



THE DASHPOT



Issue 80 Newsletter of the Association of Minemen Summer 2013



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Gary Cleland

As many are painfully aware, our Association has entered into some rough times. Since the passing of Bill Fortner our editor of our main line of communication the Dash pot, there has been no direct published quarterly communication to our membership since the last direct mailing from our association secretary prior to the 2012 reunion in Panama City.

Webmaster Phil DeChene has asked to retire and be relieved from the webmaster duties as soon as possible. Derick Hartshorn has agreed to assume the duties as Webmaster and will be completing the transition to this new position soon. For this reason, Derick is resigning from the appointed positions of Chaplain and Membership Chairman. He will however, continue to fill the communications gap with the periodic MINEMAN NEWS newsletter.

Former President and Association Chaplain, Bob Hart, has agreed to temporarily resume the duties as Chaplain until a new volunteer steps forward.

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39th ANNUAL AOM REUNION

October 4-6, 2013

Contributed by Toby Horn

As promised last issue, I want to let you in on some of the great things to do at Whidbey Island during our early-October reunion. Jani and I plan to go early (I'm thinking Tuesday – 1st) not only to check on all our plans, but also to explore some of the events going on.

We will be staying at the Coachman Inn on the outskirts of Oak Harbor. There is a website you can visit [www.thecoachmaninn.com] for an overview of the different accommodations offered. Dana Beckman is the general manager there and has provided us with great rates. The most popular will be the standard queen bed setup, I think, at \$75.65 per day. A standard double will be \$84.15 per day. The rooms are equipped with coffee maker, microwave, refrigerator, iron/board, DVD player, and a minimum 32" flat screen TV. There is a continental breakfast each morning from 6-10AM. Dana says the rates will apply for a few days forward for you early birds, and a few days after for those wishing to stay longer to enjoy the area events. The phone number there is 360-675-1419 for reservations. Please identify yourself as an AOM member for the rates quoted.

It's great just to have your morning coffee on a nice Northwest morning as you view Mt. Baker in the distance. You can have your coffee in the

Continued on page 7

When it comes to the future, there are three kinds of people: those who let it happen, those who make it happen, and those who wonder what happened.

- John M. Richardson, Jr

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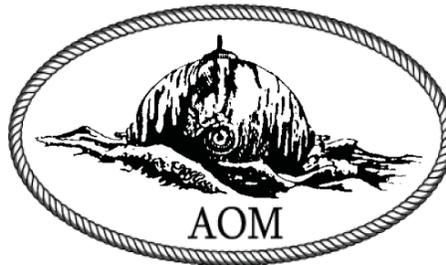
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DEDICATED TO SERVING THE U.S. NAVY MINE FORCE

The Dashpot,
published quarterly, is the
newsletter of the
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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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

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11/23/12 - Major Meliza Harris; Air Force Nurse; (MN3); gordyhar@gmail.com
09/28/12 - Daniel W. Gwilt MN1 (SW); daniel.gwilt@lcs2.navy.mil
09/28/12 - LT Stephanie Moss Cowart [MN1]; stephanie.cowart@navy.mil; stephanie.cowart@navy.smil.mil
09/24/12 - LTJG Cole Drum 6162 (MNC); drumd@ddg76.navy.mil; coledrum@hotmail.com
09/24/12 - Christopher James Ross MNC (SW/SC); christopher.ross@lcs2.navy.mil
06/22/12 - Benjamin Wells MN1; ky1714@yahoo.com
05/30/12 - ENS Darrell Bostic 616X (MNCS); waytoolaidback@hotmail.com

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07/04/12 - Robert Lackey MN1; roblackey@hotmail.com
06/26/12 - Shelley Henriksen MN1; Retired: May 1, 2011; Houston, TX; shelleyhenriksen@yahoo.com
06/26/12 - LCDR William S. (Bill) Johnson; [AOM PRESIDENT (03-06)]; Retired 1 October 1990; Keyport, NJ; bpjohns@optimum.net

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Mustang Minemen

by Ron Swart

How many of the AOM membership know that we have Limited Duty and Chief Warrant Officers who were former Minemen, now serving our Navy and Nation at sea and ashore? If you didn't, it is my honor and privilege to introduce our eight serving "Mustangs":

- Lieutenant (LDO) Stephanie Cowart, Surface Ordnance Operations Officer, US Fleet Forces Command;
- Lieutenant (LDO) Cole Drum, Systems Test Officer (AEGIS) USS Higgins, DDG 76;
- Lieutenant (LDO) Mathew Hatlevig, MIW Training & Assessment, Navy Mine and Antisubmarine Warfare Command;
- Lieutenant (LDO) Steven McMillian, Fire Control Officer & Systems Test Officer, USS George H. W. Bush, CVN 77;
- Lieutenant (LDO) John Caporuscio, Systems Test Officer (AEGIS), USS William P. Lawrence, DDG 110;
- Ensign (LDO) Darrell Bostic, en route to USS Hopper, DDG 70, as Systems Test Officer (AEGIS);
- Chief Warrant Officer (CWO4) James East, Fire Control Officer, USS John C. Stennis, CVN-74;
- Chief Warrant Officer (CWO3) Andrew Palmer, Systems Test Officer (AEGIS) USS Gettysburg, CG-64.

So we can get to know these Officers better, I have asked them for their biographies, four of which are included here, and the remainder to be published in future issues of the Dashpot. These great Americans represent Mine Warfare's best and brightest, currently bringing their substantial MIW expertise to the Aircraft Carrier and CRU/DES world. We thank them for their service!

Ensign Darrell L. Bostic

Ensign Bostic enlisted in May of 1995 from his hometown of Kansas City, Missouri at the age of 17. He attended Boot Camp in Great Lakes, Illinois, with follow-on orders to Quartermaster "A" School in Orlando, Florida. His first duty station was the USS OAK HILL (LSD 51) as part of the commissioning crew.

He was assigned to Navigation Division completing a Mediterranean Deployment and several Ships Availability Periods. After several rapid promotions and numerous awards he desired a more challenging career as a leader. With advancement in mind, QM2 Bostic attended Mineman "A" School in 1999 at Mine Warfare Training Center in Ingleside Texas.

His first assignment as a Mineman was at the Navy Reserve Center in Corpus Christi, Texas. Working as the Training Coordinator, he was directly responsible for the scheduling and completion of training for over 300 Selected Reserve Sailors. He also was the instructor for the Navy Rights and Responsibilities (NR&R) Workshop. Upon his promotion to Mineman First Class he received orders to USS ARDENT (MCM 12).

While serving as Combat Information Center Leading Petty Officer onboard ARDENT, he coordinated over 600 square miles of mine hunting and neutralization operations in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. With the implementation of rotational crews, he was sent back to Ingleside, Texas and assigned to USS BLACKHAWK (MHC 56). While assigned to BLACKHAWK

he completed his qualification as MCM Evaluator and Tactical Action Officer (TAO). His combat experience and superb leadership abilities made him an obvious selection for Mineman Chief Petty Officer in 2004.

In November, 2004, he checked on board USS DEFENDER (MCM 2), which later changed to MCM CREW IMPLICIT. While onboard the DEFENDER, he participated in a Ships Availability Period and qualified as Tactical Action Officer (TAO). While attached to CREW IMPLICIT he transferred to USS WARRIOR (MCM-10) and successfully completed a rigorous training cycle, RONEX/GOMEX, and Persian Gulf Deployment.

After four years at sea, Chief Bostic was selected to serve on the staff of Mobile Mine Assembly Group (COMOMAG) in 2006, as the Leading Chief Petty Officer for the Service Mines Division and Inspector on the Mine Readiness Certification Team. During his tour he was advanced to Senior Chief Petty Officer and subsequently selected for the Limited Duty Officer program.

Ensign Bostic attended LDO/CWO Indoctrination in Newport, Rhode Island, and received orders to USS HARRY S. TRUMAN (CVN 75), where he served as the Weapons Department G-2 Division Officer. Ensign Bostic has follow-on orders to USS HOPPER (DDG 70) to serve as the Systems Test Officer within Combat Systems Department.

His personal awards include the Navy Commendation Medal, Navy Achievement Medal (six awards), and the Enlisted Surface Warfare Insignia.

Ensign Bostic graduated from Park University with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Management/ Human Resources. He and his wife, Audrey, have two children, Kievan (14) and Kinadi (9).

Lieutenant Stephanie Moss Cowart

Lieutenant Cowart is a Native American, born in Fort Hood, Texas. She enlisted in the Navy in 1991 and reported to Recruit Training in Orlando, Florida in August, 1992. Upon completion of boot camp, she reported to Mineman "A" School in Charleston, South Carolina.

Lieutenant Cowart's enlisted tours include: Mobile Mine Assembly Group (MOMAG) Unit 11 in Charleston, South Carolina as a mine assembly technician and explosive forklift driver; MOMAG 8 in Agana, Guam as the Magazine Storage Supervisor, Supply LPO, and filled the position of an independent duty SK; Navy Recruiting District Dallas as a Station Commander for Navy Recruiting Station Terrell; Mobile Mine Assembly Unit (MOMAU) 8 Agana, Guam as the Quality Assurance and Operations Department Head; and USS CORMORANT MHC-57 as the Operations LPO and the SONAR Supervisor, where she was half of the SONAR Team that set the Navy record, at the Kingfisher Range, for mine hunting in 2003. Her billet assignments provided extensive experience in all facets of mine assembly/production, Explosive Safety Ashore and Afloat, Explosive Safety Inspections (ESI), AA&E, RSS&I, ammo storage, magazine requirements and inspections, transportation of explosives, ROLMs, OIS, and the Qual Cert Program.

Lieutenant Cowart was commissioned as a Surface Ordnance Officer, through the Limited Duty Officer program, in April 2004 and promptly reported to USS COWPENS CG-63, in Yokosuka, Japan. There, she filled the position of Systems Test Officer (STO), responsible for the maintenance and readiness of the entire AEGIS Combat Weapons Suite. In August, 2006, she reported to Staff Duty in Commander, Mobile Mine Assembly Group (COMOMAG). She initially filled the billet of the N33 Division Officer, in charge of Explosive Safety and Mine Exercise and Training. She was quickly fleeted up to fill a gapped N1 Department Head position. In February 2007, LT Cowart was hand selected by the Commodore to be the "Acting" Commanding Officer of MOMAU 15 in Ingleside, Texas during an unexpected gap in the position. She remained the "Acting" CO for 11 months, returning to COMOMAG in January 2008. LT Cowart returned to the N1 Billet, while remaining the Explosive Safety Officer, FOS-M and DRRS-N Coordinator. She reported onboard USS SAN JACINTO CG-56 in August 2009, once again filling the STO billet. She immediately made an eight month deployment and returned to immediately go into an extended yard period for the Cruiser Modernization (CRUMOD). LT

Cowart was the lead and CRUMOD Coordinator, overseeing 26 major alterations and 990 authorized work jobs. SAN JACINTO was fitted with AEGIS BL 8.1.1.1G and though it was the fourth ship to go through the modernization, SAN JAC became the first BL 8.1.1.1G ship operationally ready for the Fleet.

Most recently, Lieutenant Cowart reported to United States Fleet Forces Command (USFFC) in the N41 Department, as the Surface Ordnance Operations Officer (N411B), in August 2012. She is currently responsible for surface ordnance logistics for all of LANTFLT and provides guidance as a subject matter expert to OPNAV, Fleet Forces, and SURFLANT.

Lieutenant Cowart's awards include two Navy Commendation Medals, nine Navy Achieve Medals, one Joint Meritorious Unit Commendation, three Meritorious Unit Commendations, two Battle "E" Awards, three Humanitarian Service Medals, the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, and Expert Rifle and Pistol.

Lieutenant Cole Drum

Lieutenant Drum enlisted in the United States Navy in April of 1995. Following Basic Training, he attended Quartermaster "A" School in Orlando, FL. He reported to his first duty assignment, MCM Rotational Crew Golf, homeported in Ingelside, TX. While assigned to ROTCREW Golf, he served aboard USS Sentry (MCM-3), USS Pioneer (MCM-9) and USS Warrior (MCM-10), and deployed to the 5th Fleet AOR for multiple deployments aboard USS Dextrous (MCM-13). In 1999, LT Drum cross-rated from Quartermaster to Mineman following Mineman "A" school at the Mine Warfare Training Center at Ingelside, TX.

His first shore duty assignment began at Mobile Mine Assembly Unit Eleven (MOMAU-11) Charleston, SC in December of 1999, where he served in the Quality Assurance and Operation Departments. At completion of that tour he reported to Mine Warfare Training Center for AN/SQQ-32 Sonar school prior to arriving at USS RAVEN (MHC-61) in December of 2002 as Operations Department LPO. In March, 2003, the USS RAVEN and Coalition forces cleared the KAA River of live mines at the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom. LT. Drum was initiated to Chief Petty Officer while deployed to 5th Fleet in 2004.

His next duty assignment was to Mine Warfare Training Center Ingelside, TX in December of 2004, where he served as Lead instructor for 3 MEDAL courses, the Mine Warfare Officer pipeline, as well as the Department LCPO. He terminated his shore duty assignment early in July of 2007, to report to Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron Fifteen (HM-15) in Corpus Christi, TX, where he served as Operations Department LCPO. He was selected into the Limited Duty Officer program in 2008 and subsequently completed the LDO/CWO Course in Newport, Rhode Island, graduating in November of 2008.

LT Drum's first Officer tour was with Naval Special Warfare Unit THREE (NSWU-3) Manama, Bahrain in December, 2008 where he served as the Weapons Department Head. As the Ordnance Officer he was responsible for the management, distribution and storage of weapons, weapon systems and all ordnance supporting West and East Coast SEAL teams deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan and Africa.

LT Drum is currently serving onboard USS HIGGINS (DDG 76), a Ballistic Missile Defense Destroyer homeported out of San Diego, CA as the Systems Test Officer. While onboard HIGGINS, LT Drum completed a nine-month deployment to the 5th Fleet AOR in 2010 and is currently on another nine-month deployment to the 5th Fleet AOR.

LT Drum is authorized to wear the Surface Warfare Officer, Enlisted Surface, and Air Warfare Specialist Designations. His personal awards include: the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (two awards), Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (six awards), Combat Action Ribbon, and the Navy and Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal (three awards) as well as numerous unit awards.

LT Drum is married to the former Miss Valerie Rios of Snyder, TX. They have two sons, Christian

and Noah, and reside in Poway, CA.

Lieutenant Matthew A. Hatlevig

Lieutenant Hatlevig is a native of Janesville, Wisconsin, and enlisted in the United States Navy in November 1994. His initial training, along with Seaman Apprentice Training, was conducted at Recruit Training Center, Great Lakes, Illinois. Lieutenant Hatlevig's first sea tour was in USS DEFENDER (MCM-2), homeported in Ingleside, Texas. DEFENDER deployed in support of Exercise Blue Harrier 95 shortly after his arrival onboard as a Deck Seaman. Lieutenant Hatlevig attended Mineman "A" School May 1996 in Ingleside, Texas. While stationed onboard DEFENDER, he was qualified as an Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist and advanced to Second Class Petty Officer.

In May 1999, Lieutenant Hatlevig reported to Mobile Mine Assembly Unit (MOMAU) Ten, Okinawa, Japan and assumed duties as the Retail Ordnance Logistics Management System (ROLMS) Administrator. After advancement to First Class Petty Officer in December 2000, Lieutenant Hatlevig assumed duties as Mine Production Leading Petty Officer. During his tenure, MOMAU Ten completed two Mine Readiness Certification Inspections, two Explosive Safety Inspections, and 15 highly successful bi-lateral exercises.

In August 2002, after completing mission essential training stateside, Lieutenant Hatlevig joined the crew of USS PATRIOT (MCM-7), forward deployed in Sasebo, Japan. While attached to PATRIOT, he was assigned as the Deck Department Leading Petty Officer and completed seven exercises and two inspection cycles. During his tour, PATRIOT was awarded two Battle Efficiency ribbons. He also qualified as Combat Information Center Watch Supervisor, Command Duty Officer, and Officer of the Deck, Underway. The culmination of this highly successful tour was his selection for advancement to Chief Petty Officer.

In September 2005, Lieutenant Hatlevig reported to the Center for Surface Combat Systems, Mine Warfare Training Center, Ingleside, Texas. He served as the Ordnance Division Officer where he qualified to instruct three courses and qualified as a Master Training Specialist. During his second year onboard, Ensign Hatlevig was the principle Mine Warfare (MIW) Subject Matter Expert for the Littoral Combat Ship Task Force, Dahlgren, Virginia. Lieutenant Hatlevig personally developed the Mine Warfare Mission Package manning structure and detailed training requirements for the Program Office for Ships and Littoral Mine Warfare.

Once commissioned as an LDO in October 2007, Lieutenant reported to USS STOCKDALE (DDG-106) as the Systems Test Officer. During his tour, he completed AEGIS Light Off, CSSQT, FCT, PSA, and a Seventh Fleet deployment. As Ship's Material Maintenance Officer, Lieutenant Hatlevig organized three Continuous Maintenance Availabilities and one CNO availability. He qualified Surface Warfare Officer, Anti-Air Warfare Coordinator, and Tactical Action Officer.

He is currently on the staff of Commander, Naval Mine and Anti-Submarine Warfare Command under the Mine Warfare Training and Certification directorate.

Lieutenant Hatlevig and his wife, Helena, live in San Diego, CA with their four children: Haden, Holden, Mason, and Madison. Lieutenant Hatlevig's personal decorations include the Navy Commendation Medal (four awards) and the Navy Achievement Medal (three awards).

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hotel, or walk downtown to Angelo's Café, Arties, Honeymoon Bay Coffee Roasters, or the Whidbey Coffee Company.

Many things will be available within walking distance from our lodging, and other island adventures involve no more than a 15-to-30-minute drive time. One of the big draws to the area is the Swinomish

Casino located in Anacortes, just a 20-to-25-minute drive away. As you drive there, you'll pass over Deception Pass Bridge, which is now a state park with a majestic overlook. As you view this awesome sight, please ignore the fact that Spider Dennison and I went hand-over-hand across this span on the trestles underneath (on a rope-yarn Wednesday after giving blood for a Red Cross drive). It was one of those double-dog-dare types of thing. There is a Deception Pass boat tour that you can take, embarking in Anacortes. It is about an hour long, costs \$20 for seniors, and is one of the most-visited attractions in Washington State.

The first part of October features a lot of local festivals. NAS has an Oktoberfest event as does the town of Oak Harbor. As I get data and features, I'll let you know. You can make a day-trip to Greenbank, Coupeville, San DeFuca, or Keystone. Greenbank is located on the narrowest part of Whidbey Island with views of the Sound on both sides. You can visit the Greenbank Farm and experience a 1900's era working farm. There are also a winery, specialty shops, cozy cafes, antique stores, a turn-of-the-century general store, and a farmer's market. The Whidbey Highland Games are held here, but I'm not sure of the dates.

Coupeville is one of the oldest communities in the state of Washington. They have an Arts and Crafts Festival, Penn Cove Water Festival, and the Mussel Festival. It also has Puget Sound's oldest wharf, with an area water interpretive center as well as unique shopping and dining experiences. You can wander over to San De Fuca, located at the end of Penn Cove for a look at the famous mussel rafts where these succulent morsels are grown for shipment all over the world. Visit the nearby 1900-era Captain Whidbey Inn or go over to Fort Ebey and watch the hang-gliders do their stuff on a nice breezy day.

Keystone is an old haunt of mine way back when. There is a ferry landing there for departure to Port Townsend. Fort Casey is right there and is the place where Spider and I used to dive amongst the kelp beds. It is now an underwater park. There are spectacular views of the Olympic Mountains, and you can walk to the Admiralty Head Lighthouse and Fort Casey to learn about the region's military history. This is the sight for the Whidbey Kite Festival, so you may be able to see some of the most inventive kites flying that you will ever see flying in a good breeze.

There is also the Naval Air Station itself. The Chief's and Officer's clubs both offer great chow. They have their own golf course which is open to the public. Our old mine shop is gone now, as well as the FASRON (Fleet Aircraft Service Squadron) to which it was attached. I'm going to try to arrange for a base tour and will have our President offer invitations to the base CO to attend our dinner meeting and picnic as reunion time draws near. I don't know if they can spell "mines", but maybe that's a good thing?

Mark your calendar! Stay tuned! More to come!

From the Secretary/Treasurer's Desk

Hello to All. The 2012 reunion was a success; some of the regulars were unable to attend due to illness, and unforeseen problems, but rest assured a good time was had by all. For those who were unable to attend I hope to see you in Whidbey Island this year.

Our membership list has been decreasing each year, due mostly to not paying your dues. I cannot stress enough the importance of renewing your membership on time. It is due in October of each

year. You can pay for 5 years in advance, but if you have not paid, this will be the last Dashpot you will receive. Check your mailing label and you will see a date, if it says OCT. 2012; you have not paid your dues. Please keep up to date as we cannot afford to lose any members.

Mike Femrite
Secretary/Treasurer

New Mine Warfare Boss:

by Ron Swart

Commander of Naval Mine and Antisubmarine Warfare Command, Rear Admiral Robert M. Hennegan.

Prior to his new appointment, Rear Admiral Hennegan was commander, Submarine Group 9, headquartered at Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor, Silverdale, Wash. He was responsible for the readiness, training, logistical, administrative and personnel support of all U.S. ballistic missile (SSBN) and guided missile (SSGN) submarines in the Pacific Northwest. He assumed duty as commander, Submarine Group 9 on Oct. 29, 2010.

His tours at sea include assignments in USS Haddock (SSN 621), USS James Madison (SSBN 627), and USS Grayling (SSN 646). Hennegan commanded USS Buffalo (SSN 715) and Submarine Squadrons 6 and 8.

Here's a note from a 100-year-old member which accompanied his dues and scholarship donation. Ashore, Hennegan served on the staffs of the secretary of Defense, the chief of Naval Operations, and the director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion. He served in fleet support positions on the staff of commander Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet and at Submarine Squadron 16. He also served as the deputy chief of Legislative Affairs for the Navy and on the Department of Defense Transition Task Force in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Hennegan most recently served as deputy commander, Joint Functional Component Command for Global Strike at U.S. Strategic Command.

A 1980 graduate of the United States Naval Academy, Hennegan completed studies in the Navy's Nuclear Propulsion Program. He earned a Master of Science degree in Operations Research from the Naval Postgraduate School, completed the Harvard Business School Advanced Management Program, the National Securities Studies Program at George Washington University, and the Seminar XXI Program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

His awards include the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, and the Vice Admiral Stockdale Award for Inspirational Leadership.

*There are two kinds of people who never amount to much:
those who cannot do what they are told, and those who
can do nothing else.*

- Cyrus Curtis, 1850 - 1933



DASHPOT1974@tampabay.rr.com

THE EDITOR'S CORNER

Hello Everyone,

As you know Bill Fortner is in a better place but his legacy lives on through the Dashpot. I am giving it a shot though I have a long ways to go. Bill had this down to a science and he took a lot of his methods with him. I am kind of starting from the ground up, more like learning to walk all over again.

Up until now I have been content just waiting for the Daspot to show up in my mail box and read it, there is more to it now. I hope everyone is pleased with what I am putting together, and if you have any comments or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Regards,

Don Healer

NEXT DASHPOT ARTICLES ARE DUE 1 SEPT 2013

Submit Articles to ***DASHPOT1974@tampabay.rr.com***

ASSOCIATION OF MINEMEN

submitted by Mike Femrite

Minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2012 in Panama City Florida

- The president called the meeting to order at 1310 hours
- Minutes of the 2011 meeting were read and approved by membership.
- Treasures report was read and accepted by membership
- Bob hart read a thank you letter he received from sarah eayres, one of the scholarship awardees.
- Dick Martin discussed essay contest for the vfw.
- Ron glasen was not able to attend so he sent his scholarship report to gary to be read at the meeting, 21 scholarships were given out at \$750.00 Each.
- Once again, our scholarship benefactor donated \$20,000.00, To the scholarship fund.
- Dick schommer said he would like to have the 2014 reunion in south carolina. He will head it up and report back on all the specifics.
- Mike femrite discussed the cost of the dashpot every quarter. Thoughts of having it printed semi annually was discussed and the motion was made to keep it as it is, quarterly.

- We are looking for a relief for our dashpot editor, Bill Fortner. Derick Hartshorn suggested Bob Defrees, motion was tabled until Bob could be contacted.
- It was suggested to create a committee to investigate and change the Association Of Minemen to Association of mine Warfare. Motion was made and approved to leave it as AOM.
- President Gary Cleland announced that we have 3 BOD vacancies. Motions were made and approved to replace Curtis Christian with Phil Dechene, Shane Stone with Tom Hoffman, and Warren Savage to remain on as a bod.
- A motion was made to place an aom plaque at the Navy Memorial in DC. Cost is currently \$3,000.00. Toby suggested taking the money from the general fund. It is \$500.00 To initiate and the BOD will work with the memorial committee on the design and location of the plaque. The motion was passed by the membership.
- Dick Schommer questioned if the storekeeper was bonded. Mike Femrite said he would check and get back to the members.
- Paul Santa Maria asked that the presidents scholarship fund be changed to the Paul and Myrtis Day Santa Maria scholarship fund. Motion was made approved by the membership.
- We had 3 winners of the AOM Minemen of the Year Award:
 - (Shore) MN1 (SW) Marco Navarro, Mine Warfare Training Center San Diego CA.
 - (Sea) MN1 (SW) John Carver, MCM Crew Conflict.
 - (Reserve) MN1 (EXW) Sider Vegasegura, naval reserve momau one.
- Motion was made and passed to give our guest speaker, Capt Scott Pratt, a history book and a challenge coin.
- Motion was made and approved to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by

Michael Femrite

Secretary

Scholarship Happenings

by Ron Glasen

Because of your tremendous support for our 2012 Scholarship Program, your scholarship committee of Robert Stancik, Curtis Christian, and myself, were able to approve 21 Scholarship Applications. Each scholarship award was worth \$750 for a total of \$15,750 in scholarship awards. The 21 applicants were made up of 11 women, and 10 men. 13 of the applicants were college students continuing on with their education working for their particular degrees. Eight applicants were high school seniors entering college for their freshman year. I hope that you will continue to support The Scholarship Program with your generous donations. We need to make our 2013 Scholarship Program



as successful as our 2012. Remember, it's not too early to start supporting your, 2013 Association of Minemen Scholarship Program.

NMC COMOMAG Division

Contributed by MN1 Sean Hindley



Greetings and salutations from all of us here at NMC COMOMAG Division in sunny San Diego! It's been some time now since we had the pleasure of reporting important happenings from your friendly neighborhood subject matter experts, and my-oh-my have there been some exciting ones. We have welcomed new faces, passed out fond farewells, conducted inspections, provided world-wide exercise support, held MWR events, and given out some well deserved awards.

NMC COMOMAG Division N32 Exercise and Training department and N31 Service Mines department have been scouring the globe to provide on-site support and subject matter expertise to Units worldwide this quarter. The entire NMC COMOMAG Division staff has been out and about providing a myriad of technical support and training ranging from SLMM training in NMC EAD units to successfully completing Mine Readiness Certification and Inspection (MRCI) visits to many of our Mining Units. A big "Bravo Zulu" goes out to NMC CWD Unit Seal Beach, NMC CED Unit Charleston for all of their hard work and dedication to meeting and exceeding the inspection team's expectations. Your drive and initiative really shows and contributes directly to the success of the Mine Warfare mission.

In addition to the training going on within our Units, NMC COMOMAG Division personnel have also been on the move to South Korea, Bahrain, Virginia, the California Coast, and everywhere in between to support joint-service exercises. MNC(SW) Tetrault, MNC(SW) Sandoval, MN1(SW) Guerrero, Mr. Ed Simmons, and myself have the distinct privilege of traveling the globe to do what Mineman do best – build, deploy, recover, and interrogate mine shapes and Versatile Exercise Mines in theater!

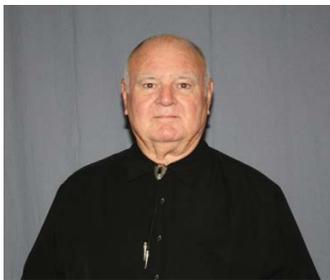
As is customary with the passing of any period of time, we here at NMC COMOMAG Division are not exempt from the sting of the evil PCS monster. We have had to bid farewell to MNCS(SW) Greer.... oh correction....ENS (Sel) Greer and MNC(SW) Angle. Chief Angle, you will be missed amongst the ranks here at NMC COMOMAG Division, and ENS (Sel) Greer, congratulations on this fantastic career accomplishment! We hope to see you back in the Mine Warfare community before long.

We would also like to welcome aboard MNC(SW) Gibbens coming to us from MCM Crew Conflict. Chief Gibbens will be working with N31 Service Mines department.

And finally, congratulations to MNM(SW) Roach, our newest Mineman Master Chief, and all those who were selected as Senior Chiefs. For those of us who are anxiously awaiting the FY14 CPO Board results, Best of Luck Shipmates! Until next time, as always, stay safe, keep the press, and remain Always Ready to support Mine Warfare missions around the globe!

Late Entry: NMC COMOMAG Division MNM (SW) Alt on the Mineman of the Year effort for this year. COMOMAG is taking lead on this effort. Call for candidate nominees will go out on or before 1 Aug and the selection will be made in time to announce the winners at the reunion at Whidbey Is. this Oct. “.
BT.

TAPS



WILLIAM SWAIN FORTNER, 69, Sand Rock, died Saturday, Jan. 5, 2013. He is survived by his family. A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. Friday the 11th at Collinsville

Baptist Church. Perry Funeral Home directing. [Published in The Gadsden Times on January 10, 2013]. The family will greet friends Friday, January 13, 2012 from 6:00pm until 8:00pm at the funeral home.

A FEW OF THE COMMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN RECEIVED:

I met MN1 Bill Fortner in Hawaii 1971. He was working for the division officer Bill Mehard as the Mines Division administrative assistant. He was one of the most squared-away sailors I had ever met and went out of his way to be helpful. After that tour, our paths crossed periodically, and in 1977, he and I, along with Will Dixon and Bill Burton, were selected to participate in the LDO program.

In 1985, I relieved Bill as the Officer-in-Charge at MOMAG DET 3 NWS Earle, Colts Neck, N.J. Bill was a great innovator, and during his tour at DET 3, he created mine maintenance and testing programs that utilized Work Simplification Procedures. He worked closely with Joe Balderrama and Bo Bellamy to establish an extremely efficient and well-organized mine maintenance facility. In addition, Bill planned and helped construct new office areas and a crew's lounge inside the mine shop that contributed to the efficient use of work space. Needless to say, I was so fortunate to benefit from Bill's creativity as his relief.

Bill was a true horseman, and while at NWS Earle, he was able to keep a horse at stables on base. On his time off, he would occasionally ride his horse up to the mine shop to check on things and to visit the crew if they were working. I can imagine that at times, he also helped fertilize the

landscape around the facility.

Bill's dedication and contributions to the U.S. Navy and to the Mine Force were tremendous. We have lost a great shipmate, friend and ambassador to the Association of Mineman.

--James G. Longway

This is so sad to hear this new year. The few times I have met with Bill, I was very impressed with his dedication to the AOM and his overall decency. My prayers will go out to him and his loved ones.

--Kurt M Stauff, MNM(SW/SS), USN (ret)

It is with heavy heart, even though I truly do not know Bill, that my heartfelt thoughts go to he and his family and friends, and that in his time peace (whatever that may be) arrives passionately We (minemen) have forever been precious few in number.

--Dave Grim



IRMA CARLSEN, wife of Bill "Swede" Carlsen, our former Chairman of the AOM Scholarship Committee. Irma experienced a rapid decline in health and Bill was forced to utilize a senior nursing facility to manage her care.

Irma attended as many AOM reunions with Bill as proximity would allow. Bill's loss is a loss for all of us. Her passing took place on Tuesday, January 22, 2013.



MNCS MICHAEL NELSON BON, age 63, died at Whatcom House Hospice in Oak Harbor, Washington on Monday, January 28, 2012, 4:45am, following a tragic ordeal with colon cancer. He was born in Cleveland, Ohio on

November 15, 1949 to Nelson and Dorothy Bon. He married Norma Cristina Bon in Olongapo, Philippines on September 10, 1971. He served U.S. Navy for 20 years and retired in 1989 as Mineman Senior Chief. Following retirement he served as the naval base theater manager, retiring 17 years later, in 2006. He saw duty in the Philippines, Japan, Guam and Italy. Among his enjoyments in life were camping, traveling, trains, movies. He leaves to mourn his passing, his wife Norma Cristina, children: Ofelia Ann and husband John Doney, Jennifer Ann and husband Jeff Zwiers, Daisy Ann and husband Ryan Hays; grandchildren: Nathan, Zacharie, Joshua and Samuel and a sister, Barbara Ann Bon Ames. The family wishes to thank St. Joseph's Hospital in Bellingham and the Whatcom House Hospice in Oak Harbor for their warmth and sympathetic care.

Mike's family recognized him for his simple philosophy in life that could be summed up in three words: "smart, loyal and a pillar to the family". His table blessing was equally simple: "Good bread, Good meat. Good God. Let's eat."

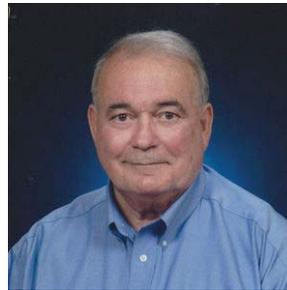


WILLIAM HENRY BECK, 82, passed away on March 29, 2013. William was a retired Naval Chief Petty Officer, and retired from Yorktown Naval Weapons Station. He attended Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church. William is survived by his loving

wife, Leatizell Beck; son, Charles Robert Stone and daughter-in-law, Sue. He also leaves two grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

JOHN LOONAM NOTES: "I heard at the old timers luncheon today that Bill Beck was a retired MNC. Jack Smoot told me Bill was on active duty for 12 years then went to the reserves and joined the Mine Engineering Facility at Yorktown. He remembered Bill's joy when he made MNC. Bill was in the Yorktown Reserve MOMAG. Bill was a behind the scenes helper at all the AOM reunion functions held at Yorktown. There were 18 attendees at the luncheon at the old Mine Warfare School in Yorktown now a Coast Guard Training Center."

LAWRENCE J. "LARRY" LOONAM, 54, son of CWO-4 John F. Loonam, passed away April 15, 2013 from natural causes. Born in Malta in 1958, son of John F and Barbara E Loonam (deceased) is survived by his father John, daughter Heather Velders of Barnegat, NJ and two grandchildren Lisette and Christopher, brothers: Michael of Mauldin, SC; John Jr. of Greenville, NC; Gregory of Port Royal, VA; sisters: Kathleen of Williamsburg, VA; Diane Parker and Sandy of Gloucester, VA. Larry, a 1976 graduate of York H. S. served in the U.S. Navy (PR) during the Vietnam era; worked in construction field holding various positions. He was an avid fisherman always looking for that big one.



CHARLES DUNN, 77, of Cottageville, SC passed away on Sunday April 21, 2013 in Charleston, SC. He was born June 29, 1935 in Carlisle, AR to the late Mr. Henry Dunn and Mrs. Tennie Dunn.

Charles was the 7th of 8 children. He married the former Ms. Mae G. Spradley in Charleston, SC on May 17, 1963 and had two children. He attended Lonoke High School (AR) and graduated in 1954. He served in the United States Navy for 21 years earning the Vietnam Service Medal and 5 Good Conduct Awards. Upon retiring from the Navy, he attended Trident Technical College earning an Associate Degree in Criminal Justice. Charles was employed by DoD Security at the Naval Weapon Station for several years. He retired from the Naval Weapon Station as a Heavy Equipment Operator. He enjoyed spending time with his grandchildren.

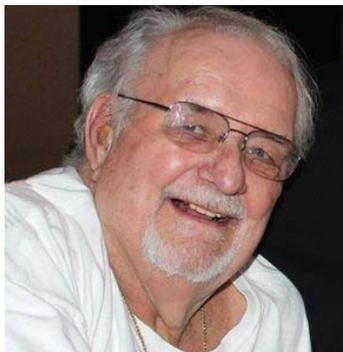
He will be remembered by his loving wife of 49 years, Mae G. Dunn and their children: Charles Dunn II and his wife Connie of Summerville, SC and William R. Dunn and his wife Donah of Cottageville, SC, grandchildren: Christin Sirline, William C. Dunn, Christina A. Dunn, Clarissa M. Dunn and Corrin G. Dunn, a great grandson: Bradley L. Mason, sisters: Ruby J. Jones and her husband Harold C. and Nellie C. Glover and her husband Dennis all of Little Rock, AR. Charles was predeceased by his parents: Henry R. and

Tennie M. Dunn, three brothers: Robert H. Dunn, Samuel N. Dunn and Tommy K. Dunn, and sisters Helen L. Romans and Gladys C. Lackie.

LT MICHAEL PAUL SPORTELLI - "I learned yesterday that LT Michael Paul Sportelli, USN, Retired, passed away on 05/27/2013 from an apparent heart attack. He was 57 years old and living in Myrtle Beach, SC. I confirmed this with Mike's Ex-Wife, Terry who now resides in Rhode Island. They had 3 grown children, Joe, Leanne and Nicholas. Mike was my XO at Momag Unit 3 when I was the CO and he relived me as CO when I retired in October 1990. Mike was cremated and will be interred in The Veterans Cemetery either in Rhode Island or New Jersey. Bill Johnson

HIDEKO (MACHI) SMITH, wife of Master Chief Leo R. Smith passed away on 16 June 2013 in Lynn Haven, Florida. Michi was born in Kumamoto Japan on 14 June 1948 and has been a resident of Lynn Haven, Florida since 1995. She suffered two strokes in May and October 2004 and had been in and out of the hospital three times since Christmas Eve. On May 20th she was admitted with double pneumonia and unfortunately couldn't recover. Her system began to shut down on the 13th and she passed two days after her 65th Birthday. Memorialization will be by cremation and no services will be held.

She is survived by husband of 45 years, Leo Smith of Lynn Haven; daughter Margie Ogo and husband Ray of Virginia Beach Va.; granddaughter, Kaelani Ogo of Virginia Beach Va.; grandson, Andrew Ogo of Virginia Beach Va.; and great grandson, Adam Ogo.



CWO4 GORDON DAVID "GORDY" GRAMPP, passed away at his home on 18 June 2013. He started his Navy career in 1954 as a Mineman and retired after 30 years as a CWO-4 in 1984. He

volunteered for EOD early in his career so he could receive the double hazardous duty pay.

It was the late 1950s and he had a wife and 4 kids as a Second Class Petty Officer and needed every penny he could make. When he made First Class in the mid-60s, he was the only Mineman promoted that cycle. He applied for and accepted for the Warrant Officer Program in the late 60s and was promoted to WO-1. He retired in the Orlando area in 1984 and started his wood carving career. He became known in the art circle and sold hundreds of carvings throughout the next twenty years. His wife of 58 years, passed in May of 2012 and now he is again with her. He leaves behind one son, four daughters, 12 grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren. He loved the Navy and was very proud of being part of the EOD family. Gordon David Grampp was a great and complex man... a loyal husband, endearing father of five, 12 grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren

His wife of 58 years, passed in May of 2012 and now he is again with her. We love you Dad and we miss you so very much. He was a proud member of the United States Navy for 30 years.



MNC (RET.) FRED DANIEL BARTRAM AND MONICA M. BARTRAM, both of Fort Gay, WV. Monica passed away Saturday, June 29, 2013 at her home in Fort Gay, WV. and her beloved husband Dan joined her in their journey on Sunday, June 30, 2013. Dan passed away at the Emogene Dolin Hospice House in

Huntington, WV.

Tribute to Bill Fortner

Contributed by Joe Beetar

As many of you know, on January 5th of this year we lost a dear shipmate. Although Bill and I enlisted around the same time, our paths never crossed during the four years of my service. Bill's service was to span 30 years.



October 1961



New Ensign

During that time, he made his mark as he advanced through the ranks, earning the respect and admiration of all he served with. In 1977, Bill was selected for the LDO program and ultimately attained the rank of Lieutenant Commander. After retiring in 1991, he and his wife, Dee, returned to their home state of Alabama.

During that time, he made his mark as he advanced through the ranks, earning the respect and admiration of all he served with. In 1977, Bill was selected for the LDO program and ultimately attained the rank of Lieutenant Commander. After retiring in 1991, he and his wife, Dee, returned to their home state of Alabama.



Bill and Dee 1963



New Chief

Bill was an active, senior member of the Association of Minemen. He served on the Board of Directors from 2005 to 2009, and was the Dashpot Editor from 2001 until his passing.

Shortly after taking over as the Dashpot Editor, Bill wrote a short piece concerning the reporting of members' passing. He lamented the use of photos taken late in their lives and suggested that photos from their earlier times be used instead.

Bill was not only deeply religious, but an accomplished poet and songwriter, as well. At his request, some of his original work was included in his Memorial Service. Following is one of his especially beautiful poems.



Bill & Dee Oct 2012

The Tear-Stained Album *by Bill Fortner 2005*

*Until the time the Bo'sun's pipe sounds the call for me,
These tired old eyes will gaze upon the faces that I see
In this treasured album,
Resting tear stained on my knee.*

*When the final bugle sounds
Playing taps alone for me,
I'll board a shining silver ship
And sail a crystal sea,
With gold top gallants billowing
To Port Eternity.*

*There, upon arrival,
Surrounded I will see,
My shipmates sailing years before
Waiting there for me,*

*Who welcome me as worthy kin,
Home at last from sea.*

*So weep not when I board that ship
And sail the crystal sea.
And join my shipmates
Who are waiting patiently for me.
To render my best hand salute
When the Bo'sun's face I see.*

*You will hear me in the zephyrs,
You will feel me in the rain.
And know that I'm still with you
Until we meet again.
To live a life fantastic
Where there is no word for pain.*

REUNION PREVIEW

Contributed by Toby Horn

We've had our ups and downs getting the word out about our coming reunion at Whidbey Island, Washington. I was delayed by a new knee operation, and there have been glitches in getting our beloved Dashpot newsletter back in operation. By now, you should have already received a special mailing brochure giving details, thanks to our Secretary/Treasurer, Mike Femrite. Our computer savvy members have also been able to keep updated by infograms posted by Derick Hartshorn and website postings by Phil Dechene.

This is our first issue of the Dashpot since Don Healer has taken over the helm as the new Editor. It is a formidable task, and Don needs not only our heartfelt thanks but our help as well. It is not an easy job mustering all the information needed to publish the articles, info columns, photos, and data necessary to keep our membership informed. Please submit all your articles to him in a timely manner so he can get the Dashpot to you the same way.

Our reunion at Whidbey is going to be a great one – a memorable one. I can feel it in my bones (just like when it rains). I didn't have the space in the previously posted info to tell you that we will be there during the time of some of the Whidbey Island/Oak Harbor Oktoberfest activities. As I stated earlier, the wife and I are going early and staying late to enjoy some of the events that will be going on. I want to revisit the old Mineman haunt – the Oak Harbor Tavern – to see if there are any friendly ghosts hanging out there. I know the Olympia Beer has long gone, but maybe they still have the pickled eggs and pigs-feet on the bar. Yum!!! There is a new Marina there now, which is supposed to be a great spot to rest your bones, have a coolie or two, and enjoy the view of the boats, harbor and surrounding views. As I recall, our hotel hostess, Dana Beckman told me that their own bar/lounge (Patriot's Lounge) puts out a lot of hospitality in the way of welcoming us veterans.

There are many places on the island to visit. For those of you traveling the southern (ferry boat) route from Seattle, you will be seeing some of the lower island and middle island scenery. Tucked back on those side roads are some interesting attractions such as wineries, town markets, antique malls, forts, and aquiculture farms (see clams, mussels, etc.) The station, NAS Whidbey, is one of the few (if not the last) naval stations to have its own separate, Chief's Club, NCO Club, and Officer's Club as well as its own golf course.

I am still trying to log on the Saturday morning Deception Pass Tour, however I cannot get a human person to answer the phone and recorded messages go unreturned. If not that, I'll have something interesting for you to do, though, while the BOD hacks out our association business. Maybe I can arrange a bear hunt, led by our famous huntsman Ray Cobis. Ray will insist that it be "bare-handed, knives-only" so only the hearty need apply. Hey! – we can cook up the catch at our picnic down at Rocky Point on Sunday.

Our President, Gary Cleland has graciously allowed me to be your Master of Ceremonies for our dinner meeting on Saturday evening. I will be wearing my official Navy kilt based on a double-dog-dare from our Scottish contingent led by Bob Stancik (he has to wear one also), so this alone will be worth your attendance. I urge all our Scottish friends to do the same so I won't feel out of place. Please no jokes about what is worn beneath the kilt, since absolutely nothing is worn – it is all in perfect working order. I don't have a definite commitment for the CO NAS (Captain Mike Nortier) to be a speaker for our dinner as yet. Schedule demands on COs are tough these days and I probably won't know until later. However, I have composed a little dissertation called "Minemen Firsts and Promises Kept" that I think you will enjoy hearing about. Along these lines, I would like to hear from

any of you about “firsts” you experienced (no, not that kind) as a Mineman that I can add to my list.

Our picnic at Rocky Point should be pleasant and fun. The O-Club is cooking the chow for us and has already started the brewing process for our beer. I'd sure like to see a resurrection of a horseshoe tournament. Do you remember the “Dead Red Rooster Award” for the champion? We retired that a long time ago in someone's care? Who has it? We will do a water-balloon toss to see who can stay dry. We'll try to start our auction around 1400 so bring your items with you, or send them via mail to the hotel address marked “hold for AOM”.

That about wraps it up for me this go-round. It goes without saying that I'd like to see all of you at our reunion this year. I ain't getting any younger, shipmates and neither are you. Put it on your bucket list! Send in your registration now! I think you'll love Whidbey Island. See ya there!

Note: Toby can be reached by phone at 843-762-3552 or email at tobyonesc@bellsouth.net.

Water Mine Warfare in South Vietnam

By Edward J. Marolda

The Vietnamese Communists employed thousands of mines against U.S. and allied naval forces throughout the conflict in Vietnam, much as they had against the French during the First Indochina War. Between 1959 and 1964, Viet Cong mines, often homemade devices, took an increasing toll of naval vessels and civilian craft on the many rivers and canals of South Vietnam. This threat ended commercial traffic on some of the country's primary waterways.

As U.S. naval forces deployed to South Vietnam in the mid-1960s, moving into the watery environment of the Mekong Delta west and south of Saigon, they took steps to counter the enemy's mine threat. The danger was especially acute on the waterways near Saigon, South Vietnam's most important port. Viet Cong closure of the Long Tau River, which followed a meandering, forty-five-mile course through the Rung Sat swamp on its way to the capital, would have put an enormous strain on allied logistic resources in the southern regions of South Vietnam.

As a result, on 20 May 1966 the Navy established Mine Squadron 11, Detachment Alpha (Mine Division 112 after May 1968) at Nha Be. The minesweeping detachment operated 12 or 13 57-foot, fiberglass-hulled minesweeping boats (MSB). The MSBs fought with machine guns and grenade launchers and carried surface radars and minesweeping gear for clearing explosives from the rivers. The Navy also set up three-boat sections at Danang and Cam Ranh Bay. Detachment Alpha's strength increased in July 1967 when the first of six mechanized landing craft, minesweeping (LC-M(M)) reached Nha Be.

Despite the presence on the Long Tau of Mine Squadron 11 and other river warfare forces, in the second half of 1966 and early 1967 the Communists mounted a serious effort to interdict the waterway. The Viet Cong employed mines, 122-millimeter rockets, rocket-propelled grenades, recoilless rifles, machine guns, and small arms against American and Vietnamese naval forces and merchantmen. In August 1966, Viet Cong mines severely damaged SS Baton Rouge Victory, a Vietnamese Navy vessel, and MSB 54. Then that November, the enemy sank MSB 54. In February 1967, Communist direct-fire weapons and mines destroyed MSB 45 and heavily damaged MSB 49.

By the spring of 1967, however, the tide began to turn. Allied naval units moved in force into the Rung Sat area, refined their mine countermeasures tactics, and brought better weapons and equipment into play against the enemy sappers. Vietnamese Regional Force, U.S. Army 9th Division troops, and Navy SEAL commandoes, working with helicopter, river patrol boat, MSB, and LCM(M) units, scoured the shorelines. During the next year, Communist guerrillas periodically ambushed ships on the Long Tau, but the fast and devastating reaction by allied forces kept casualties and damage to vessels relatively light. Often, the minesweeping force swept up mines before they could do damage or river patrol boat and SEAL patrols disrupted enemy attack plans. The upshot was that the Viet Cong were unable to cut or even seriously slow logistic traffic on the Long Tau, even when their comrades were fighting for their lives in Saigon during the Tet Offensive of early 1968.

During 1968 and 1969, the Navy also deployed strong mine countermeasures forces to the Cua Viet River, just south of the Demilitarized Zone, and defeated the North Vietnamese Army's attempt to cut the vital waterway.

Full article can be found at : <http://www.history.navy.mil/wars/vietnam/minesouthviet.htm>

“If you’re running a 26-mile marathon, remember that every mile is run one step at a time. If you are writing a book, do it one page at a time. If you’re trying to master a new language, try it one word at a time. There are 365 days in the average year. Divide any project by 365 and you’ll find that no job is all that intimidating.”

- *Charles Swindoll*

I picked up on a few things putting this Dashpot together. In 1972 I was assigned to the USS Midway (CVA-41), Charlie Dunn was in-charge of our team that put mines in the water at Haiphong Dec 1972. I was a seaman apprentice. Over the years, and from time-to-time, I wondered what ever happened to him. I ran into him a couple of times at the WPNSTA Chasn but other than that, that was it. Then his name came up on the list for TAPS. 40 years ago, I never would have dreamed that I would be the one placing his name in our TAPS column. The same goes for MNCS Bon, Gunner Gramps, my former CO at WPNSTA Earle NJ - Lt Sportelli, and of course Bill Fortner.

So for those of you on ACTDU, try to always make your last meeting with your shipmates a good memory, because you just never know where your paths may cross.

Don Healer

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must be paid annually by the month of October.
The dues expiration date is October in the year
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Punta Gorda, FL 33951