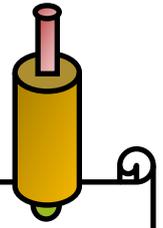




# The DASHPOT



The Official Newsletter of the Association of Minemen

## In This Issue:

- 43<sup>rd</sup> AOM Reunion
- Korea and the Minemen
- The “Dirty Dozen”
- Mine Warfare News
- Around the Fleet
- “Gunner” in the Spotlight
- Letters, Pictures and more

The 43rd Annual AOM Reunion is coming up fast and this issue of The Dashpot has all of the information you’ll need, along with the registration form to sign up, hotel registration guidance, an agenda for the three day event and contact information, (in case you have questions). Remember to bring your Mineman memorabilia, handicrafts and goodies for our AOM Picnic Auction, with all proceeds going to our Scholarship Fund. We hope you’ll join your shipmates, friends and family in sunny San Diego, CA, October 13 through 15, 2017.

## From The President

*M.N.C.M Tracey Hays, U.S.N.R*



Welcome to the newest edition of the Dashpot!

*I have made my travel arrangements for the October reunion in San Diego, which is one of my favorite cities to visit. I hope to see a lot of “old” faces, and maybe some new faces as well.*

*Spring was rough for Minemen in South Carolina. After the loss of Curtis Christian, we suffered the loss of MN2 Cole Spennati, along with his Navy veteran wife and two toddlers, in a horrific highway crash Mother’s Day weekend. Stationed in Charleston, he was slated for a billet in San Diego, and was on the list for advancement to First Class Petty Officer. My personal condolences to Cole’s families and friends.*

*On a happier note, an LTF (LCS Training Facility) has been making progress in Mayport, with the installation of a computer lab and associated equipment. I haven’t seen it yet, but if it is anything like the LTF in San Diego, I would be impressed. Some of my LCS MCM Sailors were involved in the process, and it gives me hope that we are headed in the right direction. Only time will tell.*

*I have seen some e-mails about the Mineman of the Year, and am expecting the message pretty soon. I will keep everyone posted.*

*I am looking forward to the selection list for FY-18, and hoping to see a few familiar names. May the odds be ever in your favor. :)*

*In closing, I sent my very best to you and yours. Life is short, so cherish those that are most important. Tracey*

## NOTABLE QUOTABLE

*“(What we’re) talking about is sort of a bigger issue where ... it’s just kind of not enough to be an expert at your job, to be a good person, to be a leader, and an exemplary ... Sailor. ... Somehow you need to go off and get something more. You need to get a collateral duty. ... This whole idea .... that without a bunch of collaterals, you’re just not going to be competitive for advancement. What that does ... it waters down our mission focus. I want to be the absolute most lethal Navy, the most feared Navy on the face of the earth, and I don’t need a lot of collaterals to do that. I just need a lot of people who know how to do their job, fight their team, fight their ship, and defeat the enemy – and that should be enough to get advanced in our Navy. You don’t need a lot of collateral duties...”*

**Admiral John Richardson**  
**Chief of Naval Operations**  
**14 April 2017**

Reminds me of my safari in Africa.  
Somebody forgot the corkscrew and  
for several days we had to live on  
nothing but food and water.

-W. C. Fields





Association of Minemen

**Dedicated to Serving the U. S. N. Mine Force**

The Dashpot, published quarterly, is the newsletter of the Association of Minemen (AOM), a non-profit organization incorporated in the State of South Carolina...to perpetuate a knowledge of undersea mine warfare, necessary to America's first line of defense

**Officers**

**President**

Tracey Hays (14-17)  
114 Hidden Palms Blvd.  
Summerville, SC 29485  
Ph.860-559-9724  
Tracey.Ann.Hays@gmail.com

**Vice President**

John Epps (14-17)  
231 Silverwood Ct.  
Richland, WA 99352  
Ph.509-627-0671  
mncm@aol.com

**Secretary/Treasurer**

Mike Femrite (11- )  
P.O.Box 510519  
Punta Gorda, FL 33951  
Ph.850-207-9831  
mike\_mncm@yahoo.com

**Board of Directors**

Danny Epperly, (15-17)  
123 Yorkshire Dr.  
Yorktown, VA 23693  
Ph.757-870-1376  
depperly1@verizon.net

Eddy Atkins (15-17)  
117 Quart Meeting House Rd.  
Williamsburg, VA 23188-1851  
Ph.757-565-3333  
weatkins@cox.net

Philip DeChene (17-19)  
1827 Broadway Dr.  
Graham, NC 27253  
Ph.336-229-1951  
pdechene@triad.rr.com

Warren Savage (17-18)  
10331 Settle Rd.  
Santee, CA 92071  
Ph.619-258-1478  
chiefskip@aol.com

Tom Hoffman (17-19)  
2266 East Hurd Rd.  
Monroe, MI 48162  
Ph.734-289-2279  
mdau0302@sbcglobal.net

G. Paul Santa Maria (17-18)  
228 Kiwi Dr.  
Barefoot Bay, FL 32976  
Ph.772-584-0037  
gpaulsm@juno.com

**Dashpot Editor**

Ron Swart (16- )  
305 Fairview Dr. Canton, GA 30114  
Ph.678-880-9008  
swartre1@comcast.net  
dashpot-editor@comcast.net

**Committees**

**A.O.M. Historian**

Vacant

**Scholarship Chair**

Ron Glasen (12- )  
1114 Fran Lin Pkwy Munster, IN 46321  
Ph. 219-838-6425  
searchcoil@hotmail.com

**Membership Chair**

Derick Hartshorn (08- )  
1204 4th Street Dr., SE  
Conover, NC 28613-1827  
Ph. 8284644981  
derickh@charter.net

**Communications Chair**

Derick Hartshorn (08- )  
1204 4th Street Dr., SE  
Conover, NC 28613-1827  
Ph. 8284644981  
derickh@charter.net

**Chaplain**

Vacant

**Parliamentarian**

Warren Savage (17-18)  
10331 Settle Rd.  
Santee, CA 92071  
Ph.619-258-1478  
chiefskip@aol.com

**Reunion Committee Chair 2017**

Warren Savage (17-18)  
10331 Settle Rd.  
Santee, CA 92071  
Ph.619-258-1478  
chiefskip@aol.com

**For Dashpot input,  
please send to:  
dashpot-editor@comcast.net**

**Input for Fall 2017  
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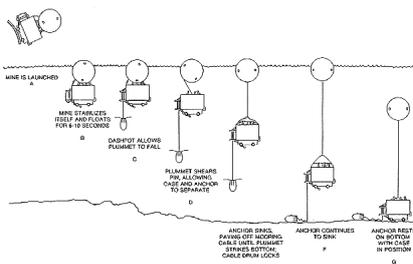


Figure 18-2. Mechanical Sweep Mine M6 C Flaring Sequence

**From the Editor...**



Gunner Jim Miller suggested I look to the Mineman History book for inspiration as I put the Summer issue together...he was right! Thanks Jim!

With current events firmly in mind, this issue looks back at the Korean War and the role that we Minemen played. Our active duty Minemen, like those of us who served before, must leverage a wide range of skills to get the job done. True enough in peacetime, but even more so during war. Reflected against this period, present day back-and-forth discussions on "strait-stick" Minemen (those that worked solely on mines) versus today's active duty Minemen, working both in mine countermeasures and mines, seem interesting but not necessarily accurate historically, given our rate's service during the Korean War when we did not use mines. Our history during this conflict is recounted by Minemen LCDR Harold Elston and AOM past presidents CDR Lyal Striker and G. Paul Santa Maria. We also take a look at our current forces who will respond to a Pacific theater mine threat or be tasked to lay mines against our enemies.

CDR Toby Horn provides a look back at the "Dirty Dozen" inspection team and what happens if mine maintenance fails to meet the required standards for readiness.

In a letter to the Editor, LT Blas "Joe" Hernandez, USN (Ret.) adds some missing pieces to Bill Robert's accounting of the DST and our Minemen participation in the Vietnam War.

We also put a spotlight on one of our most dedicated and influential members: CWO4 Jack Smoot, USNR (Ret) who has served the Mine Force with expertise and exceptional leadership. We also take a snapshot of what is happening around the Mine Warfare community and the Navy.

**Happy 241st Birthday America!!!**





From our Secretary/Treasurer



It's that time of the year again. The new school year is coming up fast. Trees and flowers are in full bloom and Summer's heat has set in. This means that students need to get hot and apply for scholarships. Where can they find scholarship money for their upcoming college necessities? It's AOM Scholarship Time!

Your scholarship committee is sharpening our pencils, cleaning our bifocals and getting ready for the applications to start coming in. If you know of any applicants, let them know that all the rules must be followed. If anything is left off of the application, the application will be considered incomplete and will not be considered for a scholarship. The rules can be found on the AOM web page,

<http://minemen.org/>

All candidates must complete the application Forms S-1 and S-2 and provide the following along with your application:

1. a transcript of credits earned from applicable schools.
2. two letters of recommendation.
3. a study plan covering the scholarship term which includes a synopsis of the field of interest/study.
4. the courses he/she plans to complete.
5. any other pertinent information the candidate feels might enhance their chances of receiving the award.

Applications are to be received by the AOM Secretary by June 1, each year. Good luck to all applicants!

Your Scholarship Committee is waiting to start work on all the new applications that will be coming in.

*Ron Glasen,*

Scholarship Committee Chairman

The Reunion is coming up soon. I am looking forward to San Diego and seeing everyone. It sounds like Warren Savage and Gary Cleland have been working hard to make this another great Reunion in San Diego. I would like to see all the reservation forms and money by Oct. 6 2017 so I can have tickets made, and have a final head count for the reunion committee.

I am sorry to say that we have lost 40 members due to unpaid dues. There is a place on your reunion registration form to pay your dues. Dues are always due in October for the following year, so please pay your dues for 2018.

Mike Femrite



**Editor's Note:** thanks to Toby Horn for some interesting and historically relevant "filler" photographs, like the military currency formerly used by our servicemen on Okinawa (below). You will see more in upcoming issues!

The "Consolidated Order of Clock Cockers" plaque is awarded in recognition of those Sailors who have served as a Mineman (MN Rating) from the beginning of their Navy service, for a minimum of 25 years Active Duty. To be recognized for this award, the following information must be submitted:

1. Full Name and Rank
2. Active Duty Base Date
3. Your Mailing Address, unless you want the plaque presented to you during the Annual AOM reunion.

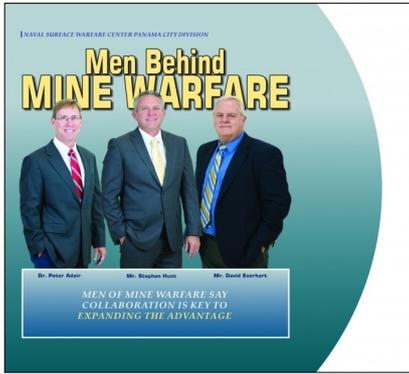
**Mail requests for recognition to:**  
R. Schommer, 827 N. Aylesbury Rd,  
Goose Creek, SC 29445  
email to [rschommer@bellsouth.net](mailto:rschommer@bellsouth.net).  
Please allow 30 to 45 days for the plaque to arrive by mail.

## Reunion Booklets

The 2015 Reno reunion and 2016 Yorktown-Williamsburg reunion booklets are available through Storekeeper Tracey Hays for \$20 worth of reunion memories in color laser print!

MNCM (SW) Sam Dorbandt, COMOMAG's Senior Enlisted Advisor, (a former Mineman of the Year himself), is honchoing the 2017 Mineman of the Year call for nominees and will lead the selection panel. A Naval Message with the details will be released from COMOMAG to ALCON. His contact information is: MNCM(SW) Samuel B. Dorbandt Senior Enlisted Advisor COMOMAG  
Office: (619) 524-1758  
Cell: (361) 229-2654  
[Samuel.Dorbandt@Navy.Mil](mailto:Samuel.Dorbandt@Navy.Mil)





**Story by Daniel Broadstreet  
Naval Surface Warfare Center  
Panama City Division**

PANAMA CITY, Florida - Mine Warfare Executives Dr. Peter Adair, Stephen Hunt and David Everhart are working to establish a culture of collaboration among the U.S. Navy's Research, Development, Test and Evaluation community to help the United States maintain maritime superiority over adversaries.

Adair, who was appointed as Mine Warfare Director for the Naval Surface Warfare Centers (NSWC) on April 16, 2017, said one of the objectives of his newly-appointed role is to coordinate with all Naval Warfare Centers (WCs) on Fleet engagement in the area of MIW, which includes Mine Countermeasures (MCM) and Mining. A native of Panama City Beach, Florida, Adair works at the NSWC Panama City Division (NSWC PCD).

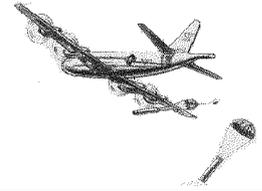
"Collaboration is key," said Adair. "Working with the U.S. Navy's Fleet, we will conduct mission engineering and analysis to identify MIW capability gaps against current and future threats. I will then partner with NAVSEA's Chief Technology Officers (CTOs), Rapid Prototyping Directors and experts across the technical community to find potential solutions to these Fleet capability gaps. To achieve this, the Navy RDT&E community's culture must evolve into one that begins to work collaboratively across all domains."

Everhart, appointed as NSWC PCD's Chief Technical Officer on Oct. 2, 2016, said his primary objective is to lead change in PCD's culture to enable more rapid identification of technologies and innovative solutions to address Fleet capability gaps.

"When I speak about finding potential technological solutions, I'm referring to emerging and mature technologies, and those found outside of our Navy's traditional Mine and Expeditionary Warfare sources that can be rapidly configured to address urgent needs," said Everhart.

Hunt, appointed as NSWC PCD Distinguished Engineer for MIW

# Mine Warfare Update



Prototyping on Oct. 2, 2016, said he is responsible for collaborating with the entire Naval Research and Development Establishment (NR&DE) in search of technologies with the potential to be rapidly prototyped as solutions for Fleet capability gaps.

"I believe we are ushering in a new cultural shift, a new approach that encourages the NR&DE community to collaborate as an enterprise," said Hunt. "Adair, Everhart and I are responsible for establishing liaisons across all Department of Defense (DoD) NR&DE domains. This includes Systems Commands like the Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) and agencies like the Naval Research Laboratories."

Hunt said technology is rapidly advancing on a global scale and America's adversaries are now able to obtain competitive technologies, which challenge the United States' ability to maintain Maritime superiority.

"This trend is shrinking the gap between us and our adversaries," said Hunt. "This is why we're formulating a new cultural shift toward unifying our NR&DE community into a collaborative enterprise. This strategy will also help us to rapidly field more prototypes, which will further expand America's technological advantage."

Adair, Everhart and Hunt agreed that initiating an expanded network of collaboration across the NR&DE community will also require creating new tools to support collaborative work at different locations.

"There is new legal language being introduced into our DoD's Acquisition processes which is empowering our community, not only to develop more innovative solutions, but also to field these prototypes to the Fleet more rapidly," said Adair.

Everhart said by implementing collaboration at the NR&DE level, the Navy will be able to accelerate the fielding of solutions to keep pace with our adversaries. "The clock is ticking," said Everhart.

"Innovation doesn't always mean inventing new technologies. It is also about finding more ways to combine proven technologies and integrating them into creative configurations to effectively counter threats and achieve military objectives."

"If we empower NSWC PCD's 1,400-plus employees by giving them tools to collaborate more effectively across our command, just imagine the increase in innovative solutions we're likely to achieve," said Hunt. "It stands to reason by doing the same for the NR&DE community, we will expand the advantage over America's adversaries on an exponential scale."

## Active Duty MNC Quotas FY18

**Eligible**  
**66**

**Quota**  
**34**



## Reserve MNC Quotas FY18

**Eligible**  
**15**

**Quota**  
**3**

**Rear Adm. Phillip Sawyer** was selected to serve as the next commander of U.S. 7th Fleet in the Pacific, the Pentagon announced. Sawyer, who has served as the deputy commander of U.S. Pacific Fleet since September 2015, will also be promoted to the rank of vice admiral. A career submariner, Sawyer is quite familiar with the 7th Fleet area of operations. Before heading to Pearl Harbor to work at PACFLT, Sawyer commanded all submarines in 7th Fleet as commander of Submarine Group 7 -Task Force 74/54, and then all submarines in the Pacific as commander of Submarine Force U.S. Pacific Fleet. He also served as the **Deputy for Navy Mine and Antisubmarine Warfare (the former NMAWC San Diego)**. The Phoenix native commanded USS *La Jolla* (SSN-701) and Submarine Squadron (SUBRON) 15 in Guam. Sawyer graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1983 with a bachelor of science in systems engineering. He will replace Vice Adm. Joseph Aucoin, who has led 7th Fleet since September 2015. The Pentagon has not yet announced Aucoin's next assignment.

## Active U.S. Maritime Alerts:

*2017-004A-Report of Waterborne Improvised Explosive Device-Southern Red Sea. A maritime threat has been reported in the Southern Red Sea, in Yemeni territorial seas. It has not been confirmed. On or about June 11th, 2017, the maritime threat reported was the discovery of waterborne improvised explosive devices (mines). Exercise caution when transiting the area. Further updates will be provided when available. This alert automatically expired on June 30, 2017. Any questions regarding this alert should be directed to:*

*MARADSecurity@dot.gov.*





## ...AROUND THE NAVY



### Navy Peacoat Phase-out Planned

By: **Sam LaGrone**

July 6, 2017 • Updated: July 6, 2017

Congress is questioning the Navy's decision to phase out the peacoat – its best-known piece of outerwear – as part of its 2018 budget deliberations. In August, the Navy said it would make the wool double-breasted coat optional in sailors' seabags starting in 2018 and replace the maritime wardrobe staple with a synthetic black cold weather parka. Sailors can still wear the peacoat after the transition but the uniform shift and its potential effect on U.S. manufacturers have raised concerns with lawmakers. To that end, the House Armed Services Committee's proposed defense bill requires the Navy to justify their decision rooted in protecting the industrial base. The panel is "concerned this decision was made without considering upgrades or alternatives to the traditional pea coat or an impact to the nation's domestic textile industrial base," read draft language in the HASC bill.

"The committee notes the importance of a stable domestic textile industrial base to produce garments such as these and encourages the Department to take into consideration, when making decisions about uniform changes, such an impact upon the domestic textile industrial base, including the small businesses that provide critical contributions." The concern is in part due to the money involved with the change. The manufacturer, Boston-based Sterlingwear, was awarded a four-year contract with options of up to \$48 million to produce peacoats and overcoats for the service in 2015. "The U.S. Navy phase out of the traditional Navy peacoat will result in several hundred lost jobs, and could mark the beginning of the end for New England woolen manufacturing," Sterlingwear VP and chief operating officer David Fredella told the *East Boston Times-Free Press* in March. "We believe that the U.S. Navy was unaware of the collateral damage of their decision to phase out the wool peacoat by replacing it with a 100 percent synthetic parka. It will not only result in the closing of manufacturing facilities and lost jobs, but it will also impact the ability of the woolen trade industry to satisfy other U.S. Military wool clothing requirements."

"A peacoat or pea jacket was historically the mainstay of the sailor's cold weather gear and maintained its fashionable reputation for centuries, to today," Daley

told USNI News. "The pea jackets of 1731 were required due to the expansion of the British Royal Navy into the northern Atlantic and other extreme regions of the world where cold weather gear was required."

For its part, the service said the parka was a more versatile and lower cost option for sailors moving forward. The decision, "as predicated on the desire to reduce current Navy sea bag uniform component requirements and reduce cost to the Navy's annual uniform budget," read a statement from the service to USNI News.

"The Cold Weather Parka was determined a suitable substitute because of its more modern appearance, light weight fabric and inclement weather (rain, snow and cold) protective qualities/characteristics. The parka was also selected for its versatility in being able to be worn with service and dress uniforms and civilian clothing." While the parka might make the best fiscal sense for the service, Daley told USNI News the change would be stepping away from its heritage by removing the coat from the seabag requirement. "If the U.S. Navy were to delete the sailors' peacoat from its required uniform kit, then the Navy would essentially be deleting a part of history, a fashion that is strongly identifiable with sailors, an item of clothing that has been used for centuries as a recruitment tool."

"New sailor recruits always gladly anticipate their first peacoat. The Navy can still move forward with technology and strategy while still maintaining its strong sartorial past."

#### SECNAV Nominee Richard V.

**Spencer Pledges Transparency, Acquisition Reform.** Spencer, who lived in Wyoming, served as Marine aviator beginning in 1976, after graduating from Rollins College. He left the service as a captain in 1981. Spencer served as the chief financial officer and vice chairman of the electronic commodities futures exchange Intercontinental Exchange, Inc., until 2008. He's served on both the DoD Business Board and the Chief of Naval Operations Board of Business Advisors. Spencer is the administration's second nominee for the position. Spencer has now cleared the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) by voice vote, and now will have his nomination voted on by the full Senate.

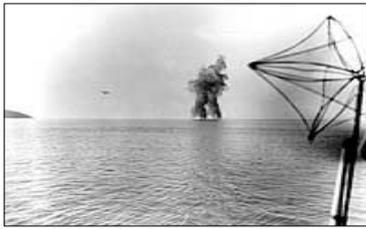
### Navy COOL

Today's Sailors now have a great tool, a website called Navy COOL, to help them turn Navy experience into accreditation that is recognized in the civilian marketplace. On this site they can learn how experience in the Navy could speed up getting a promotion or landing a civilian job. Ratings, designators and collateral duties/out of rate assignments are mapped to civilian credentials, and Service members can learn how to obtain these credentials and plot out their careers.



**July 5, 2017.** The Navy's new Littoral Combat Ship **USS Gabrielle Giffords (LCS-10)** completed its maiden voyage and arrived in its new homeport of San Diego. *Giffords* sailed from the Austal USA shipyard in Mobile, Ala., to Galveston, Texas, for a June 10 commissioning ceremony, and then headed through the Panama Canal to get to California. During that transit, the ship's crew conducted Combat Ship Systems Qualification Trials (CSSQT) events, crew certification events and equipment and systems checks, according to a Navy news release. "Our sailors are honored to represent the ship namesake, its homeport in San Diego and the U.S. Navy," Cmdr. Keith Woodley, *Giffords'* commanding officer, said in the news release. "Every sailor will continue, through *USS Gabrielle Gifford's* service to her nation, to fulfill the ship's motto, 'I Am Ready.'"

**Ed. Note: LCS-10 and her sister ships in SDGO may be tasked with conducting MCM duties with Minemen aboard.**



# A bit of Mineman History



## Wonsan Korea Mine Clearance, October-November 1950

### Preface

**CDR Lyal Stryker, USN (Ret.)  
AOM Past President**

*"The United States Navy did not utilize mines in the Korean 'Police Action', but the Minemen were there doing anything they were asked to do. Initially, they conducted some of the first small-boat (LCPV) moored mine sweeping as described..." As the Mine Warfare Forces became better organized, there were Minemen attached to Mine Squadron Three which was homeported in Sasebo, Japan. While in port, the Minemen prepared Mk 6 training mines for the helicopters to practice locating the many Russian moored mines in and around Wonsan. At sea, they performed various duties in support of the embarked staff, including supervision the Combat Information Center (CIC). When ANCHORED OUTSIDE Wonsan harbor, they were assigned to work with the embarked Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Team and participated in the recovery of Russian contact mines. They also worked with EOD by maintaining the EOD boat, diver tending lines and hoses. Following the cease fire of July 17, 1953, Minemen were assigned to the LST's that evacuated the South Korean Marines from islands above the 38th parallel on Korea's East Coast. Minemen screened and inspected all of the ordnance the Marines brought aboard, much of which had to be "deep-sixed" because of their unsafe condition, for example: Hand grenades with safety-pins removed and their handles lightly taped down, demolition charges with fuses installed. Minemen helped set up the mine school at Chinhae, South Korea and provided training to South Korean sailors as instructors. As Minemen have answered the call in the past to perform duties outside of the requirements of their rate, they will continue to do so in the future. Minemen are well trained to meet all challenges because they are MINEMEN.*

The following are the recollections of **LCDR Harold Elston, US Navy, Ret.** Elston, a former Mineman, recounts his experiences as a young Sailor in Korea from 28 October to 30 November 1950 participating in clearing the port of Chinnampo. "Imagine being a young Mineman Seaman Apprentice aboard a Destroyer Minesweeper (USS CARMICK [DMS 33]) in the Korean Theater of Operations and being asked to volunteer for a special task without knowing the task or the risk. I don't remember exactly how I came to volunteer, but the next thing I knew I was with eight or nine others and were loaded into a motorized whaleboat and delivered to a Japanese

LST [Landing Ship, Tank], that had just arrived in the approaches to Chinnampo (now called Nam'po). We were led by a young Navy Reserve LTJG by the name of Privette, and once aboard the LST we were shown to the tank deck where we found two World War II 35-foot motor launches and a considerable pile of minesweeping gear which appeared to be miniatures of the type used aboard the YMSs [Motor Minesweepers] for sweeping moored mines. We were also shown a pile of portable radio gear and batteries to use for communications between the launches." "Also aboard, was a USN helicopter along with its crew and maintenance personnel. They had to stay aboard the LST, but we were lucky enough to return to our own ship each night. We had three or four qualified motor whaleboat coxswains in the group and two of them were to act as coxswains for each of the two boats. Since I was the only one with experience with the explosive minesweeping cutters we were provided, it fell to me to train another man to install the cutters on the other boat. Since it was a job that didn't occupy much time we also became the unofficial radio operators. Of course when it was time to let the gear out and rig it for sweeping, it was an all-hands evolution. The 1/4 inch wire rope used to stream the miniature minesweeping gear was difficult to handle when paying out and many times more difficult when it came time to bring it and stow it aboard the launch. We made ready everything the first day and returned to our ship that night. The next day, after checking the time of high tide, we left our ship for the Japanese LST and our first day of Small Boat Minesweeping. Little did we know that this was the first time this had ever been attempted. We proceeded to launch the gear and started our first sweep into the shallow waters in the entrance to the river leading to Chinnampo." "There is a 27-foot tidal range in that area and we could only sweep while the tide was at, or near, flood stage. When the tide ebbed, many of the moored mines that had been planted there, often during the night, came to the surface and were easily avoided. We were able to sink them with M-1 rifle fire. Once in awhile, instead of just making a hole in the case so that it would fill with water and sink, when hit by a bullet from our M-1 the explosive charge would detonate. Mud, water and all kinds of other debris would be thrown all around us. We first decided to stay about 200 to 300 feet away so most of the heavier debris would go over our heads. That worked fine until the shrapnel started falling into the

boat. We changed our tactics and decided to stay as far away as we could and still hit the mine with rifle fire."

"We proceeded that first day to launch the gear from both boats and entered the approaches to the Chinnampo River. In less than an hour the engine in one of the launches suddenly died. The load was just too much for it. We retrieved the gear for that boat with much difficulty, since we were unable to control the boat's heading without engine power. Before the end of the tidal period we lost the engine in the second boat as well. We managed to attract the attention of the helicopter crew and they sent a boat from CARMICK to tow both boats back to the LST."

"We returned to CARMICK where we awaited the arrival of replacement boats. A few days later, several US Navy ships appeared on the horizon, including a destroyer, a destroyer escort rigged to carry Explosive Ordnance Disposal and Underwater Demolition Team personnel, and another destroyer escort fitted with electrical generating equipment. Following them was a relatively large ship which we soon identified as USS CATAMOUNT (LSD 17). In its well deck were a large number of World War II LCPVs [Landing Craft, Vehicle and Personnel], at least 12 to 15, as well as several larger LCSMs [Landing Craft, Mechanized]. As soon as the group arrived we were told that we were going to be put aboard CATAMOUNT temporarily, to conduct small boat minesweeping. As soon as we were aboard we were allowed to select any two of the LCPVs to use as our minesweepers. After careful selection by LTJG Privette, we loaded and launched the boats from the well deck and returned to the Japanese LST to retrieve our minesweeping gear. Returning to CATAMOUNT, we prepared our gear for the next high tide. When the tide came in we launched our boats and, after streaming our minesweeping gear, commenced sweeping into the entrances to the Chinnampo River. The entrance was very wide at high tide with two islands almost side by side creating a narrow entrance."

"Once past the two islands the river widened out to a width of a mile or so (at high tide) so we had an area inside the two islands about a mile wide and about 3 miles long before it became a narrow channel leading to the pier at Chinnampo, two miles up river. We swept in and around the two islands and up the river at each high tide, during daylight, for the next 15 days. During this time we had the helicopter from the Japanese LST firing on mines which



surfaced because the tide went out or because they were improperly laid in water too shallow for them.”

“Occasionally a USN PBY would fly by and use the waist machine guns to either sink or explode mines that came to the surface. One day there was a line of eight mines floating on the surface when the PBY came by. As they fired on the mines the entire line exploded all at the same time. The plane was making a turn at that moment, crossing the line of mines. A wall of water was sent skyward as all of the mines fired simultaneously. The wall was higher than the PBY was flying and when they hit it they lost altitude. They were almost to the surface before they managed to get the aircraft under control. Watching from our boats, we were sure it was going to crash but somehow the pilot was able to get the plane back into the air before hitting the surface.”

“On another occasion, the EOD folks gathered up a large number of the mines which had surfaced and been towed to involved, but large fish were killed in the area we were one of the islands in the entrance. Without letting us know, they suddenly detonated all of the mines at one time. We never did learn how many mines were located, almost 3 miles away. As we neared the island where the detonation took place, we noticed fish up to 24-inches in length had been killed.”

“After we had streamed our gear from the LCVPs and found they would be able to carry the load, we convinced the shipfitters aboard the CATAMOUNT to assist us in designing and constructing a winch system we could use to stream and recover our minesweeping gear. They were some of the best and most willing folks we could have met. Many times they worked during the entire time we slept, in order to have the equipment ready when we needed to go about our minesweeping tasks.”

“The nearest we came to being shot, was by our own YMSs, when they fired at a mortar battery set up on one of the small islands. They were on the South side of the island and we were on the North. The 40-mm shells came through the trees and almost hit us. One of the projectiles did penetrate the boat I was in but simply came in one side and went out the other, thankfully without exploding. We could also hear them passing overhead, but since we had no radio contact with the YMS we could not tell them of our situation. We just scooted out of there as fast as our boat would take us.”

“During the time that we worked we had swept some 12 to 20 mines, we

## A bit of Mineman History con't



weren't absolutely sure because often when we thought we had swept one or more, upon pulling in the gear, we found none of the cutters had fired. We had also fired on and either sunk or exploded at least another dozen or more.”

“The day before Thanksgiving, we were told to report to the APD [High Speed Transport], and we were all looking forward to a nice hot Thanksgiving Dinner aboard CATAMOUNT. They lifted our boats aboard and we were assigned temporary quarters for the night. The ship got underweigh sometime in the evening and we traveled north all night. At first light they woke us and gave us breakfast. Then we manned our boats, and were lowered into the water. We were provided with two escort boats with armed personnel and told to sweep up a river from its mouth. We swept up the river while Korean folks on the banks waved US or South Korean flags. About noon we were signaled by radio and told to return to the ship. As we turned, a few rifle shots went over our heads and we noticed that the same peasants along the riverbanks were now waving North Korean flags and every once in awhile would direct rifle fire at us. It was difficult, but we found a way for four or five of us to get behind the diesel engine that was providing our power. We knew the sides of the boat would not stop a rifle bullet. To make matters worse it was so cold that the salty water of the river froze on the gunwales of the LCVP. The water, which splashed into the boat, froze on everything it contacted, except the engine. We took turns, even when they were not firing at us, to huddle next to the diesel engine in an attempt to get warm. As soon as we were spotted by the APD they came alongside and picked us up and we left, heading south, as fast as we could go. We later learned that the North Koreans and Chinese had overrun the area, but we never were told for sure what river we were operating in. The only river of any size North of the Chinnampo is the Yalu. We thought that was where we were.”

“During the time we swept, using the LCVPs, we fortunately lost only two engines. They were much more capable of towing the sweep gear than the motor launches we first used. The diesel engines on the LCVPs provided considerably more horsepower.”

“After our return to the CATAMOUNT from the APD we were given our Thanksgiving dinner and then returned to CARMICK. I've often wondered what became of the LCVPs, because CATAMOUNT did not remain with us after that day and we had no further contact with her or the LCVPs.

CARMICK proceeded to Inchon Harbor where I was transferred to the Hospital Ship USS HAVEN [AH 12] when it was suspected that I had contracted tuberculosis. I was hoping for an appointment to the Naval Academy, but the possibility that I had TB brought that hope to an end. Later, given a clean bill of health (it was scar tissue on my lungs, not TB), I was transferred to the Navy Beach Masters unit in Inchon, awaiting transportation to rejoin my ship.”

While there, I spent several days assisting refugees to board LST's at high tide so they could be taken out to the AKAs [Assault Cargo Ship] and APAs [Assault Transport] for transportation to some other area of South Korea. It was known at that time that the North Koreans were going to overrun Inchon within a matter of days. A few days after New Years Day, I was put aboard the Oil Tanker USS ASTABULA, bound for Sasebo, Japan, where I rejoined CARMICK.”

“We immediately left Japan heading for the East Coast of Korea, to an area near Wonsan. For several days we would stream our minesweeping gear before daylight and sweep at a speed of 15-20 knots North towards, and perhaps past, the port of Wonsan. When it became dark we would recover our sweep gear and anchor for the night. The next day would be a repeat except we go south all day, spend the night, and then resume our sweep on a northerly heading.”

“After this operation, we returned to Sasebo, Japan where I was given orders to report to the Commanding Officer, Naval Ammunition Depot, Oahu, Hawaii for further duty. The crews of the two LCVPs were awarded Bronze Star Medals with combat "V"s. CARMICK was also awarded a Navy Unit Commendation for the period 28 October to 25 November 1950.”

**LCDR Harold E. Elston, USN, (Ret.)  
AOM Member #299, passed away  
November 19th, 2008 in Guthrie, OK**





**KOREA**  
**G. Paul Santa Maria**  
**AOM Past President**

“When the Korean War started on June 25th, 1950, I was a Mineman Seaman working at the Marine Armory in Yokosuka, Japan cleaning Navy weapons: rifles, carbines, machine guns, etc. Within a very short period of time, I was assigned cleaning and mounting 20mm anti-aircraft guns on LCTs (Landing Craft, Tank) along with ammo and drum magazines for that ammo.”

“Immediately upon completion of that assignment, I was designated as ‘Ordnance Officer’ for the LCTs and was soon on my way to Korea, via Camp McGill, to pick up a tank and personnel of the 1st Cavalry Division. We were towed to Pohang Dong, Korea by sea-going tugs, stopping overnight in Sasebo, Japan.”

“Upon arriving at Pohang Dong, we unloaded the tank and Army personnel and were detailed to unload the supply ships as they arrived. There were about 35 assorted Navy personnel: a Warrant Officer, Boatswains Mates, Gunners Mates and myself, the only Mineman.”

“The North Koreans continued pushing South and within several weeks, they were a few miles North of Pohang Dong and its airfield. At this time, several of us Sailors were dispatched to the front lines to fight along with the 1st Cavalry.”

“As history states, the fighting became bitter and intense. Unable to withstand the continued onslaught, we all withdrew back into the city. As the situation continued, we were ordered to turn over all the LCTs to the South Koreans. My job was to instruct the officers and crews on the operation and maintenance of the 20mm anti-aircraft guns. All U.S. Naval personnel boarded an LST and returned to Yokosuka, Japan.

# A bit of Mineman History con't



**Which Mine Warfare Forces may be called upon should hostilities erupt in the Western Pacific today?**



**LCS SQUADRON 1**  
**LCSRON 1 DET**  
**MISSION PACKAGE SUPPORT**

- USS FREEDOM LCS 1
- USS INDEPENDENCE LCS 2
- USS FORT WORTH LCS 3
- USS CORONADO LCS 4
- USS JACKSON LCS 6
- USS MONTGOMERY LCS 8
- USS GABRELLE GIFFORDS LCS 10
- USS OMAHA LCS 12



**Commander, Task Force/Group**  
**and**  
**Theater Mine Warfare Commander (MIWC)**



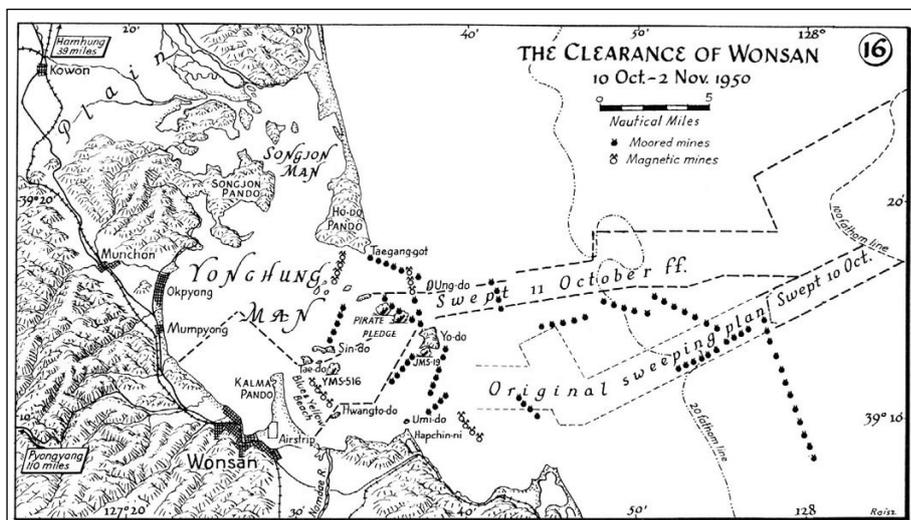
**MCM SQUADRON 7**

- USS PATRIOT MCM 7
- USS PIONEER MCM 9
- USS WARRIOR MCM 10
- USS CHIEF MCM 14



**NAVY MUNITIONS COMMAND**  
**EAST ASIA DIVISION (EAD)**

- NMC EAD UNIT GUAM (Mine Shop)
- NMC EAD UNIT OKINAWA (Mine Shop)
- NMC EAD UNIT MISAWA (Mine Shop)



# Tails from the Poopdeck...

Minemen Sea Stories



## The "Dirty Dozen"

By CDR Maurice "Toby" Horn, LDO/USN (Ret.)

In July 1969, the Joint Chiefs and CNO had decided on the campaign for mining Haiphong Harbor and other critical waterways in Vietnam. A special team was convened by CNO to inspect and declare the readiness of our Pacific mine facilities to support this campaign. Captain Donald "Don" Hihn had just taken the helm as CO NWS Charleston after transferring from NAVORD (Ord-054-Mine Warfare/EOD/UDT). He was given the task of assembling and heading the personnel for the readiness inspection team. He contacted LCDR Earl Roberts (senior LDO mine type at the time), who was still at NAVORD and had worked for Hihn there. Earl was told that he was to be a member and was asked him to recommend others for the team. Earl knew of my reputation via Mine Project FOUR and the Port Lyauety pullout (which resulted in the creation of Sigonella, established our mine readiness system, and upgraded mines located at Malta, Souda Bay, and Andenes) so he called me at NMEF and asked me for my recommendations. This is essentially how the Inspection Team was formed. Members decided upon a standard mine assembly rate based on mine readiness reports submitted by each facility twice a year. The team first inspected the mine facility at NAVMAG Yokosuka. Mine assembly there failed to meet reported rates and quality. The Ordnance Officer was relieved by Captain Hihn on the spot. We then went to NAVMAG Subic and the mine assembly there was similar. The Mines Officer there was relieved of duty and replaced. MN1 Briggs and I were flown aboard the two Yankee Station carriers and we reported high readiness for deployment there but with a high failure rate due to mines we inspected which failed to pass operational tests. The mines aboard had come from both Yokosuka and Subic. I was temporarily ordered in-country to report to COMNAVFORV, NARDUV and then to CTF-115 to assist and advise with ongoing DST-115 operations. When I reported back, I learned that the CNO ordered the 'readiness' team to remain and conduct directional schooling at both Subic and Yokosuka. What was supposed to be a twenty day TAD assignment for the team turned into almost four months.



Our team became known as "The Dirty Dozen" and members are shown in the attached photo. (Names are left to right)

Back row: MNCM Fred A. Reid, NAD Bangor; MNCM William Brooks, NAD Earle; MN1 Billy W. Luker, COMINEPAC; MNC Frank A. Eck, COMINEPAC; CDR Arthur R. Yingling, COMINEPAC Observer; MNCS J.D. "Jimmy D" Stoker, COMINEPAC; and LT Maurice "Toby" Horn, NMEF.

Front Row: CAPT Donald "Don" E. Hihn; "The Bull" (another long sea-story); LCDR Herbert "Ed" E. Sprecher, COMINELANT; LCDR Earl "The Pearl" L. Roberts, NAVORD; LCDR Lyal M. Stryker, NMEF; MN1 Charles W. Briggs, COMINEPAC; and CDR William "Bear" E. Everhard. The photo was taken 5 August 1969



# 43rd Association of Minemen Reunion



## Association of Minemen

**Look out San Diego, here we come !!!** The 2017 AOM reunion preparations are well in hand and the reunion registration, agenda, hotel information along with a San Diego map have been completed and will be published on the AOM web page (<http://minemen.org>) and in the July 2017 Summer Dashpot. I have it from good sources that the weather will be beautiful, the food will be delicious, the beverages will be cold and the conversations among old friends will be lively! We'll be headquartered and lodged at:

### Holiday Inn San Diego Bayside

4875 North Harbor Drive, San Diego, CA 92106, Phone: 619-224-3621, Website: [www.holinnbayside.com](http://www.holinnbayside.com)

A special room rate for AOM Reunion of \$129 per night is available for October 12 – 17, 2017. The total amount per night including taxes and fees is \$145.24. (Includes 10.5% occupancy tax, 2% tourism marketing, district tax and .09% California Tourism Tax). The AOM Reunion group code is **AMM** and the group rate is valid for bookings made through **9/22/17**.

On the Holiday Inn San Diego Bayside website (above) you can click on the link [Association of Minemen Room Reservations](#) to proceed directly to your reservation desk. The link goes to the standard reservations page with the AOM group code of **AMM** preloaded. Guests need to input their arrival and departure dates which need to fall within the group contract dates (October 12 – 17, 2017) and click "Check Availability" to go to the group's specific rate and availability page. From there select a room type that you prefer and input your personal details to complete the reservation (please scroll down to see all available room types). Guests may also use their IHG Rewards number with the group rate. You may also contact hotel reservations directly at Holiday Inn San Diego Bayside. Call 1(619) 224-3621, ask for reservations (Ext: 701) or call toll free (in USA only) [1 \(800\) 662-8899](tel:18006628899).

The hotel has waived the \$14/day parking fee for our reunion group! Complimentary airport shuttle pick-up is available 24 hours a day. If you are using the shuttle, after picking up your luggage, call the hotel at 619-224-3621 to request the shuttle service. Personnel from the Holiday Inn will give you instructions on where to meet the shuttle. Check-in time is 4:00 p.m. and check-out time is noon. A 10% discount will be given in the Holiday Inn Bayside restaurant, the Pt. Loma Café, for everyone who asks, and is 55 years or better. Hope to see you in October!

**Warm regards, Warren Savage**  
**Reunion Committee Chairman**

### Friday, October 13, 2017 – Tours

9:30 a.m. - Tour of the Mine Warfare Training Center

Afternoon - 2 Tours are available: 1. USS Midway museum ship and 2. a Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) (or an MCM Class Ship if an LCS is unavailable). Sign up for one or the other.

### Saturday, October 14, 2017 – BOD and General Business Meeting (Holiday Inn Pacific Room)

Banquet: (San Diegan / Presidio Room) No Host Bar: 5:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Banquet Dinner and Program: 6:30 – 10:00 p.m.

Banquet Menu: Tossed Green Salad - Tri Tip Steak - Chicken Breast with Wild Mushroom Sherry Glaze - Fresh Seasonal Vegetables - Rolls and Butter - Carrot Cake - Fresh Brewed Kona Coffee, Decaf and Assorted Hot Herbal Tea

### Sunday, October 15, 2017 – Picnic Lunch and Auction - Noon to 4:00 p.m. (Harbor View Room)

Picnic Lunch Menu: Tossed Green Salad - Hamburgers - Hot Dogs - Potato Salad - Baked Beans Potato Chips - Iced Tea and Fresh Brewed Kona Coffee, Decaf and Assorted Hot Herbal Tea

**The Hospitality Room will be in the Holiday Inn's Pacific Room located on the ground floor in Building A, beginning at 12 noon on Thursday, October 12, through 10 a.m. on Monday, October 16, 2017.**



Association of Minemen

# 43<sup>rd</sup> Association of Minemen Reunion

## ASSOCIATION OF MINEMEN 43<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL REUNION AND MEETING

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

HOLIDAY INN, SAN DIEGO BAYSIDE

OCTOBER 13 – 15, 2017

Please return this form to the address below to complete your registration for the reunion events. Your tickets will be made available at the Early Bird, Business Meeting, Dinner or Picnic as appropriate.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ AOM MEMBER # \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS/P.O. \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

**Buffet Dinner Tickets @ \$50.00 each X \_\_\_\_\_ (includes tax and gratuity) Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**Buffet Picnic Tickets @ \$30.00 each (Adult) each X \_\_\_\_\_ Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**Buffet Picnic Tickets @ \$15.00 each (Child - 12 & younger)  
each X \_\_\_\_\_ Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**Reunion Fee (Membership Approved for Incidental Costs) Total \$10.00**

**Annual Dues \$15.00 as applicable – (Check your DASHPOT address label for dues status.  
Pay ahead (5 year max). Add \$5.00 for new or member reinstatement fee). Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**AOM Scholarship Donation (tax deductible) Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**Other Donations (indicate which one) \_\_\_\_\_ Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**TOTAL ENCLOSED    \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO “ASSOCIATION OF MINEMEN”**

ASSOCIATION OF MINEMEN  
POST OFFICE BOX 510519  
PUNTA GORDA, FL 33951

Please let us know if you plan on taking the Friday, October 13, 2017 tours:

Morning Tour @ 9:30 – Mine Warfare Training Center: Qty \_\_\_\_\_

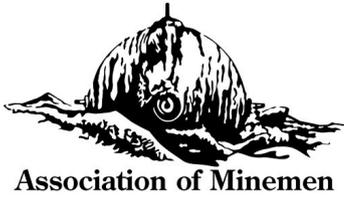
If interested, sign up for ONE of the following afternoon tours:

Afternoon Tour #1: USS Midway Museum Ship tour: Qty \_\_\_\_\_

-or-

Afternoon Tour #2: a Littoral Combat Ship (LCS): Qty \_\_\_\_\_

(Note: if an LCS is not available, tour #2 will be an MCM ship)



# 43<sup>rd</sup> Association of Minemen Reunion

**Holiday Inn**  
San Diego Bayside



# AROUND THE MINE WARFARE FLEET



By MN1(SW) Jonathan Wampler

Greetings from **Mobile Mine Assembly Group!** From all of us at COMOMAG, we would like to first congratulate all Sailors who advanced throughout the Fleet. Here at COMOMAG, our very own MN1(SW) Levi Schmid was selected for advancement to First Class Petty Officer. To the left, pictured is MNCM(SW) Samuel Dorbandt "Tacking on the crows." Tacking on the crows is a tradition that dates back to the early days of the British Navy; where Sailors, would take turns sewing a stitch into a newly promoted sailor's insignia. Often the patch was given to them from a Shipmate. This tradition is an uplifting event; that not only immerses Sailors into Navy tradition, but also gives sailors a sense of belonging. It's a great way to commemorate such an achievement in a Sailor's career.



Another significant achievement in a Sailor's career is, the day they decide to reenlist. We had the pleasure here at COMOMAG; with the help of the MK-5 Marine Mammal Program, to reenlist MN3 Guevara. Depicted in the picture is CWO2 Montero, administering the reenlistment oath to MN3 Guevara; while MK-5 Sea Lion "Rex" supervised the ceremony in the background.

Congratulations, to MN3 Guevara, and special thanks to the MK-5 Marine Mammal Program for allowing Rex to participate in the ceremony.



We would like to extend a warm welcome to our newly reported Sailors; MNC(SW) Warren, MN1(SW) Cowen and IT2 (SW) Hollingworth. With new Sailors arriving, there are always those who are leaving. IT1(SW) Brown is departing COMOMAG, and returning to sea duty onboard the USS RUSHMORE (LSD-47). Fair winds and Following Seas Shipmate!



# AROUND THE MINE WARFARE FLEET



*From the Mine Warfare 'Schoolhouse'*  
**MNCS (SW) Ed Sandoval**

As the Mine Warfare community and mission changes, we are constantly updating our capabilities to provide mission readiness in the form of well-educated and motivated Minemen. From the V4 upgrade of the SQQ-32 Mine Hunting SONAR Set to the SLQ-60 SeaFox, the warfighting technologies and efforts continue to increase. One significant development is the procurement and employment of the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS), but more importantly, the incorporation of female Minemen crewmembers on these platforms. MNSN Lyons, a recent "A" School graduate, expressed an interest in this program while in school. She was subsequently selected for these orders and was very excited to get to work. "I can't wait to learn about my rate" she said in an interview with MN1 Card. "I've already got my Non-Resident Training Course books to study for my exam, but I'm excited to do my job."

MNSN Lyons is the one of six females selected for LCS orders in the past six months. As the influx of students continues, the possibility of more female Sailors becoming members of the LCS community increases. This is just one of the many ways Mine Warfare Training Center is leading the charge on mission readiness within the fleet.

## Winner of the 2017 Mine Warfare Essay Contest

Sponsored by the Mine Warfare Association

### Rethink Mine Countermeasures

By Dr. Scott Savitz (printed with permission)

*Here is an excerpt from his article:*

Naval mine countermeasures (MCM) face major challenges. Traditional MCM platforms, such as the wood-and-fiberglass Avenger (MCM-1)-class ships, are in the process of being decommissioned. Their intended replacements, the littoral combat ships (LCS) and their associated mine warfare mission modules, have been delayed and face various development issues. Despite efforts to reduce the timelines, costs, and risks associated with MCM operations, mines remain cost-imposing weapons that can deny access for protracted periods or inflict unacceptable losses on the U.S. Navy. Given these challenges, it makes sense to think about alternative concepts of operations for conducting MCM in time-sensitive circumstances or contested environments. Traditional approaches remain relevant in permissive environments where timelines are long. Such circumstances can allow for the use of minehunting systems to methodically detect, classify, and identify mines and then eliminate them. Moored minesweeping (in which tethered contact mines are torn from their moorings) and influence minesweeping (in which off-board equipment emulates the signatures of a ship to prematurely detonate influence mines) are faster, though there is



**MNC (SW/EXW) Andrew Fillebrown** our Mineman Detailer, has just returned from a detailing trip to our Minemen in Bahrain, Sasebo and San Diego. He reports that he enjoyed visiting the ships and Sailors in each location and expresses his **thanks to all** for the excellent reception and hospitality at each location.



greater uncertainty about whether they have eliminated all of the mines. Moreover, all these approaches require the use of scarce, visible, slow-moving assets, which would be threatened in a hostile or contested environment.

**Conclusion:** The emergence of increasingly capable unmanned surface vehicles (USVs) may enable minefields to be cleared to acceptable levels of risk more quickly than traditional MCM approaches while putting fewer people and valuable assets in harm's way. The idea is simple: develop a set of inexpensive, expendable USVs that can sweep for mines while enduring high rates of attrition. These are challenging times for the United States and its allies in naval mine warfare. Numerous potential adversaries have mining programs that could impede naval operations while also damaging or sinking U.S. warships. At the same time, the U.S. Navy has a dearth of emerging and legacy MCM capabilities. In this context, it makes sense to develop relatively inexpensive, expendable minesweeping USVs to enable more rapid, cost-effective mine clearance. Limited investments in such capabilities today could enable the U.S. Navy to enter hazardous waters more quickly and deter potential aggressors who might employ mines.

**You may read the whole essay in the July 2017 Naval Institute Proceedings Magazine**  
<https://usni.org/node/91134> - Ed.

# AROUND THE MINE WARFARE FLEET



By MN1(AW) Courtney Crank

## ~MISSION UPDATES~

Unit Seal Beach launched into this year's Mine Readiness Assist Visit (MRAV). With unprecedented eagerness and an open mind, we conducted a final series of in-depth program and building inspections to ensure we had an honest statement on areas that needed improvement. Over the course of the last 3 months, UWD fine-tuned program details and tightened some our procedures. Upon COMOMAGs arrival, we presented ourselves confidently, and were rewarded with a positive training event from the experts. Bravo Zulu, guys!

Amidst this highly charged event, we continued on with the missions at hand as well. Over the Quarter, UWD shipped over 40 mine shapes and their applicable equipment in support of multiple exercises. UWD also received over 280 items from various other commands for refurbishment needs, and performed maintenance and refurbishment of over 200 additional mine shapes and equipment to those that were earlier shipped.

## ~HAIL AND FAREWELL~

First and foremost, congratulations to our frocked Petty Officers this Quarter: YN1 Williams, MN2 Tri, MN2 Young, MN2 Rincon, MN2 Butler, MN2 McFarland, MN2 Chrisp, MN2 Copple, MN3 Blake, MN3 Chapman, MN3 Huey, and MN3 Rivas. Let us welcome aboard our newest family members to the UWD; GM1 Maltese, GM1 Sager, MN2 Tejada, MN2 Rincon, and MN2 Haskell.

Unit Seal Beach would also like to wish fair winds and following seas to our brethren; MN1 Schwartzbarra, MN1 Collazoluciano, MN1 Morse, MN1 Brown, MN2 Hipol, MNSN Wipf, MNSN Jackson, MNSN Mayette, MNSN Sannicolas, and MNSN Scalf. Your next command is lucky to have you!

*Greetings from the Navy Munitions Command Pacific CONUS West Division Unit Seal Beach, Underwater Weapons Department (UWD) in sunny California! With Summer firing up, UWD met that heat with our own. Here's a look at what we've been cooking up ...*

## ~UNIT CAMARADERIE~

This Quarter, we took morale to new heights, proving yet again that we are family no matter what. With that spirit, let us congratulate MN3 Cruz and his wife on the birth of their son, Daniel Luis! We celebrated each other as well with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Birthday Bash and a gender reveal for MN1 Crank and MNSN Ruiz (they're both having girls!).



MNSN Ruiz learning, for the first time, that she is having..... **A DAUGHTER!**

We also had our Quarterly Departmental Picnic, where we went head to head with softball, volleyball, and kickball. With the intense competition, we also spent good quality time just relaxing with plates of ribs (made by MN3 Perkins), burgers, and dishes made fresh from each of our homes.



MN3 Honesty and MN3 Sannicolas with their newest 3<sup>rd</sup> Class, MN3 Blake.



LS1 Mactal and LS2 Moreno firing up the grill.



UWD didn't stop there, though. We also went out into the community, participating in various events such as Pageant for the Arts at McGaugh Elementary, and Armed Forces Day at Torrance Del Amo Fashion Center, where we presented the Quickstrikes, missiles, and torpedoes that we work with here at Seal Beach.



Left: MNC Sisson and MNSN Parson showcasing the MK 63 Quickstrike mine.



## ...IN THE SPOTLIGHT

### NAVY MINE EXPERT FINDS NAVAL WEAPONS STATION IS "THE TIE THAT BINDS"

Dave Buswell, Navy Public Affairs Center NORVA

**This article was released by Navy Public Affairs in February 1978 and is reprinted with Jack's permission. ED.**

The observation that "you can't go home again" certainly does not apply to the U. S. Navy Reserve's Chief Warrant Officer Jack F. Smoot. "I never really left Yorktown's Naval Weapons Station since I was born there..." says Smoot. And today, his ties with the station are even closer. Consider that his wife, the former June Elkins, was also born and raised on the station and that today, he works there as a civilian during the week and as commanding officer of a highly-regarded Naval Reserve Unit one weekend a month. Further, his wife is the station Commanding Officer's secretary and, at one time or another, all five of his brothers also worked at the station.

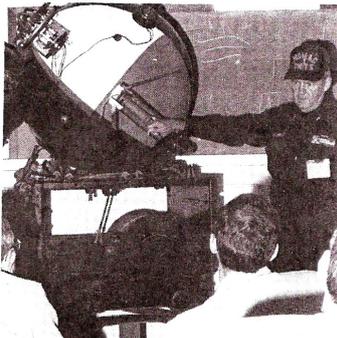
When Jack Smoot was born in 1929, one of six boys and three girls, his father was a civilian electrician at what was then known as the Naval Mine Depot. His wife's father was the facility's maintenance carpenter. When Jack graduated from Poquoson High School in 1946, he immediately enlisted in the Navy and was sent to Electrician Mate's school at Great Lakes, IL. Following graduation, he spent the next 18 months aboard the amphibious repair ship USS Krishna ARL-38.



After mustering out in late 1948, he simultaneously joined the Navy Reserve and went to work as a civilian at the Naval Weapons Station. His progress in both pursuits over the years has been remarkable. In his civilian capacity, he has risen to head of the management division of the station's Quality Assurance Department with a GS-13 rank. In

the Navy Reserve, he has been promoted over the years from Mineman First Class to Chief Warrant Officer with an Underwater Ordnance Technician specialty, one of the few, if any, in the Navy Reserve Program. As a reservist, Chief Warrant Officer Smoot commands Mobile Mine Assembly Group Unit 1006 with a compliment of 16 enlisted personnel, the first of 27 units in the U. S. Navy Reserve. "I was on active duty at the Mine Warfare School in Charleston, SC in 1971" recalls Smoot, "and became aware of the need for continued Navy Reserve readiness in this highly-specialized and technical field of mine warfare." He wrote a memorandum to the appropriate authorities in Washington D.C. and outlined what he thought such a unit could accomplish. "Not only did they like my idea," says Smoot, "but they asked me to set one up here at the station and ordered me to it as Commanding Officer." Jack Smoot has been CO of NR MOMAG Unit 1006 since 1971, except for two years on another assignment. "Our task as a unit is to have every man up-to-date in every respect of the technical aspects of mines and mine warfare and to be ready to integrate with the regular Navy should such a contingency arise." I can say categorically, that we are ready." And, that statement is no exaggeration. In addition to two

### Mine Warfare Experts Offer Timely Briefings



Chief Warrant Officer Jack Smoot discusses fine points concerning modern, tubular-shaped mines during a briefing.

#### NR MOMAG UNIT 1006

U.S. Naval Reserve MOMAG Unit 1006 was the first of the twenty-seven modern Naval Reserve Mineman units. It was established as MOMAG 501 in July 1972 under the command, and largely due to the efforts of, Chief Warrant Officer Jack F. "Gunner" Smoot, training at the Naval and Marine Corps Reserve Center, Newport News, Virginia. The unit presently reports to the Naval and Marine Corps Reserve Readiness Center, Norfolk, Virginia, Captain Paul B. Elliott, USNR, commanding; and trains at the Naval Weapons Station, Yorktown, Virginia. The mission of the unit is to support the mission of MOMAG, especially to augment MOMAG Unit 5, Sigonella, Italy. Unit 1006 was a recent winner of the "M", the Mine Site Excellence Award.

CWO4 J.F. Smoot	LT R.H. Packard	LT J.W. Bruce
MNQM D.L. Epperly	MNCS R.A. Spencer	MNCS E.G. Matern
MNC S.W. Liberman	MN1 J.H. Rowe	MN1 L.A. Boyers
MN1 S.L. Warner	MN2 T.D. Ferguson	MN2 L.L. Paton
MN2 H.E. Wexler	YN2 P.E. Bates	MN2 R.J. Brisette
MN3 T.E. Johnson	MN3 R.J.A. Girard	MNSA R.C. Welch

MNQM W.E. Atkins      MNC W.H. Beck

days of drilling one weekend every month, the men of NR MOMAG Unit 1006 go on active duty for training for two weeks every year. Recently, they were sent as a unit overseas to work with their active duty counterparts at a mine staging site in Europe. As an auxiliary activity, the unit also maintains a most impressive and historic collection of mines in a museum housed in the drill site building at the Weapon's Station. With obvious pride, Smoot comments that "The collection of mines we have represents virtually every type of mine used in the history of modern mine warfare. Some of them date to World War I and include enemy mines as well. They were obtained by both reservists and civilians over the years and serve a training function as well." While mines clearly take up a great deal of Jack Smoot's time and attention, he also finds time to pursue golf and fishing. He and his wife have two married daughters, Connie Reynolds and Pamela Worthy, both of the Yorktown area. Whether pursuing his career or his hobbies, there is probably no one who knows mines any better than Jack Smoot. The Navy is proud to have his services both as a civilian and a Navy Reserve Officer. **Jack served as the second President of the Association of Minemen after our inaugural President "Foxy" Fischer, (Ed.)**

#### "Mr. Mineman"

The Naval Mine Engineering Facility referred to CWO4 Jack Smoot by this name as a result of all the RUDMINE reports he submitted



# Taps

*Honoring those we have lost... Praying for those who are suffering*



**MNC Guy Henry Hall, USN, (Ret)**

Guy Henry Hall, age 95, of Lenoir, NC passed away Wednesday, April 12, 2017. He was born July 27, 1921 in Orangeburg County, South Carolina to the late Bob and Jessie Suddreth Hall. He had served 20 plus years in the U. S. Military and was the last Pearl Harbor survivor in Caldwell County. MNC Guy Hall, one of the last remaining of those Sailors selected for the Mineman rate after it was first created (from Gunners Mate (Mines). Very few Sailors who would later become designated as a Mineman had enlisted before Pearl Harbor and Guy was one of the very few to attain the Mineman designation. He not only enlisted before World War II but was at Pearl Harbor during the Japanese attack.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by two brothers, Earl Hall and Hal Hall; and one sister, Joyce Profit. Mr. Hall was a wonderful husband and Christian man. He had served 20 plus years in the U. S. Military and was the last Pearl Harbor survivor in Caldwell County. He was a member of Fairview Presbyterian Church. Survivors include his wife of 51 years, Kathy Hamby Hall of the home; one daughter, Peggy Hall Walsh and husband Benny of Lenoir; and one grandson, Chuck Pearson.

Funeral services were held April 17, 2017 at Greer-McElveen Funeral Home Chapel. Interment followed at Blue Ridge Memorial Park with full military honors provided by Caldwell County Honor Guard. Thank you for your service and may you rest in peace Chief Hall.

**His hometown newspaper, the Lenoir (NC) News-Topic published an account of his life, as follows:**

"Guy Hall survived the worst military attack on U.S. territory in 1941, when he literally saw death all around him, but it was after the war back in Lenoir that he came to something hard to face: asking a pretty woman out on a date. Her name was Kathy Hamby. She was a waitress at a restaurant in Whitnel and after his death, she shared memories of their lives together. "He was kinda shy. So he left the restaurant and called back the restaurant and asked to speak to me because he was too shy to ask me in person, she said. He had naturally curly hair. He had a lot of hair. And he had like these steel-blue eyes, real pretty blue eyes." They went to a fair in Shelby on their first date. You want to know the truth? I went to sleep (in the car) and slept all the way home, she said with a laugh. He was a very nice gentleman. And he was always thoughtful. He's really took care of me all these years as long as he was able. Guy and Kathy Hall celebrated their 51st wedding anniversary on April 10, and two days later he passed away. He was 95.

He was born in Orangeburg, South Carolina, but grew up in Lenoir after his parents moved. As soon as he graduated from high school, he enlisted in the Navy in 1939, fulfilling a childhood desire, Kathy Hall said. He said since he was a little boy, (when) he saw this sailor in a ... I guess in a magazine or something, and he said, I always wanted to join the Navy. That's what he told his mother, I'm going to join the Navy, when he got old enough, she said. Kathy said he didn't talk about his service often but was always open to a conversation if someone asked him.

For 20 years, Guy served his country in the Navy, including at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on Dec. 7, 1941, when the Japanese staged a sneak attack on the American fleet there. Hall had been at Pearl Harbor for at least two years. His job was to plant mines in the water. Shortly before Dec. 7, though, he was transferred. He said one of the chiefs came down and they were lined up or something. And (the Chief) said, You, you, and you, and you, come with me. And that saved his life," Kathy said. Those men went to the USS Phoenix (CL-46), a light cruiser that survived the attack without severe damage or casualties.

Because had he been on the boat that he was on before the Phoenix, -- all of them got killed. So it wasn't his time to go, Kathy said. Though the Phoenix survived the attack, those aboard saw its effects. He said as they were trying to get out of the harbor, there was a lot

of dead bodies on top of the water, she said.

Guy later was stationed Charleston, South Carolina, in charge of the military police at an Army depot. After a few years, he moved back to Lenoir. That's when he met Kathy... Throughout his life, Guy remained a member of Fairview Presbyterian Church in Lenoir, and his faith continued to grow through the years, Kathy said. He was a good Christian man. That's the most important to me, she said. He was a good Christian and a loving husband."

## The Binnacle List



Past-President **Gary Cleland** recently underwent a successful spine surgery and reports he's a new man and now able to walk around without serious pain. We are all very happy for you and wish you a speedy and full recovery Shipmate!





# Taps



**MN1 (SW) (Select) Cole Spennati, Wife Elise Ann and Children Aila Elise (4) & Gianna Rose (18 mo.)**

On Tuesday, May 16, 2017, near Lumberton, North Carolina, Cole Allen Spennati, his wife, Elise Ann Larson Spennati, and their daughters, 4-year old Aila Elise and 18-month old Gianna Rose Spennati, tragically died in a motor vehicle accident. First Class (Sel.) Cole A. Spennati, 25, was born in Lewistown, PA.

Cole was a graduate of Mount Union Area High School in Mount Union. He was a multi-sport athlete participating in track, basketball and cross country. He was a loving son, brother and father who loved being outdoors, especially fishing or pitching horseshoes. Upon graduation, he enlisted in the United States Navy in 2011 and was serving as a Mineman, stationed in Goose Creek, South Carolina. He was the son of Louis Spennati Sr. and Jenifer Worthy Spennati of Mount Union. In addition to his parents, Cole is survived by three brothers, Louis Spennati Jr., Gene and Blake Spennati, all of Mount Union.

Elise Ann Larson Spennati, 31, was born in Keflavik, Iceland. Elise was a 2004 graduate of Cary High School and enlisted in the United States Navy in 2011, serving almost four years. At the time of her discharge, she was stationed on the USS Stout and was Sonar Technician 2nd Class. She was the daughter of United States Navy military parents, Gregory Robert and Marla Elise Wike Larson of Maggie Valley, North Carolina. Cole and Elise met and married while serving in the United States Navy. They were patriots who loved each other and served their country with extreme pride.

In their married life together, they were blessed to be the parents of two daughters, Aila Elise and Gianna Rose Spennati. These "angels" were loving, joyful young ladies and will always be in the hearts of their families. As a family, they enjoyed the mountains, camping, fishing and fitness training. It is with heavy hearts that we return Cole, Elise, Aila and Gianna to our Lord, but we know they are among our family and friends who have preceded them to heaven. They were loved by all who met them, and there exists a resolute peace and certainty that they are present and safe

in their eternal home with God and their savior, Jesus Christ. A memorial service was held Saturday, July 1, at Robert D. Heath Funeral Home, Mount Union, PA. Final interment of the family will be scheduled at a later date in Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C. Memorial contributions in memory of the family may be made to Shelter to Soldier, 2665 Fourth Ave, San Diego, CA 92103.

**Ed. Note: Cole Spennati's uncle is MNCS David Fazenbaker, USN (Ret.) who kindly provided this obituary for the Dashpot with permission from the families. Thanks Dave!**



**MNC (SW) Patrick Brady**

We mourn the recent and untimely passing of MNC (SW) Patrick 'Pat' Brady who passed 7-7-17 at his home in Fredricksburg, VA. He leaves behind his family: sister Stacy Brady, mother Francine Brady, niece Shannon Connolly, and his sons Joseph Dominic Brady and Patrick Anthony Brady, who miss him dearly.

Funeral services will be conducted as follows: the viewing on Sunday, July 16 from 1400-1700 and 1900-2130 at Scarpaci Funeral Home.

On Monday, July 17th, The mass service will be at 1030 at the Roman Catholic Church of St. Patrick, followed by the ceremony at Greenwood cemetery, Brooklyn, NY.

The unexpected loss of Chief Brady has shocked and saddened the entire Minemen CPO community and all of his shipmates who worked for and with him. We pray for healing and comfort for his family, friends and shipmates.

**Rest in peace Shipmate.  
We have the watch.**



**With Honor & Gratitude  
We Remember**

# A.O.M. Mineman Letters & Stuff



Dear DASHPOT Editor

*"Ditto on the New Dashpot... Great Job"*  
*"CDR Roberts did a very thorough job on the Destructors, but he didn't mention the origin of the idea when LCDR Ben Randle of COMSERVPAC learned what had happened to some Mk 50 mines. He had MOMAT 0302 set up some magnetic induction mechs and test sets at Westlock. His idea to convert bombs to mines was confirmed and you know the rest of the story."* **Joe also added some more names to the MN deployer's list, as follows:**

*USS Midway (CVA-41)*  
*Re-seeded the minefield at Haiphong Harbor on 18 Dec 72. The final prep was performed by MOMAT 0304:*  
*MN1 Charlie Dunn*  
*MN2 Michael Milen,*  
*MN3 Jim Anderson*  
*MNSN Don Healer*

*Minemen from MOMAG Charleston*

*USS Kitty Hawk (CVA-63):*

*MN1 Yancy*  
*MN3 Delozier*  
*MNSN Reid*  
*MNSN Kennedy*

*USS Constellation (CVA-64)*

*MN2 Allen*  
*MN3 Dufrein*  
*MNSN Dubois*  
*MNSN Hinton*

*USS Coral Sea (CVA-43)*

*MN3 Gill*  
*MN3 Pusher*  
*MN3 Buris*  
*MN3 Murcier*

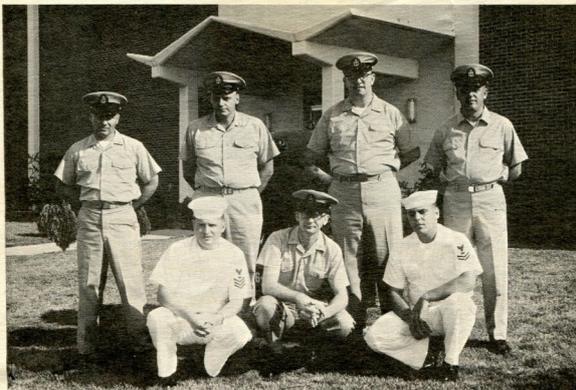
*"All received Navy Commendation Medals for performing final prepping 36 Mk 52 Mines for Haiphong."*

*Signed, Joe Hernandez*

**LT Blas Palma Hernandez, USN (Ret.)**

## Has anyone heard from Fred???

MN1 Kenneth D. Willingham (US Navy, Ret.) is looking for a former shipmate. Anyone knowing the current location or knowledge of MN1 Fred Reed (Ret.) is urged to contact Ken at [kennethd53@hotmail.com](mailto:kennethd53@hotmail.com). Ken says that Fred is African-American and served at MOMAG Unit 5, Sigonella in 1983.



## JUNE GRADS

U.S. Naval Schools, Mine Warfare "B" Course graduates, Class 6801, pose before the entrance to the new school building at Charleston. Left to right they are: Front row: MN1 G.R. Kelly, TMCS W.G. Bean, faculty advisor for the class, and MN2 L.E. Dufhio. Back row: MNC L. Carvell, MNC R.L. Johnson, MNC J.E. Trick and MNC D.L. Chmura.

MNCs Carvell, Trick, Chmura and MN1 Kelly are assigned to MOMATS at Charleston, MNC Johnson will remain at the school as an instructor. MN2 Dufhio is Sigonella bound. TMCS Bean transferred to the Fleet Reserve August 68.

8

TROUBLESHOOTER 2-68

## Who are these Minemen? What Unit is this?

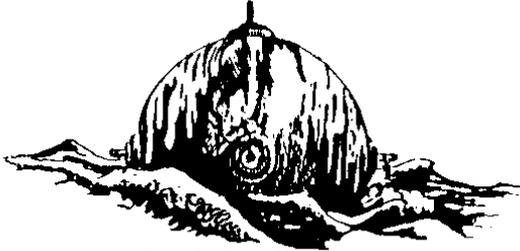


**Editor's Note:** *The Dashpot used to have a column year's ago entitled: "Where's Charlie" with the objective of finding old shipmates with whom we had lost touch. Ken's inquiry above reminded me of that effort and I'd welcome input, inquires and feedback on adding such a feature to future issues. I know there are quite a few Minemen I have served with, who for one reason or another, have 'disappeared' from view. (like this guy to the Left...) Let me know what you think.*

*All the best, Ron Swart*

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Application Fee: \$5.00 - Annual Dues: \$15.00 - NOTICE: To maintain membership, dues must be paid annually by the month of October. The dues expiration date is printed on the mailing label above your name. Mail checks to the Association of Minemen, P.O. Box 510519, Punta Gorda, FL 33951