

The DASHPOT

Issue 17

Newsletter of the Association of Minemen

SPRING 1997



FROM THE PRESIDENT

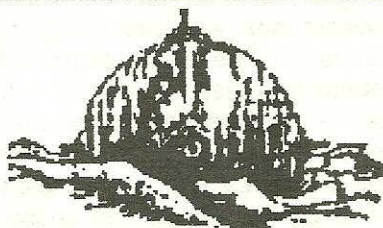
Spring is here and we are well on our way into 1997. We are looking forward to our 23rd Annual AOM Reunion at the Handlery Hotel and Resort. The Handlery Hotel Resort is located at 850 Hotel Circle North in the Mission Valley section of the City of San Diego. The phone number to the Handlery Hotel is 1-800-676-6567. Things are shaping up for what should prove to be a memorable get together, one that can truly be a family event. Your San Diego Reunion Committee headed by **Jim Miller** ably assisted by **Bill Bash**, **Jerry Chipman** and **LCDR John Iwaniec** have worked diligently to assure this event is nothing less than outstanding. The 23rd Annual AOM reunion Committee looks forward to an outstanding event and we promise great weather.

Transportation between the airport and the Handlery Hotel Resort will be provided free by Cloud 9 shuttle, compliments of the Handlery.

For those flying to the west coast, US Airways (USAIR) is currently offering discount travel to and from the reunion, valid between 5 and 13 August 1997. Call 1-800-334-8644, 0800 - 2100 E.S.T and refer to 28620170.

There is a great deal to do for everyone; including arts, attractions, shopping, dining, sightseeing, networking, picnicking, golfing and meeting with new and old found friends. We ask that reservations at the Handlery be made early as well as reservations form requests be sent in to allow us to guarantee you a fun

Please See President Page 2



AOM

"M" Award Winners Announced

CMWC 172305Z JAN 97

The 1996 nominees for the best active and reserve mine shop in the navy were, as always, very competitive and all exhibited tremendous accomplishments and mission readiness. All packages submitted were carefully reviewed, and after much deliberation, I am pleased to announce the 1996 Active Mine Site Excellence "M" Award winner is **Mobile Mine Assembly Detachment Seven** and the Naval reserve winner is **NR Mobile Mine Assembly Unit Eleven**, Houston, TX

On behalf of all Mine Warfare Forces, my congratulations go to all the Units both Active and Reserve, for their hard work and dedication throughout the year.

Keep smilin, Rear Admiral D. R. Conley sends.

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SAN DIEGO AUG 8-10 '97 23rd Annual Reunion

MINE COUNTERMEASURES Deployment

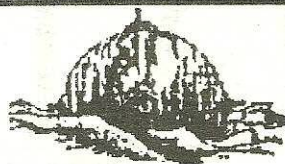
The Foc'sle 2/14/97

The tactical staff of Commander, Mine Countermeasures Squadron Two in USS Inchon deployed for a four month Northern Europe and Mediterranean Sea for countermeasures exercise "Blue Harrier '97". Accompanying Inchon are USS Black Hawk, USS Avenger, USS Devastator and USS Scout. The 28 day transit will be the first for an Osprey class mine hunter. "This will be the first demonstration of the Inchon Task Group to operate forward from the sea and conduct MCM operations anytime, anywhere, for as long as it takes" said CAPT **Bruce T. Van Belle**, COMCMRON TWO. The ships are due back from deployment in early July.

Mines at Corpus Christi Airport

The Foc'sle 2/14/97

Visitors at Corpus Christi International Airport now have a "minefield" on display. **RADM Dennis R. Conley**, COMINWARCOM recently cut the ribbon on a display for the Mine Warfare Center of Excellence at the airport. The display features five different types of mines used by the US Navy throughout history as part of a project to represent the unique aspects of the Coastal Bend area.



**ASSOCIATION OF
MINEMEN
DEDICATED TO SERVING
THE
U.S. NAVY MINE FORCE**

The Dashpot, published quarterly, is the newsletter of the Association of Minemen, 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.

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President from Page 1

filled stay.

The Admiral Baker Golf Course and Picnic Area is in a fantastic location within three miles of the Handlery. The Admiral Baker boasts two 18 hole golf courses and spacious picnic grounds with something for everyone. The golf plans are underway for those taking part. The picnic will prove to be a great opportunity to get together. Don't forget the AUCTION - bring along items to be included in the auction. This will assure continuation and enhancement of our scholarship endeavor.

We will be having individual and group pictures of our reunion as well as a reunion book made available through "Reunions Inc.". We look forward to having photos and videos available for review from MOMAG Sites as well as our 1996 reunion at Panama City.

Enclosed we have our schedule of events from the Early-Bird get-together to golf to our general membership meeting and dinner to our picnic and auction. Our general membership meeting will be an opportunity to be brought up to speed on Navy and AOM business as well as conduct an election for two director positions currently filled by **John Loonam** and **Bill Roberts**.

We will also select a location for our 1999 AOM Reunion.

Your AOM Officers and Directors have been doing much behind the scene - A SPECIAL THANKS TO THEM ALL. We also want to express our thanks to AOM members **Fred Dane** and **Hal Elston** for putting the Association of Minemen on the internet. Our Home Page looks great and those of you who have access will find this medium one that will be a great communication tool. Thanks again **Fred** and **Hal**.

Our 24th AOM Annual Reunion will be in Charleston, SC scheduled for 7 - 9 August 1998. **Lyal Stryker** and **Toby Horn** have put the preliminary actions together and we eagerly look forward to this reunion. Volunteers

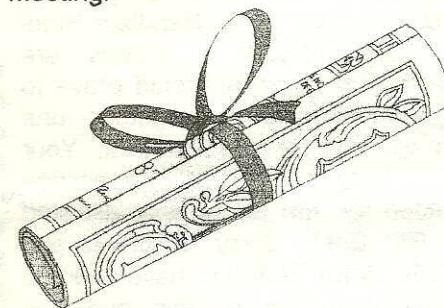
to help graciously accepted, Charlestonians call **Lyal** or **Toby** and lend a hand.

Best wishes to all, looking forward to a great year. Anyone in arrears with dues, please consider sending in membership dues in now. This is our way to help you, the customer. Respectfully yours,

Warren

SCHOLARSHIP

Just a reminder that the deadline for submitting scholarship applications is **MAY 1997**. Applications are available from **Lyal Stryker** and you can call or write to him as noted on page 2. Winners will be announced at the Annual Reunion Meeting in San Diego on August 9, 1997 at the dinner meeting.



Also, please remember our Scholarship Fund donations when you renew your dues and send in your reunion registration form.

Mineman in the News

The Foc'sle 12/13/96

MNSN Matt Rucker, Rotational Crew Bravo, USS Pioneer, MCM 9 was pictured running a sander on board ship. The caption said any day in the Navy you can see Sailors performing Ship's preservation. **MN1 Brian Wilson** of Crew Hotel was recognized for volunteering during Military Family Appreciation Day at Ingleside. Advancements by sailors taking exams at PSD Ingleside: **MN2 Keith Jacobson**, USS Heron **MN1 Richard Hormann**, USS Chief **MWTC MN1 Richard Lewis**.

MINE PLANT STILL BLOOMS

by CDR Ron Swart

An interesting call came in the other day that brought to mind just how effective and long lasting an underwater minefield can be. Newspaper articles in the Key West Citizen reported an underwater floating object resembling a mine off the coast of Key West. Navy EOD was called to investigate and subsequently determined that it was indeed a MK 6 Mine of WW II vintage and blew it up. The high-order explosion set off another series of articles speculating as to where this mine may have come from and how dangerous this old minefield may be to navigation.

As many of you know, in April 1942, a protective mine barrier was laid along the west side of the Florida Keys to protect marshaling convoy vessels from marauding German submarines. A reported 3460 MK6 (Mod 8??) mines were laid, and almost immediately succeeded in sinking four allied ships, including the USS Sturtevant, DD-240. An extensive recovery effort was made in 1944 and 1945, but less than half the mines were accounted for. In the years since, hundreds of these MK 6 Mines were dredged or trawled free by fishermen and shrimpers or broke free on their own and washed ashore. This is not news to those of you Minemen who were stationed in Key West. All the mines have long since sunk, either by Naval gunfire (a popular countermeasures tactic of the time), were weighted down by heavy sea growth or the case corroded through and filled with sea water. In any event, they are now an integral part of the reef around 15 miles off the nearest coastline. This area is well marked on all charts of the area and include clear warning not to anchor, dredge, trawl, lay cable or pipelines for the risk of striking a mine.

It took me a week of file searches, old mining book reviews and

discussions with retired Minemen to determine the details of this issue which has drawn the attention of CINCLANTFLT himself. My eternal thanks to the efforts of Toby Horn and Lyal Stryker for their assessment of the situation and "just in time" training for this "new" Mineman on the trade secrets of the old MK 6. If any reader has a story or information about this sleeping dragon, I'd love to hear it!

In the end, I learned how important **good documentation** is when it comes to minefields, both new and old. I regret the deplorable mess the Mine Warfare repository has become. After years of Salin-like purges and the move to Texas, it isn't the resource I'd hopes it would be. (I'll take an action item to get it squared away.) I'm also thankful we don't have Europe's residual mine problems...I've recently heard estimates of over 28,000 WW. II mines still off the coast of the newly free Baltic states. I guess old mines don't fade away; at least not by themselves.

COMMAND IN THE SPOTLIGHT

The Foc'sle

Mine Warfare Training Center (MWTC) is the Navy's premier instructional site for current mine warfare tactics, planning and systems, and provides state-of-the-art training in shipboard fire fighting, damage control, and selected engineering systems and administrative programs.

The center's vision is manifold. First and most fundamentally, it seeks to provide the best possible integrated (surface, air and underwater) mine warfare training and education to all dedicated and organic MIW forces of the fleet. It fully embraces the CNO's program of mainstreaming mine warfare and seeks to implement the principles enunciated in the Navy's *Forward from the Sea* strategy. In the areas of engineering and damage control, the center's vision is to

Please see MWTC Page 9

SECRETARY

Lyal Stryker



Not too much to report here this issue. Dues are coming in rather slow and we still have too many in arrears. John Loonam has looked at the dues due dates on our membership list and notes that we have a lot of members past due back to 1991 and suggests we delete anyone that is more than two years delinquent. This idea and others will be discussed at the next reunion this August in San Diego. We also have 16 Honorary Minemen and 36 widows that are not required to pay dues along with 120 military commands/activities that are also not required to pay dues. Another matter we will discuss in San Diego is the feasibility of sending out an annual dues notice separate from the Dashpot. If you have any thoughts on these matters please let us know. I know that many of you are active web surfers and we can use your help in running down past shipmates and members. If you locate anyone and send us the name and address we will send them an invitation to join. I also want to thank Fred Dane for the great job he has done in establishing the **Association of Minemen web site**, it really looks great in color! In the last Dashpot the dates listed for the 24th AOM Annual Reunion in were incorrect. **The correct dates are August 7-10, 1998.** We have made a tentative reservation with the Best Western Atrium Inn where we held a previous reunion. There is a possibility we may hold the reunion at the new hotel being built at Patriots Point and dinner aboard the USS Yorktown. Toby Horn is working the details on Patriots Point. Hopefully we will have firm details in the next Dashpot.



FINAL CALL FOR YOUR MEMORIES FOR THE HISTORY BOOK

Under the extended schedule our publisher agreed to last fall we must make our final submission of material this month MARCH 1997. P.S. seeing how as you will not receive the Dashpot until late March we will accept inputs until the end of April. If you have been holding back, now is the time to send it in, whatever condition it is. Thanks to **Fred Reid** for sending his memories of WWII mining when in the Pacific and we need to hear from those of you that were also there. **Hal Elston** sent in his memories of the early days of the Korean War when he and others rigged LCVP's to sweep moored mines. **Don Decrona** has sent in historical information about the beginning of the Viet Nam War. **Ed Gard** wrote about his Korean memories on the AM 123 and three years at Azuma Island. Also **Frank Butler** for sending the Mine Mark 50 information.

A while back we had to again review the biographies you sent in because the publisher had changed the type set to be used in our book. While going through them we noticed many of you listed some of the real old mine bases/shops where you served and we would like to hear from all of you, especially **Roy Schardin** in 1942 at Suva Fiji, Tunga Tabu, Tunga and Efate Harbor; **Bob Lattanzi** in New Caledonia, New Hebrides, Guadalcanal and NAF Attu; **Don Hihn** and **Earl Roberts** about the real story behind the "Dirty Dozen"; **Bob "Red" Greene** about the first/early mine shop at Misawa; **Arthur W. Cook** about excess mines disposition in the Phillipines; **Jim Butt** and **John Loonam** about Malta/Halfar; **Tommy Hogan** about Malta and the Fasron; **Sam English** about Port Lyautey; **Max Chilcotte** about J11A #3, Tanforan and MAD # 4; **Earl Roberts** and **Buddy Rowzee** about the DST

design/development and production; and to all of you that were there and made it happen.

Researchers Test MCM Technology

Mine Warfare Home Page

The application of an unmanned, computer-operated, intelligent robot in conjunction with a small submarine can make detection and, possibly neutralization of mines much safer and easier.

To investigate this theory, a consortium of research organizations and several officers from the Naval Post Graduate School (NPS), Monterey gathered in Mono Lake, CA using the Telepresence Controlled Remotely Operated Vehicle (TROV), an intelligence-control guidance system under development at NPS. The experiment proved the sonars could be put on a TROV and integrate them to provide good resolution in water that was more saline than ever experienced in a mine countermeasures situation.

The current mine neutralization system uses a Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV), which is quite large and therefore unable to get very close to its target. It also requires a much larger charge to neutralize the mine than that would otherwise be necessary. The present ROV is more useful in deep-water mine countermeasures.

The navy has no clandestine ability to perform mine countermeasures in shallow waters. NPS is trying to bridge that gap through the use of autonomous vehicles in shallow water to perform minefield surveillance, minefield reconnaissance and minefield neutralization. An EOD Officer disagreed with the concept saying "The AUV just couldn't get close enough to some mines, especially magnetic signature mines, to be used for neutralization. It will be excellent for surveillance, then passing the information to an EOD dive team for neutralization."

Mailbag



Following are abbreviated notes received from members when sending in their dues, orders, etc.

Ted Newton wrote requesting to be designated a "Clock Cocker" based on his 36 years and 6 months service. He also asked if we could help him determine if he was the record holder for a Mineman on active duty as an enlisted man. Anyone out there serve longer as a Mineman? Ted splits his time between Charleston and Florida.

Bryan F. Pease sent in 2 years dues and said he appreciates the time and effort everyone puts into the Dashpot. Likes to hear what everyone is up to and reading about the changes that are occurring with the MINEFORCE!

Butch Leonard apologized for sending in his dues late but noted that if he does not get a bill or reminder he tends to forget. (Don't we all!) We are thinking about sending out an annual dues notice and this will be discussed at the San Diego Reunion/Meeting. Also apologized for not making the Panam City Reunion, even though he only lives 120 miles away, but he and **Dora** started a new business in July and just couldn't get away. Says they are both in good health, for old folks, and look forward to seeing all the Minemen in San Diego.

"Moose" Wheelock sent a card to let us know he and **Anne** are busy as usual up in Chimacum, Washington. Their good news is that their son **Greg** has been selected for promotion to Lcdr and they are very proud parents. **Moose** also said he is in the process of getting some new

Please see **Mailbag** from Page 5

knees. (We thought he had good looking knees!) Hope all goes well for **Moose** and that he has received his new knees.

Bill Garrish sent in a nice long letter from Amery WI wanting to join the AOM and said he believes he knew me (Lyal) from West Loch in 1951. Said he would be in Charleston for the 1998 reunion. His nickname was "Reb" but he said he has been in Yankee land for 2/3rds of his life. Has what he calls a little hobby farm with chickens, ducks, geese, cows, pigs and sheep. Fully retired now and after 10 years has learned how to truly enjoy retirement. Each day he does something he enjoys. **Bill** said he would be glad to hear from any Mineman and would reply. His address is 1472 100 Ave., Amery, WI 54001.

Civic News

Lyal Stryker

Those of you in the Charleston/Lowcountry area should mark your calendars now for the weekend of April 25, 26 and 27, 1997 for the **U.S.S. Hobson** annual meeting and memorial service. The memorial service will be held on Sunday April 27, 1997 at 1:30 p.m. at the Hobson Memorial Monument at White Point Gardens on the Battery, downtown Charleston. The Association of Minemen co sponsor this annual event with the Fleet Reserve Association Branch 50 in Charleston. Please remember that a young Third Class Mineman, **George Swan** lost his life in the sinking of the USS Hobson, DMS 26 on June 26, 1952 while the ship was acting as plane guard for the USS Wasp during exercises in the North Atlantic. A total of 176 men lost their lives when the USS Wasp collided with the USS Hobson. The Hobson was built in Charleston during WWII as a destroyer and later converted to a high speed minesweeper in Charleston.

Minemen on the Net

AOM Home Page (Fred Dane)

<http://battle.netgate.net>

MNC Robert A.(Andy) Anderson,

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Todd

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Wilder,

Committee Reports History

Lyal Stryker

This seems to be the month for mines to be making history. Elsewhere in this Dashpot is an article from our BOD member **CDR Ron Swart,** USN concerning the Mark VI mine case that was recovered near Key West and was blown up by EOD. The explosion that resulted was obviously from a 300 pound TNT loaded Mark VI mine case. As this story continues to unfold we will gather all the information available, report it in the next Dashpot and use it in the History Book now nearing completion. One of the sad things about this incident is that the newly formed "Mine Warfare Association" president **Al Bottoms** has been quoted in the Key West newspaper, The Key West Citizen, as "the mine expert" and saying that "these explosives age poorly. When they're 50 years old the explosive becomes sensitive and may go off when moved." We do not know where he gets his information from but we do know that the cast TNT in these Mark VI mine cases do not get sensitive with age and there is no known record of a Mark VI mine from the Key West minefield exploding after being recovered except when EOD detonates them. The newspaper ran an editorial headed "Cruise Ships: Be Wary of Mines". We have been helping the Navy gather information on this matter and refering them to members who were there and others that have instructed on the Mark VI mines. If you have anything to contribute/comment let us hear from you.

A USAF LCOL, B-1 Navigator, has contacted us for information concerning the B-29 minelaying role in WWII. He is planning on writing a book about the operation and we are probably going to loan him some of our documents for him to research.

North Sea Minefield - World War I

(Naval Orientation December 1948)

On 1 January 1917, the Germans announced that they had at least 103 U-boats available for action. During the five previous months the British had been losing an average of 37 ships a month. In February the U-boats sank 86 British vessels and in March the total went to 103. So far, the U-boat had been countered mainly by defensive measures - the arming of merchantmen, zigzagging, the convoy system, etc. Offensive measures - the antisubmarine patrol, the development of the hydrophone, the depth charge, the aerial bomb - had driven off the U-boats rather than sunk them. Only 55 or 60 had been destroyed during the first three years of the conflict, and they were being replaced at an average of three a week.

When America entered the war the weapon that proved particularly effective was an American product - the **Mark H (Mk VI) mine**. When the crisis was at its height, there had been many crackpot ideas for combating the U-boat. These included the employment of trained seals to detect submarines, and a plan for diverting the Gulf Stream in order to freeze up the U-boat harbors. Some Americans wanted to know why mines could not be planted off the mouths of German harbors to blast the U-boats as they sortied.

One such American was Secretary of the Navy, **Josephus Daniels**. In reply to the Daniels query, the British pointed out that they planted some 30,000 mines in Heligoland Bight, and the Germans had swept up these fields almost as soon as they were planted. The requisite was a mine that could not be thus easily swept. The standard item of the period was a contact mine, globular in shape, with wart-like horns projecting an inch or

two from its surface. Already in production was a novel *American mine equipped with long antennas which extended in the water like tentacles*. These (long-armed) electric mines were detonated when metal came in contact with one of the antennas.

The British remained skeptical. Could this **Mark H (MkVI) mine** be manufactured in sufficient quantity to cover a large area? The Navy guaranteed production of **1,000 per day**. An area extending from the Orkney Islands to Norwegian waters was marked for mining. This 230-mile field was planted, in the main, by American minelayers operating throughout the winter and spring of 1918. By the end of the war, approximately 70,000 antenna mines had been laid in the North Sea, 80 percent of the work being done by the American force.

In width varying from 15 to 35 miles, this North Sea minefield was only partially planted when the barrage began to take a U-boat toll. In July a badly damaged U-boat staggered home, reporting the new peril. Then, in rapid succession, three U-boats were lost. On one late-summer day the Germans lost three more U-boats to the North Sea mine barrage. By October some 17 U-boats were sunk or damaged by the great mine barrier and at least 40 were missing, their fate undetermined. At Wilhelmshaven the German submariners mutinied. The mutiny spread to the fleet at Kiel. The Germans had lost the undersea war and with it all hope of defeating the Allied coalition. In November the German High Command sued for an armistice, and World War I was over.

1997 Dues are past due. Send your check for \$10 to the Secretary /Treasurer. Year on your mailing label indicates dues are paid through August of that year. Dues notices are not mailed to members.

THE U.S. NAVY IN VIETNAM

Don DeCrona

Even before the French left Vietnam, the U.S. Navy advisory effort was established in August 1950 when the Navy Section of the Military Assistance and Advisory Group, Indochina, was formed in Saigon. CDR. **James B. Cannon, USN**, and seven officers and men comprised the Navy Section in the beginning. This advisory group was the forerunner of the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam.

Later that year, a joint State-Defense Survey Mission visited Vietnam. They recommended that the American naval aid program be concentrated on a buildup of river and coastal forces. Specific recommendations by the Mission included a provision for modern, radar equipped patrol aircraft; provide a variety of small ships and craft for offshore patrol; and the broadening of river operations, and establishment of adequate repair and logistic facilities to maintain the new equipment.

Although the Vietnamese Navy was not organized until 1952 by the French, U.S. Navy advisors worked indirectly with the Vietnamese who were then a part of the French Navy organization. After being organized in 1952, the French and Vietnamese Navies worked as a combined unit. By 1954, the French Navy strength engaged in the Indochina War was at 10,000. The Vietnamese Navy mustered an additional 1,500 officers and men. Together, the two navies operated more than 300 amphibious ships and craft, 75 patrol boats and mine sweepers, two cruisers, and two aircraft carriers.

When the French relinquished control of the country in 1955, the Vietnamese Navy was left with 30 ships, six river assault groups and a cadre of about 2,000 well trained

Please see History Page 9

ASSOCIATION OF MINEMEN

P.O. Box 71835

CHARLESTON, SC 29415

TWENTY THIRD ANNUAL MINEMEN REUNION MEETING at SAN DIEGO

Please return this reservation form as soon as possible to the address above to expedite your registration for reunion events. Your tickets will be made available at the Early Bird, General Business Meeting, Dinner and Picnic.

Name: _____ Member# _____

Address: _____ City _____ State: _____ Zip _____ - _____

Phone No. _____ - _____ - _____ (for last minute notification)

Dinner Tickets @ \$25.00 Ea _____ X \$25.00 \$ _____

Picnic Tickets @ \$8.00 Ea _____ X \$8.00 \$ _____
(13 years and up)Picnic Tickets @ \$4.50 Ea _____ X \$4.50 \$ _____
(8 to 12 years -- 7 or under are free)

Annual Dues (\$10.00 as applicable to update, advance 5 Years max) \$ _____

USS Yorktown Mine Museum Donation \$ _____

USS Lexington Mine Museum Donation \$ _____

AOM Scholarship Fund Donation \$ _____

Number of Children 7 or Under at Picnic _____

Please indicate number of children 7 or under so we can plan picnic details

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

We must guarantee numbers for dinner no later than the morning of 5 August therefore **no refunds after 4 August 1997**

The picnic will be standard "picnic stuff", hamburgers, hot dogs, etc. with all the trimmings plus cold refreshments for all.

Tenative Program

Host Hotel is the Handlery Hotel and resort located at 950 Hotel Circle North, San Diego, CA 92108. Toll free number is 1-800-676-6567. For use 8:AM to 5:PM (pacific time) . Commercial 1-619-298-0511 anytime. Rooms \$69. single or double up to 2 persons. Continental Breakfast per room. Free Transportation to and from Airport by Cloud 9 provided by the Handlery. mention AOM when booking rooms.

Golf: Pre-Registration \$2.00 9 July after 1 Aug pay in full. 0700 Tee Time cost \$23.00 includes cart. Golf Shop (619) 556-5520 Starter (619-556-5521) mention AOM

The Picnic will be standard picnic stuff Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, etc. with all the trimmings plus cold refreshments for all.

8 AUG Golf available today

1600-2200 Early Bird, welcome reception pick up tickets, snacks, hors d'ouvres courtesy of AOM

Hotel resturant open for menu orders.

1900-2100 Board of Directors meet (tentative)

9 AUG 0700 Golf Tournament

1000-1200 Board Meet (Alternate)

1400-1600 Gen Membership Meet in Conf Rm elect 2 Directors J. Loonam & B. Roberts term expires

1800-1900 Cocktails No-Host

1900-2000 Dinner

2000 Guest Speaker (Approx)

10 AUG 1130 Picnic Admiral Baker Park

Auction Auction Auction

US Airways (formerly US Air) is the official carrier for the AOM 23rd annual reunion.

Discounts are offered are 5% first class and 10% unrestricted coach fares. Valid August 5-13 1997.

Call the Meeting and Convention Reservation Office at (800) 344-8644 8:AM to 9:PM Eastern Time. Refer to Gold File 28620170

Points of contact for the Reunion:

Jim Miller 619-695-1289 (H)

619-695-7112 (W) 3-11 PM Pacific (calls welcome)

Bill Bash 619-424-9417

Jerry Chipman 619-421-6609

Order your Association of Minemen History Book
by contacting the Secretary / Treasurer
(the printing order goes in soon)

Reunions

Navy Times

USS Harry F Bauer DM 26

April 16-20 Savannah GA

contact Rip Ruopoli

1707 Orange Grove Shores Dr

Charleston SC 29407

(803) 766-2712

USS Shea (DM 30)

May 2-4 Charleston SC

Contact Tony Carbone

137 W Main St

North Adams MA 01247

(413) 663-8482

NOTE

Articles submitted are printed without verification and are as perceived by the author. Editing by the Dashpot (to reduce space) is for length not content. The AOM does not assume responsibility, accuracy or authorship on submitted articles.

Some Congressional retirees May Collect Millions

Some 37 House of Representatives will retire this year. House members earn \$133,600 a year Majority and minority leaders \$148,400. and the Speaker \$171,500. They contribute up to 8% to pension plans which covers 20% of their pension. Taxpayers pick up the rest. Rep Pat Schroder will be 56 when she begins drawing her \$74,900 pension for 26 years service. Life expectancy tables say she should collect that pension until age 85.9 or \$4.18 million.

officers and men. The U.S. Navy advisory effort began in early 1955. At that time, the Chief, Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) assumed responsibility for the training and organization of the Vietnamese Armed Forces. The initial program was administered by a joint French-American staff called the Training Relations and Instruction Mission (TRIM). In 1956, U.S. Navy advisors were assigned to assist in the development of the Vietnamese Navy. The Vietnamese Navy established a *Sea Force* and a *River Force*.

In 1958, the Viet Cong embarked upon a full scale insurgency in the Republic of Vietnam. To counter the infiltration of arms and men from the North, the Vietnamese Navy established a *Coastal Force*. A fleet of 200 sail and motor junks was formed and assigned to operate in the area of the 17th parallel. The *Sea Force* was modernized and expanded by new ship acquisition from the U.S. in 1959. In April 1961, U.S. assistance to Vietnam expanded and special attention was given to building a Vietnamese Navy patrol force and paramilitary junk force. This year, the Vietnamese Navy had 37 ships, the largest of which was the LSM, 197 boats, and a personnel strength of about 5,000.

Morale was high, but the Vietnamese Navy's forces were still not sufficiently equipped to counter the growing enemy infiltration threat. Additional assets were requested from and approved by the U.S. The years 1962 to 1964 were marked by rapid expansion of the Vietnamese Navy. Training facilities, repair bases, and logistics support activities were established; communications equipment and networks were improved; and organizational and administration procedures were strengthened. The number of ships increased to 44 and the personnel strength increased to 8,100. MAAG Vietnam was shifted to the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) on 15 May 1964. At that time

the MAAG's Navy Section became the Naval Advisory Group, MACV. Recognition was given to the increased tempo and importance of naval activities in the Republic of Vietnam when, on 10 May 1965, the first flag officer was assigned to head NAG. On 1 July 1965, the paramilitary "Junk Bases" were incorporated into the regular Vietnamese Navy. These coastal group bases stretched along the 1,200-mile South Vietnamese coastline, with several U.S. Navy advisors at each.

Assisting the Vietnamese Navy during this period were the U.S. Navy "Brown Water Sailors". Brown Water Navymen used everything from pleasure boats converted into highspeed river gunboats to modern PCF Swift Boats. In 1968 there were 36,000 U.S. Navymen in Vietnam serving as a fighting, advisory and pacification force from the DMZ to the Ca Mau Peninsula. However, in 1968, the Vietnamese Navy still lacked the manpower and equipment necessary to counter the threats being imposed by the Communist aggressors.

On 12 February 1969, the Accelerated Turnover of U.S. Navy Assets to the Vietnamese Program (ACTOV) was approved. The U.S. Navy then resumed a totally advisory role in the Republic. By November 1969, the Vietnamese Navy reached a personnel strength of 30,000. Their craft, including ships, boats, and junks, numbered more than 1,100. After 1970, the Vietnamese Navy had the responsibility for conducting all riverine and coastal combat operations and developing logistic and maintenance self-sufficiency. With the Vietnamese Navy assumption of these responsibilities, on 15 April 1972, the transfer of the last of the U.S. Navy's 33 in-country bases was completed, and the completion of the turnover of 1,022 ships and craft was completed on 10 November 1972.

Attesting to the success of ACTOV, U.S. Navy forces in Vietnam had been reduced from the peak strength of 39,089 on 12 February 1969, to only

1,500 Navy men by the beginning of 1973. The U.S. Navy Advisory Group completed its advisory mission as provided for in the cease-fire agreement of 28 January 1973. The last of the U.S. Navy advisors departed Vietnam on 28 March 1973. The Navy Division of the Defense Attaché Office that remained until 1975 was responsible primarily for monitoring operations, managing authorized U.S. assistance and logistic support programs and meeting statutory obligations to oversee the use of U.S. supplied equipment.

COMMANDERS OF U.S. NAVAL FORCES VIETNAM

RADM Norvell G. Ward, USN

1 Apr 1966 - 27 Apr 1967

RADM Kenneth L. Veth, USN

27 Apr 1966 - 30 Sep 1968

VADM Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., USN

30 Sep 1968 - 15 May 1970

VADM Jerome H. King, Jr., USN

15 May 1970 - 5 Apr 1971

RADM Robert S. Salzer, USN

5 Apr 1971 - 30 Jun 1972

RADM Arthur W. Price, Jr., USN

30 Jun 1972 - 25 Aug 1972

RADM James B. Wilson, USN

MWTC from Page 3

maximize MIW platform survivability through the best possible damage control and fire fighting training and to enhance platform reliability through tailored engineering and combat systems training. Finally, MWTC seeks to bring educational and training resources of the greater Navy to the Ingleside customer through distance learning techniques.

Originally established under the name "Naval Schools, Mine Warfare" (NSMW) in Yorktown, Virginia on 31 December 1940, the school migrated to Charleston, South Carolina, in January 1959 in order to maintain closer coordination with the fleet. On 1 July 1972, NSMW merged with Fleet Training Center, Charleston, and became the Fleet and Mine warfare Training Center (FMWTC), an entity which endured until the Base

Please see MWTC Page 15

MOMAU THREE

By LT Mike Sportelli

I know, I know it's remarkable, input from Unit Three. Well I thought it was time to let you all in on what's been happening in the Garden State.

1996 had been one heck of a year, busy would certainly be an understatement. It as one of those years when every inspection fell during the same year. But that's all right, that's just the way we like it, busy. We had a very successful MRCI with a 98 percent weapon reliability and 100 percent supply validity. Also an ESI, NAVOSH, FCA, DDESB, ADMAT, that can't be it, I must be missing a couple. Anyway, as you might expect, everyone of them was very successful and a testament to this outstanding crew. Personnel transfers and retirements were also plentiful, hopefully I didn't forget anyone.

Departures:

MN1 Gutierrez to EOD School

SK2 Marte to USS Detroit

MN2 Maness to Navhosp Bethesda

MN2 Alt to USS Defender

Separations:

MN3 Kinnel

MN2 Levasseur

Arrivals:

MNSR's Kutrich, Lanpheare,

Salinas and Rye from FMWTC

SK2 Vigil from NWS Earle

MN2 (SW) Boulware from USS Patriot

MN3 Heider from MOMAU Five

MN3 Moyers from MOMAU Five

MN2 Pascoe from USS Chief

MNSA Haley from MOMAU Twelve

YNSN Ellis from NWS Earle

MNC Tandy from FMWTC

SK2 Santiago from Roosevelt Roads

MNC Taylor from MOMAU Fourteen

Retirements:

MN1 (SS) Randy Coben retired with 20 years of dedicated service on 31 JAN 97. He is currently driving a bus for Academy Bus Lines at \$20. per hour, not bad huh?

A triple retirement ceremony was held in honor of MNCS Ken Empie, MNC Carly Myers and MNC Jim Phillips

honoring their dedicated service on 7 MAR 97. Folks that's 62 years of Mine Force experience retired in one day. Their experience, technical knowledge and above all their friendship will be sorely missed by everyone who has had the pleasure of serving with them.

MOMAD Seven

CWO Gary Riggins

I can report that MOMAD Seven is the "BEST" Mine shop in the free world. We were selected as the "M" award winner for 1996.

Our Sailors of the Quarter for 4th Q CY 96:

Senior, YN1 Wallace Pedro

Junior, MNSN Chad J Adsit

MN2 Randall A. Childers Third Award, Good Conduct

MNSN Natasha L. Faill was meritoriously advanced to MN3 on 26 February as a result of ranking # 1 in her "A" school class.

MNCS Dwayne Baldwin with his busy schedule, largely responsible for this command's selection as the "BEST" Mine Shop, also manages to find time to perform the duties of the president of the Nanakuli Maili Little League Baseball Program. Several of his supporting staff members are also from MOMAD Seven; MN1 Brian L. Allston, Safety Officer and Umpire; MN3 Natasha L. Faill, Umpire and MNSN Chad J. Adsit, Umpire. MN3 Thomas J. Sorenson received his private Pilot's license from the FAA in February.

MOMAU Ten

Only an E-mail note from MN2 Bill Ramsey saying he had been to school all week was being processed for medical discharge.

MOMAU Eight

By LCDR Tim Patton

Things are well here at MOMAU Eight in the lush tropics of Guam. We are staying very busy but thanks to the efforts of a great hard working crew we somehow manage to get it done on time and right. You'll find no boiled frogs out here, except those laying around on the road! Always moving forward, the crew is doing some very innovative and creative workload management using a systems approach to process improvement and statistical process control. We never knew there were so many ways to skin the cat. We could use a few more bodies to help out but I guess everybody has that problem. Over the past year we have passed all our inspections in spite of Murphy...MRCI, FCA, and ESI all successfully accomplished and all because of the hard work and sweat of those who chose to achieve from day to day.

The most significant event that we've been through recently was the retirement of CWO3 Ray Ferraro. Ray retired with twenty-four years of outstanding service and I'm not ashamed to say the Navy has lost a great professional and leader and I say good-bye to a great friend. I'm a better human being today for having served with him. he is truly a class act. Anyone wanting to drop Ray and Ronnie a line can write them at the following address:

Ray & Ronie Ferraro

5801 Thomas Dr Apt 203

Panama City FL 32407

We have recognized many of our crew for outstanding performance over the past several months. They represent some of the finest professionals in our community and we're darn proud to have them here at Unit Eight. Some of those outstanding professionals are as follows:

Mineman of the Year Nominee:
MN1 John Pipkin

Please see Unit Eight Page 12

FULL FORCE NEWS



COMOMAG

CDR Ron Swart

The study to determine if MOMAU Fifteen Kingsville, TX is a candidate for privatization or "outsourcing" is complete and they do not qualify. CINCLANTFLT has determined that Mobile Mine Assembly Group doesn't fit the profile due to our mobilization tasking and the unique nature of the service we provide to the fleet.

● Lay-up of the MK 60 (CAPTOR) stockpile has begun at MOMAU Fourteen and work on the MK 56 lay-up is underway. Current plans call for a 5-year draw down.

● The realignment and reorganization of COMINEWARCOM is top priority here in the Center of Excellence. Although the final organization has not been decided, it is certain that both the N9 Minefield Planning Department and the MOMAU/MOMAD MRCI and assist visit functions will move under COMOMAG.

● COMINEWARINSGRU will stand down and their functions will transfer to the appropriate Type Command (AIR LANT/PAC, SUB LANT/PAC, SURFLANT, COMOMAG, etc.). Another Mine Countermeasures Squadron will stand up (MCMRON Three) and a "Requirements" department N8 will be formed on the COMINEWARCOM Staff to address the future for Mine Warfare.

● Congratulation to **double winner** MN1 **Lee Whitmore**, MOMAU One, Seal Beach, CA for his selection as COMOMAG and COMINEWARCOM

Sailor of the Year. Congratulations and well done to MN3 **Tamara Smith**. MOMAU Twelve, Misawa, JA for her selection as the COMOMAG Junior Sailor of the Year.

● A well deserved "BRAVO ZULU" to the best little mine shop in MOMAG: *Mobile Mine Assembly Detachment Seven, Hawaii* and their top notch reserve counterparts; *Naval Reserve Mobile Mine Assembly Unit Eleven, Houston, TX*, for winning the active and reserve Mine Site Excellence "**Battle M**" for 1996.

MOMAU One Seal Beach

LCDR (Select) John Iwaniec

We do have some great news to report from Unit One. First we are proud to report that MN1 **Lee Whitmore** has been selected as COMOMAG's Senior sailor of the Year. We are also happy to report that MN3 **Alfredo Medina** was COMOMAG's "runner up" for Junior Sailor of the Year. Petty Officer **Whitmore** will now be considered for COMINEWARCOM's Sailor of the Year. If Y'all remember, Petty Officer **Whitmore** was the Minemen Association award winner last year. We're really proud of him and hope he goes on to be one of the future leaders in the Mine Force. By the way, **Whitmore** say's he is still waiting for that beautiful plaque he was supposed to get and hopes to see it soon. He also says he wanted to meet Mr. **Mehard** who he understands is a really neat guy...

We're all looking forward to this years reunion in San Diego, I will ensure the entire crew gets a day off to participate in the festivities. **Jose Balderamma**, if you're still kickin out there and if you plan to go, you can stay with me. I don't see why I should be so nice, you haven't answered your mail lately...

Other good news, our Water Blaster and Powdered Paint System is on track and the crew is really looking forward to the Powder Paint, since

we're really tired of taking these mines down to bare metal after every plant and we're already feeling the pinch of manpower cuts.

Our recent Sailors of the quarter are SK1 **Duane Townsend** for senior and MN3 **Mark Geisler** as our Junior representative. SK1 **Townsend** is one of the best "Store creatures" I've ever worked with and will miss him as he transfers in a month.

Other than that its business as usual, weathers great and I only hope the state stays together long enough for me to complete my tour and leave. I keep the boat close to the house just in case. I hear the shrimping season wasn't as good this year in Charleston, but then again Captain **Danny Powers** say's that he was fishing with **Toby Horn** who is sort of a rookie and really doesn't know what he is doing yet...

By the way, Captain **Powers** (former COMOMAG) has landed a job in Jacksonville, Florida running the S3 pilot simulator. We all hope he and his lovely wife **Karen** enjoy their new job and home. CDR **Ken Vanourney**, Ret. (former CSO COMOMAG) is living in Kentucky now and is teaching the ROTC program there and is building a new home. He and his wife **Pat** are doing great. I miss both of these folks tremendously. I also stayed with CDR **Will Dixon** and his charming wife **Mel** about a month ago on my way to Okinawa. the good CDR is working for CINCPACFLT and seems to be doing real good, lost some weight (again) and they fed me like a king. I can see why he has problems with keeping his waist line down. **Mellie** can really cook.

Well this wraps it up for now, I'm even going to try and send my dues along with this, see y'all in August. (ed note: told John dues to Lyal articles to me)

Association Logo

Paraphernalia (shirts, hats, tie tac, sweat shirts, jackets etc) available.

For order blank & prices

Contact Lyal Stryker (address P2)

Unit Eight from page 11SOY: MN1 **John Pipkin**JSOY: MN3 **Donny Briggs**SSOQ's: MN1 **John Pipkin**MN1 **Richard "Red" Rollins**

(PCS MOMAU Fourteen)

MN2 **Donna Oglesby** (PCS Balboa Naval Hospital)MN2 **Bernard Thomas**JSOQ's MN3 **Donny Briggs**MN3 **John "Cappy"****Caporuscio**MN3 **Steffan Kichta**MN3 **John "Dead Eye"****Dominguez**

Of course we would have liked everyone who went up for advancement to have made it but unfortunately that wasn't the case however, we are extremely proud of those that were selected for advancement:

MNC **John Bray**MN2 **Stephanie Cowart**MN3 **John Dominguez**MN3 **John Caporuscio**MN3 **Steffan Kitcha**MN3 **Doney Briggs**

Our new Executive Officer, CWO3 **John J. Goodwin**, will be arriving on 1 April 97. We are really looking forward to his arrival. He is currently attached to Naval Activities Guam as the Ordnance Production Officer, so he is coming from across the jungle. He has visited us often and is considered a good friend and shipmate. He is also familiar with our operation. He's already complaining about the size of his office, something about it being too small. Although Gunner Goodwin is not from the Mine Warfare Community, he does come to us covered with salt. A career full of sea time both Commissioned and enlisted and an absolute wealth of leadership experience, he will undoubtedly be a welcome addition. Last August we also lost another fine professional that being MNCS **Bob "Bubba" Hill**. He served this crew as the Senior Enlisted Advisor and its fair to say that we are still reeling from his loss. The billet has been gapped since August 96 and it doesn't look to be filled until

November 97. The billet is currently and temporarily being filled by MNC "Mad" **Jack Cantrell** who we removed from production to perform these duties. He's been doing a bang up job for never having filled that type of billet before. He claims he was trained by MNCM **Helgerson**! In fact he throws big Arn's name around all the time! He could have done a lot worse I suppose and me too.

I can't speak for my fellow MOMAU/MOMAD C.O.'s and OIC but I am extremely pleased with the new breed of Mineman who have arrived on our door steps. MN1 **John Sullivan** and MN2 **Terrell Burkhardt** have brought with them a welcome change in prospective, experience and leadership to MOMAU Eight which I wouldn't trade for all the tea in China. Good job MNCS **Darnold**, keep 'em coming.

In closing, the Island of Guam recently stepped into the history book once again. The USS Independence and her entire Battle Group literally squeezed into Apra Harbor recently for a port visit. To put this in perspective, this is comparable to parking the family Cadillac in a compact parking space at the local grocery store! It can be done but only if there are no cars on either side of you. The last Aircraft Carrier to visit Guam was the USS Midway in 1966. I don't know if Guam's local population was ready for it or not but there was an instantaneous infusion of approximately 10,000 sailors let loose on liberty (Holy Cow! Katie Bar the Doors). A good time was had by all except my teenage daughter who was kept safely locked in her room for the entire port visit. Needless to say everyone was locking up their daughters for the weekend. Well that's the news from the leading edge of dawn's first light. Until next time Hafa Adi

MOMAU Twelve**"TACHI IRI KINICHI"**

By LT Ed Simmons

Ed. Note, sorry to say this missed the December issue due to my fax problems. Thanks to Unit Fourteen I received it but just

after I dropped off the copy to the printer. This report was dated 10 Dec.

Here is our input for Dashpot. **H** Yoshi and I have been here about six months now. The days of being on the golf course are over. Saturday was a beautiful day and MNCM **Benton** and I were on the golf course. Sunday, there was a blanket of white stuff all over the ground. Didn't know what it was but it wasn't cotton. I guess the next time I get on the golf course it will be to do some cross country skiing. Happy holidays from all at MOMAU Misawa. KONICHIWA, summer and fall have passed and we're readying to dig in (or out) for the winter! The snow blowers are primed and our POV's have all weather tires installed. Early predictions are over 140" of snow this season, OOH YAH!

Here we go... notable events:

"Salty Dawgs" make base newspaper; MN2 **Franklin**, MN3 **Dykes**, MN3 **Koski**, MNSA **Rosser**, children **Kyleigh**, **Franklin** and **Alexandra Dykey** adorn the latest cover, outfitted in full pirate garb after summer's annual boat regatta. MOMAU 12 finished a promising fourth in our homemade sailing craft and our volleyball team came in an astonishing second place during intense (sometimes ugly) competition.

MN1 **Rapley** led NAF Misawa's Dragon Team in preparation to battle other dragon boats at Misawa's Kappa Festival 96. LT **Ed Simmons** has already been recruited to fill in next year for MN1 **Rapley** due to his retirement in May 1997. Skippers' got some big feet (literally) to fill.

MOMAU 12 was recognized by Misawa Air Base Commander, BGEN **Paul Hester**, 35th Fighter Wing Commander, as one of the top ten organizations base wide in raising funds for the local Red Feather charitable campaign. This is an annual charity drive in Misawa for the local community.

Congratulations are in order for our newest advancees, MN1 **Adams** and MN3 **James**

Please see Unit Twelve on Page 13

Unit Twelve from Page 11

Recent award winners:

Navy and Marine Corps
Achievement Medal:

MN1 **James Adams** (2nd award) by
CO, MOMAU 12

YN2 **Donnie Wilson** (2nd award) By
Commander Seventh Fleet

Flag letter of Commendation:

MN2 **Sharlene Walker** by
COMINEWARCOM

Sailors of the Quarter:

MN2 (MN1) **James Adams**

MNSN (MN3) **Daniel James**

Hails:

MN1 **Joe Miller** From MOMAU 11
Charleston

MN1(SW) **Mike Corvo** From US
Heron

MN2 **Sharlene Walker** from MOMAU
1 Seal Beach

MN2(SW) **Jesse Gutierrez** from USS
Heron

MNSA **Maltsberger** from FMWTC
Farewells:

MNC **Keith Brieno** to FMWTC

MN1 **James Adams** to USS Heron

MOMAU Fourteen

By MNCS (SW) **M. D. Campbell**

Hello from MOMAU Fourteen in
Yorktown, VA. During the past
few months a lot has been
going on here.

First our new arrivals:

Our new Executive Officer, LT
Carlton J. Cubbedge, arrived on
board from the USS John F. Kennedy
(CV 67).

The Operations and Quality
Assurance Department is now
headed up by MNC **Leeann Baker**
coming from Naval recruiting District
Jacksonville, FL. The Production
Department is headed up by MN1
Richard (Red) Rollins arriving from
MOMAU Eight Guam. We also
welcomed aboard MN1 **David**
VanEtten from MOMAU Five
Sigonella who will be assisting in the
Logistics department.

Departing personnel were:

MNC **Scott A. Caswell** who retired
31 December 1996

MNC **Keith D. Taylor** who transferred
to MOMAU Three Colts Neck
CWO4 **Joseph V. Kuhlmann** who
departed to Naval Activities Agana,
Guam.

Awards:

Navy and Marine Corps
Achievement Medal:

LT **C.J. Cubbedge** (fourth award) for
service in USS John F. Kennedy (CV
67)

MNC **Leeann Baker** (second award)
for service at NRD Jacksonville

MNC **Keith D. Taylor** for service at
MOMAU Fourteen

Military Outstanding Volunteer
Service Medal:

MNC **Keith D. Taylor**

Letter of Commendation:

MN1 **David VanEtten** for service at
MOMAU Five

Senior Sailor 4th Q 96 MN1 **Julie J.**
Porter

Junior Sailor 4th Q 96 MN3 **Roert J.**
Powers

Senior Sailor of the Year 96 MN1
Julie J. Porter

Junior Sailor of the Year 96 MN3
Gerald L. Crain

Advancements:

MN3 **Gary J. Keeney** was advanced
to MN2

MNSN **Andrea S. Dussault** was
advanced to MN3

MNSN **Timothy L. Velas** was
advanced to MN3 under the
Accelerated Advancement Program
for graduating number one in his "A"
School class.

MOMAU Fifteen

MNCS **Clint Chacanaca**

Howdy to all our shipmates and
friends around the world, from
MOMAU Fifteen here in the
heart of the Mine Warfare Center of
excellence. The TEMPERATURE is
rising, mine requests are coming in
from all over, the new Seamen are
hot to trot and the shop is cookin'.
Life in south Texas is great!! 1997 is
starting off with exciting expectations
of a fantastic year. CWO3 **Butler** at
COMOMAG has been helping with
the identification/procurement of a

new water blast/paint spray system. I
beleive it will be of great benefit with
the increase of OP-TEMPO we are
beginning to experience here and will
be experiencing in the future. We are
now preparing for the ESI at the end
of March, which I know will be a
breeze. We have a new Sailor of the
Year at MOMAU Fifteen, MN1 (AW)
Hickman. He gave the competition in
the COMOMAG Sailor of the year
Board a run for their money and came
in as runner-up. Congratulations to
MN1 Whitmore as COMOMAG's
selection and to all the other fine
sailors who competed in the selection
process. The USS Lexington mine
exhibit is going well, we have
refurbished several mines and taken
them to the Lexington. Plans are to
have the museum completed by July
4th and so far we are right on track.
The Efficiency review went great! I
know now what it is to try and
squeeze water from a rock (ha ha).
CWO4 Harris is planning his
retirement on 13 June at Club 19
here in Kingsville. I think that is it for
now, I wish you all the best for the
next quarter when we will be writing
again.

NR MOMAU 8 Austin TX

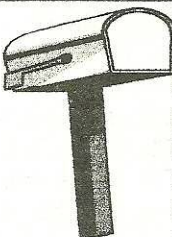
by MNCS **Robert L. Stegge**

We're getting ready for our first unit
at MOMAU 12, Misawa in May.
Everyone's looking forward to
augmenting Unit 12. After all those
enjoyable years in Guam, a new
location is a refreshing change and
challenge. Our unit is joining with
NRMOMAU 1 Seal Beach. There
area lot of "old" friends and also some
"new" friends at both Seal Beach and
Misawa.

Some personnel actions:

Congratulations to MNCS **Robert**
Stegge who was notified that he will
be commissioned a CWO2 in April
98. MN1 **Dave Sodke** is returning to
the unit after an extended period of
Individual ready reserve (IRR) non-
drilling status. MNC **Art Hicks** was
injured at work and is presently

Please see NR MOMAU 8 Page 14



Editor AOM Dashpot,
We didn't fall off the
face of the earth, after
retirement we moved
from Moncks Corner
to Branchville, SC.
Family considerations
and climate suitable

for our horses caused us to pull up
stakes and we ended up at Sandrock,
Alabama. The house overlooks Lake
Weiss which has 450 miles of
shoreline. Centre, AL is near and
boasts to be the crappie capital of the
world. Alabama treats retirees very
well and the tax picture is great.
Prices aren't too bad either; a
neighbor has a two bedroom on 38
acres up for sale at \$70,000. Forgot
about the AOM as I changed
addresses so my dues are in arrears.
I'll contact Lyal with the address you
gave me and get current.
Remember me to all that knew me.
Bill and Dee Fortner

E-mail shorts:

CDR Ron Swart says **MNC Dave Lauffenburger** picked up CWO2. They are looking into changing the Mineman name to Minewarfare Specialist. Not change the rating badge. Not a "done deal" so far. **Hal Elston** says All credit on AOM Home page goes to **Fred Dane**. Hal serves as editor and assistant. **Fred** funds it. **Dick Martin** visited the folks at Panama City in Feb. Talked with lots of old friends at NCCS. CWO-4 **John Bartleson, Jr.** USN Ret is looking for some "older" Minemen that attended mine disposal school at the Washington Navy Yard 1941 to 1945. He says many of these folks went on to mine school at Yorktown. If you are one or know anyone that attended contact the Dashpot or him by E-mail as listed this issue. **MNCS John Nahra** responded to my recruiting e-mail about why he no longer belongs to the AOM. **Toby Horn** replied with vigor on why he should renew. **John** disagreed with the reply. The delayed History Book is still an issue with him.

Editor AOM Dashpot,

Each time our country struggles to
shake off the effects of war and

tragedy, history paints a picture that
caution us to take heed and reminds
us that: "Those who do not remember
the past are condemned to repeat it".
B.P. "Joe" Hernandez,
Historiographer

Laverne Padgett assumed the role
as Great-Grandma joinig us and
others in the community. Guess we
are the senior citizens now or soon
will be. The work being done on
Dashpot is greatly appreciated.
Enclosed are a few chuckel type fill-
ins. Keep up the good work and take
care. **Laverne**

MNC Jim Trick Ret. Just a note to fill
our MN gang in. As you know I had a
stroke in 1984. Since my stroke, my
balance and coordination have
eroded. In July 1996 I fell and broke
my right ankle. I can't walk without
help now and require help in many
things. I shall be in a nursing home
or assisted living home the rest of my
days.

Teresa and I will celebrate 41 years
married January 14th. Sure hope you
can read this as I am half blind and
my hands don't work well.

I read "Dashpot" cover to cover even
though I don't know all the names, am
pleased to know our mine force is
alive and well. I am corresponding
with Ed Guard. he was on Azuma
Island when I was.

I don't find names on our roster like
**MNC Chmura, MNCS Bean, MNCS
Hawks, MNC Bob Johnson, MNC
Bob Wilson** and others that don't
come to mind right now. I am looking
forward to our history book, it has
been a long time due. Wish my
hands did not get so tired as I have
20 years of stories to tell. My best to
all the MNs that may remember me.

Jim

**NEXT
ARTICLE DUE
DATE
JUNE 10 1997**

Binnacle List

Heard about the following shipmates
or spouses that have been
incapacitated and we wish them a
speedy recovery:

- Frank Martin**, heart attack, Panama City (hope it wasn't all the work on Panama City reunion)
- Leonard Carvell**, heart attack, Charleston
- Moose Wheelock**, Chimacum, Knee replacement
- Ralph Shaw**, Washington, Intestinal Cancer
- LaVon Decrona**, Reno, undetermined

Sailor in the Spotlight

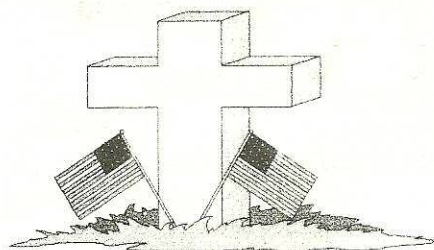
The Foc'sle 2/14/97

The station paper focused in on
MN2(SW) Dennis A Moxley of the
USS Robin for a personal interview.
On board almost 2 years including
the pre-commissioning unit, Petty
Officer **Moxley** enjoys his
assignment as the MK 48 (MNS)
technician. He came to Robin from
MOMAU One Long Beach. About
the Mineman rating he says "I like
the rating--its exciting. There's a lot
of variety in what we do and there's
greater opportunity in the rating
now". With underway OOD and
Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist
qualifications acheived, he is
working on Engineering Officer of
the Watch qualification.

NR MOMAU 8 from Page 13

recuperating at home. he is expected
to make a full recovery, but will be
laid-up for a few months. Everyone
wishes him a speedy recovery and
looks forward to his returning to the
unit as soon as possible. **PN2(SS)
Jack Collins**, our unit personnelist,
returned from his augmentation to
JOINT ENDEAVOR. About all for
now, Cheers! **Bob** (Almost Gunner)
Stegge.

TAPS



Since our last newsletter we have learned of the following members and friends that have passed away. The membership of the Association of Minemen wish to express their sympathy to the families of those departed loved ones who now reside with our Most Supreme Commander.

MN1 Holt "Pappy" East, USN (RET) August 26, 1996, Newport News, Virginia. **Pappy** was one of the original members of MOMAT 0321 when established in Yorktown, Virginia. Thanks to **Sue Schommer** for reporting this.

Valerie Harder Grayvill, age 34, daughter of **Ken** and **Sadie Harder**, died at home in Summerville, South Carolina after a long battle with cancer on January 16, 1997. She was buried near Pittsburgh/Antioch, California with her husband. **Ken** and **Sadie** are caring for their three granddaughters ages 14, 11 and 9.

Betty Stancil, in Newport News Virginia, mid January 1997 after being bed ridden for three years with emphysema. She was the wife of retired **MN1 George "Uncle Louie" Stancil** who committed suicide several years ago. Their daughter still lives in Gloucester Virginia and she remembers **Bo Bellamy** and **Sam English** who used to babysit her in Charleston. Thanks to **John Loonam** for reporting this. John noted that he, **Toby Horn**, **Bill Roberts** and all the others in Keywestevdet in the early 60's knew "Uncle Louie".

John Kojcsich Ret. Civ. NMEF reported in NWSY Retiree newsletter 2/97

....And Sail Away

Some time at eve when the tide is low
I shall slip my mooring and sail away.
With no response to a friendly hail
Of kindred craft in the busy bay.
In the silent husk of the twilight pale,
When the night stoops down to
embrace the day.

And the voices call in the waters flow
Sometime at eve when the tide is low
I shall slip my moorings and sail away.

A few who watched me sail away
Will miss my craft from the busy bay.
Some friendly barks that were
anchored near

Some loving souls that my heart held
dear

In silent sorrows will drop a tear
But I shall have peacefully furled my
sail

In moorings sheltered from storms or
gale.

And greeted the friends who have
sailed before
O'er the Unknown Sea to the Unseen
Shore

(Thanks to Angie Rines)

MWTC from Page 9

Realignment and Closure (BRAC) of 1993 mandated its suspension, effective 1 October 1995. While in Charleston, NSMW and FMWTC trained 552,172 students from the U.S. and over 35 foreign nations.

In anticipation of the closure of FMWTC in Charleston, the Navy began construction on the new Mine Warfare Training Center and fire fighting facility in Ingleside, Texas in October 1994. Although the new facility did not open its doors until February 1996, selected MIW classes were convened in a temporary building off-base as early as December 1995. The first Mineman "A" School class Ingleside convened 11 March 1996 in the new facility, nine days before the official ribbon cutting, performed by **RADM Ernest Christensen, COMTRALANT**, on 20 March 1996.

Another Icon bites the dust

The Booster 3/97

Anyone stationed at The Mine Depot/Naval Weapons Station, Yorktown remembers Building 380-B. Assuming various roles over its history since 1944, Originally a BOQ, it became office space in 1961 moving through various tenants many at the same time. The Post Office for zip 23691 (no longer a valid zip), Comptroller, Disbursing, Credit Union, Cafeteria, Naval Investigative Service, Red Cross, MWR and the list goes on. Now it is a grassy expanse having served the station well over the years. Just too expensive to maintain and a burden on the Station's maintenance budget. More outdated structures will follow.

Think it Over

Are you an active MEMBER
The kind who would be missed
Or are you just content that
Your name is on the LIST?

Do you attend the REUNIONS
And mingle with the flock,
Or do you stay away
and criticise and knock?

Do you take an active part
To help the work along
or are you just satisfied to be
the one who "just belongs"

Do you work on committees
to see there is no trick'
Or leave the work to just a few
and talk about the clique?

So come to the reunions often
and help with hand and heart,
Don't just be a MEMBER
But take an active part.

Think this over friend'
You know right from wrong
Are you an active MEMBER'
Or do you.....JUST BELONG???

sub. by **Chuck Nicklin**, Fraser DM-
24 Assn.

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