



ROGUES, RASCALS, AND RENEGADES

GUNNER SAM AND THE SANDWICH BOMB

Gather 'round while I tell you a tale of greed, avarice, and revenge.

It was a cold and wintry day when the inspection team arrived at Heathrow on our first inspection trip. The travel to the British Airways domestic terminal was fraught with disaster. Master Chief Keen had been robbed of his skivvies as the airlines had lost his luggage yet again. This was a common occurrence. As a matter of record, Master Chief Keen has underwear in most every major airport visited by the inspection group. But digress ... British Airways does not serve snacks on board as the flights are very short in duration, but they do have a sandwich buffet where travelers can make a quick sandwich and eat before boarding. We all made a sandwich and boarded our flight. The inspections, as I recall, went well.

A year later, we returned for the "assist" visit. Again we made our way to the domestic terminal and made a sandwich. Gunner Sam made several.

The visit at Glen Douglas went smoothly as I recall after we thawed from the bus ride, the driver of which had no clue as to the meaning of the American term, "Turn up the heat." The ride to Campbelltown was no better and we arrived with blue lips at the hotel. It is my recollection that the officers stayed in relative luxury at the Argyle Arms, owned by a banker, while the enlisted personnel were quartered in the Kintire Hotel, owned and operated by a retired sailor. I believe everyone went to their rooms then returned to get shillings to put into the room heaters to try to save themselves from frostbite. The manager advised us to "just pull out the coin box and cycle the coins back through." What a novel and generous idea.

Those of us at the Kintire made great and lasting

He knows what he's talking about — here's a list of his medals: Two Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medals; two Navy Achievement Medals; Joint Meritorious Unit Achievement Award; Navy Unit Commendation; Coast Guard Meritorious Unit Commendation; two Battle Es; National Defense; Armed Forces Expeditionary; two South West Asia Service Medals; the Global War on Terror Service Medal; Humanitarian Service Medal; two Sea Service; Armed Forces Reserve Medal; Kuwait Liberation Medal; Kuwait Liberation Medal (Kuwait); and Navy Pistol sharpshooter.

Musings

"Jason and I are very close," Julian related. "He actually flew to San Diego while I was stationed at Nuclear Weapons Training Group Pacific to talk to me about coming into

impression on the staff as we each had in our possession several bottles of duty free spirits which we spread around quite freely. We became very popular with the staff; endeared, yea beloved, would not be too strong of a term.

The inspection at Machrihanish was too soon over and the time to return was upon us. To show their gratitude, the Kintire Hotel staff threw us a party and it was a doozy.

The next morning dawned cold and gray with a razor sharp wind blowing into the harbor. The bus tooted impatiently and the sickest, saddest, sorriest sailors you have ever seen stumbled, careened, reeled, ricocheted, or were poured onto the bus and away we went. As humanity returned, so did hunger. Sam opened his briefcase and offered bone dry, week-old British Airways sandwiches for a dollar.

The following year, we stopped at Earle, NJ first and one of us bought a ham sandwich with extra mayo from the Country Store there and had it sealed in a barrier bag. Miles and miles it traveled, rounder and rounder it got until we were afraid to carry it any longer. At Michelangelo International in Rome, this round shiny ball was given to Sam when he mentioned he was hungry. There are many guns in that airport and Sam got suddenly afraid. We rapidly cleared out of the line of fire with Sam holding the bag so to speak.

It opened with a loud pop! The stench cleared out at least a hundred yards of concourse and left Sam complaining that we could have gotten him shot. That had been a real possibility and, if the Carabinieri had known who had caused that stink, I am quite sure they would have done just that.

Sam got out of the sandwich business after that.

the Navy — he wanted to know my feelings and recommendations."

Before both being assigned to commands aboard Naval Station Ingleside, Jason and Julian had never had the opportunity to be stationed together, so they've made the most of it.

"We get together a few times a week," Julian said. "We share DVDs, I mooch off of him for a good home cooked meal, and if I have any problems with my computer, I give him a call."

It's been some ride since their days of "sailing the high seas" on their beds.

Indeed, as another old saying goes, it's been an adventure.