



the QUARTERDECK LOG

Membership publication of the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association. Publishes quarterly—Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter. Not sold on a subscription basis. The Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association is a Non-Profit Association of Active Duty, Retired, Reserve and Honorably Discharged Former Members of the United States Coast Guard who served in, or provided direct support to, combat situations recognized by an appropriate military award while serving as a member of the United States Coast Guard.

Volume 33, Number 1

Spring 2018

USCGC JOSEPH GERCAK COMMISSIONED AND HOMEPORTED IN HAWAII

The new Sentinel Class *Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Gerczak* was commissioned March 9th, 2018 and is headed to Coast Guard Base Honolulu to begin its first deployment. The *CGC Joseph Gerczak* is a Fast Response Cutter with a maximum speed of 28 knots and a range of nearly 3,000 nautical miles, which is crucial to curbing illegal maritime activity.

The Sentinel Class cutters perform or assist with a variety of missions, including law enforcement, counter-drug patrols, search and rescue, and enforcement of fisheries regulations.

This new cutter was named in honor of Joseph Gerczak, who was killed during World War II while defending the tank landing ship USS LST-66 from a Japanese air attack during the American assault on Borgen Bay during the Battle of New Britain on December 26, 1943.

(Story on Page 6)

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COAST GUARD COMBAT VETERANS ASSOCIATION

ELECTED OFFICERS:

National President – Stephen Petersen, LM
 National Vice President – Terrence O’Connell, LM
 National Secretary/Treasurer – Gary Sherman, LM

BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Chairman – PNP Michael Placencia, LM
 2nd Term: Bruce Bruni, LM & Robert Macleod, LM
 1st Term: William Figone, LM & PNP Gil Benoit, LM

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE*

National Secretary/Treasurer
 P O Box 777
 Havre de Grace, Maryland 21078
 Phone: 610-476-8061 (c)
 E-mail: cgcva@comcast.net
 Website: www.coastguardcombatvets.org
 *use the Administrative Office for contact with the CGCVA on all matters.

THE QUARTERDECK LOG:

Executive Publisher – PNP Ed Swift, LM
 Editors – (INPO) Bruce Bruni, LM
 PNP Michael Placencia, LM
 Gary Sherman, LM

AUXILIARY OFFICERS:

National President – Javaughn Miller
 National Vice President – Beverly Johnson
 National Secretary/Treasurer – Mimi Placencia

APPOINTED OFFICERS:

ByLaws – **Thomas W. Hart, LM**
 Convention Planners – PNP **Michael Placencia LM, Gary Sherman, LM and Bruce Bruni, LM**
 Membership – **PNP Michael Placencia, LM**
 Parliamentarian – (Vacant)
 Historian – PNP/Founder **Paul C. Scotti, LM**
 Service Officers – **Thomas Huckelberry, LM, Richard Hogan Jr. LM and Floyd Hampton, LM**
 Budget Director – **Gary Sherman, LM**
 Chaplain – **Vince Patton, LM**
 Webmaster – **Richard Ames**
 Nominating Committee – **Bill Figone, LM**
 Cape May Liaison – **Thomas Dougherty**
 MEAP: **Edward Bachand, LM and PNP Ed Swift, LM**

FROM THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT

STEPHEN PETERSEN. USCG (Ret.)

Ahoy Shipmates!

Well, do you see a different look? Our new editors, the three musketeers, Bruce Bruni, Gary Sherman, and Mike Placencia have now been on the watch for the past three months working hard to continue this fine publication.



Editor Ed Swift set the bar high and it is not going to be easy to fill his shoes.

After 24 years, Swifty has finally handed over the reins and will take a back seat to the publication that he so diligently nurtured. BRAVO ZULU Ed. Thank you for making our Association magazine what it is today – the best of many that are published.

My Florida visits to see family has a great side benefit. It gives me the opportunity to see Association members on their home turf and renew friendships. If I missed you on my past visit, I’ll catch you on the next trip.

Missing from the photo op at the legion and displayed on page 3 is Paul Little, who was part of the group – must have been getting a beer at the bar!

Thanks to all that took time out of their busy retired schedules so that we could hoist a few beers and/or a cup of coffee. A few days later I met up with member Alan and Caren Dillenbeck in Vero Beach. (and more beers)!

Congratulations to Admiral K.L. Schultz, selected to be our next Commandant, Admiral C.W. Ray (CGCVA member) selected to be our next Vice Commandant, MCPO J.M. Vanderhaden as the next MCPOCG, and MCPO G.M. Williamson, Jr. as MCPO of the Coast Guard Reserves.

**NEXT QD LOG DEADLINE IS
 AUGUST 1, 2018**

**Email articles and photos to the editor at
[CGCVA@comcast.net](mailto:cgcva@comcast.net)**

FROM THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT



Veteran's breakfast Melbourne, FL
Terry Graviss, Steve Petersen, Norm Lemoine



Luncheon get together at Port St Lucie, FL
(left to right) QMCM Ed Lewis, CWO Jim Fay,
Genie Holmes, QMCM Nate Holmes,
MKCM Steve Petersen, Kay Petersen

(Cont'd from page 2) We look forward to meeting the new leadership during their tenure and we will be Semper Paratus to assist in any way possible.

Have a few extra bucks? There are many worthwhile organizations and programs that would appreciate your support. To name a few is our own Quarterdeck Log Booster Club; the Coast Guard National Museum; 36 footer Restoration Project, Cape May Maritime Museum; Coast Guard Foundation; the CGC Taney Hull Preservation Project; Coast Guard Morale Program. These are just a few that could use your help. All are 501(c)(19). Semper Paratus and lookout Charleston 2019!! ~ Steve

FROM THE NATIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT

FROM THE NATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT

I have known Ed "Swifty" Swift since he was a Seaman Deuce in the office of the Commander, Ninth Coast Guard District. I also met Mare there while she was a USO Volunteer at the DoD induction center in the same building.



When the new inductees were off to boot camp, young Mare would visit the USCG offices to share her leftover cookies and snacks. I think she shared most of her cookies with Seaman Swift. I followed his career through the enlisted and Warrant ranks followed by a direct commissioning and eventual promotion to Lieutenant Commander.

Swifty was a valued asset in the USCG and one of the most valued assets of the CGCVA. He has served a

VP term and three terms as our President and while performing all the duties that those offices demand, he continued to create each quarterly issue of one of the best periodicals of its kind, the Quarterdeck Log.

Ed's 24-year reign as Editor of the Quarterdeck Log is complete but he will surely assist Mike, Gary and Bruce as they jointly assume the QDL publishing role. I thank Ed for his many years of friendship and I trust the membership unanimously agrees that he deserves the admiration of each of us. ~ Terry O'Connell



Swifty performing duties as a Guinness Inspector at McSorley's Ale House in NYC

ALTERNATE MAGAZINE DELIVERY OPTIONS

Many non-profit organizations, like ours, are looking at alternative ways to cut costs and deliver service (in our case, the Quarterdeck Log) to each member. All members are equal, but not all members have the same capability, especially when it comes to technology.

We're seeing other non-profit organizations move to an all electronic magazine, where you get an email, which contains the entire magazine. We are not ready to do that, but it is tempting. However, there are too many of our members who do not have the technology or the desire for us to switch to an all electronic copy of the Quarterdeck Log. Many of our members are very happy and content with receiving a hard copy of the magazine, and we need to continue that option, especially for our WWII and other members who might find it easier to read about the association with a copy in their hand.

We could get to this point if membership dwindles or printing costs go up but we'll keep printing the magazine, especially if we keep getting your support through the QDL Boosters and other important donations. We do not offer a magazine subscription or paid advertising, at this point.

FUN WITH PAYMENTS:

If you send me a check with a different address than what's in our CGCVA database system, I don't automatically change your address. At that

point I have some doubts as to which one is correct.

Many people, including myself, use up the old checks before starting to use the new checks with your new address.

Often I've received a check with one address, and a different return address on your envelope and neither match the address in the CGCVA system. As you can see from the photo on the right, I do not have a lot of hair to pull out while trying to determine who the check is from.

Intuitively, I have to assume that the return address on your envelope is your most current address. If you've handwritten the address or placed an address sticker on it, I would have to assume that the return address is accurate, because you would want the check to come back to you if it was undeliverable to us.

So if you want to use an old check with a previous address and an old envelope with a previous address, please put a note in there with your current address, so I know which one to use. My clairvoyance skills are very limited! ~ Gary Sherman



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

NEW MEMBER	SPONSOR
DONALD FENTZLAFF	THE ASSOCIATION
RICHARD W. WALTON	WALT VIGLIEZONE
JEFF ROSENBERG	THE ASSOCIATION
ROBERT K. BAKER	THE ASSOCIATION
RANDALL L. COYNE	THE ASSOCIATION
FRANK J. TOBAT	THE ASSOCIATION
AUSTIN R. KEETH, JR.	THE ASSOCIATION
JAMES T. MARTIN	CGPATFORSWA
MICHAEL K. HART	BRUCE BRUNI
DYLAN R. SKIDMORE	THE ASSOCIATION
JOHN R. CHISM	THE ASSOCIATION
TIMOTHY A. DIMOCK	GARY SHERMAN
NATHAN J. SWAILS	THE ASSOCIATION

CROSSED THE BAR

ROBERT KASTNER, LM
GORDON D. GILLETTE, LM
RICHARD T. WEINAND, LM
DAVID J. DALZELL, LM

AUXILIARY NEWS

REUNION 2019

We are less than a year away from the 2019 Reunion in historic and beautiful Charleston, SC. We expect this event to be one of the best attended conventions by having it in a “destination location” during prime tourism season. This creates a great opportunity for the Auxiliary’s silent auction that will generate funding for the CGCVA’s Operating Fund and hopefully, offering some great and interesting items in return. We again ask your assistance in making this a successful enterprise by donating unique and creative articles for everyone to bid on. Please complete the Silent Auction Form below and forward it to me at jmiller@lptribe.net, fax it to me at (619) 478-2125, or mail it to 8 Crestwood Road, Boulevard, CA 91905.



Javaughn Miller
Auxiliary President

Don’t forget to renew your CGCVA Auxiliary membership by completing the form below and forward it to CGCVA Auxiliary Treasurer, Mimi Placencia, 9804 Iroquois Lane, Bakersfield, CA 93312. ~ Javaughn

COAST GUARD COMBAT VETERANS ASSOCIATION AUXILIARY AND ASSOCIATE MEMBER APPLICATION FORM

Membership Type: Auxiliary _____ Associate _____ New _____ Renewal _____ Returning _____

Two-year membership May 20, 20____ to May 20, 20____

Name: _____ Date: _____ Email: _____

Phone: (Cell) _____ (Home) _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Dues: **\$15 for two-year membership.** Make check or money order payable to CGCVA Auxiliary Association

Mail to: Mimi Placencia, National Secretary—Treasurer, 9804 Iroquois Lane, Bakersfield, CA 93312.

Auxiliary Membership Qualifications: Family of members of the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association in good standing.

Associate Membership Qualification: All other interested parties. Associate membership is a non-voting membership.

For additional information, please contact:

2019 CGCVA Convention / Reunion Silent Auction Item Registration Form

Description of Item: _____

Name of Person Supplying Item: _____

Value: _____ Minimum Bid: _____

Send this form to: Javaughn Miller via email at: jmiller@lptribe.net, or fax: (619) 478-2125 or mail it to me at: 8 Crestwood Road, Boulevard, CA 91905 ~ Thanks!!

COVER STORY

bursting successively closer, he dauntlessly continued delivering a steady stream of bullets against the enemy until he was fatally struck down by a violent blast which forced shrapnel into his gun shield and silenced his weapon.

Signalman Third Class Gerczak was posthumously awarded the Silver Star for his heroic and selfless actions.

Christopher Havern of the Coast Guard Compass provided much of the information for this article.



Silver Star

AWARDED FOR ACTIONS DURING

World War II

The President of the United States of America takes pride in presenting the Silver Star (Posthumously) to Signalman Third Class Joseph Gerczak, United States Coast Guard (Reserve), for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity while serving aboard *U.S.S. LST 66* during the initial assault against enemy Japanese-held Borgen Bay area of New Britain on 26 December 1943. When seven Japanese dive bombers suddenly attacked while his ship was in the bay awaiting the formation of the task unit then on the beach unloading cargo, Signalman Third Class Gerczak immediately manned his battle station and was the first to open fire. When the planes came in and struck from starboard, he poured his drums of ammunition into the attackers with unrelenting fury, blasting two from the sky and into the sea near his vessel. With his ship struck by bomb fragments, each bursting successfully closer, he dauntlessly continued a steady stream of bullets against the enemy until he was fatally struck down when a violent blast silenced his weapon and forced shrapnel into his gun shield. By his expert marksmanship, unwavering perseverance and cool courage in the face of tremendous odds, Signalman Third Class Gerczak contributed materially to the success of this as well as previous assault and reinforcement landing in the New Guinea Campaign, and his constant devotion to duty throughout was in keeping with the highest traditions of the Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country.

Service: United States Coast Guard

Rank: Signalman Third Class

Division: U.S.S. LST 66

GENERAL ORDERS:

Bureau of Naval Personnel Information Bulletin No. 348 (March 1946)

COVER STORY



CGCVA member, PACAREA CMC MCPO Mark Pearson presenting CGCVA plaque to XO, LTJG Joshua Martin



CGCVA member Andrew Siepka and his wife Christin at the commissioning ceremony



CGCVA member, MCPO Mark Pearson presenting a copy of Paul Scotti's book, "The Coast Guard in Vietnam" to FN Matt Cusak, the youngest member of the CGC Joseph Gerczak crew



USCGC Joseph Gerczak is now officially commissioned on 19 March 2018, the 26th in the Coast Guard's line of Fast Response Cutters



USCGC Joseph Gerczak



REFUGEE SPEARHEADS VIETNAM MEMORIAL

By Mike Voges

On April 30, 1975, after the South Vietnam capitol fell to North Vietnamese forces, Thy Cavagnaro (birth name Nguyen) and her family escaped Saigon on her uncle's warship, of which he was the commanding officer. They fled to the Philippines, then to Guam and finally to a refugee camp in Pennsylvania, where they were taken in by a family in New Jersey. Thy was only one and a half years old when she came to America with her family of five, after their neighborhood was bombed.



About a year ago, Thy, a Barnegat, New Jersey resident and her husband, James Cavagnaro, started planning an event dedicated to the Vietnam Veterans. “These veterans were heroes and not given their due thanks when they initially came back”, she said to the crowd. “You’ve helped keep communists away from our neighborhoods in Vietnam, and you made sure we had safe passage to your own country, when we lost ours”. “This memorial is a thank you to all who served”.

Aside from the numerous speakers, the event, which was planned for March 29th, the first nationally recognized Vietnam Veterans Day, featured the dedication of a Vietnam Veterans memorial. Pictured above. There is a large Vietnamese community near Barnegat, New Jersey

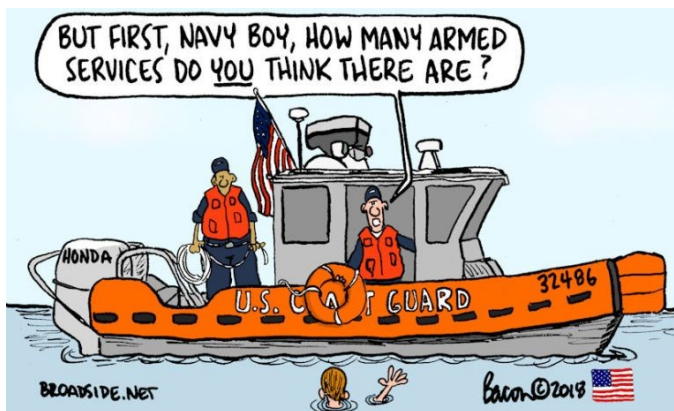
and about 500 Vietnam Veterans.

Thy Cavagnaro and her husband, James, personally funded all the costs to purchase this memorial and thanked those Coast Guard veterans who attended the ceremony.



From left to right: EN3 Tony Kopke, EN2 Mike Voges, Thy Cavagnaro and GM3 Bill Pettek

The members of the Coast Guard Combat Veteran Association in attendance were GM3 Bill Pettek (CGC Point Kennedy), EN3 Tony Kopke (CGC Cook Inlet), CWO4 Ralph Howland and Mike Voges, EN2 (CGC Point Mast). Additionally, there were a few other Coast Guard Vietnam Veterans in attendance.



Boot Camp Awards

At each graduating boot camp ceremony at Training Center Cape May, NJ, the recruit earning the physical fitness award is presented with the PNP Jack Campbell Physical Fitness Award, which includes a certificate and CGCVA Watch. This award was named in honor of PNP Jack Campbell and has been a continuing award honoring the most physically fit recruit. The following are the previous award winners:

- FN James F. Myers**, Vancouver, WA, Charlie 195 to Station Grand Isle, LA.
- SA Ryan C. Jackson**, Atlanta, GA, Delta-195 to SFO Eastern Shore, Chincoteague, VA.
- SA Troy D. Bowersox**, Cleveland, Oh, Echo-195 to Aviation Logistics Center, Elisabeth City, NC
- SN Sarah C. Blonder**, Baltimore, MD, Foxtrot-195 to Base Miami, Miami Beach, FL.
- SA Dylan D. Hintz**, Riverside, CA, Golf-195

- to Station Depoe Bay, Newport, OR.
- SA Bryan M. Balonis**, Boston, MA, Hotel-195 to CGC Tahoma, Portsmouth, NH.
- SN Sarah N. S. Levesque**, San Diego, CA, India-195 to Sector Mobile, AL.
- SN William M. True**, Louisville, KY, Juliett-195 to Station Grays Harbor, Westport, WA.
- SN Matthew B. Pounds**, Raleigh, NC, Kilo-195 to Station Juneau, AK.
- SA Pedro J. Maldonado**, Richmond, VA, Lima-195 to CGC Eagle, Baltimore, MD.
- SA Jacob A. Jancoski**, Chicago, IL, Mike-195 to CGC Henry Blake, Everett, WA.
- SA Benjamin T. Woodward**, Raleigh, NC, Nov-195 to Station Cape Charles, VA.
- SA Hunter B. Carlisle**, St. Petersburg FL, Oscar-195 to Station Port O’Connor, TX.
- SN Dylan W. Edwards**, Wilmington, NC, Papa-195 to Training Center Cape May, NJ.

QD LOG BOOSTER CLUB

The printing and postage for the QD Log is by far the largest expense item we have and it was determined that if every member contributed \$10 or more to the QD Log Booster Club each year, it would pay for all the expenses that go into printing and mailing the magazine. Donations can be sent to the Administrative Office (marked in the “memo” section of your check as “QD Log Booster Club”) and all those contributing will have their names listed in the subsequent magazine. Contribution amounts will not be published but all contributions are greatly appreciated. We have been told many times that we have the best association magazine out there and we’d like to keep it that way.

Since publication of our last magazine, the following individuals have made donations and become members of the QD Log Booster club:

- Paul Balmer Jerry & Cindy Goff Albert Duffield Michael Johnson Michael Niles**
- James Hull Emmett Knapton, Jr. Stanley Beras William Bradley, Jr. H. Don Smith**
- Iver Anderson Richard Barren Wayne Borchsenius William C. Held, Jr. Herbert Cohen**

- Charles Bevel IMO Joyce Bevel**
- Terry Carnila IMO John G. Carnila**

Thanks to all who have become QD Log Booster club members so far! All contributions are appreciated!

And remember, these contributions are tax deductible as we are a 501(c)19.

Are You Aboard?

JOIN THE CREW!

By registering, you will be kept informed of the latest scuttlebutt, including:

- Quarterly Newsletters
- Upcoming Events
- Major Milestones in the design and construction phases
- Our "Plankowner" program

Now is the time for ALL Coast Guard personnel – active, reserve, retired, civilian, auxiliary and family – **"To Bring Coast Guard History to Life!"**

Visit CoastGuardMuseum.org to register today!



860.439.1790 | info@coastguardmuseum.org | www.CoastGuardMuseum.org



On April 20th, in a change of command ceremony at USCG Headquarters, CAPT G. Todd Prestidge (left) assumed command of the USCG Personnel Service Center from CGCVA member RADM Matthew T. Bell, Jr. CGCVA past president, Ed Swift (center), presented CAPT Prestidge an Association challenge coin and thanked him for all his support to the CGCVA when he served as commanding officer, USCG Training Center Cape May from 2013 to 2016. (photo by CGCVA member RADM William G. Kelly).

CONVENTION TIME IS RAPIDLY APPROACHING

We are less than a year away from the 2019 CGCVA convention in Charleston, S.C. We are sure that attendance at this event will be high, so we urge anyone intent on attending the event to get your reservation made early. We have a limited number of rooms available at the reduced convention room rate. Once they are gone, the room price increases to the standard rate.

NORTH CHARLESTON MARRIOTT HOTEL SHUTTLE SERVICE

The North Charleston Marriott Hotel offers free shuttle service between the Charleston International Airport and hotel every 30 minutes, when needed. It also provides free shuttle service to the Tanger Outlet Mall located less than a mile away. To arrange for airport pickup call: [1-843-797-1400](tel:1-843-797-1400).

There is an AMTRAK train station in North Charleston, less than a mile from the hotel, if that is a method of travel that interests you. At this time, there is no shuttle service to the train station, but we are working on it.



CHARLESTON RESTAURANTS

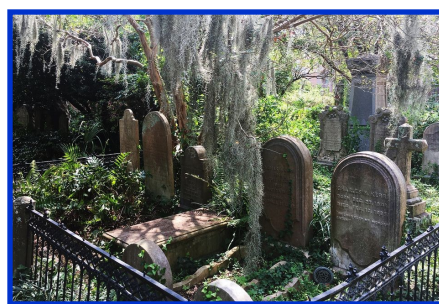
Charleston is noted for their many restaurants and pubs. The 126 year old Hyman's Seafood Restaurant, pictured below, is just one such place

offering exceptional fare. Located at 215 Meeting Street, they have two basic operating principles. #1 - *The customer is always right.*

#2 - *When in doubt, refer to rule #1.* Like many Charleston restaurants, there is never a lack for customers who are willing to wait for great food.

See the web ink for a list of Charleston restaurants and night life:

<https://www.charlestoncvb.com/plan-your-trip/dining-nightlife~124/>



Charleston Ghost and Graveyard Walking Tours

Schooner Pride Harbor Tours offers an 84-ft, three-masted schooner modeled after the classic coastal trading schooners, a perfect tour for some "seasoned" Coasties who miss the sea. Their weblink is: <https://www.schoonerpride.com>

Charleston Carriage Tours is a fun and interesting way to explore Charleston. They offer several "entertaining carriage tours", or enjoy a quiet, romantic evening carriage ride through the city's Historic District. Their weblink is:

<https://www.charlestoncvb.com/plan-your-trip/tours-attractions~204/carriage-tours~1151>

More ideas and tours that are offered in Charleston can be found here at <https://www.tripsavvy.com/charleston-south-carolina-things-to-do-1640142>

The CGCVA Convention Committee really spent much time and consideration in selecting Charleston for the 2019 convention and chose Charleston because of the many things to see and do. It certainly is a destination location for many and we know that you will have a great time. We really hope to see everyone there!

Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association

REUNION / CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM

April 15—18, 2019

**THE NORTH CHARLESTON
MARRIOTT HOTEL**

4770 Goer Ave
North Charleston, SC 29406
Reservations: 1-888-236-2427

Code: **CGAA OR CGAB**

For the online registration,
go to the CGCVA webpage

(<http://www.coastguardcombatvets.org>)

and click on the Convention Registration Button



Make sure that you ask for the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association Reunion 2019 rate.

Room Rates: (Single or Double occupancy) \$135.00

Fees to register, luncheons and banquets are shown on the following page. After selection of the activities you wish to attend, fill in the corresponding amounts and total them. Send this page and the reservation form with your Luncheon/Awards Banquet and meal selections along with your check.

(Payable to CGCVA) to:

Mike Placencia
9804 Iroquois Ave
Bakersfield, CA 93313-5323
Phone: (661) 401-0609

Email: cgmaterchief22@hotmail.com

(PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (Cell) (_____) _____ (Home) (_____) _____

Email address: _____

Arrival Date / Time: _____

Name(s) to appear on Badge(s): _____

Vessel / Unit: _____

Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association

CGCVA CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM

<u>Early Registration:</u>	Cost	How Many	Total Amount
Received by March 8, 2019	\$25.00/person	X _____ =	_____
<u>Late Registration:</u>			
Received after March 8, 2019	\$40.00/person	X _____ =	_____

Monday, April 15, 2019

Registration and Opening Ceremony

Tuesday, April 16, 2019

Open Day to take advantage of the many tours offered throughout the Charleston area, visit the shopping district along Kings Street and enjoy a fantastic dinner at one of the many fine Charleston restaurants. Check out the official Charleston tourism website at: <http://www.charleston-sc.gov/index.aspx?NID=184>. If you are still undecided upon arrival in Charleston, there will be a more comprehensive list of things to do included with your registration pack.

LUNCHEON AND AWARDS BANQUET RESERVATION FORM

Wednesday, April 17, 2019

CGCVA Business Meeting / Luncheon (CGCVA Members only)

\$25.00 / person X _____ people = \$ _____

Poultry: _____ Beef: _____ (Note if you have dietary requirements, advise Mike Placencia)

Wednesday, April 17, 2019

Auxiliary Friendship Luncheon (Open to all)

\$25.00 / person X _____ people = \$ _____

Poultry: _____ Beef: _____ (Note if you have dietary requirements, advise Mike Placencia)

Thursday, April 18, 2019

Cocktail Hour (5:00 p.m. with Cash Bar); Awards Banquet (6:00 p.m.)

\$55.00 / person X _____ people = \$ _____

Indicate: Poultry: _____ Beef: _____ Fish: _____

(Note if you have dietary requirements, advise Mike Placencia)

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED FOR ALL THE ABOVE ITEMS: \$ _____

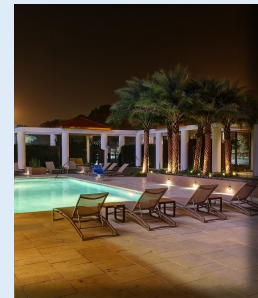
Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association

2019 Reunion / Convention Itinerary

NORTH CHARLESTON MARRIOTT HOTEL

4770 Goer Ave

North Charleston, SC 29406



Sunday, April 14

4:00 p.m. CGCVA
Officers /
Trustees Board Meeting CGCVA
Planning Committee Meeting

Monday, April 15

9:00 a.m. Registration and Hospitality
Room opens
4:00 p.m. Opening Ceremony
5:00 p.m. CG Vietnam Veterans 50th
Anniversary Commemoration

Tuesday, April 16

9:00 a.m. Registration and Hospitality
Room opens
(Free day to take advantage of
what Charleston has to offer
tourists)

Wednesday, April 17

9:00 a.m. Registration and Hospitality
Room opens
11:30 a.m. CGCVA Business Meeting and Luncheon
11:30 a.m. Auxiliary Friendship Luncheon

Thursday, April 18

9:00 a.m. Hospitality Room opens
5:00 p.m. Cocktail Hour (cash bar),
Hospitality Room closed
6:00 p.m. Awards Banquet
Hospitality Room reopens after
Awards Banquet

Friday, April 19

Check Out. We wish you a safe journey
home

NOTE:
Upon arrival at the
North Charleston
Marriott Hotel, be
sure to
check the times of
the events as they are
subject to change

Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association

General Information for Members and Visiting Associations

Please wear your nametag at all times while in the Hospitality Room, you will not be served without it. There are special discounts throughout the hotel for those wearing their nametags. If you registered early, your ship/station/group name will be added to the nametag if you have indicated it. This will make it easier to be recognized and attract others to speak up and get acquainted.



If your visiting group desires a separate meeting room and luncheon, please contact Mike Placencia and he will attempt to make arrangements with the hotel to meet your needs. However, be advised that it is unlikely that the hotel will be able to provide a different menu item from that being served to the CGCVA without an increase in cost. Please make this request known prior to arrival to the hotel in order for Mike Placencia to coordinate the request with the hotel. Mike can be contacted at: (661) 401-0609 or at:

cgmasterchief22@hotmail.com

Remember, all guests are encouraged to attend the CGCVA Auxiliary Friendship Luncheon. We have attempted to make this event comfortable for you so that you will feel welcomed to our convention and reunion. If we have overlooked anything, please let us know.

Extending Your Stay at the North Charleston Marriott

The hotel is offering the same reservation rates for three days prior to and three days after the convention. Please tell the hotel when making your reservation that you intend to take advantage of this offer.

Refund Policy

Requests for refunds, will be honored for some or all payments, for compelling reasons if received by March 15, 2019. Refund requests after that date may be honored after the convention, subject to the availability of funds after all convention expenses are paid. Registration fees are NOT refundable. This is due to the expenditure of monies for necessary and contracted convention items and services.

Makes checks payable to the CGCVA

Please help the committee by making your reservation as early as possible after May 14, 2018. We must provide a headcount in advance. It takes much time and effort negotiating to get the best deals possible so that everything is in place when you arrive. Please help us by filling out the preceding forms and sending them with your check, payable to the CGCVA, to Mike Placencia as early as possible.

Thank you for your assistance and consideration. ~ *The Convention Committee*

AIR ALERT RED
INBOUND SCUD MISSILE

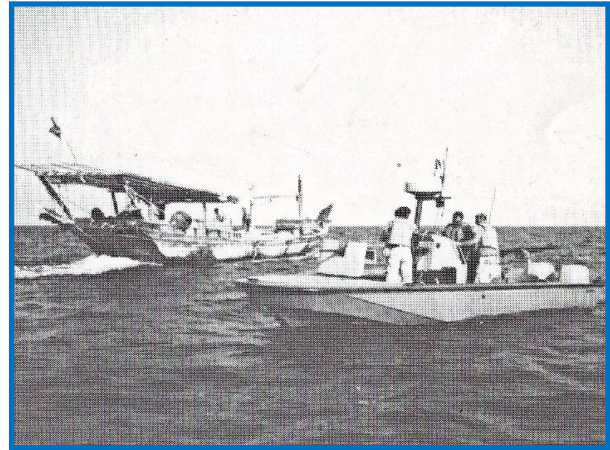
By Bruce Bruni, LM, with excerpts from the Naval Institute's Proceedings December 2002 article which was written By Adam B. Siegel

In late August 1990, Coast Guard Reserve manned Port Security Units (PSU) were mobilized in support of Operation Desert Shield to counter Iraq and Saddam Hussein's invasion into Kuwait. PSU303 of Milwaukee, WI, mobilized first under Title 10, followed by PSU301 of Buffalo, NY, a week later. Eventually, there would be three PSUs deployed to the Middle East with PSU302 from Cleveland, OH, arriving in November. PSU301 would be assigned to the northern most port of debarkation at Al Jubayl, Saudi Arabia, with PSU303 assigned to the Port of Damman, Saudi Arabia and PSU302 at Manama, Bahrain. Their mission was to provide waterside security for the many ships that were delivering troops, equipment and ammunition for the expected effort to push Iraqi forces out of Kuwait, soon to be known as Operation Desert Storm. PSU crews used six Transportable Port Security Boats (TPSB) 22-foot Boston Whaler "Raiders" equipped with a combination of a .50 caliber M2 machine gun and an M60 machine gun mounted on a platform with an ability to move 360 degrees along the gunwale.



Port Security Unit Qualification Pin

Crews operated without the benefit of any cover, such as a bimini top, to shield them from the blistering sun in the hot months, or from the cold and wet of the winter months, often patrolling up to six hours underway, often conducting numerous boardings of the many fishing boats operating in the Persian Gulf near the sea-lanes for ships entering and leaving the ports. However, in the best traditions of the U.S. Coast Guard, crews professionally accomplished their mission. It is likely that it will never be known if their presence deterred Iraqi



Market-Time Persian Gulf style
 Maybe it should be called "Souq" Time
 (USCG PSU 301)

aggression in any of the Saudi or Bahraini ports, but Iraq did use combat swimmers in their initial attack upon the Port of Ash Shuai-bah, Kuwait. However, use of Iraq's SCUD missiles in targeting any of these ports was a serious threat, but especially the Port of Al Jubayl.

Iraqi Staff-Lieutenant General Hazim 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Ayyubi, commander of Iraqi surface-to-surface missile corps during the Gulf War, had stated that Iraqi forces already were prepared to fire SCUD missiles equipped with conventional and chemical warheads in early August, with the Port of Al Jubayl as one of the planned target areas. The initial Patriot anti-missile batteries arrived in Dhahran on 13 August, with Al Jubayl receiving its Patriot anti-missile battery on 04 September. During Desert Storm, Iraqis fired 88 Al Hussein missiles, commonly known as SCUDs.

Al Jubayl has one of the largest commercial piers in the world, more than a mile long, with extensive space to stage military forces. About 20 percent of Desert Shield and Desert Storm cargo moved through Al Jubayl, including the nine Maritime Prepositioning ships of Squadrons 2 and 3 that arrived at Al Jubayl in August of 1990 with 30,000 Marines. The first three ships carried significant amounts of supplies, with each squadron carrying 2,000 containers, 800 of which contained ammunition. The ammunition and other combustibles, such as fuels, have an explosive arc of about 4,500 feet. If just one ship had exploded at the Al Jubayl commercial pier, the blast would have likely destroyed all ships at the pier and everything on it.

FEATURED ARTICLES



On the afternoon of 15 February 1991, the *USS Tarawa* off-loaded its six-plane Marine Corps AV-88 detachment. On board there were 2,793 sailors, Marines, soldiers, and civilians. Other ships and numerous U.S. and allied personnel were also in the port at that time, including the 97 Coast Guard personnel of Port Security Unit 301, located at the adjacent area between the commercial pier and break wall.

The pier area had a wide array of supplies and equipment stored on it, both in the open and in warehouses. The ammunition stored on their pier included 155-mm high-explosive and white phosphorus rounds, Army missiles, cluster bombs and 500-pound bombs.

On 16 February 1991, at 0207 local time, the 66th SCUD missile launched by Iraqi forces impacted a mere 150 meters from the ammunition laden pier, hitting within the harbor's breakwater, just 125 meters off the bow of the Polish hospital ship *ORP Wodnik* and less than a 1,000 meters from *USS Tarawa* and Port Security Unit 301. Coast Guardsmen and lookouts in the port area reported sighting a "flash" in the sky, and hearing a very loud "boom", with a significant concussion hitting the Coast Guard's tents. The SCUD's warhead failed to

detonate, but some small pieces of the missile debris hit the aviation support ships *SS Curtis (AVB-4)* and *SS Wright (AVB-3)*, *ORP Wodnik* and the pier near these three ships.

British Forces chemical alarms sounded throughout the immediate area with a loudspeaker announcing GAS, GAS, GAS!! Believing that they were under a possible chemical attack, Coast Guardsmen quickly donned MOPP suits and crews immediately reported to their assigned General Quarters stations in anticipation of a follow-on Iraqi waterborne assault. The three Coast Guard RAIDER boats that were already on patrol at the time the SCUD struck were joined by the three other boats. Coast Guard security teams manned their landside positions checking their fields of fire, watching and waiting until the stand-down call was received.

The Nonproliferation Review/Spring-Summer 1997 found numerous incidents where chemical weapons were used by the Iraqis, and lists this particular attack in their report, which can be found at:

<https://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/npr/tucker43.pdf>

FEATURED ARTICLES

*Seabees of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 24, stationed near the port of Al Jubayl, report a bright flash in the night sky followed by a powerful detonation-concussion. Chemical alarms sounded, and troops don MOPP gear. After the all clear, troops unmasked and experience an acrid smell, choking, profuse nasal secretions, facial numbness, a burning sensation on exposed skin and a metallic taste in the mouth. Two M256 detection kits are positive for chemical blister agent. During the weeks following the incident, many of the exposed troops develop skin rashes and chronic ailments. — **Nonproliferation Review***

Within a short period of time after the attack, the remnants of the SCUD was observed floating on the surface near *ORP Wodnik*. A MOPP suited Coast Guard boat crew cautiously approached the spot, taking an approximate bearing in its relationship to the pier, before the missile disappeared below the surface.



MOPP level 4 Suits

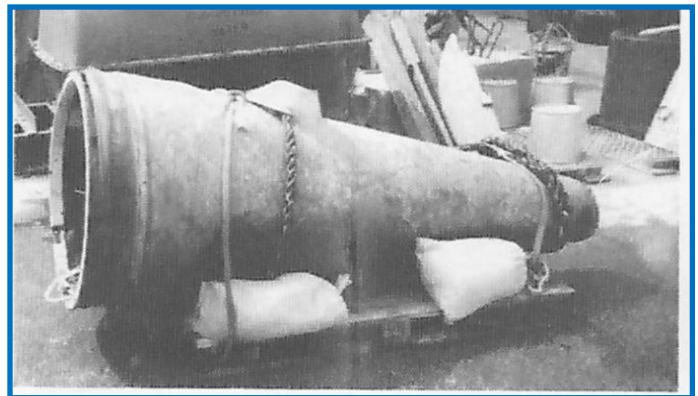
What was not known at the time of the attack was that the Patriot missile battery assigned to Al Jubayl was down at the time of the attack for replacement of a part in its main computer and did not come back on line until 0212 local time, five minutes after the attack.



Patriot missile battery

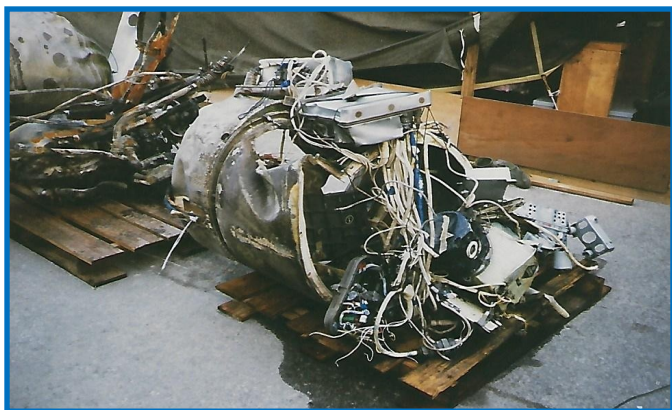
Few know how close this missile came to destroying the port and city of Al Jubayl. Had the missile struck the pier, or even a ship, the resulting explosion and conflagration would have rivaled the great Halifax disaster of 1917.

The Central Command situation report said that the missile hit out to sea or in an unpopulated area. At 1st Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters, the intelligence officer briefed the commander that the SCUD had “landed approximately 10 miles southeast of the port.” The Patriot battalion’s watch log listed the missile as having landed outside of the battery’s coverage area. One Patriot missile performance analysis stated simply that there was no detection and the missile hit ten miles north of the Patriot battery. This probably is the reason why the air alert was being broadcasted as “yellow” just seconds before impact.



SCUD Missile Warhead
(USCG PSU301)

FEATURED ARTICLES



SCUD debris recovered from harbor
(USCG PSU301)

With daylight, a Coast Guard crew assisted a Navy EOD team with recovery of the virtually intact missile, including its warhead. Finding the warhead was no secret to the U.S. military. Many photos were taken and forwarded to family, friends and to the USCG.

Although it was well known that Al Jubayl was a major logistics port, this was the only attack that the Iraqis conducted against it. It is believed that the

presence of *Tawara*, arriving only 13 hours before the attack, may have been reported by local intelligence sources to the Iraqi forces and that the ship was the target. If that was the case, why didn't the Iraqis launch multiple missiles, instead of relying on a single assault, which in hindsight, had only a one in 2,000 chance of hitting *Tarawa* directly and less than one in 200 chance of hitting the ships or the ammunition dump on the pier. Although a one-missile attack had a low probability of hitting *Tarawa*, Iraq fired five-missile salvos multiple times during the war. Such a multiple-missile attack would have greatly increased the possibility of a hit on any high-value targets in the Al Jubayl area, especially the port's large petrol-chemical complex that would have had disastrous results.

This particular launch originated from north of the Qurnah "SCUD basket" in an area from which only one other SCUD launch occurred during the war. Maybe it was incompetence on the part of the Iraqi missile command, or the fear of being targeted by allied forces looking for SCUD launch sites, but thankfully, no follow-on launch occurred. ~ **B.F. Bruni**

Maurice Jester - Boatswain, Officer and War Hero

By William H. Thiesen, Ph.D.

Historian, Coast Guard Atlantic Area

He . . . really would like to be in charge of a Coast Guard station down in Maryland, but it would be a shame to lose a man like Jester on a job like that. He is an action type, a good ship keeper, stern, humane and just, a fine man. He should be a chief boatswain one of these days. - Lieutenant Commander Earl Rose in his Letter to Headquarters, 29 Oct 1939.

The quote above describes Coast Guard hero Maurice David Jester. Born in 1889, Maurice Jester came from a town whose history was tied to the sea. Chincoteague is set in the Eastern shore of Virginia. In its early days, residents earned their living from fishing or salvaging ships that came ashore in storms. Later, the local area hosted a lighthouse and a lifesaving station. After he finished school, Jester went into fishing. and got married at age 20

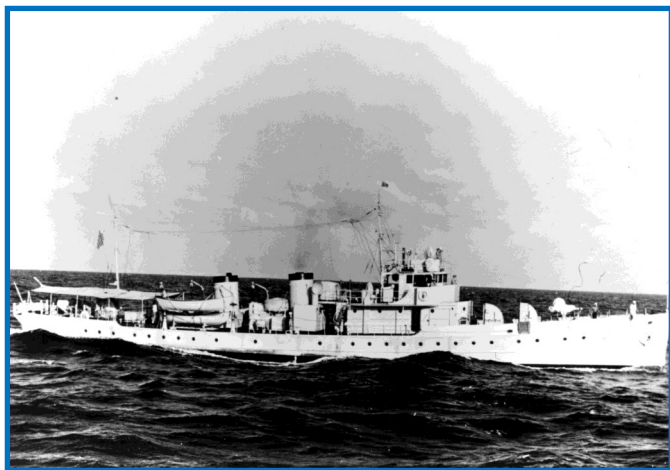
in 1909. However, it was difficult to support a family through fishing, so he chose to enlist in the Coast Guard.



*Photograph of Maurice David Jester,
Coast Guard hero of World War II
(U.S. Coast Guard)*

FEATURED ARTICLES

Over the course of his early career, Jester would become a seasoned cutterman. He enlisted as a surfman in 1917 and his first duty station was Rehoboth Beach, Delaware. For the next 20 years, he served on coastal patrol boats and cutters based in seaports from Norfolk, Virginia, to Boston, Massachusetts. In the 1920s and early 1930s, he had commanded patrol boats and cutters interdicting illegal liquor smugglers in the Rum War of Prohibition. In 1935, he was transferred to the West Coast and served on board cutters in Oregon and California. All the while, he advanced in the boatswain rating from junior petty officer to chief. After his 1939 transfer back to the East Coast and over two decades of enlisted service, he received an officer's commission as a lieutenant. In January 1942, a month after receiving his commission, 52-year-old Jester took command of the cutter *Icarus*, a 165-foot "B" - Class cutter.



Photograph of the 165ft CGC *Icarus*

With the 1941 U.S. entry into World War II, *Icarus* engaged in anti-submarine patrols and served as an escort for the "Bucket Brigade," the East Coast's wartime convoy route. In the morning of Friday, May 8, Lieutenant Jester oversaw *Icarus*'s departure from her Staten Island base destined for Key West, Florida. Saturday found *Icarus* steaming south on a zigzag course at 14 knots. Just south of North Carolina's Cape Lookout and about 25 miles offshore, *Icarus*'s sonar operator picked up a

"mushy" contact 2,000 yards off the cutter's port bow in about 120 feet of water. The officer-on-deck called Lieutenant Jester to the bridge.

Ten minutes after the sonarman heard the underwater contact, an explosion rocked the cutter about 200 yards off her port side. The explosion appeared to be a torpedo, sending *Icarus*'s crew to battle stations. Jester ordered the cutter to steam toward the sonar contact. After calculating the contact's course, he ordered *Icarus* to drop five depth charges in a diamond pattern with one charge in the center. Two more charges were dropped in a "V" pattern at a point leading the contact's underwater course. As roiling water from the explosions subsided, large bubbles were observed on the surface, so Jester ordered a single charge dropped on the spot where the air bubbles had surfaced. Six minutes later, he ordered a second charge dropped in the same place.

The last depth charge blasted the U-boat to the surface where *Icarus*'s gun crews raked her with machine guns and her 3-inch cannon. Within four minutes of surfacing, the mortally wounded U-boat began to slip back into the sea. Meanwhile, 35 German survivors were struggling on the surface to avoid the cutter's path and deadly depth charges. Taking no chances, Jester ordered one last depth charge dropped over the U-boat, which brought a



Icarus disembarking surviving U-352 crew members at the Charleston Navy Yard in Charleston, South Carolina.—(Courtesy of the U.S. Navy)

FEATURED ARTICLES

large air bubble to the surface. Other underwater explosions were attributed to scuttling charges set by the Germans. Finally, no further noises were heard from the sub as her flooding shell settled on the sea floor.



Crewmembers of *U-352* dining at the Charleston Navy Yard under the gaze of Navy overseers after disembarking Cutter *Icarus*
(Courtesy of the U.S. Navy)

After dropping the last depth charge, Jester ordered *Icarus* away from the scene of the battle. Up to that time, no U.S. warship had captured enemy combatants and Jester radioed his command



Kapitänleutnant Helmuth Rathke, captain of *U-352*, having his identification photograph shot as part of the processing before departure for a prisoner-of-war camp.
(Courtesy of the U.S. Navy)

for further instructions before acting. After receiving orders to rescue the Germans and steam for the Charleston Navy Yard, Jester directed *Icarus* to return to the submariners.

Expecting to be machine-gunned in the water, some of the Germans yelled in English, “*Help!*” *Mercy!*” and “*Don’t shoot us!*” *Icarus* gathered the submariners from the water and, except for the wounded survivors, placed the prisoners under armed guard in the cutter’s forward crew compartment.

In all, the battle had lasted about an hour. During that time, the U-boat got off only one torpedo, which detonated harmlessly when it struck the shallow seafloor. Because the cutter had no sonar range finder, Lieutenant Jester had to use his seafaring experience to develop depth charge plots based on the sonarman’s ranges and bearings. As for the crew, Jester later reported, “*The performance of the entire crew . . . deserves the highest praise. All stations were manned promptly, and without confusion. Their conduct throughout was manifested with enthusiasm, alertness, and devotion to duty.*” *Icarus* had become the first Coast Guard cutter to sink a U-boat and only the second U.S. warship of World War II to destroy one.

Before steaming for Charleston, Jester sent his final message, “*Contacted submarine Destroyed same. Lat 34°12 ½" Long 76° 35". Have 33 of her crew members on board. Proceeding Charleston with survivors.*” During the trip to Charleston, he learned that his deadly opponent was *U-352*, carrying a complement of 48 men. In all, *Icarus* rescued 33 Germans, the first enemy combatants captured by U.S. forces in World War II. The next morning, before *Icarus* arrived at the Navy yard, the prisoners thanked Jester for their treatment onboard *Icarus*. When they debarked, the Germans became the first foreign POWs to step foot on American soil since the War of 1812.

FEATURED ARTICLES

Maurice Jester went on to greater glory. Not long after the battle, the Navy awarded him the Navy Cross Medal.



The Navy Cross –
(Courtesy of Wikipedia)

He was the first Coast Guardsman to receive the Navy Cross and one of only six service members to have received it during the war. Within months of the battle, he received promotion from lieutenant to lieutenant commander. After his 1944 retirement, Jester was advanced in rank to full commander and he and his wife returned home to Chincoteague, Virginia. In 1957, he died of heart disease and was laid to rest with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery.

Maurice David Jester had served a distinguished career that spanned the First World War, Prohibition and

the Second World War. Under his command, *Icarus* had made her name as the second American warship to sink a U-boat during the war and the first to capture enemy combatants. Jester was one of the Service's first heroes of World War II and, during his career, he advanced from surfman to commander. Soon, the Coast Guard will name one of its Fast Response Cutters in his honor.



Headstone for Maurice Jester and wife Nora located at Arlington National Cemetery

Phil Eaton--The Coast Guard's Winged Warrior of World War I

William H. Thiesen, Ph.D.

Coast Guard Atlantic Area Historian

The first German submarine operations in U.S. waters took place not in World War II, but during World War I. With responsibility to protect the coasts, the U.S. Coast Guard had several encounters with these early U-boat attacks, including those of *U-156*. Armed with eighteen torpedoes, four deck guns and a supply of underwater mines, *U-156* began her campaign against East Coast shipping in June 1918. During this cruise, she sank nearly thirty-five vessels including the armored cruiser USS *San Diego*, which struck one of her mines on July 19, 1918.

The Coast Guard and its aviators played a vital role in the World War I war effort. In 1916, Congress authorized the Coast Guard to develop an aviation branch, including aircraft, air stations and pilots. That same year, Coast Guard officers began to train at the Navy's Pensacola Naval Flight School. Lieutenant Philip Bentley Eaton was one of these officers.

Eaton's early passion had focused on engineering and technology. He matriculated from the prestigious Webb

Academy of Naval Architecture in New York. After graduating from Webb in 1907, Eaton received an appointment as a cadet engineer in the Revenue Cutter Service School of Instruction and graduated with the class of 1908. Over the next six years, he saw service on board cutters stationed in Baltimore, New York,



Second Lieutenant Philip Eaton photographed at the U.S. Navy's flight training school in Pensacola, Florida
(Courtesy of the Coast Guard Aviation Association)

FEATURED ARTICLES

Milwaukee, New London, San Juan, and Port Townsend (Washington).

In 1915 Eaton was assigned to the Coast Guard Cutter *Bear* and served on her for two years before departing in 1917 for flight training at Pensacola.



Lieutenant Eaton's certificate from flight school designating him Naval Aviator Number #60

On April 6, 1917, the U.S. had declared war on Germany and the Coast Guard was transferred from the Treasury Department to the U.S. Navy. After earning his wings as a naval aviator in October, the Navy assigned Eaton as executive officer of Naval Air Station Montauk (Long Island) and, eight months later, he received command of Naval Air Station Chatham on Cape Cod. Chatham supported two dirigibles and seven seaplanes with a complement of 245 officers and men. After two weeks on the job, Eaton received a field promotion, rising from second lieutenant to captain of engineers, equivalent to the Navy's rank of lieutenant commander.

Late in the morning on Sunday, July 21, 1918, *U-156* emerged from the hazy waters of Cape Cod to prey on American coastal shipping. She located the towboat *Perth Amboy* and four wooden barges lined up in a towline. Rather than waste precious torpedoes on the slow-moving *Perth Amboy* and her consorts, *U-156's* commander ordered his crew to shell the vessel and her barges with the sub's deck guns. Some of the long shots landed on Nauset Beach, the first foreign cannon fire to hit U.S. shores since the War of 1812 and the only enemy shells to hit American soil during World War I.

Though he served as commanding officer of Chatham, Eaton still flew regular patrol flights. Two days before the *U-156* attack, one of the air station's dirigibles had broken its anchor mechanism and drifted away from the station. By the morning of the 21st, the lighter-than-air craft had still not been found, so Eaton took-off early in one of the station's R-9 floatplanes to search for it. Other aircraft from the base were also searching for the missing dirigible. When he returned from his patrol later that morning, Eaton was informed of the U-boat attack in progress. The acting commanding officer heard the enemy sub firing on the barges, and he dispatched one of the base's HS-1 seaplanes with a payload of two Mark IV bombs. The HS-1 dropped its bombs close enough to sink the *U-156*, but the bombs' fuse mechanisms failed to detonate on impact. They were duds and some officials claimed German saboteurs might have tampered with the fuses.

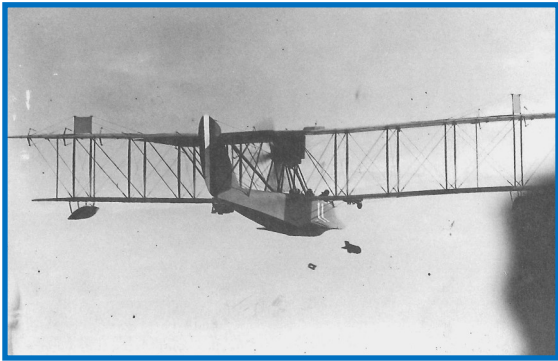
After returning from his patrol, Eaton took-on a payload of a single Mark IV bomb underneath his R-9 biplane. Within ten minutes of landing, he had returned to the air flying a beeline at the surfaced U-boat. The skies were hazy and smoke rising from the burning vessels obscured Eaton's aircraft from the sub's lookouts. In addition, the distraction from the HS-1 still circling overhead and Eaton's low-level approach took the U-boat's gunners by surprise.



Aerial view of Chatham Naval Air Station showing one of its dirigibles in the foreground and the air station in the background
(Courtesy of the Coast Guard Aviation Association)

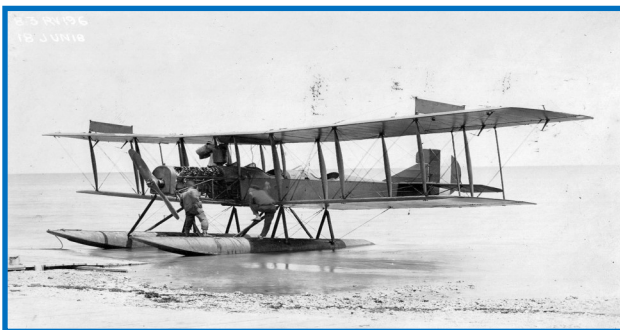
FEATURED ARTICLES

The sub's gun crews finally saw Eaton closing and began firing on him. Eaton dodged the enemy fire and bore down on the target while the Germans scrambled for the hatches to prepare to dive. Witnessing the attack from his cockpit, the pilot of the HS-1 later reported, *"Right through the smoke of the lifeboats and all, here came Captain Eaton's plane, flying straight for the submarine and flying low."*



One of Chatham Air Station's HS-1 flying boats dropping its payload of two wing-mounted bombs
(Photograph courtesy of the National Archives)

Eaton made his approach unscathed and dropped his bomb at an altitude of 500 feet. The bomb struck the water near the U-boat, but it proved a dud just like the ones dropped by the HS-1. Eaton later stated, *"Had the bomb functioned, the submarine would have literally been smashed."* Eaton made a second pass over the sub still running on the surface, but with nothing left to drop, he reached for a wrench located in the cockpit and threw



One of Chatham's Curtiss R-9 float planes on the beach. This may have been the aircraft flown by Eaton to attack German submarine U-156
(Courtesy of the San Diego Air & Space Museum)

it at the enemy vessel. Witnessing this desperate effort, the U-boat commander realized he had little to fear from the circling aircraft. With the *Perth Amboy* in flames and the barges destroyed, the U-boat submerged and departed the scene of North America's first air-sea battle.

This first fight between U.S. naval aviation and the German menace in U.S. waters proved significant in several ways. Even though the bombs were duds, Eaton's aim proved accurate and the presence of Eaton's aircraft likely hastened *U-156's* departure from the scene. While the four barges were lost, the tug was recovered, and no American lives were lost on any of the vessels. In addition, a Coast Guard aviator played a vital role in the first air-sea battle in home waters.



Navy and Marine Corps Medal
(Courtesy Wikipedia)

Eaton's wartime aviation assignments would be his last. After the war, he returned to sea duty and marine engineering assignments at a time when maritime technology completed the transition from wood and sails to steam and steel. Another of Eaton's career highlights occurred in 1942 when he rescued survivors from the fiery wreck of a B & O Railroad passenger train earning him the Service's Navy & Marine Corps Medal.



Rear Admiral Philip Bentley Eaton's headstone located at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia
(Courtesy of David McInturff)

USS *Big Horn*—the Coast Guard’s “Q-ship”

William Thiesen, Ph.D.

Historian, Coast Guard Atlantic Area

During World War II, the U.S. Navy operated a number of armed merchant ships or “Q-ships” in the Battle of the Atlantic. Q-ships were heavily armed merchant ships whose guns were hidden, so they could lure unsuspecting German submarines to the surface then unmask the guns and attack the U-boats. Built as an answer to the Nazi strategy of concentrating U-boat attacks on oil tankers, none was more formidable than the Q-ship USS *Big Horn*.

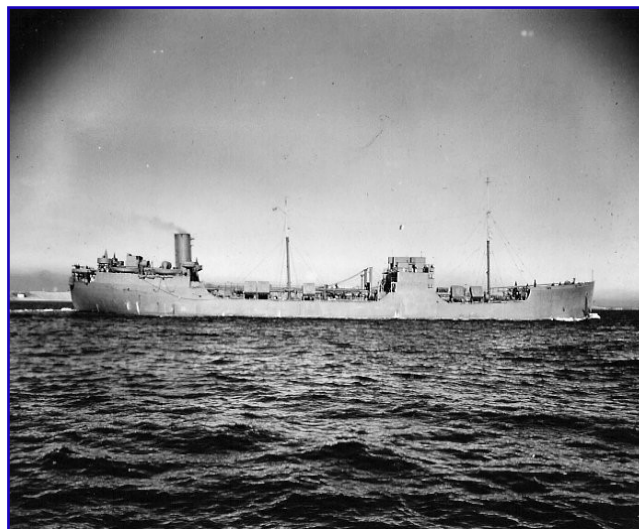


The oil tanker *SS Gulf Dawn* undergoes conversion to the “Q-Ship” USS *Big Horn*, in April 1942, at the Bethlehem Steel Company in Brooklyn (U.S. Navy)

Big Horn was built in 1936 as the commercial tanker *SS Gulf Dawn*. Her conversion to a Q-ship began in March 1942 at the Bethlehem Shipyard, in Brooklyn, and continued at the Boston Navy Yard where the work was completed in July 1942. The 425-foot tanker had a crew of 240 officers and enlisted men and could steam at 13 knots. She carried watertight barrels stored in her cargo areas to provide added buoyancy if torpedoed and she was equipped with underwater listening gear. Her

armament included one 5-inch gun, four hidden 4-inch guns, and Hedgehog anti-submarine depth charges. *Big Horn* completed her final shakedown cruise in late August 1942.

On her first cruise under the Navy, *Big Horn* operated out of Trinidad on the aluminum ore route. Later, she traveled in convoy between Trinidad and Norfolk and on at least one occasion was prevented from attacking Nazi submarines because convoy ships crossed through her line of fire. It was after January 1943, when German submarines left U.S. waters, that *Big Horn* began operations with a small task group of submarine chasers. In May, *Big Horn* sighted a periscope off her starboard bow and attacked the undersea contact, dropping depth charges for a four-hour period. During the attack, there was a heavy swirl as a U-boat dove below the surface and, later, an oil patch was visible over a wide area indicating that a submarine had been hit. In mid-summer 1943, *Big Horn* served as the flagship of another small task group, which patrolled the Atlantic north of the Azores and as far south as Brazil and West Africa. This was the last Q-ship patrol in which *Big Horn* participated.



An American periscope photograph of USS *Big Horn* on her first weather patrol. Only one of her five big guns are visible from a submarine perspective four of them are hidden behind false bulkhead

CDR Douglas L. Jordan (USCGR ret.)

FEATURED ARTICLES

The Navy command cancelled the Q-ship program after it showed meager results. On January 1st, 1944, after completing her final cruise under Navy control, USS *Big Horn* was re-assigned to the Coast Guard for weather patrol duty. Her Coast



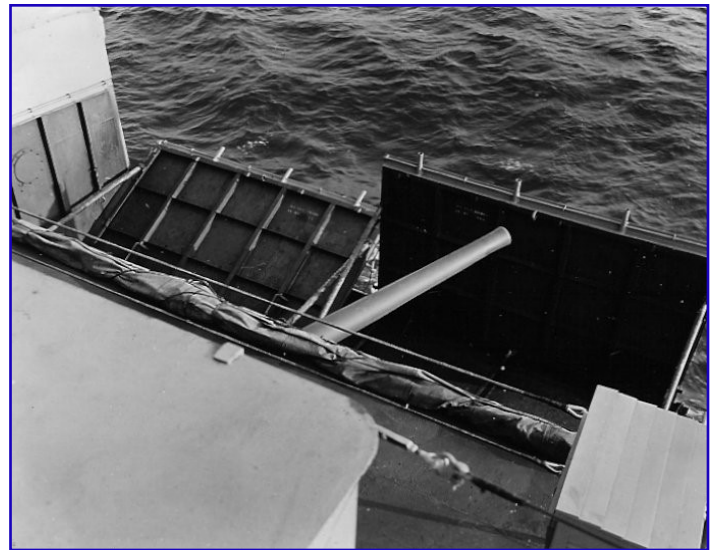
*Photo of Big Horn from her bridge showing two of her 4-inch guns hiding behind false bulkheads
[CDR Douglas L. Jordan (USCGR ret.)]*

Guard crew boarded her on January 7th, 1944, and she performed North Atlantic weather patrols for the next year. With her armament intact, *Big Horn* could attack any U-boat that threatened her while carrying out her mission. Homeported in Boston, she continued to perform weather patrols in the North Atlantic until January 1945 and then returned to Navy control.

With the need for oil to fuel the final bloody campaigns in the Pacific, the Navy re-assigned *Big Horn* to tanker duty. Even though she had officially returned to Navy service, she retained her Coast Guard crew. In March of 1945, she took on a load of oil at Aruba and steamed through the Panama Canal for Pearl Harbor and on to the Marshall Islands. For the rest of the war, she supplied oil to the major battlefronts in the Philippines and Okinawa. After the war ended in August, she was temporarily stationed in Japan before returning to the U.S. in the spring of 1946. *Big Horn* decommissioned later that year.



*One of Big Horn's 4-inch deck guns is un-masked for gunnery drills
[CDR Douglas L. Jordan (USCGR ret.)]*



*Big Horn's bow-mounted Hedgehog anti-submarine weapons are fired during drills
[CDR Douglas L. Jordan (USCGR ret.)]*

FEATURED ARTICLES



Big Horn's bow-mounted Hedgehog anti-submarine weapons are fired during drills [CDR Douglas L. Jordan (USCGR ret.)]



A March 1945 photograph showing *Big Horn* after removal of her Q-Ship gear and conversion back to fuel tanker role for Pacific War duty (U.S. Navy)

USS *Big Horn* was one of several Q-ships operated by the U.S. Navy in the early part of the war. Among the others was USS *Atik*, sunk in March 1942 by a U-boat while on her shakedown cruise. Another was USS *Asterion*, which served as a Q-ship between March 1942 and October 1943. Like *Big Horn*, *Asterion* was re-assigned to the Coast Guard for weather patrol duty later in the war.

USS *Big Horn* marked a truly unique chapter in Coast Guard history. She was one of the only Coast Guard-manned Q-ships and, over the length of her service career, she performed combat missions, weather patrols and tanker duty. *Big Horn* and the men who sailed her are a part of the legend and lore of the U.S. Coast Guard.



Big Horn rolling in heavy seas during a North Atlantic weather patrol in April 1944 [CDR Douglas L. Jordan (USCGR ret.)]

MINDING MY OWN BUSINESS

Do you remember the times when you were on your ship and minding your own business and out of nowhere you hear, on the IMC “Now Petty Officer (so and so), lay to the Quarterdeck.” It happened to me. I wasn’t used to being piped to the quarterdeck, which violated my “low profile” slacker rule.

We were tied up at the Navy base in Subic and I was just below deck and clueless about why I should be called to report to the quarterdeck. As I got to the quarterdeck, I saw my boss and supply officer, CWO Harry Imoto with a .45 caliber pistol strapped to his hip, which was unusual. Also, what really surprised me was that two of our gunner’s mates were with him and they both had M-16s. This situation didn’t look good and I’m wondering what the Hell this has to do with me. I figured that maybe Mr. Imoto was going on some special assignment, for more stereo equipment or some sale at the PX, but why did he need an escort of two GM’s with automatic rifles.

Before I had a chance to take in what I was observing, one of the gunner’s mates reached around and strapped a .45 to my hip. Now I was raised around guns so I respected them and wasn’t afraid of them, but I was unfamiliar with the .45. I pulled the piece out of the holster and as I started to re-insert it into the holster, the weapon’s slide started to cock. One of the GM’s saw that and grabbed the gun, in order to keep the storekeeper from blowing his foot off. I was a little embarrassed, since my specialty was typing.

You know, I don’t remember volunteering for anything and this would be the time when, if I was a civilian, I would be making that “T” symbol with my hands and saying “Timeout!” However, that was not one of my choices. Still this was starting to look more like one of those “lies my recruiter told me” situations!

I finally got an answer from Mr. Imoto, who was kind of smirking because he knew he didn’t give me any kind of heads up before interrupting my afternoon nap.

“We’re heading to the bank,” he said. I was thinking, “where was it...Manilla?” He said smiling, “you’re the driver.”

Oh Boy, what fun. I hadn’t driven a car for months and maybe we’re going sightseeing in the

Philippines! That’s when Mr. Imoto informed me that we were going to the bank on the Subic Bay Navy base. We weren’t going there to rob it, as I fleetingly thought, but would be picking up \$70,000 in cash for payroll. There had been robberies on the base, that is why we were armed to the teeth.

Sure would have been a great day for me to have invented “direct deposit!”

We got to the bank and I waited in the car, with one or both of the GMs. Mr. Imoto walked quickly into the bank and came out a few minutes later and got into the passenger seat of the car and said, “Let’s go!”

Not really sure I needed him to give me “the word” I think I figured out where the “hyperdrive” was on that old gray beat up Chevy government vehicle, but I wasn’t wasting any time. I already had gotten a speeding ticket on the base at Pearl Harbor, so I was hoping not to get another one on Subic Bay.

We weren’t challenged by anyone on the base and made a bee line back, and I’m happy to report that the .45 pistol and holster came off me without incident.

Harry Imoto was still laughing at me because he knew I wasn’t expecting that little excursion “to the bank.”

Thanks Harry for the fun time!

Gary Sherman, Former SK2

SEA STORIES

The sea stories column on this page is a new feature for the Quarterdeck Log. For those of us who haven’t been able to attend the reunions, this is a perfect opportunity for you to send in your sea stories and we’ll print them if they meet the following criteria:

1. They must be short. We’re not looking for “War and Peace” just a paragraph or two of something that happened to you or a shipmate while serving in the U. S Coast Guard.
2. There can’t be any profanity or inappropriate material.
3. And, I cannot stress this enough, the story cannot start with “Now this ain’t no S\$%t!”

Send us your funny and poignant reflections of serving this nation and we’ll publish them and share your sea stories!

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WEBSITE NEWS:

Some of you may have found it difficult to sign onto the CGCVA website www.coastguardcombatvets.org Members tab with the website not accepting your password. We wanted to let you know that there has been some trouble with the web hosting company (Webs.com) and we have notified them that the website is not working properly. With that, we are suspending the website's Members tab for this and some other reasons.

The purpose of the website's Members tab was for members to post their photos and list some of their experiences. Unfortunately, very few members were utilizing these features and the login problems are tying up too much time and resources to continue its operation. Additionally, it appears that many non-members have thought that signing into the website granted them CGCVA membership, which it does not. Therefore, we have had to remove the non-members from the site and suspend the site until further notice. ~ **Richard Ames, Webmaster**

Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association

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(Please Print Clearly)

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