

20th Naval Construction Battalion

*Historical
Information*



*“Construimus, Batuimus”
“We Build, We Fight”*



20th C.B. 1st Section

20th C.B.

1st Embarkation
 NCTC - Norfolk
 ABD - Hueneme, 14 Sep'42
 Ready Date - 28 Sep'42
 Left ABD - ~~1st Wave, 15 Oct'42~~ 6 Oct'42
 2nd Wave, 26 Nov'42
 Destination - ~~Epic Woodlark~~ Australia (Brisbane) - Russells

2nd Embarkation
 NCTC -
 ABD - Parks
 Ready Date - 1 Feb'45
 Left ABD - 1 Feb'45
 Location - Saipan
 Okinawa

7- 3-44 - Early history of 20th CB 1st Sect. from enc. "H" of CinC ltr L16-H over Ser. 0203 conf. ltr to Budocks dtd 31 May'44:

Departed U.S. 10/6/42
 Arrived Noumea10/20/42
 Departed Noumea 5/13/43
 Arrived Townsville, Australia 5/20/43
 Departed " " 6/26/43
 Arrived Woodlark Is. 6/30/43

LOG

- 9-12-42 - 20th CB left Norfolk 14 Sep'42 for Hueneme. (CO Norfolk letter of 13 Sep'42 P16-4/P16-3/MM/00 Ser 4294 jgd to Lt. Dudley)
- 10/15/42 - (Date approx.) - 1st Wave of this Batt. left Hueneme on rush call for temporary stevedoring assignment.
- 11/26/42 - 2nd Wave departed and Batt. will resume operation as a unit; presumably will be assigned new duty. Roster for 2nd Wave shows 9 officers and 401 men.
- 1/ 1/43 - Sections 1 and 2 united 13 Dec'42.

1.

20th C.B. 1st Sect.

- 1-20-43 - 20th C.B. at White Poppy engaged in stevedore work and upon relief by 2nd CB Special will engage construction projects in White Poppy area.
- 5-11-43 - At Noumea. One-half of this batt to be detached at early date. (ComNavBasesSoPac area to ComSoPac Sec. ltr. dtd 5-11-43)
- 7-13-43 - 1 Jun'43 report of 20th CB - 18 officers and approx. 1/2 batt transferred to ALDER, known as Forward Echelon, balance of batt remaining at Epic.
- 7-22-43 - 2 Companies with a Naval Base Unit. (Secret report 6-13-43 - PWO 7th flt to Budocks.)
- 8-28-43 - 1 Aug'43 report of 20th CB - Forward Echelon of 20th CB at Woodlark - 526 men.
- 9-20-43 - May & June report 20th CB Rear Echelon - arrived Guadalcanal 14 Jun'43, Russell Is. 16 Jun'43. Echelon split into 2 groups; 1 1/2 companies under Lt. Riordan going to Ohene Bay, Vengunu Is.; 1 Company under Lt. Sanders going to Viru Harbor, New Georgia Is.
- 9-21-43 - 1 Aug'43 report - Detachment of 2 officers, 1 warrant and 142 men are at Viru Harbor under Lt. W. L. Sanders. 12 officers and 402 men at Oleana Bay.
- 9-30-43 - 20th CB, 1st Sect. is attached to the 7th fleet. The 2nd Section is serving with the 3rd Fleet. (VCNO conf. disy. to Com7thflt 272043 NCR 3341 Sep.)
- 10- 5-43 - Aug'43 report (Secret) Forward Echelon still at Woodlark.
- 10- 9-43 - 1st Sect. of 20th CB to be designated as "Forward Echelon". (Conf ltr from 20th CB, Ser 118, 24 Sep'43)
- 11-20-43 - 1 Sep'43 report of 20th CB - Expects to return to Brisbane soon for a rest in Brisbane, then to build ABCD at Brisbane, later to move to Milne Bay. 12 officers and 306 men now at Kiriurna, balance at Woodlark.

2.

20th C.B. - 2nd Sect.

- 9-30-43 - 20th CB, 2nd Sect. serving with the 3rd Fleet. (VCNO conf. disp. to Com7flt 272043 NCR 3341 Sep.) (Our officer roster selected by process of elimination from the 31 Aug'43 roster from the 2nd Sect. of the 20th CB)
- 10-21-43 - August report of Vini Harbor detachment, part of 2nd Section, now consists of 3 officers and 128 men. ~~SECRET~~
- 11-10-43 - 1 Oct'43 report - A detachment of 3 officers and 114 men departed for Base Is. for duty.
- 12-10-43 - 1 Nov'43 report - 20th CB, 2nd Sect., operating at Wickham, Ondonga, Bau Is., Roviana, Doke-Koke Is.
- 2-14-44 - 1 Jan'44 report of 20th CB, 2nd Sect. - This section detached from the 15th Reg. 20 Dec'43 and ordered to Russell Is. to operate the ABCD Annex. Work completed at Ondonga. Work continued at Bau Is. awaiting transportation at which time the work will be taken over by the 37th CB. 31 Dec'43, first echelon of 3 officers and 54 men departed from Ondonga for the Russells. Unit at Bau consists of 4 officers and 195 men. Unit at Doke-Koke consists of 1 officer and 15 men. This batt. reported at Russell Is. on 1 Jan and 13 Jan'44.
- 4-20-44 - 1 Mar'44 report - 20th CB, 2nd Sect. operating at ABCD Annex, Russell Is.
- 5-10-44 - 1 Apr'44 report - 20th CB, 2nd Sect. operating at ABCD Annex, Russell Is.
- 5-31-44 - 1 May'44 report - operating at ABCD Annex, Russells. This section received 100 men from BCDD and 100 from CD 2275.
- 7- 1-44 - 1st and 2nd Sections of 20th CB reunited 6 Jun'44 at Russells (20th CB 2nd Sect. spltr to Comsopac ser. A16-3/NM over O12 dtd 10 Jun'44)
- 7- 4-44 - 20 CB 2nd Sec Rep of 1 Jun'44 -- operating at ABCD Annex Russells. It is expected that the operation of the Annex will be turned over to the 24th CB.

3.

20th C.B. 1st Sect.

- 12-29-43 - 20th CB, Sect. 1 located at Kiriwina, to move to Woodlark in December. (Secret BN166/A1-1-5455/Com7thflt to BuDocks dtd Nov'43)
- 2- 3-44 - 1 Jan'44 report of 20th CB - After this batt removes installations at Woodlark, the unit will be withdrawn to Brisbane for rest.
- 2-25-44 - 20th CB is no longer with the 15th Reg. (AES) (Probably the 2nd Section)
- 3-15-44 - 1 Feb'44 report - Construction work ceased 7 Jan'44 to prepare to evacuate the Woodlark Is.
- 5-27-44 - 1 Apr'44 report - location not indicated except that 1st and 2nd endorsement by the 12th Reg. and 3rd Brig. 3rd end. by Gilli Gilli Naval Base.
- 6-22-44 - 1 May'44 report - Work was completed at Woodlark 16 Apr'44. Embarked 16 Apr'44 and arrived Milne Bay 17 Apr'44. Departed Milne Bay 24 Apr'44 and arrived at Brisbane 30 Apr'44. At present time quartered at Camp SeaBee near Brisbane pending further movement. Not attached to a regiment during period of this report (endorsed by 12th Reg.)
- 6-29-44 - Sup. Report for Apr'44 - According to 3rd end. by ComserFor7thflt dtd 10 Jun'44 the 20th CB 1st Sect. left Batt. Staging and Receiving Barracks Facilities 1 Jun'44 for the South Pacific area.
- 7- 1-44 - 1st and 2nd Section of 20th CB reunited 6 Jun'44 at Russells. (20th CB 2nd Sect. spltr to ComSoPac ser A16-3/NM over O12 dtd 10 Jun'44)
- 7- 7-44 - 20th CB 1st Sect. is located at Brisbane preparing to move to Sopac Area. (Comserfor7flt Sec. ltr A-9-4 over Ser 00673 to Budocks dtd 14 Jun'44)
- 7-13-44 - 1 Jun'44 report of 1st Sect. - In accordance with Comserfor7flt orders, this Section embarked and departed from Brisbane on 2 Jun and arrived at Russell Is. 6 Jun'44 where it joined with 2nd Sect.

4.

- 6-28-45 - 1 Jun'45 report of 20th CB - located at Okinawa. The 2nd echelon comprised of 4 officers & 276 men sailed from Saipan on 7 May'45 and joined the 1st echelon on Okinawa on 14 May'45. Report routed via 42nd Reg & 10th Brig.
- 7-14-45 - 20th CB detached 1 July from the 42nd Reg of the 10th Brg. Ordered to proceed immediately and report to OinC 11th Brg. for duty. (10th Brg sec orders ser 11027 dtd 1 July to OinC 20th CB)
- 7-16-45 - 1 Jul'45 report of the 20th CB - located at Okinawa. On 29 June, the batt moved from its bivouac area near Gusikawa into a permanent area about a mile from the Awashi Airstrip. Report via the 42nd Reg and 10th Brg.
- 7-30-45 - The 20th CB is assigned to the 11th Brg and 45th Reg effective 10 July. (COT APO 331 sec report on assignment of CB units ser 897 dtd 10 July)
- 8-20-45 - 1 Aug'45 report of the 20th CB - located at Okinawa. Report via 45th Reg and 11th Brg. vation
- 9-11-45 - Inactivation of following CB units approved Comservpac disps 291935, 290051 & 290007 all Aug:- 4,6,7,17,20,66,74, 78 & 87 CBs - Okinawa. (Cinpoa conf spdltr ser 032559 dtd 4 Sept'45 to Comservpac).
- 9-28-45 - 1 Sept'45 report of 20th CB - located at Okinawa. Report via 45th Reg. & 11th Brig. rpt states that the 20th CB was inactivated on 26 Aug'45 & pers. assigned to other units. 839 men transferred to other batta. 132 men transferred to RecSta for discharge under the point system.
- 9-29-45 - Comservpac directs to inactivate the following CBs 4, 6, 7, 17, 20, 66, 74, 78 & 87. Inform Comservpac when inactivations are completed. (Comservpac conf spdltr ser 05174 dtd 11 Sept'45 to Comdt., NOB, Okinawa).

7.

20th CB

- 11-26-45 - 20th CB was inactivated on 8 Nov'45. (20th CB air mail ltr ser 996 dtd 8 Nov'45 to Comservpac).

INACTIVATED

8.

ON BOARD

<u>DATE</u>	<u>OFFICERS</u>	<u>MEN</u>	<u>AUTHORITY</u>
1 Jul'44	29	1014	MoR
1 Aug'44	29	1021	MoR
1 Sep'44	29	990	MoR
1 Mar'45	27	1040	MoR
1 Apr'45	27	1038	BNP625 & MoR
1 May'45		1024	BNP625
1 Jun'45	27	1025	BNP625 & R
1 Jul'45	26	989	Roster & BNP625
1 Aug'45	26	979	BNP625 & R
1 Sept'45			
1 Oct'45	12		R

20th Construction Battalion (INACTIVATED)

History of the 20th Naval Construction Battalion

The 20th Naval Construction Battalion was commissioned on August 20, 1942, at Camp Allen, Virginia, with Commander Allen F. Jones designated Officer in Charge. On September 14 the battalion left Camp Allen by rail and arrived at Port Hueneme on September 20th.

At Port Hueneme the battalion was divided into two sections. On October 6th the first section, with Lieutenant Dudley in charge, sailed from San Francisco and arrived at Noumea, New Caledonia, on October 14th.

The second section, with Commander Jones in charge, left San Pedro, California, on November 29th and joined the first section on Noumea on December 13th.

The entire battalion performed stevedoring from October 1942 to April 1943 in support of the Guadalcanal campaign. In addition, the 20th Seabees constructed roads and concrete foundations for warehouses and made repairs on a number of ships, including the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise.

The battalion was again divided when the 1st section left Noumea on May 14, 1943, for Australia. They arrived at Townsville, Australia, on May 20th, and there the Seabees waited for future deployment to Woodlark Island. The section left Townsville in echelons between June 20th and July 23rd. On July 23rd part of the section left Woodlark for Kiriwina Island with Lt. Ahearn in charge.

On Woodlark the Seabees worked on gun emplacements for the U. S. Army, constructed roads and camps, a water supply system and surfaced an airstrip. On Kiriwina the men constructed housing and a water supply system for aviation personnel. On April 16, 1943, the first section left Woodlark Island

for Milne Bay, New Guinea.

The second section left Noumea in echelons in late May and June 1943 with Lieutenant Commander Riordan in charge. The Seabees arrived on Guadalcanal in the Solomons on June 2nd and eleventh. On June 12th they left Guadalcanal for Banika, Russell Islands. They arrived on Banika the next day, where the Seabees began breaking into 3 groups which separated, one group going to Vanaguna, New Georgia; one to Viru, New Georgia; and a third group returned to Guadalcanal, where they kept the battalions records at Koli Point.

The Seabees on Vangunu and Viro constructed gun emplacements for the U. S. Army, roads and dock facilities, an underground communications center and operated a sawmill. At Viru the Seabees manned the front lines in defensive actions against Japanese attacks.

In September 1943 the contingents on Vangunu and Viru left those islands for Bau Island, New Georgia, E. Roulanne, Doke Doke, and in October one group went to Ondonga, New Georgia.

On Rovianna the Seabees built roads and docks and also worked on camp and base facilities. Afterwards they went to Munda, where they constructed camp facilities for a naval construction battalion and Marine Corps air facilities. On Doke Doke a camp and administration area, roads and docks were constructed, and the Seabees erected warehouses. The group of Seabees that went to Ondonga built roads and camp facilities for a Submarine Detection Unit and repaired a number of concrete barges.

On New Year's Day 1944 the various contingents of the second section of the 20th Naval Construction Battalion began returning to Banika. By the 10th of January the section was reunited on Banika and began working on a comber strip and operating the advanced base construction depot.

On June 6, 1944, the day of the Normandy Landing in Europe, Section One of the battalion arrived at Banika, and Sections One and Two reunited as the 20th Naval Construction Battalion. They remained working on Banika until September 14, 1944, when the 20th Seabees boarded ships and headed for home.

After a stopover at Guadalcanal, the battalion arrived at San Francisco on September 29th and was stationed at Camp Parks in Pleasanton, California. At Camp Parks the battalion enjoyed leave, reorganized, and trained for their second deployment.

On February 1, 1945, the 20th Naval Construction Battalion left San Francisco and on March 4th arrived at Saipan in the Mariannas. On Saipan the battalion erected a building to house an Army Coca Cola plant while waiting for deployment to an advance base.

The battalion began leaving Saipan on 12 April, and by May 14, 1945, the 20th Seabees were on Okinawa, Ryukus.

On Okinawa the 20th NCB constructed and maintained roads, built a bridge, constructed waterfront facilities, maintained pontoon barges and worked on the Awashi Airfield, as well as an advanced base construction Depot located on Ketchin Hento. The battalion participated in air and group defense and shot down one "Tojo" with 20 mm anti-aircraft fire. On May 28 while some of the battalion's Seabees were repairing the USS Snelling, the ship was hit by a Kamikaze plane, and six Seabees were injured.

The 20th NCB was operating as a component of the 39th Naval Construction Regiment on Okinawa when the war ended. On November 8, 1945, the battalion was inactivated. The men who were eligible for deployment home were sent to the United States, while the others were transferred to other outfits to await their turn.

20th Naval Construction Battalion

Chronology

20 Aug 1942 Commissioned at Camp Allen, Virginia.
23 Officers, 1008 Enlisted Men.
Commander Jones Officer in Charge.
14 Sep 1942 Departed Camp Allen, Virginia.
20 Sep 1942 Arrived Port Hueneme, California.

Section One

06 Oct 1942 Left United States, San Francisco, California.
12 Officers, 591 Enlisted Men.
Lieutenant Dudley in Charge.
20 Oct 1942 Arrived Noumea, New Caledonia.
14 May 1943 Left Noumea, 18 Officers, 542 Enlisted men.
Commander Jones in Charge.
20 May 1943 Arrived Townsville, Australia.
Left Townsville, Australia for Woodlark Island by echelons as follows:
20 June 1943 Advance Party. One Officer, Seven Enlisted men.
26 June 1943 First Echelon. Four Officers, 96 enlisted Men.
04 July 1943 Second Echelon. Two Officers, 41 Enlisted Men.
09 July 1943 Third Echelon. Six Officers, 155 Enlisted Men.
Arrived Woodlark Island by echelons as follows:
(All echelons united to form Section I)
29 June 1943 Advance Party.
30 June 1943 First Echelon.
08 July 1943 Second Echelon.
13 July 1943 Third Echelon.
23 July 1943 Fourth Echelon.
Part of the Section left Woodlark Island for Kiriwina Island by echelons as follows: (Lieutenant Alva f. Ahearn in Charge)
13 Sept 1943 First echelon. Nine Officer, 206 enlisted Men. Arrived 14 Sept 1943.
29 Nov 1943 Left Kiriwina island.
30 Nov 1943 Arrived Woodlark Island.
16 Apr 1944 Left Woodlark Island for Milne Bay, New Guinea. 15 Officers, 470 Enlisted men.
17 Apr 1944 Arrived Milne Bay.
25 Apr 1944 Left Milne Bay. 15 Officers, 467 Enlisted Men.
30 Apr 1944 Arrived Brisbane, Australia.
02 June 1944 Left Brisbane, Australia. 13 Officers, 478 Enlisted Men.

Viru for Doke Doke.

09 Sept 1943 Third Echelon. Two officers, 94 Enlisted men. Left Viru for East Rovianna.

09 Sept 1943 Third Echelon arrived East Rovianna.

09 Oct 1943 Group One, Second Echelon left Vangunu for Ondonga, New Georgia. Ten Officers, 262 Enlisted Men.

15 Oct 1943 Group One, Second Echelon left Vangunu for Ondonga, New Georgia.

25 Oct- 5 Nov 1943 Group Two, first and Second Echelons left East Rovianna and arrived at Bau Island on 5 November 1943. This group at East Rovianna had also worked at Munda, New Georgia during their stay at East Rovianna.

01 Jan 1944 One Officer and 54 Enlisted men left Ondonga for Russell Islands

02 Jan 1944 Officers and men as above arrive Banika, Russell Islands.

06 Jan 1944 Group Two, Second Echelon left Doke Doke and arrived Bau Island same day.

09 Jan 1944 Nine Officers and 202 Enlisted men left Ondonga for Russell Islands.

10 Jan 1944 Officers and men as above arrived Banika, Russell Islands.

09 Jan 1944 All personnel, Four Officers and 211 Enlisted Men, left Bau Island and sailed for Russell Islands.

10 Jan 1944 Bau Island Group arrived Russell Islands and joined the group from Ondonga.

10 Jan 1944 All personnel of section Two Arrived at Banika, Russell Islands and are united. Total 14 Officers, 467 Enlisted Men.

06 June 1944 Section One arrived from Brisbane, Australia and Sections One and Two are combined to form the 20th Battalion.

Section One	13 Officers	478 Enlisted Men
Section Two	<u>14 Officers</u>	<u>687 Enlisted Men</u>
Total	27 Officers	1165 Enlisted Men

14 Sept 1944 Battalion left Banika, Russell Islands for United States; 26 Officers, 997 Enlisted Men. One stop enroute at Guadalcanal.

29 Sept 1944 Arrived San Francisco, California, stationed at Camp Parks.

29 Sept-1 Feb 1945 Battalion stationed at Camp parks, California for reforming, reorganization and training.

01 Feb 1945 Left San Francisco, California. 27 Officers, 1046 Enlisted Men.

04 Mar 1945 Arrived Saipan, Marianna Islands. 27 Officers, 1042 Enlisted Men.

12 Apr 1945 First Echelon of 23 Officers and 749 Enlisted men sailed from Saipan on four Land Ship Tanks to Okinawa.

17 Apr 1945 First echelon arrived Okinawa.

07 May 1945 Second Echelon of Four Officers and 277 Enlisted Men sailed from Saipan for Okinawa.

14 May 1945 Second Echelon arrived Okinawa. Battalion united.

17 Aug 1945 Located on Okinawa.

08 Nov 1945 The 20th Naval construction Battalion was inactivated on Okinawa.

20



SEABIRDS





**NO
PHOTOS
AVAILABLE**