



The DASHPOT



Issue 55 Newsletter of the Association of Minemen Fall 2006



FROM THE PRESIDENT

William "Bill" Johnson

32ND ANNUAL REUNION 2006
PANAMA CITY BCH, FL
20-22 OCTOBER

Time is fast approaching toward our reunion date. According to Chairman Ron Swart, everything is falling into place very nicely, all loose ends are being tucked in and we are on track for another great reunion. Remember to please **get your dinner reservations in not later than 30 September**. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact one of the Committee members listed in a related article in the previous issue (Summer 2006) of the Dashpot.

We will be selecting two Directors this year to fill the expiring terms of Gary L. Cleland and William Fortner. Members of the Board of Directors serve a term of three years. Let our Vice President, Mr. Warren Savage, know that you want to serve on the Board so he can place your name in nomination. We also need volunteers to fill vacancies in our Organization. There is always room for one more name so let me add your name to the list.

At this year's General Membership Meeting, we will be looking to select a place to hold the year 2008 reunion. This will be east of the Mississippi so bring your ideas with you and toss them into the pot for consideration. Additionally, let me ask all of you to continue to recruit old and new members to keep our programs and Association solvent, growing and meaningful.

Don't forget to bring items for the auction. They can be homemade or store-bought and the monies from the auction mainly go to support our Scholarship Fund. Thank you all very much. **God Bless all of you and your families and God Bless America.**

REUNION LAST WORDS

by Ron Swart

Well, final preparations are underway for the October Reunion and our reunion volunteers have been doing a fantastic job. This should be a reunion to remember. Word has it that many of the former NMEF / NMWEA and White Oak crowd will join us for dinner to hear Joe Kocur speak. Ken Waringa has the lead for the dinner arrangements and is currently visiting Scotland, no doubt to rest up as he anticipates the great reunion weekend at the beach. Preparations for a shrimp boil at the AMVETS-hosted Early Bird are moving along thanks to Leo Smith and Dale Garwood (head chef and boiler). The final paperwork for the picnic on board Naval Support Activity, Panama City is signed. The pig roast should be a blast. Leo Smith and Bob Bainbridge have assured us a good time. Chuck Hadden is in charge of the weather and has a requisition in for sunny skies and light breezes. MNCS (SW) Steve Brachier of the Fleet Liaison group here, is getting the word out to the Sailors to join in the fun. I have heard from many old friends and shipmates who send their regrets but promise to attend the next reunion when it comes to their coast. Still, we can and will accommodate any last minute changes... so come if you get the urge and the time.

Remember to get your Dinner reservations and choices in by the end of September so we can lock down the menu and table requirements. I remembered to order up coffee for the BOD meeting and we have space set aside for the entire morning of the 21st. Let me know if I can help you with finding your way around, places to visit and things to do. We are excited to host this year's AOM reunion. All the very best, Ron Swart

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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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CLOCK COCKERS



Those of you who think you may be eligible for the Clock Cockers' Award please write or e-mail Dick Schommer so he can verify eligibility and prepare the award. I would do it the day you get the Dashpot as there are time constraints.

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SCHOLARSHIP SCOOP

by Swede Carlsen



The Scholarship Drive for 2006 was one of the AOM'S best. Like 2005, all of the 2006's scholarship applicants were awarded a \$500 AOM Assistance Scholarship. Three (3) were donated by the membership, one (1) Memorial Scholarship in the name of Kay Brannan and anonymous donor donated nine (9) more for a total of thirteen (13) Assistance Scholarships.

The following list contains the awardee's name and school they are attending:

Joseph Cavallo
Michelle Gagnon
John F. Loonam, Jr
Sabrina Ann Peters
Lauren Saccone
Nicholas Squillace
Kelly J. Stewart
Shannan Sweeney
Christine Tiramani
Steven Tiramani
Jacquelyn Vietro
John Wallace
Lindsey A. Wallace

Tufts University
Penn State University
UNC at Wilmington, NC
Coastal Carolina University
Eugene Lang College
Wright State University
Furman University
College of Saint Rose
Bucknell University
Bucknell University
Buffalo State University
Oregon State
University of Puget Sound

Congratulations to all awardees!

We have to start on 2007's scholarships by making generous donations and big bids at the AOM picnic auction. Let's not forget the President's Fund started by Past President G. Paul Santa Maria and his wife Bootsie. This fund's monies are working all year in a certificate of deposit owned by the AOM.

See you in Panama City. Don't forget your wallets and purses... as well as stocks, bonds, precious metals, jewels, piggy banks, the coffee can buried in the backyard, cash and checkbooks.

STAND TALL AMERICA



MAIL BAG

Dear Scholarship Committee,
Thank you for bestowing upon me the honor of being the 2006 recipient of your scholarship. Your award will continue to help me reach

You couldn't have been more thoughtful.

my scholastic goals at The University of Puget Sound. Thank you for taking the time to consider my application.

Sincerely,
Lindsay Wallace

CHRIS

8-28-06

Hope you and yours are well & happy. Looking forward to the reunion in October and seeing you and all the rest that you make it.

Lee

We are doing fine and keep busy doing the things we enjoy. Our 62nd wedding anniversary was on June 30th and our second great grandchild arrived on July 19th.

We now have two boys. Marie Brooke's family sold her home and moved her to a home for Alzheimer patients in New Port Beach. She was not manageable so it was for our own good. We do miss her.

Enclosed is check for membership dues. Thank you all for the house that go into the Dash Pot. We appreciate it. Sorry to hear of Harold Elstone's illness. We are keeping him in our prayers.

Bob & Frances
Stirkney

Dear Committee,

I wish to thank the Association Of Minemen Committee for the check in the amount of \$500. Once again, it will be put to good use. I am continuing my education at Oregon State University this fall. I am officially a sophomore studying business. I am also going to continue playing baseball. This past year was unbelievable. We won the Pac-10 and also the College World Series! Last year at this time I never could have imagined it! It was a dream come true!

Thank you again for your support and generosity. It is greatly appreciated. Wish me luck and GO BEAVERS!

Sincerely,
John Wallace

Thank you for the generous Association of Minemen Scholarship Award_ and thank you to all the Association of Minemen members for making this award possible. The funds, will go toward enhancing my continuing academic achievement. This award comes at a helpful time. College costs have -one LIP. Doesn't everything? In these troubled and uncertain times it's good to have help.

At present, my GPA is 3.9. During my remaining year I will be completing an Honor's scholar project in my major. I am on the University of North Carolina Wilmington Dean's list for academic excellence both semesters so far and on the Chancellor's list for last fall's semester. I'm in the top 5 percent of my class. Additionally my major department recognized me for academic excellence and awarded a scholarship for half my textbook costs. It's great to be recognized, specially by one's associates. I expect to graduate at or above my current GPA in May 2007.

UNCW's Creative Writing department introduced a new program this year. Writing major students who have completed the sequence of publishing courses earn professional publishing certification. This is in addition to my bachelor's degree in fine arts, creative writing. The publishing certificate is intended to promote graduate's careers in the publishing industry, which is one of my goals. I am taking the publishing sequence and will complete certification eligibility in the spring semester.

I have the same medical issues, diabetes, carpal tunnel disease and kidney stones. Recently, a neurologist determined that I have permanent partial disabling impacts from carpal tunnel disease, which are impediments to employment. Attending college has been a wise choice that you-all have promoted.

Thank you, and Respectfully yours,

John F. Loonam, Jr.

WOW! Bill,
That was a GREAT read, the MOMUA Units really kept us up to date and informed.

I don't know how it can get any better, but the information on the Navy and Mineforce has been truly informative.

I know it seems funny me saying this but I can't be the only one that got excited reading about a group that I had belonged to even after being out of the Navy 34 years.

When we were young Mineman it was Brass Wire Brushes, Non-Sparking Tools and a lot of Paint.

I would go back in for Two Weeks every year with out pay just to see the Mineforce at work. (If Betty Let Me)

Nice Set Up Bill.

Betty and I sure could go for the Early Bird Shrimp. We will be arriving for the Reunion on the 19th.

Hope to see you all soon.

Willie

Hey Shipmate,

I just received a Ring I ordered from this site: www.gordonsmasonicing.com, it's made from a solid piece of Stainless Steel and at a reasonable price just \$100 per ring.

This man is retired Navy and also makes rings for just about every job and organization out there. I'm sure if some enterprising Mineman out there came up with a design he could make a beautiful ring for the AOM.

If you get the chance check out the site and kick the idea around at the reunion.

Dave Watkins

MN1 (Straight Stick) Ret.

**NEXT DASHPOT
ARTICLE DUE
DATE IS
1 DECEMBER
2006**



LEANING ON THE TAFFRAIL

NAVY MINE EXPERT FINDS NAVAL WEAPONS STATION IS "THE TIE THAT BINDS"

by Dave Buswell



CWO JACK F. SMOOT.

Yorktown, Va. - The observation that "you can't go home again" certainly doesn't apply to the U. S. Navy Reserve's Chief Warrant Officer Jack F. Smoot.

"I never really left Yorktown's Naval Weapon Station:-since I was born there 48 years ago," says Smoot. And today, his ties with the station are even closer. Consider that his wife, the former June Elkins, was also born and raised on the station and that today he works there as a civilian during the week and as commanding officer of a highly-regarded Naval Reserve Unit one week-end a month.

Further, his wife is the station commanding officer's secretary and, at one time or another, all five of his brothers also worked at the station. When Jack Smoot was born in 1929, one of six

boys and three girls, his father was a civilian electrician at what was then known as the Naval Mine Depot. His wife's father was the facility's maintenance carpenter.

When Jack graduated from Poquoson High School in 1946, he immediately enlisted in the Navy and was sent to electrician mate's school at Great Lakes, Illinois.

Following graduation, he spent the next 18 months aboard the amphibious repair ship Krishna.

After mustering out in late 1948, he simultaneously joined the Navy Reserve and went to work as a civilian at the Weapons Station. His progress in both pursuits over the years has been remarkable. In his civilian capacity, he has risen to head of the management division of the station's quality assurance department with a GS-13 rank.

In the Navy Reserve, he has been promoted over the years from a first class petty officer with a "Mineman" rating to chief warrant officer with an underwater ordnance technician specialty, one of a few, if any, in the Navy Reserve Program.

As a reservist, Chief Warrant Officer Smoot commands Mobile Mine Assembly Group ("MOMAG") 1006 with a compliment of 16 enlisted personnel, the first of some 27 such units in the Nation.

"I was on active duty at the Mine Warfare School in Charleston, South Carolina in 1971" recalls Smoot, "and became aware of the need for continued Navy Reserve readiness in this highly-specialized and technical field of mine warfare." He wrote a memorandum to appropriate authorities in Washington, D.C. and outlined what he thought such a unit could accomplish.

"Not only did they like my idea," says Smoot, "but they asked me to set one up here at the station and ordered me to do it as Commanding officer." And Jack Smoot has been commanding officer

since 1971 except for two years on another assignment.

“Our task as a unit is to have every man up-to-date in every respect of the technical aspects of mines and mine warfare and to be ready to integrate with the regular Navy should such a contingency arise. I can say categorically that we are ready.”



CWO Smoot giving a brief in the classroom.

And that statement is no exaggeration. In addition to two days of drilling one weekend every month, the men of MOMAG 1006 go on active duty for training for two weeks every year.

Recently they were sent as a unit overseas to work with their Navy active duty counterparts at a mine staging site in Europe.

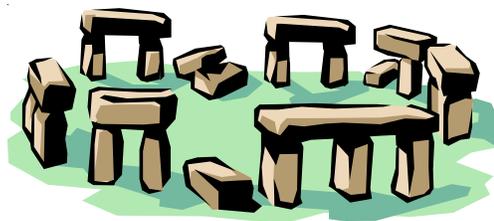
As an auxiliary activity, the unit also maintains a most impressive and historic collection of mines in a museum housed in the drill site building at the Weapons Station.

With obvious pride, Smoot comments that “The collection of mines we have represents virtually every type of mine used in the history of modern mine warfare. Some of them date to World War I and include enemy mines as well. They were obtained by both reservists and civilians over the years and serve a training function as well.”

While mines clearly take up a great deal of Jack Smoot’s time and attention, he also finds time to pursue golf and fishing. He and his wife have two married daughters, Connie Reynolds and Pamela Worthy, both of the Yorktown area.

Whether pursuing his career or his hobbies, there’s probably no one who knows mines any better than Jack Smoot. And the Navy’s proud to have his services both as a civilian and as a Reserve officer.

HISTORY LESSONS



NAVY PLANE WING INSIGNIA

Don DeCrona



In 1942 the wing insignia was changed as shown on the above aircraft, formerly a red circle appeared in the center of the white star. Tail markings of red, white, and blue have been discontinued. Note: Aircraft in picture is the Grumman F6F Hellcat and the Corsair.

“LOST MINEMAN”

Thomas, Buford, MNC; 34; passed away US Naval Hospital, Bremerton, WA. around 1954;

RAWLINS, J. B., MN3, May 3, 1945; (KIA USS AARON WARD DM-34)

FOLLETT, R. R., MN2; May 3, 1945; (KIA USS AARON WARD DM-34).

Please review the TAPS list at the AOM web site at <http://home.triad.rr.com/aom/index.htm>. Those that have gone before deserve recognition and respect by those of us who took up the torch and followed them. Let us not be forgotten by those who follow in our footsteps.

“Moral courage is the most valuable and usually the most absent characteristic in men.”

General George Patton



TAPS



MN1 Clair Vincent (Mike) Cummings, USN (Ret.)

Clair Vincent (Mike) Cummings died during the evening of August 5, 2006, with his family by his side. He was the husband of Patricia Cummings. Residence, North Charleston, SC. The relatives and friends of Mr. & Mrs. Clair Vincent Cummings are invited to attend the Mass of Christian Burial of the former in St. John's Catholic Church, Wednesday, August 9, 2006 at ten o'clock. The prayers of final commendation and farewell will be at the Riverview Memorial Park. Friends may call at the J. HENRY STUHR, INC. NORTH AREA CHAPEL on Tuesday between six and eight o'clock. He was born on April 10, 1931 in Masonville, Iowa, the son of Francis and Eula Lamb Cummings. He graduated from Lamont High School and entered the US Navy at the age of 17. His 20 year career as a Mineman took him to Hawaii, Japan, Washington, Virginia, Maryland, California, and finally Charleston, where he retired in 1967. He worked at the former Gulf Oil Plant as a mechanic until his retirement. He was an active parishioner at St. John's Catholic Church for 42 years. A jack-of-all-trades, our husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather gave unconditionally of his love, strength, wisdom, and talents. We will miss his exceptional sense of humor and unfailing love of life. He is survived by his wife, Patricia Cummings; two sisters, Sr. Mary Kevin (Beverly) Cummings of Dubuque, IA and Joyce Carpenter of Mt. Vernon, IA; three sons: Edward (Fran) Cummings, Donald (Rebecca) Cummings and Timothy (Victoria) Cummings; seven daughters: Diane York, Margaret (Sam) Brock, Kelly (Danny) Kirk, Lisa (Ted) Blevins, Tammy (Sam) Cox, Sandra (Phillip) Euper and Jany (Bryan) Pooser; 26 grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. He is predeceased by his brother, James Cummings and two

grandchildren, Greg Brock and Katherine York. For those who would like to do something lasting in Mike's name consider making a donation to his beloved St. John's Catholic Church at 3921 St. John's Avenue, N. Charleston, SC 29405. A memorial message may be written to the family by visiting our website at www.jhenrystuhr.com. Visit our guestbook at www.charleston.net/deaths.



Glaze, Doyle R., MNC, USN (ret.)

My father, Doyle R. "Rick" Glaze MNC (Retired 1970), passed away at home in Baton Rouge, Louisiana from lung cancer at 6 pm on May 16. He was stationed in the Ticonderoga, Indiana, Shanks and others that he could not remember. We were so excited to know that he found this website, and I believe he caught up with an old shipmate of his through this great site.

He wanted me, his daughter, to contact and inform you of his death and its circumstances. We are asking that, in lieu of flowers, please make a donation to the American Cancer Society. If anyone was close to him and wishes to write anything to him or my mother, it can be sent to our home address: 9469 El Cajon Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70815

Thank you. We appreciate all your hard work in the service.

Sincerely,
Nicole Glaze



John Dunn (CIV)

John Dunn, civilian engineer (Ret.) at NMEF, came to the end of his seven year battle with cancer. John passed away Saturday morning. Born 2/7/46 in Urbanna, VA. Survived by his wife of 39 years Jean Revere Dunn, sons Mike and Tim. John graduated from Virginia Tech and worked at NMEF/ Weapons Station, Yorktown for 29 years retiring in 1995. The funeral was held on 7/30/06 at 10 am at Petsworth Baptist Church, Gloucester. Internment was at Topping, VA. Memorials to American Cancer Society or Petsworth Baptist, 2471 Hickory Fork Rd, Gloucester, VA 23061

Please check the TAPS list at the AOM website, <http://home.triad.rr.com/aom/index.htm>, and let Phil Dechene or Bill Fortner know if there are any names that you know are missing.

Rogue's Gallery



Standing, left to right; MN2 Frank Stiles, MN2 Dwenger, MNCM Jim Powers, MNSN Mueller, MNSN Hess, MN3 Unknown. Squatting left to right; MNSN Privette, MNSN "Beats," MN1 Don Jones. MNC John Wead not present due to broken leg.

Our group, from MOMAUPAC, Long Beach, CA, deployed on a 6-month TDY to NAVMAG, Subic, for possible use aboard "Yankee Station" aircraft carriers. In preparation for that eventuality, I was sent to "SERE" School, in San Diego and "JEST" School at Cubi Point, in the P. I. I lost 10-lb at "SERE" School and came back sporting the bright-red imprint of an Interrogator's hand on my face. Luckily for me, the "ROE" said they couldn't hit you with their fists. The group, minus Powers and Wead, went to the "Jungle Environmental Survival Training" School where the amazing Negretos/Aeta instructors taught us how to catch fruit bats, cook perfect rice in bamboo, and fix snares for "wild" chickens. etc. A pilot in the class decided to test the snare without realizing his head was directly under the "big rock" that made the thing work. And before anyone could say "Sir, I respectfully suggest that you not do that." the rock pulled a "Newton" on him, and left a big knot, and a small gash on his noggin.

At NAVMAG, an MN2 (forgot his name) claimed to have helped delivery some of the first Mk 50 mines that were used in North Vietnam's "inland waterways." He said a few of the small Mk 50 mines were flown from NAS, Cubi Point, to S. Vietnam inside twin-engine SNB aircraft. (Maybe some of your readers could help verify that story.)

We never got the call to go to an aircraft carrier, so we worked hard wherever they needed us at NAVMAG. Meanwhile, back in the States, our dependents were enduring the anxious days of the "Watts Riots" that occurred in August, 1965.

Tropical

Memories





The Old Folks At Home

The Yellow Jacket Caper, or...



A well insured man should not listen too closely to his wife.

After having proved to my satisfaction that the high wheel lawn trimmer my shy and retiring bride of some 45 years had insisted on purchasing was useless in the uneven, rock-strewn ditch that runs between our driveway and the pasture fence for about 1,300 feet, I did not say, "See, I told you so", but I did remind her that she had heard it from me first.

My old Sears Brushwhacker was dead due to a leaky fuel tank and, since it was 20 years old, I only got snickers from the Sears parts people when I tried to order a new one. My only choice was to get a new Brushwhacker which I did. I unpacked the rascal, assembled and fueled it. Two tugs on the starter cord and I was rewarded with that throaty roar of power (mad hornet in a mayonnaise jar) I had missed and couldn't wait to get to the ditch and wreak havoc. I installed the deadly 8-toothed, steel blade on the head and smiled inwardly as I waited impatiently until 4 p.m. and a cooler temperature to sally forth and do battle with the weeds and broom grass.

It was exhilarating! Though the ferocity of my attack had dog fennels uprooting and running for their very lives, my foray into the ditch with the new Brushwhacker was only a partial victory as I didn't get the whole area subdued due to a nest of yellow jackets in the last 4 square feet of the section I had marked off to do. Having encountered these pests before, I departed the area at about Warp Eight, the sonic boom disrupting their malevolent plans. I returned to my castle in defeat.

Miz Dee had heard from a neighbor (so SHE says) that gasoline was just the thing for yellow jackets and all that was needed was to pour a little in the hole. That sounded simple enough. About dusk, I got a 5 gallon can and away we went with the gusto of a hound dog hot on the scent of a bag of Alpo.

I sloshed some gasoline where I had seen the yellow jackets emerging and darned if they didn't start coming out in at least one other place and possibly two. I hastily sloshed on more, probably close on 3 gallons or more. There was a bunch of them climbing around on the tall grass and weeds though they seemed a bit disoriented by the gas fumes and Miz Dee was spraying at them with hornet spray.

Miz Dee, a closet pyromaniac I learned, suggested we light the spot on fire to get the yellow jackets climbing around on the tall grass and weeds I had been unable to cut. While the idea initially sounded reasonable, the hair on the back of my neck began to rise and I should have taken that as a warning.

We tried to light a Kleenex with the car cigarette lighter to no avail. We drove back to the house and got a box of matches and returned to the scene.

Did I mention that the ditch is on a goodly slope and that gasoline fumes are heavier than air and will seek the lowest point? Well, at HER insistence, I lit the Kleenex and tossed it into the little stand of grass and weeds with no result until a small part burned free and fell to the ground.

Suddenly, with a significant "WHUUUMMMMP", the air was filled with flaming yellow jackets as a fireball erupted and then, with a loud "SWOOSH," raced like a blue rocket down the ditch setting the entire world on fire. Fortunately, there was green grass on the other side of the fence that runs parallel to the ditch and the barren driveway on the other.

Fearing litigation that would put me in the poorhouse for the remainder of my days, I raced through the falling yellow jackets who were even more disoriented and not a little bit angry and beat into submission a rapidly advancing 8 feet wide wall of fire at the lower end. Fear had panicked her and Miz Dee was performing like a champion country/western clogger. She stomped the upper end out in seconds.

This little job took 2 hours and cost me my best leather Velcro sneakers and a new pair of pants. Why do I listen when I know better, why, why?



USS NEW YORK



With a year to go before it even touches the water, the Navy's amphibious assault ship USS New York has already made history. It was built with 24 tons of scrap steel from the World Trade Center

USS New York is about 45 percent complete and should be ready for launch in mid-2007. Katrina disrupted construction when it pounded the Gulf Coast last summer, but the 684-foot vessel escaped serious damage, and workers were back at the yard near New Orleans two weeks after the storm.

It is the fifth in a new class of warship - designed for missions that include special operations against terrorists. It will carry a crew of 360 sailors and 700 combat-ready Marines to be delivered ashore by helicopters and assault craft.

"It would be fitting if the first mission this ship would go on is to make sure that bin Laden is taken out, his terrorist organization is taken out," said Glenn Clement, a paint foreman. "He came in through the back door and knocked our towers down and (the New York) is coming right through the front door, and we want them to know that."

Steel from the World Trade Center was melted down in a foundry in Amite, La., to cast the ship's bow section. When it was poured into the molds on Sept. 9, 2003, "those big rough steelworkers treated it with total reverence," recalled Navy Capt. Kevin Wensing, who was there. "It was a spiritual moment for everybody there."

Junior Chavers, foundry operations manager, said that when the trade center steel first arrived, he touched it with his hand and the "hair on my neck stood up." "It had a big meaning to it for all of us," he said. "They knocked us down. They can't keep us down. We're going to be back."

The ship's motto? - 'Never Forget'

LCS MINE WARFARE CREWS TRAINING IN PANAMA CITY

by Dan Broadstreet, NSWC PC Public Affairs

PANAMA CITY, Fla. – The Navy's first Mine Warfare (MIW) Mission Package DET ONE crew is currently training and preparing to operate from the Navy's most innovative, modularized and reconfigurable ship – the Littoral Combat Ship, USS Freedom (LCS 1).

The Navy's current plans call for a total of 55 of the agile, high-speed, LCS ships to be built for the Navy's Surface Fleet. Each ship will be capable of carrying any one of the mine warfare, anti-submarine warfare or surface mission packages at a given time.

"The modularity and flexibility of the mission packages ensure that we can transport and embark them on the LCS when and where they're needed very quickly," said Capt. Walter Wright, program manager, LCS Mission Modules Program.

According to Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City (NSWC PC) Department Head Dave Tubridy, training the first MIW MP DET ONE

crew to board the USS Freedom signifies one of the last required phases in certifying the mission packages ready for deployment.

“You hear a lot about the Navy’s newest surface combatant class Littoral Combat Ship,” Tubridy said. “And it is exciting that the ship will be capable of reconfiguring into three different warfare packages within a day’s time. But, what is equally exciting is the progress we’re making in training the first LCS crew.”



Pictured left to right are: MN3(SW) Jamnis Lacy, ARINC AQS-20 Instructor Rick Lemcool, AG1(SW) Michael Johnson and MNC(SW) Ollie Collins perform maintenance actions on the AN/AQS-20A sonar tow body. The LCS MIW DET-1 crew will handle and maintain the five organic Airborne Mine Countermeasures mission systems once deployed.



Pictured from left to right are: MN3(SW) Jamnis Lacy; MN1(SW) Cameron Carlisle; MN1(SW) Paul Bufano (Background); and MNSN(SW) Christopher Leclere review the physical and operating characteristics of the AN/AQS-20A Mission Module supporting container during their orientation at Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City. The session was only a small part of the 19-member MIW DET Crew’s training package, specifically focused on learning about the AN/AQS-20A and the Remote Minehunting Mission System.

Tubridy also added that the mission package is only complete when a “qualified crew” embarks the ship with the package.

The detachment crew is on track to conclude qualification trials in November 2007. After

successful qualification the crew will be certified for deployment aboard the USS Freedom (LCS 1).

The crew will also receive training in Visit Boarding, Search and Seizure, and Anti-terrorism Force Protection according to Ed Brenner, Mine Warfare Training Lead.

Lt. Brian Amador, Officer-in-Charge of the Mine Warfare Mission Package DET ONE crew, acknowledged he and his crew are aware they’re a part of “history in the making.”

“This is where the technology is changing and enabling us to put one of the fastest moving ships the world has ever seen in the water with some of the world’s most sophisticated machinery,” Amador said.

“No longer do our ships have to be inside that minehunting area or relatively close to it,” Amador added. “Now, our ship can be over-the-horizon with our Unmanned Automated Vehicles doing the work and looking for the mines. So, Sailors and high-priced platforms are taken out of harm’s way.”

“The LCS and the MIW Mission Packages are bringing Mine Countermeasures to the mainstream,” said Wright

“If you have the capability of changing your ship’s mission package from a Mine Warfare role to an Anti-Submarine Warfare role in less than 24 hours, then you’re combating several mission areas with just one ship,” Amador said, adding he frequently states “taxpayers are really getting the three-for-one sale.”



Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City Organic Mine Countermeasures Tactician Teresa Link critiques the skills and proficiencies of Littoral Combat Ship Mine Warfare Detachment-1 MNC(SW) Ollie Collins while conducting Post Mission Analysis of the AN/AQS-20A Sonar data.

NAVY'S NEW TACK ON MINE WARFARE

David Axe | August 23, 2006

The Navy's 4,000-strong Mine Warfare Command based at Naval Station Ingleside, Texas, is undergoing its most radical transformation in decades as it tries to keep up with new technology and a changing world. Modular counter-mine systems embedded on destroyers, submarines, helicopters and the new Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) are replacing dedicated minehunting ships to make the force speedier, longer-ranged and more flexible. Concurrent administrative changes aim to reduce overhead.

Through the transformation, the command's message remains unchanged: countering mines is a vital mission. "This includes not only locating and neutralizing sea mines, but also identifying where mines are not present," says Ed Mickley, Mine Warfare Command spokesman.

Command executive director Scott Price points out that, since World War II, mines have accounted for three-quarters of all successful attacks on Navy ships, including two ships that suffered damage during the 1991 Gulf War.

Traditionally, minehunting has been the purview of small, slow ships equipped with sonars and magnetic mine detonators. The ships would spot the mines and clear them themselves or call in divers to disarm them. In recent decades, modified helicopters towing special sleds have joined the fray — and so have highly-trained dolphins working with Navy handlers. Additionally, from 1996 to 2002, a former amphibious assault ship served as a mine warfare command vessel. (It has been replaced on an experimental basis by a catamaran of commercial design.)

While effective against large, dense minefields in predictable places — such as those planned for the U.S. seaboard by the Soviet Union during the Cold War — traditional forces are too slow and flimsy for rapid deployment to unfamiliar waters to counter more mercurial mine threats.

The Navy's solution is to integrate minehunting systems onto its large, fast *Arleigh Burke*-class destroyers and the future fleet of nimble LCSs (and, eventually, *Virginia*-class submarines) while transitioning the airborne counter-mine force from oversized Sikorsky MH-53E Sea Dragons to smaller Sikorsky MH-60R Seahawks that can fly from the surface ships' heaving decks.

Several *Burke* destroyers have been fitted with the Lockheed Martin AN/WLD 1(V) Remote Minehunting System, or RMS, which Price describes as "a diesel [unmanned] system, with the bulk of its body underwater, that tows a side-scanned radar" for detecting mines.

LCS is designed as a "truck" that can accept different "mission modules" depending upon the threat. The keel of the first LCS was laid last summer. As many as 55 might join the fleet in coming decades. The class's countermine module will be one of the first fielded: module crews are already training on simulators at a Navy facility in Panama City, Florida.

The LCS countermine module combines several advanced minehunting drones including the RMS and the so-called Unmanned Surface Vehicle — essentially a robot motorboat that tows countermine sleds similar to those towed by helicopters. Future development might see mine hunting systems combined with the Northrop Grumman RQ-8 Firescout drone helicopter being considered for the LCS.

As modular and organic capabilities increase, the command will decommission its 12 *Osprey*-class small coastal mine hunters, which "were designed in the 1980s ... to counter massive Soviet mining of U.S. ports," Price says. Six *Ospreys* are slated for 2007 disposal.

The balance of the command's traditional force — 14 ships of the larger *Avenger* class — will be modernized pending a decision on their fates slated for around 2012.

The command is transforming its administrative structure at the same time that its forces adopt new technologies. The Navy has announced the impending merger of Mine Warfare Command with the Fleet Anti-Submarine Warfare Center to create a new command devoted to countering undersea threats.

The decision has been met with some skepticism, admitted Admiral John Nathman, commander of U.S. Fleet Forces Command. "People don't like change, and we have people that don't like what we've done," Nathman told *Defense News* on Aug. 15.

"Mine warfare wasn't as holistically treated as it should have been. We tended to put it together operationally at the point of the problem," Nathman added. "The benefit to this merger will be the combined use of resources that overlap for both commands."

I JUST NEED ENOUGH
TO TIDE ME OVER UNTIL
I NEED MORE.

Bill Hoest



COMOMAG

by MNCS(SW) David Ostrom

Greetings all from South Texas! This submission to the DASHPOT has seen a very busy past quarter with the MOMAU sites participating in numerous Mine Warfare exercises throughout the Fleet. MOMAU Units provided personnel and assets to support RIMPAC 06, PANAMAX 06, FAWOMOMEX 07-1, MIREM LOE 06-2, TRIDENT FURY, USS STENNIS C2X, 340WPS Barksdale B-52 MINEX, MINEX/EODEX 06-2JA, and TSWG-NOAA Underwater Domain Awareness event. We received an outstanding report from the staff at the University of Florida and U.S. Coast Guard for the outstanding personnel and material support MOMAU ELEVEN provided during the TSWG-NOAA event. Their efforts and technical support with the staff in Southern Florida ensured successful testing of potential 3-D sonar's for Coast Guard use.

We had Captain O'Reagan, Naval Munitions Command onboard COMOMAG for a site visit as we prepare for our alignment with NMC. We also send a "Bravo Zulu" to MOMAU FIFTEEN for their successful Mine Readiness Certification Inspection!

Awards: "Bravo Zulu's" to LT Greg McGill, CWO3 Carl Washington, and MNC(SW) John Sullivan who were awarded the Navy Commendation Medal. IS1 Maisha Dunomes and MN1(SW) Kirk Veselka were awarded the Navy Achievement Medal.

Welcome Aboard! to LCDR Edgar Martinez from SUBBASE NEW LONDON Connecticut, LT Jeff McCrady USS PAUL HAMILTON, LTJG Stephanie Cowart USS COWPENS, and MN1(SW) Jason Reinhart MHC CREW INFLICT.

Transfers: LT McGill to NAVORDTESTU CAPE CANAVERAL Florida, CWO3 Washington to NAVSPECWARUNIT THREE, Bahrain, ISC(SW) Randy Bubar to VPU ONE Brunswick Maine, IS1 Dunomes to VP 45 Jacksonville Florida, MN1(SW) Sue Lowder to MCM DIV 31 Bahrain, and MN1(SW) Veselka to HM 15 Corpus Christi Texas.

We also wish continued success and the very best life has to offer to CDR John Dennett, MNC(SW) Steven Pierce and MNC(SW) John Sullivan who each just recently retired from active duty and are starting the next phase of their lives with family. All of us at COMOMAG wish each of you and your family members a very Happy Thanksgiving. God bless and stay safe.



MOMAU ONE SEAL BEACH, CA

by LCDR B. D. Hall

CO's CORNER: Greetings from sunny Seal Beach, CA.

Hello fellow MOMAU warriors. The past summer months consisted of "HOT" southern California weather and a successful completion of RIMPAC '06 in Pearl Harbor, HI.

Job well done to MN1(SW) Travis Ramsey, MN2 Jeramie Lane, MN2(SW) Mikael Nissen, and MNSN Cody Wolfe for their superb support and professionalism during RIMPAC '06. As part of MOMAU One's MAT Team Detachments Two and Three, all members were instrumental in the launch and recovery of over 150 mine counter-measure training targets within the Penguin Banks, Mirem, Molokai and Barber's Point training minefields.

The crew's hard work and preparation prior to the exercise was undoubtedly recognized throughout the course of the exercise. The support from the homefront was indeed superb as the MOMAU One crewmembers provided any and all support as needed. Bravo Zulu to all hands!

Special thanks to MNCS(SW) David Ostrom from COMOMAG and MN1(SW) Matt Ledford from MOMAU 11 as part of MOMAU One Detachment One. They both worked diligently in the loading, positioning, final preparation, surface launch and recovery of all training shapes during RIMPAC '06.

Good news was delivered during the first week of August. We received notice that MN1(SW) Keon Jackson was selected to join the ranks of Chief Petty Officer. Job well done and well deserved, Bravo Zulu!

HAILS & FAREWELLS: We had five new Sailors join our ranks this past season. MNC(SW) David Epton arrived from NAVMEDCLINIC London and MNSA(SW) Traves Walters reported from MHC CREW PRESTIGE. As well as MN2 Christopher Robinson, MNSA Shane Mrary and MNSA Christopher Reuss who all reported to us from STUMINWARTRACEN. Welcome aboard to all!

Farewell to MN1(SW) Travis Hutchens who transferred on August 2nd to USS PATRIOT (MCM-7). Best of luck!

AWARDS & RECOGNITION: Congratulations to SK2(AW) Rene Morales for choosing to continue his naval career by reenlisting for three years. The crew of MOMAU One prepared an outstanding reenlistment ceremony for SK2(AW) Morales on 24 August 06. We acknowledged him and his wife Adriana for their continued and dedicated service to the Armed Forces.

I'd also like to congratulate MN2(SW) Jeramie Lane for selection as Sailor of the Quarter, and MNSN Justin Creadick for selection as Blue Jacket of the Quarter.

ON THE HORIZON: This Fall marks the start of a new era at MOMAU One beginning with my Change of Command on 12 October 2006. My

relief will be LT George V. Bodine who will be reporting from NAVORDSAFSECACT Indian Head, MD. I wish LT Bodine a hearty "welcome aboard" as he makes his transit from the east coast to Seal Beach, CA.

Next quarter marks a busy schedule for MOMAU One to include exercises on the USS JOHN C STENNIS and in Barksdale AFB, LA. Both events will take place in the month of September and include a mix of Quickstrike weapons. In October, prior to Change of Command, we will roll into our Technical Assist Visit (TAV) conducted by COMOMAG and end November with assisting the USS NIMITZ in her Mine Readiness Assessment and COMPTUEX. Following these evolutions we look forward to the holiday season and some well deserved time off with friends and family filled with fun and relaxation.



MOMAU FIFTEEN INGLESIDE, TX

by MN3 Sandy M. Gardner and MNSN Heather Priest

Greetings:

Well like always, this quarter has been full of excitement. Each Department has put forth all its efforts in support of a rigorous and highly demanding Exercise schedule. This includes the upcoming PANAMAX, where MNSN Johnson and I, will be representing MOMAU 15. Additionally, we have been extremely busy preparing for the upcoming MRCL, which is scheduled in September. Is it any wonder that there is time for anything else, but like always we seem to fit in a few extras. For example Production has been going full speed ahead on Rate training, gearing up for the September advancement exam. I want to wish everyone good luck and I can't wait to announce the new petty officers!

I would like to also pay respects to MNC (SW) Robert Dunbar who retired this quarter. Throughout his Navy career he has seen many faces, but the ones we hope he misses the most are the good friends he has made along his long journey. He started by reporting to Mobile Mine Assembly Group Unit 8, located in Guam in 1987. He then transferred to MOMAG Unit 9, located in Subic Bay, Philippines, in 1989. Next he arrived at MOMAG Unit 14 at Yorktown, Virginia in 1991. In

1993 he reported to MOMAG Detachment 7, at Lualualei, Barbers Point, Hawaii. Chief Dunbar then transferred to USS PELICAN (MHC 53) in Ingleside, Texas in 1999. He finally made it back to a mine shop, Mobile Mine Assembly Unit 15, Ingleside, Texas in 2003. Here is where he influenced some of the greatest sailors. His Navy knowledge and mine shop teachings could always be heard from across the room. I can say from all of us at the shop that he will never be forgotten. He has held many duties, from the Technician at MOMAG Unit 8 to the Mine Assembly Officer and Executive Officer here at Mobile Mine Assembly Unit 15. He has always shown the highest level of excellence. That of which earned him the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (three awards), Joint Meritorious Unit Award, Navy Unit Commendation, Meritorious Unit Commendation, Good Conduct Medal (six awards), National Defense Service Medal (two awards), Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Sea Service Deployment Ribbon, Navy and Marine Corps Overseas Service Ribbon (four awards), Navy Marksman Rifleman Ribbon, Navy Pistol Shot Medal (Expert).

***"They're on our right,
they're on our left,
they're in front of us,
they're behind us;
they can't get away from
us this time."***

Chesty Puller, USMC, Chosin Reservoir, Korean War

HOME LAND SUPPORT

During World War II, the Disney Studio set up a special five-man crew of artists to respond to requests by the military and war industry to use Disney characters in unit insignia. The Disney Studio created 1,200 different insignia for bombing squadrons, naval vessels, training schools, chaplains' corps, women's units, and even Allied units. Of those, Donald Duck appeared in more than 200 designs. Below is an insignia made for the U.S. Navy.



Fiobuoys on the pier.



**Third Division
First Defense Battalion
(Mine Sweepers)**



Getting ready to deploy fiobuoys.

**Let us think the unthinkable,
let us do the undoable.
Let us prepare to grapple with the
ineffable itself,
and see if we may not eff it after all.
Douglas Adams (1952 - 2001)**



MCM NEWS

MINE WARFARE COMMANDER LEADS MINE THREAT RESPONSE PLAN FOR U.S. PORTS AND HARBORS

Public Affairs Office, Commander, Mine Warfare Command

Corpus Christi, TX—Circumstances surrounding the attacks of 9-11 underscore the fact that the U.S. Navy was thrust into an unprecedented era of warfare. Specifically, the actions perpetrated by a ruthless, asymmetrical enemy demand an examination of existing tactics, techniques, and procedures employed to counter unpredictable enemy courses of action in maritime environs.

The National Strategy for Maritime Security approved by the President in October of 2005 and the supporting Maritime Operational Threat Response (MOTR) Plan provide high level guidance in support of the national strategy. In response, Commander, Mine Warfare Command (CMWC), in her capacity as CTF-21, was tasked by Commander U.S. Fleet Forces Command (CFFC) to develop comprehensive MCM requirements for the protection of U.S. ports, harbors, and approaches.

Of paramount concern is the ability to respond rapidly to Homeland Defense matters relative to naval mine countermeasures (MCM). The Commander Mine Warfare Command (CMWC) led her staff to swiftly analyze the force requirement necessary to support the MOTR strategic initiative.

“We have the lead in the development of a comprehensive mine clearance response plan to support Maritime Homeland Defense (MHL) for our nation.” Rear Admiral D. A. Loewer, Commander, Task Force 21 stated, “The plan revolves around the rapid response of underwater mine countermeasures (UMCM), airborne mine countermeasures (AMCM), and Mine Countermeasures (MCM) Squadron staffs that can quickly move into a threat area and integrate with federal, state, and local agencies at the Unified Command Post and Incident Command Post.”

In February, 2006, Rear Adm. Loewer convened a ‘summit’ to push forward on critical aspects for this task. This meeting significantly increased awareness among all participants regarding the focus required for conducting countermeasure operations in confined, often restricted ports and harbors along our Nation’s coastline. Participants

from integral commands including NORTHCOM, USFFC, CG LANT and PAC evaluated existing mine clearance assets, logistics and technology to help define rapid response options.

Loewer added, “Our response includes employment of divers, marine mammal systems, unmanned underwater vehicles (UUVs), and towed side-scan sonar to detect, identify, and neutralize sea mines and waterborne improvised explosive devices (WIEDs).”

TRIALS PROVE KEY TECHNOLOGY

“Technology is key to our success,” Loewer stated emphatically. “Unmanned vehicles and underwater surveillance systems newly designed to improve antiterrorist efforts were tested during the Trials, which I observed at La Spezia, Italy.”

The April 2006 NATO Harbor Protection Trials (HPT-06), which employed a multi-national, multi-disciplined military and scientific team lead by NATO Undersea Research Center’s (NURC) personnel to analyze cutting edge systems was hosted by Rear Adm. Guilio Cobolli of the Italian Navy General Staff.

Thirty-eight systems were offered by industry partners from NATO nations and 15 were selected after a rigorous screening process. The multi-faceted team validated the systems and associated concepts, updated the NURC trial plan for harbor protection then identified areas for cooperation and development.

“I was profoundly impressed by the technological advancements,” said Rear Adm. Loewer. “I thought I had seen the pinnacle of 3-D, geo-referenced, underwater imagery during a live demonstration of a system in development for the Coast Guard, then I witnessed a different system’s imagery of the sea bottom next to a seawall in Livorno, Italy that was virtually indistinguishable from a mosaic of actual photographs.”

Immediately after the Trials, NURC hosted discussions between CMWC, industry and other military experts about challenges faced in ports, harbors, and approaches and potential solutions

through new technologies. Participating nations included Australia, Germany, Denmark, Poland, Finland, Spain, Norway, France, Italy, and the U.S.

“The Harbor Protection Trials provided important advancements to counter the challenges in protecting near land maritime environments. We’ll continue to engage and compel industry teams to find the best methodology to support combatant commanders and the Department of Homeland Security as they deal with low-visibility, underwater obstructions,” Loewer added.

CONOPS PARTNERSHIP CREATED

After her trip to Italy, and to initiate a working relationship, Rear Adm. Loewer met with Rear Adm. Justice, USCG, Director for Enforcement and Incident to empower a USCG-USN team that will address the prevention, detection, and mine countermeasures operations for mining of U.S. ports, harbors, and approaches. Their results will form the basis for an Integrated Concept of Operations (CONOPS) as required by the MOTR for the Department of Defense (DoD), Department of Justice (DOJ), and Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

During July a working group will convene in Corpus Christi, Texas to initiate the development of these Integrated CONOPS.

Rear Adm. Loewer added, “As we move forward, we must look to the long term and engage our industry partners for their input, knowledge and expertise. We must establish integrated agency response requirements, evaluate port priorities, and determine future development programs which meet our specific MHLD requirements.”

DATA STANDARDS NECESSARY

The newest techniques rely upon change detection – the ability to use historical environmental

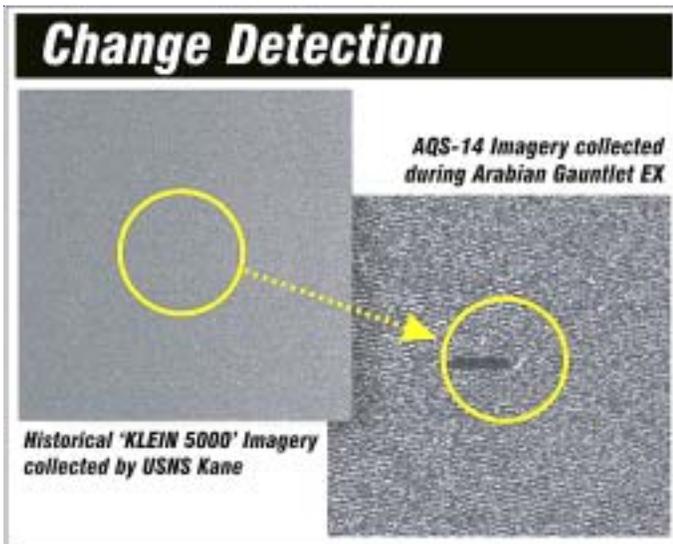
survey data as a baseline for comparison to MCM exploratory operations. Tactics will focus on identification and neutralization of Waterborne Improvised Explosive Devices, reducing risk to our forces. Developing the survey database will require standardization across the USN, USCG, and US Army Corp of Engineers platforms.

Loewer stated, “If change detection techniques are to be effective, standardized guidance, technical standards, and reporting requirements must also be provided to units that perform the surveys and to the entities that maintain the database.”

The Naval Oceanographic Office and Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command are defining these requirements in conjunction with the Navy, Coast Guard, and Army Corp of Engineers.

Rear Adm. Loewer remarked, “We must remain on this axis of advance, expanding our group of stakeholders to all federal, state and local agencies, as well as to industry partners, who would synergistically interact to protect our Nation’s ports and harbors from any maritime threat.” As the Commander Mine Warfare Command drives these efforts forward in a demanding and changing environment the end result will be a transition from the current, fly-way USN capability in response to WIEDs and mine countermeasures to a dedicated, long term cross-agency, capability-based response that will optimize assets and capabilities, and minimize limitations.

Critical advancements, as demonstrated in the HPT-06 Trials, are aggressively being pursued by Rear Adm. Loewer and her staff striving for breakthroughs in technology, cooperation of foreign governments and industry partners, and military assets to answer the challenge presented by the MOTR.



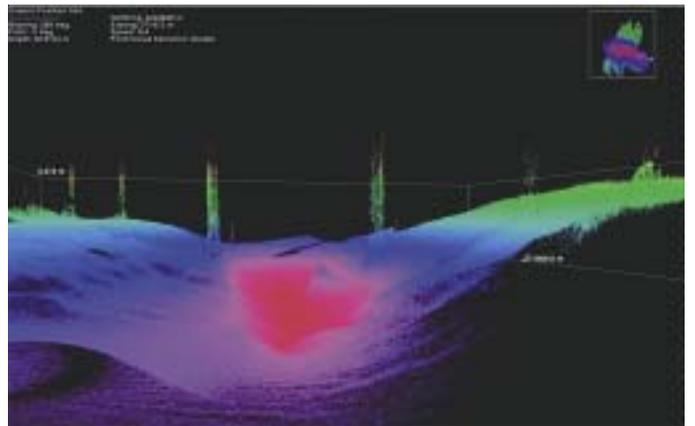
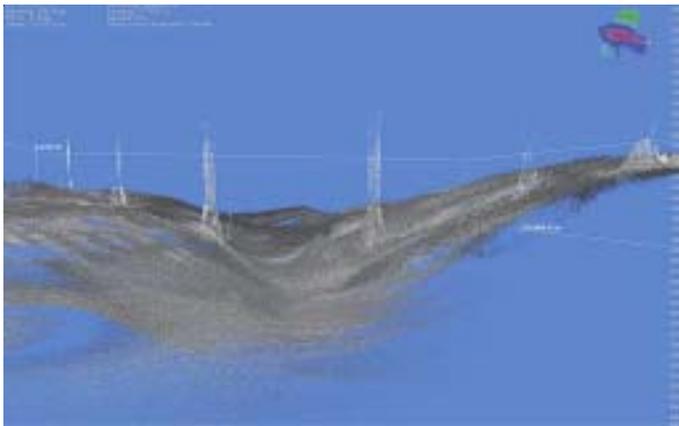
Ed Note: It is astonishing how nothing is visible with one mode of search and yet it literally jumps out in another. If it is hard to see, the left image shows a mine-like object in some detail.



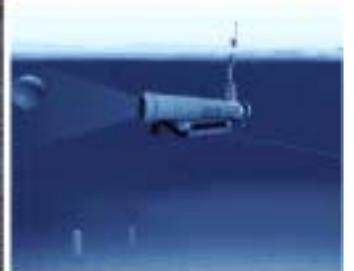
Gee whiz, is there something missing? There does not appear to be any water where there is water!!!



Bridge from above



Bridge through different eyes underwater



More of the arsenal used in mine countermeasures

PANAMA CITY AREA MAPS



REUNION ACTIVITY AREAS



GOLF COURSES AND OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

**Association of Minemen 32nd Annual Reunion & Meeting
20-22 October
Panama City Beach, FL at the Boardwalk Beach Resort and Hotel**

Association of Minemen
P.O. Box 71835
Charleston, SC 29415

Please return the reservation form as soon as possible to the address above to expedite your registration for reunion events. Your tickets will be made available at the Early Bird, General Business Meeting, Dinner, and Picnic.

Name : _____ AOM Member # _____
Spouse / Guest Name(s): _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip : _____ - _____
Phone: () _____ E-mail: _____ @ _____

The Early Bird, October 20th: This year we'll be hosted by the AMVETS post 47 located near the Navy Base just off of Hwy 98 on Panama City Beach. This year we'll try a yummy seafood boil to accompany some of the refreshments. We will ask for a small donation to cover expenses.

AMVETS Post 47
8317 Front Beach Road
PCB FL, 32407
850-234-0995

Dinner Meeting, October 21st:

Dinner Tickets @ \$26.00 ea. X _____ Ticket(s) = \$ _____
This year our dinner choices start with the house salad, and the entrée choices are *London Broil*, *Seafood Newberg* and *Chicken Picatta*. Desert will be cheesecake or key lime pie. (This price includes all taxes and gratuities.) Please indicate your choice and quantity of entrée below:

"London Broil # _____ meals
"Seafood Newberg # _____ meals
"Chicken Picatta # _____ meals

The Picnic, October 22nd: We're reserving the Navy Base MWR Picnic Grounds and Beach for this year's "grill and chill" starting at 1100. Those of you who remember the AOM Reunion during the summer of 1996 will recall that this is a great facility. Base access will require a photo ID and we'll add your name to a list at the Main Gate.

Picnic Tickets @ \$12.00 ea X _____ Ticket(s) = \$ _____
(Age 7 to 12 years \$5.00, under 7 years FREE)
Picnic Tickets @ \$5.00 ea X _____ Ticket(s) = \$ _____

Number of children attending picnic age 6 and under _____

Annual Dues: @\$15.00 October 2006 to October 2007 (5 year max) \$ _____
Your label has your paid to date, e.g., October 2006 is your paid to date.
(New or reinstatement member add \$5 application fee)

Museum Donation: Tax deductible \$ _____

AOM General Fund Donation: Tax deductible \$ _____

AOM Scholarship Donation: Tax deductible \$ _____

Dinner total \$ _____

Picnic total \$ _____

Checks payable to: Association of Minemen **TOTAL ENCLOSED:** \$ _____
(No cash please)

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NOTICE: To maintain membership, dues of \$15.00
must be paid annually by the month of October.
The dues expiration date is October in the year
above your name on your mailing label.