

THE DASHPOT

Issue 35

Newsletter of the Association of Minemen

Fall 2001



FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Paul Santa Maria

First, let me thank everyone who showed a very enthusiastic support at my being elected as your President for the next three years. It is indeed one of the highest honors I have received in my lifetime. The legacy my predecessors left is both challenging and encouraging. I am not going to make any promises, other than, that to give my very best ability and to constantly keep our great organization vibrant, progressive and safe.

Welcome and congratulations to our newly elected Vice President, Jack Smoot, who is also a past president, to our two new board members; John Loonam, a name familiar to all for his dedication, and to William "Bill" Johnson who continually supports the association in many ways. With these new members, and to our four incumbents, we will have another outstanding slate of officers.

Many "kudos" to our exiting officers; President Joe Balderrama, Vice President William "Swede" Carlsen, our truly dedicated Director, Ron Swart, and Parliamentarian Don DeCrona. You have earned our respect and gratitude for "One hell of a great job."

Without reservations, "One hell of a great job" is the order of the day for the DeCrona's and Cobis' for putting on a reunion where each and every function ran like a well-oiled Swiss watch. I was in awe at the panic to see these four people so synchronized that you would think it was at least ten people doing all that work. Then to top it all off, the DeCrona's, without being asked, but sensing a need, took over the storekeeper's job of selling shirts, hats, etc. Amazing, simply amazing. Thank you all, you great members who brought and purchased the many items at the auction. I would say it was successful.

We have several important challenges facing us at this time.

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RENO REUNION REPORT

By Joe Balderrama

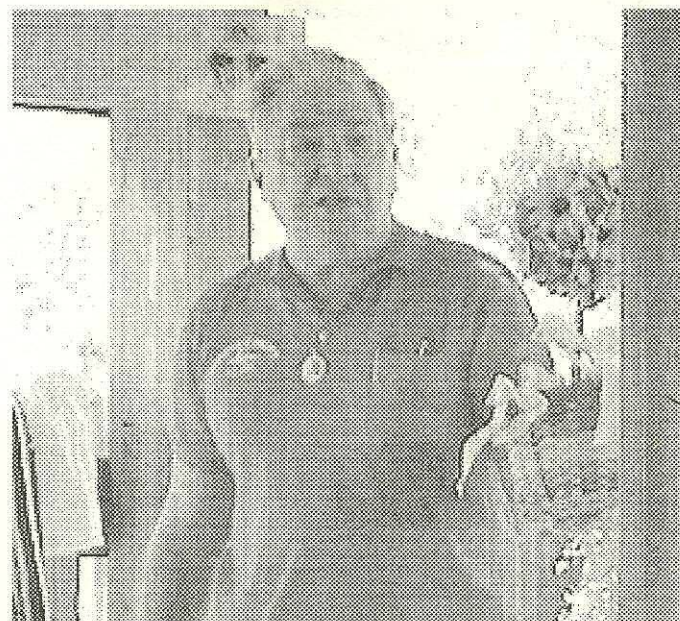
Hi again Shipmates, I thought it would be appropriate for me to say thanks to each and every one of you for allowing me to serve as your President for the last three years. It has been an honor. I won't try to thank anyone individually because it would take about ten pages of this publication to do so. Just accept my profound appreciation for all your help and guidance during my tenure.

Now, let me give you a brief report about the Reunion in Reno. For those of you that were there, you know that a great time was had by all. The planning and execution of all the events were accomplished without a flaw.

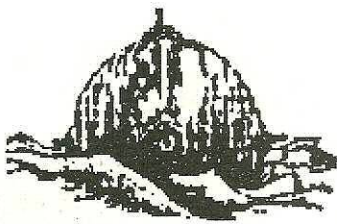
Thanks to Ray & Ann Cobis and Don & Lavon DeCrona. All business went well, and we made the choice to go to San Diego in 2003. As you all know the preparations for the 2002 Reunion are well underway, and I am really looking forward to returning to Yorktown.

I would also like to congratulate the new slate of Officers especially the newly elected President Paul G. Santa Maria I'm sure he will give his all to serving. I will do my utmost to assist him in any way to assure his success.

Stay Well, Joe!



**Newly Elected AOM President
Santa Maria Does Auction Duty**



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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From The President cont. from page. 1
First is our museum aboard the Yorktown, which, according to our curator, Toby, is in shambles because of civilian workers doing repairs. We need both funds and, when the time comes, volunteer manpower. Let's get behind this 110% and put and maintain our museum in top ship shape. This reflects what we are and stand for to the outside world.

The next challenge is membership. We need new and young blood to insure the continued survival and success of our great organization. So what say you young one? Step up to the plate and take a swing.

The next challenge doesn't take any time at all, just money! As you will read in another column, the Scholarship Challenge, which pits the membership to match or surpass the \$5,000 donation made to the scholarship fund by my wife and I. In one year's time, this will give

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our scholarship fund a strong base for years ahead. I'm confident that you will make it successful.

At this time, I would like to thank and welcome aboard the following members who have accepted these respective positions: Secretary/Treasurer, Curtis T. Christian; Parliamentarian, Warren Savage; Chaplain, Henry Williams; Dashpot Editor, Bill Fortner; Scholarship Chairperson, Swede Carlsen, Storekeeper, MN1 Stephanie Cowart; Membership, Bill Mehard; Yorktown Museum, Toby Horn; and Lexington Museum, CDR Ron Swart. We have a great team here.

NOTICE:

Effective immediately: Any expenditure made without PRIOR approval from the President and/or Board of Directors will NOT be honored for reimbursement. NO EXCEPTIONS.

SCHOLARSHIP FUND CHALLENGE

By William Carlsen

Our President G.Paul Santa Maria and wife Bootsie have issued a challenge to all AOM members. They have donated \$5000 to the scholarship fund with the following conditions.

1. Members and/or friends have one year from 8/12/01 to collectively match this donation.
2. Funds not matched will be returned to the Santa Maria's.
3. The smallest donations should be Twenty - Five (\$25.00) dollars.
4. History Book loan payment monies will be accepted.
5. For the first five (5) years all monies will be deposited in a Certificate of Deposit selected by the Treasurer.
6. For the first five (5) years the interest only that has accumulated for that year may be used for scholarship distribution. No multi-years accumulation shall be distributed in any one (1) year.
7. After the first five (5) years the control of this fund will lay with a committee consisting of: President, Treasurer and Scholarship Chairperson..

G. Paul and Bootsie wish us good luck and God Bless the AOM.

See companion Scholarship Report article on page 4.

Yorktown Museum Report

By Toby Horn

There is good news and there is bad news. On Friday, July 13th I went to the Yorktown to retrieve some CD-14 clock faces for our Clock Cocker's award fabrication. I had called ahead for access, and per his request, I first met with Dave Burnett - the new (interim) director of the Patriot's Point authority. He had been the Engineering & Maintenance director there for several years and took over when Admiral Flatley left. He accompanied me aboard, with many questions about the museum, our association, and our role concerning the museum. I explained all, as I knew it.

In this regard, I told Dave about our former arrangement of having the Navy JROTC Unit from Waltersboro on board for a weekend each year to help with the museum efforts. He was somewhat shocked when I told him that two years ago, we had been told that the Yorktown could no longer accommodate the Unit except on a daily basis. He told me that this was not so, but that arrangements had to be made well in advance - as much as a year in advance. I will explore this further.

I also told him of the receipt of a letter that stated that Patriot's Point would no longer provide free/open access to members as we had often requested. I told him of member's contributions to museum efforts, members "working parties" and supply of free maintenance materials, of our new 501(c)(3) status which should enhance contributions, and of the IRS required clause in our C&BLs that distributed funds to Patriots Point in the event of dissolution. He acknowledged our contribution and told me to provide him with a letter requesting that Association members be allowed free access, along with a sample membership card. This will be posted in the ticket-taking booth, and any member showing his card will henceforth be allowed on board free. I think we can safely announce that this will be in effect as of 1 September. This ends the good news.

We continued with a physical inspection of the museum. It is a shambles. The entrance into the museum is through a room with a series of display

cases. There are excerpts and drawings and placards, along with some old CDs, FMs, SDs, etc. The documentation is faded. Many are illegible. There is leaking electrolyte from old SDs and batteries. This is an area that can be used for absolute visual impact, yet it leaves one cold and uninterested. It needs a complete overhaul.

From this area, you enter into the main display room with all the mine cases. There are no signs to tell anyone what they are looking at. Cut-a-way cases are not standardized as to color code of explosive charge area or other notation. People came through as I was standing there and asked, "What's this"? There is a lot of wall space where photographs could be placed for visual impact.

The anti-room that has a plexi-glass shield to view an interior exhibit is worthless as is. The original displays have been moved around and now don't make much sense. Display documentation is hard to read or altogether illegible. Much of this is due to the placement/replacement of "stuff" as contractors came through our spaces (above and below) to make way for new vents and access holes for oil spillage containment. This room needs to be completely overhauled.

From this room, you take a ladder down to our storage and office space. After all the hard work the JROTC Unit and a few of us did to inventory and store excess materials, I was aghast to see what looked like a room devastated by a tornado. The contractors had come through to cut access holes, taken away or moved shelving, and piled components from the shelves in heaps all throughout the space. All of our tools have been stolen. Our files and file drawers have been rummaged through and papers and pieces of components are everywhere. The bulkhead plates removed by Acetylene remain on the deck where each access hole has been cut. It will take a major work party to get things back in order.

I expressed my dismay to Dave Burnett. He told me that the contract people for the oil containment work had to come through our spaces to run the pump-out hoses. I suppose this was necessary, but they sure ransacked our spaces in the process. He told me that they had tried to contact our historian,

Lyal Stryker, to advise us of the work, but could not get through. They had no other contact point. A lot of hard work went down the drain. To avoid this in the future, we'll have to get some notification procedures in effect. I'll take this for action. I'd like some Charleston area volunteers for placement on the notification list.

I think this report speaks for itself. We need help with the Yorktown museum. This means not only people to help, but funding as well. The "wish list" I provided two years ago is now elevated to a "must list". As it stands now, all we have for our museum is a bunch of hardware standing around that means nothing to a layman. This is not in keeping with our AOM preamble of "perpetuating a knowledge of mine warfare".

I appeal to all of our members to make a tax-deductible contribution to the Yorktown Museum Fund or the General Museum Fund. In this case, even a buck will go a long way. A possible resource might be that some of the reunion auction proceeds be diverted to the museum fund, but this will take a special vote since it is now set up that most proceeds go to the Scholarship Fund. We also could have a special item to auction just for the Museum Fund? Another idea - how about an "auction area" on our web site where we do a running silent auction for a special item a couple of times a year? We could provide a museum update as well with some photos I could send. This would serve a dual purpose of getting people to visit our site as well as make money for the fund.

We need to schedule a museum work party as soon as the weather turns a little cooler - September, I think. Temperature in the tour area is reasonable for people making the tour, however work on the ship is now impossible. I will be asking our Secretary for a listing of all Charleston area members so that I can contact them as potential volunteers. Please, everyone help however you can. We want to make our museum something we are proud of.





MNCS Ronald Airhart passed away at Chester, VA from heart and lung complications on December 28, 2000.

MNC Harold W Cisco was listed in the TAPS section of the August Fleet Reserve magazine *All Hands*. Harold was a member of Branch 198 in Bend, Oregon.

MN1 Roger Klages. James E Trick (jiggs66@msn.com) sent the following to the AOM website: "My shipmates it is with a heavy heart that I report that Roger Klages Ex MN1 died on 3 Sept. He and I worked on Azuma Is. in Butler 3 in the 50s. Home is the sailor, home from the sea and the hunter home from the hills."



BINNACLE LIST

Johnny Corbin. John Loonam wrote that he got a phone call from Ray Ethridge who said retired Johnny Corbin suffered an aneurysm in his stomach on 4 May. He went to the emergency room at Mary Immaculate in Newport News. They airlifted him to Norfolk General where he almost didn't make it for loss of blood. They fixed him up but may have nicked his spinal chord as he is now paralyzed from the waist down. Johnny is now in Riverside Rehab Hospital in Newport News (room 109). He expects to be released in a few days. His wife, Shirley, would like fellow MN's to contact Johnny using web TV Internet. shirleyfromva@webtv.com

LT. Melanowski, USN, RET. Fred Dane reports that retired LT. Melanowski continues to suffer from degenerating vision. Though not blind, he has very poor eyesight and can't read or drive. He considers himself homebound. Thirty years accumulation of "stuff" is hindering his move to VA Beach. He said he remembers many MN.

A TRAGEDY

A terrible tragedy has befallen our family. I'm not writing this note for your sympathy, but to give you the lessons I've learned this week.

My two beautiful granddaughters were ripped out of our lives this week in a house fire. They were 4 and 6 and their names were Sariena and Annie. Sariena was a Princess and Annie was a Racecar Buddy.

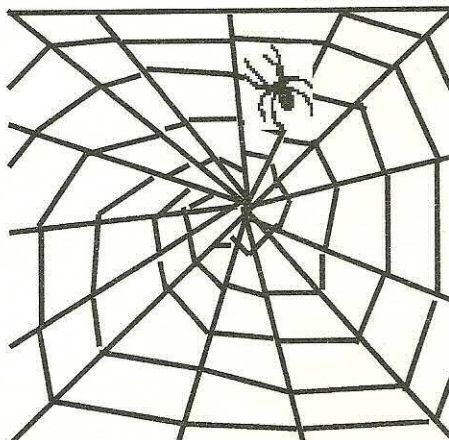
They were killed by smoke inhalation.

The lessons I learned were:

- * Bunk Beds are a killer for the children in the top bunk. They wanted to sleep together that night.
- * The test button on a Smoke Detector only tests the battery and the buzzer. The Detector did not activate or was not heard.
- * Faulty wiring was the cause of the fire. The house was old and had been rewired, but probably not by a licensed electrician. The insulation on the wires was stripped back about 3 inches before it was attached to the wall sockets. Power surges during the night shorted the wires causing the junction box (between the floor and ceiling) to overheat and start the fire. Today, Fire Codes don't allow junction boxes between ceiling and floor spaces. They must be accessible. An investigation is in process.
- * If you do not Permit a rewiring you may be asking for a problem.

IF YOU WOULD HAVE SEEN THEIR
FACES BLACKENED FROM THE
HEAT, YOU WOULD TAKE THIS
VERY SERIOUSLY.

William C. Holloway



SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

By Swede Carlsen

It gives me great pleasure to announce the awardees of the AOM Scholarships for the year 2001. They are:

Aaron W. Ennis of Medford, OR.

Kumi D. Swart of Corpus Christi, TX.

The recipient of the Doreen Stryker Memorial is **Andrew Peters** of Herminie, PA

The recipient of the Kay Branan Memorial is **Donald W. Lozen** of Summerville, SC.

Remember Shipmates, the scholarship fund is a help in defraying these very high costs of higher education. A college education requires a lot of hard work and takes a lot of money to complete.

Once again, congratulations to the scholarship recipients.

Think Scholarship, it gives you a little relief from Uncle Sam's long tax arm.



SECRETARY'S REPORT

From the Secretary's desk.

For those who did not make the reunion, you missed a good one. Weather was great and food was even better.

I plan to move our FY end to June 30 vice Aug. The time I need to close books and make the reunion is just too tight. If anyone has an objection please let me know.

Many thanks to Don and Ray (and wife's) for a job well done.

I think most everything is covered in the minutes of the meeting printed elsewhere in the DashPot. If I missed anything let me know.

Our new President has provided us with a \$5000.00 CD the interest from which will go to the scholarship fund. This donation is good for one year and will be permanent if we match the funds for another CD. Should any of you have some spare pennies donate it to the scholarship fund. It is tax deductible.

Curtis

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN RENO, NV ON 11 AUG 2001

The President called the meeting to order at 1336.

The minutes of the 2000 meeting were read and accepted with the following changes noted:

1- The scholarship award must remain at \$500.00 as it is stated in our By-Laws.

2- Changes to our By-Laws must be printed only one time in the Dash-Pot.

Mr. Jack Smoot reported on the 2002 reunion/meeting to be held in Yorktown, VA.

Mr. Warren Savage made a motion to have the 2003 reunion/meeting in San Diego, CA. The vote was taken and motion adopted. The association will meet in CA on 8-9-10 Aug 2003.

The president thanked John Loonam for his good work on the Dashpot, and Mr. Dane and Mr. Elston for their work on the Web Page. It was recommended that the AOM repay Fred Dane for cost of the web site. Fred thanked the members but declined any payment. (Secretary's note: THANKS FRED)

Paul Santa Maria reported on the scholarship committee. We will issue four scholarships this year. Names will appear in the next Dash-pot.

The president read a letter for Mr. Toby Horn about the condition of the Yorktown mine museum. The President also read a letter drafted by Toby for the President's signature, which will allow AOM members free admission to the Yorktown/Patriot's Point. After a lengthy discussion, it was voted to provide any funds necessary to Toby to put the Yorktown back in shape. Mr. Harold Elston suggested that we might try to find another site for the Yorktown museum.

The President brought up the subject of changing the By-Laws to provide

for the immediate past President, and the vice President to be voting members of the BOD. A motion was made and passed. A secondary vote is to be taken at the 2002 meeting.

The president notified the membership that the last of the history book loans would be paid this year.

The treasurer's report was given and accepted.

The nominating committee nominated Mr. Paul Santa Maria for the office of President, Mr. Jack Smoot for the office of Vice President, and BOD nominations of Mr. John Loonam to replace outgoing Paul Santa Maria and Bill Johnson to replace outgoing Ron Swart. A vote was taken and the nominees were elected.

After a discussion with the membership, the President instructed the Secretary to provide a complete membership list to any member who requested it at a cost of \$10.00; \$8.00 of these proceeds is to go to the Yorktown museum and \$2.00 to operating funds.

The incoming President made the following appointments.

Parliamentarian:	Warren Savage
Historian:	Lyal Stryker
Yorktown Museum:	Toby Horn
Lexington Museum:	CDR Ron Swart
Chaplain:	Henry Williams
Dashpot Editor:	William Fortner
Scholarship:	William Carlson
Storekeeper:	MN1 Stephanie Cowart
Secretary/Treasurer:	Curtis Christian

The President adjourned the meeting at 1455.

Respectfully Submitted: C. T. Christian

BUILDING 7 From Rock and Mortar to Memory

By JO1 Tonia Varner
Naval Weapons Station Yorktown

Buildings, just like people, hold memories and symbolize times that have long past. Building 7 is one of those structures that reflect a part of Naval Weapons Station Yorktown history. It was built in 1941 and served in many capacities, namely as the ordnance administrative office, naval mine engineering facility and printing plant. The building also, at one time, housed a cafeteria, the safety department and Marine Corps liaison department. Thousands of personnel worked in and passed through the doors of the building over the years. It was the nerve center of the ordnance department, said Ben Harris who has worked at the station since 1965.

The building continued to bustle with work for many years. When the Atlantic Ordnance Command was established, the ordnance department staff moved from Building 7 to Building 1959. After the ordnance office moved, the building slowly quieted to almost a whisper. In 1998 the building briefly served as a flood relief donation center after Hurricane Floyd. The size of the building was conducive to storing furniture and other large items that were donated to flood victims. This was the last role the building played in NWSY history.

As with most old buildings, it was not economical to maintain it, so demolition began in the end of June. The building is now only a pile of rubble that has been hauled off to its final resting place. It served the Navy well and will be remembered by those who spent their workdays within its walls. Eventually the area where Building 7 once stood will become an empty grass field, and only the memories will remain.



TO THE NEW MNCPO'S



The August CPO selection board chose the following men and women to wear the prestigious Fouled Anchor Device, which is renowned the world over as the symbol of personal excellence, preparedness, and devotion to duty. The AOM and the entire The Dashpot staff offer their congratulations and best wishes for great success to the selectees.

The MNCPO selectees are:

BODEN, John P.
BORN, Craig K.
BRASHIER, Steve
BROOKS, Eric T.
BUTLER, Edgar
BUTTS, Fredrick
CROCKER, Duane
DAVIES, Barbara
DIXON, Keith D.
DOHMAN, Mark J.
FARR, Raymond
FILTER, Henry
FILTER, Katherine
GONZALES, M.
GRANTZ, Steven
HAVENS, Daniel
HOEKMAN, Terry
LEVINE, Jerome
NUTTING, Don R.
OGLESBY, Donna
PARKER, John H.
PIPKIN, John J.
ROBINSON, D.
RODRIGUEZ, Anthony
SPERLING, Kevin
SZOSTKIEWICZ
VENCZEL, Dean
WHITE, William
WILBANKS, Jody



Mineman First Class Petty Officers Henry and Katherine Filter

HUSBAND, WIFE MAKE CHIEF

Story, photos by Mike Antoine

Henry and Katherine Filter have many things in common, besides being married to each other. They both enjoy fishing and golfing. Both enlisted in the Navy in the '80s. Both are members of the mine warfare community, and both work at the "Mine Warfare Center of Excellence." Now they have something else in common, both are chief petty officer selectees. The road to this milestone in their careers was well worth it to these two.

Henry, a native of Tracy, Minn., enlisted in the Navy in June 1984, because the idea of travel appealed to him. He'd spent most of his career in the boatswain's mate community, but converted into the Mineman rating in October 2000, hoping that advancement opportunities would be better. He's now convinced they are.

For Katherine, a native of Cleveland, Ohio, her desire to travel and her love of the ocean led her to enlist in the Navy in August 1983. She worked in the storekeeper rating her first three years in the sea service, but decided to strike for the Mineman rating after having been "exposed to the ordnance field" while serving in her storekeeper rating.

Katherine was serving as an instructor at Ingleside's Mine Warfare Training Center when the opportunity presented itself to serve as one of the first females aboard USS Cormorant (MHC 57). "I voluntarily ended my shore duty to get on the ship," she said, a move that in her words made the difference in her being selected for chief.

While waiting for the results from the CPO selection board, the Filters weren't losing any sleep worrying about the results. "I would have been just as happy if he'd made it and I didn't. And the feeling was vice versa," Katherine said. Katherine was the first to learn the good news. Her commanding officer notified her at home by phone. Henry learned of his selection the following day in the middle of a class he was teaching.

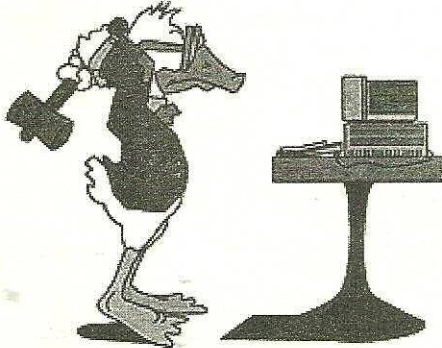
"We were both in shock at that point," Katherine smiled.

Making chief has made the couple rethink their future.

"I might stay in longer now," said Katherine. "I think I'd like to make senior chief before I retire."

Henry, who just recently reenlisted for four more years of service, says he wants to get some more qualifications in his record and try to pick up E-8.

Oh, and there's one more thing the Filters have in common. They both agree this is the biggest milestone in their naval careers.



Editor's Notes

Greetings! I am Bill Fortner, your new Dashpot editor. After having shamelessly bribed John Loonam with wealth untold to grudgingly relinquish the position and having gloriously triumphed over a vast array of clamoring contenders, I feel most fortunate to have been selected to fill this prestigious position within the AOM.

Expect the first few issues of the Dashpot to have somewhat less than the meticulous formatting provided by John. I am learning desktop publishing from the ground up and I ask that you to bear with me. I hope to continue the fine content you have come to expect and, perhaps, add a little as the learning curve begins to flatten and I get more proficient at browbeating and strong-arming potential contributors.

In all seriousness, I truly am honored to serve in this capacity and pledge my best. Feel free to contact me by e-mail, snail mail, or phone to submit articles of interest to the mineman community. The pertinent contact data is listed in the masthead on page 2. I prefer e-mail as that format is easily recorded and transfers more directly into my filing system. Photos of current events are most welcome and add visual interest to an article. Send them if you have them and try to have them to send. I can deal with almost any kind of image.

You will note that there are few referral pages in this issue. Whenever possible, articles will be run nose to tail. When you reach the bottom of a column, the story should continue at the top of the next.

While the Dashpot is the informational newsletter of the AOM, which has a lofty and serious mission, you may, however, henceforth be subjected to the odd outburst of subtle humor on occasion. Do not be alarmed. It is entirely intentional.

ROGUES, RASCALS, AND RENEGADES

Disclaimer. For the active duty Minemen, do not attempt to duplicate these events at your duty station. The feats of daring-do recounted in this column reflects a different time and a different Navy. Much has changed since then. It was a time before you were wearing disposable pants; a time when giants inhabited the land and most trod the decks of mineships.

There were several great inputs for the new column and I would like to thank all the contributors. As space permits, I will try to include them all. Please be patient. The first article in what I hope will be a continuing saga of the lighter side of the Mineforce comes from Phil Dechene.

Hi Bill,

I don't know who it was that chopped up the marline and put it in his sandwich, but I can picture his face, as I was his instructor when the incident occurred. My fading memory thinks his last name started with a B.

I was teaching the MK 56/57 B class in the hanger at the school in Charleston. (Good lord I had forgotten about the seaplane hanger until you made me think of it while trying to recall the "marline incident") As Minemen we really did do with what was available didn't we? Remember the cubicles (classrooms) in the hanger? In the MK56/57 classroom we had a hole in the overhead where we had hung a chain-fall so we could marry the case to the anchor.

Sorry about digressing. Back to the marlin incident. As I, recall the student liked cucumber sandwiches with the cucumbers drowned in mayonnaise. He brought them in from home or the mess hall and placed them in the refrigerator for later consumption. For several days running when he went to get his sandwich it was gone. I think he either knew or at least suspected who it was.

We had a spool of marline in the classroom because a length of marline was used to secure the safety pin that held the mooring arm in the unlocked position until the case was married to the anchor. (I had forgotten about marline until you brought it up)

Anyway, the student decided that if he chopped up the marline into real fine

fibers and mixed it into the mayo the thief would not notice until it was too late and he was running for the head later in the day. From what I heard later it worked.

If you remember, marline had an odor that was unpleasant (unless you were a bos'n) and it had a respectable range. I believed it was the same student with the sandwich that tied a loop of marline on the belt loop of another student that was in a car pool with other students. It was reported that on the way home the student with the marline on the belt loop stated, "That marline stinks so bad you just can't get away from it. I can still smell the damn stuff." I lived with it every working day so I must have become immune to it.

Well maybe this input will jog someone else's memory that has more details.

Phil

And Norman Wicke provided this tantalizing look into the excruciatingly drab and humdrum life of Minemen in Japan.

Bill,

I'm having a slow day. Have you ever heard of the weekend duty section water-skiing behind the Mike boat off Azuma Island in Yokosuka, 1969-70 time frame. I know it happened at least once. They took the governors off the engines so it would go faster.

Norm

For Pete Mirich: The next issue's Rogues column will be devoted entirely to you ... EVERYBODY has been ratted you out. Uh huh, I have a couple of Pete Mirich stories myself. ;^)

Thought For Today

Perish the thought, but I think we might consider adopting one policy espoused by the United States Marines. It has often been said, "Once a Marine, always a Marine." Should not this thinking also apply to Minemen? Perhaps we should consider striking the term "Ex-Mineman" from our lexicon.



FROM THE MAILBAG

The AOM received a letter of gratitude from the Naval Post Graduate School at Monterey, CA. Contents of the letter is as follows:

Gentlemen,

I am writing to acknowledge, with gratitude, your recent donation of a copy of the book U.S. Naval Mines and the Minemen: A History to the Dudley Knox Library:

The donation of this material to our collection assists us in building and maintaining a more valuable resource of materials to support our students and faculty at the Naval Post Graduate School. It also allows us to provide services to other students and scholars from Monterey Peninsula and the Navy, as well as civilian researchers from all over the United States who use our collections. We very much appreciate your assistance in enabling us to build a stronger library.

An attractive gift plate bearing the name of your Association will be mounted inside the cover of the donated book.

Signed: Sincerely, Maxine H Reneker, Associate Provost for Library and Information Resources, and Library Director.

Ed Oyer sent a letter dated June 7, 2001. The contents of that letter are as follows:

One and all, greetings:

Enclosed please find remittance for two years dues.

John still doing a great job on the Dashpot. I especially enjoy the reflections – lest we forget.

I doubt I'll be in Reno as summer months are busy with family. I have suggested before that the fall months might be better – maybe take another look at this.

Been busy writing as usual with some publications, e.g. "Proceedings" and letters to the editor – two pending at the "Proceedings," and a short story about my visit to the Wisconsin.

Of course I still ping on Congress about our LACK of medical care – this "so called" "Tricare for Life" is not the complete answer. Of course our litigation was upheld and remanded BACK for settlement. I hope I get my justice before I die and, if not, my sons and grandson will carry on.

A good sign – at our local Memorial Day Service we had over 500 people – the most ever and more teenagers than ever before. Dress Blues had to be let out a TAD, but still comfortable. I've convinced others to dress out as well.

Looking forward to next year.

Warmest and best wishes, Ed Oyer ... PS Maybe the Dashpot should have some data on the memorial to be at the old Naval Base. "Bones" will be represented there.

Henry Wolf (MN No. 1172) sent this note:

Hi Curtis,

Enclosed find a check for my Aug. 2002 – Aug. 2002 dues.

I won't be able to attend the Reunion this year (again).

I woke up on the 14th. I passed out 3 times, when I woke up the house was full of paramedics and cops. At hospital had tests run and pacemaker implant also a cast was put on my left wrist. I broke (it) during one of my spells.

It makes me very mad that I can't make

the reunion this time because it is so close, about 450 miles. Well, I hope to make it sometime.

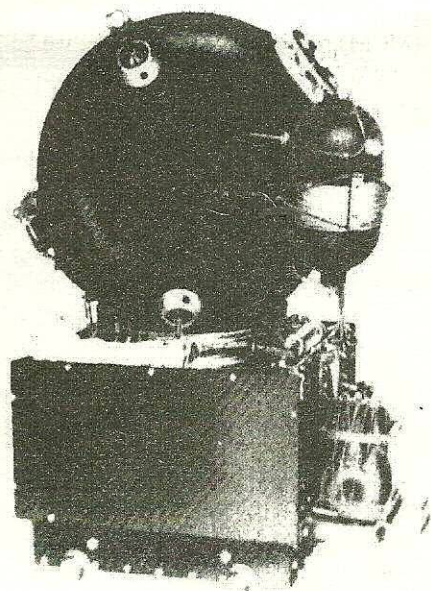
You guys have a good time.

Best Regards, Hank

Wesley Billington sent this request for memorabilia:

I am a Vet. WWII. I have a hobby collecting pins & patches of WWII etc. I am trying to fulfill my wife's wishes by keeping up with my hobby. I miss my wife dearly due to cancer. If you wish to donate anything at all would you be so kind to send it in a manila envelope because I have received pins and patches damaged and also missing from regular envelopes.

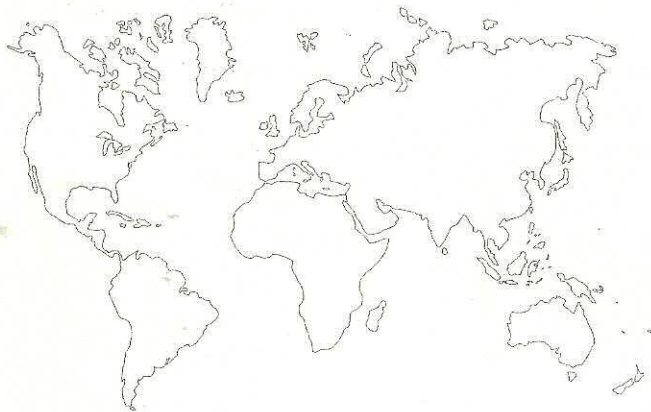
Thank you. Wesley Billington, P.O. Box 857, Johnstown, NY 12095



NEXT ARTICLE

DUE DATE

1 DECEMBER 2001



SOME NAVY OFFICIALS WANT SERVICE TO BUY NEW AND BETTER SEA MINES

By Ron Swart

This publication "inside the navy" quoted me after a speech I made at a seminar on mine warfare a couple weeks ago... thought you'd want to know what I'm up to these days... Ron

This article talks about U.S. Navy sea mines. When the Navy finally began to focus on MCM in the early 90s, OPNAV gutted the mining program to pay for Mine Countermeasures (MCM) research. A decade ago we had a fairly robust mining program. Today the mining program is in deep trouble. Many experts retired without younger engineers coming in behind them to continue the science (and art) of mine design.

Inside the Navy

SOME NAVY OFFICIALS WANT SERVICE TO BUY NEW AND BETTER SEA MINES

Date: August 6, 2001 -

PANAMA CITY, FL — Senior Navy leaders plan to push soon for Navy Department endorsement of a plan to buy a new generation of naval mines that will fill a looming inventory gap and provide weapons that can be delivered more safely and efficiently, according to several Navy officials here.

The Navy has four classes of active mines in its inventory, three of which are scheduled to leave service soon. Despite significant institutional obstacles facing the mine warfare community in getting top-level endorsement of buying new mines, officials here said it is time to make the effort.

Rear Adm. Mike Sharp, program executive officer for mine and undersea warfare, said he has learned during the first six months of his job the service should turn some of its current attention on countermine systems to a more active role in buying live mines. He said it is unrealistic to assume the service can buy mines made in other countries, so it needs to begin re-establishing a mine-producing capability in the United States.

"The input I've gotten is yes, we truly need to have our own

mines," Sharp said here. "Well I'm here to tell you, if we don't do something, we won't have our own mines."

Almost all of the nearly three dozen speakers here at last month's Mine Warfare Association summer regional conference focused on the platforms and systems used to find and blow up enemy mines that threaten Navy ships. However, Sharp and other officials said the service needs to realize its supply of "offensive" mines is dwindling and will not be sufficient to support potential Navy mining missions in enemy waters 10 years from now.

The Navy's sea mine supply consists of the following weapons: the 2,000-pound Mark 56 anti-submarine, air-delivered moored mine; the 2,400-pound Mark 60 Captor air-, submarine- or surface-delivered moored mine; the 500- to 2,000-pound Mark 62, 63, 64 and 65 Quickstrike air-delivered bottom mines; and the 1,700-pound Mark 67 Submarine Launched Mobile Mine (a submarine-laid bottom mine).

The Mark 56 and Captor will leave service this year, Sharp said, and the SLMM is "really on its last leg" after being sustained in the Navy's fiscal year 2002 program objective memorandum process through 2010. The service had looked at buying an "Improved" SLMM with the Australian navy, but that effort is dead. With the SLMM only good for a few more years, the Quickstrike will be the only active mine in the service's fleet after 2010, Sharp said.

He said the Quickstrike has some limitations, though, such as the requirement to drop it from relatively low-flying and slow aircraft exposed to enemy fire. In fact, the only American mining mission in the 1991 Persian Gulf War ended in a U.S. plane being shot down and its pilot killed, officials here said, which punctuates the danger of laying a minefield in enemy territory.

Cdr. Ron Swart, commanding officer of the Navy's Mobile Mine Assembly Group in Corpus Christi, TX, said here that the mining community has several challenges facing it, not the least of which is negative public perception on the issue of mines.

Although Swart called active mines a "humane way of doing coercive persuasion," he acknowledged, "it's clear that mines are not acceptable in the broad public view."

John Pike, a defense expert and head of the think tank GlobalSecurity.org, said in a telephone interview with Inside the Navy he does not think sea-based mines suffer the same kind of public image problem as land mines, which are the subject of intense public scrutiny, cleanup efforts and political pressure for discontinuing their use because of the unintended injuries they inflict on innocent civilians.

"Except for the fact you spell them with the same letters, it's a completely different weapon," Pike said of land mines and sea mines. Navy officials who spoke here, though, expressed concerns that the American public may not differentiate between the two as readily.

"I think what we suffer from is a [public relations] problem," said Capt. Gary Belcher, commander of the Mine Warfare Training Center in Ingleside, TX, during an open discussion here. "We're collateral-damaged from the Princess Diana

effect. Maybe we have to work that side. Maybe they get to be called something different."

The "Princess Diana effect" Belcher mentioned refers to the public work the late British princess did on behalf of land mine victims in efforts to rid the world of the weapons. Pike noted that while sea mines can cause problems for commercial vessels that inadvertently travel in their path, the United States is required to clear any sea mines it lays once a conflict is over, and the naval mine community is not facing the public relations challenges of land mine-laying countries.

Officials with the United Nations and Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation, which play active roles in the anti-land mine debate, said their organizations have not taken a stance on naval mines and that the two weapons are generally considered to be different systems that bring up different issues.

Swart of the mobile mine group in Texas said the Navy "has some issues with delivery" of mines in that there is not much focus put on the practice during the training cycle of aircraft carrier battle groups. He also said the retirement of the SLMM, Captor and Mark 56 will leave only a modest shallow-water mining capability beyond 2010.

"We will maintain a fairly capable, although somewhat difficult to deliver, maritime mine stockpile for the foreseeable future," Swart said. "We're going to have some gaps with our capability."

Sharp, the mine PEO, said he is working with officials in the expeditionary warfare requirements branch (N75) on a mining plan to present to Navy "corporate leadership" by the end of the year to determine "whether to continue with a Navy mining effort or not." A Navy spokeswoman said the service has a requirement to maintain a naval mining effort and that its aging supply of mines could require an analysis of whether to buy more in the near future. A Joint Staff official said the Joint Staff does not have an official position on naval mines, for the requirement to buy more has not made it that far yet.

Capt. Terry Haid, the acting deputy assistant secretary of the Navy for mine and undersea warfare, said during the discussion here the Navy might have a "small window of opportunity" to win approval from the Defense Department for buying more sea mines. He said that during his work with groups crafting the terms of reference for the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review, he noticed much discussion on distributed sensors, unmanned vehicles and autonomous vehicles that could be read to imply potential support for a more robust mining capability. The window of opportunity may be limited, though, as "none of our discussions ever centered around the littoral sea mine," Haid said.

Swart said the mining community faces several perennial challenges in getting more mines bought and delivered to the fleet: a "lack of visibility" of mines as a warfare option; little enthusiasm among military leaders to use them because of the logistical challenges and risks associated with them; no single "owner community" within the Navy that lobbies for their funding; a lack of control in the minefield that keeps a "man in the loop"; and international rules of engagement that limit mines' use.

Swart and Sharp said the ROE issue could be addressed by a more open dialogue about sea mines. They said the weapons could be used under international rules and laws, just as

weapons like the Tomahawk cruise missile are publicly accepted despite their violence and potential for collateral damage. They also said technological advances are leading to the development of remote-controlled and safer mines that could allay fears about their potential collateral damage.

"I think that there's some possibilities here with naval mines that really stretch our imaginations," Swart said. "I would submit to you we should consider this as a very viable weapons system."

Dave Everhart, leader of the Navy's mining technology office at the Coastal Systems Station here, described several science and technology programs that could lead to more advanced mine-laying capabilities within the next 10 to 20 years.

He said the limited robustness of current sea-based sensor networks hinders the development of some envisioned new mine networks. However, Everhart said CSS is working on a bottom-anchored torpedo tube that would be part of a sensor network. The system, which he said could be fielded by 2010, would use a network of sensors to detect the presence of an enemy vessel, and then launch its torpedo, which would be considered a mine in this case, from an anchored launching tube.

A test two months ago of the torpedo and sensor network in 150 feet of water was partially successful, Everhart said, and researchers plan to continue developing the system over the next several years.

Sharp espoused the concept of the United States laying mine fields that can be remotely controlled as a means of deterring an adversary. "Why not put the mines in place, covertly, years in advance, with remote controlled systems, such that when hostilities break out, we activate the system, and [the enemy is] not allowed in there in the first place?" he asked. There is not a requirement now for the service to buy more mines, Sharp said, but it is his job to "put forward the technologies that stimulate some thought" on the issue.

The Navy cannot buy mines used by other countries because they are designed primarily to defend one's own shore, and are therefore deployed from the back of boats and not aircraft, Sharp said. "Does that fit into our needs? I don't think so. Are we ever going to mine our own coast? I hope not. Are we ever going to send surface ships in? I doubt it," he said.

He and other officials, including retired Rear Adm. Chuck Horne, a former commander of the Navy's mine warfare command, said the service could use sea mines to hem in an adversary, close off a choke point or slow commercial shipping to achieve a political or military end.

"The beauty of a mine is it's like a poker game," Horne said here. "You don't get medals for getting sunk by mines."

Pike of GlobalSecurity.org said the Navy's envisioned need for more mines is not entirely clear, given that the potential list of enemies such as Iraq, Iran and North Korea have very limited navies. He said the United States probably would have to "sell" the notion of using mines in war time on the notion of potentially facing China, because of its substantial navy and heavy reliance on shipping routes. — Christian Bohmfalk

source: Inside the Navydate: August 6, 2001issue: Vol. 14.



CDR R. E. SWART

Commander, Mobile Mine Assembly Group

Greetings from South Texas. This has been one of the busiest summers in memory, for me and the COMOMAG staff. Changes of Command and retirements were mixed in with seminars and meetings galore... and a trip to the annual Korean-American exercise, Ulchi Focus Lens to cap it all off. Here are some highlights...

- Briefs, briefs and more briefs: We try not to miss any opportunities to brief Flag and General officers and there were 16 of them attending the MINWARA summer seminar in Panama City this past July, including a dinner talk by our CNO Admiral Vern Clark, addresses from the current CINCLANTFLT, Admiral Bob Natter and the kick-off address from Admiral (ret) Stan Arthur. My talk was on maritime mining (what else?) and it seemed to go over well.
- While aboard USS Blue Ridge in August, I had a chance to update VADM Metzger and his Task Force Flag Officers on the state of our mine stockpile along with our ability to deliver it. As in previous briefs, I provided a glimpse into the future of the sea mine and its role in the undersea common operating picture.
- Most recently, I had the opportunity to brief VADM Al Konetzni, Deputy CINCLANTFLT, who provided some valuable feedback on how to move forward with mining mission needs in the year ahead. All in all, there seems to be an active interest and awareness of sea mines at the highest levels of our leadership.

As always, September is when we wrap up the annual budget drill. This has been a particularly challenging year, funding-wise, but thanks to the efforts of each Unit and the Operations and Supply departments on staff, we have finally figured out about what it costs us to operate each year, making

our budget projections even more valid. This proved to be harder than one would think, with hidden costs and expenses all over the place. FY-02 should be a much more stable year for everyone.

MN1 Dennis Moxley has developed a comprehensive computer-based data management system for MOMAG, that will incorporate financial projections based upon expected operations, fleet exercise and training support requirements, post exercise data, service mine maintenance schedules, Unit and Detachment readiness status and so forth. We couldn't have afforded the cost of contracting for this work, which we hope, once installed, will revolutionize our filing system. We'll be ready to launch the program sometime later this fall.

COMOMAG has changed its name from "Commanding Officer" back to Commander and the XO becomes (once again) the Chief Staff Officer (CSO), effective 15 Sep 2001.

Welcome aboard to Mr. Jay Burton (MNC RET) our new Training and Reserve desk on staff. We're glad to have you back aboard, Jay!

New CO/OIC:

LCDR (sel) Theresa Wright,
CO, MOMAU 10, Kadana, Japan

LCDR (sel) Larry Kelly,
CO MOMAU 5, Sigonella, Italy

LCDR (sel) Kevin Miller,
CO, MOMAU 1, Seal Beach, CA

LT Lowell Kurz,
CO MOMAU 8, Guam (October 2001)

LT (jg) Steve Wanglin,
OIC MOMAD Misawa, Japan

New LCDR Promotions (former Lieutenants Forever):

LCDR Jim Washington,
Operations Officer, COMOMAG Staff

LCDR Sandra Oliver,
Plans and Requirements Officer, COMOMAG Staff

Last on my list of reportable items... CDR Terry Auberry has consented to relieve me in September 2002, releasing me of that major concern. Thanks Terry!

That's it for this report...

CDR Ron Swart
COMOMAG



MOMAU ONE SEAL BEACH

By LT Kevin Miller

CO's CORNER. Life here at MOMAU One is going great...we have great weather, a great facility, and a great crew! What more can one expect. First off, I want to wish fair winds and following seas to LCDR Ed Simmons and his wife Yoshi. I relieved Ed on 3 August during a combined Change of Command and retirement ceremony. It was a splendid military event that showcased all of the time-honored traditions. Ed is still in the area if you wish to stop in and congratulate him on his completion of thirty years service to our country.

It is my pleasure to introduce and welcome our new members and their families with a hearty HAIL to: MNSN Travis Baxter his wife April and Alex, his son; MNSN Michael Carpioglio, his wife Jennifer, sons Vincent and Michael, and daughters Jessica and Alexis; MNSN Jason Hughes and his wife Sabrina; MNSN's Shane Huddleston, Shane Stone, Nicolas Resch, and Donal Meade, all arriving from Mine Warfare Training Center, Ingleside. Additionally, IT2 (SW) Sheila Loe joined our team. Her last command was COMNAVFOR KOREA.

We also have had three marriages since the last Dashpot. Please join me in wishing congratulations, fair seas, and bright skies to MN2 Siangco and his bride Leah (wedded 30 Jun 01), MN3 Atkeson and her groom Chad (wedded 4 Aug 01), and MN3 Gardner and his bride Amanda (wedded 2 Sep 01).

AWARDS & RECOGNITION. Our recent Sailor of the Quarter and Blue Jacket of the Quarter boards have noted the fine achievements and efforts of MN3 Atkeson and MN3 Beal. They have earned Letters of Commendation and are surely rising stars in our community.

I would like to thank CAPT Bruno (CO NAVWEPSTA SEAL BEACH) and Lt. Col. Smith (CO 5th Battalion 14th Marines) for providing the exceptional Color Guard for the Change of Command/Retirement ceremony. BM1 Hauabrook, SH2 Shneider, SKSA Ray, SGT Castro, SGT Banuelos, and LCPL Gonzalez received Letters of Appreciation for their superb performance.

Many thanks to my MWR Committee and the Chairman, MN3 Atkeson, for putting together the Ice Cream Social fund raising event and our recent Hail and Farewell held at Barney's Beach House. The numerous spent paper towels and full bellies evidenced PO Atkeson's fame on the grill.

YN2 (SW) Roland Coates and MN3 Dewey Noble earned Good Conduct Medals - Congratulations to all.

RE-ENLISTEMENTS. Congratulations to YN2 (SW) Coates on his re-enlistment of two years. PO Coates' ceremony was held on our Quarterdeck with all hands in attendance.

IN TARGET QUEUE. Our sailors have been working smartly in preparation for our upcoming Explosive Safety Inspection and completing the requisite End of the Year Reports. I am certain that all the efforts will pay great dividends. MWR has resumed our schedule of Hollywood taping attendance, with the next scheduled for the afternoon of 19 September. These worthwhile events help fund our MWR

programs. Additionally on the 19th, we are looking forward to the visit of COMINEWARCOM CMC to address our sailors and see how we do it in Sunny Southern California. MWR is also preparing numerous fund raising events and for our upcoming Command Holiday Party.

Editor's Note: Due to scheduling conflicts, the Summer input from MOMAU One did not make it in the Summer Issue of the Dashpot. To provide the news from MOMAU One and accord their sailors the recognition intended the article is being included in this issue.

MOMAU ONE (Summer)

By LCDR Ed Simmons

MOMAU ONE NEWS - CO CORNER. Life here at MOMAU One is great...we have great weather, and of course, a great crew! What more can one ask for. I will be retiring here shortly and I just want to say thank you to everyone that I have worked with, it has been a pleasure. LT Miller will be relieving me, he is reporting from the USS ARCTIC (AOE 8). Most Respectfully, LCDR Ed Simmons

HAILS & FAREWELL. Welcome to MNC (SW) Greg Williams who reported onboard from MOMAU Eight Guam, MN1 (SW) Frank Mendenhall who reported onboard from ATG, Ingleside TX, MN2 (SW) Matthew Heyer who reported from USS Champion, MN3 Sara Petree who reported from MOMAU Ten Okinawa, MNSN Jesus Rivera who reported onboard from MN"A" School at Ingleside TX, and YNSN Severin who is reporting from the USS COWPENS, which is homeported in Japan. YNC James Telford departed in June and reports to COMFLEACT Chinhae Korea in July 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 YN2 (SW) Roland Coates on his selection as Sailor of the Quarter for the First Quarter. Bluejacket of the Quarter winner was MN3 Dewey Noble. Both sailors are exceptional assets and are representative of the best we have! Navy & Marine Corps Achievement Medals were presented to MN2 Laura Arthur (1st) and MN3 Christine Beal (1st). CO Letter of Commendations presented to YN2 (SW) Roland Coates and MN3 Dewey Noble for superior performance of duty. CO Letter of Appreciation for NWAS Corona Armed Forces Day was presented to MN2 Laura Arthur, MN3 John Gardner and MN3 Christine Beal. Good Conduct Awards were presented to MN3 Sara Petree (1st). Advancements - Congratulations to MNSN Jose Avelar, MNSN David Baker and MNSN Ralph Maldonado on their selection to MN3.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT. MOMAU One and the Destroyer Escort Association (DESA) held it's annual Children's Easter Party Potluck Luncheon at the command. Another resounding success of fun and interaction! Food was delicious, Easter Bunny provided the kids GREAT Easter baskets and we also had an Easter Egg Hunt. DESA has sponsored the Children's Easter Party for our sailors for some time now. On behalf of my crew, I want to thank these wonderful ex-sailors and their spouses for making Easter festive and one to remember. They truly have given from their heart and it is wonderful to get together on occasions such as this!! NWAS Corona Armed Forces Day, Saturday, May 19, 2001.

MOMAU THREE EARLE

By MNC Brieno

Greetings from the men and women of MOMAU Three.

I am happy to report that we successfully completed COMOMAG's Administrative Quality Review. In addition to supporting numerous Funeral Honor Details, Waterborne Security and Joint Task Force Exercises, We continue to work the MK 56 demilitarization and regular maintenance.

Congratulations go out to MN2 Ramon and MNSA Wheat who were selected as Senior and Junior Sailors of the Quarter. MNSA Wheat also received a letter of Commendation from Commanding Officer MOMAU THREE for outstanding management of the tool control program specifically recognized during the Quality Review.

We welcome IT2 Santiago who reported from the USS Trenton out of Little Creek VA and to MNSR Feeney who reports from the Mine Warfare Training Center in Texas. Both welcome additions to the command. We recently said farewell to MNSA Wheat who reports to school at the Mine Warfare Training Center then the USS Chief out of Ingleside. We wish him and his wife the best of luck.

MOMAU FIVE SIGONELLA

MNCM(SW) Mark Zinnel

Salve from Sigonella!

Summer seems to be dancing around the calendar this year at Sigonella, a little rain, sunshine, temps between mid 80s and 100s, green plants mixed with future fire hazards where ever you look, guess I should be happy Mt Etna is relatively calm.

We have effectively closed out our exercise season with the completion of Alcudra 2001, Damsel Fair 2001 and Arabian Gauntlet 2001. The away teams did a great job of getting ET mines in and out of the water, brought home most of the stuff they left with and managed to impress the customers enough to receive letters of appreciation for the jobs they did. Sent a recovery team to Norway to help out MOMAU Eleven with Blue Game 2001, the team reported excellent liberty and great support from the Norwegian Navy with the op. Waiting to see if anything new will come along this calendar year but keeping busy in the meantime with refurbishment, maintenance, and as always training.

Had a good session with our two Reserve units, NR MOMAU Six and NR MOMAU Seven in May, lots of great training and did a rehearsal for the MRCI set for this fall. Down side was this being the last trip for MNCM Jan Bays and MNCS Robert Gunn from Unit Six, both will be retired in December so figure the money crunchers won't allow a return trip in November for the MRCI.

By the time this is read, MNC Thomas "TJ" Kaiser will be a retired Sailor. The Medical Board decided he needed to be at home more than continuing his career, fortunately he had finished his twenty so we had a little ceremony and chased him out the gate. Not sure what his next career will be, he, Miss Rose and Zachary will be living in Bakersfield CA, hope to see

him again at some reunions down the road. MN2 Bernard Whack has retired after 20 Years, now resides in Orlando FL Bernard started his career as a Signalman, moved to Instrument Repairman and finally converted to Mineman.

MN1 Julie Porter was selected as our Sailor of the Quarter and MNSN Travis Ramsey was our Junior Sailor of the Quarter for 1Q01. MN2 Brian Plazola was selected as our Sailor of the Quarter and MNSN Nathan Krueger was our Junior Sailor of the Quarter for 2Q01. All have worked really hard for the command and stand head and shoulders above the crowd.

New arrivals are MN3 Wendy Sims returning for her second tour here from MOMAU Fourteen and MN3 Debra Spangler also from MOMAU Fourteen, guess the "A" School pipeline has been secured for the present. YN1 Lipsey is here, now our poor YN3 can relax a little. LT (LCDR Select) Larry Kelley has arrived from Bahrain as our new CO, LT Martin is now a USS Kennedy sailor out of Mayport FL! MN2(SW) Wayne Hinton just flew in from the USS Heron, this is his second visit to our fair island.

March Exam results are out and the following Sailors have added more chevrons or a new crow to their uniform sleeves: MN1(SW) (Select) Manuel Jimenez, MN2 (Select) Wendy Simms, MN2 (Select) Travis Hutchens, MN3 (Select) Rafnar Brito, MN3 (Select) Frederic Denson, MN3 (Select) Kevin Dielman, MN3 (Select) James Gipson, MN3 (Select) Nicholas House, MN3 (Select) Jonathon Reece, MN3 (Select) Ian Schaming, MN3 (Select) John Shewbruit and MN3 (Select) Lindsey Wohlgenuth. We are very proud of all our selectees!

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

MOMAD TWELVE MISAWA

By MN1 (SW) Anderson

Ka'nichi'Wa!! From the tip of the spear, here in wonderful Misawa.

It was a very productive summer and we are now bracing for winter. Fall is a specialtime of year here in the North of Japan. You have the Mikoshi festival and the Misawa Autumn Festival. On base, the Airforce will be sponsoring the Annual Special Olympics and the Navy is sponsoring the annual Boat Regatta!! We placed third two years running in the regatta, and are hoping to out distance our archrivals, the CB's, this year. Wish us Luck. As for the Special Olympics, several of our shipmates are sponsoring this event, helping out when and where we can, showing the Airforce true Navy Pride!

Welcome aboard to the JMSDF personnel from Ohminato, who are here to visit and watch an upgrade. We would like to wish MN3 Christopher Garner fair winds and following seas, as he departs us in October, heading for the USS SCOUT...haze grey and underway!!! Finally, MOMAD would like to send our deepest thanks to CDR Swart and LT Wright for their contribution to our flawless Change Of Charge ceremony! So, with the dog days of summer behind us, with all of our shipmates making it through the 101 critical days, we bask in the little sun left, and enjoy all the joys that Japanese autumn brings!

FromMisawa, wishing all the best, Happy Labor Day.

MOMAU FOURTEEN COMPLETES MISSION AT YORKTOWN

Courtesy of Mobile Mine Assembly Group Unit Fourteen

Another chapter in naval mine history closes with the disestablishment of Mobile Mine Assembly Group Unit 14 located at Naval Weapons Station Yorktown. The unit's primary mission was to provide service MK-60 Captors mines to CINCLANTFLT, CINCPACFLT, and CINCUSNAVEUR in support of individual theater war plans. As the only IMA worldwide, it was MOMAG Unit 14's responsibility to complete all maintenance actions for returning unserviceable assets due for maintenance worldwide.

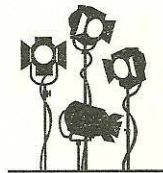
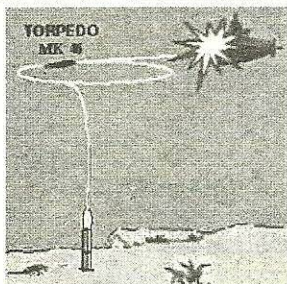
The ACaptor@ is a highly classified system that was designed to be used on any operational delivery platform from air, submarine, and surface assets and was considered to be the main deterrent to the Soviet submarine threat.

In 1976, the Navy asked Congress for funding to buy 480 of the lethal ACaptor@ mines initiating the birth of Mobile Mine Assembly Group (MOMAG), Unit 14. The unit would eventually have an inventory of 2,564 weapons.

On Oct 3, 1988, MOMAG Unit 14 was commissioned under the operational control of CINCLANTFLT. The crew was comprised of one officer and 43 enlisted personnel. It's been 26 years since the first 12 ACaptor Techs@ reported here after attending class at Goodyear Aerospace in Akron, Ohio. In the beginning, and subsequently for the first 10 years, the Captor IMA operated under the control of the Commanding Officer, Naval Weapons Station Yorktown. The first officer assigned served as a department head of mines division and reported to the ordnance officer. In those years it was known as Captor IMA and the weapons system saw a lot of changes and upgrades. Naval Mine Warfare Engineering Activity supervised the repair and overhaul work being performed by 30 civil service ordnance technicians on base at the Captor Depot.

The CNO POM 98 decision to remove the MK-60 from service started the ball rolling in the demilitarization arena and notification came in that year to lay the MK-60 to rest. It has taken three years to process 2,564 weapons and dispose of 6,000 line items of mine material.

On April 23, 2001, the last MK-60 Captor mine passed across the assembly stands heading for the U.S. Army demilitarization depot at Toole, Utah.



MINEMEN IN THE SPOTLIGHT

MINEMAN OF THE YEAR

FM COMINELWARCOM CORPUS CHRISTI TX//01//

SUBJ/ANNOUNCEMENT OF MINEMAN OF THE YEAR//

RMKS/1. COMMANDER, MINE WARFARE COMMAND IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THE 2001 MINEMAN OF THE YEAR:

A. MN1(SW) MICHAEL GONZALES, USS WARRIOR, ACTIVE DUTY MINEMAN OF THE YEAR. PETTY OFFICER GONZALES IS ALSO WARRIOR'S SAILOR OF THE YEAR.

B. MN1 JOEL R. BROWER, USNR, NAVAL RESERVE MOBILE MINE ASSEMBLY UNIT THREE, RESERVE MINEMAN OF THE YEAR. PETTY OFFICER BROWER SERVES AS A TRAINING OFFICER AT UNIT THREE.

2. THE COMPETITION FOR THIS YEAR'S SELECTION WAS PARTICULARLY KEEN. THE MINEMEN SELECTED REPRESENT THE BEST IN HIGHLY COMPETITIVE GROUP. CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL NOMINEES AND BEST WISHES FOR CONTINUED SUCCESS.//

SIMA CPOA BRIGHTENS CHILDREN'S DAY

By JO1 Lupe Saenz, USNR

Patients at Driscoll Children's Hospital are \$450 richer thanks to some Ingleside chief petty officers. DCC (SW) Matt Hostler and GSCC (SW) Jamie Felgenhauer recently presented a check to Sonja Eddleman, RN, program director of CARE Team and Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners office, on behalf of the Shore Intermediate Maintenance Activity (SIMA) Chief Petty Officers Association.

"This is really nice for these gentlemen to think of our children in this hospital," Eddleman said. "We greatly appreciate it and thank them for it."

The hospital unit plans to use the money to buy "Beanie Babies" and warm quilts for the young patients to enjoy. Why did SIMA CPOA donate to the hospital?

"Every year we try to pick a charity that supports an entire region of South Texas," Felgenhauer said. "This year being our third annual event, we decided to give it to the children's hospital."

Felgenhauer said that the money was raised through a golf tournament where more than 80 people participated, including many SIMA Sailors.

"The core people who put together the fundraiser includes our organization president, DCCS Robert Thomas, along with MNCS Pete Vasquez, HTCS Mike Barfield, ICC Chris Ware, MNC Todd Harnish, and MRCS James Parks," Felgenhauer said.

The SIMA CPOA, currently comprised of about 40 members, is already planning next year's event to support another local charity.

SIMA is based at NAVSTA Ingleside, Texas, the Navy's "Mine Warfare Center of Excellence."

CHAMPION SAILORS EXCEED THE CHALLENGE

By Fifi Kieschnick

Their motto is "We accept the challenge," but in this instance USS Champion (MCM 4) Sailors exceeded everyone's expectations.

A recreational area at the Aransas Pass Nursing and Convalescent Center was dedicated "Champion Park" on July 27 in honor of USS Champion Sailors.

For the past several months, Champion Sailors have worked more than 500 hours to make the grounds a wheelchair-accessible park for the Center's residents to enjoy. They cleared and leveled the ground, made Wheelchair-accessible paths from rubber conveyor-belt material, made wheelchair-accessible picnic tables, benches and a stage.

"Chief Fish gave me a drawing of a modest project that would take a little of the crew's time during the week and on weekends," said LCDR Kenneth Williams, Champion's commanding officer. "But, the drawing got bigger and bigger and bigger."

Champion's MNC (SW) Cecil Fish not only spear-headed the project; he came up with the idea. The Brownwood, Texas, native frequents the nursing home, and plays guitar and sings to the residents. He thought the abandoned lot adjacent to the Center would make a nice recreation area for the residents. When his ship went into the yards in April, he approached his CO with his "drawing" and said he thought it would be a good community project for Champion Sailors. The original concept was for a recreation area, but then wheel-chair accessible picnic tables were designed and built, then a stage, then a barbecue pit ...

"I never thought such a lovely park could be created," said the local mayor, Karen Gayle, at the dedication ceremony. She said she used to visit her grandfather when he was a resident of the Center. "I never thought there was a need or that

it could be done," she added, "but these Navy 'strangers' have come in and adopted us."

The Sailors will continue to add to the park. They plan to build a privacy fence and a gazebo, put in ponds, plant flowers, hang feeders to attract squirrels and birds, and provide upkeep.

The project has grown into a community effort. Besides local donations of material, more than \$1,500 has been donated from various community members and organizations.

USS Champion is homeported at Naval Station Ingleside, Texas, the Navy's "Mine Warfare Center of Excellence."

PATRIOT AND GUARDIAN PARTICIPATE IN FIRST EVER MCM PASSEX

By COMCMDIV 11 Public Affairs

Aboard USS PATRIOT AND USS GUARDIAN, South China Sea – Mine Countermeasures Division ELEVEN (COMCMDIV 11), USS Patriot (MCM-7), and USS Guardian (MCM-5) departed Okinawa May 28 to participate in the first Western Pacific Mine Countermeasure (MCM) exercise. While en route to Singapore, Patriot and Guardian rendezvoused with two Japan Maritime Self Defense Force ships, JDS Bungo (MST 464) and JDS Yaeyama (MSO-301) in the first joint Passing Exercise (PASSEX) between United States and Japan mine countermeasures ships.

In a PASSEX, two navies travel together from one place to another while conducting tactical maneuvering, operations, communications drills and refueling at sea. The PASSEX occurred between June 1 and 5 in the South China Sea.

"Bungo and Yaeyama worked with their counterparts, Patriot and Guardian in all areas of task group operations — including four replenishments at sea with JDS Bungo, formation steaming, communications drills, and tactical signals," said Cmdr. Terry Miller, Commander, Mine Countermeasures Division 11.

"Working with our coalition forces in open ocean steaming for an extended period improves our combined operating procedures, interoperability and readiness," said Miller. "We can operate in any ocean anywhere in the world with our JMSDF partners."

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Mine Warfare Exercise Success Lies With Multinational Cooperation

By LTJG John Perkins

SINGAPORE — During an exercise focusing on the mission of keeping sea-lanes open for commercial shipping, the real underlying significance was the cooperation of the 14 countries involved.

The exercise, the first Western Pacific Mine Countermeasures Exercise (MCMEX) 2001, marked the first time that 13 Pacific Ocean-region countries and the United States came together in an exercise to maintain the safe navigation of international



SOUTH CHINA SEA, near Singapore — Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit 5 Detachment 51 Sailor, SK2 (EOD) Dave McGarry of Boynton Beach, Fla., is extracted from an exercise area in the South China Sea by a CH-46 "Sea Knight" helicopter in front of USS Inchon (MCS 12) during First Western Pacific Mine Countermeasures Exercise (MCMEX) 2001 June 18. MCMEX involved 14 countries, including the United States, in an effort to maintain safe navigation of international waterways by using mine hunting and disposal techniques of the participating navies. Hosted by Singapore, the exercise included participants from Australia, China, France, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Russia, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, United States, and Vietnam. (U.S. Navy Photo by IT2(EOD) Joshua D. Brown)

waterways by blending the mine hunting and disposal techniques of the various participating navies.

Hosted by Singapore June 11-22, the exercise included participants from Australia, China, France, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Russia, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, United States, and Vietnam.

U.S. participants in the exercise included the mine countermeasures command and control ship USS Inchon (MCS 12), based in Ingleside, Texas; and the Avenger-class mine countermeasures ships, USS Guardian (MCM 5) and USS Patriot (MCM 7), forward deployed to Sasebo, Japan. Other U.S. Navy units participating in the exercise were Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 15, from Corpus Christi, Texas; Helicopter Combat Support Squadron 6, from Norfolk, Va.; Explosives Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit Five, Detachment 53, from Guam; and EODMU Three, Detachment 51, based in San Diego, Calif.

With the commitment from so many regional countries, the exercise's overall commander, Republic of Singapore Navy Colonel Kevin Santa Maria said, "This exercise was able to build and foster common operational procedures that enhance regional cooperation in humanitarian mine-disposal efforts."

Strategically important to the Western Pacific countries, each year more than half the world's shipping tonnage is transported using Western Pacific sea lanes that provide a vital link to global commerce.

"This exercise has strengthened our region's collective ability to deal with one of the most pressing concerns of our time — safety of navigation," said Mr. David Lim, Singapore's Minister of State for Defense and Information and the Arts. "Our region is crisscrossed by many important sea lanes of communication that are essential for trade and shipping."

Significance of multinational cooperation

With so much commercial activity traveling through the Malacca and Singapore Straits, any type of disruptions to the sea lanes could have an immediate impact on the region's and the world's economy. Thus, placing a high level of importance on region's ability to affectively keep the waterways open.

According to Rear Adm. Jose Betancourt, Commander, Mine Warfare Command, "This is one of the most important exercises that has been conducted in the Western Pacific because all three aspects of mine countermeasures (MCM) are present. The MH-53s provide the aviation element, Explosive Ordnance Disposal divers make up the underway portion, and the work horses of MCM operations — the surface ships complete the triad."

The real benefit of having so many countries involved with the exercise is the interaction and understanding that takes place between the countries as they each learn how the other conducts MCM operations. "We have visited with and attended briefings with MCM sailors from the other nations playing in this exercise, learning how their ships operate and comparing

this to our standard routines and procedures, said Lt. Cmdr. Bernard Gately," commanding officer of USS Guardian (MCM 5).

As the cooperation between the countries grew, the ships also had an opportunity to test certain skills that are essential to conducting successful MCM operations. "Western Pacific MCMEX gave all the participants the opportunity to practice and refine mine hunting and mine sweeping skills that are critical to ensuring safe maritime shipping and transits," said Capt. Ralph Young, Commander of U.S. MCM participating forces and Commander, Mine Countermeasures Squadron 1.

It is not often that countries have come together and agreed to work toward a common goal. But according to Capt. Charles Smith, USS Inchon (MCS 12) commanding officer, the significance of this exercise rest with the abilities of the participating countries to come together and work toward a common objective. "It is rare for 14 nations to work together in such a way," he said.

Significance of U.S. participation

While the actual exercise location had worldwide implications, the U.S. forces presence and participation was significantly important as well. USS Inchon, the only MCM command and control ship in the world, is in the middle of its first deployment to the Western Pacific.

"The deployment of USS Inchon from the Gulf of Mexico to the Western Pacific demonstrates the American commitment to teamwork and regional cooperation in Southeast Asia and the Western Pacific," said Young. "USS Patriot (MCM-7) and USS Guardian, both forward deployed to Sasebo, Japan, reinforces our commitment to this region."

Not only was the United States presence significant, USS Inchon provided a unique capability to the exercise. "Inchon provides us a cohesive tactical command and control picture that can be transmitted to any regional commander so they can make an informed decisions how to deploy their assets," said Betancourt.

Just as important as Inchon's interaction with the other countries, the interactions between the U.S. ships provided additional benefits. With Inchon's first journey to the Pacific, this also marked the first opportunity for Patriot and Guardian to work with Inchon.

"This is the first time Guardian and Patriot have operated with the U.S. Navy's only MCM command and control ship," said Gately, USS Guardian's commanding officer. "Any experience we gain now will only help us in future contingency operations. I also think this exercise has given Inchon a chance to learn first hand the way naval operations are conducted with the forward deployed naval forces."

Real world atmosphere

As the 14 countries worked together and exercised the collective group's ability to keep one of the most important areas safe for commercial transit, the area and the exercise also provided

a real world atmosphere. "If this was in fact a real contingency, this is where our ships would be operating," said Santa Maria. "Even though the ships were in designated exercise areas, they still had to avoid commercial vessels and fishing boats throughout the tactical phase."

For the U.S. Sailors, the non-stop pace and daily taskings separate this exercise from the others. "Receiving our missions daily added a realistic element to the exercise," Lt. j.g. Aaron Copeland, USS Patriot combat information center officer. "Most exercises have a schedule we follow closely, but there were times during this exercise when Inchon tasked us to mine sweep a completely different area than originally planned," he said.

"Over the past months we have practiced multi-ship operations, ship handling skills, underway replenishments, and multiple extend periods of mine hunting and mine neutralization which



USS Guardian (MCM-5) and USS Patriot (MCM-7) both forward deployed from Sasebo, Japan, anchored pier-side in Singapore for the first Western Pacific Mine Countermeasures Exercise. The MCM exercise, which kicked off June 12, aimed to enhance regional cooperation among the 13 other countries participating. Approximately 1,200 U.S. Sailors took part in this first multinational MCM exercise held in the vicinity of Singapore. The exercise, which included USS Inchon (MCS-12), was completed June 22. (U.S. Navy photo by Lt. Vic Lopez)

have fully tasked all aspects of the ship's capabilities, said Gately. "However, this exercise has required us to execute these skills on a faster pace and in a couple of cases, simultaneously as we would have to do in a real world contingency operation."

As the exercise came to an end, all the countries involved were able to take one major theme with them – how they would fit in to a multinational contingency.

"We learned how the U.S. naval forces would integrate into a multinational real world MCM operation in the Western Pacific," said Young.



USS INCHON, HM 15 To Return From Western Pacific Deployment

By LT Marc Boyd

The South Texas-based USS Inchon (MCS 12) and Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 15 will return home this week after a nearly five-month deployment to the Western Pacific Ocean. . Friday, Aug. 31, seven MH-53E Sea Stallion helicopters from Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 15 (HM 15) will roar over the tarmac of Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, after spending the spring and summer aboard Inchon, participating in numerous mine countermeasures exercises around the Pacific.

Saturday, Sep. 1, USS Inchon returns to its homeport of Naval Station Ingleside, Texas. The 30-year-old ship, which was converted from an amphibious helicopter transport ship in 1994, is completing its second deployment as America's only mine countermeasures command and control ship. Inchon's last deployment, in 1999, sent the 20-ton ship to the Mediterranean and Adriatic Seas in support of Operation Shining Hope. This year, Inchon returned to the Western Pacific for the first time since 1973.

During the deployment, Sailors had a chance to put their specialized mine warfare skills to use in numerous mine countermeasures exercises with allies around the region. Most significantly was Inchon's participation in the First Western Pacific Mine Countermeasures Exercise hosted by Singapore.

The exercise replaced bilateral MCM training previously conducted between the U.S. and Singapore. The focus of this year's cooperative exercise was to underscore maritime safety

while practicing sea mine detection, identification and disposal procedures to keep important international waterways open.

For the first time, 15 countries participated in the MCMEX, including Australia, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, Russia, South Korea, Thailand, Tonga, and Vietnam.

"Western Pacific MCMEX gave all the participants the opportunity to practice and refine mine hunting and mine sweeping skills that are critical to ensuring safe maritime shipping and transits," said Capt. Randolph Young, Commander of U.S. MCM forces participating in the exercise and Commander, Mine Countermeasures Squadron 1.

According to Rear Adm. Jose Betancourt, Commander, Mine Warfare Command, "This was one of the most important exercises that has been conducted in the Western Pacific because all three aspects of mine countermeasures are present. The MH-53s provided the aviation element, Explosive Ordnance Disposal divers made up the undersea portion, and the work horses of MCM operations — the surface ships, completed the triad."

While the exercise was important, it was only one of the many accomplishments for the Inchon/HM 15-Blackhawk team. The interaction between the other countries and between various elements of the MCM triad was the focus Inchon Commanding Officer, Capt. Chuck Smith's remarks to the crew before returning to port.

"We have made history with this deployment. Our stellar performances during exercises, the obstacles we overcame, and all our objectives met, to say this was a successful cruise would be an understatement," Capt. Smith exclaimed. "We crossed both the International Date Line and the equator, visited great ports, excelled during international mine countermeasures exercises, dodged a typhoon, and navigated our way through the Panama Canal twice. That's a lifetime's worth of accomplishments and we did it all in just four months."



NAS Corpus Christi, Texas (Aug. 31, 2001) — Families of Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 15 (HM 15) welcome returning aircrews from a nearly five-month deployment aboard USS Inchon (MCS 12) to the Western Pacific Ocean. (U.S. Navy photo by LT Marc Boyd)

INGLESIDE'S MINE WARFARE TRAINING CENTER WINS TECHNICAL TRAINING EXCELLENCE AWARD

Francoise "Fifi" Kieschnick
Public Affairs Officer
Naval Station Ingleside

The Mine Warfare Training Center, located aboard Naval Station Ingleside, was awarded the Chief of Naval Education and Training's Technical Training Excellence Award for 2000. The award recognizes training commands that demonstrate superior accomplishment with its resources to support its mission, concentrating on imaginative and innovative management actions that have enhanced training, pipeline management or productivity. There are three criteria: training effectiveness, resource management and administration.

"It's not a 'quirk' or a sudden spike," said CAPT Gary Belcher, commanding officer, Mine Warfare Training Center, to his instructors and personnel. "It's a reflection of sustained superior performance, vision and leadership. It's a reflection of what you've been doing day in and day out."

The 75 instructors at MWTC — 69 enlisted Sailors and six officers — teach 65 different courses ranging in length from one day to 15 weeks. In 2000, 2,715 students graduated from the various courses taught at the Center.

The Mine Warfare Training Center is the Navy's premier instructional site for current mine warfare tactics, planning and systems. Instructors provide state-of-the-art training in ship-board firefighting, damage control, and selected engineering systems and administrative programs. MWTC moved to Ingleside in October 1995. A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held at NAVSTA March 1996. The school's move to Ingleside was a positive step toward the self-sufficiency of the Navy's "Mine Warfare Center of Excellence." The training center offers formal courses of instruction to officers and enlisted Sailors enroute to the homeported ships, tactical squadrons, shore commands, and other fleet units. With sufficient classroom space to simultaneously teach multiple courses, MWTC also boasts some of the finest technology in mine warfare such as state-of-the-art electronic classrooms, training simulators and firefighting training devices.



MINE WARFARE SHIPS RETURN FROM WEST COAST DEPLOYMENT

LT Marc Boyd
Public Affairs Officer
Mine Warfare Command

The four ships of Mine Warfare Readiness Group 3 (MIWRG-3) transit the Panama Canal today on their return trip to their Ingleside, Texas, home port. The mine countermeasures ships USS Avenger (MCM 1), USS Chief (MCM 14), USS Devastator (MCM 6), and USS Scout (MCM 8), left the South Texas Naval Station Feb. 15, for a six-month deployment to the U.S. West Coast and Canada. During the deployment, the ships participated in a number of major fleet exercises, conducted operations with Canadian naval forces, and made several port visits.

The ships will return to Naval Station Ingleside, Texas, Friday, 3 Aug.,

During the deployment, the ships participated in a number of naval exercises, including Exercise Kernel Blitz 01, a joint exercise conducted March 19 – April 8, off the coast of Southern California. Capt. Richard Rush, Commander, Mine Countermeasures Squadron Two, based in Ingleside, spearheaded mine warfare efforts during the exercise.

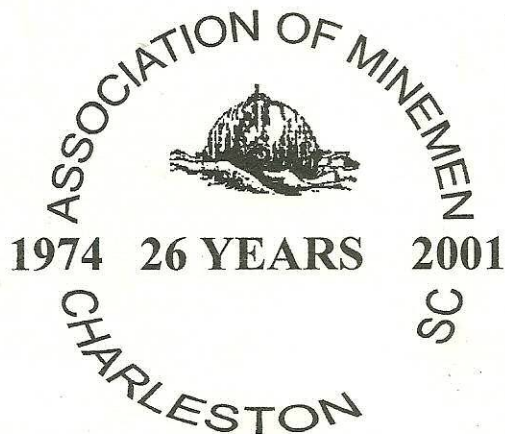
In addition to participating in a number of training exercises, the nearly 320 Sailors aboard the four MCM's enjoyed port visits along the U.S. West Coast, Canada and Central America. The ships visited Portland, Ore., for the Rose Festival in June, and made several port visits, including stops in San Diego and San Francisco, Calif., and Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. On the return trip, the ships made brief refueling stops in Manzanillo, Mexico; Puerto Quetzal, Guatemala; and Rodman, Panama. Avenger and Devastator enjoyed a final port visit to the island of Roatan, Honduras, while Chief and Scout stopped in Belize City, Belize, to refuel before returning to their Ingleside, Texas, homeport Aug. 3.

The four Avenger-class ships are designed as a mine hunter-killer capable of finding, classifying and destroying moored and bottom mines. The 224-foot, 1,300-ton mine countermeasures ships are equipped with a high definition, variable-depth sonar, and a remotely operated, robotic submarine used to neutralize mines. It is also capable of conventional mine sweeping measures. The ship has a fiberglass-sheathed, wooden hull and is armed with two .50 caliber machine guns.



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