



The DASHPOT



Issue 49

Newsletter of the Association of Minemen

Spring 2004



FROM THE PRESIDENT

William "Bill" Johnson

Let me begin this article by correcting the dates of service for our two newest Board Members, **Robert Stancik** and **Robert Wilson**. They were wrong in my last article and should be (04-07) vice (05-08).

I want to thank the Board of Directors for their unanimous vote in support of the "Service Recognition Award". This award will be for Sustained Contribution and Distinctive Service to the AOM. Criteria and parameters for the award will be defined and submitted to the General Membership for approval at the next meeting. Many thanks to **Bill Mehard** and **Toby Horn** for their work on this award to date. We will not let this fall through the cracks. Thanks again.....

Our Vice-President **Warren Savage** is busy making initial contacts with the **USS MIDWAY (RET.)** Project Association in regards to including a Mine Display as part of the Museum. Stay tuned for details as they develop.....

I am still working on rounding up some very important members so their names can be submitted to the Board of Directors for consideration and approval to fill vacancies in our Organization. If you want to volunteer, send me your name so I can add it to the list. There is always room for one more name.

A last bit of very "Important" information: My daughter **Katie** and her husband **Mark** became the proud parents of a Healthy, Baby Boy on 10 January 2005. **Connor Thomas (CT) Ross** arrived at 1:09 AM at University Memorial Hospital in Charleston, S.C. five weeks early. He weighed in at 5 lbs 9 oz and was 19 inches in length. **Katie** and **Mark** with **CT** (in the basket) attended the 30th Annual AOM Reunion and thoroughly enjoyed themselves very much.

This is a Creative Challenge. Thank you all very much. **God Bless all of you** and **your families** and **God Bless America**.

MNCS FISH NAMED MILITARY VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Story and photos by Mike Antoine
Naval Station Ingleside Public Affairs



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THE 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 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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MNCS(SW) Cecil Fish Continuation.

The 2004 Military Volunteer of the Year, as recognized by the Ingleside Chamber of Commerce, is MNCS(SW) Cecil Fish of Mobile Mine Assembly Group (COMOMAG).

Fish has played at area Christmas events, Round Up Days, and Winter Texan Appreciation Days, in addition to providing original, traditional and inspirational entertainment for many of the convalescent homes, schools, businesses and community functions and benefits on a regular basis in the surrounding area.

It was Senior Chief Fish who spearheaded a project of several years back at the Aransas Pass Nursing and Convalescent Center. He and his shipmates, on their own time, built a recreation park next to the facility.

For several months, Sailors from USS Champion (MCM 4) cleared debris from the area, constructed wheelchair-accessible paths and built picnic tables, benches and a stage to accommodate the residents.

Senior Chief Fish and his wife, Rene, live in Ingleside, where they are still raising one of their five children.

The award announcement took Senior Chief Fish by total surprise.

"I had no idea I'd even been nominated for the award — I thought I was just attending an awards banquet for someone else," he said.

Fish, who developed a love for guitar almost three decades ago as a high school student, now plays regularly for area retirement homes, including ones in Rockport, Aransas Pass, Portland, and Corpus Christi.

Fish, the leading chief petty officer for the Operations Department at COMOMAG, will bid farewell to the Navy way of life in November.

"It's been great to be able to use my talents while serving the Navy," he said.

And he plans to continue using that talent and his smooth voice once he's done finding the perfect place for his shadowbox.

"My brother and I are going to play at festivals throughout Central Texas — singing, selling cowboy products and operating a concession stand.

"And that's just the beginning," he continues. "Our long-term goal is to open up a western-town themed tourist attraction, complete with music, Cowboy poetry, and old fashioned street brawls by costumed actors."

For now, the Brownwood, Texas, native is content to enjoy his twilight tour with the U.S. Navy.



From the Desk of the Secretary

Hope all have recovered from the reunion in Charleston. I had a ball and am looking forward to Texas this year.

We have twenty eight (28) members who have not paid dues. This will be your last Dash-Pot unless I hear from you. If above your name you have an Aug. 04 you are past due. Sure hate to lose that many members.

Please don't forget donations to the scholarship programs. Look in the past issue and this issue of the Dash-Pot and you will see a lot of "Thank You" notes from the Kids.

All you active duty members ——— **THANKS FOR SERVING.**

See Ya.

Curtis

TRICARE FOR LIFE FOR FAMILY MEMBERS AND SURVIVORS OF SERVICE RETIREES

by Phil Dechene

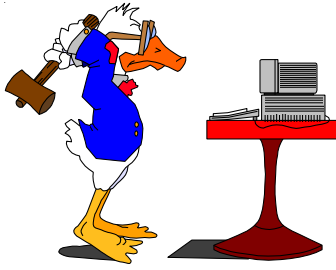
A while back there was an article in the MOAA Magazine the stated that there were many widows of retired service members that are unaware that they are eligible for Tricare For Life. In the January 05 issue there was a side bar that provided that information

In a nutshell it states: **TFL is available to Medicare-entitled uniformed service retirees, including Medicare-entitled family members and survivors, and certain former spouses.**

To participate in TFL you must be entitled to Medicare Part A and be enrolled in Medicare part B.

To learn if you are eligible, contact the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) at (800) 538-9552 or go to your nearest uniformed services ID card facility. To locate the ID card facility nearest you, visit the Rapid Site Locator at www.dmdc.osd.mil/rs1.

If anyone knows a survivor they should check to see if they are aware of this entitlement.



FROM THE WEBMASTER

Below are recently changed or added e-mails on the AOM WEB Site. There have been several inquiries about e-mail addresses on the AOM WEB Site that are bouncing. If you are listed on the site please check to see if your address is current and correct. If changes are required e-mail me the information at pdechene@triad.rr.com. Phil DeChene AOM WEB Master

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He who joyfully marches in rank and file has already earned my contempt. He has been given a large brain by mistake, since for him the spinal cord would suffice.

-Albert Einstein



Barrett, Alice

Fred Dane reports that **Alice Barrett** passed away Nov. 28, 2004, She is the wife of **Fred Barrett**, former MN2. They live in Norwood, MA



Daughtrey, Grace

Dick Schommer reported that Grace Daughtrey, wife of MNC Charley Daughtrey (deceased), passed away the morning of 23 Feb 05. The cause of death was a stroke. Services were held on 26 Feb 05 at 2 PM. Boone Lipsey Funeral Home, Highway 41, Adel, GA.



Guyton, John R. MNCS, USN

Mason, Gilbert MN1, USN

John Loonam reports that the March 2005 issue of All Hands lists John R. Guyton MNCS, Branch 192 and Gilbert Mason MN1 Branch 50 in the Taps section.



Harris, George

George Harris former MN3 age 72 passed away on Feb 12, 2005 at Santa Margarita, CA This information came from Jim Minor (NMA) via Fred Dane.

Leisy, Irene

Irene Leisy, wife of former MN2 Kenneth Leisy, passed away October 27, 2004 from heart problems and other complications. They are from Orrville, OH Fred Dane reporting.



Hullinger, Bill

Bill Hullinger (former AOM member) died in his sleep in October 2004.



Hirgstetter, Fred

I am deeply saddened to pass on the news of the loss of yet another one of our shipmates and Association Members.

I received a phone call from Sonja Hirgstetter reporting that her husband Fred Hirgstetter, AOM #0185, had died on 26 December 2004 after a sudden heart attack. Fred was 73 years young. They resided at 63 Carefree Lane, Cheektowaga, New York 14227-2223.

I extended to Sonja and the family, on behalf of the Association of Minemen, our deepest sympathy on their loss. May God bless the memory of Fred Hirgstetter and God Bless America.

Bill Johnson, AOM President.



Johnson, Don E. (Gunner), CWO3, USN (Ret.)

CWO3 Don E. (Gunner) Johnson, 59, of Jacksonville, Florida passed away January 3, 2005. He was a Vietnam veteran, serving two tours with the U.S. Army in Vietnam. He then enlisted in the U.S. Navy as a Mineman, beginning his naval career at Naval Weapons Station Charleston, SC. He also served tours at Naval Weapons Station Earle, New Jersey; Naval Magazine, Guam; and Naval Weapons Station Yorktown, VA. Upon his commission, he served as the Ship's Gunner onboard USS Saratoga (CV-60) during Desert Storm. After serving a tour at the Weapons Department, Mayport Naval Station, he retired in 1995 from Naval Station Charleston.

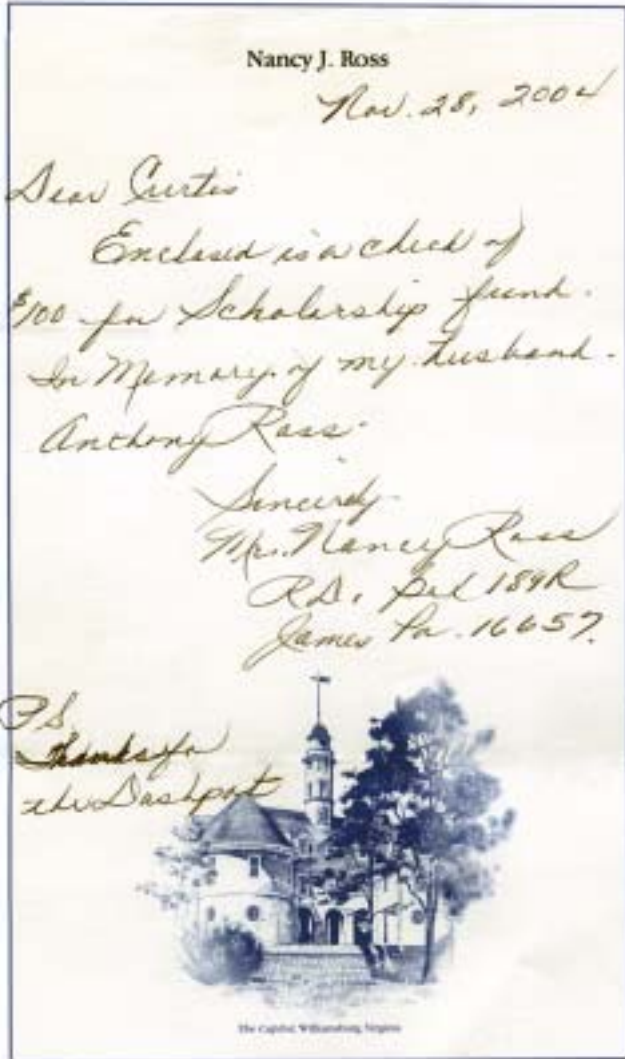
CWO3 Johnson was an avid reader and enjoyed rebuilding Studebaker and Avanti automobiles. Survivors include his wife of 26 years, Nancy; a son, Mac George and his wife Dilla Johnson; a stepdaughter, Jennifer Seifert; and stepson, Wayne and his wife Jennifer Seifert. Also, one uncle, Leroy Fraunfelder and wife Joyce, and one grandson. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to The Salvation Army.

Tears

God's way to cleanse the heart of grief.
Each droplet gives the soul relief.
When dark clouds come and tumult grows,
Take comfort in those healing flows.



MAIL BAG



Association of Minemen

We would like to take this opportunity to than you for the scholarships you have awarded us. They are greatly appreciated and they help us attend the college of our choice and pursue our education.

Sincerely,

Christine and Steven Tiramani

I shot an arrow into the air, and it stuck.

Graffito in Los Angeles

Hi Mr. Dechene;

Just a quick email for the AOM web site; I have been recalled to active duty again. This time I am in Kuwait as a part of NAVELSF Forward Oscar Customs Inspection Battalion. There are two other Minemen on this operation. They are MN2 Bonnie Dykes and MN2 Lawrence Tyson. We are a part of a first of its kind Naval Customs Inspection Battalion and are backfilling positions for the Army. We should be home by the end of the year. Thanks;

R/MN1 Stephen L. McManus

My address here:
Stephen L. McManus
NAVELSF FWD OSCAR/CUSTOMS
APO, AE 09366

Next Dashpot Articles are due 1 June 2005

SCHOLARSHIP SCOOP

by Swede Carlsen



The scholarship program has a never-ending season. The fruits of the program are sought after every year by worthy applicants. The AOM should keep up with these requests for assistance scholarships, as the cost of a higher education is very dear. Our help can take some of the financial pressure off the applicants. A donation towards the President's Fund will keep monies working for every year's applicants, as well as a donation to the general fund.

As has been written in previous scholarship articles, scholarships can be found at colleges, universities, religious groups, business cooperatives, ethnic groups, veteran's organizations and more - BILLIONS OF DOLLARS WORTH! There is over 300 million dollars available for military personnel. Check out www.scholarships.com on the net.

Have deserving applicants for AOM scholarships download applications from the AOM website at <http://home.triad.rr.com/aom/index.htm>. They can also be requested from the AOM Secretary/Treasurer Curtis Christian or the AOM scholarship chairman W. (Swede) Carlsen by 'Snail Mail'.

STAND TALL AMERICA

SAGA OF THE SHOULDER BOARDS



Way back at the dawn of time, in 1959, LTJG William Haxton handed William 'Bill' Roberts his now unneeded ensign shoulder boards as a challenge. Bill Roberts took up the challenge and his incredible success is history. He, in turn, passed them down to another he thought deserving, and that recipient to another, and another, and so a chain of honorable endeavor was forged, link by link, that remained unbroken for decades. This single act had far reaching effects that LTJG Haxton could not have imagined in his wildest dreams.

In December of 2004, their task complete, the shoulder boards ended their 44 year odyssey and were returned to Bill Haxton mounted in a display along with a Mineman History Book. The brass commemorative plate reads as follows:

To: LTJG William O. Haxton, USNR (EOD)

These shoulder boards, initially presented to MN1 William A. Roberts, by you at the US Naval Magazine And Net Depot, New Port, RI. as a challenge has served as an inspiration and challenge to many of us in the US Naval Mineforces. The following Minemen have worn them with pride, honor and distinction.

These boards are now returned to you with our sincere gratitude and appreciation:

- | | | | | |
|---------------------------|----------|------|------------------------|------|
| 1. ENS William A. Roberts | 1 Oct 64 | Ret. | CDR | USN |
| 2. ENS William Fortner | 2 Apr 77 | Ret. | LCDR | USN |
| 3. ENS Ron Swart | 2 Apr 80 | Ret | CDR | USN |
| 4. ENS Joe Harris | 2 Apr 83 | Ret | LT | USN |
| 5. ENS John Lawton | 1 Mar 85 | Ret | LT | USN |
| 6. ENS Tim Paton | 1 May 86 | Ret. | CDR | USN |
| 7. ENS Ken Allen | 1 Sep 88 | Ret. | LT | USN |
| 8. ENS Drake | | | Reserve Chaplain Corps | USNR |

We hope LTJG William O. Haxton, USNR (EOD) takes great pride in what he accomplished with a simple gesture. We never know how many lives the little things we do will touch and what a dramatic change they may make.



BINNACLE LIST

Don Decrona writes:

Receiving Christmas cards and telephone calls can bring happiness or sadness, this year both.

Joe Hernandez informed me that **Bill Hullinger** (former AOM member) died in his sleep in October 2004. He also stated that **Jerry Wells** died from colon cancer in July.

R. J. (Bob) Lattanzi had triple bypass surgery in July. The day after his bypass, he had a collapsed lung. I talked to Bob yesterday and he is doing quite well. He carries an oxygen bottle to help his breathing until he gets his strength back. He was in good spirits and mentioned that he still needs the walking cane because of the arthritis in his legs.

I talked to **Dale (Moose) & Anne Wheelock** and they are doing just fine. Like most of us we have our normal health problems.

A note from **Eddie (Ski) and Esther Milanowski** finds them about the same with their major medical problems. They live with their daughter Renee and her husband at Virginia Beach. Ski has macular degeneration of both eyes and Esther has extensive bone loss which lead to the collapse of her spine. She is still confined to a left chair 24 hours a day. They look good in the picture they sent me.

Moose asked me if I had heard anything about **Freddy West**. If you have any new info (year 2004), let me know so that I can tell Moose. If you call Moose, please let me know. Thanks.

I wish I could have sent happier news.

Take care, Don

USO NITE AT VERO BEACH



Paul and Bootsie Santa Maria

This was taken just prior to attending a dress-up for USO Nite in Vero Beach, FL at the Heritage House which was used as a USO during WW II. Most of the attendees were from the Underwater Demolition Training Base located at Ft. Pierce, just below Vero Beach.

(The image leaves no doubt as to just who is in charge does it?)

He who hesitates is not only lost... but miles from the next exit.



EDITOR'S CORNER

Once in every generation of Minemen, a plan that threatens their existence festers among the bean counters and "efficiency experts" and bursts forth in full fury upon the MIW community. The mighty elephants gird for battle and the earth trembles. This generation is no different. Our courageous elephant, assisted by a host of tenacious and canny pygmies, engaged in tusk to tusk combat and once again our wise and valiant elephant has triumphed.

There is a likely a personnel change coming in positions in the organization structure (historian, storekeeper, parliamentarian, etc.) and I hope to be able to report what those are next issue after they have been approved by the Board of Directors. Keep watching for it.

The "Taffrail" section of the Dashpot is for those of you that want to recount past events and share some personal history. These articles are vital to our history as they provide the stories behind the mementous events in which many of you were caught up. Please take the time to write them down and send them to me.

ROGUE'S GALLERY



Recognize Yourself In this Rogue's Gallery?

MINEMEN ASSIGNED TO MINE, DEPTH CHARGE AND WEAPON "ALPHA" PRODUCTION OF NAD OAHU 1961 - 1962

Personnel Named From Left to Right:

Front Row

Foster, L. A. MN1, Taylor, M. J. MN3, Hanks, P. W. MNC, Alonzo, J. M. MNCA,
Powers, J. W. MNCM, CHMINWARTECH, R. F. Dredger, Bucholz, J. (N) MNCA,
McCune, M. L. MNC, Branam, D. J. MNCA, Barger, G. T. MN3, Rebbetoy, B. E. MN2,
Miller, D. L. MN2

Mid Row

Mason, G. (N) MN2, Bartram, F. J. MN2, Davis, G. W. MNSN, Vines, W. E. Jr. MNSN,
McCalla, D. L. MNSN, Vermette, R. W. MNSN, Hart, H. P. MN3, Muszynski, E. F. MN1,
Missing Name, MN3, Gotshall, B. G. MN1, Ruth, J. R. MN1, Williams, H. M. MN1,
Combs, C. E. MN3, Sham, D. M. MNSN

Back Row

Jacques, W. R. MNI, Davis, R. C. H. MM, Moutier, R. B. MNSN, Kirkwood, A. P. MN3,
Smith, O. G. MN1, Cline, F. J. MN1, Evans, R. D. MNSN, Schaefer, C. F. MN3,
Hellien, G. A. MN1, Rohr, R. J. MN2, Relosky, G. J. MN3, Jones, D. R. MN2,
Halby, R. R. MN3, Brown, K. H. MN2, Harrison, J. F. MN2, Holt, D. H. MN3,
Koeller, R. L. MN2

Missing From Photo

Fields, J. W. MNCS, Chipman, G. A. MNC, Anderson, R. L. MM, Austin, R. M. MN1,
Collins, D. L. MN2, Head, R. L. MN2, Szczutkowski, E. R. MN2, Terry, W. R. MN2,
Cowell, C. S. MN2, Crum, P. E. MN3, Dipko, A. J. MN3, Knight, R. C. MN3,
Sannino, T. V. MN3, Steen, H. B. MN3, Hoehne, J. A. MNSA

Complements of Donald R. Jones

LEANING ON THE TAFFRAIL



A LITTLE BIT OF MINE TRAINING PAYS OFF

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

I was a member of the third session of training at the old Mine Warfare School, Yorktown Va. A bit of history follows:

I returned to my Destroyer the USS Aylwin DD 355 as a Gunner's Mate. I was aboard her during the attack on 7 December, and received two bullets in my chest in the attack. I was saved because I smoked a pipe and had a full can of E'sliced Edgeworth pipe tobacco in my shirt pocket. Took two bullets in my chest, but did not realize it until latter on. I had a gang down in the after magazine sending more 5" ammunition. Topside, when I noted blood on the deck plates, checked and found it to be my blood. All our Medical people were ashore, so I just washed off the blood, put on a clean shirt and did my duty. About eleven days later, we returned to Pearl Harbor, and I was sent to the old Naval Hospital where the Doc. looked at me and said this is not too bad and sent me back to the Aylwin for duty.

A few months later, I was transferred to the Mine Warfare School, Yorktown, as an instructor. While here, I took a dual exam for CPO and Warrant Officer. A bit later, I was called into the Skippers Office and was told that I was a CPO Mines. A week later I was called in again and was told that I was a Warrant Officer, and a week later I was again called to the Office and informed that I was an Ensign and received orders to get out of the enlisted barracks and move to the BOQ and that I was to eat at the Officer's Mess. A few weeks later four mine qualified men and I were transferred to the USS Salem CM 11 for duty. I stayed on her for a trip to the Med, and later a trip to Kwajalein and then to Saipan. I was the sent back to Pearl for re-assignment to Piney Point, MD., which was a proving ground for torpedoes and self-propelled mines. My next duty stations was as the only officer at the Net and Boom Station on Iroquois Point, Pearl Harbor, and later was again transferred to become Mines Officer, and fill in for the OinC of the West Lock ammunition Depot. I also filled in as the Ordnance Officer at the Ammunition Depot Laulaulei when he was absent. Four years later I was transferred to the mine layer destroyer USS Shannon DM 25 as Gunnery/Mines Officer, and later I was moved to be OinC at the station on Sandy Hook, NJ with responsibility from Fisher's Island in Long Island Sound down the coast of New Jersey for about 40 miles. I now had 21 years of service under my belt and decided to retire as a LCDR. The next day I went to work with the Bell Telephone Laboratories in connection with underwater sound, and later with guided missiles. On the missile job, I was relocated first to Kwajalein Atoll as the Explosive Man in Charge of all handling of these missiles. I remained therefore four years and was then relocated to North Dakota, in the late fall where the first detection and launch guidance facility was being tested. Being that I had 21 years service with the Laboratories I decided to retire again, but was sent to Orlando, Florida where evidence was being assembled to fight the breakup of AT&T. The fight was getting to be very, very expensive so AT&T decided to breakup the system, and I decided to really retire which I did.

Since I decided to retire we, my wife and I, have lived in two homes in Punta Gorda, Florida, then relocated to Sun City Hilton Head, S.C. and now to Illinois and the Independent Living Facility here for people that are getting a bit of age on themselves, but can still get about locally pretty well.

Use this or not as you see fit, for it might be interesting to some of the Minemen as they grow older and want nothing to do with housework, lawn care, and still able to do about as they see fit. We are very happy here and have about everything that we may need for comfort as age creeps up on us.

Best Wishes
Arthur W. Cook

Editor's Note: Art, I think most Minemen want nothing to do with housework, lawn care, and still be able to do about as they see fit. It seems to start while they are still in their teens.



Rogues, Rascals, and Renegades

LOVE'S LABOR LOST

Rome was not built in a day, or did he make First Class that quickly either. MN1 Bob Rome was a tall, gaunt man who had paid his dues and was at last on sea duty in the States in the USS Howard W. Gilmore (AS 16), a submarine tender. Assigned to Building 132, that nefarious den of ne'er-do-wells who daily, sometimes hourly, made cumshaw forays throughout the base to trade coffee for vital shipboard necessities, he became a leader of men. Perhaps it was more like a ring leader of men now that I think about it. It was he, "Sleepy" Waldrop, and the Ekstrom brothers who bolted a pneumatic gyroscope from a Mk 14 torpedo into the bottom of a trash can and spun it up with compressed air beyond the range of the human ear, placed it in the office, and covered it over with crumpled paper. They summoned the "new kid" and bid him take out the trash.

The can was heavier than it should have been, but the unsuspecting Seaman Recruit, a burly fellow, grasped it firmly in both hands and lifted it up. All went well until he turned around, or tried to. The trash can would not cooperate and remained steadfast in its position. Amid initial gales of laughter from the others and a look of total astonishment on the face of Master Chief Glowa, the young polywog summoned his strength, which was considerable, and jerked the can around causing the gyro to tumble and throw the trash can and the seaman around the office much like a dog shaking a rag. Master Chief Glowa's desk was cleared with a single, incredibly swift, pass sending the Master Chief diving thereunder for safety while the rest took refuge atop the safes and out the windows or fled headlong out the office door in sheer terror.

Eventually, the young seaman gained control over the demon possessed trash can, wrested it to the door, and out to the dumpster, but not before severely damaging most of the walls, the door, which lost a few panes, and Master Chief Glowa's coffee cup which was now mostly dust. He was not amused. Having been at lunch, he had not been privy to this grand experiment. He gave absolution to the Seaman and summoned the miscreants in a voice that shook the foundation and in a language with which they were more familiar. The Seaman was in awe as he had never seen blue air before, or beheld steam come from ears, or fire shoot out of human nostrils in all his eighteen years. He did not know whether to salute, bow, curtsy, or genuflect in the presence of such a remarkable being.

After several excruciating minutes of a one way conversation they departed enmasse like locusts to get materials to repair the damage and spent the evening and most of the night making the necessary repairs which were considerable.

Fate is not fooled and Karma always returns to rebalance the cosmos. It did in this case as well. Some months later, MN1 Rome and a young MN3 named variously Ross Maddox, Sweetpea, or Stinky depending on the circumstance at the time, purchased a small, inboard cuddy cabin cruiser. The initial sight of her tugged at one's heart strings and made one yearn to shoot and bury her and thus end her misery. The two stalwarts, with the cunning eyes of seasoned sailors, saw beneath the flaking paint, the bent shaft, the damaged propeller, the rotten wood, the missing fittings, and a host of other nautical ailments and committed themselves to restore this once lovely craft to her proper state. They were undaunted.

In all fairness, their dedication was commendable, bordering on fanatical. They labored nearly every afternoon after work and every weekend for months, pouring every spare dime they had into the project. Slowly, ever so slowly, a remarkable transformation occurred and the cruiser began to look like it might actually become seaworthy. More time passed and a miracle happened. As with most women, a coat of paint does wonders and the cruiser began to take on a pleasing appearance.

Soon came the time to commission this new creation. Unfortunately, I am told, it was not champagne, but something less expensive, perhaps Thunderbird or Ripple, that washed her bow. That was a mistake. Neptune frowns on deviation from long established tradition.

Rome and Ross decided on a weekend shake-down and loaded her with fuel and ample stores for the venture. I am told the "stores" consisted of a few cans of Campbell's soup and several cases of beer. That was decidedly their second mistake as, at some point, their navigation skills became seriously degraded to non existent and they passed over a rather large and shallow oyster bed at flank speed. Some say the bottom was damaged, others say a foot or more was planed completely off before she came to rest far from traveled waterways. The two fed the swamp mosquitoes for three days before rescue. They were found to be somewhat anemic, but still in good spirits as there were a few cases of vital stores still onboard as well as all of the soup.



COMINWARCOM CHANGE OF COMMAND

by Fifi Kieschnick



Rear Adm. Michael P. Nowakowski

Mine Warfare Command changed hands today, Jan. 13, when Rear Adm. Michael P. Nowakowski turned over the helm to Rear Adm. Deborah A. Loewer.

Mine Warfare Command exists to support the Fleet commanders by developing and evaluating mine warfare doctrine, tactics and equipment. Through training and operations experience, the command ensures the readiness of U.S. Navy mine warfare forces to conduct offensive and defensive mine warfare operations throughout the world by integrating the assembly, delivery,



Rear Adm. Deborah A. Loewer.

and removal of all types of mine threats. As technical advisor to the Fleet commanders, the command provides mine warfare planning and intelligence on foreign mine capabilities and develops tactics to counter other nations' mining capabilities. Through operational control of surface, air and Explosive Ordnance Disposal mine countermeasures forces, the command maintains deployable staffs and other Fleet assets to support national security and to ensure safe passage of Fleet units and merchant shipping.

Rear Adm. Nowakowski is heading to Norfolk, Va., where he will serve as Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet.

Rear Adm. Loewer became Vice Commander of Military Sealift Command on July 7, 2003. She was promoted to Rear Admiral (lower half) on Oct. 1, 2003.





COMOMAG

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

Howdy! Shipmates. Well down here in South Texas (COMOMAG), the ole Blue Bonnets will be popping up soon and all the spring breakers will be breaking. Another year started and pick'n up speed. Sometimes it seems that things happen so fast. I say this because I still recall the time of hanging my chaps up, 27 years ago and joining the Navy. I can still recall that first early morning wake-up call at boot camp, in San Diego California, oh what a morning to remember. Now as this year passes by, I will be jumping off the fast trail soon, knock'n the dust off my chaps, grappin my git' & fiddle and singing an old tune down an ole Texas Trail. It sure has been a good ride.

CMC News – MNCS(SW) Jerry L. Williams
This past year has been full of rumors, meetings, and endless discussion regarding the future of our Mineman rating. Although seemingly official courses of action may have seemed inevitable, our future path has now been clearly defined and I want to make sure everyone gets the most up-to-date and accurate information on this important topic as it becomes available. Despite past discussions to the contrary, past working group meetings called to review options and explore conversion possibilities confirmed the necessity of a dedicated rating to best serve the readiness required in the MIW community. These meetings highlighted the serious consequences of disestablishing or splitting up the MN rating to mission readiness and Sailors careers, resulting in a firm commitment at the Flag level to stay the course while expand future MN billet possibilities.

All that hard work has been thoroughly reviewed by the chain of command and I can assure you that our leadership is completely engaged on maintaining the Mineman rating in its present form.

To be clear, there will be no disestablishment of the Mineman rating. There is no longer an effort underway to split or dissolve our current career path as currently employed. All current active and reserve Minemen should ensure that any remaining rumors on this topic are addressed and dismissed as without merit. Our responsibilities and future career path as Minemen has been validated and will remain in place. Let's put this to bed once and for all. Feel free to contact me at COMOMAG if you have any concerns or questions on this matter, otherwise, see you all in Oct here in Corpus for the Reunion! Email: jerry.l.williams@navy.mil

Operations (N3) has been busy processing worldwide Mine Exercises. The demand for Target type mines for exercises have been on the increase. Operations department has been working with PMS495, NSWC, SPAWAR, OPNAV, and other resources on Worldwide Mine Threats to enable us to produce mine type replicas and yes, we're still talking up the 2010 mine.

Several of our N3 personnel participated in the Annual Waterfront Workshop for Ordnance on 1-3rd February in Ingleside, going over proper admin/accounting procedures as well as NCEA Management. Petty Officer James W. Grant and Petty Officer Kirk E. Veselka from N3 worked along with MOMAU FIFTEEN in the deployment and recovery of a local exercise with the support for DATA Collecting and technical assistance as well as testing out the Australian recovery device called the "Fiobuoy" for Mine warfare recovery purposes. N3 working harder for a better Mine warfare Program for Tomorrow.

Minefield Planning (N5) Personnel seem to be making their rounds in this world supporting all our NATO Countries in the Mine warfare planning phases. End of last year and in January 05 Mr. Donald B. Stanley, (N3) Mr. Ed Simmons, LCDR Jon C. Grant and ISC Randy L. Bubar, accompanied by CDR Bowlin, COMINWARCOM were a part of Maritime Mining informational Brief and U.S. Mine Warfare seminar that were very informative for HELTACWINGSPAC and Canadian Forces Fleet School QUEBEC CITY, CANADA. LCDR Grant and Mr. Stanley covered on two different visits with our Canadian allies, topics from COMOMAG Organization, Mine Types, Delivery Platforms, Future of Mining (2010 Mine Concept), Minefield Planning and many other topics. Mr. Simmons covered Exercise and Training discussing Exercise and Training Mine types and MCM Training Support Products. In other parts of the world, Lt Gregory L. McGill wrapped up a Mid Planning Conference in Korea

for UFL Exercise. Lt McGill and OS1 (SW) Davis went TAD to SAIC in Virginia, in support of the Minefield Planning portion of the Mine Warfare and Environmental Decision Aids Library (MEDAL) for Fleet Acceptance Testing. They both conducted several tests to help improve the MEDAL program in support of Minefield Planning.

might make the rest of your day go a whole lot better. Remember keep those soldiers and sailors over in war zones in our thoughts and prayers. That concludes another entry from South Texas. I think I'll go shine up my spurs and mosey on; ya'll keep your horse on the trail.



Community Service: COMOMAG Personnel have started a volunteer project helping a local Ingleside Library with some landscaping to beautify the outside of their building. Chief Kent is heading up the project and is getting his tiller on the job with the help of MN1 Veselka's Mechanical background, to getting it running, and the hard labors of IT2 Ramirez, Mrs. Kent (A great help) and of course again MN1 Veselka's labor as well has started this project out and will be helping one day a month until things are looking great.

COMOMAG Personnel were involved with another very worthwhile project on March 5, an annual event to help clean our local beaches up, it's called, "Capt Billy Sandifer Annual Big Shell Beach Cleanup." The day was overcast but no rain fell, and hundreds of trash bags were filled. Unfortunately, the currents in the Gulf of Mexico all dump their trash onto Padre Island, so each year the cleanup finds countless articles from all over. Big thanks to Mr. Donald Stanley, MN1(SW) Williams, MNC(SW) Sullivan, and MN1(SW) Veselka.

Other events this Quarter:

BZ's Corner:

MOMAD 12, for a recent onload Exercise with a P-3, loading inert MK65's. **MOMAU 10**, for outstanding support to COMINEWARCOM Battle Staff during Exercise Terminal Fury 05.

Awards:

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| MNCS(SW) Cecil Fish | City of Ingleside
Military Volunteer of
the Year |
| MN1 (SW) James Grant | Sailor of the Year
2004 |
| OS1(SW) Adrian Davis | Good Conduct
Award (4 th) |
| MN2 (SW) Brad Simoncic | Sailor of the Quarter
for 4 th Quarter |

Arrivals:

- MNC (SW) John G. Sullivan – USS Dextrous
- MN2 (SW) Renee K. Myers - MWTC

Well, let me wrap this up for this quarter by saying from COMOMAG to all Dashpot readers, have a wonderful and productive next Quarter and when you feel bad about something and things just don't seem to be going the way you want them to, just do something nice for somebody else. It



MOMAU ELEVEN GOOSE CREEK

By MNC(SW) Stanley King

Good wishes from the beautiful Low Country! Hope the start of 2005 has found all of you well and ready to face another year. We'll start off by reporting that the command has completed the following missions in support of Commander Second Fleet, Joint USAF/USN exercises and CNO projects: CJTFEX 04-2 Recovery, USAF COUNTERSEA SYLLABUS SORTIE/CLASS 05A MINEX, and DDX ISUW EDM. In addition to providing mines to the fleet, we are preparing for our Mine Recertification Inspection (MRCI) 9 – 13 May, Administrative and Material Inspection (ADMAT) August 2005 and Explosive Safety Inspection (ESI) October 2005.



MOMAU Eleven and Reserve Units 6 and 7 train during MK 65 Buildup



MOMAU Eleven and Reserve Units 6 and 7 train during MK 65 Buildup

HAIL AND FAREWELLS

Recently, MOMAU Eleven said “Fair Winds and Following Seas” to MNCS(SW) Brian Allston, retiring after 20 years of honorable service. MNCS(SW) Allston has made numerous contributions to MOMAU Eleven and he will be missed.

New arrivals were MN2(SW) Joseph Pawlikowski, MN2(SW) Bryan Walker, GM1(SW) Christopher Neely, and I. We also announce the birth of Olivia Ledford to MN2 Matthew Ledford and his wife Tiffany, and Hendrix Brooks Bailey to MN2 Rhett Baily and his wife Christal.

AWARDS

Congratulations: We’d like to congratulate the following personnel for their accomplishments:

- MN1(SW) Casey Watkins - MOMAU Eleven’s Senior Sailor of the Year
- MN3 David Harvey – MOMAU Eleven’s Junior Sailor of the Year
- YN1 (SW) Darrell Thomas - MOMAU Eleven’s Senior Sailor of the Quarter
- MNSN Daniel Kline - MOMAU Eleven’s Junior Sailor of the Quarter.



MN1(SW) Watkins receives Senior Sailor of the Year Plaque



MN3 Harvey receives Junior Sailor of the Year Plaque



YN1(SW) Thomas receives Senior Sailor of the Quarter Plaque



MNSN Kline receives Junior Sailor of the Quarter Plaque





MOMAU FIFTEEN INGLESIDE

By LCDR Julian Wyatt

From the Desk of the Commanding Officer: LCDR Julian Wyatt

Welcome aboard to our New Ombudsman; Mrs. Aimee Dease! Good luck to all sailors taking the advancement exams this year!!

Rear Adm. Deborah A. Loewer, the new COMINEWARCOM, visited MOMAU 15 to see what minemen do for a living. We were very glad to have her here and enjoyed her visit. Rear Adm. Loewer is already making her presence felt at the higher echelons of decision making.



MNC(SW) Dunbar, Production Department Head, briefs the Admiral on overall operations and inter workings of Mines in his area of expertise. Chief Dunbar, although pressed for time, gave a stellar brief! Way to go Chief!



MN1(SW) Billen (not shown in picture), proudly presents the MOMAU 15 VIP Brief, while LCDR Wyatt and MNC(SW) Stultz explain the Loss Mine Data Base and Initiatives that are underway at Naval Station Ingleside.



LCDR Wyatt exchanges coins and presents Admiral Loewer with the coveted MOMAU 15 Command Ball Cap.

From the Desk of the Mine Assembly Officer: MNC(SW) Michael Stultz

Congratulations to the following SOY's:

SSOY: MN1 (SW) William Andrzejewski
JSOY: **MN3 Robert Apple**

A well deserved Salute to our Sailors of the Quarter (4th Quarter 04):

SSOQ: MN1(SW) William Andrzejewski; Operations Department Head
JSOQ: MN3 David Reinertsen; Mine Assembly Technician

ADMIN DEPARTMENT SITREP: Department Head: YN1(SW) Eldrid Vistro

Business as usual in the front office! It's a steady strain on updating and validating instructions, ensuring that everyone has the latest and greatest information at their fingertips. I have relieved Chief Parks and the turnover process was successful and thorough, with the help of YNSN Howard, who has a handle on every phase of the operation!! Looking forward to a fantastic tour.

OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT SITREP: Department Head: MN1(SW) William Andrzejewski

MOMAU 15 initiatives comprise the following: (1) Sailorization Concept: When orders are received on a sailor, Operations Department ensures the member is given the opportunity to interface with his or her ship, to include an underway period if at all possible. Routinely, our goal is at least 6 visits. (2) MWTC Rolling Start Program and MOMAU 15 TAD: Sailors that complete the MWTC "A" School Rolling Start Program ahead of schedule, report to MOMAU 15 TAD, to work in a mine shop prior to reporting to their next duty station. (3) SWOS Pipeline: Newly reporting Commanding Officers from Newport RI, as well as MOMAU/MOMAD Commanding Officers and OIC's, routinely visit

MOMAU 15 for a thorough Department Head turnover brief, tour of facilities and review of instructions, procedures and inspections. (4) HEMERA (Corrosion Control Initiative for MCM/MHC's). MOMAU 15 has assisted the waterfront with corrosion preventative maintenance on water tight doors and gaskets, with installed equipment.

SUPPLY DEPARTMENT SITREP: Department Head: SK1(SW/AW) Jerilynn Pruske

From the new MAD Install program 4.0, to recent Services Parts Ordering Tool (SPOT) program metric review, Supply Department has been extremely busy. This included PMS 495 and CSS Representatives conducting a time study to validate the SPOT Program. Additionally, SPOT user training version 2.0, release 1, was conducted. Exercise support and refurbishment schedule keeps the OPTEMPO at a strong but steady pace.

PRODUCTION DEPARTMENT SITREP: Department Head: MNC(SW) Robert Dunbar

We have accomplished our first goal of the New Year; SCRMC Refurbishment schedule for afloat mine warfare units. As a maintenance provider, typically we wait until the waterfront alerts us to the need to retrieve assets, refurbish and then return. This year, MOMAU 15 attended the quarterly maintenance meeting and proposed to the waterfront in a consolidated message, to accomplish this task during CMAV's (Continuous Maintenance Availability). Exercise support has encompassed a US and French EOD Mine Exercise in Corpus Christi Operational Area. The highlight of this past quarter was receipt and training for the French Exercise Mine System. MOMAU 15 assisted in the Operational Test of the Versatile Exercise Mine System conducted by NSWPC and COMOMAG aboard the USS Sentry. BZ to MN1 Cooks for the only MOMAU reporting 100% readiness in test set maintenance.

QA DEPARTMENT SITREP: Department Head: MN1(SW) Terry Ward

MOMAU Fifteen successfully completed the Industrial Hygiene Survey (IHS). BZ to MN1 Ward!

Welcome Aboard to the following personnel:

MN3 Paul Dease from USS Abraham Lincoln
MN2 Justin Boyd from USS FALCON
MNSN David Shafer from MWTC
YN1(SW) Eldrid Vistro from USS SHOUP

Farewell and Following Seas to the following personnel:

MNSN Benjamin Wells transferred to USS ROBIN
MN3 Casandra Ward transferred to HSV SWIFT

MINE COUNTERMEASURES NEWS

FIRST SOUTH TEXAS BILATERAL EOD EXERCISE SUCCESSFUL

Story and photos by Mike Antoine
Naval Station Ingleside Public Affairs



The Navy's first bilateral Explosive Ordnance Disposal exercise with the French Navy was held in South Texas this week.

For roughly three days, nine French Sailors from Clearance Diving Team (CDT) Atlantic occupied the Mine Warfare Training area on Padre Island, based out of Brest, Brittany, France. They trained alongside 16 Sailors from Explosive Ordnance Detachment (EOD) Mobile Unit Six (MU 6) detachments Two and Four, based at Naval Station Ingleside.

"This was a great chance for us to conduct interoperability training," said LCDR A.K. Williams, of Mine Warfare Command, who helped coordinate the exercise. "It provided a great foundation for us to work together on a larger scale should that time come. Having done this at the detachment level, we will be able to mesh together more quickly to accomplish any mission given us."



Watching from the beach



Beached



SUPER T-SHIRT SALE

We are overstocked in Adult size Small T-shirts with large lettering and mine emblem. The great price that includes shipping is \$4.00 each or two for \$7.50. Get them while they last. This size and style will not be reordered.



Many thanks to Phil Dechene for these picnic images.



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