

The Cutter

The Newsletter of the Foundation for Coast Guard History

28 Osprey Dr.

Newsletter 27, Summer 2009

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Bill of Lading

The Wardroom

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From the Chairman

It has been a decade since we launched FCGH. We began with the goal of assisting the Coast Guard History Program and encouraging writers to research and describe the accomplishments and proud history of our nation's oldest continuous sea service to a wide audience. We are "staffed" by less than a dozen volunteers, all of whom share in a strong respect for the current men and women of the Coast Guard and an appreciation for what their forbearers have done.

In an annual award program, we reward Coast Guard units which have established an impressive way of displaying or highlighting some aspect of CG history to which their unit has contributed. We judge books relating to the broad range of CG missions and history, and recognize the authors; this year, for the first time, also honoring a video/film documentary. We fund a summer intern in the Historian's office, to assist in digitizing records. We recognize individuals who have given a great deal of their personal time in furtherance of the Coast Guard history program. And, we fund small projects at CG units or places of significance, to point out the Service's rich history...visit our web site for the impressive list.

While we have accomplished much, we have failed to ignite grass roots support by the current CG team....including Auxiliarists and Reserve members. In private conversations, we are thanked profusely and encouraged to both continue and do even more. To do that requires funds, and our source of funds will primarily come from our membership dues and contributions. If each of our members would make the effort to enlist one additional member each year, we would quickly achieve the growth and capability needed to respond to many more suggested projects throughout the United States. Please accept

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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 were 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 here 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

that challenge; find that one (or more) new member as your contribution to our tenth anniversary....August 4.

It is my privilege to announce changes to the three top positions in the Board of Regents. Captain Rob Ayer has accepted the role of editor of The Cutter, beginning with this special issue; the quality and timeliness of this and future issues will be apparent to all members. Our new Executive Director is Commander Gary Thomas, who has a life-long strong interest in Coast Guard history; he has eagerly embraced the challenges of 'running the show' and finding new ways to improve and expand the Foundation's outreach. Finally, and with a great deal of pleasure, I report that VADM (Ret) Jim Hull and I have 'exchanged salutes' and I stand relieved as Chairman. Admiral Hull is well known amongst Coast Guardsmen, active duty and former/retired. He is a highly respected gentleman, with a zest for life---and a contagious enthusiasm. His leadership and counsel will ensure the Foundation remains true to its missions.

I send my heartfelt thanks to all...the ten years have truly been a great pleasure. With the new top team in place, the future is bright. Along with the other co-founder and fellow emeritus, Captain Fred Herzberg, I look forward to continuing my support in the coming years. Semper Paratus!

Howie Thorsen
Chairman Emeritus

I want to thank all those who have worked so hard during the past ten years to enhance Coast Guard History. In particular, special thanks to VADM Howie Thorsen for devoting his time, talent and advice to the Foundation, along with his co-founder, CAPT Fred Herzberg.

I am a busy person, like all of you who are reading this article. I accepted the position of Chairman after significant soul searching. I have been interested in Coast Guard history since my first assignment on the newly-commissioned 378-foot Coast Guard Cutter RUSH in 1969 and my time off the coasts of Vietnam. That interest followed me throughout my career: Haitian and Cuban migrations, fisheries enforcement, counter-drug operations, EXXON Valdez, the 50th anniversary of D-Day “cruise” on DALLAS, hurricanes and earthquakes, creation of the national motor lifeboat school, through the latest outload of supplies and reserve force callups and the subsequent port security operations of post-9-11. This doesn’t begin to touch upon the significant policy and organizational changes that touched my life, such as including women in the service and dealing with the racial tensions that the service has experienced.

And these were just some of the things that I experienced in my own career; what about Joshua James? And Hopley Yeaton? And yourself? What did they and you experience, and how much do we know about them? Our goal is to expand that knowledge, and then somehow preserve it, in concert with present-day Coast Guard initiatives, as well as other organizations which focus on preserving our heritage.

I believe we can multiply our impact and effect -- while enjoying what we do -- by collaborating with other organizations, sharing access to information via technology, and engaging those who share our interest and passion in understanding Coast Guard history. With Howie, I met with ADM Allen the other day, and he plans to “expose” our organization on his blog site (watch for it) and support our efforts to recognize efforts to promote the history of our service. We must capitalize on his efforts.

I pledge to work closely with you, the members, the regents, and especially Gary Thomas and Rob Ayer, who have willingly volunteered their time, energy and talents to make this “vision” a reality. My grandmother once told me -- and I have never forgotten what she said -- that “Something worth doing, is worth doing right!” I will strive to “do it right,” and with your support and suggestions, I believe WE can accomplish great things.

Jim Hull
VADM (ret), USCG
Chairman

Shipmates,

As this is my first column since volunteering to take over as the Executive Director, I'll use it as a means of introduction.

I'm still on active duty, currently serving as the Commanding Officer of the Loran Support Unit (LSU) in Wildwood, NJ. I'm married to CAPT Cari Batson Thomas, who is the Commanding Officer of Training Center Cape May, just across Cape May harbor from the LSU. We have one daughter who also has a love of history and is entering her junior year of college, studying Art History.

I truly feel blessed to have been offered the opportunity to take on the responsibilities of this role, and couldn't say "Yes, I'll do it" fast enough. I have loved all history as long as I can remember. I was fortunate to have had parents who made sure our vacations always included visits to museums, historical sites and the like. My time in the Coast Guard has simply been an extension of that, as I gained an appreciation for the Coast Guard's history by sailing in cutters such as CGC TANEY, whose sailors literally made history. I'm fortunate that my dear bride of 23 years shares my love of Coast Guard history, because it makes it easier to drag around our growing library of Coast Guard books, paintings and antiques as we move from assignment to assignment.

Earlier in my career I was the Operations Officer on a medium endurance cutter. For those of you who haven't been one, you're the number three person in the chain of command and generally are responsible for ensuring that the mission of the cutter is safely and effectively executed. While the job often meant 20-22 hour days underway,

lots of coffee and a large bottle of antacids, it was also one of the most rewarding tours I had. I love challenges and do best when I'm busy, and that is exactly what being an "Ops Boss" was all about. The Ops Boss crafts the navigation plan, schedules the boarding activities, ensures drills are conducted, and generally manages the daily routine. The two things the Ops Boss doesn't do are (1) make all the decisions by himself, nor (2) conduct each and every task that must be accomplished. As Ops Boss, I relied on my boarding teams, quartermasters and others to do what needed to be done, and was acutely aware that I worked for the CO and XO. And at the end of the patrol, we were all judged on how well we executed our mission in the public eye.

I see my role as Executive Director much like being an Ops Boss. While I can craft our strategic plan or communications plan (a "navigation plan," if you will), it will still need approval from the Board of Regents that I work for (the "CO and XO"). While I may initiate changes to the newsletter or the website ("scheduling the boarding activities"), I will have to rely on volunteers such as the Editor and Webmaster (the "boarding team") to actually accomplish the mission. And at the end of the day, our mission execution will be judged by you, our shipmates ("the public eye").

Probably the greatest thing I learned as an Ops Boss was to trust those around you and fully appreciate that good ideas come not only from the salty dogs senior to you, but also from the most junior shipmate who simply sees the problem in a different light. I have no preconceived ideas about our way forward, and I hope that each of you is willing to provide guidance to me as I draft up our navigation plan: give me your input

as to where we should steam this cutter; let me know what port calls you think we should make. My contact information is below, and I promise to discuss with you each and every idea that you submit.

Finally, as I sit here typing this column, I've just finished presenting a history lecture on the Coast Guard at a local museum. Every time I do something like that, I'm always amazed at the diverse group of people who turn out to such events, eager with questions and a desire to learn more about the Coast Guard. I know that I can't be the only one who encounters people like that — each of you out there knows at least one person (if not several) who has the same passion for the Coast Guard and our rich history. I ask that each of you take to heart the President's challenge of bringing on one new member by the 10th Anniversary.

The radar is clear of contacts and the weather forecast calls for clear skies. Let's raise the anchor, go have some fun, and enjoy the cruise.

Regards,

OPS: CDR Gary Thomas
GMThomas@aol.com, (757) 375-1816

"History Becomes Real When You Participate"

Baggywrinkle

We all know that our Service has frequently acquired floating assets from other sources, especially the Navy, when they have already served significant periods, whereupon we then extend that service life almost indefinitely. But even we eventually come to the conclusion that a ship is done. However, others may continue the life of a ship even when we consider it used up—and not always for the most admirable of purposes:

The Revenue Cutter *Campbell*, which operated on the Florida Coast during the Seminole War (1836-38), was so far decayed as to be of little use. She was anchored inside the reefs and her armed boats were employed as pickets, patrolling the coast with becoming vigilance.

She must have been disposed of out of government service shortly after the end of the conflict, for in 1839 the same ship, now the schooner *Campbell*, was captured by the British off the coast of Africa, under American colors. She belonged to a notorious slave dealer known as Blanco, and was to have taken 250 slaves from Gallenas to Havana.

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.

The Wardroom

From the Editor:

Ahoy! I consider it a great privilege to assume the duties of Editor of the *Cutter*. I appreciate the confidence shown in me by my fellow Regents of the Foundation for Coast Guard History, and I will strive to earn as well the confidence of the readers of this newsletter. My predecessors, Sandy Schwaab and Fred Herzberg, have left a legacy to which I hope to add luster. I would especially like to thank Sandy for his efforts to pass the baton to me in a way that would allow a smooth transition. Please ascribe any roughness in this first issue under my aegis to my own faults, and I promise to try to improve the product from here forward!

You will note that this is not the only transition the Foundation is going through at present. Every organization has its own almost organic lifecycle, and in this one the generation of the founders is giving way to the next. We cannot say enough in praise and gratitude to VADM Howie Thorsen and CAPT Fred Herzberg for creating this Foundation and newsletter and otherwise beginning a great task: highlighting, for the sake of appreciation, the history of

the Coast Guard and its predecessor services, their personnel, ships and other facilities, and their sterling accomplishments. I am excited to be moving forward in harness with VADM Jim Hull and CDR Gary Thomas as well as the other continuing Regents, yet I am confident that we will continue to benefit from the shrewd yet graciously offered advice of Howie and Fred. I am especially grateful that Doug O'Dell is continuing in his role of behind-the-scenes *Cutter* production, because without him my role would be much more onerous.

That leaves you, our members and other readers: we hope you enjoy the news, articles and other contents of the *Cutter*. It will only get better if you provide feedback on what has already been published; let me know what type of articles and other coverage you most like to see; provide leads on possible reprints and other stories on which I should follow up – and even write some articles yourselves. Please see the box elsewhere in this issue for an address and other procedures for submitting to the *Cutter*.

– Rob Ayer

Baggywrinkle Nautical terminology:

Broach – from the Middle English *brocus*, meaning “projecting.” Originally used to describe the piercing of a cask to open it. In ordinary usage the term was eventually used to describe the opening of a new subject in conversation. In nautical usage it described a situation in which a ship had turned sideways to the waves, allowing them to break over the full length of the hull – usually meaning the ship was in extremis, probably sinking or about to break up. The likely origin of this usage is from the action of the masts piercing the oncoming waves while the ship lay on its side. --- *From the October 2003 issue of “Evening Colors”*

Pharos: The lofty Pharos light of Alexandria, near the mouth of the Nile River, was completed under Ptolemy II in about 280 B.C. In height and fame it has never been surpassed; it was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. So synonymous did the Pharos become with “lighthouse” that *pharos* was adopted as the word for *lighthouse* in the Romance languages. But despite the fame of this remarkable tower, the signal it sent out to the Mediterranean mariner in his galley was merely the glow and smoke from an open fire. This feeble source of illumination was used for all marine lights for centuries thereafter.

Flotilla Becomes First to Receive History Award

By Regent C. Douglas Kroll, Ph.D.

Auxiliarists have a proud tradition of assisting the Coast Guard wherever they can, most often in its day-to-day operational activities, and these contributions are a source of great pride to every member. Less well known are contributions that individual Auxiliarists and Flotillas make to promote public awareness of the Coast Guard's illustrious past and its contributions to the nation—an area that has always been a weak aspect of the Coast Guard's culture.

One Flotilla that excels at this effort is Flotilla 3-5 in the 11th District (Southern Region). Its efforts were recently recognized by the Foundation for Coast Guard History. Since 2001 the Foundation has presented an annual award to the U.S. Coast Guard unit that strives to promote the Coast Guard's history. The award is open to any active duty or reserve unit, spouses club, or auxiliary unit. The award is subdivided into two categories: large units and small units. Large units are described as those with over thirty assigned billets.

This past year marked the first time in the history of this award that an Auxiliary unit was judged best. Flotilla 3-5 of San Pedro, California, was named the 2008 winner in the small unit category. The Foundation's Awards Committee commented: Members of Flotilla 3-5, District 11 Southern Region, United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, renovated the Point Vicente Lighthouse and opened it to the public, an ongoing commitment they have kept since 1992. That project included the creation of an

interpretive museum on Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary activities, including the displaying of historical artifacts. Since 1992, flotilla members working in conjunction with Aids to Navigation Team Los Angeles/Long Beach have welcomed more than 350,000 visitors to the lighthouse. In 2002 the flotilla tackled the Point Hueneme Lighthouse, creating exhibits and displays telling the stories of the Coast Guard, Coast Guard Reserve, and Coast Guard Auxiliary.

As a member of the Board of Regents of the Foundation for Coast Guard History, as well as an Auxiliarist, I had the distinct pleasure of presenting this award to Flotilla 3-5 of San Pedro, California, at our district's recent Annual Training Conference in Costa Mesa, California. Assisting me in recognizing this outstanding flotilla was Rear Admiral Paul F. Zukunft, USCG, Commander of the 11th Coast Guard District.

Introduction:

Olivia D. Smith

**Summer 2009 Coast Guard Historian's Office Intern
Funded by FCGH**

Ms Smith attended high school in Pennsylvania and in 2004 received her BA in Historic Preservation from Goucher College in Baltimore, MD. She plans to attend Parson's School of Design to study the History of Decorative Arts.

Olivia has previously worked on the Weir Farm National Historic Site in Wilton, CT; the Lights of Liberty tours through the streets of Philadelphia; the Martin Van Buren National Historic Site in Kinderhook, NY; the Chadds Ford PA Historical Society's colonial homes; the Hampton

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2009 Foundation for Coast Guard History
BOOK AWARDS

Lighthouse History Book Award

This year's competition was exceptionally close, with several other books featuring lighthouses from California, Michigan, Maine, Rhode Island, Georgia, New York and Maryland being judged by our thoroughly knowledgeable panel of readers. The 2209 winner is:

Bostick, Douglas W. *The Morris Island Lighthouse: Charleston's Maritime Beacon*. Charleston, SC: History Press, 2008.

Described by one reviewer as "professional, crisp, and after reading it, I feel like I know a whole lot more about Morris Island than I ever thought I would. In such an instance, all an author can say is 'mission accomplished.'"

Coast Guard Heritage Book Award

This year's competition was exceptionally close, as well as the largest ever conducted by the Foundation for Coast Guard History. Other books judged this year ranged in scope from the story of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary to the United States Life-Saving Service to rescue swimmers to personal reminiscences of Coast Guard service. The judges, though, citing your "unprecedented contribution to the field of Coast Guard history," deemed the following title to be the best of the lot:

Buker, Commander George E. *The Metal Life Car: The Inventor, the Impostor, and*

the Business of Lifesaving. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2008.

It was described by our judges as "a well written and entertaining historical narrative with good value within a narrow spectrum of U.S. Revenue Marine Service history."

[Ed.: See in this issue a review of the winning book by Regent Doug Kroll]

VIDEO AND FILM AWARDS

(As documentaries on the service do not come out as frequently as books, our intention is to make this a biannual competition.)

Deep Sea Detectives: Caught in a Killer Storm

Studio: A&E Television Networks

Producer: Lone Wolf Documentary Group

We salute you as winner in the inaugural Video and Film Awards category of the Foundation for Coast Guard History's annual award competitions. Your excellent documentary, *Deep Sea Detectives: "Caught in a Killer Storm,"* was described by one reviewer as "respectful of the Coast Guard's past and reflective of its current reverence for its history. Sharp computer graphics and well-selected historical imagery and on-air experts made this film a standout." We thank you for doing your best to tell the story of the loss of the cutters *Bedloe* and *Jackson* and for helping to solve the mystery of which lost cutter is which in the Graveyard of the Atlantic.

Foundation for Coast Guard History
2009 Awards

UNIT AWARDS

Large Unit Award: Sector Northern New England, South Portland, ME. Citation: In 2008 Sector Northern New England designed and implemented a comprehensive and aggressive Sector History and Heritage Preservation Program. Milestones included: the collection of artifacts in a central display at the Sector's Command Building, and inventories of artifacts at units throughout the sector; the preservation of a peapod for presentation to the new national museum; the collection of oral histories; the implementation of a new chiefs' course of study and research on the famous Coast Guard men and women who have lived and worked in the sector; the creation of a historical reference that captures the history of the Sector and each sub-unit; the creation of a huge media event for September 2009, in which all lighthouses in Maine will be open to the public at the same time; the revitalization of the Coastal Warning Display program; a new Sector Art Program; rotating exhibits in conjunction with the Maine Lighthouse Museum; the creation of a plan to transfer artifacts to the permanent collection at the new national museum; collaboration with the city of Rockland, Maine, on the celebration of its becoming a Coast Guard City; the creation of a speakers' bureau.

Small Unit Award: International Ice Patrol, New London, CT (first repeat award winner). Citation: The International Ice Patrol annually commemorates the loss of RMS *Titanic* and the successes of the Greenland Patrol. In 2008, personnel collaborated with the Weather Channel on "When Weather Changed History - Titanic" and Pioneer Productions on "The Unsinkable Titanic," both of which highlight the history and mission of the International Ice Patrol. By preserving and sharing historical documents with CG-711, the IIP aided in the location of the remains of LT John Pritchard's J2F-4 plane (Pritchard saved 16 people from air crashes and then perished in another attempt). The IIP also rescued artifacts pertaining to the history of the

unit destined for disposal, including nearly 300 glass lantern slides with imagery of USRCS cutters *Bear*, *Thetis* and *Itasca*; donated two slides to Mystic Seaport Museum for its traveling "Dogs at Sea" exhibit; scanned several sets of presentation notes referring to the Coast Guard and its posture on the Grand Banks of Newfoundland in 1931 and 1932; continued the digitization of the IIP annual reports, dating back to 1913; preserved thousands of negatives discovered in storage in 2007;

continued to run a two-week "IIP University" for all personnel, which includes a 50-minute history of the IIP; developed a working relationship with the local community through schools, colleges and other organizations; and more.

2009 Special Achievement Awards

Each year the Foundation has the option of presenting Special Achievement Awards to recognize Coast Guard units and individuals who have made significant contributions in furthering the awareness of the U.S. Coast Guard's rich heritage and achievements, among both rank-and-file Coast Guard personnel and the people who those men and women continue to serve so well: the American public.

Said FCGH Chairman Howie Thorsen: "The committee members who judge and select the most worthy during each year's competition are not affiliated officially with FCGH, and I view their selections with the comfort of knowing they reflect their honest judgment. This year, they recommended that you be presented a special achievement award...and I have unhesitatingly approved it. It is a distinct pleasure for me to salute you and to present, in recognition of your extraordinary personal efforts, this Special Achievement Award. On behalf of all members of The Foundation for Coast Guard History, I send heartfelt congratulations, along with many thanks, for your outstanding accomplishments." Citations follow:

Captain William R. Webster, USCG (Ret.), nominated by Sector Northern New England:

For over thirty years Captain Webster has been a strong proponent of capturing and interpreting the history of the Coast Guard for future generations. As an author, Captain Webster has contributed articles and papers on Coast Guard history to *Proceedings*, *Sea Power*, *Wreck & Rescue Journal* and other publications. He coauthored *The Pendleton Rescue off Cape Cod: The Greatest Small Boat Rescue in Coast Guard History*, which is on the Commandant's Recommended Reading List. As a result of his research, he has developed a narrative history of Context, Challenges, Action and Results of the Bernie Webber and *Pendleton* story, which he has delivered at the Coast Guard Academy and Massachusetts Maritime Academy. As a historian he has thoroughly researched the cases of the fishing vessel *Sol-E-Mar* and sailing vessel *Morning Dew*, in preparation for a book aiming to incorporate historic lessons learned into modern operation center personnel's culture, capitalizing on past errors and insights. He's a member of the recently-formed task force of historians who will develop research and operations plans to find the World War II-era USCGC *Escanaba*; has worked ten years to develop similar plans to locate USRCS *Bear*; and mentors writers working in the field of Coast Guard history and emerging leaders in the Coast Guard. Captain Webster is an enthusiastic supporter, dedicated researcher and talented motivational speaker who incorporates the rich lessons of our maritime tradition and makes it relevant to the media, public and, most importantly, the future leaders of the Coast Guard.

LTjg Jennifer D. Osetek, Sector Long Island Sound, CT: LTjg Osetek demonstrated strong initiative, creativity, and perseverance while bringing the Sector's new history and leadership programs to fruition and building both a

repository for artifacts as well as interpretive displays. In 2008, the Sector opened a new command building and, on LTjg Osetek's suggestion, the building was named for Captain Quentin R. Walsh, a World War II hero. In preparation for the event, LTjg Osetek found living relatives of Captain Walsh and invited them to the ceremony, researched his story, and gathered artifacts from the Coast Guard Historian's office in Washington, D.C. She inventoried and identified an extensive number of historic items and artifacts in the former Sector Long Island Sound command building, retaining some and returning others, working with the Coast Guard Curator to ensure best preservation practices.

BM2 James Abels, USCGC *Forward*, Portsmouth, VA: In 2006 BM2 Abels founded "The Bluejackets," a World War II Maritime Living History Group that focuses on telling the story of the common sailor of the Coast Guard and Navy during the war. He aided the crew of the SS *John W. Brown*, a restored liberty ship, with interpretation; created exhibits for the Coast Guard Ball and its salute to World War II veterans and the Old Coast Guard Station's Museum's "Coast Guard at War" program; and arranged a visit to the museum for the crew of *Forward*, where they met with WWII Coast Guard veterans. He volunteers at state and national parks in the Mid-Atlantic region. At Point Lookout State Park, he aided in the upkeep of the last earthwork remains from the Civil War; qualified as a historic weapons safety and black powder safety officer within the Maryland Park Service, Department of Natural Resources; and taught safety courses to the park's personnel. He received the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal in 2007, and the American Legion Spirit of Service Award in 2008.

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National Historic Site in Towson, MD; and the Railroad Museum in Strasburg, PA.

She is trained in architectural surveying; National Register and National Trust/Main Street nominations; museum collection inventorying, data collection, and cataloguing; leading tours and performing costumed interpretation; curatorial cleaning and exhibit climate monitoring; and outreach and educational programs. She has also served as a volunteer archaeologist at a number of sites.

Olivia will spend much of her time working with the office's lighthouse files. She is preparing detailed finding aids that list the photographs and other manuscript materials held by the Historian's Office. The finding aids will eventually be posted on line.

Main Prop:

In Remembrance of a Heroic Rescue

*By PSI Kevin Rofidal, USCG – MSU
Duluth, MN*

BM1 Edgar Culbertson lost his life in Duluth 42 years ago, during a rescue attempt to save three brothers who also perished to the mighty Lake Superior. April 30, 1967, was a day many people in the area still refer to as Black Sunday. Tornadoes in southern Minnesota resulted in thirteen deaths, yet Duluth found itself facing the brunt of the storm, with waves on Lake Superior over 20 feet, gale force winds gusting to 45 mph, and 36 degree water.

Three teenage brothers had been seen running along the jetty by the North Breakwater Duluth Entry Light.

A witness had seen one of the boys knocked into the water by a huge wave, and after a few minutes the other two were not seen; it was presumed they were clinging to the light on the end of the pier.

A three-person rescue crew from Lifeboat Station Duluth, consisting of BM1 Edgar Culbertson, BM2 Richard Callahan and FN Ronald Prei, tethered themselves with a rope, spaced 25' apart, and set out to find the missing boys. The rescue crew made it to the light, but there was no sign of the boys, who died and have never been found. On the way back to safety a huge wave knocked BM1 Culbertson off his feet over the sea wall onto the rocks, killing him also. For their heroic actions the three rescuers were awarded the prestigious Coast Guard Medal, with Culbertson's medal being presented posthumously to his parents.

Recently uncovered documents from the national archives indicated that BM1



BM1 Culbertson's children at memorial service

Culbertson had law enforcement training, making him eligible to be added to the National Law Enforcement Memorial in Washington, DC. So in May 2009, marking the 42nd anniversary of the rescue attempt, BM1 Culbertson was memorialized during a service held in Duluth. His adult children were presented with replacement Coast Guard Medals,

along with the Fraternal Order of Police Medal of Valor for a fallen law enforcement officer. Also present was former Coast Guard Fireman Ronald Prei, the lone survivor today, who met the Culbertson family for the first time. The cold, damp and foggy day in Duluth on which the memorial was held, next to the unpredictable Lake Superior, was most fitting.

The Distinguished Revenue Cutter Service and Coast Guard Career of Capt. Charles S. Root

*By William H. Thiesen, Ph.D.
Atlantic Area Historian, United States Coast Guard*

In studying the historical record of by-gone days, scholars often come across men and women whose deeds have gone largely unrecognized. Such is the case of Captain Charles S. Root, one of the most distinguished engineering officers of the early twentieth century, whose career exemplified the Coast Guard's core values.

Early in his career, Root distinguished himself as a brave and self-sacrificing member of the Revenue Cutter Service. In June 1900, he entered the service as a second assistant engineer, and by September of that year he had earned the Gold Lifesaving Medal, an honor bestowed on only a few Revenue Cutter Service personnel.

Root received the medal for service while assigned to the cutter *Galveston* during the catastrophic Galveston Hurricane, which is believed to have killed more Americans than the combined number lost in the attack on Pearl Harbor, Hurricane Katrina and the terrorist attacks of 9/11. During the height of the hurricane, and at great risk to his own life, Root led rescue parties into the flooded streets of Galveston to save over thirty individuals from drowning.

Root also distinguished himself as an accomplished professional in the field of

engineering. He had already established his career as a marine engineer in Connecticut before joining the service at the age of twenty-six. As an engineering officer, he specialized in reconditioning steam vessels for sea service, including the USS *Bancroft* after it was turned over to the Revenue Cutter Service to become the cutter *Itasca*, and the USS *Eagle 22* after it became the cutter *Earp*. Root published papers on marine en-

gineering in professional journals, and a prize was later established in his name for the highest grades in mechanical drawing at the Coast Guard Academy. In 1917, the U.S. Navy ordered Root to convert the large yacht *Xafira* for war patrol duties, and later that year it requested Root's services again when it took possession of the interned Austrian passenger liner SS *Martha Washington*. The Austrian crew had sabotaged *Washington's* steam engines, but Root got the vessel in operation in short order

and served as first engineering officer throughout the rest of World War I as the transport ferried American troops between the United States and France.

Root received medals, commendations and special recognition from the Coast Guard and the U.S. Navy throughout his career, but he is best known for his work in Coast Guard intelligence during Prohibition. In 1924, then-Lieutenant Commander Root created the Coast Guard's Office of Intelligence as the service became the primary law enforcement agency in interdicting illegal liquor smuggled along the nation's coasts and inland waterways. Root built up one of the most respected intelligence sections in the federal government by recruiting the



Captain Charles Root

best talent, adopting the finest technology at his disposal, and working closely with offices and personnel in the Treasury Department and Customs. As head of Coast Guard Intelligence, he is credited with breaking up much of the rumrunning activities along the East Coast. Between 1924 and 1929, he rose in rank from lieutenant commander to captain and, from 1925 on, held an additional appointment as customs agent.

In 1930, Captain Root died in an automobile accident in Washington, D.C. In August of that year, he was buried with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery, joining many other distinguished members of the U.S. Coast Guard buried in that hallowed ground. In addition to his role as founding father of Coast Guard intelligence, Root had had a distinguished career as an engineering officer on board cutters in Atlantic, Gulf and Pacific waters, including service on board the cutter *Seneca* during that vessel's historic first cruise in the International Ice Patrol. Terms used by contemporaries to describe him include "skillful," "proficient," "reliable," "efficient," "unselfish" and, "untiring," and the Coast Guard's current Charles S. Root Intelligence Award for excellence is named in his honor. In a 1927 commendation, Assistant Treasury Secretary L.C. Andrews concluded with the following remarks: "I am truly grateful that I had a man of your caliber and genius here at hand to help me plan and carry on this [Prohibition] work. I hope, Commander that you have a most successful future, as you will always have a very warm spot in my affections."

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On 8 June 2009 the International Ice Patrol (IIP) conducted a memorial service at the Coast Guard Academy at which it dedicated a wreath for later commission to the waters of the North Atlantic. As part of the Academy service IIP commanding officer CDR Scott Rogerson read excerpts from the following piece by Bill Thiesen. It describes the heroics of Mess Attendant Charles David, whose actions were in the finest traditions of all those who served in the Greenland Theater during WWII. – Ed.

African-American Hero, Segregated Service

*By William H. Thiesen, Ph.D.
Atlantic Area Historian, United States Coast
Guard*

For many it takes a lifetime to learn the skills of leadership, while others come to it naturally. Mess Attendant (MAtt) First Class Charles Walter David, Jr., knew instinctively how to lead others despite barriers imposed by the nation's racially-segregated society of the mid-twentieth century.

MAtt David, an African-American, served in the Coast Guard early in World War II, at a time when African-Americans were barred from the officer ranks and limited to such enlisted ratings as steward's mate.

MAtt David was unique in many ways; notably by his age – he was 26 during his time on board the cutter *Comanche* in the Coast Guard's Greenland Patrol, making him one of the ship's older enlisted crewmembers. He already had a family at home in New York when many of his shipmates had just learned how to shave. At well over six feet tall and 220 pounds, David's stature could intimidate men; however, MAtt David

counted many friends among the cutter's crew of 60.

He had natural talent, playing blues harmonica in jam sessions with his shipmate, friend and saxophone player, Storekeeper First Class Richard Swanson. Despite the second-class status African-Americans held in the military at that time, MAtt David distinguished himself with his loyalty to the crew and an inclination to the service's core values of "Honor, Respect and Devotion to Duty."

In February 1943, while *Comanche* served as one of the Coast Guard escorts for the three-ship Convoy SG-19, weather conditions during the convoy's first few days proved horrendous. The average temperature remained well below freezing, the seas were heavy and the wind-driven spray formed tons of ice on virtually every exposed surface of *Comanche's* decks and superstructure.

The Coast Guard not only fought the elements, but an ever-present enemy lurking in the frigid waters as German U-boats hunted the convoys bound for Greenland. At about 1 a.m. Feb. 3, a German submarine torpedoed one of the convoy's vessels, the U.S. Army Transport *Dorchester*, which carried over 900 troops, civilian contractors and crew.

Two hours later, the task force commander ordered *Comanche* to the scene of the disaster to screen rescue efforts by the other Coast Guard escorts. By this time, *Dorchester* had slipped beneath the waves and those passengers and crew who survived the sinking had taken to the water or lifeboats. The ship's log noted, "All men in lifejackets lifeless." However, *Comanche's* lookouts threw a cargo net over the cutter's

port side when they spotted lifeboats full of freezing survivors. MAtt David, SK Swanson and several shipmates clad only in ordinary uninsulated uniforms swung into action as the cutter pulled alongside.

In a race against time and 10-foot waves, MAtt David climbed down the 40-foot cargo net and helped hoist *Dorchester's* living yet frozen survivors from the lifeboats to the *Comanche's* deck. SK Swanson worked alongside his musician friend as they saved nearly 100 survivors from the lifeboats. During the operation, *Comanche* executive officer Lieutenant Langford Anderson fell into the frigid seas. Without hesitation, MAtt David plunged into life-threatening water within minutes and helped LT Langford back aboard the cutter.

After hoisting the last survivors on board *Comanche*, Matt David ascended the cargo net to the ship's deck. Despite being six years MAtt David's junior, SK Swanson's limbs had succumbed to the cold and exhaustion. He only made it halfway up. MAtt David encouraged his friend, yelling, "C'mon Swanny. You can make it!" But SK Swanson was too tired and frozen to go any further. MAtt David descended the net and, with the aid of another crewmen, pulled SK Swanson back up to the *Comanche's* deck.

MAtt David placed the needs of others above his own, risking his own life to save dozens of *Dorchester* survivors, *Comanche's* executive officer and SK Swanson, who later described his heroic friend as a "tower of strength" on that tragic day—even though MAtt David performed these feats while battling his own serious illness. Days before the rescue operation he had contracted a raspy cough; then during his exposure to the frigid water and

sub-freezing air temperatures he suffered hypothermia. Later, when *Comanche* delivered its *Dorchester* survivors to an army base hospital in Greenland, doctors ordered an ambulance to bring in MAtt David as well. It was the last time his shipmates would see him alive. He became bed-ridden as the effects of hypothermia turned the cough into full-blown pneumonia, and within a few weeks he succumbed to the illness. SK Swanson and *Comanche's* crew weren't aware that their friend and shipmate had died until weeks later.

MAtt David placed the needs of others above his own and played a key role in the rescue of nearly 100 *Dorchester* survivors. For his heroic service, he received the Navy & Marine Corps Medal and, in 1999, he was posthumously awarded the Immortal Chaplains Prize for Humanity in the same ceremony as famed South African archbishop Desmond Tutu.

In the final irony of MAtt David's story, his own family believed he had been buried at sea; whereas he had been temporarily buried in Greenland and, after the war, his remains were interred in the Long Island National Cemetery at Farmingdale. For decades, his family had lived in New York City, within miles of Charles Walter David's final resting place, without knowing it; but 60 years after his heroic end the service undertook a systematic search for his immediate family and notified his next of kin.

Baggywrinkle

At the time of the creation of the Revenue Cutter Service in 1789, Congress set the first allotment for rations at nine cents per ration per day. By 1791 Secretary Hamilton was hearing reports from the field that Collectors of Customs and cutter commanders were having a hard time recruiting crews at that rate. So Hamilton reorganized the method of rationing the ships, and was able to increase the ration allotment – to the grand price of twelve cents per man per day.

'To Mature and Grow into a Man' By Arnold Palmer **Coast Guard Yeoman to Golf Legend**

Since joining the professional ranks after winning the U. S. Amateur Championship in 1954, Palmer has won 92 national or international golf competitions, 61 of which—including four Masters—have come on the PGA tour. Voted Athlete of the Decade for the 1960s in an Associated Press poll, Arnold Palmer has won every major except the PGA Championship, having finished second in that annual tournament three times. Even though his devoted and extensive tournament fan gallery is known as Arnie's Army, Palmer recently received the U.S. Navy Memorial's Lone Sailor Award for his service in the U.S. Coast Guard and subsequent success as a pro golfer. Here's what he remembers about that service and what it still means to him today.



A YEOMAN'S WORK: Palmer worked on identification and security clearances in the Coast Guard's 9th District. When told he'd need to commit to more time in the service to be an aviator,

I can't say it was my destiny to join the Coast Guard. It just happened. When I was in high school, I had a great friend named Bud Worsham. We had become close pals playing the junior golf circuit across the United States. Before we graduated, he asked me one day where I was going to go to college. I told him I hadn't really thought much about it, and he said, "Why don't you go to Wake Forest?" I thought that was a great idea. So we both ended up in North Carolina at Wake Forest and played on its golf team. He and I were there for three years before a tragic event changed everything. In our senior year, Bud was killed in an

automobile accident on the way home from our homecoming dance in Durham. Up to that time, that was probably the toughest thing that ever happened to me. We were very, very close. I tried to stick it out and stay in school, but I just couldn't do it. In fact, I lost it. Consequently, I decided I needed to change the scenery, and after finishing the fall semester signed up for three years in the Coast Guard.

There were numerous things I liked about the Coast Guard. First, I enjoyed boating and I liked the water. And in the back of my mind I had worked up an appetite for flight. I thought flying in the Coast Guard would be the greatest thing that could ever happen, other than playing golf, of course. So I reported to Cape May, New Jersey, for boot camp. Physical fitness was pretty much my bag, and I became an instructor. I was also a lifeguard on the ocean beach while I was there and helped train recruits.

I even managed to get involved in golf at boot camp, but not in the way one might expect. The commanding officer one day commissioned me to build a golf course. But he didn't provide any equipment, which was a major hindrance. We did manage to build a sort of rudimentary, haphazard course, but it was not a pretty sight.

I volunteered at Cape May for something I thought would be interesting but turned out to be an ordeal. I signed up to train for the honor guard at the Washington premiere of the 1951 movie, *The Fighting Coast Guard*. The training was extensive and it was all on the cold, windy Cape May runways. We were still in boot camp, and it was hard. We had an old Marine drill sergeant as our company commander, and he was one tough character.

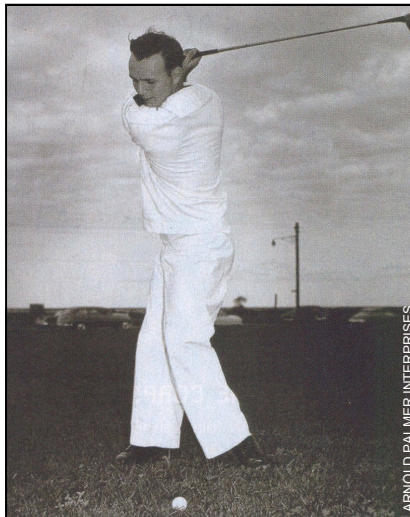
When I volunteered to do this, I thought it would be a chance for me to get to see some

of my friends and my sister, all of whom lived in Washington. But it almost wasn't worth it. We trained for 60 days, and it was damned cold. They had started with about 400 men and ended up with 60. I made the final 60, and I'm still pretty proud of that. I never did get to visit with my friends or my sister in Washington.

I was transferred after almost a year at Cape May to Cleveland and to a job with the Coast Guard Auxiliary. My commanding officer was the son of former Commandant of the Coast Guard Admiral Russell Waesche. At that time, and I guess it's still true today, the Auxiliary in Cleveland trained ci-vilians to help police the boats on the Great Lakes, teaching them how to keep a boat fit for sailing. That was part of my job.

After about six months in Cleveland, I went to Groton, Connecticut, where I enrolled in my first Coast Guard school and became a yeoman. Then I was assigned to the 9th Coast Guard District, where my job was to travel to all the district's stations and take identification photos of everyone. This was how Coast Guard personnel received their security clearances. I was in charge of taking the photos, bringing them back, developing them, and organizing them. After this, I had to distribute both IDs and security clearances to all whose pictures I had taken at each station. It was a long, tedious job.

Even though I've since taken up flying, I never did get to fly in the Coast Guard. What happened was that the admiral who was my boss suggested that I could be a Coast Guard aviator, but I had to sign up for another three years and go to flight school. I could then go into naval or Coast Guard aviation training. I decided then that I really wanted to play on the PGA tour, and that superseded any notion of flying. When I



BOOT CAMP GOLF: After the accidental death of a dear friend, Palmer left Wake Forest University in his senior year to join the Coast Guard. His commanding officer in boot camp at Cape May, New Jersey, commissioned him to build a golf course—"not a pretty sight," Palmer says.

Main Prop

completed my last semester at Wake Forest after leaving the service, I went back to Cleveland and worked as a manufacturer's rep just before winning the national Amateur Championship. Shortly after that, I got married and went on tour.

But I've never forgotten my Coast Guard service and have retained many things from it. It provided good discipline and opportunities for me to mature and grow into a man. The Coast Guard was very important in helping me understand things I didn't quite understand when I went in. It gave me the confidence that I was going to be able to do what I needed to do in my life. And it allowed me the opportunity to take a little time to understand myself and the outside world.

A number of my friends have had Coast Guard connections. I played golf quite a bit with the famous pro football player and coach Otto Graham, and he became a very good friend. Otto was a captain in the Coast Guard and the football coach at the Coast Guard Academy. We

communicated regularly up until his death. Another person in my life with a Coast Guard connection is someone who used to

caddy for me, the former Governor of Pennsylvania, my friend Tom Ridge. He was the first Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, which includes the Coast Guard. He is one of the great people in this country.

On a final note, I want to say how important I think it is to serve your country.

Too many people in leadership positions today do not know what it means to serve. It's actually very sad. Every person in the United States of America, all people who benefit are born here, should at some point in their life serve their country for at least one year in some fashion. That should be compulsory. If they're physically fit, they should serve. Such a requirement would

both the nation and the individual.

Article appears courtesy of Naval Institute Proceedings, January 2009



LONE COAST GUARDSMAN: On 30 September 2008, the U.S. Navy Memorial presented its Lone Sailor Award to Arnold Palmer in honor of his service in the U.S. Coast Guard and his achievements as one of the greatest professional golfers of all time.

Baggywrinkle Lifeboat Designs

In 1765 a Frenchman, Bernières, invented what is now generally acknowledged to have been the world's first lifeboat, i.e., a specially-designed and -constructed boat whose sole purpose was lifesaving; previous Chinese and European boats had been ordinary craft diverted to lifesaving work when necessity arose. Although the evidence is extremely scanty that the Bernières boat ever saw actual service, it was put through a series of convincing tests in the Seine River in that year before an enthusiastic crowd. The boat would not sink although it was allowed to fill to the gunwales.

(Continued on p. 22)

Bernard C. Webber (USCG Ret)
1928-2009

One of the Coast Guard's legendary heroes, Senior Chief Petty Officer Bernard C. Webber (USCG Ret), died at his home in Melbourne, Florida, Saturday, January 24th. He is survived by his widow, Miriam (Pentinen) Webber, a daughter, Patricia Hamilton and her husband Bruce, two granddaughters, Leah and Hilary Hamilton of Shamong, NJ and North Eastham, a son, Bernard E. Webber and a grandson, Shane Webber of California.

Senior Chief Petty Officer Bernard C. Webber is one of the "*Chatham Legends*".

On February 18, 1952, he took the **CG36500** out of Chatham Station with three volunteers—Seaman Ervin Maske, Seaman Richard Livesey and Petty Officer 3rd Class Andrew Fitzgerald, an Engine-man, responding to the tanker *Pendleton*, which had broken in two off Chatham in a storm. Seaman Maske was at Chatham Station awaiting transport to the Lightship *Stonehorse* but remained ashore because the Coast Guard deemed the seas too rough to transport him. He volunteered, along with the two Chatham Coast Guardsmen, to accompany Mr. Webber.

The Coast Guard crew faced 60-foot waves, hurricane-force winds and blizzard conditions to rescue 33 sailors who survived the shipwreck. While the **CG36500** was leaving Chatham Harbor, her compass and windshield were smashed and the rescue boat began shipping water. The crew persevered, and by dead reckoning they finally sighted the stern section of the *Pendleton*, where the ship's crew was awaiting rescue. They only lost one man—the ship's cook, George D. "Tiny" Myers.

The four who manned the rescue boat all received coveted Coast Guard Gold Life-saving Medals for their heroism in what is considered by maritime historians to be "*The Greatest Small Boat Rescue in Coast Guard History*." Of the four, only Engine-man Fitzgerald is still alive.

Senior Chief Webber was born in Milton, MA, in 1928, the son of the late Rev. A. Bernard Webber and Annie Knight Webber. He was one of four sons -- all of whom served in the U.S. Military during World War II: Paul in the Army in Europe, Bob in the Coast Guard, and Bill in the Army Transportation Corp.

When he was only 16, Bernie Webber joined the Merchant Marine Service and trained at Sheepshead Bay Maritime School in New York. When World War II ended, he enlisted in the U.S. Coast Guard and attended "boot camp" at Curtis Bay, MD. He was transferred to Cape Cod to serve lighthouse duty at Highland Lighthouse in North Truro and later went to the Gay Head Lighthouse on Martha's Vineyard. He first saw the **CG36500** when he returned to Chatham for a visit. He was transferred to Chatham Station in 1949. After the *Pendleton* rescue, he transferred to Woods Hole and didn't return to Chatham until 1954, and served there only until 1955.

His final tour of duty at Chatham ended in 1963 when he was transferred to *Cross Rip* Lightship until it was decommissioned. Mr. Webber was reassigned to the CG Cutter *Point Banks* out of Woods Hole. From there he and the ship were ordered to Vietnam. When he returned from 'Nam, he was assigned to the Buoy Tender *Hornbeam* in Woods Hole and finally retired from the Coast Guard as a Senior Chief Petty

Officer, serving as a Warrant Bosun (WO1), on September 1, 1966. During his time in this region, he also served at Nauset Lifeboat Station, Race Point Lifeboat Station, aboard a Coast Guard tug out of Southwest Harbor, Maine, and the *Nantucket* Lightship.

Senior Chief Webber met his wife Miriam Pentinen, a native of Wellfleet, when he first served duty in North Truro. They were married July 16, 1950, in Milton in a ceremony performed by his father, Rev. A. Bernard Webber.

After he left the Coast Guard, Mr. Webber served as Wellfleet Harbormaster, reconditioned boats for Nauset Auto and Marine in Orleans, and partnered on a charter boat out of Rock Harbor, Orleans. In “retirement” he worked for the National Audubon Society in Maine and later for Hurricane Island Outward Bound School in Maine. He also worked in the marine field for dredging, towboat and salvage companies and even served with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

In his book, “*Chatham: The Lifeboatmen*”, he wrote: “After 42 years of work on the sea, it became time to come home.”

His widow Miriam said that Mr. Webber will be cremated and his remains will be interred with military honors in a family plot in Wellfleet on May 9, 2009.

Courtesy of Jack McGrath of the CG Heritage Museum in Barnstable, MA. Source unknown.

HONORING THE PASSING OF CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER BERNARD C. WEBBER, UNITED STATES COAST GUARD, RET.

HON. WILLIAM D. DELAHUNT of Massachusetts in the House of Representatives
Thursday, May 7, 2009

Mr. DELAHUNT. Madam Speaker, it is my esteemed honor to rise today to commemorate the passing on January 24, 2009, of Bernard C. Webber, a truly great member of the maritime community and a genuine hero of the 1952 *Pendleton* rescue off Chatham, Cape Cod, Massachusetts.

As a teenager from Milton, Massachusetts, young Webber demonstrated his service to his country by serving with the U.S. Merchant Marines in the Pacific during World War II. On February 26, 1946, Webber enlisted in the U.S. Coast Guard. He quickly rose through the ranks and was eventually assigned to Coast Guard Station Chatham as a First Class Boatswains Mate.

After just six years in the service, he distinguished himself on the night of February 18, 1952, by executing the greatest small-boat rescue in Coast Guard history. Webber and his crew of three crossed the treacherous Chatham Bar and made their little 36-foot lifeboat, the CG 3600, famous. After Webber and his crew crossed the bar, they immediately faced 70-knot, horizontal, blinding snow and 60-foot waves en route to the floundering 503-foot tanker *Pendleton*, a T-2 fuel tanker that had broken in half the same night. With the windshield all but destroyed, all means of navigation—including the compass obliterated by seas and winds, and with limited-to-no visibility, Webber nonetheless found the stern of the tanker, where thirty-three

were huddled in the wet and freezing night. Webber skillfully guided his small boat—powered only by a single 90-horsepower gasoline engine—and rescued all but one of the crew from the stern of the stricken tanker. Moments after the last crewman was rescued, the hulk of the *Pendleton* rolled over and sank. Webber then skillfully navigated his grossly-overloaded boat toward safe refuge, but had to cross the Chatham bar again before reaching the safety of Chatham Harbor.

For their actions, Webber and his crew received the coveted Gold Lifesaving Medal, reserved for extreme heroism, and a place in Coast Guard history for having executed the Greatest Small Boat Rescue of all time. In 2007, the Coast Guard acknowledged the enormity of the rescue by declaring it their third most significant rescue of all time, ranking behind only the 1980 rescue of 520 people from the Dutch liner *Prinsendam* off Alaska and the service's phenomenal performance in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, during which 33,545 people were saved.

In 2002, I had the great and distinct privilege of overseeing the re-issuance of the Gold Lifesaving Medals to Warrant Officer Webber and his crew at ceremonies honoring them in Boston and on Cape Cod.

Webber's life was not solely defined by the *Pendleton* rescue or his time in the Coast Guard. He served in the Coast Guard until 1966, including a tour in Viet Nam, and at several other stations and lightships. He went on to serve as the Town of Wellfleet, Massachusetts,' harbormaster; a charter boat captain out of Orleans; the Warden-Head Boatman for the National Audubon Society; and part of the Hurricane Island Outward Bound School in Maine—all told,

spending more than half his life on New England waters. In his later life, he continued to make contributions to his former service's proud heritage with his summer visits to local Coast Guard stations, and by educating Coast Guard Academy cadets and others about his time in the Coast Guard.

Warrant Officer Bernard C. Webber leaves a legacy of quiet strength and dignity that is a loss to Massachusetts and the United States. As we honor his memory with a service this weekend, I encourage my colleagues in the House of Representatives to please join me in acknowledging the passing of an American icon and Coast Guard hero.

(Lifeboat Designs continued)

The first English lifeboat is said to have been designed by a British coachmaker, Lionel Lukin, but the use of such boats for rescue received little encouragement until, as a result of the efforts of Sir William Hillary, the Royal National Lifeboat Institution of Great Britain was founded in 1824. America's first lifeboat was built at Nantucket by William Raymond in 1807. This boat was thirty feet long, was lined with cork inside and outside the gunwales, and much resembled the common whaleboat of that time, except for the bottom, which was flatter. It was rowed by ten

men, with two more at each end handling sweeps instead of a rudder. Raymond's boat could carry twenty persons safely and live through the most boisterous seas.

- From "*Some Unusual Incidents in Coast*
(Continued on p. 21)

The Queen of the Fleet - The Passing of the Baton

The oldest active duty cutter in service is known as the Queen of the Fleet. On February 8, 2007, CGC *Storis* was decommissioned in Kodiak, and thus the title passed to CGC *Acushnet*. Proudly bearing its "38" hull number in gold - a distinction given only to the oldest cutter in the fleet - the *Storis* completed its last patrol in the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea in early December 2006. *Acushnet* celebrated its 63rd birthday Feb. 5, 2007.

***Storis*:** During World War II, CGC *Storis* patrolled the North Atlantic to prevent the establishment of Nazi weather stations in Greenland. In 1948, CGC *Storis* changed homeport to Juneau, Alaska, from where it supplied medical treatment to native villages and surveyed uncharted waters in the Arctic.

In July of 1957 *Storis*, along with the previously-decommissioned cutters *Bramble* and *Spar*, completed its historic transit of the Northwest Passage and circumnavigation of the North American continent. Soon thereafter CGC *Storis* was transferred to its final homeport of Kodiak, Alaska.

Coast Guard Pacific Area Public Affairs is in the process of setting up a dedicated website for the 64 year old cutter, which will be hosted by Military.com and supported by Fred's Place.org. Former *Storis* crewmembers who are interested in sharing photos, video and sea stories are welcome to forward them to the Pacific Area Public Affairs office for inclusion.

***Acushnet*:** *Acushnet* was originally commissioned as a Diver Class Fleet Rescue

and Salvage Vessel, USS SHACKLE (ARS 9) for the U.S. Navy Feb. 5, 1944. In 1946 *Acushnet* was commissioned in the Coast Guard, along with *Escape* and *Yocona*.

Unlike any other ship in the Coast Guard, *Acushnet* has served in the Navy and Coast Guard as a Fleet Rescue and Salvage Vessel (ARS), an Auxiliary Tug (WAT), an oceanographic vessel (WAGO), and a medium endurance cutter (WMEC). It is the second Coast Guard cutter to bear the name *Acushnet*.

Acushnet's operational history as USS *Shackle* includes participation in the salvage efforts at Pearl Harbor, Midway Island, Eniwetok, Guam, Saipan, and Japan. The salvage ship also played active roles in the battles over Iwo Jima and Okinawa. During WWII it earned three battle stars.

Acushnet's first homeport as a Coast Guard tug was Portland, Maine, where its crew earned a valiant reputation as a dependable friend to fishermen and boaters in distress. From 1968 to 1978, *Acushnet* supported the National Data Buoy Project while designated as an oceanographic vessel, primarily in San Diego (1968-1971) and then in Gulfport, Miss. In 1978, *Acushnet* was reclassified as a medium endurance cutter primarily to enforce maritime laws in the Gulf of Mexico, Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea. *Acushnet* crews also participated in the largest immigration crisis in the history of the Coast Guard, the Mariel Boat lift from Cuba in 1980.

In 1990, *Acushnet* changed homeports to Eureka, Calif., and patrolled the West Coast from the southern waters of California to the northern waters of the Bering Sea. *Acushnet* changed homeport to

Eureka, Calif., and patrolled the West Coast from the southern waters of California to the northern waters of the Bering Sea. *Acushnet* changed homeport to Ketchikan, Alaska, in 1998 from where it continues to serve as a medium endurance cutter, patrolling primarily the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea.

Nicknamed "The 'A' Team in Alaskan Fisheries," *Acushnet* is credited with handling the Alaskan environment more effectively than most other cutters even though it lacks a flight deck and modern weapons systems. Its current missions consist of homeland defense, search and rescue, and law enforcement.

(Continued from p. 17)

Guard History," Historical Section, Public Information Division, CGHQ, 1950

But the quest to perfect the lifesaving boat did not end there, as witnessed by the following item, which appeared in the *New Bedford Evening Standard* of 9 July 1880:

A New Life-Saving Boat – Early last spring Congress made an appropriation for the construction and testing of a life-boat, to be built upon a plan invented by Capt. D.P. Dobbins of the life-saving service. The lifeboats in use at present at the life-saving stations are constructed after an English pattern. They are good boats, but objectionable on account of their great weight. To make them ‘self-righting’ a keel weighing from 600 to 1000 lbs is attached. Capt.

Dobbins secures the same result by a modification of the shape of the vessel. The following letter from the inventor to Superintendent Kimball [head of the LSS] shows that the invention is a success: “Referring to yours of June 19, at hand, I have to say the self-righting surf-boat authorized by letters of March 3 & 4 was completed and tested Thursday last, the 17th, by the keeper and crew of life-saving station No. 5, under my personal supervision. The boat proves to be a perfect success. It will right instantly, and carry her entire crew around with her when full of water, as she is on righting, and with her crew at their stations. She shows a side of over six inches out amidships, so she can be bailed readily. She is very stable or stiff under foot and in a seaway. It was quite difficult for the seven men to capsize her, full as much so as it is for the crew of the English self-bailing and righting life-boats to capsize them. The prescribed beam of the boat made it difficult to secure the ready righting I claim for my own dimensions, but I have succeeded at the loss of a heavier [boat?] than I designed for a practical surf-boat. She will weigh not over 1000 lbs, however, which is 6000 lbs less than our ordinary surf-boats weigh. She is roomy, stout, staunch and strong, and pulls readily, and is a most beautiful sea-boat.” Capt. Dobbins has not patented his invention, and will receive no compensation for it, beyond the satisfaction of having contributed to perfect the life-saving service, in which he is a most efficient officer.

Speakings

R 191638Z Mar 09
Fm Comdt Cogard Washington DC
To Alcoast

Subj: Retirement of the 44-ft Motor Lifeboat

1. The retirement and decommissioning ceremony for the Coast Guard's last 44-ft motor lifeboat (MLB), 44301, is scheduled for 8 May 2009 at Coast Guard Station Chatham, Massachusetts.
2. The 44-ft MLB has been one of the most successful boat designs in Coast Guard history. In service for nearly a half century, Coast Guard 44-ft MLBs and their crews saved thousands of lives and millions of dollars in property. The 44-ft MLB represented the core of heavy-weather search and rescue capability to the American boating public for forty-six years. Its stalwart presence was always ready for the call when storm-driven winds, seas, and surf began to build. With superior structural integrity and seaworthiness, the 44-ft MLB swiftly built a reputation as a boat that safely brought boat crews home in all weather conditions.
3. The Office of Boat Forces, First Coast Guard District, Sector Southeastern New England, and Station Chatham wish to extend an invitation to Coast Guard members (active duty, retired, reserve, auxiliary, and civilian) to attend this historic occasion. Event details will be posted to Station Chatham's website and continually updated as the date draws near. Personnel planning to attend are requested to click into the sign-in sheet on Station Chatham's website (link below) so that an accurate count is available for planning.
 - a. Operational commanders are authorized to issue permissive orders, in accordance with ref (a) for those members requesting to attend.
 - b. Request widest dissemination of this message through all existing channels (retiree groups, local chiefs mess, CPOA, etc).
4. POCs.
 - a. Event organizer. Lt Robert Griffin at (508) 989-4802 or robert.e.griffin(at)uscg.mil.
 - b. Office of Boat Forces. Lt Lawrence Ahlin at (202) 372-2457 or lawrence.f.ahlin(at)uscg.mil.
 - c. Station Chatham website: <http://www.uscg.mil/d1/stachatham/44retirement.asp>
5. RADM Wayne E. Justice, Assistant Commandant for Capability, sends.
6. Internet release authorized.

BT
Nnnn

The Message Board

The Foundation is proud to acknowledge the accomplishments of LCDR Bennett, and to share his well-deserved basking in the limelight for the cutting-edge, scholarly, historical research he performed—with the funding support of the Foundation. – Ed.

R 022013Z Apr 09
Fm Comdt Cogard Washington DC
To Alcoast
BT

Subj: 2008 JOC Haley and CDR Simpson public affairs awards results, and DOD Thomas Jefferson award nominations

1. The JOC Alex Haley award recognizes the special achievements of individual authors and photographers whose published works have excelled in supporting Coast Guard operations through skillful public communications.
2. A selection panel convened 17-20 Mar to review submissions. I am pleased to announce the following results.
3. The winners of the 2008 JOC Alex Haley awards are:
 - c. Best writer (non-public affairs specialist/officer), LCDR Michael Bennett (CG Academy) for the article “The U.S. Coast Guard and OSS Maritime Operations During World War II.”
13. RDML Mary E. Landry, Director for Governmental and Public Affairs, sends.
14. Internet release authorized.

BT
Nnnn

From: William J. Belmondo, CAPT, USCG, CO, ISC Seattle
Sent: Wednesday, January 03, 2007
Subj: CAPT NEILS PETER THOMSEN, USCG (Ret.), 1907-2007

Member passed away quietly the morning of January 2nd. He would have been 100 years old in March.

CAPT Thomsen recounted his career with the Coast Guard in a couple of books. WWII service included sinking a Japanese sub in Dixon Entrance; participation in the Guadalcanal and Solomons campaigns; and command of USS *Menkar*, tasked with LORAN station construction across the Pacific. After the war, he developed and patented the mechanical chain stopper, assigning rights to the government; the chain stopper is now used in numerous countries throughout the world.

CAPT Thomsen's spouse of 25 years is Mrs. Airdrie A. Thomsen, 19222 Olympic View Drive, Edmonds, WA, 98020. The following poem was written by CAPT Thomsen and

appeared in the local paper as his obituary:

Requiem for a Sailor
(Master Mariner, War Hero, Writer, Inventor, and Lover of Life)

I know not what lies beyond
Or in whose care I'll be,
But it must end as it began:
This wedding with the sea.

My course is laid, my sails unfurled,
And my heart is light and free,
So scatter me over the ocean wide,
When the helm is hard alee.

My dust will mingle with each curling wave, and perhaps I'll a merman be.
And there will be singing and dancing seahorses prancing,
And a harem of mermaids all trembling for me
When I am called to my home in the sea.

Following funeral services, plans were for CAPT Thomsen's ashes to be spread in the waters off the West Indies. In lieu of flowers, Mrs. Thomsen requests donations to the U.S. Halo Fund (a subsidiary of the international organization dedicated to the removal of debris of war, including landmines) at www.halousa.org.

BT

As a tribute to CAPT Thomsen, and as a recognition of the innovative spirit and intellect he displayed, the following results of this year's Coast Guard Innovation Awards are presented. Note the breadth and variety displayed, and the degree of initiative the submissions evidence. Our Coasties are doing good and clever work out there, and deserve to be associated with CAPT Thomsen's legacy. — *Ed*.

Subj: 2009 Captain Niels P. Thomsen Innovation Awards

A. Coast Guard Innovation Program, COMDTINST 5224.13

1. This ALCOAST announces and congratulates the recipients of the 2009 Captain Niels P. Thomsen Innovation Awards.
2. The Commandant's Innovation Council considered 65 outstanding nominations this year. After intense deliberation, five initiatives were selected to receive Innovation awards and seven were recognized as finalists. These twelve recipients are listed below by category. Additional information regarding these and many other outstanding ideas and innovations may be found in

The Message Board

the Innovation database at <http://cgweb.mlcpc.uscg.mil/paic>.

a. Science or technology: the winners are ANT South Portland, ME for their Carmanah field testing unit and USCGC *Bertholf* for their voice over ip (voip) in wmsl staterooms initiative.

(1) Finalist: USCG NAVCEN - use of NAIS for GPS interference

b. Operations or readiness: the winner is LANTAREA for their Marine Transportation System Common Assessment and Reporting Tool (CART).

(1) Finalists:

(a) COMDT (cg-51) - AIS via satellite

(b) D11 - anti-small boat attack operation/operation focused lens (ofl)

c. Administration, training or support: the winner is the Maintenance and Logistics Command, Atlantic for their depot-level engineering specification compiler.

(1) Finalists:

(a) TRACEN Petaluma - petty officer indoctrination program

(b) USCGC *Alex Haley* - masters degrees for cutters.

4. Additional information regarding this and other Innovation Council activities can be obtained at <http://www.uscg.mil/innovation> or from Mr. Fred Hooghouse at 202-372-4579 or innovation@uscg.mil.

5. VADM Clifford Pearson, Chief of Staff, U.S. Coast Guard sends.

6. Internet release authorized.

Baggywrinkle

In the first half of the 19th century the Revenue Cutter Service, on behalf of the United States government, spent a great deal of time and effort in the tracking down, fighting, arresting and proffering for prosecution of pirates. Today, with visions of Johnny Depp and Keira Knightly in mind, this may seem a bit quaint. But pirates were a serious danger, to which the Service had to respond. (And it is doing so again today, in African waters.) Witness the following description (by a well-to-do—and thus spared—witness) of piratical action on the coasting schooner *Mary*, ca. 1820:

Over my left shoulder, one of our sailors was strung up to the yardarm, and apparently in the last agonies of death; while before me our gallant captain was on his knees and begging for his

(Continued on p. 34)

The Message Board

Noting the passing of a Coast Guard stalwart: another whose accomplishments in life will live on in the recognition received by others through an award given in his name.

R 031359z Jun 09

Fm Comdt Cogard Washington DC

To Alcoast

Subj: In memoriam for RADM Bennett S. "Bud" Sparks

a. Alcoast 316/09

1. In ref (a), the Commandant announced the passing of Rear Admiral Bennett S. "Bud" Sparks on May 22, 2009, in Windsor, California, at 83 years of age. RADM Sparks has been described as one of a kind, a true patriot, a real legend, as well as a loving family man. In an interview published in the March/April 2001 *Reservist* magazine, RADM Sparks wrote that if he had one word to describe his more-than-five-decade Coast Guard career (1942-89), it would have to be "opportunity." Throughout his Coast Guard career, he had many opportunities and always made the most of them. He will always be remembered fondly by those who knew and worked with him throughout the years.

2. Born October 10, 1925, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, RADM Sparks joined the United States Coast Guard Reserve in December 1942, taking a train from Erie, Pennsylvania to boot camp at Manhattan Beach, New York. After boot camp he served in enlisted ranks from seaman recruit/E-1 to chief petty officer/E-7.

3. During World War II he served as a combat air crewman aboard a variety of Coast Guard aircraft in the Pacific, Atlantic and European theaters, flying both anti-submarine and air-sea rescue missions. In 1946 he transferred to the regular Coast Guard, and in 1957 received a field promotion to ensign. As a pilot, he flew as both a Coast Guard and civilian aviator in Alaska from 1946 to 1957 on mapping missions for the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey (which became part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in 1970).

4. From 1966 to 1989 RADM Sparks held nine consecutive commands: four Coast Guard units, three Coast Guard groups, and two U.S. Navy Maritime Defense Zone sectors. He also served as district inspector for the Eleventh Coast Guard District and as senior Coast Guard Reserve officer for the Pacific Area in San Francisco and the Atlantic Area in New York. He commanded the United States Navy Northern California Maritime Defense Zone headquartered in San Francisco and later the Maritime Defense Zone Sector Six at the U.S. Navy base in Charleston, South Carolina.

5. RADM Sparks' training included the Naval War College, National War College, National Defense University, Industrial College of the Armed Forces, and Army War College. Nominated by President Reagan for flag rank in the USCGR in February 1985, he was promoted to rear admiral (upper half) in 1987.

The Message Board

6. In 1989 he served as chairman of the strategic planning and Reserve capability study (sparcs-89). This study proposed a broader definition of the reserve component's national security mission, serving as a long-range blueprint for the Coast Guard Reserve and providing the theoretical basis for Coast Guard-wide integration of active and reserve forces. In July 1989 he retired from the United States Coast Guard Reserve after 47 years of service.

7. Maintaining his involvement, RADM Sparks became the first Coast Guardsman to serve as president of the Reserve Officers Association of the United States. He also served as the national deputy executive director of the Reserve Officers Association of the United States in Washington, DC, from 1988-91, with additional duties as director of administration and director of finance. In addition he served as chief of the United States delegation to the Inter-Allied Confederation of Reserve Officers (CIOR) at NATO Headquarters in Brussels, Belgium. In 1992 he was appointed to a two-year term as international secretary general of CIOR, a position open to the United States only every 24 years. He was the first Coast Guard officer to ever hold an international position in the CIOR.

8. In 1993 the total force award was renamed the RADM Bennett S. "Bud" Sparks Total Force Award in his honor. The award is presented annually by the Reserve Officers Association of the United States to the Coast Guard unit judged to be the most supportive of a totally integrated Coast Guard force, demonstrated by its effective use of Coast Guard reservists.

9. RADM Sparks is survived by four children, Bennett Jr., James, John and Julieann; a sister, Doris Lederman; 11 grandchildren, 22 great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild. His wife of 60-plus years, Elizabeth "Betty" Sparks, predeceased him October 28, 2005, as did two other children, Richard and Donna.

10. A funeral service will be held at Wells Fargo Center, Santa Rosa, California, at noon on Saturday, June 13, 2009. Interment will follow at Shiloh Cemetery, Windsor, California.

11. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorial contributions in his name to Coast Guard Mutual Assistance, 4200 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 60, Arlington, Virginia 22203-1804; the Veterans Home of California Yountville, P.O. Box 1200, Yountville, California 94599; or the Alzheimers Association North Bay Chapter, 4340 Redwood Highway, Suite D314, San Rafael, California 94903.

12. RDML D. R. May, Director of Reserve and Training, sends.

13. Internet release authorized.

BT
Nnnn

Coast Guard Cutter *Apalachee* to Find New Life Here as a Museum

Cleveland (OH) *Plain Dealer*, Tuesday, Jun 02, 2009—By James Ewinger, *Plain Dealer* Reporter

Retired Chief Petty Officer George Staples remembers when wooden mallets and baseball bats were used to keep the ice off Coast Guard ice-breaking tugs. He didn't need any Monday as he stood on the bridge of the *Apalachee* at the foot of East Ninth Street. The vessel spent World War II and the rest of its 43 years in government service battling the elements around Baltimore.

The 110-foot cutter *Apalachee* sailed here Sunday from Oswego, N.Y., and is expected to become a floating museum. The Coast Guard Tug Association, with members across the nation, hopes to berth it by the old Coast Guard station on Whiskey Island.

"It could break three to six feet of ice," said Staples, of Bradenton, Fla., one of the volunteer crew members who sailed the tug here.

It took four days to get to Cleveland. Then another 20 minutes Monday morning to move 1,000 yards from the Coast Guard moorings on East Ninth to the Port Authority's Pier 28, just west of Cleveland Browns Stadium.

"This is the last time I sail this ship. The last time I said that was 23 years ago," said retired Chief Warrant Officer Dave Cunningham, who commanded the recent voyage. He was also the *Apalachee*'s last captain when it was decommissioned in 1986. When Cunningham stepped ashore in 1986,

"it was like the life was coming out of the ship."

He watched the life begin to flow back in three weeks ago in Oswego, as volunteers got the *Apalachee* ready to come here. It spent the last 20 years around Oswego Bay until its civilian owner donated the cutter to the Tug Association in January. Cunningham said despite its working life, a lot of the machinery had fallen into disuse. "But we know how to make it run, and how to bring it back," he said. Many of the volunteers are old Coasties, along with two on active duty with the *Neah Bay* here.

A lot of cleaning and refitting still needs to be done, but the cutter retains the black hull of a Coast Guard work boat, along with the regulation white superstructure and buff-colored mast and fittings.

The cutter had a complement of no more than a dozen or so, but Cunningham said that "hundreds of men served on her since World War II," and at least in spirit, they were all on board for the trip to Cleveland.

Baggywrinkle

The Coast Guard Saves a President?: The first time an American President left the western hemisphere during his term of office was when Woodrow Wilson attended the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. While modern presidents travel around the globe regularly, it would have been embarrassing to lose the first one to do so. Yet, when Wilson returned to the U.S. on the steamer *George Washington*, it entered Boston harbor in a thick fog and nearly ran aground on Thacher's Island. But Third Assistant Keeper Babcock was keeping the fog signal going at Thacher's Island light, and the ship's captain must have heard it at the last second. Just as Babcock saw the bow of the great liner loom out of the fog, the captain reversed his engines and backed out of danger.

Tamaroa/Zuni at risk

Storied Rescue Ship in Need of One

The 66-year-old steel ship now docked at Little Creek Naval Amphibious Base doesn't look like much. Rust smudges its hull, which in some places is dull white and gray elsewhere.

But this ship, originally a Navy salvage tug known as the *Zuni*, is a survivor of historic battles and epic storms, and those who love it aren't ready to let it fade into obscurity -- or be shredded into razor blades. They want to take it to sea as a training vessel for scout groups and high school junior ROTC programs, and offer cruises down memory lane for veterans groups.

Seven years ago, a private donor purchased the ship at auction and turned it over to the nonprofit *Zuni* Maritime Foundation. Two months ago, a tugboat pushed the *Zuni* into a slip at the amphibious base. Now its members are on the hunt for volunteers.

"Don't think just because you're 60, 70, 80 years old we don't want you," said Tom Robinson, the foundation's director of public relations. "We've got volunteers who were stationed on her at Iwo Jima. We've got volunteers who are in their 80s, World War II vets, with walkers and canes and oxygen bottles. Once they get on deck, they're 19 years old again."

Harry Jaeger, a retired Navy senior chief petty officer who is the foundation's director of operations, didn't serve aboard the *Zuni*. But he spent four years in the late 1950s on two of the *Zuni*'s sister ships. He navigates the 88 spaces spread across seven decks as if he never left.

Traveling through submarine-infested Pacific waters during World War II, the *Zuni* towed ships that were damaged by Japanese torpedoes to safety. It took part in the invasion of Iwo Jima, where, after almost a month of fighting, it was beached during a salvage operation and had to be salvaged itself.

In 1946, the Coast Guard took possession of the 205-foot-long ship, which it renamed *Tamaroa* and put into service as a medium endurance cutter on the eastern seaboard. The "Tam" was a workhorse until it was decommissioned in 1994. It responded to the sinking of the cruise ship *Andrea Doria* in 1956, near Nantucket. In 1991, during what later became known as "The Perfect Storm," the *Tamaroa* plucked three mariners from a distressed sailboat while battling 40-foot seas -- and hours later rescued the crew of a downed National Guard helicopter also responding to the storm.

Jaeger tells the stories with pride. "I call it the ship with nine lives," Jaeger said.

Volunteers have been coming aboard for weekend work projects since 2005, when the ship was located in Baltimore. It was towed to Newport News in 2007, then spent time at a Norfolk shipyard. In December, Little Creek's commanding officer approved bringing the *Zuni* to Pier 12 at the amphibious base.

Volunteers have scavenged parts off Ghost Fleet ships and rebuilt the intercom from scratch. The captain's chair on the bridge came off the *Stark*, a decommissioned frigate. The wheel and helm of the old-fashioned wooden ship came from a sister ship, the *Seneca*.

Memorials

Some things aren't new: the officers' wardroom still boasts its original metal table, and the *Tamaroa's* final watch, quarter and station bill remains posted along a passageway, listing the crewmembers and their duties. A few years ago, an Eagle Scout installed a set of canvas bunks, the kind Jaeger remembers from the 1950s. The four massive engines are operational, Jaeger said.

The ship needs about eight weeks in dry dock and \$200,000 of exterior cosmetic work, Robinson said. He hopes to convince local shipyards to make in-kind donations. He and Jaeger, who both live in Richmond, also are making the rounds of Hampton Roads veterans organizations, trying to drum up volunteers.

They also get some interest from passersby on the Little Creek pier, where the *Zuni* sits between a coastal patrol boat and an old Military Sealift Command cargo ship. Senior Chief Petty Officer Russ Englehard's curiosity recently was piqued by the steel relic. An engineman, Englehard spent a recent lunch hour touring the ship with Jaeger. Much of the tour took place by flashlight; the ship hasn't been hooked up to shore power yet.

Afterward, Englehard warmed up in the ship's office, eating a sandwich made by Jaeger's wife, Shirley. Asked what he

thought of the vessel, Englehard chose his words carefully. "It's got quite a bit of work to do," he said. "But still, I think it's worthwhile."

Jaeger knows there's much to be done, but he's thrilled to be at Little Creek. "As far as we're concerned," he said, "we're back in the Navy."

(From the Norfolk *Virginian-Pilot*, February 16, 2009, courtesy of Military.com)

Baggywrinkle

A story from the days of manned lighthouses: two of the most remote lights in Alaska were Scotch Cap and Cape Sarichef, guarding Unimak Pass leading from the Pacific into the Bering Sea. In this isolated region the keepers of the two lights were each other's nearest neighbors. In the 1930s the assistant keeper of Cape Sarichef, Lee Harpole, decided to visit his colleagues at Scotch Cap, and set out to walk the 17 miles alone. There was no road, not even a well-defined trail. On the way, he came to a swift-flowing glacial stream. To keep them dry, Harpole removed his outer garments, made a bundle of them, and attempted to throw the bundle across to the other bank. But the throw fell short and his clothes were swept away. Harpole continued across the stream, and completed the remaining four miles of his trek in bare feet, clad only in a shirt and hat.

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Off-Duty

Reading List Recommendations:

The Past As Prologue: the Importance of History to the Military Profession. Edited by Williamson Murray and Richard Hart Sinnreich. Although directed to military and naval issues, this book, particularly the Introduction and the first presentation, "Military and the History of War" by Michael Howard, should provide food for thought for Coast Guardsmen as well. Ed. note: this book is having quite an impact, and discussion of it has been rapidly making the rounds in professional circles at the highest levels. [Recommender: Dick Malm]

A Sailor at War on the Greenland Patrol – WWII by Maurice "Moe" Steinberg. A first-person account of his tour as a "Huf/Duf" radioman aboard the North Atlantic convoy escort cutter USS *Modoc* (WPG 46). A memoir of his experiences from boot camp to becoming a morse code radio operator on anti-submarine duty on the Greenland Patrol. He describes the hardships and hazards of escorting troop ships, merchant vessels and fuel tankers to Newfoundland and Greenland during the winter of 1944-45 and his duties monitoring German U-boat transmissions to reveal their presence on the surface. [Recommender: our sister publication, *The Quarterdeck Log* of the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association]

The Finest Hours, by Casey Sherman and Michael Tougias. Description of a major CG SAR episode, the 1952 *Pendleton/Fort Mercer* rescues off Cape Cod, told in an exciting and gripping manner (CG history in the raw....). This book is an equivalent of the *Perfect Storm* narrative. Fascinating.

[Recommender: Dave Young, CGA Class of '49. See tributes to CWO Bernie Webber, earlier in this issue. — Ed.]

Operation Homecoming: Iraq, Afghanistan and the Home Front, in the Words of the U.S. Troops and Their families – Eyewitness Accounts, Private Journals, Short Stories, and Other Writings. Sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts, edited by Andrew Carroll. This book reveals the thoughts, experiences, and anxiety of those, from across the spectrum of ideologies, who have experienced the trauma of terrorism and war. Ed. note: as we know, those fighting in this war include Coasties -- as in all past wars fought by the U.S. [Recommender: Dick Malm]

Book review by Regent C. Douglas Kroll, Ph.D.

George E. Buker, *The Metal Life Car: the Inventor, the Imposter, and the Business of Lifesaving.* Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2008. 182pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8173-1608-2.

Anyone familiar with the history of the Life-Saving Service is aware that the development of the "metal life-car" that would greatly increase the possibility of survival for passengers trying to reach the shore from their shoaled, shipwrecked vessel. A corrugated metal craft suspended by wires that raised it above or hauled it through the dangerous surf, this "metal life-car" was an immediate success. These craft were implemented at numerous life-saving stations along the Atlantic coastline and were instrumental in saving hundreds of lives in the latter part of the 19th century. Buker's book, however, is more than just a

book about these amazing rescue craft. It is also, as the subtitle indicates, the story of the “inventor”, Joseph Francis, the “imposter”, Captain Douglass Ottinger of the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service, and the “business” of lifesaving.

Beginning with a brief biography of Francis, Buker tells how Francis, after developing the “metal life car” developed various metal boats, bateaux and pontoon wagon bodies for the U.S. Army. Three chapters are then devoted to telling how successfully the army used these in their campaigns against American Indians in the trans-Mississippi West and during the Third Seminole War in the swamps of Florida. However, the reader gets bogged down trying to connect all this detailed information with the story of the invention of the “metal life car.” They have little to do with his basic argument and distract the reader from his main argument.

In 1855, Francis left his metal boat manufacturing business in New York and moved to Europe. During Francis’ seven-year stay in Europe promoting his metallic watercraft, his company in New York began losing business. When Francis returned to the United States in 1862 he abandoned his time-tested practice of demonstrating the usefulness of his pontoon wagons and instead merely marketed them to the army, without much success.

The final third of the book addresses the central argument that Buker makes in this volume. Here Buker introduces the reader to Captain Douglass Ottinger of the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service, who supervised the establishment of the first federal lifesaving stations in New Jersey in the late 1840s. In 1857, while Francis was in Europe, Ottinger applied for a patent for his invention of an upper deck for Francis’ metal life car. The

U.S. patent office informed Ottinger that his device was not patentable. Buker then tells of how this “imposter” applied to Congress for financial compensation for his invention of the “life or surf car” and other apparatuses of his in use at lifesaving stations. In 1859 Congress declared Ottinger to be the “original inventor” of the life or surf car and granted him relief of \$10,000. Buker argues that Ottinger misled Congress and received this money under false pretenses. Later that same year the U.S. Patent Office declared Ottinger to be the original inventor of the metal life car. Buker then gives examples from Ottinger’s career, demonstrating the officer’s “prevaricator’s style” in always enhancing his accomplishments. Buker laments that it was not just Congress who was misled by Ottinger’s claim, it was also Sumner Kimball, Superintendent of the U.S. Life-Saving Service, who acknowledged Ottinger as the inventor of the life car in his annual report of 1876 and challenged Francis’ claim. Buker details the battle between Francis and Ottinger that lasted the rest of their lives. Francis died in 1893 and Ottinger in 1899.

Buker has nothing but disdain for Captain Douglass Ottinger, “the imposter” who falsely claimed to be the inventor of the metal life car and was recognized both by Congress and the U.S. Patent Office for doing so. “Only a perfidious person, of whom Douglass Ottinger was among the quintessence, could accomplish this.” (132)

Buker concludes with lamenting how the “imposter” seems to have won out over the “inventor” noting that Robert F. Bennet’s *Surfboats, Rockets, and Corronades* (1976) declares that Francis implemented Captain Ottinger’s ideas. He also laments that the North Carolina Maritime Museum in Beaufort displays a metal life car with the legend that Ottinger designed the original life-car in

the early 1840s.

While Buker notes Bennet's work on the Life-Saving Service, it is surprising that he omits any mention of Dennis Noble's *That Others Might Live: The U.S. Life-Saving Service, 1878-1915* (Annapolis: Naval Institute, 1994). Noble speaks of the heated debate between Captain Ottinger and Joseph Francis and notes that Francis claimed the credit for the invention of the "life car" while Ottinger claimed to have invented the "surfcara." Noble, a scholar on the Life-Saving Service, rather than taking sides in the debate, agrees with Bennet that this "debate has helped to dull the fame of the only lifesaving device wholly developed by Americans during the volunteer era." (Noble, p. 116).

Regardless of the identity of its "true inventor," the metal life car was without peer as a lifesaving device in the days of wooden sailing ships carrying immigrants to their new homes in the United States.

Buker recounts the technical advancements that made shipwrecks less deadly during the nineteenth century, but spends almost as much time telling the reader the details of the Third Seminole War in Florida. By doing so, he has made his book much harder to read and lessened its value to those interested in life-saving history.

(Continued from p. 26)

life. The wretches were endeavoring to extort from him the secret of our money; but for a while he was firm and dauntless. Provoked by his obstinacy, they extended his arms and cut them off at the elbows. At this human nature gave way, and the injured man confessed on the spot where he had concealed our specie. In a few moments it was aboard their own vessel. To revenge

themselves upon the unhappy captain, when they had satisfied themselves that nothing else was hidden, they spread a bed of oakum on deck, and after soaking it through with turpentine, tied the captain on it, filled his mouth with the same combustibles, and set the whole on fire. The cries of the unfortunate man were heartrending, and his agonies must have been unutterable, but they were soon over....

On casting my eyes towards the schooner's stern, I discovered that our boatswain had been nailed to the deck through his feet, and the body spiked to the tiller. He was writhing in the last agonies of crucifixion. Our fifth comrade was...brought upon the deck blindfolded. He was then conducted to the muzzle of the swivel and commanded to kneel. The swivel was then fired off, and his head was dreadfully wounded by the discharge.... – From Irving H. King, *The Coast Guard Under Sail*, pp. 64-5.

Baggywrinkle

Wandering Buoy: Sometime in the 1940s the Frying Pan Shoal buoy "2A FP" broke loose from its moorings off the North Carolina coast and embarked on an epic journey. No small specimen at twelve tons and forty feet, with light and whistle, it got into the Gulf Stream and made its way up the U.S. coast and across the North Atlantic. Along the way it was sighted and reported at least ten times, but all efforts to retrieve it were unsuccessful. As it approached the Irish coast a French steamer again sighted it and reported it to Irish lighthouse authorities. Finally, after a voyage of a year and a month and four thousand miles, buoy "2A FP" washed ashore off Skibbereen, County Cork. Perhaps some of our blackhull sailors can tell us whether they know of any case of greater wandering by one of our aids?

WILLIAM R. FLORES: *Blackthorn* Crewman, Hero: On January 28, 1980, the Coast Guard Cutter *Blackthorn* collided with the tanker *Capricorn* near the entrance to Tampa Bay, Florida. As the



Blackthorn began to capsize, Seaman Apprentice William R. Flores threw lifejackets to his shipmates already in the water and used his trouser belt to secure the lifejacket locker door in the open position, allowing more to float to the surface. After most of the survivors had abandoned ship, nineteen-year-old Flores chose to remain on board the sinking ship to assist trapped crew members—and sacrificed his own life in the process. Flores posthumously received the Coast Guard Medal for his unselfish acts of heroism.

[By William H. Thiesen, Atlantic Area Historian; previously appeared in *Civil Rights – On Deck*, a publication of CGHQ]]



Caption: Picture courtesy of the U.S. Coast Guard History Web Site (www.uscg.mil/history)

Baggywrinkle

Volcanic Eruptions: [Ed.: When I reported aboard my first ship, the 210' *Vigilant* in New Bedford, MA, in 1979, it had only recently returned from responding to a volcanic eruption in the Caribbean, on St. Vincent, I believe. The following item demonstrates that the Service has been in this business for a long time.] In June of 1912 the cutter *Manning* was re-coaling in the harbor of Kodiak Island, AK, when the top blew off Mount Kitmai, nearby on the Alaskan Peninsula. At that time Kitmai was the newest and largest of the world's active volcanoes. It had a crater 3700 feet deep, surrounded by wild and rugged slopes. This eruption constituted the greatest then known in modern history: it lasted for three days; more than five cubic miles of ejecta spewed from Kitmai's mouth; sulfurous fumes poisoned thousands of bear, caribou and birds; ash twenty feet thick blanketed the area and contaminated the nearby waters, driving away fish; the dust darkened the sky over the Sahara Desert, 12,000 miles away. The natives of the area were in a bad way, with many villages covered, and their food supply gone. Using boards and canvas, the *Manning's* crew built a shelter on her afterdeck and used it to temporarily house some of the four thousand displaced persons; they instituted rationing of food until the *Bear* and other cutters of the Bering Sea patrol arrived with additional supplies. Thereupon the *Bear* headed north, while the *Manning* undertook to transport the inhabitants of several whole villages that had been entirely destroyed to new living sites where game and fish were still available.

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*391 Brookview Dr.,
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