

The Cutter

The Newsletter of the Foundation for Coast Guard History
28 Osprey Dr.
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E-Mail: Want to save a tree? Send us your e-mail address. We will let you know when the next issue is available on our web site. Just send a message to FoundationforCGhistory@gmail.com. You will not miss an issue. **Website:** www.fcgh.org

From the Chairman, Jim Hull, VADM USCG (ret.)

Well, it has been three months on the job...and I am still finding out all the “history” behind the Foundation for Coast Guard History. Research and documentation are key to an organization such as this; and luckily, with regard to running it, we have most of it—it’s just that it’s all spread out, and in some cases it’s archived in people’s minds. So Gary Thomas and I have engaged in a comprehensive effort to get it all down on paper. We are making progress monthly, and thank you’s go to Howie Thorsen and Fred Herzberg for “assisting” us, and to all the Regents as well. We are developing one- and five-year strategies that will be provided to the members, and updated on a yearly basis. I’m not sure when the first one will hit the streets, but I will let you know in the next edition of the *Cutter*.

On a “historical” note, I performed my first official function: attending the “roost” at Elizabeth City and presenting a copy of an aviation print on behalf of the Foundation to the new gold Ancient Albatross, symbolizing his seniority in the active aviation community. When the Commandant talked he recognized our organization, and I spoke on the need to document our Coast Guard history—for which the aviation community is the model at this time. It was a great event, and we received applause—and that is a good start for me.

Our Executive Director Gary Thomas has also been busy, as he describes elsewhere in this issue. We have talked with Dr. Bob Browning, the Coast Guard Historian, who has pledged to work with us and provide our membership with opportunities to assist. I look forward to providing that to the membership soon.

With that said, future success is up to all of us: talk up the Foundation; spur more interest; and document and promote the history of the Coast Guard.

The Foundation for Coast Guard History



www.fcgh.org

Nomenclature regarding content

Bill of Lading – Traditional meaning: the basic document of a cargo-conveying sea vessel, showing receipt of the goods carried. In the *Cutter*: Table of Contents.

Main Prop – Traditional meaning: short for main propulsion -- under sail or steam, this is the primary means of making the ship go. In the *Cutter*: feature articles.

The Wardroom – Traditional meaning: the space where necessary ship's business might be conducted. In the *Cutter*: FCGH affairs.

Speakings – Traditional meaning: in the days of sail, with no long-range communications, ships passing would "speak" each other, exchanging port info and news from shore. In the *Cutter*: passages and transitions -- of ships, the "Ancients," and people.

Memorials – Traditional meaning: a statement of facts addressed to the government, usually accompanied by a petition or remonstrance. In the *Cutter*: updated news on maritime museums and memorials – usually accompanied by a petition for support!

The Message Board – Traditional meaning: on naval ships, paper copies of message traffic routed for the eyes of those with a need to know. In the *Cutter*: reprints of relevant CG messages.

In the Offing -- Traditional meaning: this referred to coming over the horizon from the deep sea to approach the land. In the *Cutter*: notices of upcoming events.

Off-Duty -- Traditional meaning: not on watch; time to relax. In the *Cutter*: book and movie reviews and recommendations.

Baggywrinkle -- Traditional meaning: bits and pieces of old line gathered together to fill a spot where gear might otherwise chafe. In the *Cutter*: interesting historical oddments used as filler.

Note on Baggywrinkle - Except as otherwise identified, all items of Baggywrinkle are from "Some Unusual Incidents in Coast Guard History," Historical Section, Public Information Division, CGHQ, 1950

The Wardroom

From the Executive Director, Gary Thomas, CDR USCG

Well, VADM Hull and I pulled in the lines and got underway on the new voyage that we've embarked upon. While I mentioned last edition that I was excited to be your new OPS BOSS, I really wasn't sure what I'd gotten myself into. What I have discovered is that each day I am more pleased with the opportunities it has given me to learn even more about Coast Guard history! In the short time I've had the job, I've been privileged to: present the Foundation's oil painting print to the newest Coast Guard Silver Ancient Mariner, Master Chief Richard Vobornik; meet some great folks from the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association; chat with both the Coast Guard's Historian (Dr. Browning) and the Coast Guard Academy's Curator (Ms Jennifer Gaudio) about how we can support them; learn about the only Coast Guard Officer who was part of the Bataan "death march;" and attend a meeting of the United States Life-Saving Service Historical Association.

And what have I learned from this short time as the OPS Boss? Well, just this: "history becomes real when you participate," which you see as the tag line below my column and in my emails. So, what exactly do I mean by that? By becoming involved with the Foundation, I've been able to hear about and be part of history as it is being discovered, learned and shared. Without having volunteered for this job, I might not have learned until sometime next year that the aircraft of LT John A. Pritchard, USCG, has been located under 60 feet of ice—and that's only *if* someone wrote an article about it. Without having volunteered, I might have been more likely to say, "Who is he?" Now I know that he was lost during WWII while on a rescue mission to save a B-17 crew, was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, and that the aircraft has been found in part through the efforts of some dedicated Coast Guard aviators volunteering their time over the

past several years. In coming editions, we'll tell you more of the story.

So that is my suggestion to you: do as I have, become involved. Let us know about the stories that are out there that you know of. Send your articles to our Editor, Rob Ayer, so that we can share the history with others. Have some spare time? Contact your nearest Coast Guard unit and ask them what they are doing to preserve their unit's history – maybe you can help them scan in some photos, create a scrapbook, or organize their boxes of press clippings. In doing so, you're putting your hands on history and actively helping to preserve it. Remember, history that isn't captured and preserved for the future might as well not have happened. Our Guardians throughout our history have placed their lives at risk to accomplish the mission; we owe it to them to help tell their story.

Of course, as the “new guy”, I've wandered off the trackline a few times administratively in my daily duties, but I've been fortunate to have an experienced Board of Regents who have brought me back on course and kept me out of shoal water to ensure all our energies are devoted directly to our mission of promoting, preserving and educating people about Coast Guard history. Rest assured, the Board of Regents represents the goals of our organization well, and your interests are well protected.

And speaking of administrative items, if you would share your email addresses with us, we can reduce our costs for sending out renewal notices and other administrative correspondence. That saves us money that we can apply to other efforts. While you're at it, think about opting to receive the *Cutter* via email instead of in the regular mail; that too would reduce our costs. Remember, all of us are volunteers, and all our revenues go back into the organization, so any money saved is money “earned back” to the Foundation.

There really has only been one thing that I've not been able to accomplish, and that is getting feedback from you, our shipmates. I'd like to

think that lack of feedback means that we're providing you a great product, and that Rob Ayer is doing a great job with the *Cutter*—because I know he is. However, every organization needs feedback, and I'd like to hear from you. We don't have a “Letters to the Editor” section, but my email address and phone number are below. Let me know if we're covering the right topics in Coast Guard history; let me know about additional topics you want to see; and, most importantly, let me know where we can improve the product we're delivering to you.

With that, we're underway as before. Make all your reports to the bridge.

Baggywrinkle:

Providing water-borne security for America's Cup sailing races was long a responsibility of Coast Guard cutters, boats and personnel. The following relates to an America's Cup defense from an even earlier era – Ed.: Galatea, a 103-foot cutter, was the British challenger for the Cup in 1886. She was defeated by the American defender, Mayflower, in two races off Sandy Hook, NJ. Until 1956 it was required that yachts competing in the Cup competition had to sail to the competition on their own bottoms. Galatea's owner, William Henn, sailed his vessel across the Atlantic along with his wife, several dogs, and a monkey. – from The Dictionary of Nautical Literacy by Robert McKenna (CGA C'85)

Baggywrinkle:

The “Lifesavers” hard candies, so named because they resembled miniature life rings—a shape so familiar to sailors—were introduced in 1912. One of the first marketing slogans for the roll candies was “for that stormy breath.” – from *The Dictionary of Nautical Literacy* by Robert McKenna (CGA C'85)

The Wardroom

By Sara Elward with Fred Herzberg, Founder and Executive Director Emeritus, FCGH

DO YOU WANT TO BE REMEMBERED?

Most of us want to be remembered, to feel that we have made a difference in this life. Of course, your service to your country has made a difference; but now you have another opportunity to make a difference, one that will insure that the U.S. Coast Guard and the individuals who served in it will be remembered: you can include the Foundation for Coast Guard History in your will or trust.

Including the Foundation in your will or trust serves several purposes, each of which may be important to you:

-You will make a difference. Supporting the Foundation preserves the history, the heritage, the deeds and heroic actions of you and your mates.

-You will be remembered. Your name will be added to the list of benefactors who support the Foundation.

-You will lead by example. Your gift may inspire others to do the same by creating a model of service and philanthropy for your mates, your family and your friends.

If you need information about including the Foundation in your will or trust, please contact our treasurer, Rick Batson, *phone number, e-mail and/or mailing address*. If your estate already includes the Foundation, please let us know; we want to recognize your generosity. Informing FCGH of your prospective gift helps us plan for the organization's future. Of course, confidentiality and anonymity are assured if you wish them.

Bequests are a key element in preserving the heritage of the United States Coast Guard. The Foundation is a federally-recognized 501(c)3 organization, so estate gifts will provide tax benefits to your estate to the extent allowed by law.

Thank you for considering naming FCGH in your will. You *can* be remembered, and you *can* make a difference.

YES, I would like to make a difference by supporting FCGH:

--I would like more information about wills and estate planning.

--I would like to learn more about gifts that provide lifetime income.

--I am considering a gift to "The Foundation for Coast Guard History" through my estate plan.

--I have already provided for "The Foundation for Coast Guard History" in my estate plans.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone (_____) _____

E-mail _____

Requests for information impose no obligation and are confidential.

The Wardroom

Your ongoing contributions to the FCGH assist us in supporting important research on USCG history projects. The following report updates one such research project; a previous report appeared in Cutter #22 (Spring 2007) without clearly crediting LCDR Bennett for his earlier work and results. – Ed.

Guardian Spies” Update:

Michael Bennett, LCDR USCG, in addition to his regular duties is also a researcher sponsored by the Foundation for Coast Guard History. His overall project falls under the heading of “Guardian Spies.” His article “Guardian Spies, The Story of the Coast Guard and OSS in WWII” won the 2008 Coast Guard Alex Haley Award for Writing. His most recent article appeared in the December 2008 issue of the CIA Center for the Study of Intelligence publication *Studies in Intelligence* (Volume 52, Number 4). For his accomplishments LCDR Bennett received an award from Admiral J. Scott Burhoe, Superintendent of the Coast Guard Academy, in a ceremony on July 1, 2009.

Other significant accomplishments for the “Guardian Spies” project include:

- The creation of a digital archive of over 3000 documents and photos.
- Recent updates to the website with over 3 hours of declassified video footage covering the Coast Guard men attached to the Maritime Unit of the OSS. These men were the foundation for what later became U.S. Navy SEALs and were the frogmen of the Office of Strategic Services. Three separate Operational Swimmer Groups were created by the OSS Maritime Unit; and out of 226 men approximately 80 were from the Coast Guard. (The rest were Navy, Marines and Army.)
- An additional 6 hours of declassified video footage has been recovered and is being digitized.
- Recent updates of OSS Maritime Unit member names on the website have facilitated contact with relatives across the United States. Family members conducting open source research on the www have been able to find their relative, obtain copies of the declassified files from

LCDR Bennett, and get help with filling in the gaps in the story line through interviews and the sharing of documents and photos.

- The Guardinspies.com web site receives approximately 450 unique hits monthly, ranking it number one in its category for Coast Guard Intelligence History. It is linked to by history and college websites across the country, such as the OSS Society.

Breaking News:

As a result of recent discoveries at the National Archives in Washington D.C. and through collaboration with the National Security Agency Historian’s Office, LCDR Bennett and his research assistant CWO Britt Henderson have uncovered the existence of an Intelligence Specialist Rating in World War II entitled Intel Specialist “X,” as well as the unit history of Coast Guard Unit 387, the Coast Guard Communication Intelligence Unit in World War II responsible for cracking the Green Enigma Code. That’s right: the Coast Guard cracked the first Enigma code! This was the code of the German Abwehr and was referred to as “Enigma G,” or the Green Enigma. CG Unit 387 was assigned responsibility for world-wide clandestine radio intelligence and Western Hemisphere clandestine radio intelligence collection, which it shared with the F.B.I. for the duration of the war.

This new history uncovered by LCDR Bennett has even found its way into a speech of the Commandant, Admiral Thad Allen, in a recent forum at the National Defense Intelligence College in Washington, D.C.:

“It was on September 11th, 1941, when Coast Guard Unit 387 - our embedded cryptologic unit - was transferred along with the rest of the Coast Guard to the Department of the Navy. Throughout World War II, CG signals intelligence personnel worked to intercept over 10,000 encrypted enemy communications and played a key role in cracking the Green Enigma code of Nazi Germany.

We disestablished our program after World War II, but we became active again over the last 30 years, working with the Department of Defense and other federal agencies to counter transnational threats such as drug smuggling and illegal migration, in addition to traditional national security threats. As a result, the Coast Guard formally joined the Intelligence Community (IC) in 2002.

Today we have our own Service Cryptographic Group located at Fort Meade and are in the process of standing up our Coast Guard Cyber Command.”

The Intel Specialist “X” rating was responsible for support to the Captain of the Port (COTP)—similar to modern-day Coast Guard Sector Intelligence Officers (SIOs)—and included approximately 230 active duty and reserve members with wide responsibility for counterintelligence, counterespionage, anti-sabotage operations and merchant mariner investigations within U.S. ports. They also coordinated with the F.B.I., Office of Naval Intelligence, and local and state law enforcement officials. This rate was demobilized at the end of the war, and most of these functions were rolled into the day-to-day operations of the Captain of the Port.

These are significant finds for Coast Guard History and U.S. Military History during World War II. With the exponential expansion of the Coast Guard Intelligence Program post-September 11, 2001, many parallels can be drawn between Coast Guard intelligence operations in World War II and those in the post-9/11 environment because of the Coast Guard’s unique authority, access, capabilities, and missions. These recent discoveries of the Intelligence Specialist “X” rating and CG Unit 387 have significantly expanded the scope of the “Guardian Spies” project to cover all of Coast Guard Intelligence in World War II. LCDR Bennett is currently working on a book-length manuscript that encompasses all of this history and is searching for a publisher. He is scheduled to present his recent findings on CG Unit 387 at the National Cryptologic Symposium hosted by the National Cryptologic Museum at the National Security Agency (NSA) on October 15-16, 2009, and is working with the museum to create a display for CG Unit 387 history. More information can be found at www.guardianspies.com.

Lieutenant Commander Bennett is currently a Director’s Fellow at the National Security

Agency for 2009 – 2010. Chief Warrant Officer Henderson is currently a marine inspector at Sector Delaware Bay.

The Wardroom

FCGH-Supported Intern Completes Summer’s Work *By Dr. Robert Browning*

Olivia Smith, this year’s summer intern in the Coast Guard Historian’s office in DC, grew up in a suburb of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; however, despite her proximity to a place rich in history, she didn’t become interested in the subject until attending Goucher College in Towson, Maryland. She graduated in 2004 with a Bachelor of Arts in Historic Preservation. The interest arose from trips home to Rockdale, where, with each new visit, she found that more of the area’s historic character had been lost.

Since developing an appreciation for and an understanding of the importance of history, Olivia has spent time at several organizations that keep historic records. She has worked at three National Park Service sites (Hampton NHS, Martin Van Buren NHS and Weir Farm NHS), the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania and the Chadds Ford Historical Society. When she has time, she enjoys volunteering for Passport in Time, a volunteer archaeology and historic preservation program, which is administered by the Forest Service as well as at Winterthur Museum and Country Estate.

Olivia will be attending Parsons School of Design in New York this fall, where she plans to get a Master of Arts in the History of Decorative Arts.

During her 8-week internship in the Coast Guard Historian’s Office, she processed lighthouse files. She removed staples and other damaging metal material from the files and rehoused the photos in archivally-sound sleeves. In addition, she prepared a preliminary inventory of the files. She worked through over 600 files which spanned more than 50 linear feet. Olivia answered historical inquiries and prepared a short piece on uniforms for the website. She also assisted with a digitizing project to prepare 6 images for loan to the Corcoran Gallery of Art.

The Coast Guard Historian’s office is very grateful for the support from the Foundation that allowed Olivia to make this contribution to the preservation of Coast Guard history.

Main Prop

The Coast Guard Ironclad

By Paul Fawcett

The most famous ironclads of the Civil War are undoubtedly the CSS *Virginia* and the USS *Monitor*. Their place in history is firmly cemented because of their parts in the first duel between ironclads. But these dreadnoughts had a smaller, lesser-known cousin. This “other” ironclad was one of the more unique warships of the conflict between brothers, and belonged to neither Union nor Confederate Navies, but to the US Revenue Cutter Service (USRCS), a predecessor service of the US Coast Guard.

The US Revenue Cutter *Naugatuck* was a 101-foot, steam-powered, twin-screwed gunboat built in 1844. Her name came from a Native American word meaning “fork in the river.” Her configuration as a steamer with “screws” or propellers put her a technological leap ahead of many of her sister Navy ships and Revenue cutters which were configured for sail, or with side paddle wheels if fitted for steam.

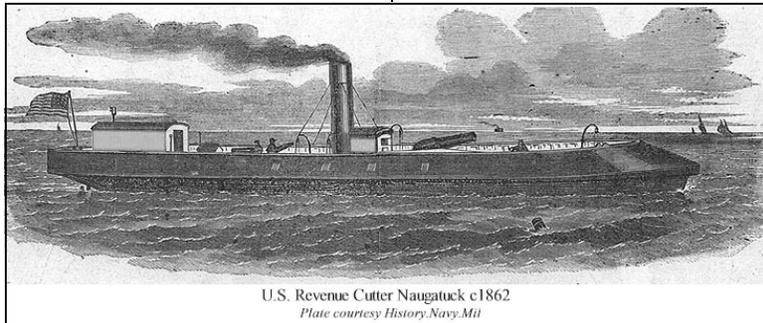
The *Naugatuck*, also referred to as *Ironsides* in various records, boasted a 100-pound turreted parrot rifle main armament and two 12-pounders as secondary armament. The turret was a new concept at the time and was revolutionary in that it permitted the vessel to bring its guns to bear on the target without turning the entire vessel. But the most unique feature of the *Naugatuck* was her semi-submersible capability. This innovative little cruiser contained void spaces that she could pump full with water within fifteen minutes and out again within eight. With her ballast tanks empty she drew six feet, in ballast she drew another three feet, increasing her draft to nine feet. This allowed her to go into battle with only her gun turret showing above water, providing her greater protection against enemy battery fire. She could also lessen her draft to clear obstructions or shallow-water areas that might stop other vessels.ⁱ

The *Naugatuck* was the brainchild of New Jersey

businessman Edwin A. Stevens and his brother Robert, who had lobbied Congress to build an armored monitor to defend New York harbor, a project known as the “Stevens Battery.” But the effort languished in the development stage for over thirty years, consuming government funding as well as the Stevenses’ private funds.

Ultimately the *Naugatuck* was produced as a proof-of-concept vessel, albeit much smaller and less elaborate than the proposed Stevens Battery. In an unusual method of acquisition—apparently in an attempt to reinvigorate government interest in the project—she was donated to the Treasury Department, which turned her over to the Revenue Cutter service.ⁱⁱ

Like many of her sister revenue cutters such as *Harriet Lane* and *Miami*, she was taken into service with the US Navy at the outbreak of the war due to the fact that the Union Navy was chronically short of available warships. On May 8, 1862, *Naugatuck*



U.S. Revenue Cutter *Naugatuck* c1862
Plate courtesy History.Navy.Mil

saw her first action, shelling Confederate positions at Sewells Point, VA, with her flotilla mates USS *Monitor*, USS *Dakota*, USS *Seminole* and USS *Susquehanna*.ⁱⁱⁱ

On the personal order of President Lincoln, who was directing troops in the field for a short period after the fall of Norfolk, VA, a flotilla was dispatched up the James River. Accompanied by her flotilla mates USS *Monitor*, USS *Galena*, USS *Aroostock* and USS *Port Royal*, *Naugatuck* sailed up the James River headed for the Richmond, the seat of the Confederate government. The *Naugatuck* led the squadron, with the thought that, due to her semi-submersible nature, she could pump out her ballast and clear any obstructions she might encounter in the river. But before the flotilla reached Richmond it encountered heavy Rebel fortifications at Drewry’s Bluff, known as Fort Darling, which had been completed just in time to oppose the Union gunships. The Southerners were well dug in, with Confederate soldiers, marines and sailors manning heavy-caliber guns, some recently removed from Confederate warships, and rifle pits.^{iv} The Confederates had also succeeded in mining the James River below the Fort with a collection of junk

including stone, chain, and other debris, designed to impede Union warships from continuing upriver. The flotilla stood to and engaged in a gun duel with the Fort's artillery, supporting riflemen and the Confederate Navy vessel CSS *Patrick Henry*. During the ensuing battle the *Naugatuck's* turret exploded, essentially disarming her. The USS *Galena* was also heavily damaged by counter-battery fire and musket fire raking her decks, and was forced to withdraw. The flotilla retreated back down the James River to lick its wounds, and Richmond lived to fight on.^v

After the battle of Drewry's Bluff the *Naugatuck* was repaired, renamed the *E. A. Stevens* after her patron, and assigned to guard New York Harbor—the initial purpose for the ill-fated Stevens Battery project!^{vi}

Two other USCG vessels have since borne the name *Naugatuck*. A 100-foot patrol boat served under that name during the prohibition era, 1926-1935. The third and last cutter to be named *Naugatuck* was a 110-foot harbor tug commissioned in 1939 which ended her service life in 1979.

The *Naugatuck* is an indication of the USRCS and USCG organizational attitude: she wasn't necessarily the right tool for the job; she was twenty years old by the time the RCS received her; and she was much smaller and more lightly armed than her contemporaries. But she was the weapon at hand and the job needed to be done, so the RCS used what it had, setting the example for all cuttermen who followed in her wake.

ⁱT. Strobridge, *The United States Coast Guard and the Civil War*. Retrieved January 27, 2008 from United States Coast Guard Historian, Website: http://www.uscg.mil/history/articles/Civil_War_Strobridge.html

ⁱⁱDepartment of the Navy. *Online Library of Selected Ships: USS Naugatuck*. Retrieved January 28, 2008, from Naval Historical Center Web site: <http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/sh-usn/usnsh/n/naugatck.htm>

ⁱⁱⁱD. Eicher, *The Longest Night: A Military History of the Civil War* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 2001).

^{iv}United States Coast Guard, *U.S. Coast Guard Cutters and Craft: Naugatuck, 1862*. Retrieved January 29, 2008 from Historian Web site <http://>

www.uscg.mil/history/webcutters/Naugatuck_1862.html
^vMy Civil War, *The Battle of Fort Darling/Drewry's Bluff (First)*. Retrieved January 31, 2008 from Web site: <http://www.mycivilwar.com/battles/620515b.htm>

Main Prop

The Battle of Cardenas Bay and the Importance of Honor and Teamwork

by William Thiesen, Coast Guard Atlantic Area Historian, Portsmouth, Va.

The War with Spain in 1898 was a very brief engagement as most wars go, but it proved another reminder of the U.S. Revenue Service's ability to serve its nation honorably. A predecessor service to today's Coast Guard, the Revenue Service fought proudly in both Atlantic and Pacific theaters of this war, also known as the Spanish-American War. While numerous revenue cutters served honorably throughout the hostilities, few distinguished themselves as much as the Revenue Cutter *Hudson*.

In March 1898, after the United States declared war with Spain, an executive order placed the *Hudson* and all other revenue cutters under the direction of the U.S. Navy. After a short time, this small cutter received an armament of two six-pound rapid-fire guns and a Colt automatic "machine" gun. Designed to serve harbor patrol duties on the East Coast, the new 95-foot *Hudson* was technologically advanced for its time, with all-steel plating and a triple-expansion reciprocating steam engine.

Despite its special features, *Hudson's* crew really set the cutter apart from the rest of the fleet. The crew of twenty included First Lieutenant J. H. Scott, Third Lieutenant Ernest Mead, First Assistant Engineer N. E. Cutchin, Second Assistant Engineer T. G. Lewton, Steward's Mate H. Savage and Cook Moses Jones. *Hudson's* captain, LT Frank Newcomb, had served in the Civil War and would later serve as a Coast Guard officer in World War I. Newcomb was the only crew member who had served in wartime, but he would later write in an after-action report that each of his crewmen performed "in a cool and efficient manner" under fire.

By May 1898, the *Hudson* had been attached to the naval squadron blockading Spanish shipping between Matanzas and Cardenas, Cuba. During the early days of that month, three Spanish gunboats

had sortied from Cardenas to harass the American squadron. Due to the threat posed by these enemy vessels, squadron leader CDR John Merry (USN) decided to destroy the gunboats while they sat moored in Cardenas harbor. On May 11, the torpedo boat USS *Winslow* spearheaded the attack, with the slower *Hudson* following behind. As soon as the *Winslow* entered the harbor, Spanish shore batteries and gunboats opened fire on the torpedo boat, disabling it and killing or wounding many aboard.

During the battle, the *Hudson* crew served with honor as they manned guns and worked on deck without any protection from enemy fire. Commanded by LTs Scott and Mead, the gun crews kept up a steady covering fire at close range as the *Hudson* moved in to rescue the crippled *Winslow* and its surviving crew members. At the height of the action the *Hudson* kept up a hot covering fire of 135 rounds in the span of twenty minutes. According to Mead, each one of the rounds “shook *Hudson* from stem to stern.” As the *Hudson* drew nearer to the *Winslow*, enemy rounds landed all around, and one of them felled a group of the *Winslow*’s crew members trying to receive the towline. After 30 minutes under constant fire, the crew of the *Hudson* managed to secure a line to the *Winslow* and tow the boat out of range of Spanish guns. The day’s action had resulted in the destruction of two Spanish gunboats, but it cost the lives of several crewmembers aboard the *Winslow*, including the only naval officer lost during the war. The *Hudson* had been spared serious damage and departed that evening carrying dispatches and the *Winslow*’s dead and wounded crewmen to Key West.

Many men served with honor that day at Cardenas. Congress awarded three *Winslow* crewmembers the Medal of Honor. On special recommendation by President McKinley, Congress honored the *Hudson*’s crew with specially-minted medals for their valor. A joint resolution provided LT Newcomb with the war’s only gold medal awarded by Congress and silver medals to his officers. Congress awarded bronze medals to the crew, including Steward’s Mate Savage and Cook Jones, who had each fed ammunition to their respective six-pound gun mounts. This is likely the first time in Coast Guard history that African-Americans received such recognition for action against an enemy on the high seas.

The crew of the *Hudson* performed honorably in the face of intense enemy fire. In a letter written to the Treasury Department a month after the enemy action at Cardenas, Newcomb reported, “Each and

every member of the crew ... did his whole duty cheerfully and without the least hesitation.” The honor and discipline demonstrated by *Hudson*’s officers and enlisted men allowed the crew to work as a team to fulfill the vessel’s mission in spite of the odds against their success.



This painting by Dean Ellis depicts the Revenue Cutter Hudson rescuing the Torpedo Boat Winslow. Reproduced with permission from the artist.

Main Prop

A Radioman in the U.S. Coast Guard

By Michael Chartuk

On December 8, 1941—out of the U.S. Coast Guard radio school as a Radioman Third Class, owning a solid 26 words per minute Morse code rating—I was assigned to a USCG monitoring station. It was located at Southampton, New York—inside a luxurious, beach-front mansion. Upon arrival I was led into a small room, where I saw two USCG second-class radiomen wearing headphones, seated at a long bench. With but a glance at me, each continued tuning what I could see was a National HRO shortwave radio receiver. A Chief Radioman, introducing himself as Hackworth, seated at a third HRO, pointed to a fourth, saying “Get a pair of earphones.”

After a quick look out a window, where I saw tall poles and strung wires, I sat at the radio receiver and found and plugged in the earphones, just like the ones at radio school. “What am I supposed to do?” I asked.

“Look for clandestine transmissions...five-letter code. If it’s a weak signal, copy as much

as you can.”

It wasn't long before I came across just that: five-letter code, at a pretty good rate, but with good “fist” which I could easily copy. The Chief leaned over to look. “Never mind that,” he said. “It's a German sub.” I was copying a German sub! But never mind that!

In a while the Chief looked at a paper which I had filled up. He pointed to something I had scribbled down—a long string of a 3-letter call sign, followed by a cryptic “QRU AR K.” In radioman language that means, “End of transmission, please reply.” He asked, “At what dial position did you find that?”

I didn't remember. “What is QRU?” I asked.

“It's a Q-Signal. It means, ‘I have nothing for you. Do you have anything for me?’”

But another day the other radiomen found my 3-letter call-sign guy and his “QRU AR K.” This was my first German spy! And a day later, instead of a QRU, I copied solid my first spy message—in the 5-letter code the Germans always used. Proof: he signed off with an “HH.” Easy to guess what “HH” meant.

Three-letter call signs, 5-letter code sent in precise German “fist”: I soon learned this was what to look for. It was the communication between German spy stations and their home station in Hamburg. What was in the messages—save for what was pertinent to our operations, such as call signs to look for—was never divulged by decoders at Washington Headquarters, where all were sent. But for sure, much of it had to be ship convoy departures from U.S. ports.

There were other suspicious radio transmissions to copy; for example, Spanish ships, with their raspy spark transmitters, unlike the pure, constant-wave tones of the German transmitters. And daily there was a clandestine station using the odd call sign UU2, which sounded in Morse code like the rhythm of the William Tell overture. And there was the spy home station

in Hamburg with the call sign AOR: he was on daily. But he never sent his messages in a complete string; he'd stop and shift frequency, then send V's until contact was made again. He was the only one who did this. It was a workout for us, but we managed to keep up, knowing that when he used the Q-signal QSY he'd shift soon. There was one other station of great interest to me. He used the call sign CEL. His signal strength was low, which put him at a distant location. He came on only occasionally. His keying was extremely slow; it seemed a couple of seconds between characters, making it easy to tune right through him. He transmitted the usual formula of QRU AR K. We never copied a message from him.

Why was the Coast Guard doing this, not the Navy or some other U.S. Government agency? Coast Guard radiomen being capable of it was a good reason—but there was a better one. During Prohibition, interdiction of rum runners was the Coast Guard's task, in the course of which the Coast Guard regularly monitored the clandestine radio transmissions between rum runners and foreign ships offshore. After those thirteen years of experience, it was a natural choice to include the Coast Guard in the monitoring of clandestine radio transmissions, now of foreign spies.

It may well be asked, “Why weren't these spy stations hunted down and put out of business, their operators shot?” What for? We intercepted and decoded all of their messages, so their harm was neutralized. Just say, the devil we know is better than the devil we don't know.

Fitting right in, I did fine. The German “fist” was easy to copy; I found my share of new spy stations; and, yes, Southampton was a great liberty town. The war was just started; people couldn't do enough for us. I boarded at a local home: good meals, laundry done. Many visits to a USO that had started up at the American Legion hall, local girls—ah, the life. Of course, we could never divulge what we were doing.

Trainees fresh from the Coast Guard radio school came aboard, soon making up watches of five men each. Promoted along the way to Radioman First Class, I was by this time watch supervisor.

After little more than a year at the Southampton station, I was called in by Chief Hackworth. He said they were sending out Naval Intelligence task groups to set up other monitoring stations. “You have a choice between Recife, Brazil, or Ciudad Trujillo, Dominican Republic.” I “volunteered” for Ciudad Trujillo—maybe because I had never heard of the place.

“Okay. You will be in charge. Pick four to go with you.”

Our group—myself as RM1, along with Radiomen Second Class Jim Harkin, Clint Wheeler, Tom Marks, and Frank Prior—took a train to Miami for a week’s stay, then a flight aboard a PBY. In an hour we landed at Ciudad Trujillo (the city formerly known as Santo Domingo).

Seabags and all, we boarded a taxi—vintage even in 1943; the driver, thinking he knew exactly where to take us, dropped us off at a wharf on the river Ozama. There we saw tied up a U.S. Navy destroyer escort and a U.S. Coast Guard 125-footer.

Seeing a USCG emblem on a door, we walked in and were greeted with, “Where did you come from?!” by a USCG LTJG. The Lieutenant had no idea what to do with us, but— noticing “U.S. Naval Attaché” on our orders, and seeing we were on “subs and quarters”— said, “You’re on your own. The Naval Attaché is at the embassy.” After a one-night stay in an old hotel (supper and breakfast beyond imagination), the taxi driver—who had waited around— took me to the U.S. Embassy on Cordell Hull Street.

There LCOL Roger Willock, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Naval Attaché, took me to a storage room, where my eyes lit upon a stack of five HROs, a pile of coiled antenna wire, insu-

lators, a locked file cabinet, and a typewriter. The colonel introduced me to a U.S. Army sergeant, saying, “Sergeant Abrams here will help you get set up at the radio station.”

After a jeep ride heading north out of the city—a bone-jarring ride, during some of which the only sign of a road was the woodpoled power line that we followed along, as we dodged natives on their burros, and got stuck for a while in a scary cattle drive, long horns slicing in and out of the jeep—we arrived. “Kilometro Ocho,” the sergeant announced.

If I had expected something special, I didn’t get it. All there was to see was a decrepit, white-washed, concrete building; the terminus for the power line we had followed for eight kilometers barely emerged from head-high grass. The only thing that signified “radio station” was what looked like a dipole antenna strung between wooden poles. There were some people around; Sergeant Abrams introduced me to a Dominican Army sergeant, Bacco by name, who spoke a little English.

I looked around: some primitive plumbing, a screen door, an almond tree. Looking very much out of place, a Hallicrafters radio transmitter sat on a high bench. I saw a separate concrete structure with a doorless opening, and inside it a concrete platform on which a charcoal fire glowed under a rattling coffee pot.

Sergeant Abrams took me on a narrow boardwalk out of sight into tall-grass jungle. We came upon an Adcock rotating direction-finder, with a U.S. Army private, wearing earphones, on duty. “Nothing,” the sergeant received in answer to his “Anything?”

The sergeant found us a house to rent, complete with a cook at five dollars a month, a maid at two-fifty a month, and a yard boy at two-fifty a month. The cook, an English-speaking Jamaican, turned out to be a treasure. After settling in, I went to the Coast Guard office to make sure of our pay. There, to questions I could not or would not answer, I had to reply with a terse “Naval Intelligence”—

always received with suspicion. Nonetheless, we stood well on our own.

Sergeant Abrams took me to the Dominican Army fort in the city to introduce me to Lt. Saladin, head of the Dominican Army Signal Corps, and a man who would be of invaluable help. At my request he had his men raise a 50' pole, then string long-wire antennas from the top of the pole out in different directions, into grassy jungle partly cleared by stripe-uniformed convicts borrowed from a Dominican prison. Enough wire slacked down from the top of the pole—climbed by a Dominican Army private—to lead into the concrete building, then to each of four receivers. (The fifth HRO was a cannibalized spare.)

We were in business. Our antenna array, if not very elegant, worked fine. Spy stations barely discernible at Southampton came through loud and clear here at Kilometro Ocho, and vice versa. We tried the Adcock out in the tall-grass jungle, but it proved of no use to us—its receiver sensitivity was too low. Sergeant Abrams and the two U.S. Army radiomen who had manned the station, with its transmitter and direction-finder, did not much comprehend our approach. Within a few days, at their request, they were transferred out—but I laid claim to their jeep.

As the days and weeks passed we became better and better at our work. Daily I delivered to the Naval Attaché written copy of all clandestine matter we intercepted. Among themselves my four radiomen set up a twenty-four-hour, seven-day watch at the station; I became charged with all else. I was quartermaster, yeoman, caretaker, errand-boy, housekeeper, chauffeur, diplomat, and all-around scrounge, wherever it took me: to Puerto Rico for clothes and supplies; to the Dominican Army garage for gas for the jeep, or springs, or the welding back on of the spare tire bracket; to the U.S. Embassy for money to pay bills, or to the U.S. Navy doctor there for medicine or for APC's (Clint came down with jaundice, Tom got malaria, I caught dengue fever, Montezuma's revenge did not spare any of us; I spelled anyone

who couldn't make his watch).

The Dominican Army, on Lt. Saladin's assurance, with Sergeant Bacco in charge, maintained a twenty-four-hour guard at the station and daily saw to stripe-suited prisoners with machetes who kept down the grass jungle surrounding the station. In turn we were happy to teach English and to allow Morse-code practice.

In a list of clandestine 3-letter call signs sent to us by headquarters there appeared the call sign CEL; I remembered it from back in Southampton. I had heard it there only once, having to dig it out of static; other operators there had heard it; but no one was ever able to copy a message. Maybe we could pick it up here at "Kilometro Ocho." I remembered the very slow, deliberate way the operator transmitted a long string of his call sign, his QRU and his AR K. I told my watch-standers to look out for his signal, maybe even a message; I gave a dial setting where he might be found. A couple months went by, and we were about to give up on this one. But one day, coming in with Jim Harking—Jim to relieve Tom Marks, on duty since midnight, me to pick up reports of our operations to take back to COL Willock for sending on to headquarters—Tom handed me a paper and said, "Look what I found. I got CEL and a message, solid."

We wasted no time. I got out our coding machine, added some nonsense words, then coded CEL's call sign and message into our code of the day. We fired up the radio transmitter—our call sign was HIQG—and radioed the recorded message to headquarters in Washington.

The German spy stations by now pretty much had settled into routine. We could sit and wait for them; their time to come on and band positions were well known to us; those that changed call signs, we'd know in advance what they'd be; we were on new spy stations as soon as they came up; we even took breathing spells with them. As noted, we never knew what was in the messages, as they were always coded; but suffice it to say, we fell easily into their

operation—with the exception of the station using CEL, which was once and away: we did not hear from him again, even with a receiver locked on him.

One day, riding in with Tom Marks—Tom to relieve Frank Prior, Frank to take the jeep back—it was my intention to spend the day with Tom on his eight-to-four. I wanted to try out a wax cylinder Dictaphone given to me by COL Willock. In hooking up the Dictaphone Tom and I found a weak station, of whose message we could copy only about half; but on playback the machine did well: we were able to retrieve several code words missed the first time around.

When lunchtime came around we shared some rice and beans and Coca Colas with the station guards, then I started on some paperwork. But soon I heard a guard halting a car. It was an embassy car. I let in two U.S. Navy officers. One of the officers pinned a green/white ribbon on my undress whites blouse and said, “Radioman Chartuk, you are awarded the Navy Commendation medal and you are promoted to Chief Radioman.”

Promoted to Chief: more pay, chuck the sailor suit, great! A medal? What was that for? “We are not supposed to tell you, but...”

The German Navy had deployed a wolf pack of forty submarines (!) in a line stretched across the expected path of a ship they were out to sink. They set up a radio lookout station disguised as flotsam. The lookout aboard the flotsam—whose call sign was CEL—spied the subs’ target underway and alerted the submarines. The targeted ship would have to pass between at least two submarines, which would converge and fire torpedoes into the ship’s stern with the intention of disabling its propellers and rudder to put the ship dead in the water or make it run helplessly in a circle with a jammed rudder. The other submarines would close in and fire volleys of torpedoes until the ship was sunk with all aboard. Lifeboats and survivors in the water would be machine-gunned.

“The lookout’s message that your station intercepted—you were the only one—when decoded, gave them away. The ship was given urgent advice in time to change course out of harm’s way.”

“The ship”? Was it the *Queen Mary*, the “Gray Ghost,” sailing independently with a U.S. Army division aboard—15,000 soldiers—along with 400 of the ship’s crew?

The war in Europe came to an end. As if someone threw a giant switch, the German spy network fell silent. After four months of nothing Japanese, with no enthusiasm for Russian stations—their messages in tiresome five-number code—came news of the dropping of an atomic bomb.

On orders, I burned every evidence of our operations, and then I sent everyone home. With gratuities I thanked our cook, maid, and houseboy. I paid off Mr. Pou, the landlord, and moved into the Jaragua, a hotel on the Caribbean; on chief’s pay I could afford it.

But my job was not quite finished: there was U.S. Government property to look to. It took a couple of months, but I managed to sell it all, at cost, to the Dominican government: the HROs, the transmitter, the Adcock direction-finder, the emptied file cabinet, the Dictaphone, the typewriter, the jeep, and anything else around. I thanked and said goodbye to COL Willock and to Lt. Saladin, who had been of such help to me. I made sure Tom got recommended for the Navy Commendation medal. I found out what happened to CEL, on his flotsam raft—a U.S. Navy destroyer took care of that. Then I—a twenty-four-year-old U.S. Coast Guard sailor who represented the United States in a foreign country both militarily and diplomatically, who did shake hands, eye-to-eye, with the president of the Dominican Republic—returned home to ship out.

ADDENDUM

A few years ago I wrote to the Bureau of Naval Personnel requesting the medals to which I was

entitled. I did receive the U.S. Coast Guard Good Conduct Medal with bronze star, the American Defense Service Medal (with clasp), the American Campaign Medal, and the World War II Victory Medal; but as to the Naval Commendation Medal, there was no record of this award.

Main Prop

USCG Aviation History in the 1950s

By Victor E. Roulund (AD2, 1952-1956)

The following are some of my experiences with USCG Aviation, especially the Yuba City floods of December 24, 1955, including how we received the Distinguished Flying Cross for our rescue of over 138 flood victims that night.

Previous to Yuba City: How I got into the Coast Guard during the Korean War: I was down in Florida working, pumping gas, and waiting to be drafted. I got my draft notice that I had to go to NY to go into the Army. I decided to join the Marines: only two years at that time—if you lived. I got to the NY recruiting office, but a Coast Guard recruiter grabbed me and sold me on joining the Coast Guard (“Probably spending my time fishing off the New Jersey coast on a 40-footer.” What a laugh: I never got aboard a Coastie ship).

I went to Cape May, NJ, and took many tests and qualified to go to aircraft mechanics school in Elizabeth City, NC, then to USCG Air Station South San Francisco, CA. I was trained to be an aircraft mechanic and flight engineer. The Coast Guard kept sending me back to the east coast for many schools, on helicopters and then on the P5M, that were great. I worked on PBYS, PBMs, B-17s, PB4Ys (B-24s), R5Ds (DC4s), JRBs and JRFs, and P5Ms; then I went to school to maintain

helicopters: HO4S #1304 and #1305.

At first I was maintaining and flying on fixed-wing planes. After a maintenance check we signed off on the plane as ready for flight status—then we had to jump in the plane for the check flight. (“Did I really tighten that last nut, and safety wire all the bolts?” I’m still around, so I must have....) All the pilots on the base had to be checked out on all the planes (except the helicopters). Now I think pilots are qualified on only one type of plane, as they are so complicated now.

I made many flights to Hawaii and Alaska even before they were states. We performed many escort flights, intercepts, at all times of the day and night for passenger planes traveling to and from Hawaii. We had to give up the B-17s as they were too slow to keep up with a commercial plane on three engines, and replaced them with the Navy version of the B-24, the PB4Y, which had a single vertical fin and rudder. The USCG got most of its surplus planes from the Navy or Air Force—for a dollar, we were told....

Putting a sea plane (PBM or P5M) into and out of the water was a gigantic job; it took most of the base personnel: to operate the bulldozer and hand lines; float the beaching wheels to and from the planes; and handle the small boats to tow the gear. Men had to climb out on the wing to get the wing float in the water to attach the beaching gear. With a helicopter, we just jumped in, warmed up the engine and took off. The Yuba City rescues (see below) changed USCG Aviation from relying on seaplanes to depending on helicopters for almost all rescues.

As for me, one day I went over and asked about what a helicopter was and how it

flew with no wings, only rotating blades. The Chief found out the copters interested me and talked me into joining his staff. I was a warm body, willing to fly in a helicopter; no one wanted to fly in a helicopter at that time: they did not look very safe nor airworthy.

When we weren't flying, maintaining and pulling service checks on the aircraft, we were out getting more flying time and making practice rescues on some of the volunteers from the base. For using the hoist and rescuing people with the helicopters, all we had was on-the-job training (OJT). Also we had to go to all the functions and air shows around California and do demonstrations of rescues. It seemed there were search and rescue missions happening all the time in the San Francisco area. We were in the San Francisco newspapers all the time. (I saved all the clippings I could find, but where they are I don't know.)

Note: the movie "The High and the Mighty" with John Wayne was made on our base while I was there.

Yuba City Floods: That December night most of our base personnel were home on Christmas leave, so all we had was a skeleton base crew. California was having so many storms and problems at that time; one of our helicopters had to go to the Russian River area, as there was much flooding and many people were trapped in the river by flash flood waters. About 3 p.m. I was called to get on the JRB Beechcraft and fly to Marysville, CA, and join the Coast Guard HO4S (1304) with Joe Accamo (an American Indian from Ocala, FL, if I remember right), Hank Pfeifer and George Thometz, as they needed another crewman. The sandbags along the Feather River on the Marysville side were predicted to fail very soon, so the Governor told the people

to leave Marysville and go to the Yuba City side, where the sandbag dikes were expected to hold up. We landed at the Marysville airport and serviced the copter, and made it as light as we could so as to carry more people. It was still daylight, but with heavy rain squalls at times. We made some flights to get familiar with the area and see what we could do if the dikes failed.

About dark, we were notified that the dikes were failing *on the Yuba City side*—where most of the people had gone to be safe. We started flights, with only one pilot and one hoist operator to save weight, taking turns: changing flight teams all the rest of the night, two on and two off. We flew all night, never shutting down the copter for fuel and oil, very dangerous with 115/145 fuel. We hoisted people from trees, rooftops, cars, boats, trailers—anything that was above water. It was very DARK and rainy; I don't know how the pilots found anything.

Joe had picked up an old man who said—once he was on the ground—that his invalid wife was on a mattress in a house trailer floating down the Feather River. Pfeifer told me to get on board the copter, and we went to find the trailer; how he did it, I don't know, but he did. Joe had a bad back, and he knew he could not do anything floating on a house trailer, trying to get inside; and we didn't even know if the one we'd found was the right trailer. So I was elected to go down in the basket (a "You have to go out, you don't have to come back" type of thing). All I had was a Mae West, hunting knife, small axe, flashlight—and some youthful guts. Not knowing what the hell I was going to do, I landed on the trailer roof and looked up—as the helicopter flew away to rescue other people. I had no radio to talk to anyone, so would have to flash my flashlight

beam at the copter to get the crew's attention when I needed them to pick us up.

WOW, what do I do now? Pitch black, floating downriver, and can't get the lady to answer yet; must be very scared, if she's really in there....I took the axe, chopped off the roof vent, and yelled to the lady that I was going to get her out of there somehow. I tried to get through the roof vent, but it was too small for me to fit. So I looked around, opened the front door, slid over the side, and got into the trailer. She was paralyzed from the waist down, and floating in waist-deep water on a mattress. She was very frightened—and so was I: the trailer seemed to be sinking, and I had only a short time to do something. And when was my ride getting back to me; and how could they find me again, anyway? I picked her up, carried her to the front door, and calmed her down some, then waited to see the copter lights. When I did I was able to use the flashlight beam to direct the copter to us. Joe lowered the basket, I placed the lady in it, and she was lifted into the copter, then Joe picked me up and we got back to the airport.

The Coast Guard's was the only helicopter with a rescue basket that people could use. One Navy copter tried to pick up a woman with the horse collar, but she fell to her death while being hoisted. So as soon as it got light enough, the Navy and Air Force were used to spot people for us. What a Christmas Eve and Night. This was the worst set of storms in California ever to that point; they have had more since then, but later on they had better equipment: more helicopters with baskets, etc. New Orleans had the same type of flooding a few years ago, but they had so much help, copters and small boats all over the place.

When we got back to our air station everyone wanted to know how we handled everything, and we just said we were doing our job to our best of our ability....

Aftermath: Before I was discharged in June 1956, Alex Haley (author of *Roots*) interviewed ADC Joe Accamo, LCDR Henry Pfeiffer, LCDR George Thometz and me for *True*

magazine and *Readers Digest*. I never saw the *Readers Digest* article, but a large writeup appeared in *True* magazine in 1956 or 1957. The title was "A Christmas Present for Yuba City." Tom Beard interviewed me and several others for his report in the Foundation for Coast Guard History "coffee table book." Our Yuba City rescue, I am told, is displayed in the U.S. Navy Air Museum in Pensacola, FL, in the Coast Guard section.

We (all four of us) received the Distinguished Flying Cross. When I got out of the Coast Guard I went to the University of Florida, and the USCG wanted to present me with the DFC during a homecoming football game half-time. But it was Thanksgiving break, and I wanted to go to Lake Worth, FL, my home at that time, so instead they gave me the DFC medal at USCG District 7 Headquarters in Miami. If I had known what this would mean several years down the road, I would have made different plans...(You can Google our names and get the writeups on our DFC's. We were told, when we received ours, that only twelve DFCs had been given out during peacetime.)

As noted, after my CG service I went to the University of Florida, on the GI Bill. All I ever wanted to do was fly, so when I had enough credits and an AA degree, I joined the U.S. Air Force to get to flight school. I flew three trainer planes: the T-34, T-37 (twin jet) and T-33 (F-80). But my Dad died, at age 55, and so I missed two weeks of training, and never got back into the training mode. Because I didn't want to be a navigator, and had prior service, I was discharged. I went to work for Pratt and Whitney Aircraft (United Technologies Corp.) and spent 33 years as a senior pricing analyst, preparing engine pricing proposals for the Air Force and Navy. I always wanted to be connected to aviation in some way.

My wife Louise and I raised a great service-oriented family of four sons and a daughter. Two of our sons are now retired from the USMC after thirty years: Arthur, a Chief Warrant Officer, and Thomas, a Chief Master Sergeant. A grandson, Staff Sergeant Chris Rou-

lund, Army Airborne Ranger, had six tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, then was killed in a parachute jump at age 27.

I am 76 now and probably the only one still alive from that Coast Guard helicopter crew of December 25, 1955. I think that Tom Beard has tried to find the other guys, and I have tried also, but no luck. Tom Beard also said that I must have been the first Rescue Swimmer in the USCG, before they had a name for it. I am very proud to have been able to do what we were trained to do in the USCG, and to be able to improvise in the different situations required for each rescue. In the movie "The Guardian," with Kevin Costner, rescue swimmers now are trained like Navy Seals. WE had to learn by experience. All of us would jump into the ocean or flood waters, as required, to save a person in need. Seems as if a young person doesn't think much about dying, just does it. Look at all our service troops now: they are the BEST...

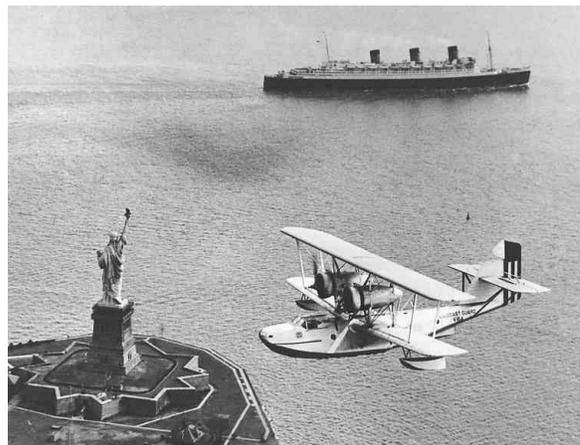
More Aviation from the 1950s

By Roy Vander Putten

During this same period I had some interesting experiences, too. One mission was to take flood relief supplies in an R5D into the Humboldt County Airport in Lincolnville, CA. We were told the prisoners from the Humboldt County Jail would be unloading the aircraft. In the pre-flight briefing some of the crew were issued .45-caliber handguns. This was the only time I carried a firearm on a mission. When we landed the Sheriff greeted us and told us, "If one of those SOBs tries to run, you shoot him immediately." I was disappointed that no one ran.

A few days later we were flying medical supplies into the Stockton Airport in a PB4Y. When we got into the landing pattern the tower suggested we not try to land as there was water on the runways, four to six inches. But we had a gung-ho pilot by the name of Bob Lemon, and he said these meds were sorely needed, so he was going to set her down. To make a long

story short, we hydro-planed off the end of the runway, nose down into a drainage ditch. I thought, "How the hell are they going get this plane out of the muck?" About a week later the water had receded, and the same air crew that put it into the muck was sent to check it out and bring it back. When we arrived the Navy was excavating to place large pneumatic bags under the wings, and putting down metal runway grids under the wheels. They blew up the bags and used a D-8 Cat to pull the aircraft onto the runway. We had a damaged prop, but flew it back to SFO on three engines with the gear down. I think these antics supported the Navy sobriquet that we were the "Hooligan Air Force."



This photo depicts in the foreground the "Hall PH-1," the Coast Guard's first amphibious aircraft. It was designed and built by Coast Guard LT Norman Hall (one of the first two Coast Guard officers to undergo pilot training, along with Elmer Stone - Ed.). Three were delivered in 1939. Immediately upon delivery some changes were made, so then they were re-designated "PH-2". A total of ten or twelve were built. This plane was flying from CG AirSta Brooklyn, New York, located at Floyd Bennett Field. The ship in the background is the Queen Mary, outbound. Photo is from the New York University Archives. Provided courtesy of Lou Zarelli of Clarksville, VA.

Baggywrinkle:

As late as 1914, among the other drills and exercises required of cadets at the Academy (drilling with pistols, rifles, artillery pieces and bayonets) were drilling with cutlasses, and engaging in fencing as exercise. Real swashbucklers! -- From *The Coast Guard Expands* by Irving H. King

USCGC *Point Welcome*: Target of Opportunity
By William R. Wells, II

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Introduction: All martial conflicts are evolutionary processes, in which coordination and cooperation evolve out of disaster. The "friendly fire" expended on the United States Coast Guard Cutter *Point Welcome* (WPB 82329) was one incident that forced a small measure of improved operational coordination during the Vietnam War.

The Event: Operation Market Time was designed to interdict people and supplies being conveyed from North Vietnam to the Communist Viet Cong in South Vietnam. At about 0330 on August 11, 1966, with sunrise just two hours away, the *Point Welcome* lay to in Market Time Patrol Area 1A1, three-quarters of a mile south of the 17th parallel.¹ The officer of the deck, LTJG Ross Bell USCG, and the helmsman, GM2 Mark D. McKenney, watched aircraft "illuminate" (light up with flares) various contacts outside the Cua Tung (the mouth of the Ben Hai River). BM1 Billy R. Russell had observed these same contacts on radar above the 17th parallel during the previous watch. The morning was clear, and nothing appeared unusual. Bell decided to start both Cummins V12 engines and move farther south. Proceeding at five knots, he resumed patrolling 1A1's thirteen miles of coastline.²

However, within minutes aircraft began illuminating the *Point Welcome*. Bell sent McKenney to awaken LTJG David C. Brostrom USCG, the commanding officer, but before Brostrom arose the first firing run hit the cutter, seriously wounding Bell. Bell attempted to turn on the WPB's navigation lights and retrieve the Very pistol, but a second firing run "wiped out the bridge completely."

Yellow Bird 18, a B-57 from the 8th Bombard-

ment Squadron, made these attacks, following a bombing mission on the Cua Tung. Target designation came from *Blind Bat 02*, a U.S. Air Force C-130; *Yellow Bird 18* had asked earlier if it had any gun targets. *Blind Bat* reported negatively until alerted by *Spud 13*, a Mohawk from the U. S. Army's 131st Aviation Company. *Spud 13* notified *Blind Bat* of a large target that had run south at increased speed from the 17th Parallel. After *Spud 13* reported, *Blind Bat* illuminated the WPB with flares. At 0340 *Yellow Bird 18* made the first "tail attack", firing 800 rounds of 20mm ammunition that "left him [the boat] burning." Following *Yellow Bird's* second attack, the WPB's engines were opened to maximum speed of eighteen knots, which *Blind Bat's* pilot later estimated to be 30-35 knots.

LTJG Bell made one transmission to the Coastal Surveillance Center (CSC) at Da Nang: "Article [call sign], this is Article India, I am under fire from Vietnamese aircraft." CSC coolly replied, "Article India, this is Article [call sign], roger, out." Bell then pushed the engine controls to maximum speed. At 0350, *Point Caution*, from the adjacent patrol area, offered help, and received "This is India, affirmative. I have taken hits and request assistance"; but even at maximum speed *Point Caution* did not sight *Point Welcome* until 0435.

Chief Boatswain's Mate Richard H. Patterson, up for the 0400-0800 watch, was half-way up the bridge ladder when the first strike exploded the five-gallon gasoline cans on the stern. The force knocked him off the ladder and momentarily unconscious. On reviving, and still not knowing that aircraft had attacked the boat, he went aft and organized a fire party. From the berthing area, Fireman Apprentice Houston J. Davidson thought he heard a rocket hitting the boat. Once on deck, Davidson attempted to retrieve the cans of firefighting foam, but was unable to because of wounds received in *Yellow Bird 18's* second pass. Later *Yellow Bird* noted that the boat's bridge was the target for the second run.³ Chief Engineman William H. Wolf was the engineer on the mid-watch and

heard the rounds hit on deck. Similarly, BM1 Russell, ET2 Virgil G. Williams and CS2 Donald L. Austin came on deck to either assist with the fire or the wounded. From the second pass LTJG Brostrom was dead on the signal deck and EN2 Jerry Phillips dead on the main deck. The other wounded were McKenney, LTJG Do Viet Vien of the Vietnamese Navy, and Timothy J. Page, a civilian photographer, all receiving varying degrees of shrapnel wounds.

Out of ammunition, *Yellow Bird 18* climbed to 10,000 feet and observed that the boat was "steadily taking evasive action," but "wasn't going in any particular direction." Such movement was not surprising, considering that helm control had been shot away and Chief Patterson maintained steerage with the engine controls alone.

At 0350 command fell to Patterson. Knowing Market Time recognition codes, he tried to find the Very pistol in the wreckage, but failed. In addition, the gun runs had cut the power conduits to all the radios and navigation light circuits.

Yet the WPB remained operational, so *Blind Bat 02* called for another strike. A flight of two U. S. Air Force F4C Phantoms (*Coyote 91* and *92*)⁴ was in position for the attack. *Coyote 91* carried two 250-pound bombs and *Coyote 92* two "cans" of cluster bomb units. *Coyote 91* waited at 10,000 feet while *Coyote 92* prepared at 3,000 for an attack. However, *Coyote 92* evidently had some doubts about the target's origin, for he made a recognition pass at fifteen hundred feet, blinking his navigation lights—the only one to do so. He received no reply—not realizing it was because the WPB had lost all signal capability. *Coyote 91* also questioned *Blind Bat 02* about the flight's position, now within South Vietnamese waters. *Blind Bat 02* acknowledged the position, but claimed he had followed the ship from farther north; therefore, "Hit him."

The WPB's southeasterly course was Patterson's decision. He was trying to "run for the dark," but knew he could neither out-run nor

continue evading the aircraft, so he decided to beach the WPB at the Cua Viet and get support from the South Vietnamese Junk Force base there.

Coyote 92 made his first attack from stern to bow, missing by five hundred feet. But his second may have exploded two or three bomblets on the port stern. Flight leader *Coyote 91* then made three bomb runs, west to east. The first missed by 150 feet; the second was dry; the third missed by "fifty feet off the starboard side." The misses were due to Patterson's evasions. Later he noted that he timed the runs, then waited until he heard the planes begin the run in and backed the engines full, then went full ahead as the aircraft went away. By the time of the last bomb attack the boat was about 2½ miles north of the Cua Viet. However, before *Coyote 91* left the boat appeared to stop within 250 feet of the Cua Viet. The attacks stopped about 0415 when *Blind Bat* was informed that the boat was friendly.

Following *Yellow Bird's* strafing runs, Patterson ordered all personnel below decks for protection and first aid for their wounds. As the WPB moved south, Patterson was not aware the engines were losing power from a loss of forced draft air because *Yellow Bird's* second attack had shot away the blowers to the two diesel engines. He knew only that the boat seemed to begin to "settle" from its high position at flank speed; he thought the boat had taken a bomb hit and was about to sink. Therefore, having reached the Cua Viet, Patterson ordered the crew to abandon ship, with the seriously wounded being placed in both life rafts. McKenney remarked later that the crew was "very calm about the whole thing," and there was no panic.⁵

As the crew entered the water, *Blind Bat* continued to illuminate the area that had now turned into a rescue scene. Led by the chief petty officers, the crew moved toward the river mouth in two groups. Chief Wolf's group was about two hundred yards away when it began receiving small arms fire. The other group was already under mortar, .50-caliber and other

small arms fire from one of the junks at the South Vietnamese base. This firing was from the north, but the crew also received small arms fire from the south, presumably from the Viet Cong (VC). Because of the incoming fire, Wolf decided to head seaward, back to the WPB.

There personnel were retrieved by the *Point Caution*. *Caution's* commanding officer, LTJG James D. Boyce USCG, picked up five of the survivors at 0455 and called for a medevac. Boyce sent three men to the *Point Welcome* for a damage assessment, and although they found a small fire, all machinery was functional and running, and by 0510 they had extinguished the fire. Within the hour junks had transferred the wounded to the hospital at Phu Bai. Also eventually on scene were the cutters *Point Lomas*, *Point Orient*, and PCF-15; and the USS *Haverfield* was sent to the scene to provide "big gun support" in case the attack had been by North Vietnamese aircraft. Patterson, Wolf, Russell and O'Conner navigated the *Point Welcome* back to Da Nang, arriving at 1615, August 11, 1966, just twelve hours after the last attack.⁶

This was not the last incident of this type to occur in the same general location. On August 16, PCF-19 received three rocket hits, sinking the boat and killing five; the cutter *Point Dume* and PCF-12 were attacked by an unidentified aircraft; and both the USS *Boston* and HMAS *Hobart* were attacked, with loss of life, in the same general area.⁷ The combined effect was to make it abundantly clear that the current rules of engagement, or at least interservice coordination, were not sufficient.

The Investigations: Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) convened an official inquiry, headed by Colonel Samuel L. Reid, USA.⁸ The board uncovered wide inconsistencies in interpretation and communication between the various agencies and their rules of engagement. Indicative of the period, the board also found that the investigation itself was not a unified effort: a 7th Air Force panel conducted a parallel investigation, yet oddly it did not

submit it, nor was it asked to provide it.⁹

Some contributing factors identified:

Coordination/Responsibility Problems:

- Coordination between 7th Air Force and Naval Forces Vietnam was practically nonexistent. They assigned only one naval officer to the 7thAF with the primary function of liaison—but even that made it the only operation that had any Navy/Air Force cooperation at all.
- All the aviators testified that they had never heard of Operation Market Time, nor were they aware they shared seaward patrol areas with the Navy. The 7th AF Operations Officer also testified that he, as Director of Strike Plans, had not heard of Market Time operations in the DMZ area. He could not say the whole 7th AF did not know about it, but was not aware of any attempts to coordinate actions in common patrol areas.
- CTF 115 (commander of the naval task force) and his staff were just as unsure of the rules of engagement in the DMZ and just as unfamiliar with Air Force operations orders. CTF 115 was unaware there was an overlap of operations in the DMZ. The Naval forces were not on the distribution list for the existing Air Force rules of engagement orders.
- The pilots considered the entire width of the zone hostile territory. With regard to the WPB in this case: confusingly, *Coyote 91* estimated that the "ship" was between two and two and one half miles south of the Cua Tung and "South of the DMZ river [Cua Tung]"; however, it was "still North of the DMZ." The latter determination gave the target greater legitimacy under the rules of engagement.

Command and Control Problems:

- The USAF Task Force commander said *Blind Bat 02* was the "airborne battlefield command and control" controller [ABCCC] and could authorize striking fleeing targets or targets of

opportunity. But he was responsible for *North* Vietnam operations; he was unsure of the rules for actions in *South* Vietnam. (The WPB had been at Patrol Area 1A1's northern edge, and thus near the DMZ; but nonetheless was well south of the 17th Parallel.) In contrast, the 7thAF Operations Officer testified that *Blind Bat* was not, in fact, an ABCCC for night flights, but more of a mission/traffic controller.

- The Air Force divided command and control. At one point the duty officer of the Control and Reporting Center, 620th TCS Detachment told *Blind Bat 02* "to get off what they were doing" (stop attacking the target); but shortly before that the I Corps Control Center had told *Blind Bat* to leave its area of coverage to continue the strike.

Chain of Command Problems

- *Point Welcome's* administrative commander was LCDR Howard I. Istock, USCG, Commander, U. S. Coast Guard Squadron One, Division 12. The relationship between Commodore Istock and the operational commander, CTG 115.1, was often adversarial. For example, on 1 August Istock had protested CTF 115.1's deletion of CGDIV12 and the PCF commander as information addressees on all "spotreps and other messages," because it meant that each task unit commander had to wait for the patrol debriefs for any information.

- Commander Joseph D. Nolan, USN, Commander Task Group (CTG) 115.1, received Istock's reports (see below) and forwarded them to either III MAF or I Corps, but did not inform CTF 115, did not investigate them, and did not consult the individual boat commanders. Instead he dismissed the complaints, after finding it difficult to "judge the seriousness" of the incidents.

Informational Problems:

- The aviators had received an incorrect briefing at Dong Ha that there were no friendly craft in the area.

- Both of the Mohawks that originally "painted" three to five targets at the Cua Tung River may have mistaken the *Point Welcome* as one of the group. The *Spud* pilot later testified that it was possible that while making turns he could have lost the original target and picked up another; interpretation of the "paint," either in the air or on the ground, was not a definite science, and errors were common.

Challenge Problems:

- The Navy issued monthly three separate sets of daily challenge codes. However, the Coast Guardsmen understood that the basic emergency identification signal was two red flares; the WPBs used their navigation lights for emergencies as well.

- Istock had made strongly-worded weekly reports to CTG 115.1 of previous friendly fire incidents, and had warned that, without some coordination meetings, some serious event would occur. Some excerpts: "Challenge and reply systems to date are ineffective and not being used. There is a question as to when systems are to be used, and between whom;" "More coordination between Market Time and other efforts [agencies/services] in I Corps is necessary;" "Again, the challenge and reply procedures are poor;" "Lack of liaison in these matters will lead to eventual disaster. Too many near misses have already occurred."

Recognition Problems:

- The Air Force personnel were operating under conflicting expectations concerning recognition of friendly craft: *Blind Bat 02* reported expecting that watercraft were supposed to respond to challenges by turning on their deck or navigation lights, or displaying "parallel lights approximately amidships maybe slightly forward or a red rotating beacon or a red flare fired from the stern." In contrast, the F4 pilots expected to see a "series of green lights in a horseshoe or 'U' shape on the bow of the boat" or some sort of flare. Thus, the pilots held no

consensus of what they expected, other than the red flare.

- With regard to being able to actually see any recognition signals: *Blind Bat* admitted that because of his fear of being shot down he did not descend below 4500 feet. He claimed the target mounted .50-caliber or 37mm guns, and the Air Force claimed that downings from these gun types occurred below 4500 feet. So *Blind Bat* stayed at or above 4500 feet; he also did not turn on his lights. Evidently *Blind Bat* was also unlighted during previous identification passes. Nevertheless, he considered *Yellow Bird* orbiting at 6000 feet with lights and aero beacon flashing as sufficient signals. Under the board's questioning *Blind Bat* admitted, "I don't know whether he saw our [*Yellow Bird's*] signals or not." The board never asked *Blind Bat's* mission controller how, on his second run, he was able to identify the target's guns but missed the 3-foot-high English call letters painted on top of the bridge and the decidedly American-style, 14-foot-long boat on deck.

- *Blind Bat 02* testified that he understood the use of his beacon and navigation lights as signals, and claimed to have made "a few passes for identification": that after being notified of the "large target" by *Spud 13*, he dropped four flares and found the boat; dropped two flares in a second pass, one aerial and one surface; and then one flare every two and half minutes in the third. Since the *Point Welcome* did not respond to the flare passes, *Blind Bat* called in the strike.¹⁰ But in doing so *Blind Bat* misinterpreted the rules of engagement set by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The rules allowed strikes on a "hostile vessel" if it was military and in South Vietnamese or Thai internal or territorial seas. In addition, it had to be engaged in "attacking or acting in a manner which indicates within reasonable certainty an intent to attack US/friendly forces or installations, including the unauthorized landing of troops or material on friendly territory," laying mines, or "engaged in direct support of attacks against RVN or Thailand."¹¹ In this case, the absence of "reasonable certainty" and hostile fire did not influence *Blind Bat 02* to take closer looks, nor did he try

to inform any of the surface units. In any case, in later testimony LTJG Bell said he saw no identification signals from the aircraft: "The next thing we knew there was illumination directly overhead and a firing run was made." Interestingly, as *Point Caution* was en route to the scene to assist *Point Welcome*, she was illuminated by *Blind Bat*. After the fact, *Blind Bat* was conducting an experiment: he wanted to learn if the flares "washed out" the cutter's navigation lights—they did not; however, the flares did wash out the aircraft lights from sea level.

- The Air Force pilots and crews had received briefings on Navy boat types, but not the WPBs—which had been patrolling the area for over a year. The half-light caused by the flares actually made identification more troublesome for *Yellow Bird 18's* pilot. His initial impression of the WPB was of "the classic silhouette of the Chinese Junk, that is the high stern and the big sail"; whereas another pilot described it as a "PT class boat."

Communications Problems:

- There were no standard procedures in place for CTF 115.1 to talk with the various aircraft control agencies. CDR Nolan assumed that since III MAF and I Corps had copies of the CTF 115 OpOrder, it was their responsibility to make the other agencies aware of the presence of the Market Time boats and their recognition codes.

- The telephone system at Da Nang in 1966—involving three separate telephone switching systems—was inefficient, encouraging the making of assumptions and relying on misinformation. Despite the growing number of organizations working in the same area, there were few direct lines between them.

- The Coastal Surveillance Center (CSC) watch officer informed the investigative board that neither he nor any other watch officer had instructions for anything other than administrative functions. Magnifying the control problems of CSC was the physical separation of the

CSC watch officer from his assistant on board the repair barge YR71. The assistant had radio communications, albeit often dubious, with WPB and SWIFT units, while the CSC watch officer only 500 yards away had no direct contact with the boats he was supposed to manage.

Findings:

The 7th AF investigating officer concluded that "this incident was caused in large part by an overlap in areas of responsibility." The 7th AF investigation also concluded the *Point Welcome* did not know the "correct...challenge/response for air to surface," and that, given "two means of identifying themselves to aircraft"—by turning on running lights or by voice communications—"the vessel did neither."¹² (Then again, the Air Force had no procedures to challenge Market Time vessels.)

The Commander In Chief, Pacific (CINCPAC) stated: "This incident is an apparent lack of tactical coordination between operational commanders."¹³

The MACV investigating board found no one person or organization at fault, but instead a system that showed no signs of concerted effort, one that combined with misinformation and misperception to cause the strike.

A Captain Stewart, the last witness called, recommended, in hindsight, a "common set of rules or a common set of identification signals" and the formation of a group to study the problem. These were essentially the same recommendations previously made by Commodore Istock.

Lessons Learned, Changes Made:

Strike orders for watercraft in South Vietnamese waters were thereafter cleared through the Coastal Surveillance Groups.

The MACV Chief of Staff, Major General W. B. Rosson, USA, ordered a review of all orders, instructions and mission directives to pro-

vide coordination and interchange of information so as to develop training programs that emphasized recognition and identification of friendly and hostile watercraft.

Following August 11, the USAF Task Force commander responsible for North Vietnam operations ordered that no attacks on watercraft inside the DMZ were to be conducted unless the vessels had attacked the aircraft, engaged in supporting enemy troops, or originated in North Vietnam.

The WPB crews replaced the call letters on the top of the bridge with a white star, and changed their procedures.

Conclusion:

The *Point Welcome* incident probably saved lives in the long years ahead. The preceding series of non-lethal incidents had not forced coordination between the various services; but the loss of lives finally did so. Friendly fire may always occur; but if it is preventable by seemingly simple administrative steps, then the deaths of LTJG Brostrom and EN2 Phillips were not in vain.

The reaction and performance of the *Point Welcome* crew displayed what one would expect from men with professional and high-quality character and training. These qualities continued throughout the war, making the Coast Guardsmen the most professional among the coastal warfare groups in Vietnam.

Notes

1. The limits of Patrol Area were from RVN coast at 17/00 N, to 17/00N, 107-23E; thence to 16-50N, 107-23E; thence to a point on the RVN coast at 16-50N.

2. The "B" Class 82-foot WPB carried 1500 gallons of diesel fuel, and conservation was the general rule on patrol. The average speed on patrol, with one engine on line, was about 2½ kph at 250 shaft turns.

3. 7th Air Force Tan Son Nhut Message 111149Z Aug 66, pg. 2, para. 11. This report indicates *Yellow Bird* made three strafing runs, but testimony shows only two.

4. Ironically, the *Point Welcome's* logo was the cartoon character "Wile E. Coyote."

5. The wounded civilian journalist, Tim Page, later wrote an account of the attack, in *Page After Page* (New York: Athenaeum, 1989), 126-131. Despite its claim of being an eyewitness account, Page's version is singularly inaccurate in context and detail; including, for some unknown reason, defaming the personal actions of various members of the *Point Welcome* crew. Mr. Page has refused invitations to apologize to the crew that worked so diligently to save his life. A few of Page's inaccuracies: he describes the *Point Welcome* as "a military version of a shrimp boat"; he says "Its mascot, painted on the flying bridge side, was the cartoon road runner doing "beep beep"; he claims the "F-4 US Air Force Phantom was skimming the waves at sonic speed, its 20-mm Vulcan guns pouring 6000 rounds per minute towards us," whereas this model F4 was not equipped with 20mm guns; he incorrectly sequences the aircraft attacks and misidentifies the ordnance used; he states that LTJG Brostrom was decapitated in one attack, that everyone on deck was wounded in the second pass, and that the third pass left the cutter "dead in the water." Probably the most ludicrous statement concerns his attempt to take photos in the dark; he claims he had a "swabbie" full in his lens who had "truncated arms" from an exploding fire extinguisher. Adding more insult to his fictional account, he stated that the "chief bosun and another man scrambled up the forward ladder to douse the fire on the forward deck They were blown back on top of us moments later. One more dead, one armless." The only part of his account that had any truth to it was that his Rolex watch was lost in the action.

6. In the aftermath of the attack, BMC Patterson found Page's Rolex watch and returned it to him.

7. Thomas J. Cutler, *Brown Water, Black Berets: Coastal And Riverine Warfare in Vietnam* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press), 114-115. Cutler mentions the *Point Welcome* incident, but unfortunately uses Tim Page's inaccurate and unconfirmed portrayal of the incident.

8. The details of this account are derived from the official Report of Board of Investigation, Point Welcome Incident (U) ordered by USMACV 13 August 1966. [Declassified 13 May 1988]. "Point Welcome File," U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office, Coast Guard Headquarters, Washington, DC. Testimony was given in the investigation from 15 August to 23 August 1966. Except as otherwise noted, all material in this piece comes from this report.

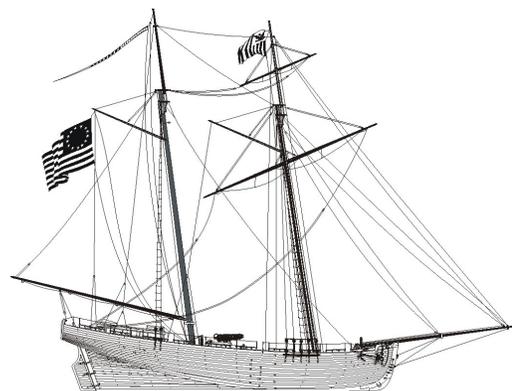
9. The report has not been located. However, a synopsis was recorded in Project CHECO Report, Operation Tally Ho, 21 Nov '66, pp 29-32. Air Force Historical Research Agency, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama.

10. Ibid, 30.

11. Rules of Engagement - Southeast Asia (U), JCSM-118-65, 19 February 1965. [Declassified June 21, 1988, NARA]. This change in the rules of engagement removed the restriction against pursuit into Communist China.

12. CHECO Report, 21 Nov 66, p. 31.

13. "PT. Welcome Incident," CINCPAC 120322Z Aug 66.



U.S. Revenue Cutter *Dallas* 1816 to 1821

Speakings



Coast Guard Aviation Association, The Ancient Order of the Pterodactyl

By Mont J. Smith, President,

Coast Guard Aviator 1520, Coast Guard Helicopter Pilot 822

Commander Stewart Graham, CG Helicopter Pilot #2, Celebrates 92nd Birthday!

Commander Stewart Graham, USCG (ret.), is celebrating his 92nd birthday on Friday, September 25th, 2009! He was designated Coast Guard Aviator #114 in 1942 and Coast Guard Helicopter Pilot #2 in 1943. He was the leading pilot in pioneering helicopter Anti-Submarine Warfare tactics, and trained Navy pilots to conduct these critical missions. Commander Graham was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, 2 Air Medals, and was commissioned a Knight of the Order of Leopold of Belgium for helicopter rescues.

Receiving his wings as an enlisted pilot, Commander Graham pioneered the introduction and development of rotary wing aircraft in naval aviation. As the Coast Guard's second helicop-

ter pilot, he laid the groundwork for the ship-board operation of helicopters at sea in flights from the British freighter *Daghestan* during a transatlantic convoy in World War II. Subsequently perfecting the techniques employed by helicopters in the search and rescue role, he performed both the first night helicopter medical evacuation and the first night hoist pick-up. He helped shape the future of the antisubmarine warfare role by experimenting with, and instructing fellow helicopter pilots in, the techniques of employing dipping sonar for the detection of submerged submarines, which in ensuing years became an important capability in Cold War operations against the Soviet Navy.

Commander Graham became a leading figure in the development of rotary-wing aircraft. His dedication and perseverance ensured a prominent role for the helicopter in peace and war. CDR Graham was inducted into the Coast Guard Aviation Association Hall of Honor on August 4th, 1995, and the National Museum of Naval Aviation Hall of Fame on May 6th, 2004.

The 1,350 members of the Coast Guard Aviation Association salute Stew Graham!!!

– Provided courtesy of Regent Phil Volk

Submitting to the Cutter: Please do not hesitate to provide content for this newsletter. Submissions can be mailed to: Rob Ayer, 28 Osprey Drive, Gales Ferry, CT 06335 or e-mailed to raye@comcast.net. I encourage you to provide them to me in electronic form, either in a forwarded e-mail or an attached file, although paper is also acceptable. If sending me a piece previously printed elsewhere, please provide the publication, the issue information, and the original author, as applicable. Whether an already-printed or original piece, please also send me *your* name and contact information, so that I can follow up if necessary.

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The Wardroom

The Coast Guard recognizes its history embodied in its most senior active duty personnel in various categories of service with designation as most "Ancient." Normally as one incumbent retires, a ceremony is held as the title is passed on to the next holder. The Foundation for Coast Guard History often participates in such ceremonies; see separate articles in this issue. The lists below represent a "capture" of the best information available on past honorees. The Editor will happily accept any additions, corrections or modifications that readers may offer to improve this record.

Gold Ancient Mariner (Cuttermen)

CAPT A.J. Hagstrom - 16 January 1980 (Prior Enlisted)
CAPT D.F. Smith - 01 August 1984
RADM W.H. Stewart - 30 November 1984 (USCGA)
CDR J.R. Hearn - 01 Jul 1985 (Prior Enlisted)
CAPT J.D. Webb - 30 Apr 1987
CAPT E.E. O'Donnell - 28 August 1987 (Prior Enlisted)
RADM R.P. Cueroni - 24 June 1988 (USCGA)
ADM Paul A. Yost, Jr. - 28 June 1989 (USCGA)
LCDR Melville B. Guttormsen - 31 May 1990 (Prior Enlisted)
CAPT William S. Cheever - 28 June 1999 (Prior Enlisted)
CAPT R. A. "Mac" McCullough - 27 June 2003 (Prior Enlisted)
CAPT Michael A. Jett - 10 June 2006 (Prior Enlisted)
VADM Robert J. Papp - April 2007

Silver Ancient Mariner

QMCM C.E. Dowden, Jr. - 16 January 1980
HSCM Clarence Sheffield - 16 December 1988
QMC Frank Albright Jr - 01 September 1989
BMCM Donald Urquhart - 13 August 1990
BMCS Charles D. Buckley - 01 July 1995
BMCM Michael W. Gibbs - 29 August 1997
DCCM Amritt A. Villa - 26 July 2006
SCPO Christopher Kukla - October

2007MCPO Richard Vobornik - July 2009

Gold Ancient Albatross (Aviators)

William Davis "Doc" Shields - 1965
Charles "Sonny" Tighe - 1966
Chester Robey "Chet" Bender - 1970
Walter Raymond "Goldie" Goldhammer - 1974
Chester Arthur Richmond, Jr. - 1975
John Pershing "Silver Eagle" Greathouse - 1977
William Donald Harvey - 1979
Charles Earll "Chuck" Larkin - 1979
Frederick Paul Schubert - 1984
Donald Charles "Deese" Thompson - 1985
Edward "Ed" Nelson, Jr. - 1989
Clyde E. "Rob" Robbins - 1989
Howard Benton "Howie" Thorsen - 1990
George Donald Passmore - 1991
Thomas Tracy "Indian" Matteson - 1992
William C. Donnell - 1993
Richard Dennis "Hound Dog" Herr -1997
Edward J. Barrett - 1998
James C. "Ox" Olson - 2000
David William Kunkel - 2006
Vivien Crea - 2008
Gary Blore - 2009

Silver Ancient Albatross

ADCM J.T. Woltz - 08 Jun 1990
MCPO-CG Eric A. Trent - 01 Dec 1995
SCPO Gary Butler - 30 Jun 1998
AVTCM Douglas W. Farence - 02 Nov 1999
AMTCM Bernard D. Irsik - 14 Jul 2000
AMTCM Mark T. Bigart - 24 April 2002
AMTCM William Beardsley - 11 April 2003
CPO Peter MacDougal - Summer 2009

Ancient Keeper (Boat Forces)

MCPO John Downey - to June 2008
CWO Kevin Galvin - June 2008 to July 2009
CWO Tom Guthlein - July 2009

Queen of the Fleet

Similarly, the Coast Guard recognizes its active cutter with the longest commissioned service as "The Queen of the Fleet"; that cutter's hull

numbers are painted in gold.

The following is a list of cutters that have been so honored. Again, any better information will be gratefully received. (Thank you to CDR Andy Sugimoto, ENS Cory Anderson and Scott Price from the CG Historian's office for their assistance.)

CGC *Ingham*: 17 Sep 1936 - 27 May 1988

CGC *Fir*: 01 Oct 1940 - 01 Oct 1991

CGC *Storis*: 5 Feb 1944 - 8 Feb 2007

CGC *Acushnet*: 1944 to 2009 and counting



Coast Guard Silver Ancient Mariner

Master Chief Petty Officer Richard Vobornik relieved Senior Chief Petty Officer Christopher Kukla as the Coast Guard Silver Ancient Mariner in a ceremony presided over by the Coast Guard Gold Ancient Mariner, VADM Robert Papp, Jr., Commander, Atlantic Area. Presentation of commemorative print made by Foundation Executive Director CDR Gary Thomas.

Speakings

Ancient Albatross Change of Watch

1 October 2009, Air Station Elizabeth City, NC

The Ancient Albatross Award was established in 1966 to honor the Coast Guard aviator on active duty who had held that designation for the longest period. In 1988 the Enlisted Albatross Award was established for the enlisted member on active duty with the earliest graduation date from class "A" school in a Coast Guard aviation rating.

Beginning in 2007 the FCGH began the now-established tradition of presenting a framed print of appropriate historical significance to

award recipients, including the Gold (officer) Ancient Mariner and Silver (enlisted) Ancient Mariner, whose qualifications for the sea-going honors mirror those of the aviators. Retired Coast Guard CWO Bill Ravelle, a noted maritime artist, volunteered his professional service and painted, first, CGC *Northland* and, later, the Curtis "F" Boat aircraft. Prints of the original paintings were made and, nicely framed, are presented to the recipients for their perpetual use. (Prints are not available for sale to the public.)



Dressed in festive attire, VADM Vivien S. Crea (right) ceremoniously passes the role of Ancient Albatross to RADM Gary T. Blore, seen wearing a traditional pair of goggles, leather helmet and jacket and scarf during an Ancient Albatross Change of Watch ceremony at Air Station Elizabeth City. (Photo courtesy of Justin Falls/The Daily Advance)

The transfer of honors ceremony at which Ancient Albatross #21, VADM Vivien Crea, the former Vice Commandant, passed the mantle to #22, RADM Gary Blore, Commander 13th Coast Guard District, was conducted on 1 October 2009 in front of a large gathering of active duty and retired personnel. The Commandant, ADM Thad Allen, brought a contingent from HQ; both Area Commanders and many District Commanders, as well as all current air station commanding officers, attended.

The Commandant's welcoming remarks included his recognition of the importance of recording and then remembering the history of the Service, including a strong endorsement of the efforts of FCGH. After remarks by the incumbent and the traditional passing of Ancient Albatross mementos, our Chairman, VADM

Jim Hull, USCG (ret.), in his first official ceremonial act representing FCGH, took the podium microphone.

In keeping with the light-hearted atmosphere of the entire ceremony, Admiral Hull related a few of his personal experiences with aviators while he served both at sea and ashore....and pointed out that he was wearing brown shoes for the occasion (a reference to a long-standing Coast Guard tradition of thus identifying aviators, who once wore a distinct green uniform, with brown shoes, rather than the blue uniform and black shoes of the sailors). At the conclusion of his well-received remarks, the chairman called for the display and presentation of the print to Admiral Blore: an altogether grand ending to the ceremony.

Baggywrinkle:

A Horror Ship – 1729: The passengers of a ‘horror ship’ were landed in 1729 near what was later to be the site of old Monomoy Light, Monomoy Point, Massachusetts. The *George & Ann* had been out nearly four months from Dublin, Ireland. More than one hundred people had died of a terrible sickness, but there was still not enough food to go around. Contrary westerly winds had delayed the vessel day after day until Nantucket Sound was reached. By this time the remaining passengers suspected the captain of starving them all in order to acquire their possessions. In October a Captain Lothrop, sailing south in a Boston packet, sighted the ship flying a distress signal and came alongside. The crazed passengers were by this time reduced to fifteen biscuits and a few pints of water. They begged Captain Lothrop to pilot them to the nearest land, which was Monomoy Point, and threatened to drop their own captain over the side if he did not concur. He finally gave in and Captain Lothrop piloted them to Monomoy. What makes this incident especially notable: the head of this Scotch-Irish group of immigrants, which was headed for Ulster County, New York, was Charles Clinton, from whom were descended: General James Clinton of Revolutionary War fame; Vice President George Clinton; and DeWitt Clinton, Governor of New York and builder of the Erie Canal.

Memorials

Former Stage Island Boathouse May Be Relocated Next To Fish Pier

by Tim Wood, *Cape Cod Chronicle*

CHATHAM --- Last March, Chatham Bars Inn owner Richard Cohen was in Shanghai, China, when he came across a news story on the Internet about the former Coast Guard boathouse being barged from Stage Island to Quincy. He picked up the phone and called Paul Zuest, the inn’s managing director.

“He said it would be great to keep it in town,” Zuest recalled Monday. Cohen instructed him to offer the inn’s cooperation in finding a permanent home for the 74-year-old boathouse. Zuest called Harbor-master Stuart Smith, who was part of a group trying to find a location for the structure.

The result is a tentative deal to bring the boathouse back to town and locate it permanently on land owned by Chatham Bars Inn adjacent to the municipal fish pier. CBI would donate the property and underwrite the cost of a new piling foundation and renovation to the boathouse, and Boston contractor Jay Cashman --- who paid to move the building off Stage Island and is currently storing it at his Quincy shipyard --- will cover the cost of returning the structure to Chatham.

“We’re thrilled CBI made the offer,” said David Doherty, who has spearheaded the effort to find a home for the boathouse. Doherty, Smith and historical commission members Donald Aikman and Frank Messina, who form the ad hoc Save the Stage Island Coast Guard Boathouse Committee, cautioned, however, that there are still several hurdles to be overcome.

First and foremost is regulatory approval by the town. Although a boathouse is an allowed use in the coastal conservancy district, relocating the structure to the CBI property will still require approval by the conservation commission and zoning board of appeals.

“That’s the next step,” said Messina, although he added that no one has yet raised any red flags about the idea.

The group envisions the boathouse being put to a number of uses, including as a museum and marine education center. It could eventually become a

working facility with a marine railway where fishermen could haul out vessels for repair. The building is large enough to accommodate educational programs, a museum and even storage for community boating programs, Messina said. A number of Chatham organizations, including the Cape Cod Commercial Hook Fishermen's Association, Friends of Chatham Waterways, Pleasant Bay Community Boating and the Cape Challenge Sea Scouts, have indicated an interest in the building and support the project, he added.

"We want to keep it as a working boathouse," said Smith.

The boathouse could also be an attraction for CBI guests, residents and visitors, said Zuest. But the inn's interest, he added, is "strictly for the benefit of the town." The land in question is underutilized and the boathouse would be a natural complement to the adjacent fish pier. The building may interfere slightly with the view from the cottage on the bluff above the beach, "but we can live with it," Zuest said. "It's a small inconvenience for the benefit of the townspeople."

The boathouse was moved from its original site to make way for construction of a private home. Vacant and unused since the late 1970s, the structure once housed the famous CG36500 lifeboat used in the 1952 rescue of 32 crew members from the *Pendleton*, the subject of several books, and widely regarded as the most daring and important small boat rescue in Coast Guard history.

Smith, Aikman and Messina made several attempts to find a new location for the structure. They sought Community Preservation Act funds to pay for the move, but were turned down because there was no specific site available for the boathouse. Doherty, who is also president of the Chatham Conservation Foundation, worked with Cashman to temporarily store the boathouse until a location for it could be found.

A huge barge came into Stage Harbor in March, and Cashman's crew spent several days working out the logistics to lift the boathouse, estimated to weigh 50 tons. In a spectacular operation that drew an audience of media and townspeople, a crane hoisted the building off its pilings and swung it onto the deck of the barge. The operation was estimated to cost more than \$100,000.

The 1,800-square-foot boathouse is in "very good shape," Messina said, and the only work necessary would be cosmetic: a new roof, shingles and doors. Its original colors would be restored: red roof, white siding and blue doors. The interior would remain unchanged, and there would be enough room for several groups to share the space. Messina said he has been in touch with the Coast Guard Heritage Museum about a display on the history of the Coast Guard, and the town's school department and Marconi Maritime Museum are interested in a "wet lab" to promote marine education. The Cape Cod Commercial Hook Fishermen's Association sees the boathouse at that location as a way to expand its pier host program, which pays retired fishermen to greet and educate visitors at the fish pier.

"We certainly think it would be a nice, logical adjunct to have some kind of educational display inside the boathouse that would complement our presence at the pier," said association Executive Director Susan Nickerson. "It would be a nice alternative on rainy days." A couple of the association's board members are working with the Save the Boathouse group, she added. "We want to stay on the inside track with this."

A boat ramp or marine railway is a long-term goal, said Doherty. "That will take a lot of time and money," he said.

Currently, the boathouse is still owned by DMD, which will sign it over to the Save the Boathouse group once the structure is relocated, Doherty said. Paperwork is being filed to obtain nonprofit status for the group, which would oversee the boathouse and its use. Details about the future ownership of the land --- whether CBI will donate the property to the group or provide an easement --- are still being worked out.

If all goes according to plan, the boathouse could be barged back to town in the spring, and the renovation work could be completed in time to have it open for the town's 300th anniversary celebration in 2012, said Aikman.

Provided courtesy of Dave Considine, and Fred Herzberg, Founder and Executive Director Emeritus of FCGH

Memorials

100-Year-Old Coast Guard Graves Get Spring Cleanup

By Paige Dickerson, *Peninsula Daily News* (Olympic Peninsula, WA)

NEAH BAY -- A dozen Coast Guard members honored two of their comrades by cleaning up their graves on Waadah Island earlier this month. A group of officers who toured operational and historical sites on the North Olympic Peninsula mentioned the graves to those at Coast Guard Group/Air Station Port Angeles, LT Christian Polyak said. "We were shocked that it hadn't been maintained in many years."

Waadah Island, off the coast of Neah Bay, was set aside for military use on June 9, 1868. It was previously occupied by three generations of a family, and the resident at the time of its sale was Young Doctor, who sold it to the government for \$755.

The graves are those of two Coast Guard members, John Sundstrom and John Jacobson -- their ranks were unclear in military documents -- who died on Nov. 19, 1908, when those stationed on the island were doing a test run in a power lifeboat, according to the Coast Guard report. Sundstrom, Jacobsen, Fritz Klintberg, Alfred Rimer and August Mullich were aboard the boat when it hit heavy waves. The boat capsized. Klintberg, Rimer and Mullich all swam to shore. Searches for the other two were unsuccessful. Eventually, their bodies washed ashore.

Because their families could not be found, they were buried on the island. Polyak said that, for some time, the spouses of those stationed at Neah Bay cared for the graves. But no one had cleared the graves for many years, he added.

A group of seven Coast Guard members based in Port Angeles and five from the station in Neah Bay participated in the recent cleanup, Polyak said. "Besides doing the right thing and taking care of those graves, it was a great thing

because we at the air station in Port Angeles don't get to interact very often with those on the boats, so it was very good to meet with them," he said.

Those who cleaned the graves are Polyak, CAPT William Catelli, LT Larry Santos, Chief Petty Officer John Linnborn, Aviation Survival Technician 2nd Class Mikol Sullivan, Aviation Survival Technician 3rd Class Nicholas Gardner, Aviation Survival Technician 3rd Class Christopher Watson, Machinery Technician 3rd Class Jake Hetherington, Boatswain's Mate 3rd Class Tim Mathis, Machinery Technician 3rd Class Daniel Langley, Boatswain's Mate 3rd Class John Pariser and Seaman Apprentice Todd Merritt.

"Now that we did all that work, it will be just a once-a-year thing, and then cut back the brush in another five or 10 years," Polyak said. "It is really fantastic now. Before you couldn't see anything, and now there is an unobstructed view from there to the water."

Baggywrinkle:

A report from her era concerning one of the Service's great heroes: "Ida Lewis has been appointed keeper of the Lime Rock Light in Newport harbor in place of her mother, who has held the place for a number of years past. Mrs. Lewis's second daughter, who is very sick, requires all the mother's attention, and accordingly it was suggested to her that by her resignation the heroine could receive the appointment. She gladly accepted the suggestion, and on Saturday Ida received her appointment, with a salary of \$750 per year, an increase of \$250 over her mother's pay. In communicating the appointment Secretary Sherman says: 'This appointment is conferred upon you as a mark of my appreciation for your noble and heroic efforts in saving human lives.' Ida Lewis had given up all hope that her claims would ever be recognized, and the news was joyfully received." -- From the *New Bedford Evening Standard*, 27 January 1879, "Home Matters"

Memorials

Inductions Into the Hall of Heroes

The following personnel were inducted into the Hall of Heroes in Chase Hall at the Coast Guard Academy in a ceremony held at the Officers Club in May 2009.

Information provided by LT Allison Dussault, Delta Company Officer

RADM Edward H. Smith (CGA C'1913): Distinguished Service Medal: as Commander of the Greenland Patrol and later as Commander of a Task Force in the Atlantic Fleet from December 1941 to November 1944.

CAPT Donald C. McNeil (CGA C'23): Bronze Star (with Combat Distinguishing Device "V") posthumously: as Commanding Officer of the USS CALLAWAY, in action against enemy Japanese forces during the assault on Luzon, Philippine Islands, January 8, 1945.

LCDR Edward C. Allen, Junior (CGA C'38): Bronze Star (with Combat Distinguishing Device "V"): as Navigator and Gunnery Officer on board the USS LEONARD WOOD, during operations against the enemy at Luzon, Leyte, Angaur, Saipan, French Morocco, Sicily and the Gilbert and Marshall Island Groups, during World War II.

LCDR John Natwig (CGA C'42): Silver Lifesaving Medal: For heroic action, April 1952, when he rescued a boy from drowning in the Atlantic Ocean, off San Juan, Puerto Rico, by climbing out of the co-pilot's hatch, diving into shark-infested water, swimming to the boy and supporting him for one-half hour until rescued.

LT Roger H. Banner (CGA C'43): Legion of Merit (with Combat "V"): as Officer-in-Charge of a Support Boat from the USS SAMUEL CHASE during the amphibious invasion of Italy on September 9, 1943.

CDR Paul D. Henneberry (CGA C'56):

Bronze Star Medal (with Combat "V"): as Commanding Officer of USCGC BERING STRAIT during combat operations in Vietnam, 1970-71.

LTJG Stephen T. Ulmer (CGA C'63): Silver Star Medal: as Commanding Officer of USCGC POINT LEAGUE during Operation MARKET TIME in Vietnam in June 1966, during a gun battle with a vessel smuggling ammunition to the Viet Cong.

CDR Lawrence G. Brudnicki (CGA C'72): the Coast Guard Medal: as Commanding Officer of Coast Guard Cutter TAMAROA during the daring nighttime rescue of four survivors from a downed Air National Guard H-60 helicopter during one of the strongest storms in recorded history, October 1991.

LT Jimmy Ng (CGA C'72): Distinguished Flying Cross: as pilot and aircraft commander of Coast Guard HH-3F 1471 engaged in the rescue of 17 seamen from the merchant vessel THERESA LEE which was filling with deadly ammonia gas, disabled, and sinking in Bristol Bay, Alaska in August 1980.

CAPT Scott D. Genovese (CGA C'79): the Bronze Star Medal: as Commanding Officer, USCGC BOUTWELL deployed with Commander, United States Fifth Fleet from February to May 2003 in connection with combat operations in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM within the territorial waters of Iraq.



Coast Guard 40' Utility Boat

Memorials

Barbers Point Aircrew Memorial Dedication

by LTJG Jason Gross, Air Station Barbers Point

September 4, 2009, marked the one-year anniversary of a tragic day in Coast Guard history. On this date exactly one year prior, the Coast Guard lost the crew of CG-6505 while it was participating in a routine training mission five miles south of Honolulu International Airport. Sadly, CG-6505 was not the only aircraft that had been lost from Air Station Barbers Point: on the afternoon of January 7, 1982, the wreckage of CG-1420, an HH-52A

helicopter, was found along the north shore of Molokai after it responded to a fishing vessel's distress call. So, in order to celebrate the lives and sacrifices of all these fallen crewmembers, the members of Air Station Barbers Point decided to dedicate a memorial to honor the aircrews of both helicopters.

In the weeks following the loss of CG-6505, Captain Brad Bean, then the Commanding Officer of Air Station Barbers Point, expressed his desire to dedicate a memorial to the crews. Captain Bean expressed his wish for the memorial in four simple, yet poignant words: Honor, Tasteful, Remembrance, and Timelessness. These words served as the guiding light for a committee of eight Coast Guard members in their efforts to design and construct the memorial.

The project ended up coming together beautifully due in large part to the design work of the committee, the fundraising efforts of the Coast Guard Aviation Association, and ultimately the support of the entire Coast Guard. Additionally, the air station was lucky enough to have an Air National Guard Civil Engineering Unit, which happened to be on base for other projects, volunteer to complete the first phase of

construction. What started as merely a desire quickly yielded a computer-generated design, and ultimately ended up as a tangible and timeless tribute to seven great Coast Guard airmen.

The Barbers Point Aircrew Memorial was dedicated on September 4, 2009. The service was opened by CAPT Anthony Vogt, Commanding Officer of Air Station Barbers Point. His remarks were followed by

several comments from RADM Manson Brown, Commander Fourteenth Coast Guard District, and VADM David Pecoske, Vice Commandant of the Coast Guard. The memorial, a lava-rock wall centered on a bronze flight helmet and pair of flight boots, was then unveiled by VADM Jody



Breckenridge, Commander Coast Guard Pacific Area, and Mr. Ben Stoppe, the treasurer for the Coast Guard Aviation Association. The ceremony was concluded when CAPT Bean placed the final brick of the memorial, and a formation of two Barbers Point HH-65's conducted a flyby on their way to lay wreaths at each crash site.

The service was attended by family and friends of the aircrews, as well as distinguished members of the Coast Guard, Hawaii National Guard, Hawaii state government, and Honolulu Fire Department. In total, approximately five hundred people came out on a beautiful Hawaiian day to celebrate the lives and commemorate the sacrifices of these seven aircrew members.

The Barbers Point Aircrew Memorial is dedicated to the crews of CG6505 and CG1420. CG6505 was crewed by CDR Thomas G. Nelson, LCDR Andrew C. Wischmeier, AST1 David L. Skimin, and AMT2 Joshua W. Nichols. CG1420 was crewed by LCDR Horton W. Johnson, LT Colleen A. Cain, and AD2 David L. Thompson. Let us never forget the sacrifices that these Guardians made in the service of their country.

Off-Duty

Book review by Regent Bob Desh, CAPT USCG (ret.)

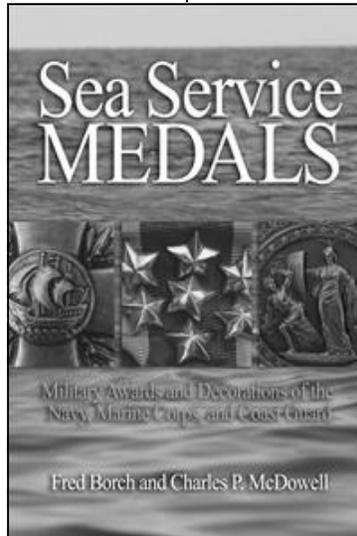
Sea Service Medals: Military Awards and Decorations of the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard by Fred L. Borch and Charles P. McDowell. Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 2009 ISBN 978-1-59114-089-4

Have you ever wondered how the Commandant's Letter of Recommendation Ribbon came to be? How about why the Purple Heart Medal is called that? Ever read the citation for the first Coast Guard Medal? These and a host of other fascinating facts and answers can be found in *Sea Service Medals*.

The book's dust jacket makes the bold claim that it is "the first and only complete historical examination of all the personal awards, decorations and medals that may be awarded to Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard personnel for heroism, achievement, and service." In this reviewer's opinion, Mr. Borch and Mr. McDowell succeed in meeting this claim. Much can be learned about an individual's career from a quick glance at his or her ribbon bar. This book adds depth of understanding and history to that knowledge.

The book is broken up into four distinct sections: "Decorations for Valor in Combat"; "Decorations and Medals for Noncombat Valor"; "Dual-Purpose Decorations for Performance or Valor"; and "Awards and Decorations for Outstanding Achievement of Meritorious Service." The reader should note that the "I was there" medals (Liberation of Kuwait; Southwest Asia Service; Global War on Terror") are not included in this book, as these decorations are awarded for contributions of military units—not for the actions of an individual.

The chapters follow the medals' order of precedence. Each section then explains the establishing authority for the medal; the date it was established; the designer of the medal; the heraldic symbolism of the medal; the medal's first recipient; and the historical background on the medal. Each section also includes an illustrative citation or two for recipients of the medal.



I have read no better reference book on how these medals came to be. I found the historic analysis to be fascinating. I believe all readers will be especially interested in the theory of how the Purple Heart got its name.

The book includes 50 color photographs, including several wonderful images of unique and historic medals, including the reverse of a hand-engraved Medal of Honor.

I believe *Sea Service Medals* lives up to the claim of being the authoritative book for this topic. It was a great read, and would be a welcome addition to any personal or unit library. It would be invaluable to any CO wishing to add a little history to an award ceremony!

Baggywrinkle:

Joshua James (1827-1901) is perhaps the most celebrated lifesaver in world history. He is credited with saving more than 600 lives during a long and distinguished career that spanned nearly 60 years with the Massachusetts Humane Society and the U.S. Lifesaving Service. He died while still serving at his Point Allerton MA Life-Saving station. His most famous rescue was in November 1888, when he and his crew saved 29 people from five different vessels. During the Portland Gale of November 1898, he saved twenty people from six ships. – from *The Dictionary of Nautical Literacy* by Robert McKenna (CGA C'85)

Baggywrinkle:

Most Academy cadets of the modern era have participated in coastal sail training in Luders yawls, typically in their 2/c summers. A frequent stopover port on such “gunk-holing” trips is Cuttyhunk Island, one of the Elizabeth Islands in southwestern Massachusetts. The following provides some of the earliest history of this pleasant spot – Ed.: Cuttyhunk Island was the scene of the first English colonization in New England in 1602. In that year Bartholomew Gosnold landed at Cuttyhunk Island from the bark Concord together with 32 other Englishmen. They built a sedge-thatched house and also a flat-bottomed punt on which they were ferried across the lake to the inner island. From this base on Cuttyhunk the group went on many exploring expeditions to the surrounding islands and mainland. They planted Martha’s Vineyard with wheat, oats and barley and gathered the strawberries, raspberries and gooseberries which abounded there. They enjoyed the scallops, mussels, cockles, lobsters, crabs, oysters and whelks. Their greatest discovery was sassafras, highly prized in England as a medical root at the time, and they loaded the Concord with it for the return journey.

During the first week in June, fifty Indians with their sachem arrived from the mainland to attend the first New England fish dinner as guests. On June 10th, 1602, the Indians ambushed several of the settlers and wounded one of them in the side. There had been some trouble, it seems, over a canoe which had been stolen by one of the Englishmen from Hills Hap island near the mainland. The Englishmen became alarmed, and on July 23, 1602, the whole group set sail for England, thus ending the first attempt at colonization in New England. It was not until 1823 that a lighted beacon was erected on the southwestern point of the island, later (1838) being transferred to a 25-foot tower, 48 feet above the sea.

Baggywrinkle:

*In the latter part of the 19th century and early part of the 20th, as wooden sailing ships gave way to steamers, many of the older vessels were simply abandoned—becoming derelicts, and thus a responsibility for the Coast Guard’s predecessor service. – Ed.: Derelicts—partially submerged hulks that had been abandoned voluntarily or involuntarily—were a perennial maritime hazard that became greater as the speed of ships increased, and revenue cutters undertook the elimination of this danger as a matter of course whenever it was encountered. Methods of coping with derelicts varied: some had potential value and were towed into port for salvage if possible, others might be beached, and those that could neither be towed in nor beached had to be destroyed, usually by gunfire or by demolition charges known as mines, occasionally by ramming. Towing was difficult enough, for a hawser had to be secured to the derelict, which most often meant putting men on board—no simple task if a sea were running—and not every hulk had a fitting readily available to which a line could be made fast. Destruction by gunfire would have been easier, but for the fact that except in wartime no revenue cutter carried guns heavier than 6-pounders, and a hulk of wooden construction or laden with a fairly buoyant cargo was unlikely to sink when struck by such light projectiles. So mines were much used. A boat crew would secure the mines where they would do the greatest damage, which usually required boarding, and if the hulk had capsized, they would chop holes in her planking. Swinging an axe while balancing on a slippery surface and lurching in even a slight swell required skill of no ordinary kind, but one or another of the boat crew must have possessed it. Back in their boat, the sailors would pull away from the derelict while the gunner paid out the electrical firing cable until, at a safe distance, the mines were exploded. Obviously, destroying derelicts was not a job for the novice, and even the most experienced seamen might find themselves ‘hoist by their own petard’ if any one of a number of possible mishaps were to occur. – from *Guardians of the Sea* by Robert E. Johnson.*

Baggywrinkle

The Advent of the use of Radio in SAR

As the 19th century rolled over in to the 20th, the revenue cutters continued to assist helpless ships and seamen at sea throughout the era. One dramatic rescue involved the cutter *Gresham*, when she made her way through 150 miles of dense fog to reach the sinking steamer *Republic* on 23 January 1909. The *Gresham* was one of fewer than a score of cutters equipped with wireless sets before 1910. Her rescue of the *Republic*'s crew was facilitated by the wireless; along with other such rescues, it proved the value of wireless in saving lives at sea. By 1915, the entire fleet of cruising cutters was similarly equipped, which significantly expanded the cutters' effectiveness.

On the morning of 22 January the Lloyds Italian liner *Florida*, bound from Naples, Italy, to New York with 800 immigrants on board, rammed the *Republic*, outbound from New York on a cruise to Gibraltar and Genoa with 422 passengers and a crew of 300 under the command of Captain William Inman Sealby. The *Republic* was cut to the waterline. Captain Sealby ordered abandon ship and told wireless operator Jack Binns to send a wireless message appealing for assistance. Holding a broken key together by hand and using emergency power in a dark cabin, Binns managed to send out the "CQD" message, which was then the distress call. Binns' message brought assistance and surely avoided a tremendous loss of life. He became the hero of the hour.

The *Republic* rescue eventually involved the combined efforts of *Gresham*, *Florida*, the White Star liner *Baltic*, USRC *Seneca*, and the British steamship *Furnessia*. The *Republic* eventually sank while under tow toward Nantucket.

The *Gresham*'s report stated: "During all of the above operations, the wireless apparatus of the *Gresham* was in constant use, the operator rendering the most exceptional, efficient and arduous service. While interferences were

encountered, dispatches of the most important character were sent and received, and after the rescue three messages were sent out for Captain Sealby, which not only assured those personally interested in himself and crew but gave information to the country at large in this important affair."

The *Boston Daily Globe* reported that all persons on board the *Republic* probably would have been lost but for the wireless; no vessels had come within hailing distance of the *Republic* except those responding to her wireless message. The chief clerk of the Steamboat Inspection Service, William F. Gatchell, reported that wireless was indispensable to safe navigation, and used the rescue of the *Republic*'s passengers to support his case. Marconi himself said that the rescue of the passengers was an overwhelming reward for his work on wireless telegraphy.

Motivated by a letter from a constituent who was sure he would have perished on board the *Republic* except for the wireless, Representative Francis Burke of Pennsylvania introduced legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives that would require any ship carrying fifty or more passengers to be equipped with wireless before it could clear from the United States for an ocean crossing. This proposal made good sense, but it would take the devastating loss of the *Titanic* in 1912 to stimulate legislative action. – from *The Coast Guard Expands* by Dr. Irving H. King

Baggywrinkle:

Hooligan Navy: nickname for the U.S. Coast Guard, first applied during WWII as it was perceived that it did not enforce military matters and manners as strictly as the other services. It particularly applied to the many civilian yachtsmen who manned "the corsair fleet." (See Roy Vander Putten's reference related to this term in his article on p. 17 – Ed.) -- from *The Dictionary of Nautical Literacy* by Robert McKenna (CGA C'85)



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