

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

ADDRESS REPLY TO:
COMMANDANT (C)
U. S. COAST GUARD
HEADQUARTERS
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.



JUN 15 1948
FILE: CG-783
(619-277)

Mr. Robert K. Yeaton
[REDACTED]

Dear Sir:

* The U. S. Coast Guard Construction Detachment #26 has been awarded the Navy Unit Commendation for outstanding service in support of military operations during the construction of the second Aleutian Loran Chain on the Island of Attu, from November 1, 1943 to February 15, 1944. By virtue of your service while attached to this detachment during the period for which it has been cited, you are authorized to wear as a part of your uniform the inclosed Navy Unit Commendation ribbon.

I take this opportunity to express my personal congratulations on this well-deserved recognition of your meritorious conduct. The credit you have brought to the Coast Guard by your devotion to duty and adherence to the traditions of the service is deeply appreciated.

Please inform the Commandant (PMM) when you are in receipt of the inclosure.

Very truly yours,

MENDEN C. NEILL
Rear Admiral, U. S. Coast
Acting Commandant

Incl
NUC ribbon

* DURING WWII USCG WAS UNDER JURISDICTION
OF NAVY DEPARTMENT

December 20, 1992

To LORAN Station Personnel,

Enclosed is a portion of an article from National Geographic which brought back memories of my tour of duty as a LORAN operator at the original station on Attu, USCG UN17 62.

Also enclosed are some Xerox photo copies (unfortunately not too clear) and information which may be of interest to you from an historical standpoint.

I arrived on Attu with the other members of the crew in November 1943, temporarily assigned to Construction Detachment #26. My duties were laborer and seaman aboard a landing craft used to carry material used for the construction of the station, from the supply depot at Holtz Bay to the base camp at Baxter Cove. From there, the supplies were hauled on a sled pulled by a bulldozer to the station site at Theodore Point. The Holtz Bay area was then home to several thousand army and naval personnel. There were two CB battalions, a naval air facility, a small sub base, Marine detachment for SP and dock traffic control, an Army port battalion, engineer units, an air strip and numerous anti-aircraft units deployed throughout.

Once the station was completed and the CO's gone, we were alone atop Theodore Point, the only visitors to the station being a Chaplain and a three man Navy dental unit, each visiting once. Otherwise our only physical contact with other than crew members was with the crews of the vessels which periodically


delivered fuel, supplies and mail to our "harbor" at the base of the cliff. I imagine your situation is the same.

I left atter on December 7, 1944 as one of the first to be rotated back to the States for re-assignment. We left aboard an Army transport from Holtz Bay which by then had an Army PX, Navy ship service store, a beer hall, a movie theatre (The Blue Boy) and even some female nurses at the hospital.

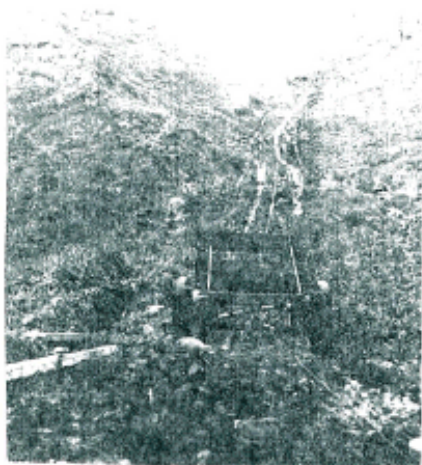
Now for the real purpose of this letter. I would like to know if the monument we erected at Theodore Point in memory of one of the CO's killed in a bulldozer accident near Boyta Cove is still there. I think his name was Baughman, but after almost fifty years, my memory is a little vague. Also, is a glass Japanese fish net float with the names of the original crew on it still in existence?

If one of you would write to answer these questions I would sure appreciate it. I also would love to know what the present facility is like and the way you receive fuel supplies and mail. Although the remoteness hasn't changed, I'm sure modern life is much different than ours was. Thanking you in advance

Sincerely
Robert R. York
Former RDM(L) 3c USCG-R



BOTTOM TO TOP TRANSPORTATION

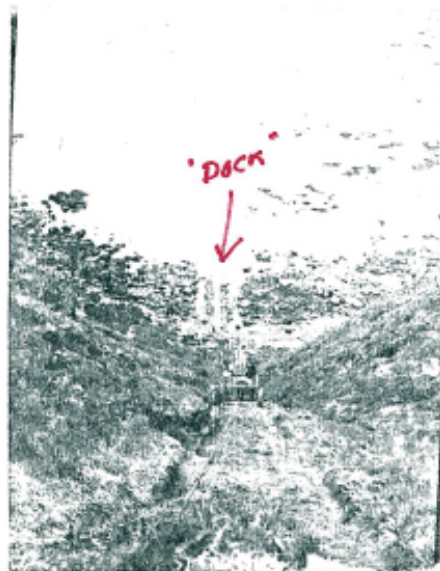


AT BOTTOM LOOKING UP

A WOODEN PLATFORM WAS BUILT ON THE CHASSIS OF MOBILE WATER TANK AND THREE SIDES ATTACHED, EMPTY FUEL DRUMS (4 AT TIME) PERSONNEL (2 AT TIME) AND SUPPLIES WERE HAULED FROM "DOCK" AREA TO TOP OF CLIFF

PATROL BOATS USUALLY DELIVERED SUPPLIES. THEY ANCHORED OFF SHORE AND WE USED THE ROPE TO BRING THEM ASHORE

A WINCH AT TOP OF CLIFF PULLED CABLE ATTACHED TO CART TO RAISE AND LOWER IT



PART WAY UP



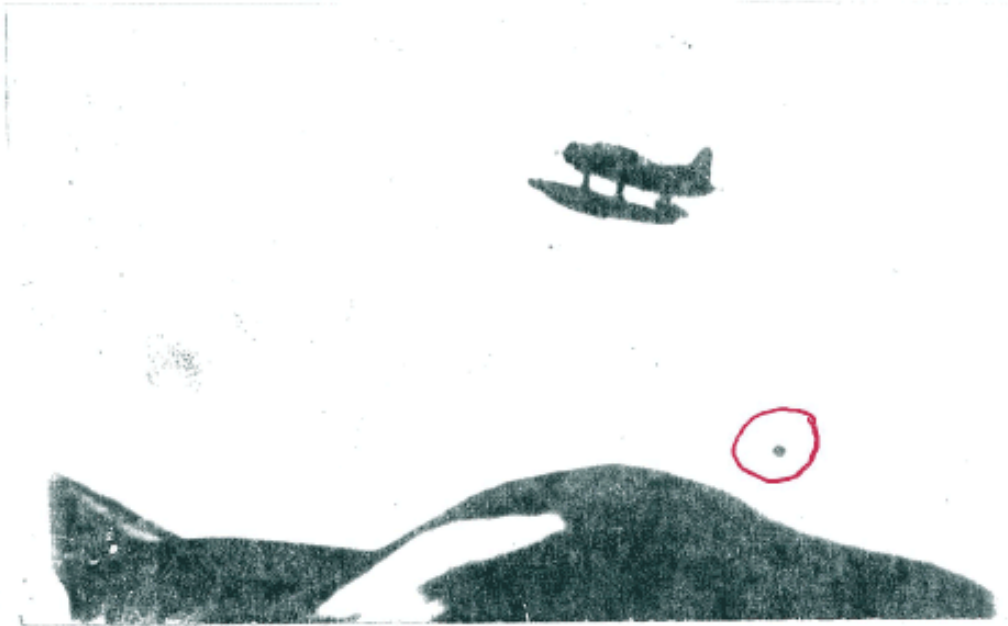
CABLE

ALMOST AT TOP

MONUMENT REFERRED TO IN LETTER

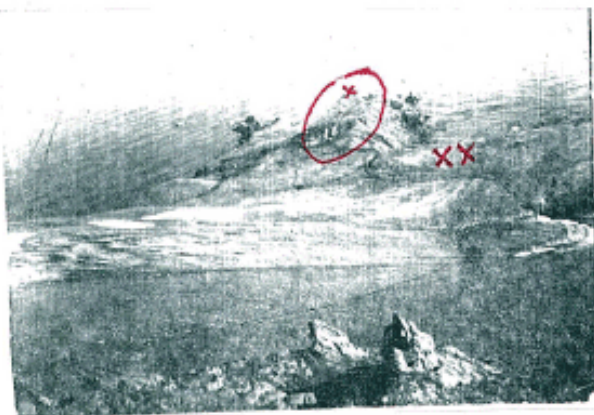


FIRST CO of UMT 6L
LT (SG) E DOSTER A CARRIER
COAST GUARDSMAN, HE WAS
AN ENLISTED RADIODAMAN PRIOR TO
PEARL HARBOR AND PROMOTED
"THROUGH THE RANKS"



MAIN RAOP

U.S. COAST GUARD UNIT 62 - THEODORE POINT
SUMMER 1944

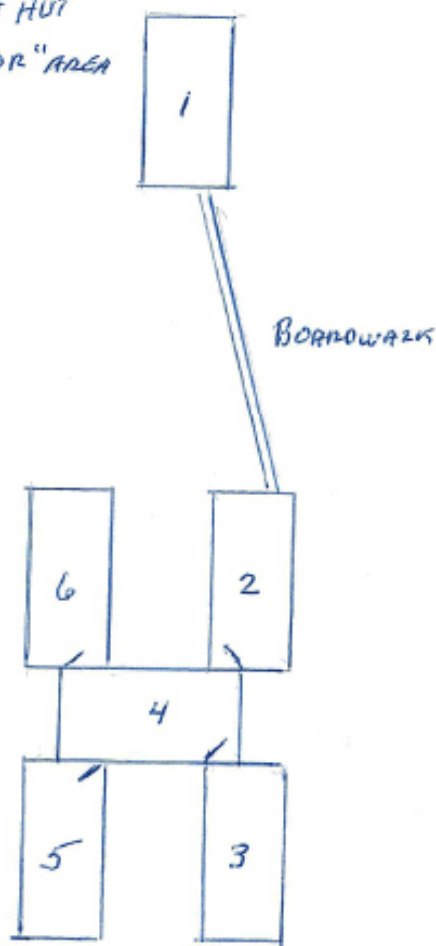


VIEWED FROM TOP OF
MOUNTAIN BEHIND STATION



END OF CREW'S QTRS
SHOWING BOARDWALK
AND LIFELINE TO LORAN HUT

X LORAN HUT
XX "HARBOR" AREA

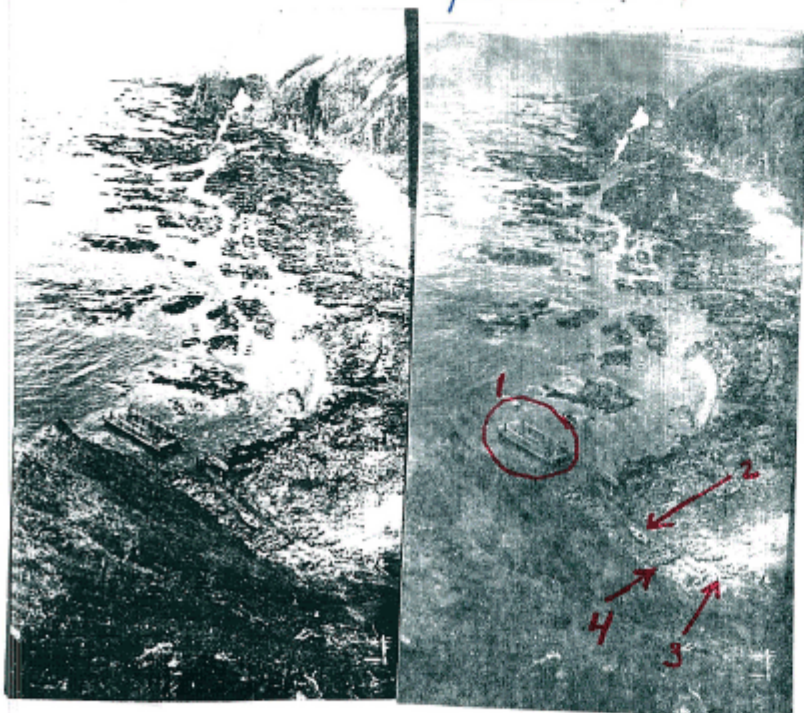


STATION LAYOUT
SIX QUONSET HUTS

- 1 LORAN HUT
- 2 CREW'S QUARTERS
- 3 CO'S QTRS
EXEC OFFICER QTRS (CPO)
OFFICE
- 4 WATER TANK
HEAD & STORAGE
- 5 MESS HALL
GALLEY
COOK'S QUARTERS
- 6 3 DIESEL GENERATORS
"REC ROOM"
PING PONG TABLE
CARD TABLE

HUTS 2-6 JOINED BY DOORS

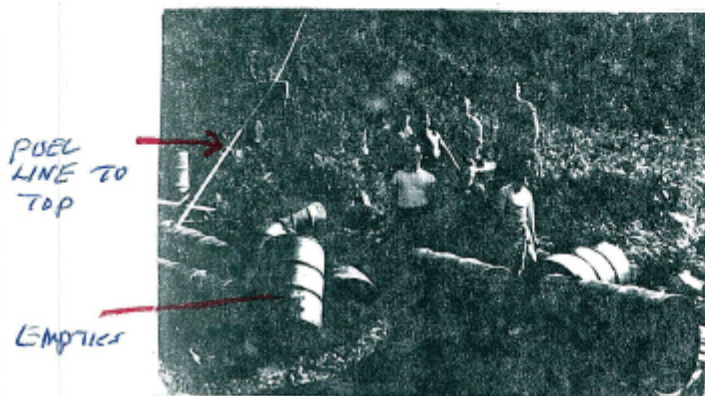
FUELING



- 1 - BARGE
- 2 - STATION DORY
- 3 TANK LOCATION
- 4 DRUMS TO BE EMPTIED

DRUMS OF DIESEL FUEL
DROPPED OFF BARGE AND
FLOATED TO "DOCK" FROM
THERE ROLLED TO TANK AND
EMPTIED. FUEL PUMPED
VIA PIPE LINE TO TOP OF
CLIFF AND EMPTIES FILLED.
IN STORAGE AREA. AS
NEEDED DRUMS ROLLED TO
HUTS AND CONTENTS
PUMPED WITH HAND PUMP
INTO TANK FOR HUT.

THE TOP (TANK) PORTION
OF AN ARMY WATER TANK
TRAILER WAS REMOVED FROM
CHASSIS AND WHEELS AND
A WOODEN PLATFORM BUILT
AROUND IT. DRUMS WERE
EMPTIED INTO TANK AND
FUEL PUMPED UP PIPE LINE
EMPTIED DRUMS WERE
HAULED VIA CART TO TOP
WHERE THEY WERE FILLED

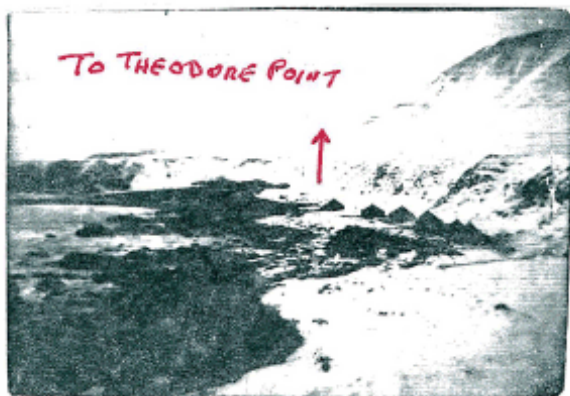


3 DRUMS BEING EMPTIED INTO TANK



FILLING TANK
AT HUT

BAXTER COVE - DECEMBER 1943



TENTS FOR LIVING QUARTERS



ORIGINAL "GALLEY"



WATER SUPPLY
PIPE IN CENTER
OF STREAM



LANDING CRAFT
READY TO UNLOAD
AT "DOCK"



SLED PULLED BY
BULLDOZER TO
TRANSPORT SUPPLIES +
EQUIPMENT TO
THEODORE POINT

THIS IS FROM
A USCG
PUBLICATION.
I THINK IT
WAS CALLED,
"THE SPAR,"
CIRCA 1944.

They Built Their Fame on Hell's Island

By MORT HOROWITZ, SP. 3C

"YOU work till you can't work any-
more and you drop, and somebody
chucks a bucket of cold water over you.
Then you get up and work three more
hours."

The C.G. CD's—ever heard of them?

"Rank or rate don't matter a damn.
There'll be a commander in ice water up
to his belly, standing in line next to a
seaman, passing equipment ashore."

The C.G. CD's—ever heard of them?

"You go up in a plane with a sighting
party and survey an island, so you can lay
plans to get your equipment ashore, and
build your installations. Only the Japs
have still got the island, and you know it
won't be long before you'll be going in
'here.'"

"You don't just land your stuff. You
have to blast a channel, to make it big
enough to get a bulldozer through, and
there's Japs all around you all the time,
blasting to get you out of there."

The C.G. CD's—ever heard of them?

The Construction Detachment of the
United States Coast Guard, unknown even
within its own Service, has erected monu-
ments to its courage over acres of Hell the
devil himself disowned from the Aleutians,
across the ends of the earth, to the Marshall
Islands in the Pacific.

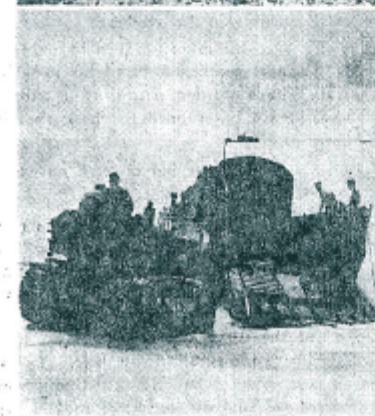
HANDPICKED PERSONNEL

From the very nature of the work they
do, which is to build radio stations, it is
necessary for the men of the CD's to make
their stations on the obscurest islands, and
then on the most isolated and inaccessible
part of the island.

The personnel is handpicked, from inter-
views, from classification files, from special
recommendations, and requests from quali-
fied men.

They are construction experts, but a bit
more versatile than the ordinary kind. They
build, but first they fight to get into
where their work is needed, and they are
under fire while they're building, fighting
always against the enemy, against the ele-
ments, and against time.

⚓ Page Fifty-four ⚓



ALL REFERENCES
ARE TO RADIO
STATIONS SINCE
LORAN WAS
CLASSIFIED "TOP
SECRET" AND "SECRET"
UNTIL MID 1944

One Coast Guard-manned AK, and a fleet of Coast Guard buoy tenders, bore the CD's through the North Atlantic and Pacific, where they set up radio stations at Dutch Harbor, Alaska, Greenland, Iceland and the Aleutians.

Part of what makes the CD's stand out as extra tough in a fighting service, is the primitive, on-the-fly life they are forced to live permanently, while on duty.

Aboard ship, the seabag is home and fire-side. Then: "You lay offshore and you wait. You wait while they bomb the island, and when it's what they call 'reasonably' secure, you go in. Not the first wave, maybe, but as soon thereafter as they think you've got a chance of getting your equipment ashore.

"It's not the men they worry about, but you've got to get that equipment on the island without losing it, or having to fall back and leave it behind."

Then when they get ashore, it's always build what they came to build, and get out. That's the one complaint the CD's have,—that as soon as they build up a base, and barely start to enjoy some of the normal comforts, they're on their way again, back to a ship, and another island, and the same thing all over.

HALF DONE

Once the equipment is landed, the CD's consider that job as being 50% completed. On Attu, coming through Massacre Bay, there was only one place to land, but the radio station had to be placed on the other end of the island, 14 miles away.

Mountains, stretching across the island, made it impossible to make the trip overland. Among other things, bulldozers, pieces as heavy and awkward to transport as any machinery in the CD's repertoire, had to be borne to the scene.

The only way to carry the equipment needed was by landing craft and LCV's, the latter borrowed from the Navy. But the landing at the other end was dependent on wind and tide and weather conditions.

Sometimes there were two-week waits between trips, before the craft could get to the landing point and put part of the machinery ashore. Then it was impossible to stay more than an hour at a time, because of the recurrence of foul weather conditions.

GOOD TEAMWORK

There has always been close harmony between the Navy Seabees and Coast Guard CD's engaged in this work, but a striking evidence of the difficulties inherent in this particular operation is told by CD men.

On leaving Massacre Bay, after erecting their radio station, they told the Seabees two bulldozers on the other side of the island were being left behind. This is done with equipment on occasions when getting it out would take more time and work than is considered feasible to spend.

"We're forgetting about them, so you can use them while you're here," the Navy skipper was told.

THEY BUILT THEIR FAME

(Continued from Page 54)

"Go through that kind of hell, across the island, to get them back here? Thanks, but we'll leave 'em right where they are!"

The CD's recall with glee the time in the South Pacific when they built a station on an island within 60 miles of 25,000 Japanese.

"Marine flyers went by and poured lead on the Japs every night, but we were uncomfortable the whole while on that job, anyway."

The worst ordeal the CD's came through was in the Marianas, where they were continuously under increasing enemy fire. Then, too, where the climate in the Aleutians had been healthful, despite its discomforts, the 120-degree heat of the Pacific had every man ailing.

Working in a hurry and with never enough water to bathe properly or often enough, dust clogs the pores of the skin, and all of the men complained of fungus growths.

Service with the Construction Detachment calls for skill, but beyond that, it demands raw courage and the stamina of strong, determined men.

The statistics in their record show that. It takes 1,300 tons of material to build one chain, which consists of four stations. Security reasons do not permit divulging the number, but in over two years, in two oceans, there have been many stations built.

There are no hours on the job,—especially during the hardest part of it, which is unloading and landing the equipment, when every man works around the clock.

The C.G. CD's—ever heard of them?

(Concluded on Page 68)