

How a BT2 Became a Seabee by Ferdinand Prehn

I originally served in the Navy from Oct 1961 to Nov 1966 and after my initial enlistment, I stayed away from the Navy for 14 yrs, got married and raised a family. I was working as a carpenter, and one day we were working down the street from our local Reserve Center. It was raining and I joked that I was going to go get a good cup of Navy coffee. I went and met the recruiter, who later became a good friend. He told me if I joined for 2yrs, I could be returned to my previous rank of BT2 and be on a ship for weekend drills in Philadelphia. I said no, then he said as a carpenter I could be in the Seabees. Again I said no but only if I could be 1st class. I joined the Advanced Pay grade Program and had to complete all the correspondence courses for 1st Class PO in 6 months. Upon completion of the correspondence courses, I was assigned to Battalion 21 in Lakehurst NJ . So that is how a BT became a Seabee. I had a great Career, 22 yrs and retired as a Chief in 1997. My retirement ceremony was held in the Hindenburg hanger with 8 other chiefs.

I Served on the USS Randolph CVS15, USS Annapolis AGMR1 Plank Owner, USS Wright CC2. Battalion 21, Eighth Regiment, Second Brigade, then Battalion 21 until retirement. Also, served 1 year as a Reserve Recruiter.