



# The DASHPOT



**Issue 61 Newsletter of the Association of Minemen Spring 2008**



## FROM THE PRESIDENT Robert Hart

Here in the South, at least, the weather is starting to break and the things of Spring are beginning to show themselves. Here in Hartsville, the daffodils are in bloom, the Bradford pears are starting to show some green leaves, and the goldfinches are returning from their winter quarters.

We have gotten Curtis Christian, Bob Stancik and Dick Schommer bonded through Nationwide Insurance. Dick Schommer has informed us of the signing of the contracts for the 2008 Reunion at the Town and Country Inn on Savannah Highway, Charleston, SC.

Up until now, I have tried to start this "From the President" article on the upbeat, but now I must mention the fact that Connie and I have experienced some grim realities. We had two deaths in our family in six days in January. I will send the information to Phil DeChene for inclusion in the AOM Obituaries.

We, BOD and I, are presently discussing the method of presentation of the names of those who have died since our last reunion at our Bell Ceremony at reunions. The Bell Ceremony is a solemn event to honor those Minemen and others in a dignified manner of remembrance. More about this later.

**A committee is a cul-de-sac  
down which ideas are  
lured and then quietly  
strangled.**

Barnett Cocks

## 34TH ANNUAL ASSOCIATION OF MINEMEN REUNION, CHARLESTON, SC

**OCTOBER 10-12, 2008**

Plans for the reunion are starting to take shape. Again all the events / functions will take place at the Town and Country Inn. Now is the time to put some serious thought into what you can bring to the reunion for the auction. Our scholarship fund can always use the money.

The schedule of events will be the same, Earlybird Friday night, business meetings and Dinner will be on Saturday and the Picnic and Auction on Sunday. Times will be published at a later date.

There are two campgrounds located within easy driving distance from the Inn. The Air Force Base also has a campground, but it is not an easy drive.

1. Oak Plantation Campground, 3540 Savannah Hwy. phone number 1-866-658-2500, e-mail address [www.oakplantationcampground.com](http://www.oakplantationcampground.com).

2. James Island County Park, 871 Riverland Dr. James Island, SC phone number 1-843-797-7275

3. US Air Force Base Rec Center Campground, phone number 1-843-963-5271.

As stated in the last DASHPOT the cost of the

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**PRESIDENT**  
**Robert N. Hart (07-10)**  
 1237 Patrick Hwy  
 Hartsville, SC 29559-7759  
 843-383-0882  
[cnbhart@roadrunner.com](mailto:cnbhart@roadrunner.com)

**VICE PRESIDENT**  
**Ron Swart (07-10)**  
 2020 Tupelo Court  
 Panama City, FL 32405  
 850-215- 9649  
[swartre@knology.net](mailto:swartre@knology.net)

**SECRETARY/TREASURER**  
**Curtis T. Christian (01- Morte)**  
 303 Cypress Shores Rd.  
 Eutawville, SC 29048  
 803-492-4245  
[curtischristian@hotmail.com](mailto:curtischristian@hotmail.com)

**PAST PRESIDENT**  
**Bill Johnson (07-10)**  
 341 Shadynook St.  
 Keyport, NJ 07735-5140  
 732-583-8546  
[bjjohns@earthlink.net](mailto:bjjohns@earthlink.net)

**PARLIMENTARIAN**  
**Warren Savage**  
 10330 Settle Rd.  
 Santee, CA 92071  
 619-258-1478

**CHAPLAIN**  
**Robert N. Hart**  
 1237 Patrick Hwy  
 Hartsville, SC 29550-7759  
 843-383-0882  
[cnbhart@roadrunner.com](mailto:cnbhart@roadrunner.com)

**HISTORIAN**  
**Jim Cernick**  
 2305 Westlake Circle S.  
 Ingleside, TX 78362  
 361-775-1219  
[BARKINPIG@aol.com](mailto:BARKINPIG@aol.com)

**YORKTOWN MUSEUM**  
**Toby Horn**  
[Tobyone@ix.netcom.com](mailto:Tobyone@ix.netcom.com)

**LEXINGTON MUSEUM**  
**Ron Swart**  
[swartre@knology.net](mailto:swartre@knology.net)



# The ASSOCIATION OF MINeMen



DEDICATED TO  
 SERVING THE  
 U.S. NAVY MINE  
 FORCE

The Dashpot, published  
 quarterly, is the newslet-  
 ter of the Association of  
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 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.



**2008 REUNION COMMITTEE**  
**Richard Schommer**  
 827 N. Aylesbury Dr.  
 Goose Creek, SC 29445-5707  
 803-797-3715  
[rdschommer@hotmail.com](mailto:rdschommer@hotmail.com)

**SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE**  
**William (Swede) Carlsen**  
 1925 Pilgrim Ave.  
 Bronx, NY 10461  
 718-792-2298  
[mncsswede@aom@worldnet.att.net](mailto:mncsswede@aom@worldnet.att.net)



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**Ken Waringa (07-08)**  
 133 Coral Dr.  
 Panama City Beach, FL 32413  
[kcwaringa@knology.net](mailto:kcwaringa@knology.net)

**Walter W. Peters (05-08)**  
 3040 Annette St.  
 Ardara, PA 15615-9724  
 724-864-4748  
[wwsjp@aol.com](mailto:wwsjp@aol.com)

**Gary L. Cleland (05-09)**  
 12201 Sunrise Ct.  
 Poway, CA 92064-2865  
 858-748-3835

**William Fortner (05-09)**  
 1020 County Road 856.  
 Cedar Bluff, AL 35959  
 256-523-7111  
[mk27@httswireless.com](mailto:mk27@httswireless.com)

**Robert W. Wilson (07-10)**  
 10 Illinois Ave  
 Port Monmouth, NJ 07758-1108  
 732-787-4174  
 FAX 732-787-5519 (call first)  
[MNCUSNRET@att.net](mailto:MNCUSNRET@att.net)

**Robert "Stan" Stancik (07-10)**  
 151 Westminster Blvd.  
 Goose Creek, SC 29445-1879  
 843 797 2275  
[fstan@yahoo.com](mailto:fstan@yahoo.com)

**AOM STOREKEEPER**  
**Ron Swart**  
 2020 Tupelo Court  
 Panama City, FL 32405  
 850-215- 9649  
 Mobile 850-276-1750  
[swartre@knology.net](mailto:swartre@knology.net)

**DASHPOT EDITOR**  
**Bill Fortner**  
 1020 County Road 856  
 Cedar Bluff, AL 35959  
 256-523-7111  
[mk27@httswireless.com](mailto:mk27@httswireless.com)

**AOM HOMEPAGE**  
[home.triad.rr.com/aom/index.htm](http://home.triad.rr.com/aom/index.htm)

**WEBMASTER**  
**Phil Dechene**  
[pdechene@triad.rr.com](mailto:pdechene@triad.rr.com)



# SCHOLARSHIP SCOOP

by Swede Carlsen



The AOM scholastic assistance scholarship application deadline nears. All qualified students should have their application forms S-1 and S-2 into the Secretary/Treasurer's hands by 1 May each year. The scholarship chairperson shall receive from the Secretary/Treasurer by 1 July all applications and the chairperson shall review them for completeness. The scholarship committee will then determine which applicants will be awarded an AOM assistance scholarship.

Scholarship applications can be downloaded from the AOM home page at <http://home.triad.rr.com/aom/index.htm>. They also can be requested from the Secretary/Treasurer Curtis Christian or the scholarship chairperson William Carlsen at 1925 Pilgrim Ave., Bronx, NY 10461-4001.

Make sure all applicants have their completed S-1 and S-2 forms submitted before the deadline.

REMEMBER: Not applying for assistance scholarships is like turning down money that has no strings attached. It will help qualifying applicants attain their degree's. Let's give all the applicant's an opportunity to be awarded an AOM Assistance Scholarship! Donate to the funds, Presidential, General or as a Memorial.

STAND TALL AMERICA!

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## FROM THE DESK OF THE SECRETARY

Please look at the address label on your Dashpot. If your date is Oct. 2007 this will be your last issue. We need you as a member. Only \$15.00.

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### 34th Reunion Continued

Dinner is \$33.00 per person, and the cost of the Picnic is \$12.00 for adults and \$6.00 for children over 7. The dinner Saturday night will be a seafood buffet and Sunday will be standard picnic fare.

If you have any questions about the reunion give me a call at 843-797-3715 or send an e-mail to [rdschommer@hotmail.com](mailto:rdschommer@hotmail.com). Hope to see you all at the reunion.

## BINNACLE LIST



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### LCDR John Iwaniec, USN (RET)

Hey Guys,  
Just a short note...John had a heart attack yesterday (March 4, 2008) while at work. They got him to the hospital and he received two stents for blockage. We don't know the extent of the damage yet (See update below). Keep him in your thoughts. YB Ed Hutsell

#### Update

All, spoke with John today and he sounded great... was up and around but a bit shaken by the whole ordeal. Blood flow to his heart is back to 100% but he has to slow down for a while. Fortunately, there was minimal damage to his heart... best to all, Ron

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## I WAS A SAILOR ONCE

Sharing a glimpse of the life many so dearly loved...

I liked standing on the bridge wing at sunrise with salt spray in my face and clean ocean winds whipping in from the four quarters of the globe. I liked the sounds of the Navy - the piercing trill of the boatswains pipe, the syncopated clangor of the ship's bell on the quarter-deck, harsh, and the strong language and laughter of sailors at work.

I liked Navy vessels--plodding fleet auxiliaries and amphib, sleek submarines and steady solid aircraft carriers.

I liked the proud names of Navy ships: Midway, Lexington, Saratoga, Coral Sea, Antietam, Valley Forge - - memorials of great battles won and tribulations overcome.

I liked the lean angular names of Navy "tin-cans" and escorts, mementos of heroes who went before us.

And the others - - San Jose, San Diego, Los Angeles, St. Paul, Chicago, Oklahoma City, named for our cities.

I liked the tempo of a Navy band.

I liked liberty call and the spicy scent of a foreign port.

I even liked the never ending paperwork and all hands working parties as my ship filled herself with the multitude of supplies, both mundane and to cut ties to the land and carry out her mission anywhere on the globe where there was water to float her.

I liked sailors, officers and enlisted men from all parts of the land, farms of the Midwest, small towns of New England, from the big cities, the mountains and the prairies, from all walks of life. I trusted and depended on them as they trusted and depended on me--for professional competence, for comradeship, for strength and courage. In a word, they were "shipmates"; then and forever.

I liked the surge of adventure in my heart, when the word was passed: "Now Hear This. Now station the special sea and anchor detail - all hands to quarters for leaving port," and I liked the infectious thrill of sighting home again, with the waving hands of welcome from family and friends waiting pier side. The work was hard and dangerous; the going rough at times; the parting from loved ones painful, but the companionship of robust Navy laughter, the "all for one and one for all" philosophy of the sea was ever present.

I liked the fierce and dangerous activity on the flight deck of aircraft carriers, earlier named for battles won but sadly now named for politicians. Enterprise, Independence, Boxer, Princeton and oh so many more, some lost in battle, and sadly many scrapped.

I liked the names of the aircraft and helicopters; Skyraider, Intruder, Sea King, Phantom, Skyhawk, Demon, Skywarrior, Corsair, and many more that bring to mind offensive and defensive orders of battle.

I liked the excitement of an alongside replenishment as my ship slid in alongside the oiler and the cry of "Standby to receive shotlines" prefaced the hard work of rigging spanwires and fuel hoses echoed across the narrow gap of water between the ships and welcomed the mail and fresh milk, fruit and vegetables that sometimes accompanied the fuel.

I liked the serenity of the sea after a day of hard ship's work, as flying fish flitted across the wave tops and sunset gave way to night.

I liked the feel of the Navy in darkness - the masthead and range lights, the red and green navigation lights and stern light, the pulsating phosphorescence of radar repeaters - they cut through the dusk and joined with the mirror of stars overhead. And I liked drifting off to sleep lulled by the myriad noises large and small that told me that my ship was alive and well, and that my shipmates on watch would keep me safe.

I liked quiet mid-watches with the aroma of strong coffee--the lifeblood of the Navy permeating everywhere.

And I liked hectic watches when the exacting minuet of haze-gray shapes racing at flank speed kept all hands on a razor edge of alertness.

I liked the sudden electricity of "General quarters, general quarters, all hands man your battle stations," followed by the hurried clamor of running feet on ladders and the resounding thump of watertight doors as the ship transformed herself in a few brief seconds from a peaceful workplace to a weapon of war--ready for anything.

And I liked the sight of space-age equipment manned by youngsters clad in dungarees and sound-powered phones that their grandfathers would still recognize.

I liked the traditions of the Navy and the men and now women who made them. I liked the proud names of Navy heroes: Halsey, Nimitz, Perry, Farragut, John Paul Jones and Burke.

A sailor could find much in the Navy: comrades-in-arms, pride in self and country, mastery of the seaman's trade. An adolescent could find adulthood.

In years to come, when sailors are home from the sea, we still remember with fondness and respect the ocean in all its moods - the impossible shimmering mirror calm and the storm-tossed green water surging over the bow. And then there will come again a faint whiff of stack gas, a faint echo of engine and rudder orders, a vision of the bright bunting of signal flags snapping at the yardarm, a refrain of hearty laughter in the wardroom and chief's quarters and mess decks.

Gone ashore for good we grow humble about our Navy days, when the seas were a part of us and a new port of call was ever over the horizon.

Remembering this, WE stand taller and say,

**"I WAS A SAILOR ONCE."**

Unknown



**Editor's Note: If this didn't move you, seek out the sea, jump into it and pull its salty waters over you...for you are dead.**



## 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 correct. If changes are required or you wish to be listed on the site e-mail me the information at [pdechene@triad.rr.com](mailto:pdechene@triad.rr.com).  
Phil DeChene AOM WEB Master

### E-mail – Active Duty

### E-mail – Reservist

### E-mail – Retired

01/25/08 - Larry Seibert MN1 USNR; [lseibert@epix.net](mailto:lseibert@epix.net)  
01/22/08 - Keith Brieno MNCS; [kbrieno@usadomains.net](mailto:kbrieno@usadomains.net)  
01/08/08 - David P.Brummell MN1 USNR; [david.brummell@dodig.mil](mailto:david.brummell@dodig.mil)  
01/08/08 - CDR Michael (Mike) L. Mercer; [mikelemerc@gmail.com](mailto:mikelemerc@gmail.com)  
01/08/08 - George Preston MN2; [gpreston@cavecreek.org](mailto:gpreston@cavecreek.org)  
01/01/08 - Michael Femrite MNCM; [mike\\_mncm@yahoo.com](mailto:mike_mncm@yahoo.com)  
01/01/08 - Francis (Frank) Strunk, MNC; [frankifox@bellsouth.net](mailto:frankifox@bellsouth.net)  
12/13/07 - Jan Lester Bays MNCM; [jbays@ByrnesSchools.org](mailto:jbays@ByrnesSchools.org)  
12/05/07 - Donald W. Barton MN1; [sentry3@netzero.net](mailto:sentry3@netzero.net)

### E-mail – Ex-Minemen

02/22/08 - Nancy Harper MN2; [nancygilbert@tenpleinland.com](mailto:nancygilbert@tenpleinland.com); [emmentoo@yahoo.com](mailto:emmentoo@yahoo.com)  
01/16/08 - Tom Hoffman MN3; [MDAU0302@sbcglobal.net](mailto:MDAU0302@sbcglobal.net)  
12/13/07 - Saralyn “Sam” Mason-Born MN3; [saralyn.mason-born@kiewit.com](mailto:saralyn.mason-born@kiewit.com)  
12/05/07 - John FX (Moose) Mullery MN3; [jmullery@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:jmullery@tampabay.rr.com)  
12/03/07 - James Spencer MN2; [djspencer7403@sbcglobal.net](mailto:djspencer7403@sbcglobal.net)

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***“When you can’t go *where* you want to, *when* you want to, you haven’t got command of the sea.”***

Admiral Forrest Sherman, the Chief of Naval Operations, 1950, regarding Wonsan

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## Rumor Has It...

Heard a strange, but supposedly true story about two Minemen buddies in Japan about 1960. It went something like this:

One night, a Mineman from one mineshop in Japan called his MN buddy who worked at another mineshop in Japan. After some pleasantries were exchanged the first MN told his buddy that he was short one acoustic firing mechanism for something they were doing and he asked if his buddy could send him one. The second Mineman said sure. So the next morning the MN put the firing mech in a cardboard box with some crumpled up newspaper, added wrapping paper & address labels, wrapped it with some strong string, and took it to the Japanese post office and mailed it to his buddy. A day later the package arrived undamaged, but for some reason another MN opened the package and the silly story quickly spread from one end of Japan to the other.

Don Jones



## TAPS



**CDR Earl Leon Roberts, USN (RET)**

CDR Earl Leon Roberts, USN (RET) died February 8, 2008 in Williamsburg, VA. He was born on December 13, 1926 in Alta Vista, KS, the son of Allen Dale Roberts and Pearl Ina (Chitty) Roberts.

Mr. Roberts earned his GED from the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1974 and graduated Magna Cum Laud from Saint Leo Junior College in 1983. He retired with the rank of Commander United States Navy after thirty years of service in 1974 having received the United Nations Medal and several Bronze Stars.

Mr. Roberts was recently preceded in death by his loving wife of 55 years, Edna Ardell S. Roberts, as well as his parents and an older brother, Russell E. Roberts of KS. Earl is survived by his brother Lonnie Carroll Roberts of Clearwater, KS, and sister Norma Allene R. Dinwiddie of Independence MO; his four grateful and loving children, Vicki Lynn R. Henry of Williamsburg, VA, Sharon Kay R. Terjak of McKinney, TX, Kenneth Earl Roberts of Yorktown, VA, and Nancy Jean R. Coverdale of Portland, OR; seven grandchildren; five great-grandchildren.

Chaplain Janna Roche officiated. Burial was in Williamsburg Memorial Park. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, Williamsburg Branch Office, 263 McLaws Circle, Suite 203, Williamsburg, VA 23185 or to the James City County Rescue Squad.



**Mrs Edna Ardell Roberts**

Mrs. Edna Ardell Roberts died Jan. 20, 2008 in Williamsburg, VA. She was born on 14 Jan 1928, in Hutchinson, KS, the daughter of George Andrew and Lois Ardell Houghton Smith.

Mrs Roberts graduated from Hutchinson Junior College and attended the University of Colorado at Boulder. She was an accomplished Cellist, music teacher and band director prior to her marriage of 55 wonderful years to Earl Leon Roberts also of Hutchinson, KS.

Mrs Roberts' parents and her sister, Bernice Francis York of Hermiston, OR, preceded her death.

Edna was briefly survived by her husband who left this earth 20 days later to be with her. She is survived by her four loving children Vicki Lynn R. Henry of Williamsburg, VA, Sharon Kay R. Terjak of McKinney, TX, Kenneth Earl Roberts of Yorktown, VA, and Nancy Jean R. Coverdale of Portland, OR; seven grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; her nephew, George York; and her niece, Magaret Brown.

Chaplain Janna Roche officiated and burial was in Williamsburg memorial Park.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, Williamsburg Branch Office, 263 McLaws Circle, Suite 203, Williamsburg, VA 23185 or to the James City County Rescue Squad.

## **Douglas (Doug) Allen Clark**

Douglas Allen Clark, 71, transferred his letter of life from earth to heaven on Friday, Feb. 15, 2008, at Bay Medical Center.

Doug was born May 21, 1936, in Barre, Vt. His formative years were spent in Gary, Ind., graduating from Edison High School. He then achieved a Bachelor of Science degree, majoring in mechanical engineering, from Purdue University. Following completion of an ROTC commitment with the U.S. Army in Virginia, Doug was employed as a civil servant with the Navy for 38 years, working at Yorktown Mine Warfare Center in Virginia and the Naval Coastal Systems Center Laboratory in Panama City Beach, Fla.

Doug is preceded in death by his parents, Warren and Grace Thompson Clark; his brother and sister-in-law, Rob and Kay Clark; and his first wife of 26 years, Barbara Pumroy Clark. Left to cherish his memory are his wife, Daphne Wilson DuKate Clark; daughter, Shari Jean McClellan of Stafford, Va.; stepson, Robb Davis and wife, Adrienne, Panama City Beach, Fla.; stepdaughter, Alyssa Blaire Davis of Apopka, Fla.; two grandsons, Thomas Palmaz and Ryan McClellan; twin nieces, Lisa and Laura; great-nieces, Rachel and Shauna Reynolds, all of Kansas City, Mo.; two step-grandsons, Shane and Bryce McClellan; and a dear step-granddaughter, Devyn Shea Davis of Panama City Beach, Fla.

A celebration of the life of Doug Clark will be held at 5 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 21, 2008, on the Palm Court Terrace at the Bay Point Marriott Resort. A Witness to the Resurrection Service will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 23, 2008, at Williamsburg Presbyterian Church with internment following in the Clark family plot at the Williamsburg Memorial Gardens in Williamsburg, Va.

Doug served as president of the Williamsburg, Va., Jaycees. He was an elder in three Presbyterian churches, serving for more than 18 years. He served as commander of the St. Andrew Squadron of the United States Power Squadrons and was a certified instructor and administrative and executive officer. He also served as a director of the Bay Point Yacht Club, president of the Men's Golf Association and a member of a wonderful camaraderie of golfers in the Rat Pack, president of the Bay Point West Homeowners Association and trustee for eight years. He was extremely honored to have been inducted into the NCSC Hall of Fame in 1998.

Those desiring may make memorial donations to the Building fund of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, Panama City, FL.

## **Hajnal, Harold Raymond, MNCS, USN (RET)**

MNCS Harold R. (Bing) Hajnal, USN (RET), 71 of Goose Creek, SC, husband of Helen G. Hajnal, passed away on Tuesday, January 29, 2008 at a local hospital.

Born September 11, 1936 in Peoria, IL to the late Harry J. and Mildred Daly Hajnal. Bing spent 22 years on active duty, and then went to work at the Naval Weapons Station, Goose Ck, SC. He ran the mine shop until it was phased out. He was a sports referee and a member of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church.

Survivors include his wife, Helen Gertrude Osakowicz Hajnal of Goose Creek; three sons, Kevin Hajnal of Conway, SC, Kenny Hajnal of Guilford, CT, Keith Hajnal of Myrtle Beach; one sister, Judith Szabados of Peoria, IL; and three grandchildren, Holly, Shane and Julie Hajnal.

MNCS Hajnal was predeceased by a brother, James Hajnal.

The funeral service was held Friday, February 1, 2008 at Carolina Memorial Funeral Home followed by burial in Carolina memorial Park.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Association of Minemen Scholarship Fund, PO Box 69, Eutawville, SC 29408-0069

## **Kelly, George Robert, MNC, USN (RET)**

MNC George R. Kelly, USN (Ret) passed away on the 11th of March 2008 at the age of 75 in Phoenix, AZ. He retired in early 1973 from the Fleet Mine Facility, NAD Earle, NJ.

Over the past few years, he had suffered several heart attacks and strokes and underwent bypass surgery. He spent the last few months in a nursing home in Phoenix.

George was born February 6, 1933 in New York City, NY. He is survived by his wife Nancy, three daughters and five grandchildren.

On Thursday, March 13, 2008, Chief Kelly received full military honors at his interment in the National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona at Phoenix.

## **LAUX, Ralph MN1**

MN1 Ralph Laux, EOD, USN was killed in an explosive accident at China Lake, CA in May 1976

## McGimsey, Joe, MNC, USN (RET)

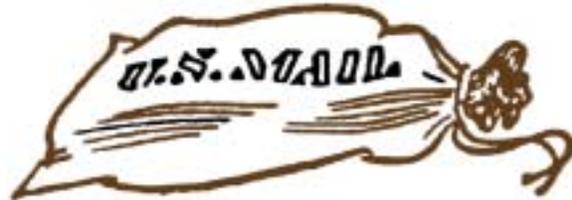
MNC Joe McGimsey, USN, (RET) retired to the California desert and died there in the 1970s.

## SHAW, Ralph A., Jr., MNC, USN (Ret.)

MNC Ralph A. Shaw Jr., USN (Ret), died on Dec 21, 2007 of a heart attack. He had just turned 73 years old. He joined the Navy in 1953 and retired in 1975. He lived in Port Hadlock, WA since retiring. This information provided by his wife, Barbara Shaw.

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# The Mail Bag



Dear Bill,

21 Sep 07

As long as you want to frame the picture of the Shawmut I thought that you might like a similar picture of the Black Hawk. They are the only two of the ships dad had. I am sure though that this Flucke did the whole bunch of the ships. Also:

Twas the month of May when we started this trip  
Turned an old hooker into a ship  
A pile of junk they found in New York  
I wonder what made them call her Black Hawk.

There is no doubt more but that is all I have and I haven't the slightest idea where I got it from. Thank you for the North Sea Mine Barrage. From the date I would gather that Capt. Belknap must have started to write it before the war was over.

I have not received the Mk 6 Mine model. This is not surprising and is due to the PO departments routing of the mail. When I lived in Maine my English mail came through White River Junction. My father lived in the same house for at least 60 years and I got a letter back saying the mail was undeliverable.

I never knew what I wanted to be. I saw a notice on a bulletin board saying come on down and enlist in weather and you will be guaranteed being able to finish the current semester. So I did and became a weather observer. After the war I went back to school but was still in the reserves. Upon graduation finding a job was not so good so I re-enlisted and spent my career, after going to forecaster school, as a forecaster. My wife died in Nov 1968 leaving me with 4 children ages 8 through 16. My present wife's husband died and we got married. I retired on 1 December 1974 and I finally know what I wanted to be, RETIRED. My wife's first husband left her with a monthly check and we decided that I would retire. I began to join things and go to yearly reunions. We usually hit 4. One was in Los Angeles so we took 45 days and drove. We always drove. We went by way of Yellowstone National Park, Salt Lake City, Hayward, CA where we visited my wife's grave, Los Angeles and home via Sarasota.

In April, 1988 I had a stroke which left me paralyzed down my right side so it looks like I made a good decision not to work.

Your envelope cost \$1.82 to mail. The last time I used a machine to reproduce it cost 10 cents per copy. Then there is a line at the PO so I think that \$10.00 will cover it. Now all I have to do is remember to enclose it. I can provide you with the names of all the ships in the mine-laying squadron.

My first wife now resides in an urn on my desk waiting for a new facility to be made in Colorado Springs. I hope that I will live long enough to see that happen.

Don

When I joined the Navy, at 17, it was for what was called a "Kiddy Cruise." I was to be discharged the day before my 21st birthday. But, being a Mineman in the greatest Navy in the world was such a special calling and so much fun I stayed on active duty for a few days short of 32 years. Many of the fine Minemen who helped teach me and further my career have passed on, but I also want to thank those that I served with who might happen to read these words. Since my last 3-years were with the Naval Intelligence Support Center (NISC) and thinking that I was too young to really retire I rejoined NISC as a civilian in May, 1986. During the next 17 years as a foreign Mine Warfare (MIW) analyst I got to work with Minemen from other countries who were equally proud of their weapons and MIW expertise. I was lucky to have been able to gather intelligence overtly in the following countries: Turkey, Kuwait, Croatia, Albania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, former East Germany, Poland, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Romania, and South Africa. When I finally got around to retiring in late 2003, someone calculated that I had been with the Navy for 49 years and six months. Good luck to all who might pass this way.

Don Jones MNMCM



### Ode To Earl

A young lad seventeen of age  
sets out in the Navy all arage.  
His duties were many, demanding too  
and he bore on with all he could do.  
He stayed over and over for many a year.

In the year 1954, his career did change  
as he entered the Mine Force's varied range.  
He did so for years and more with gold,  
we in the fleet knew we had one so bold.  
His duties were never a limited few,  
but first of all was always the crew.

Somehow this sailor had always the pleasure  
to benefit from his actions and his measure.  
The country and Navy has truly now lost  
a patriot and sailor to the ultimate cost.  
Fair Winds and following seas  
wherever your journey now may be.

Ed Oyer  
LT USN (RET)

My Dear Mineman Family  
First Bless you for  
thinking of me + my Family.  
We appreciated your  
Generous Gift to the  
mineman Scholarship Fund.  
Bing would just love  
that.

I have never been  
more proud to be part  
of our Military as I  
was at Bing's Services.

The out of town Friends  
& Family were amazed  
how we all help each other!



During a time  
like this  
we realize how much  
our family and friends  
really mean to us. . .

Your expression  
of sympathy will always  
be remembered

Helen Haynal  
& Sons  
Kevin Kenneth  
&  
Keith

January 4, 2008

Dear Shipmate,

Please find enclosed a check to cover the application fee, three years of membership dues and the remainder is for the Scholarship Fund.

I was a member of the AOM many years ago (while still on active duty) and had become remiss in submitting my dues. I am honored to have this opportunity to join this amazing organization again and I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to Bill Fortner for sending me the e-version of the Dashpot and providing me with this great opportunity. I look forward to receiving the Dashpot in the future and renewing my acquaintance with the many Shipmates I have lost track of through the years.

Sincerely,  
Rita J. Nicely  
MNCS USN (RET)

**The prodigal daughter has returned. Welcome back, Rita. ;-)**

Jan. 1, 2008

Enclosed is my check for my annual dues. Enjoy reading the Dashpot, brings back some good and bad memories. Really like the photos sent in shown in the "Rogues Gallery". Met up with an ex MN while he was passing through the Orlando area, Harold McGarry. He told me he sent in a picture of the first "boots" to go to the Mine Warfare School back in 1948. It was supposed to be put into the MN Book but wasn't. I'd really like to see that picture. If anyone has a copy, please send it to bigchiefski@aol.com or publish it in the next Dashpot.

Thank you.

A. J. Sikorski, MNCS, USN (RET)

**Editor's Note: If anyone does have that photo, please send it to The Dashpot. I will scan it and have it back in the mail to you the next day the post office operates. The picture will appear in the following Dashpot.**

**Bill**

Arthur W. Cook, LCDR, USN (RET)  
Hawthorne Apt. # 111  
10 East Hawthorne  
Vernon Hills, IL 60061-1402

January 1st 2008

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have been a reader of your "Association of

Minemen" for a large number of years, and desire to continue for a few more, being that I will be 90 years young this year.

Please find my check for the annual dues, \$15.00, in this note for the next year payment to the Associated Minemen.

I served 21 years in the US Navy from Apprentice Seaman to the rank of Lt. Commander, and retired the summer after WWII. I went to work for the Bell Telephone Laboratories about 8 hours after I retired. My work with them was mostly handling and disposing of explosives that had piled up over the bulk of the world, but primarily in the Pacific and Philippine Islands. I worked another 21 years for the company and retired once more.

In the navy, I became a Gunner's Mate, Gunnery CPO, and then promoted to become a gunnery Officer. I retired as a LTCMDR with an excellent record.

Since retirement I and my wife have traveled a fair amount, mainly in the US and Hawaii. She is extremely sickly now, but still hanging on. We have lived in this retirement home for about 3 1/2 years, and, while I know my wife will not be with me much longer, I am looking forward to being here for about 10/11 more years.

I have been a reader of the Association of Minemen since it was first published. I retired from the service before the Mineman rating was established, but worked with all of the early mines as expected, mostly in Virginia and on floating vessels such as a ferry boat used to transport a full load across the Atlantic to South-east Europe and to the Med.

Please find my check for \$15.00 for the coming year. Why do you not have the possibility of a 5, 10 or 15 year set up for the publication? Although at my age, year-by-year may be best.

The Association of Mineman publication was apparently established a few years after I retired and first moved to Hawaii and later back to the East Coast, and now the Chicago area, where I guess I will remain until death overtakes me.

Keep the mag. coming to me--thank you.

LCDR Arthur W. Cook, USN (RET)  
(Now approaching 90)

**Commander, may you hear the swooshing sound as you pass 90 and the boom when you roar through 100.**

**Take comfort in knowing those we love never really die until we do, and then we are together again. Tears are temporary.**

# THIS IS FROM THE 10 NOV 1944 ISSUE OF THE SWEEPER.

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THE SWEEPER

## THE SWEEPER

Captain A.V. Ashbrook, USN, Commanding Officer  
Commander L.R. Cutting, USN, Executive Officer  
Lt. M.J. Keady, CMC, USNR, Staff Advisor

Editor: M. Friedenberg, Sp(A)lc  
Features: T. Mackin, Ylc; J.C.L. Middleton, Slc; W. Rabold, EM 3c; A. Hertlein, Slc; H.W. Dandot, Sp(W)3c  
Photography: W.G. Bennett, Sp(P)lc  
Lithography: J. Smith, EM2c; J.S. Norris, Flc  
A.A. Reasie, Slc

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## SERVICEMEN DID VOTE

Well the elections are over. The outcome may or may not have pleased you, and how you voted is of no concern to THE SWEEPER. The significant thing is that so many of you did vote.

On the spot observers estimate that 60 percent of the men stationed in England cast ballots. It is impossible to know at this point how many men in uniform actually did take part in the elections. Even if this is too high a figure, it is generally agreed that the number far exceeded most peoples expectations. Certainly the proportion of servicemen voting compares very favorably with that of civilians millions of whom stayed away from the polls altogether.

Many people claimed that the men in blue and khaki didn't know the score and wouldn't bother to vote even if they could. You men in uniform certainly proved they were all wet and set an enviable example of good citizenship. To the man who is fighting for it, his country is a pretty precious thing and he's anxious to have a hand in running it.

The War and Navy Departments and the various voting officers are largely responsible for the big service vote. By making help and information accessible to everyone, the whole voting procedure was made easy.

The GI's and Bluejackets deserve the real credit though. By your valor on the battlefronts you are guaranteeing your country's future. By your vote and by taking an active interest, insofar as you can, in problems within the country you will guarantee your personal future. More power to you!

## SWEEP MINES WITH FISHING NETS

In the war, emergency situations have given rise to ingenious devices for battling the menace of mines. In an Associated Press dispatch filed in Athens on November 4 a new technique was reported.

According to this dispatch, Greek partisans known as the Elia, are busy clearing the important port of Salonika of extensive mine fields. Fishing schooners under the supervision of British experts have begun sweeping for mines with ordinary trawling nets. Sponge divers meanwhile remove explosive charges from the mine fields.

Marine Sgt. Lee Powell, known and liked by many as the Lone Ranger, was killed recently by the Japs.

## PERSONNELITIES

### F. C. FISHER, CMM USN

In 1926 Chief FISHER decided to follow the sea as a career, and joined the Navy as an Apprentice Seaman. His first assignment was aboard the USS RICHMOND which was to be his home for 10 years.



In 1927 the RICHMOND went to China to help quell a Chinese disturbance, the trip from Pearl Harbor to Shanghai was made in 9 days and 9 hours, a record which stands to this day. All the crew members were awarded the Yangtze Medal for their part in the action.

In 1934, the RICHMOND also aided in suppressing a Cuban uprising.

Chief FISHER'S ship was on the scene to pick up survivors of the airship MACON when that ill-fated dirigible crashed off San Francisco in 1934. All hands aboard the RICHMOND received a citation for their gallant work in rescuing 67 of a crew of 75 aboard the MACON.

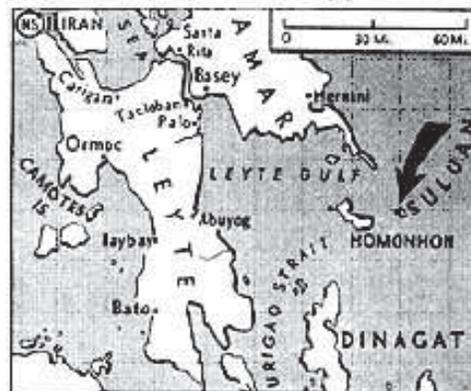
FISHER requested duty with the Mine Force in 1936, and reported aboard the USS GAMBLE for indoctrination. After 9 months training he shipped on the USS OGLALA, and was placed in charge of the mine gang. In February 1938 became attached to the Flag Complement as instructor at the Minecraft Mine School. He was promoted to CMM at that time.

On December 7, 1941 FISHER was at Pearl Harbor with his wife and two young children. Bombs dropped 200 feet from his house, but he safely evacuated his family. Hurrying to the scene of action, he helped take care of the wounded from our battleships. The USS OGLALA, to which he was still officially attached, was sunk during the Jap attack.

FISHER remained at Pearl Harbor as instructor until receiving orders to report to MMS in October 1942. He is in charge of Advanced Base Lab which teaches assembly, planting, and recovery of drill mines.

The Isaac Walton of the school, FISHER knows the streams and rivulets of Tidewater Virginia like the palm of his own hand. He is also noted for his prowess as a hunter. At the moment his one ambition is to catch a fish that will make Lt. Adler's prize catch look like a minnow.

## Return to the Philippines



After 2 and a half years, Gen. Douglas MacArthur keeps his promise to return to the Philippines. Arrow points to site of first landings followed by landings and secure positions on Leyte and Samar.

# From the Labyrinth of the Historian



Howdy AOM and Hello MW. Spring is here, unpack that old Seabag and clean out your junk, send it my way. I'm currently working on a new website to offset and add to AOM's. Hopefully, I will have a lot of space for your pictures and other MW history. I will let ya'll know when it's up and running. I do need all photos you can send me of any mine shops, mines, flows, mineman, etc. This I guarantee will be posted, if at all possible. Keep the history coming. We cannot begin to build a Mine Museum, one that truly reflects and respects our history, with out your generous help. Anything and everything, donate please, if you can, email me on anything you want to sell. That includes photos; albums; uniforms; insignia; and cruise books; etc. I've managed to scrounge up quite a bit of history last year, but the Eagle perches above my head only briefly each month. Donate what you can. I still need a few of the first newsletters. If you have any of the very first issues, please send them. Copies are great too. Push AOM in the school again, build it in the Mineshops, and sail it in the fleet.

I have 12 FREE 1 year memberships for any new members, active duty MN, who just contact me at barkinpig@AOL.com. Until next time, take care, DTTAFSA, BPIG sends

## A LASTING LEGACY

Based on recent donations made to the AOM Scholarship Fund, I worked on my "gray box" the other day (the lock box I have for all my important papers in case we have to evacuate for hurricane or flooding) and updated my will and last wishes instructions to my next of kin. I particularly wanted to change my "obit" posting instructions to reflect inclusion of "memorial donations to be made to the AOM Scholarship Fund in lieu of flowers" - or other condolences my friends and survivors might offer. I can't think of a better way for folks to send me off. Flowers wilt, fade and die off. But, through a donation made this way, some young man or woman will benefit in education and experiences that will live on and on. Think about it folks!!! You might want to do the same. Curtis Christian



# W DIVISION

Deep in the bowels of the ship dwell the Nuclear Weaponsmen of W Division in air conditioned splendor. It has been rumored that behind the locked doors of the weapons spaces are exotic dancing girls, and hashish pipes and that the nights are filled with their orgies. That's the rumor. Only the men of W Division know what is in there and they are not talking.



W Division at work



Last Row (L to R): A. T. Kellie, C. A. Nelson, R. E. Peltier, J. F. Byrne, J. S. Tarley, J. N. Nelson, W. R. Ellington, K. A. Aasen, T. C. Grabow, T. E. Ashby, L. W. Verne, A. A. Lewis, J. C. Kirby. First Row: W. A. Miller, T. R. Holt, C. Sing, N. A. Sandergaard, LT E. D. Lightow, CWO-3 C. L. Saggi, R. E. Scott, G. S. Stanley, C. J. Swank, A. B. Wittig.



# Over The Taffrail

## When Russian Mines Were For Sale in "Shotgun News".

MNCM Don Jones, USN (RET)

Shortly after the December 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union, the US Navy discovered that Russian mines were for sale in "Shotgun News." The U. S. Customs Service also reported that entrepreneurs from a small company in Missouri, had received two Russian exercise mines. Color photos, of the bottom mines, revealed the familiar red and white stripes of ex-Soviet exercise mines and other key markings identified the mines as Russian designed. The news media would have identified them as "Red Sea mines." The photos were helpful, but they didn't reveal whether the mines had electronics inside. Since "the Red Sea mine's" innards had been crushed and flooded with seawater by underwater explosions, it would be great to find "new mine components."

We needed to look inside the instrument sections. I was going to Tennessee that weekend, so I drove on to Missouri the next Monday to open-up the mines acquired from one of the Baltic states. At the company's warehouse, the next morning, I was amazed at the massive quantities of Russian Army equipment and uniforms that were stored inside. The Navy items were in a far corner of the huge warehouse. A woman kept tabs on me, while the men were gone.

Wisely, the mines were back inside their metal shipping containers. Normally, for long-term storage, a vacuum would be pulled on the container and it would be back-filled with an inert gas, such as argon. Once the stop-bolt was retracted and the container's end-cap was removed, I could slide the mine out. The heavy mine was in a metal harness and suspended on multiple rollers in a channel on each side of the container's center section. The pristine mine slid out like opening a well-oiled drawer in a filing cabinet. The recovery float section was unfamiliar, but the rest was like seeing an old friend.

Heel-of-hand strikes on the handle of a screwdriver got the threaded retainer rings off a hand-hole cover in the instrument section. The woman had her orders, she was looking over my shoulder with a bright flashlight shining on the opening. That gave me an idea, so I sent her scurrying off looking for a small mirror. Meanwhile, I removed the hand-hole cover and looked inside. Electronic cables were going every which way. The mine appeared to be fully instrumented. However, among every Russian mine's publications there is a tiny booklet that lists the amounts of precious metals in its electronic components. It's a thief's guidebook on what's worth stealing if precious metals are what they're after.

Similar procedures on the other mine produced the same results. By then the men had returned and I had help buttoning-up the two mines. I also had a chance to talk with the businessman who had purchased the mines. He said when he arrived at the motel in one of the rebellious Baltic states it was like a big "flea-market" of military items, both Army and Navy, was underway in the parking lot. He claimed to have paid \$5,000 for the two mines. He also bought two Russian torpedoes. He claimed there was a dozen or more metal containers similar to the ones he bought that were gone by the next morning.

I could tell he was feeling "antsy" about something. Finally, he admitted he was getting married that day to the Russian-speaking young lady that had helped him "seal the deal" about the mines and torpedoes. I congratulated him, shook his hand, and said goodbye. We both must have been "kind of giddy" that day, because he let me drive off with his briefcase, containing all his marriage papers and no telling what else in my car. Not long afterwards, out on the main highway, I saw an old blue Volkswagen van, leaving a trail of blue smoke, trying to catch up to me so I pulled over and he retrieved his briefcase. We said goodbye again and he roared off to get married within an hour or so.

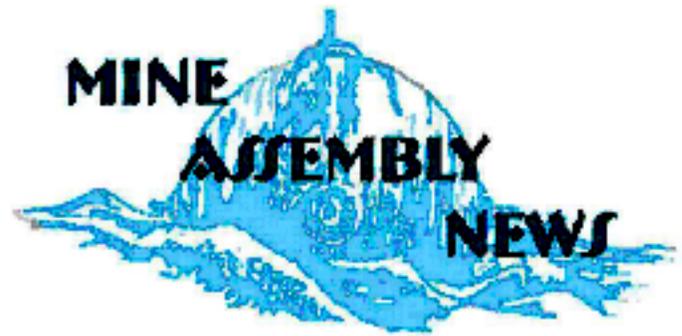
On the way back to Washington, I couldn't help but think what a goofy world we live in when some guys with a little money could buy Russian mines and torpedoes and then try to sell them using the "Shotgun News."

Don Jones, MNCM, USN Retired, PO Box 36, Sherwood, TN 37376, Phone: 931-598-0864  
E-mail: [jodo496Usn@aol.com](mailto:jodo496Usn@aol.com)



## COMOMAG

By MNCS(SW) Mike Cooley



We're off to a great start in 2008 here at COMOMAG. The winter was mild as usual and spring is already upon us. We had a very nice Christmas party put together by MN2(SW) Adkins and SK2(SW) Nunez and we appreciate all their hard work.



COMOMAG Christmas Party

Last issue we bid farewell to MNMCM(SW) Jerry Williams although his ceremony had not yet occurred prior to the deadline for the winter edition. He had a wonderful ceremony with CDR Anderjack presiding and Mr. Ron Swart as the guest speaker. Jerry's retirement speech was truly one of the best I have ever heard with interesting sea stories from various assignments throughout his remarkable 30-year career. One of the greatest moments of the ceremony came at the conclusion of MNMCM(SW) Randy Childers' reading of "The Watch". Jerry's son, Midshipman Second Class Jason Williams, relieved him of the watch by saluting and stating, "I have the watch". Here are some photos of the ceremony.



CDR Anderjack, MNMCM(SW) Williams,  
Mr. Ron Swart, CDR, USN Ret



His son, Midshipman Williams relieves the watch

**EXERCISE/TRAINING DEPARTMENT (N32)**

We'll begin by regretfully bidding farewell to MN1(SW) Renee Myers. HM-15 is gaining a sharp sailor and she'll be sorely missed. Her relief, (and husband) MN1(SW) Kirk Myers is off to great start as he hit the deck plates (carpet) running. I'm sure he'll never use those infamous words, "I didn't get a good turnover". Although we didn't have any exercises over the holidays or the beginning of the year, we did provide E/T support to the following EOD customers in support of their training requirements; NSCT ONE, EODMU ONE. We also provided sonar condition check shapes to USS AVENGER and USS PIONEER in support of their upcoming INSURV. We have several big exercises brewing on the horizon, including VULCANEX and HAWKEX for HM-14 and HM-15, "The MOMAU sites are doing a great job and their outstanding support, often on short notice, is greatly appreciated."  
~Ed Simmons

**SERVICE MINES DEPARTMENT (N31)**

N31 has been hard at work with many activities these past few months. LTJG Cowart attended a conference in January, learning about Fleet Ordnance Support Model (FOS-M). Throughout the year, MOMAU's will begin using the FOS-M program, reporting ordnance tonnage, and man hours. Mr. Helgerson is currently observing the MK 71 TDD FIAT in Guam. We also have been preparing 5 MOMAU's for their Calibration Capability Evaluation (CCE) and 2 MOMAU's for Mine Readiness Certification Inspection (MRCI). We currently have three sites up and running on OIS-R and expect to have the remaining sites up soon. Bravo Zulu to MNC(SW) Bostic, MN1(SW) Reinhart and MN2(SW) Adkins for all of their hard work and dedication to not only COMOMAG, but to the MOMAU sites as well.

**SUPPLY DEPARTMENT (N4)**

This is our first input to 'The Dashpot'. I enjoy reading every MOMAU's blog in the previous issues, and hope ya'll enjoy sharing our news as well. We have had some changes in Supply these last few months. SK1 Paradis, earned the recognition of MOMAG Sailor of year 2007 and then transferred to EOD Seal Team Four in January. He is currently enjoying two hour PT sessions including frequent five mile runs. Our new LPO, SK2 Hylton is also COMOMAG's Sailor of the Quarter fourth quarter CY2007, and the financial storekeeper for our department and all of the Units. (Don't call him for money, though, he is trained to say No). SK2 Nunez, is our travel card expert, as well as the point of contact for purchase card. SK2 Grigsby has become our travel expert in matters related to DTS. Our newest addition, SK2 Duplechan, is also a financial storekeeper, specializing in Unit MILSTRIP log issues. ~With flexibility being our game, job titles will soon change once again, as always we will continue to provide stellar support to our MOMAU's!

This is all for now, stay safe, and keep your bottom line black! ~Chief Diaz

**AWARDS**

SOY - SK1(SW/AW) Raymond Paradis  
SOQ - SK2(SW) Hensley Hylton  
NCM - LCDR Thomas Mathison  
NCM - MNCM(SW) Jerry Williams

NAM - IT1 Patricia Dunn  
NAM - SK2(SW) Gabriel Nunez  
NAM - SK2(SW) Hensley Hylton  
NAM - MN1(SW) Renee Myers



**SOY - SK1(SW/AW) Paradis**



**SOQ - SK2(SW) Hylton**

## ARRIVALS

MNC(SW) Jeffrey Blackwell from MHC CREW EXCEL  
aboard USS BLACK HAWK (MHC 58)

MN1(SW) Kirk Myers from MCM CREW DOMINANT  
aboard USS CHAMPION (MCM 4)

YN1(AW) Houston enroute MOMAU TEN

## DEPARTURES

LT Robinson to retirement

MN1(SW) Renee Myers to HELMINRON FIFTEEN

SK1(SW/AW) Raymond Paradis to EOD Seal Team Four

## REENLISTMENTS

MN1(SW) Renee Myers at Escondido Ranch



# MOMAU ONE SEAL BEACH, CA

by LT G. V. Bodine



LT McGregor and MN1(SW) Myers



Navy family – Midshipman SecondClass Jason Williams,  
MNCM(AW/SW) Carrie Williams,  
and MNCM(SW) Jerry Williams

**CO's CORNER:** Greetings from sunny Seal Beach! It was a busy Spring of preparing for mine exercises.

MOMAU ONE Sailors are not just inspired to go out and take college classes but they've brought college classes to the command. That's right! We have an instructor who teaches a class right here for the command and anyone from the base who'd like to attend.

MWR has been working hard for the crew! We had a snow day, yes you heard me right, we had a snow day in sunny California! We took a day and went to the mountains for some snowboarding and skiing. They have also planned for a day of paintball. I think the khaki's are in for some trouble.

The Chiefs Mess went out and started a fitness trend by running in the Surf City Half Marathon in Huntington Beach, CA. From the looks of it, the rest of the crew is stepping up to the challenge and is looking to join them in the next marathon in June.

We would like to mention the efforts and support the crew has been giving the local Sea Cadets. They spend weekends driving the kids to different drilling events and flag ceremonies. Their efforts have paid off significantly. Two of the cadets have just been accepted to the Naval Academy.

Along with the college classes and preparing for mine exercises, the crew has been working hard on studying for their advancement exams. We're expecting an outstanding outcome.

Well that is all for now! We will let you know how the khakis fared after paintball day....

**HAILS & FAREWELLS:** We welcome aboard MNSR Stefani Durrell from Mine Warfare Training Center, Ingleside, TX.

Fair winds and following seas to MN1 Jeramie Lane who separated from Naval service.

**AWARDS & RECOGNITION:** CONGRATULATIONS to MN1(SW) Hoffman for selection as MOMAU ONE Sailor of the Year and to MN3(SW) Reuss for selection as MOMAU ONE Junior Sailor of the Year

**ON THE HORIZON:** RIMPAC 08 and EDUCATED SAILORS!!!!!!



## MOMAU TEN KADENA, JAPAN

by YN1(SW) Ryan L. Durnell

Another Quarter has gone by and MOMAU TEN continues meeting and exceeding its commitments. These last few months have been particularly busy as well challenging as we prepare for our upcoming MRCI. We started the Quarter with some light maintenance and preparing some E/T shapes for upcoming exercises. February was spent mostly doing upgrades of every configuration possible in order to give the guys a taste of all the different configurations that could be called upon during the MRCI. Our MRCI will be in March and we are forecasting a positive outcome. Shortly after our MRCI, we are schedule for an ESI. We had an assist visit from the NOSSA folks in February and they only found a handful of things for us to improve on. We have no doubt that we will pass ESI as well.



MOMAU 10 loads Aero 51 trailers while ramping up for upcoming MRCI.

On a very positive note, the crew has settled into the newly renovated building quite well. With the addition of new head/shower facilities and additional office/computer workstations, moral has greatly improved. We would like to also welcome a new shipmate. MNSN Mary Russel has joined us from MWTC Ingleside and will be a welcomed member of the Team Ten family.

We have had our small share of exercises this quarter as well as mentioned above. We provided mine shapes for Exercise 1JA, conducted by the Japanese Self Defense Force, and MCMEX 08-3, conducted by Mine Counter Measures Squadron Three One in Bahrain. We also provided 4 MK 63 laying mines to the USS Nimitz strike group in support of Foal Eagle 2008. In addition to the already busy schedule (MRCI and ESI), we are gearing up to support Cobra Gold 08, CARAT 08, and Mercury 08. All three exercises will require a MAT team, which should gain us deployment experience as well as some good and well deserved liberty.



MN3 Gartman installs a 1372 cable on a MK65 Laying Mine.

MN1 Flores and MN1 Green have successfully transitioned MOMAU TEN from Retail Ordnance Logistics Management System (ROLMS) to the coveted on-line Ordnance Information System (OIS-R). The transition was very smooth and seamless to their hard work, meticulous accounting of our inventory, and the help of Mr. Brad Fish.

Lastly, as MRCI quickly approaches, so does the re-uniting of MOMAU TEN with our reserve units. Every visit by them is a great opportunity to both show our appreciation to our Reserve brothers and sisters and also get some great training with each other. They are expected to come aboard mid March and the whole command is looking forward to our yearly gathering. Not to mention our Bi-annual Post MRCI picnic. We would have a very hard time getting through this arduous inspection with out these hard charging brothers and sisters!



MN1(SW) Stone receiving SSOY.



MN2(SW) Prendergast receiving JSOY.



A friend, mentor, and superb sailor departs us. MN1(SW) Quintero dedicated 20 years to the US NAVY. "Fair winds and following seas"

**NO SKIPPER WHO HAS STRUCK A  
MINE WANTS AN ENCORE.**



## MOMAU ELEVEN GOOSE CREEK, SC

MNC Shawn Barker

A Cheery Hi Ho from the world's largest, most productive mine shop! TEAM ELEVEN has started the new year with a BANG! The AF MAT is getting ready for it's semi-annual deployment to Barksdale. We are getting the exercise shapes ready as well as others shapes for other exercises and training events. We completed our upgrade assessment and have being working on our routine quarterly maintenance. Additionally, our "Dump the Junk" campaign cleaned out the two magazines and one warehouse full of residual unserviceable material left over from the mergers of MOMAUs THREE, FIVE, and FOURTEEN. We are also cleaning out the Bats in our Belfry. Overhaul of one of our inert storage buildings, which has had bat infestation problems, has finally begun while work on our new Explosive's Operating Building and the habitability improvements for our current Operations building has been delayed.



MN(SW) Matthew Giannini and MN2(SW) Brad Corson install a MK7 Tail Section during a MK65 upgrade.

## Weapons Upgrade Assessment

Welcoming back almost all of NR MOMAU SIX, who have attended every upgrade to date, TEAM ELEVEN completed another exceptional weapons upgrade assessment. We started off with an awe inspiring safety brief given by our XO, LCDR Marc Goode, who gave us a visionary focus on safe operations. Preparing for our MRCI later this year, we continued our rotation of personnel through the various station assignments for the SLMM team, MK-65 team, and MATs. The professionalism of TEAM ELEVEN shown through as all the teams performed brilliantly, supporting the concept that ANY Sailor can be placed in ANY position, ANY-TIME, ANYWHERE. Even the non-Mineman were in the mix, serving on the line, driving fork trucks, and moving material from the build teams to the downgrade and inspection teams.



Six all up round MK67 SLMMs. (Six for Six) All in a days work!



Vision... MOMAU Sailors look to the future during a safety brief

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Despite the busy schedule, TEAM ELEVEN once again found time to help the people of the

surrounding communities. Our Sailors donated numerous hours of public service to the following events and activities: Special Olympics Winter Fund Raisers, Beach Hill Elementary Career Day, and Cub Scout Pack 453.



MN2(SW) Ralph Maldonado assists a patron during a Special Olympics Fund Raiser.

## OFFICER SELECTION

MNC(SW) Travis Meyer is the only applicant MOMAG wide to have been selected for the LDO/CWO program. He will be commissioned as a Chief Warrant Officer 2 in the Surface Ordnance designator and is looking forward to going to sea as a Systems Test Officer on an Aegis cruiser or destroyer.

## AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

Bravo Zulu and congratulations to the following personnel:

### Awards:

Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal:

MN1(SW) Donald Kiper

Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal:

MN3 Brandon Bernard  
MN1(SS) Lance Thomas  
MN2(SW) Fredrick-Paul Saporita  
YN2 Richard Saunders

Volunteer Service Medal:

MN1(SW) Frederick-Paul Saporita

Letter of Commendation:

MN3(SW) Stephen Bates  
GM1(SW) Chris Neely  
MN1(SS) Lance Thomas  
MN2(SW) Eric Zenero  
MN3(SW) Stephen Bates

Sailors of the Quarter 3Q07:  
Senior Sailor of the Quarter:  
MN1(SS) Lance Thomas  
Junior Sailor of the Quarter:  
MN2(SW) Eric Zenero  
Blue Jacket of the Quarter:  
MN3(SW) Stephen Bates



### REENLISTMENTS

GM1(SW) Chris Neely,  
MN1(SW) Frederick Paul-Saporita,  
MN3(SW) Gregory Pettit,  
SKC (SW) Jeffery Clemente  
MNC (SW) Pamela Kulisek each reenlisted for 4  
years.

## MOMAU TWELVE MISAWA, JA

by YN1(SW) Ryan Durnell



LCDR Marc Goode reenlists MNC(SW) Pamela Kulisek  
for another 4 years

### DEPARTURES

MNCM(SW) Donald Kiper, Japan  
MNC(SW) Hugh Griffis, Bahrain  
MN3(SW) Stephen Bates, Ingleside  
MN3 Brandon Bernard, Japan  
GM1(SW) Chris Neely, Mayport  
MN1(SW) Frederick Saporita, OCS

### NEW ARRIVALS

MN3(SW) Alvarez  
SK2(SW) Thomas Ellison

Greetings from the Land of the Rising Sun, Japan!  
It's been another quarter of hard work and well  
earned successes in Misawa, Japan. In January, our  
most junior member strengthened our ties with the  
host nation, representing us at the annual Sapporo  
Ice Festival, a Japanese tradition celebrating the  
beauty of the winter. We were also graced with the  
arrival of our first Command Master Chief,  
MNCM(SW) Donald Kiper. A team led by CWO3  
Lute, our Executive Officer, conducted 08-1JA  
Multinational Exercise with our hosts in the Japan  
Maritime Self Defense Force in February 2008.  
MNCS(SW) Andrew Palmer stepped up, accepting a  
commission as Chief Warrant Officer (2) on the first  
day of March 2008. Meanwhile, the crew continues  
to diligently focus on our fast approaching annual  
Mine Readiness Certification Inspection (MRCI).  
We are now gearing up for a number of pre-  
inspections, checks, and finalizing the full  
integration of a top flight assembly team.

### FAREWELLS:

CWO2 Palmer – Reporting to Mobile Mine  
Assembly TEN in March 2008  
MNCS(SW) Williams – Retiring 30 June 2008  
MN1 Hanson – Reporting to PreComm LCS 1 in  
March 2008

### HAILS WELCOME ABOARD

MNCM(SW) Kiper – Arriving from Mobile Mine  
Assembly Unit ELEVEN (Jan 08)  
MN1(SW) Dillabough – Arriving from MHC CREW  
DETECTOR (Feb 08)  
MN2 McFarland – Arriving from MCM CREW  
CONFLICT (Mar 08)

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Successfully taking the fight to  
the enemy is predicated on being  
able to get men and material out of  
our ports and into theirs.

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MN2 Montalvo – Arriving from MCM CREW FEARLESS (May 08)  
MN3 Barrows – Arriving from MCM CREW DOMINANT (Jan 08)  
MNSR Valdez – Arriving from Mine Warfare Training Center (Jun 08)

I would also like to take some time to recognize and congratulate the following personnel for a job well done.

**AWARDS & RECOGNITION**

MN2(SW) Rupe – Sailor of the Year, CY 2007  
MN3 Staggs – Junior Sailor of the Year, CY 2007  
SK1(SW) Powell – Sailor of the Quarter, 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2007  
MN3(SW) Staggs – Junior Sailor of the Quarter, 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2007  
CWO2 Palmer – NCM  
MNCS(SW) Williams – NCM  
MN1(SW) Hanson - NAM

**On the RADAR screen**

We are gearing up for another full year, preparing for another successful MRCI at the end of March and into early April. Looking further ahead, our team will tackle another ESI and FCA toward the end of the year. The months ahead promise a good deal of sweat and hard work, but our efforts are rewarded with a fine country, friendly nationals, and the appreciation of our community. Fair winds and following seas.





## Mine Warfare Structure

**NMAWC, (pronounced En MawK) the Naval Mine and Antisubmarine Command welcomes its new leader, Rear Admiral Frank M. Drennan.** Headquartered at Naval Base Point Loma, Naval Mine and Anti-Submarine Warfare Command Complex, San Diego, California. **NMAWC** functions as the War Fighting Center of Excellence for Mine and Anti-Submarine Warfare by focusing efforts across numerous resource sponsors, systems commands, research labs and operational commands to ensure supremacy in Mine Warfare and ASW. Of interest to us all, RADM Drennan has stated that he and his staff will work with the numbered fleets and Navy leadership to determine the way ahead for our naval mining capability, thus providing an important opportunity to define our mine readiness requirements not available to us in the recent past. As the principal authority for the MIW and ASW missions, his duties as **NMAWC** include:

- Develops doctrine, tactics, techniques, and procedures as the MIW and ASW Center of Excellence.
- Focuses efforts across the MIW and ASW mission areas to include resource sponsors, Systems Commands, Laboratories, and experimentation initiatives; Articulates MIW and ASW operational and future readiness capabilities requirements; Promotes rapid delivery of new technologies and training, through support of Sea Shield and Sea Trial.
- Promotes MIW and ASW training and qualification improvement; Supports the numbered Fleet Commanders in MIW and ASW integrated training and certification.
- Supports MIW and ASW performance assessment at all levels against standardized, common metrics.
- Supports Theater ASW.
- Supports Operational Commanders with: a standing deployable MIW Battle Staff; deployable mine countermeasures staffs; Combatant Commanders' MIW operational and contingency plan development; and maritime component commander and theater ASW staff support. The MIW Battle Staff, as the Naval Component Commander MIW Commander,

executes delegated Operational Control of Air, Surface, and Underwater MCM forces.

A native of Elberton, Ga., Rear Adm. Drennan graduated in 1976 from the U.S. Naval Academy with a Bachelor of Science degree in Aerospace Engineering. Prior to command, he served at sea in USS James Madison (SSBN 627), USS Birmingham (SSN 695), and USS Louisville (SSN 724). He served ashore on the staffs of COMSUBRON 16, COMSUBPAC, Naval Submarine School, OPNAV, and the Joint Staff.

Rear Adm. Drennan commanded USS Portsmouth (SSN 707) from August 1992 to March 1995. During his tour, Portsmouth was awarded the Submarine Squadron Three Battle Efficiency "E" for excellence in combat readiness and all-around ship's operations, as well as the Engineering "Red E" and the Supply "Blue E" departmental awards.

Rear Adm. Drennan commanded Submarine Squadron Six from August 1999 to August 2001. From January to June 2000, he carried out additional duties as the Undersea Warfare Commander for Commander, George Washington Battle Group on the staff of Commander, Cruiser/Destroyer Group Two.

Following selection for flag rank, he served at U.S. Strategic Command as Director for Strike Plans, Director for Information Operations, and Deputy Commander for Space and Global Strike Component Command.

Rear Adm. Drennan took command of Submarine Group 9 in June 2005 and assumed additional duties as Commander, Submarine Group 10 in January 2006.

Rear Adm. Drennan holds a Master of Science degree in Engineering Management from the Catholic University of America and is a graduate of the Harvard Business School Advanced Management Program.

Rear Adm. Drennan is a U.S. Pacific Fleet recipient of the James Bond Stockdale Award for Inspirational Leadership during his command of USS Portsmouth. He also received the David Lloyd Award for excellence in leadership during the Submarine Officer Advance Course.

He is entitled to wear the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit (six awards), the Meritorious Service Medal, the Navy Commendation Medal (five awards), and the Navy Achievement Medal.





**Pictured are (l-r) Jerry Ferguson, Deputy Director NMAWC, Vice Adm. Samuel J. Locklear, Commander, U.S. Third Fleet, Rear Adm. John J. Waickwicz, Rear Adm. Frank M. Drennan, Capt. Irving A. Elson, U.S. Navy Chaplain.**



**Rear Admiral Frank M. Drennan offers his vision to the crowd who gathered for the Naval Mine and Anti-Submarine Warfare Command (NMAWC) Change of Command Ceremony Pictured behind Rear Adm. Drennan is Vice Adm. Samuel J. Locklear, Commander, U.S. Navy Third Fleet and Mr. Jerry Ferguson, Deputy Director, NMAWC.**



# MINE COUNTERMEASURES NEWS

## Mine Countermeasures: Progress and Set Backs

by Norman Polmar | December 24, 2007

The U.S. Navy's first destroyer fitted for modern mine countermeasure operations has begun searching for mines in the Mediterranean Sea. The USS *Bainbridge* (DDG 96) is forward deployed and has begun using the AN/WLD-1 Remote Minehunting System (RMS).

Mines are a major concern for U.S. warships operating in forward littoral waters, such as the Persian Gulf. Beginning with Operation Desert Storm in 1961, three U.S. Navy ships have been severely damaged by mines in the Gulf—a helicopter carrier, an Aegis missile cruiser, and a guided missile frigate. Mines are cheap, readily available, and can be clandestinely emplaced.

The RMS is a self-propelled, remote-controlled, torpedo-like object that seeks out bottom and bottom-moored mines. The vehicle has a small, 370-horsepower diesel engine for propulsion. The vehicle's sensors forward-looking sonar and obstacle-avoiding video camera. The images from these sensors is sent by data link to the destroyer's combat center. The craft can be programmed to perform autonomously or can be controlled via data link, even when beyond the horizon from the mothership, which recovers the RMS after the "mission." The RMS can detect and map the location of mines, but neither it nor the destroyer can sweep or destroy the mines.

The Navy plans to outfit six Aegis missile destroyers with the RMS. But, the RMS is intended to support naval forces operating in relatively shallow, littoral areas where the threats include mines as well as small submarines and small surface craft. The Aegis destroyers are primarily anti-air warfare ships, intended for deep-water operation, primarily in support of carrier battle groups. Indeed, the Navy's trouble-plagued Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) program was developed in part to provide a littoral mine countermeasures capability. The

RMS is a key component of the LCS mine countermeasures suite, which will include the means of destroying as well as detecting mines. Further, aboard the Aegis destroyers the RMS will be rarely employed, thus the specially trained crewmen will have little "stick" time. And, of course, they will be employed in other duties much or most of the time, duties for which they may or may not be properly rated. One must then ask that with the LCS program underway and the Navy operating 14 mine countermeasures ship of the Avenger (MCM 1) class, why the six missile destroyers are being fitted with the RMS.

Meanwhile, the Navy has recently taken out of service the last of its relatively new Osprey (MHC 51)-class coastal minehunters. These 12 ships—ideal for littoral operations—were commissioned between 1993 and 1999. The Navy began decommissioning them in June 2006. Some have been transferred to Greece and Egypt, with the remainder being kept in storage at Beaumont, Texas, until they can be disposed of.

Lee Hunt, vice president for academic affairs for the Mine Warfare Association, said that the departure of the last coastal minehunters robs the service of the ability to survey domestic harbors for mines. The threat of mines or Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) in U.S. harbors is of growing concern of the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Defense.

Still another sign of the confusion and lack of interest with respect to mine countermeasures is the current Navy move to replace the large MH-53E Sea Dragon mine countermeasures helicopters with the smaller MH-60S Sea Hawk. The latter has considerably less endurance and equipment lift capacity than the MH-53E, and also lacks the big bird's night-flying capability.

The U.S. Navy has long employed minesweeping helicopters, which can be rapidly flown to forward areas with their support gear and put to sea in a variety of ships, especially amphibious helicopter carriers (LPH/LHA/LHD). They have been used in several areas over the years, including North Vietnam waters at the end of the Vietnam War.

While the U.S. Navy has long shown a lack of interest in mine warfare, the situation was recently exacerbated by the merger of what had been a separate Mine Warfare Command with the recently established anti-submarine training command to form the Naval Mine and Anti-Submarine Warfare Command with headquarters in San Diego. Despite official Navy statements to the contrary, the merger in reality subordinates mine warfare interests to the larger, broader, and more-visible ASW commu-

nity. This is particularly true as the Navy sounds the alarm about the increasing Chinese submarine capabilities with hardly a mention of that nation's mine warfare activities.

Sound Off...What do you think? [Join the discussion.](#)

## DISCUSSION RE MR. POLMAR'S ARTICLE:

Editor's Observation Over 40+ Years: This is nothing new to old-timers in the Mine Force. The navy seems to run a 20 to 25 year cycle when it comes to really appreciating mine warfare. This cycle roughly coincides with the retirement of those who have faced or used mines and fully understand the threat, both defensive and offensive. The newer weapons and platforms are often viewed as the panacea for any future conflict much like bombers were going to make ground warfare obsolete

## ABOUT NORMAN POLMAR

**NORMAN POLMAR** has been a consultant to several senior officials in the Navy and Department of Defense, and has directed several studies for U.S. and foreign shipbuilding and aerospace firms. Mr. Polmar has been a consultant to the Director of the Los Alamos National Laboratory.

Mr. Polmar also served as a consultant to three U.S. Senators and to two members of the House of Representatives, as a consultant or advisor to three Secretaries of the Navy and two Chiefs of Naval Operations, and as a consultant to the Deputy Counselor to President Reagan.

Mr. Polmar has written or coauthored more than 40 books and numerous articles on naval, intelligence, and aviation subjects. His comparative analysis of U.S. and Soviet submarine design and construction, *COLD WAR SUBMARINES*, written in collaboration with Mr. Kenneth J. Moore and the Russian submarine design bureaus RUBIN and MALACHITE, was published in late 2003.

For the past three decades he has been author of the reference books *Ships and Aircraft of the U.S. Fleet* and *Guide to the Soviet Navy*.

Mr. Polmar's articles and comments appear frequently in various newspapers and periodicals and he is a columnist for the *Proceedings* and *Naval History* magazines, both published by the U.S. Naval Institute.

From 1967 to 1977 Mr. Polmar was editor of the United States and several other sections of the annual *Jane's Fighting Ships*.

and satellites were going to render spies passé. Those single platform concepts were proven wrong. Even the mighty force of a major battle group can be rendered impotent by mines as was the Pacific Fleet at Wonsan Harbor. Bob Hope landed at Wonsan before the US Navy could land a single Mud Marine. You can't storm the beaches unless you can get to them.

Always we find too late that we have too few and too unsophisticated mines for offensive use and too few sophisticated minesweepers and highly trained minesweeping professionals for defense against even the most rudimentary threat by our weakest enemy.

Rear Admiral Allen "Hoke" Smith the Korean campaign's amphibious task force commander who reported to the CNO, Admiral Forrest Sherman with the permission of his boss VADM C. Turner Joy, the following:

**"We have lost control of the seas to a nation without a Navy, using pre-World War I weapons, laid by vessels that were utilized at the time of the birth of Christ."**

Did we learn from this? No, we did not. It happened again in Gulf I...and just over a decade later in Gulf II. When will naval strategists realize that as long as there are ships, there will be sea mines and they will be used. Considering it takes only one mine casualty to close a port or choke point, the number of sea mines available to our enemies is frightening. It is not possible these weapons are being maintained by our enemies and potential enemies as "make work" projects. They are maintained because they are effective and we remain vulnerable.

Foreign flag vessels are in all our major ports every day. We have no idea what they might drop through a simple aperture in their bottoms on their way out to sea or as they cruise our coasts. If America's harbors were mined tonight, tomorrow there would be five new classes of minesweepers; combatants, container ships, tankers, RO/ROs and anything else that floats.

Our enemies have repeatedly proven adept at using mines and regenerating the US Navy's cyclic interest in mine warfare. The problem is that successful and timely minesweeping and hunting requires a cadre of highly trained professional mine personnel and dedicated craft. There is a lengthy timeline in acquiring both.

Losing dedicated minesweepers is serious. Losing missile armed combatants to mines can be catastrophic. Though strong and powerful, even the carrier has a keel that can be shattered with no enemy combatant in sight. If the need is fast, mobile minesweepers, perhaps MCM configured LCS's and trained crews should be an integral part of the battle group.



## MINE COUNTERMEASURES SQUADRON ONE, INGLESIDE TX

HOWGOZIT INPUT FOR OCT 2007 – JAN  
2008

by MNCS(SW) Mike Szostkiewicz

It has been another quarter where the entire MINE COUNTERMEASURES SQUADRON ONE (MCMRON1) has been “stepping and fetching” from beginning to end. Not only our staff members here in Ingleside, Texas, but also MINE COUNTERMEASURES DIVISION ELEVEN (MCMDIV11), USS GUARDIAN (MCM 5) and USS PATRIOT (MCM 7), all who are FDNF home-ported in Sasebo, Japan. We’ve also added HELICOPTER MINE COUNTERMEASURES SQUADRON 14 DET ONE (HM14 Det1), currently based out of Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan to our list of forward deployed Mine Warfare forces.

We started off October with a team attending the STAFF TALKS with the Republic of Korea (ROK) Mine Warfare Staff in Chinhae, South Korea. These staff talks occur every year alternating between the USA and ROK. We talk about our best and new practice in the advancement of Mine Warfare and share information on how to best combat the problem of mines and mining in littoral waters. Along with the Staff Talks, exercise CLEAR HORIZON was also a great success. This was a Bi-lateral exercise with the ROK and was the first time in many years that the venerable MH-53E Sea Dragon helicopters of HM14 Det1 operated in ROK waters.

November played host to our MCMRON1 assessment more fondly known as the Gulf of Mexico Exercise (GOMEX). We took TACON of USS DEVASTATOR (MCM 6), USS WARRIOR

(MCM 10), HELICOPTER MINE COUNTERMEASURES SQUADRON 15 (HM-15), along with an EOD detachment. This was a two week exercise to “Flex the MCM Triad”, being we were in charge of air, surface and sub-surface mine countermeasures units to combat a “Port Breakout” scenario for a simulated High Value Unit. The exercise was a great success and will probably be the last GOMEX as all are gearing to transition to San Diego for most of the Mine Warfare Fleet here in Ingleside. Almost seemingly without a break, we transitioned from being under the microscope to being Ambassadors as we hosted a delegate of Mine Warfare Officers from the Republic of Singapore for Staff Talks and planning for Exercise MERCURY taking place during the summer of 2008.

Even as the Christmas holidays were quickly approaching, December was no reason to throttle back. We attended a two week engagement split between Monterey and San Diego, CA for the Homeland Defense Experiment known as CONTECH. This was a simulated exercise/experiment where the port of San Diego was “mined” with an unknown quantity and type of Underwater Improvised Explosive Devices (UWIEDs). We worked directly with our Coast Guard cousins and the Captain of the Port, along with numerous civilian companies and their Un-manned Underwater Vehicles (UUVs), surveying the bottom of the harbor floor and the shipping lanes while comparing their data to what a team from the NAVAL OCEANOGRAPHIC office had to their prior survey. This is known as “change-detect” and is an invaluable tool and procedure to be able to identify bottom objects that may have been “recently planted.”

January 2008 proved also to be much of the usual full speed ahead we’re accustomed to here at MCMRON1. Our brethren at MCMDIV11 in Sasebo are fully engaged in a bi-lateral UUV exercise with the ROK, as we here in Ingleside are gearing up for the annual MINEX/EODEX 08-1JA in Japan.

The next quarter looks like much more of the same: planning for upcoming exercises to include (but not limited to!) COBRA GOLD, TERMINAL FURY, MERCURY, ULCHI-FREEDOM GUARDIAN, IWO JIMA LIVE MINEX and RIMPAC just to name a few.

Plus our FDNF MCMs PATRIOT and GUARDIAN are preparing for a first in Japan; they’re going thru the Japanese Electromagnetic Ranging Facility to calibrate their degaussing systems!

WHERE WE’VE BEEN... ONLY VICTORY  
REMAINS!



MCMRON1 Commodore Jeff Connor (center-right) and Colonel Tan (center-left) of the Republic of Singapore Navy during Staff Talks November 2007. Photo by NSI PAO Mike Antoine.

Editor's Note: The Association of Minemen welcomes COMCMRON ONE and greatly appreciates your interest. We extend a hearty invitation to join us as members if you so desire.



Ok, Chin Sing, who are the rest of the bandits in this photograph and where was it taken?

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