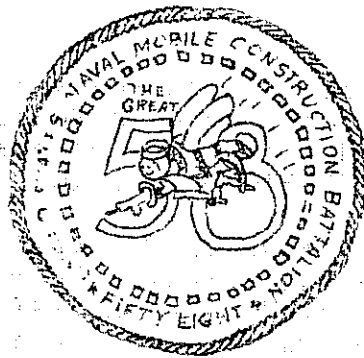


FIFTY-EIGHT



FAMILYGRAM

Hoi An  
Republic of Vietnam  
25 May 1968

Dear Family,

For most of us time is truly flying by. Hard work on our many jobs by day, good food, and comfortable nights for sleeping seem to fully occupy our time, but we do try to mark every special occasion or event with something out of the ordinary. Most important was Easter, which we observed with a sunrise worship service. Were we at home I might say that the service was marred by rain. Actually, the rain was brief, and a welcome change from the heat and dust. Two weeks after Easter we passed the half-way point on our current deployment. We celebrated by declaring that Sunday to be "Hump Day", a full day of rest and relaxation for the months ahead.

Despite the hot weather, our cooks have continued to provide us with the best prepared food in the Navy. They work out of two small galleys and most of our Seabees here in Hoi An eat in mess tents, but all of us declare their efforts to be "number one". Proof of this is the number of U. S. Marines who "happen" to be in the camp at meal hours. With food like this, it is no wonder that morale is high.

Adding to our high morale is the tremendous satisfaction everyone is getting from working on the Korean cantonment in Hoi An. There was a time, only a few months ago, when there was nothing but sand, trees, and Viet Cong here. Now there are over 700 buildings dotting the landscape, and a five mile road cutting through the area, all built by "The Great FIFTY-EIGHT". Some VC no doubt remain, but their suppression is in the hands of the South Korean Marines - capable hands indeed.

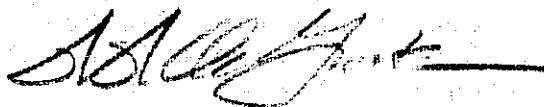
Overall morale is also enhanced by the R&R program. The 5 days out of Vietnam have been a welcome change for all who have participated. The possible locations to visit on R&R are many, but the most popular sites are Hawaii, Australia, Hong Kong, Bangkok, and Tokyo. It now appears that one out-of-country R&R will be available for every FIFTY-EIGHT Seabee who wants to go and has the necessary good disciplinary record.

All these things help create good morale, but none of them, nor all of them put together, are as important to our Seabees as letters from home - letters that make home seem closer - letters that let him know you care.

Our latest issue of BLAZE is enclosed for your information and enjoyment. You will note that I am soon to be relieved as Commanding Officer by Commander C. J. Mathews, a fine officer who I know will soon become as proud of FIFTY-EIGHT as I am.

This will be my last opportunity to write to all of you in the FIFTY-EIGHT Family. I wish there were some way that I could let each of you know how much I appreciate the sacrifices, some great, some small, that you have had to make so that your son, or husband, or sweetheart, could have the privilege of serving his country with an untroubled mind. Your Seabee in FIFTY-EIGHT is among the best men in the land. On this deployment, here at Hoi An, in DaNang, Nam Hoa, Soc Trang, and Chau Duc, he has worked miracles. I can only say - thank you. May God bless you all.

Sincerely,



W. W. DeGROOT III  
Commander, CEC, U. S. Navy  
Commanding Officer