

# The DASHPOT

Issue 32

Newsletter of the Association of Minemen

Winter 2000



## From The President Joe Balderrama

Hi once again Shipmates, with the holidays upon us **Clare** and I would like to wish each and everyone a joyous holiday season and a prosperous New Year. May all your dreams come true.

As many of you know the Publisher of this fine Newsletter for the last 8 years has chosen not to continue in this capacity after the Summer 2001 issue. **John Loonam** has dedicated countless time and tireless effort in providing us with the best Newsletter of its type anywhere. During his tenure the production has been operated like a well-oiled machine. I have been remiss in that I have failed to provide sufficient and timely recognition for his efforts. As many others perform unselfishly without the recognition due them, they are not intentionally ignored it is purely oversight. I apologize if anyone's feelings have been hurt. I'll try and do better in the future.

The Editorship of the Newsletter will be performed after **John** "retires" by **Ron Swart**, I'm certain that he will execute these duties with the same dedication as has **John Loonam**.

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## Mineman of the year presentation

By CDR Ron Swart

Prior to my address to the graduating Mineman class 00080, LCDR Jacobs, Commanding Officer USS Defender was asked to present the Association of Mineman Plaque honoring his selection as Mineman of the Year to MNC (SW) **Allen E. Alt Jr.** It was a perfect opening to invite the newly graduated Minemen to the Association of Minemen and the U S Navy's finest rating.

The theme for this presentation and the graduation was initiated by Captain **Charles Belcher**, Commanding Officer of the Mine Warfare Training Center. Take advantage of your time in the Navy and most especially of the opportunities you have as a Mineman ... you can achieve your dreams and goals if you make the effort.

Three honor graduates were recognized: MN1 (SW) **Henry A. Thedford**, Perryville AR, reporting to COMCMRON One, Ingleside, TX; MNSN **Christine M. Beal**, Franklin ME, reporting to MOMAU One Seal Beach, Ca and MNSR **Jennifer S. Chatwin**, Caliente, NV, reporting to MOMAU Eleven, Charleston, SC.

All received complementary one year memberships to the AOM.

Well done, Minemen!!! It was a morning well spent.

### Lyal Stryker adds

Ron - That was great for you to award the Active Duty MOY award at the MN A Graduating class. Would be a great press release for Navy Times !!! I know this is a little late but I wish to provide a copy of our History Book to each MOY. I assume you still have some on hand

## 27th Annual Reunion Reno

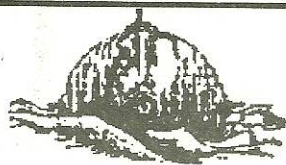
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but if not let me know and we will get them to you. I noted the Reserve MOY is from the Charleston area and I would like to attend the presentation of his MOY award if possible. I am leaving town to-morrow morning and will be gone about two weeks. I will send a check to **Curtis** for the two books when I return. Looks like we are off to a good start advertising the AOM!!!

Let's keep up the momentum!!!!



Mine Warfare Training Center photo (10/06/00) presentation of the year 2000 Mineman of the Year plaque to MNC (SW) Alt. L-R CDR **Ron Swart**, COMOMAG, MNC Alt and LCDR **Jacobs**, CO, USS Defender



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

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

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thank you **John!**

Another thing that has been brought to my attention recently is the lack of reports by the curators of the respective Museums, I have asked for this info and it may be found elsewhere in this issue.

The response to our request that your loans for the History Book, be considered as gifts, was overwhelming. It just proves once again that Minemen are in fact still a family. You have all made me proud to be a member of the Association of Minemen.

Now I need to set the record straight on the subject of voting membership. It seems that I must have attended a meeting on another planet a couple of years ago, but then everyone knows that my memory isn't what it used to be, so I'll just report it the way that it seems that the membership wants it. It was proposed that the Immediate Past President and the Secretary/Treasurer be allowed to vote with the Board of Directors. After polling the BOD and consulting with the Parliamentarian, it was determined

to be inappropriate and will not be pursued further.

## Secretary/Treasurer

**Curtis Christian**



**H**ello from the Secretary's desk.

We have sent the scholarship awards out to the recipients. I know that **Paul** will tell you more about that in this issue.

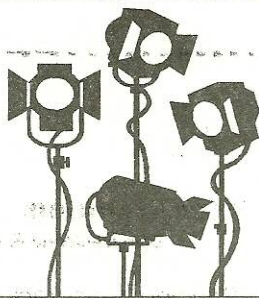
It was passed at the meeting in Charleston to repay half of all loans that were outstanding. This has been completed. If I missed anyone please let me know. On the loans that were \$100.00 we paid off the entire loan. Again please let me know if you have any questions about this.

As most of you know our web page has taken over 31K hits now. **Fred** and **Hal** are still doing a wonderful job.

The last mailing was the first under our new tax-free status. We got a lot of returns that could not be delivered. I am sending **John Loonam** a list of lost folks. We had some returns that were paid up members with no forwarding address. Hope to find them and get the next Dashpot to the correct address.

**REMEMBER DUES ARE NOW \$15.00 PER YEAR.**

Our primary sea mines acquisition manager office, PMS-407, has been merged into a new office, PMS-490, with **CAPT Briggs** remaining as the Program Manager. While not mentioned in this letter, I have seen other material that includes sea mines under an Assistant Program Manager for Energetics, headed by **Jim Grembi**. That APM would be responsible for sea mines and all very shallow water and surf zone MCM and obstacle breaching. PEOMUW Notice 5400 18 Sep 00



# Minemen in the Spotlight: MN1 (SW/AW) David L Butler USN

**P**etty Officer **Butler** was born September 16, 1966 in Lapeer Michigan. He graduated from Lapeer East High School in 1985. He enlisted in the Navy on June 17, 1985. After completion of recruit training at RTC Great Lakes, he reported to USS GERMANTOWN (LSD-42) Assigned to Deck Department, second division cranes. Advanced to Boatswain Mate Third Class August 16, 1987. Honorable discharged from the navy April 5, 1988. He returned to the Navy December 7, 1988 and was advanced to Petty Officer Second Class. He then reported to USS FARRAGUT (DDG-37) in Norfolk, VA. Assigned as 1<sup>st</sup> div LPO. Receiving his Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist qualifications on June 24, 1989. Next, he reported aboard USS SCOTT (DDG-995) where he was assigned as 1<sup>st</sup> Div LPO. Then he transferred to the USS YELLOWSTONE (AD-41) and was assigned to Deck Department, 2<sup>nd</sup> Div LPO and Crane Officer. During this tour he was advanced to Petty Officer First Class. After completing a short tour he was transferred to SIMA Norfolk, assigned to R-5 Department, Weight test and Heavy Cranes Division as the LPO and Command Crane Officer normally held by a Navy Lieutenant. After completing a successful shore tour he transferred to NAS Sigonella, IT.

Assigned to MWR Department as the Commands Fleet Recreation Coordinator. Received his Enlisted Aviation Warfare Specialist qualification After completing his overseas tour and 14 years of outstanding service as a Boatswain Mate, he converted to the Mineman rate. Reporting to MINEWARTRACEN Ingleside, TX. After completion of Mineman "A" School, he reported to Commanding Officer, Mobile Mine Assembly Group, Corpus Christi, TX. Assigned to the Operations Department as Service Mine Logistics and Commands Leading Petty Officer. Petty Officer **Butler** manages Mine Warfare Underwater Test Set Equipment Program and Field Calibration Activities Program. Tracks all service mine assets. Researches and coordinates logistic support for all MOMAG demilitarization of the navy's underwater mines MK 56, MK 60 and MK 65.

Petty Officer **Butler** has been awarded two Navy and Marine Corp Achievement Medals, three Navy Good Conduct Medals, Armed Forces Service Medal, three Oversea Service ribbons, National Defense Medal, five Sea Service Ribbons, Joint Meritorious Unit Award, South West Asia Service Medal, and two Battle "E" Awards. He received the following NEC; Weight test, Rigger & Industrial Crane Journeyman NEC 0110,

Underwater Mines test set Maintenance NEC 1205, Versatile Exercise Mine Operator NEC 1210 and maintenance NEC 1211.

Petty Officer **Butler** was married on November 20, 1992 to **Gretchen M. Woodbury**. He has two children, **Ashley M. Butler** Born on November 3, 1993 and **Zachary D. Butler** born on October 30, 1994.

Petty Officer **Butler** has supported his community over the past two years he has been the Asst. Coach for 2 youth soccer teams and is currently a Deputy Constable of Precinct two in Nueces County with over 420 hours of community law enforcement this year. He is enrolled in Del Mar College where he is working to complete his law enforcement degree.

## Advancement Selectees

- MN1** Blighton, Larry; Caver, Shane; Dum, Delton; Hall, Grville; Hatlevig, Matthe; Hoell, Jerry; Koedyker,, Roger; Olson, Robert; Pollitt, Dale; Santel, Richard; Smith, Eugene; Themins, Steven; Williamson, Robe
- MN2** Abreu, Robert; Alard, Rrobert; Akema, Rudolph; Bee, Shawn; Campion, William; Coleman, Anthony; Cook, Tobie; Garza, Jack; Greer, Matthew; Gunn, Aaron; Hohn, Jerry; James, Daniel; Kopelwitz, Scott; Kormylo, James; Mahoney, Lynda; Martinez, Armand; Martinez, Ramses; McIntosh, Jeffer; McQueen, Stephen; Pate, Jeffrey; Saunders, Vernon; Silman, Sean; Starnes, Byron; Tyo, Benjamin;

(Continued on page 6)



## Mid-Year Financial Report as required by CCBL Ballance Sheet November 2000

Title	Debit	Credit
Cash	6549.21	0.00
QM Supply	1523.60	0.00
History Book Inventory	8816.00	0.00
Admin Supply Inv	55.96	0.00
Unapp Cash	4707.25	0.00
Scholarships	0.00	1784.20
History Book Sales	0.00	460.00
Member dues 01	0.00	2601.00
dues 02	0.00	945.00
dues 03	0.00	430.00
dues 04	0.00	350.00
dues 05	0.00	120.00
Yorktown	0.00	15.00
Lexington	0.00	0.00
Museums Gen	0.00	330.00
Reunion	0.00	1114.82
Quarter Master	0.00	562.75
Capital	0.00	13296.81
Operating Funds	0.00	3132.00
Dashpot Expense	484.50	0.00
Printing Expense	44.00	0.00
Postage Expense	89.68	0.00
Chaplain Expense	100.00	0.00
PO Box	44.00	0.00
Awards Expense	127.38	0.00
Misc. Expense	2600.00	0.00

Totals \$25,141.58 \$25,141.58

That's all sports fans

### The Stores

MN1 Stephanie Cowart

I know its been awhile, things have been hectic here on recruiting duty. It looks like I am finally going to be receiving the long awaited 2000 Reunion shirts. (any day now...keeping my fingers crossed) They are pretty sharp looking shirts. As soon as I get them in, I will try to get a picture of the front and back posted on the website. I am still working on a "deal" with the same supplier for new items, especially embroidered denim shirts, golf wind shirts, polo shirts, etc., to try to update our supply of AOM gear. We are still working on some small issues, but if everything works out, you will be able to order and customize a lot of

different items.(Directly from the supplier)

There is still a large quantity of old shirts and hats left, and the new tie tacks that were ordered last summer. Mostly what I have left is in smaller sizes, great gifts for kids and teens. I am trying to sell most of it, so PLEASE...buy something!! Or at least make me an offer, and if Curtis and Joe agree to it, you can get yourself a deal.

Also, come April, I will be in transit. I will be in Corpus at school from May until August. After April, contact me through the email address or the new address I will post at that time. I would hate to lose an order that was sent to my old address. And to some of the newer members, or Minemen stationed on the ships, I will have

## Committee Reports

### Reno Reunion

Don DeCrona & Ray

The Reno Reunion is on track. We are signing contracts right after the first of the New Year and will have details of the "Master Plan" in the next issue. Bid that vacation for the weekend of 10 August and start looking at those web sites for airfares. We're at the Sands in Reno as usual

### Scholarship Scoop

Paul Santa Maria

The Christmas season is upon us. I hope that somewhere in the hustle and bustle of purchasing the right gift for our loved ones that the Scholarship Fund may find a little niche. Of course, we will always need items for our Reunion Auction. Hopefully we work on that function all year long. Again, thank you, each and everyone of you for the outstanding participation in our last auction. There is no task too difficult for a Mineman, only another challenge!

By the time you receive this issue of The Dashpot, we will be living in the Sunshine State of Florida. No we will not dimple our ballots! Our new address will be:

Mr & Mrs J P Santa Maria  
820 Tamarind Circle  
Barefoot Bay FL 32976  
(561)664-7540

See you all in Reno

the supplies with me, so if you are interested in seeing or purchasing some of the AOM gear, contact me at the schoolhouse and we can make arrangements.

## ■ FULL FORCE NEWS



**1 July 1975 - 1 July 2000**

Mobile Mine Assembly Group



**ANYTIME - ANYWHERE**

**Mine Warfare News**

By CDR Ron Swart

**M**erry Christmas and a happy New Year to you. The year 2000 lived up to its press as the start of something new... at least we've been busier than ever preparing for the next Navy. For starters, we've had three sessions before the Naval Studies Board, discussing where we are and where we're going. We were honest without overstatement and I believe they understand our position regarding the future of maritime mining and our sea mine stockpile. Only time will tell if our story gets through to the Navy leadership. We gave it our best shot! My grateful thanks to all the hard work put in by the diligent engineers and contractors at CSS Panama City (Mr. **Bill Jones**, Mr. **Mike Mill**, Mr. **Dave Bucher**, Mr. **Dave Everhart**, Mr. **Vic Newton** and a host of others), and the visionary future requirements crowd at COMINEWARCOM and COMOMAG under the leadership of Captain **Dave Grimland**, Mr. **Scott Burleson**, our own Major **James Auclair**, USAF and

Mr. **D. B. "Stan" Stanley**.

Now, news around the Group:

● Starting with the latest, congratulations to LCDR (Sel) **Sandra Oliver** who completed her highly successful tour as CO of MOMAU 15 in Kingsville, TX. Her relief is a familiar face... LT (jg) **Dave Lauffenberger**, who is an up-from-the-ranks Mineman reporting as the new CO fresh from a great tour in USS Seattle. Welcome back, **Dave**



**CDR Ron Swart**, COMOMAG chats with MOMAU-15 new CO, LT (jg) **Dave Lauffenberger** after Change of Command ceremonies at Corpus Christi.

● We're still in the process of closing MOMAU 14, the CAPTOR shop, by the end of this Summer. LCDR **Mike Zahn** (MOMAU 11) and LCDR **Ken Dalton** (MOMAU 14) joined me in briefing the progressing plan to CINCLANTFLT and we are working on the details of funding the move from Earle to Charleston to take place sometime in 2002.

● Mr. **Gil Firth** retires from Government service this month. **Gil** has been the corporate knowledge mainstay on the CNO (N752) Mine Warfare staff. A long time NMEF / NMWEA employee, **Gil** relieved Mr. **Les Sterling** of his responsibilities at OPNAV when **Les** retired. We could not have survived these leanest of times without his hard work and devotion to the mine community. We wish Mr. **Firth** the fairest of winds and following seas in years ahead.

He will be greatly missed and impossible to replace.

● The NATO Mine Warfare School at Eggermin has received the Mk 60 CAPTOR display mine we donated for their museum. CAPTOR, a long time mainstay of the US mining commitment to NATO, represents an important period in history for all of our allies. My thanks to the MOMAU 5, Sigonella Sailors for their professional preservation of this last remaining CAPTOR on European soil.

● The MOMAG welcomes back MNC **Jennifer Lauffenberger** who will join the Operations staff as an inspector and also as a qualified Mine Mk 67 (SLMM) technician and instructor. Chief **Lauffenberger** will also be assigned the responsibility of helping Mine Warfare Training Center bring the SLMM school back on line after CNO's decision to keep it in the fleet for the foreseeable future.

● We now have funding in the budget to begin procurement of exercise mines that look like the foreign mine stockpile threat to be used for MCM training. It will take us a while to get a sufficient amount of these "targets" into our stockpile, but we are happy that this program was supported in the budget.

● I had the honor of retiring MNC **George Butterhof** at MOMAU 3 this Fall, and at the same time, go to attend their regional Navy Ball which was held in Atlantic City. Very nice! The new leading Chief is MNC "**Breeze**" **Brieno** who reported from the Mine Warfare School. LT **Alex Brown** says he is very pleased to have such a competent relief for Chief Butterhof and their handoff was seamless. That is about all there is to report this issue as each Unit should be reporting their accomplishments as well. Happy Holidays!!!

## MOMAU 10 Kadena

LCDR John Iwaniec

Hi All

Well it's great to finally be in the holiday season. We had our Christmas party last night and it turned out to be a wonderful evening.

Everything is winding down with our exercises and we just finished screening our MK 166 Kit's, what a job that was. January will start the conference swing again and we look forward to a very busy summer. We had a great visit from RADM **Shultz** from CTF76. The Admiral was given a Power Point presentation of what we do for a living and then he toured the spaces. The Admiral was impressed that we had the finest looking facility in the 18 MUNS area. That honor goes to the crew, who have gone far beyond to make this place look great and taking pride in the command. LT **Theresa Wright** our XO, traveled to Singapore and gave a great presentation to RADM **Edwards** (our OPCON), she was joined there by LCDR **Wesnewski** from MOMAU Eight and CWO4 **Riggins** from now MOMAD 12. Unfortunately, the schedule was so tight the LT didn't see much of Singapore except the roads and the airport. I am very pleased to report we have three new Petty Officers in the Command from the last rating exam. Petty Officer **Mathew Hatlevig**, made First Class, Petty Officer **Arron Gunn**, made Second Class, and MNSN **Alexander Pascual**, is now a new Third Class. Congratulations to these most

deserving individuals. Our most recent Sailors of The Quarter are MN1 **Mathew Hatlevig** and YNSN **Jeremy Keels**, competition this round was especially keen. We just finished our big exercise in Korea, Foal Eagle/ MIREM, the exercise was very challenging as always and I pass my heartfelt thanks to CWO4 **Riggins** for leading the team. If it wasn't for the Gunners savvy and ability to speak Korean, we would have had a much harder go of it. This exercise always deals you every problem in the book. I was very impressed with my new "A" School students, MNSA **Souphanovong** and MNSA **Sandberg**. These sailors fresh out of "A" School, received their first test of fire by getting thrown into this exercise straight out of "A" School. My thanks to COMOMAG and FMWTC for sending me sailors who are ready to go to work. We also had one person transfer, MN3 **Sara Petree** who is headed for MOMAU One in Seal Beach CA. SK1 **Edward Bajaris** is taking the big plunge and will soon be a hitched man. The SK1 looks like a keeper and has hit the ground running here. As for our Facilities, we finally received our new back-up power generator. Maybe now they can cover up the big hole in the side of my building, they had to do that to remove the older one. What ever happened to the old idea of doors. We have five new computers now, courtesy of Commander Fleet Activities Okinawa and we will have Siprnet capability within the next couple of months. Last but not least, I have to brag that I now hold two world records for Spearfishing. My 61 pound Giant Trevally, is a new International Undersea Spearfishing Association 21 Century world Record, and My 24 pound Snub Nosed Pompano is

an all time World Record. Just had to throw that in for all you fishing enthusiasts. Well gang guess that's it for this year, hope everyone out there has a great XMAS and a super New Year.

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Unit 15's article added as it was received after the copy was at the printer.

The Photo on page 5 is of CDR **Swart** and NAS Kingsville base Chaplain not Ltjg **Lauffenburger** as stated. Sorry **Dave**, I don't know if its an improvement or disservice. Just bad editor assumption.

The back side of this page is blank.

## MOMAU ONE NEWS

**CO CORNER** . By LCDR Ed Simmons I want to extend to each of you and your families, our warm and sincere wishes for a happy and safe holiday season. As the year 2000 nears it's end, I can reflect on the many good things that have happened to us at MOMAU One and know even at during the worst of times, it has brought this command and community together, strengthening our bond as a family, a community, and a nation. Those of you who recently sent me Email, I thoroughly enjoyed reading them and finding out where my past shipmates & friends have gone to. On behalf of my crew, we wish you our heartfelt joy and prayers for a most prosperous 2001.

Most Respectfully, LCDR Ed Simmons

NRMOMAU One. Congratulations to CW04 Nate Miranda on receiving the Navy & Marine Corps Commendation Medal, Gold Star in lieu of 2nd Award, presented for his superior performance of duty as NRMOMAUONE Executive Officer. FYI, for those of you that are not aware, Nate took over as Commanding Officer when LT Jim Peck departed to his new duties in October. Nate's fine sailors were recently at the command helping with painting and such.

**HAILS & FAREWELL.** Welcome to SK2(SW) Pierre Rhinehart who reported onboard from USS Abraham Lincoln, and MNSN Brian Lampman and MNSN Christine Beal reported onboard from MN"A" School at Ingleside TX.. MN2 Jeremy Koski departed in December and reports to MOMAU 8 Guam in January 2001. We wish you the best in your next assignment and wish to express our thanks on a job well done.

**AWARDS & RECOGNITION.** Congratulations to MN2 Christian Siangco for his selection as Sailor of the Quarter for the Third Quarter. Bluejacket of the Quarter winner was MNSN Kevin Blanchard. Both sailors are exceptional assets and are representative of the best we have! Navy & Marine Corps Achievement Medals were presented to; YNC Jim Telford (4th), MN1 Dean Carr (3rd), MN2 Kecia Nason (2nd), MN2 Jeremy Koski (1st). CO Letter of Commendations presented to MN2 Christian Siangco and MNSN Kevin Blanchard for superior performance of duty. CO Letter of Appreciation for North Long Beach Veteran's Day Parade were presented to: YNC Telford, MN1 (SW) Carr, MN3 Noble, MNSN Gardner, MNSN Baker, MNSN Avelar, MNSN Beal, MNSA Maldonado, and MNSA Blanchard.

resounding success of fun and interaction! Food was delicious, Santa Claus provided the kids GREAT gifts, and Beany Bop the Clown entertained both the old and young with magic tricks. DESA has sponsored the Christmas Party and Christmas Baskets for our sailors for some time now. On behalf of my crew, I want to thank these wonder ex-sailors and their spouses for making our holidays festive and one to remember. They truly have given from their heart and it is wonderful to get together on occasions such as this, to celebrate the meaning of Christmas and family!! Long Beach Veterans Day Parade, Saturday, November 11, 2000. Sailors from MOMAU ONE helped celebrate a Salute to Those Who Served. The Grand Marshal was Art Linkletter, Humanitarian and Star of Radio, Television and Motion Pictures. Participants in setting up the command float and making things happen include: LCDR Simmons, YNC Telford, MN1(SW) Carr, MN2 Siangco, MN3 Noble, MNSN Gardner, MNSN Baker, MNSN Avelar, MNSN Beal, MNSA Maldonado, and MNSA Blanchard.

(Continued from page 3)

Valdez, Richard; Whitfield, Brian; Wilhoit, Matthew



LCDR Ed Simmons, CWO-4 Nate Miranda and NRMOMAU One

Good Conduct Awards were presented to YNC Jim Telford (4th) and MN2 Nick Bitar (2nd). Advancements - Congratulations to MNSN Gardner on his selection to MN3. Still waiting on the rest of the listing though.

**COMMUNITY SUPPORT.** MOMAU ONE and the Destroyer Escort Association (DESA) held it's annual Christmas Potluck Luncheon at the command on 9 December. Another

MN3 Boomer, Steven; Boyd, Justin; Brown, William; Bufano, Paul; Byrne, Steven; Carr, Christophe; Cooper, Trevor; Coppedge, Jerald; Deshazo, James; Dove, Gary; Gardner, John; Gonzalez, Daniel; Harris, Christop; Hawes, Bryan, Lee; Homan, Julian; Joynes, Terrance; Kersey, Ralph; Kidd, Ryan; Long, John; McCarty, Brian; Miller, Travis; Ortner, Jason; Pascual, Alexand; Phillips, Philip; Pienkowski, Jaco; Thomas, Michael; Thompson, Eric; Tucker, Jeffery; Warren, Gregory; West, David; Wright, Travis; Young, Jason

## GREETINGS FROM MOMAU THREE

by MNC Brieno

**W**e hope you all had a great holiday season. The cold weather has set in and we're gearing up for a cold winter. We've had a few personnel changes since our last submission. I arrived in September and took over the MAO job from MNC **Butterhof**. He transferred to the Fleet Reserve and we sent him on his way with a great retirement ceremony. Commander **Swart** was the guest speaker. He and MNCM **Reeve** came up from Texas. It made for a very meaningful ceremony for Chief **Butterhof**. We also welcomed MN2 **Williams** who arrived from MN "A" School and MN3 **McQueen** from the USS *Champion*, both welcome additions to our crew. We said farewell to MNC **Lauffenburger** who transferred to COMOMAG and MN1 **Weller** to MOMAU Eight in Guam. We wish them both the best of luck.

Congratulations to MNSN **Fedo** and YN1 **McDonald** who are our Junior and Senior Sailors of the Quarter. Naval Weapon Station Earle awarded MOMAU Three their annual Safety Award and gave the personal award to MNSA **Taylor** for his outstanding HAZMAT Program.

We recently had a very successful 4-day IDDT with our three Reserve Units. All worked very well together as we did upgrade training in preparations for our upcoming MRCI. In addition to our regular maintenance, we continue to work the MK 56 demilitarization, safely preparing all material for shipment or disposition.

MOMAU Three participated in the base sponsored Haunted House competition this year where we placed second. In sports, we actively participated in several MWR events. Flag football, basketball and lots of 5K runs.

As we look ahead, we look forward

to a very successful MRCI and New Year. Best wishes...MOMAU

## Feste felici da Sigonella!

### Unit 5

By MNCM(SW) Mark Zinnel

**I**'m four months into my third year at Sigonella and it just keeps getting better! There's snow on the mountain, citrus fruits are being harvested and you can barely smell the sheep by-products on these crisp mornings. The only blight on this pretty picture was having to put Maggie, our Command mascot to sleep after she suffered complete kidney failure from unknown causes. Both the American and Italian vets did everything possible but the damage was irreversible.

Our hosts seem to be more responsive to work requests and repair requirements especially after the annual NATO inspection of the facilities and the European Ammunition Conference attended by LT **Martin** and CWO3 **Simmons**. All three doors in Administration are new, Mine Assembly has it's double door installed for Component Test, the roll-up door on the east side has been replaced, and the building is sporting a new coat of paint! Magazines One and Two have had a face lift and the doors re-balanced so you can open and close them manually vice using forklifts.

Finally have a short breather with only one exercise being supported, Turkish MINEX 2000. Red Reef in the Arabian Gulf was put on hold due to the recent events in that part of the world. Most of the work has been maintenance and getting caught up on refurbishment. I've had MNC **Kaiser** and MNC(SW) **Sanders** hitting the road for planning conferences so the April/May time frame will be busy with our MRCI, ALCUDRA and Damsel Fair all happening at the same time. It's with a heavy heart that I have to report that we have lost our bid to

maintain the MK 67 SLMM at MOMAU Five. The rollback was immediately recommenced. No tear loss was reported.

Our only transfer this time is MN1 **Andrea Edwards** who will be reporting to COMOPTEVFOR in Norfolk VA. MN1 **Patrick Haley** is here from MOMAU Ten, MN3 **Travis Hutchins** from the USS *Pioneer*, MN3 **Thomas Bowen** from ROTCRU Gulf and the following have joined us from "A" School: MNSN **Frederick Denson**, MNSA **Jessie Jochims**, MNSA **Mathew McDonald**, MNSA **Duncan Harvin II**, MNSA **Brandy Hastings**, MNSA **Heath Cruse**, MNSA **Jesse Rupe**, MNSA **Joyce Wilson**, MNSA **Nicholas House**, MNSA **Jody Casey**, MNSA **James Gipson**, and MNSA **Jason Allen**.

That's all from the tip of the Mediterranean Spear .....  
Arrivederci!

## MOMAU ELEVEN

MNCM Al Fross

**S**eaason Greetings from Charleston South Carolina. It's been a very productive year for us here at MOMAU Eleven. Finally got the AC fix for the office areas but as I type this it's about 65 degrees inside the building. PWC has been trying to get our boiler up (which hasn't run for about two years) but to no avail. Hopefully soon we'll have heat. We have been doing a lot of prep work for our upcoming MRCI in late January and I have no doubt that the crew is up to the task. Also people can't call this just a toy Mine shop anymore. Finally received some Service 65's. Someone must have thought it was important for them to get here because the first load was under heavy guard. (See photo) We had a nice visit by our boss (CDR **Ron Swart**). He was very pleased at our new facility and capabilities that we can grow here in Charleston.

Departures: MN2 **Etchison**

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

departed for Security Duty in Souda Bay Crete. SK1 **Minter** and family departed for the new carrier Ronald Reagan, CVN 69, stationed out of Norfolk and last but not least YN1 **Bevis** transferred to the fleet reserve. Looks like she and family will be staying in the Charleston area for awhile.

Arrivals: MN1 **Sullivan** and family reported to us from Unit Eight. In addition the following reported onboard from the schoolhouse: MN3 **Gray**; MNSN **Deshazo** and wife; MNSA **Chatwin** with son soon to follow; and the following personnel with families; MNSA **Campbell**, MNSA **McGlosson**, MNSA **Roof**.

Awards: LOC's to MN1 (SW) **Crocker** (SSOQ), MNSN **Dove** (JSOQ), and MN2 **Pollitt**, MN2 **Dominguez**, MN3 **Walker**, MN3 **Auman** and MNSN **Thompson** (VFW Color Guard); Good Conduct to MN1 (SW) **Elmhorst** (4th), MN1 **Ortiz** (3rd).

Well so much for the news at MOMAU Eleven, the next SUPER MINE SHOP. The men and woman wish all MINEMAN past and present a joyous holiday season and hope to see and hear from y'all next year. BE SAFE.

## Ingleside happenings

Foc'sle 12/8/00

MN1(SW) **Martin Ingmire**, Shore intermediate Maintenance Activity was pictured along with his answer to the roving reporter on family holiday traditions. Bravo Zulu column: USS Cormorant's MN1 (SW) **Donna Ogelsby**, Navy Achievement Medal and Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist (ESWS) Qualification. MN1(SW) **Katherine Filter** and MN2(SW) **Fondrae Townsend** upon reenlistment. USS Dextrous's MN2(SW) **Towles**, MN2 (SW) **Jamie Dykes**, MN1(SW) **Wilbanks** qualified as Combat Information Center Watch Officer (CICWO). MN1(SW) **Keith Dixon**,



LCDR John Iwaniec, CO  
MOMAU 10, Kadena

We had a great weekend diving in October, Shot this big mutha when I saw him swimming in front of a White Tip Shark, man what a fight, took out 150 ft of line before he got tangled up in 60ft of water. I had to go down and finish him off with another gun. **Ed Hutsell** was with me of course and when he got back to the boat and saw this big sucker laying in the bottom of the boat, said "only got one huh?"

MN2(SW) **James Grant**, MN1(SW) **Jody Wilbanks** and MN1(SW) **Charles Walker** qualified as ESWS. USS Raven, homeported in Bahrain participated in exchanging holiday notes with a Corpus Christi elementary school this year. MN2 **Shane Senseney** and MNSN **Jacob Pienkowski** were pictured and quoted on their participation. MN3 (SW) **Jeffery Pate**, USS Osprey received his ESWS qualification. MN1 **Katherine Filter**, USS Cormorant was pictured at the ship's navigation, command and control console.

Join the AOM Today

## Remote Mine Hunting Program

Coastal Courier 12/1/00

The WLD-1 Remote Mine Hunting program completed a very successful Preliminary Design Review (PDR). With approval of the PDR, the program will begin the detail design effort.

WLD-1 is a surface mine countermeasures system that will be installed in Arleigh Burke-class destroyers to provide those ships with an organic capability to conduct forward area reconnaissance of anticipated operational areas to characterize the mine threat environment. CSS personnel are involved with the PMS 490 project with Lockheed-Martin Naval Electronics Sensor Systems. Over the next year three at-sea Critical Item test events are scheduled.

## EDITOR

by john loonam

I went to the Ingleside Reunion fully prepared to step down as editor of the Dashpot. CDR **Ron Swart** expressed an interest in assuming the role but had a delay of two years before he thought he would be ready and able to commit the time for the job. Well folks the two years is coming to an end and I'm stepping down. **Ron** is still on active duty and about the fullest plate of anyone I know in the AOM. Please support him to the fullest and get those articles in before the deadline.

My goals have been met. I started with Issue 7 and if all goes well will finish with Issue 34. That will be through three full terms of Presidents as I took the job from Toby when he was elected to be President in 1994. You have had 4 issues per year and within a few

(Continued on page 11)

## Coastal Courier 10/6

The Navy's aging MH-53 Sea Dragon mine sweeping helicopter is looking at the YCH-60 as a proposed replacement.

### Gunfire sinks submerged mine at 15 feet.

During Desert Storm, USS Tripoli, LPH-10 struck a near surface contact mine. A recent "live fire" demonstration of the Rapid Airborne Mine Clearance System (RAMICS) was conducted at Aberdeen test center using a Marine AH-1 helicopter and its M197 20mm gun equipped with special projectiles designed to continue on a straight flight path as they enter the water to depths in excess of 15 feet. The system uses light detection and ranging targeting to locate near-surface mines through the water. The fire control system on the helicopter puts the ordnance on target, making the entire system self-contained. Currently, the only means to positively destroy near-surface mines requires the use of remotely operated vehicles or EOD personnel. CSS is the lead Technical Direction Agency for Ramics. They near time goal is to rapidly move RAMICS into the acquisition phase for installation in the CH-60's within five years.

Coastal Courier 10/20/00

### Sea lions recover targets

Three Navy sea lions assisted in the recovery of test hardware from the floor of the Gulf of Mexico off Panama City, Florida.

Civilian and military personnel from Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center San Diego and EOD Mobile Unit Three brought the sea lions to NCSS.

Some 60 miles out into the Gulf, 12 simulated mine shapes and exercise hardware had been placed at depths of 400-600 feet. The sea lions are trained to home in on pingers attached to simulated mines. The sea lions are able to make repeated dives to attach recovery lines to the mine shapes. This provides an

efficient and cost-effective alternative for underwater recovery.

The animal working under the close supervision of its Navy trainer searches a specific area listening for the pinger. The animal reports to its trainer when the target object is detected. The trainer decides if an animal or human will recover the object. After locking in on the pinger, the animal is fitted with a bite plate to which an attachment device is mounted. The sea lion swims down and attaches the device to the target and swims back to the boat for a well deserved reward of fish while a crane is used to pull the mine shape off the bottom.

A Mark 5 sea lion learns to recognize the shapes of 21 different targets and can provide real time surveillance carrying a video camera mounted on a bite plate in its mouth. The sea lion can make the round trip to 600 feet in 3.5 to 4 minutes. All 12 shapes fitted with pingers were recovered from the 600 foot field and all four of the shapes in the 400 foot field not equipped with pingers.



### Binnacle

This missed the Fall issue (Early July)  
**Robert (Willie) Wilson**

says: I was placed in the hospital on Monday and had a catheter inserted which showed 39% blockage in all but one artery which had 90%. Wednesday I was transferred to ST Michael's Hospital in Newark for an Angioplasty, plus one 18 mm Stent implantation just below the heart. Everything went quite well. The two holes in my groin look as if a Giant Cobra Bit me. I feel great and I will be fishing this weekend for Fluke and or Weak Fish.

**Bobbie Loonam** had an Angina episode in November and has recovered from Angioplasty

Foc'sle 9/29/00

The front page photo featured the newest CPOs of the Mine Warfare Center of Excellence manning the rails of the USS Chief.

The Mine Warfare Command Sailors of the year included MN1 **Randall A Childers**, USS Raven and MN1 **Allen E Ault**, USS Defender.

Foc'sle 10/13/00

LCDR **Mark Laxen** relieved CDR **Matt Beaver** as Commanding Officer USS Robin 20 October at the Naval Station Ingleside waterfront.

Foc'sle 10/27/00

Bravo Zulu to the following MN re-enlisting: MN1(SW) **Steven L Grantz**, Shore Intermediate Maintenance Activity and MN1 **Tommy Lee Boyles**, USS Ardent.

Foc'sle 11/9/00

Bravo Zulu to MN2(SW) **Robert A Williamson**, USS Sentry (SSOQ), MN1(SW) **Greg Hartman**, USS Scout (SSOQ), MN1(SW) **Michael Gonzales Jr.** (SSOQ) and MN1 **Thomas Lavake**, USS Heron (SSOQ).

USS Black Hawk MN take third place in Fleet recreation's first fleet golf tournament. MN1(SW) **William Andrzejewski**, MN2(SW) **James Schuette** and MN3 **Ramses Martinez** were pictured holding their trophy's.

Bravo Zulu to MN1 **Patrick Clayton**, USS Avenger, for achieving his Associate's degree in professional focus in electronics technologies. He is pursuing his baccalaureate degree in business administration.

Foc'sle 11/22/00

LCDR **Christopher Halton** relieved CDR **Brad Smith** as Commanding Officer USS Black Hawk 21 November on board the Lexington Museum.

Bravo Zulu for re-enlisting to MN1 (SW) **Brian L Sloan**, Shore Intermediate Maintenance Activity. Petty Officer **Sloan** will Transfer to the USS Chief.

**We need your dues, please take a moment and stay current**

## CVA Final Prep Team

By Robert D Gill

One day at work, I was clicking around Yahoo on my computer when I got an idea to type in "Mineman" and hit "Search". I stumbled upon the AOM page with all kinds of interesting names and information. What really caught my eye was reading The Dashpot and seeing my name on page 13 (Fall issue) in an article about the mining of Haiphong Harbor on 9 May 1972.

My name is **Robert D. Gill**. I was the Petty Officer in charge of the three-man mine assembly team aboard the USS Coral Sea CVA 43 back in 1972.

I joined the Navy in November of 1968. In February, after Great Lakes boot camp, I got orders to go to Mineman "A" school. I graduated on 25 July 1969 and in August of 1969 I arrived at NAD Westloch for a two-year tour. **Bill Mehard** was the Mines Division Officer. I went to MOMAG Charleston in August of 1971.

After almost three years of shore duty, I thought a deployment on an aircraft carrier would be a change. Four of us were sent to the USS Coral Sea. I think a guy named **Smith** was the MN1. I was the MN2, **Robert Pusher** was the MN3 and **Tim Mercier** was the MNSN.

We picked up the carrier in Hawaii (Pearl Harbor) in November of 1971. When we got on board I thought we would get assigned to Special Weapons Division. After all, how many mines would they need assembled? The Aviation Ordnance Officer asked us if we would like to help out in "G" Division (bomb assembly) as the AOs always could use the extra hands.

For the next seven months, I never worked so hard and long in my life. I think G Division put together about 50,000 MK 82 bombs in that period. Our MN1 got transferred to Guam after a couple of months and that left **Pusher, Mercier**, and myself on board.

It was not uncommon to do 30, 40, and 50 line periods in the Gulf of Tonkin. The workday was usually 12 on and 12 off.

The Eastertide Offensive was going on and we had six carriers over there in early May of 1972.

After a long work day, I was called to Ordnance Control. When I got there the Weapons Officer and the Captain of the ship were waiting for me. They told me they wanted all the MK 52s we had in "Alpha" condition ASAP. I thought they had their conditions mixed up.

Between **Pusher, Mercier** and myself, we directed the bomb assembly crews (AOs) in putting the mines together and sent them up to the flight deck after we made all the settings and finishing touches. After being up almost two days straight with no sleep, I had to hit the rack.

A few hours later MNSN **Mercier** woke me up to say they needed me up on the flight deck because they thought one of the mines was armed. I went topside and was directed to the Flight Deck Officer. He started screaming at me that someone pulled a safety pin out of the hydrostatic arming device. I knew the mine would not arm unless it was deep in the water. He blamed us down below and I told him someone loading the mines on the A6s must have done it putting arming wires on.

This whole operation was classified. The pilots could say nothing to their aircrews (zip lip). Many sailors on the carrier did not know what this type of bomb was. They had never seen it before.

The jets took off toward the coast, destination unknown.

Shortly afterward, the captain of the USS Coral Sea got on the speaker and stated that President Nixon had just announced the port of Haiphong had been mined. All ships had three days to leave (delayed arming). I think everyone onboard was thrilled to be a part of history.

However, I was told I had to go

see the Captain of the ship after the jets had returned. There had been some problem. When I got up to the Captain's office there were two pilots in their flight suits. They said the parachute packs on a few mines had blown off in flight. They had to jettison the mines. The Captain wanted to know why. I found out later there was a defect in some of the parachute packs (E-rings?).

A few days later they flew me by helicopter over to an ammunition ship to see what they had in the magazine for mines. We had to restock our supply. I do not think the people on the ammunition ship knew what a mine looked like. I was flown over to the USS Kitty Hawk to confer and get advice from MN1 **Yancy** because I was somewhat overwhelmed by all the responsibility. (I had just turned 22.) I guess we got the job done.

We received a Navy Commendation Medal for our efforts.

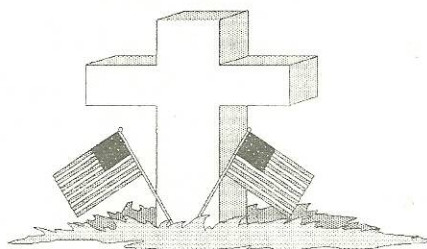
By June it was time for us to head home. We stayed on line until 1 July 1972 (combat pay and tax free for another month). We got off the ship in Subic Bay and flew back to Charleston.

I took a 30-day leave, then went back to finish my enlistment in MOMAG. I was separated from active duty on 21 November 1972.

Over the years I have seen articles in Readers Digest, Vietnam Magazine, and books about the Haiphong mining event. I was glad to be a part of it. I still live in Billerica, MA, with my family. I have worked for Dupont Pharmaceuticals for 24 years.

At Mineman A school some of the instructors were CWO **Russell**, MN1s **Smith and Dove**. Chiefs **Merrill, Rousseau, Woodsen and Martin**. At NAD West Loch I remember Chiefs **Krupczyk Pinson and Fowler**, also MN1s **Teague, Kirkwood, Muise, Fortner and Crum**. I worked in Bld. 8,

(Continued on page 11)



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

Coastal Courier 11/3/00

**FRANCIS XAVIER 'FRANK' MARTIN** (AOM member) age 65, Panama City, Fla., passed away Friday, Oct. 27, 2000, at a local hospital. He was a native of Boston, Mass., and moved to Panama City in 1971, coming here from Charleston, S. C., where he was stationed in the Navy. Mr. Martin retired on 1974 after 28 years of service in the U.S. Navy. After his retirement he worked for the civil service for 10 years at the Naval Coastal Systems Center. He is survived by his wife of 43 years, **Ann Martin** of Panama City, three daughters, two sons, 10 grandchildren and one great-grandson. Burial was at Forest Lawn Cemetery.

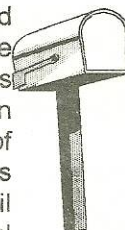
**Robert L. Koeller**, 69, of Belfair, WA died Oct. 11, 2000, at Harrison Hospital. He was born Sept. 30, 1931, in Greeley, Colo. He married Mary O. Lyons on Dec. 28, 1962. Mr. Koeller served in the Navy from 1948 to 1974. He was a Mineman, achieving the rank of Chief. He was a member of the National Rifle Association. Survivors include his wife; three stepsons, two daughters, eight grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.



(Continued from page 10)

component test, and the mobile mine shop. Out on the USS Coral Sea I was a "red shirt" in G division. we had liberty in Subic bay about 6 times, and we had a 7 day R&R in Hong Kong. we were supposed to go to Singapore and cross the Equator. This did not happen due to that Eastertide offensive. In April of 1972 I was launched off the carrier in a small COD (mail plane) into DaNang. You could ride the mail plane in and get a helo back the next day. It was just something they let the sailors do. The one night I spend in country they hit us with 122 mm mortars. I spent a rough night in a bunker to say the least.

Back at MOMAG I do remember Mr. **Elston**, Mr. **Stryker**, MNCM **Reid**. Thanks again. **BOB GILL**



## Mail

**Fred Dane** reports about a mini-A school class reunion. Hey **John** we are back from Laughlin, NV, it was a good trip. **Hal**

**Elston** and his wife were there also **Mary** and I, **Danny Priest**, **Bob Garland** and **Ernie Love**. We were there about 4 days. **Garland** and **Love** were only in about 4 years and got out They left West Loch before you got there.

I neglected to include a note I received from **Jack Shreve** along with his DST story carried in the Fall issue. **Jack** thanked the AOM for selecting him as an Honorary Mineman. He stated that he often thinks of that honor and the MN that he worked with over the years as a member of NAVSEA's PMS407

**NEXT ARTICLE  
DUE DATE  
MARCH 10**

## EX-NMWEA Christmas Party 12/16/00 at Nick's in Yorktown

**Jeannie Abrams**, **Glen Adams**, **Reggie Bean**, **Lyn Beard**, **Ray Becker**, **Dick Bishop**, **Jim Braybrand**, **Phyllis Cain**, **Randy Chandler**, **Hayden Ross-Clunis**, **Neal Cowan**, **Emma Crawford**, **Eric Cruz**, **Brenda Dix**, **John Dunn**, **Bob & Carol Forrest**, **Frenchy Rodrigue**, **Pat Hallinan**, **Dave Hamilton**. **Lucille Harris**, **Beth & Wayne Henderson**, **Jim Henkel**, **Dewey Hogge**, **Lorimer Hogge**, **John & Glenda Holland**, **Joanne & Charlie Lane**, **Winnie & Fred Lewis**, **Fran Lisciandri**, **John Loonam**, **Richard Martin**, **Susan Mason**, **Joanne Matthews**, **Shirley McCrae**, **Charlie Miller**, **Joe Morgan**, **Ron Muse**, **Tom Mylum**, **Annie Oliver**, **Flo Parker**, **Lud Piclett**, **Ray Purcell**, **Earl Roberts**, **Betty Ryan**, **Margie Silvers**, **Alice & Adrian Step**, **Pat & Gene Sutton**, **Jim & Waneta Towell**, **Lousia Valencourt**, **Kitty Vicellio**, **Flea Walker**, **Shirley White**, **Annette Wilburn** and **Charlotte Wilkerson**

(Continued from page 8)

days of the beginning of each quarter as I hoped to do. There have been many trying times and deadline crisis's that challenged me. Glitches with my computer and printer, late submissions and the printing jobber's scheduling and break-downs.

Support and appreciation from the members and my working relationship with our webmaster, **Fred Dane** have kept me going long after I thought it was time to throw in the towel. Its time to pass it on to the younger generation. I'll be 68 this summer and have just about lost touch with any names I recognize on active duty. Those that I do know will be retired in the next few years.

My last issue will be Summer 2001. Thanks for your kind support

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