

Swift Current

July 2015

Contact: elbowgolf65@gmail.com for corrections.



Saturday Morning at The Navy Yard With a Couple Hundred Shipmates

After an early start from the hotel all SIX bus loads of Swifties and families arrived at the Navy Yard. We were treated to an All-Star welcome in spite of a DOD-wide security alert that had us threading the buses past armored and armed DOD guards. Capt. Todd Creekman and many others from the Yard were on hand on what was their normal day off to make sure the visit went well. We got to see PCF-1 and assess first hand the work needed to get her back into shape, inspected the brand new "reader rail" which was added by the Naval Historical Foundation. The boat is now located just outside the Navy Yard on the side of the public walkway that meanders along the Potomac—pretty nice spot!

President's Corner—

The 2015 SBSA Reunion in Washington, DC highlights. By all accounts, all who attended had a great time. The "Memorial" tour on Saturday was special. It included a visit PCF-1 at the Washington Navy Yard, then our "Still on Patrol" memorial service held at the U S Navy Memorial in downtown Washington, and finally a stop at the memorials on the Mall. The Hospitality Suite was the center of activity thanks to the spirited management of DC Current. The well attended Banquet featured speaker CDR (ret) and former POW Paul Galanti. During the Banquet the following awards were presented: The Ralph Singleton Patriot Award: to "The Dirty Boat Guys" who refurbished PCF-816 in San Diego-Bob Bolger, R. A. Bond, Terry Boone, David Bradley, Bob Brown, Virgil Erwin, Don Farrell, David Hansen, Rich Holleran, Duncan Hunter, Fred Kaufhold, Gary Liedorff, Tom Matyn, M.C.Pugh, Richard O'Mara, Tony Snesko, James Steffes, Dewy Williams, Stanley Williams-The Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr. Humanitarian Award: to Joe Lavoie. Two special awards for extraordinary dedication to supporting Swift Boat Sailors were given to: Friar Tuck (Bob Brant), and Mary Lynn Hoffmann. *See everyone on San Diego, 2017!*

Mike Solhaug



Several Swifties were able to get down to the Mall to see the **Commemorative Air Force** fly-over honoring the fallen for Memorial Day. Fortunately, Joe LaVoie was there with his camera! Anywhere here you see an aircraft, it's probably one of Joe's!



After the Navy Yard visit, the group was on to the Navy Memorial in downtown DC—if you haven't seen it, you need to do so! In spite of sweltering temperatures and the world-famous Washington humidity, the observance here was nothing short of breath-taking. Our Honor Crew's names were read to the ringing of a large ship's bell, our Memorial Day wreath was laid near the Lonesome Sailor, and foot traffic stopped to the playing of Taps as we closed.



The last stop on the Memorial Tour was at **The Wall**. Because of the heat and humidity—and an unusually large group of non-sweating teen-agers in the area—we paid our respects and headed back to the hotel for some R&R (at our age that usually calls for either cold beer or oxygen!).

Saturday evening was spent “on your own” as old friends and old crews re-united over dinner and all the other things that old sailors do in the Nation’s Capitol. There were unsubstantiated reports that one group “closed” a nearby seafood house. What happens in DC....





Follow-up from Raul Herrera on an item of interest-

Several folks requested information on how to purchase the **SATX SBSA Banner**. Here's the skinny on how to order one from the maker:

3'x6' Swift Boat Sailors Association Banner

\$108.00 Cost

10.80 Less 10% Military Discount

9.99 S & H

\$107.19

The print company owner is a personal friend of mine and a Vietnam Veteran helicopter pilot. His name is Don Roberts and he can be contacted at (281) 757-3224. He lives in the Houston/Galveston vicinity. They take major credit cards. His email address is don@printonanything.com

**MOVING? NEW EMAIL ADDRESS?
DODGING CREDITORS?**

Please let us know: sbsatreasurer13@gmail.com

Other than the slight "leaning" problem, the Sheraton was terrific and a great value as well. By shifting the banquet to Sunday evening instead of the usual Saturday schedule, the reunion planners were able to save each Swiftie a nice little bit of money. "Hand Salute" to Mike Solhaug and his planners!

***Better Living Through Chemistry—
the gift that keeps on giving!***

From Don Blankenship comes the following bit of summertime cheer—please read and heed.

----Original Message----

From: Don Blankenship

Sent: Saturday, April 11, 2015 1:18 PM

To:

Subject: ***Swifts Spraying Chemicals?***

While looking at a list of the tests the government operated in the sixties and seventies, I ran across a report of a test conducted off the coast of San Diego in 1969 which involved Swift boats in decimating some chemicals. That's a part of Swift boat history that I wasn't aware of. If you look at another email and the links in it regarding Project 112 and Shad you will be amazed at all the crap dumped into the air by the government. [REDACTED] Don

The Department of Defense (DoD) is providing this information, at the request of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), to assist the VA in providing healthcare services to qualified veterans and to assist veterans in establishing service connection for disability claims. The Deployment Health Support Directorate (DHSD) collected this information from multiple sources and requested that the military services declassify it to allow its public distribution. The VA accepts this information provided on location, dates, units and/or ships, and substances involved in this exercise, which DHSD extracted from classified DoD records, and will provide it to individual veterans as necessary, but the VA cannot verify its accuracy. Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) Deployment Health Support Directorate FACT SHEET For more information [\(703\) 578 - 8500](tel:(703)578-8500), [\(800\) 497 - 6261](tel:(800)497-6261)

Version 10-09-2002 / Deseret Test Center / Project SHAD / DTC Test 69-31

Project Shipboard Hazard and Defense (SHAD) was part of the joint service chemical and biological warfare test program conducted during the 1960s. Project SHAD encompassed tests designed to identify US warships' vulnerabilities to attacks with chemical or biological warfare agents and to develop procedures to respond to such attacks while maintaining a war-fighting capability. The primary purpose of DTC Test 69-31 was to evaluate the continued effectiveness of the Shipboard Toxicological Operational Protection System (STOPS) of the USS Herbert J. Thomas (DD-833). The ship was challenged by five chemical vapor attacks using methylacetacetate, a simulant for Sarin nerve agent. An additional 11 attacks were conducted in which the **USS Herbert J. Thomas** was enveloped with the nonpathogenic biological aerosol, Bacillus globigii (BG). A MARS generator mounted on the bow of the ship was used to disseminate methylacetacetate; **PCF "swift boats"** were used to disseminate BG during simulated biological warfare agent attacks. DTC Test 69-31 trials were conducted in the Pacific Ocean, off the coast of San Diego, California, during the period August 19 - September 4, 1968.

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DTC TEST 69-31 / 2-2-2-2 / Test Name DTC Test 69-31

Testing Organization US Army Deseret Test Center Test Dates August 19 - September 4, 1968
Test Location Testing was conducted in the Pacific Ocean, off the coast of San Diego, California
Test Operations To test the Shipboard Toxicological Operational Protective System (STOPS) using methylacetacetate, a simulant for Sarin nerve agent (GB) and Bacillus glo

bigii, a nonpathogenic biological aerosol. Participating Services US Navy, Deseret Test Center personnel Units and Ships Involved USS Herbert J. Thomas(DD-833) Dissemination Procedures MARS generator to disseminate MAAPCF "swift boats" for BG dissemination Agents, Simulants, Tracers Bacillus globigii (BG) Methylacetacetate Ancillary Testing Not identified Decontamination Not identified Potential Health Risks Associated with Agents, Simulants, Tracers Bacillus globigii(BG) Now considered to be Bacillus subtilis var. niger, a close relative of Bacillus subtilis, this bacterial species was used as a simulant and considered harmless to healthy individuals. Bacillus subtilis and similar Bacillusspecies are common in the environment, and are uncommon causes of disease. They have been associated with acute infections of the ear, meninges (brain lining), urinary tract, lung, heart valve, bloodstream, and other body sites, but always or nearly always in individuals whose health has already been compromised. Long-term or late- The Department of Defense (DoD) is providing this information, at the request of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), to assist the VA in providing healthcare services to qualified veterans and to assist veterans in establishing service connection for disability claims. The Deployment Health Support Directorate (DHSD) collected this information from multiple sources and requested that the military services declassify it to allow its public distribution. The VA accepts this information provided on location, dates, units and/or ships, and substances involved in this exercise, which DHSD extracted from classified DoD records, and will provide it to individual veterans as necessary, but the VA cannot verify its accuracy.

DTC TEST 69-31 / 3-3-3-3

[...] developing health effects would be very unlikely (except perhaps as a complication of the acute infection).

(Sources: Tuazon CU, Other Bacillus Species (chap. 197), in Principles and Practice of Infectious Diseases, 5th edition (vol. 2), ed., Mandell GL, Bennett JE, Dolin R, Churchill Livingstone, Phila-delphia, 2000, p. 2220-6; US Environmental Protection Agency, Bacillus subtilis Final Risk Assessment, February 1997, available at <http://www.epa.gov> as of October 4, 2002.) Methylacetacetate (MAA) This compound was used as a simulant. While acute exposure has been associated with irritation of skin, eyes, respiratory tract, and digestive tract, there is little or no evidence of long-term or late-developing health effects and it is not known to cause cancer in animal testing.

(Sources: NLM TOXNET, Methyl acetacetate 105-45-3, HSDB Human Health Effects and Animal Toxicity Studies, available at <http://tox-net.nlm.nih.gov>. <http://hazard.com/msds/tox/f/q4/> q936.html [as of January 28, 2002] and http://www.hbcollage/chem/lab/organic/gilbert3e/resources/studenttools/dl/e_mmsds.pdf)

About the mail situation with the Swift Current---

In one of those odd government practices that any good US Navy man could easily understand, you've probably noticed that you're getting a mailed copy of the Swift Current even though we've asked you over the years for your email so we could avoid the postage charges. Well....the Postal Service makes it less expensive to send a copy to each of our members than it was to just send a first class piece of mail to each person who needs a hard copy. Makes perfect sense, right?

Don't FORGET! Dues notices are now being sent by email and are only sent via USPS if individually requested by a member. Contact Don Hammer if you're in doubt about whether or not you are paid up, please.

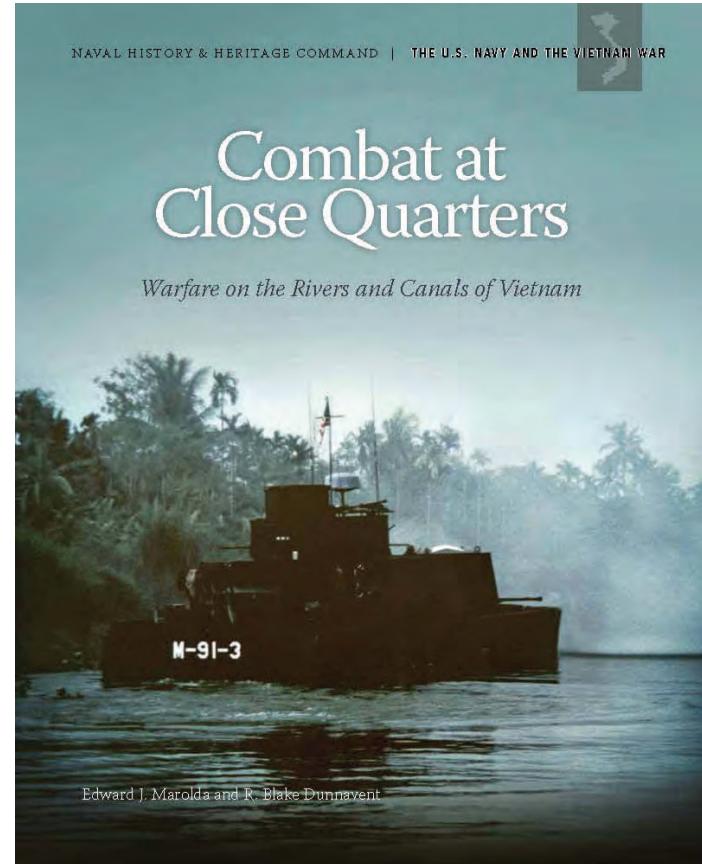
sbsatreasurer13@gmail.com

Combat At Close Quarters

[Original Email] When we attended the Swift Boat Sailors Association reunion last month we toured The Naval History Museum in Wash. DC. During the tour they provide us with the information to download this PDF which has just been published. If you like a paperback addition is available through the Government Printing office.

Thought you might find this interesting, especially those of us who lived it. Some of you may already have it.

Regards, Jim [Will] jimwill444@yahoo.com



Editor's Note: I have the original that was given to me as a representative of the SBSA. The digital copy is lots easier to deal with!
Thanks Jim!

LOOK WHAT WE FOUND!

<http://www.amazon.com/Revell-Germany-Swift-Plastic-Model/dp/BOOBECI9WQ>



The SBSA has no financial interest in this product nor does it or any of its D&O or appointees benefit in any way from the sale of it under any circumstances.

A Really Brief History of PCF-816/P-24



Virg Erwin, Dave Wallace, & LCDR Phil Webb (Asst. Naval Attaché to Malta) on P-24 for the first time in 40 years. May 14, 2010.



Virg & Dave fearlessly driving P-24 (inside the breakwater of Valetta Bay in Malta under the watchful eyes of the regular crew). In spite of this short ride, AFM decides to donate the boat to the SBSA. **It was love at first sight!**



P-24 arrives in Norfolk on August 14, 2012. A large crowd of Swifties in on hand to welcome our girl back home.



To the utter amazement of several dozen by-standers P-24 pulls into a strip mall in Covington, GA.



After what can only be described as **HERCULEAN EFFORTS** on the part of a small group who came to be known as "**The Dirty Boat Guys**" the "new" PCF-816 is almost ready to launch. Hours of grinding, sanding, re-wiring, taking apart/putting together, and every other job usually assigned to the boat Seaman Deuce these guys along with some really extraordinary help from the Maritime Museum of San Diego got the job done. There's not much anyone can say to describe the width and breadth of the job these DBG's did or the hours and gallons of sweat expended. All Swifties everywhere stand in awe and most of us are more than a bit jealous that we couldn't join in the fun!

To the delight of all Swifties, families, and friends, PCF-816 was available for rides at the SBSA reunion in 2013.

Help Is Needed AGAIN!

We have an opportunity in the summer of 2016 to take PCF-816 on an "Ocean Trip" up part of the California coast and back as part of the Maritime Museum's efforts to publicize/raise money to support activities like this in the future. Swifties are being sought to man the boat for the trip with only a few caveats:

- There must be a USCG licensed captain onboard and in command at all times.
- There must be an Engineman onboard at all times.
- You must be able to remain at sea for up to 1 day at a time.
- You must provide your own transportation to/from the various pickup points/towns.
- You must be willing and able to present a short program supplied by MMSD to people who come out to see her.

We also need a catchy name or slogan for this event! One of the first thoughts was for something like "Final Cruise of the 816" but that's been discarded as a bit to dampening. We need names/ideas/slogans to help promote this project. Send your input to DC Current, SBSA Secretary, at dc.current2@gmail.com to be considered. If there's a special name that really, really strikes everyone's fancy then your Officers have promised an unspecified—but probably very nice—reward to the winner (no splits).

We need to assist the MMSD in any ways we can in order to get the engines overhauled prior to the final launch of the summer cruise. The SBSA has promised to make up to \$30,000 available to reach the amount needed. If it cannot be raised from other sources. SBSA is also on-the-hook for fuel and consumables along the way—**so get those thinking caps screwed on!**



Norfolk, VA 23508

P.O. Box 6281

Swift Boat Sailors Association Inc.



New Officers Elected/Appointed at 2015 General Business Meeting

POSITION	NAME	DIRECTOR CLASS
Chairman of the BoD	Van Odell	2019*
President of SBSA	Mike Solhaug	2017
Vice President	Bob Barnett	2019*
Treasurer	Don Hammer	N/A
Secretary	DC Current	2017
Director	Bob Gnau	2019*
Director	"Rocket" Holleran	2019*
Director	Terry Boone	2017
Director	Dave Bradley	2019*
Director	Dave Wallace	2017*
Legacy Director	Sue Edwards Irvin	2019*

* Elected in 2015 for 4 year term, except for Wallace who elected to serve a two year term to balance out future elections.



Swift Boat Sailors Memorial— Memorial & Website

The official dedication of the Swift Boat Sailors Memorial monument and website were unveiled at the SBSA Reunion in Washington, D.C. We were fortunate to have five Gold Star families in attendance. This incredibly beautiful and poignant monument is currently an exhibit at the Virginia War Memorial in Richmond, VA. The website address is www.SwiftBoatSailorsMemorial.com. We would like to take this opportunity to once again thank everyone for their help and participation in making the monument and website a success. If you would like to have any of your photos, stories, videos, etc. exhibited on the website please contact Sue Edwards at SueEdwards@live.com.



Here's the monument flanked by Thomas Holloway's siblings (one of our Gold Star Families who attended the reunion).