

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

THE VIETNAM CENTER

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September 20, 1998

Report of Trip to Washington, DC Secretary of the Navy's Advisory Committee on Naval History 16-18 September 1998

Travel Arrangements

This trip was, of necessity, a very short one. I had a speaking commitment with the Optimists Club in Lubbock on 15 September and was scheduled to give the keynote address at the Veterans' Administration's POW/MIA Day ceremonies in Lubbock on Saturday, 19 September.

In order to maximize my work time in Washington, I scheduled a 0530 departure from Lubbock on 16 September, and arranged to meet former South Vietnamese Ambassador Bui Diem [a member of the Vietnam Center National Council] for lunch at his home in Rockville, Washington. The ambassador graciously offered to meet me at the airport, take me to his home and then return me to my hotel in time to freshen up before a 3:00 p.m. meeting with Congressman Larry Combest at the Longworth House Office Building on Capitol Hill.

On arrival at Lubbock International Airport at 0430, I was advised that my flight had been canceled. I was rescheduled on flights to arrive in Washington at 2:30 p.m. Therefore, I reluctantly canceled my meeting with Ambassador Diem, and had my meeting with Congressman Combest postponed until 3:30 or 4:00.

Visit to Congressman Combest's Office

Aside from cancellations, my flight to Washington was uneventful, and upon arrival, Mr. Combest's Chief of Staff, Rob Lehman, suggested that I come directly to the office from the airport, which I did, arriving there about 3:00 p.m. When I arrived, I found Mr. Combest had been called to attend a meeting and therefore was not available. However, I had a very extensive conversation with Mr. Lehman, which probably was more worthwhile, as he is the one who will actually have to do most of the work relating to the Vietnam Center.

Virtual Vietnam Archive. Mr. Lehman advised me that he thought they had located the funding for the Virtual Vietnam Archive digitizing project in the education budget. He would be contacting Cassidy and Associates about this.

Further Assistance. Having dealt with this, my principal concern, in very short order, Mr. Lehman asked what else they could do for the Vietnam Center. I responded that I was getting the feeling I had asked for too little of them, to which he answered that they would be happy to undertake other projects for us.

Digitizing National Archives' Vietnam Records. Mr. Lehman then brought up the issue of the National Archives' Vietnam records, which he and I had discussed during my last visit to Washington. Since then I have learned from Archives' staff that a decision has been made by the NARA leadership to limit the digitization of their Vietnam records to a sample of 40,000 pages only. The Vietnam project staff at NARA (Mr. Shaughnessy) will have to select representative documents to put on-line.

When I mentioned this, Mr. Lehman suggested that Mr. Combest could send a letter to the National Archives suggested that when Texas Tech's Virtual Vietnam Archive project is up and running, they arrange to send significant portions of their Vietnam records to Texas Tech for putting on-line.

He then asked me for a starting point, and I suggested that the Pacification records would be a very good place to start, as they all have been declassified and are accessible. Mr. Lehman said he would initiate correspondence with NARA, emphasizing that Texas Tech is a regional federal repository.

Vietnam Veterans in House and Senate. I provided Mr. Lehman with a three-page update on the various projects currently underway with the Vietnam Center and Archive. He will circulate them to all Congressmen and Senators who are Vietnam vets, and additional copies to all Veterans Affairs Committee members of both the House and Senate. A listing of Vietnam veterans in the Senate and House is attached.

Secretary of the Navy Subcommittee on Naval History

Committee Composition. This committee convened at Building 1 of the Washington Navy Yard at 0800 on Thursday, 17 September. Perhaps the most prominent member is former Congressman G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery, a World War II veteran, sponsor of the GI Bill, and life-long advocate of veterans' issues. Navy flag officers on the board include Admiral William O. Studeman, USN (Ret), Vice Admiral Robert F. Dunn, USN (Ret), who is President of the Naval Historical Foundation, and Vice Admiral George W. Emery, USN (Ret). Other members include Mr. J. Revell Carr, President of Mystic Seaport Museum, a prominent art critic, a senior archivist and librarian, a number of academics and a few political appointees, including the president's personal lawyer, David E. Kendall. [Mr. Kendall was otherwise occupied and thus was unable to attend the meeting this year.] A complete listing of the committee is attached.

Meeting Agenda. The agenda for the meeting is attached. In essence, there were briefings throughout the day on Thursday and Friday morning. Friday afternoon was devoted to formulation of the committee's report to the Secretary of the Navy. On Thursday, the committee visited the Pentagon to have lunch with the Honorable Jerry M. Hultin, Under Secretary of the

Navy. [Mr. Hultin, who holds a Ph.D. in History, shares my interest in Theodore Roosevelt's administration of the Navy.]

Secretary of the Navy Dalton was not available during our meeting. Indeed, on the first day of the meeting we were advised that Mr. Richard Danzig had been nominated to replace Mr. Dalton.

Principal Issues. Following are the principal issues discussed at some length during the meeting, which will appear in our annual report to the Secretary of the Navy:

Need to Increase the Visibility of the Naval Historical Center (NHC) and Familiarize the Fleet with the NHC mission. The NHC is the official "keeper" of the historical records and the traditions of the Navy, yet its activities are little known in the fleet. If the NHC is to continue to receive funding in these times of reduction of forces, it is essential that it adopt a much higher profile within the Navy. There was some discussion of the need for the NHC to have more direct access to the appropriate Assistant Secretary of the Navy (ASN).

NHC Publications Program. The committee will commend the NHC on its innovative approach to publications whereby it has posted completed manuscripts on the Internet and encouraged publishers to take them up for publication, rather than funding publication through the Government Printing Office. Each such transaction saves the NHC approximately \$100,000, as the NHC is required to fully fund publication, but the GPO retains all income from sales.

Dwindling Resources and Expanding Responsibilities. The drawdown of the Navy and the closure of naval bases has created extensive new tasks for the NHC; however, NHC staff and funding is following the general downward trend. I raised this issue personally with Under Secretary Hultin during our luncheon; he has promised to consider the issue. However, we will make some mention of this in the official report to the Secretary.

Future Status of USS *Constitution*. Following its major overhaul, Old Ironsides has been fully tested at sea, declared fully sea worthy and sail capable. The question now is, what shall be done with it? Will it remain simply a moored museum taken out into Boston harbor every six months to turn around? Or will it be used to visit other ports and actually sail?

This question seems to be answered by CNO's decision (09 June 1998): "I decided that the nation is best served by conducting any future operation of Old Ironsides in close proximity to the Boston Harbor sea buoy in the sheltered waters of Massachusetts Bay . . . I simply cannot justify the risk of unexpected weather harming this national treasure."

My personal feeling is that perhaps the ship should be permitted to conduct short visits to other ports within Massachusetts Bay. However, there was extensive discussion of other possibilities for the ship. And the point was made --possibly quite legitimately-- that there are times of the year which can easily be calculated, when sailing the ship involved little "risk of unexpected weather." The commanding officer of the ship and some others in the committee highlight the great potential for sailing her to Atlantic coast ports.

A copy of the commanding officer's slide presentation is attached.

Executive Order Declassification Project. Lieutenant Commander Eric Higgins, the officer in charge of this project reports that it is unlikely the US Navy will be able to comply with the deadline of April 2000 imposed by the president. He believes his team will complete primary declassification by about November of that year; however, the problem of referrals of documents to other agencies, and referrals of documents to the Navy, has not been addressed. He has no feeling for how many documents this will involve, or how long it will take to process them.

Within the NHC, 1.1 million pages of documentation have been reviewed for declassification in FY 98, and about 890,000 (84%) were declassified. The priority for declassification within the Navy Department is as follows:

- Files of the Office of Chief of Naval Operations (OCNO)
 - Strategic Plans Division
 - Political/Military Division
- Korean War
- Vietnam War
- Personal Papers

Commander Higgins reported there are an estimated 227 million documents in the Department of the Navy which fall under the executive order for declassification review. At this point, 102 million have been reviewed. It is estimated 35 million will not be reviewed by April 2000. Further, by April 2000 another FY of documents will come up for declassification, and no plans/funding have been made available to keep the declassification teams in place.

Navy Art Collection. There have been considerable problems with the Navy Art Collection, including a failure to keep close control over items loaned to Department of the Navy officials for office decorations. The result was a decision for an IG inspection, which was accomplished in August, and which highlighted the collection's problems.

Among the problems cited was that the NHC has not had a command inspection in three years, and recommends one be held in the near future. Staffing, budget, and displays were evaluated as inadequate and traveling exhibits under publicized. As for inventory management, there is need for software to track inventory, and there is no current appraisal of the value of the Navy Art Collection.

Cold War Navy Museum Project. The NHC has requested military construction (MILCON) funding to refurbish Building 70 of the Washington Navy Yard to house a proposed museum to commemorate the functions of the Navy during the Cold War. The idea is to seek funding to upgrade the existing building, and then to approach major defense contractors to fund the various displays in the museum.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY'S
ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE ON NAVAL HISTORY

Meeting Agenda
17-18 September 1998

Thursday, 17 September 1998

- 0730 Van pickup at Loew's L'Enfant Plaza Hotel
- 0800-0815 Assemble in Conference Room of the Middendorf Center
Bldg. 1, Washington Navy Yard; pastries, coffee, tea
- 0815-0820 Welcome by William J. Cassidy Jr., Deputy Assistant
Secretary of the Navy (Conversion and Redevelopment)
- 0820-0830 Remarks by Chairman, Dr. David A. Rosenberg
- 0830-0900 Presentation by Dr. William S. Dudley,
Director of Naval History
- 0900-1030 Briefings/Discussion of Issues
- Naval Historical Foundation Interaction with
Naval Historical Center
Vice Admiral Robert F. Dunn, USN (Ret.)
President, Naval Historical Foundation
- Navy Historical Preservation Programs
Dr. Bernard Murphy, Navy Department Federal
Preservation Officer
- Military Construction Plans and Funding
Captain T. Creekman, Deputy Director of Naval History
- NHC Publications; Outreach to Navy Training/Education;
Historical Commemorations
Dr. Edward J. Marolda, Senior Historian, NHC
- 1030-1045 Break
- 1045-1145 Briefings/Discussion of Issues
- The Navy Museum and Museum Education Center
Mr. Kim Nielsen, Director, The Navy Museum
- Navy Art Collection
Ms. Gale Munro, Navy Art Collection Branch
- Artifact Collections Management
Dr. Norman Cary, Head, Curator Branch

Professional Reading List. This perennial project is designed to encourage Navy men and women to continue to improve their professional knowledge through providing them a recommended reading list. The Chief of Naval Education and Training, Vice Admiral Tracey, currently has this project in hand. However, the committee urges continuing work on this project to ensure it is completed and published to the fleet, and also that books appearing on the list be made available in stock at Navy Exchanges.

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Meeting Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m. on Friday, and I departed immediately for Ronald Reagan National Airport to catch a 5:04 p.m. flight to Dallas/Fort Worth, with connecting flight to Lubbock, arriving at LIA at 10:25 p.m.

In sum, my participation in this annual meeting is of considerable value in updating me on the progress of many aspects of the Navy's historical programs. It is particularly rewarding to me, as a retired naval officer, to be able to assist in my own small way the Navy's historical efforts, and thus I hope to remain on this committee for several years to come.

- encl: List of Vietnam veterans in Congress
- SecNav Advisory Committee Membership
- SecNav Advisory Committee Agenda
- USS *Constitution*, CO's presentation

Vietnam Veterans in Congress

SENATE

✓Max Cleland D-GA	SD 461	43521	Army	1965-68
✓Chuck Hagel R-Neb	SR 346	44224	Army	1967-68
✓Tom Harkin D-Iowa	SH 731	43254	Navy	1962-67
✓Bob Kerrey D- Neb	SH 141	46551	Navy	1966-69
✓John Kerry D-Mass	SR 421	42742	Navy	1968-69
✓John McCain R-Ariz	SR 241	42235	Navy	1958-81
✓Charles S. Robb D-Va	SR 154	44024	Marines	1961-70
✓Robert C. Smith R-N.H.	SD 307	42841	Navy	1965-67

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

✓Leonard L. Boswell D-Iowa	1029	53806	Army	1956-76
✓Allen Boyd D-Fla.	1237	55235	Army	1970-71
✓Randy "Duke" Cunningham R-Calif.	2238	55452	Navy	1966-68
✓Eni F.H. Faleomavaega D- Am. Samoa	2422	58577	Army	1966-69
✓Rodney Frelinghuysen R- N.J.	228	55034	Army	1969-70
✓Jim Gibbons R-Nev	1116	56155	Air Force	1967-71
✓Wayne T. Gilchrest R-Md	332	55311	Marines	1964-68
✓Duncaan Hunter R-Calif	2265	55672	Army	1969-71
✓Sam Johnson R-Texas	1030	54201	Air Force	1951-79
✓Jim Kolbe R-Ariz	205	52542	Navy	1968-69
✓John P. Murtha D-Pa	2423	52065	Marines	1952-55, 1966-67
✓Joseph R. Pitts R-Pa	504	52411	Air Force	1963-69
✓Glenn Poshard D-Ill.	2334	55201	Army	1962-65
✓Silvestre Reyes D-Texas	514	54831	Army	1966-68
✓Bobby L. Rush D-Ill.	131	54372	Army	1963-68
✓David E. Skaggs D-Colo.	1124	52161	Marines	1968-71
✓Vic Snyder D-Ark.	1319	52506	Marines	1967-69

1145-1200 Van departs Naval Historical Center for Pentagon

1200-1430 Luncheon at Pentagon hosted by Under Secretary
of the Navy, Honorable Jerry M. Hultin

1430-1500 Return to Bldg. 1

1500-1600 Briefings/Discussion of Issues

Declassification Program
LCDR Eric Higgins, Head, Declassification Branch

The Navy Department Library
Ms. Jean Hort, Head, Navy Department Library

Navy Underwater Archaeology
Dr. Robert Neyland, Head, Underwater Archaeology
Branch

1600 Van returns to Loew's L'Enfant Plaza

1700-1730 Van departs hotel for The Navy Museum

1730-1930 Reception Hosted by the Naval Historical Center
(spouses/significant others invited)

1930 Van departs The Navy Museum for Loew's L'Enfant Plaza

Friday, 18 September 1998

- 0730 Van departs Loew's L'Enfant Plaza for Bldg. 1,
Naval Historical Center
- 0800-0830 Assistance in filling out travel claims;
pastries, coffee, tea
- 0830-0930 Briefings/Discussion of Issues
- Future Plans for USS Constitution
CDR Christopher A. Melhuish, Commanding Officer,
USS Constitution
- Naval Reserve Activities
Captain James Noone, USNR, Executive Officer,
Naval Reserve Historical Center Detachment 206
- Other Washington Naval Historical Activities
Dr. Jan Herman, Historian, Bureau of Medicine
and Surgery
- 0930-1000 Break/Photo Opportunity
- 1000-1200 Guided (or Self-Guided) Tour of Naval Historical
Center
- 1200-1330 Luncheon: Washington Navy Yard Officers Club
- 1330-1345 Return to Bldg. 1
- 1345-1545 Open Discussion by Subcommittee; Preparation of
Subcommittee Report
- 1600 Van departs Bldg. 1 for Loew's L'Enfant Plaza

Secretary of the Navy's Advisory Subcommittee on Naval History

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Sailing

... Into the
21st Century?

The Bicentennial -- a review

- First Sail in 116 years
- Bicentennial of Launch (1797)
- Bicentennial of First Sail (1798)
- Sea trails
- Chief Petty Officer initiations
- CNO decision and port visit cancellation

The First Sail



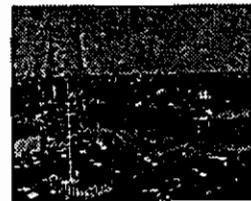
- 21 July 1997
- Navy-run event



Marblehead port visit

Bicentennial of Launch

- 21 October 1997
- Civilian sponsored event
 - Bicentennial Salute Cmtee
- Replicated Centennial (somewhat)
- *All Hands on Deck* curriculum launched
- ASN Cassidy senior Navy rep



At site of original launch

Bicentennial of First Sail

- 23-26 July 1998
 - 19 Vessels
 - 6 countries
- Civilian sponsored event
 - BSC
- DEPSECDEF embarked
- Duke of York visit with crew
- 22,000 visitors in one day!



21-gun Salute

Sea Trials

- 20 May 1998
- Massachusetts Bay
 - International waters
- NAVSEA sponsored
 - Instrumented
 - ~\$250K
- Towed 52 miles over 8 hour period
- *Found seaworthy*



Under tow in Mass Bay

Chief Petty Officer Initiation

- Two initiations:
 - 1997 & 1998
 - 50-60 selectees each time
- DNS and MCPON actively involved
- Great success
- Navy-wide next year



CNO Decision

"I decided that the nation is best served by conducting any future operation of Old Ironsides in close proximity to the Boston Harbor sea buoy in the sheltered waters of Massachusetts Bay . . . I simply cannot justify the risk of unexpected weather harming this national treasure."

09 June 1998

Current Mission Functions

- Preserve and Protect the ship
 - NHC Detachment
 - Crew
 - National Park Service
- Open ship visitation
 - Guided tours 365 days a year

Mission Functions (cont'd)

- Community support
 - Color guards/parades (~30/year)
- Military support
 - Flags (>1000 flown/year)
- Military events
 - Ceremonies (~130/year)

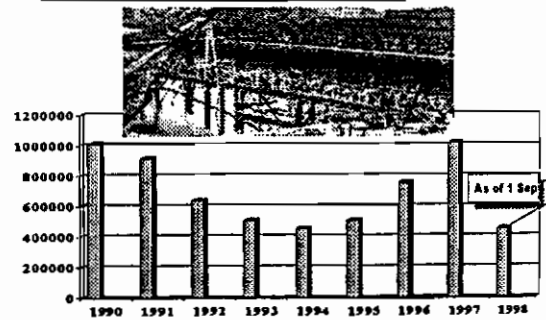


Mission Functions (cont'd)

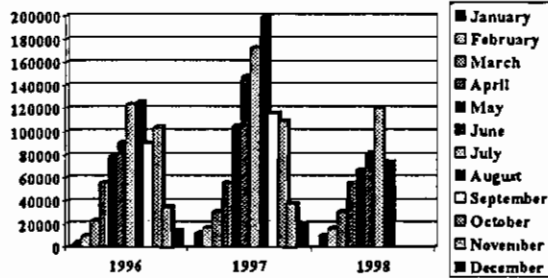
- Presentations
 - ~60/year
- Turnaround cruises
 - Two annually
- Special tours
 - On request, first-come basis and limited
- Web site
 - Average 6000 hits/month



The People . . . visitation



But... Shifting Interest?



CO's views

The ship's well-being depends on the U.S. Navy to protect and preserve her, and for the Navy to actively promote USS CONSTITUTION nation-wide, and particularly to the Nation's youngest citizens.



Blessing of the ship's sailcloth
Old North Church, Boston

CO's views (cont'd)

Current manning is appropriate to both QOL and mission



It's a ship not a museum! But balancing tourist industry and Navy needs is challenging

Navy should invest in a long-term vision for the ship -- 50 to 100 years is not unreasonable -- why repeat history?

Disposition/use of sails should be addressed

Promotional opportunities

- National speaking tour
- Equip crew in authentic period uniform
- Configure 24 Pounder gun for off-ship firing demo
- National gig rowing demonstrations
- Flag-in-residence program
- Law of Sea Treaty signing onboard?



Gig crew

1999 activities

- Bunker Hill and Independence Day Turnarounds
- "CPO-99"
 - > CPO initiation. MCPON sponsored

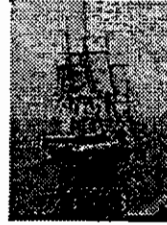
2000 activities

- Bunker Hill and Independence Day Turnarounds
- *Sail Boston 2000*
 - > 11-16 July 2000
 - > Civilian-run Tall Ships regatta
 - > Scores of sailing vessels

Downstream

- Long range calendar:
 - 2000, 2003 & 2012 to consider
- Dry dock and overhaul: 2007-2010
 - Major overhauls every 10-12 years

Big investment . . . but USN is in for long haul



Fact: Ship is seaworthy and sail capable

Fact: \$250K donated by Americans for sails

- Next chapter?

O & A's





E. R. ZUMWALT, JR.
ADMIRAL, U.S. NAVY (RET.)

October 15, 1998

James R. Reckner, Ph.D.
The Vietnam Center
Texas Tech University
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Dear Jim:

Many thanks for your sharing your trip report on your visit to the Navy's Advisory Committee on Naval History.

I have one wild idea as a result of reviewing the document—would it be feasible to put anything on the professional reading list that would end up generating interest in the Vietnam Center?

Sincerely,

E. R. Zumwalt, Jr.
Admiral, USN (Ret.)

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