

THE DASHPOT

Issue 42 Newsletter of the Association of Minemen Fall 2003

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Paul Santa Maria

43?



Congratulations to our new members of the Board of directors: Gary Cleland and Phillip Mocalis. I extend to you a hearty "Welcome Aboard". I wish to convey a most sincere "Thank You" to our outgoing members of the board: Dick Schommer and Bill Roberts. Both have made a very positive contribution to this great organization and I am sure they will continue doing just that. I would also like to thank each and every one of the Officers, Directors, Chairpersons, and their committee members for having done an outstanding job for the Association of Minemen. All appointments remain the same.

Another great year and successful reunion has come and gone, but certainly is not forgotten. To the Reunion Committee, Chairman Warren Savage and Gary Cleland, Chip Chipman, and Jim Miller, many kudos for a job well done.

In my opinion, the reunion was a success even though the attendance was a little less than usual, but you can be assured that the camaraderie was at its usual high. All the functions were well attended. A big "Thank You" to Patty and Bill Johnson and Dick Schommer handling the sale of the ship's stores, to all those who brought items for the auction, and those who generously purchased them. The Association is very solvent thanks to you all and to the dedication of our Treasurer, Curtis Christian.

Speaking of money, the Association thanks each and everyone who contributed unselfishly to our various programs. A special acknowledgement is in order for the anonymous donor of three thousand dollars (\$3,000.00) to the scholarship fund so that all nine scholarship applicants were awarded five hundred dollar (\$500) scholarships this year. Beautiful, just beautiful!

Congratulations to Ron Swart for being the recipient of our coveted "Clock Cockers Award" for the year 2003. Ron served 32 years, retiring with the rank of Commander. "Well Done" Ron.

I thank you for such an overwhelmingly positive response to our newest award, the Certificate of Appreciation. One of the most rewarding duties of a leader is to recognize dedication with a tangible award. I felt so very honored presenting each and every award. Our newest stores item, the AOM belt buckle, was also received very well. I want to thank Director John Loonam for all his hard work in making both of these items become a reality.

There is no doubt that Admiral Betancourt is a strong supporter of our organization. His words renewed the vigor in our dedication to the mine community. He offered to assist us in having our 2005 reunion in Corpus Christi. Ron Swart has also volunteered to spearhead a committee to put it together. It, too, will be in October.

Our upcoming 2004 reunion will be in Charleston, SC. Dick Schommer has put together a very promising package for us.

The Association congratulates MN1(SW) Patrick Clayton, serving in the USS Avenger, MCM 1, and MN1 Paul Chavez, serving with NR MOMAU TEN, for their selection as the active duty and reserve Mineman of the Year. Obtaining this august award is difficult and speaks reams of the abilities and character of these two sailors.

Now is the time to start preparing for Reunion 2004 in Charleston and 2005 in Corpus Christie.

God bless you all and God bless America.

**2004 REUNION CHARLESTON, SC
MAKE YOUR PLANS NOW!!!**

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SCHOLARSHIP SCOOP

By Swede Carlsen



This year's scholarship drive met with considerable success. Nine applications were received and all nine were awarded a \$500 scholarship. Of the nine scholarships awarded, one was the memorial scholarship in the name of Kay Branan, two were from the membership and six were from an anonymous donor.

Those awarded are:

1. Ashley L. Gordon; Maine Maritime Academy
2. Casey Keller; Ocean County College
3. Michelle Cleland; University of Rhode Island
4. Erin E. Simmons; Old Dominion University
5. Kumi Swart; University of North Texas Science Center
6. Justin B. Pittman, Trident Technical College
7. Michelle Caputo; SUNY Binghamton

8. Antonietta Marmorato; Franklin Pierce Law Center
9. Gino Marmorato; Pace University of Law

Congratulations to all recipients!

Remember, all scholarships are funded by the President's Challenge Fund and donations from the membership so let's start working on 2004 scholarship awards.

STAND TALL AMERICA



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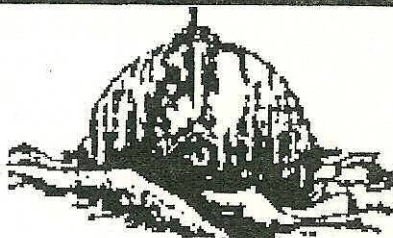
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DEDICATED TO SERVING THE

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 with the mission of perpetuating knowledge of undersea mine warfare and championing its necessity as one of America's first lines of defense.



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MINUTES OF THE ASSOCIATION OF MINEMEN

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN SAN DIEGO ON 9 AUGUST 2003

Some notes are from the Board of Directors (BOD) meeting and special called meeting Sunday.

The President called the meeting to order at 1405.

Minutes of the 2002 meeting held in Williamsburg VA. were read and accepted.

The treasurer's report was given and accepted.

Warren Savage reported on the 2003 reunion

Dick Schommer reported on the 2004 reunion in Charleston, SC. All functions of the reunion will be held at the Town and Country Inn on Highway 17 South. Rooms will be \$74.00 per night.

John Loonam requested that advertisement for the reunions start in the winter Dashpot and be on the front page of the winter, spring and summer issues.

The secretary requested that his home phone number and personal address not be used in advertisements.

The President instructed the secretary to send each BOD member a copy of the membership roster.

The secretary asks that someone look into using the large table display stored at Unit 11. Dick Schommer stated he would look into it.

Swede Carlsen reported on the scholarship awards. One issued for the Brannon Memorial, two issued from AOM funds and six picked up from an anonymous donor. Recipient names will be posted in the Dashpot.

The nominating committee recommended Mr. Gary Cleland and Mr. Philip Mocalis to relieve Mr. Dick Schommer and Mr. Bill Roberts on the BOD. No further nominations being made, a vote was taken and the two nominees were elected to the BOD.

A motion was made to make 102-year-old Julio J. Ereneta an honorary Mineman. The vote was taken and passed.

The proposed changes to the "Duties of Officers, Directors and Committees" was voted on and passed. The changes will be printed in the Dashpot.

The President announced the Mineman of the Year as MN1 (SW) Patrick Clayton active duty and MN1 Paul Chavez reserve duty.

The President announced that Ron Swart would receive the Clock Cockers award for 30+ years of service.

The Board of Directors ratified the following actions they approved during the year by phone and/or e-mail in accordance with Article VI, Section 8 of our bylaws:

1. Design and mount Certificates of Appreciation.
2. Design and purchase 250 belt buckles.
3. Appoint Ron Swart as Historian.
4. Appoint to the Board of Directors as ex-officio members:

Bill Fortner, Dashpot Editor

Phil Dechene, Webmaster of the AOM website

A motion was made and voted on to present ADM Banencroft with a history book.

Warren Savage thanked all the people who had worked on the 2003 reunion.

A motion was made to have the 2005 reunion go to Corpus Christi or to Long Beach should Corpus Christi not take it. The vote was taken and the motion passed.

The President announced that after dealing with the IRS on changes to our By-Laws, he has found out that a change in our By-Laws do not have any effect on our 501 (C) 3 status. Only if we change the purposes of the AOM would it effect our 501 (C) 3.

A motion was made to give Corpus Christi 90 days to accept the reunion in order for Long Beach to prepare. The vote was taken and the motion passed.

The treasurer announced that he would close the AOM books on the last day of Aug. 2004.

No further business from the floor the meeting was adjourned at 1620.

At the picnic, the President convened a special meeting of the BOD to discuss the events that transpired at the Saturday night banquet. IE: the change of venue for the 2005 reunion. It was determined that the selection of Reno NV. vice the original choices of Corpus Christi/Long Beach were invalid and would not be adhered to. Therefore the original selection will stand.

Respectfully submitted
Curtis "T" Christian III
Secretary AOM

**THE REAL REASON YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH
YOU...
IS THAT IT GOES BEFORE YOU DO.**



MAIL BAG

Shipmates,

In the fall of 2001 I reported that my son Justin had been murdered in his home in Sacramento, CA. Two men broke into his home intent on robbing them, while one waited out-side, as look-out, the bottom line was that Justin ended up being shot to death. My hat is off to the authorities of Sacramento. The Sheriff's department apprehended all three individuals in a very short period of time, the Assistant District Attorney tried the three individuals, in separate trials, and obtained three convictions, and the court awarded two, life sentences without parole, and one 45 years to life. I would like to thank all those who gave Jo and I their sympathy and condolences at that time.

Bill Roberts

On July 8, 2003 Jim Hawks wrote:

Hi Chris,
Enclosed is payment for 2 years dues and a small donation to the museum fund.

I'm sorry Betty and I will be unable to make the reunion in Diego, but hope to make next year's in Charleston.

Take care,
Jim Hawks

On July 15, 2003 Ski wrote:

I had planned on going to my first AOM reunion since I retired in 1976, but, because of problems, I won't be able to make this one. Hope to go to the one in Charleston next year. I did go to CA in June and I got to see two of my old shipmates Chip Chipman and Mac McGarry. Saw Frenchie LaFleur and his wife Helen back in Dec. 2002 in Vegas along with Chip and Mac who drove there. Here are my dues for another year. Hope to see you all next year.

Ski

Hi Curtis,
Nothing new in the foothills!

I am still in remission - just go back for follow-ups. Hope all is well with you. Here are my dues for next year. Have a nice day - more if I ever have any news.

Shipmate,
Jack

Fred Hirstetter wrote:

Can't make the reunion this year. Hope all AOM members have a good time. I would like to obtain a belt buckle. Please send me the information and order form. Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Fred Hirstetter

On July 20, 2003 H. L. Moore wrote:

Enclosed is a check for \$105 to cover two years dues and a donation of \$25 each to the Museum, AOM General Fund, and the AOM scholarship Fund.

I always find The Dashpot interesting reading, especially the history stories. I don't recognize the names anymore of those at the various sites. I see a few names of those that are assisting with the reunions that are familiar, but even those are getting fewer and fewer as time goes by. It could be because I was discharged from active duty in June of 1958. I went to Mineman Class "A" school in Yorktown, VA in 1955, served at the Naval Net Depot in Prudence Island, and was discharged in Key West, Florida as a Mineman 2nd Class. I was stationed at the Mine Warfare Evaluation Detachment there. I joined the Naval Reserve in 1968 and retired from the Naval Reserves in September of 1992, MOMAG 1711 - Oklahoma City, OK as a CWO4, with a total of 30 years, 10 months, and 28 days. Most of the time our unit went to Guam for our two weeks active duty, however we also went to Charleston, SC, Seal Beach, CA, and to Hawaii one year. I don't even know if there is still a reserve unit in OKA as there was talk about moving it to Dallas when I retired. I've sent some cards to some of the guys that were in the Reserve Unit, but I don't hear back from them anymore. MN1 Clifton Duke Hayes, MNCS Gerald (Mac) Berry, MNC Daniel Lentz, MN1 Michael Ball, MN2 Steve Gouch, MN1 Larry Fields, MNC Greg Moffett are just a few that were in the NR-MOMAG Unit 1711 when I retired.

You don't need to include any of this in your write up. I just wanted to give a little of my own history with the Mine Force as well as that of the Reserve Unit I was with.

Best regards,
H. L. Moore

Letter from Victor F. Godfrey.

Bill,

Attached you will find an article I wrote for the USS Ticonderoga CVA-14 newsletter. The subject is pretty self-explanatory. Minemen were not a very common sight on aircraft carriers back in the fifties. If you think the association members would be interested in reading it please feel free to publish it.

I was in the Navy from 11/54 to 9/58 and was discharged as an MN3. I was assigned to the Ticonderoga after

completing "Basic Mines" at NMWS, Yorktown, VA in 1955. Out of our class of 8, there were four billets for aircraft carriers: two on the Ticonderoga, then homeported in Norfolk, and two for the Lake Champlain homeported in Mayport, FL.

After my tour on the "Ti" I was assigned to the Naval Ammunition Depot, Earle in Colts Neck, NJ. There I worked in the Mine Lab. Our boss was Chief SPRECHER. Also assigned there at that time was Dick BILLINGS, MN1 and Al BORENE, MN1. I mention these names because I've seen them mentioned in The Dashpot and on the website.

I enjoy reading The Dashpot except for the "Taps" section. I've already seen a few Minemen from my Navy days who I enjoyed working with; Grady TEAGUE (NAD Earle), Tom MONZO (NMWS-Yorktown) to name a few.

It's good to see that Minemen are going back to sea in the Mine Countermeasure ships. Sea duty is one of the most enjoyable parts of being in the Navy.

I hope you find the article acceptable. There may be a few technical errors but it's been a long time (45 years) since I've been a Mineman. I wish I could make the reunion but, unfortunately, I can't make it this year. Maybe I'll get to Charleston next year. Was down there this year visiting the USS Yorktown on the way home from the Ticonderoga reunion in Mobile, AL.

If you have any questions, please send me an email; vicg636@verizon.net

Thanks Paul for the certificate of appreciation. I didn't realize it has been 29 years. My how time flies. I ordered the engraved plaques from T & T Sports and they should be ready the 18th. I have the reserve casting done and will get the active casting when I get back from the week at the beach vacation up in North Carolina at Atlantic Beach.

Again, Thanks for the recognition,

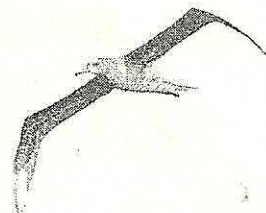
Bill

Kumi Swart writes:

President Santa Maria,
I am so grateful to you and the scholarship committee for selecting me as one of your scholarship recipients. I was excited to hear the news upon returning home this weekend. Currently, I am completing a rotation at The Medical Center in Columbus, GA as a fourth year medical school elective. I will be sending a formal letter of thanks in the mail, but I wanted to quickly send this e-mail to you while I had the time.

Thank you,
Kumi Swart

TAPS



CDR Dan Powell, USN (Ret.)
Member Number 008A

Dan Powell died on Saturday morning, June 28, 2003. He had been feeling pretty good though he had a hard time breathing the preceding Wednesday. He was put into ICU, but his lungs were basically gone, one not functioning and the other filling with fluid.

Dan was a good friend to all and a mine warfare mentor to many. Those who knew him will surely mourn his passing. Now that the storm of life is over, may he be granted fair winds and following seas.



John Loonam reports the following:

The July issue of *All Hands* lists Thomas R. Patterson MNC in the taps listing. He was a member at large so no home branch is listed.

**We all get heavier as we get older
because there is a lot more
information in our heads.**

Vlade Divac



FROM THE SECRETARY'S DESK

By Curtis T. Christian

San Diego will never be the same. We had some good meetings and a lot of fellowship (or should that be sip) we did some sipping along the way.

The Picnic and auction were a big success they only arrested Warren twice. We told him to not make so much noise and to hide the glass bottles. The San Diego crew did a lot of work and we owe them a big **THANK YOU**. If you missed it you missed a good one.

Please remember that it is time for the 2004 dues.

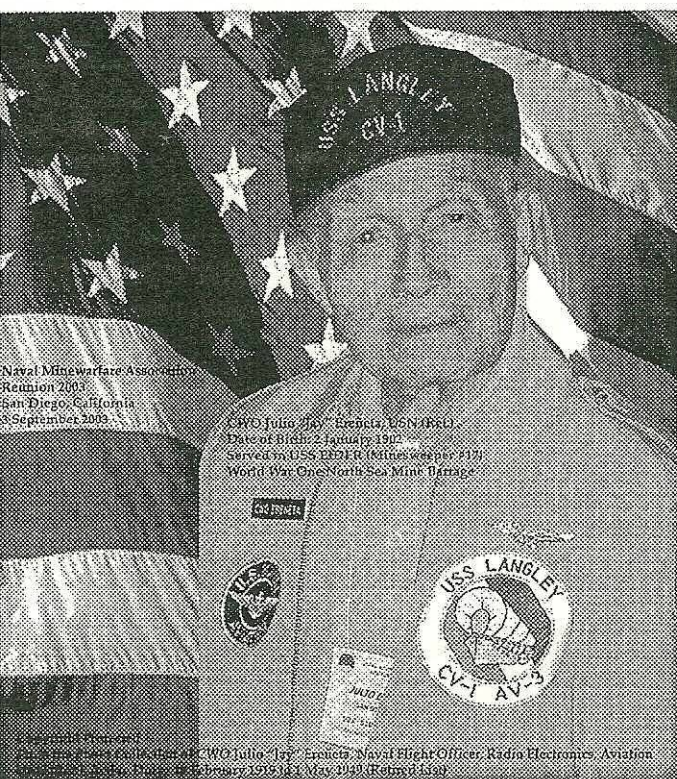
My thanks to the anonymous donor who picked up six of the nine scholarships issued this year.

Hope to see you in Charleston Next October

Curtis

MEET "JAY" ERENETA OUR NEWEST, YET OLDEST, MEMBER

By Frank Ereneta



CWO Julio "Jay" Ereneta, USN (Ret.)
Date of Birth: 2 January 1902
Served in USS EIDER (Minesweeper #17)
World War One North Sea Mine Barrage

CWO Julio "Jay" Ereneta, USN (Ret.)

Frank Ereneta introduced his father at the 2003 AOM Reunion in San Diego by saying, "May I introduce my father. He is:

Name: Julio "Jay" (nmn) Ereneta
Rank: Chief Warrant Officer (Naval Flight Officer, Radio Electronics, Aviation), USN (Ret.)
Enlisted Service No.: 213-35-79
Officer Service No.: 196816
Officer Signal No.: 31453 (July 1944)
U.S. Navy Continuous Service: 18 February 1919 to 1 May 1949 (Retired List)

He is now living his one hundred second (102) year of life. He is alive, ambulatory, agile, articulate, and in full possession of his mental faculties (he can still roll on the floor with the great grandchildren). Although he is a Naval Aviation officer, in the early years of his career he served extensively in minewarfare craft. He is truly such an "old-timer" that he is authorized to wear the World War One Victory Medal (minesweeping clasp) for duty in USS EIDER (Minesweeper #17, later AM-17) in the sweeping of the World War One North Sea Mine Barrage, March to October 1919. He continued serving in EIDER and USS SEAGULL (Minesweeper #30) through 1920. During the period 1920-1921 he attended Navy Radio School, Great Lakes, and then served in coal burning battleship, USS FLORIDA (BB-30), 1921 through 1923.



Julio "Jay" Ereneta, Radioman Striker, USN
"Liberty Call"
USS EIDER (Minesweeper #17)
Charleston, South Carolina
Winter 1919

- (1) This is liberty uniform of the day. Notice regulation "Bat hat" and neckerchief knotted at his midsection as prescribed in those days.
- (2) During this period (Winter 1919 through Summer 1920), Ereneta was berthing in a hammock in old wooden warship (muzzle loader main battery), USS HARTFORD #881 in active service. This was the flagship of Admiral Farragut at the Civil War Battle of Mobile Bay, 1864.

From the Photo Collection of CWO Julio "Jay" Ereneta, USN (Ret.), Active Duty: 1919 - 1949.

Information Source: Recollections of CWO Julio "Jay" Ereneta, USN (Ret.) described by him in 2002.

In 1924 he returned to minewarfare craft. He served in Asia in minelayer, USS RIZAL (DM-14)(Station Ship, Cavite, Philippine Islands) before transferring to minesweeper, USS FINCH (AM-9) on China Station/Yangtze Patrol during the period 1924-1928.



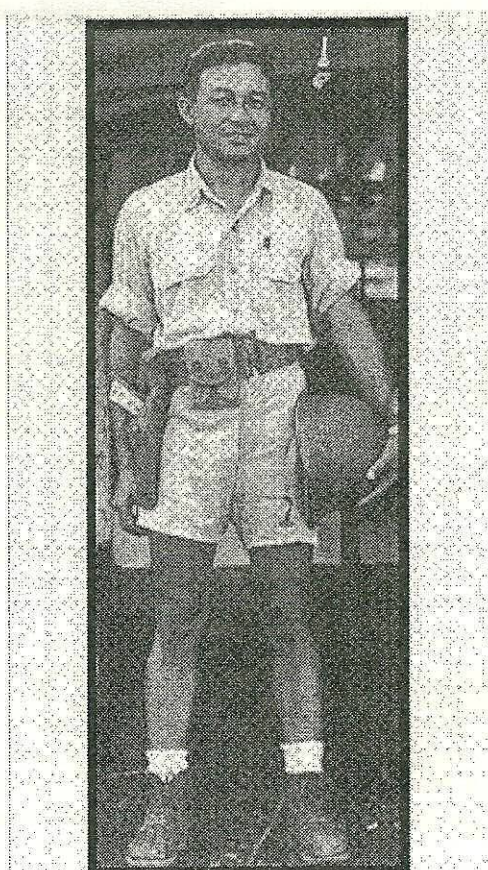
Julio "Jay" Ereneta,
Radioman First Class, USN
"Salty" China Hand
Minesweeper, USS FINCH (AM-9)
China Station/Yangtze Patrol
Chefoo, China
Summer 1927

By virtue of his extraordinary longevity, he may well be the oldest living veteran of the naval minewarfare community (He has been so recognized by the Naval Minewarfare Association). I guess if you live long enough, this happens. He has been recognized by the National Battleship Association as probably the oldest living battleship sailor (coal burning USS FLORIDA, BB-30, 1921-1923).

He is by designator an aviation communications/electronics specialist but during his minewarfare days he was a Radioman (Striker, Third Class, Second Class, and First Class).

He first flew as aircrewman in an F5L Seaplane of USS WRIGHT (AZ-1) at Newport, Rhode Island, in August 1922. This was even before the Navy's first aircraft carrier, USS LANGLEY (CV-1) had launched and recovered her first aircraft. The USS WRIGHT (AZ-1, AV-1, AG-79) Association has recognized him as the oldest living crewmember of that association.

He flew hundreds of hours in the 1930s/1940s as a Radioman/Gunner in the air squadrons of the Navy's first aircraft carriers, USS LANGLEY (CV-1) and USS LEXINGTON (CV-2). At the onset of hostilities of World War Two, he received his wartime commission as Chief Warrant Officer (Naval Flight Officer, Radio Electronics, Aviation) and continued in a flying status through 1946."



Julio "Jay" Ereneta, Warrant Officer, USN
Naval Flight Officer (Radio Electronics, Aviation)
CASU-8(F), Carrier Aircraft Service Unit (Forward Deployed)
South Pacific Area, Solomon Islands Chain, Russell Islands Group
Banika Island (60 miles NW of Guadalcanal)
May 1943

Some direct quotes from audio/videotapes of "Jay" Ereneta in past interviews:

In an interview in September 2000, he said:
"It has been my fate to survive several events in peace and wartime, at sea and in the air".

Later, he said:
"How ironic it is that I have survived to this advanced stage of my life. It is likely that I have outlived most if not all of my former shipmates and contemporaries."

Later, he said:
"I have probably attended more naval burial services than anyone I know. I've been doing so since 1919."

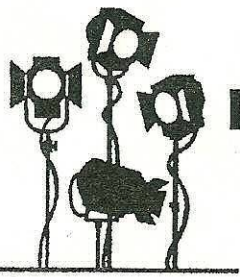
Lastly, he said:
"But I would willingly do it all over again. I came to the United States of America in 1918 specifically to join the US Navy. It is a dream which I had since I was a young boy. It is indeed a proud thing to have served my Country."



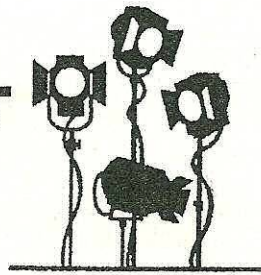
CWO Julio "Jay" Ereneta and AOM President G. Paul Santa Maria at Reunion 2003 in San Diego

**WINTER DASHPOT
ARTICLES ARE DUE
1 DECEMBER 2003**

The difference between
stupidity and genius...
is that genius has its
limits. (Einstein)



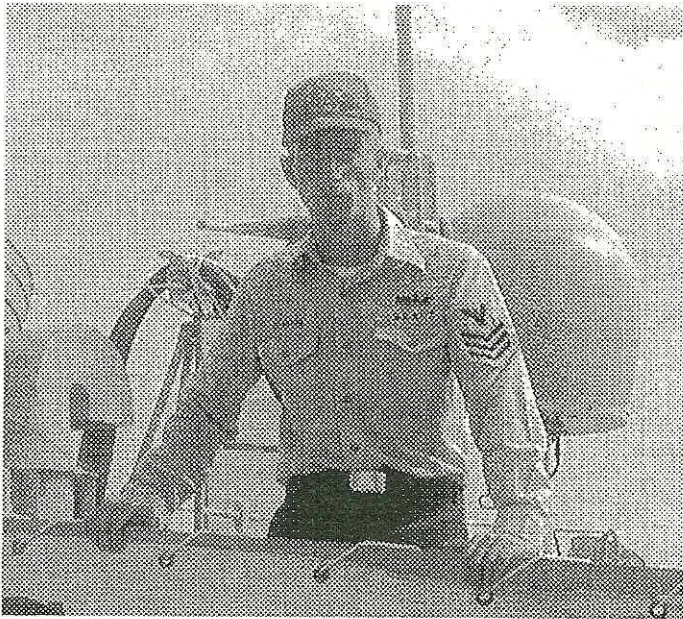
MINEMEN IN THE SPOTLIGHT



AOM MINEMEN OF THE YEAR

ACTIVE DUTY

MN1(SW) Patrick D. Clayton, USN



**MN1(SW) Patrick D. Clayton, USN on board
USS AVENGER MCM 1**

MN1 Clayton is carrying the load of two officers, a division officer and a department head, while still maintaining his normal duties as a Technician and the ship's Operational Specialist. His selection for these positions, Command Duty Officer qualification and his being AVENGER's and COMCMRON TWO's Sailor of the Year make MN1(SW) Clayton an ideal representative for the 2003 AOM Mineman of the Year.

MN1 Clayton completed 12 Navy Rate Training Manuals, was awarded an AA in Electronics from University of Phoenix and is enrolled in BSBA program at Thomas Edison State University. He performs Community Service with the Salvation Army "Surviving the Night" outreach program that feeds the homeless. He is a Qualified Command Duty Officer and was hand selected to be the Command Training Officer, a position previously held by a LTJG. While in that position, Schools/NEC fills increased 42% and he enjoys 100% retention in all zones. He is a Second Chance Sailor Mentor. Four sailors from other commands have been assigned to him. All have stayed Navy.

MN1 Clayton has also a MNC selectee.

RESERVE

MN1 Paul Chavez, Jr., USNR-R



**MN1 Paul Chavez serving with
NR MOMAU TEN**

MN1 Chavez is the Leading Petty Officer at MOMAU 10. He supervises and trains 12 junior personnel. He was requested by MOMAG CDS to instruct a class on Mine Mk 56 at the Mineman "A" school. He was instrumental in the successful completion of the Mine Readiness Certification Inspection at MOMAU 8, Guam and was awarded a Letter of Commendation from Rear Admiral Paul J. Ryan, COMINSEWARCOM for outstanding performance as a member of the augmentation team to that unit. MN1 Chavez played a key role in the mine exercise. MN1 Chavez is also the MOMAU 10 Training Officer.

As the Training Officer, he coordinates the travel requirements for MOMAU 10 for IDTT and ATs by being proactive with the members of the command and communicating with the Navy and Marine Corps Reserve Center, El Paso, TX. He has ensured that the members of MOMAU 10 get to MOMAG CDS for their quarterly training requirements. He is involved in the local community by volunteering his time and resources at the New Horizons Academy, a kindergarten through 12th grade school. He spent over 50 hours networking the computers for the school.

MINEMAN HISTORY BOOK

Members of the Mineforce, tell your loved ones you would like a copy of the Minemen History book as a gift for anniversary, birthday, Father's Day, Christmas or other special occasion.

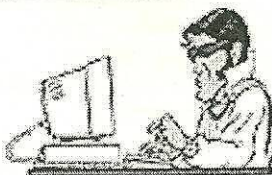
Our outstanding Minemen written/prepared book, *U.S. Naval Mines and the Minemen A History*, is available for immediate shipment.

The cover of the book is hard-bound, dark blue with gold letters and a gold floating mine. The book is "coffee table size", has 176 pages on glossy paper and is well written. This historical document covers a period from 1777 to 1975, and contains about 361 large and small pictures (from personal Minemen photos), 23 drawings and 7 charts.

Order your copy now by sending in your check or money order for \$75 (includes \$5 postage & handling) to Association of Minemen, PO Box 71835, Charleston, SC 29415-1835. Be sure to include your name and mailing address.

EDITOR'S CORNER

By Bill Fortner

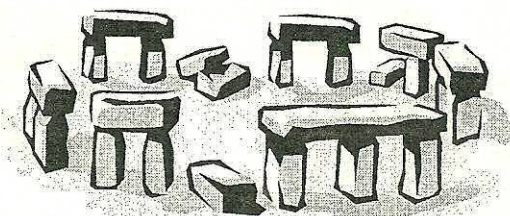


Greetings, salutations, yo bro, and hello. This is the biggest issue (28 pages) of the Dashpot that I have ever done. I hope you all enjoy it. For those of you that don't know, the Dashpot is on the AOM web site in living color. <http://home.triad.rr.com/aom/index.htm>

I had the distinct pleasure of watching one of our own wax eloquent about mine warfare in a History Channel special about landmines, part of which was dedicated to sea mines. The entire staff of the Dashpot wishes to convey intense pride in CDR Ron Swart, USN (Ret.). We hope that the exposure does not alert media moguls to this undiscovered talent and cause us to lose a good man to the godless heathens in Hollywood.

H. L. Moore sent in a nice kudo about the Dashpot, most particularly the history sections. The entire staff of the Dashpot is delighted to hear that and thanks Mr. Moore profusely for the compliment. This month, the Dashpot is positively wallowing in history articles.

Our membership has not kept pace with attrition and we may well see the effective end of the AOM as our older members in increasing numbers finish this tour, pack their sea bags, and embark on their final cruise. Much of the problem, I think, is that we have for too long done the "feel good" thing of holding reunions in places where there is no longer, or never was, an active duty Mineman presence. I don't think we can continue to pamper ourselves in this manner if we wish to sustain adequate growth and remain a viable organization. At the moment, there are three active duty bases in CONUS; Seal Beach, Goose Creek, and Ingleside. I think it behooves us to limit our reunions to those sites. That still provides East Coast, West Coast and Central reunion locations. That is where the fleet is and our future is with them. Without them, we have no future. They have to see us and know us to want to join us. Think about it.



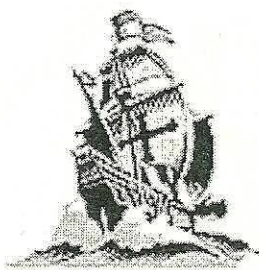
HISTORIANS REPORT

By Ron Swart

Historical perspectives: The essence of history is rarely a unbiased, dispassionate recounting of events, but rather it is reflected in the personal accounts of those who lived through it. I tried to keep this in mind through my 45 minute interview with the History Channel. My mind swirled with snippets of historical mine warfare moments hoping that their questions would lead me into my comfort zone... sea mines and their application. I thought of those of you who served in World War II, Korea and Vietnam and how sea mines and mine countermeasures served our military objectives and those of our enemy. Perhaps I should have paid closer mind to the change in the TV program's title... "Modern Marvels: Landmines". The focus of my interview centered on the very early events of our past during the Revolutionary War and the Civil War. I had to dig deep into my failing memory of Mineman Chief Ralph Parsons forcing me to stay awake during endless flickering black and white reels recounting the roots and origins of the naval mine. It became very clear during that interview that war was indeed hell as I struggled to recall the events that I was being quizzed on. For those of you that saw it, I think that the History Channel did a creditable job of balancing the broad topic of mine warfare on land and at sea. My fears of them editing my statements down to a 5 second sound bite taken out of context proved to be unwarranted. While they certainly could have picked someone more charismatic or handsome, I was proud to have the chance to contribute to the piece along side such truly notable experts as Dr. Dave Skinner, (my boss here at CSS) and Don Sheppard of Florida State University, along with many others. One of my cubicle-mates (Engineer Mike Uzarski) captured it on CD-ROM for me (I was on the road) and I can make it available to Bill Fortner and Phil Dechene for distribution to those who missed it.

I had the excellent fortune to contact MNCM Dave Walker at just the right moment. Dave agreed to serve as our point man to the USS Yorktown Museum and has made some truly excellent recommendations on what we can do in the future. The essence of his approach is to not make our vision too grand, but to reassemble our display in a way that reflects the dignity and integrity of our service to our country. We have a proud history and a wonderful story to tell. With little steps and a good plan, we can bring Yorktown and Lexington up to snuff and get our mine warfare display back on the main route. In the months ahead with approval from our leadership, I will start to lay out our plans for both Yorktown and Lexington Museums. This effort cannot succeed with a "Little Red Hen" approach. We will need planters, harvesters, millers and bakers... not just "bread eaters". (If you miss the point of this analogy, do a web search for the Little Red Hen). If you live in or around Charleston or Corpus Christi - Ingleside, think about donating an hour or two on a weekend for a great cause: your history.

I sure wish I could have attended the reunion in San Diego, but circumstances and a new job conspired against me. I won't miss the next one. That's it for this issue. All the best, Ron Swart

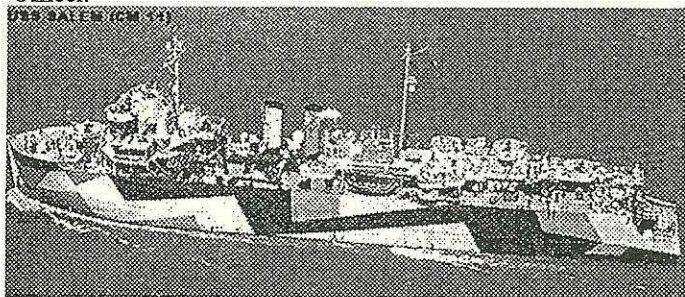


LEANING ON THE TAFFRAIL

Memoirs

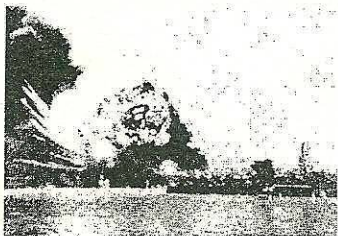
By Arthur Cook, LCDR, USN, (Ret.)

In 1939/40 I was a student assigned TAD orders to attend the mine school in Pearl Harbor, with CPO DeForrest the instructor. At the time I was a Gunner's Mate 2nd Class, possibly only 3rd Class. The class was for me to become familiar with sea mines, notably the Mk 5, Mk 6, and I believe the Mk 7. I was later sent TAD to attend the third session at the Mine Warfare School in Yorktown, VA, which at the time was a three month school. The facility was in a rather raw state, building new buildings, and the roads, when it rained, were pure mud. I returned to my ship the USS Aylwin DD 355 and was wounded during the attack on Pearl Harbor. A few months after Pearl Harbor, I was sent on duty orders to teach at the Mine Warfare School in Yorktown. I was there for roughly 1 1/2 years. While there I was sent to the Portsmouth Naval Hospital to have the bullets in my chest removed. I was promoted three times in a three week period, each promotion a week apart, to CPO Gunners Mate/ Mines, to Warrant Officer and then to Ensign. I was working under Warrant Office Sheldon, but after my promotions he was working for me. A few weeks later I was sent to the USS Salem CM 11 as the Gunnery/Mines Officer.



USS Salem (CM-11) in warpaint.

The ship then was homeported at the Naval Ammunition Depot, Yorktown, VA. We made a trip to the Med at our top speed of 11 knots (if the wind was not against us) and then were ordered to the Pacific, with a full load of explosives (mostly Mk 6 mines). We had engine trouble and put in at San Diego and had a fix (we thought) on the old engine. The USS Salem and three other ships like her had been train ferries carrying trains from Key West to Cuba several years prior to being used by the Navy. With the engine acting up we made it to Pearl Harbor and were moored at pier 5 when the five LST's caught fire and started drifting about the harbor with their fully loaded cargo of explosives.



West Loch Ammunition Explosion

I worked, while the engine was being really repaired, under George Sheldon, who had been at the Mine School in Yorktown, as described above. He was now a LTJG and I was still an Ensign. We then proceeded to Kwajalein, moored for a spell there, then headed for Saipan where we, with our new explosives load, were to resupply the Marines that were to land once the barrage let up. We went in under the barrage. While there, I received orders to return to the US for 30 days leave, my first since I had been in the service. When I got to San Francisco, my orders were changed and I was to return immediately to Pearl for reassignment. In Pearl, I picked up orders to return to Norfolk to attend the Advanced Gunnery Officer's School and upon completion to report to the USS William P. Ditter as Gunnery Officer. The Ditter got completed much quicker than scheduled and they would not release me from the School. I later chased this ship to San Diego, to San Francisco, then to Pearl, but in each case, she had departed prior to my arrival. In Pearl I was given TAD orders to be Asst. Gunnery Officer under Admiral Sharp, Commander, Mineforces Pacific. After the war ended, I was transferred to Commander, Service Force Pacific, then to the Pearl Harbor Navy Yard Ordnance Section, then to the Harbor Defense Unit, Pearl Harbor and then to Guam where I was assisting the Explosive Ordnance Demolition Unit Pacific. Later I was transferred to the USS Shannon DM 25 as the Ordnance Officer (I was full LT at this time).

On the third day I was on board the Shannon, I received 3 month TAD orders to report to the USS Coral Sea CVA 53 with a crew of Minemen and about twenty mines of several types to find out if mines could be assembled and tested during flight operations. We found out that all except the Mk 12 mines could, with some minor procedure changes, be assembled, adjusted and made ready for use under the adverse conditions that existed in the Torpedo Shop, which was on the Hanger Deck about amidships. When I did return to the USS Shannon, we headed for six months in the Med. I returned on this ship to Charleston, S C and was assigned to the Harbor Defense Unit as Skipper, with a dozen Officers and about 130 men, at Sandy Hook NJ. I was responsible for the bulk of Long Island Sound, most of Long Island and about forty miles south on the New Jersey Coast. I had been promoted a few years earlier to LCDR, and as such I retired in 1959. The next day I went to work with the Bell Telephone Laboratories developing and testing underwater detection units, and later on guided missiles. I spent four years on Kwajalein Island and later, in civilian status, as Operations Officer at the Guided Missile Intercept Facility near Langdon, ND. After this, I became asst. to the Ex Vice President of the Bell Telephone Laboratory in Naperville, IL. I then decided to retire, but, even though I had time in service, they would not permit this. Thus I worked in Orlando, FL on the AT&T Anti Trust Case, where my job was to find proof that many of the allegations made by various companies were false or greatly expanded as to what had happened. I have been retired since 1980 and now reside in Sun City at Hilton Head, S.C. The address is 51 Plymouth Land, Bluffton SC. 29909

Roguez Rascals, and Renegades

A trio of tales from Jack Cantrell:

"How about when MN1 (Ret.) Van Valerie got an old bicycle from the junk yard behind DET 6 and worked on reconditioning the thing day and night for 2 months. He pulled that thing out of his barracks room all new and shiny with a big grin on his face for the initial ceremonial ride to work. We all assed him going to the shop and there he was grinning like a \$40.00 pack mule eating saw briars. Well we had quarters and Valerie was UA! About 20 minutes had passed and here he comes walking into the compound with the bike slung over his shoulders. The rims and handle bar were bent beyond repair and he looked like hell. We asked him what happened and he said he hit a sewer truck head on in the curve of the road and it sent him into the vineyards. Needless to say he never road a bike the rest of his tour and probably still stays away from them today.

Or when we were in Brunswick, Maine in the dead of winter on a P-3 Plant. The team was lead by MNCM (Ret.) Ralph Davis. They put us in a Quonset Hut to build the sorties. It was so cold that we had to heat up the fins so they would fit on the bomb bodies to meet our attainment time. Of course the MNCM wasn't going to be cold so he bellied up to the forced air gas heaters to stay warm. We had to push him out of the way so we could heat up the fins (He was the bottleneck in the flow). Well the team got done with the build up and went over to where the MNCM was standing to talk about where we were going for liberty. Looking down at Ralph's feet, there were his "Bates Lights" so hot they were bubbling up like boiling oil and it was so cold he never felt it. Needless to say we couldn't save the shoes but we did save his 10 little digits.

When MN1 Dave "Fat Rats for Fat Cats" Trillich received a Personal For emergency message for the DET 6 OIC while he was CDO. I was on duty and told him as CDO he needed to open it to make sure what the subject line was and in fact it was a bonafide emergency. Well he wouldn't listen and had to get into the pickup and chase the OIC, LCDR (Ret) Dale Smith, because he was going to the beach and in those days we didn't have cell phones and beepers. So he takes off 100-MPH rounds a curve and a big truck was right in the middle. He avoids the truck, but takes down a rock fence and kills a chicken or two. So here he is in the middle of a Greek farmers field and then decides to open the message and come to find out it was an emergency weather message "wind gust up to 45 knots"! Well needless to say his next month of liberty was replacing the fence and paying restitution for the chickens. I think D.D. gave him some EMI on how to stand CDO after he repaired the duty truck.

Or When MNCS (Ret) Mike Whitener bought a brand new Nissan Pickup Truck with a 100-watt stereo system. He comes in looking like "Boss Hog"

all laid back with Deep Purple blaring out the speakers echoing through the Guam jungle with his combination cover on, one hand on the steering wheel, bobbing his head up and down to the music. He was showing off that new truck (took it off the car lot the evening before) in front of the troops at quarters when WAM BAM he hits a 56 crate, stands it up on end, and it creases his truck bed. His combination cap is cocked over on his head, his face is beat red, and his eyes looked like Buckwheat on the little rascals it was a classic! All D.D. Smith (CO at the time) said was, "Senior go fix that 56 crate or I will garnish your *)\$%^#%* pay!"

When MNCS (Ret) Raymond was supposed to fix MOMAU 3's air compressor and MNCM (Ret) "BO" Bellamy was out on the production deck and asked a seaman why he was hand torquing the Mk 55 tail plate covers when he just spent thousands of dollars on power torque tools. The seaman said the air compressor was down. BO hollers in that southern island talk for Raymond and asked why it was not fixed. Raymond said, "I forgot," and Bo replied, "You got 15 *(@#&* minutes to get it up and running or you will be blowing on the end of that hose to make them tools work!" Bo Bellamy could wax eloquent on occasion.



And one from Poochie Troutman:

I have a story to tell you about Keeran, TM1 Gribble, and myself on Azuma Island. It had to do with the three of us having duty one night and someone sabotaged a dock mule by pouring paint into the crankcase. The three of us had to take a lie detector test, given by NIS. The investigators seemed to think one or all of us were guilty. I was half in the bag when I took the test. I think Josh Keeran was the only sober one. The end result was one of the Japanese workers who was not the brightest of the brightest had been the one who had done the dirty deed. He had used, what he thought was oil, but actually was oil based paint. Remember how it separated with the oil coming to the top. We were really on the hot seat for a few days. So much for the reliability of the polygraph test. When we were brought to the place of the polygraph test, we were kept waiting and it got beyond the lunch hour before all of us had taken the test. The top five club was near by, so we stopped by for a few. Gribble was very drunk by this time. I think the NIS folks were pretty POed by this time and just knew we had something to hide. Later, the worker who did this thing was caught doing or attempting to top off another dock mule with the paint and the mystery was solved. He confessed he had topped off the mule that the three of us had been accused of doing. He just thought that it was oil he was putting in these Mules. The guy's name was Wolf Wolf. Go figure.

PAST PRESIDENT MEDALLION PRESENTATION



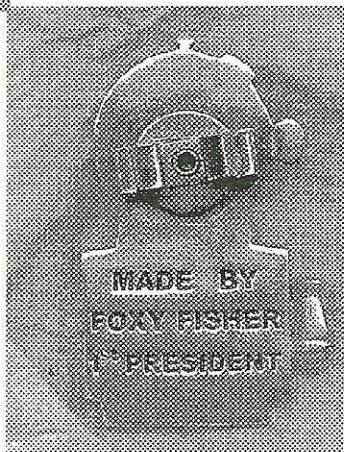
By request of AOM President Paul Santa Maria, Director, John Loonam, presents the first Past President's Medallion to Mary Fisher, 89, widow of first President, Forrest, (Foxy) Fisher at Yorktown Virginia on September 1, 2003 at the Fisher home.

Closeup images of the Past President's Medallion



**MEDALLION
FRONT**

**MEDALLION
REAR**



More of these medallions were presented to past presidents at the Association Of Minemen dinner meeting by current president G. Paul Santa Maria



FLEET NEWS

NAVAL STATION INGLESIDE CONTINUES TO GROW

By Francoise "Fifi" Kieschnick



Ribbon cut opening MOMAU 15 facility

The ribbon was cut, marking the opening of a new facility aboard Naval Station Ingleside Tuesday, June 24. Cutting the ribbon was (from left) Capt. Tonya Concannon, commanding officer, Naval Station Ingleside; Rear Adm. Paul Ryan, Commander, Mine Warfare Command; Cmdr. Terry Auberry, Commander, Mobile Mine Assembly Unit; and Lt. David Lauffenburger, commanding officer of MOMAU 15. Ground was broken in May 2002 for the 16,800 square foot facility that was built by Arana-Durden Inc. The \$2.4 million building contains state-of-the-art self-contained paint processor, which is environmentally friendly. Members of MOMAU 15 are in the process of moving into their new spaces.

ERROR CORRECTION

In the article titled "A History of U.S. Naval Mines in Vietnam, Haiphong: My Last Chapter", by LT Joe Hernandez, USN (Ret.) part of a statement by LCDR R. L. Anderson was omitted. The complete statement is as follows: The mines came from NAVMAG Subic. LCDR R. L. Anderson, USN (Ret.) wrote in the History book that: "in '72-'73 responsible for mine and destructor assembly used in Haiphong Harbor and Vietnam." Self-destruct mechanisms were installed. No minesweeping was necessary. Defective sterilizer batteries may have been installed. There were serious security problems.

MINE ASSEMBLY NEWS



COMOMAG

By MNCM Jerry Williams, USN

Greetings Shipmates. I hope everyone is doing well and enjoying the summer heat and warm weather activities. As I write this, summer is coming to a close, but here in Texas we have seen some nasty weather along with our famous ever present sunshine. These past few months we've had two tropical storms pass close by, one slipping by to the south, and one moved onward to the north. Despite the misses, we saw plenty of wind and a lot of rain, even today it's pouring outside! Despite all this bad weather, we continue to need the rain to keep local reservoirs full after many years of near-drought conditions, and are still a few inches short of what we need each year by this time.

On the more serious side, I'd like to ask that we all take a moment to remember the brave young men and women on our own MCM's/MHC's and MOMAU's, as well as all the other devoted service members away from home and all over the world this year. Not only these, but especially remember the loss of fallen heroes we as a nation inevitably have as we lead this valiant and noble cause. The war on terrorism is long from over, and its through the service and sacrifice of these fine Sailors/Soldiers/Airmen and Marines that we and countless others around the world, continue to enjoy the freedom and prosperity we hold so dear.

On the MOMAG front, we just completed the MRCI at MOMAU Five and am happy to report to you that they passed all areas. BZ to MNCS(SW) Ostrom and his fine Sailors for their hard work and dedication. We have also just concluded the Job Task Analysis (JTA) for the Mineman rating. This process and the work we did will be used to build the Professional Training vector for the coming Task Force EXCEL 5-Vector model that the Navy is

building for all naval ratings. We had great representation for all aspects of the rating and laid the foundation for what Minemen will train to in the years ahead. Look forward to more on this as the 5-Vector Model is further developed.

In case you've been out of the loop recently, we've just set a record of sorts with the recently announced Minemen Chief Petty Officer's with 28 MN1's being selected. This is the largest amount of CPO Selects for the MN rating on record. All are outstanding Sailors and will be an incredible asset to the Mine Warfare Community. In order of advancement, Selectees included:

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| 1. MNC Warren Smith | NRD Ohio |
| 2. MNC Gary York | NAS Corpus |
| 3. MNC Patrick Clayton | USS Avenger |
| 4. MNC Stanley King | USS Sentry |
| 5. MNC Daryl Marcello | EOD |
| 6. MNC Michael Negri | EOD |
| 7. MNC Ollie Collins | MOMAU 11 |
| 8. MNC Philip Stewart | USS Osprey |
| 9. MNC Robert Dunbar | USS Pelican |
| 10. MNC Matt Oconnell | MWTC |
| 11. MNC Donald Peterson | MWTC |
| 12. MNC Paul Bertsch | HSV2 - Swift |
| 13. MNC Mark Penberthy | MWTC |
| 14. MNC Leonard Rambo | USS Patriot |
| 15. MNC Edward Barnes | USS Defender |
| 16. MNC Steven Pierce | MOMAU 5 |
| 17. MNC Laura Rodriguez | COMOMAG |
| 18. MNC Mario Perez | EOD |
| 19. MNC Livingston Mezier | MWTC |
| 20. MNC Brian Kopp | MOMAU 10 |
| 21. MNC Shane Caver | MWTC |
| 22. MNC Robert Olson | USS Oriole |
| 23. MNC Steve Themins | USS Sentry |
| 24. MNC John Frederick | USS Ardent |
| 25. MNC Jerry Gerhardt | USS Dextrous |
| 26. MNC Robert Morgan | MWTC |
| 27. MNC Jamie Dykes | USS Dextrous |
| 28. MNC John Caporuscio | MCMDIV 31 |

I also want to pass on BZ's to two exceptional Minemen who were just recently selected as the Best-of-the-Best in the annual AOM's Minemen of the Year competition. Serving on board USS Avenger (MCM 1), MNC(SEL/SW) Patrick D. Clayton was chosen as the Active Duty Mineman of the Year, and also was selected for CPO this year as well, a double acknowledgement of his outstanding performance. From NR MOMAU Ten, MN1 Paul Chavez was selected as the Reserve Mineman of the Year. Due to the caliber of our Mineman these days, the MN of the YR competition is becoming more and more difficult each year. The board received a record 23 packages from reserve, active, sea and shore commands. All nominees were incredible Minemen and the board was very impressed with the quality of Minemen in the Navy today. Once again, BRAVO ZULU to each nominee and the Selectees. (See MINEWARCOM MSG 081504Z AUG 03).

Continued overleaf.

Other events this Quarter:

Awards:

YNC(SW) Janet Henderson – NCM
MN2(SW) William Campion – LOC – 2Q03 SOQ

Advanced:

MNC(SW) Laura Rodriguez

Departures:

YNC(SW) Janet Henderson – Fleet Reserve
ITC(SW) Michael Usery – MCM Squadron
MNCS(SW) Thomas Robertson – MOMAU Ten

Arrivals:

MN1(SW) Kirk Veselka
SK1(AW) Robert Longoria
MN1 Timothy Gilliland
MN1(SW) Cook

That's a wrap for this quarter, remember to visit COMOMAG's world wide web site for updates on issues, useful www links to Navy and other programs, and current contact information. The address is www.comomag.navy.mil. As always, if you need assistance from the staff here, don't hesitate to call, email, or otherwise contact us for help. Take Care and Stay Safe.

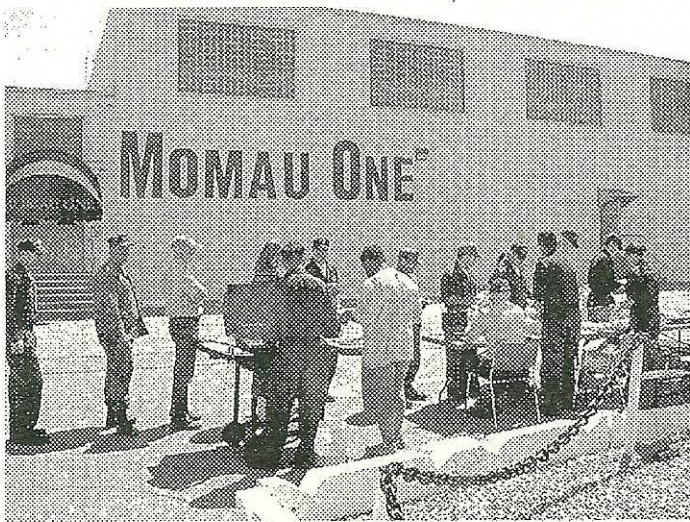


By LCDR K. L. Miller

CO's CORNER. Greetings from Sunny Seal Beach! Hard to believe I have been here for two years. As I collect my thoughts for this issue, I am able to reflect with pride on our successes. The key ingredient to any success is personnel and planning, but I also believe that intangibles influence both. One of those is location, none of which can be finer than the shores of Southern California. A cool breeze, good waves on a great beach, topped with the lovely locals combine to make this the great hidden oasis of the Mineman community!

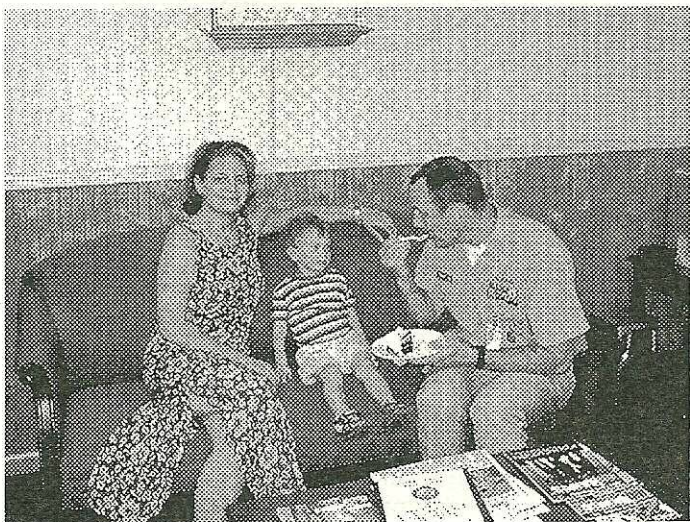
We have been at it fast and furious over the last three months. We kicked off June hosting LT Drew Polczynski and his sailors of NR MOMAU FIVE for two weeks. We offered our crane and fork truck training in return for their assistance during our wall-to-wall inventory. Being from Pittsburgh, his crew quickly adapted to Sunny Seal Beach, sampling the local eateries and adult beverage establishments. They are scheduled to return here late September, I am not sure if it is to continue their

rigorous training or retrieve MN1 Jenny Doerr's garments that were left at Mother's. The World Champion Anaheim Angles donated tickets to our crew for their night game against the Phillies on the 10th. On the 11th, MN1(SW) Ron Chabot and his quintessential QA Department grilled up juicy hamburgers and hotdogs for a MWR fund raiser.



Team One during upgrade assessment

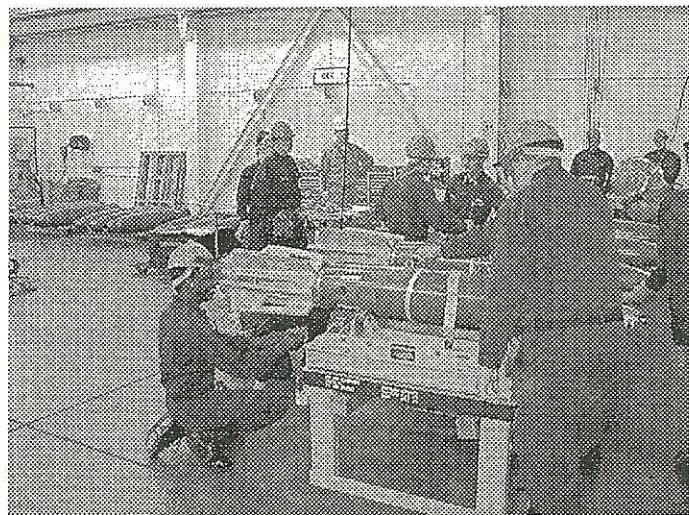
The taps flowed as we sampled the fare during our annual wetting down at Dave's Other Place on the 13th. On the 19th we had a short visit by CWO4 Vince Wisner and some of his crew from NR MOMAU NINE. They were on board a week under the tutelage of MN2(SW) Mathew Heyer and his arduous fork truck training course. MNC(SW) Greg Williams and MN3 Donal Meade returned on the 20th after a month of working on their tans and golf game in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. While there, they also assisted the USS City of Corpus Christi complete the first live SLMM shoot since 1998. The local authorities visited us on the 24th for an Environmental Compliance Inspection. On the 25th, MNCM(SW) Mark Zinnel re-enlisted his last time to take him to his thirty year mark. His wife Pamela, son Benjamin, and the crew enjoyed a fabulous cake and gourmet coffee to mark the ceremony.



MNCM Zinnel, Pamela, and Benjamin (MNCM's re-enlistment)

IT1(SW) Sheila Loe and MN1(SW) Jacob Mazerek headed up the ADMIN & Supply MWR fund raiser on the 2nd of July. Veggie burgers highlighted the otherwise carnivorous menu. The Fourth was celebrated vigorously here on the beaches and with spectacular fireworks up and down the Southern Californian coast. On the 18th, yours truly assisted CAPT Rusty Mirick and his wardroom as they held "Dinner at Lugigi's" at world famous Barney's Beach House here at Naval Weapon Station Seal Beach. This near annual event goes to the highest bidder at a silent auction with proceeds to benefit McGaugh Elementary School. Earlier that day, our sailors enjoyed a rousing time at Boomers. As others partook in miniature golf, go-carts, batting cages, and arcade, MN2 Travis Hutchens led the bumper boat charge drenching MN1(SW) Chabot. Bunker 33 was the site of a Hail and Farewell on the 24th. Our MWR provided hamburgers and hotdogs as we brought a variety of potluck dishes and beverages. On the 30th, Production Department flexed their combined culinary skills as they wowed us with succulent fajitas during a MWR fund raiser. It was a difficult decision as to beef or chicken; so many enjoyed both delectable taste treats.

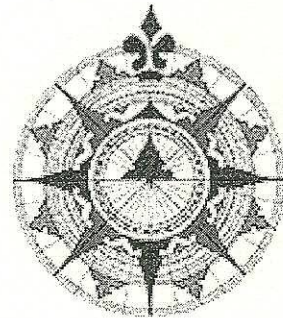
We jump started August with our quarterly upgrade assessment. Team One was first in the barrel on the 5th; Team Two had the benefit of an extra day when they conducted their assessment just barely edging Team One.



Team One during upgrade assessment

Mobile Ordnance Training Team (Norfolk, Virginia) visited us the week of the 11th. They guided us through the nuances of Fleet Sentencing and gave our warehouse a thorough look in preparation for our upcoming ESI. We held a command car wash on the 16th to increase our funding for our Christmas party. Hopefully all of our MWR fund raisers will pay off with another memorable affair.

MNCM(SW) Zinnel took a brief hiatus to the Mine Warfare Center of Excellence the week of the 18th. Besides basking in the heat and humidity of Texas, Master Chief contributed to a group of fellow experts to improve MN "A" and "C" training cur-



riculum. On the 19th, Navy College representatives ventured out of their sanctuary of San Diego to give us an outstanding presentation on our collegiate opportunities. MN2(SW) Vernon Saunders manned the grill for QA Department, turning out zesty hamburgers and toothsome hotdogs on the 27th. This MWR fund raiser was capped with a three shot basketball competition. All hands took their best shot, or in some cases seventy-five, in this fierce tournament. MNSA Christopher Ricks proved to be not only the shortest Mineman here, but also the best shot when he was crowned champion. On the 29th, we toasted our new arrivals and said goodbye to others at a potluck picnic.

HAILS & FAREWELLS. We have two new sailors joining our family this quarter. On the 22nd of August, YN2(SW) Jamaal Thomas arrived from the USS Belleau Wood (LHA 3). SK2(SW) Rene Moralesperez reported on board the 27th, after detaching from the USS Tarawa (LHA 1). Both ships are home ported in San Diego, CA.

On the 30th of May, MN3 Shane Huddleston separated from the Navy. MN2 Shane Stone departed on the 2nd of June to join the USS Ardent (MCM 12) in Manama, Bahrain. MN3 Michael Pendley and his wife Amanda set sail on the 6th to Ingleside, TX where he will join the USS Cormorant (MHC 57). MN3 Jesus Rivera departed the Naval service on the 15th. On the 1st of August, MNSN Travis Baxter departed for the USS Pioneer (MCM 9). MN3 Donal Meade departed on the 18th en route the USS Warrior (MCM 10). The USS Cormorant, USS Pioneer, and USS Warrior are home ported in Ingleside, TX.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION. CO Letters of Commendation awarded to MN2 Marion Barrientos and MNSA Brian Kiggans on selection to Sailor of the Quarter and Blue Jacket of the Quarter, respectively. NAMS were awarded to MNCM(SW) Zinnel and MNC(SW) Williams for their superb contributions during MRCI. MNSN Christopher Miserlian was awarded a NAM for his selection as Blue Jacket of the Year. YN2(SW) Roland Coates was awarded an End of Tour NAM for his many noteworthy accomplishments. I also offer a hearty attabooy to MN3 Miserlian advancing to his respective rank!

Bravo Zulu to all!!

IN THE TARGET QUEUE. Ghost Rider, the pattern is full!! ESI, RIMPAC MPC, Vegas, and JCS C2X just to name a few.



MOMAU EIGHT GUAM

By MNC(SW) Michael Ward

HAFA ADAI to all! Our summer has been quite busy. As the contractors continue the upgrade of our facilities, we have had to make slight modifications to the workload schedule. All inert material for third and fourth quarter are being tackled as we speak. With the help of Commander Dennett from NAVMAG, we will utilize their explosive operating building to perform maintenance on our explosive material during the month of September. Recently we finished the testing of 200 MK 4 main mine assemblies, maintenance on 56 racks, MK 57 TDD's and MK 46 batteries.

Production and the supply department are already making preparations for the upcoming MRCI in March of 2004. Supply will be performing a wall to wall inventory in September while production and myself will put the finishing touches on our upgrade flows. On the lighter side of the relaxed wonderful world of shore based Mineman, personnel recently participated in a boonie stomp to collect moss for MOMAU 8's sister village Talafofo. They used the moss to decorate their parade float for the July 21st Liberation Day parade, an event that is celebrated by both Military and Islanders alike.

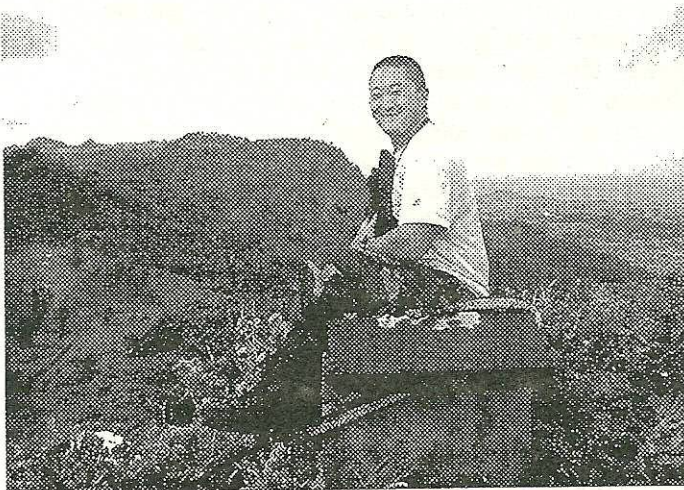


Unit EIGHT crewmembers return from a "boonie stomp" with moss for their sister village's parade float.

The command also participated in a Navy Ball Golf Tournament at Admiral Nimitz Golf Course. It was a fun time for everyone. Congratulations to MN1(SW) Gonzalez who won a 2-night stay and dinner at the Rose Hotel International.

AWARDS:

2nd Quarter 03
SSOQ - YN1 Poynter
JSOQ - MN3 Jansen
BSOQ - MNSN Ayers



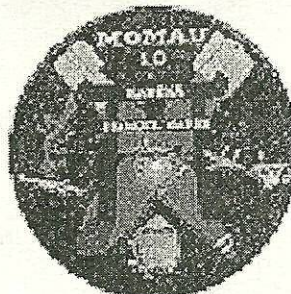
Pictured is MN3 Jansen, Unit EIGHT's Junior sailor of the quarter, sitting on top of what's left of the old Japanese lookout post located on Naval magazine.

HAIL AND FAREWELL:

CW02 Forsythe, new XO, reported onboard in June from the USS FRANK CABLE. MNC(SW) Ward, new MPO, reported onboard in July from MWTC. MN2(SW) Keefer reported onboard from the USS Dextrous which recently participated in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

MN2 Long has cross-rated to MA and transferred to Whidbey Island, WA with his wife Roxanne. MNSN Harris is going into the civilian world in Seal Beach, CA. MN2 Phillips is going TAD to EODMU 5 here in Guam for a short time and then transferring to EODTEU 2 in Norfolk, VA.

Have a great summer! Work hard, play hard, but be safe.



MOMAU TEN KADENA

By MNCS John Bray

Hello again from Okinawa....I hope this writing finds each and every one of you happy and winding down from a great summer. The summertime blues are nearly over and we look towards new challenges in the coming year. Hmm, what's going on around

here this time around? Well, the final phase of our exercise season has been wrapped up with the completion of 03-2JA up in Northern Japan. We once again want to extend our sincere thanks to the leadership and crew of MOMAD Misawa for handling this exercise as they did a superb job. LCDR Cross and his able team completed the annual Cobra Gold exercise and returned home in late May. Yours truly had the pleasure of leading the June Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) exercise in Thailand this go-around but unfortunately, no good sea stories to tell out of this one as there as no liberty due to force protection issues....oh well, maybe next time. With the exercises completed, we had some time to concentrate on facility upkeep this summer and many of the command spaces are sporting a fresh coat of paint and looking mighty fine due to the recent wind down time. We had the pleasure of hosting some "extra" help these past few months compliments of the Kadena Summer Hire Program and were provided high school "young adults" who assisted us in re-habbing our aging inert warehouse building. We threw a nice Okinawa-style beach bash for our hired help on their last day and they all seemed to get a big kick out of that.

KUDOS: Congrats go out to MN3 Matthew Everingim who was selected as our Command Sailor of the Quarter for his outstanding performance in the Mine Production Department.

ARRIVALS: By the time this hits print, we will have welcomed MNCS(SW) Tom Robertson onboard from the COMOMAG Staff. Tom will be learning the ropes at the site level in the coming months and sliding over into my position next year so I can be put out to pasture in civilian land come next summer.

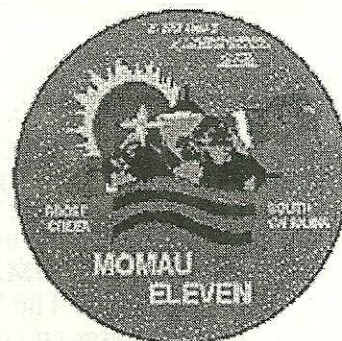
DEPARTURES: We will soon be saying fair winds and following seas to SKC(SW) Ed Bajarias and MN2 Tim Astin. The SK scammed himself a follow-on assignment right here on Okinawa at CTF-76 and MN2 Astin will be returning to "sunny" Bahrain to collect some more big COLA. We wish them both all the best in their new assignments and greatly appreciate the significant contributions they have made to the command over these past few years.

It looks as though we have had a "turn of fate" in the right direction and will be getting a seasoned YN1 onboard after the first of the year. Come to think of it, I shouldn't even be saying anything as I'll probably jinx us now and they'll cancel his orders since I've counted the chickens before they've hatched! We have been without an experienced YN for years now and forgotten what it feels like to have an experienced Admin Staff. Not to take anything away from our current and past administrative personnel who have done a superb job despite no formal training or experience. We've just had to get by however we could administratively these past few years and have had various junior and senior MN's and even the IT running the show up in the front

office. It'll be nice to get the Minemen back in the shop where they belong though. We eagerly await getting our civilian Supply Specialist (aka...SK) billet filled. With the SKC soon transferring, I'm sure his current fill-in (MN1(SW) McMillian) will be all too happy to turn the command financial duties over in the not too distant future.

A few of us in the crew just returned from a week-end scuba diving trip to the Kerama Islands to enjoy some of the pristine reefs the surrounding area has. The "balmy" 86 degree water temps and near perfect sea conditions remind me of why duty in Okinawa is so spectacular. It'll be a shame to see the water cool off and have to break out the thick wetsuits in another month or so.

That's about it for this time. Have a happy Halloween and don't eat too much candy while you're at it. All the best from the Officers and crew of MOMAU Ten.



MOMAU ELEVEN GOOSE CREEK

By MN3 Valerie Wheeler

Greetings from the Low Country! This summer has been one of the rainiest in memory. The South Carolina lightning display is a sight to behold. But rain or storm, we have a job to do.



MN2 Stretch demonstrating proper usage of the high pressure washer while staying dry.

Just when we thought it was safe to take a breather after the MRCI, it was time to gear up for the Administration and Material inspection. While the admin and supply areas kicked into high gear in

preparation, the production team had their own worries. Mr. Jerry Ellis of Coastal Sea Systems, Panama City arrived with his team and the SLMM Inwater Reliability Evaluation began. The MOMAU 11 team had begun preparations some weeks before, starting with the assembly and filling of the MK 53 battery. Mr. Ken Warringa, also of CSS gave instruction on this neat little gadget that assisted in the process of filling the battery. The SLMM team had their work cut out for them as this plant would require 16 weapons. The team, led by MN3 Percy rose to the challenge and performed admirably. News from the shoot site indicates 15 out of 16 weapons launched and functioned perfectly. Seems our SLMM team 'ROCKS'!

Meanwhile, the end of the Administration and Material Inspection went off without a hitch, the Command gaining an overall SAT from the COMOMAG inspectors.

VEMS has not had an easy time of things either as TACDEVEX requested 8 weapons for their games. Meanwhile, CT and Production have started a punishing work schedule in order to complete this quarters maintenance cycle.

All in all, even with the MRCI and ADMAT behind us, we are not out of the woods yet. The Explosive Safety Inspection looms ever nearer and demands from the fleet for shapes grows every day. We currently have one team, consisting of CWO2 Traylor, MNCM(SW) Walker, MN2(SW) Watkins and MN3 Wohlgenuth deployed out to FT Lauderdale, Florida. They are attending the TACDEVEX and will be staying on a little while longer to assist in the IRE post mission analysis of our 16 SLMM's. MN3 Percy will also be assisting in the recovery. Later on this month other teams will depart for Barksdale, Air Force Base and Brunswick Maine. Being the largest mineshop in the world does have it's advantages.

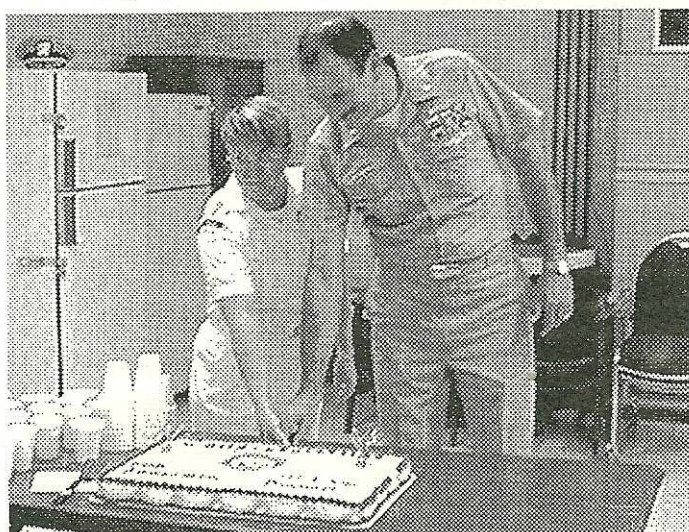
On the personnel side of things, congratulations to MNC(SEL)(SW) Ollie Collins for being selected for Chief Petty Officer. Outstanding work and well deserved!

LCDR Anderjack is now Commander Anderjack, having received silver oakleaves pin from CDR Auberry on July 1st. In a combined ceremony, MN1(SW) Braham reenlisted again for the final time. Congratulations to both.

The Fourth of July saw all of us out at Shortstay park for a fantastic party hosted by our MWR in which everyone had a great time, hence no pictures of that event.

As always, time passes causing friends and shipmates to move on, leaving us behind to bid them

farewell. Soon though, new faces arrive fitting into the empty spaces of those who left us behind....



CDR Anderjack and MN1(SW) Braham demonstrate proper cake cutting procedures for the crew.

HAIL AND FAIRWELLS.

Departures

MN1(SS) Sullivan
MN3 Sellers
MN3 Perkins
MNSN Romann
MNSN Cox

To

Fleet Reserve
USS Civilian
USS Civilian
USS Sentry
USS Sentry

Arrivals

CWO2 Traylor
MN1 Cassidy
MN1(SW) Braham
MN2(SW) Wood
MN2(SW) Bufano
MN2 Haynes
MN2(SW) Brady
IT2(SW) Biosca
MN3 Mosier
MNSN Smith

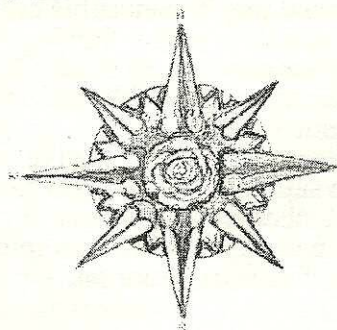
From

USS Estocin
MOMAU 8
USS Cormorant
USS Devastator
USS Guardian
USS Gladiator
USS Avenger
USS Kennedy
USS Scout
MWTC 'A' School

KUDOS

MN1(SW) Gibbs
MN2(SW) Allard

SSOQ
JSOQ





MOMAU TEN KADENA

By MNCS Jack Cantrell

Greetings from the "North Pole" of the mine shops. Hope everyone is getting ready for their 4th of July bash. Here in MISAWA we will be going skiing (snow skiing that is). The crew here has been really working hard putting in the long hours during the winter months so we can enjoy some well deserved "LIBERTY" time off during the 2 months of summer we have.

We would like to welcome the following personnel on board. MNC Dean Venzeland his lovely wife Jury, and his sons TJ and Brandon from the USS Patriot Sasebo Japan, MN1 Laura Arthur from MOMAU 1, MNSN Santiago Gonzales, MNSN Josephine Russell, MNSN Angela Cattaneo, MNSN Jason Schriener from MWTC "A" School. Welcome Aboard!!

The command would like to extend a "BRAVO ZULU" to our reserves who volunteered during our time of need: MNC Daniel R. Bravo from NR MOMAU 8, GMC Paul C. Stahl from NMCRC Pittsburgh PA, MN1 James D. Hayes NRC Austin TX, GM1 Matthew A. Handwork NMCRC Handwork TX, MN1 Kathy S. Lamb from NR 5 TX, MN1 Able Fernandes from NRC Kerny, NJ, MN1 Scott D. Ash from NMCRC Los Angeles CA, TM2 Kelvinoge Morrisette NR MOMAU 8, SK2 Julie A. Baumholser NMCRC Greenville SC, SM2 Brian E. Spinks from NRC Austin TX, MN2 Richard J. Fortunato NRC Harlington TX, TM2 Seeman J. Williams from NMCRC Pittsburgh PA MN2 Tracey A. Hays from NRC Kearny NJ, and MN3 Juan C. Pazazan. What an outstanding group of Sailors! I am proud to have had the opportunity to work with each and every one of them. Again, thanks for the Operational Assist!

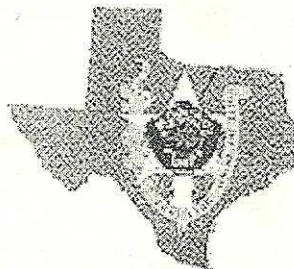
ADVANCEMENT AND RECOGNITION. Congratulations to MN3 Michael Nielsen for his selection to his present rate. Also YN1 Chris Grob for his selection as SOY for 2002 and MN3 Courtney Haralson for his selection as JSOY for 2002. In addition to MN1 Kenneth Boatright on his selection as SSOQ 1st quarter 2003 and MNSN Russell P. Stratford III as JSOQ for 2003. For SOQ 2nd quarter 2003 we would like to congratulate MNSN Eric Perando for his selection. Well Done!

DEPARTURES. We will be saying Good bye to the following personnel: MN1 Timothy Gilliland will be transferring to COMOMAG. I just want to say that was the fastest (15 minutes from start to finish. I am talking about orders in hand! OP IMMEDIATE!) I have ever seen orders cut in my 23 years of active duty. MN1 could not throw that hook that our Detailer threw at him Good Job MNC East! YN1 Chris Grob reporting to Seal Team Five, Coronado, CA, MN2 Justin McAndrew will be reporting to the

USS Ardent Bahrain and IT Rick Avalos reporting to VAQ 138, Whidbey Island WA. Please accept our Thanks to each and every one of you for a job "WELL DONE"

Well that's about all to report from the "North Pole". MOMAD 12 wishes every one to have a safe and enjoyable summer. So until next time "Take Care and God Bless"

MOMAD 12 Standing by!



MOMAU FIFTEEN INGLESIDE

By IT2(FMF) Summer

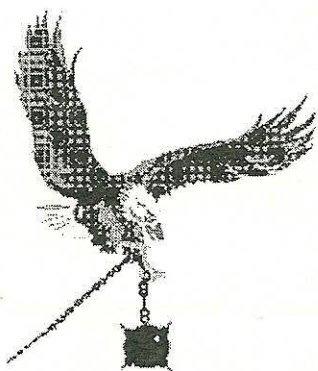
Hello again, from MOMAU Fifteen and South Texas. The fishing season was great and the weather again was a scorcher, but that doesn't mean the crew didn't enjoy the beautiful South Texas beaches. The only time this summer that the beach wasn't a big hit was during those pesky tropical storms, but we are still alive and kicking so I guess that proves a little bad weather can't keep us down.

On a brighter note we have finally achieved what seemed like the impossible, our move to the luxurious Naval Station Ingleside. I would say it seems we have been making guesses on when MOMAU 15 would be there forever and a day, but we finally made it. The shop is bustling with the crew and contractors to put the finishing touches on the mine bay cranes, and our newly acquired mezzanine deck for storage. I would say in no time at all we will be back in the full swing of operations and just in time to get prepared to participate in JTFX04-1. I am sure that the newly implemented NMCI (Navy and Marine Corps Intranet) will also be up and running very shortly down in South Texas.

Onboard our new arrivals are loving the challenge of setting up a shop from scratch. Along with the rest of the crew we are overjoyed with our new facilities. So, We give a big welcome to MN3 Sheree Stevens reporting from Mineman "A" school, and MN3 Trisha Mason reporting from the USS Cormorant MHC-57.

We have a good bit of Bravo Zulus this quarter so without delay I give you our very own MNC Select (SW) Robert Dunbar, SSOQ SK1 Julio Harros, JSOQ MNSN Casey Kilgos, and I can't forget our volunteers this year for the Operation Graduation help at Corpus Christi Fun trackers MN3 Justin Stordahl and MNSN Cassandra Ward.

I must admit the hardest part of any of these newsletters is saying goodbye to Shipmates moving on in their careers and lives. On that note I will close by saying Fair Winds and Following Seas to our soon to be retired MN1(SW) Randall Lauderdale. He will retire this fall after twenty years of Superior performance and Faithful service to this Great Navy. We wish you and your family all the best.

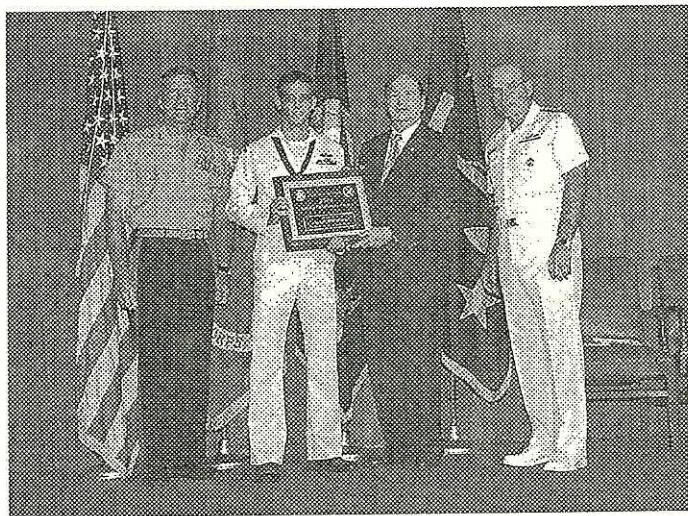


MINE COUNTERMEASURES NEWS

USS DEFENDER WINS DEPARTMENT OF NAVY SAFETY AWARD

By Francoise "Fifi" Kieschnick

USS Defender recently won a Department of the Navy Safety Award. MN1(SW) Edward B. Barnes, of USS Defender, went to Washington, D.C., to accept the award on behalf of his ship.



Pictured here MN1(SW) Edward B. Barnes receives a Department of the Navy Safety Award.

The ship was cited for its aggressive off-duty safety programs. Barnes accepts the award from Acting Secretary of the Navy, H. T. Johnson. Also pictured are Commandant of the Marine Corps General Hagee and Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Clark.

USS Defender is an Avenger Class mine countermeasures ship with a mission of hunting, neutralizing and sweeping underwater mines anywhere in the world in support of U.S. interests. USS Defender is homeported at Naval Station Ingleside, the Navy's "Mine Warfare Center of Excellence".

HOME FOR FATHER'S DAY!



The sun rises as MIWRG Three transits the Straits of Gibraltar while heading home from Operation Iraqi Freedom. (U.S. Navy Photo)

MIWRG3 Returns From Med Deployment

By Francoise "Fifi" Kieschnick

Mine Readiness Group Three will return to Naval Station Ingleside June 13, following a successful Mediterranean deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The readiness group includes USS Devastator (MCM 6), USS Chief (MCM 14), USS Sentry (MCM 3) and USS Scout (MCM 8) and their 332 personnel.

Devastator, Chief, Sentry and Scout received short notice to deploy in December to support the war on terror. After hurried preparations, the group departed Ingleside on Jan. 13. Their primary mission was to provide a mine warfare presence in the U.S. Sixth Fleet area of operation ensuring the uninterrupted flow of forces through the Suez Canal and to serve as a surge force if significant mining was encountered.

The "Iron Men on Wooden Ships" made a winter Atlantic crossing that required 21 days underway, most of which were in arduous seas, alongside USNS Patuxent. After arriving in theater, the four ships joined USS Cleveland (LPD 7), which had embarked personnel from three Explosive Ordnance Disposal detachments, Mine Countermeasures Squadron Two, and Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron Fifteen. They then conducted several weeks of detailed Route Survey operations, surveillance and training in the vicinity of the Suez Canal, providing invaluable operational experience and continuing to define the future role of mine warfare forces.

Devastator and Sentry arrived in the vicinity of the northern approach to the Suez Canal first and were in place when hostilities broke out in Iraq. Scout and Chief joined them shortly thereafter. The mine warfare forces were eager to support Operation Iraqi Freedom, however everyone was glad to receive orders to return home May 15, earlier than anticipated.

The return trip began in Souda Bay, Crete. Port visits were made in Augusta Bay, Sicily; Malta; Rota, Spain, for maintenance and resupply; Nassau, Bahamas; and Key West, Fla. Some of the crews' family members took part in a "Tiger Cruise" - they were able to join their Sailors in Key West and ride the ship back to Ingleside.



REUNION 2003

29th AOM Reunion Attendees

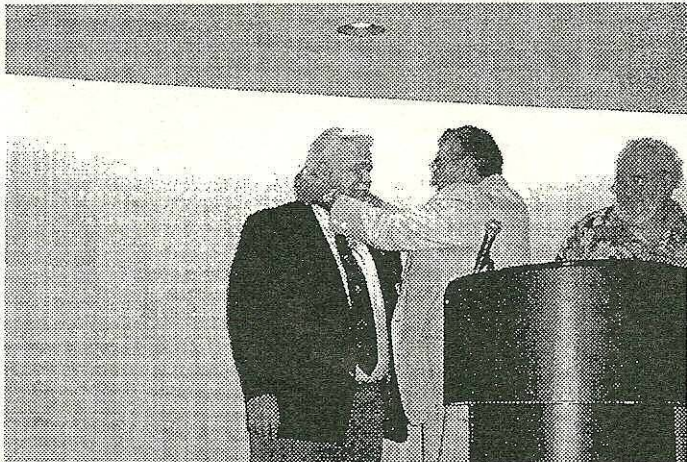
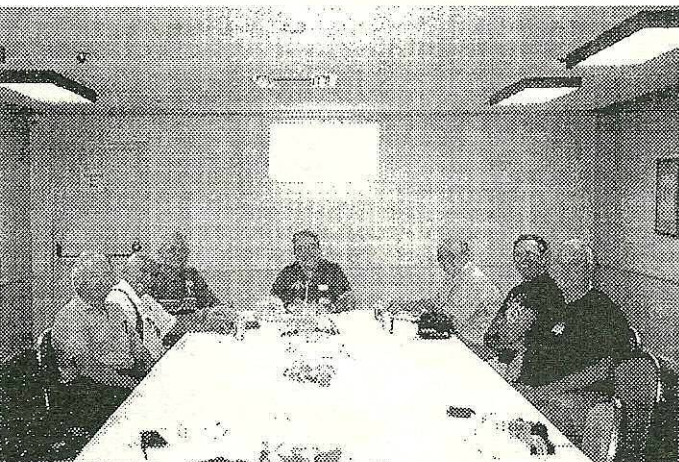
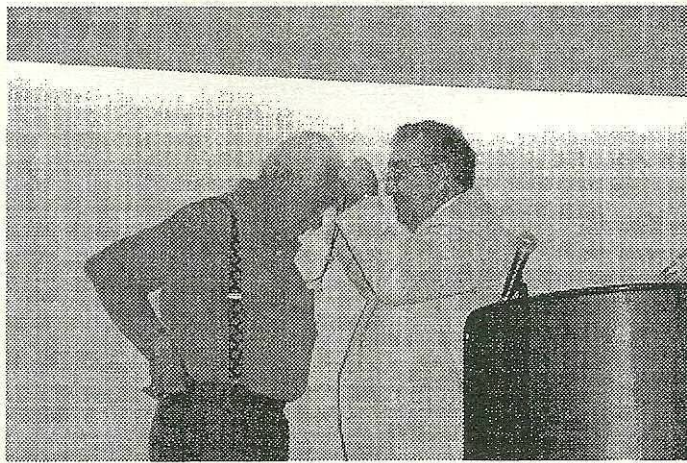
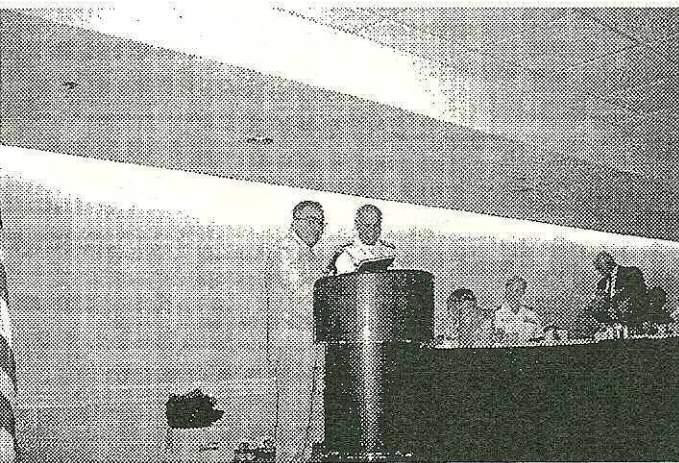
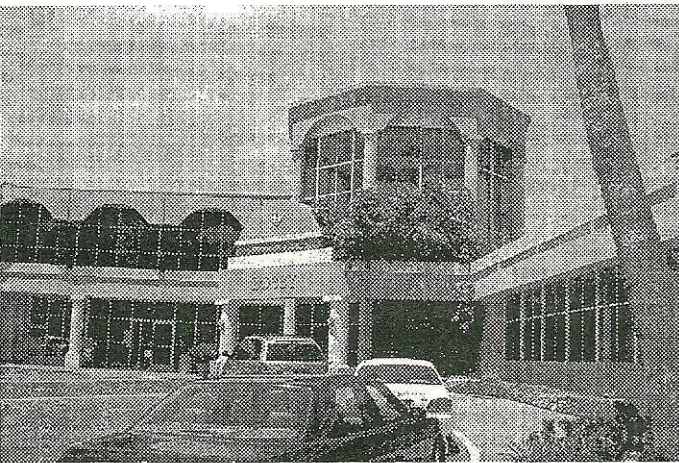


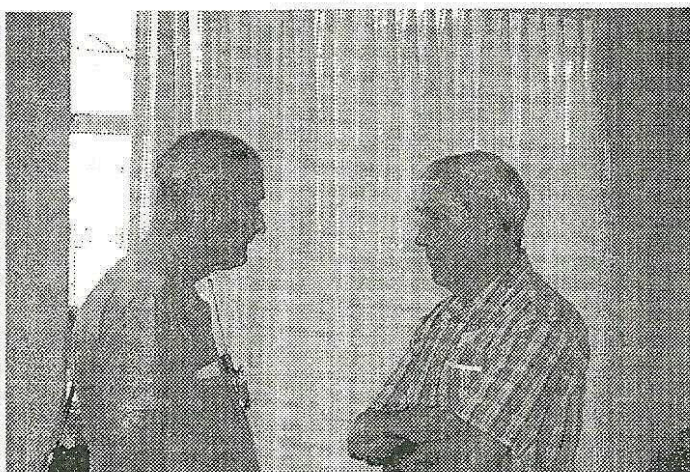
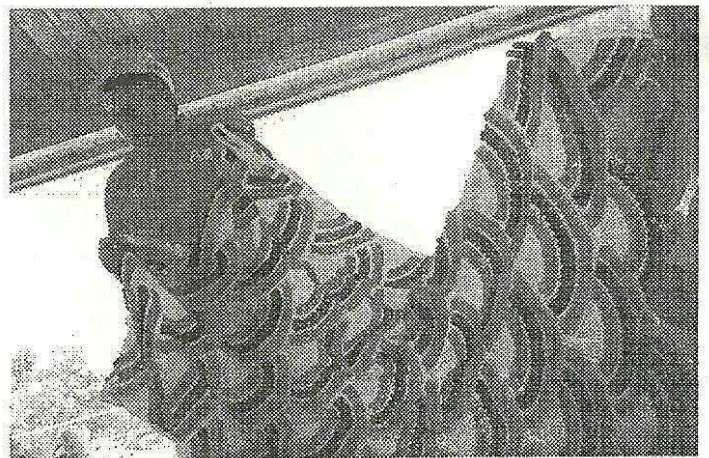
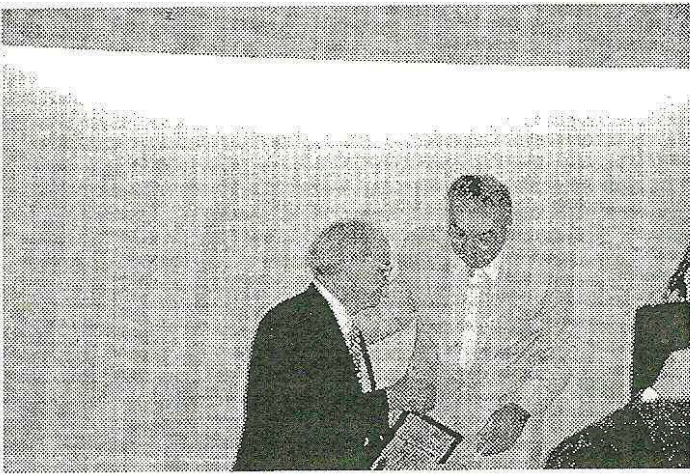
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G. Chipman
S. Cowart
D. DeCrona
J. Hernandez
F. Lafleur
F. McCarthy
W. Peters,
W. Savage

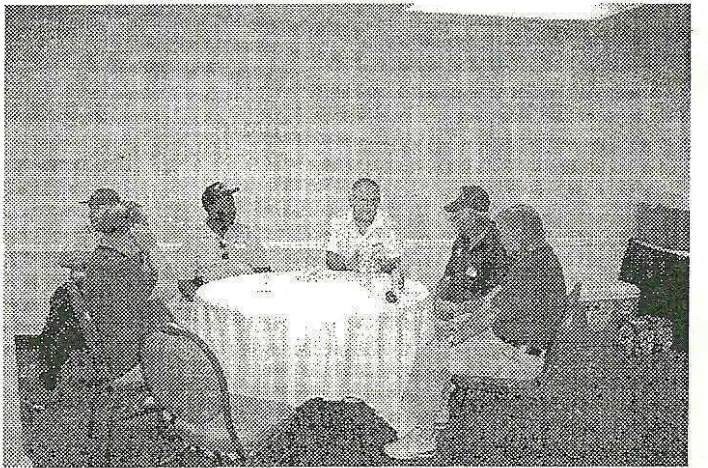
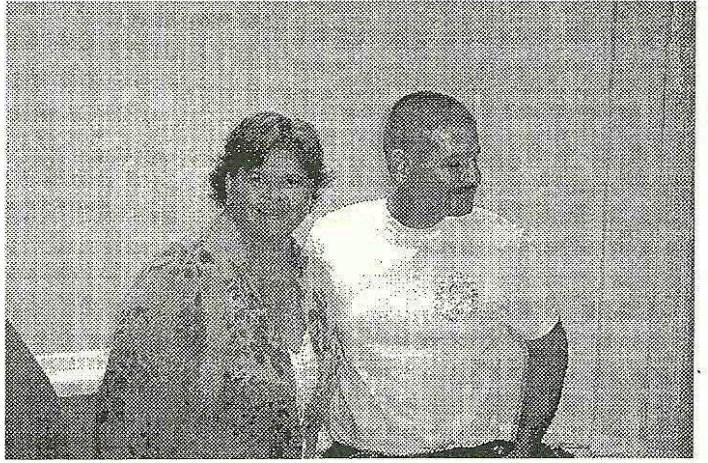
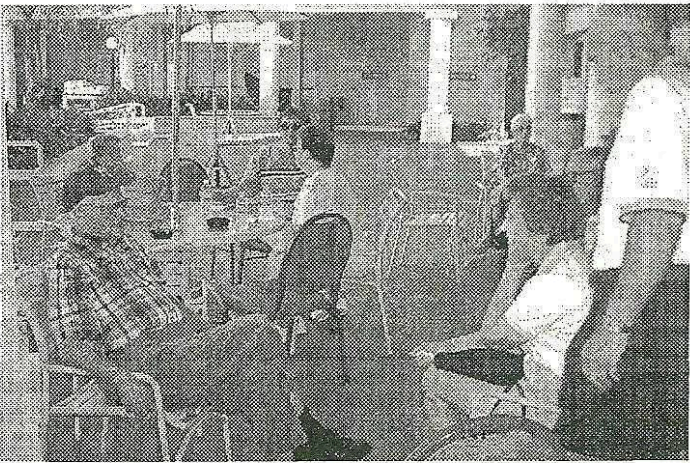
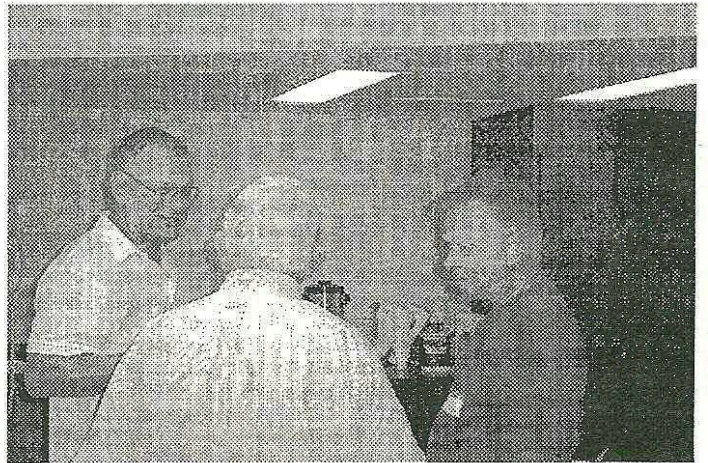
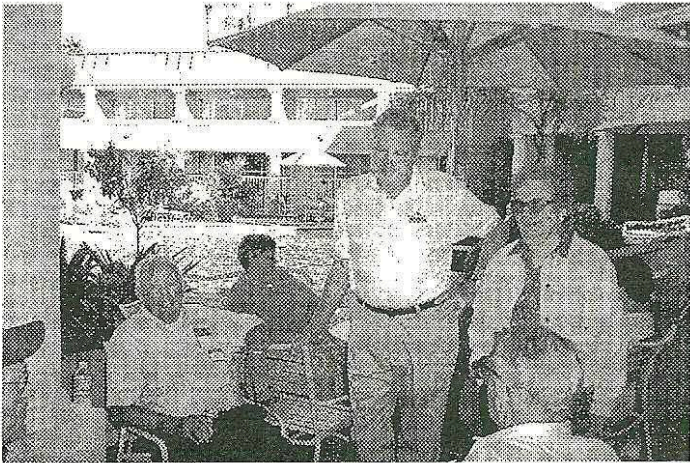
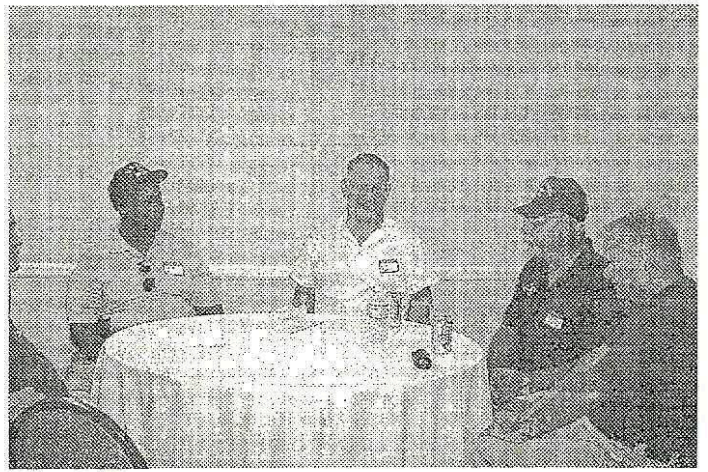
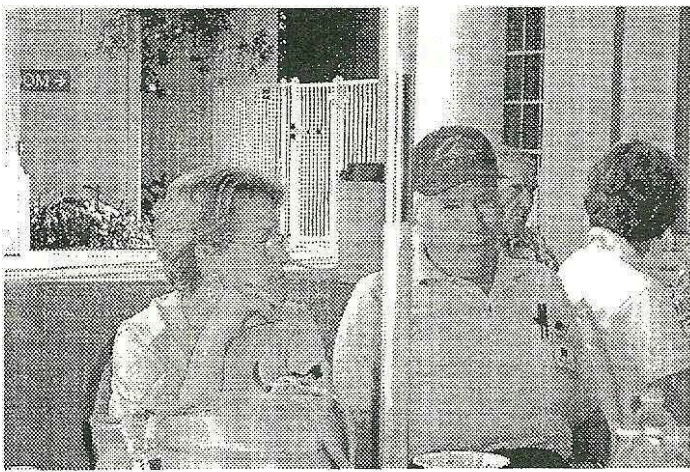
Jose Balderama
A. Boreen
C. Christian
F. Dane
B. Defrees
B. Holloway
R. Llanttanz
J. Miller
F. Reid
D. Schommer
R. Wadman

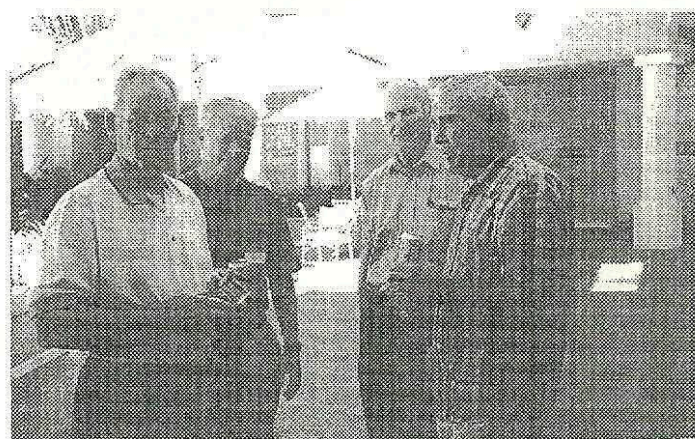
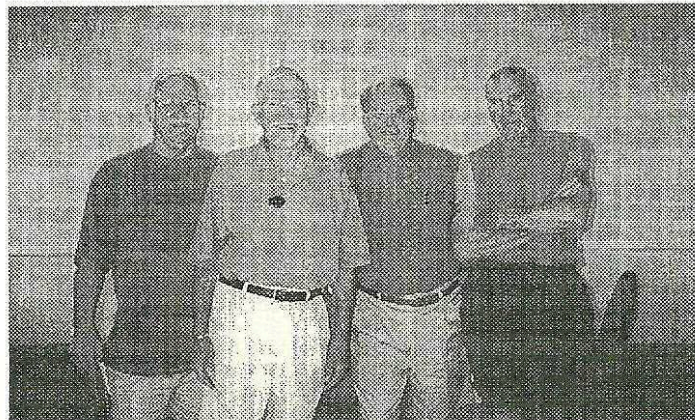
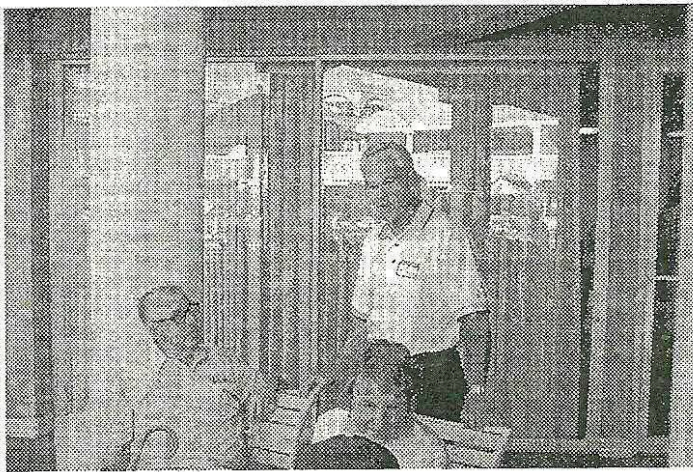
F. Barrett
D. Branan
G. Cleland
B. Darlington
D. Epperly
B. Johnson
D. Lewis, J
P. Mocalis
R. Ruhland
R. Stickney
L. Whitmore

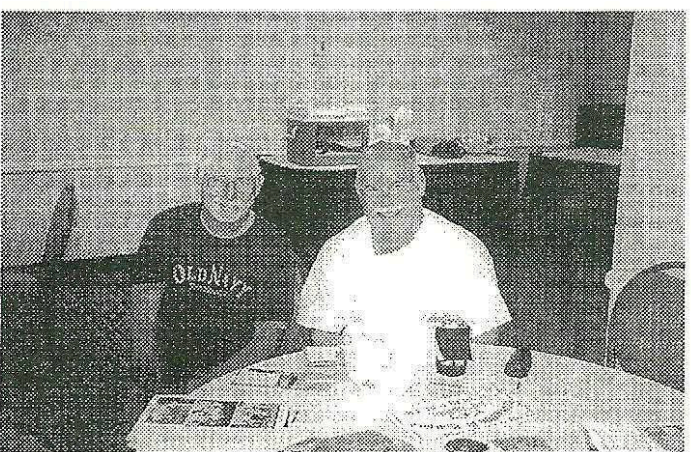
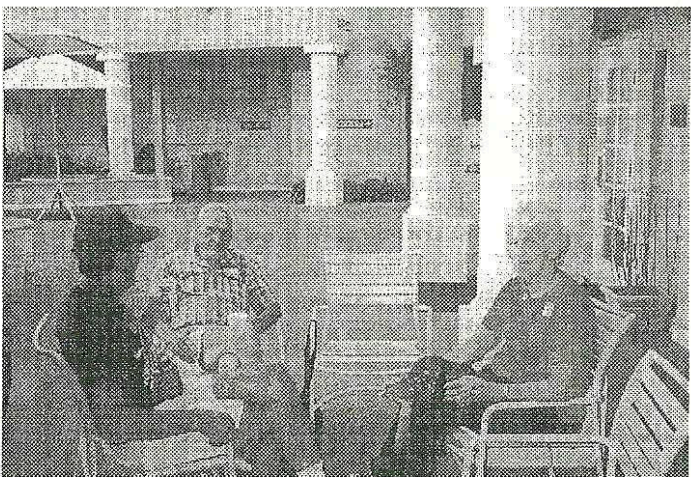
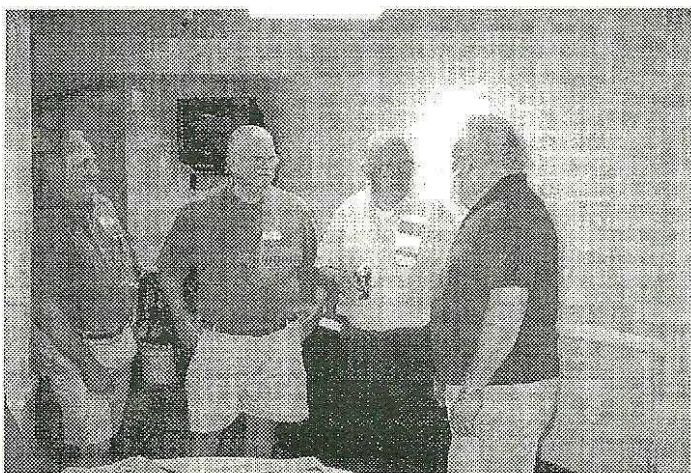
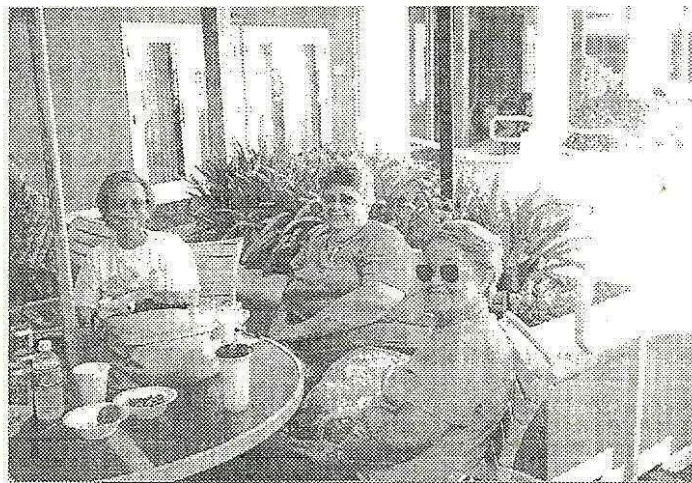
W. Bash
S. Carlsen
R. Cobis
R. Davis
B. Hart
T. Kaiser (E. bird)
Loonam
T. Newton
P. Santa Maria
J. Temple











Lest We Forget THE COST OF CARELESSNESS

West Loch Disaster

On May 21, 1944, at 3:08 p.m., an explosion blossomed out of LST-353. Apparently the blast originated near the bow of LST-963, where Army troops had been unloading mortar ammunition. Red hot fragments showered the clustered LSTs, igniting gasoline drums lined up on the exposed forecastles. In minutes, the explosions began to rip the invasion fleet apart. Fires began to blaze from stem to stern.

The explosions continued, damaging more than 20 buildings shoreside at the West Loch facility. For 24 hours fires raged aboard the stricken ships.

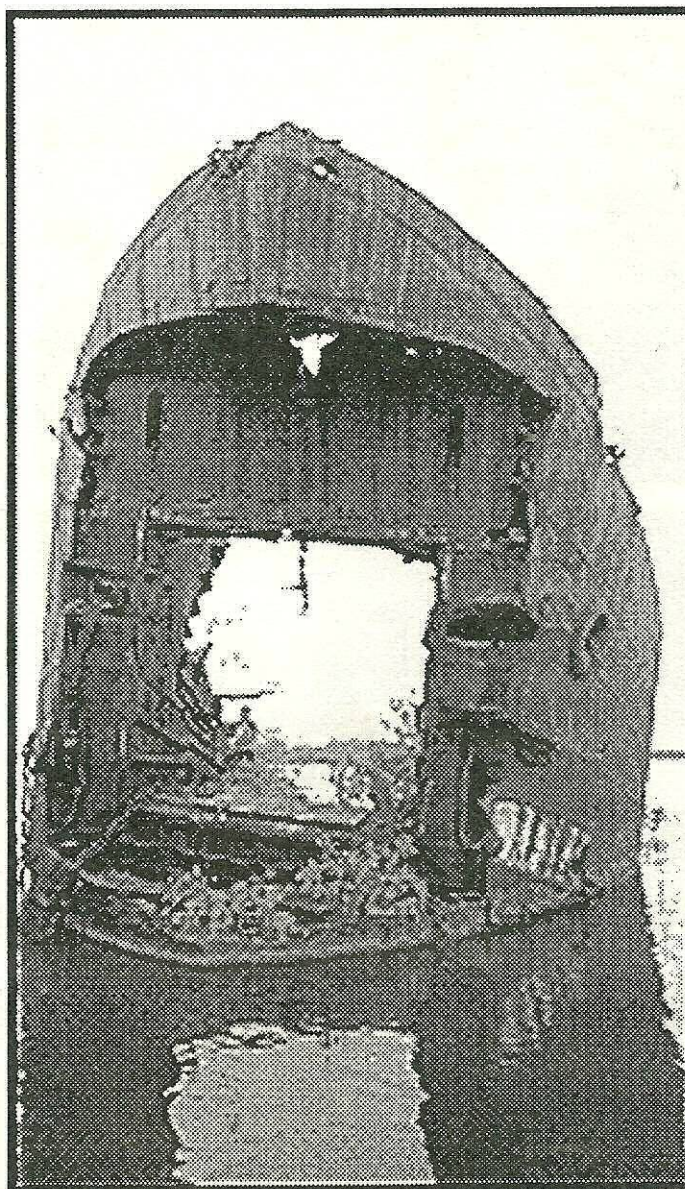
In all, six LSTs were sunk and several severely damaged. Dead were 163 men and 396 were wounded.

Several investigations sought to find the reason for such a disaster, but no conclusive evidence as how it occurred was decided upon. Two major reasons have emerged as to the possible cause: The initial explosion was caused by gasoline vapor, or that one or more mortar shells exploded while being handled.

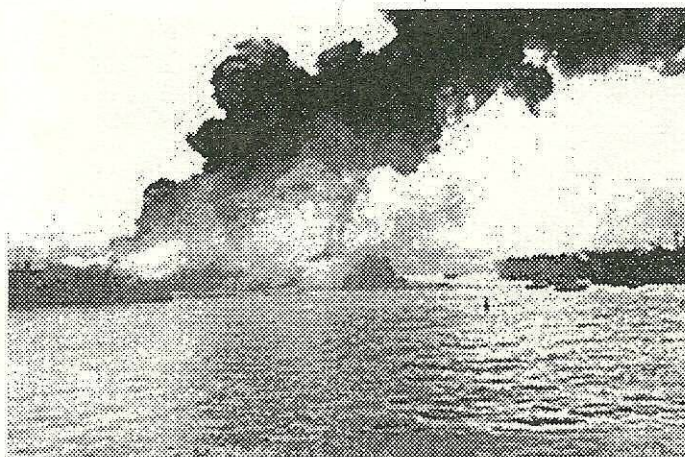
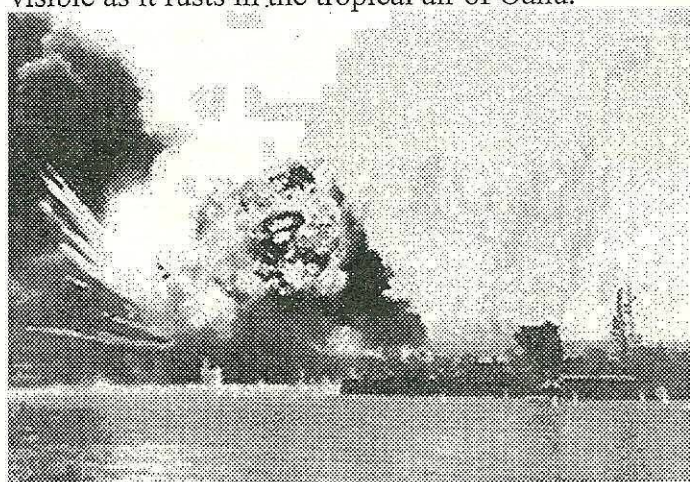
It was recommended that LSTs no longer be nested, so that disaster like that at West Loch could be avoided. Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz disagreed. He felt that facilities were too limited at Pearl and that the nesting was necessary. "It is a calculated risk that must be accepted."

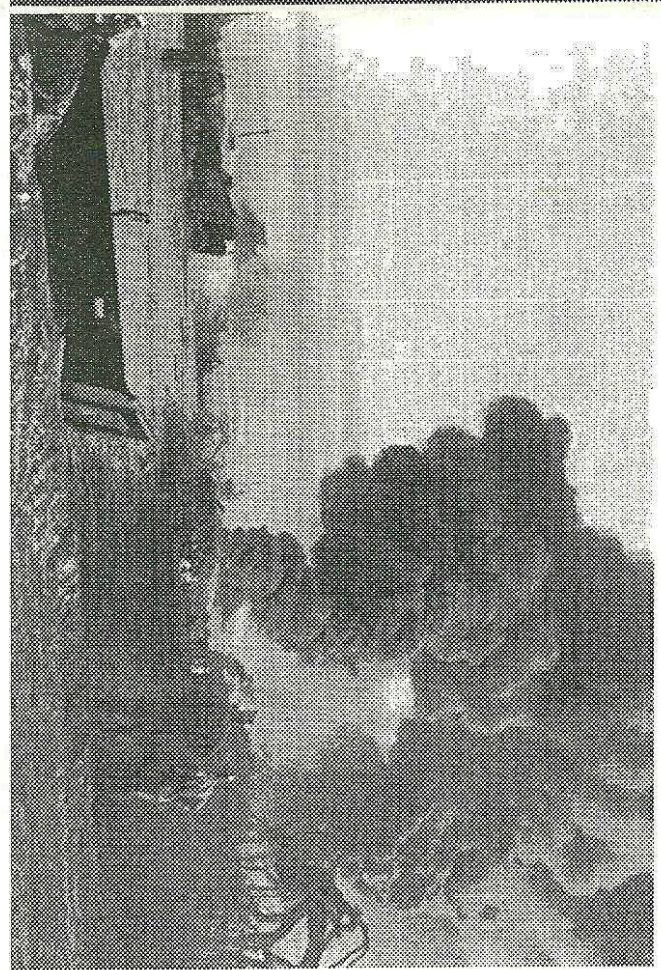
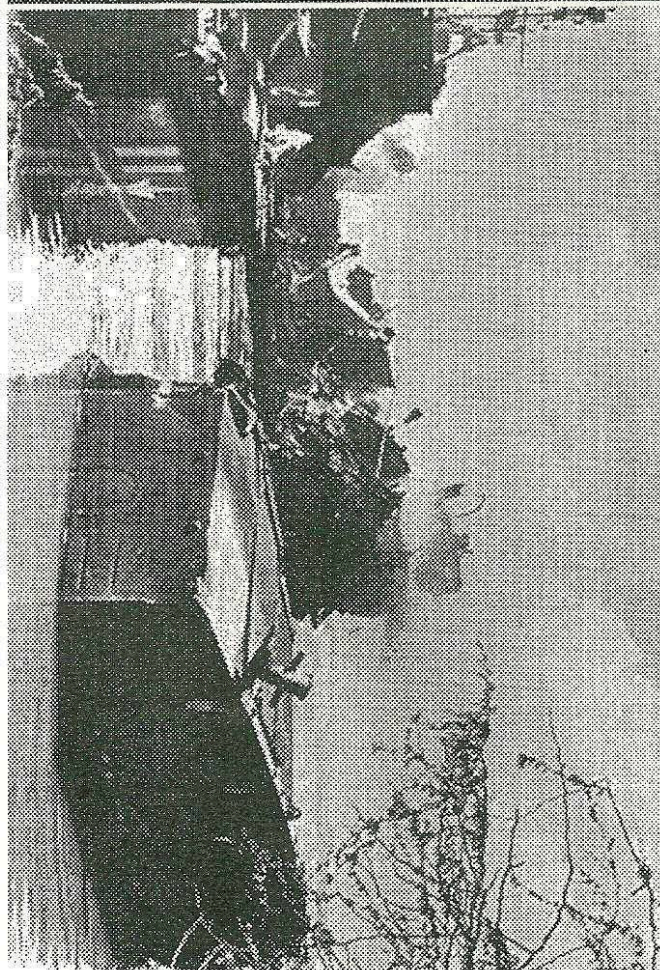
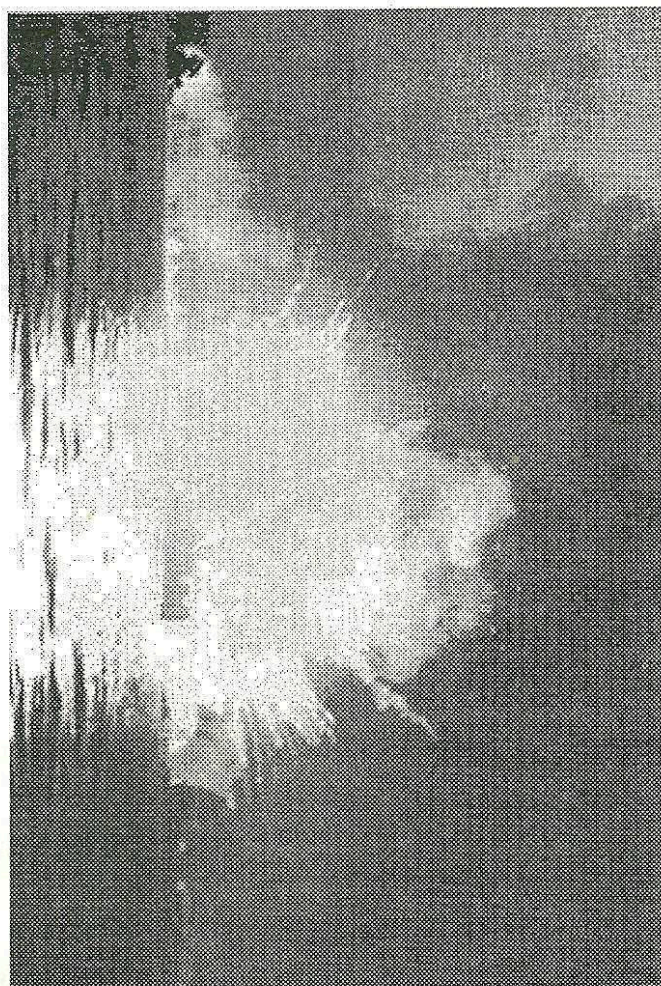
During the explosions and fires, firefighters had prevented further loss of ships that would have delayed the invasion of Saipan. As it was, only a day was lost in the departure of the invasion fleet.

Today, only a few reminders of the West Loch disaster remain. For years, both during the war and after, the disaster at West Loch was veiled in secrecy and mystery. In particular, the bow of LST-480 is visible as it rusts in the tropical air of Oahu.



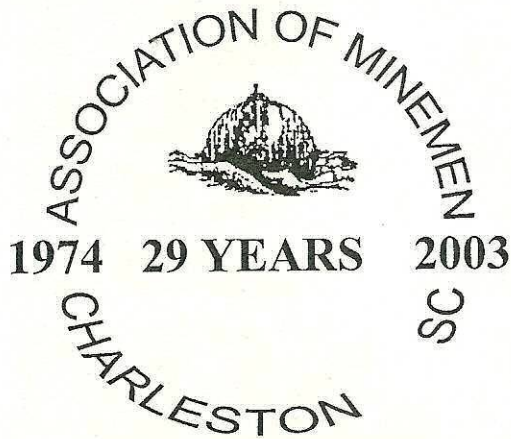
LST 480 sits on the bottom of West Loch as a reminder of the horrific accident that occurred there in 1944.





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