



# the Quarterdeck Log

Membership publication of the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association. Publishes quarterly — Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall. Not sold on a subscription basis. The Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association is a Non-Profit Corporation of Active Duty Members, Retired Members, Reserve Members 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 11

Fall

Number 4

## **“Fiesta San Diego” a Success**

### *CGCVA Looks Ahead Toward 1998 Convention In Corpus Christi*

For those arriving in San Diego for the 7th CGCVA Reunion/Convention on Oct. 30, 1996, the low gray clouds, pouring rain and standing water on the streets made for an ominous start to the long-awaited event. The weather, however, changed overnight and was absolutely beautiful the next day, in time for the arrival of many of the attendees and the Opening Ceremony. The monsoon-like conditions were actually welcomed by the San Diego area which had not had rain for quite a spell.

A lot of pre-planning had gone into “Fiesta San Diego” by the members of the Convention Committee and it showed. The facilities at the Radisson Hotel were top-shelf and the hotel staff was very cheerful and helpful. The Hospitality Room was filled with large paintings depicting the Coast Guard during WWII, Vietnam and Desert Storm. Bartenders Bill Figone, Walt Gore and Ed Swift were ready to serve the crowd. Baker Herbert and Herb Weinstein had a large selection of CGCVA goods available at the “Small Stores.” Nancy Burke and Gert Hertica eagerly welcomed members and guests as they arrived and registered. Good fun and camaraderie prevailed as everyone readied for the 4 p.m. Opening Ceremony.

#### **Opening Ceremony**

As the 4 p.m. hour approached, everyone moved across the hall from the Hospitality Room to the spacious confer-

ence room. With everyone in place, “Fiesta San Diego” was officially started with the presentation  
(continued on page 13)



*Do you think that CGCVA Auxiliary Secretary-Treasurer Nancy Burke (left) and Auxiliary President Jane Maxwell had fun at the latest CGCVA Reunion & Convention? You bet they did and so did everyone else. For more pictures and news from “Fiesta San Diego,” see the special Reunion section on pages 13-22. Photo by Ed Swift.*



**COAST GUARD COMBAT VETERANS ASSOCIATION  
OFFICERS**

Joseph Kleinpeter, National President  
John W. Campbell, National Vice President  
E.P. "Ed" Burke, National Secretary  
Baker Herbert, National Treasurer

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Two-Year: Robert J. Maxwell, Two-Year: W.  
Figone, Four-Year: Paul Scotti, Four-Year:  
Raymond C. Hertica, A.L. Grantham, Past  
National President.

**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES  
NATIONAL SECRETARY**

17728 Striley Drive  
Ashton MD 20861-9763  
Messages & Fax (301)570-5664

**NATIONAL TREASURER**

PO Box 544  
Westfield Center OH 44251  
Msg & Fax(330)887-5639

**COAST GUARD COMBAT VETERANS ASSOCIATION  
AUXILIARY OFFICERS**

Jane Maxwell, National President  
Pearl Grantham, National Vice President  
Nancy Burke, National Secretary/Treasurer

**THE QUARTERDECK LOG**

LCDR. Ed Swift, USCG, Editor-In-Chief

The Administrative Offices are for contact with the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association for all matters, i.e. change of address, membership, tax-deductible contributions, and articles and photos for the Quarterdeck Log.

*From the President*

Dear Shipmates:

What a great reunion we had in San Diego. The hotel accommodations were excellent and the weather cooperated throughout our stay. Our Auxiliary did an outstanding job coordinating activities, ensuring our Reunion & Convention ran smoothly; we certainly couldn't have done it without them.



**JOE KLEINPETER**

After we settled in, we toured San Diego's sites, the Coast Guard Air Station and a local VFW Post where we were warmly received and entertained. At the air station, we received an overview of helicopter operations and a tour of the 110-foot patrol boat *USCGC Tybee*, which played a major role in the movie, "Clear and Present Danger."

Our next reunion is planned for Corpus Christi, Texas where I am sure we will have as great a time and be well received by the local Coast Guard.

During our recent convention, I was granted the privilege of serving as your national president and I am honored to represent the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association. In my brief acceptance speech I stated our organization is a shining light signaling all free people, informing them of our contributions to the preservation of freedom, and the supreme sacrifice made by our shipmates who remain on watch forever, never to live the American Dream. As keepers of the light, you and I will ensure it shines bright forever.

Upon returning from our convention, I was invited to attend an award ceremony with many of our members to honor distinguished member Charlie Derderian. Charlie received the Silver Lifesaving Medal for rescuing two Navy personnel on Dec. 15, 1944, at Waikiki Beach, Hawaii. Although the rescue was recorded, Charlie shipped out the next day and 52 years later he was honored. On

(continued on page 11)

## From the Vice President

First, I would like to thank the CGCVA members for supporting me and voting me your national vice president. I have in mind several projects and, with your continued support, we will be successful in accomplishing them.

Recently, I was invited to a Navy League dinner hosted by the CO, CG Station Sandy Hook, N.J. It was the first Navy league dinner I had been to and I was quite impressed with the attendance and their many interesting projects.

An award was presented to the 110-foot patrol boat *USCGC Adak*, which was one of the first rescue vessels at the scene of the TWA flight 800 crash off Long Island, N.Y. This cutter spent many hours searching for survivors and wreckage; it's crew went far beyond the call of duty to help in every way. Incidentally, the *CGC Adak* is the cutter that RADM Ames was referring to in his remarks at the San Diego Convention Awards

Banquet.

Also at the Navy League dinner, two of the divers involved in the Flight 800 recovery efforts told of their job. They explained the procedures and equipment used to locate the wreckage, and related the many weather problems and constant danger of swimming into sharp pieces of wreckage in the murky waters. It was very difficult work and these divers did an incredible job.

As Joe Kleinpeter has already indicated, he and I attended the annual Pearl Harbor Day memorial services on board the decommissioned *CGC Taney* in Baltimore, so that's all for now. Jack



**JACK CAMPBELL**

## From the Editor

Too bad "Fiesta San Diego" is over. I really had a great time — chatting with the members, working the bar with Walt Gore, Bill Figone and Frenchie, taking in a few of the tours, and in general, sharing camaraderie with a lot of great folks. I can't wait for 1998 in Corpus Christi! Anyway, thanks for the great time you showed me and for the most appreciated vote of confidence in the *Quarterdeck Log*.

It truly is my pleasure to serve as your editor and I appreciate the tremendous support you provide by sending interesting material for the newsletter.

This issue concentrates on our recent reunion & convention so don't expect the usual array of short news and/or feature articles. Don't worry — I didn't throw anything away, I simply ran the time-critical material while saving the rest for later issues. I decided to run another feature article, however, since many of you indicated you liked them. This issue's feature is on the Coast Guard in Vietnam.



**ED SWIFT**

By the way, a few folks have been confused about the information on the *QD Log* front cover and think they've missed a copy. Never fear — I'm simply working with the system I inherited years ago. By the time you receive this issue it will be early 1997 although the *Quarterdeck Log* is labeled Volume 11, Fall, Number 4. I realize we're in the middle of winter, but the label simply pertains to the

period of time the material in the issue is covering, unlike magazines at the news stand which are dated a month or two ahead of time.

Hope you like the additional color in this issue, at least the cover. Our contracted printer apparently likes the newsletter too and offered to give us a little something extra for our Reunion Wrap-Up issue. My sincere thanks to the terrific folks at Cockran Printing for their most professional assistance!

Here's wishing the entire CGCVA family a healthy and happy New Year!

**Swiftly**

### **"Fiesta San Diego" Reunion Notes**

I will be so bold as to say that our recent reunion & convention in San Diego was the best one I have been to. I had a great time and everyone I spoke to did likewise. I believe we set some kind of record for attending to business and getting back to having a good time. This by no means says that we did not do the job properly. Everything on the agenda was covered and a few items from the floor were addressed.

Take a look at the *Quarterdeck Log* masthead on the inside front cover and look over the new slate of Officers and Trustees. You'll have to agree that we have some fresh talent and what I believe will be an exciting two years of accomplishment for the CGCVA. The appointed Directors and Committee Chairmen are also a group of people that accomplish things. Should any of the membership be asked to serve on a committee by one of these Chairmen, I would hope there will be a lot of 'yes' responses. These are the people that keep your association going and growing, so please, support them in any way you can.

### **Have You Changed Your Address Lately?**

There is one thing that I would like to bring to the attention of the membership and that is the cost that we are experiencing every quarter when the *Quarterdeck Log* is mailed out. We receive an awful lot of change of address notices from the Post Office that cost the Association .50 for each one. I realize that the Association is not at the top of your list when it comes to moving but a lot of money could be saved annually if you would notify us of the move in a timely manner. Please give it some thought and consideration if you are planning on moving in 1997.

### **USCG Recognition For Vietnam Service**

We are trying to help a member of the Gamewardens of Vietnam Association, Inc. with a Memorial Wall Project that will give the Coast Guard some well-deserved recognition for its participation in the Vietnam War. Our Historian,

Paul Scotti, has provided everything he asked for with the exception of color copies of USCG unit Vietnam patches. Should any of you have any of these patches, please provide me with a color copy or loan them to me until they can be photographed. Thanking you in advance for assisting with this project.



**E.P. "ED" BURKE**

### **Shipwreck Trail Project**

There is another very worthy project that I want to bring to your attention and request your assistance with. "The Shipwreck Trail" is a project to commemorate the 327-foot fleet. The *USCGC's Bibb* and *Duane* are on the bottom at Molasses Key Largo Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, one cutter upright, the other on its side. Qualified divers are allowed to visit these ships which are in 100 feet of water.

There is going to be a 60th anniversary celebration of the USCG "Treasury" class cutters on Nov. 29, 1997 at Key Largo, Fla., and the CGCVA has been asked to help with the funding of a plaque. Each of the seven cutters has its own association so we would be the eighth participant. It is estimated that our 1/8th share would amount to \$250-\$300 for the plaque.

Other plans include a 'time capsule' which would be kept at the Coast Guard Yard, Curtis Bay, Md., and opened 50 years later. Again, we have been invited to participate. I know there are many "Treasury" class crew members in our ranks so I'll keep you informed on what's going on with the "Shipwreck Trail" project. If you believe, as we do, that this is a very important project and would like to make a contribution, send it to the CGCVA National Treasurer marked for the "Shipwreck Trail" plaque.

Semper Paratus!

**Ed Burke**

### Treasurer's Report

Currently on hand in all funds and certificates of deposit \$34,720.54. My report at the San Diego Reunion indicated that I reported \$15,119.77 on hand at the Norfolk Reunion in 1994. Funds earned but not received are \$1,405.87 from investments in certificates of deposit. Complete records were given out to all present in San Diego but if you didn't attend and would like a report, please write me and I'll mail you one. To keep everything straight, our bank wrote a letter to National President Al Grantham and National Secretary Ed Burke (their names are on our accounts) informing them of our balances. The only way that I will handle money is with total verification. Director Bill Figone audited the books in San Diego and there will be an audit every year in the future, which is as it should be.

### Thoughts of "Fiesta San Diego"

Seeing friends at reunions was certainly what was intended when our Association was founded 10 years ago. San Diego lived up to its purpose. In between visiting and tours, the reunion attendees spent considerable time (and money) at the CGCVA "Small Stores" table. Under the high pressure of Herb Weinstein and the help of Nancy Burke, we did a whopping \$1,850 in sales. Of course donations from Past President Dick Stent and President Joe Kleinpeter helped out quite a bit too. Thanks to all!

### Miscellaneous Ramblings

Again, thanks to those members who send in their dues from the expiration label on their copy of *The Quarterdeck Log*. This is a tremendous help. Life Members have an "Exp" on their label but that is a computer requirement. Life Members never have to pay any additional membership charges. The fees for life membership is as follows: Under age 30 (\$200); 31-40 (\$185); 41-50 (\$165); 51-60 (\$145); 61-70 (\$115); 71-80 (\$85); 81-89 (\$50); and 90 and up no charge.

I am going to try and stock a few more items

in our "Small Stores." If you want a list of what we have, just drop me a line.

### CGCVA Book II?

I have been contacted by the publisher of our CGCVA History Book about book II. A new History Book would include those who may have missed out on Book I, stories that members may want to submit, a photo and short story about you, etc. These books take a long time to get published, a few years, and cost in the neighborhood of \$50. Before we could even consider such a project, we would need at least 300 definite affirmative replies. So let me know if you are interested.

Write me at P.O. Box 544, Westfield Center, OH 44251-0544 or call me at (330) 887-5539. You may fax me at (330) 887-5639 too. Remember, I'm on Eastern Time, I go to bed about 8:30 p.m. (2030) and I'm usually up about 8 a.m. (0800). Thanks for your continued support and of course, re-election. Semper Paratus! **Baker Herbert**



**BAKER HERBERT**

---

### Reunion Wrap-Up

I would like to express my appreciation to those who made "Fiesta San Diego" the most outstanding and fun-filled reunion we have ever had. Please join me in thanking Ed & Nancy Burke, Ray & Gert Hertica, Paul & Liz Scotti, Walt Gore, Bill Figone, "Frenchie" Benoit, Baker Herbert, Bill Miller, Don McCormick, Ed Swift, my wife Jane and a few others who I must apologize to for omitting their names.

We are already in the process of putting together the "Sands of Corpus Christi" Reunion and we intend to do whatever is necessary to top our last one. Your ideas are certainly welcomed!

**Bob Maxwell**  
Chairman, Convention Committee

### USCGC Modoc (W-46)

The 10th Reunion for crew members of the *USCGC Modoc (W-46)* will be held May 29-June 2, 1997 at the Holiday Inn Koger in Richmond, Va. Contact: Bob Woodbury at 18 Ninth Ave., Halifax, MA 02338 or call (617) 293-7992. Or contact Moe Stienberg at P.O. Box 178, Carle Place, NY 11514 or call (516) 334-5309.

### USS Gallaway

The 31st Reunion of the *USS Callaway* will be held Sept. 9-11, 1997 at the Mayflower Park Hotel, 405 Olive Way, Seattle, WA 98101. Hotel phone is (800) 426-5100 or contact local hosts Judd and Eve Killpack at 13080 SW Butner Rd., Beaverton, OR 97005. Ph: (503) 646-3600

### LST 792

Crew members from the World War II *LST 792* are invited to attend a reunion May 18-21, 1997 at the Holiday Inn Downtown, St. Louis, Mo. *LST 792* operated in the Central Pacific theater and was severely damaged in the beaching at Iwo Jima in February 1945, sustaining 13 direct hits from Japanese 80mm shore batteries. Interestingly enough, all nine officers who served on *LST 792* are planning on attending this reunion. For more information, contact CAPT Gerald K. Barker, USCGR (Ret.) at 833 SW Plass in Topeka, KA 66606 or call (913) 233-8827.

### USS Gen. Hugh L. Scott

All crew members who served aboard the *USS Gen. Hugh L. Scott (AP-136)* are invited to attend a reunion on Apr. 11-13, 1997 in Houston, Texas. Contact is A.W. 'Bill' Damrell at 2226 Hidden Creek, Kingswood, TX 77339. Ph: (281) 359-1338.

### Looking For Shipmates

I would very much like to hear from crew members of the U.S. Army *FS-173* with whom I served in the Southwest Pacific as an EM2/c. Please write to Jeff Anderson at 128 Masters Drive, Conroe, TX 77304.

### USCGC Campbell (W-32)

Our 12th Reunion of *USCGC Campbell* crew members will be held 14-18 May, 1997 at the Holiday Inn Northwest, 3233 NW Loop 410 in San Antonio, Texas. Contact is David A. Blum, President of the *USCGC Campbell* Association, 8341 Sands Point Blvd., Tamarac, FL 33321. Ph: (954) 722-8161.

### PCSA Reunion

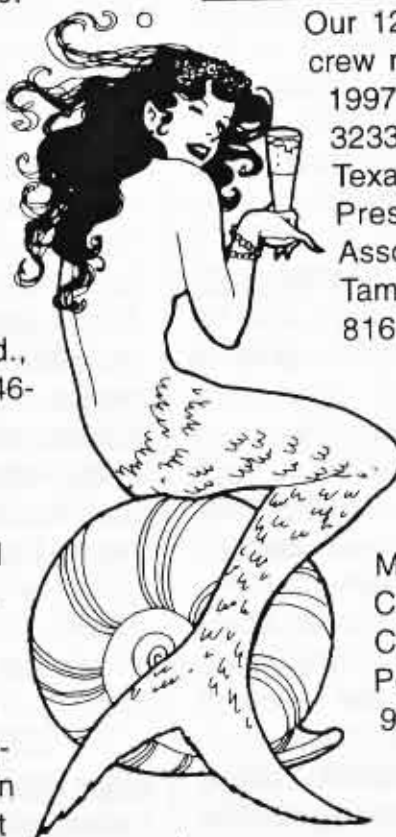
All members of the Patrol Craft Sailors Association are invited to attend their upcoming reunion May 29-31, 1997 at the Town & Country Hotel, San Diego, Calif. Contact is John L. Bothel at 1120 Pepper Dr., #64, El Cajon, CA 92021-3967. Ph: (619) 449-3967.

### LST 758 & CGC Icarus

Can you help me out? I'm trying to hear from crew members who served aboard the *LST 758* and the *CGC Icarus* with me. Please write to Bill Murphy at 3664 Lakewood Dr., Sarasota, FL 34232.

### LORAN Coasties Reunion

Still being developed but primarily a get-together (picnic, softball, dinner, dance, etc.) and opportunity to catch up with old friends. Date is June 7, 1997, in Wilmington, North Carolina. Yankees are welcome but are expected to use the spittoons and not the floor. For more information, contact Perry Campbell at 1308 Shenandoah St., Wilmington, N.C. 28405.



### **Congratulations!**

Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Banghardt marked their 50th wedding anniversary on Aug. 3, 1996. Joe is a WWII veteran and a CGCVA member. Congratulations kids!

### **Honor Guard Reunion**

The CG Honor Guard Association, a newly formed organization for prior and current USCG Honor Guard members is planning a reunion in the Washington, D.C. area for March 1997. For further details, write to Bill Kiley at 135 Parkwood Dr., Royal Palm Beach, FL 33411.

### **USCGC Barataria**

Tim Manning writes to announce a 30-year Vietnam deployment reunion for any crew members of the *USCGC Barataria*. Hope you know how to reach Tim since there's no address or phone number. Anyway, the reunion is planned for April 1, 1997 in Portland, Maine.

### **USCGC Eastwind**

Earl T. Ellis, Jr., also of no posted address or phone number, writes to announce the 2nd reunion for crew members of the *USCGC Eastwind (WAGB-279)* on May 23-26, 1997 at Hyatt Harborside Conference Center, on the grounds of Boston's Logan Airport.

### **Dual Cutter Reunion**

Crew members from the *USCGC's Chataqua* and *Winnebago* will hold a reunion Aug. 1-4, 1998 in Sacramento, Calif. Contact is Lloyd T. Bell at 2763 Larkspur Lane #9, Sacramento, CA 95864. Ph: (916) 485-8876.

### **Looking For USS Theenim Shipmates**

Art Hannah, 79, who was a GM3/c aboard the *USS Theenim* in WWII, is trying to track down his shipmates from the original crew of 400. About 40 of them made it to the *Theenim* reunion last October in Myrtle Beach, S.C. If you are a crew member or know of one, write to Art at Dept. P, 306 Hemlock Lane, Crown Point, IN 46307.



## **CROSSED THE BAR**

by Alfred Tennyson



*Sunset and evening star  
and one clear call for me!  
And may there be no moaning of the bar,  
when I put out to sea.*

*But such a tide as moving seems asleep,  
too full for sound and foam,  
When that which drew from out  
the boundless deep turns again home.*

*Twilight and evening bell,  
and after that the dark!  
And may there be no sadness or farewell,  
when I embark;*

*For tho' from out our bourne or time and place  
the flood may bear me far,  
I hope to see my Pilot face  
when I have crossed the bar.*

### **CWO4 (F&S) William O. Caverly, USCG (Ret.)**

Life Member #98  
Passed: August 24, 1996

### **Arthur Turek**

Joined: May 1988  
Passed: October 1996

### **Lenore E. Pierce**

(wife of member Vernon Pierce, LM)  
Passed: October 26, 1996

### **Clyde E. 'Jim' Martin**

Joined: October 2, 1992  
Passed: September 17, 1996

### **Sallie Larzalere**

(wife of member CAPT Alexander R.  
Larzalere, USCG (Ret.)  
Passed: December 25, 1996



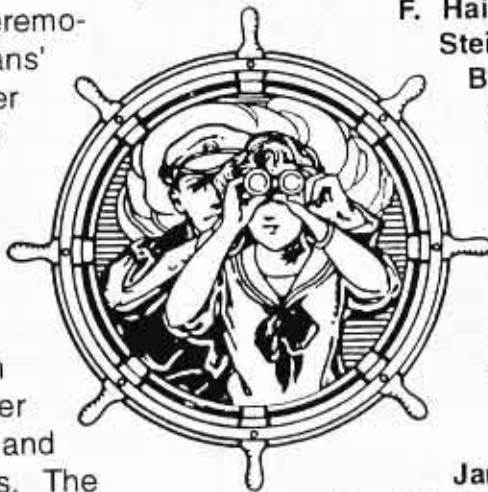
USS Theenim (AKA-63) crew members at their 4th reunion at Myrtle Beach, S.C. Their 1997 reunion is scheduled for sometime in October at Branson, Mo.

### Ship's Bell Rings Again

After a lengthy search, the bell from the USCGC *Spencer* was found at the Coast Guard Exhibit Center in Forestville, Md. Through the efforts of Hank Rogers, Len Derleth and Jim Tierney, along with officials of the Intrepid Sea-Air-Space Museum at Pier 84, New York City, an acceptance and dedication ceremony was held at the site on Veterans' Day, Nov. 11, 1996. Several former *Spencer* crew members — Jim Tierney, John Halligan, James Ruggiero, Frank Evans, John Thomas, George Hallock, Bob Marzen and Nate Lichtwar were there.

As part of the ceremony, Jim Tierney of the CGC *Spencer* Association gave brief remarks and tolled the *Spencer's* bell 11 times. The need to keep the WWII fight for freedom alive and known to our children so that they understand the sacrifices made by the veterans was stressed and all the children in attendance were presented a small American flag and a white carnation with the words 'peace' and 'freedom.'

The ceremony concluded with the tossing of a memorial wreath into the river. **Mary Ellebracht**



### Welcome New Members

A hearty "welcome aboard!" to the following new CGCVA members. New member names are boldfaced, and sponsors are indicated in parentheses. In subsequent issues, I will include information on the unit(s) new members served at to qualify for membership:

#### AUGUST 1996

**Richard F. Boever** (Nickolas Didychuk); **Angel Aviles** (Dan Whitaker); **Ernest W. Gschwender** (John Stamford); **Gordon L. Angermeier** (B.C. Nance); **Ralph A. Cragg, Jr.** (O.C. Wev); **Milton L. Croall** (Paul Wheeler); **Mayne 'Bud' H. White**; **Weldon I. Hudson** (Tom McIver); **Joseph I. Pegler** (Dan Whitaker); **Robert S. Goodman**; and **Robert C. McClanahan** (R.E. Masker).

#### NOVEMBER 1996

**Frank A. Smith** (C. Bell); **Robert A. Morgan** (Dan Whitaker); **Charles W. Griffin** (Logan Cannon); **Bruce 'Buck' A. Forsberg** (Bob Maxwell); **William D. Woodbury** (Dan Whitaker); **James J. Granger** (Byron Jennings); **William E. Edison** (Dan Whitaker); **Charles C. Terwilliger** (Fred Mientka); **Robert F. Hainge** (H. Davenport); **Edward T. Steinhaus** (Bill Sherron); **Richard R. Buelow** (Dan Whitaker); **Christian H. Grube**; **James M. Everett** (Jack Campbell); **Robert W. Le Comte** (Roger Grinnell); **Paul F. Alexander** (Timothy O'Leary); **Joseph J. Plumeri** (Thomas Brown); **Willis J. Goff** (Joe Kleinpeter); and **Harold A. MacDonald** (Bob Maxwell).

#### DECEMBER 1996

**James S. Sebrell**; **George W. Walker** (Floyd A. Rice); **Warren W. Smith** (Dick Stent); **John H. Sitter** (Chuck Ulrich); **Marshall R. Lafon** (Bob Maxwell); **Frank A. Tucker** (Dale Shankster); **Kristopher L. Swift** (Ed Swift); **RADM Ernest R. Riutta, USCG** (Dan McCrummen); **George W. Bond, Jr.** (Dan Whitaker); **VADM Roger T. Rufe, Jr.** (Al Grantham); **Michael A. Johnson** (Dave Williams); **David G. Oringer** (Seymour Greenberg); and **Richard E. White** (Joe Kleinpeter).



### USS Aquarius Plaque

It has been said that a person will have in their lifetime, two days that will be forever etched in their memories — their wedding day and the birth of their first child. Well, on Oct. 19, 1996, I added another.

On that day, crew members from the *USS Aquarius* (AKA-16) gathered at the ADM Chester A. Nimitz Museum to dedicate a plaque for the vessel. We were honored to have with us Barbara Lind, daughter of the *Aquarius*' skipper, RADM Ira E. Eskridge (deceased), who assisted with the unveiling of the plaque.

In addition, the Coast Guard



(Above) WWII USS Aquarius crew member Andy Gerfin and his son, CAPT Andrew Gerfin, USCG, in front of the Aquarius memorial plaque at the ADM Chester A. Nimitz Museum.

(Right) A closer look at the USS Aquarius plaque.

Commandant was represented by CAPT Andrew Gerfin, USCG, the son of Aquarius crew member Andy Gerfin. CAPT Gerfin was also our guest speaker.

Dale Shankster



### Let Your Name Live On

For years, the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association has been operating from day-to-day through the collection of dues and the contributions of our members. The time has come for us to be more concerned about the future. Will you consider naming the CGCVA in your will? Any help in the form of cash, stocks, or life insurance policies will help assure the future of the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association. It can be as easy as using one of these sample forms of bequest:

— (Whatever is left after other bequests have been granted.) "All the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate, including real and personal property, I give, devise and bequest to the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association, a Corporation created under the laws of the State of Ohio, located at (give the current designated Administrative Office or Headquarters address)."

— "I give, devise, and bequest to the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association, a Corporation created under the laws of the State of Ohio, located at (give the current designated Administrative Office or Headquarters address), \_\_\_\_\_ % of my estate."

— "I give, devise, and bequest to the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association, a Corporation created under the laws of the State of Ohio, located at (give the current designated Administrative Office or Headquarters address), the sum of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for the (Name a specific fund), the principle of which shall remain in perpetuity."

### **Silver Lifesaving Medal Presented**

If you are waiting to receive an award or a medal and you think the process is taking a long time, try walking a few decades in Charles G. Derderian's shoes.

On Nov. 26, 1996, Derderian received the Silver Lifesaving Medal — for a rescue that had taken place nearly 52 years earlier. In December 1944, he was assigned to *USS LST 759* and, while on liberty by Waikiki Beach, Oahu, Hawaii with shipmate Edward Truckenbrodt, Derderian heard two people in the surf screaming for help. Without hesitation, he jumped into the water, swam to the two people and returned them safely to shore.

"Charley was an excellent swimmer," said Truckenbrodt. "Several people stood and watched the two people get swept out into the sea, but Charlie took off his clothes and jumped into the water to save them, without a word."

The water condition didn't make Derderian's rescue any easier. "The surf was very high and the seas were choppy," added Truckenbrodt. "Charley was badly bruised and scraped from the ordeal."



(Above) CDR Kenneth R. Burgess, Commander, USCG Group Moriches, N.Y., hands Charles G. Derderian the certificate for the Silver Lifesaving Medal at Nov. 26, 1996 ceremony at USCG Station Jones Beach, N.Y.

(Below) Charles G. Derderian at Coast Guard boot camp at Manhattan Beach Training Station in Brooklyn, N.Y. in July 1943.



The two rescued people were Navy sailors on leave. A Navy chief helped the two men back to their ship and told Derderian and Truckenbrodt he would write them up for saving the two sailors.

Unfortunately, *LST 759* shipped out the next day and they never heard another word about the rescue. "After all, there was a war going on," said Truckenbrodt.

The facts of the rescue were eventually brought to the attention of U.S. Congressman Peter T. King (N.Y.) and an inquiry was conducted through the CG's 14th District Office in Honolulu.

During the presentation ceremony Derderian said, "I'm

very proud to receive the award, but there are a lot of combat veterans here and elsewhere that survived the sinking vessels and the attacks during the war — they are heroes too."

Derderian, now 72, is a CGCVA life member.  
PA3 Robert K. Lanier, USCG

### **Living Hero Honored By Coast Guard**

The Coast Guard Recruit Training Center, Cape May, N.J., honored GM1 Willis Jerry Goff on May 17, 1996, naming a building for him.

The Applied Training Facility which houses the armory and damage control classrooms for the recruits was officially named "Goff Hall," after the Coast Guard Vietnam veteran, one of three CG enlisted members to receive the Silver Star Medal during the Vietnam War.

Goff was cited for heroic courage and gallantry in action against Vietnamese and Vietcong aggressors on Jan. 22, 1969. CWO Bill Carson

## Rolling Thunder

The Tenth Rolling Thunder Ride For Freedom will take place May 25, 1997 (Memorial Day weekend) in Washington, D.C., assembling at the North Pentagon Parking Lot at 8 a.m. Bikes will leave at noon for the ride through Washington, D.C. to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to pay respects to lost and missing brothers and sisters. Last year's Rolling Thunder had over 200,000 riders.

The purpose of this annual event is to demand a full accounting of those known taken captive. To learn more, contact Artie Muller at P.O. Box 216, Neshanic Station, NJ 08853.



*A Son Remembers — James Scott of Clayton, N.J., places a rose at the base of the Mt. Tom Memorial in Holyoke, Mass., site of a B-17 crash on July 6, 1946. Twenty-five servicemen returning from Europe were killed in the crash, including Scott's father, Coast Guard BM2/c Russell S. Scott.*

## Chapel Honors Island War Hero

More than 100 veterans and active duty members of the U.S. armed forces turned out Oct. 9, 1996, to honor Father Vincent Capodanno, one of Staten Island's most revered war heroes.

A dedication ceremony at the new Capodanno Memorial Chapel on the grounds of Fort Wadsworth in Rosebank, Staten Island, N.Y., was held to honor the memory of the former U.S. Marine chaplain who was killed in the line of duty

nearly 30 years before.

The occasion also marked the establishment of a new house of worship for more than 300 military employees and their families who moved to Staten Island after the Coast Guard closed its

facilities on Governors Island. Coast Guard officials said it is fitting for the Coast guard men and women who are dedicated to saving lives, to have a chapel named after a man whose spirit will continually remind them of what they are about — a place where their strength will be renewed.

**Kerry Murtha**  
Staten Island Advance



*Members of USS LST-70 who gathered for a reunion in Bloomington, Minn., on Sept. 7, 1996.*



Crew members and spouses of the USCGC Alexander Hamilton Survivors Association at their Reunion at the Coast Guard Yard.

### **CGC Ingham War Memorial**

The Coast Guard lost 912 members in WWII and Vietnam, but until recently there was no single national memorial in their honor. That all changed on Oct. 8, 1996, when the decommissioned USCGC *Ingham* (WHEC-35) was dedicated as the National Memorial to Coast Guardsmen killed in those wars. The ceremony took place at the 327-foot cutter's home at Patriot's Point, S.C.

Memorialization of the *Ingham* was the result of persistent efforts by the USCGC Ingham Association and its president, Tony Pagano. They succeeded in getting support for the memorial from the other 327-foot cutter groups, the Coast Guard commandant and our Association.

A plaque with the official proclamation was displayed during the ceremony, while the text was read by CDR Manson K. Brown, commanding officer of USCG Group Charleston.

The *Ingham* was one of dozens of ships that the Coast Guard sent into action during WWII and the Vietnam War. It's also one of four historical ships on display at Patriot's Point.

"We saw a lot of action," said Tony Pagano at the dedication ceremony, recalling his own experiences during WWII. "We first worked the Atlantic, handling convoys to North Africa. Later it was the Pacific."

The dedication also paid tribute to Douglas A.

Munro, the Coast Guard's only Medal of Honor recipient, and former LTJG William L. Bryan, who was assigned to the *Ingham* during WWII. Bryan was the *Ingham's* gunnery officer and the ship's lay chaplain. He was honored for his service aboard the *Ingham*, especially his efforts on behalf of the enlisted crew.

Byran's daughter, Ellen Obed, said she learned of the *Ingham's* service from her father after the war. At the ceremony, she said, "We dedicate this memorial so that we may not lose what our fathers gave us to keep."

### **From the President** (cont. from page 1)

On behalf of all CGCVA members, I want to salute Charlie for risking his life to save others, fulfilling the Coast Guard tradition.

On Dec. 7th, Vice President Jack Campbell and I attended a Pearl Harbor Ceremony aboard the decommissioned USCGC *Taney* (WHEC 37). The *Taney* was surplussed to the Baltimore Maritime Museum 10 years ago and is the only remaining Pearl Harbor combat vessel afloat. The ceremony was conducted by the Marine Corps and will be rotated among the service branches. In addition to speeches made by Pearl Harbor survivors, at 12:55 p.m., a wreath was cast off the stern, cannons sounded, "Taps" was played, and bells tolled for each of the ships lost at Pearl Harbor 55 years before.

I want to take the time to welcome our new members aboard, including Willis Jerry Goff, recipient of the Silver Star for action taken in Vietnam on Jan. 27, 1969. On May 17, 1996, Jerry was honored again at the Coast Guard Recruit Training Center, Cape May, N.J., where a new facility, "Goff Hall," was named after him. In November, Jerry also represented the Coast Guard and Douglas Munro at a Medal of Honor recognition ceremony for all service branches at RFK Stadium in Washington, D.C.

Thank you for your letters and phone calls and I hope to see you in Corpus Christi. Semper Paratus!

Joe

**Dear Auxiliary Members and Friends:**

It is a great honor and privilege to have been elected as your CGCVA Auxiliary President for the next two years. For eight years I served as Secretary-Treasurer and I now hand over those reins to Nancy Burke who I know will do an outstanding job. Please send your dues to her from now on. We are also fortunate to have Pearl Grantham as our new Vice President.

For those of you who could not attend "Fiesta San Diego," you missed the best convention ever. It was a pleasure to see Past Auxiliary Presidents Liz Scotti and Marylou Herbert there after a four-year absence. They were both a lot of help and we shared a lot of fun memories. Unfortunately, our outgoing President Edith Courter, could not join us due to her husband, Al's ill health. We all missed them and wish them the best.

We can't thank the ladies enough who helped us at this reunion. It was like old times with the togetherness everyone shared. A special thanks to Liz Scotti for her words at our Friendship Luncheon and assistance with our installation of officers. Also to Nancy Burke who did everything and them some and to Gert Hertica who handled registration everyday.

The San Diego Reunion will be hard to beat but with all the plans we have for everyone in Corpus Christi in 1998, I'm sure we can do it.

These next two years should be new and exciting for both the Association and the Auxiliary. I am looking forward to serving along with CGCVA National President Joe Kleinpeter. The Auxiliary will always do as we have in the past — be there for the Association whenever needed.

My best wishes to all in 1997 and thank you again for your support!

**Jane**



**Coast Guard Combat Veterans Auxiliary  
Membership Application**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Init

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street or Box Number City State Zipcode

Eligibility: \_\_\_\_\_ Sponsors Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Wife, Husband, Daughter, Son, Other-Explain

**Amount of Membership Dues enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Dues: \$10.00 Every 2 Years**

**Make Checks Payable to: CGCVA AUX  
Nancy Burke, Secretary/Treasurer  
17728 Striley Drive,  
Ashton, MD 20861-9763**

CGCVA Form#3A (Rev 12/96)

# "Fiesta San Diego"

## A look back at the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association Tenth Anniversary Reunion & Convention

**Opening Ceremony** (continued from page 1)  
of the colors by a four-man color guard squad from USCG Activities San Diego.

Bob Maxwell, chairman of the Convention Committee welcomed everyone, then introduced CAPT William Hayes, commanding officer of USCG Activities San Diego. CAPT Hayes also welcomed the group and reminded everyone

of the next day's tour at the USCG AirSta and CGC Tybee.

Once all the necessary business was taken care of, a four-man Mariachi Band came in and provided Mexican music to get the "fiesta" going in style. CGCVA President Al Grantham and Auxiliary Secretary-Treasurer Jane Maxwell were dressed in ponchos and sombreros by member Warren Kimzey, and they were each given a shot of tequila to toast the CGCVA.

With the reunion now officially underway, everyone returned to the Hospitality Room, including

the Mariachi Band, which strolled through the crowd providing festive music for an hour or more. The fun and camaraderie continued until late that evening.

### **Tours Aplenty**

The first of several exciting tours and special events kicked off at 9 a.m. the next day — a visit to Air Station San Diego and the CGC Tybee.

About 125 members and guests made the short bus trip to CG Activities San Diego and were treated to an air-sea rescue demonstration, tour of the base facilities, lunch at the Mess Hall and the opportunity to buy CG items at the CG base



THE COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20593-0001

### A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDANT OF THE COAST GUARD

On behalf of the men and women of the United States Coast Guard, I extend my warmest greetings to the members of the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association on the occasion of your biennial Convention and Reunion.

Our fine Service has participated in every armed conflict, declared and undeclared, since the Constitution became the law of the land. You, as Coast Guard combat veterans, have contributed outstanding service in safeguarding the freedom of our Nation just as many of our shipmates have paid the ultimate price in that pursuit. Through your continued vigilance and support of the Coast Guard, you each provide a vital living link between the past and present. A link that will continue to teach and develop future generations of Coast Guard men and women. I am most appreciative of your association's many exceptional efforts, including your annual recognition of a Coast Guard Person of the Year.

I salute you and wish you a most productive and enjoyable Convention and Reunion. Thank you for helping to make the Coast Guard the world's premier maritime service and for remaining "Always Ready!"

Sincerely,

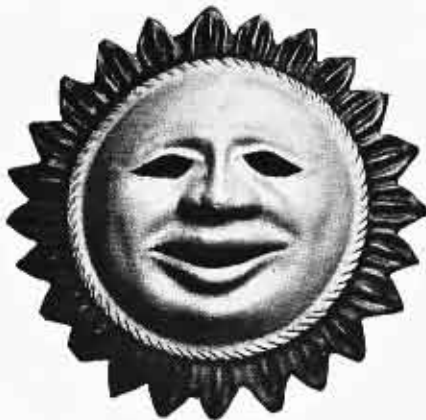
  
Admiral, U. S. Coast Guard

Coast Guard Commandant ADM Robert E. Kramek's personal letter to the CGCVA which was read at the Opening Ceremonies.

Tybee, the Mess Manager, ET2 John Archer, and all the fine folks at Activities San Diego who made us all feel so welcome. It was a lot of fun!



Newly elected CGCVA officers for 1996-1998. (Left to right) Joe Kleinpeter (President); Bob Maxwell (2-Year Trustee); Jack Campbell (Vice President); Al Grantham (Immediate Past President); Ed Burke (Secretary); Ray Hertica (4-Year Trustee); Baker Herbert (Treasurer); Paul Scotti (4-Year Trustee); and Bill Figone (2-Year Trustee).



At the conclusion of the Air Station tour, everyone returned to the hotel and had a choice of afternoon activities both at or away from the hotel. Of course, the Hospitality Room remained a busy place.

That evening, many of the reunion attendees went on a three-hour dinner cruise through San Diego Harbor.

Nov. 2nd saw another strong contingent make a pleasurable bus trip to Tijuana for some relaxing bargain-hunting and dining. Once in the town, everyone debarked the busses and strolled the streets which were teeming with locals selling everything from silver jewelry to leather goods, prescription drugs to vanilla. And of course, you'd better haggle. It was

amazing — you could buy something for 10 per cent of what was asked, just by holding your ground. After an hour or so of shopping, everyone returned to the busses for an authentic Mexican meal at a local restaurant. The tour got back to the hotel about 8 p.m.



**The Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard**

2100 — 2nd Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20563-0001

OCT 17 1996

Mr. A.D. "Al" Grantham  
President  
Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association  
15703 SE 45th Court  
Bellview, WA 98006

Dear Mr. Grantham,

I was really looking forward to attending the banquet and renewing friendship's during the Coast Guard Combat Veterans bi-annual convention in San Diego. I am both disappointed and sorry that it became necessary to cancel. Unfortunately, the Commandant scheduled his "Future Directions Study" for October 30th - November 6th and I'm required to participate.

I wish you and your members a successful San Diego gathering. It is my home town and I know everyone will have a wonderful time.

Semper Paratus,

Rick Trent  
Master Chief of the Coast Guard

*Personal letter from Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard Rick Trent, who was unable to attend "Fiesta San Diego."*



*Most of the members of the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association who attended "Fiesta San Diego." Photo taken after the Nov. 2, 1996 Business Meeting by Art Green (standing near the top of a 16-foot ladder!)*

ing new members for the CGCVA, including placing magazine ads in national service magazines.

— All of the published By-Laws changes were accepted and approved. Future recommended By-Laws changes will be published in the





*Quarterdeck Log* indicating both present and proposed By-Laws.

- CGCVA Life memberships will be promoted.
- Election of CGCVA Officers and Trustees. These are listed on the inside cover of this issue.

— Appointments of other Association positions, including: Parliamentarian (Charles A. Parker); Budget Director (Walter W. Gore, LM); Ways & Means Director (vacant); Nat'l Membership Director (William L. Smith);



# The City of San Diego Proclamation

Presented By  
The Office Of  
The Mayor

## UNITED STATES COAST GUARD COMBAT VETERANS ASSOCIATION

**WHEREAS**, the four main missions of the United States Coast Guard are maritime law enforcement, maritime safety, marine environment protection and national security; and

**WHEREAS**, the United States Coast Guard's multi-mission approach permits a relatively small organization to respond to public needs in a wide variety of maritime activities and to shift emphasis on short notice when the need arises; and

**WHEREAS**, since 1790, the United States Coast Guard has served in every major national conflict, earning thirty-three battle and campaign streamers, symbolizing the Coast Guard's contribution to national defense; and

**WHEREAS**, the United States Coast Guard promotes safe and effective passage of marine and air traffic by providing continuous and accurate, all-weather radio navigation service and maintaining short and long range aids to navigation such as lighthouses and buoys; and

**WHEREAS**, the United States Coast Guard reduces the risk of loss of life, personal injury and property damage in recreational boating, improves safety, and fosters greater development, use, and enjoyment of United States waters; and

**WHEREAS**, on a daily basis, the United States Coast Guard promotes maritime transportation in ice-laden polar and domestic waters, issues new, renewed and upgraded licenses for officers and seamen, manages port safety, port security and environmental concerns, and enforces all federal laws on, under, and over the high seas and waters under the jurisdiction of the United States ;

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, SUSAN GOLDING**, the Thirty-second Mayor of the City of San Diego, do hereby proclaim October 31, 1996, to be the "COAST GUARD COMBAT VETERANS DAY" in San Diego.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I HAVE HEREUNTO SET MY HAND, THIS DAY,  
AND HAVE CAUSED THE SEAL TO BE AFFIXED HERETO:

SUSAN GOLDING  
MAYOR

October 31, 1996

DATE

*Certificate from Susan Golding, Mayor of San Diego, proclaiming Oct. 31, 1996, as "Coast Guard Combat Veterans Day" in San Diego.*

Quarterdeck Log Editor-In-Chief (LCDR Ed Swift, USCG); Chairman, By-Laws Committee (George V. 'Vince' Stauffer, LM); Chairman, Nominating Committee (Raymond O'Malley); Chaplain (William G. 'Bill' Miller); Photographer (Art Green); CGCVA Sales (Sidney 'Herb' Weinstein)

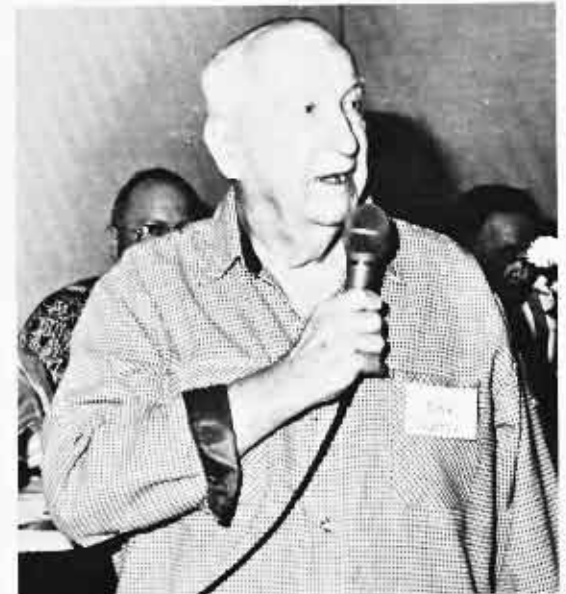
Please note: We have a very important position of Director, Ways & Means, vacant. If any of the member-

ship would like to help out and feels qualified for this position, please contact the Secretary or President and make yourself known.

— A Membership Committee was approved, including: North East (John S. Stamford, LM); South East (William 'Bill' Wells); North Central (Florian 'Byke' Byczynski); South Central (to be confirmed); North West (William 'Bill' Smith); South West (Paul E. Wheeler); At Large (Ennis 'Dan' Whitaker).

### Awards Banquet

At 7 p.m. on Nov. 3rd, the Awards Banquet was held with newly elected President Joe Kleinpeter serving as host. A superb meal was served and



*USS Leopold (DE-319) WWII survivor Richard Novatny speaks to the membership on liability insurance at the CGCVA Business Meeting.*



*CGCVA National President Al Grantham addresses the membership at the Nov. 2, 1996 Business Meeting.*

everyone commented on what a fantastic reunion this had been.

Following dinner, Joe introduced distinguished guests and Immediate Past President Al Grantham moved into the presentation of "CGCVA Person of the Year." ASMC Donald K. Murray, USCG, of Air Station Cape Cod, Mass., was presented a plaque for his extraordinary heroism, outstanding professional competence and performance of duty 16 April 1996 in the dar-

local American Legion and VFW Posts.

Joe Kleinpeter then introduced the newly elected and appointed CGCVA Officers for 1996-1998 and they were all officially sworn in to office. The colors were retired and everyone adjourned back



*The "Fiesta San Diego" Reunion & Convention was officially underway with the Oct. 31, 1996 Opening Ceremony. The partying began at the ceremony's conclusion with the arrival of a four-man Mariachi band.*



*CAPT William M. Hayes, commanding officer of USCG Activities San Diego, welcomed the CGCVA members at the Opening Ceremony.*

ing rescue of three people from drowning in 35 foot seas with hurricane force winds 90 miles east of Provincetown, Mass. Chief Murray and his wife, Carrie, by the way, fully involved themselves in the reunion activities and thoroughly enjoyed meeting all the members and guests.

Next, RADM Fred Ames, commander, CG Maintenance & Logistics Command Pacific, was introduced as key note speaker. Among his comments, RADM Ames urged all the CGCVA members to promote the USCG through their involvement with their

to the Hospitality Room.



*CGCVA President Al Grantham and Auxiliary Secretary-Treasurer Jane Maxwell make a (traditional?) Mexican toast with shots of tequila after donning the appropriate costumes.*

### Wrap-Up

Checkout and departure began the morning of Nov. 4th although the newly elected officers remained to have a wrap-up business meeting. From all accounts, everyone said that "Fiesta San Diego" was the best Reunion ever. Still, the Convention Committee plans to make the 1998 Corpus Christi Reunion even better.

**Swiftly**

P.S. My sincere thanks to Art Green for his great help, unselfish efforts and tremendous photographic skills. Ya done good Art!



1

photo by Art Green



2

photo by Art Green



3

photo by Art Green

## The Business Side of "Fiesta San Diego"

(1) The newly elected CGCVA Auxiliary Officers. (Left to right) Jane Maxwell (President); Nancy Burke (Secretary-Treasurer); and Pearl Grantham (Vice President)

(2) ASMC Donald K. Murray, USCG, the CGCVA Person of the Year, with his wife, Carrie, and Immediate Past President Al Grantham

(3) Members of the CGCVA Ladies Auxiliary who attended "Fiesta San Diego"

4

(4) Newly elected CGCVA President Joe Kleinpeter is congratulated by RADM Fred Ames, Commander, Maintenance & Logistics Center Pacific, at the conclusion of the Nov. 3, 1996 Awards Banquet



photo by Art Green



photo by Art Green

(5) Bess Witcraft, Baker Herbert's mother-in-law, receives an Outstanding Service Award from Al Grantham for helping label the Quarterdeck Log since 1988.

5



6

photo by Art Green



7

photo by Art Green



8

photo by Art Green

(6) CGCVA elected and appointed officers are sworn in.  
 (7) Convention Chairman Bob Maxwell hands the gavel (and the reins) of authority to newly elected CGCVA President Joe Kleinpeter.

(8) One of the CGCVA's top recruiters, Dan Whitaker, is handed his appointment as West Coast (At-Large) Recruiting Coordinator for 1996-1998 from President Joe Kleinpeter.  
 (9) Active duty Coasties at "Fiesta San Diego" included (left to right) RADM Fred Ames, CAPT William Hayes, ASMC Donald Murray, LCDR Ed Swift, and SKC Roberts.



9

photo by Art Green



photo by Ed Swift

1



photo by Art Green

2

3



photo by Art Green  
photo by Art Green



The Fun and Camaraderie Side of "Fiesta San Diego"

4



photo by Ed Swift

5

(1) One of the many CGCVA members who took the Tijuana tour haggles for a lace tablecloth.

(2) The only SPAR who attended "Fiesta San Diego" is interviewed for the Reunion video.

(3) While CGCVA members had much to choose from for entertainment, i.e., San Diego Zoo, Tijuana, USCG Air Station, etc., newly elected Association Vice President Jack Campbell and his friend Babs Tipling opted for a trip to the downtown flea market. Looks like Babs got a little tired though.

(4) During WWII, the Coast Guard supplied escort protection for convoys going across the North Atlantic and in the Mediterranean. Here are three survivors of three different escort vessels that battled German submarines. From left, Dick Novotny (USS Leopold); Art Green (USS Menges); and Raymond O'Malley (USCGC Escanaba).

(5) Gil 'Frenchy' Benoit and his wife, Linda, take a rest by the tall ship, Star of India at San Diego's waterfront.

# Start planning for



6

photo by Art Green

7



photo by Ed Swift

8



photo by Ed Swift



photo by Ed Swift

9



10

(6) Four shipmates from four different vessels that were part of the 22nd Escort Division during WWII. From left, Ted Mrowicki (USS Joyce, DE-317); Bob Reichstetter (USS Kirkpatrick, DE-318); Dick Novotny (USS Leopold, DE-319) which was sunk; and Bill Smith (USS Poole, DE-151).

(7) Bill Figone pours a drink for a thirsty CGCVA member. Bill shared bartender duties throughout the convention with Walt Gorr and Ed Swift.

(8) CGCVA and Auxiliary members and their guests were invited to the Coast Guard Air Station for a tour. As part of the activities, a sea-air rescue demonstration was held and many spectators, such as this CGCVA member, opted to watch the action from the deck of the USCGC Tybee, a 110-foot patrol boat moored at Activities San Diego.

(9) Your editor had to get something for his wife since he didn't bring her to the Reunion so here Swifty is contemplating some serious purchases during the Tijuana tour.

(10) Of all the personal reunions that took place at "Fiesta San Diego," perhaps none were as special as the meeting by Gil 'Frenchy' Benoit and CAPT John M. Austin, USCG (Ret.). They ran into each other on the third day of the CGCVA Reunion, the first time they had seen each other for exactly 28 years. On Nov. 2, 1968, CAPT Austin, then the Commander of Coast Guard Activities in Vietnam, was visiting a Saigon field hospital where he presented Benoit the Purple Heart Medal for wounds incurred the day before. CAPT Austin expected to see Frenchy at the Reunion and even brought the original Coast Guard news release and photo taken at the field hospital.

# Corpus Christi in 1998

# A Low-Profile War

*The U.S. Coast Guard In Vietnam, 1965-1975*

*This article appeared in the October/November 1996 issue of The VVA Veteran, a publication of Vietnam Veterans of America. It is reprinted with their permission and that of the writer, Mr. William Triplett.*

Recently, Jay Crissey wore his Coast Guard uniform to a benefit aimed at raising money for a memorial to Illinois' veterans of the Vietnam War. The event was attended by many who had served in country, and upon seeing Crissey, most of them said, "Coast Guard? What are you doing here?" Then they noticed his Vietnam ribbons and welcomed him. Crissey didn't react with much more than a shrug; After 26 years of similar questions, he's gotten used to it. "Most people don't know that the Coast Guard was even there," he says with benign resignation.

Indeed, from 1965 to 1975, some 8,000 U.S. Coast Guardsmen voluntarily served in Southeast Asia. Seven were killed and nearly 60 wounded in duties that ranged from patrolling the 1,200-mile South Vietnamese coastline and supervising the major harbors to supporting ground and air operations. In addition to searching sampans and junks for contraband, Coast Guard boats and cutters fired shells, ferried medical supplies, transported friendly combatants, mapped the Vietnamese coastline and shelf bottom, and oversaw the unloading of all munitions arriving by ship. Throughout much of the war, the U.S. Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force benefited greatly from the Coast Guard's low-profile presence, often with-

out ever realizing it.

Events leading to the Coast Guard's involvement in Vietnam began on a mid-February day in 1965, one month before the arrival of the first large-scale American combat forces. An Army helicopter on a rescue mission was flying over Vung Ro Bay near Qui Nhon in the central coastal regions, when the pilot spotted what he thought was a small island. The only problem was the

"island" was moving — from one side of the bay to the other. The pilot swooped down for a closer look and saw that beneath the expert camouflage was a North Vietnamese trawler. Air strikes followed almost immediately; the trawler went down in shallows near the beach. Friendly ground forces then tried to recover cargo but were driven off by heavy fire from Vietcong positions along the coast. Finally, having rid the area of VC, the friendlies discovered that the trawler was loaded with tons of weapons and medical supplies.

U.S. forces had known that North Vietnam had been supplying its South Vietnamese compatriots by land and perhaps to some extent by sea. However, the trawler incident made it clear that the North



*(above) LTJG Eugene Hickey, CO of the CGC Point White and CAPT Robert Loforte, Commander of USCG Squadron One inspect enemy rifles seized from a night battle with a Vietcong junk March 9, 1966.*

*(right) Empty shells plop around his feet as USCG Commandant ADM Williard J. Smith handles a .50 caliber machine gun aboard an 82-foot "Market Time" patrol cutter in the Gulf of Thailand.*





was using sea routes for major deliveries of weapons and materiel. American and South Vietnamese military planners realized that a formal sea-interdiction effort was necessary, and thus created Operation Market Time (a reference to the way in which local fishermen used the waters for fishing and marketing). Responsibility for Market Time was of course given to the Navy, which assigned destroyer escorts and minesweepers to form a barrier along the South Vietnamese coastline. At the time, however, the Navy did not have shallow-water craft for close-to-shore and up-river patrolling. The Pentagon ordered contracts for such boats to be built, but construction might take up to six months. And so the Navy turned to the Coast Guard.

In April 1965, the commandant of the Coast Guard announced the formation of Squadron One, which was initially composed of 17 82-foot cutters. Forty-seven officers and 198 enlisted men crewed the cutters. And all of them were sent to various locations on the West Coast for training while merchant vessels transported the boats themselves to Subic Bay in the Philippines. Probably the most significant training took place at Coronado, California, where, according to a monograph prepared by the Coast Guard's historical office, crewmen learned about "such topics as the care and feeding of the 81mm mortar and the .50 caliber machine gun." (Both weapons were being mounted on the cutters for extra firepower.) "Other subjects included [nuclear-biological-chemical] warfare, damage control, navigation and piloting, organization, rules of the nautical road, boarding procedures and tactics, lookout procedures, recognition, combat indoctrination, radiotelephone procedures, water survival, hand-to-hand combat, and the code of conduct."

John Nelson, who was among the earlier crews to serve, said, "We got a lot of training." Reunited with their boats in Subic Bay, the crews of Squadron One, including LT Robert Nelson, CO of the CGC Point Glover, shows rifles and ammunition recovered from a Vietcong junk his vessel sunk at Hon Hao on Sept. 19, 1965.

One underwent orientation and some last-minute refresher training before deploying to Vietnam. Then, on July 16, eight of the squadron's cutters were designated as Division 12 and set sail for Danang; about a week later, the nine



A crew member from the 82-foot CGC Point Glover pokes through a load of sand aboard a Vietnamese junk en route from Hon Tre, main island in the Isles des Pirates group, to market at Ha Tien, on the border of South Vietnam and Cambodia. The inspection revealed no hidden contraband, the men were each given a cigarette from the Coast Guard crew and sent on their way.



remaining cutters, designated Division 11, made way for An Thoi in the Gulf of Thailand. Division 12 was to patrol South Vietnam's eastern coast, while Division 11 covered the western coast. The mission statement for both divisions was straightforward: "Stop sea infiltration of weapons and supplies to the Vietcong."

The mission itself, however, was not so simple. There were an estimated 60,000 junks and sampans that regularly sailed the South Vietnamese waters, working out to more than 3,500 per individual cutter. If Squadron One was going to handle so much traffic, some sort of strategy was needed. A priority system was devised: Cutters

would look hardest at vessels in transit; next would be junks fishing or otherwise operating in restricted areas; fishing boats anchored but not working any nets followed; lastly were fishing boats that were working nets. The cutters also coordinated their movements and activities with the Navy destroyers and minesweepers that cruised deeper waters, forming what was known as the outer barrier.

**B**ut even the best planning and foresight can have absurd gaps, as was demonstrated fairly quickly.



arms. A 20-foot junk tried — unsuccessfully — to ram the cutter; Coast Guardsmen opened up with .50 caliber machine guns. The junk began to float dead in the water,



(Above) On patrol near Duong-Dong in South Vietnam, the 82-foot CGC Point Comfort inspects a junk's papers and cargo.

(Left) A CGC Point Gammon crew member sprays the cutter's white hull with a more practical camouflage dark gray paint following a close call by the CGC Point Orient a few nights before.

as did two of the five Vietcong aboard. The *Glover's* boarding party discovered numerous "small arms, ammunition, and papers," according to the Coast Guard monograph. Then later that same day, Division 11's *Point Marone* intercepted a larger shipment. A 40-foot junk decided to fire on the *Marone*

rather than submit to inspection. The *Point Marone* responded with heavier fire, killing eight Vietcong. The boarding party discovered, among other things, a sizable load of small arms, ammunition, grenades, clothing, and money. No Coast Guardsmen were killed or wounded in either action.

**D**ivision 12 scored similar victories along the eastern and northeastern stretches of the coast, but the southeastern region — including the vital Mekong

A cutter on its first night patrol drew enemy mortar and machine gun fire from the coastline. The *Point Orient*, like every other cutter, was still painted a nice, bright white — making the ship a fat, luminescent target, particularly on a moonlit night. The crew escaped injury, and the cutter sustained not even a scratch, but Market Time commanders opted not to push their luck. All boats were immediately painted battle gray.

**D**uring the first months of patrols along the western coast, Division 11 alone boarded more than 1,100 junks and sampans and stopped another 4,000 to check their papers. The following month, the division's *Point Glover* made the first significant capture of sea-borne



The 311-foot CGC Half Moon fires its five-inch gun at a Vietcong stronghold in the Song Ong Doc area of Vietnam.

Delta offering several approaches into the Saigon area — proved difficult to patrol effectively. Lying at the extreme end of the area of operations for both Division 11 and 12, the southeastern coastline was vulnerable: Only a few of the total 17 cutters could ever pass through the area. The Navy's shallow-water boats (called "PCFs," for patrol craft, fast) were finally built and delivered and could fill in the gap — but only temporarily, as it turned out. PCFs could not operate safely during the long monsoon season. The cutters, however, had

no problems with the heavy weather, thus in October 1965, the secretary of the Navy once again asked the Coast Guard for help. The Coast Guard replied by sending another nine of her 82-foot cutters to form Division 13, which started its Vietnam service in February 1966. Division 13 operated out of Cat Lo, an old French naval base just north of the delta — its principal area of responsibility.

Nelson sailed with Division 13 on the *Point Cypress*, having volunteered to go to Vietnam (as did all Coast Guard personnel). "I had almost been wasted in New York City fighting a dock fire," he says, recalling his pre-Vietnam duty in the Coast Guard. "And then I was a crew member on a 44-foot self-righting life boat that we flipped on a rescue mission off Long Island. So I thought, heck, I can do the same thing in Vietnam for 65 bucks more a month." The third night after his arrival on the *Point Cypress*, he was in a firefight as friendly ground forces pushed a VC unit toward the beaches in a hammer-and-anvil operation. Most of the time, however, the *Point Cypress* crew was boarding sampans and junks. "Boarding was the name of the game," he says, "They



(Above) BMC C.C. Gardner of the CGC *Point Mast* gives a package of pencils, paper, candy and plastic toys to a Vietnamese girl.



(Left) EN2 Jens Andersen of the CGC *Point Mast* demonstrates the use of school supplies to children on Hom Nam Du, a remote island. The effort was part of a civic action project by the cutter to foster goodwill.

had hoped, no doubt due in large part to the fact that, although having to restrict access to many of those fishing grounds, the Coast Guard also provided medical help and a steady supply of candy and cigarettes to the fishermen.

wanted numbers, so that's what we did."

The numbers from the first year of operations certainly sound impressive. According to the monograph, Squadron One "steamed more than a half million miles; stayed underway over 70 percent of the time; detected 15,000 junks; inspected 30,000 junks; boarded 35,000 junks; accounted for 75 VC KIA/WIA; arrested several hundred; destroyed 16 junks and one steel hull; [and] conducted 35 naval gunfire support missions." But the real measure of what these numbers mean — and hence, how effective Operation Market Time was — may lie in the VC's response to the operation. Repeatedly, the Vietcong spread the rumor among the South Vietnamese fishermen that the real reason for the U.S. Coast Guard's presence was to put the locals out of business by usurping the best fishing grounds. The fishermen did not rebel or protest as the VC



The 82-foot CGC *Point Cypress* on patrol in South Vietnam.

Another indicator of Operation Market Time's growing success: About the same time Coast Guard cutters were capturing more and more enemy junks and sampans and the occasional trawler, enemy supply traffic on the Ho Chi Minh Trail increased proportionately. Once more, the Coast Guard was called in.

The U.S. Air Force was given primary responsibility for shutting down the trail, but the Southeast Asian jungle terrain, with its sometimes impenetrable weather, made it extremely difficult for Air Force bombers to pinpoint targets. The Air Force turned to the Coast Guard for help because of the latter's experience with land- and sea-based aids to navigation. "The Coast Guard offered to install and operate an electronic long-range navigation chain known as Loran-C," wrote Paul C. Scotti in a short history



While assigned to Squadron Three in South Vietnam, the 255-foot CGC Owasco (WHEC-39) "unreps" with the USS Guadalupe (AO-32) after refueling from the Navy tanker during a "Market Time" patrol.

he compiled on the Coast Guard in Vietnam. The Loran system was so accurate, it had once been part of the U.S.-guided missile program; Loran would put the Air Force's bombs, starting from almost eight miles high, within 50 feet of their target.

For security, however, the Air Force told the Coast Guard and the public that the system was to help locate and rescue downed American pilots. (The VC and NVA were less likely to attempt sabotaging Loran sites if they believed the system was not an offensive operation.) Baker Herbert, already a longtime Coast Guard expert in aids to navigation, volunteered to be part of the installing team. "I was pretty highly qualified to help get this thing up and running," he says. "I also liked that it appeared to be a humanitarian mission." The officer in charge of the team was Coast Guard Captain Thomas R. Sargent III, "a brilliant man, a shrewd diplomat, and a great engineer," as Herbert recalls. Before the team went to Vietnam in January 1966, Sargent made a reconnoitering trip. "He realized that to

A day after its battle with a motorized junk 17 miles off Saigon, in which ten Vietcong were killed, four captured and the junk sunk, the 82-foot CGC Point White was on patrol again. Here, Point White crewmen stand ready with guns while another inspects a junk for contraband.



make things work in South Vietnam, you needed cash," says Herbert, who adds that Sargent then sought and received authorization to have \$50,000 replenishable cash available to the team at all times. And Herbert was to handle it.

Says Herbert, "We bought property, desks, typewriters, even a Volkswagon bus for us to get around." After being properly outfitted, the team identified four sites on which to install Loran systems — three in Thailand and one on Con Son Island off the southern coast of South Vietnam. "You need three [sites] for triangulation," Herbert says. "The fourth was to be a backup in case one of the others went down for any reason." Construction was finished in less than eight months — which was "unheard of," Herbert says. Back then, it normally took close to three years to install Loran.

By September, Herbert was on his way back home, but not before he had learned, much to his dismay, the true purpose of Loran. A Coast Guard officer one day cornered Herbert, wanting to know why he had told the *New York Times* that Loran-C was not for rescues but for



*A replenishment of ammunition arrives on board the 311-foot CGC Half Moon by high line from the Navy ammunition ship USS Pyro at sea off the coast of Vietnam. The Half Moon had used nearly 200 rounds of five-inch high-explosives against Vietcong positions the day before.*

bombing-guidance. "I hadn't known that it was for bombing," Herbert says. "I hadn't even seen the story in the *New York Times*." (The source of the leak was later discovered to be an Air Force major at MACV in Saigon.) Like many others, Herbert returned home without the enthusiasm he'd taken with him into Vietnam. "We bombed thousands of people, and I felt bad about that. In the Coast Guard, we're supposed to save lives."

Nevertheless, the Coast Guard did indeed save lives — including those of downed pilots. Beginning in April 1968, several of the Coast Guard's specialists in aviation search-and-rescue flew helicopters for the 37th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron based in Danang. They won medals for valor. In fact, one of the Coast Guard's seven KIAs was a rescue pilot whose helicopter was shot down during an attempt to pull a Marine Corps flier out of a hornet's nest of NVA.

By 1969, the Coast Guard and the Navy were in the process of turning over many of the cutters to the South Vietnamese. This meant not only training South Vietnamese crews to operate and maintain the vessels, but often to repair those vessels when they experienced breakdowns or problems. "Our biggest chore was probably trying to keep ancient materiel running," recalls Jay Crissey, who sailed with *An 81mm mortar shell fired from the 82-foot CGC Point Lomas shatters rocks over the entrances to a suspected Vietcong cave hideout along a beach in a Vietcong-controlled area near Danang. Rounds from a .50 caliber machine gun, mounted piggy back on the mortar, were also fired into the cave.*





*During ceremonies at Danang on March 16, 1970, Coast Guard Division 12 turned over the 82-foot patrol boats Point Kennedy and Point Young to the Vietnamese Navy. Division 12 was decommissioned at the same ceremony, leaving only one Coast Guard division in operation in the Republic of Vietnam.*

Squadron Three, which had been formed a few years earlier as a reinforcement to the Navy's outer-barrier ships. Squadron Three comprised 30 high-endurance cutters in the 255- to 311-foot class, and, like their smaller sister ships in Squadron One, their duties were many and varied. Crissey was a small-boat engineer: To transport boarding parties onto junks, the cutters put small boats over the side; Crissey was an engineer on one.

Just as often, however, the boats were used to drop off Special Forces units under cover of night at designated points on the coastline. After the units finished their mission, the boat Crissey was on would stand off from the beach, waiting for a prearranged flashlight signal. "If the signal was right, we'd blast in as fast as we could, hit the beach, pull them aboard, then get the hell out of there," he says.

The larger cutters were armed with five-inch guns, the services of which were frequently requested by friendly ground forces. For example, in the course of 10 months, the cutter Crissey was on fired 2,201 rounds of five-inch shells in 101 gunfire-support missions. Targets were, for the most part, the usual — enemy bunkers and

positions. But there were sometimes the unusual, such as a pepper farm near the coast, owned by a senior South Vietnamese officer and in need of irrigation. "We dug irrigation ditches for him with five-inch shells," Crissey says. Then there was the coastal village of Song Ong Doc, where a Special Forces camp was set "in the dead center of Charlie's territory," as Crissey recalls. But the villagers were friendly. Still, on many nights, Crissey's cutter "lobbed shell after shell into the area" to protect the camp. "As daybreak came, we'd put the small boats over and go in with doctors and corpsmen and patch up" any villagers who might have been inadvertently wounded by the shelling. "But that was typical of that war, wasn't it?"

Indeed, if the villagers complained, it was never to the Coasties. The Special Forces unit was certainly grateful for the cutter's help. In fact, when the ship finally set sail to return home, the unit sent a telegram, which could easily have expressed the combined sentiments of the Navy, Air Force, Army, and Marine Corps to the entire Coast Guard: "As homeward you post, Well may you boast, Our thanks we so pay, And we really must say, We liked you guarding our coast."



**Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association**

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

(Please Print Clearly)

**Personal Data**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Init.

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: ( ) - \_\_\_\_\_ Date Of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have two(2) Residences?  Yes  No  
If Yes, furnish the following information: (This is for the Quarterdeck Log mailings)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: ( ) - \_\_\_\_\_ When There?: \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsored By: \_\_\_\_\_

**Military Data**

Branch Of Service	Service Number	From	To
_____	_____	_____	_____

**Important:** This Application MUST be accompanied by either a copy of your Discharge (Both Sides); or, a copy of a DD-214; or, a copy of a DD-215; or, a copy of NAV/CG-553; or a copy of your letter of awards, or a copy of some other "Official" document that states your participation in or your direct support of a combat situation. You may further get a certified statement from a former shipmate who is a member of the CGCVA in "Good Standing," stating that you served with him on a particular ship/station during a particular period of time. Haitian service has recently been authorized the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal that qualifies for membership.

Rank/Rate: Present  @ Discharge  @ Retirement  \_\_\_\_\_

Dues: \$25.00 For 2 Years. Amount of Membership Dues Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make Check/M.O. Payable To: CGCOMVETS

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Send To: E. P. "ED" Burke, LM, National Secretary  
17728 Striley Drive, Ashton, MD 20861-9763  
Tel: Msg. or Fax (301)570-5664



*Many CGCVA members and guests visited USCG Activities San Diego on Nov. 1, 1996, one of several tours during the 10th Anniversary CGCVA Reunion & Convention in San Diego. Photo by Ed Swift.*

**Please! Look at the Exp. Date on your label and renew if due.  
The Quarterdeck Log**

**COAST GUARD COMBAT  
VETERANS ASSOCIATION  
P.O. BOX 544  
WESTFIELD CENTER, OH 44251**

Forwarding And Address  
Correction Requested

WILLIAM R. WELLS II Exp. 12/1/98  
258 MEADOWLAKE DR  
MARTINEZ GA 30907

BULK RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
WESTFIELD CENTER, OH  
PERMIT NO. 2

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

**POSTMASTER: Dated Material, Please Do Not Delay**

**Printed By: COCKRAN PRINTING  
334 Brock Bridge Road - Laurel, Maryland 20724  
Phone: 301-725-4506 Fax: 301-725-6696**