



THE DASHPOT



Issue 72 Newsletter of the Association of Minemen Winter 2010



FROM THE PRESIDENT Gary Cleland

Greetings from sunny San Diego, California. I am sure some of the membership may not have heard of the happenings to our association since the conclusion of the reunion in Williamsburg, VA. I regret to inform those who have not heard that our newly elected President Robert "Willie" Wilson tragically died in a single car accident shortly after arriving home from the reunion. His wife Betty, although seriously injured, is on the road to recovery. Keep Betty in our thoughts and Prayers. You can see our website for additional details.

As a result of Willie's untimely passing, the following AOM leadership changes have occurred. I, as your newly elected Vice President, have recently been sworn in as President Pro Tempore by our Parliamentarian, Warren Savage. In my new capacity as President and, with the approval of the Board of Directors, I have appointed Bob Hart as Vice President Pro Tempore to complete the top of our Association's leadership team. These pro tempore positions will be confirmed at our next general membership meeting in San Diego, October 14, 2011.

I am in close contact with Curtis Christian, our outgoing Secretary/Treasurer, as he turns over the duties of this appointed position to Michael Femrite who has graciously volunteered to assume the very important duties of that office. The physical change will be one of the most difficult changeovers to effect due to the transfer of bank accounts, post office box address and licensing from the State of South Carolina to the State of Florida.

I look forward to serving you, the members of our Association of Minemen, now and in the future.

37TH ANNUAL AOM REUNION POINT LOMA, CA OCTOBER 14 - 16, 2011

You are all welcome to attend the 37th Annual Association of Minemen Reunion and be part of a most memorable event. We are putting together the final touches for our reunion in San Diego, CA. I want to thank everyone for their assistance, especially the 2011 Association of Minemen Committee, our President, our Directors, as well as all the involved members and friends, for their assistance in our pulling together our reunion. We are looking forward to our 37th annual reunion being held from 14 to 16 October in San Diego at the Holiday Inn San Diego Bayside. This hotel location was selected by the AOM Reunion Committee Team to house our reunion as well our annual meetings, functions and activities except for the picnic. Our 1996, 2003, 2007 and 2009 AOM reunions were also held in San Diego at the Handlery Hotel and Resort and received a "Well Done" from those in attendance.

The Holiday Inn San Diego Bayside is located at 4875 North Harbor Drive intersecting Nimitz in San Diego and is only one mile from the San Diego International Airport (Lindbergh Field) across from San Diego Bay. The 37th AOM reunion is being planned and operated by our nucleus team consisting of President Gary Cleland, W. C. Holloway, Jerry Chipman, Jim Miller and Warren Savage as well as other southern California AOM

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YORKTOWN MUSEUM

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at Present

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DEDICATED TO SERVING THE U.S. NAVY MINE FORCE

The Dashpot,
published quarterly, is the
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Association of Minemen,
a 501-C non profit, non
political 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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ASSOCIATION OF MINEMEN

Minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2010 in Williamsburg VA

NOTE: some entries are taken from the BODs meeting.

The President called the meeting to order at 1400 hours.

Introduction of members was called for by the President.

Nominations for new officers were as follows.

President -----Robert Wilson.
Vice President---Gary Cleland
BOD ----- Robert Oltman.
BOD ----- Shane Stone MN1 (SW)

Our incoming President appointed Mike Femrite to fill in as BOD to replace Gary Cleland.

William (Swede) Carlsen reported on the scholarship awards.

The President reported on the membership committee.

Toby Horn reported on the Yorktown Museum.

Warren Savage reported on the Midway Museum.

Ron Swart reported on the Lexington Museum.

Ron Swart and Warren Savage will look into giving the North Sea brass plate to the Minemen School in San Diego.

Bill Fortner reported that the next Dash-Pot may be late by a few weeks.

Curtis Christian asked to be relived as Secretary/Treasurer by our next meeting.

The Treasurer will check on the advantage of putting our CD monies into a money market account.

Our new President Was asked to write thank-you notes to the Mariners museum for their hospitality and Ross Maddocks for donating the officers lanyards.

The President announced the Minemen of the year as follows:

Active Duty Sea ----- MN1 (SW) Brian A. Rey.
Active duty Shore --- MN1 (SW) James Longhtin.
Reserve ----- MN1 (SW) Kenneth J. Lopez.

Warren Savage reported on the 2011 Reunion in San Diego.

The President reported on the dedication of the new MN School in San Diego.

A motion was made to make CAPT. Charles Martin an Honorary member of the AOM. Motion passed.

The President requested permission to present our guest speaker with our AOM coin. A vote was taken and passed.

Dick Schommer asked if we had anyone eligible for the Cock Cockers award. It was decided that Bob Reid was eligible.

It was decided to hold the 2012 Reunion in Panama City FL.

After a discussion on the amount of money being lost on our reunions a motion was made to charge a \$10.00 registration fee on each entry sheet for the reunions. This to help offset some of the losses. A vote was taken and the motion was passed.

No further business was addressed and the President adjourned the meeting at 1550.

Respectfully Submitted

Curtis Christian
Secretary.

THANKS TO DONORS

The Association of Minemen wishes to thank all those who donated to the museum and scholarship funds. Your support helps preserve our heritage and educate our youth; both are worthy callings.

SAN DIEGO REUNION CONTINUED.

members and associates. We eagerly look forward to this event as one to be truly remembered and surpassing our 35th AOM reunion also held in San Diego.

The team is in the process of putting together activities which include our annual Early Bird, banquet, picnic and auction as well as other endeavors and annual meetings. We are looking forward to making this truly a family oriented function which enhances networking and camaraderie. We are looking at USS Midway, Naval Station, San Diego Zoo, Sea World, casino sites and other activities.

The Early Bird receptions will be held on Thursday, 13 October at 1200 in Harborview Room and Friday 14 October starting at 1000 on the Poolside Deck in the Poolside Hospitality Room with refreshments available. This will be a great opportunity to greet, meet and mix. There will be maps and handouts available as well as photos from the past. The hospitality room hours will be from 1000 to 2200, 13 to 17 October.

The Board of Directors meeting will tentatively be held Saturday morning at 1000 on 15 October. Our general membership meeting follows at 1400. Our banquet will be held on Saturday, 17 October starting at 1800 also at the Holiday Inn.

Our Annual AOM Picnic and Auction is planned to be held Sunday, 16 October starting at 1130 at the Navy Mine Warfare Training Center on base across the street from the Holiday Inn.

We will be using our Dashpot and the AOM website to keep everyone up to date on what is happening. We are looking forward to having a great and meaningful reunion.

To make reservation arrangements with the Holiday Inn San Diego Bayside call 1-619-224-3621 weekdays between the hours of 5 am-10 pm PST. The Holiday Inn National number is 1-800-662-8899. A FAX is available 619-224-1787. A special group rate is available from October 14 to 17; room rates are \$109.00 plus 12.5% tax, single or double. Identify yourself as "Association of Minemen" to get the special rates; the cutoff date is 20 September. Check-in time is 1600 and checkout time is 1200. Hotel parking is free. For your convenience there is a Holiday Inn Restaurant on site. There is also a Navy Exchange outlet located across the street as well as ten restaurants in close walking distance.

Complimentary provided:

- Parking
- Twenty-four hour Airport/Amtrak shuttle service. (Call the hotel directly for service.)
- Shuttle to local shopping and Balboa Park and San Diego Zoo
- Hospitality Suite with coolers, ice, portable bar and display tables (with 20 rented sleeping rooms).
- One hour welcome reception with beer, wine, well and soft drinks and cold hors d'oeuvres (with 20 rented sleeping rooms).
- Use of a TV/DVD/VCR for viewing past events.
- Kids 19 and under stay free; kids 12 and under eat free at the hotel restaurant with a dining adult.
- Senior discounts offered at the hotel restaurant featuring home style, affordable cooking.

AOM Officers

 **Check the masthead (pg 2) for correct entries.** 
Send corrections or fill in the blanks via e-mail.

YORKTOWN 2010 REUNION WRAP-UP

Thanks for attending the Yorktown 2010 Reunion held at the Lexington/George Washington Hotel in upper York County. Thanks to Toby Horn for arranging the free tour of the Mariners Museum in Newport News on Friday. We had a record crowd for this area attending the various functions of the reunion. We are all shocked and saddened by the event that followed when we lost our new President Willie Wilson. We outgrew the planned dinner and picnic rooms as well as doubled the number of rooms booked. The Hospitality room needed expandable walls as the crowd kept increasing. Some attendees never made it through the wall of tale-tellers. We were never lacking in conversation with Adm. Hoffman and Cdr. Lorenzen explaining past experiences. The hotel was happy with the attendance and demeanor of the membership. All in all, the Reunion Committee wishes to express our pleasure in hosting the event with such a positive gathering. The business meeting required extra seating as we reached the largest crowd we have ever seen. Clothing sales, auction, hospitality room, banquet and picnic were all well supported and we thank each and every one of you for your participation and financial support to the AOM. Ed Oyer, John Loonam, Eddie Atkins, Danny Epperly 2010 Reunion Committee

SCHOLARSHIP SCOOP

by Swede Carlsen



BINNACLE LIST

Betty Wilson

The reunion at Williamsburg was a huge success! The bidding at the picnic auction and donations from the membership and friends have added to the scholarship funds as follows:

Presidential Fund CD -----\$19,799.78

General Fund-----\$19,514.75

Benevolent fund-----\$675.00

The AOM was able to award nineteen assistance scholarships in 2010. It is the hope of the AOM to be able to award as many scholarships in 2011, if not more.

Christmas is the time for giving gifts. Let's put the Scholarship Funds on our Christmas lists!

Happy holidays.

Stand Tall America!

She is doing well with rehab and is just about weaned from the ventilator. They supplement this with the oxygen tube in the nose and she is a little more active each day. She is fully coherent and can converse and all her vital signs are strong. She is deeply saddened by Willy's death, of course...says "she wants to go home, but Willy won't be there." The family is not too happy with the hospital and staff where she is. She had one incident where the "call button" on her bed was not working and she could not get anyone to respond until they came in for a medicine round some hours later. I can hear Betty now!!! All in all, the prognosis is good. I don't know if she will be released in time for Christmas, or where she will spend the holidays at this point.

Editor's Note: Hang in there, Betty, we are praying for you. We extend our heart-felt sympathy to you and your family for your terrible loss. We are here for you.

Bill



THE MAIL BAG

COMMANDING OFFICER

Navy Munitions Command
CONUS East Division
P.O. Drawer 410
Yorktown, VA 23691-0410

Thank You

Hello this is Nicholas Fanelli, I received a Minemen scholarship and wanted to say that I am honored to receive a scholarship from an association that has served our country, and looks to aid those college students who need it. Thank you for selecting me to be one of the few people to have this scholarship, and thank you all for serving this country to give us the many freedoms that we are able to enjoy.

-Nicholas Fanelli

October 22, 2010

To The Association of Minemen (in care of Mr. Robert Hart, previous serving president)

Please accept my deepest sympathies on the passing of your new president-elect, Mr. Robert W. Wilson, this past week. As a community, I know you will pull together to help his family, as well as the Mine Family. Your reputation as a tight-knit and supportive community will stand you well as you recover from this loss. You Have my deepest respect and prayers in this time of need.

Very Respectfully,
Charles B. Marks
Captain, U. S. Navy

**"The reason the American Navy does so well in wartime is that war is chaos, and the American Navy practices chaos on a daily basis."
A German General Officer**

Toby sends:

Just want to update you on my trip to New Jersey for Bob "Willy" Wilson's funeral service. I arrived there on Sunday afternoon a little after 1300. Willy's brother-in-law, Greg (Betty's sister's husband) met me and we drove about an hour to go directly to the hospital where Betty was in intensive care. Several of the immediate family were there (Willy's children Chet and Dee were occupied with funeral arrangements) as well as Betty's sister, Debbie. After a brief chat with them, Debbie got me into the trauma unit to see Betty. I could hardly recognize her through all the bandages, and tubes were running everywhere. When I started talking to her, she opened her eyes and seemed to recognize me by jerking her hands a little. I could only stay a few minutes in the room. The doctors reported that they planned to operate on her broken hip in the morning. I visited with the family for about an hour.

We left there to go for a short dinner, then on to Greg & Debbie's home. They were very gracious hosts for my entire visit. While sitting at his built-in dining room bar, though, I noticed he had a piece of clothesline for a bell pull. I told him I would send him a Ross Maddocks masterpiece to replace it.

The next morning we awoke to an Indian summer day, which held for my entire visit. They couldn't believe it for that time of the year in New Jersey. We think Bob may have had something to do with the planning. We left for the morning service at the funeral home. Chet and Dee met me at the door and seemed genuinely glad to see me. Chet asked me to say a few words at the service as well as recite the poem Willy wrote for Ralph Christopher's book "River Rats". I went to the flag-draped casket to pay my respects, for myself and all his shipmates that could not be there. Willy looked good decked out in his Chief uniform. He wore the pendant of office for our AOM President which Chet and Dee told me he was so proud of. They had left room for me to place the black beret on his chest. I gave him a salute of respect as I finished our prayer of departure.

The viewing hall was packed to overflowing as the service began. Two fine young sailors from NAD Earle were there as honor guards. One came forward to salute the coffin as the other stood at the back of the hall and played Taps on his bugle. He then came forward and they withdrew the flag from the coffin to perform the folding ritual, each step precisely rendered, and then to present the flag to Dee and Chet. As soon as they had departed, Chet rose and asked me to come forward to speak.

I was really choked up, my friends, after the Taps/Flag ceremony. I did manage to get my words out, but must admit there were a few snivels and shed tears in the doing. I gave the following:

"Shipmate!!!

It is a term used by we sailors to describe a certain kind of person know to us and to you.

It describes someone more than just a friend.

Your shipmate guards your right flank - your left flank - keeps you out of harm's way - and is there for you when you need him.

The term is used with respect and honor.

Bob "Willy" Wilson was my shipmate, as he was to many others.

I, perhaps, know Bob a little better than most of the others, though. He lived with me for several months while his precious wife, Betty, lay in a hospital near death.

In those moments when prognosis was not good, we talked - and in such moments a man's heart opens and one can see beyond the bonds of warrior, patriot, comrade - and yes, shipmate.

And what I saw in Bob was one of the most genuine persons I have ever known - in heart, mind, and soul.

I shall miss my shipmate greatly - just as you.

I then read the poem that Willy had written. I don't think there were too many other dry eyes in the hall at that time. The service concluded with a prayer.

There were two other viewings/services that day - one in the afternoon and another in the evening. The afternoon function was just as crowded, and we had additional representation by Don Felorini (spl?) and his wife who drove down from New York. They reported that Swede and Irma Carlson had wanted to come, but Irma took sick and they couldn't make it. That service included honors rendered by the local American Legion honor guard. They were dressed in camouflage and Taps was also rendered (with a bugle recording). I think Navy got better reviews.

The evening viewing/service was crowded with a lot of other folks who couldn't come during the day. About half way through, I looked up from a seat where I had taken refuge to see John and Bobbie Loonam. They had just arrived after

4 November 2010

a long drive up from Virginia and clearly were exhausted. They were a welcome sight amongst all the folks who had come to pay their respects. I got them introduced to all the immediate family and we were able to get them settled into a local motel as we left.

On Tuesday morning, we went directly to the funeral home to pay final respects before the closing of the coffin. Dee approached me and mentioned the AOM President badge/pendant of office and told me that they intended to retrieve it and put it with the other articles for return. He was so proud that he wore it around all the time. Chet told me he had most of the other articles together, and I told him the AOM would be sending a representative to pick them up at a later time. The pall-bearers arrived and a bag-piper was there to pipe Willy into the hearse for the trip to the church. Similarly, he was piped into the church - and out again after. It was a Catholic service in a cavernous church, which didn't do well with my hearing. John and Bobbie said that it wasn't just me or my hearing, though - they also had difficulty.

We left the church for a luncheon reception at a local hall where Willy and Betty had celebrated their marriage many years ago. Many friends and family came to thank John, Bobbie and me for our attendance. I had to leave to catch a limousine to the airport and John and Bobbie were leaving as soon as they finished the luncheon. I hope they arrived back home safe and sound.

In summation, I think that Willy was friends with the entire state of New Jersey, based on the attendance at the different services and all those I met. He will be sorely missed by all of us. I have attached a photo of the front page of Willy's funeral service leaflet. That ends my report, gang. My best to all of you. Toby

Dear Association of Minemen,

I wanted to thank you all very much for the scholarship of \$750 for this school year. Being at an out-of-state-school, financials can be a bit tough. I really appreciate you for considering me for this scholarship. It is an honor to have received it again. It is an amazing attribute of your organization to help all these students in a time of financial struggle. Have a great time at the reunion.

Thanks again,

Nicole Loonam.

Curtis,

Received the check--Thanks.

Enclosed, Scholarship Donation--for my dear friend and shipmate, Willie.

Sent out a few more lists of attendees and a few more fans for the ladies--have a few remaining.

I commend you, for all that you do--put this in the Dashpot.

Warmest wishes,
Ed

PS: Just met today with a VA headshrinker over my mental anguish all these years over the H-bomb tests, and my shipmates I've lost because of radiation exposure--we'll see!!

Ed

“One of the serious problems in planning against American doctrine is that the Americans do not read their manuals nor do they feel any obligations to follow their doctrine.”

From a Russian Document



I was NEVER this tender!!!



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. Phil DeChene AOM WEB Master

E-mail – Active Duty

11/22/10 - James Longtin MN1 (SW); James.Longtin@fe.navy.mil
10/07/10 - Derek Smith MN3; dangerskim@gmail.com
09/25/10 - William Zack Champion MNC; william.campion@lcs1.navy.mil

E-mail – Reservist

11/05/10 - Ken Lopez MN1 (SW); MN1KenLopez@gmail.com

E-mail – Retired

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10/31/10 - Fred Dane MN1; navy1968@live.com
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10/06/10 - Robert (Bobby) Briggs MN1; bigbellybob@comcast.net
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USS Catamount LSD- 17



TAPS



Douglas Scott "Doug" Harriman

Douglas Scott "Doug" Harriman, age 46, a resident of Strasburg passed away, Thursday, September 9, 2010, at his residence.

A funeral service was conducted at 11:00 AM Monday, September 13, 2010 at Fellowship Bible Church, Winchester with Pastor John Morrison officiating. Burial followed in Lebanon Church Cemetery.

He was born on September 19, 1963 in Norfolk, VA a son of Andrea Crabill Harriman and the late Robert B. Harriman, Sr. He was a 1982 graduate of Strasburg High School and was a US Navy Veteran. He was a member of Fellowship Bible Church in Winchester. He was an Explosive Engineer & Blaster and was employed by Winchester Building Supply. He was preceded in death by his father, Robert B. Harriman, Sr.

Survivors include his loving wife of 26 years, Faith T. Harriman of Strasburg; his children, Dustin M. Harriman and girlfriend Kymberli B. Dixon of El Paso, TX, and Heather N. Harriman Moreland and husband, Michael A. Moreland of Strasburg; his grandchildren, Landon M. Moreland, Tyler R. Harriman, Taylor F. Moreland, and Braxton K. Harriman; His Mother, Andrea Crabill Harriman of Lebanon Church; his maternal grandmother, Mildred H. Crabill; Brothers David S. Harriman and wife, Dorothy H. Harriman, and their children, Hallie and Rachel, Robert B. Harriman, Jr. and wife Shannon B. Harriman, and their children, Robert, Connell, Gavin, and Nilah.

Memorial contributions may be made in memory of Doug to Fellowship Bible Church, 3217 Middle

Road, Winchester, VA 22602 or Blue Ridge Hospice 333 W. Cork St., Winchester, VA 22601

To sign the guestbook and submit condolences to the family please go to www.stoverfuneralhome.com

Sabre A. Patterson

Sabre A. Patterson, 19, of 103 Hazen Ave., Ellport passed away Saturday September 25, 2010 at 1:30 am as a result of a motorcycle accident.

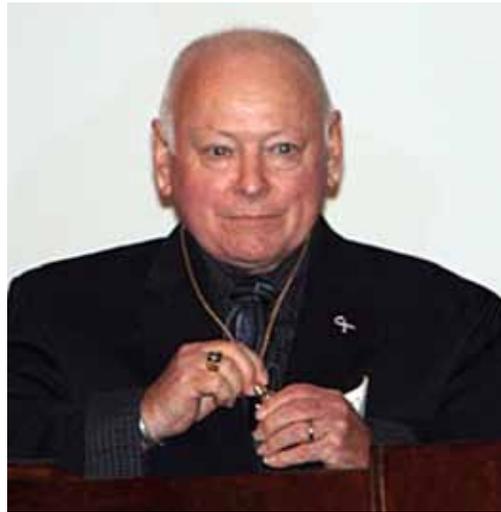
Sabre was born on December 17, 1990 in Okinawa Japan to Ron Patterson, Jr. and Hope Wood Gebhardt. She was a member of the Lincoln High School Class of 2009, and attended the Savannah United Methodist Church in Shenango Twp., Pennsylvania. Also, Sabre had been working at the Save-A-Lot grocery store in Franklin Twp. as a cashier.

Sabre is survived by her mother and step father Hope Wood Gebhardt and Ken Gebhardt of Ellport, her father Ron Patterson, Jr. of Beaver Falls, one brother Dustin Patterson and his fiancé Amanda Spignesi, one sister Shannon Patterson and her fiancé Brett Evans, a half sister Nicole Lynn & Tony Taylor of Ellwood City, a nephew Josh Smith, a niece Emma Callahan, her maternal grandmother Hilda Wood and her companion Tom Tocyloski of Ellwood City, her paternal grandparents Ron & Judy Patterson, Sr. of Beaver Falls, her step grandparents Kenneth & Elaine Gebhardt of Ellport, several aunts & uncle, and numerous cousins. Sabre was preceded in death by her maternal grandfather Carl Wood.

Services were held on Monday the 27th at 1:00 pm at the Samuel Teolis Funeral Home, Inc. with Rev. Mark Goswick officiating. Interment followed at the Holy Redeemer Cemetery.

River Rat

He runs the river night and day,
upon his head a black beret.
Combing waters filled with death,
knowing fear with every breath.
Fighting for a cause that's right,
a chance of not living throughout the night.
Sailors of a different breed;
trained to fight born to lead.
Fighting boats with hulls of green,
the very best you've ever seen.
We stand up straight with head held high;
will always look you in the eye.
So my friends, when I've gone to rest,
lay a black beret upon my chest.
Robert W. Wilson, MNC, USN (Ret)
(Dec. 20 Oct 2010)
River Division 592/ RPG-56



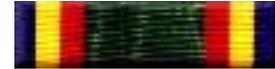
Robert W. Wilson, MNC, USN (Ret)

It is with the deepest sadness that I report that fellow Mineman and President of the Association of Minemen for four short days, Willie Wilson, was unexpectedly taken from us on October 20, 2010. Robert W. Wilson, of Port Monmouth and Port Orange, Florida, was called home October 20th in an automobile accident. "Bob" spent his childhood in Illinois and Iowa and settled in New Jersey after marrying Betty. He was a devoted husband, father, and "Pop Pop." Bob served with honor in the US Navy for 20 years. He was part of the "Brown Water Navy" during the Vietnam War and was awarded multiple Bronze Stars with Valor and Purple Hearts as well as the Combat Action Ribbon and a Meritorious Unit Commendation for his service in combat. Bob was personally cited, and his team highlighted, in the book River Rats by author Ralph Christopher. After retiring from the Navy, Bob held several positions in sales and operations management at UPS. He enjoyed many hobbies, including boating, shooting and fishing, but his favorite enjoyment was simple conversation with his many friends. He knew no acquaintances or former friends, only "friends for life." He gave of his time, his help and his means generously and with passion. He actively supported the NJ Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Association of Minemen, the American Legion, and was formerly a sustaining member of the NJ Naval Museum. He quietly supported friends and family in times of need. He is survived by his wife Betty, of 52 years (nee Topolewski); his son Chet Wilson and companion Dawn Ziffer of Middletown; his daughter, Dee Williams and husband Jerry Williams of Connecticut; a brother David Harper of Iowa, and sisters, Janet Tegtmeier of Iowa, Nancy Hammond of Michigan and Mary Lynn Ponce of Florida; grandsons, Bryan, Damon and wife Geni, and Bailey; his granddaughter, Jordan; great-grandchildren Kayla, Bryen and Xsenia; and his "grand-pal" Shane. Surviving in-laws and extended family members can be counted among the very many friends who will miss him. A mass was held at St. Ann's Church, Keansburg Tuesday, October 26, 2010 at 10:15AM. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, St. Jude's Research Hospital, American Cancer Society or US Navy Minemen Scholarship Fund.

A memoriam may be found at: <http://www.hartshorn.us/Navy/navy-Memoriam-2010.htm>



OUR MINEMAN FROM OKLAHOMA



LIEUTENANT COMMANDER HAROLD E. ELSTON, USN (RET) (DECEASED 19 NOVEMBER 2008)

by William "Bill" Roberts

Lieutenant Commander USN Harold E. Elston, from Kingfisher, Oklahoma, enlisted 4 October 1949, at Klamath Falls Oregon. He attended NSMW Yorktown, VA., graduating "A" school 27 June 1950, at which time he was ordered to the USS Carmick DMS 33, at Vallejo, California. The Korean War had just begun and I am sure that Hal was wondering what he was doing aboard a high speed minesweeper, but then again in those days minesweeping was part of the curriculum in "A" school.

The Carmick was not a new ship, launched 8 March 1942, Seattle, Washington. She began life as DD 493, departing San Diego California 19 February 1943, for Norfolk, Virginia, arriving there in March. Convoy and escort duty was conducted until she was assigned to the Submarine hunter killer operations with Destroyer Squadron 18, in March 1944. On 6 June (D-Day) 1944, Carmick took station guarding the flanks of the leading ships off Omaha Beach acting as antisubmarine and E-boat screen. She remained off the beach head through 17 June firing against enemy air attacks and guarding the great numbers of ships moving into the area to support the forces ashore.

Screening duty in the English Channel preceded Carmick's departure for the Mediterranean 18 July 1944. Convoy duty in connection with the buildup for the invasion of Southern France continued until 16 August, day of the preliminary attacks on the coast between Toulon and Cannes. Once more Carmick was in the van of the invasion fleet with duties similar to those she had at Normandy. Her constant vigilance was rewarded when on 18 August; she destroyed an enemy E-boat. September 23rd, 1944, she was cleared for New York City. After overhaul and training Carmick made three more Atlantic escort runs and on 10 June 1945, entered Philadelphia Navy Yard for conversion to a high speed minesweeper and on 23 June 1945, she was reclassified DMS-33.

August 27th, 1945, Carmick cleared Norfolk, Virginia for the Pacific, arriving at Okinawa 15 October and then proceeding to the Yellow Sea for minesweeping operations. She remained in the Far East to support the occupation until returning to San Francisco 20 April 1946. With San Diego as her home port, Carmick made one tour to the western pacific in the summer and fall of 1947 and conducted local operations until the outbreak of the Korean War in June of 1950. She cleared San Diego 4 October 1950 for duty in United Nations efforts in Korean waters. Operating with TF 95, out of Yokosuka Japan, she patrolled off both coasts of Korea, providing fire support and minesweeping operations. From 29 October to 3 December she penetrated the dangerous harbor at Chinnampo to sweep mines and carried out this difficult assignment so well as to earn the Navy Unit Commendation. Carmick returned to San Diego 21 November 1951, for overhaul and training.

Mineman Seaman Apprentice Hal Elston was an integral part of the shallow-water minesweeping operations conducted at the approaches of Chinnampo Harbor. This is how Hal recalls it, "I was assigned to a team under the command of LTJG Privette, to go aboard an LST, which had been given to the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force (JMSDF), and inventory some minesweeping gear

we would find there. In the next several days, we equipped the two USN 35 foot motor launches we found on board the LST with the small minesweeping gear for moored mines we found as part of the inventory. We were then told to launch the boats, stream the gear and sweep the entry area leading to the river serving Chinnampo.

One the first day the engine on the other launch failed and we had to tow it back to the LST. The second day the motor in our launch failed and we were towed back. We were then told to go back to our ship and wait. A few days later the USS Catamount LSD-17, arrived with at least twelve LCVPs in her well deck.”

Leaving Norfolk Virginia, on 15 August 1950, Catamount called at San Diego en route Kobe Japan, where she embarked marines bound for the invasion of Inchon. In the landings at Wonson, Catamount sailed with the important repair and salvage group. It was in November 1950, that Catamount achieved a notable first; she became the first LSD to take part in minesweeping operations at Chinnampo, port city of P'yongyang. It was essential that this port be opened so that the advancing U.S. Eighth Army ashore could be supplied by sea and all types of minesweepers were summoned for the urgent task. Catamount served as tanker and supply ship to this varied fleet, as well as mothering a swarm of LCVPs which were able to sweep waters too shallow for larger craft.

Hal and company were then transferred to the Catamount and moved the minesweeping gear from the LST to two of the LCVPs on Catamount. “We proceeded to sweep for moored mines in the approaches to Chinnampo. Many of the mines planted by the North Koreans floated on the surface at low tide because of the extreme tidal variations and poor navigation of the small river vessels used for mine laying. A USN helicopter crew which had been brought aboard the Japanese LST disposed of most of the mines using rifles of some sort. We also fired and sunk or exploded a good number of them with M-1 rifles, firing from LCVPs. The minesweeping gear was at first paid out using a hand-over-hand method which was slow for both streaming and recovery. We convinced the shop personnel aboard the Catamount to fabricate a drum with a couple of gears and a ratchet type of pawl to wind the sweep cable on. We had an adequate supply of explosive cutters (MK-12, I believe) and we swept at least a dozen or more mines that had not floated to the surface. At least two other MSCs arrived and swept the deeper water areas while we restricted our ops to the more shallow water. The day before Thanksgiving, our LCVPs and crews were put aboard the USS Bass (an APD, I think) and we steamed north all night. In the early morning, we launched our boats and along with two boats carrying EOD and UDT personnel we proceeded to sweep up a river (I think it was the Yalu). We swept for over four hours and then turned around, recovered our gear and made a run for our ship. The reason for running was that Koreans who had been waving South Korean flags at us suddenly begun waving North Korean flags and started shooting. Fortunately no one was hit.

As a result of the effectiveness of these boats in carrying out minesweeping operations the MSBs were designed, built and provided to the Commander of the Korean Theater of operations.” Hal closes in saying “that each man assigned to this minesweeping task was awarded the Bronze Star with Combat V.”

Hal went on to serve at NAD Oahu (1951), NSMW Yorktown (instructor) 1953, Headquarters Naval Support Activity Yokosuka Japan (Azuma Island) 1957, NAS North Island, Nuclear Weapons Tech. Selected for the LDO program, commissioned Ensign USN, July 1960, remaining in the Nuclear Weapons field with duty at NAVSTA Midway Island, transferred in October 1963 to NSMW Charleston, South Carolina as mines Department Director and instructor Mine Warfare Staff Officers Course. Served on the Staff of Commander Mine Force Pacific at Long Beach California, from 1967 through 1969, before being ordered to duty as Commanding Officer Mobile Mine Assembly Unit Atlantic at Charleston SC and becoming the first C.O. of MOMAG when MOMAULANT was decommissioned July 1971. Relieved by LCDR Lyle Stryker, 16 December 1971 and transferred to Staff Commander Mine Warfare Forces, serving until retirement 1 June 1972, as Lieutenant Commander.

Lieutenant Commander Harold E. Elston USN passed 19 November 2008, Guthrie, OK.

As a White Hat in those early days on Azuma Isl. Japan and as OIC Drill Mine Preparation Facility Long Beach CA., I was fortunate to have worked with Hal, then and when he was a member of the COMINEPAC Staff, where I ultimately relieved him in 1968. He always was a pleasure to work with and his passing was a sad day.



The Civil War

THE CONFEDERATE TORPEDO SERVICE

By R. O. Crowley

Formerly Electrician of the Torpedo Division, C. S. N.

(The Century / Volume 56, Issue 2, The Century Company, New York, June 1898)

PART TWO

Operations on the James River

Having our system now perfected, we established a torpedo station, some five or six miles below Richmond, by submerging two iron tanks, containing one thousand pounds of powder each, in twelve feet of water, leading the wires ashore, and connecting them with a galvanic battery concealed in a small hut in a deep ravine. From the battery-house the wires were led to an elevated position near by, where the man in charge could keep a lookout for passing vessels. The position of the torpedoes in the water was indicated by two sticks, planted about ten feet apart on the bluff, and in a line with each other and the torpedoes; and the watchman's instructions were to explode them by contacting the wires as soon as an enemy's vessel should be on a line with the two pointers. All this being prepared, we awaited the approach of a Federal gunboat. As was usually the case, one came when least expected, on a beautiful clear day, when our entire force except the man stationed as lookout was absent in Richmond, preparing other war material.

We were apprised by telegraph of the rapid approach of the gunboat, and immediately hastened toward our first station; but we arrived too late. The man in charge had not seen the United States flag for a long period, and never having previously seen a gunboat so near, lost his presence of mind, and fired one of the 1000-pound powder-tanks when the gunboat was at least twenty to thirty yards distant. A great explosion took place, throwing up a large column of water to a considerable height; and the gunboat by her momentum plunged into the great trough, and caught the downward rush of a wave on her forward deck. The guards were broken away, half a dozen men were thrown overboard, and other damage to the gunboat was caused. The steamer then turned about as quickly as she could, and prepared to retrace her route down the river, after picking up the men who had been washed overboard. There was a brilliant opportunity to accomplish her total destruction by firing the remaining torpedo as she passed back over it. But alas! the man had been so astounded at the first explosion that he had fled precipitately, without waiting to see what damage had been done, and the gunboat was thus enabled to return down the river in safety.

The partial success of this attempt at exploding torpedoes by electricity immediately established the reputation of the Torpedo Division, and created great excitement all over the South, it being an undisputed fact that but for this explosion a Federal gunboat would have been moored at the wharf at Richmond that morning, and would have captured the city.

A description of the defenses of the James River would be incomplete that did not include the barricade at Drewry's Bluff. The river here is very narrow and deep. The right bank is a high, precipitous bluff, and the left low, flat land, so that the fort on the bluff commanded a wide sweep of country. The barricade was formed by driving piles, and then making square cribs of them, with the interior filled with broken granite, of which there were large quantities at Richmond. These cribs were stretched across the river in an irregular line, and were exposed a little at low tide. Between the cribs several

steamboats and schooners were scuttled and sunk. No direct passage was left open, even for our own vessels, except a very labyrinthine route on the left bank, just large enough for small tugboats.

When the time came for our own ironclads to pass down the river, the Torpedo Division was sent to break up some of the cribs by exploding torpedoes on the top of them. In this manner a passage sufficiently wide was effected without damage to the remaining cribs. The barricade was left in such a shape that it could thereafter be quickly reconstructed so as to close the passage entirely.

Blowing up these cribs was great fun for our party, besides affording us practice in experiments. Numbers of fine fish were stunned by each explosion, and, floating to the surface, were speedily captured by us. There were no other barricades in the James River of any magnitude during the war. There was a slight one of stone cribs and sunken vessels at Howlett's Reach, but it was not considered effective. In fact, the main reliance on the barricades was that they would prevent a surprise movement by the enemy at night; and it was not believed that the one at Drewry's Bluff would do more than hold a determined enemy at bay for a few hours, while the shore batteries on the bluff could be pouring plunging shot on the decks of attacking vessels.

Immediate steps were now taken to establish other torpedo stations at several points lower down the river, using in every instance 2000-pound torpedoes. At our lowest telegraph station, which was located on General Pickett's Turkey Island plantation, opposite Presque Isle, we erected a lookout tower, about one hundred feet high, from which the Federal gunboats at City Point could be seen distinctly. At Presque Isle we stationed a scout whose duty it was to signal the man in the tower when anything suspicious occurred. Presque Isle is only a short distance from Bermuda Hundred, which is near City Point. The lowest torpedo station was at a place called Deep Bottom, about five miles above City Point by land, but more by water. As there were a good many free Negroes in the vicinity of Deep Bottom, we had to do our work with great secrecy, generally planting the torpedoes at night, in a position previously surveyed by day. At Deep Bottom we located the galvanic battery on the right bank of the river, in a pit about four or five feet deep, the top covered over with twigs and brush, and in another pit, some distance off, a place was prepared for the lookout; this pit was also concealed by twigs and brush.

We were duly advised of the advance of General Butler's army from Bermuda Hundred toward Drewry's Bluff, the entire Federal fleet also advancing up the river, covering his right wing. The Federals had been told by the Negroes that there were torpedoes at Deep Bottom, and used great caution in advancing. As soon as the fleet rounded the point below Presque Isle, the Federals began shelling our tower, and it was soon demolished; but no one was hurt, as our men took away the telegraph instruments, and rapidly retreated up the river road. A force of marines was landed on both sides of the river, in order to discover the whereabouts of our batteries. A squadron of boats, heavily armed, went in advance of the fleet, dragging the river for wires and torpedoes. Their grapnels, however, passed over and over our wires, without producing any damage, our lookout, from his concealed station in the pit, noting all the movements of the men in the boats, and hearing every word of command. After a while the Federal commander, apparently satisfied that there were no torpedoes there, ordered the Commodore Jones, a double-ender gunboat carrying eight guns and manned by a force of two hundred men, to move up to Deep Bottom, make a landing, and report. This was done, the gunboat passing over our torpedoes; but our man in the pit kept cool, and did not explode them, because, as he afterward said, he wanted to destroy the ironclad, recently captured by the Federals from us near Savannah, Georgia.

The Commodore Jones steamed up to the wharf at Deep Bottom, and found our quarters deserted. This looked suspicious, and the order was then given for her to fall back. Our man now concluded that the entire fleet would retire, and he determined to destroy the Commodore Jones. As she retreated she passed immediately over one of the two torpedoes planted there. All at once a terrific explosion shattered her into fragments, some of the pieces going a hundred feet in the air. Men were thrown overboard and drowned, about forty being instantly killed. The whole Federal fleet then retreated some distance below.

The Federal marines on shore continued their explorations, and our man in the battery-pit suddenly jumped out, and was as killed by a shot from the marines. The small boats again began dragging for our wires, and finally caught them, and by underrunning them to the shore at length discovered the man in the lookout pit, who was immediately taken prisoner and carried on board one of the vessels

composing the fleet. He was subsequently imprisoned at Fort Warren, but about a year afterward was exchanged. Both he and his assistant, when taken aboard the fleet, were securely placed in a conspicuous position on the wheel-house of a double-ender gunboat, "the foremost vessel," in order, as they were told, that if any further explosion took place they should share the consequences.

Thus was accomplished at one blow, and almost as quick as lightning, the complete destruction of a war steamer by submarine torpedoes. So far as I know, it was the first instance of the kind in the annals of war. Its effect astonished the world, and its immediate result was the safety of Richmond from a second peril. General Butler, finding his army completely uncovered on the right wing, was unable to accomplish anything by land, and retired to Bermuda Hundred.

Shortly afterward the land forces again advanced, and compelled us to abandon all our torpedo stations below Dutch Gap.

While we were busily engaged in perfecting our system of submarine defenses, making it necessary that we should have unobstructed navigation of the river, some mechanical torpedoes were planted, under the direction of army officers. As these were entirely unreliable as to certainty of explosion or contact, and were as dangerous to us as to the enemy, our chief, upon being advised of it, demanded their removal. The Secretary of War gave a reluctant assent to his demand that we should drag them up and put them out of harm's way. There was not much accord between the army and the navy in those days, however; and we were not fully advised in the premises, as will be shown herein. The steamer A. H. Schultz, formerly used as a passenger-steamer between Richmond and Norfolk, and commanded by Captain D. J. Hill, was at the outbreak of the war laid up as useless at the wharf in Richmond. Later she was taken possession of by the Confederate government for the purpose of transporting prisoners to and from Varina, on the James, the point of exchange. One day she started down the river, having on board four hundred and fifty Federal prisoners. She passed the barricades at Drewry's Bluff safely, and landed her prisoners at Varina, where they were duly turned over to the Federal authorities, and it was expected that she would then bring back to Richmond a like number of exchanged Confederates; but owing to some misunderstanding on the part of the commissioners of exchange, no Confederates were brought up by the Federals to Varina, so she was obliged to start on her return to Richmond. When she reached a point just below the barricades at the bluff, she came in contact with one of these mechanical torpedoes, placed there by army officers, and an explosion followed, killing two firemen and two Confederate soldiers. The steamer sank in five minutes, and was a total loss. On the downward trip the torpedo probably swung downstream with the strong current, and for this reason the steamer did not come in contact with the percussion fuse; but on her return the torpedo, still swinging with the current, offered a fair mark for the steamer's hull coming up. It was a most fortunate thing for the South that the Schultz did not strike the torpedo on her downward trip, as the Federals, most of whom were just from the hospitals, and in a weak and sickly condition, would probably all have been drowned, and universal condemnation would have fallen upon the destruction of four hundred and fifty prisoners under a flag of truce.

Continued in the spring issue.



USS Carmick DMS-33

MORE FROM THE WEBMASTER

I received an e-mail from the Military Heritage Director at "Together We Served" asking that I administer the AOM Page at their WEB Site. As the Admin of the Association page I can add any and all news, announcements, biographies etc., from our association as we wish.

Together We Served (TWS) is a WEB Site that was founded in 2003 and since that time has created secure, password protected websites for each branch of the US Military with now over 1 million US Military members.

TWS is a US Military heritage based organization with a mission to capture the service history of each and every living Marine, Soldier, Sailor, Airman & Coast Guardsman in their own words and photographs while we still have the opportunity. TWS enables Sailors to record their Navy service in the most complete and accurate format available and in so doing, they will be able to automatically find and contact others who served in the same duty stations at the same time. Over 1.1 million service biographies have been posted on Togetherweserved.com including 2.5 million photographs.

TWS would like to assist the AOM to capture the service biographies of our Members in a unique 'Shadow Box' service biography format which we will then be able to display on our website in the form of a password protected 'Member Roster'. Our Member Roster will be exclusive to our Association and is not shared in open forum. An additional advantage is that we will be able to identify other Members of Togetherweserved.com who may be eligible to join the AOM. There are 1015 TWS Members that identify themselves as Minemen. However; only 27 or so are listed on the AOM Roster page.

Togetherweserved.com wants to preserve our stories for future generations. Here are some TWS member comments:

<http://navy.togetherweserved.com/usn/comments.html>

If you are already a member of Togetherweserved.com, and you have indicated that you are a Member of the Association of Minemen Roster on your TWS profile page, you will already appear on our Member Roster along with a link to a Shadow Box version of your Navybio page.

If you are not already a Member of TWS please go to: <http://navy.togetherweserved.com/usn/index.jsp> and register. Once you register you can go to the below link and join the AOM Roster.

If you are a Member of Togetherweserved.com, and are not a member of the Association of Minemen Roster please register by clicking on the following link. (There is no charge to participate in the Roster)

<http://navy.togetherweserved.com/usn/servlet/tws.webapp.WebApp?cmd=JoinNow&InvitedBy=Association-46>

You do not have to be a member of the AOM to be listed on the TWS AOM Roster Page. However; if you are reading this and are not a member of the Association of Minemen I encourage you to go to <http://minemen.org/MemberApplicationForm.htm> and join.

Editor's note: I hope all of you had a merry Christmas and will have a prosperous New Year.

I sure miss Willie. I did a group portrait of him and his family in 1968. It wasn't very good as I was learning, but it meant a lot to Willie as he reminded me every time we met that a wallet-sized copy of that portrait had lived in his helmet while in Vietnam and that he thought it helped him make it home in one piece. I have taken thousands of pictures in my life, but not another that had so great an impact on a friend. I am honored he thought it a good luck talisman that brought him safely home through deadly waters. I am incredibly sad that Willie had to leave us again so soon. Fair winds and following seas, shipmate. Bill



The future of Navy Minemen

By Capt. Charles B. Marks

WILLIAMSBURG

As commanding officer of Naval Weapon Station Yorktown and Navy Munitions Command CONUS East Division, let me explain these two commands and their evolving missions to show where the Mine community fits into the Navy over the next several decades.

I see nothing but mission growth and increased workload for our ordnance teams across the globe.

As the Army and Air Force redeploy back from Iraq and eventually Afghanistan, the Navy will continue to sustain its forward presence through deployed forces.

The Navy is historically the first-responder for the United States, and those first-responders will need to have ammunition.

Procurement of new weapon systems will slow down since we are not using our weapons as

ESSAY

much in combat and the economic downturn has hurt future budgets. As a result, more maintenance will be required to sustain operational capability for an aging weapons inventory.

As ships come back full from deployment and with much of their ammunition, it will need to be offloaded, maintained and prepared for the next deploying unit.

As for the employment of Minemen in the future mission of the Navy, I see those skill sets becoming more mainstream. We

are shifting our historic focus on Europe toward China and the Middle East. We are concentrating our mine assets in San Diego, with the move of the Mine Warfare Command and all mine assets from South Texas to Southern California.

Operationally, we have made several other recent shifts that bode well for the Mine community.

Offensive mining capability remains at the ready for both fleet commanders, in Charleston and in San Diego. This is a geographic improvement over South Texas.

The Mineman operational chain of command has been consolidated and shortened to allow a more mainstream

integration with the fleet. The importance of this cannot be understated, especially when one considers how often a complicated chain of command leads to failed funding schemes in Washington.

Mine countermeasure vessels remain forward deployed to the Middle East. This mission continues to mature and grow as real-world threats manifest themselves.

Mine countermeasure squadrons continue to rotate and forward deploy, keeping their readiness at its highest levels in years.

The LCS Mine Mission Module is due to hit the fleet

shortly, greatly enhancing fleet capabilities as that new combatant is integrated into the fleet.

Although fiscally challenging, the future mission of Navy Munitions Command continues to grow and evolve. The assets we are using must be employed more efficiently and



Minemen repair a NOAA buoy.

creatively.

As I look forward to Naval Weapon Station Yorktown's 100th birthday in 2018, I see a tightening fiscal landscape with growing mission need for the unique capability that the Mine community provides to the fleet.

Adapted from remarks by Capt. Marks to the 36th reunion of the Association of Mineman last Saturday at the Lexington Washington Inn.



COMOMAG SAN DIEGO, CA

by MNCS(SW) Greer

Welcome once again from San Diego, your MIW Fleet Concentration Area of the world. It's been a busy quarter for many of our units worldwide and it's been a busy quarter for us as well. In preparation for the impending Commanders Conference in January we have finished the final touches on our new spaces and jumped head first into the local community. We will soon be the proud owners of our own piece of beach front property when we "Adopt-A-Beach" in downtown Point Loma. We also had MN1(SW) Hindley participate in the presentation of the National Ensign prior to the kick off at our local NFL teams opening game. The San Diego Chargers went on to defeat the Jacksonville Jaguars by 25 points and MN1 was able to watch it all from the sidelines.

Bravo Zulu to NMC CED Unit Charleston on their recent bi-annual Mine Readiness Certification Inspection (MRCI). Their preparation and professionalism were evident during the week-long

inspection culminating in three fully certified Mine Assembly Teams (MAT).

Additionally, a Bravo Zulu to MN1(SW) Hindley who was recently advanced to his current pay grade. MN1 was the only Mineman selected for First Class Petty Officer this cycle in the entire mine force. For those not selected this cycle continue to read those pubs and study.

Hails:

MNC(SW) Sandoval coming from MCM CREW Persistent in San Diego, CA

MN1(SW) Stafford coming from NMC EAD Unit Guam

LS2(AW/SW) McCready coming from VAW-112 in Point Mugu, CA

YNSN Toves coming from USS IWO JIMA in Norfolk, VA

Advancements:

MN2(SW) Hindley was promoted to MN1 in November.



MN1 Hindley being pinned.



SEAL BEACH, CA

by MN3 Shimonek

Greetings: from NMC Underwater Weapons Department in sunny Seal Beach, California. As we continue to move forward this year and near the holiday season we would like to welcome our new Navy Munitions Command family. On the 17th of August, we held a decommissioning ceremony of MOMAU ONE and FIFTEEN; as well as our merge with Navy Munitions Command. On September 24th, the department held an MWR Potluck celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month where we raised nearly \$600 through a dunk tank and pie in the face contest. In October, 10 of our sailors attended a 3 week Auxiliary Security Force Academy. On November 6th, Underwater Weapons Department participated in our annual Veteran's Day parade, thanking all who have served and all who continue to serve. MN3(SW) Hayes led 5 of our sailors in a ride-along and serving our local senior citizens at the Westminster Senior Center this past quarter.



Just entertaining the folks.

After a very busy 2nd quarter completing 6 exercises we kept up the vigorous workload after completing RIMPAC 10'. We provided the Third Fleet with 116 assets to use in Hawaii this past summer for training. We also sent 17 of our sailors to Hawaii to assist in the plant and recovery

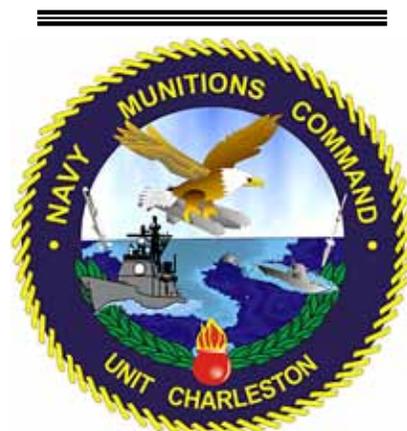
of these assets. We successfully completed 5 exercises for the 3rd quarter, providing the fleet with exercise and training mines.



Underway with a load.

Our sailors have also had some big career and personal developments. We welcomed the newest little members to our department, congratulations MN3 Crespo, LS2(SW) Casillas, and MN3(SW) Barrett on your babies. Congratulations to MNC(SW) Phillips on your advancement to Chief Petty Officer. Congratulations to our Sailor of the Quarter, MN1(SW) Nichols, MN3 Shimonek on Junior Sailor of the Quarter, and MNSN Neighbors on Blue Jacket Sailor of the Quarter. MNSN Doubrava, we wish you a speedy recovery. Unfortunately, this quarter we have said farewell to 7 amazing sailors, we wish you all the best. We have also welcomed over 10 new sailors this quarter. We look forward to serving with all of you.

It has been a busy and successful quarter; that's all for now from NMC CWD Unit Seal Beach, Underwater Weapons Department.



GOOSE CREEK, SC

by MNCS(SW) Mike Szostkiewicz, MN1(SW) Michael Lynch, MN1(SW) Travis Hutchens, MN3 Matthew Hamm

TEAM CHARLESTON WARRIORS

"We work hard... so others don't have to!"



First and foremost, the crew of NMC Unit Charleston sends their condolences to the family of Robert "Willy" Wilson. His dedication towards the Mineman rating was superb and he will be missed by all.

MNC(SW) Allan Mitchell and MN1(SW) Shane Stone represented NMC Unit Charleston at the Annual Association of Mineman reunion in Williamsburg, Virginia. MN1(SW) Stone stated "It was an amazing time and I am honored to be voted in as a member of the Board of Directors by my fellow Minemen." Chief Mitchell and Petty Officer Stone passed on our congratulations to the Sea and Shore Minemen of the Year.

It has been another busy quarter for our Mine Production Department. Diligent planning and precisely executed workload schedules were essential to a successful Mine Readiness Certification Inspection (MRCI) in which the team from Commander, Mobile Mine Assembly Group (COMOMAG) led by LT Adam Morgan and MN1(SW) Allen Alt, examined the four pillar programs as well as our ability to safely and successfully assemble all mine systems, which consisted of nearly 150 MK 62, MK 63 and MK 65 Quickstrike mines and the MK 67 Submarine Launched Mobile Mines (SLMM). Our Mine Assembly Teams (MAT), consisting of two CV/ CVN, one US Air Force, a double line MK 65 flow team and our SLMM team completed all required builds with zero safety discrepancies, zero major discrepancies and passed a tough MRCI with a satisfactory score in all areas. Many thanks to our Reservist brethren who were onboard and fully integrated into our watchbills.

Our MATs also recently deployed to Patuxent River, MD in which MNCS(SW) Brad Vonnahme, MN1(SW) Alex Sanchez, MN2(SW) Carlos Espinosa and MN3 Beau Temple provided technical support for Research, Development, Testing and Evaluation of the practical attachment and deployment of Quickstrike mines from the F/A-18 E & F variants. Another MAT consisting of MN1(SW) John Pennington, MN2(SW) Ryan Bish and MN2(SW) Tyler Ruble deployed in USNS HUNTER in support of VULCANEX 10-4 in which we assisted Helicopter Mine countermeasures Squadron (HM) 14 with their semi-annual unit level training and qualification. Most recently, our team consisting of MNC(SW/AW) John Davis, MN1(SW) Travis Hutchens, MN2(SW) Ryan Bish, MN2 Robin Taylor, MN3 Marcus Brown, MNSN Charles Gilley and MNSN Reginald Martinez de-

ployed in USS ENTERPRISE (CVN 65) to assist with their training and qualification on the Quickstrike series mines. We also have another MAT set to deploy in USS GEORGE HW BUSH (CVN 77) in early 2011 to assist with their training and qualification on the Quickstrike series mines.

We also recently saw the promotions of MN1(SW) Michael Lynch, MN2 Robin Taylor, MN2(SW) Tyler Ruble, MN2(SW) Donnie Roberts, MN3 Christopher Gonzales-Bouton, MN3 Beau Temple, MN3 Marcus Brown (from the March 2010 exam cycle) as well as MNC(SW) Alan Mitchell, all of which advanced to their current pay grade. There were also many reenlistments including LS1(SW) Thomas Ellison and MN1(SW) Paul Antos during a command picnic in which the Naval Weapons Station Commanding Officer CDR Gary Martin and CMDCM(SW/SS) Billy Cady were in attendance.

Happy Birthday Minemen!! On Tuesday, 12 October, we held a cake cutting ceremony to celebrate the 67th anniversary of the Mineman rating. This was an excellent opportunity to remember our collective achievements and those who have paved the way for the rest of us over the last 67 years. We were pleased to have retired MN1CM William Neiderberger as our guest speaker. Later we celebrated the Navy's Birthday, October 13th, in which both events we enjoyed delicious cake... shortly before our Physical Readiness Test.



Many thanks to our OMBUDSMAN, Mrs. Maria Rojas and her crew of dedicated spouses of NMC Unit Charleston's Family Readiness Group for sponsoring a booth at the annual Halloween "Trunk or Treat" festival. They raised money for our family Thanksgiving meal and are looking forward to a fun Children's Christmas Party.

Maritime Positioning Force:

One of our myriad of missions here at NMC Unit Charleston is that of the Maritime Positioning

Force. Here's an excerpt from:
<http://www.msc.navy.mil/pm3/mpf.asp>



“Fifteen Military Sealift Command (MSC) prepositioning ships are especially configured to transport supplies for the U.S. Marine Corps. Known as the Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF), the ships were built or modified beginning in the mid-1980s and are forward-deployed to the western Pacific Ocean, the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. The ships contain nearly everything the Marines need for initial military operations -- from tanks and ammunition to food and water and from fuel to spare parts and engine oil.

The ships are organized into three squadrons: MPS Squadron One, usually located in the Mediterranean Sea and eastern Atlantic; MPS Squadron Two, usually located at Diego Garcia; and MPS Squadron Three, normally in the Guam/Saipan area. In addition to Marine Corps designated ships, MPS squadron staffs also oversee all other prepositioning ships in their geographic operating areas.

Each MPS squadron carries sufficient equipment and supplies to sustain about 15,000 Marine Corps Air Ground Task Force personnel for up to 30 days. Each ship can discharge cargo either pierside or while anchored offshore using lighter age carried aboard. This capability gives the Marine Corps the ability to operate in both developed and underdeveloped areas of the world.”

•Our civilian counterparts on the MPF and Rail team were heavily involved in the shipping and receipt of nearly 5500 tons of ammunition and supplies from USNS Lance Cpl. Roy M. Wheat (T-AK 3016), USNS SEAY (T-AKR 302), USNS SISLER (T-AKR 311) and USNS CHARLTON (T-AKR 314). Showing the 3rd largest ordnance tonnage pushed by any NMC DET this FY, we have ensured that all ordnance movements to the Middle East have gone smoothly and efficiently.

NMC Unit Charleston's Commanding Officer, CDR Marquis Patton proudly announced the pro-

motions of Frank Allen, Jerald Coppedge, William Guretsky, Mark Lamourex and Sheila Dibibar. Awards for length of service were given to Kenneth Bausley (30 yrs), Isiah Felder (25 yrs), and Thomas George (20 yrs). Congratulations to all our Civilian team!

Welcome aboard and Congratulations go out to:

Sailors of the Quarter 3rd Quarter, 2010:

Senior SOQ: **MN1(SW) John Sisson**
Junior SOQ: **MN2(SW) Chris Beck**
BJOQ: **MN3(SW) Sergio Rojas**

Arrivals:

MN3 Spradlin
MN2(SW) Pitts
MNSN Hargis

That's all from the Low Country! See you next Quarter! HooYah!

All photos taken by IT3 Deshantre Key



COMOMAG Lead Inspector MNCM(SW) Alt inspecting the MK 63 Quick Strike Mines while MNC(SW/AW) John Davis, MN2(SW) Justin Tassej and MN3Marcus Brown standby.



MN1(SW) Paul Antos reenlists at Command Picnic while his mother looks on.



NMC Unit Charleston's Chiefs Mess along with retired MNMCM William Niederberger. Pictured are: MNCS(SW) Mike Szostkiewicz, MNC(SW) Paul Snyder, MNCS(SW) Brad Vonnahme, MNMCM(SW/AW) Tim Hickman, MNMCM (ret) William Neiderberger, MNC(SW/AW) John Davis, MNC(SW) Allan Mitchell, MNC(SW) Jerry Gerhardt. Not pictured, but there in spirit, MNC(SW) Rob Allard

Here is the latest and greatest. We hit a few landmarks here at LCS in the last quarter. First, MCM DET personnel embarked USS FREEDOM (LCS-1) from Sep through Nov. This marked the first time Mine Countermeasures personnel were integrated with the LCS core crew. While onboard Mission Package (MP) personnel participated in a few public events which included hosting Chief of Naval Operations, ADM Gary Roughead, who visited on Sep 16, as well as the Chief of Naval Operations of the Indian Navy, who visited on Sep 19 for tours onboard USS FREDOM. Both of these visits took place at San Diego Fleet Week Sep 16 – 19, during which MP sailors and core crew gave a remarkable 5000+ tours.

During the week of Sep 27, MP personnel completed the first Surface Warfare (SUW)/Mine Countermeasures (MCM) MP swap out onboard USS FREEDOM. The swap was completed in a 96 hour time limit. It proved that MP personnel could bring all necessary equipment on board USS FREEDOM in a reasonable time frame. Following the swap, MP personnel completed a successful fit test of all the MP equipment, proving not only that we could bring on the equipment but that we could successfully complete missions as well.

On Oct 2, MCM MP Sailors concluded End to End (E2E) Phase III testing in Port Everglades, FL. This year for E2E, MP Personnel focused on user level testing of the Remote Minehunting System (RMS) and the Unmanned Influence Sweep System (UISS) in a tactical environment.



Jerald Coppedge receives his advancement award from CDR Patton at awards ceremony.)



LCS MCM DETS ONE AND TWO SAN DIEGO, CA

by **MN2 Samantha Hill**



MCM MP Personnel in front of the Remote Multi-Mission Vehicle (RMMV) onboard USS FREEDOM (LCS-1)

Happy Holidays from all of us here at LCS MCM DETS ONE and TWO.



Hail:

MN1(SW) Burel Jones
MNCS (SW) Brain Trotter
MN1(SW) Michael Balazs
MN1(SW) Stephen Bates
MN1 (SW)Lorenzo Cuellar
MN1(SW) Jacob Fedo
MNC (SW) Able Gonzalez

Farewell:

AG1 (SW) Michael Johnson will retire
31JAN2011.
LCDR Eric Cottrell
MNC (SW) Roel Elizondo

Awards:

AG1 (SW) Johnson and **MNC (SW) Elinzondo**
both received the **Navy and Marine Corps**
Commendation Medal.

And last but not least,
Baby News:

MN1 (SW) Gwilt and his family welcomed a beautiful baby boy named Mason Tyler Gwilt on 17NOV2010 weighing 7lbs 3oz. 21 inches in length.

MNC (SW) Gumin and his wife are due to welcome a baby in Dec 2010.

MN1 (SW) Harris and his wife are expecting a baby girl due Feb 2011.

MN2 (SW) Wells and his wife are expecting a baby girl due in Feb 2011 as well.

Ed.: Hey, I thought you guys had a heavy schedule!!!
Congratuations, and keep up the good work.



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