

# The DASHPOT



Issue 47

Newsletter of the Association of Minemen

Fall 2004



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

**G. Paul Santa Maria**

This is my last article as your President so I will keep it short.

I want to thank each and every one of you beautiful people for making the past three years among the most beautiful, most rewarding years of mine and Bootsie's lives. In all our years of various involvements, never has there been a whole group of people more loving, more dedicated, more proud and more supportive. This is, without reservation, the finest quazi military/civilian organization on the planet.

I owe you all a tremendous debt of gratitude for honoring me with the high office of President, giving me strong support, guidance, and respect. A man cannot wish for anything more out of life. Thank you and God bless you all.

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## 30TH ANNUAL ASSOCIATION OF MINEMEN REUNION

**By Dick Schommer**

By the time you members receive this issue of the Dashpot, all contracts will be signed and all will be set for the great event, our 30th Anniversary.

The members that signed up for the MOMAG visit on the 8th of Oct. 2004, get up early and plan on meeting at the Inn at 0800 (8:00 AM). We will be carpooling to the Weapons Station and must be there by 0900. Everyone has to go through the security procedures, badge, vehicle passes, etc., and make sure you have a picture identification of some sort with you.

There will be NO Yorktown Tour. No agreement could be reached on entry for the members. Of course you are free to go at your expense.

As stated before, we have the Oak Room for the Early Bird and all meetings. This will be available for the weekend. The Early Bird will get underway at approximately 1600 on 8 Oct. '04. Liquid and light snack refreshments will be available.

Our President, Paul Santa Maria, plans on getting together with the BOD's for a pre meeting at approximately 1900, 8 Oct '04. The location will be announced.

Business meetings are as follows: BOD Meeting 1100-1200, 9 Oct. '04, Membership meeting 1400-(?). These meetings will take place in the Oak Room. A schedule of events will be posted in the Oak Room.

Dinner will be at approximately 1900, but a no host bar will be set up at 1800 for those that want to mingle and tell lies, catch up on the grandkids (in some cases great grandkids), and brag a little bit. This dinner will be an all you care to eat seafood buffet plus chicken.

We have been asked about the dress code for dinner. It is evening casual attire, however, no shorts please.

For those who haven't made up their minds about attending the reunion it is never to late, but we have to have a total number of dinners by 4 October 2004.

The picnic will begin at 1200 on 10 Oct '04 around the pool area. We will have normal picnic vittles.

Don't forget to bring Auction items and money. The Auction is for a great cause, our Scholarship Fund.

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If you have any questions or need directions give me a call or send me an e-mail. My phone number is 843-797-3715 and e-mail is [rdschommer@hotmail.com](mailto:rdschommer@hotmail.com) See ya all in October. Drive safe.



informal cocktail party, casual dress, at his home on James Island on Thursday evening at 1800 (6:00PM). Several family secret hors d'oeuvres recipes are planned, as well as others.

Bar drinks and beer. Directions (map) will be available at the Town and Country arrival desk (please ask for them if coming). It is a 20 minute drive, and if you don't have transport, call and Toby will try to get you there. For logistics planning, he'd like to have some indication of your intent to come by e-mail at [tobyone@ix.netcom.com](mailto:tobyone@ix.netcom.com), or by calling 843.762.3552

For Thursday (or before) arrivals and Charleston area members, Toby Horn is planning an



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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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# SCHOLARSHIP SCOOP

By Swede Carlsen



The AOM'S 2004 scholarship drive has met with great success. All thirteen applications received were awarded a \$500 assistance scholarship. Two awards were from the membership, one memorial scholarship in the name of Kay Branam, and ten were from an anonymous donor.

The following listed individuals were awarded an AOM scholastic assistance scholarship.

1. Ashley L. Chavez - Technical Vocational Institute Albuquerque, NM
2. Joseph J. Cavallo - Tufts University
3. Jennifer D. Jacob - Nicholls State University
4. Antonietta Marmorato - Franklin Pierce Law Center
5. Gino Marmorato - Pace University of Law
6. Sabrina A. Peters - Francis Marion University
7. Justin B. Pittman - Trident Technical College
8. Jillian F. Smith - Ocean County College
9. Nicholas R. Squillance - Wright State University
10. Kelly J. Stewart - Furman University
11. Steven Tiramani - Bucknell University
12. Christine Tiramani - Bucknell University
13. Jacquelyn Vietro - Buffalo State, SUNY

Congratulations to all awardees!

Remember we're going to start on the 2005 scholastic donations at this year's picnic. See you there!

Let's help our leaders of the future...



STAND TALL AMERICA



## IT'S NOT TOO LATE!!!

There is still time, though not much, to get your AOM patch concept to Curtis Christian or G. Paul Santa Maria so it can be considered at this year's reunion. Get your crayons and let your creative juices flow!

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Worry is interest paid in advance for a debt you may never owe.

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## GUNNER JOE SEZ ...

For those of you that didn't volunteer your extensive and world renowned expertise and creative skills to fill a vacant seat in the AOM leadership ... **DO NOT WORRY!!!** Your friends and shipmates did it for you. Now, isn't that just special?

I knew you would be pleased.

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## USS YORKTOWN (CG-48)

By John Loonam



The USS Yorktown (CG-48) steamed through the open York River Bridge and passed the Yorktown Beach on 12 August on her way to her homeport in Pascagoula, MS and decommissioning. It seems the 20 year old ship is not cost effective to upgrade.



# MAIL BAG

Curtis,

Please find enclosed a Check in the amount of \$45.00 of which \$15.00 is to be applied to my annual membership dues and the remaining \$30.00 to be applied where it can best be used by the association.

Unfortunately, we won't be able to make the reunion this year as I have 4 appointments with the VA that conflict with the reunion dates.

Please give old shipmates our best regards.

Thanks!!

Cecil H. Martin (0016)



7-16-04

Dear friends,  
Enclosed is check for dues renewal. We are doing well and keep busy. Lee and Polly Engberg stopped overnight on their way home from vacationing in the East Coast. It was a pleasant surprise. Andy Anderson passed away September 4, 2003. His daughter informed us. Burial of ashes was at Newport Beach last month. Willy Brooks' widow, Marie, has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. Her daughter is with her at the present time. June 30<sup>th</sup>, we celebrated our 60<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary. We enjoyed dinner with our children and friends. Thank you for the Dashpot. We really enjoy reading it.

Fondly,  
Bob and Francis Stickney

**WINTER DASHPOT  
ARTICLES ARE DUE ON  
1 DECEMBER 2004**

Dear Mr. Fortner,

I have read and followed with interest the commissioning of Ensign Stephanie Cowart in the past few issues of The Dashpot. I would like to add some historical information for your Mineman history or the next issue.

I was a Reserve Mineman from El Paso Unit 1990 until late 2000. During that time our mobilization site was Guam, where I first met PO Stephanie Cowart. She was one of the active duty Mineman who was always friendly to her reserve counterparts and always showed us the best spots to snorkel or dive, depending on the time of year we were in Guam.

It is always exciting to see an enlisted person become a Mustang, especially when she is the first female MN1 to be commissioned in over a decade.

However, I would like to correct the record as her being the first MN in over a decade to achieve this distinction. I put in my package for LDO in 1999, while at the same time being board eligible for Chief. When I was selected for LDO, my name was withdrawn from the Chief's board, since you cannot have the best of both worlds. My commissioning date was 1 Feb 2001, and my designator was 6365 (Aviation Ordnance). I am presently assigned to an AIMD Unit with a MOB site at Sigonella, Sicily.

I certainly have fond memories of both the mine force and Guam, and I would not be where I am today in the Navy if it were not for the active duty Minemen who taught me so much. In addition, my endeavors were recognized with the distinction of being the 1997 Mineman of the Year.

This information is not to take away from Stephanie's accomplishment, only to challenge other Active Duty and Reserve Minemen that they too can achieve what they set their sights upon, and no obstacle is too hard to overcome.

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Editor's Note: Thank you for setting the record straight. Please forgive us for the oversight. Being a Mustang myself, I know how important the distinction is.

Regards,  
Bill



# BINNACLE LIST

**Bill and Dee Fortner**

After having ridden our scooters over 1,200 miles all over the western states during our recent trip, I am sorry to inform you that Miz Dee and I had a serious accident shortly after our return on a deserted county road about 5 miles from home.

Unable to read a roadside sign, she signaled, pulled over into my lane, and slowed. I was looking at something on the other side of the road and didn't see her turn signal or brake light. When I looked forward again, the rear of her scooter was so big it blotted out the sky. This severely limited my options. After a brief, but impressive, scream I crashed into her at about warp 3 then went airborne doing a handstand into a flying triple gainer with two half twists before coming to rest with a thunderous splat in the full layout position on the centerline. The EMS people gave me a 9.8 for style. The angle of impact laid her scooter down and sat her safely on top where she merrily pirouetted for several revolutions along the grassy shoulder to wild applause. She was a bit shaken and sore for several days; I received a broken collarbone, minor road rash, three bruised ribs, and some really goooooood pain medicine; Loracet Plus 7.5 ... ask for it by name.

Considering we rode so many miles out west with no problems, it is almost certainly true that most accidents do happen within 25 miles of home. In the future, we will be trailering our scooters at least 30 miles from home to ride them just to be on the safe side.

Bill Fortner



Guam

# DEAD RED ROOSTER REPORT



**By Toby Horn**

I haven't heard from more than four members about golf reservations. No! – I'm not going to "assume" that a particular person wants to play. As it stands now, I will make a foursome reservation at the Muni Golf Course for those of you who have signed up – for Saturday morning at 0800. With the limited number of players, I can only make reservations a week ahead of time, so we're at the mercy of any planned event that Muni might get scheduled. I'll try to post final status on tee-time(s), etc., in the Oak Room at the Early Bird.

Since we won't have a tournament event, I guess the Dead Red Rooster award will just carry over. Whoever has it (I haven't heard for sure), please pack it up and send it to the AOM Secretary. Your particular reign is over. See ya at the reunion.

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## EDITOR'S CORNER



We had a marvelous trip around the West. I can appreciate now what I was fighting for all those years on active duty. There was so much beauty in South Dakota, Wyoming, Idaho, Colorado, and especially Utah of all places. The rock formations and colors are stunning and the Rockies and the Grand Tetons are spectacular. I cannot thank enough the Dashpot contributors who went out of their way to get their material in early so the trip was possible for us.

I want to commend the sites for the excellent articles they send and thank them all. They are our link with the future and we must never forget that.

Ensign Cowart finished "Knife and Fork" as well as several Aegis schools and is now in the Orient. She blew in on a typhoon and landed with two earthquakes. I just know the Japanese were thrilled at her arrival and are taking cover.



## TAPS

**Patterson, Thomas R., MNC, USN**

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

**Bess, James O., CDR, USN (Ret.)**

I realize that some of you might not know CDR James O. Bess or care less about his passing, but Bess was a strong supporter for the Mine Force. I first met him in 1962 when he was the X.O. at NAD Hawthorne and I was under orders from the Naval Mine Engineering Facility to observe the preparation of mines for the Pacific. The picture below was taken while he was at Hawthorne.

My next meeting with Bess was when I reported for duty at NAVMAG Subic and he was the commanding officer. His command had just failed the CINCPACFLT Mine Readiness Inspection in August 1969, and when I reported aboard he didn't have any kind words to say about the mine force in general. It didn't take long before his opinion changed to the better. He told me one day that he had always admired the sailors of his Mine and Torpedo Division, but what he didn't like and what made him bitter of the mine force was how his command and he personally was treated during the inspection. He never said that the inspection wasn't necessary nor that good would not come from the inspection. I'm not going into detail what I was told, as the main problem involved one person on the inspection team.

Anyway, when Bess retired from NAVMAG Subic he told me how proud he was of his Minemen and that he had now a much better understanding of our program.

Under TAPS of the June 2004, MOAA magazine, CDR Bess was listed.

Take care, Don Decrona



## MINEMEN IN THE SPOTLIGHT

### FAIR WINDS AND FOLLOWING SEAS



**LCDR Coral Lee Mac Intosh, USN**

After 28 years of faithful and most honorable service, Lieutenant Commander Coral Lee Mac Intosh, the world's first female Mineman Limited Duty Officer, retired in a ceremony at the Naval Air Station, Brunswick, ME Chapel on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2004 at 1000. A biography of her career is as follows:

LCDR Coral Lee Mac Intosh was born in Schenectady, New York. In August 1976, she enlisted in the Navy and was ordered to RTC, Orlando, Florida to attend Recruit Training.

In March 1977, LCDR Mac Intosh Graduated from Mineman "A" School and reported to her first duty station, Commander, Mobile Mine Assembly Group, Charleston, South Carolina, where she was assigned tours at Mobile Mine Assembly Group, Detachment FIVE, Sigonella,

Sicily, Mobile Mine Assembly Group, Detachment SIX, Souda Bay, Crete and Mobile Mine Assembly Group, Detachment FOUR, Glen Douglas, Scotland.

March 1980, she was transferred to Navy Recruiting District, Albany, New York for a tour as a Navy Recruiter. In June 1983, she was transferred to Fleet and Mine Warfare Training Center where she attended the Test Set Repair and Maintenance Course. Upon graduation, in October 1983, she received orders to Commander, Mobile Mine Assembly Group, Charleston, South Carolina as a first class petty officer and performed staff duties as the Assistant Operations Officer for Logistics, the Assistant Operations Officer for Quality Assurance and Facilities and the Assistant Operations Officer for Maintenance. Additionally, while assigned to Commander, Mobile Mine Assembly Group, she deployed to Mobile Mine Assembly Group, Detachment SIX, Souda Bay, Crete and returned to serve as Assistant to the Operations Officer. In September 1985, while attached to the Fleet and Mine Warfare Training center, she was advanced to Chief Mineman, the first female in the Navy to do so, and performed duties as an instructor, course supervisor, and administrative chief.

On 1 February 1989, LCDR Mac Intosh was commissioned under the Limited Duty Officer Program and became the first female LDO in the surface ordnance field. She then assumed duties as the Repair-5 Division Officer onboard USS JASON (AR 8). In June 1990, she was transferred to Shore Intermediate Maintenance Activity, San Francisco, California and served as Repair-Treasure Island and Repair-1 Division Officer. April 1993 she was assigned to Mobile Mine Assembly Group, Unit ONE as Prospective Commanding Officer, and became the Mine Community's first female Commanding Officer of a Mobile Mine Assembly Group Unit in June 1993.

In July of 1996, following a successful Commanding Officer tour at MOMAG Unit One, she transferred to Commander, Mine Warfare Inspection Group where she served as the first female Mine Preparation Inspector and Department Head until the command disestablished, May 30, 1997. She immediately transferred to the Mine Warfare Training Center at Ingleside, TX and served as the Director for Mineman "A" and Ordnance "C" schools and Mining Instructor for Officer curricula. In December of 1999 she transferred to Naval Magazine Pearl Harbor, HI where she served as the MK 46 Torpedo IMA Division Officer and was promoted to the Ord-

nance Operations Officer in July of 2001. In January of 2003 she transferred to her current billet at NAS Brunswick, ME, Assistant Deputy Program Director for NAVOSH for Commander, Navy Region Northeast.

LCDR Mac Intosh has been awarded the Navy Commendation Medal with Gold Star in lieu of Fourth Award, Navy Achievement Medal with Gold Star in lieu of Third Award, Meritorious Unit Commendation with two bronze stars, Navy "E" Ribbon, Good Conduct Medal with one bronze star, National Defense Service Medal with one bronze star, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Sea Service Ribbon with two bronze stars and the Navy Recruiting Ribbon.

Lieutenant Commander Mac Intosh is married to Paul Francis Appleton. They have one son, Kyle and reside in Freeport, Maine.



**Imperial Palace 1950**



**Lake Yamanka, Japan 1951**



# LEANING ON THE TAFFRAIL



**USS Aaron Ward (DD-773/DM-34)**

The third ship named **USS Aaron Ward (DD-773/DM-34)** in honor of Rear Admiral Aaron Ward was a *Robert H. Smith*-class destroyer minelayer in the service of the United States Navy.

She was laid down as an Allen M. Sumner-class destroyer (DD-773) on 12 December 1943 at San Pedro, California by the Bethlehem Steel Corporation, launched on 5 May 1944, sponsored by Mrs. G. H. Ratliff, redesignated a destroyer minelayer on 19 July 1944, and commissioned on 28 October 1944 with Comdr. William H. Sanders, Jr. in command.

Between commissioning and the end of January 1945, Aaron Ward completed fitting out and conducted her shakedown cruise off the California coast. On 9 February, she departed San Pedro, bound for Pearl Harbor where she arrived on 15 February. The warship conducted additional training in Hawaiian waters before loading supplies and ammunition and getting underway on 5 March to join the US 5th Fleet at Ulithi. She entered the lagoon of that atoll in the Western Carolines on 16 March but put to sea again on the 19th with Task Force (TF) 52 bound for the Ryukyu Islands.

The Mine Flotilla, of which Aaron Ward was a unit, arrived off Okinawa late on the 22nd. The following day, the destroyer minelayer got her first glimpse of the enemy when some of his planes approached the sweep group but did not attack. More came in later, but the combined gunfire of the group dissuaded them from approaching close enough to harm the American ships. The first actual air raid occurred on the 26th, and USS Adams knocked the intruder out of the sky.

Aaron Ward supported minesweeping operations around Kerama Retto and Okinawa until the time of the first landings. During that period, she accounted for three enemy aircraft. On 1 April, the day of the initial assault on Okinawa, the destroyer minelayer began screening the heavy warships providing gunfire support for the troops ashore. That duty lasted until 4 April when she departed the Ryukyus and headed for the Marianas. She arrived at Saipan on the 10th but shifted to Guam later that day. After several days of minor repairs, Aaron Ward headed back to Okinawa to patrol in the area around Kerama Retto. During that patrol period, she came under frequent air attack. On the 27th, she splashed one enemy plane and, the

next day, accounted for one more and claimed a probable kill in addition. She returned to Kerama Retto to replenish her provisions and fuel. While she was there, a kamikaze scored a hit on USS Pinkney. Aaron Ward moved alongside the stricken evacuation transport to help fight the inferno blazing amidships. While so engaged, she also rescued 12 survivors from Pinkney.

On 30 April, the destroyer minelayer returned to sea to take up position on radar picket station number 10. That night, she helped repulse several air attacks; but, for the most part, weather kept enemy airpower away until the afternoon of 3 May. When the weather began to clear, the probability of air attacks rose. At about dusk, Aaron Ward's radar picked up bogies at 27 miles distance; and her crew went to general quarters. Two of the planes in the formation broke away and began runs on Aaron Ward. The warship opened fire on the first from about 7,000 yards and began scoring hits when he had closed range to 4,000 yards. At that point, he dipped over into his suicide dive but splashed about 100 yards off the destroyer minelayer's starboard quarter. The second of the pair began his approach immediately thereafter. Aaron Ward opened fire on him at about 8,000 yards and, once again, began scoring hits to good effect — so much so that her antiaircraft battery destroyed him while he was still 1,200 yards away.

At that point, a third and more determined intruder appeared and dove in on Aaron Ward's stern. Though repeatedly struck by antiaircraft fire, the plane pressed home the attack with grim determination. Just before crashing into Aaron Ward's superstructure, he released a bomb which smashed through her hull below the waterline and exploded in the after engine room. The bomb explosion flooded the after engine and fire rooms, ruptured fuel tanks, set the leaking oil ablaze, and severed steering control connections to the bridge. The rudder jammed at hard left, and Aaron Ward turned in a tight circle while slowing to about 20 knots. Topside, the plane itself spread fire and destruction through the area around the after deckhouse and deprived mount 53 of all power

and communication. Worse yet, many sailors were killed or injured in the crash.

For about 20 minutes, no attacking plane succeeded in penetrating her air defenses. Damage control parties worked feverishly to put out fires, to repair what damage they could, to jettison ammunition in danger of exploding, and to attend to the wounded. Though steering control was moved aft to the rudder itself, the ship was unable to maneuver properly throughout the remainder of the engagement. Then, at about 1840, the ships on her station came under a particularly ferocious air attack. While USS Little was hit by the five successive crashes that sank her, LSMR-195 took the crash that sent her to the bottom; and LCSL-25 lost her mast to a suicider. Aaron Ward also suffered her share of added woe. Just before 1900, one plane from the group of attackers selected her as a target and began his approach from about 8,000 yards. Fortunately, the destroyer minelayer began scoring hits early and managed to splash the attacker when he was still 2,000 yards away. Another enemy then attempted to crash into her, but he, too, succumbed to her antiaircraft fire.

Her troubles, however, were not over. Soon after the two successes just mentioned, two more Japanese planes came in on her port bow. Though chased by American fighters, one of these succeeded in breaking away and starting a run on Aaron Ward. He came in at a steep dive apparently aiming at the bridge. Heavy fire from the destroyer minelayer, however, forced him to veer toward the after portion of the ship. Passing over the signal bridge, he carried away halyards and antennae assemblies, smashed into the stack and then splashed down close aboard to starboard.

Quickly on the heels of that attack, still another intruder swooped in toward Aaron Ward. Coming in just forward of her port beam, he met a hail of antiaircraft fire but pressed home his attack resolutely and released a bomb just before he crashed into her main deck. The bomb exploded a few feet close aboard her port side, and its fragments showered the ship and blew a large hole through the shell plating near her forward fireroom. As a result, the ship lost all power and

gradually lost headway. At that point, a previously unobserved enemy crashed into the ship's deckhouse bulkhead causing numerous fires and injuring and killing many more crewmen.

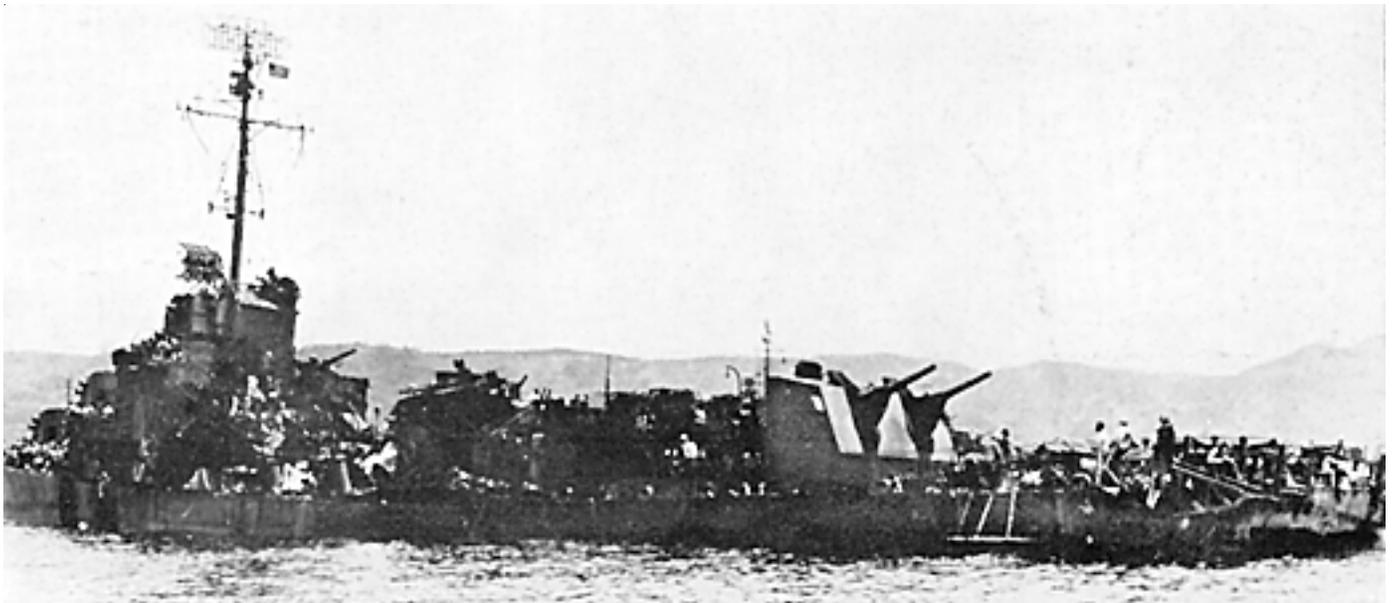
As if that were not enough, Aaron Ward had to endure two more devastating crashes before the action ended. At about 1921, a plane glided in steeply on her port quarter. The loss of power prevented any of her 5-inch mounts from bearing on him, and he crashed into her port side superstructure. Burning gasoline engulfed the deck in flames, 40-millimeter ammunition began exploding, and still more heavy casualties resulted. The warship went dead in the water, her after superstructure deck demolished, and she was still on fire. While damage control crews fought the fires and flooding, Aaron Ward began to settle in the water and took on a decided list to port.

She still had one ordeal, however, to suffer. Just after 1920, a final bomb-laden tormentor made a high-speed, low-level approach and crashed

into the base of her number 2 stack. The explosion blew the plane, the stack, searchlight, and two gun mounts into the air, and they all came to rest strewn across the deck aft of stack number 1. Through the night, her crew fought to save the ship. At 2106, USS Shannon arrived and took Aaron Ward in tow. Early on the morning of 4 May, she arrived at Kerama Retto where she began temporary repairs. She remained there until 11 June when she got underway for the United States. Steaming via Ulithi, Guam, Eniwetok, Pearl Harbor, and the Panama Canal, Aaron Ward arrived in New York in mid-August. On 28 September 1945, she was decommissioned, and her name was struck from the Navy list. In July 1946, she was sold for scrapping.



Aaron Ward earned one battle star and the Presidential Unit Citation for World War II service.



**USS Aaron Ward (DM-34)**

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## NEW MINEMAN CHIEF LIST

8327 BATES JONATHA 0007	7280 BOSTIC DARREL 0005	0621 DRUM DELTON C 0003
8733 HOELL JERRY J 0002	8147 MEER CHRISTOP 0006	5354 PAYNE CHAD QU 0004
	1061 SEDILLO ISAUUR 0001	

The Association of Minemen and the ENTIRE staff of the Dashpot congratulate you and wish you continued success in all that you do.

# WHO'S WHO?

A look at the MOMAG Site CO's and OICs



LT Bart D. Hall  
Commanding Officer of MOMAG Unit  
ONE

LT Bart D. Hall, of Salt Lake City, Utah, enlisted in the Navy in February 1985. Upon completion of FC "A" and AN/SPG-55B "C" Schools, he was assigned to USS MACDONOUGH (DDG 39) home ported in Charleston, SC. At the end of a four year tour, he attended MK 76 TERRIER weapons system school and returned to sea onboard USS RICHMOND K. TURNER (CG 20) as TERRIER weapons systems technician and CF division LPO from July 1991 through September 1993. While onboard TURNER he was promoted to the rank of Chief Firecontrolman and was involved with multiple USN/FGN multinational exercises and the first test firing of the Navy's Lightweight Exo-atmospheric Projectile (LEAP) missile. LT Hall was then assigned to the AEGIS Training and Readiness Center (ATRC) Dahlgren, VA from November 1993 through February 1996 as instructor and course supervisor for FCS/ORTS track II COI. He was commissioned through the Limited Duty Officer program in March 1996 and assigned as System Test Officer onboard USS LABOON (DDG 58) from September 1996 through November 1999. While onboard LABOON he participated in OPERATION DESERT STRIKE, sending 13 Tomahawk missiles into Iraq and two overseas deployments.

After leaving LABOON, LT Hall reported to the Naval Ammunition Logistics, Ammunition Management Office, Atlantic (NALC AMMOLANT) as the Surface Forces Ordnance Logistics Officer and Director, responsible for processing ammunition requirements for all LANTFLT units as well as LANTFLT ordnance readiness matters.

Upon transfer from NALC AMMOLANT, he was assigned to USS DONALD COOK (DDG 75) as Weapons Officer and subsequently Combat Systems Officer. While onboard DONALD COOK, he took part in the opening and follow on Tomahawk missile strikes in support of OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM.

Personal awards and decorations include the Navy Commendation Medal (Six awards), Navy Achievement Medal (Four awards), Military Outstanding Voluntary Service Medal (MOVSM) and various unit, campaign and service awards.





## COMOMAG

By MNCS (SW) Cecil H. Fish  
(Texian Cowboy)

Howdy! Shipmates. Well down here in South Texas (COMOMAG) it's been a bit warm and lacking on the rain. Let's put it this way; the cows are seeing a little more brown grass, probably not as tasty. We have been very fortunate so far this year, not having any Hurricane type weather this season. We all remain ready for anything. We have been going through changing trends and have just had our Change of Command.

Please let me share with you a piece of our new Commander's Command Philosophy about the Navy's most important asset, people:

**"People are the cornerstone of our organization. They are our most valuable resource. We strive to develop our people professionally and personally by enhancing pride and professionalism, adherence to Navy Core Values, improving the work environment, providing job enrichment/personal growth, taking care of families and fostering teamwork."**

This is all so true, without your people you have nothing. Remember, let's keep those service members in our thoughts and prayers that are in the hot spots and away from their families.

## Mobile Mine Assembly Group welcomes our new Commander.



COMOMAG  
CDR John M. Dennett

CDR John M. Dennett relieved CDR Terry W. Auberry as Commander, Mobile Mine Assembly Group (COMOMAG) in a change-of-command ceremony aboard Naval Air Station Corpus Christi on August 16, 2004.

CDR Dennett, a native of Alamogordo, New Mexico, enlisted in the U.S. Navy in August 1975. Following recruit training in San Diego he attended Fire Control Class "A" School at Naval Training Center Great Lakes, IL, followed by the AN/SPG-51D Radar Technician Class "C" School in Mare Island, Calif.

Upon completion of training in May 1977 he was assigned to *USS California* (CGN 36). In January 1981 he cross-decked to *USS Mississippi* (CGN 40) to fill a critical billet gap as the Tartar Systems Technician.

In June 1981 he attended Instructor Basic School at FTC Norfolk. This was followed by an assignment as an Instructor/Course Supervisor for the MK 74 Missile Fire Control System at

Combat Systems Technical Schools Command (CSTSC) Mare Island. At CSTSC he was designated a Master Training Specialist and in September 1983 promoted to Chief Fire Control Technician (Missiles). In August 1984 he returned for duty in *USS California* (CGN 36), home ported at NAS Alameda, Calif.

CDR Dennett was commissioned an Ensign through the Limited Duty Officer program (Surface Ordnance) in September 1986. Following a series of schools he reported in December to the *USS Gridley* (CG 21) in San Diego. During this period he served as Ship's Maintenance Management Officer, IC/NTDS Officer and Fire Control Officer.

In August 1991, he was assigned to the NROTC Unit at the University of San Diego. At the same time he graduated Summa Cum Laude with a Bachelors in Business Administration from National University.

He reported to *USS Valley Forge* (CG 50) in San Diego as the Systems Test Officer in March 1993. While assigned to *Valley Forge* he completed studies with National University and in July 1994 earned a Masters of Science in Logistics Engineering Management.

In March 1995, CDR Dennett was assigned as a Nuclear Weapons Inspector at Field Command, Defense Special Weapons Agency, and Kirtland Air Force Base.

CDR Dennett reported to *USS Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72) in March 1998. Though initially detailed as the Combat Systems Maintenance Officer he was fleeted up in July 1999 and served as the Combat Systems Officer.

CDR Dennett reported to Mine Warfare Training Center in March 2000 where he directed the Mineman Class "A" School and various Class "C" Schools.

In June 2002 CDR Dennett reported to Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Marianas as the Assistant Chief of Staff Ordnance and Ordnance Program Manager. During this tour he provided ordnance logistics support for units in the 5th and 7th Fleets and Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. CDR Dennett's awards include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (three awards), Navy Commendation Medal (two awards), Navy Achievement Medal (two awards), the Good Conduct Medal (three awards) and various other campaign and service awards.

Other events this quarter:

**BZ's Corner:** A BZ goes out to MOMAD Twelve for a successful Explosive Safety Inspection. Congratulation to YN1 (SEL) Emory from MOMAU 10, for his selection to Chief Petty Officer.

**Awards:**

- |                  |                               |
|------------------|-------------------------------|
| CW03 Washington  | - Certificate of Completion   |
| MN1 (SW) Grant   | - Certificate of Completion   |
| IT2 (SW) Ramirez | - 2Q04 SOQ                    |
| IT1 (SW) Dennis  | -Certificate of Appreciation  |
| Kelly Dennis     | - Certificate of Appreciation |
| MN2 Dillabough   | - Letter of Appreciation      |
| OS1 (SW) Davis   | - Letter of Appreciation      |
| MN1 (SW) Cook    | - Letter of Appreciation      |
|                  | -Volunteer Service Medal      |
| SK2 Trammel      | - Letter of Commendation      |
| YN2 Moss         | - Letter of Commendation      |
| MNC (SW) Kent    | - Good Conduct Award          |
| IT2 Reeder       | - Good Conduct Award          |
| MN2 Champion     | - Navy Achievement Medal      |
| IT1 (SW) Dennis  | - Navy Achievement Medal      |

**Departures:**

- MN1(SW) Williams
- CDR Terry W. Auberry

**Arrivals:**

- SK2 Trammel

Well, that concludes another entry from South Texas, I think I'll go watch some cows graze in the brown grass and sing an ole Cowboy tune, Yippe ki a. 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](http://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 keep your horse on the trail, and be safe.



Kadena, Okinawa 1950



## MOMAU ONE SEAL BEACH

By LT Bart D. Hall

**CO's CORNER.** Greetings from Southern California! I continue to be impressed every day with the dedication and professionalism displayed by everyone here at MOMAU One. So far, my tour as Commanding Officer has been as rewarding as it has been challenging. I've finally relocated my family to the city of San Pedro, California in Air Force housing. I'm looking forward to spending some quality time with them exploring the vast wonders of Southern California. This summer has been at great one with plenty of exercise and tasking to help bring sunshine to the shop, not to mention a little bit of antelope hunting for yours truly!

RIMPAC was a breeze for our dedicated sailors. MNC(SW) Bobby Weatherholt, MN1 Vernon Saunders, and MN3 John Golden were MOMAU One's candidates for the mine exercises. During this Multinational exercise, MOMAU One provided training assets for the Australian Dive Team, Explosive Ordnance Disposal, USS AVENGER, and USS DEFENDER to hone their mine neutralization skills.



Congratulations to all MOMAU and Naval Weapon Station personnel who attended the First Line Leadership Development and Primary Leadership Development courses held at the most beautiful sight the Navy has to offer - you guessed it, MOMAU One. Bravo Zulu to

MN1(SW) Jacob Mazurek for saving the Navy twenty three thousand dollars in TAD/TAR by "thinking out of the box" and importing the training to the Los Angeles region rather than sending sailors individually to San Diego. Bravo Zulu!



MWR continues to impress me with their fresh ideas and enthusiasm keeping the crew's morale high. So far I've witness, Hail and Farwell's, picnics, camping trips, car washes and Captain's Cup race with Naval Weapon Station and numerous fundraisers to keep MWR alive. MWR is currently planning for our annual Las Vegas trip, Halloween costume bash, and Christmas party. Keep up the good work.

**HAILS & FAREWELLS.** We have six new sailors reporting onboard within the next few months. MNC(SW) Anthony Bartoli arriving from USS PATRIOT, IT2(SW) Yesenia Rivera arriving from USS BOXER (LHD 4), MN2 Rex Taylor arriving from USS RAVEN, MN3 Brian Danley, FN Adam Blow, and SN Justin Creadick.

Farewell to MN1(SW) Ronald Chabot, he will be retiring 31 October 2004 with a ceremony held at the American Legion Hall on 8 October 2004. Petty Officer will be ending his time in the Navy after 20 years of honorable service. Best wishes to MN1(SW) Ronald Chabot and his family. MN3 Shawn McFall received orders to USS SCOUT and will be transferring spring 2005. In addition, a heartfelt "Fair Winds and Following Seas" and "Welcome Aboard" goes to CDR Terry Auberry who turned over command of COMOMAG to CDR John Dennett on 16 August 04.

**AWARDS & RECOGNITION.** MN1(SW) Ronald Chabot was recognized as Sailor of the Quarter and MN3 Misty Rains as Blue Jacket of the Quarter. Congratulations to both.

**ON THE HORIZON.** MOMAU One is in the midst of a major facility upgrade. Thanks to unfunded grants in administrative funding, our warehouse will be receiving a face-lift to include a brand new tier storage system doubling the storage capacity. New carpeting, drop ceilings, cable satellite system, and furniture upgrades are all upcoming additions designed to add to the commands beautification project and boost morale. On the operational side, no less than five exercises are scheduled to be supported, support taking MOMAU One all the way through the New Year.



## MOMAU FIVE SIGONELLA

By MNCS(SW) Dave Ostrom

***Saluto da Sicilia!*** The month of July had MOMAU FIVE conduct their Change of Command Ceremony. On the 2nd of July, Lieutenant Junior Grade Baron D. Tillinghast in a ceremony held at the NATO Base, Belpasso Mine Depot, Sigonella, Sicily relieved Lieutenant Commander Larry E. Kelley. The guest speaker was Commander Robert Neville.

During his tour at MOMAU 5, Lieutenant Commander Kelley led his command in twelve highly successful Mine Warfare exercises which provided over 600 Exercise and Training (ET) mines and Mine Counter-Measures Training Targets (MCTT) valued at over 20 million dollars. Exercises were held in various NATO, Partners For Peace and Gulf Coalition Countries. In 2003 he provided logistical support to Mine Countermeasure Squadron Three at Naval Support Activity Bahrain in direct support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Lieutenant Commander Kelley initiated a four million dollar infrastructure improvement military construction (MILCON) project. The project will upgrade U.S. and Italian Navy facilities electrical distribution systems and drastically improve the anti-terrorism intrusion detection system for the Base. Lieutenant Junior Grade Tillinghast is a native of Troy, Pennsylvania. He enlisted in the Navy in November 1985. Chief Warrant Officer Tillinghast reported to the Mobile Mine Assembly Unit Five in Sigonella, Sicily in June 2002 as the Executive Officer. He was selected to the grade of Lieutenant Junior Grade in October 2003 under the Limited Duty Officer Program.

"War is an ugly thing, but not the ugliest of things. The decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feeling which thinks that nothing is worth war is much worse. The person who has nothing for which he is willing to fight, nothing which is more important than his own personal safety, is a miserable creature and has no chance of being free unless made and kept so by the exertions of better men than himself."

John Stewart Mill



**Commandante Gaetano Russotto accepts a MOMAU FIVE command plaque from LCDR Larry Kelley**



**LCDR Kelley and LTJG Tillinghast**

MOMAU FIVE was proud to have Colonel Barry Cronin, CTF 68 onboard in July for a Site Visit. COL Cronin received a tour of the MOMAU FIVE compound and facilities, talked with the crewmembers, and received a presentation on the mission of UNIT FIVE. We then welcomed Mr. Jim McCowan and Mr. Bruce Riggs from COMINWARCOM onboard for a Site Visit. They were able to see how UNIT FIVE com-

pletes their mission, tour the facilities, and work directly with our Supply Department personnel on funding issues. August had a team of personnel from NCC Headquarters Lester, Pennsylvania onboard MOMAU FIVE to conduct our 2-year Crane Audit. Immediately following the Audit, Fleet Technical Support Center Atlantic (FTSCLANT) was onboard and completed a Calibration Capability Audit (CCA). MN1(SW) Ernesto Trius did a superb job at all the preparations that went into having his TSM Lab inspection ready for the audit. We have completed and have ready for airlift 30 ET/MCMTT training assets ready for MIW exercise DESTINED GLORY 04. We will be sending a three person Mine Assembly Team in support of this exercise, and they will perform all operations on an Italian GORGONA class Minelayer. We are looking forward to having two Naval Reserve Mineman from Houston, Texas onboard for their two-week annual training (AT) in September.



**NRMOMAU 3 & 4 personnel during JUNE 04 Annual Training**

**Congratulations!** I am very happy to announce that MN1(SW) Matt and Stacy Greer are the proud parents of the birth of their baby boy Kaiden Greer! And MN3 Lou and Shawna Marroletti are the proud parents of the birth of their son Eric Marroletti! Mom's, Dad's and boys are all doing well.

**BRAVO ZULU's!** our 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2004 Sailors of the Quarter are MN1 John Carlos Dominguez (SOQ) and MN3 Craig Bruner (JSOQ).

**WELCOME ABOARD!** to MNSA Martin Ballman from MWTC Ingleside, MN3 Todd Browne from USS FALCON (MHC 59) and MN2(SW) Joshua Chronister from USS SHRIKE (MHC 62).

**TRANSFERS:** MN3 Brandon Vollm to USS CHIEF (MCM 14) and MN3 David Reinertsen to MOMAU FIFTEEN.

Last issue I promised some pictures of the UNIT FIVE crew during some of our recent MIW exercise operations:



**MN2 Gary Dove and MN2(SW) Rich Weldon USNS APACHE - SPANISH MINEX 04**



**MN2(SW) Mark Floor, MNC(SW) Steve Pierce and MN1(SW) Irving Flores USNS APACHE - DAMSEL FAIR 04**



**Working with MDSU Det BRAVO – DAMSEL FAIR 04"**

***In closing:*** The summer months are coming to a close, so all our dependent children are eager to kick off the up-coming school year. We continue to keep on track and meet all deadlines to our Quarterly Workload/LCM Schedule. Our Mine Readiness Training Assessments with our Naval Reserves has allowed us to improve our Mine Assembly lines, personnel station assignments, SOP's and QA procedures. Refurbishment of our recovered training mines has allowed our new personnel to get plenty of hands on OJT with our portable sandblasters and BINKS spray paint guns! We get them ready for our next exercise commitment. Until next issue, stay safe, and best wishes for continued success.



**Rail launch of a MK6 onboard KNM TYR - BLUE GAME 04**



## **MOMAU EIGHT GUAM**

**By MNCS(SW) Paul King**

HAFADA to all. MOMAU 8 completed a successful MRCI. MNC(SW) Ward (MPO) and the hard working folks in Production Department, along with the three MOMAU Reserve Units 9, 10, and 11, received an overall score of 94% in weapon reliability. Logistic Department, led by MNC(SW) Crocker, received a 100% on Validity during the MRCI.



**MOMAU 8 Fully Augmented with MOMAU Reserve Units 9, 10, and 11. SK1(SW) Brown holding morning Quarters.**



**MOMAU 8 Crew along with the Air Force B52 Bomber loading team**



**Pictured left to right are MN2 Valles (NR MOMAU 10), MN2 Delbosque (NR MOMAU 11), and MN3 Padilla (NR MOMAU 10). MN3 Padilla and his team gave MOMAU 8's EIGHT BALL a fresh coat of paint and added some flames for MRCI.**

Administrative Department, led by YN1(AW) Wright, has done an outstanding job processing all of the necessary paperwork to get over 10 MOMAU 8 sailors transferred, re-enlisted, and even a Rate Change. All of this on top of a successful ADMAT inspection.

MOMAU 8 had the opportunity to train with the Air Force recently. We completed a "Load Exercise" on a B52 Bomber at Andersen AF base. Several MK56 and MK 65 mines were loaded internal and external. We also built close to 100 Inert Quick Strike mines and delivered them to the Air Force in support of "Marianas Trench Mine Ex 04



**MNC(SW) Lavake overlooking MNC(SW) Crocker as he gives the Air Force some hands on training on a MK 65 prior to it being loaded.**



**MOMAU 8 Crew members getting an up-close view of the B52 Bomb Bay were the MK 56 Mines will be loaded.**



**MOMAU 8 Crew watching as the Air Force loads MK 65 Mines aboard a B52 Bomber**



**MOMAU 8 Commanding Officer LCDR Kurz displaying four of his MK 65 Mines loaded aboard a B52 Bomber**

**Departures:**

LCDR Kurz - USS Harry S Truman (CVN 75)  
 MN1 Kazmaier - USS Black Hawk (MHC 58)  
 MN1(SW) Brown - MWTC, Ingleside  
 MN3 Lipscomb - USS Patriot (MCM 7) Sasebo  
 MN3 Jansen - USS Patriot (MCM 7) Sasebo  
 MN3 Coppedge - USS Patriot (MCM 7) Sasebo  
 MN3 Crum - USS Heron (MHC 52) Ingleside  
 MN3 Morales - USS Falcon (MHC 59) Ingleside  
 MA2 Oppermann - To Region SO West Security Det. San Diego, CA

**Arrivals:**

LCDR Washington - LANTORCOM DET SEWELLS POINT, VA  
 MNC(SW) Butler - USS Raven (MHC 61), Bahrain  
 YNSN Coates - NTTC Meridian, MS

Congratulations to these MOMAU 8 sailors for receiving the following awards:

**SSOQ** - SK1(SW) Brown (1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2004)  
 MN1 Koski (2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2004)

**JSOQ** - MN2 Keefer (1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2004)  
 MN3 Darby (2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2004)

**BJSOQ** - MNSN Gaines (1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2004)  
 MNSN Whaley (2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2004)

**Good Conduct:** MNC(SW) Crocker, MN1 Koski, MN3 Ayres, MNSN Gonzalescarmona

**Letter of Commendation (LOC):** SK1(SW) Brown, MN1(SW) Van Matre, MN1(SW) Keefer, MN3 Ayres, MNSN Whaley, MNSN Higgins, MNSN Gains, MNSN Gonzalezcarmona

**Humanitarian Service Medal:** MN1 Perez, MN1 Kazmaier

**Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal:** MN1 Koski, MN3 Darby, MN3 Ayers, MNSN Gaines

Congratulations to MN1(SW) Keefer and MN1(SW) Vanmatre on their promotion to MN1.



**CWO3 Forsythe (XO) Frocking MN1(SW) Keefer and MN1(SW) Vanmatre**

Congratulations to MN3 Jansen on his re-enlistment.



**MN3 Jansen being re-enlisted by the MPO, MNC(SW) Ward.**

Congratulations to MA2 Oppermann on his Rate Conversion from MN2 and his re-enlistment



## MOMAU TEN KADENA

By MNCS(SW) Tom Robertson

**KONNICHIIWA** from beautiful Okinawa, Japan! This year is moving right on by. As I write this installment we are getting ready for another busy quarter with our exercise conferences beginning and a change of command later in the year. We completed our Explosives Safety Inspection in late June with only one finding. The crew performed excellent in the weeks and months leading up to the ESI. Our supply and ROLMS folks did an outstanding job, receiving a 100% on their inventory items inspected by Mr. Brad Fish for the ESSOPAC team. We followed up with our ADMAT in July hosting the COMOMAG team.

**ARRIVALS:** Welcome aboard to MN1(SW) Christopher Bender, his wife Becky, and sons James and Jarred reporting from the USS Sentry and MNSN Eddie Gutierrez coming

straight to us from "A" school at MWTC Ingleside, Texas.

**DEPARTURES:** We will be saying good-bye to a large number of personnel in the coming months: MN1(SW) Steven McMillian departed in July for the USS PIONEER (MCM-9). MN2 Rebecca Diehl will be leaving in October to report to the Golden Warriors of VFA 87. MN1(SW) Antawan Hinton will be headed for the PIONEER in November.

A lot of work has been going on around our facilities the entire summer. With the Air Force summer hire program we were able to have 12 teenagers working with us doing beautification projects around the compound.

A big hearty congratulations goes to YN1(SW/AW) Jimmy Emory for his recent selection to Chief Petty Officer, he will be happy when September 16<sup>th</sup> finally arrives. SK1(SW) Napoleon Spencer and MN3 John Rodriguez both get a well done for being selected as the junior and senior Sailors of the Quarter for MOMAU Ten.



## MOMAU ELEVEN GOOSE CREEK

By MNCS(SW) Michael A. Morus

Summer has almost passed for MOMAU Eleven and the weather has not cooperated one bit. Lots of rain and rainy days, but all is well at the Shop. We started our summer with a huge exercise that had members from Unit Eleven, augmented with a couple of experts from MOMAU Fifteen, split up into three teams, planting over 180 mines in North Carolina and Florida simultaneously. This daunting task lasted over 30 days and proved once again that MOMAU Eleven is up to any task.

Work continued into the summer with a joint build with utilizing MOMAU Eleven personnel and personnel from WQED Yorktown. 20 each MK 65 Quickstrike Mines were built to support

the In Water Reliability and Evaluation Program (IRE). Included in this was a chance for MOMAU Eleven to flex our Mine Assembly Team (MAT) capabilities by deploying a MAT to Barksdale Air Force Base to complete a joint build with the WQED Crew and members of the Air Force, which produced 20 each MK 63 Quickstrikes to round out the plant. We'd like to thank Mr. Jerry Ellis, Mr. Bill Treadwell, Mr. Ralph Payne, and Mr. Gerry Hill for the great experience we had with this project.

On a personal note, we'd like to congratulate MN2(SW) Paul Bufano and his wife Angela on the birth of their son Anthony.

Once again the time has come to bid Hail and Farewell to our new Shipmates and those that have departed.

**Departures**

IT2 Quillen  
YN3 Lozado  
MNC (SW) Boden  
Oct)

**To**

USS Stout  
USS Civilian  
Fleet Reserve (28

**Arrivals**

LCDR Patton  
MN2 Lewis  
MN2 Brown  
MN2 Terry  
MN2 Knott  
FC2 Page  
MN3 James  
MNSN Tilley  
MNSN Osbourne

**From**

ATG SanDiego  
USS Pelican  
USS Chief  
MOMAU Eight  
USS Heron  
USS Enterprise  
USS Sentry  
Minemen "A" School  
Minemen "A" School

**Kudos**

MN1 Watkins  
MN2 Gipson  
MN2 Percy  
MN2 Webb  
MN3 Rishovd  
MNSN Musante

Senior Sailor of the Qtr.  
Navy Achievement Medal  
Navy Achievement Medal  
Navy Achievement Medal  
Letter of Appreciation  
Letter of Appreciation



Okinawa 1950



**MOMAU FIFTEEN  
INGLESIDE**

**By LCDR Julian C Wyatt**

From the Desk of the Commanding Officer:

Good Morning Family Members, Friends, Col-leagues, and other Distinguished MVP's,

MOMAU 15 is gearing up for the Fall Season with a wide assortment of scheduled Fleet Exercises; MCM and MHC INSURV Events; Refurbishment of Display Shapes in support of the Royal Navy and Minister of Defense; and of course miscellaneous support for NSWC Coastal Systems in Panama.

This next quarter will be a busy one and as usual, our teams response is unilaterally, *"Prepared for the Challenge."*

Several of our Superstars received personal awards and recognition for jobs well done, and this includes the retirement ceremony for our Operations Officer, MN1 (SS) Gregory Eckelbecker. **CONGRATULATIONS** to all the awardees.



- MN3(AW) Sheree Stevens receives recognition as second quarter 2004 Junior Sailor of the Quarter.



**MN2(SW) Toby Mozek receives recognition as second quarter 2004 Senior Sailor of the Quarter.**



**Rendering of honors during MN1 Greg Eckelbecker's retirement ceremony.**



**MN1 Greg Eckelbecker makes his final remarks during his retirement ceremony as LT Wyatt and guest speaker MN1CM(SW) Williams look on.**

- NAM - MN1 (SS) Gregory L. Eckelbecker
- NAM - MN1 (SW) Terry K. Ward
- SOQ LOC - MN2(SW) Toby W. Mozek
- JSOQ LOC - MN3(AW) Sheree L. Stevens
- LOA - MN2(SW) Jeffery D. Mcintosh
- LOA - MNSN Benjamin W. Wells
- LOA - MNSN Cassandra J. Ward
- LOA - MNSN Bradley J. Arms
- LOA - MNSN Robert C. Apple
- LOA - SK2(SW) Amanda J. Waldrep
- LOA - MN3 Trisha D. Mason
- LOA - MN2(SW) Matthew V. Piccione
- LOA - MN1(SW) Terry K. Ward
- LOA - MN1(SW) Robert C. Mounsey
- LOA - MN1(SW) James H. Cooks
- LOA - SK1(SW/AW) Jerilynn S. Pruske
- LOA - MN1(SW) Scott L. Kopelwitz
- GCM - MN3 Richard W. Schmidt

**Welcome Aboard to the following personnel:**

- MN1(SW) William Andrzejewski; Operations Officer
- MN3 David Reinertsen; Production Department
- IT2 Joey Burgin; ADP Department

**Farewell and Following Seas to the following personnel:**

- MN1(SS) Gregory Eckelbecker
- MN3 Justin Whitmore
- IT1(FMF) Lewis Summer

How many of you recognized our retiring AOM president G. Paul Santa Maria in the photos from Guam, Japan, and Okinawa?

Paul, the AOM members thank you for your most outstanding and truly dedicated service.



# MWTC HOLDS CHANGE OF COMMAND

Command of the Mine Warfare Training Center will pass from Cmdr. Ricks Polk to Cmdr. Curt Steigers, on Friday, Aug. 27, at 10 a.m., in ceremony at Naval Station Ingleside.



**CDR Polk**

Cmdr. Polk's next assignment is as the commanding officer of USS Ingraham (FFG 61).

Cmdr. Steigers' most recent assignment was as commanding officer, Military Sealift Command, Korea.

His sea duty assignments include division officer tours as Combat Information Center Officer and then Anti-Submarine Warfare Officer on board USS David R. Ray (DD 971) homeported in San Diego, Calif., and as Readiness and Tactics Officer on the staff of Commander, Destroyer Squadron Seven, also homeported in San Diego.



**CDR Steigers**

Following Department Head School, he served as Operations Officer and Navigator on board USS Willamette (AO 180) homeported in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. He subsequently served as Executive Officer and Navigator on USS Warrior (MCM 10) and then USS Champion (MCM 4), both homeported in Ingleside, Texas. Cmdr. Steigers' last sea duty billet was as Commanding Officer of MCM Rotational Crew Hotel, commanding USS Chief (MCM 14) homeported in Ingleside and USS Ardent (MCM 12) forward deployed to the Arabian Gulf.

Cmdr. Steigers is a 1985 honor graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, in Annapolis, Md., who then completed Surface Warfare Officers Basic School in Coronado, Calif. He also holds a masters of science degree in operations research from the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, Calif., and a masters of arts with distinction in national security and strategic studies from the Naval War College, Newport, R.I.

Cmdr. Steigers' personal awards include two Meritorious Service Medals, three Navy Commendation Medals, and two Navy Achievement Medals.



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