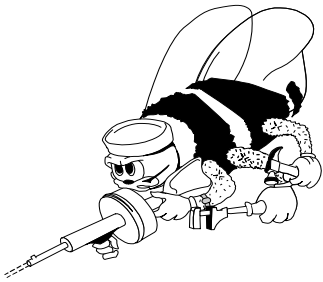


MCB 2 Reunion Association

Volume 8, Issue 4

July 26, 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

Country Inn & Suites Our Reunion Hotel! Make Your Reservations Now! See Page 14 for the form

Things Are Still Being Worked Out.

Stand By For The News!

Plans are coming together but this is a bit tougher to plan than ordinary. Pete and I flew out, spent two days checking hotels and where to hold our banquet, plus checking out the progress of the museum and making arrangements for a long tour of the Reagan Library. The hotel is a nice property that has a hot serve-yourself breakfast included

See *Stand By For The News* (Continued on page 2)

Help Needed.

Funds Are Running Short.

After Pete and I have returned from our Port Hueneme trip, the dues money has not been able to offset all the expenses of the Newsletters and operations. Each issue of the Newsletter costs between \$750 and \$850 to publish and costs are going up for our printing and mailing service. If you can help with any amount, that would be greatly appreciated. Some have helped

See *Help Needed* (Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1) **Stand By For The News**

in the room charge, plus a free happy hour every evening from 5-7 pm. We will have functions planned every evening but will try to allow for time at the happy hour so you can visit with friends. Our first day, Thursday, we will be traveling to the Reagan Library, returning about 4 p.m. On Friday, we expect to be able to visit the museum and possibly have a BBQ put on by the chiefs association. Saturday morning will be our business meeting followed by the memorial service with free time afterward until our banquet at 6 pm. I am still working out some of these details, but if you want to make your hotel reservations now, see page 15 for the hotel reservation work sheet. The hotel will accept cancellations up to 96 hours prior to your reservation with no penalty. So, go ahead and make your reservations now and make plans to have fun in Port Hueneme!

(Continued from page 1) **Reunion Taking Shape**

with the Port Hueneme trip and thank you, but deposits for our banquet dinner and bus service will take a big bite out of our current resources. There are 14 months before we all gather in Port Hueneme, and that is a long time to go. I can stretch out the Newsletters and publish three more before the reunion instead of the four more normally, and I can drop those from the mail list that would prefer to just receive the on-line Newsletter, but let me know which way to go. Send me your letters and emails. By the fourth issue of the newsletter a few years ago, we would have over 300 members paid up by now, so we are thinning out and that puts a crimp in our finances. If you can help, please do. Thanks, Scott

SEABEES

June - October Dates to Remember

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.
July 4	Independence Day!
July 26, 1944	Seabee land on Tinian
Aug. 6, 1945	Bombing of Hiroshima
Aug. 7, 1942	1st Marine Division lands on Guadalcanal
Aug. 9, 1942	Battle of Savo Island
Aug. 9, 1945	Bombing of Nagasaki
Aug. 11, 1942	USNCTC Camp Endicott, Davisville, RI commissioned "Original Home of the Seabees"
Aug. 14, 1945	Japan accepts terms of Potsdam Declaration
Aug. 20, 1942	OIC, 6th NCB arrives at Guadalcanal, first CEC/Seabee officer to enter a combat zone.
Sept. 1, 1942	6th NCB Seabees arrive at Guadalcanal, first Seabees to enter a combat zone.
Sept. 2, 1945	Formal surrender of Japan. WW II ends.
Sept. 14, 1892	Admiral Ben Moreell's Birthday.
Sept. 15, 1950	MCB 2 Commissioned.
Oct. 13, 1775	Navy Birthday
Oct. 16, 1942	Eight men of the 6th NCB killed at Guadalcanal, first Seabees killed in action. Seaman B. Meyer awarded Silver Star posthumously.



Notes from our members:

From 'Holly' (Fran)

Hollingsworth: Our thanks to you and all of **Holly's** brothers-in-arms who kept our dues paid for a time when our health kept us from doing it [brothers-in-arms and **Mary Dick**, a real sweetheart!]. Right now, I know we are late again but please forgive us and keep us in your prayers [done!]. **Holly** is a COPD patient and it is very severe. In the 2½ years we have lived in Pearland, TX he has been hospitalized six times because of it. We love getting the Newsletter and keeping up with all that is going on with MCB 2. Again, our thanks to all who helped, and know that you guys mean a lot to us..... from **Fred Simon:** I would like to thank you for the Newsletter. I enjoy hearing about our membership and their activities. At 79, I feel I couldn't make the reunions but enjoy the pictures and stories about what is happening. I would like to have two American flags. Enclosed is my check to cover them. The wind here in Vermont has been horrendous. 50 miles an hour and wet snow hanging on to everything. Temperatures in the 20's. My power has been off more than on and we need it for our water and heat; the animals, quail (and eggs), chickens (and eggs), horses and sheep and the filtration and aeration of our Koi pond. It has been tough but now it's going to 75° and maybe 80° this weekend. Thank God. [since this letter, I had written **Fred** by email. I received this response] The economy here in Vermont is really bad. I received my notice that since there was no increase in costs last year, I wouldn't get a COLA from Social Security, (where are they shopping?) The farmers market is suffering, my wife's son's Green Mountain Grill has many fewer customers, etc.etc. I have a 4X6 Embroidered star flag and a Seabee flag on my pole. I need two for my neighbors. I keep the town of Pittsfield supplied with one when needed, too. I had an accident last week with my table saw. They amputated my index and middle fingers of my left hand at the first



joint. I'm not hurting much physically but mentally a lot. I didn't want to go thru life with another problem. Since I have two titanium knees, a pacemaker/defibulator, diabetes, C.O.P.D. and glaucoma and now this.....Life is a bitch then you die! I've fixed the horse and sheep fences that the snow pushed down, let them and the chickens out as the snow is finally gone. BUT the snowmobilers, snowboarders and skiers are gone too. That's most of Vermont's income from visitors..... from **Jesse (Carol) Wilson:** Please apply the enclosed check to dues owed by **Jesse Wilson**. Any extra, apply where needed. Sorry to be late and thanks for sending the Newsletter. We also have a new address [see pg. 10]..... from **Bob Janson:** Late as usual, but here is a check for my dues [thanks]..... from **Norm Pratt:** I enjoy reading about the activities of MCB 2 [**Norm** is a dear friend in Las Vegas that was with NCB 124.] received dues from **Bill (Shari) Wisnowski, Don (Winifred) Grobbel, Gerry Seger, Richard (Jean) Skillicorn** and **Jim Wommack** [thanks]..... from **Mel Dixon:** I noticed I am not on the Good Guy List. I have been in the hospital and nursing home most of the year so I am behind on everything. If I owe more, let me know [you're OK for now and thanks]. Thanks for all your trouble..... from **Dolores Hardoin: Len** passed away on Jan. 8, 2010..... from **Juanita Hershberger** (for **Leonard 'Hersh' Hershberger**) Thank you so much for continuing to send me the MCB 2 Newsletter. I read it cover to cover. Tho' I know **Hersh** is gone, I know he would like me to keep getting it, altho' I am sure most of his Seabee buddies have passed on..... from **Betty Krygier:** Thanks for sending me the Newsletter. I enjoy hearing all the news. Enclosed is my check for **Emil's** dues and a bit extra for the Newsletter..... from **Pat (Ralph) Presson:** [**Ralph** called me asking for some flags] Thank you..... from **Les (Marge) Keller:** Sorry this is late. I thought I had mailed it. **Les** is doing well..... from **A.N. Olsen:** I thought I had better get a few bucks off to you to help pay the postage [thank you very much!]. Really appreciate your efforts with the Newsletter and keep up the good work. BZ..... from **Ray Sorrentino** [by email]: Reading the Newsletter, it reads on page 3 of the April 2 issue from **Tony Mas-**



(Continued from page 3)

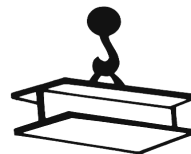
troianni that he is the only one from the original CBD 1803 made up on Guam in 1951. Let him know that there were about 40 men from 1803 and one of them was me. You [Scott] have the pictures on file [guess I'll have to dig a bit and find them]..... from **George Rosen-vold**: I am sorry to report that another one of our comrades has fallen. **Kenneth O. Stoutland**, who I served with in Korea 1952-1953, passed away in Boca Raton, Florida on March 17th. We served together at K-3 with CBMU 101. Enclosed are a few bucks if you would please send me an up-to-date roster [on the way]..... from **Pat Cunningham**: Please apply this check to my dues. Sorry I'm late [not a problem and thanks]..... from **Pat Presson**: We received the flags so fast we couldn't believe it! Thanks a lot. You did not charge us enough for postage so here is some more [thank you!]. Take care..... from **Harry Agles**: Sorry I am late but put me on the Good Guy list again [thanks, and you are on!]. As we get older (81) we do forget things..... from **Walt Ahern**: Had a great time at Myrtle Beach. Sorry I am late with my dues and here is a check for dues plus other expenses [thanks]. Hope to see you all at Port Hueneme..... from **Joe Sobczak**: Enclosed are my dues to get back on the Good Guys List [you're back and thanks]. Sorry for being late..... from **Shorty Campbell**: [enclosed a check for dues plus some extra] Please mail me a current roster. Thank you..... received a check from **Don Hofstetter** for the flags.....from **Walt Hagen**: No procrastination this time. This check goes out in the morning [thanks]..... **Jack Schrader**: Enclosed is a check for the flags you sent, with some extra for shipping and handling. I also want to thank you for the information you sent me regarding VA assistance regarding **Tom Roy's** problem. I sent this information /on to **Tom's** son and was informed that they already had this information. I also received a call from **Tom** and he sounded pretty normal. His son told me he was doing good health-wise, but his short-term memory is completely gone and they



have someone to stay with him during the day. Thanks again for sending the flags and the VA information from **Dick Forster**: I was with CBMU 1 at Pohang in 1952-'53. I have a lot of pictures taken there that I would be glad to share [I would love

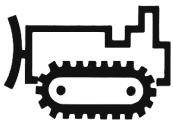


to have you send them, **Dick**. I have received an envelope full of old photos from **John (Jack) Ryan** that I will add to the Newsletter from time to time. See pages 9 & 10 of this issue for a few.]..... from **Pat (Ann) Carey**: **Pat** said to use the excess from the check for the flags for his dues [done! And thanks]. He never knows how far ahead he is paid. Or just use it for whatever you need..... from **Marshall Williams**: Long time no see... hope all is well [it is! Grandkids were here, summer is great and the livin' is easy!]. I just got off the phone with **Don Eminhizer**. We covered the history of the Korean War. Our part, that is. It sure feels good to chat with old buddies like that. What would we do without the past? I lost my wife on May 19th. She had been ill and suffered a long time. Her heart just gave out in the ambulance on the last trip to the hospital. We had 53 great years. All the guys who served in Trinidad will remember her. That beautiful blond with very long blond hair. She worked hard in Trinidad. She decorated the hotel auditorium when we had the Seabee Birthday Balls. I got the nicest part. Being Lead Chief, I was assigned to escorting the Queen up to the stage to the Captain of the base, **Robert Coates**. How's that??!! I'm enclosing a check for dues and give my best to everyone..... from **L.P. (Pop) Burleigh**: It's that time again for my MCB 2 dues. Enclosed is a check for my dues. I wish I could make the trip to Port Hueneme, but my wife is practically unable to travel any distance and I just cannot leave her alone for that long [absolutely! We understand]. I do hear from my old buddy **Stoney Serrett**. He lives about 1½ hours from me. Hello to all of you out there. I sure miss seeing all of you..... from **Ernest Owens**: Through the years I have enjoyed reading about MCB 2 and its people. God permitting, sometime around the end of 2011, my wife and I plan to return to Costa Rica. We own two houses there now and we plan to have a big house constructed on the top of a mountain. The scenery for miles is just fantastic. We will not need air conditioning or heating. Three years ago, a house was built for my wife's parents next to our home there. Her Papa is 105 and her mother is in her late 90's. There is no industry and no politicians. Just pure fresh air. I will be 85 next November and my wife will be 48 in August. You are do-



(Continued from page 4)

ing a fantastic job as our secretary/
treasurer. In your Newsletter, you
mentioned **Howard Doyle** and I had
a friend named **Bob Doyle**. Could
they be the same person? [no, two
different people.] **Bob** was from
Dripping Springs, Texas. I'm sorry I was never
able to attend any of the reunions so as to get to
know you and others. I was in Company A and did
not know too many shipmates in the other compa-
nies..... received a check for a cap from **Charles
Loeffler** [thanks]..... from **Ray Nethercott**:
Guess I slipped off the list. I want to slip back on it
[you're back! Thanks]..... from **Stiles Stevens**:
I've been waiting to hear more info about the reu-
nion of CBMU 101 and all the other "hangers-on".
Particularly, what hotels are you considering, or
which one was picked? I hope the Best Western in
Oxnard, then I can keep getting Best Western
points. A few weeks ago I was passing thru the
Virginia Highland section of NE Atlanta and found
a copy of the "Ponce Press" for June 2010. I no-
ticed, buried in its few pages, the attached ad for the
233rd Seabee Battalion of the Navy League's Sea
Cadet Corps program. I talked today to the C.O.
(ex-Navy Air Officer) and the group is sponsored
by American Legion Post 233 of Logansville, GA.
I thought the 700-plus members on your Good Boy
List might find this of some interest. Looking for-
ward to Port Hueneme next year..... from **Frank
Jacus**: Here's a check for my dues, two US flags
plus some extra for postage [thank you!]..... That
looks like all the letters for now. I hope you enjoy
this issue as it has a couple good stories you will
probably enjoy. And this is the beginning of the
reunion reservation forms. See page 15 for the



form to reserve your room at the
Country Inn. It is a very nice hotel
similar to our stay in St. Louis.
Make your reservations now and
start making plans to come to Port
Hueneme in September 2011! See
you then! Scott

Definitions based on what the word sounds like when spoken out loud:

- Arbitrator: A cook that leaves Arby's to work at McDonald's.
- Avoidable: What a bullfighter tries to do.
- Bernadette: The act of torching a mortgage.
- Burglarize: What a crook sees with.
- Control: A short, ugly inmate.
- Counterfeiters: Workers who put together kitchen cabinets.
- Eclipse: what an English barber does for a living.
- Eyedropper: a clumsy ophthalmologist.
- Heroes: what a guy in a boat does.
- Left Bank: what the robber did when his bag was full of loot.
- Misty: How golfers create divots.
- Paradox: two physicians.
- Parasites: what you see from the top of the Eiffel Tower.
- Pharmacist: a helper on the farm.
- Polarize: what penguins see with.
- Primate: removing your spouse from in front of the TV.
- Relief: what trees do in the spring.
- Rubberneck: what you do to relax your wife.
- Seamstress: describes 250 pounds in a size 6.
- Selfish: what the owner of a seafood store does.
- Sudafed: brought litigation against a government official.
- Subdued: like a guy, like, who works on one of those Attack Submarines.

Ham and eggs, A day's work
for a chicken, a lifetime
commitment for a pig



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Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.

Our Fallen Comrades

Leonard J. Hardoin	1/8/2010
Duane L. Henrichson	5/16/2010
Lee B. Stevens	6/19/2010
Kenneth O. Stoutland	3/17/2010
Karl W. Weisenbacher	8/2009
Fred Wilmarth	2010
James E. Wommack	7/20/2010

May they live on in our memories.

Bills travel through the mail at twice the speed of checks

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

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

The Good Guy List

For 2010

Vance Adams, Harold Agles, Walter Ahern, Allan Alberg, William Alwine, Vern Ammentorp, David Anderson, Gene Antoine, Basil Arnold, Pat Badgett, Ed Ballerstein, V. H. Barnes, Mike Barron, Hank Bentsen, Dan Beran, Frank Betonte, Ralph Binney, Vernon Blakeslee, John Bloem, Bill Body, Alexander (Cat) Borys, Bob Bowdler, Don Bradley, John Brown, Phil Brunelle, Alfred Bryant, David Budworth, Wayne Bulgerin, L.P. 'Pop' Burleigh, Ralph Burnley, Bill Burns, Dan Butcher, Shorty Campbell, Pat Carey, Bennie Carlson, Ed Carlson, Ken Catchpole, Frank Chambers, George Chang, Chuck Chapman, Ken Chew, Bob Colquhoun, Howard Cornwell, Richard Coulson, Warren Culberson, Pat Cunningham, Arnold Daisy, Marvin Dalby, Paul D'Angelo, Stan Dauer, Joe DeFranco, Jim De Keyser, Michael Del Busso, Tony DeLeon, Ted Devit, Mary Dick (for all the Good Guys), Mel Dixon, Robert Doezie, Tom Dowd, Howard Doyle, Harrell Edmondson, Pete Elliott, Don Eminhizer, Doug Emond, Al Erb, Ralph Evans, Richard Fairbanks, Richard Farbo, Galen Farnsworth, Frank Fibich, James Firebaugh, Warren Flading, Forrest Foland, Dick Forster, Jack Foster, Bill Frazier, Harold Freeland, Claude Garcenot, Robert Gardner, Roger Germundson, Ron Glasser, Robert Graf, John Grasz, Jim Green, Clem Gregurek, Frank Gresser, Don Grobbel, Gerald Grubb, Marvin Guetling, George Gustin, Gordon Gwathney, Pauline (for Charlie) Hagemann, Walt Hagen, David Haines, Les Hall, Roger Hamilton, Arlin Hardwick, Roy Harris, Bob Hart, Ralph Heitt, Bert Helms, Don Henderson, Duane Henrichson, Wayne Heple, Althea (Jerry) Herr, Bob Hoare, Tom Hoffman, Don Hofstetter, Charles Hogan, Ben Hollar, M. P. 'Holly' Hollingsworth, Sam Holsomback, Ray Hooter, Rod Howard, Ronald Howatson, Charles Ingalls, Vic Jaccino, Frank Jacus, Bob, Janson, Larry Jessop, Ambros Johnson, Charles Johnson, Don Jones, Lloyd Kallsen, Charles Kangas, Mike Ka-

zarian, Duane Keech, Les Keller, Hark Ketels, Denise King (for her Dad, Don Truskey), William Knight, John Kolasz, James Krause, Betty (Emil) Krygier, Ervin Lampe, Ron Landrum, Charles Loeffler, Herbert Liverman, Dale Lundstrom, Ivan Majetic, Anthony Marcella, Robert Marshall, Tony Mastroianni, Phil Matalucci, William Mayo, Charles McCabe, Norris McDaniel, Riley McDaniel, Gene McDonagh, Don McLain, Bobby McMillan, Grant Millard, Dan Millett, Dan Mills, Chuck Minert, Frank Mingo, Gary Mitchell, Roger Mohs, William Morin, Pat Morris, Finley Morrison, Hance Morton, Paul Muma, Richard Muns, Eugene (Wes) Nelson, Richard Nelson, Ray Nethercott, Opal (for Paul) Neusetzer, Don Nitsche, Joseph O'Brien, Mel Olson, Billy Partridge, Don Pastell, Roy Peak, Mal Pearson, Ben Pedrotti, John Petronka, Norm Pratt, Ralph Presson, Cecil Price, David 'Ernie' Pyle, Sam Ragusa, Robert Rasmussen, Gary Rawlings, John Recklitis, Gene Robinson, Dale Rogers, George Rosenvold, Thomas Roy, John Ruby, C. Edner Rudolph, Paul Schell, Jack Schrader, Gerald Seger, Stoney Serrett, Bill Sharp, Don Shoff, William Sigmund, Richard Sim, Fred Simon, Jack Sims, Art Siple, Glenn Sisco, Joe Sitkowski, Richard Skillicorn, Walter Smith, Joe Sobczak, Ray Sorrentino, Gene Staples, Tom Stapleton, Clyde Stenholm, Lee Stevens, Stiles Stevens, Larry Stevenson, Dan Stewart, George Stewart, John Stock, Willis Struecker, Dan Svendsen, Richard Swallow, Gary Talbert, James Taylor, William Taylor, 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, Jerry Wilkening, Marshall Williams, R. G. 'Pete' Williams, Scott Williams, Fred Wilmarth, Jack Wilson, Jesse Wilson, Preston Wilson, Bill Wisnowski, Jim Wommack, 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 July 18, 2010. There are currently 247 paid up members from a mailing list of 455. If dues have never been sent, they do not receive the Newsletter. There are 732 names on the full member roster (22 pages). (SW)

Vella Lavella

58th Naval Construction Battalion

On August 11, 1943, the 58th prepared to embark from Guadalcanal for the landing on Vella Lavella. An advance party went ahead to survey the site for the airstrip and mark the beach for the landing. This party was composed of the Skipper, CDR. Lewis; Lt. Reynolds; Lt. Currie; W.O. Smith; W. H. Moss; and F.J. Dowling, CCM.

The scouting party boarded PT Boats at Guadalcanal on the afternoon of August 11 for the overnight run up to Vella Lavella. It was a rough trip and not only did the party suffer PT sickness but were spotted by Jap planes who bombed and strafed them for nearly two hours. Lt. Reynolds said afterwards, there was nothing else for us to do but lie under the torpedo tubes and pray. After a while of praying that the bombs would not hit us, we thought better of it and decided that the bombs were not as bad as the seasickness.

The party sneaked ashore just before daylight on August 12. The island was alive with Japanese patrols but they evaded them and began surveying the landing and airstrip sites. However, they did encounter some Japanese, who were wiped out to the man. The men were looking forward to the 15th, when the first detachment of the battalion was due to land, because the Japanese patrols were becoming larger.

Well, if the advance party was having trouble with the Japanese patrols, so did the main landing party. The first detachment to embark boarded two LCI's and two LST's at Koli Point on August 13th. On the night of the 13th, the craft were lying off Lunga Point when Japanese planes attacked them. The attack lasted three hours and during it, the John Penn was sunk, the ship on which we had come to Guadalcanal from the Fiji's. On the morning of the 14th, the convoy shoved off and, at dawn of the 15th, it approached the beach at Vella Lavella.

We began to unload the cargo from the ships at Barakoma Village. The boys with the "BAR's" were acting as guards, and the unloading proceeded very swiftly as we had practiced it many times back on

the "Canal". As the ramps of the LST's came down, men and vehicles rolled out, as most of our equipment was on six wheelers, and bumped into the jungles. Bulldozers were sent ashore and soon coconut and palm trees came crashing down and pushed over with yards of coral to form ramps to the ships. Meanwhile, long lines of men waist deep in water passed boxes of supplies and equipment, for on LCI's all cargo must be man-handled. We all worked feverishly because we knew it was only a matter of a shorter space of time before the Japanese planes would be on us as the whole landing operation could be observed from enemy lookouts on Kolombangara, only thirteen miles across the water. Quite suddenly, the alarm was sounded and all hell broke loose. Every one took off for the boondocks or the ships. High in the sky, planes zoomed and droned, their machine guns spitting leaden death. The first attack lasted five minutes and seemed hours, then it began again. Through some miracle, none of the gang was hurt. When the attack was over, we completed the unloading and moved up a hill to dig in for the night as best we could in foxholes. There were so many attacks during all of the day and the night that it was a continual "Condition Red".

The second echelon landed on August 17 at 1800 and this landing was a mistake, since there was no air coverage from Munda at this late hour in the day. The only defense we had was the few anti-aircraft guns that had been set up. Attempts were made to unload the ships but the constant air attacks made this impossible. The LST's pulled off the beach and one of them was hit and had to be sunk. We lost considerable equipment on this ship. The next day, the remaining two were beached and were unloaded.

The third wave landed on August 22nd. This bunch really got the business for, by now, the Japanese really had us spotted and knew what we were about to do. In the early morning about 1000, they came over and bombed us at about 800 feet. At top speed, screaming eerily over the jungle, the Jap bombers flew to the attack. The ships gunners returned their fire, but still the planes came in and released their loads of destruction. In a formation of six, one suddenly wavers and to the cheers of the gang, it bursts into a bright pyre of flames as the gunners found their mark. The other five however, broke through and plastered us. They didn't miss the target at this range

(Continued from page 8)

and of the fifteen bombs that fell, not one was less than a hundred yards from the ships. It was a literal rain of death, when the bombers pulled out of their shrieking plunge, not a man on the ships deck was left standing. The guns were either blasted to scrap or choked with coral dust.

While the smoke and dust of the explosions still blanketed the ships, the gang on the beach and below the decks swarmed aboard to clean up. They found the decks littered with coral boulders, wounded and dead shipmates. Many men of the battalion had manned guns during this raid and Roger Poulin, Sam Barker and Steve Pavlick of Company 'D' were badly wounded. On the beach lay Bob Neumann, CM3C, our first fatal casualty of the enemy.

The fourth wave arrived on August 26th and the fifth on August 31st and by this time raids were lessened due to the Marine Defense Battalion being set up in action. During the first few days of the landings, over 34 Japanese planes were shot down with only a loss of two of ours.

After the landings, we set about to build a campsite and establish an airfield previously surveyed by the advance party. Slow progress was made because we were constantly under "Condition Red" because of the lack of air protection in the first few days. Vella Lavella was captured by bypassing other islands fortified by the Japanese, such as Kolomban-gara, Ganongga, Gizo and several other smaller islands north of Munda in the New Georgia group. The Munda airfield was still subject to night attacks, which were quite frequent, and, of course, Vella being north of Munda, they had us coming or going. Major General Twining, Commander of aircraft in the Solomon's at that time said, "it was the toughest, densest jungle in all the South Pacific, and the 58th Seabees have constructed a modern field set up for bomber fighter transport craft, whipped the field in shape in record time making it the best in the Solomon's although the hardest to construct."

Love may be blind but marriage is a real eye-opener



From John Ryan, CBMU 577: USO Show on Tarawa, July 1944
L-R: Frances Langford, Patty Thomas, Bob Hope, Jerry Colona.



From John Ryan:
Patty Thomas, Tony Romero, Frances Langford; Tarawa, July 1944





CBMU 577 Camp, Tarawa—July 1944 from John Ryan



From John Ryan
USO Show, Tarawa, July 1944 - Jack Benny and Carole Landis



CBMU 577 celebrating their first anniversary overseas.
From John Ryan

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 (or CBMU 1, etc.)

Dues are \$20/year
January - December

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

MAKE A NOTE! ADDRESS CORRECTION

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chagemann@satx.rr.com

Stiles F. Stevens
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Westwood, MA 02090-1111
(only until September)

Jesse L. Wilson
7235 Riverwalk Way N., #222
Noblesville, IN 46062

Being "over the hill" is much better than being under it!

Bill Mauldin

I was one of those that made the trek to Newport Beach to visit with Bill Mauldin. He was bedridden and unable to talk, but I took my copy of his book, *Up Front*, and read one of his stories, a funny tale. When I finished reading, Bill smiled and let out a small laugh. The nurse that was nearby said that was the first response she had seen from him. I stayed with him about an hour and left my Seabees card and a Seabee pin on the bulletin board next to his bed to which all the military men before me had affixed their pins and badges. I felt honored to have been able to be with him for a short while. One of my good memories..... and he still looked like the kid in the picture on the stamp.

Scott

Bill Mauldin Stamp Honors Grunts' Hero

By Bob Green - CNN Contributing Editor

Makes ya proud to put this stamp on your envelopes.....



The post office gets a lot of criticism. Always has, always will. And with the renewed push to get rid of Saturday mail delivery, expect complaints to intensify. But the United States Postal Service deserves a standing ovation for something that happened last month: Bill Mauldin got his own postage stamp.



Mauldin died at age 81 in the early days of 2003. The end of his life had been rugged. He had been scalded in a

(Continued on page 12)

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(Continued from page 11)

bathbub, which led to terrible injuries and infections; Alzheimer's disease was inflicting its cruelties. Unable to care for himself after the scalding, he became a resident of a California nursing home, his health and spirits in rapid decline.



He was not forgotten, though. Mauldin, and his work, meant so much to the millions of Americans who



"Now that ya mention it, Joe, it does sound like th' patter of rain on a tin roof."

fought in World War II, and to those who had waited for them to come home. He was a kid cartoonist for Stars and Stripes, the military newspaper; Mauldin's drawings of his muddy, exhausted, whisker-stubbed infantrymen Willie and Joe were the voice of truth about what it was like on the front lines.



"I need a couple guys what don't owe me no money fer a little routine patrol."

Mauldin was an enlisted man just like the soldiers he drew for; his gripes were their gripes, his laughs were their laughs, his heartaches were their heartaches. He was one of them. They loved him.



"I'm beginning to feel like a fugitive from th' law of averages."

(Continued from page 12)

He never held back. Sometimes, when his cartoons cut too close for comfort, his superior officers tried to tone him down. In one memorable incident, he enraged Gen. George S. Patton, and Patton informed Mauldin he wanted the pointed cartoons -- celebrating the fighting men, lampooning the high-ranking officers -- to stop. Now.

The news passed from soldier to soldier. How was Sgt. Bill Mauldin going to stand up to Gen. Patton? It seemed impossible.

Not quite. Mauldin, it turned out, had an ardent fan: Five star Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, supreme commander of the Allied forces in Europe. Ike put out the word: Mauldin draws what Mauldin wants. Mauldin won. Patton lost.



"I calls her Florence Nightingale."

If, in your line of work, you've ever considered yourself a young hotshot, or if you've ever known anyone who has felt that way about himself or herself, the story of Mauldin's young manhood will humble you. Here is what, by the time he was 23 years old, Mauldin had accomplished:

- He won the Pulitzer Prize.
- He was featured on the cover of Time magazine.
- His book "Up Front" was the No. 1 best-seller in the United States.

All of that at 23. Yet when he returned to civilian life

and he grew older, he never lost that boyish Mauldin grin, he never outgrew his excitement about doing his job, he never big-shotted or high-hatted the people with whom he worked every day.

I was lucky enough to be one of them; Mauldin roamed the hallways of the Chicago Sun-Times in the late 1960s and early 1970s with no more officiousness or air of haughtiness than if he was a copyboy. That impish look on his face remained. He had achieved so much. He had won a second Pulitzer Prize, and he should have won a third, for what may be the single greatest editorial cartoon in the history of the craft: his deadline rendering, on the day President John F. Kennedy was assassinated, of the statue at the Lincoln Memorial slumped in grief, its head cradled in its hands. But he never acted as if he was better than the people he met. He was still Mauldin the enlisted man.



During the late summer of 2002, as Mauldin lay in that California nursing home, some of the old World War II infantry guys caught wind of it. They didn't want Mauldin to go out that way. They thought he should know that he was still their hero.

Gordon Dillow, a columnist for the Orange County Register, put out the call in Southern California for people in the area to send their best wishes to Mauldin; I joined Dillow in the effort, helping to spread the appeal nationally so that Bill would not feel so alone. Soon more than 10,000 letters and cards had arrived at Mauldin's bedside.

Even better than that, the old soldiers began to show up just to sit with Mauldin, to let him know that they were there for him, as he, long ago, had been there for

(Continued from page 13)

them. So many volunteered to visit Bill that there was a waiting list. Here is how Todd DePastino, in the first paragraph of his wonderful biography of Mauldin, described it:



"Ordnance? Ah'm havin' trouble with mah shootin' arn."



"Th' hell this ain't th' most important hole in the world. I'm in it."

"Almost every day in the summer and fall of 2002 they came to Park Superior nursing home in Newport Beach, California, to honor Army Sergeant, Technician Third Grade, Bill Mauldin. They came bearing relics of their youth: medals, insignia, photographs, and carefully folded newspaper clippings. Some wore old garrison

caps. Others arrived resplendent in uniforms over a half century old. Almost all of them wept as they filed down the corridor like pilgrims fulfilling some long-neglected obligation."

One of the veterans explained to me why it was so important:

"You would have to be part of a combat infantry unit to appreciate what moments of relief Bill gave us. You had to be reading a soaking wet Stars and Stripes in a water-filled foxhole and then see one of his cartoons."

Mauldin is buried in Arlington National Cemetery. Last month, the kid cartoonist made it onto a first-class postage stamp. It's an honor that most generals and admirals never receive.

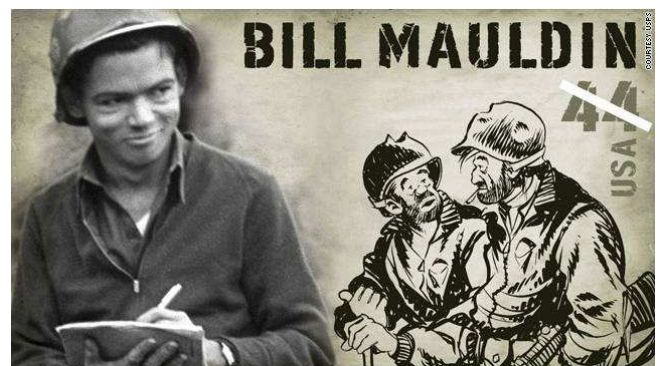
What Mauldin would have loved most, I believe, is the sight of the two guys who are keeping him company on that stamp.

Take a look at it. There's Willie. There's Joe.



"Joe, yestiddy ya saved my life an' I swore I'd pay ya back. Here's my last pair of dry socks."

And there, to the side, drawing them and smiling that shy, quietly observant smile, is Mauldin himself. With his buddies, right where he belongs. Forever.



Bill Mauldin stamp honors grunts' hero.

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