

COMBATANT CRAFT CREWMAN ASSOCIATION



PRESERVING THE HISTORY AND HONORING THE BROTHERHOOD

NEWSLETTER

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NSW VIETNAM VETERANS HONOR FLIGHT

BY PHIL GARN

On Sunday, April 28, Vietnam SEALs and SWCCs (they were BSU-1 men back then [1]) were welcomed by Naval Special Warfare Admiral Keith Davids with side boys manning the rails and thousands of well-wishers at the San Diego International Airport after their whirlwind honor flight tour to Washington, D.C., that took off a few days before.

This historic Honor Flight was actually months in the making with a lot of hard work by old comrades.

Last year, our old Commanding Officer from SBU-13, Randy Large [2], reached out to Jim Gray and me asking for assistance with a proposed Honor Flight for Vietnam era SEALs and SWCC. Randy and SEAL Admiral Gary Bonelli (ret) wanted to include boat guys as well as SEALs on this honor flight.

Jim used his contacts in the community and arranged for a few men including Jim Nye and Jim Frost to go on the flight as honorees. Other SWCC including Vietnam vet and later skipper of PTF 22, John O'Brien volunteered to go along as an escorts and help with other aspects.



This is just a small fraction of the Honor Flight Welcome Home.



Former boat guys [left to right]: Phil Garn (SBU 12 and 13), Jim Frost (BSU 1 and MST 2) Jim Nye (BSU 1, MST 1 and MST 2- also TDY to UDT-13), Chuck Chaldeckas (XO SBU 12), Jim Young (CO SBU 12) and Paul Plumb (Commodore SBR1)



Jim Nye presenting his BSU 1 plank holder plaque with PTF wood to Lance Cummings of the West Coast SEAL Museum as Master of Ceremonies Bob Shoulz from Old Frogs and SEALs looks on at the tribute in the San Diego Harbor Holiday Inn.

[1] SWCC (Special Warfare Combat Crewman) is the modern and accepted term for boat operators from Boat Support Units, Coastal River Squadrons, Special Boat Units to today's SWCC.

[2] Randy Large was also a PBOIC and patrol officer at SBU-12. Randy did a lot of the heavy lifting and administrative work behind the scenes to make this Honor Flight possible along with a tremendous group of Honor Flight volunteers and donors.

On Thursday, April 25, there was a huge reception for the NSW honorees and Honor Flight crews at the Holiday Inn Ballroom courtesy of Honor Flight and Old Frogs & Seals [3] Here in front of hundreds, Jim Nye would establish a tone donating his plank holder plaque made from the keel of a Vietnam Nasty Class PTF to the new West Coast SEAL Museum in San Diego[4].

There were a number of former boat guys and Vietnam SEALs who not only served as Commodores, COs and XO's of Special Boat Squadrons and SBUs including Paul Plumb, Jim Young and Chuck Chaldekas but were inspirations and mentors.

The honor flight men and escorts would have an early start the next day and also have a CBS Channel 8 reporter imbedded with them on their trip to Washington DC. Jim Nye featured significantly in the news coverage and represent the SWCC community throughout the journey to Washington DC and back to San Diego.



John O'Brien (Vietnam and CRS 1 vet, skipper of PTF-22) coming back reuniting with Moki Martin. Both John and Moki live in Coronado and are members of Old Frogs and SEALs.

On Sunday at San Diego's Lindberg Field, crowds erupted with cheers and applause for the returning NSW heroes. And it was not just the public that welcomed them home but teammates and neighbors like the legendary SEAL Phil "Moki" Martin, founder of the Super Frog Triathlon.

These were welcomes they did not receive when they came back from Vietnam, even Medal of Honor recipient Mike Thornton.

[3] Old Frogs and SEALs was created in the 1970s on the West Coast as a way for old teammates to get together and do good works.

[4] The new West Coast SEAL Museum is due to open in December just blocks away from the USS Midway. The Midway is one of the top attractions in San Diego.

DOC GREENOUGH SAVES THE DAY, AGAIN!

BY PHIL GARN

In March, my wife Lisa and I planned a short trip to Arizona. We were going to drive out from San Diego and stay in Prescott for a few days, visit my old SBU-13 Teammate, James “Doc” Greenough, as well as check out Sedona and Flagstaff.

With all the rain this winter and spring, the high desert flowers were in full bloom, so we had a very scenic journey. The first night we got some snow and the temperature dropped. I called Doc, he gave us some local tips and we’d meet up the next day.



Lisa, Doc and Phil at the Palace Hotel in Prescott, Arizona

After breakfast, I tried to move our car about a half a block to be closer to the hotel entrance but it just did not sound right. I initially figured it was because it was cold but it still refused to start.

At a loss, I again called Doc and asked if he had a good mechanic in the area. He recommended Action Automotive which just happened to be about a half mile from the hotel and are currently restoring Doc’s WW2 Dodge Ambulance.

After completely unloading the car, we got her towed over to Action Automotive and they got right to work. Doc came down to Prescott and showed us the sights and we had lunch at the historic Palace Hotel. The crew at Action got to work on our car so it would be up and running the next day.

We got our car and headed off to Flagstaff, which was covered in snow and picturesque, then headed down and visited with Doc at his house before heading back to the hotel.

The next day, we were all packed up and ready to go the following day, but the car wouldn’t start again. It was back to Action, there was something going on and they called the local Honda Dealer who got us in. Hours later, we were back on the road to San Diego.

As many of SBU-13 know, this was not the first time Doc saved the day. On one of our two-week active duty for training exercises, we went up to Camp Pendleton before going out to San Clemente Island where we were supposed to go to the gas chamber for CS gas refresher training.

Running behind, our Reserve Ops Officer and Command Master Chief set up a makeshift gas chamber in an old Quonset hut by tossing in three or four CS grenades. Needless to say, after the experience in the makeshift chamber, Doc Kyle and Doc Greenough quietly introduced me and others to Imodium which solved the problem though I’d gone from about 190 pounds to 175 in just a couple of days.

BOOKS FOR BOAT GUYS

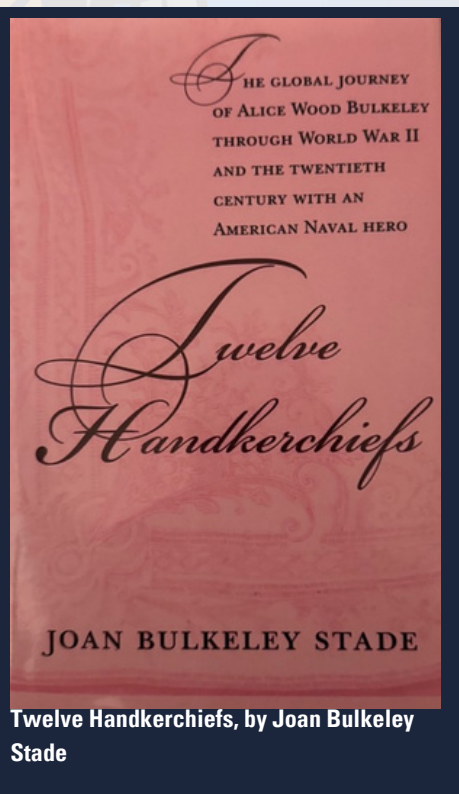
BY PHIL GARN

Three different boat guy projects and sources have resulted in three different titles which may interest to readers.

Naval Special Warfare asked us to help locate the families of legacy SWCC Medal of Honor awardees John D. Bulkeley, Arthur Murray Preston and David Ouellet. We got a lot of help from CACO Jim Grant, Tom Folkesson, Ted Walther and my genealogist wife Lisa Garn.

I had the opportunity to speak with family members and learn more about these men. David Ouellet's family thought he had been pretty much forgotten and had no idea the SWCC Class Honor Man received the Ouellet Award, and he was highly regarded in NSW.

Speaking with Peter Bulkeley, he was telling me about his father, John D., and mother, Alice Wood Bulkeley, spying on the Japanese and shooting Japanese officers with air guns in pre-WW2 China. Peter said his sister Jaon Bulkeley Stade had written a book about their mother, Alice, and sent me a copy: ***Twelve Handkerchiefs, the Global Journey of Alice Wood Bulkeley Through World War II and the Twentieth Century with an American Naval Hero.***



Twelve Handkerchiefs, by Joan Bulkeley Stade

Twelve Handkerchiefs provides a lot more personal detail as well as illuminates a different side to Admiral Bulkeley than William Beruer's excellent *Sea Wolf: the Daring Exploits of Navy Ledged John D. Bulkeley*.

The book also chronicles Alice Wood Bulkeley's astonishing life as a Eurasian in Swatow, China, where her father was an English harbor pilot. She would go to a boarding school and college in Hong Kong (very unusual in those days) and later was a secretary before meeting then Ensign Bulkeley attending a social function on a British gunboat. She would go on to have many adventures with her husband and their families, some heroic and some heartbreaking, which really humanizes Admiral Bulkeley.

As I mentioned in my article "The Mounier Brueillac Network: A Cautionary Tale" (concluded in the March 2024 issue of *On Target*), my colleague Platon Alexiades and his colleagues had a book in the works on clandestine operations out of Malta.

The book, ***Clandestine Operations from Malta and the French Resistance Connection in Tunisia*** was recently published by Wise Owl in Malta.

There is much more on the Mounier network including photographs of the operatives and a lot more detail on their operations. Platon and his colleagues interviewed relatives of the network as well as did a tremendous amount of research.

There are other **TOP SECRET** operations as well from French patriot pilots defecting from Vichy North Africa then flying missions with the RAF to Norwegians flying German float planes on clandestine operations (there is a reason why that Heinkel 115 on the cover is all black) as many other submarine, surface and commando operations. It is very well written with lots of photos and some maps.

Unfortunately, Wise Owl only accepts wire transfers and in my experience these are always difficult. However, Wise Owl did send me a bonus Mines Over Malta by Frederick Galea. There are quite a number of very interesting titles from Wise Owl, and these books are well done.



Cover of *Clandestine Operations from Malta and the French Resistance Connection in Tunisia* by Frederick Galea



Decades ago, I bought my first copy of Marco Spertini and Erminio Bagnasco's outstanding "I Mezzi D'Assalto Della Xa Flottiglia MAS 1940-1945."

This is the best book on WW1 and WW2 Italian assault craft: mini-sub (wet and dry), combat swimmers, explosive motorboats and mini-motor torpedo boats (MTBs), it has detail on operations as well as excellent scale drawings. This book was way ahead of its time as far as design and layout.

The only major issue was the book is in Italian, so I (well Google Translate) had to translate many portions into English which took days and days.

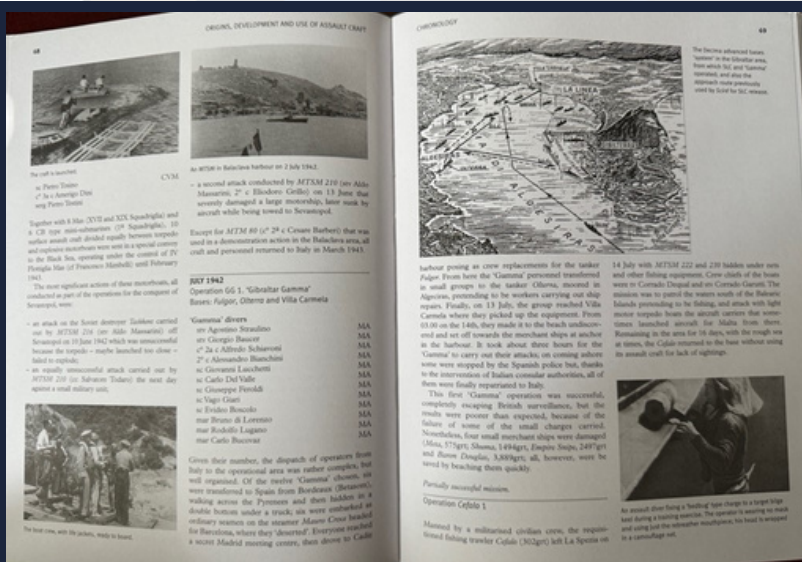


The late Erminio Bagnasco, Italy's premier Naval Historian and his son Stefano, an Italian Naval reservist and historian in his own right, have been exceptional colleagues over the years, you'll see some of their work in WARBOATS as well as articles in On Target they graciously allowed us to use.

I told Stefano that this book would be great in English. Last year, he said they were working on an English edition, but to keep it quiet. Then a few weeks ago, Naval Special Warfare Historian Dr. Pedro Loureiro said he just ordered Italian Assault Craft 1940-1945 from Amazon and sent me a link. I told him about the earlier book and promptly ordered one myself.

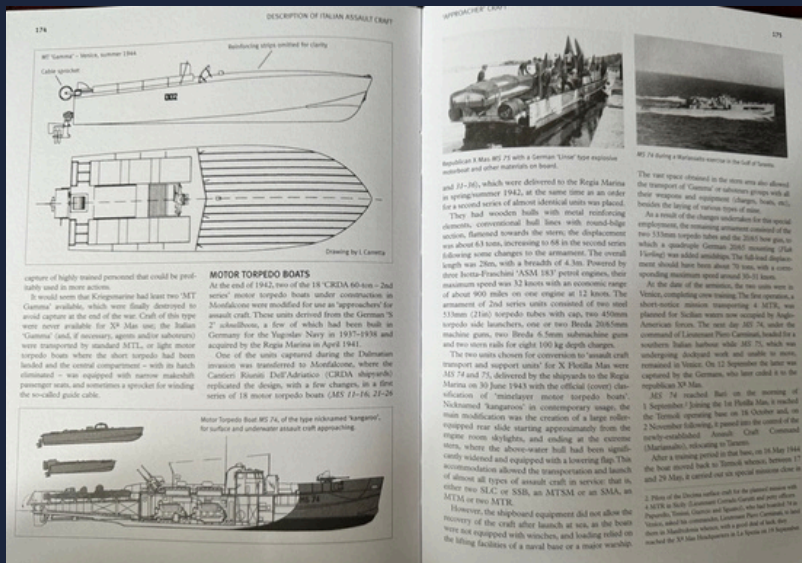
This is not merely a translation of the earlier editions I Mezzi D'Assalto Della Xa Flottiglia MAS 1940-1945 (you'll note the one I have pictured is a third edition) but updated with new photos, drawings and information.

From what I have read so far, the English text is smooth-as opposed to my rough translation and there is a lot of new information.



Some sample pages:
Note the use of MTBs to transport miniature submarines, explosive motor boats and mini-motor torpedo boats, just like we used MK-Vs to transport SDVs decades later.

The book focuses on WW1 and WW2 Italian special operations with special assault craft but also has information on German operations (the Germans relied heavily on Italian equipment, training and experience for their own WW2 programs) as well as contemporary British and Japanese efforts.



CCCA MOBILE REPAIR TEAM 2 IN MOBILE GETS PTF 26 ON HER WAY

BY PHIL GARN

In the Spring of this year, David Rawls excitedly announced at a CCCA meeting that PTF 26, one of the last remaining Vietnam era Naval Special Warfare (NSW) combat craft, would be coming through Mobile, Alabama, on her way to Golconda, Illinois.

We thought this would be an excellent opportunity for CCCA Region 2 members to show the flag and pass along some NSW history as well as perhaps get SBT 22, USMI, Jerry Strahan and the World War 2 Museum from the Gulf Coast involved.

We thought this would be an excellent opportunity for CCCA Region 2 members to show the flag and pass along some NSW history as well as perhaps get SBT 22, USMI, Jerry Strahan and the World War 2 Museum from the Gulf Coast involved. Little did David realize he would become the project manager for some major rehabilitation, recruiting boat guys and businesses all along the Gulf Coast in the heat of the Mississippi summer to establish Mobile Repair Team 2* helping get one of the last of the “Green Dragons” on her way.

PTF Background

In the 1950s and early 1960s, the South Vietnamese Intelligence Service and CIA began clandestine maritime operations out of Da Nang against North Vietnam using sailing junks. They soon realized even with motorization and additional armament, they would need bigger, faster, more heavily armed and longer ranged craft. The CIA arranged to purchase two Norwegian Tjeld (Nasty) Class motor torpedo boats through the US Navy. In the interim due to the disastrous Bay of Bigs operation, President Kennedy convened a panel to study this failed operation.

General Maxwell Taylor presented the panel’s findings which included that if a covert operation rose beyond a certain number of assigned military personnel, then operational control should pass to the Department of Defense (DOD). Though still a relative backwater, Vietnam had passed that personnel threshold and Operation Switchback would transfer control of covert operations from the CIA to the DOD in this case Military Assistance Command Vietnam Special Operations Group (MACVSOG) later Studies and Observations Group also MACVSOG.



*Mobile Repair Team One (MRT 1) was established in Subic Bay, Philippines to repair the PTFs operating in Vietnam and later in the United States.

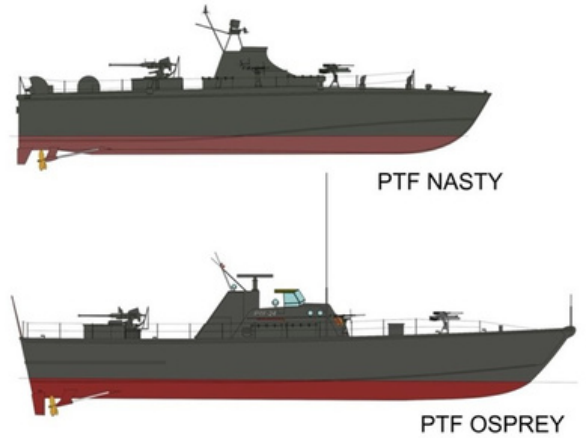
In the Spring of this year, David Rawls excitedly announced at a CCCA meeting that PTF 26, one of the last remaining Vietnam era Naval Special Warfare (NSW) combat craft, would be coming through Mobile, Alabama, on her way to Golconda, Illinois. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara accelerated the acquisition of the Norwegian MTBs as well as refurbished two experimental PTs 810 and 811 and ordered more Norwegian built Nasty Class PTFs.

The acquisition, conversion and refurbishment took longer than expected, so in the interim, the CIA began using oil service boats built by Stewart Seacraft (later Swiftships) for clandestine operations against North Vietnam. McNamara would see these in 1963 at Da Nang and order more militarized boats be procured for the Navy becoming the Patrol Craft Fast (PCF). The PTFs arrived over a year later and became Mobile Support Team 1 (MST 1) attached to MACVSOG's Naval Advisory Detachment (NAD.) McNamara wanted to send a message to the North Vietnamese to stop infiltration operations, so increased NAD offensive operations against North Vietnam.

PTF Operations were linked to the Tonkin Gulf Incident, which greatly widened the war. In August 1964 US support went from advisory and covert to conventional and overt.

More PTFs were ordered from Norway and license-built copies (PTF-17 to 22) were constructed by John Trumpy & Sons in Annapolis, MD. Later, four new PTFs of the larger 95 foot Osprey Class would be built by Stewart Seacraft in Berwick, Louisiana. The Ospreys (PTFs 23, 24, 25 and 26) went to Vietnam in 1968 but returned to the US in 1969.

The remaining PTFs would be brought back to the US and along with small combatants from BSU 1, 2 and Naval Inshore Operations Training Command would form the basis of the Coastal River Squadrons which would become Special Boat Squadrons with Special Boat Units. Much later the SBUs would become today's Special Boat Teams. The remaining PTFs would gradually be deaccessioned, and PTF 26 would be purchased by the Boys & Girls Club in San Francisco, California.



Scale color profiles of the Nasty and Osprey Class PTFs.

All Vietnam boats were painted green and known as "Green Dragons."

Profiles courtesy of Al Ross



A rare shot of Ospreys in Da Nang by Alan Sandoval in 1968.

PTF 26's Post Navy Carrier

The Boys & Girls Club would use PTF 26 as a training vessel for youth seamanship. She would later be purchased by the Liberty Maritime Museum in Sacramento. PTF 26 would be renamed Liberty and continue training youngsters.

Liberty would be the first training ship with an all-female crew and be a fixture at regattas and events from 1998 to 2020 on the West Coast. She would then be purchased by the Maritime Pastoral Training Foundation (MPTF) of Golconda, Illinois who planned to use her as a training vessel for Sea Scouts, Sea Cadets, NJROTC in the Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky Tennessee, Ohio, Missouri and Michigan areas as well as a mobile command center for US Coast Guard disaster operations in the region.

Trials Along the Way

Due to COVID restrictions and mechanical issues PTF 26's sailing was delayed but she finally got underway down the California Coast to Ensenada, Mexico. There, Mexican authorities seized her deactivated 40mm gun and mount before she was allowed to be hoisted aboard the BBC Michigan as deck cargo. The Michigan sailed through the Panama Canal and took PTF 26 to Florida where she was docked in Palm Beach then sailed around to Fort Meyers. There was also some issue with the Demopolis Lock upriver, so her sailing was delayed further. Her next stop was the Gulf Quest National Maritime Museum in Mobile, Alabama before heading on inland waterways to Golconda.

Greeted by CCCA

In anticipation of her arrival in Mobile, CCCA Historian Jim Gray and I sent out some background materials we had prepared with PTF experts Dan Withers (CCCA member and WARBOATS editor) and Jan Torre Nielsen (Norwegian PTF officer and military author) to Region 2 Manager Bruce Lemmert, Paul "Doc" Niehaus and David, all SBU-22 veterans. Bruce and Doc had the CCCA banners previously sent out by Mike Sigsworth.

It was looking like a great opportunity. The media had been notified and I also asked the team on the Gulf Coast to take pictures and send me briefs for our newsletter.

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A Lot of TLC

David reported PTF26 was not in good shape and would need a lot of repairs, just to get on her way up the river, much less restoring her to original condition.

Trying to see what needed to be done, David lost his cell phone in her bilges, so Doc and Bruce assisted with coms. David and Doc reported she had been heavily modified over the years not only with more efficient but lower powered Detroit Diesels to replace the big Napier Deltics but additional berthing spaces, etc.

Doc described a foam like brown colored shaving cream coming out of the engine. They also began compiling a list of needed repairs. David and Doc got things going repair wise working 12 hour days.

The Region 2 fellows talked with CCCA HQ about possible funding options. We thought Pat Shima might be able to help with a Go-Fund-Me effort, because CCCA can't do Go-Fund-Me operations. Pat also recommended an old teammate from SBU-12, David "Boss Man" Rhodes who was a topnotch engineer, worked for USMI and was living nearby in De Funiak Springs, Florida. Boss Man was soon on his way to Mobile to help out.



From the left:

Toby, retired Commodore & Destroyer Squadron commander, Garron Fischmann, retired Navy JAG Captain & self-proclaimed pirate, Captain Kempton Baldrige, retired Navy Chaplain, Matt Komara, retired Navy XO, Mike Klapka (an original PTF-26 crewman in the 70's as the engineman), & Lewis Beans, plumber extraordinaire.



US Coast Guard and military veterans checks out PTF 26 at Gulf Quest Museum during her extended stay in Mobile.

The Gulf Quest National Maritime Museum was soon becoming Mobile Support Team 2 in Mobile, Alabama. Doc drafted his genius electrician son in law, Malcolm Huston III, to work on PTF 26's electricals. Malcolm was so eager to help that he had to be pulled out from below decks on hot days. Doc said it was HOT, well into the 90s, "but it was a wet heat."



CCCA Region 2 men, Paul "Doc" Niehaus, David Rawls and Bruce Lemmert taking a break from repairs.

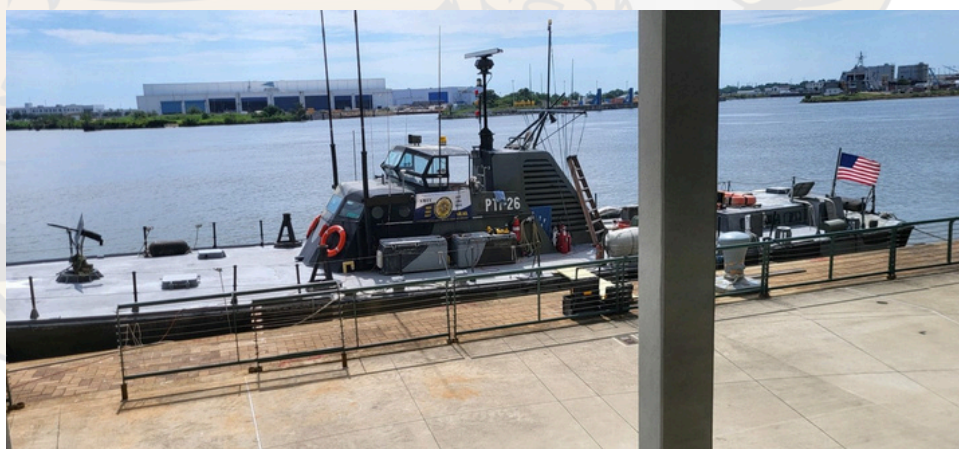


Paul "Doc" Niehaus below decks in the engine room of PTF 26. Don't cringe BSU-1 to SWCC vets, lots of work to do, mostly field fixes.

In addition to making repairs himself at his shop, Costal Police Supply company, Inc., and marshalling volunteers, David solicited donations from local businesses particularly: Fyr-Fyter Sales and Service who inspected, hydrottested, recharged and tagged all of the boats fire extinguishers and there were a lot of them (her Navy fire suppression systems had been deactivated long ago.) Mobile Ship Chandlery (Mac and Jeff McGovern) provided lessons on life rafts and sold David the proper nav lights and bulbs. David had scheduled a boatyard haul out, but that was cancelled the day before PTF 26 was to move as priorities shifted to heat exchangers. Lowes and Home Depot had most everything else David and his team needed to McGyver through the adventure.

PTF Leaves for Golconda

On July 27, PTF 26 left Mobile with much fanfare and news coverage for her journey upriver to Golconda. This would not have been possible without David Rawls and the many volunteers of Mobile Repair Team 2 in Mobile.



CCCA RETURNS TO SANTA MONICA PIER 360 BEACH FESTIVAL

BY PHIL GARN

As you may recall, the Santa Monica Pier 360 Beach Festival is a two-day annual all age event that celebrates the best of beach life including ocean sports competitions, live music, interactive games and offers a peek into iconic Southern California beach history and culture in June. CCCA was invited back to support and participate in the festival that draws tens of thousands of people from California and all over the world to share some of our Naval Special Warfare history.

We got the go ahead from President Joe Zemlin, Treasurer Mike Sigsworth and Secretary Warren Johnson and brought copies of “WARBOATS, 55 Years of Naval Special Warfare Combatant Craft History” to display as well as more CCCA stickers, brochures and even the new blue CCCA tumblers. Like last year, OSS Historian Erick Simmel and I began setting up with the assistance of event organizer, Jim Harris and his Santa Monica Pier crew, well in advance with some new displays. We were a little smarter this year not rigging the video monitor in the dark on Friday night, but early the next morning before the exhibits started. Tai Eubank, grandson of World War 2 OSS operative swimmer operative and Santa Monica Lifeguard and Erick updated the looping video that we would be showing.



Our OSS pop-up museum shared a tent on the Santa Monica Pier with the Los Angeles Lifeguards. Note the CCCA books, brochures, stickers, golf markers aka CCCA poker chips and the brand-new Navy blue CCCA tumblers.



Naval Special Warfare Command Historian Dr. Pedro Loureiro and CCCA Historian Phil Garn at the OSS Pop-up Museum on the Santa Monica Pier.

CCCA RETURNS TO SANTA MONICA PIER 360 BEACH FESTIVAL

BY PHIL GARN

We had lots of visitors as the pier was packed both days. Jim Harris estimated that we had over 25,000 people on Saturday alone. We also had some special guests including Santa Monica Mayor Phil Brock, Lisa Peterson daughter of legendary waterman Preston “Pete” Peterson who tested top secret rebreathers with Jack Taylor in the Santa Monica Bay in chilly December 1942, and pro beach volleyball legend Sinjin Smith, who was right next door at the beach volley ball exhibit.



Left to right former Lifeguards, Gary Hild and Scott Hubble, Phil Garn, Santa Monica Mayor Phil Brock and OSS historian Erick Simmel Santa Monica is where NSW started.

Of course some old comrades, Dr. Pedro Loureiro NSW Command Historian both days and teammate Chief Harold Dunnigan, a Frogman from Korea to Desert Storm and the only living SEAL to have known Jack Taylor, Bob Butt, Jim Eubank, Fred Wadley and a number of the other Santa Monica Bay watermen who served in the OSS Maritime Unit.

The CCCA stickers were a big hit, surprisingly more so with the adults, and a number of folks picked up CCCA brochures and golf ball markers. Quite a few people learned more about the OSS and its links with the Santa Monica Bay as well as SWCCs and SEALs who continue to protect our country. It all started right here in Santa Monica.

The Video

You may recall, that before the Second World War silent film star Marion Davies and Publisher William Randolph Hearst introduced then Colonel William “Wild Bill” Donovan to Naval reservists, yachtsmen, adventurers and part time spies, Hollywood film director then Lieutenant John Ford and Lieutenant (jg) Dr. Jack Taylor in Santa Monica.

Jack Taylor became Donovan’s daughter’s orthodontist and would conduct a demonstration with area watermen of locally produced Churchill Swim Fins, Sea-Net dive masks and paddle boards for the spymaster.



Some of the crowds at the Pier 360 event on the Santa Monica Pier.

Donovan believed there might be a role for these watermen and their equipment in the coming war.

Ford and Taylor also introduced Donovan to their British screen writer friend and First World War naval raider, Herbert G. A. Woolley. Woolley was recalled into Royal Navy service in 1939 and later helped his mentor Admiral Roger Keyes form British Combined Operations better known as the Commandos. Woolley later returned to the US to brief President Roosevelt on Combined Operations, helped the US military with amphibious operations and helped General Donovan found the OSS Maritime Unit (MU) with Taylor and a young civilian medical student, Christian Lambertsen inventor of the revolutionary Lambertsen Amphibious Respiratory Unit scuba rebreather.

The MU would go on to conduct clandestine ferrying operations in the Aegean (Lt Jack Taylor*), Adriatic, Ligurian Coast, English Channel (with then Lieutenant Commander John D. Bulkeley's OSS PT Squadron 2), North Sea and coast of Burma as well as operational swimmers (the first frogmen) who would operate in the European Theater of Operations, Burma Coast and put the "Frog" in the Underwater Demolition Teams with their masks, fins and superior watermanship taking back the Pacific from the Japanese.



Left to right: LT Jack Taylor in the Mediterranean. Flying the neutral Turkish flag on a clandestine resupply mission into Nazi occupied Greece on a caique (non-standard maritime), release from Mauthausen death camp. Taylor kept one of his Navy shoulder boards as well as a hidden diary of atrocities.

*Jack Taylor not only helped Woolley and Lambertsen set up the OSS Maritime Unit but would be the first in action conducting clandestine ferrying missions in the fascist occupied Aegean. He would also assist Hans Tofte and John Hamilton (aka Sterling Hayden) supplying the Yugoslav partisans, then parachute into Austria with an agent team. Though captured and tortured by the Gestapo, Taylor would survive the Mauthausen death camp and testify against Nazi leadership at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials. After the war, he returned to his Santa Monica dental practice and founded another dental office in El Centro, California. Jack Taylor is considered the prototype for today's SWCC and SEAL operators, as well as a true quiet professional.

CLASS 130 GRADUATES 14 SWCCS FACING PEER AND NEAR PEER COMPETITION

BY PHIL GARN



Note Class 130 men's faces digitized for operational and personal security reasons.

Photo courtesy of Class 130.

Master Chief Martinez emphasized even though SWCCs are known for a higher work ethic than our other SOF (Special Operations Force) brothers*, we need to go further, 100% at all times remembering the lessons in blood on the wall behind us [Vietnam Unit Memorial Monument], leveraging technology and embracing change.

He told the class and the audience, "Bring yourself out of your comfort zones," seek out mentors, pass on knowledge and "prepare for WAR." Master Chief Martinez also reminded the 14 new SWCCs of Class 130 to stay in the shadows and be humble, retain your sense of humor - laugh adversity off and keep going, balance family and work-they sacrifice for you make sacrifices for them. Finally, the Master Chief said, "You can always adjust your course and get back on track."

There have been some of changes in NSW Basic Training Command since Class 129's graduation in May, Commander John Garrett replaced Captain Tim Sulick as Commanding Officer and CWO3 Alex Palmer is relieving CWO 4 Dan Taylor; though most would not notice these changes at the graduation which was seamless and as professional as ever.

Commander Garret's presentation continued the tradition of telling stories about each of the students, though his delivery was so fast neither Chuck Chaldekas could keep up. There was one about the students impersonating the instructors after the Tour, but I did not recall how that went over, everyone was laughing now. Commander Garrett also recognized this was CWO4 Dan Taylor's last class as the SWCC Training Officer to which Class 130 piped up with a very hearty "**HOOYAH! Warrant Taylor.**"

"We are now facing peer and near peer competitors, Russia and China, it is a time of no GPS and no radio," said Master Chief Joaquin Martinez Command Master Chief at the Naval Special Warfare Center and principal speaker at SWCC Class 130's graduation. This echoed Vice Admiral Kieth David's comments about potential peer and near peer opponents earlier this year as well as not being able to get enough SWCCs or boats for the new challenges of the "Maritime Century."

*This ethic begins at home and is amplified at the School House. There the students are not only responsible for themselves and their equipment as well as teammates during physically demanding and dangerous training but also responsible for their craft which are very expensive and complex platforms operating at night on unpredictable seas. They are getting as much underway time as some WW2 pilots and aircrews while in the Boat Teams they are expanding their planning, operational, logistics and administration skills executing multi-boat and/or vehicle deployments around the world. Working with high-speed international counterparts, they are continually challenged and enhance diplomacy through their professionalism.

CWO4 Taylor has been a staunch ally. CWO3 Marks never missed a beat as Master of Ceremonies even without Command Master Chief Tony Palmer who was away, though CWO4 Taylor was in the audience as well as CWO5 Gary Luna and the Commodore, Captain Burke.

Men from Class 30 including Sandy Sands, Michael Ortiz, Justin Wilson, Dan Danielson, Josh Bunte and Kevin Murphy (Class 30's proctor) came to wish their new teammates fair winds and following seas. More classes are brining their class proctors with them to their centenary class graduations. If you have a centenary class coming up check in with CCCA and the School House.

Leadership also acknowledged CCCA donating the WARBOAT warfare insignias for the graduation as well as men of VUMMF for maintaining the monument and giving tours and SEAL Family Foundation for providing the lunch.

The History Lesson

Traditionally, volunteers from CCCA and the VUMMF teach a history lesson the afternoon before the graduation. We have also found the students appreciate being at the Vietnam Unit Memorial especially on and inside the boats, which pays big dividends at graduation. As you might expect, the information does not just flow one way. For Class 130, Chuck Chaldekas (SEAL Team 1, SBU 12 XO, CCCA founding member and current president of the VUMMF), Steve Watson (Vietnam PBR sailor and one of Chuck's righthand men at VUMMF) and I taught the lesson on combatant craft history. This led into conversations with NSW leadership the next day. Yes, the armed services are having problems with recruiting and retention. NSW is in a little better condition than the rest of the Fleet, but they too are having troubles getting their numbers. Remember both SWCC and SEAL programs still have very high attrition rates. As a most recent example Class 130 started with 25 candidates and only ten completed the Tour. That is a 60% attrition rate and typical where they lose 50% to 75%.



Class 130 receiving their WARBOATs.



The last few Class 130 men getting their WARBOATs. Note the VUMMF and the venerable CCB in the background.

There is a very strong tie to their NSW and Vietnam heritage. Also having been on the boats, the new graduates encourage their friends and families to take tours, provided by Chuck, Steve and other men of the VUMMF.

One of the issues from the recruiting focus groups are this modern generation is very afraid of death and think they are going to die if they go into the armed services. That is such a contrast to NSW, which traditionally has very few training deaths and combat KIAs though very high injury rates particularly for SWCCs. As Master Martinez said stay healthy, get fixed and get back in the fight! We need to be on the look out for good candidates for SWCC, SEAL and NSW techs and get them pointed tin the right direction.

We also learned a few things from the students:

- The students now go to a special SERE school, not like in the old days where we had to compete for slots with the rest of the Fleet. They also know there will be no monkey business like taking over the camp or hitting the instructors, because there will be a significant “beat down”* from the School House cadre as well as SERE cadre.
- We were talking about the times before closed looping where great performers were sent back to the Fleet in the then Boat Units and you could retire after twenty years as a third class. The students from the Fleet told us that due to retention issues the up or out policy had been waived, so you could still retire as a third class.

*“Beat down” is the colloquial term for corrective action in NSW training, usually involving physical exertions while being wet and perhaps sandy as well, maybe with the hawsers for SWCCs. These corrective actions reinforce teaching points and mistakes are usually not made again.



Students were so busy with last minute graduation details and immersed in the history lesson, we forgot to take a photo with Chuck, Steve and me in their cammies. I got a quick one as they staged between the PCF and CCB right before they lined up to march out.

Hooyah Class 130 you earned it.

IN MEMORIUM

BROTHERHOOD BE OUR BOND, THE SEAS, AND RIVERS WE
DID TRAVEL.

FRIENDSHIPS FORGED THROUGH CHALLENGING TIMES; FEW
WILL COMPREHEND.

REUNIONS WE WILL CHERISH AS IF TIME HAS NO
MEANING.

YOUR SPIRIT, LAUGHTER, AND FRIENDSHIPS WILL ENDURE.

WE HONOR YOU AND REMEMBER.
GOD, SPEED, AND FAST BOATS

JOSEPH ZEMLIN | CCCA PRESIDENT

GMG1 Blas Mojica
BSU-1

MMC Pete Snow
SBU-11

HMC Roger Evans
SBU-26

BMC Erwin Brunner
SBU-11

Timothy F. Joyce
SBU-12 & SBU-22