in almost the same spot as the first one. So a good old Jap trick was to give us enough time to start repairing the hole and then fire the second shell. All you can do is depend on hearing that second shell coming and hope you can scramble far enough away before it explodes. But this is a gamble which is frowned upon by life insurance companies. That's all for now!"

Newt Heisley dies at 88; veteran designed POW/MIA flag

By Valerie J. Nelson

Heisley, an Army Air Forces pilot during World War II, was a graphic designer for an ad agency when he sketched the stark black-and-white design featuring the words 'You Are Not Forgotten.'

Newt Heisley, a commercial artist who designed the Vietnam-era POW/MIA flag that came to symbolize the nation's concern for military personnel missing or held prisoner in modern conflicts, has died. He was 88.

Heisley, who was a World War II pilot, died Thursday at his home in Colorado Springs, Colo., after years of failing health, said Jim Heisley, one of his two sons.

In 1971, Heisley was a graphic designer for a New Jersey advertising agency when he sketched the stark black-and-white images at the center of the flag -- the silhouette of a man with head bowed, a guard tower and a strand of barbed wire -- and the words "You Are Not Forgotten."

His client was Annin & Co., a major flag manufacturer that had been commissioned by the wife of a soldier missing in action. She had recognized the need for a symbol to represent the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia.

"It was intended for a small group. . . . No one realized it was going to get national attention," Heisley said in 1997 in the Colorado Springs Gazette. The flag emblazoned with POW/MIA first flew over the White House in 1988. It was installed in 1989 in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda and is on permanent display.

In 1990, Congress adopted the flag as "the symbol of our nation's concern" for those missing and unaccounted for during U.S. military action in Southeast Asia. Congress later mandated that the flag be flown at federal buildings and military installations six days a year, including Memorial Day and the Fourth of July.

The flag's popularity has expanded more quickly than any other during the last 50 years, said Edward Mooney Jr., a flag expert and author in Palmdale. To veterans organizations, the design has come to represent all U.S. troops missing in military conflicts dating to World War II.

The words that Heisley stretched across the bottom of the flag -- "You Are Not Forgotten" -- were inspired by his acute memories of piloting transport planes on long flights across the South Pacific during World War II. While flying, he thought about "being taken prisoner and being . . . forgotten," he said in the 2002 book "Faith Under Fire." As he worked on flag sketches, "that experience came back to me, and I wrote down the phrase 'You are not forgotten.' "

The model for the captured soldier was his son Jeffrey, then 24, who had just returned from Marine training gaunt and sick with hepatitis. While Heisley was "extremely, extremely proud" of designing the flag, he was embarrassed by the attention that came with it, said his son Jim. "I didn't do it for personal gain or acclaim," Heisley told the Denver Post in 2002. "I did it for the men who were prisoners of war or missing in action. They're the real heroes."

Newton Foust Heisley was born Nov. 9, 1920, in Williamsport, Pa. His mother died when he was 4 months old, and he spent much of his childhood with grandparents. At Syracuse University, he earned a degree in fine arts and met his future wife.

After graduating in the early 1940s, he was a graphic artist for the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and then enlisted in the Army Air Forces. After the war, he spent 25 years at advertising agencies in New York City and New Jersey. Tiring of the big-city commute, he drove west with his wife, Bunny, looking for "greener pastures," said his son Jim.

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"They pulled into Colorado Springs in the middle of the night. The next morning, he saw the view and said, 'Bunny, we're not going any further. This is it,' " his son recalled.

After moving to the town in 1972, Heisley opened an advertising agency with Jim. One of their projects was designing a pin for the 1980 Lake Placid Winter Olympics.

When Heisley retired in 1987, he rediscovered fine art, painting a Pawnee Indian chief and a scene from "Madame Butterfly," a favorite opera of his wife. Bunny died in 2005 at 84.

On smaller canvases -- his lapel, hat and license-plate frame -- Heisley showcased the POW/MIA image whose popularity, he once said, had gone beyond his "wildest dream."

A lesson that should be taught in all schools. . .

Back in September of 2005, on the first day of school, Martha Cothren, a social studies school teacher at Robinson High School, Little Rock, Arkansas did something not to be forgotten. On the first day of school, with permission of the school superintendent, the principal and the building supervisor, she removed all of the desks out of her classroom. When the first period kids entered the room, they discovered that there were no desks.

'Ms. Cothren, where's our desks?'

She replied, 'You can't have a desk until you tell me how you earn the right to sit at a desk.'

They thought, 'Well, maybe it's our grades.' '

No,' she said.

'Maybe it's our behavior.'

She told them, 'No, it's not even your behavior.'

And so, they came and went, the first period, second period, third period. Still no desks in the classroom. By early afternoon, television news crews had started gathering in Ms. Cothren's classroom to report about this crazy teacher who had taken all the desks out of her room.

The final period of the day came and, as the puzzled students found seats on the floor of the deskless classroom, Martha Cothren said, 'Throughout the day no one has been able to tell me just what he or she has done to earn the right to sit at the desks that are ordinarily found in this classroom. Now I am going to tell you.'

At this point, Martha Cothren went over to the door of her classroom and opened it.

Twenty-seven (27) U.S. Veterans, all in uniform, walked into that classroom, each one carrying a school desk.

The Vets began placing the school desks in rows and then they would walk over and stand alongside the wall. By the time the last soldier had set the final desk in place, those kids started to understand, perhaps for the first time in their lives, just how the right to sit at those desks had been earned!

Martha said, 'You didn't earn the right to sit at these desks. These heroes did it for you. They placed the desks here for you. Now, it's up to you to sit in them. It is your responsibility to learn, to be good students, to be good citizens. They paid the price so that you could have the freedom to get an education. Don't ever forget it.'

By the way, this is a true story.

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