

Double Deuce

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deployed

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Double Deuce

NMCB-22's bi-weekly newsletter
Al Asad, Iraq

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NMCB 22 repairs key bridge in Iraq

by JO1 Leslie Shively
photos by SWC (SCW) Mark Johnson

HIT, Iraq (Oct. 15, 2005) – A team from NMCB-22 repaired a bridge critical to Iraqi people Oct. 10, that allowed residents access to polling stations and a major marketplace for food and other necessities.

A car bomb blew a large hole through the bridge in Sept. rendering it useless.

While Seabees conducted repairs, soldiers from the Mississippi National Guard and an Iraqi Security Force unit provided security.

The bridge connects Hit, 85 miles west of Baghdad, to cities in the north.

Residents swam, paddled or walked miles to the market without their bridge.

"This bridge is one of three in this area from Ramadi all the way up through Haditha that offer an opportunity to cross the Euphrates River," said Lt. Richard Windham, NMCB-22's officer-in-charge of the project.

He said the overpass was particularly vital for the recent referendum.

"Within five minutes of pulling our vehicles off of the bridge, Coalition Forces moved



BUCN David Dulworth, left and SW2 Matthew Craig weld support beams for a bridge outside of the city of Hit.

Practice runs identified prob-blems and solutions on the following day.

GySgt. Anthony Camacho, NMCB-22's Marine advisor, explained rehearsals prepared Seabees to respond tactically to possible threats.

"Everybody knew exactly what to do," Camacho said. "You gotta have the mindset you're going to win."

On the final day, Seabees repaired the bridge in four hours.

"The bad guys blew it up and they got to watch American Seabees and fix it," remarked Steelworker Chief Mark Johnson, crew leader.

"We were there to help them bring stability to the area."

Equipment Operator 1st Class Dale Young, crane supervisor, agreed saying that seeing Iraqis using the bridge was a sign of a job well done.

supplies, equipment and poll workers across the river," Windham said.

Rebuilding was accomplished in stages.

First, the NMCB -22 team conducted an on-site survey; then prefabricated



EO1 David Huntley operates a crane on Hit bridge in Iraq.

the decking, railing and part of the steel beam framing.

The Hit Men



Wetdown!!



Capt. Steven Young, NMCB-22's commanding officer presents Lt. Jay Lowack, center and Lt. Richard Windham with fresh, dry uniforms adorned with their newly pinned bars after a "wetting down."

According to the Naval Historical Center, in the old Navy, an officer's commission was hand-written on heavy parchment. The newly commissioned or promoted officer held a dinner for his shipmates and friends and during the course of the evening the new commission was rolled into a cone with the small end folded up to form a cup.

This paper cup was passed around the table for all the guests to toast the new officer. Thus, the new commission was "wetted down." Considering the importance of the document, however, this interpretation may be doubtful. Commissions in the early U.S. Navy were signed and issued by the President and were of great legal and personal value.

According to other sources, the wetting down party was once quite a rough and tumble affair. It was the custom for the officer to wear his new uniform or stripes for the first time at the wetting down. The guests would then proceed to christen the uniform, the occupant, and the commission with whatever liquid refreshment (paid for by the victim) was available.

The Seabee version of this tradition involves pouring over 100 gallons of cold water from the bucket of a front end loader over the newly-ranked officers.

If it's
Tuesday ...



this
must be ...

Al Asad,
Iraq!



- Photos EO3 Daniel Verret

Congrats!!

Certificates of Appreciation were presented by the Army to both NMCB-22 and NMCB-3 members for a remodeling job well done! Ohhh RAHHH!!!



John W. Seabee



Are we there yet?

C. GREEN 30 OCT 2005

Family bible more than heirloom

In July of this year, I called my Grandma Hitchcock and said simply, “Grandma, I need the bible back.” Her voice trembling, she responded “Oh no, honey. When?”

She knew that I was referring to the family bible she had given me the previous year for my tour with the Marine Expeditionary Force Engineer Group (MEG) in Fallujah, Iraq.

The bible, currently on it’s third tour in the Middle East, has been in my family since 1899. It originally belonged to my great-great aunt, who received it as a gift from her sister. When her brother, my great grandfather, went to fight in France in 1917, she presented it to him and he carried it all through the war. After her father’s death, my grandma kept this bible safely tucked away.

In 1965, my father was drafted into the Army and sent to Vietnam. Grandma got the bible out and gave it to him to carry on his tour of duty. He returned safely a year later with the bible. In 1969, Grandma gave the bible to her other son to carry on his tour of Vietnam. He resisted taking it at first but eventually gave in. He returned to the



U.S., badly wounded by a booby trap.

The bible followed in his personal effects and was safely tucked away again until Desert Storm, when my cousin Daren, then a US marine, was sent to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

Daren carried the bible with him and returned safely with it in 1991.

I did not know of the bible and its rich history until I was called upon to serve my country for Operation Iraqi Freedom. When my Grandma presented it to me, I asked her if she ever imagined she would give it to her granddaughter.

“No, honey, I never did,” she said.

The bible and I returned safely from Iraq in March 2005 and I anticipate another safe return in

March 2006. Incidentally, Daren is now mobilized with the Kansas National Guard, but working stateside.

We are hoping and praying that his unit doesn’t have to come over here at all but if they do we hope it is not until I get back because there is only one family bible.

- LCDR Michelle Breaux

say what?



- Photos UT1 Robert Semmelmann





ON POINT: Repairing a bridge for the people of HIT, Iraq



photos by
SWC (SCW) Mark Johnson
HM1 (FMF/SCW) Rick & Donahue