

MILITARY SEA SERVICES MUSEUM, INC.



SEA SERVICES SCUTTLEBUTT

October 2012

**A message from the President**



**Tony LaMorte**

Greetings

We are back from Virginia for our granddaughter's promotion to Chief Petty Officer, which was one heck of a ceremony. All together there were about 250 personnel that made Chief. And that was just at Little Creek Naval Base. The ceremony took place at the Chapel and it was wall to wall Chiefs. I may be in Sebring, but I'm still up in the clouds.

So here we are again in the mix of holidays; Halloween this month, Thanksgiving next and finally the big one of the year, Christmas. This time of the year is so much fun, so much food to eat, and so much family to enjoy.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and myself, I wish to extend to you a warm and heartfelt holiday season. Happy Halloween and don't forget to dress warmly. Happy Thanksgiving to you all. Count your blessings big and small; near and far. I know I will.

Last but far from least; "Don't forget to vote."

God Bless America!

*Tony*



**New Chief Career Counselor  
Shannun LaMorte**

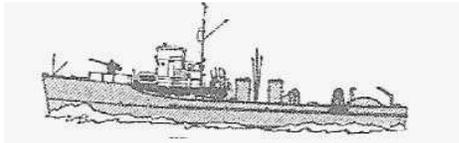
**Military Sea Services Museum**  
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E-Mail: [navmargrd@gmail.com](mailto:navmargrd@gmail.com)

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

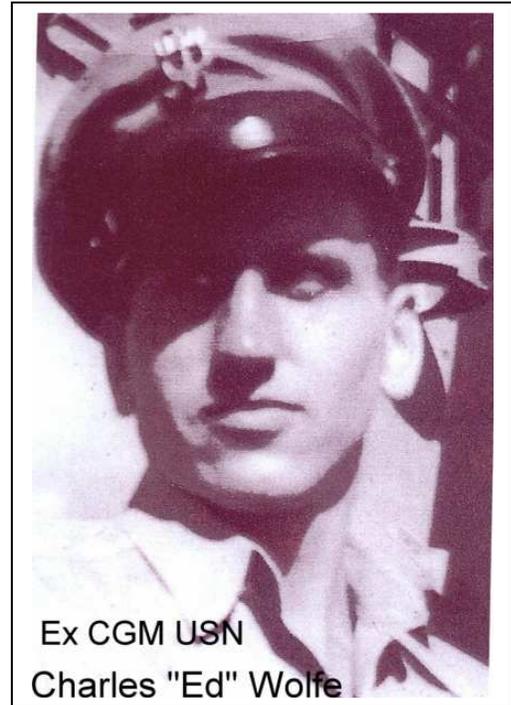
## YMS-288 Revisited

Charles "Ed" Wolfe ex CGM USN

The following is a continuation of a small gaggle of sea stories on 288 that I share with anyone who will listen. So there's no reason that you should be spared. By the way, newly commissioned YMS-288 was a 136' wood hull minesweeper, one of 481 of that class that served the Navy in World War II—but you knew that anyway.

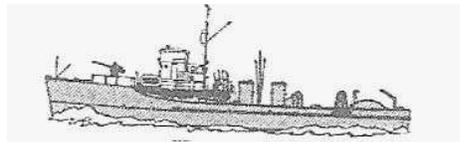


At the time of the incident I am about to relate, 288 was tied up at San Diego. Noticing that there seemed to be some inactivity on the part of some of the crew and ever conscious of my proper duties as a Gunner's Mate 2c, I decided to take matters in hand. I rounded up four crew members and herded them into the wheelhouse for a lecture and demonstration. The subject matter at hand would be small arms handling and above all Firearm Safety.



The piece chosen for purposes of demonstration was the old reliable .45 caliber. As I waved the piece about I repeated the salient points stressing that one should never point the weapon at anything you do not want to shoot. I removed the clip and showed them an empty clip, then put the clip back in the gun and pointed it up at the overhead of the wheelhouse and gently squeezed the trigger.

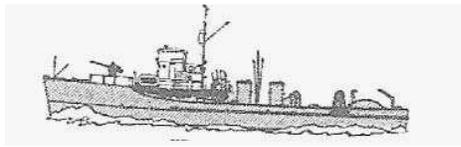
Unfortunately there was a round in the chamber and the resulting explosion reverberated like a cannon in the confined area of the wheelhouse. The resulting hole in the overhead was nothing compared to the astonished reaction of my audience. I had of course, forgotten to check the chamber to see if the darn thing was loaded. I now advised my students that class was finished for the day and that they should always remember that firearms should not be handled in the way I had just demonstrated.



Our complement for the guns was a GM 2c and a GM 3c. I was alone with the guns when a third class came aboard for duty. At that time I was a GM 2c with two years duty and this guy was a GM 3c with 10 years. I gave him the 20 mm guns and I kept small arms and the 3"50. We both took care of the K guns port and starboard.

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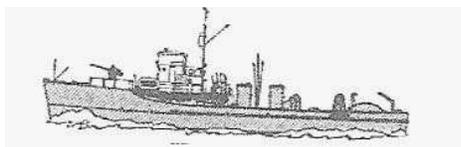
**This sailor never spoke to me no matter what the occasion. I would give him an order and he would do it, never acknowledging me at all. We were sweeping one day and I remember the sweep gear was down on the port side. Suddenly for no reason he grabbed a line that was feeding out and held the line in both hands for no reason at all. When he finally let go the palms of his hands were a bloody mass. He was immediately transferred off the 288 and I never did see him again. Besides not liking me, I don't think he wanted to go to sea on a minesweeper, especially a small one such as a 136'YMS.**



**Serving on a small minesweeper involves occasionally performing tasks not usually associated with a man's rating. One day, one of the crew approached me and said he had a headache and suggested that I might twist his neck and perhaps this would ease the pain. I responded that while I had my doubts, I would give it a try. I put my left hand under his chin, my right hand I placed on top of his head and told him to just relax and let his head kind of dangle. I had his head kind of floating between my two hands and I suddenly twisted his head to the left and jerked it up and unbelievably his headache was gone. He thanked me and that was that.**

**Actually that was really the beginning of a modest chiropractic career. From time to time I found myself adjusting a few sailors' neck problems, at least for the next three months.**

**My daughter Lila is 38 years of age and has her own chiropractic establishment at 99 Wall Street, New York City. I tried to show her how I did my treatments in the Navy but she would not permit me to demonstrate my technique. I said "listen you are a chiropractor, not by accident, because I did that before you were a twinkle in my eye".**



**Now is the time to bring this to a close. The type begins to blur but the memories linger on. Memories of the greatest mine warfare fleet ever created, memories of shipmates on YMS - 288 and those on *Terror* (CM-5) who never survived Okinawa. Nearly 800 minesweepers and minelayers have, with but one exception, been consigned to the breakers. I hope that sharing some memories with an old chief may have revived some memories of your own**

**Editor's Note. Thank You Ed Wolfe for your great sea stories. Your stories received lots of compliments and prompted Vice Admiral J.A. Sagerholm, USN (Ret) to send us some memories of his YMS experiences. We will publish the Admiral's stories in the December Scuttlebutt.**

## Welcome Aboard New Members

In September 2012, Shannun LaMorte and her partner Robert Lewis became life members of the Museum. Shannun is a Chief Petty Officer in the U.S. Navy, Robert is a Staff Sergeant in the National Guard and a civilian employee of the U.S. Navy. Shannun is in the process of transferring from Naval Network Warfare Command to Carrier Air Group Eight aboard the USS GEORGE H.W. BUSH (CVN 77). Shannun and Robert reside in Virginia Beach, VA.

In October 2012, Katrinka (Tinka) and Garth Howe became our newest members. Tinka is a retired educator and Garth is retired from Hotel Management. Tinka and Garth reside 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.

## Anniversaries

2012 is the bicentennial year of the War of 1812, Americas "Second War of Independence." This war with Great Britain lasted nearly three years, 18 June 1812 to mid February 1815.

12 October 2012 was the 12th anniversary of the terrorist attack on the USS COLE (DDG 67) at Aden, Yemen. Seventeen U.S. sailors were killed and 37 were injured.

21 October 2012 is the 215th anniversary of the launching of the USS CONSTITUTION in 1797 at Boston, MA. USS CONSTITUTION defended sea lanes against threats from 1797 to 1855. She is most famous for capturing numerous merchant ships and defeating five British warships during the War of 1812. USS CONSTITUTION acquired the nickname "Old Ironsides" during the battle with one of the British warships, HMS GUERRIERE, when an American sailor reportedly shouted "Huzzah! Her sides are made of iron" when shots from HMS GUERRIERE failed to penetrate. USS CONSTITUTION is the world's oldest commissioned warship afloat. Today, her primary mission is to promote understanding of the Navy's role in war and peace through education outreach, historic demonstrations, and active participation in public events.



## Happy Birthday

Happy 237th Birthday to the U.S. Navy. The Navy was established on 13 October 1775.

Happy 237th Birthday to the U.S. Marine Corps. The Marine Corps was established on 10 November 1775.

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

*“I’m Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines. I feed my horse on corn and beans and sport young ladies in their teens”.*

Remember that silly ditty from childhood days? Of course you do!

Now I am pondering that statement. No, I'm not concerned with Captain Jinks but rather the matter of Horse Marines. Now, as you well know, I have certainly seen my share of Marines and to be perfectly honest, I have never seen a Marine on a horse or even one that looked like he could ride a horse. So in the interest of fairness I decided to investigate a bit further and clarify the Horse Marine business.

Now, I know that your first thought concerns the Brits. It does seem that every military man in the Royal Armed Forces has a trusty steed stabled nearby. Even the Queen seems to review her troops on a regular basis, all the while mounted on horseback. Here we must note that Her Majesty, seemingly occupied in this manner for hours, is not simply astride the beast but sitting side saddle. This certainly is proof that she is not only a lady of character but one with a sturdy constitution as well as an extraordinary sense of balance. Quite remarkable for an octo-uh- lady of well advanced years. But enough of that we are not concerned with over there but rather our own US Marines.

With just a bit of checking I determined that while stories of Marines on horseback go way back, the glory days of the US Horse Marines transpired in the first half of the 20th Century. It seems the first expanded use of the US Marines on horseback occurred during the” Banana Wars” in the 1920s and 30s. Marines saw action in Cuba, Nicaragua, Mexico as well as the Dominican Republic and Panama.

While engaging in Central American combat may have had appeal to some, the real colorful action was in China. Here, some 1400 Marines of the 4<sup>th</sup> Marines guarded American and International interests from Beijing to Shanghai. Mounted on shaggy Mongolian ponies the Marines patrolled an extensive area and did it well from 1909 to 1938. This marked the end of the mounted Marines while the Japanese invasion of China and the onset of World War II marked the end of the China Marines and the end of the US Naval presence in China until 1945.

In conclusion, dear Editor, I suppose this is just a reminder that the story of the U.S. Navy and US Marine Corps in China in the first half of the 20th century is a story, while seldom told, is an integral part of American naval history.

Allie Ryan  
Gatherer of Fine Rocks



## The Perfect Gift

Once again the Museum is offering a solution for what may be a dilemma for some during the holiday season.

What about a Museum membership or an engraved brick for our Memory Walk. Remember this gift has zero calories, is heart healthy, and is tax deductible! One size fits all.

You can download a membership or brick application from our website <http://milseasvcmuseum.org/> . Or, for assistance please call the Museum at (863)385-0992, Tony LaMorte (863)382-2578, or Gene Kissner (863)382-4047.

The Museum will send a membership certificate and a card to the new member to let them know who gave the gift. We will also send a card to whomever the brick is gifted to let them know that a brick will be placed in the Memory Walk and who purchased the gift. For those living outside the Sebring area, we will mail photos of the brick after installed.



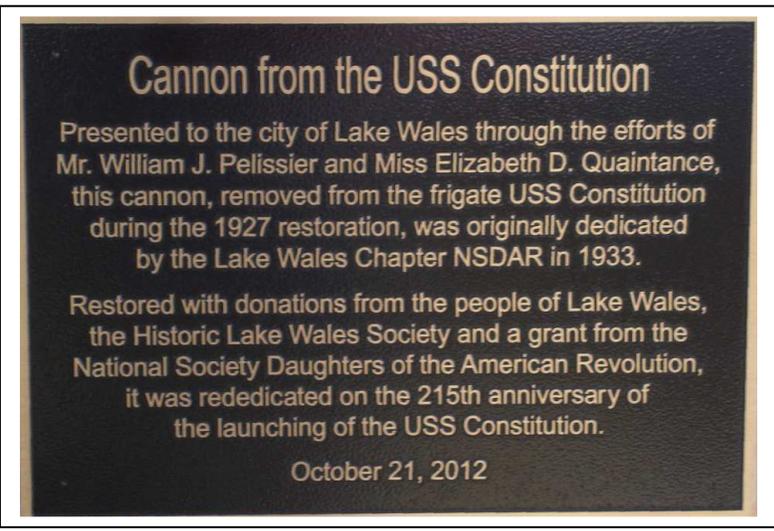
### Re-dedication of Cannon from USS CONSTITUTION

On 21 October 2012, Museum members John Cecil and Gene and Sybil Kissner attended the ceremony for the re-dedication of the Lake Wales Cannon from the USS CONSTITUTION.

During the 1927-1930 restoration of the USS CONSTITUTION her cannons, which had been placed on the ship during the 1906-1907 restoration, were removed and presented to organizations or cities for public display. Lake Wales, Florida, received one of the cannons through the efforts of several people and organizations. The cannon was dedicated on Memorial Day, May 30, 1933 at a ceremony organized by the Lake Wales Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). Recently, the National Society DAR granted a historic preservation grant to the Lake Wales Chapter DAR and the Historic Lake Wales Society. Through this grant and money, time, and services donated by many people, the cannon was meticulously restored and placed in the Dr. John Pitt Tomlinson Memorial Garden next to the Lake Wales Depot Museum. The well attended, patriotic re-dedication ceremony was organized by the Lake Wales Chapter DAR and the Historic Lake Wales Society.



John Cecil- Museum V.P.



### Quotable Quotes

"Only Government can take perfectly good paper, cover it with perfectly good ink and make the combination worthless."

Milton Friedman

"The soldier, above all other people, prays for peace, for he must suffer and bear the deepest wounds and scars of war."

General Douglas MacArthur

### Binnacle List

The Binnacle List contains reports of our members who are under the weather and could use the prayers of those of us that pray. They might also like a bit of cheering up.

No members reported.

If you are aware of any of our members who should be included in the Binnacle List, please send us an email at [navmargrd@gmail.com](mailto:navmargrd@gmail.com) or mail the information to the Museum at 1402 Roseland Ave., Sebring, FL 33870.

### **Mail Recipients of Scuttlebutt**

If you are receiving the Scuttlebutt by mail and have an email address, please provide us your email address. You will not only save the Museum postage, but you will be able to see any color photos in color.

Unfortunately, the Museum cannot afford the printer ink required to print 40 some copies of the Scuttlebutt for mailing. We copy them on our copy machine which only reproduces in black and white. You can send your email address to any of the following: [navmargrd@gmail.com](mailto:navmargrd@gmail.com) , [marieryan@cox.net](mailto:marieryan@cox.net) , [Lamorte@vistanet.net](mailto:Lamorte@vistanet.net) , or [genekissner@yahoo.com](mailto:genekissner@yahoo.com) . Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

*The current issue of Scuttlebutt will be posted on line at: <http://milseasvmuseum.org/1scuttlebutt@att.net>*