

MILITARY SEA SERVICES MUSEUM, INC.



SEA SERVICES SCUTTLEBUTT

April 2017



John Cecil

A message from the President

Greetings,

A great start to the year. We had 354 visitors during the first three months of the year. However, Sebring's winter guests are starting to depart for the far North and we are starting to see the decline in visitors that usually occurs during the summer months. This time of the year is an excellent time for groups of school children, scouts, etc. to visit the Museum. There is no charge for these groups of children and their teachers/leaders. Also, at all times, children 18 years and under and active duty military are admitted free.

The new shed mentioned in the February "Scuttlebutt" has been insulated by Museum volunteers and an electrician installed electricity. We also purchased the window air conditioner and are in the process of obtaining estimates to dry wall the shed. (During the installation of the fiber glass insulation, it was determined that installing dry wall would be a job better left to a contractor more experienced and much younger than our volunteers.)

Once again the Board of Directors expresses its sincere thank you to Bill Fincke and Gordon White our snow-birds who volunteer to stand duty at the Museum while in Sebring. Both Bill and Gordon are life members of the Museum. This was the seventh winter for Bill from Bethlehem, PA, and the third winter for Gordon from Mount Sydney, VA. The Board also thanks Fred Carino, Mike Borders, and John and Janet Harbaugh from Sebring. Fred travels quite a bit and sometimes works away from Sebring. But when he is in town, Fred stands duty in the Museum. Mike is kept busy as President of the local Chapter of MOAA (the Military Officers Association of America). When he can make time, Mike stands duty at the Museum. John is a MOAA member. He and Janet stay busy with activities in Sebring and travel some when they can, they stand duty as a couple in the Museum. They did outstanding on their first watch on 20 April. Bill, Gordon, Fred, Mike, and the Harbaughs provide welcome relief to me, Gene Kissner, and Bud Farmer who stand duty at the Museum year around. With few permanent local residents volunteering to stand duty at the Museum, the Board is concerned about burn-out, so we thank God for people like Bill, Gordon, Fred, Mike, and John and Janet. Of course, it goes without saying, that the Board is very thankful for our year around volunteers.

John

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Hours of Operation
Open: Wednesday through Saturday
Noon to 4:00 p.m.
Web site: <http://milseasvcmuseum.org/>

Welcome Aboard New Members

On 4 March 2017, Peter and Linda Smullen became annual members of the Museum. Peter is a U.S. Coast Guard Veteran. Linda works in education. Peter and Linda live in Kissimmee, FL.

On 7 April 2017, Charles May and Marybeth Dvorak became annual members of the Museum. Chuck is an Insurance Agent & Counselor "Tri-County." Marybeth is retired from Mall Maintenance. Chuck and Marybeth live in Sebring, FL

On 7 April 2017, Frank E. Uthe became an annual member of the Museum. Frank is a World War II U. S. Navy Veteran and a retired business owner. Frank lives in Sebring, FL

On 17 April 2017, Joseph P. McCreaty became an annual member of the Museum. Joseph is a U. S. Navy Veteran. Joseph works as an Operating Engineer. He lives in Lake Placid, FL.

A very hearty welcome aboard to our newest members! A sincere thank you to all our members for their continued support. Without member support, the Museum would not be able to pay its bills and would have to close the doors.

Memoriam

We are saddened to hear of the passing on 10 July 2016 of Stanley A. Walker, age 88, from Sebring, Florida. Stan is a U.S. Navy veteran of the Submarine Service, and a longtime member of the Museum.

We are also saddened by the passing on 13 April 2017 of COL Roy P. Whitton, USAF (Ret), age 94, from Lake Placid, Florida. Colonel Whitton, a veteran of the Army Air Corp/U.S. Air Force, served during World War II and the Korean conflict. Colonel Whitton was a long time member of the Museum. He was also a member of the Military Officers Association of America and served as President of the local chapter for several years.

Fair winds and following seas Stan and Roy. Rest in Peace! Our thoughts and prayers are with the Walker and Whitton families.

Stories Wanted

We would like to publish in the Scuttlebutt short stories of Navy, Marine, and Coast Guard personal experiences, and/or short stories of sea services historical events. We are sure there are plenty of stories out there that would be of interest to Scuttlebutt readers. Please email your stories to navmargrd@gmail.com or mail to the Museum.

Mailed Copies

If you are receiving the Scuttlebutt via U.S. Postal Service, we do not have a current email address for you. If you have email, please forward your email address to navmargrd@gmail.com. You will receive the Scuttlebutt in a more timely manner and you will save the Museum postage and printing costs.

Part 2 of a Mustang's Memories From Years Past

(Hope you saved Part 1 in the Feb Scuttlebutt. If not you can pull it up in the Feb Scuttlebutt on our website, <http://milseasvcmuseum.org/>).

I remained in the squadron for three more months until January, 1965. That's when the Aviation Indoc Course for student aviators began at Schools Command on the other end of the base. During my 3 1/2 years in the squadron I'd been a main element in the maintenance department, managed duty sections of all the troops, was quality control supervisor, ran the night shift and engine repair shop, flew as aircrew making test flights, and knew everyone in the squadron. During that time, I had gone from First Class to Chief, and finally to Ensign. It was strange becoming an officer and remaining in the same activity for relationships and friendships forged over time had, of necessity, to change. When changing suits, the rules changed and the camaraderie and repartee of the daily interface was no longer allowed on the surface, for the military is a jealous mistress. The day to day situation required that proper respect and separation be maintained and it was difficult for both sides to walk the narrow line. Hell, these were my buddies. Over the years we drank a lot of beer, partied hard, shared lives and patio cook-outs, and worked long hours as a team. These were people I had lived and partied with, and though a couple of hard cases did not honor the situation and forced the issue, most folks respected the rules and reacted appropriately. Most of your fellows were proud of you and for you, and wished you their best.

In the meantime, I moved upstairs to the Admin Department and became a Training weenie involved in developing a promotion syllabus for the troops. This was an effort to help everyone prepare for professional development but in fact it was a means to keep me busy and get me off the hanger deck. I essentially worked alone on a PQS type thing long before we ever heard the term, but it was similar. No matter, it got me off the lower deck and gave me time to become a little acquainted with the change of decor, attitudes, and mode of operation. In essence, it allowed me to acclimate in that new environment.

My lady and I both had bit of angst about all this. We talked of the future, of our expectations, and certainly of our inner concerns about the new social crap that we'd be facing. We were a bit apprehensive, but that was in the early 'sixties. I bought a copy of the Naval Officer's Guide, a bible for new officers which dictated the traditional views and requirements. Things like "Calls made and returned," calling card requirements dictating how the cards were to be laid out for both of us, how many were to be left at the host's house, where to put them, and all sorts of mundane silly stuff. If you did it wrong, it could be a faux pas which, depending on your CO, could possibly be reflected in your fitness report, etc, etc, ad nauseam. It was the old traditional naval etiquette stuff from the thirties and forties, most of which died out after WWII and the Korean War. Some remained, and I would be required to make a call on the CO within a certain time limit, and he was obligated to return the call at my house. All that sort of junk...Fortunately, times were changing as the Vietnam war was starting to grow and build up, so most of that was put aside or reduced to a reasonable situation. Since I was in the squadron for three months after commissioning, I did have to make a call on the Captain and did so at a Friday night party he threw which satisfied all "Calls made and Returned." Two days later, he called us on Sunday morning to return my call but begged off, thank God, for it was a typical Sunday morning with three kids trying to get ready for church. Those things were a holdover from the decorum and traditions of the old navy which didn't exist anymore. In the old days almost every officer was "Canoe-U" trained and kept those traditions alive.

Part 2 of a Mustang's Memories From Years Past-continued

There's a silly story here, and I'll relate it. I'd been sitting in Subic Bay for over two weeks waiting for transportation out to the ship, but the problem was that no one knew where it was, when it was to return, or anything else about it. One typical night while sitting at the "O" Club bar sucking on a San Miguel, one of the Marines said that Iwo Jima was sitting off the coast of Chu Lai, fifty miles south of DaNang. They had flown over it that morning and further, they were going back to DaNang the next day in their C-130 and had plenty of room, if I wanted to go. Next morning I went to the base personnel office, picked up my records, checked out and headed for Vietnam and the war zone. They proceeded to tell me that I was crazy, to just wait another couple weeks or so, and the ship would be back in Subic but if I was sure of what this all meant, I could go. So this dumb-ass good 'ole country boy with no smarts hitchhiked a ride to Vietnam, spent the night in an 8-man army tent, drank several beers while watching a movie in DaNang as mortar fire walked across the base, and hitched another ride next day to Chu Lai. As the Marine H-34 lifted off and left the field perimeter, the door gunner began firing his M60 machine gun, sweeping across the landscape as we climbed to a higher altitude. A few minutes later when touching down on the sand-blown tarmac miles south on the coast, he showed me two bullet holes in the aft fuselage which hit us as we left the base area at DaNang.

When touching down at Chu Lai, it was a strange scene to these eyes for the base was under construction; large black bladder fuel tanks connected by big hoses sprawled across the sandy ridges, troops were placing Marston matting on the ground making a makeshift runway Navy Seabee bulldozers were leveling the area for a runway, and they were installing a short-field catapult and arresting system. In a short time, the field became operational and a squadron of A4 Skyhawks were flying in and out. I grabbed my gear and walked to the beach area only to find an ongoing beer party. The men were in swim suits, running and playing in the waters of the South China Sea with frequent breaks for a cold beer. I met the ship's Supply Officer who handed me a cold Budweiser, and said "Welcome Aboard." The Iwo was steaming about 500 yards offshore and I soon caught a utility boat out to what was to be home for the next two years. In retrospect, there were not too many folks who voluntarily hitched a ride into a war zone with no idea of where one might be going or under what circumstances you may find, especially when you didn't have to...Some might call it crazy!

The day after reporting aboard Iwo Jima in Chu Lai, Vietnam, the XO informed me the Captain had invited me to his cabin for dinner, a well-established custom for all new officers. It was a welcoming get-acquainted session, where he gave a run down on the ship's mission, found out who you were, something of your background, and sort of took his measure of the man. It was a pleasant experience, though trying as a brand new officer. CAPT Scott was a fine gentleman and very quickly earned my respect and admiration, as had all the men on the ship. After deployments, there was usually a get-together which filled those protocol requirements. In time most of that had wound down to a common-sense factor and once learning how the system worked, it was never an issue. Most events were covered by a party at the boss' house which filled all requirements and sufficed for a call made and returned. The tone is set by the CO and the XO usually makes the requirements known. I have no idea what goes on over these past thirty odd years since I retired, but some of it could be and was fun...

Part 2 of a Mustang's Memories From Years Past-continued

There was some apprehension about this officer stuff at first but you soon realized that doing a job is doing a job, period. No matter if you wear a dixie cup, are a Chief or what, you do the job and things take care of themselves. I'd been around long enough to know how things work, who carried the big stick, and who took care of you. You learned to take care of your superiors, learned how to do your boss's job, and life shined for you. We all knew to take care of our people without getting so close that you couldn't see the trees anymore. You give it three-hundred percent and that's all it takes...and we all had the same feelings when moving into the Goat Locker after making Chief. Most of the concern was in our minds and that frequently grew bigger than reality. And, as I advised by grandson when he made CWO a couple of years ago, just keep your ears and eyes open and things will fall in place. It's a piece of cake, pal. Your kids have a great role model, Dad, and keep that in mind as you serve the United States Navy through the coming years!

Retrospection...

There was never a thought about staying in the Navy past my initial enlistment but time and circumstance change everything. In the end, from an untested youth of seventeen to wizened old man of forty-seven, all my days were spent in the United States Navy. I look back on those years with great pride, satisfaction, and fulfillment in a life of service, adventure, dedication, and purpose. It led me to find that magnificent bride in the western levees of Tennessee, to discover and find the basics of life, and to define the value of living and contributing to the whole. Like most sailors, it took me to many nations around the world; to Cuba, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Iceland, Spain, France, Italy, England, Scotland, Malta, Greece, Lebanon, Israel, Egypt, Morocco, South Africa, Brazil, Ceylon, Singapore, the Philippines, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Japan, and many more long forgotten. I know well some of the thoughts some folks have concerning military people but my response to them might be, "Stand a mid-watch in the grandness of the great ocean, count the stars and heavenly bodies overhead, and suck on that third cup of strong coffee as your 90,000-ton ship glides across the earth's surface, that historical highway of mankind." The oceans, the distances, the cultures, the people, the purpose, and the mission helped define who and what you were. I traveled the world several times, enjoying the magic and mysteries of strange people and new places, and filled my soul with auras of continuing differences in life. Yet, in all of it, from the daily dangers of playing with airplanes, the multiple hazards of flight deck operations on big-deck carriers, the loneliness of being gone from family so very long with some occasional unfriendly folks shooting at you, and the loss of close friends and shipmates, it was all valuable. The daily life had meaning, the long range view of the future was always positive, and there was an unmistakable sense of doing worthwhile things. Few other paths offer that to our nation's young people who may be caught up in a morass of economic inequity, perhaps a broken family and some less than caring parents, and the cultural mores our times place them in. It is difficult to break out of that sort of environment but it is possible and even quite plausible. Once a young man or woman enters the very structured life of the military, many find for the first time that they are able, capable, and quite good at learning and assuming an early leadership role. Core values are basic parts of the life, for you know where you are, what the goal is, and are given the talents and means to meet those goals, both personally and professionally.

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Navy Mustangs

What is a Mustang?

In the Sea Services (Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard), a Mustang is an Officer who was promoted up from the ranks of enlisted personnel through an in-service procurement program, with no interruption of his/her active duty status. It is also understood that the Mustang Officer was a career Sailor or Marine, and normally wears one or more Good Conduct Medals. He or she came up "from the deck plates."

Thus, the Navy Mustang is either a Limited Duty Officer (LDO), a Chief Warrant Officer (CWO), commissioned through a fleet accession program, or the Enlisted Commissioning Program. In the past, there were other programs leading to a commission, such as NESEP or the Naval Flight Officer program, but these have long since gone away.

LDOs and CWOs are a unique part of the Naval service. They serve in a role like no other commissioned officer can. LDOs and CWOs are permanent enlisted people who are commissioned as Officers, and have been called to serve from their senior enlisted ranks as technical managers. They have the necessary experience and technical background to perform tasks that call for "officer" rank and protocol to carry out, but require the enlisted heart and experience to get accomplished. Currently, the Navy and Marines are the only branches of the armed forces to have such programs.

The term "Mustang" is a relatively modern term, originating either just prior to, or during World War II. It is believed to be a Sea Service term, although other service officers are beginning to be described as Mustangs. It literally refers to the mustang horse, which is a wild animal and therefore not a thoroughbred. A mustang, after being captured, can be tamed and saddle broken but it always has a bit of wild streak, and can periodically revert to its old ways unexpectedly and therefore the owner needs to keep an eye on it at all times. By the same token, however, since a mustang was formerly a wild and free animal, it may well be smarter, more capable and have better survival instincts than thoroughbreds. The mustang can take care of itself when things get tough, thriving on rough treatment, while the thoroughbred, having been pampered its whole life, cannot. You can easily see the parallel between horses and Naval Officers. The term "Mustang" is used in a complimentary sense most of the time.

Another source for the term "Mustang" comes from the Naval Academy where the term "Mustang" was first used as an insult to the "lower class" of prior-enlisted officers. They saw themselves as thoroughbreds and, meaning to insult, called our honored predecessors "Mustangs" because we were less than pure. Like "Yankee," the slur stuck and soon became a badge of honor.

An LDO or CWO is an officer by Presidential Appointment, in appearance and in the minds of the top brass, and an enlisted technician at heart. When you find a ship or command with a relatively large cadre of junior officers, there's no question about ability and effectiveness for the Mustang normally stands head and shoulders above the ROTC officers in capacity and capability.

The creed of the LDO/CWO, upon receiving their commission is:

"I did it the hard way...I earned it."

I am a Mustang!

Thank you, CDR Eugene "Doc" Savage, USN (Ret), for sharing your life as a Navy Mustang.

Did You Know That

General Jimmy Doolittle served in two theatres during WWII? Most people know about his historic and daring raid over Tokyo in April 1942 shortly after the Japanese sneak attack on Pearl Harbor, 7 Dec 1941. For his leadership in that raid, Jimmy Doolittle was awarded the Medal of Honor and promoted two grades. But, few people know that Jimmy Doolittle also played an important role in defeating Nazi Germany. As Commander of the Eighth Army Air Force, Jimmy Doolittle changed the policy requiring escorting fighters to remain with the bombers at all times. With this change in tactic, escorting P-51 Mustangs began strafing German airfields and transports while returning to base. The strafing attacks delivered devastating blows to Nazi Germany's infrastructure and secured air supremacy for Allied Air Forces over Europe.

Quotable Quotes

It is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor.

---George Washington

The general principles on which the fathers achieved independence were the general principles of Christianity. I will avow that I then believed, and now believe, that those general principles of Christianity are as eternal and immutable as the existence and attributes of God.

---John Adams

Truth will ultimately prevail where there is pains taken to bring it to light.

---George Washington

If we are to guard against ignorance and remain free, it is the responsibility of every American to be informed. ---Thomas Jefferson

God who gave us life gave us liberty. Can the liberties of a nation be secure when we have removed a conviction that these liberties are the gift of God? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, that his justice cannot sleep forever.

---Thomas Jefferson

Happy
Mother's
Day!



Tales of an Asia Sailor



USS Thresher
by davisg022



I was stationed at NAS Lemoore out of Recruit Training. I was there for a one year special tour of shore duty. Lemoore was a brand new station. They shipped a number of “boots” there to do the mess cooking and coop cleaning duties. I spent nine of the twelve months in the galley as a mess cook and as a Commissary man striker. During that time I was assigned to the same berthing cubicle (four bunks and locker per cubicle) with a CS3, later CS2 Ronald A. Muise.

“Moose” helped me learn the rudiments of the CS rate and his advice was very helpful in my battle to become a cook striker. We became good friends. He was attached to one of the training squadrons and was transferring the same month that I was. We both filled out our “dream sheets” on the same day. I requested ships home ported on the west coast and in Hawaii. Moose applied for Submarine School. We received our orders the same day. His to Groton Connecticut for Sub School and mine to the USS Vesuvius, an ammunition ship home ported in Port Chicago, CA.

I checked out of the base the same day he checked out of his squadron. A friend of his gave us a ride to the bus station in Hanford. We shook hands and vowed to keep in touch. He was going on leave to his home in New York and I was going to San Francisco.

We traded a couple of letters over the next few months. I still have the last postcard he sent. It read: “Dave, I graduated Sub School. Getting a few days leave before I report to my first boat. I will be coming back here to report to the USS Thresher.” The postcard was dated march 27, 1963.

Tales of an Asia Sailor- cont'd

On 9 April 1963 *Thresher*, got underway from Portsmouth at 8 am and rendezvoused with the submarine rescue ship [Skylark](#) at 11 am to begin its initial post-overhaul dive trials. That afternoon *Thresher* conducted an initial trim dive test, surfaced and then performed a second dive to half test depth. It remained submerged overnight and re-established underwater communications with *Skylark* at 6:30 am on the 10th to commence deep-dive trials. Following standard practice, *Thresher* slowly dived deeper as it traveled in circles under *Skylark* – to remain within communications distance – pausing every additional 100 feet of depth to check the integrity of all systems. As *Thresher* neared her test depth, *Skylark* received garbled communications over [underwater telephone](#) indicating "... minor difficulties, have positive up-angle, attempting to blow", and then a final even more garbled message that included the number "900". [When *Skylark* received no further communication, surface observers gradually realized *Thresher* had sunk. By mid-afternoon a total of 15 Navy ships were enroute to the search area. At 6:30 pm, the Commander Submarine Force Atlantic sent word to Portsmouth Naval Shipyard to begin notifying next-of-kin that *Thresher* was "missing." By morning the next day all hope of finding *Thresher* was abandoned and at 10:30 am the Chief of Naval Operations went before the press corps at the Pentagon to announce that the submarine was lost with all hands.

Today marks the fifty fourth anniversary of *Thresher*'s loss. MY flag flies at half staff in honor of the USS *Thresher* and my friend and shipmate Ronald A (Moose) Muise.

[davisg022](#) | April 10, 2017

Contributed by CDR Eugene "Doc" Savage, USN (Ret)

Anniversaries

1 April 1893. U.S. Navy Chief Petty Officer rating established. Happy 124th birthday Chiefs. Throughout the years, the Chiefs have been known at the backbone of the U.S. Navy.

15 April 1898. Spanish-American War began.

11 April 1900. Navy buys submarine Holland VI. - - - U.S. Navy Submarine Force born.

6 April 1917. U.S. enters World War I.

21 April 1918 German fighter ace Manfred von Richthofen, "The Red Baron," is shot down and killed at age 25 over Vaux-sur-Somme, France. He had 80 confirmed kills.

10 April 1942. Bataan Death March begins.

18 April 1942. The Doolittle Raiders, using B-25 bombers launched from the USS *Hornet* (CV-8) to strike Tokyo.

18 April 1943. U.S. Army P-38 fighter planes shoot down the airplane carrying Japanese Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto over Bougainville Island in the Solomon Islands..

Anniversaries- Cont'd

7 April 1945. U.S. Navy carrier based planes sink the Japanese battleship Yamato as it heads for Okinawa.

30 April 1945. Adolf Hitler and Eva Braun commit suicide in a Berlin bunker as Soviet troops advance through the city.

3 April 1949. NATO founded.

10 April 1963. USS THRESHER (SSN 593) the worlds most advanced attack submarine of the time was lost in the Gulf of Maine during a post overhaul test dive. The entire 129 member crew was lost in the world's worst submarine disaster ever. This tragedy led directly to significant changes in the Navy's submarine safety programs that have kept the U.S. Navy submarines safe ever since.

15 April 1969. U.S. Navy EC-121 belonging to VQ-1 was shot down by two North Korean MIG-17s while on a reconnaissance mission over the Sea of Japan. The EC-121 crashed 90 nautical miles off the North Korean coast. All 31 Americans aboard were killed. The U.S. did not retaliate against North Korea other than a naval demonstration in the Sea of Japan a few days later and resumption of reconnaissance flights.

30 April 1975. Saigon fell to North Vietnamese troops. One day after the largest helicopter evacuation in history where 7000 Americans and South Vietnamese were evacuated.

12 April 1981. First U.S. space shuttle launched.

11 April 1991. Persian Gulf War official cease fire.

19 April 1995. Oklahoma City federal building bombed in a domestic terrorist attack by Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols. The attack killed 168 people and injured 680 others. McVeigh was executed 11 June 2001, Nichols was sentenced to life in prison.

1 May 1898. Admiral Dewey's squadron destroys Spanish squadron in Manila Bay.

4-8 May 1942. Battle of the Coral Sea. U.S. Navy repels the Japanese. This helps save Australia and blocks the Japanese juggernaut in the Pacific.

13 May 1908 Navy Nurse Corps established.

7 May 1941. Bob Hope's first USO show, March Field Air Base, California.

7 May 1945. Unconditional surrender of all German forces signed.

8 May 1945. Victory in Europe (V-E Day) is declared.

10 May 1925. U.S. Coast Guard Band Established.

2 May 2011. U.S. Navy SEALs kill Al-Qaeda terrorist leader Osama bin Laden in his compound in Bilal Town, Abbottabad, Pakistan. Seal Team Six, the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne) "Night Stalkers," and CIA's Special Activities Division participated in the raid on Bin Laden's compound.

15 May 2017. Peace Officers Memorial Day observed.

20 May 2017. Armed Forces Day celebrated.

29 May 2017. Memorial Day observed.