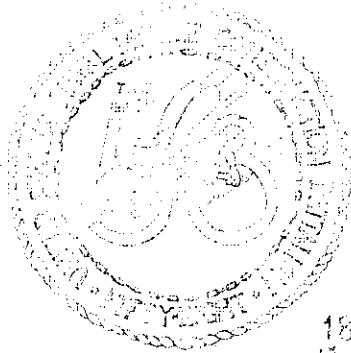


Fifty-Eight



Family Gram

18 November 1966  
Camp Haskins, Da Nang  
Republic of Vietnam

Greetings:

Nearly a month has passed since we left Davisville, and we are now comfortably settled in our camp. It is named for the late Second Class Don Haskins of MCB-Nine who was killed last year in a mortar attack on a hospital that Nine was building. Our camp was built by MCB-One on a long stretch of beach facing the South China Sea, just north of Da Nang. Because our Battalion is considerably larger than MCB-One, we have been working on camp expansion and improvement. Within a short time we will have, beyond doubt, the best camp in Vietnam. Besides ourselves, Camp Haskins includes a camp occupied by MCB-Nine, which is homeported in Port Hueneme, California, and the 30th Naval Construction Regiment. The Regiment, commanded by Captain G. R. Marshall, is our operational commander, and provides our on-scene direction, assigning workload and checking progress.

The administrative direction of the Battalion continues to be provided by Commander Naval Construction Battalions, U. S. Atlantic Fleet, located in Davisville. During the period of our departure from Davisville, a new Commander took over this important post. He is Captain Greer A. Durbee, Jr.

Since our arrival, we have been working on many projects throughout the area. Our work includes building a huge wood-truss covered storage building; erecting pre-fabricated metal shop buildings; constructing troop huts, a 500 man mess hall, electrical distribution systems, sewage and water systems; interior plumbing and wiring; road work; an aircraft parking apron; two large walk-in refrigerator complexes; quarry blasting; and working on the ever present camp maintenance.

We are doing this work for four principal customers: The Force Logistics Support Group for Da Nang, the Force Logistics Command for the northern portion of Vietnam, the First Marine Division, and the 30th Naval Construction Regiment. The first two are Marine Corps supply system commands, the third a Marine infantry command, and the last is our Seabee commander. The workload is varied, giving us at long last our chance to put all of our training to use.

One of the things noticed and commented on by all of us has been the monsoon season. As any of our advance party will testify, the rains are extremely unpredictable. In one week during October it rained 22 inches, 8 in one day. Most of the time, however, the weather is moderate and sunny, with temperatures around 80. Most of the men are taking advantage of the sun to progress with their projects and get a good sun tan.

Despite our 65 hour work week, we will take time to observe our national holidays. Thanksgiving is just around the corner, and our cooks are planning a big, traditional turkey dinner with all the trimmings. We are also planning a special Thanksgiving Day service in our chapel. Another holiday rapidly approaching is Christmas. I know many of you intend to send packages to your Seabee. By the time you receive this Family-gram, any packages you intended to send by ordinary parcel post should have been in the mail already to assure delivery by Christmas. Packages you intend to send by air parcel post should be mailed by December 1st to assure Christmas delivery. I'm sure all the men will appreciate anything sent them this holiday season. A little "touch of home" is always welcome.

In addition to Christmas mail, I would again encourage you to write frequently. Mail call is the most popular time of day for all of us, and we all like to hear our names included.

Sincerely,



W. B. DeGroot, 111  
Commander, CCC, USN  
Commanding Officer