

U.S. Coast Guard - Port Security Unit-301(A)

Persian Gulf War

Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm

September 1990 – April 1991



U.S.C.G - PSU-301(A) Camp Port of Al-Jubayl, Saudi Arabia



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PSU-301(A) - PS1 - USCGR**

Preface

First and foremost, I would like to thank all of the PSU-301(A) members who provided input and pictures to make this PSU-301(A) historical overview possible.

The great majority of these pictures were taken by PSU-301(A) members on site during our deployment and a few others thereafter.

Additionally, various other information, including maps, pictures and historical information, were extracted from reliable opensource information on the net. Any of this information is easily verifiable through firsthand accounts by unit personnel, the picture themselves, official CG records or legitimate, respected, opensource information.

I attempted to provide this information in a chronological, historical format, but in some areas of the presentation I provided updated commentary to account for a activity that happened at a later date that resulted from PSU-301(A)'s service or input (ex. Evolution of the TPSB).

PSU-301(A) members are all very proud of their service and believe the success of the PSU's during the Gulf War is one of the main reasons the Coast Guard continued the Port Security Unit program, and eventually expanded it to the well-deserved, elevated status it has today.

The role of the PSU mission of today has now expanded to providing anti-terrorist force protection and coastal defense for missions inside and outside the United States.

Preface (Cont.)

This proved to be a very rewarding project for me in researching information and chronicling numerous first hand accounts of our activities. I thoroughly enjoyed interacting with all the great people from USCG, PSU-301(A), and I am very proud to have served with them and to share our valuable, albeit at times, challenging experience during Desert Shield/Desert Storm.

As provided by PSU-301(A) Commander Scott McCone: “Not one vessel within our area of responsibility (AOR) was damaged by enemy action, not one facility at the Port of Al Jubayl was damaged due to enemy action, and, most important, not one member of the unit was killed or seriously injured while deployed.”

Commander McCone also added one final comment; “The most important date for me was February 28, 1991 – the day that Desert Storm ended.” I am relatively positive the rest of the PSU-301(A) members could not agree more.

Finally, I had thoughts of expanding this presentation more and providing it in a format such as a booklet, but did not, as I thought viewing this presentation in digital form, in the PDF document format, could easily still accomplish the intended historical purpose.

Semper Paratus, Jim Cudney

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SECTION I:

PSU-301(A) - Background/Overview

Pre-mobilization training, Activation, Travel to Saudi Arabia

Prior to August 1990, if you had asked any Coast Guard PSU member if they would have ever thought that a Port Security Unit (PSU) would be mobilized for a prolonged OCONUS deployment, it would have been considered unlikely. However, with the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, on August 2, 1990, it quickly became obvious that a mobilization and deployment was now more than possible.

In 1986 initial members of PSU-301(A) deployed to USMC Base Quantico, Virginia for an intensive two-week Combat Skills Course. In 1987 PSU-301(A) participated in FTX Bright Star 87 with boat crews and security personnel deploying to Aquaba, Jordan and a Marine Safety Detachment sent to Alexandria Egypt.

A second Training Combat Skills Course was conducted in 1988 at USMC base Quantico, VA for additional PSU-301(A) members. Supplementary training was conducted in 1988 and 1989, with the Ohio National Guard, who provided combat training at Camp Perry, OH with its “Flame River” exercises.

There was one additional Combat Skills Training course conducted in July, 1990 at USMC. base Quantico, VA for the remainder PSU-301(A) members, who had not attended the 1986 or 1988 training.

PSU-301(A) Pre-Mobilization training & equipment issue - Camp Perry, Ohio August 19, 1990

But even up to that point in August 1990, no one could have remotely envisioned the first U.S. Coast Guard Reserve OCONUS activation in approximately fifty years. Reality began to set in for the members of PSU-301(A) when unit personnel were given last minute training orders to report to Camp Perry, Ohio on August 19, 1990, for what would include evaluation of personnel, both medically and physically, advanced training and the issuance of equipment.

Upon arrival, we all sensed a heightened level of the likelihood of activation as we underwent high intensity training for pre-deployment preparation. We were also aware of the developments in the Middle East with the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, and a possible International response.

When we arrived many of us still believed that the situation was going to be handled diplomatically but as the training continued we sensed that might not be the case. We could see the writing on the wall when PSU-301(A) personnel were issued the desert “Chocolate Chips” Battle Dress Uniforms (BDU’s) fatigues, 782 gear, M-17 gas mask and the Mission Oriented Protective Posture (MOPP) suits, necessary for protecting the wearer from chemical and biological warfare agents.

We were also informed the last day of training that when we got back home to get our personal affairs in order in case of a potential deployment.

PSU-301(A) Pre-Mobilization training - relevancy concern

The training at Camp Perry was intense and some of it was somewhat confusing, especially the MARSEC related training as it was geared toward a wilderness, rugged terrain, type environment.

Our MARSEC (Maritime Security) personnel were being trained in going out on patrols in the bush, including repeatedly performing a ground combat infantry technique called fire team “rushes”. These “rushes” involved rapidly running for three (3) to five (5) seconds and then hitting the ground landing on our knees and elbows, with weapon in hand, and preparing to engage an enemy. This offensive tactic, as well as other offensive tactics, went on over a couple day period, adding to our confusion as we believed our mission was defensive in nature, in securing, and protecting a port.

Additionally, as many of our MARSEC personnel were older, many veteran police officers in civilian life, in their mid to late thirties, added another challenging dimension to this infantry type training. We also knew we would be working closely with the USMC, First Marine Expeditionary Force (1 MEF), containing young, combat trained active duty marines, and the chance of us leading the way on any offensive maneuvers would be very improbable.

Nevertheless, we met our responsibilities and completed the training, albeit these fire team rushes were taking a toll on our bodies, especially our knees and elbows, and many PSU MARSEC members suffered numerous bruises, joint trauma and other injuries during this activity.

Finally, and most importantly, as we believed we were going to Saudi Arabia, we became even more confused, as we were very sure there wasn't forested areas in Saudi Arabia, and definitely not along the coast.

**Final briefing at Niagara Falls, NY, USAF Base on September 21, 1990
before departure to Camp Perry, Ohio for final processing.
Many family members were there to see PSU-301(A) off.**



**Final muster and preparations for travel from
Niagara Falls N.Y. Air Force Base to Camp Perry, Ohio**



PSU-301(A) Activation call up September 18, 1990

The anticipation ended when the majority of PSU-301(A) members received a call, one month after the pre-deployment training, many of us on Tuesday, September 18, 1990, with the remainder of the members being notified over the following two days. We were informed that we were being activated and had three days to prepare for an extended deployment, and report to the Niagara Falls, N.Y. Air Force Base on September 21, 1990 for transport to Camp Perry, located near Port Clinton, Ohio, for further processing.

It really hit home for us that this was the real deal when we arrived back at Camp Perry and medical exams were conducted and we received a battery of inoculations. We were also provided more CBR (Chemical, biological, and radiological) training, and completed final processing, including updating our will and ensuring our beneficiary information was accurate and complete.

At the end of that first day we received a more comprehensive briefing, updating us with new developments in the Iraqi - Kuwaiti situation. They also informed us that we would be enroute to Al-Jubayl, Saudi Arabia within the next three days, and how the unit would be split up into three sections and how we would be transported.

If anyone still had any doubts that our unit was actually heading to Saudi Arabia, this put an end to that, and we could only guess on what might be coming next.

Besides medical exams and final processing at Camp Perry, there was Chemical, Biological, Radiological (CBR) Training and additional TPSB boat training including techniques and tactics



**Final packing for deployment to Saudi Arabia
Preparing to leave Camp Perry for Port Clinton, Ohio Airport**



**PSU-301(A) Final Muster at Camp Perry, Ohio
Preparing to board C-141 for flight to Al-Jubayl, Saudi Arabia
September 23, 1990**



**USAF C-141 Waiting for PSU-301(A) members to board
for twenty-two hour transit to Al-Jubayl, Saudi Arabia**

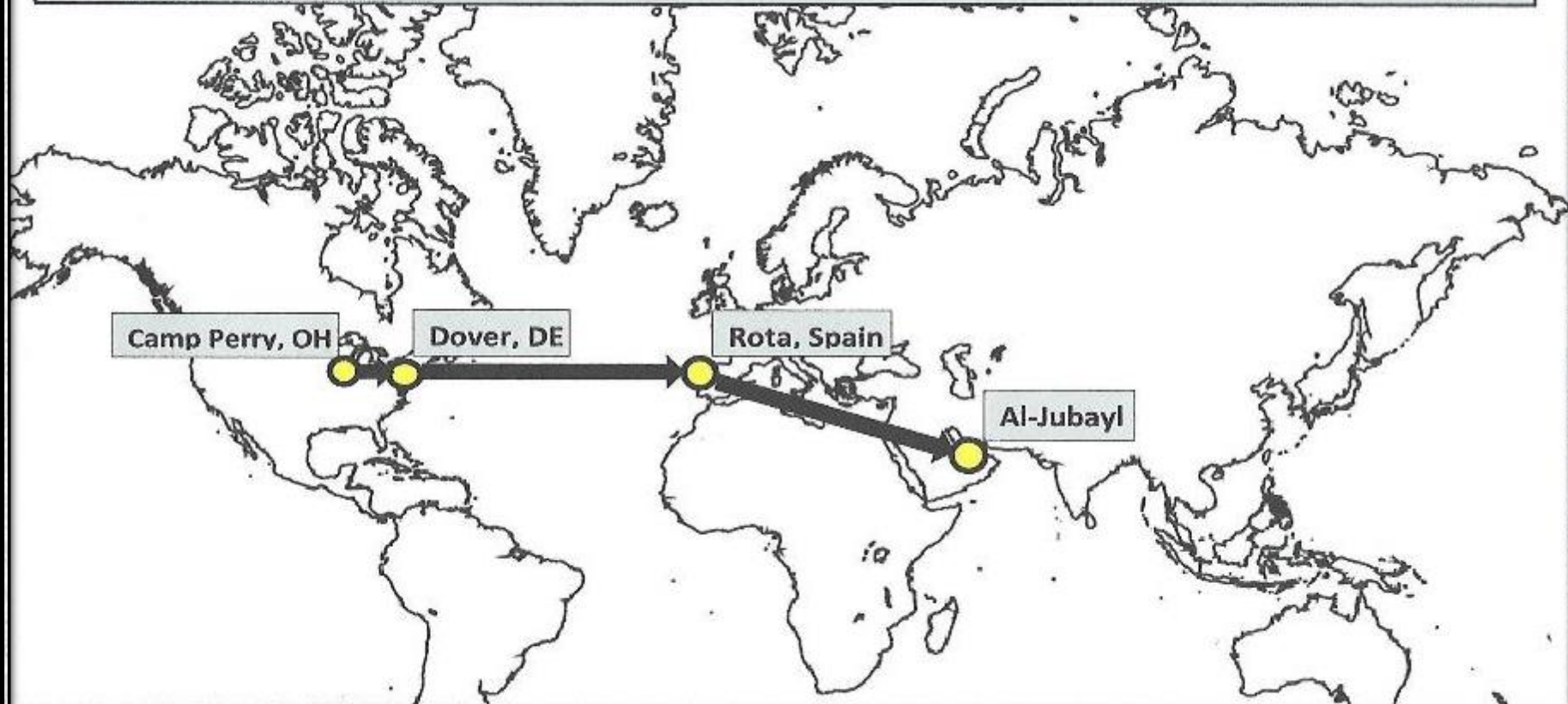


**Each U.S. Air Force C-141 contained two TPSB “Raiders,”
1/3 of Unit personnel, weapons and associated equipment**



**PSU-301(A) In transit from Camp Perry, OH
to Al-Jubayl, Saudi Arabia in U.S. Air Force C-141**

The long, loud, cold flight was uneventful yet exhausting



6,800 miles – Total travel time twenty-two hours

SECTION II:

Arrival Al-Jubayl, Saudi Arabia - King Abdulaziz Naval Base Airport September 24, 1990

PSU-301(A) members in the first plane landed at the King Abdulaziz Naval Base Airport near Al-Jubayl, Saudi Arabia in the midafternoon on September 24, 1990, which was a short distance from the port of Al-Jubayl. Many members during the flight were experiencing a level of anxiety, and trepidation, and wondering what was to come.

Most of us were somewhat numb, and drained, from the long, loud, cold, twenty-two hour flight over to Saudi Arabia, and actually relieved when we finally got there.

Without question we all realized now, that we were far removed from the comfort of our civilian lives, we enjoyed three days earlier. Additionally, we had limited knowledge and information on what to expect when we got there, adding to our irresolute concern.

But what we all remember well, especially after the long, cold flight, with minimal lighting, was the intense, 120 degree, blast-furnace like heat greeting us when the rear exit ramp of the USAF, C-141 was opened and how exceptionally sunny and bright it was, without a cloud in the sky.

As we prepared to exit the plane, we all realized we were entering a new, and unfamiliar world, different than what we had ever experienced before. We all knew we had to adapt to it quickly, as this was going to be our home for the next few months.

Departing the C-141 – An awakening to our new reality

Exiting the plane and viewing our surroundings from the airport tarmac provided us with another reality check. A contingent of U.S. Marines were there to passionately “welcome” us to Saudi Arabia, and it was more than obvious by the level of urgency they conveyed, they needed us to quickly follow their instructions for departing the airport area.

We observed the small airport terminal surrounded with defensive barriers, the buildings reinforced with sandbags, and Marine Cobra Attack helicopters circling above. There was also a hectic, but controlled effort by the U.S. Marines, directing us on where we needed to go and what they needed us to do. They told us to immediately get our equipment loaded on the trucks, with our “Raider” Transportable Port Security Boats (TPSB) in tow, and begin our journey to the port of Al-Jubayl.

The ride to the port quickly confirmed what we had heard about Saudi Arabia, that it was a vast, mostly desolate desert, with some lowland and mountain areas. In that the great majority of the members of our unit, if not all, had never been to a desert, and our first experience with it, to say the least, was quite an eye-opener.

We arrived at our destination a short time later and quickly viewed our new base of operations at the southeast corner of the Al-Jubayl Commercial Port, located across the harbor from the much larger King Fahd Industrial Port, directly to the north.

**Short ride from Airport to Al-Jubayl Port
Nothing like a relaxing drive in the country for PSC Trejchel**



Al-Jubayl City – an overview

Al-Jubayl, Saudi Arabia was a very small city in 1990, as it was a small fishing village until the mid 1970's when at that time the Saudi government designated it as the site for a new industrial city. It was still at the early stages of its development in 1990, and other than the immediate port itself, piers and break walls, its development still had a long way to go.

Many of the residents in 1990, were U.S. and Foreign Nationals working for the ARAMCO (Arabian-American Oil Company) in the oil production business. Other residents were in the shipping business or working at the Al-Jubayl port. And still others, mainly locals, were in the fishing industry.

During the months leading up to January, 1991, many of the civilian and commercial related operations in the Al-Jubayl AOR were either greatly reduced, and other activities were shut down or ceased entirely.

In addition, many of the U.S. and Foreign Nationals on the build up to the war, voluntarily left on their own and many others left later, or were eventually evacuated, just prior to the start of the Gulf war.

It is interesting to note, since the Gulf War in 1991, Al-Jubayl has grown seven fold, and is now the world's largest single industrial development project in the world.

Importance of Al-Jubayl port operations

During the Gulf War, Al-Jubayl was the northern most port in Saudi Arabia on the Persian Gulf side, for receiving and unloading ships. It was located approximately 150 miles south of the Iraqi occupying forces, placed along the Kuwait southern border.

Along with the ports of Ad-Dammam and Bahrain, further to the south, it was vitally important that all three of these ports remained open and functioning during the first phase Operation “Desert Shield” buildup. The basic purpose of Desert Shield was to first defend Saudi Arabia and ultimately set the stage to liberate Kuwait. After its implementation, Desert Shield, continued for approximately five months and eventually transitioned to the second combat phase, Operation “Desert Storm”, on Jan. 17, 1991.

If the Iraqi’s had impeded the ability of these ports to receive ships, or interrupted shipping traffic, the U.S and Coalition buildup would have been greatly slowed, if not, significantly disrupted. The potential threat to these ports came from Iraqi air power and from a land based, or water side assault, by the Iraqi special forces.

U.S. Coast Guard Port Security Units, in addition to the Saudi National Harbor Defense Units, were tasked with securing these ports. This was accomplished through proactive water side patrols to deter, and/or, support countermeasure efforts to thwart, an/or, respond to an attack from the Persian Gulf.

It was vitally important that during Operation “Desert Shield” the Ports of Al-Jubayl, Ad-Dammam, and Bahrain all remained open and operational



Overview of the initial activities conducted at Al-Jubayl Commercial Port

Upon arrival at the port, on September 24, 1990, we were quickly briefed by the USMC Command staff of the 1st FSSG (Force Service Support Group). The FSSG unit was a versatile multi-faceted combat service organization with its primary mission to provide combat service support for the First Marine Expeditionary Force, (known as 1 MEF)). This is the largest of the three USMC, MEF's, and is known as the "Warfighting MEF" for its consistent involvement and contributions in major armed conflicts.

The FSSG Staff informed us they had responsibility for the Al-Jubayl area, and how vital the mission was in securing this AOR (Area of Responsibility), in providing the ability to receive ships and unload cargo, in staging, supporting and suppling forward units.

We immediately began organizing our camp, establishing a command post on the pier, setting up communications capability, and preparing to put TPSB boats in the water.

We staged and deployed the rest of our limited resources available at that time, and eagerly awaited for the rest of our unit to arrive, as PSU-301(A) members left Camp Perry, Ohio in three separate USAF, C-141's, each containing one third of unit personnel, equipment, weapons, provisions, along with two TPSB "Raider" Boats.

SECTION III:

PSU-301(A) arrives to provide vital support to Operation “Desert Shield”, and is fully operational within first twenty-four hours in country

The third and final airplane containing the last thirty (30) PSU-301(A) personnel, two TPSB boats and equipment landed at 0300, September 25, 1990 local time the next day, and the rest of the resources were quickly positioned. The last of the final PSU-301(A) unit’s boats were fully operational and ready for patrol at 1430 hours that the same day.

LT. Tobey Morison and LT Ed Hludzinski took the first midwatch which consisted of a tarp thrown over two engine wooden crates and communicating with the boats by hand held radio.

The rest of the week was spent determining stationary posts and coordinating operational activities with the Marines and the Navy MIUW (Mobile Inshore Undersea Warfare Unit). This included the designation of boat crew duties and assignments, and establishment of CG Maritime Security (MARSEC) posts and patrol responsibilities.

All members of the unit should be proud of the fact that PSU-301(A) met all of its responsibilities and assigned duties during its deployment. From the first day when PSU-301(A) members arrived in country on September 24, 1990, our unit never stopped patrolling until our mission was completed, six months later.

USMC Intelligence brief – Emergency evacuation plan September 1990

Early that first week, the “Top” Sergeant from the USMC, 1 MEF, 1st FSSG, briefed us on the emergency evacuation plan, and the limited time and ability we had to defend our position. He reminded us that we were only 150 miles south of the Kuwait border, which, at that time, was fortified by the aggressive, invading Iraqi Forces.

These Iraqi occupying forces at the Southern Kuwait border were two hours from our location by land, and less than ten minutes by air, with an estimated 700 attack aircraft at their disposal. Furthermore, there was a great deal of hype by the Iraqi’s of their self-proclaimed, superior military force, the “elite” Republican Guard, were potentially moving toward the Kuwaiti southern border.

As provided in General Schwarzkopf’s Autobiography, “It Doesn’t Take A Hero”, during August 1990, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein kept pouring forces to the southern border of Kuwait and in General Schwarzkopf’s words “...the Saudis now found themselves looking down the gun barrels of nine Iraqi divisions (130,000 soldiers, 1,200 tanks and 800 artillery pieces, many capable of firing toxic-chemical shells). To defend adequately against such a force we needed at least five weeks’ buildup, and I was gravely concerned that the Iraqis would figure that out and attack now. My standing order to Chuck Horner (Air Force Lt. General, Commander of entire air campaign) was: “Before you go to bed tonight, make absolutely sure that every one of your commanders – on the ground and at sea - knows what to do in the event of an attack”.

USMC – 1 MEF - Sgt. Major briefs PSU-301(A) personnel along break wall regarding evacuation plan and potential for subversive activities within Al-Jubayl AOR



At that time, the Northern Saudi Arabia border was marginally fortified, and Al-Jubayl was extremely vulnerable for first few months

Additionally, in that there was a small contingent of a international military presence at the northern Saudi Arabia border at that time, mostly from Middle Eastern countries, if the Iraqi's made their move south they very well could have faced limited resistance.

The "Top" Sgt. further informed us, with the limited transportation vehicles that was available at that time to the units at our location, we would have to be ready to leave on very short notice and to jump on any available mode of transportation heading south toward Dhahran, if the Iraqi's invaded. He also instructed us to sandbag our operational and living areas to survive a potential enemy low-flying aircraft strafing attack.

Moreover, the only other units in the Al-Jubayl AOR at the time, besides the USMC, 1st FSSG, were PSU-301(A), the Navy MIUW 103, a small Navy Seabee cargo handler detachment and members of the U.S. Army 82nd airborne.

To say the least, we slept very light for the first few months, until more armored fighting vehicles, attack helicopters, armaments, equipment and troops arrived, and were deployed.

For reasons unknown, the Iraqi's did not invade Saudi Arabia at that time, and thankfully, as they did not, PSU-301(A) members are still here today to share our experiences during that time period.

The Iraqi occupying forces at the Southern Kuwait border were two hours from our location by land and easily less than ten minutes by air



We mainly had to use a compass to navigate through our AOR as there were not many signs in Saudi Arabia, but these two were helpful



**PSU-301(A) Setting up Command Post on pier
RM1 Bob Ziehm organizes communication equipment**



BM3 Gene Rossano was hoisted by a crane, to enable him to position, and secure, support guide wires on a communications antenna



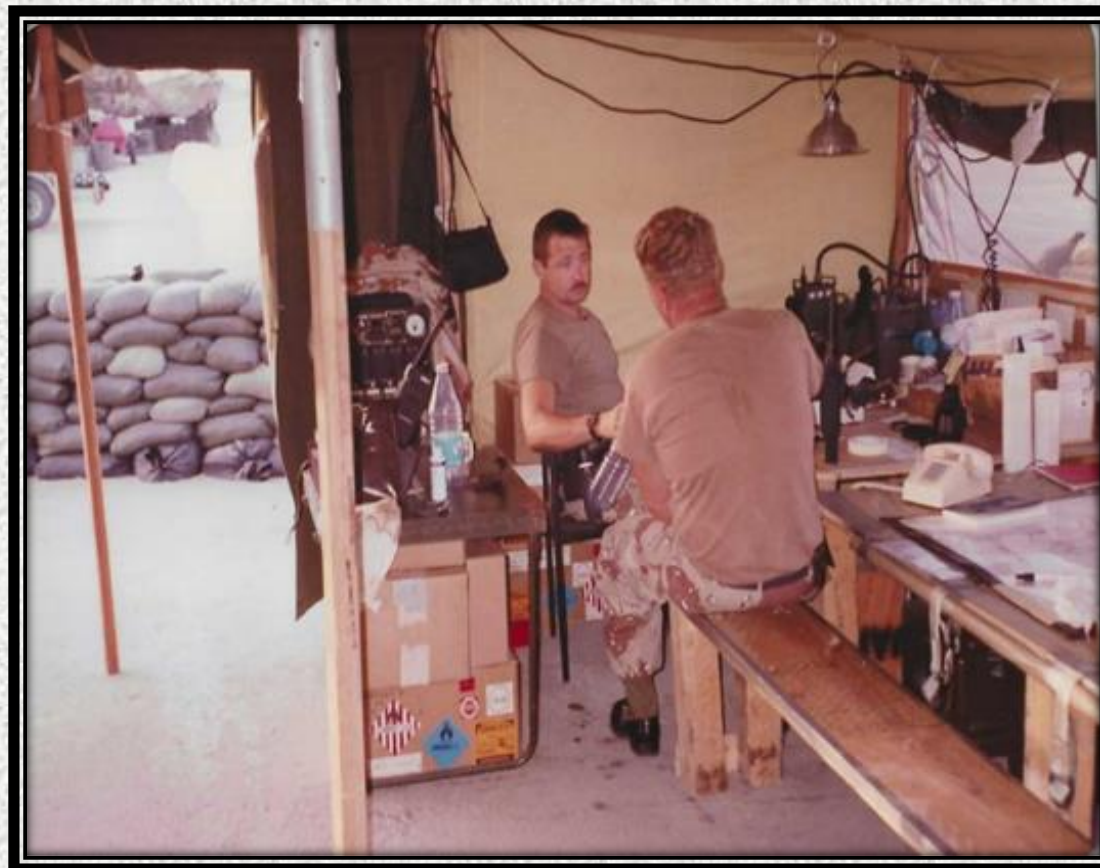
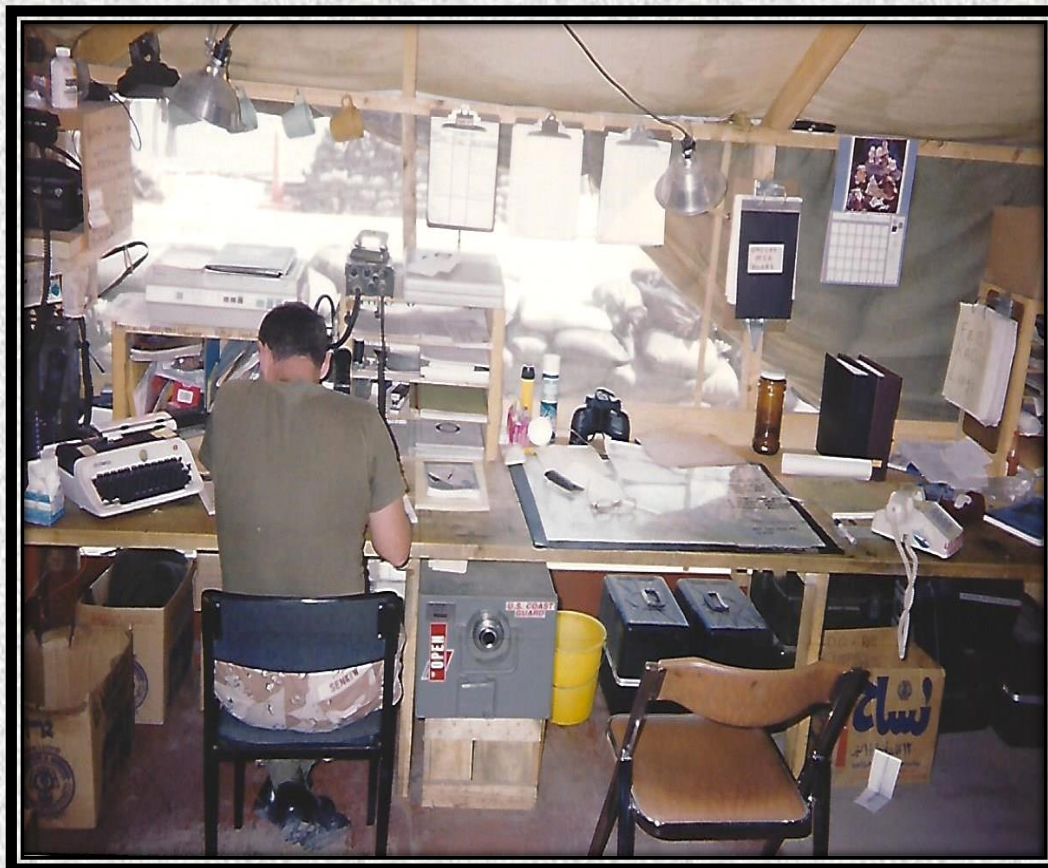
Command Post ready for occupancy



PSU-301(A) Command Post is established



Command Post staffed and fully operational September 26, 1990



All hands effort in securing, and fortifying, PSU-301(A) operational area and camp perimeter

Many PSU-301(A) members were working on selecting sites for placement of tents, establishing operational capabilities, and coordinating support activities. One of the main priorities was to set up a communication tower and initiate the ability to communicate by radio with operational personnel throughout the area, as the use of cell phones at that time was in its early stages, and not available. Many other members, in addition to fortifying these operational areas, were focused on creating a secure, and protected perimeter.

The first thing MARSEC personnel had to do was procure sandbags, which we were very fortunate to locate through the marines. This was the beginning of a great relationship with them, which continually evolved along the way, and lasted throughout our service in the Al-Jubayl AOR.

PSU-301(A) members, mostly MARSEC personnel, then began constructing various preventative barriers and sandbag blockades for providing effective force protection. This included the establishment of entry checkpoints for controlling and limiting access to camp, staffed by armed MARSEC. personnel.

The first couple of weeks was a continuous effort to put in place additional defensive measures surrounding our camp and further create, and implement, physical security controls and procedures, to deter unauthorized access into our inner perimeter and provide protection from attack.

Everyone took their turn in filling sandbags



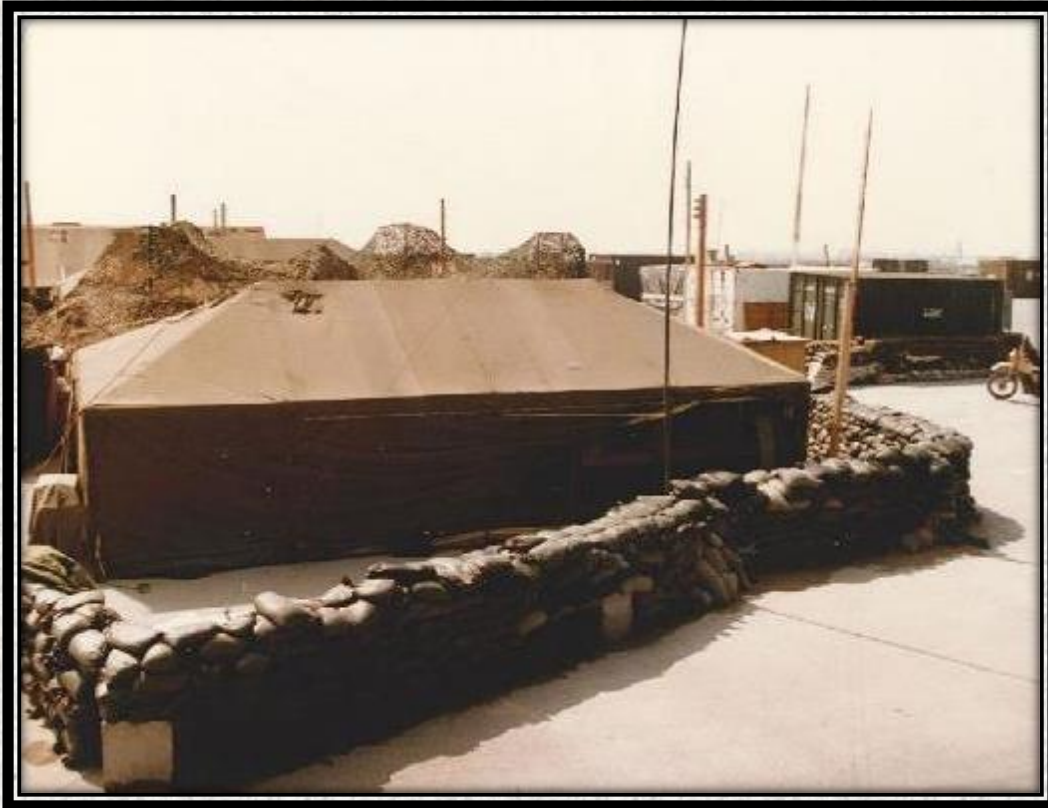
Amazingly, we never ran out of sand



Entrance to PSU-301(A) camp was well protected



Command Post was one of the first tents to be sandbagged



PSU-301(A) Mission defined for Operation “Desert Shield”

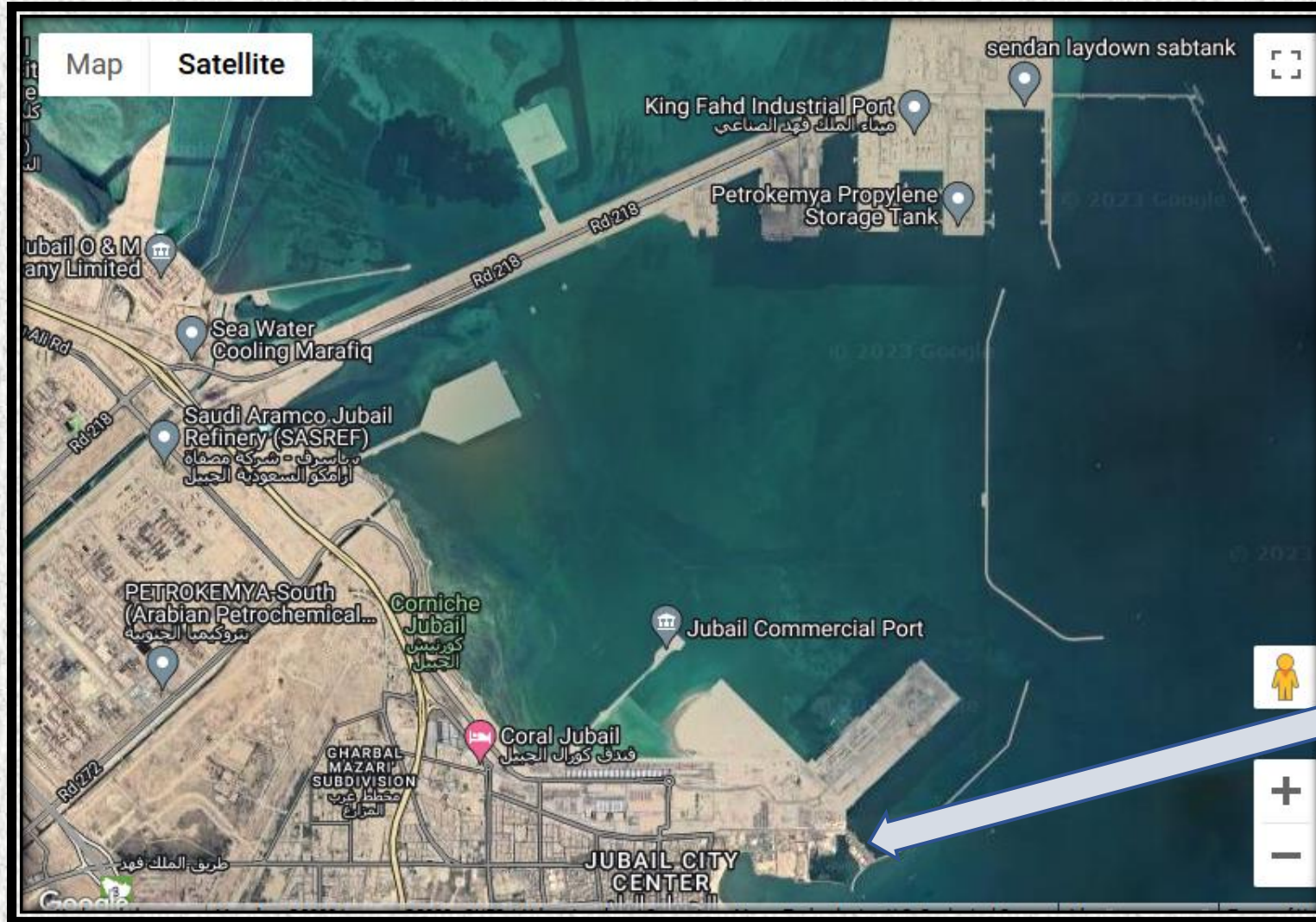
PSU-301(A) arrived at Al-Jubayl, Saudi Arabia in September 1990 for Operation “Desert Shield” with the primary mission to provide port and waterside security for the ships that would be delivering troops, military vehicles, equipment, and ammunition to support, what eventually would be called, Operation “Desert Storm”, and ultimately culminate in the U.S Led, multinational effort, to drive Iraq out of Kuwait.

Along with ninety-seven (97) personnel, PSU-301(A) had six Transportable Port Security Boats (TPSB) for patrolling the inner harbor and the designated zones outside the break wall in the open waters of the Persian Gulf.

Initially, each of these 22-foot Boston Whaler “Raiders” were equipped with removable three-gun platforms that could travel 360 degrees around the boat on a steel rail mounted to the gunwale. However, for this operation the boat had only two machineguns that were mounted, a .50 caliber M2 heavy machinegun and the 7.62mm M60 machine, or any combination thereof.

Additionally, PSU-301(A)’s Maritime Security (MARSEC) teams also conducted roving patrols and manned stationary security posts, at entrance to camp and along the pier and break wall, to provide protection for the PSU-301(A) encampment, which also included Navy Seabee cargo handlers and Navy EOD. members.

King Fahd Industrial Port & Al-Jubayl Commercial Port



**PSU-301(A)
Camp**

It took a team effort to position and mount motors



PSU-301(A) TPSB "Raider" boats put in water



TPSB "Raiders" ready to deploy



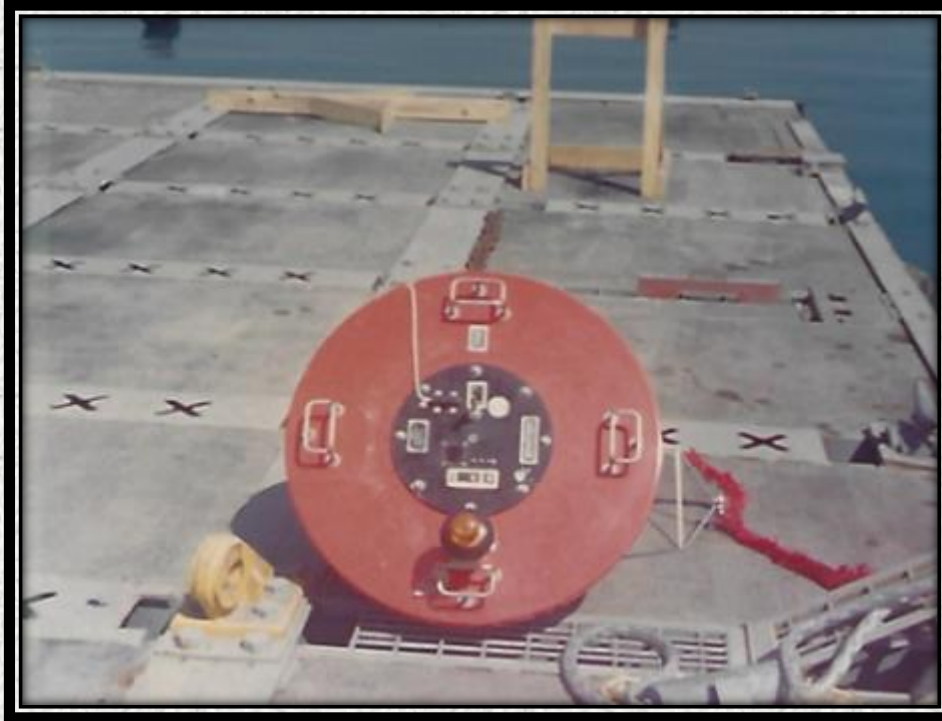
PSU-301(A) Patrolled inner harbor, shoreside facilities and designated zones outside the break walls in the open waters of the Persian Gulf



PSU-301(A) forever on patrol



PSU-301(A) assisted the U.S. Navy MIUW unit in the placement and maintenance of equipment



MARSEC Team assists boat operations with improved dock access

For the first couple of days boat crews had to climb up and down from the pier to gain access to dock side platform and boats. This was very inconvenient and dangerous, especially when carrying or transferring, equipment and/or supplies.

MARSEC personnel on foot patrol found a old, abandoned, deteriorating gangplank down the pier from our location, that had obviously been discarded.

MARSEC personnel quickly realized that with a little TLC and reconditioning, this gangplank could be utilized by our boat ops personnel to provide a better, more accessible way from the pier to the boat dock platform area. Al-Jubayl dock workers told MARSEC personnel that the gangplank was surplus debris and PSU-301(A) could have it. With the help of other PSU personnel, the gangplank were ultimately moved to our boat ops area for repair.

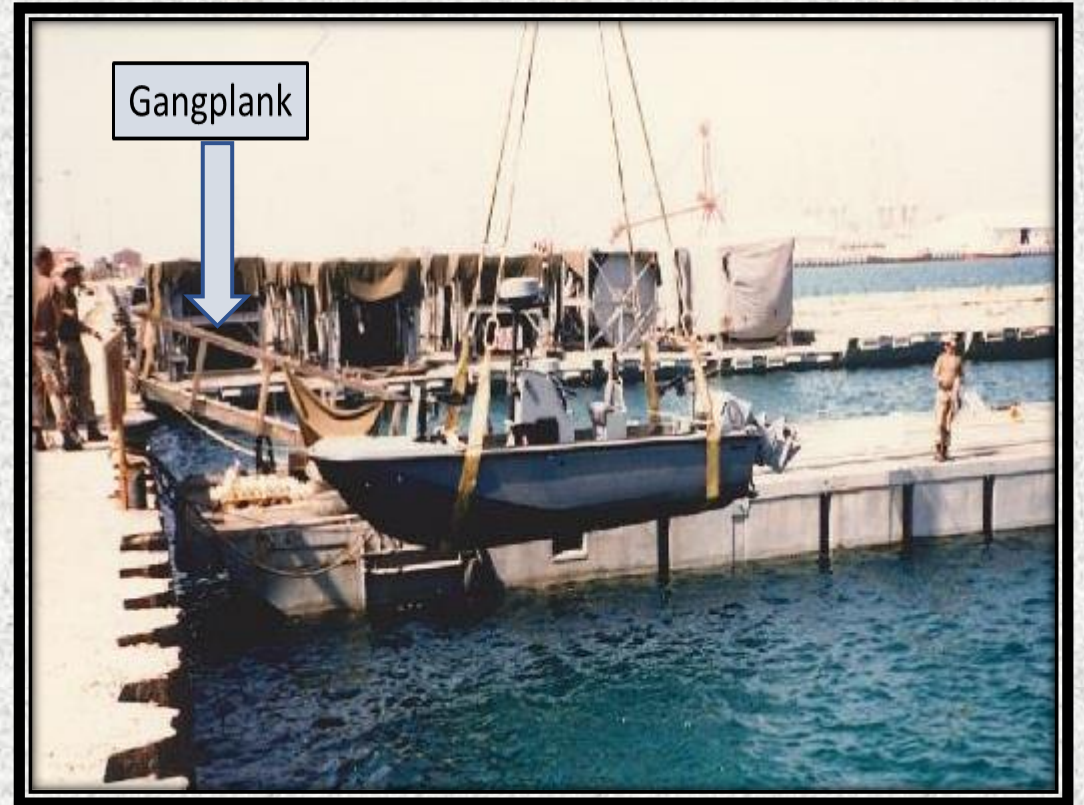
We didn't have the means or equipment available to us yet, so we had to straighten out old, rusty nails, to reinforce the gangplank, to achieve a minimal level of structural integrity and restore its usefulness. In addition, we reconfigured the railings with scrap metal rods, and duck taped various sections to brace them enough to provide the support we needed for a safer, easier access to the boat dock platform area.

Amazingly, this formerly discarded, reconditioned gangplank was still in place, and operational, upon our departure six months later. Great job, MARSEC Team.

Prior to obtaining surplus gangplank, climbing up and down from pier to boat dock was less than convenient and actually dangerous



The old, raggedy gangplank wasn't pretty but it did the job and was still in place upon our departure six months later



Within the first two days in Country, MARSEC personnel reinforce confidence in their ability to handle any situation and establish well-designed, secure outpost locations

When we first arrived in Saudi Arabia, many of the Coast Guard personnel both on site, and apparently at the HQ level, were very concerned about the potential for a international incident that may hamper our ability to perform our duties. As over a quarter of our unit personnel were sworn Police Officers in their civilian careers, many of whom were veteran officers with significant supervisory experience, we quickly addressed this issue.

We reminded our Command that we were more than familiar with interacting with people in a constructive way, and we were well aware of the very sensitive application of the “Use of Force”. We also assured them we would help the other members of our unit, with limited experience in this area, especially MARSEC personnel, in understanding and embracing it.

MARSEC personnel then proceeded to identify strategic locations for outposts, and proceeded in building the physical structures to fortify them. As with our other projects, we searched out, and retrieved, any materials we could find, to provide them the best environment to perform their important duties.

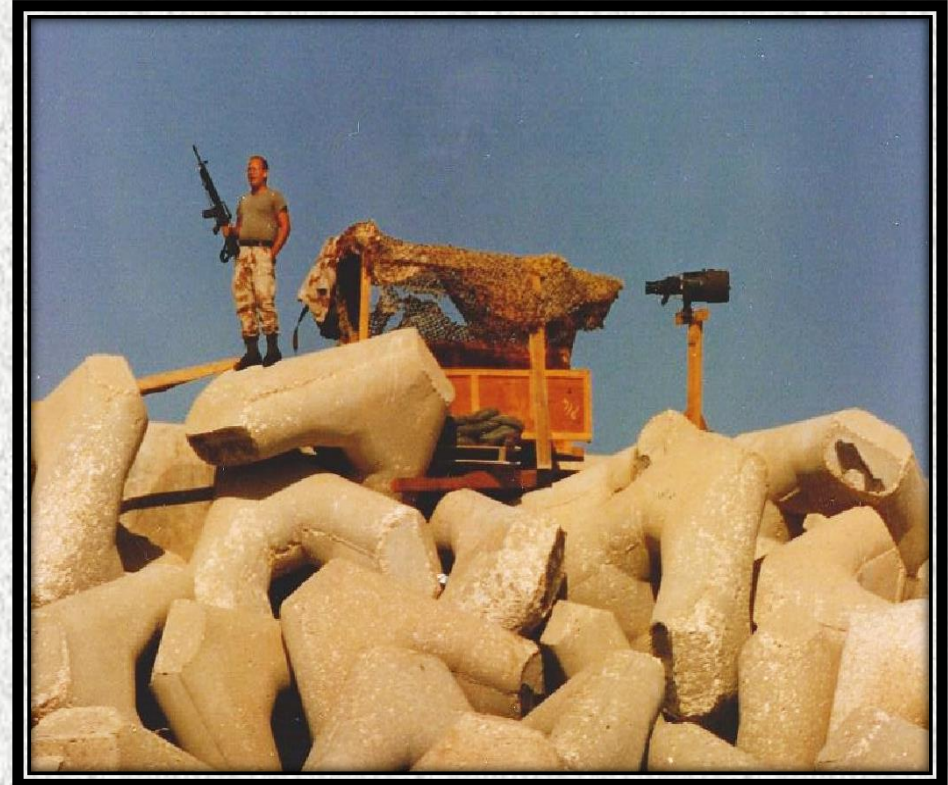
Consequently, after the establishment of the MARSEC posts, our PSU-301(A) unit members could now relax knowing that our camp had a level of protection, that would provide adequate security oversight.

Finally, true to our promise at the beginning of our deployment, not only did we not have an “International incident” during our deployment, we had in fact, established excellent relationships with all the military units and foreign nationals we interacted with.

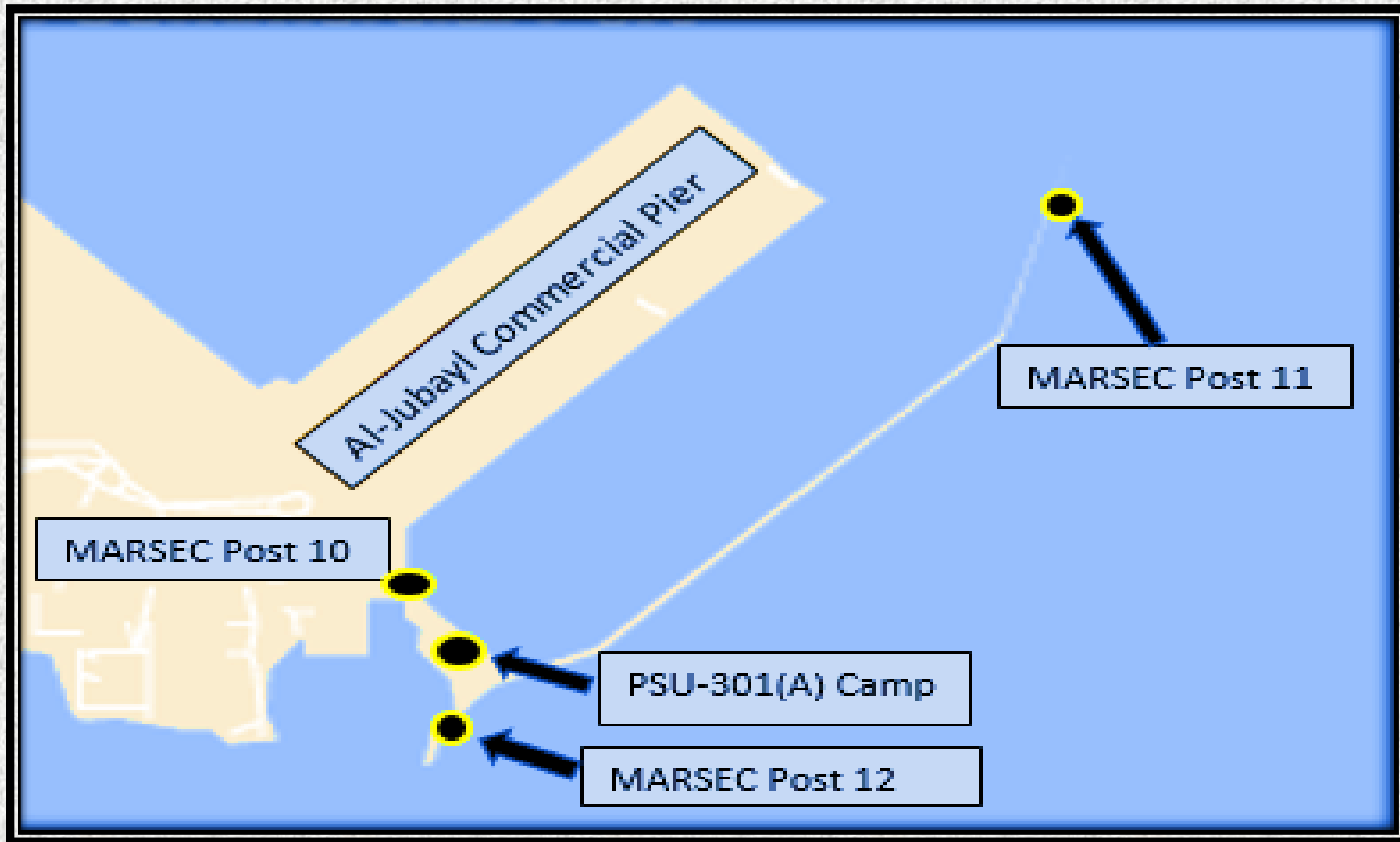
**The long, lonely walk to MARSEC Post 11,
the most solitary and isolated outpost in Al-Jubayl**



These other MARSEC outposts also provided shoreside security



MARSEC stationary outposts provided excellent shoreside security



Perpetual vigilance at MARSEC outpost was essential



PSU-301(A) establishes valuable relationship with Navy Seabees Late September 1990

We were very fortunate to have a talented Engineering Team in PSU-301(A) who were very skillful and competent. They were always accommodating with sharing their resources, but with a limited amount of support equipment such as circular saws, drills, hammers, etc., it was necessary to search out other avenues for obtaining construction tools and building supplies.

When our Command Master Chief Bill Vahey learned that a U.S. Navy, 24th Naval Mobile Construction Battalion, (NMCB) was located within our AOR, he went to visit them to see if they could assist us with constructing hardbacks for our tents on the pier.

FIMC Vahey met with the Seabees senior staff, who were very congenial, but indicated they were very busy, and involved in numerous support activities with other units. They informed us that many unit members were heading farther north in the next few days to assist with building roads and construction projects in support of ground personnel near the border.

Nevertheless, they told us they may be able to have a couple of their personnel come to our camp the next day, before they headed out, and help us get started.

PSU-301(A) commenced coordination of building projects

The next day a couple of Seabees, who had significant experience in constructing hardbacks, came over to our camp with some lumber, and equipment, and assisted us in erecting the hardback for one of our tents.

Due their excellent direction, we quickly took ownership, and actually, during the construction of the hardbacks, identified numerous members of our unit who had excellent carpentry skills. Knowing the Seabees were very busy with other projects, we thanked them for their help and informed them we could take it from there.

During this time, our Master Chief established an outstanding working relationship with the Seabees remaining in the Al-Jubayl AOR, and a special, personal friendship with their Senior Chief, who oversaw the Seabee's supply yard compound.

From that point on, as able, the Seabees were receptive to additional requests for borrowing equipment and tools, as well as support and supplies. This important, valuable relationship continued to grow and thrive, the entire time both units were in theatre.

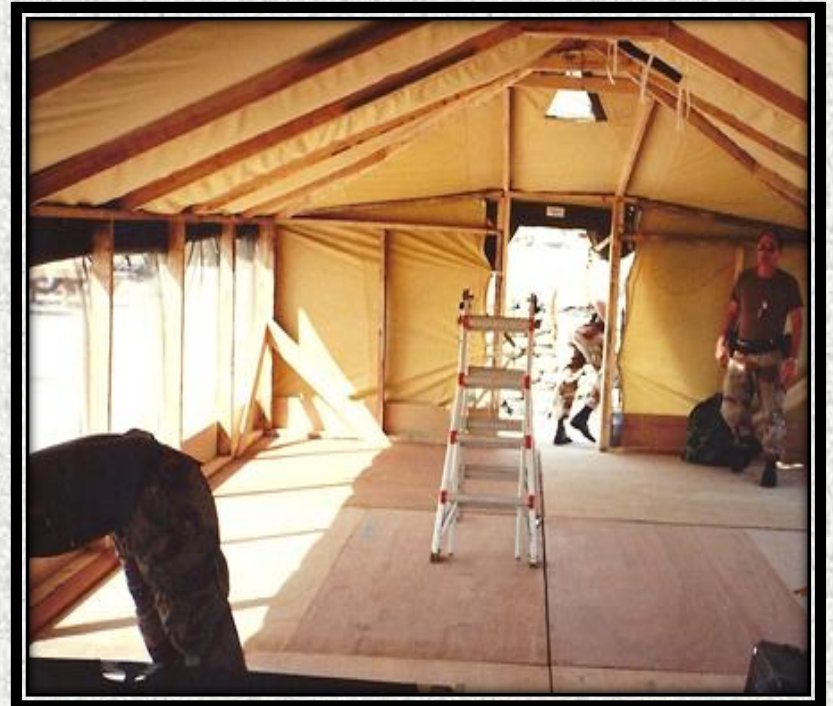
PSU-301(A) will be forever grateful for the friendship and support that the Seabee's afforded to us.

**PSU-301(A) and Navy Seabees constructing hardback for tents.
Thanks Seabees – U.S Navy 24th-NMCB**



"Construimus, Batuimus"

"We Build, We Fight"



**PSU-301(A) Charter Members of Al-Jubayl "Yacht Club"
Not quite 12,000 miles but it sure felt like it**



SECTION IV:

Desert Shield intensifies – Military buildup proceeds at tenacious pace PSU-301(A) members prepare for long deployment October 1990 through January 16, 1991

October 1990 through January 16, 1991, was extremely busy and, at a minimum, at least one TPSB boat crew conducted regular waterside patrols within the inner harbor focusing on the protection of critical assets and conducting defense readiness operations.

Additionally, at least two TPSB boat crews, sometimes as many as four during elevated alerts, patrolled the safety and security zones that were located outside of the break wall in the Persian Gulf. These patrols resulted in numerous interdictions of suspicious contacts and the frequent boarding's and searches of watercrafts.

We also assisted the Navy EOD and MIUWU (mobile inshore undersea warfare unit) as requested, in addition to performing security escort duties for merchant ships and other authorized ships and watercraft.

During this time we still had no idea how long we were going to be in Al-Jubayl so we continued to refine our operational capabilities, coordinated various training activities, and kept preparing our camp for the long haul.

U.S. Navy's Explosive Ordnance Disposal Team (EOD) Detachment 33, arrives in Al-Jubayl Early October 1990

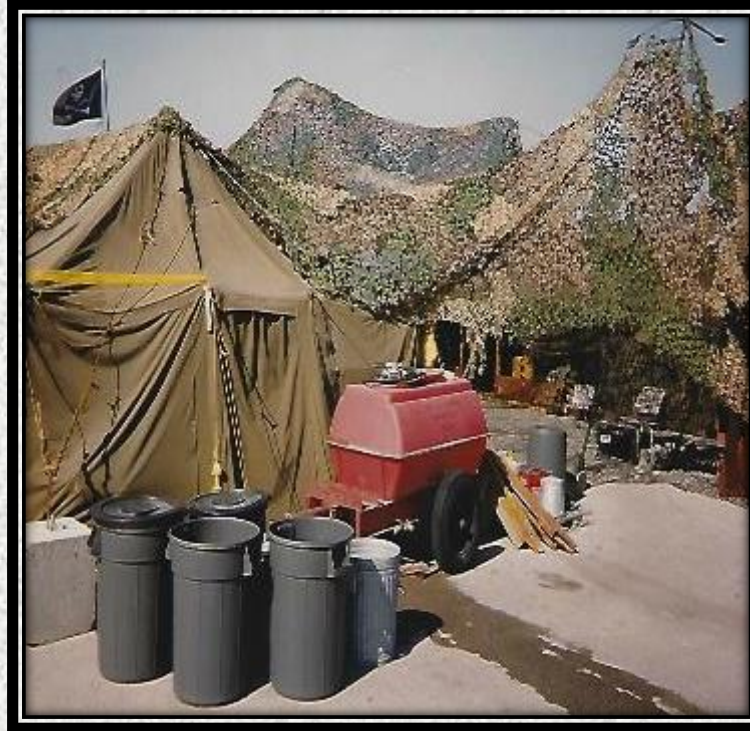
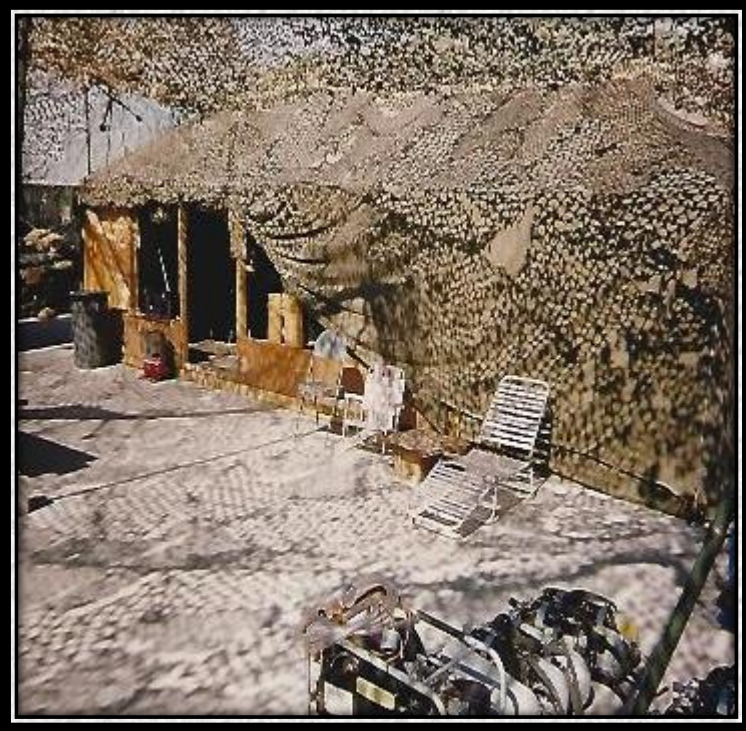
In early October 1990, the U.S. Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal team (EOD), Detachment 33, comprised of five navy divers, arrived at our camp.

They asked our Command if they could set up their encampment inside of our perimeter, knowing full well that we already had access control checkpoints in place and the inner and outer perimeter was patrolled by armed MARSEC personnel.

They also informed us that they would be heading out regularly, for a couple days at a time on operations, and would appreciate if we could keep a close eye on their tents, equipment, and property. This was not an unreasonable request as their camp site was directly adjacent to our operational area, and in close proximity to the PSU-301(A) crew tents.

Their request was granted and it was a win-win situation for both of us, as they provided us with the most relevant intelligence, and we in turn could assist them in their local operations as well. It was a pleasure working with them and we were very impressed by their expertise and appreciated their support.

U.S. Navy EOD Team set up their operations and camp within the PSU-301(A) perimeter and it proved to be a mutual benefit for both units



U.S. Navy EOD coordinated activities with us and the relationship that developed proved to be a significant, especially during boat crew changeout, when EOD team provided us an intel briefing with the most relevant, essential information.



Al-Jubayl Harbor Defense Command (HDC) Building and Saudi Coast Guard (SCG) Base of Operations

The Saudi Coast Guard (SCG) base of operations pier was few miles north of the PSU-301(A) location, in the general vicinity of the King Fahd industrial port command building. It was a short walk from their SCG pier to the extravagant, exceptionally outfitted, Harbor Defense Command (HDC) building.

Although the small Saudi Coast Guard structure on their pier was somewhat undeveloped, and minimally adequate, the Harbor Defense Command building was just the opposite, as it was very formidable in its outer appearance and obviously very well designed and constructed.

But was even more awe-inspiring was the luxurious inner elements. Without question, as the HDC building was striking on the outside, it was even more amazing on the inside, with polished floors of the finest marble and the highest grade of granite utilized throughout the building.

Additionally, it was more than apparent that the Saudi Coast Guard patrol boats were much better suited to the harsh environment than our TPSB “Raiders”, as they were equipped with cabins and a Bimini hardtop cover.

**Harbor Defense Command (HDC) building was impressive & unique.
USCG Captain John Olson, the Senior U.S. Coast Guard Liaison to the
Harbor Defense Command, viewed the port regularly from roof**



Equipped with a hardtop canopy and enclosed cabin, the Saudi patrol boats were much better suited for the harsh environment, than the open deck Port Security Unit “Raiders”



Coordination of activities with Saudi Harbor Defense Command (HDC) and Saudi Coast Guard (SCG)

PSU-301(A) provided a liaison from our unit to the Harbor Defense Command Center (HDC), and the Saudi Coast Guard (SCG) in return provided us one member for each PSU-301(A) boat for support, and to act as a interpreter.

The Harbor Defense Command and the PSU-301(A) Command Post were always in direct contact with each other via radio, and by landline phone. When one of our boats was involved in an interdiction, suspicious activity or incident, the HDC would, as able, quickly dispatch a Saudi Coast Guard boat to back us up. At various times the Saudi Coast Guard would occasionally confiscate items, remove crew members from the detained boat, and at times, direct the target boat to accompany them to their “impound” area near their SCG base area.

Although the addition of the Saudi Coast Guardsman on our boat was well meaning, and could be helpful at times, only some of them spoke English well, and others appeared to be minimally trained, and somewhat indifferent to our activities.

Additionally, at other times, triggering more concern on our part, is when some of them, as they were Sunni Muslims, became overly aggressive when interacting with DHOWS, and other watercraft, whose boat crews consisted of Shia Muslims. Nevertheless, they would quickly acknowledge our requests and direction in maintaining control of the situation and helping us accomplish our objective.

PSU-301(A) adapting to the harsh environment on waterside patrols

From the first day we arrived in country, boat crews patrolled continually, normally on four-hour shifts, and during high alerts and after the start of Desert Storm, on six-hour shifts, without the benefit of any cover, such as a Bimini top, to shield them from the blistering sun during the day. Boat crews improvised by utilizing ponchos and other available items to provide shade and protection from the sun.

Fortunately, in November, we were able to get foul weather gear from the marines, for use during the cold, wet winter nights. Eventually the Mustang Survival Suits arrived in mid-December, and we had a more enhanced level of personal protection from the weather.

Although both the foul weather gear and the Mustang Survival suits were useful, they only provided a minimal level of effectiveness, and relief, from the inclement weather, in that these original TPSB, 22' Boston Whalers were not designed with protection from the elements in mind. This was no more evident as when the monsoon rains came, and it rained for just about two weeks, from the last week of December until the second week of January.

Nevertheless, our Transportable Port Security Boats (TPSB) proved to be effective in other ways as they were outfitted with twin 155 hp Evinrude outboard engines, with a maximum speed of just under 50 knots (approximately 57 mph), providing us the speed and maneuverability to quickly respond to incidents, suspicious activities and unidentified contacts.

The original PSU's, 22' Boston Whaler "Raiders", were not outfitted with a overhead canopy or cabin and, consequently, were not designed with protection from the extreme, harsh weather in mind



Upon return to USA after war, and during debriefing at USCG Base at Governors Island, PSU-301(A) crew members request improvements to TPSB

During the PSU-301(A) post operations debrief in late March 1991, at the USCG Base at Governors Island, the great majority of boat crews made various recommendations, the most prevalent being the need to equip future versions on these TPSB boats with a Bimini, or Hard Top, Canopy/Shell cover.

We were very happy to learn, many years later, that the Coast Guard had considered our recommendations, and in the late 1990's equipped the new PSU, 25-foot TPSB's, with a Bimini Canopy and other upgrades.

Although this transition to the 25-foot TPSB was a important step forward for the PSU's, the Coast Guard realized other shortcomings with this craft during the PSU's deployment to Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) in 2003. Again, as our unit expressed years before, returning members of those units over the following subsequent years, expressed their concerns with the TPSB's ability to shield the boat crews from the elements, and made additional recommendations for improvements.

Consequently, The Coast Guard then decided to further improve the design of the TPSB and the 32-foot TPSB was created, with crew protection and comfort in mind, to further address the boat crews exposure to the environment and elements.

This 32-foot TPSB, still in use today, has many improvements and upgrades, among them a partially enclosed cabin area and a hardtop canopy/cover.

USCG Evolution of the PSU Transportable Port Security Boat (TPSB)



22-foot PSU - TPSB
Open Deck
No cover
Utilized in 1991 Gulf War
“Desert Shield - Desert Storm”



27-foot PSU - TPSB
Open Deck
Canvas Bimini cover
Utilized in 2003 Iraq War
“Iraqi Freedom”



32-foot PSU - TPSB
Partially enclosed cabin
Hardtop cover
Utilized in present day for
“Defense Readiness Operations”

Assimilation to inclement weather and dietary concerns First few weeks of October 1990

The extreme hot weather during the early months, with temperatures reaching into to the 110's, and the blistering sun, presented challenges and various heat related issues and illnesses. The call and direction to "Hydrate" was heard numerous times during the day.

In that the great majority of our unit was from the Buffalo, New York area, and within 100 miles of it, we were mostly use to blizzards, snow and cold, and most of us had never been to a desert in our life, or experienced extreme heat.

We had received a briefing by medical personnel at Camp Perry, regarding thermoregulation and how we would need to maintain a steady, satisfactory body temperature. They also informed us that in this extreme heat and desert environment, the exposure to hotter than average conditions, could result in various illnesses, including heat cramps, heat exhaustion, heatstroke, and hyperthermia.

We were also informed and encouraged to carry a lot of water with us. Accordingly in this very hot weather, we had to get use to drinking warm and sometimes hot water, and it never seemed to quench our thirst.

Nevertheless, we knew we had to drink it, and stay hydrated, or risk getting potentially very sick, which required treatment and attention by our medical personnel. Unfortunately, a couple members of our unit became extremely sick and had to be treated and hospitalized at the U.S. Navy Fleet Hospital 5, located within our AOR.

Assimilation to inclement climate and dietary concerns (cont.)

Additionally, the change in our eating habits, and the limited assortment and quality of the locally obtained available food being digested by the crew, including the high calorie content MRE's (Meals-Ready-to-Eat), caused various ailments, and many gastrointestinal afflictions.

Some of the locally obtained vegetables and lettuce that were made available to us, were apparently grown using fertilizers that did not meet the acceptable food hygiene requirements. This issue came to our attention after numerous PSU-301(A) members got very sick.

We were quickly advised what we could eat, and not eat, by our unit medical staff, HSCS Greg "Doc" Kaszubowski and HS1 Diane Avery. They spent well over a full week addressing this issue, and the resulting "E. coli" symptoms, and treating the sick unit personnel. In fact, on the entrance to our medical tent was a sign, "Take two Motrin and don't eat the salad". As with the other unit members who suffered heat related issues, the more extreme cases involving gastrointestinal infections, also had to be treated at the U.S. Naval Fleet Hospital 5.

Nevertheless, our unit medical staff, "Doc" Kaszubowski and Diane Avery, were always quick to aid any ill or injured member, and were always providing us the most relevant information to prevent and address illnesses before they became more severe.

In fact, because of "Doc" and Nurse Diane, the great majority of us were all quickly put back in action after their quick, skillful diagnosis and knowledgeable treatment.

**“Doc” and Diane handled most of our units illnesses & injuries,
US Navy Fleet Hospital 5 and Hospital Ship handled the others**



**PSU-301(A) TPSB boat escorting Hospital Ship USNS Mercy into port
U.S. Navy Fleet Hospital 5 was located in our AOR**



PSU-301(A) Admin staff was vitally important in contributing to unit personnel emotional stability and unit well-being

The PSU-301(A) admin section had one senior Yeoman and a 3rd class Petty Officer. They had to build the admin section basically from scratch into something functional, this effort took the better part of a month or more. Most of everything they needed for functioning office was received slowly and over time. The office was set up in borrowed space when we first got to Al-Jubayl, and then all admin operations was moved to the pier area once the war started.

During this six month deployment, admin was actively involved in setting up personnel support issues, transportation arrangements, leasing of vehicles and coordinating mail delivery to the PSU-301(A) location. The volume of mail received in the theater and all the “Any Serviceman” mail coming in, created various logistical challenges, which our Admin staff was able to overcome. Accordingly, mail call was always very important and a nice morale boost in hearing from the families and the home front.

But even more important was admins ability to quickly address rotational issues due to personnel matters in relation to emergency leave and replacement/reassignment of personnel due to injuries, illnesses and hardships.

Admin personnel, as with medical personnel, quickly addressed the unit’s complex emotional and mental well-being issues as needed. This effort was led by YN1 Ron Noce and his staff who did a great job with the limited resources they had to work with. SEMPER PARATUS!

Adaptation to Saudi culture and restrictive surroundings

During our pre-deployment training at Camp Perry we were informed on what we might expect, and need to understand, while in Saudi Arabia, regarding the Saudi culture and their strong religious beliefs. As well, we were told, that in 1990, Saudi Arabia was still a very isolated country and the majority of the westerners and foreign nationals, were pretty much only support workers, mostly in the oil business, and generally segregated in restricted housing complexes.

First and foremost, we were directed to recognize and respect these cultural differences, while maintaining our integrity and ability to work within this environment. We were reminded of this every morning, and four other times during the day, when their call to prayer would come over the pole mounted loudspeakers located throughout the area. This “adhan” sounded almost hypnotic in its melody, while reinforcing that we were in the Middle East and in their “world”.

Additionally, while patrolling on the water, some of the Saudi Coast Guard personnel, who were fervent Muslims, had to be dropped off on land with their prayer rug, when the call to prayer was initiated. We watched as they carefully positioned the top points of the prayer rug towards the direction of Mecca, Saudi Arabia and then alternately prostrating themselves while kneeling and reciting prayers. A short time later, after their prayer time finished, we picked them back up and continued the patrol.

One of our first PSU-301(A) building projects: The Weight/Workout Room Mid-October, 1990

After our brief, but great, experience with the SEABEE's, in working with them in constructing the hardback's for a couple of our tents, we quickly realized we had some very talented individuals in our unit with highly developed construction skills.

We thanked the SEABEE's for their help and took sole ownership in all our building projects from that point forward, while maintaining contact with their Senior Chief at their supply yard.

During our travels throughout the port and pier we quickly identified lumber and other items that had been abandoned and were awaiting disposal. As with the old, dilapidated gangplank, port workers were more than happy when we would relocate these items to our camp and put them to use

. The prior week, we had heard from the marines about a army supply warehouse being opened up in Dhahran, which also had morale equipment, including games, sports equipment and recreational items. The next day we got permission to use our pickup truck and drove the 65 miles south to Dhahran.

When we arrived at the warehouse we spoke with the warehouse manager and She was very sympathetic to our request and provided us with games, sports equipment and most importantly a full length barbell bar, dumbbell's, and several plates of weights.

When we got back to our camp we didn't have room in the rec tent for the weights so we set them up outside, on the side of the tent. Consequently, working out with the weights under the hot sun we knew we needed to build a room. Hence, the weight room was built.

We started acquiring discarded lumber for framing and even used reclaimed rough-sawn board for workout room walls



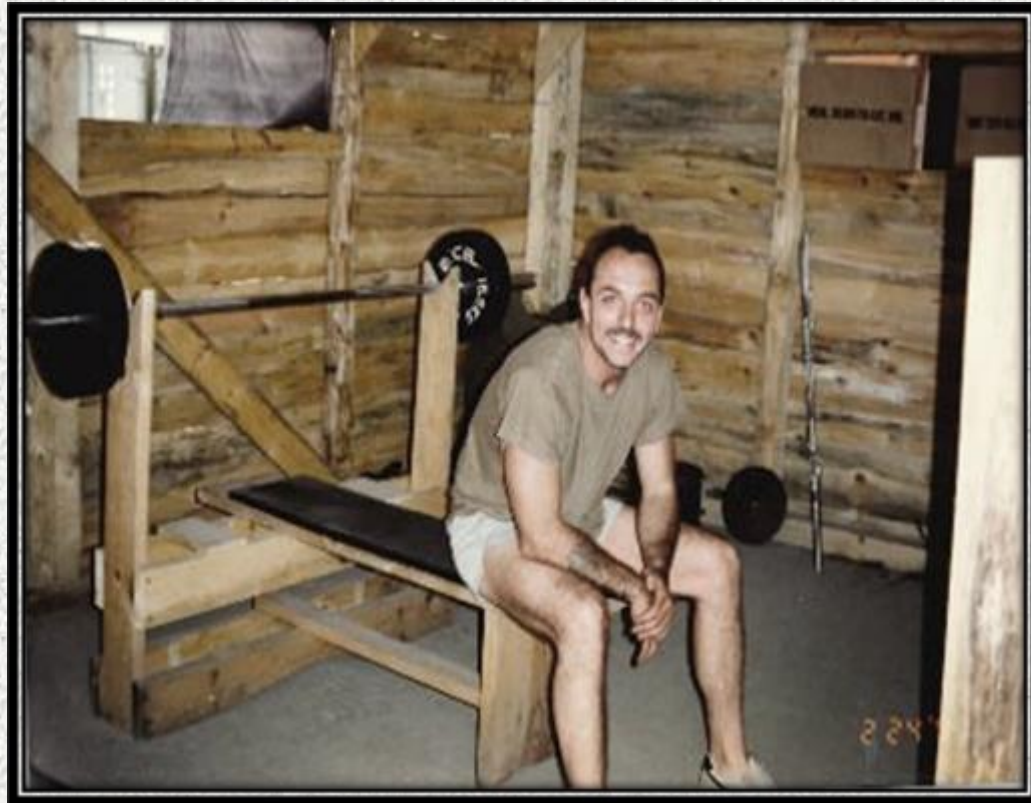
**MK3 Tom O'Brien & PS1 Ken Bienko,
Architects of the workout room, complete finishing touches**



**Weight/Workout room completed
Facilitated physical fitness training and great boost to morale**



PS3 Dave Greenway & ET2 John Badger were among the many unit members who used the weight room regularly



PSU-301(A) established great relationship with Marines

Early on, Coxswain PS1 Dan Dill and his boat crew established a significant, and very valuable relationship with a USMC Gunnery Sergeant in our AOR. This relationship quickly grew stronger and turned into genuine friendship between the Marines and PSU-301(A) members. The “Gunny” and his troops appreciated the PSU support, and we, unquestionably, appreciated their support.

As the Marines received food, supplies and equipment they always went out of their way to see if there was any thing we could use. Although we were eating the MRE’s for only a few weeks, the only ones anyone still wanted to eat were the Chicken à la King or the Turkey Diced w/ Gravy (nicknamed "Wild Turkey Surprise).

A deal was reached, in which one of our Coast Guard cooks, SS2 Henry “Curly” Marin, was sent to work in the Marine field kitchen, and from then on the Marines provided PSU-301(A) with access to hot food. We were very appreciative for the deep-dish tins, filled with hot, tasty food, and other food items which helped resolved our food issue.

Additionally, this Gunny put us in contact with other Marines in their supply department and warehouse who further assisted and supported us in getting foul weather gear and other items to enhance our ability to cope with the harsh environment.

To say the least, PS1 Dan Dill and his crew’s contacts, were key to improving our unit’s productivity, and well being, and well-received and appreciated by all our PSU-301(A) personnel.

Tanks, helicopters, armaments, and equipment arrive regularly Late October 1990

It was also very reassuring by the end of October, 1990 when the Military Sea Transportation Service (MSTS) ships, as well as the other military and commercial cargo ships, began arriving regularly with their extremely valuable cargo. Which included, among other things; armaments, bombs, support equipment, tanks, helicopters and armed forces personnel from various military units.

As we escorted them to their berth, the crew members on these ships would acknowledge our presence from above, while leaning over their weather deck, and express their appreciation for the escort, as we did to them for the valuable cargo they were delivering. It was actually uplifting to see how excited they were in reaching port and knowing their contributions were so important to the war effort.

Likewise on our end, it also boosted our morale as well, to see all the M1A1 Abrams tanks and other armored vehicles being unloaded; attack helicopters offloaded, outfitted and staged; and various support equipment and supplies delivered, could never be understated.

It was also a pleasure to interact with the many military personnel arriving on these ships and thank them for joining and supporting the war effort.

Always a great day when the MSTs ships, and numerous military and commercial cargo ships arrived, with their valuable military equipment, armaments, cargo, and supplies



Without question, it was always great seeing the military equipment and armaments being offloaded and these “bad boys” heading north to the border preparing for the impending ground war



After military and cargo ships completed off load, PSU-301(A) personnel retrieved discarded dunnage and reallocated it to the “Lumberyard” at our encampment

After providing a security escort to the military and cargo ships to their berths, and seeing all the dunnage and lumber being discarded on the pier at the off load, we quickly recognized how we could put this dunnage and wood to use to improve our operational and living conditions.

We would regularly check the schedule of when ships were coming in and plan ahead on who from our unit would be available to retrieve the wood for us.

When the ships offloading was completed, PSU-301(A) personnel, who had previously offered to pick up dunnage, were alerted and quickly responded to the pier and loaded the discarded dunnage on our truck and transported it to our camp, where it was stockpiled in our PSU-301(A) “lumberyard”.

At first we only visualized utilizing the dunnage for barricades and to further fortify our tents and ops area, but we quickly realized we could move forward with other projects as well, and solicited ideas from our fellow unit members and prioritized our efforts.

At first, our command staff was somewhat apprehensive on what our intentions were, but they quickly came onboard, as they realized these activities would keep everyone very busy and lessen the anxiety some of them were feeling realizing that a formidable enemy was only a short distance from our location.

PSU-301(A) personnel daily collected discarded dunnage and lumber from the pier after a completed offload



The quality and assortment of discarded dunnage was mindboggling

A few of us had filled the role of Facility Inspector, while assigned to Marine Safety Office as reservists in the U.S., and had previously attended the USCG Explosive Handling School in Yorktown Virginia. Accordingly, we were well aware of the Federal requirements for using wood and timber for securing, loading and stowing of hazardous and explosive cargo. Shifting cargo presents hazards such as damage to the vessel up to and including explosions. It is important that all precautions be taken by the vessel to protect cargo from shock, fire, high temperature, and moisture.

Consequently, Merchant and Military cargo ships need to follow specific procedures by which military explosives are effectively blocked, braced, and tommed aboard merchant-type ships. This is accomplished by requiring the use of wood structures for bracing, framing, decking and separation boards, commonly referred to as dunnage.

The various materials that are used to support and protect hazardous and explosive cargo in a ship's hold, include 4 by 4-inch timbers, 2 by 4-inch timbers, 2 by 10-inch planking and the use of plywood of a minimum 3/4-inch thickness or a single layer of 2-inch lumber. All of which is ideal for constructing buildings and structures.

We would routinely review the next days agenda of the incoming ships requiring escorts and be extra keen to the ones carrying hazardous or explosive cargo and have off-duty PSU-301(A) personnel retrieve the discarded dunnage and wood, after the offload.

**Dunnage was stockpiled at our camp “Lumber Yard”,
and in time, became a treasure trove of lumber for us**



Fortifying and protecting camp and operations area in event of air attack

One of our very first projects utilizing this new lumber, was to add layers of protection to our operations and living area. Although we had sandbagged many important areas already, we quickly realized and identified the ability to fortify the outside areas of our tents and operation areas by utilizing the 4 by 4” lumber.

In that the Iraqi forces were only less than ten minutes from our location by air, and in the event of a air attack, with the potential for low-flying aircraft strafing fire, we surrounded our tents with “sand-filled, three foot wide lumber boxes. We knew this would be a temporary fix, but we believed this could possibly help us survive an initial air attack before our military attack aircraft to the south of us, and attack aircraft from the ships in the Persian Gulf, could respond.

Fortunately for us, there was never an Iraqi air attack on our location, other than the “SCUD” missile attacks, from the middle of January through the end of February 1991. But, in retrospect, realizing later how vulnerable we were the first couple of months, these lumber box barriers, proved to be a very wise, prudent effort.

Moreover, and just as important, this first construction effort led to many more building projects, with the added benefit of lessening the anxiety some members were experiencing, and keeping everyone very busy, and not allowing for the time to think about, or realize, how vulnerable we actually were.

Sand-filled, lumber walled barriers, were constructed around operational areas and the crew tents for protection in the event of a potential low-flying aircraft strafing attack



PSU-301(A) finds obtaining vital supplies was very challenging October through November 1990

This connection with the Seabees was very significant, as requesting and receiving supplies through traditional channels was hampered by various delays and logistical concerns.

Before we had left Camp Perry, our unit had been briefed on customs and interactions with locals. This was especially appropriate for our three female members as there were many restrictions in place that prohibited and discouraged interactions between US personnel and Saudi males and females.

Although our Supply Officer, LCDR Carol Rivers, was proactive in obtaining supplies through the Marines, and occasional trips with them to Bahrain to procure boat parts and equipment, it was a slow, arduous process. In addition, attempting to purchase supplies at a local hardware store, or the “Super Store”, in town was also challenging as the lack of availability, and/or quality of equipment was, at times, very questionable.

Additionally, PSU-301(A) had to provide male escorts to accompany LCDR Rivers, as being a female she was not allowed to drive in country, and many clerks would not communicate with her at first. This escort duty usually fell on PS3 Pete Galley, and SK2 Art Haggerty, who acted as a Liaisons for LCDR Rivers, along sometimes with a PSU Engineer, and, at other times, a armed MARSEC member.

To say the least, the “Super Store” in Al-Jubayl, was very different and unlike any of the big box stores in U.S.A. Also, at the Local hardware store in town, many times the item or equipment needed was of a lesser desired quality or unavailable



PSU-301(A) Supply Officer and her staff establish credibility and important, productive, relationship with local merchants

During one of the first visits to the hardware store, LCDR Rivers was introduced to the owners son, and told him what was needed. He smiled at her, and turned to the PSU-301(A) Engineer that was standing next to her, and directed a question to him, ignoring LCDR Rivers. The Engineer looked to LCDR Rivers for an answer, and he told the store owner her response. The Saudi merchant gave the paperwork to the engineer to sign off on, and the engineer promptly gave it to LCDR Rivers, who reviewed it and signed it.

We had been previously informed at Camp Perry that there were going to be cultural challenges and situations like this may be an issue with female members of our unit when we first got in country and to do our best in working within this environment.

Subsequent trips went a little better each time and eventually the owner spoke to LCDR Rivers directly, although she ensured her liaison, or accompanying engineer, were also included in the conversation, to respect their culture. Eventually, LCDR Rivers was acknowledged more directly and was given the paperwork to sign.

It is interesting to note that after a while, when LCDR Rivers and her escorts entered the store, the hardware shop owner would clap his hands and say to one of his workers, “My Commander is here, bring us some tea.”

PSU-301(A) Support Division Officer, LCDR Carol Rivers, established important contact with hardware store owner & son (on right)



**PSU-301(A) Members were respectful of the local fishing community and our environmental impact on their area
PS3 Linda Oberkrieser relocates a turtle to a safer habitat
LT Tom Anderson frees a turtle that had been tangled up in a fishing net**



Establishing and maintaining Safety and Security Zones

Investigation of unauthorized activities - Interdiction of suspicious watercraft

When PSU-301(A) arrived, and quickly deployed its boats, there was much boating traffic in the Al-Jubayl harbor area and port AOR. This included mostly fishing boats, but also include various other watercraft.

In that we were all Coast Guard Reserves, most of the boat crews had limited experience in boat interdiction and boarding, in a hostile environment. The majority of this knowledge, was limited to what they gained at the Combat Skills course or at the Pre-Deployment training.

Although we had many members of our unit who were police officers in their civilian careers, and had significant experience in felony cars stops, the majority of them were on the MARSEC team at the beginning of our deployment.

Consequently, the boarding and searching of boats, especially with the unstableness of the boat, rocking back and forth on the water, became a dangerous daily activity, which had to be carefully and cautiously handled.

Our boat crews quickly came up to speed with the on-the-job training and established safety and security zones, eventually curtailing the majority of unauthorized boating activity within the first month, in the restricted areas.

PSU-301(A) Boat crews were always ready for action



Fishing DHOW's were among the boating traffic in the Persian Gulf that were intercepted, detained, boarded and searched



Protection of critical assets located throughout AOR

Besides providing escorts to ships entering and leaving port, responding to suspicious activities, and/or, interdicting and addressing unauthorized boating traffic, one of our very important duties was the protection of critical assets.

One of the vitally important assets in our AOR, that we routinely patrolled and protected, was the Al-Jubayl Desalination Plant. This plant was located on shoreside, with its water intakes extending into the Persian Gulf, with its very high concentration of salt water.

The Al-Jubayl desalination plant, was one of the largest in the world during the Persian Gulf War, and even larger today, changes salt water into potable water and supplied the military personnel and residents with drinking water, as well as providing water for industrial, commercial and horticultural projects.

Other important facilities we patrolled and protected, were associated with the petrochemical industry and their ability to export and transfer of products to various bulk oil tanker ships including the huge ocean going supertankers.

Protecting all these facilities, and providing them the security to remain operational in the Port of Al-Jubayl, was extremely important and vital to the war effort, and the Saudi Arabia economy and their ability to provide these important products to the global oil and gas industry supply chain.

In the Middle East, the Desalination Plants are just as valuable and important as the “Black Gold” found under the sand



PSU-301(A) conducts “live fire” training exercises with USMC Early November 1990

PSU-301(A) Operations personnel, and the USMC Staff, went to great lengths to get permission for us to conduct live fire training for our personnel. PSU-301(A) Operation Officers LT. Ed Hludzinski and LT. Tobey Morison met with the Saudi Arabian Admiral, responsible for activities in the Al Jubayl AOR, and requested his assistance in authorizing the operation.

LT.'s Hludzinski and Morison provided the Admiral and his staff an overview of the procedures that would be followed, with an emphasis on safety, in addition to the prospective scheduled time periods, personnel and weapons that will that would be involved.

The LT.'s then addressed a few of the Admiral's concerns, and the Admiral directed his staff to prepare a letter with his concurrence and have it provided to all the various chain of military commands, including the Al-Jubayl Port Operations management, for further review and processing.

A short time later, after numerous interactions between the USMC, USCG, USN, Saudi Military, and the Port Operations staff, the final authorization was approved to schedule live fire exercises in November, 1990. These live fire training exercises, in coordination with USMC, USN and PSU-301(A) personnel, were conducted in the Persian Gulf during the first week of November 1990.

It proved to be a great training exercise, and further firmly established our credibility with the USMC Unit personnel in Al-Jubayl, in support of the them in securing the port.

PSU-301(A) engages in more cross-training with USMC at every opportunity November 1990

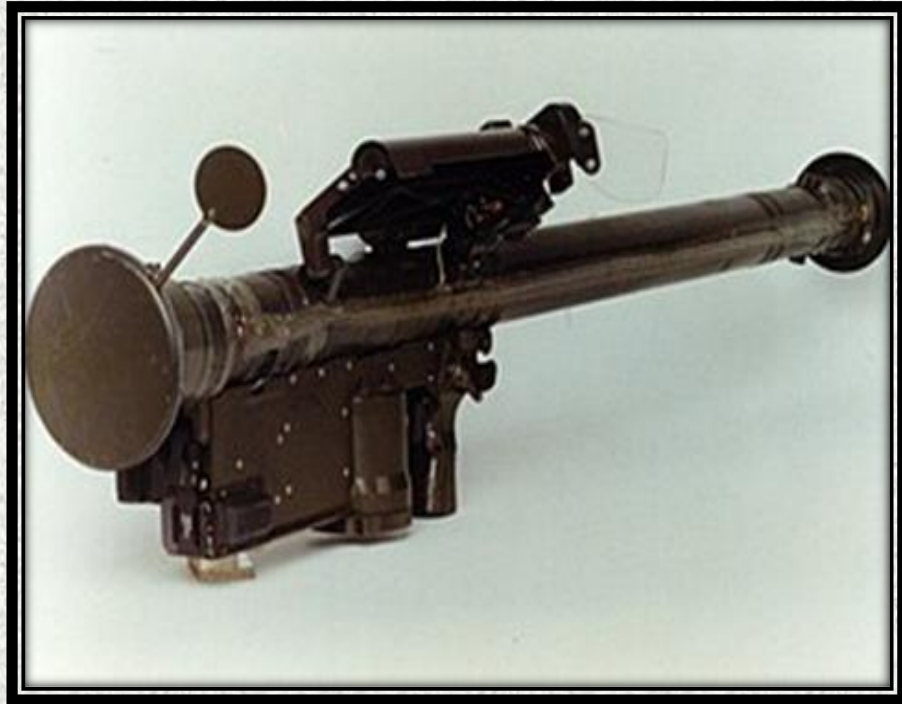
This live fire exercise led to many more cross-training opportunities with the Marines, one of which was weapon familiarization, when they assigned one Marine per shift, to supplement our personnel at the remote MARSEC Post 11 location. The Marines that were assigned to that location, besides armed with their M-16, were also, most of the time, armed with a portable air defense FIM-92 Stinger missile handheld launcher.

These young Marines were more than happy to provide familiarization training to our personnel with this American man-portable air-defense system (MANPADS), a weapon the majority of us had very limited (we had some former marines in our unit), if any, experience with. We quickly learned that although this passive surface-to-air missile launcher can be shouldered fired by a single operator, it is better suited for a two man team operation, and if need be we could assist them, if, and/or, as requested.

The more we interacted with the young Marines the more we all learned about each others procedures and operations. As they knew we were all older reservists, and they were all younger active duty Marine's, stationed at Camp Pendleton in Southern CA, the more we interacted with them the more we respected, and appreciated, each other.

I am relatively sure, after their interactions and experiences with us, they always had good things to say about Coast Guard Port Security Units.

**USMC assigned one Marine, with “Stinger” to supplement MARSEC Post 11
MK3 Mike Lafko received FIM-92 Stinger missile familiarization training**



**Developing and improving our operational efficiency,
PSU-301(A) began our next building project: The “Boathouse”
Mid-November 1990**

Always looking to improve our surroundings and operational efficiency, several suggestions were made by PSU-301(A) staff and personnel, one of which was from our Boatswain Mate Chief, Jim Terry, and numerous boat crew personnel.

Until that point in time, pre-patrol briefings were held inside, and/or, next to the morale rec tent, which was marginally adequate, and many times would disrupt crew downtime.

Their recommendation was to construct a “Boathouse,” type structure that could provide a chart table, storage area for equipment, benches, and an area to accommodate twenty people.

After discussing the proposal with the Command Cadre, the Boatswain Chief and Boat crews, a plan was developed for initiating the construction. After agreeing on the best location, and surveying the available scrap dunnage lumber we had stockpiled, we proceeded with the construction of the “Boathouse.”

It is important to note without the support of our Commanding Officer, CDR Scott McCone and FIMC Bill Vahey, the “Boathouse” and subsequent projects would never had happened. To them we owe our utmost gratitude.

Site selected for placement of future boathouse to provide unobstructed view or inner harbor and access points



The daily cutting and drilling through 4 by 4" dunnage lumber, during the building of the Boathouse, was a workout



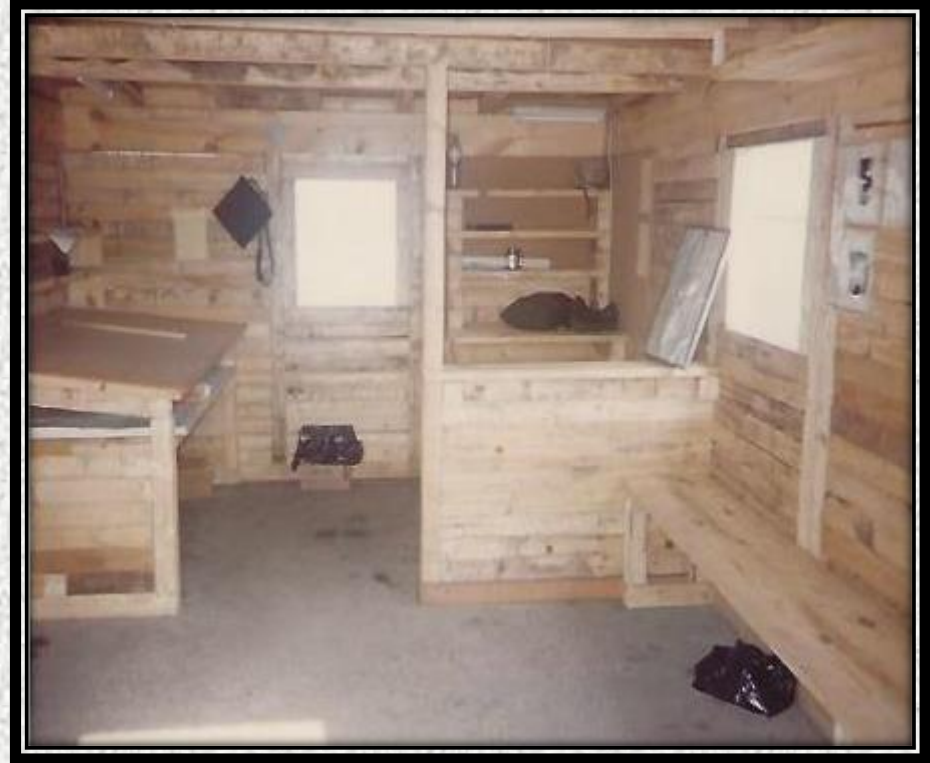
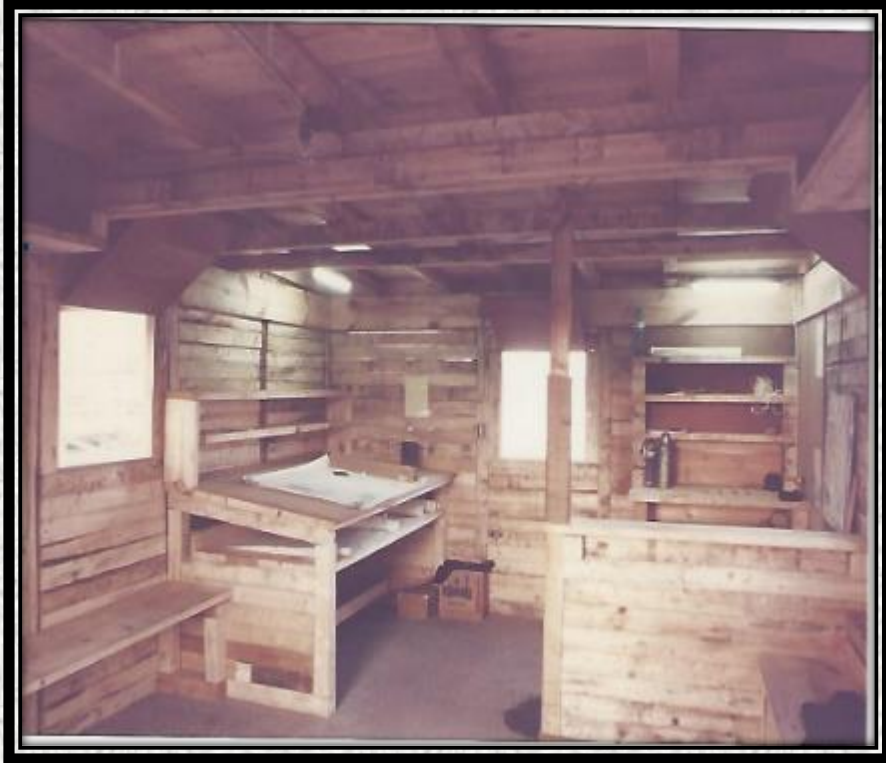
**Framing and construction of boathouse begins
The usage of 4 by 4" dunnage lumber for vertical posts and
cross sections, created one sturdy, rock-solid structure**



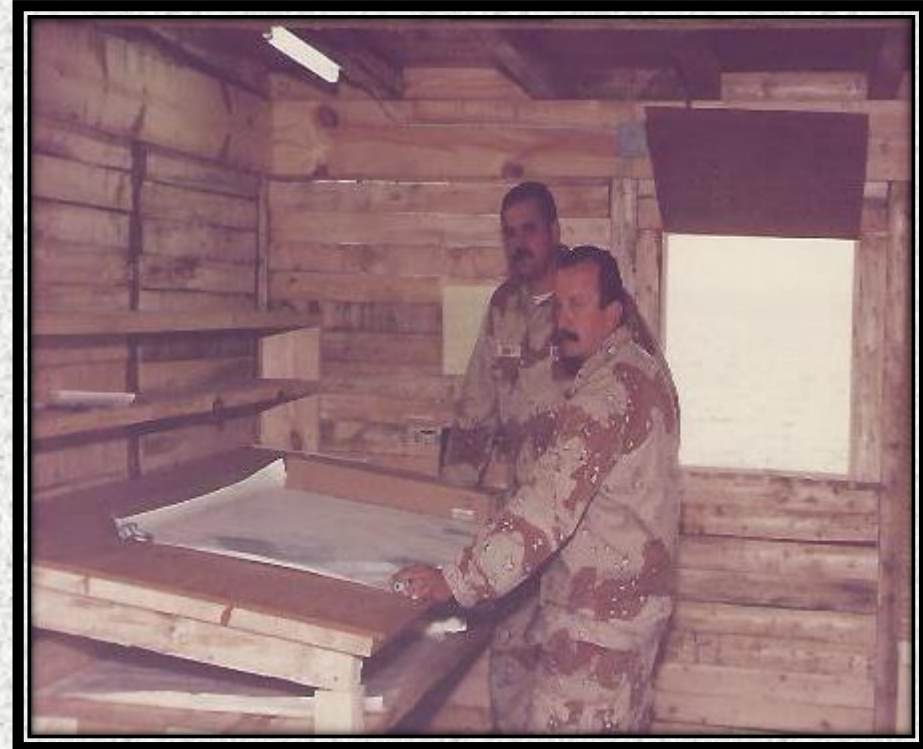
**Approximately one week after construction began:
We have a boathouse!**



Inside of boathouse completed, as requested, with chart table, storage area for equipment, benches, and an area to accommodate twenty people



**CWO Ron Ott making a “Nautical Rope Fender” inside boathouse
Chart table put to use by two of the Boathouse builders**



View from boathouse observation deck



**PSU-301(A) Commander Scott McCone assists with placement of sign
PSU-301(A) Boathouse completed and fully operational**



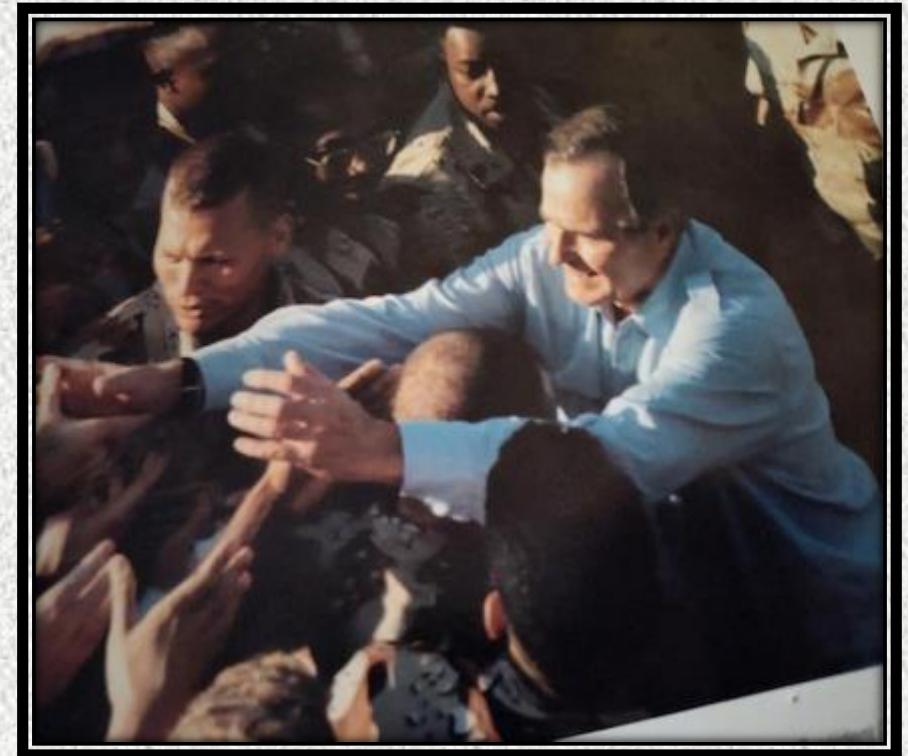
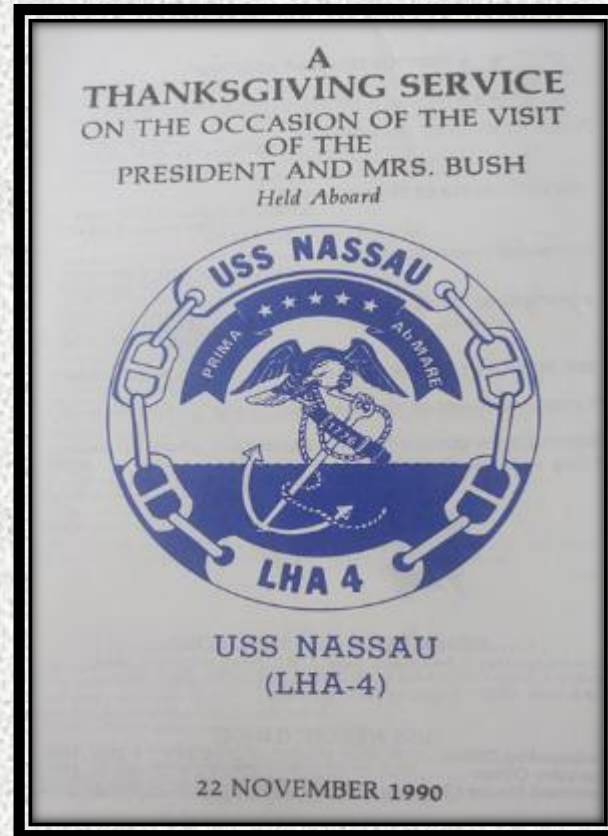
PS3 Dave Hennessey did a great job on boathouse sign



**USCG flag flew proudly over boathouse
The Mustang suit drying rack saw much use during the cold, wet winter months**



**President George H. W. Bush visits troops aboard U.S.S Nassau (LHA-4)
Five members from PSU-301(A) were selected to attend service
RM3 Bob O’Gorman (lower right) next to President’s Bush’s right hand
November 22, 1990**



Vice Admiral H. Thorsen, Commander USCG Atlantic Area, visits PSU-301(A) November 30, 1990

In late November, Vice Admiral Howard Thorsen, Commander USCG Atlantic Area, visited PSU-301(A) in Al-Jubayl and addressed members of the unit, at the break wall, next to our camp.

He provided us with information on what was happening in the USA and other Coast Guard related issues, including the announcement that our deployment had been extended, and the reasons why. He also indicated his main concern was how he and the Coast Guard could best assist us in our present situation and asked for our feedback.

One of the first issues that was brought to his attention, was how it was starting to get cold at night, and how exposed we were to the weather and other environmental elements as our TPSB “Raider” boats were open deck vessels, without a canopy or cabin to provide protection.

We further expressed to him, we had previously established a great relationship with the USMC in Al-Jubayl, and they were helpful in providing us with foul weather gear. But, even though this foul weather gear helped, it was barely adequate in dealing with the harsh, cold, wet nights on the water.

He also indicated that this situation was already being looked into by the Coast Guard but for the short term he would look into what could be done for us now.

Vice Admiral H. Thorsen listened to our concerns and promised action

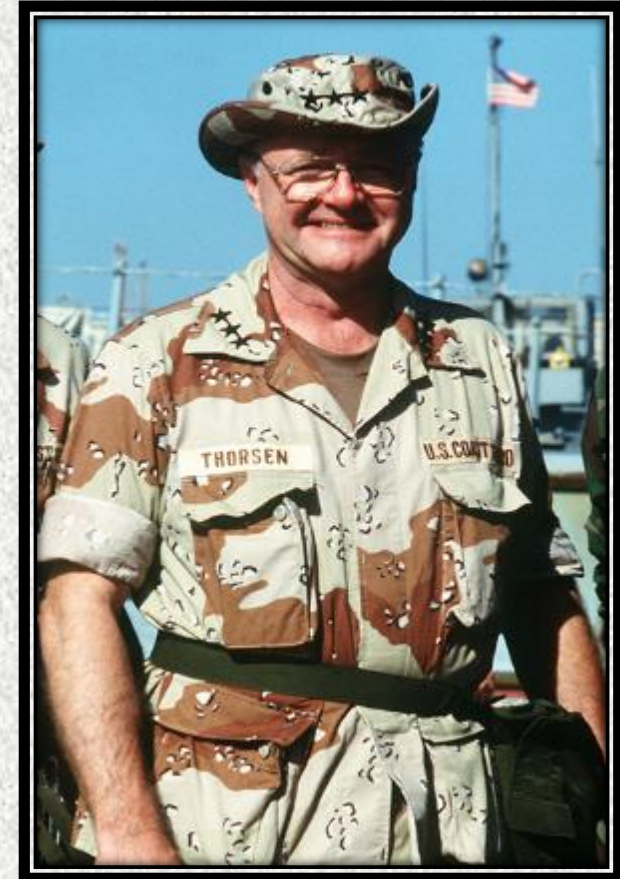
Our Engineers then expressed the need for boat parts and equipment they were lacking and the inability to procure them through established supply channels. He was somewhat aware of the challenges regarding requesting/receiving supplies, and equipment, through official channels and also said he would attempt to expedite these requests.

Knowing that our deployment had been extended, we brought it to his attention that some members had extreme hardships at home, and other members through injuries and illnesses, were not handling the situation well. We further provided to him that we knew of very qualified reservists from our units back home, who would welcome being activated and would be able to replace these particular individuals.

He was very attentive and supportive and indicated these matters would be brought to the USCG senior managements attention and addressed quickly, as able, upon his return to the USA.

As he departed, Admiral Thorsen then turned to Captain John Olson (Senior USCG Liaison in the AOR) and said, “Get the requests TO ME (Thorsen) for the supplies our guys need John – They have earned and deserve the support!!” With that, he departed and within weeks the needed logistics began to arrive, which included “Mustang” cold weather survival suits, various replacement equipment, parts and supplies, and the members of our unit with hardships and medical issues were rotated back to the USA, and were replaced by newly activated replacement personnel.

**USCG Vice Admiral, Howard Thorsen, briefing PSU-301(A) in Al-Jubayl
November 30, 1990**



Final preparations for war December 1990 to January 17, 1991

During the period from early December 1990 to January 17th, 1991, besides maintaining a high level of unit readiness, and meeting all our operational missions, concerns and responsibilities, PSU-301(A) personnel also welcomed and embraced a total unit effort in identifying and commencing additional building projects to supplement our operational situation and improve our living conditions.

By this time we had stockpiled a large amount of discarded dunnage in our lumber yard and only needed to decide on what project(s) we would tackle next. We actually had developed an organizational structure now, where everyone felt comfortable in how they could best fit in, and contribute.

These ongoing projects, beside keeping us very busy, proffered many productive interactions between all unit members and led to a high level of *esprit de corps* within our entire unit.

Finally, an unintended benefit we realized was that the majority of unit members actually enjoyed learning, and expanding, their construction and building skills during these activities.

PSU-301(A) continues to improve living conditions, resulting in furthering *esprit de corps* and enhanced productivity

Due the successful completion of the boat house, many more members in our unit joined in the building projects, and we were able to undertake multiple projects at one time. It was always a morale boosting day when another cargo ship came in and discarded their dunnage, which we quickly retrieved and put to use.

When the workout room and boathouse were completed, we began receiving input and suggestions from many members on what else might improve our situation. It was very gratifying realizing that everyone was taking ownership in these projects and their interest in improving our surroundings, was encouraging and motivating.

After receiving and reviewing all the information, we began organizing teams to undertake our next projects. We decided on building a recreation/game room, followed up with a Chow Hall, and finally with a Officers quarters, with a separate section on one end to accommodate our three female personnel. Each project moved forward quickly, and one was being completed while another one was being started.

Nevertheless, there was always the constant, lingering reminder, especially with the rhetoric being spewed by the Iraqi President, Saddam Hussein, that a war was very possible at any moment, and may last for many months.

New Chow Hall construction commenced Early December 1990

PSU-301(A) personnel, guiding and leading the building projects, sought out ideas and received input from many members on the construction of the new Chow Hall, and the best location for it.

In addition, our PSU-301(A) cooks, SS1 Bill Degnan and SS3 Joel Gregorio, provided significant, and important, input with specific design requests, to ensure adequate storage of food and equipment, and a galley area to facilitate the preparation and serving of meals.

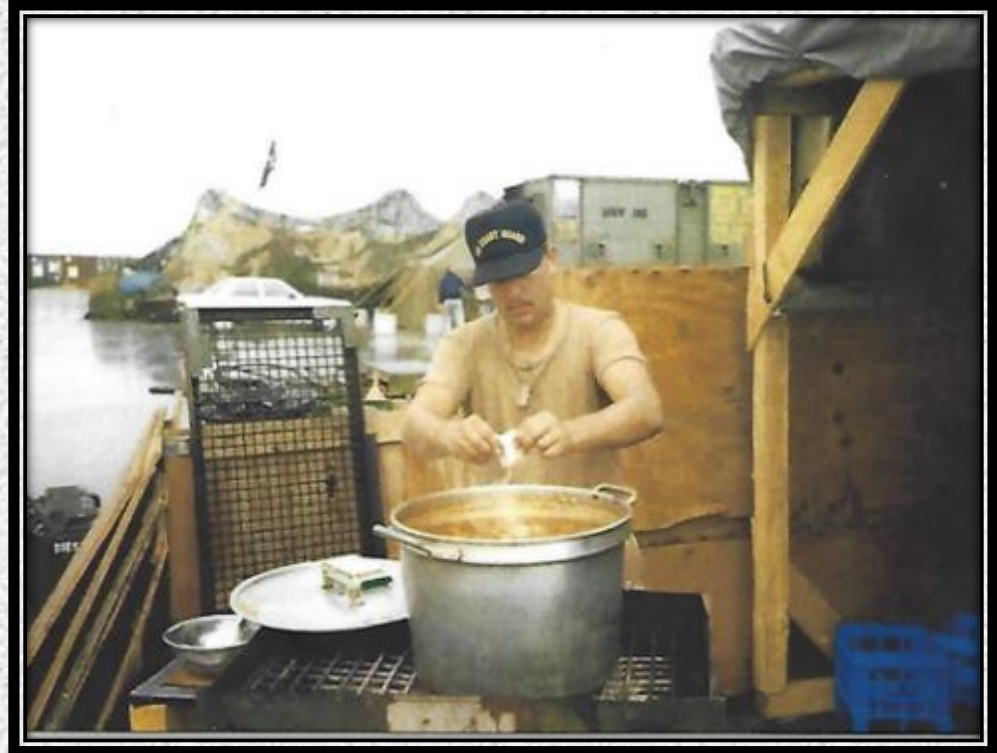
We broke the construction team up into three sections, one team for hauling lumber and securing tools and supplies; another team for building the structure itself; and a third team for the inside design and seating area.

Numerous unit members willingly hauled lumber and retrieved equipment and supplies, as requested, and/or, as needed.

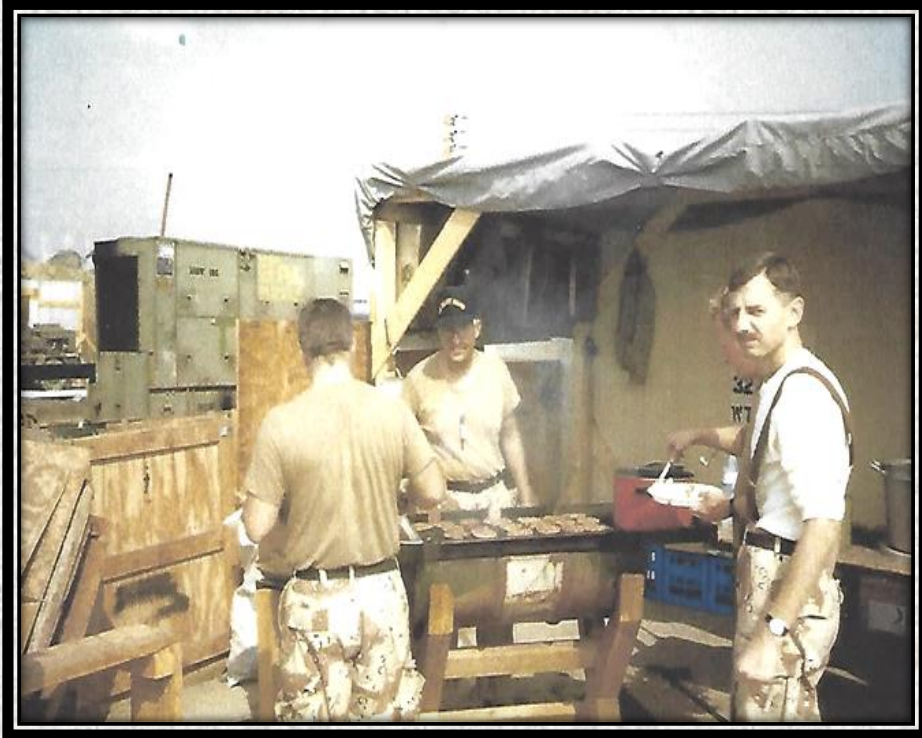
PS1 Ken Bienko, MK3 Tom O'Brien, and PS2 Jim Smith all excellent carpenters in their own right, led the building construction team, which now included over 25 people.

MK1 Steve Boucheron, who was a very talented craftsman, owning and operating his own business as a fine cabinetmaker in his civilian life, led the inside design and construction team, which was comprised of as many as 10 to 20 people, at various times.

The early days before the Chow Hall was built, PSU-301(A) Cooks, SS1 Bill Degnan and SS3 Joel Gregorio, found ways to improvise



Nevertheless, Bill and Joel made the best of what was available and always served a great meal



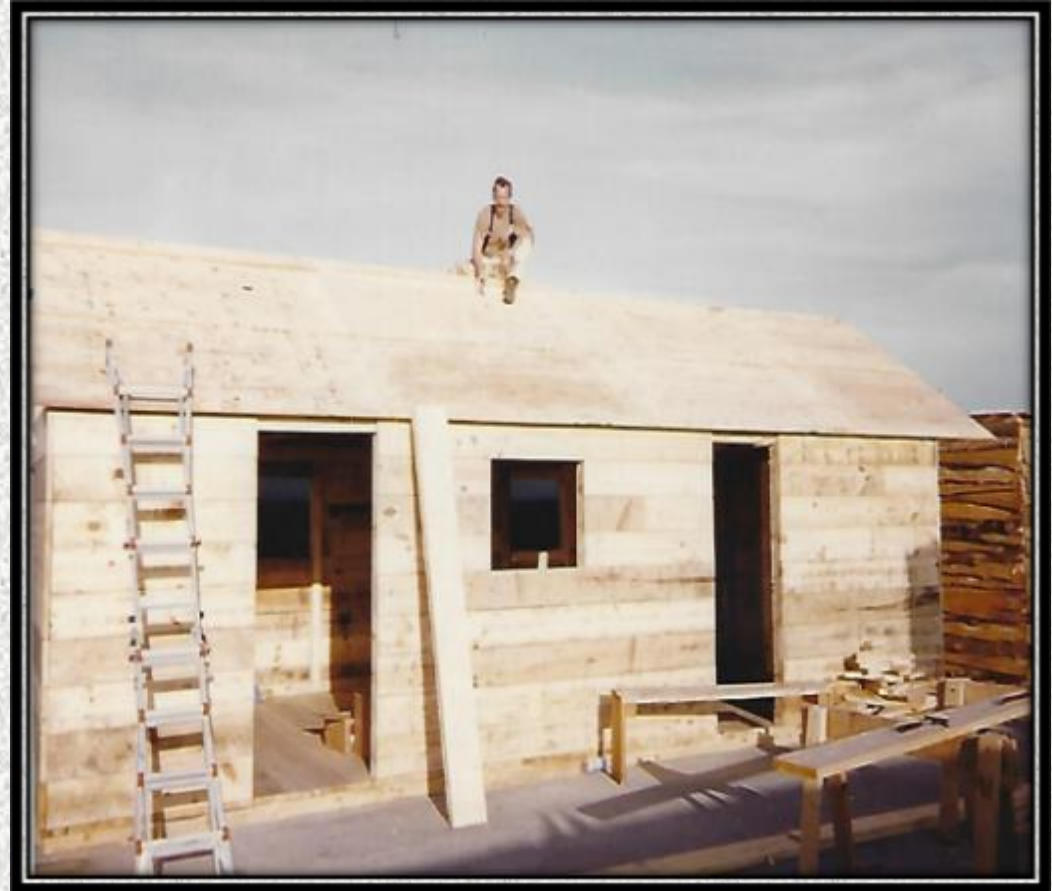
The new Chow Hall is floored and framed



Chow Hall was, floored, framed, walled and roofed in three days



**Kenny securing cross beams on Chow Hall,
later that same day Chow Hall roof completed**



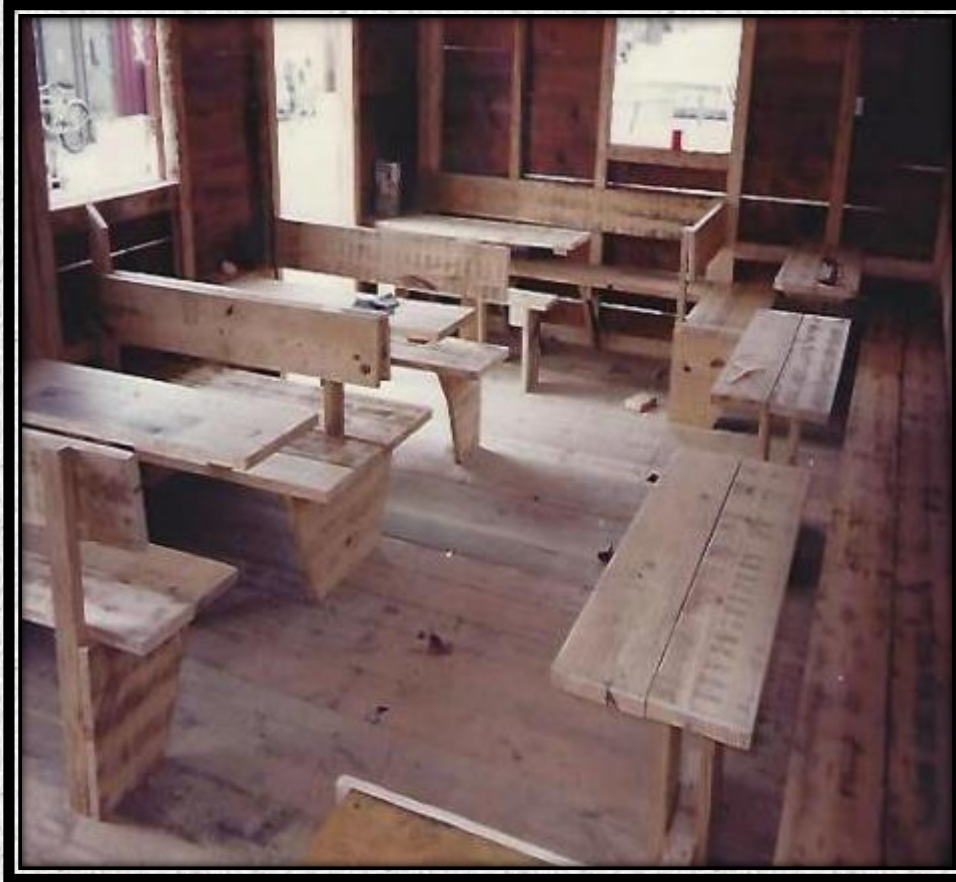
Outside of Chow Hall nearing completion



**Inside of Chow Hall making great progress
PSC Phil Trejchel plots next move**



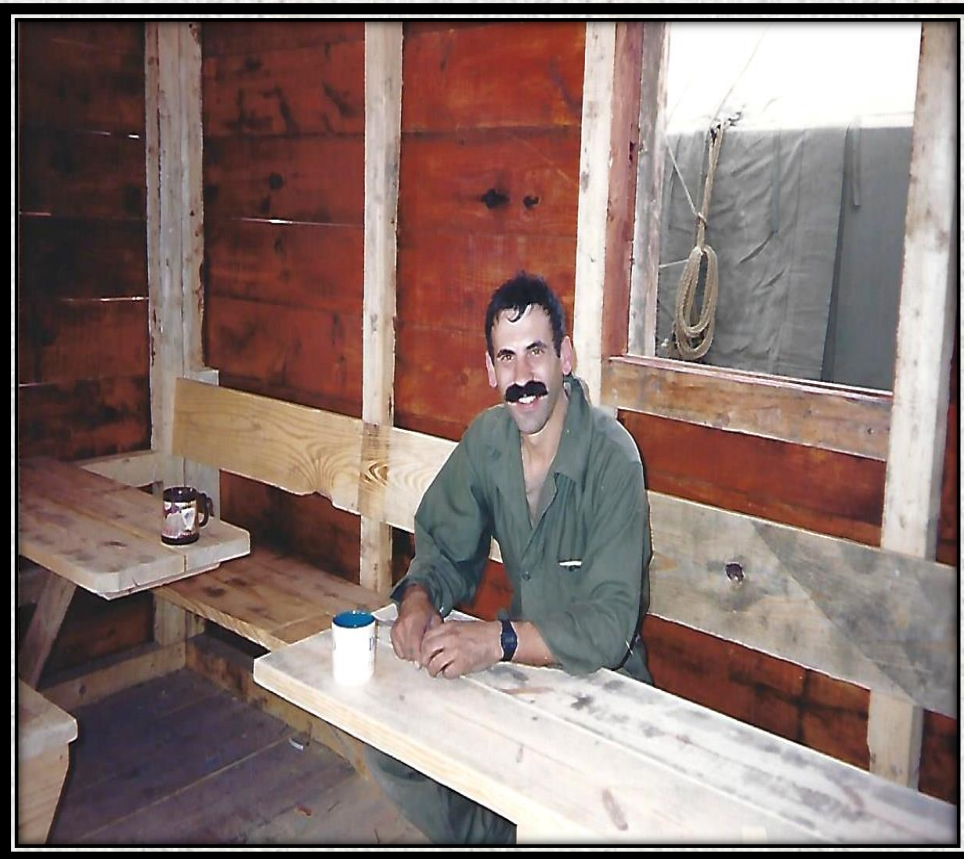
MK1 Steve Boucheron & Crew did a great job on inside seating, which was completed three days later



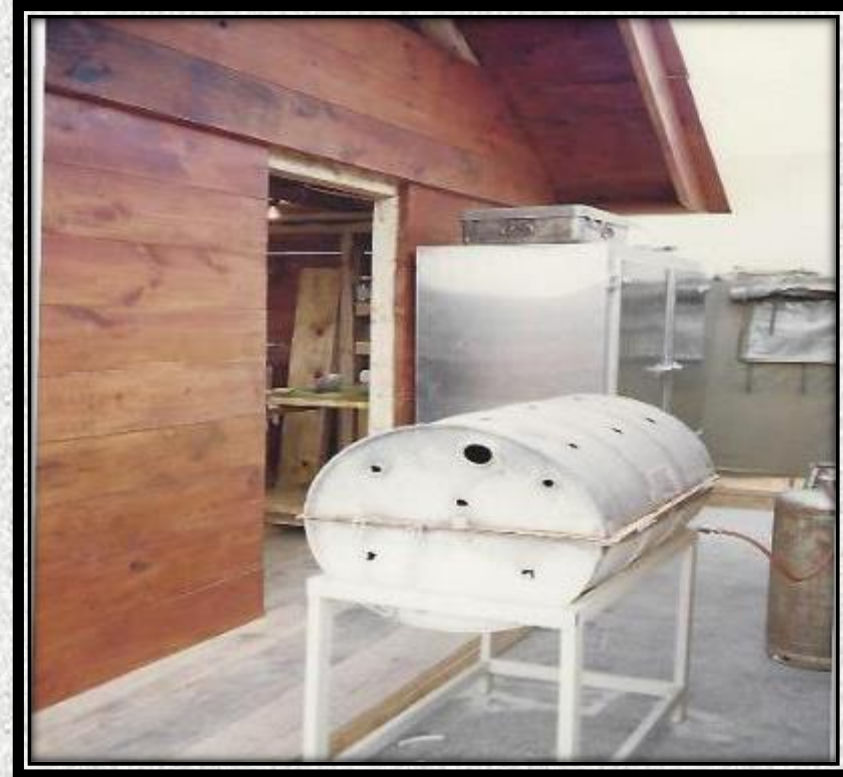
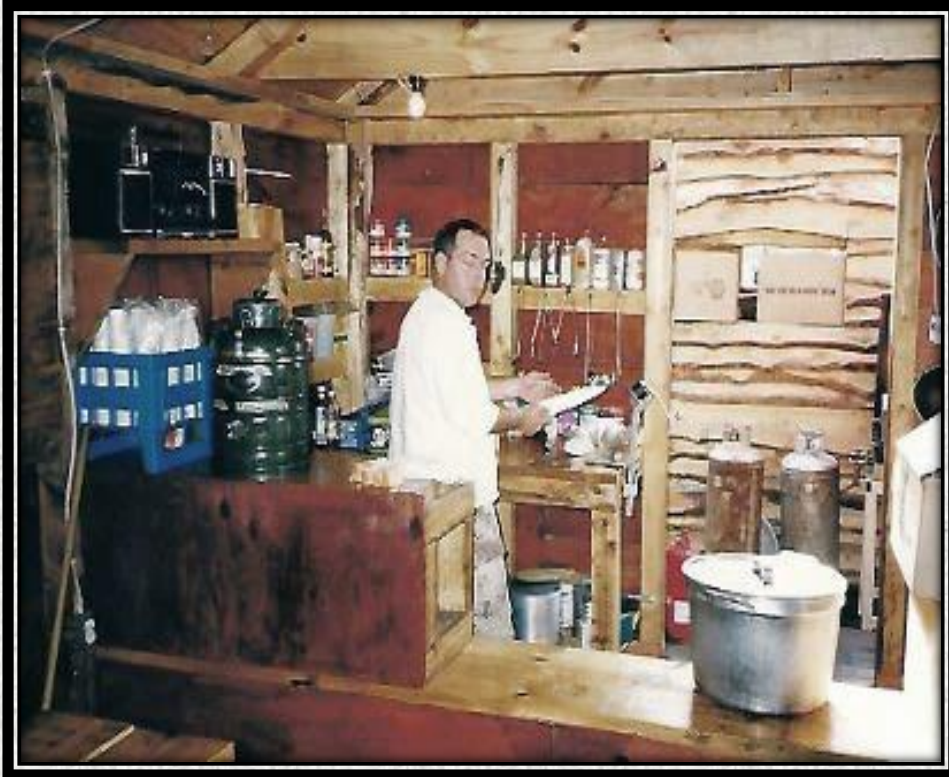
Assorted, visually stimulating, winter themed posters were hung on the inside walls throughout the Chow Hall



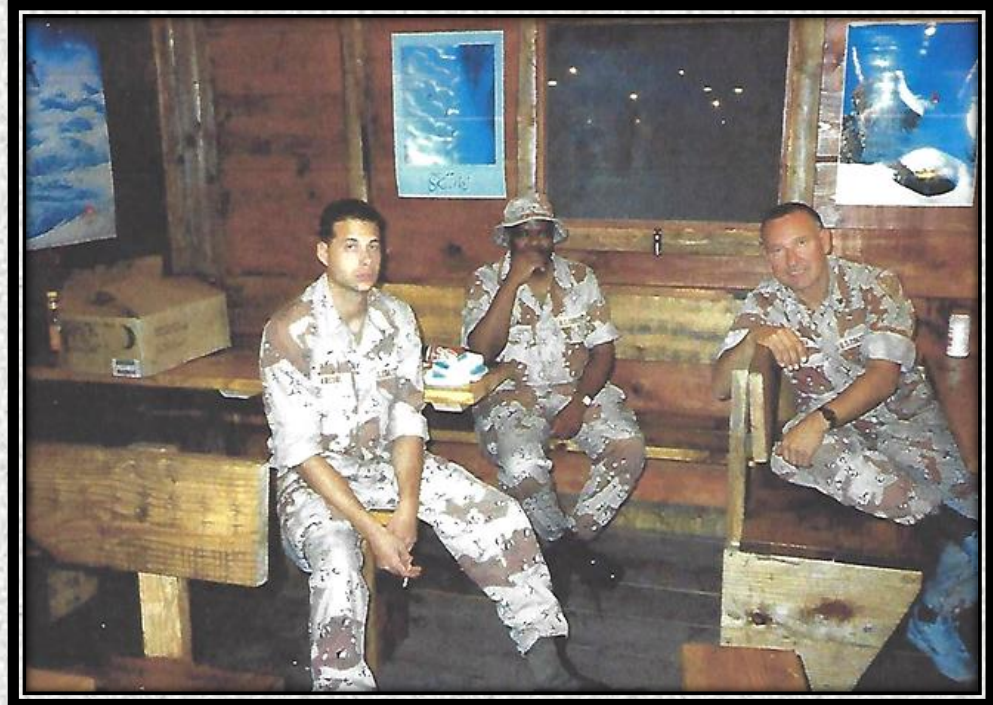
**Job Well Done Steve!
You too Ken!**



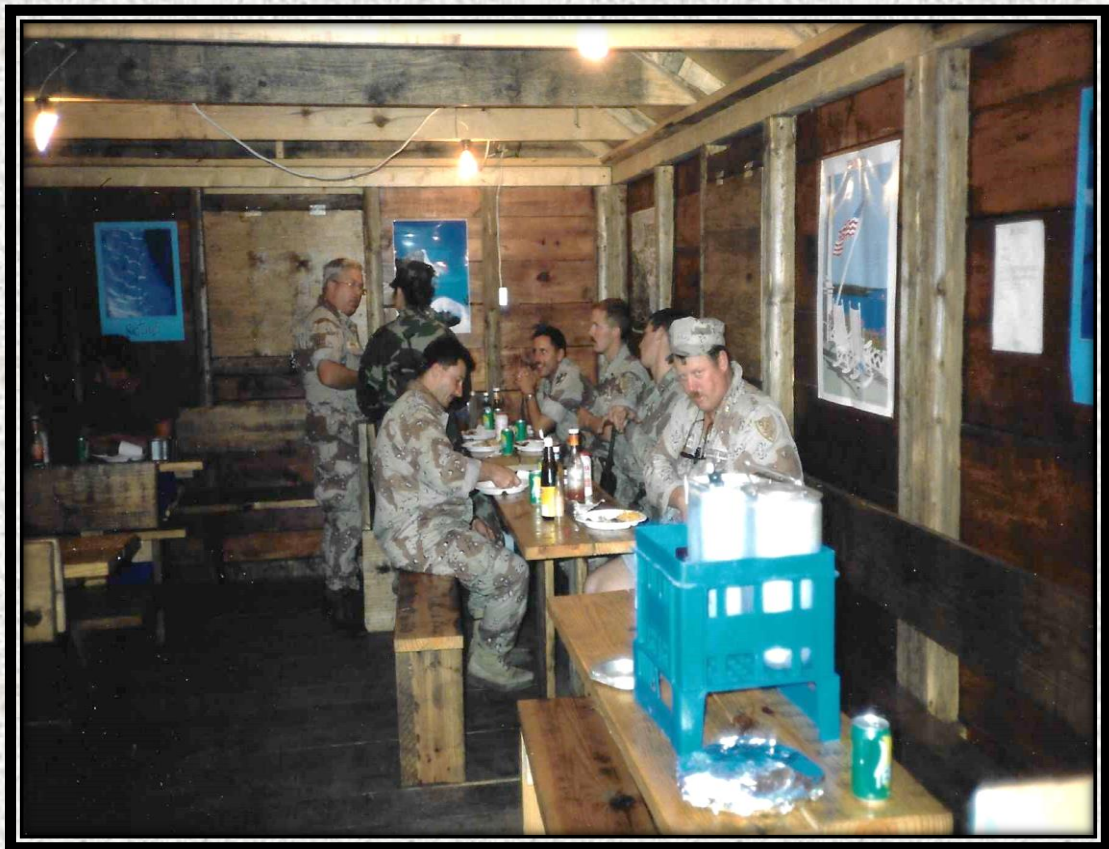
**SS1 Bill Degnan preparing dinner in new Chow Hall kitchen
The converted, cut in half, 55 gallon drum cooktop/vessel,
was great for cooking, grilling and warming up food**



**Crew was always happy to sit back and relax in new
Chow Hall before dining on a wonderful meal**



PSU-301(A) Cooks, Joel & Bill, always prepared great meals



**Bill takes well deserved break in new Chow Hall
Ken took break from building projects and helped in the kitchen
Hard to believe that Chow Hall was built from discarded dunnage**



PSU-301(A) received great support from the home front Mid-December 1990

During our first couple of months of our deployment we were regularly hearing about how supportive and patriotic everyone was at home in the USA. We were receiving numerous packages and letters, addressed to “Any Serviceman” from kids in school, support groups and companies, etc., sending us various foods, candy, board games, sports equipment, and various other recreational and support items.

A local Pizzeria Restaurant owner in Buffalo, N.Y. contacted a Buffalo Police Department (BPD) Precinct Captain and asked if there was any way they could send us pizza and Buffalo wings before Christmas. The La Nova Pizzeria owner informed the Captain he had already arranged through a local frozen food manufacturer, Rich’s Products, to palletize the boxes containing the pizza and wings, and freeze wrap it for shipment.

The BPD Captain, a military reservist himself, knew BPD Air Force reservists, who were assigned to an Air Force Air Wing in Niagara Falls, N.Y., that were making numerous round trips to the Middle East to deliver food, supplies and equipment, and asked them if they could do the transport. The BPD, Air Force reservists told the Captain they could find out when the next trip was scheduled to an area near Al-Jubayl, and get approval for the transport, most likely on a space available basis.

Pizza and Wings delivered from Buffalo N.Y. to Saudi Arabia

A short time later, the BPD Captain was contacted by the Air Force loadmasters and they informed him that they had received approval to include the shipment on a future flight, and coordinated a date and time when to have the pizza and wings at the base.

The BPD Captain got word to PSU-301(A) BPD personnel in Al-Jubayl when the Air Force C-130 would be delivering supplies to a airport in Al-Jubayl, Saudi Arabia, and only needed for us to meet them there to pick up the Pizza pallet.

We met the plane on the date provided and when the pizza pallet was unloaded, it was placed in our pickup truck. We quickly observed through the bubble wrap, that there were approximately fifty large Pizza boxes and approximately fifty boxes of Chicken Wings.

A few of our personnel, at our camp, were aware of the impending delivery, and began assembling members of our unit, along with the neighboring marines to join us for the “Pizza Party”. When we arrived back at our camp, all we needed to do was unwrap the pallet and warm the food on our 55 gallon, 1/2 drum cooktops.

To say the least it was a great morale booster at a time when many members of our unit were more than sad knowing we were going to miss celebrating the holidays with our families and friends, especially the unit members with small children at home.

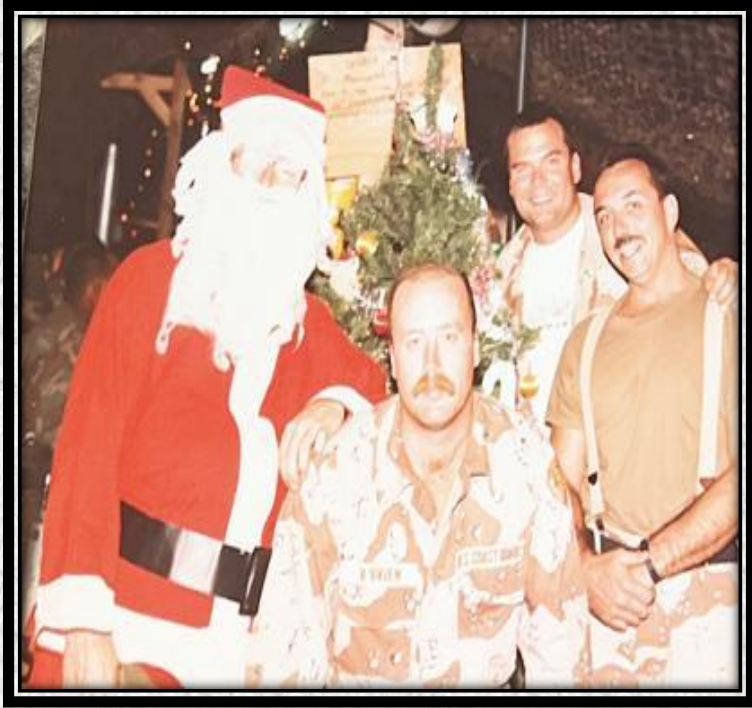
**C-130 from 914th Airwing, Niagara Falls Air Force Base,
arriving with pizza and wings delivery at Christmas**



Thanks La Nova Pizzeria & Rich's Products, Buffalo, NY, for pizza and buffalo wings, and USAF, MSgt Jerry Schoenle, for delivery

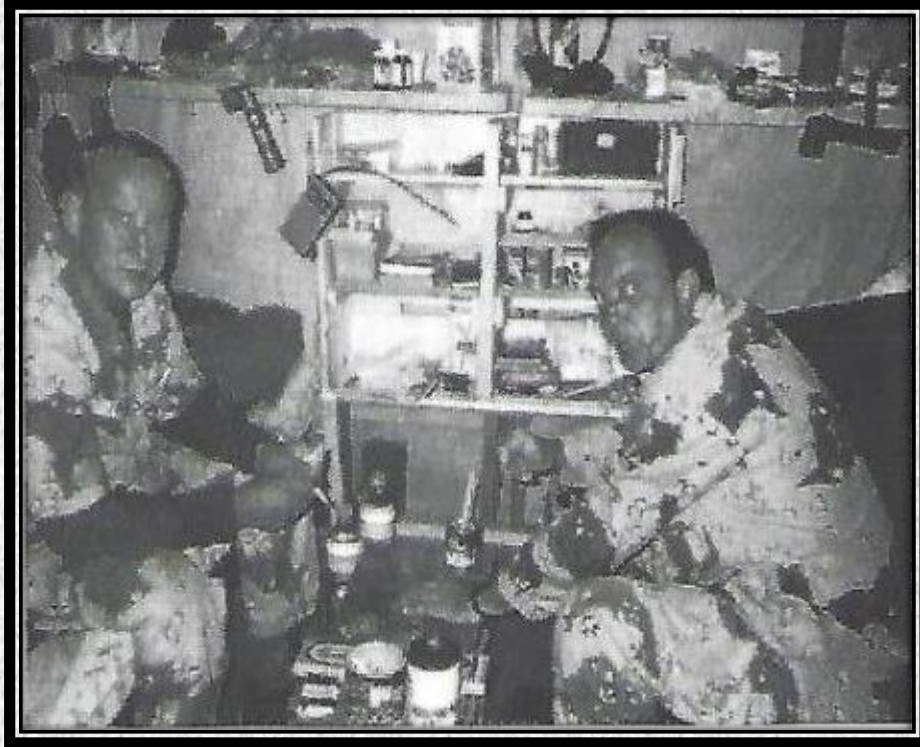


Christmas In Al-Jubayl, Saudi Arabia December 1990

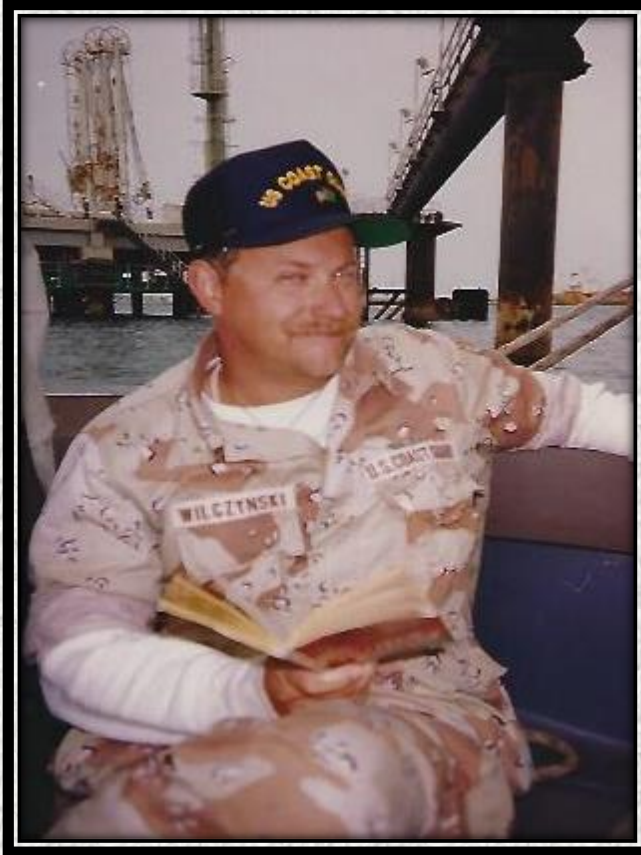


Christmas in Saudi Arabia!

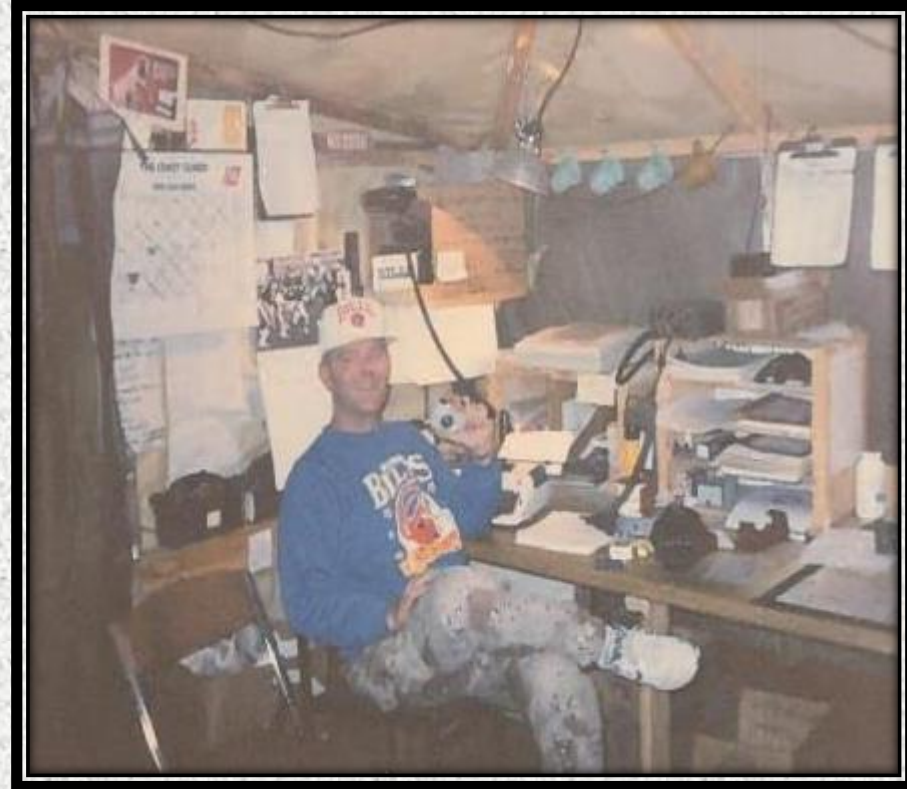
**MK1 Don Fried & PS2 Tom Richards enjoyed a game of cribbage,
While ET2 John Badger and PS3 Dave Hennessey enjoyed making music**



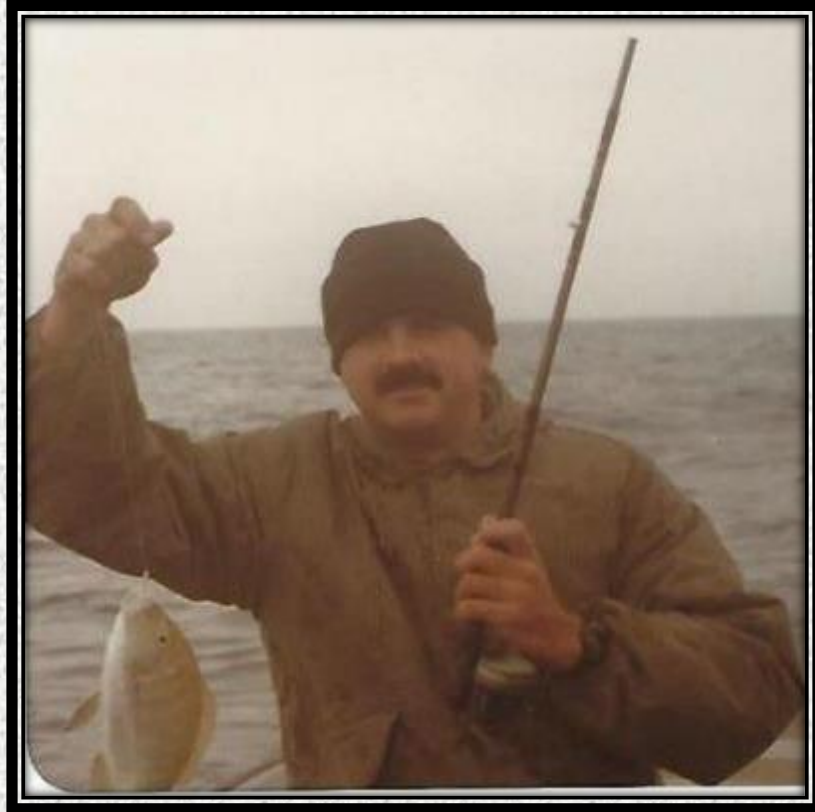
**BM3 Stan Wilczynski enjoyed reading on off duty time,
other off duty unit members just liked hanging out,
Master Chief Vahey did double duty cutting hair**



**Perfect gift from Santa – Sun umbrella hat,
Smitty's Christmas wish was for a Bill's Super Bowl Victory**



**Still others enjoyed fishing and we held contests
Boatswain Chief, "Catfish", was always willing to judge**



**The Recreation tent saw a lot of action, usually watching a VCR movie
The Engineers tent was always well organized and the services
they provided our unit were significant, proficient and essential**



Incoming!!!



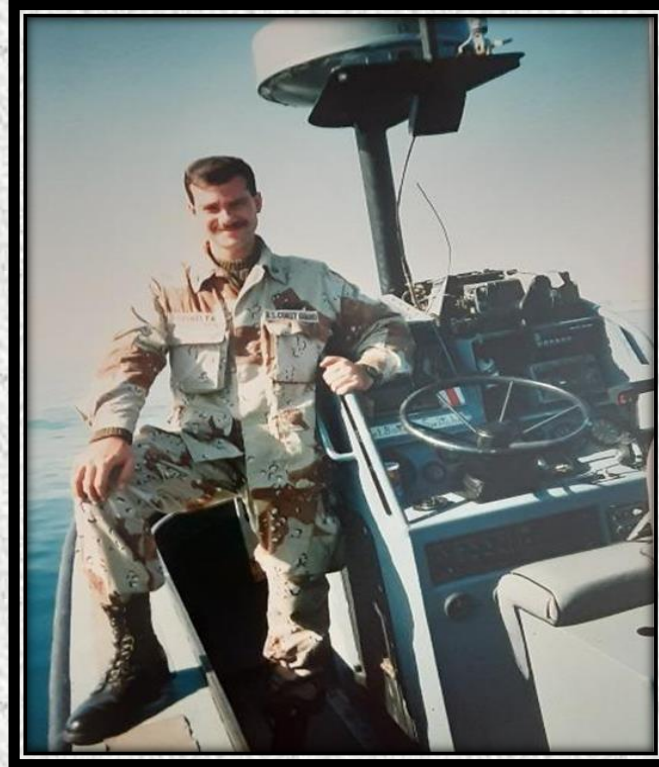
**Back to business – PSU-301(A) patrols were amplified
PS2 Tom Richards, one of our senior, well respected coxswains,
was always available for assistance and leading the way**



Boat Crews preparing for patrol
MK2 Mark Kopera and BM1 Gerald Newman standing by to get underway



**Coxswain PS3 Larry Cannan waiting for his TPSB "Raider"
BM2 Kevin Spindler, MK3 Joe Sanchez and BM3 Gene Rossano were
always ready to deploy and support boat operational activities**



Two of PSU-301(A) most senior members, Master Chief Bill Vahey and MK1 John Gaida, were always there for guidance and support, as well as, Boatswain Chief Jim Terry (middle), call sign “Catfish”, for his Coxswains



Utilizing enhanced observational positions proved to be valuable



And then the rains came – All building projects put on hold Last week of December 1990

At the end of December, 1990, it started to rain and continued for just around two straight weeks. It caught us all by surprise, as there was never even a cloud in the sky from the time we arrived in Saudi Arabia until then, and we didn't even have a clue that this heavy rain was coming.

What is known as the Indian Ocean Monsoons, affecting mostly Saudi Arabia coastal areas, started the last week of December, 1990, and was virtually non-stop until the beginning of the second week of January, 1991, with only a few short breaks in-between.

We were very lucky that our “Mustang” survival suits had arrived in mid-December and with our floppy BDU hats on our head, we were able to weather this period on the Open Deck “Raiders”. It wasn’t that bad during the daytime as it was warmer, but, the nights were unquestionably more miserable, as it was much colder at night.

As soon as the night Boat Crews returned to the dock in the morning, we immediately hung the “Mustang” suits to dry, usually inside the boathouse. Whenever, we got a break from the rain, we would move them outside to dry on the boathouse hanging rack.

Then, at the beginning of the second week of January, 1991, as fast as the monsoons had come, they were gone, and the sun was back out, again without a cloud in the sky.

As mentioned earlier in this presentation, the shortcomings of the Open Deck “Raiders”, and its unimpeded exposure to the weather and elements, was one of the main issues we brought up during our debriefing at the USCG Base on Governors Island.

Mustang survival suits helped us in dealing with the bitter winter weather, especially the cold, damp nights starting in December



**PSU-301 (A) assisted new U.S. Marine Unit in helping to set up their camp by providing them with lumber and helping with building construction
Early January 1991**

Right after the rain stopped, in early January, 1991, a new U.S. Marine Unit arrived in Al-Jubayl, and started setting up camp, about a mile down the pier from us. There was much concern and information that the war was going to start very soon, and it was a very high priority for them to get their camp in place and fully operational.

Shortly after their arrival, while we were working on another one of our buildings, the Commanding Officer (CO) of the unit stopped by with some of his troops. He expressed how impressed he was in how we had set up our camp, and asked us if we could loan them some lumber.

We discussed what his priorities were, and his initial objectives, and told him we would be glad to assist them in setting up their camp and asked him to have one of his Sergeant's come by later and we would coordinate the effort.

A little later the USMC Unit "Top" Sergeant, the senior enlisted marine in their unit, along with two other Sgt's came by and we discussed their priorities further and formulated a tentative plan.

We knew a couple of ammo ships were coming in the next day, and would be discarding dunnage during offloading, so we asked the "Top" Sgt. to come by the next morning with a couple of trucks and marines and we would assist them in the construction of the building's.

Marines immediately were engaged and committed fully to effort

The following day the “Top” Sgt. came by with a flatbed and pickup truck, with twenty Marines ready to work. We had already stockpiled enough lumber to get them started and we loaded up their trucks with lumber, tools and equipment.

PS1 Kenny Bienko and other PSU-301(A) personnel, went to their location on the pier and started laying out flooring and guiding them in framing the buildings. We quickly recognized many of the Marines had excellent carpentry and building skills, so beside assisting them, we began providing helpful instructions and motivation to aid the Marines in quickly assuming ownership of the project. Other PSU-301(A) members proceeded to the cargo pier with the remaining Marines and retrieved more discarded dunnage as the cargo ships were off loaded

After returning to the their building site with more dunnage and supplies, we assisted them until the end of the day. We could sense the “Top” Sgt. and his troops wanted ownership of the project and we complimented him on his efforts and that of his troops and let him know we were always available if they needed anything else.

Upon seeing the Marines were very motivated, and had it under control, we turned it over to “Top” Sgt. and his enthusiastic troops.

PSU-301(A) Members assist Marines in laying deck



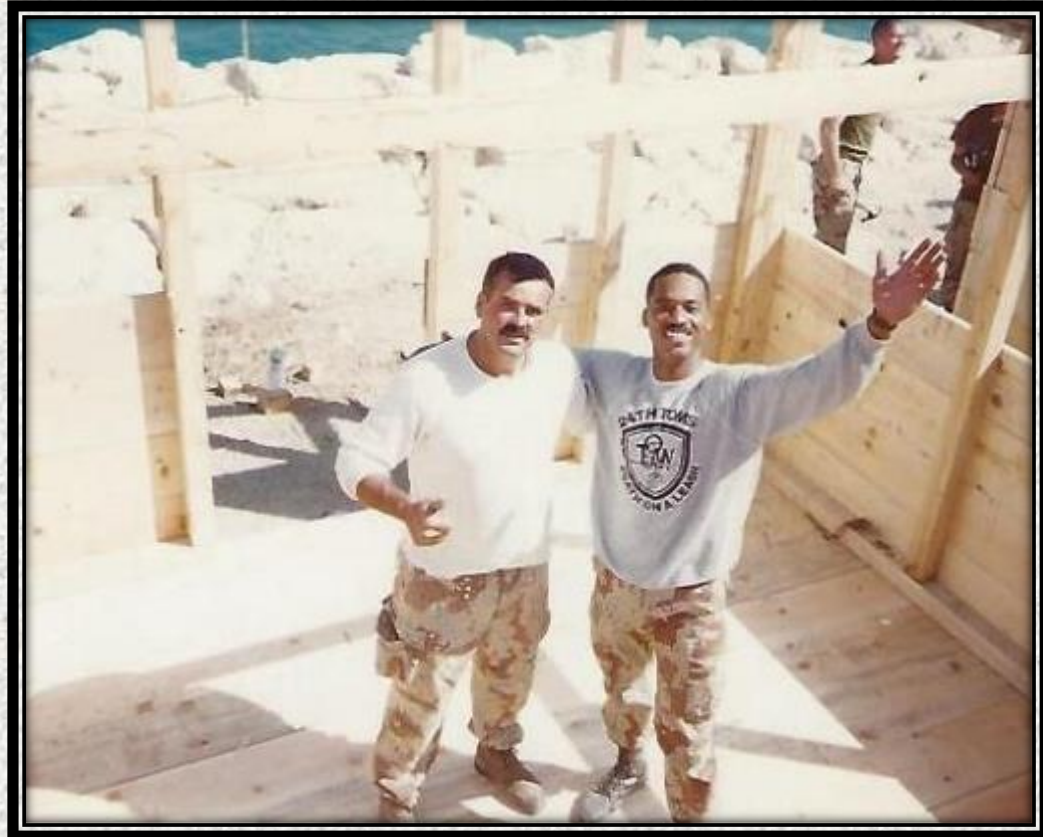
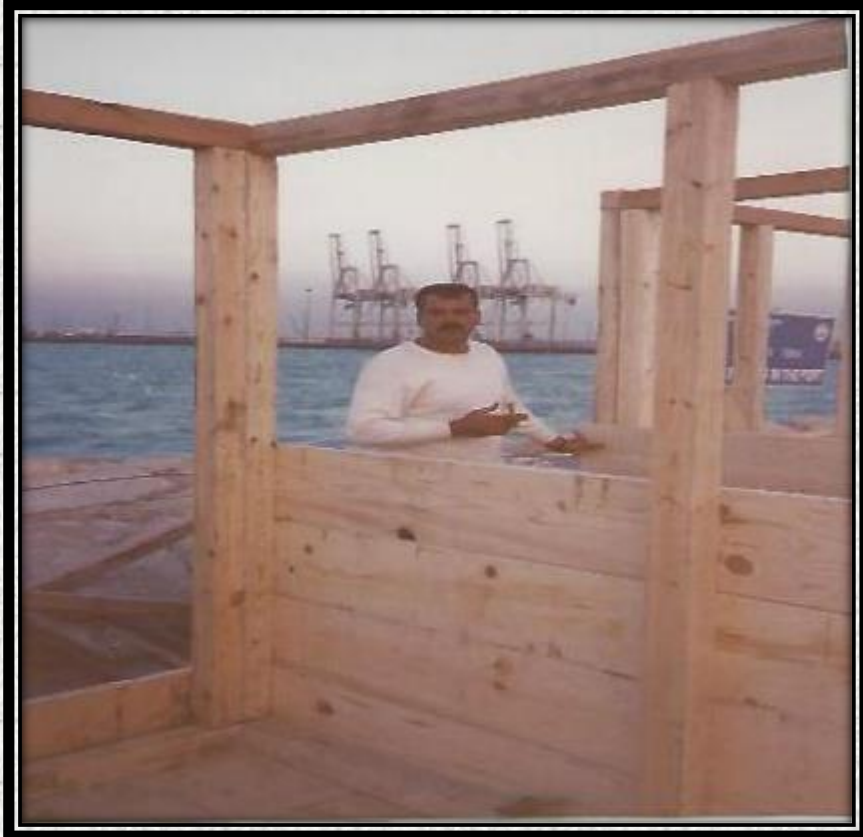
PSU-301(A) members assist Marines with framing buildings



Work proceeds on three buildings at once



**With initial framing completed the walls went up fast
The USMC "Top" Sgt. was very happy with the progress**



Great to be able to help Marines - Ooh Rah!



USMC unit expresses appreciation to PSU-301(A)

A couple of days later, the Marine Unit “Top” Sgt. came by and informed us that their CO was ecstatic with the progress of their camp and wanted to do something for us. “Top” told us the CO wanted us to know we could use one of their vehicles at any time and wanted to know if there was anything else they could do to assist us.

We knew our boat crews were getting beat up with the winter weather and the rough seas they were experiencing daily, and could use some down time. It is hard to describe how all these hours a day on the water, without protection other than the foul weather gear we wore, with five (5’) foot to seven (7’) foot swells, and 40 degrees at night feels, but any boat crew in our unit will surely attest, it wasn’t great.

Many of our crew members were suffering from back, and knee, related issues and injuries, in addition to cold and flu related illnesses. To take advantage of any opportunity to provide them with some recovery time would be very beneficial and greatly appreciated.

Although our main priority was the boat crews health and welfare, and providing them some valuable downtime, we also expressed other concerns to him as well, that these marines could help us with.

USMC unit offers help and comes through “Big Time”

One of the additional issues we brought to his attention was when we returned from patrols, each PSU-301(A) boat crew, had to clean their personal weapons, as well as assist with cleaning the TPSB mounted machine guns. This was mainly due to the weapons exposure to the saltwater mist that coated them during the patrols, and later, when oil fires were raging, the carbon soot rain/fallout. This weapon cleaning activity further added to the crew's exhaustion.

The “Top” Sgt. said that he would convey this information to his Commanding Officer, and get back to us. He returned a short time later and said that the Colonel would like to provide three Marines, per shift, to assist us.

In addition to supplementing the boat crews, the Marines cheerfully volunteered, and actually enjoyed, disassembling, cleaning, and reassembling the machine guns, sometimes holding timed contests with each other. We were extremely impressed with their ability and expertise and thankful for the support.

This exchange was not only beneficial to us, but also to them, as these young Marines thoroughly enjoyed a break from their daily routine and many of them continually volunteered to come back to our camp to assist us.

PSU-301(A) Continued to improve living conditions Mid-January 1991

The next great suggestion by PSU-301(A) personnel was to construct a Officers Quarters building, with a separate, walled off, section at one end to accommodate our three female members.

The crews tents were already filled to the limit and with the change out of patrols and boat crews, during shift changes, was disrupting many of the crews sleep. Additionally, due to the overcrowding, some interactions between some personnel was leading to uncomfortable exchanges and actually a few physical altercations.

With this new Officer Quarters building, and after the Officers relocated from their old tent, the now empty Officers tent could be back filled with a couple of crew members from each of the other crew tents.

Just moving a couple people from every tent provided much more room in every crew tent, and was very much appreciated by all involved. Especially, the relocation of some individuals who had ongoing personality conflicts with other members in their present tent

Furthermore, after relocating our three female personnel to better quarters with more privacy, albeit similar size, it improved their living conditions, which at that time were poor and marginally adequate.

**We quickly found out that in long term deployment
20 man tents are minimally able to accommodate 20 men**



**Officers quarters fully framed, roofed and almost completed
Soon after, Desert Storm commenced and building projects put on hold**



Female personnel appreciated their new quarters, located in a separate, walled off section, at end of officers building



PSU-301(A) Completes Officers Quarters just as Desert Storm commences Further building projects put on hold

By this time, almost every member of our unit wanted to be involved in the building projects, and enthusiastically worked on this project, as everyone knew the benefit of more room in their tent, and we were able to complete this new building in record time.

We already began discussing building a two story crew dormitory for the next project but that was put on hold as the war began on January 17, 1991, just as we were finishing the Officers building, and many things started happening at the same time.

This included all the “SCUD” attacks at night, the oil fires and oil spill, and other actions by the Iraqi’s including crossing over the Saudi Arabia border and attacking Kahfji, and that was just some of the activities by the end of January, 1991.

Consequently, we increased many of our patrols and operational activities, and were regularly put on a high alert status, and had to be ready to respond to a potential threat, or man our general quarters stations, on very short notice.

Additionally, we had no idea what to expect in February, and it proved to be prudent in delaying any more building projects, as February, 1991 proved to be just as active as January with the “SCUD” attack barely missing the Al-Jubayl Commercial Pier, the floating mines striking two U.S. Navy ships in the Persian Gulf, and the Crude Oil spill reaching Al-Jubayl, and threatening the operations of the Desalination plant.

We thought this may be our last building project, but later on, two days before we left Saudi Arabia, we would complete one more.

SECTION V:

Desert Storm commences with Operation “Instant Thunder” January 17, 1991

We were all very relieved when the U.S Led Coalition air strikes Operation “Instant Thunder” started on January 17, 1991, as the waiting for the unknown had began to wear on us and was becoming very stressful. Everyone was constantly wondering if this war was still going to happen as we were well aware of ongoing negotiations at the highest levels.

Additionally, we also were very concerned who might commence a ground attack first, the U.S. Led coalition forces into Kuwait or the Iraqis coming across the Saudi/Kuwait border into Saudi Arabia. Later it was determined that at that time, there was 38 Iraqi Divisions in Kuwait, made up of approximately 545,000 troops, 4,300 tanks, and 3,100 pieces of artillery.

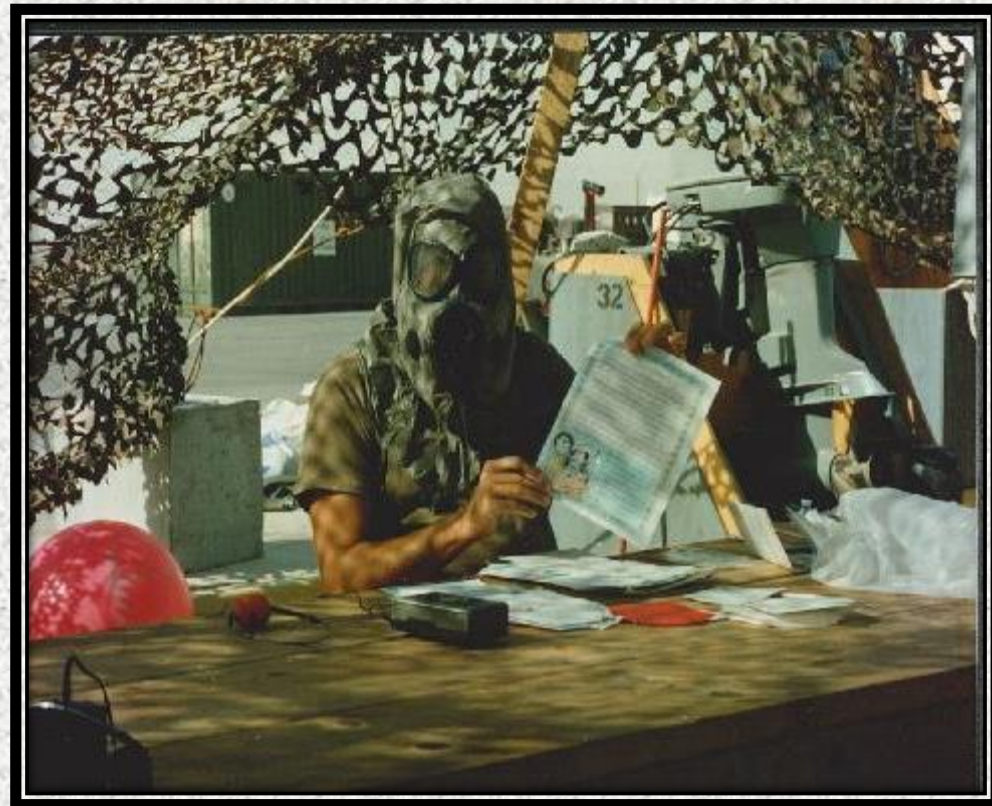
Shortly after the air strikes began, Iraq’s President Saddam Hussein boasted that this would now be the “mother of all battles”. At that point in time, none of us knew what he was actually capable of, as he had threatened chemical attacks and unconceivable destruction. True to his word, Iraq started launching “SCUDS”, not only toward us, but also Israel, hoping to fracture the Arab coalition. We knew now at least, one way or another, the end was well within the foreseeable future.

Our Unit began running drills to prepare for “SCUD” attacks and to get use to donning MOPP gear and wearing the Gas Masks.

PSU-301(A) Commander McCone and USMC Lt. Colonel brief troops at muster on preparing for an Iraqi response as Desert Storm had commenced during the night



Unit prepared for potential “SCUD” missile attacks by conducting drills to get used to wearing gas masks



Air War Campaign continues 24/7 for 42 straight days January 17, 1991 through February 24, 1991

The whole first week or two, after the Air War campaign commenced, was extremely stressful as we still didn't know if the Iraqi's would come across the border and attack into Saudi Arabia, which eventually they did twelve days later, in Khafji, Saudi Arabia, on January 29, 1991.

As the air operation continued, our stress levels were lowered, as we knew every succeeding day, the ability of the Iraqi's mounting a significant offensive attack was being diminished. From January 17 through February 24, 1991 the Air War Campaign was unrelenting, continuing without respite for twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week, for forty-two (42) straight days.

It was always a welcome sight when the U. S. and coalition military jets and attack helicopters continuously flew over us, from the air bases south of us, day and night, to attack Iraqi positions in Kuwait and Iraq. Many of us would look up above and privately in thought wish the pilots "Good Luck and Godspeed".

It was later reported that the U.S. and the 40 allied nations, including several Arab Coalition nations, flew more than 18,000 air deployment missions, more than 116,000 combat air sorties and dropped 88,500 tons of bombs.

We loved hearing the roar of the jets and the reverberations of the helicopters above us all day long, heading north on their missions to attack enemy targets!



U.S. Navy Ships located throughout the Persian Gulf provided valuable support to the Air War Mission and effort

We were also aware of the numerous U.S. warships on station, conducting operations, and patrolling in the Persian Gulf. One of them was the U.S Navy Battleship Missouri, BB-63, and shortly after it arrived in the Persian Gulf, one of her first accomplishments was the disarming of a mine by her onboard Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team, on January 9, 1991.

The U.S. Navy EOD command in theatre, had also previously assigned U.S. Navy EOD units to various locations on land, one of those locations was with PSU-301(A), in Al-Jubayl.

As previously discussed, this EOD Team addition to our PSU-301(A) camp was an important element in supporting and enhancing our ability to have the most relevant, critical information available.

On January, 17, 1991, the USS Missouri fired her first Tomahawk missile aimed at Baghdad. By January 20th, the “Mighty Mo” had fired a total of 28 missiles.

Additionally, other U.S. and coalition ships repeatedly launched their missiles and various combat aircraft and attack helicopters from their vessels as well, attacking Iraqi targets in Kuwait and Iraq continuously.

**Big Brother was always close by with numerous Aircraft Carriers,
Amphibious Assault Ships & various Battle Force Warships**



Command Ship USS LaSalle (LHA 4)



USS Missouri (BB 63) "The Mighty Mo"

Air War continued 24/7 by U.S. led coalition forces Iraqi's begin launching "SCUD" missile attacks at Saudi Arabia

Beginning on January 18, 1991, the Iraqis began firing "SCUD" Missiles at numerous locations in Saudi Arabia and Israel, and this continued intermittently for just over one month. Many of them went over our location, targeting the air bases in Ad-Dammam and Dhahran fifty, (50) to seventy (70) miles south of us. Nevertheless, as soon as the launch was detected, we still had to don MOPP gear and gas mask, as you never knew what the target was or where they would hit.

As the "SCUD" was a missile designed to hold nuclear and biological/chemical warheads, we routinely went to General Quarters, donning our MOPP gear and gas masks, as the loudspeakers announced the "SCUD" alert. In fact, in a strange way, it was almost comical after a while, when the British loudspeakers announced the "SCUD" alert sometimes well before the air raid sirens were activated.

To say the least, for those who were off duty, it wasn't fun waking up in the middle of the night, from a deep sleep, air raid siren wailing, and see the majority of the people in your tent donning their Gas Masks and MOPP suits preparing to leave for their General Quarters assignment.

Nonetheless, our prior Chemical Warfare training was now paying off as we donned our MOPP suits and Gas Masks regularly, and wearing them until the all clear was announced.

We quickly became accustomed to the air raid sirens blasting a warning of incoming "SCUD" missiles on a regular basis, and usually, regrettably, in the middle of the night.

Iraqi's continually launched numerous "SCUD's" our way January 18, 1991 through February 26, 1991

It was reported later, that just under ninety "SCUDS" had been fired at Saudi Arabia and Israel between January 18, 1991, through February 26, 1991. Additionally, over eighty percent of the Iraqi "SCUD" launches during Desert Storm occurred at night, in a designed effort by the Iraqi's to significantly harass and break the spirit of the military personnel throughout Saudi Arabia. To say these "SCUD" attacks were extremely upsetting and annoying, is an understatement.

To add insult to injury, during the early morning hours of January 28, 1991, we had a "SCUD" alert and, as many of members of our unit were from Buffalo, and Bills fans, were listening to Armed Forces Radio leading up to the Super Bowl game.

Less than a couple hours later after the "SCUD" alert stand down, the Bills lost the Super Bowl after a missed field goal on the last play of the game, in what will always be remembered in Buffalo as the "Wide Right" game.

Many of these "SCUD'S" were destroyed by the defensive "Patriot" missile batteries in the air, or caused minimal damage. Although, very sadly and tragically, on the evening of February 25, 1991, an Iraqi scud missile hit a "barracks/warehouse" used to house U.S. Army soldiers assigned to the 475th Quartermaster Group in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. As a consequence of this "SCUD" attack, 28 soldiers died and 110 were hospitalized.

Iraqi's locations that initiated "SCUD" missile attacks



PSU-301(A) Camp

**When “SCUD” launches were detected and announced,
“Mission Oriented Protective Posture” immediately initiated
January 18, 1991 through February 26, 1991**

When the Air Raid Siren bellowed and loudspeakers broadcasted the impending “SCUD” attack we immediately were required to don our MOPP gear and Gas Masks, pretty much on an intermittent basis, over a thirty day period.

MOPP is an acronym for "Mission Oriented Protective Posture"; and we were required to wear MOPP protective gear when “SCUD” alerts were announced to prepare for a chemical, biological, radiological, (CBRN) strike.

These MOPP suits were specially designed clothing to be worn over the normal uniform, and were equipped with a charcoal lining to neutralize some agents, which made them bulky, and very uncomfortable. These garments were purportedly designed to keep chemical and biological agents from reaching the skin of the wearer.

Additionally, we donned the M17 Protective Gas Mask regularly, which had different components including a filter, a face piece and water spout. Filter elements in the face piece were designed to prevent harmful agents from entering the mask.

To say the least, donning this MOPP gear and Gas Masks regularly, although important for our protection, eventually became an aggravating inconvenience and annoyance.

Donning MOPP gear and Gas Masks, when “SCUD” attacks began, was a bit frightening for a while, but over time, we almost became somewhat numb to it, and it became more of a aggravating inconvenience and annoyance



**PSU-301(A) on alert regularly as patrols increased and intensified
Patriot missile batteries were ready for SCUD's**



**Some showers were for routine, everyday use,
while other showers, were reserved for decontamination only**



Iraqi's release crude oil into Persian Gulf from Kuwait January 23, 1991 – January 26, 1991

Although we had provided extensive security and oversight in the protection of shoreside facilities, something happened on January 23, 1991, that was outside our control and threatened the ability of a facility in our AOR to continue to operate.

The Desalination Plant, located in Al-Jubayl, had their operations greatly hampered, when on January 23, 1991, the Iraqi President, Saddam Hussein, ordered a huge quantity of crude oil to be released into the Persian Gulf from Al-Ahmadi, Kuwait.

Coalition forces determined the main source of oil to be the Sea Island Oil Terminal in Kuwait, which spilled approximately 70,000 to 80,000 tons of oil each day for just under a week.

Within a few days after the initial release it was determined the best way to address and handle the crude oil release was to stop it at the source, and keep it on land. Fortunately, on January 26, 1991, three US F-117 fighter-bombers were able to destroy the pipelines to prevent further spillage into the Persian Gulf.

At the time of the release, it was being evaluated in how far and wide this oil would travel, and how to protect critical areas and facilities along the shoreline. Ultimately, the oil spill started to reach Al-Jubayl, Saudi Arabia on February 16, 1991, and became a direct threat to the Desalination plant.

PSU-301(A) assists U.S. Army Tugboat in transit to Desalination Plant

PSU-301(A) Operations Lt. Tom Anderson, with a strong background in the civilian maritime industry, was requested by the U.S. Navy to be a liaison to a U.S. Army Tugboat Crew to provide communications with the Port Harbor Defense and Coast Guard Commands. A secondary duty was to assist them navigating through the port, and requesting a PSU response in case the Tug encountered any trouble.

The Tugboat was towing a barge with a component, and equipment, for delivery from the Al-Jubayl desalination plant. The Tugboat during transit, encountered the crude oil slick, which had just begun reaching Al-Jubayl, and was now approaching the area of the Desalination plant.

The spill was further evaluated and reported to Harbor Defense Command as the Tugboat approached the plant. The Harbor Defense Command and Coast Guard Senior Staff continued to initiate further actions to protect the plant and its waterside intakes.

This spill, created a major environmental disaster, eventually reaching the Al-Jubayl coastline on February 16, 1991. Experts from throughout the world, were called in to implement preventative measures to prevent the oil slick from entering the Desalination plant intakes. The Desalination plant, and select industrial facilities, were eventually ringed with floating containment booms and barriers, which added some protection. Additionally, numerous boats, outfitted with a surface oil skimmer, arrived a short time later.

It was very ironic, that many of us had been assigned to a Marine Safety Office at different times in our Coast Guard Reserve careers as Pollution Investigators. In other circumstances we would have been assigned to assist in handling this situation, but at this time we had other, more important, duties.

The pictures from the U.S. Army Tugboat depict the oil sheen in the area as well as the dense smoke from the oil fires as they approached the Desalination plant.



After initial release in Kuwait, on January 23, 1991, oil spill eventually reaches Al-Jubayl and along Saudi Arabia coastline by February 16, 1991



Crude oil flow traveled south down the Saudi Arabia coastline, with a lot of it accumulating behind the Abu Ali Island, located just north of Al-Jubayl



Iraqi's military forces cross border and invade Khafji, Saudi Arabia January 29, 1991

The Battle of Khafji took place from January 29, 1991, through February 1, 1991, and was the first major ground engagement of the Persian Gulf War and took place in, and around, the Saudi Arabian city of Khafji, located 140 miles north of our PSU-301(A)'s location.

Three Iraqi divisions, which had been heavily damaged by Coalition aircraft during the opening days of the air war, crossed over the border and attacked the City of Khafji.

In addition, coalition forces had also intercepted communications and were aware that Iraqi commando forces were directed to infiltrate into northern Saudi Arabia, further south of Khafji by sea, to mount an offensive attacking the Coalition forces from the rear.

With the possibility of PSU-301(A) being tasked with providing boat crews to interdict Iraqi commando forces, Boat Operations Chief, BMC Terry selected four boat crews for potential deployment to that area. He informed them that PSU-301(A) may be sending four boat crews and two TPSB boats up north, just south of Khafji, within the next couple of days.

He further informed them he had limited information, that when the ground war initiated, there may be an amphibious landing that we may be assisting in later.

The Iraqi invasion into Saudi Arabia from Kuwait, and subsequent battles in, and around Khafji, lasted three days



U.S Led coalition military forces counterattack and retake Khafji, U.S. and Allies performed admirably February 1, 1991

We knew that the Navy EOD Unit with us had been going up north quite often, so one of the coxswains who had been at the briefing in the boathouse asked the EOD Senior Chief what we could expect if we were sent up there.

The Senior Chief said that might not be a good idea, as EOD Teams and minesweepers were continually locating and destroying mines, and the area still had many floating mines in the waterways that would present a dangerous situation for our boats. He further said he would provide this information to our Boat Chief and Command as soon as possible.

Due to a magnificent counter-attack the following day by U.S. and Coalition Forces, the Iraqi's offensive was repelled, and U.S. and Coalition forces were quick to regain control of the city over the next two days. Consequently, PSU-301(A) boat crews were not needed, and told to stand down.

Notwithstanding that our troops and coalition forces performed superbly, and with great courage, the mission was accomplished at the cost of 43 Coalition servicemen dead and 52 wounded. The Iraqi Army endured much more loss in defeat, as fatalities numbered between 60 and 300, and an estimated 400 Iraqi's captured as prisoners of war.

**Iraqis initiate deplorable “Scorched Earth” policy.
First oil wells ignited end of January 1991 and continue to ignite them
through the end of February 1991, even as they were withdrawing**

The Iraqi military set fire to well over 600 oil wells in Kuwait as part of wicked, reprehensible, “scorched earth” tactic during January, and continued through February 1991, even while they were retreating from Kuwait, due to the advances of U.S. led coalition forces.

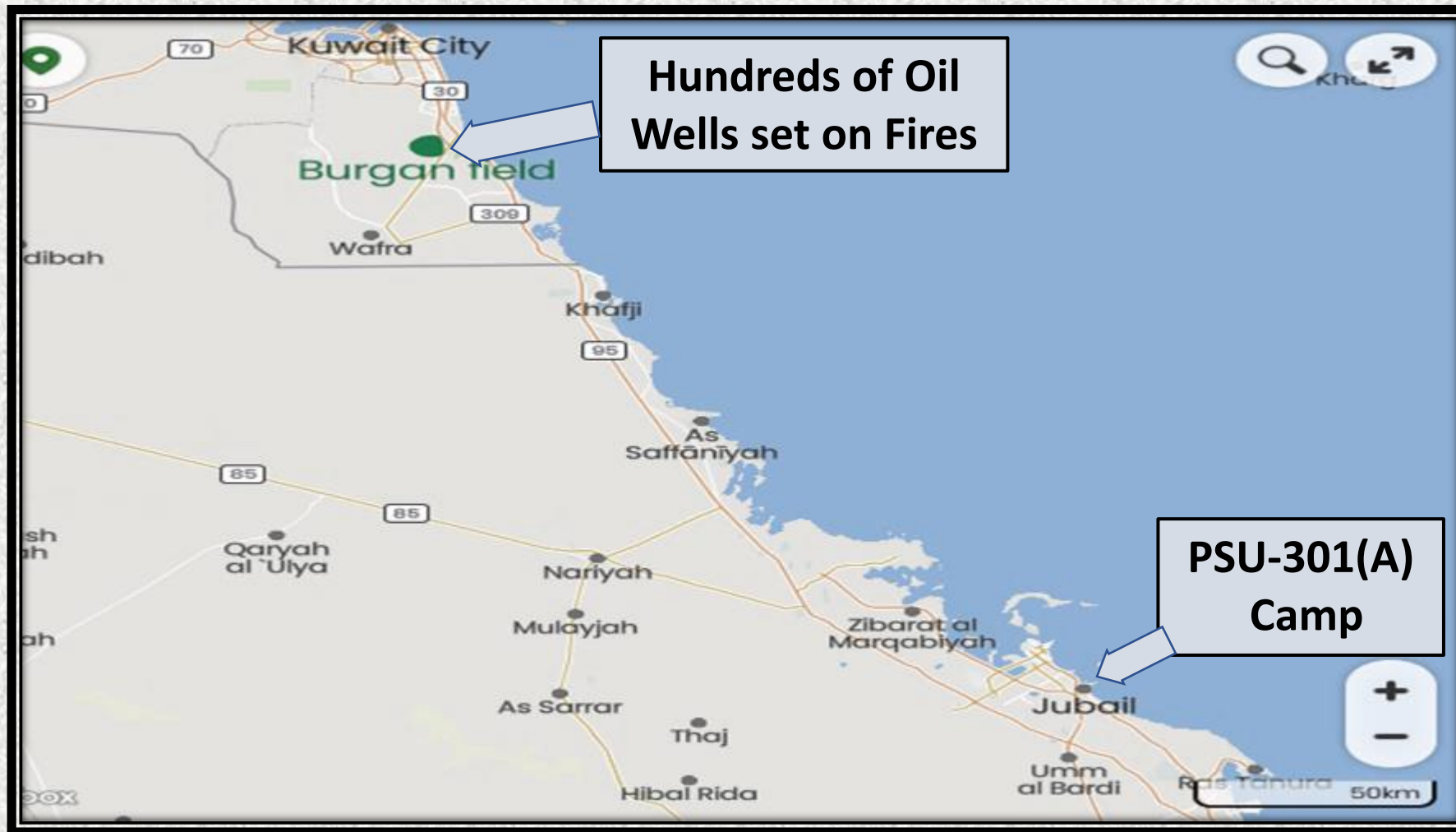
One of the major oil fields set on fire was the Burgan oil field, just over 200 miles north of the PSU-301(A) location.

The fires continued through February and March, 1991, unrestrained, until highly specialized oil well firefighter professionals, exceptionally adept in extinguishing and capping oil wells, and their equipment, could be brought to the locations. They eventually began arriving in late March 1991, and began a process of extinguishing and capping these wells, with last well capped in November, 1991.

During the months of February and March, while oil fires were raging, especially when the wind was blowing south toward our location, there was a gray, foggy haze that encompassed our sky.

Many of the personnel within the Al-Jubayl AOR experienced a burning sensation with their eyes and throats. Prior to the fires, except for the brief Monsoon season, very seldom was there ever a cloud in the sky.

**Burgan oil field fires in relation to Al-Jubayl (200 miles north).
First fires started in late January and culminating in 600 to
over 700 oil wells on fire by the end of February, 1991**



Kuwaiti oil fires raged continually during the Gulf War and for months thereafter. The first opportunity to even address these fires was almost three weeks after the ground war was won, when the first fire was contained, extinguished & capped in late March, 1991, and the last one finally extinguished and capped in Sept, 1991



**U.S. aircraft fly over the unrestrained burning
oil field fires in Kuwait to attack Iraqi targets**



PSU-301(A) members affected by smoke exposure from oil fires

Many of these oil well fires, were started in the Burgan Oil Field, the largest sandstone oil field in the world, located in Southeastern Kuwait. This oil field was approximately two hundred miles north of the PSU-301(A) location, and produced dense clouds of soot, liquid, aerosols and gases. Plumes of billowing smoke remained low to the ground, in some areas enveloping U.S. military personnel. Exposures were highest during wintertime encampments in Saudi Arabia.

Years later, after extensive environmental studies, as provided for in open source information, “It is now known that smoke from the Kuwait oil fires only affected the weather pattern throughout the Arabian Gulf and surrounding region during the periods that the fires were burning in 1991, with lower atmospheric winds blowing the smoke along the eastern half of the Arabian Peninsula, and cities such as Dhahran and Riyadh, and countries such as Bahrain experienced days with smoke filled skies and carbon soot rainout/fallout.” (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kuwaiti_oil_fires#Smoke_documentary).

Of special note, PSU-301(A), and other military personnel stationed in the Al-Jubayl AOR, and exposed to the airborne contaminants, were seventy (70) to ninety (90) miles closer to the burning oil fields, than were the locations of Dhahran and Bahrain to the south.

“SCUD” missile attack on Al-Jubayl February 16, 1991

During the early morning hours of February 16, 1991, air raid sirens sounded, followed by a deafening explosion, and the British chemical alarms broadcasting over their loudspeaker announcing **“GAS, GAS, GAS!”**

Our PSU-301(A) inner harbor patrol quickly radioed that they had observed the “SCUD” apparently explode in the air and fiery debris landed in the water near the pier, which was laden with thousands of tons of explosives and armaments, and very near the ships at berths.

The “SCUD” missile impacted approximately 2,000 meters from our camp, 150 meters from the commercial pier at Al-Jubayl, narrowly missing a U.S. Warship at its berth.

Immediately, the three PSU-301(A) TPSB boats already on patrol at the time of the “SCUD” attack, were quickly joined by the three standby boats.

MARSEC personnel went to general quarters as well, donning MOPP gear and gas masks, manning gun positions around the PSU-301(A) Al-Jubayl encampment, and along the break wall.

All remaining PSU-301(A) personnel went on high alert, donning MOPP gear and gas mask, and quickly ensured that their weapons and equipment were operational and ready.

The Iraqi "SCUD" missile crossed directly across the Al-Jubayl Commercial Pier, which was laden with thousands of tons of explosives and armaments, and hit dangerously close to it



All PSU-301(A) assets quickly initiated and deployed

The pre-deployment training in rapidly donning the protective MOPP suit and gas mask had prepared the crew for this moment, and as personnel on shore arrived at their General Quarters assignments they were ready to repel any potential Iraqi waterborne assault.

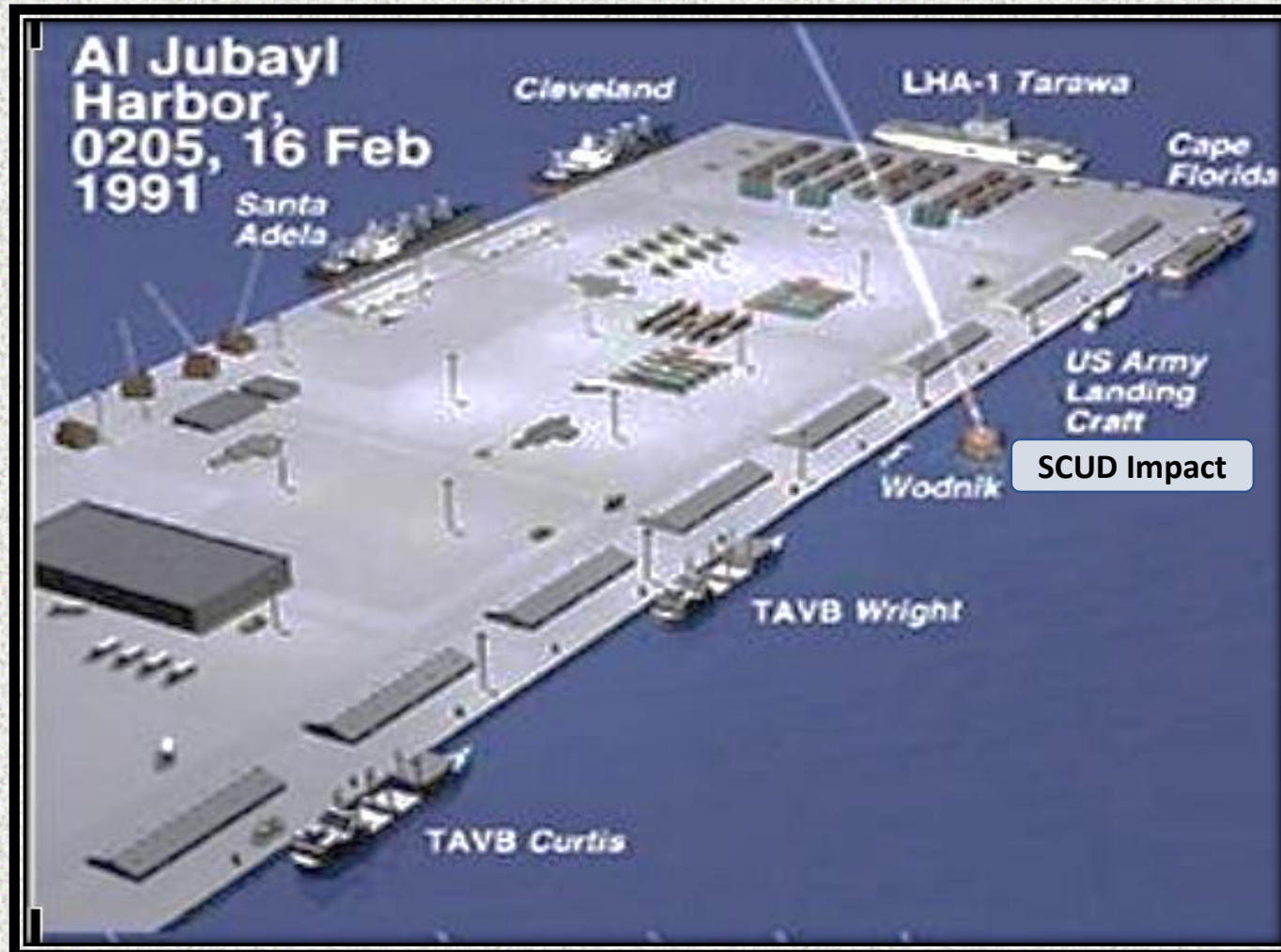
MARSEC personnel later said that it felt like a lifetime before the stand-down call was eventually transmitted, and the order came to secure from General Quarters.

After the stand down transmission, the inner harbor boat crew established a security zone around the “SCUD” impact area. This area remained secured until the next morning, when PSU-301(A) crews aided the Navy EOD divers in retrieving what was left of the “SCUD”.

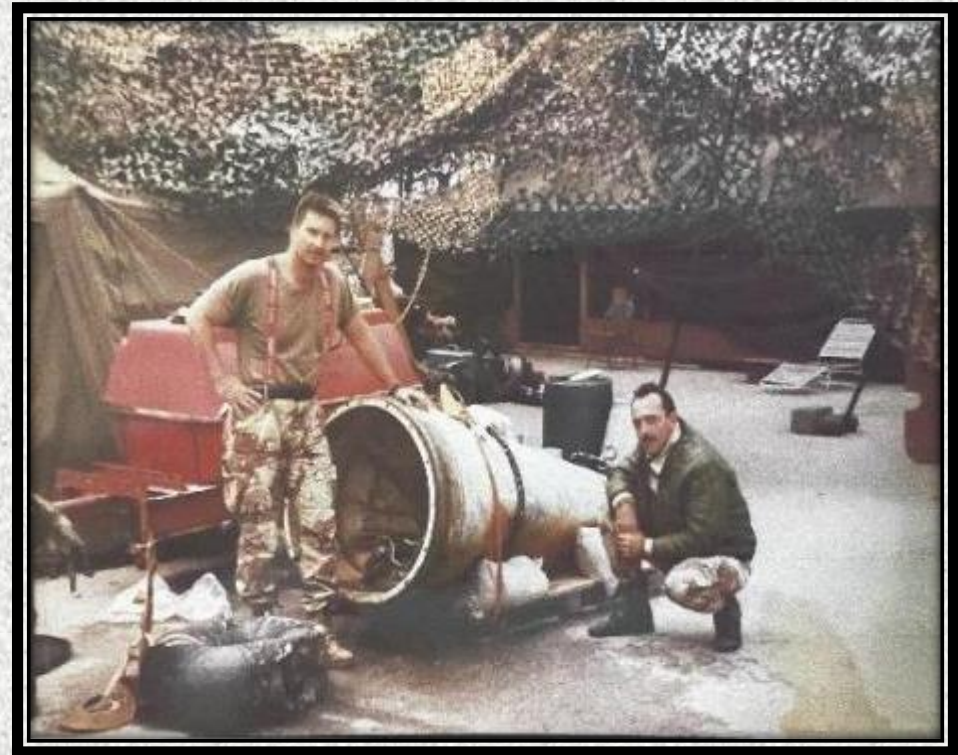
As provided by the U.S. Naval Institute in December 2002, if this “SCUD” missile had landed on the ammunition-laden pier, where thousands of tons of ammunition were located, or hit one of the ships along the pier, the results could have been catastrophic.

One can only guess what would have happened if the missile had hit the pier and if it would have triggered numerous secondary explosions. Nevertheless, the resulting blast and devastation, at the very least, could have possibly leveled many areas of the port and significantly disrupted many of the Al-Jubayl port support functions.

Additionally, there were numerous ships docked along the Pier, many of them also containing similar cargo and munitions
PSU-301(A) truly “dodged a bullet” (missile) that night



EOD Retrieved remains of a destroyed “SCUD” missile that landed in Al-Jubayl, amazingly warhead was still intact



USMC LT. General Walter Boomer visits PSU-301(A) Camp Mid-February 1991

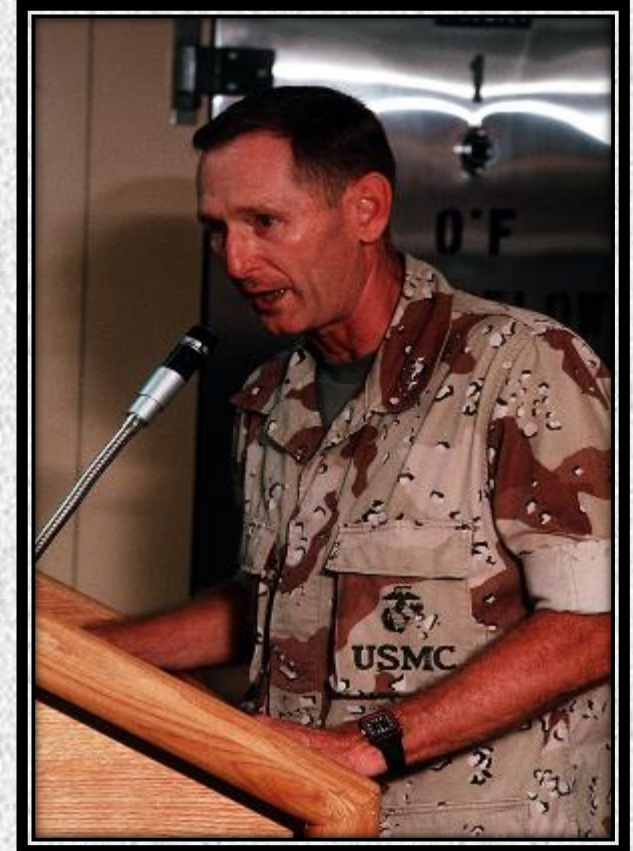
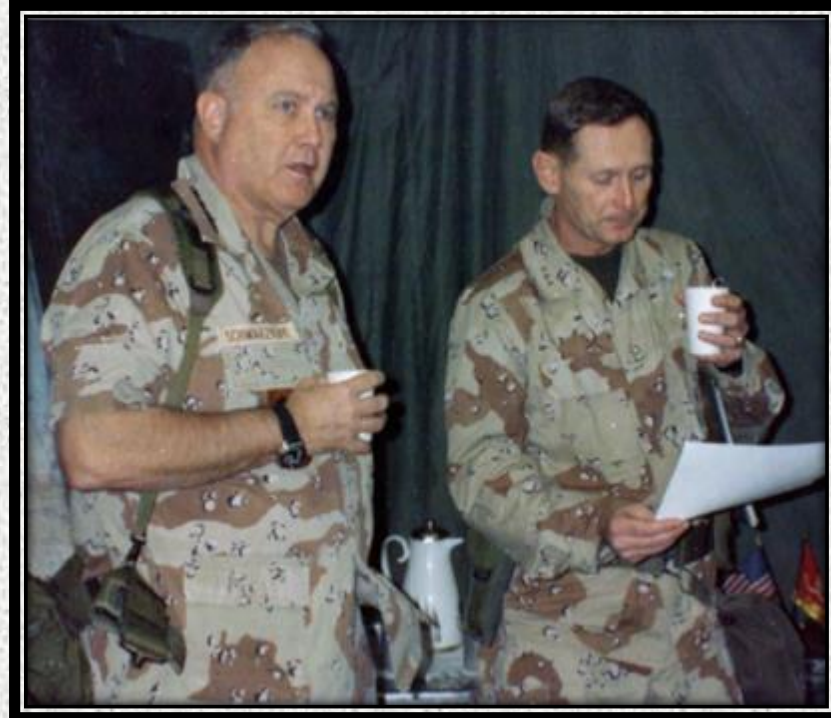
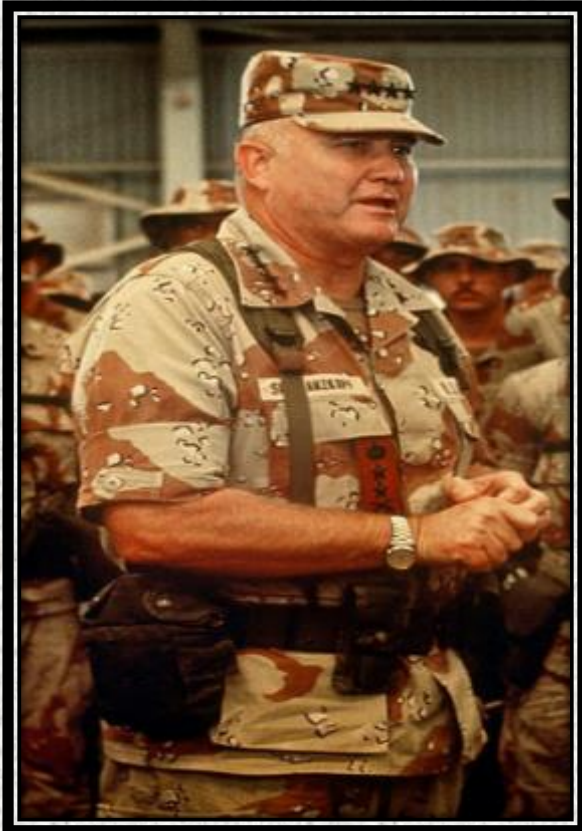
Commander of all U.S. Marines in Desert Shield/Desert Storm, USMC Lt. General Walter Boomer, well-known as one of the most respected members of Commander-in-Chief General Schwarzkopf's senior staff, came to Al-Jubayl in Mid-February, 1991, just prior to start of ground war, to visit his marines.

During the visit, he came by our camp and met with PSU-301(A) Command and crew. He expressed his appreciation for our service and support, and said how impressed he was on what we had accomplished and the great camaraderie we had developed with the marines. During his brief tour he found out that three boat crews were in their racks sleeping as they had just got off the midwatch a few hours earlier.

General Boomer came to the tent, and the next thing we heard was our CO and Master Chief requesting us to wake up for a few minutes. It is a very humbling experience to wake up, and see a three-star general standing over your rack. General Boomer expressed his appreciation for what PSU-301(A) had accomplished, and a special thanks for the help we had provided to the marines down the pier from us.

It was a surreal experience, and, as we went back to sleep, all we could think was "now that is leadership" and how glad we were that people like General Schwarzkopf and Lt. General Boomer were managing this war, instead of the politicians.

**The Gulf War Senior Military Commanders;
Four-star U.S. Army General H. Norman Schwarzkopf and
Three-star U.S Marine Corps LT. General Walter Boomer:
Magnificent Leaders and True American Hero's**



Everyone was always “excited” to go out on patrol



Danger of floating mines - U.S. Navy ships damaged after striking mine February 18, 1991

Another area of concern that added a new dimension of danger to our boat patrols, was the many mines Iraqi forces had placed in the Persian Gulf, many of them unsecured and floating freely. Just under one-hundred (100) mines had been destroyed or disabled by EOD teams and Coalition minesweepers in the first few months of Desert Shield/Desert Storm, but none had ever damaged a ship.

But that all changed on February 18, 1991, when two U.S Naval vessels struck mines. These two incidents caused significant damage to the USS Tripoli, LPH-10, a helicopter and troop carrier and the USS Princeton CG-59, a guided-missile cruiser.

These incidents couldn't have come at a worse time, as two days earlier we experienced the "SCUD" incident, and now we had to be even more on guard for a different danger and a new heightened level of awareness.

It was later learned that these mines were one of the main reasons that General Schwarzkopf had cancelled a amphibious landing, originally scheduled for two days prior to the start of ground war offensive.

To say the least, whenever we had a sonar contact, especially at night with very poor visibility, the possibility of encountering a mine was always one of our main concerns and very stressful until we were able to identify the contact.

**If mines did this to these huge U.S. Warships in Persian Gulf,
you can only imagine what it would do to a PSU, 22 foot, TPSB**



Mine damage to USS Tripoli (LPH-10)

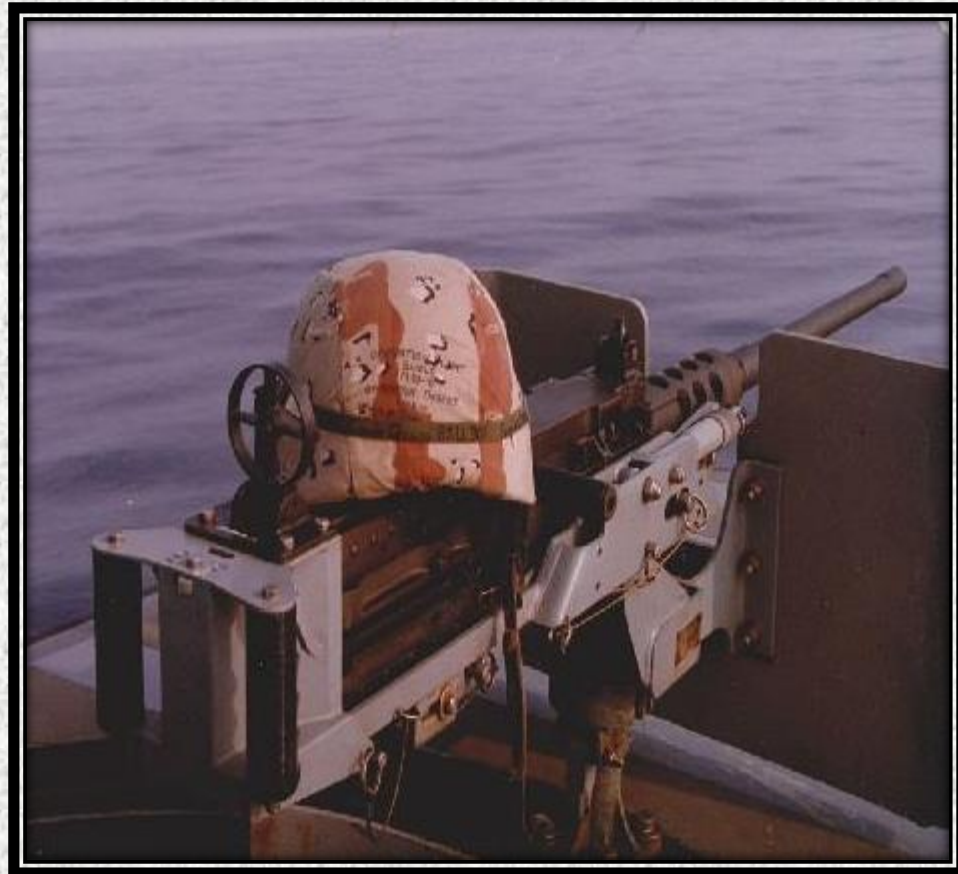
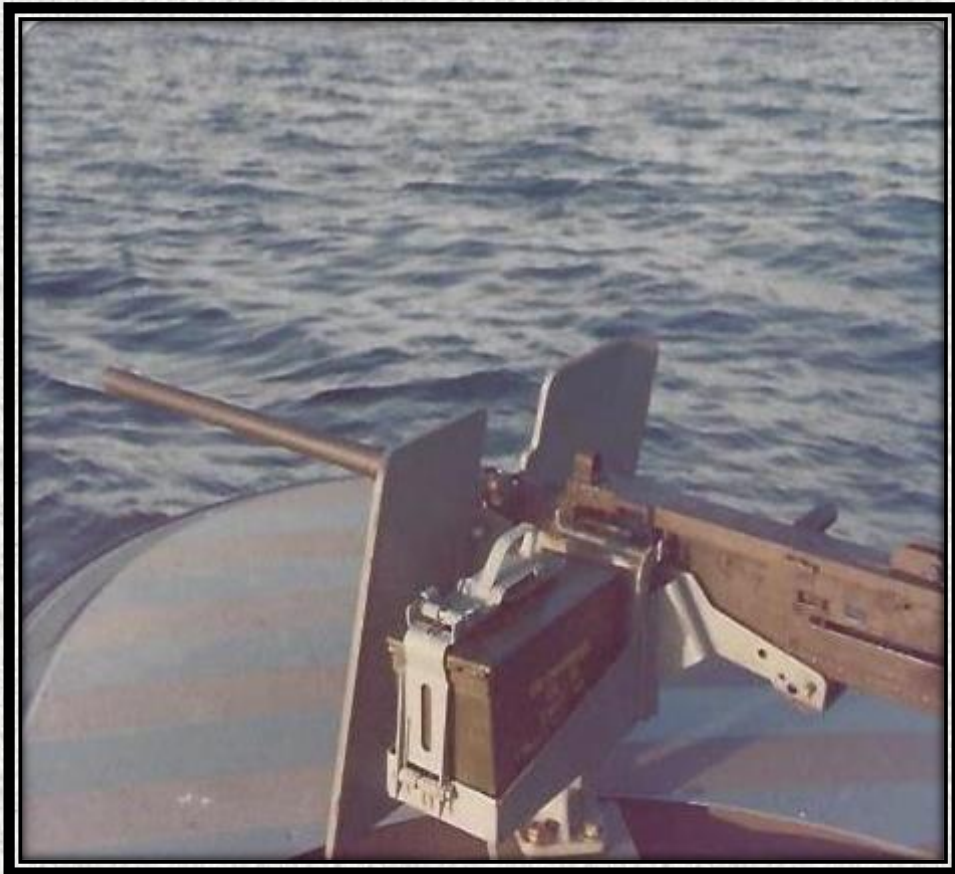


Mine damage to USS Princeton (CG-59)

PSU-301(A) TPSB's heading out on patrol



Ready, Willing and Able



SECTION VI:

Desert Storm Ground War, Operation “Desert Sabre”, commenced February 24, 1991

On February 24, 1991, after 42 days of the 24/7 air war campaign “Instant Thunder”, and numerous attacks against Iraqi targets in Kuwait and Iraq, the U. S. led Coalition forces commenced the ground war into Kuwait and Iraq. As designed, the air war campaign was very successful in diminishing the ability of the Iraqi ground forces in their ability to engage and repel the U.S. Led Coalition forces.

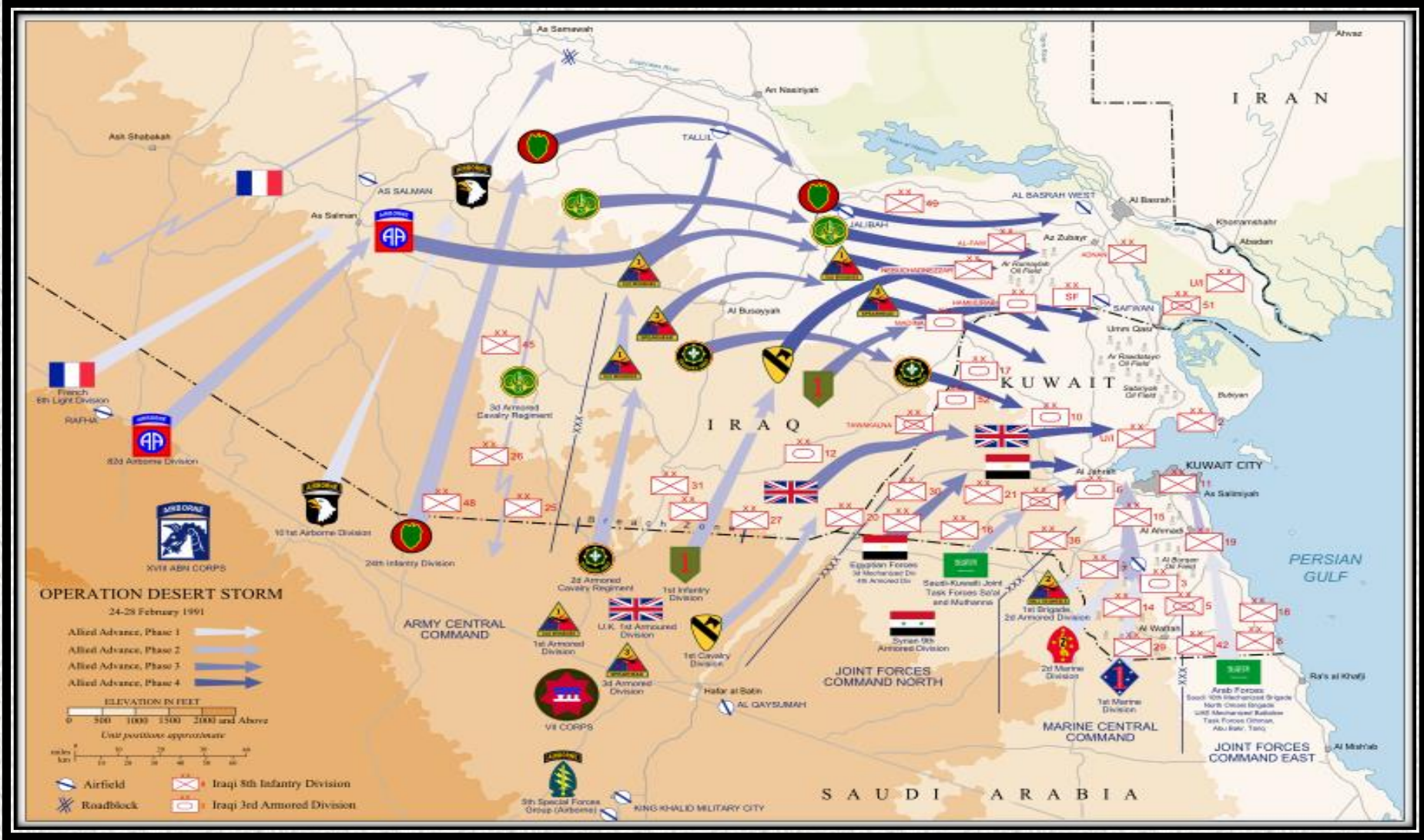
The Desert Storm Operation “Desert Sabre” proceeded with an overwhelming superiority of the U.S led multinational forces with numerous offensive campaigns at multiple locations throughout Kuwait and Iraq.

The coalition's advance was much swifter than U.S. and Allied Forces Command had anticipated, even in their best case scenarios. Consequently, on February 26, 1991, Iraqi troops began retreating from Kuwait, and shamelessly, and savagely, continued to set more oil wells on fire as they withdrew.

This well planned, U.S. led multi-nation, coordinated offensive, delivered a swift, decisive victory, with fortunately much fewer casualties than had been expected.

This resounding successful offensive was quickly followed by a cease fire, four days later on February 28, 1991.

U.S. and Coalition Forces conducted a brilliantly designed and masterfully executed, multi-front, offensive over 100 hours



Kuwait Liberated!!

February 28, 1991

Realizing his forces were being decimated, and many of his Iraqi units were already withdrawing, Iraq President Saddam Hussein announced on February 26, 1991 that Iraq would completely withdraw from Kuwait on the same day. But, even as they were withdrawing, that did not stop these despicable Iraqi forces from continuing to set oil wells on fire as they left.

The next day, on February 27, 1991, President George H.W. Bush announced that the American and multinational forces would cease hostilities against Iraq at midnight February 28, 1991, U.S. Eastern Standard Time.

We were all extremely surprised and euphoric when, one hundred (100) hours after the ground war campaign had started, on February 28, 1991, President Bush declared a ceasefire, and he also announced that Kuwait had been liberated.

It was reported later that many high ranking military personnel had expected a much longer ground war also, potentially up to four to six months, and were all equally surprised how quickly the U.S and coalition forces were able to liberate Kuwait.

The only lingering question at that time was why, knowing how treacherous the President of Iraq could be, and with the U.S and Allies formidable coalition of armies from over forty (40) countries on location, they did not proceed right into Iraq and remove him from power at that time. Consequently, in retrospect, there would have been no need for the Iraq war, that occurred just over ten years later.

PS3 Pete Galley and his work liaison present the great news!



SECTION VII:

Cease Fire/End of War

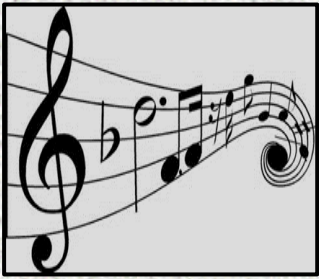
**During post War activities PSU-301(A) made numerous friends
February 29, 1991 – Mid-March, 1991**

After the ground war concluded and coalition forces began restaging in Al-Jubayl AOR, PSU-301(A) personnel made many friends with other International Forces. One of the first units we met were the highly respected elite, “Gurkha’s”, members of the British Royal Forces.

Many of us never heard of the “Gurkha’s” before, and we were all immediately impressed by their passion, professionalism and commitment to excellence. Even though many of the returning ground forces were in a somewhat standdown mode, the Gurkhas continued to devote much of their day to training.

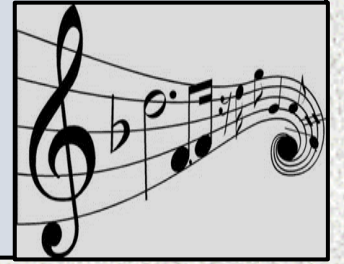
Later we found out they were members of the British Royal Forces and were from Nepal, and regarded worldwide as an elite fighting force, and among the finest, fiercest warriors, and the most feared soldiers in the world. We also learned that one of Nepal’s greatest honors is serving as a Sherpa guide and climbing Mount Everest, the other is being selected by the British Royal Forces and serve as “Gurkha”.

It was a fantastic experience getting to know these warriors and we greatly appreciated their friendship. PS2 Jim Smith, quickly became well respected by the “Gurkha’s”, and afterwards was affectionally known by the members our unit as “The Gurkha Man”!



Gurkha, Gurkha Man....

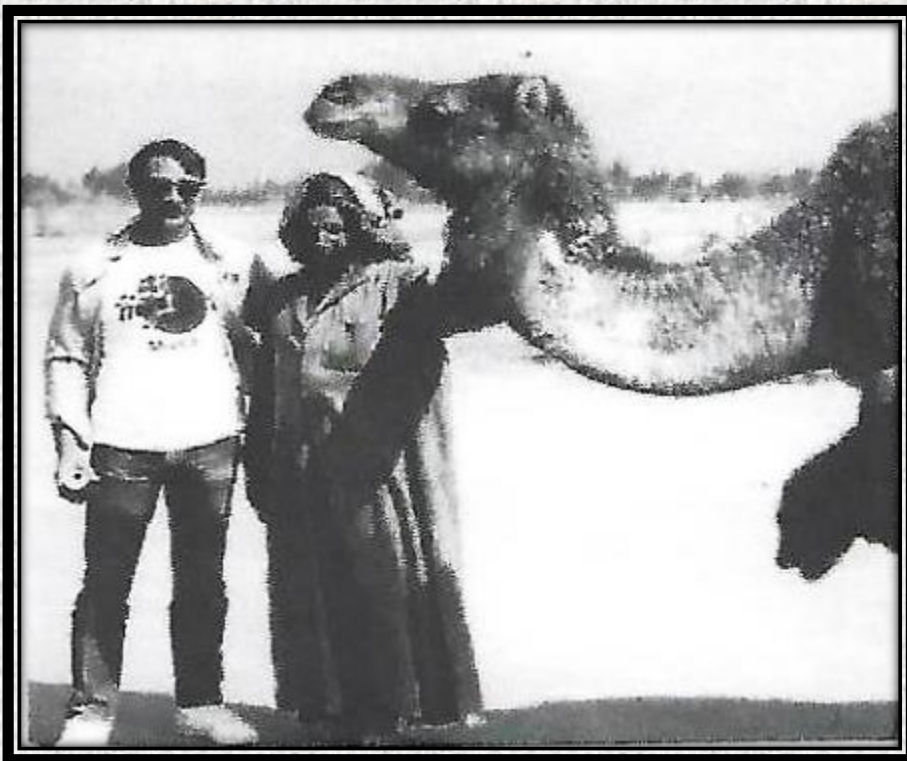
PS2 Jim Smith and his Gurkha buddies



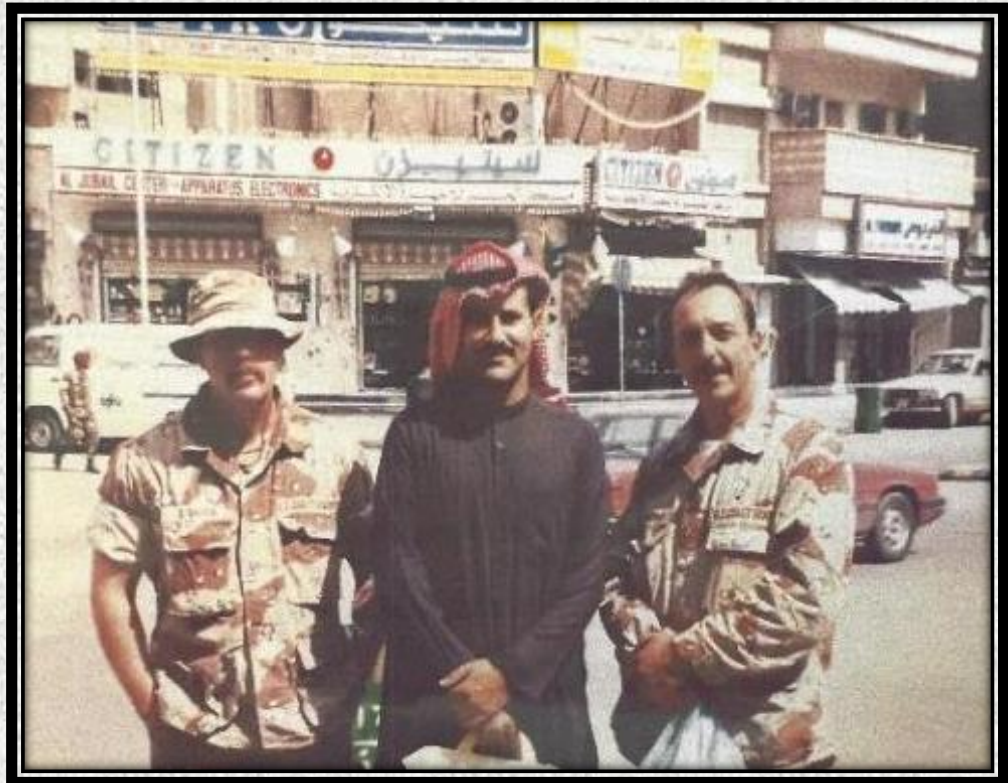
The British Army Tugboat crew came by our camp to say it was great working with us and “goodbye mates”



Both EM2 John Foro, & MK2 John McCutcheon, made many friends



**MK1 John Gaida and PS1 Geoff Ciereck made friends also.
MK3 Tom O'Brien and PS3 Dave Greenway conversing
with local merchant they encountered in town**



PSU-301(A) Command staff conducts area familiarization visit to Kuwait

Prior to the arrival of our relief unit, there was some discussion if PSU-301(A) boat crews were needed to assist with port operations in Kuwait City harbor.

PSU-301(A) Engineering Officer LCDR Lauren Johnson, MARSEC Officer LCDR Tom Anderson and Maritime Operations Officer LT Tobey Morison, traveled to Kuwait four days after ground war ended in a area familiarization visit, in case the PSU-301(A) unit was requested to support Kuwait City port operations during the post war period.

During their tour of the area, and meeting with other military units, it was determined that it was too early for any port operations, other than the EOD units, to allow EOD to ensure the harbor was free of mines and other obstacles and barriers that had been put in place by the Iraqi's.

This delay actually worked to PSU-301(A)'s benefit, as we already knew that our relief, PSU-301(B), was tentatively scheduled to arrive in country in the second week of March, and our role and involvement would be short lived.

Everywhere PSU-301(A) personnel traveled throughout the area, they were greeted by local Kuwaiti's who expressed their appreciation for our military personnel for driving the invading Iraqi's out of their country.

PSU-301(A) personnel also viewed the devastation along the "Highway of Death", which included a column of destroyed tanks, military transports and various vehicles that the retreating Iraqi soldiers had commandeered as they were fleeing Kuwait City. PSU-301(A) personnel also recalled being immersed in the acrid smoke of the burning oil wells, set alight by the Iraqis from Late-January through February, 26, 1991.

LT Tobey Morison and PSU-301(A) personnel met a Kuwaiti boy and his family, and viewed the “Highway of Death” and its scattered scenes of devastation



PSU-301(A) leaves lasting legacy with Saudi Coast Guard Counterparts

One of our last acts, two days before we departed, was a quick, simplified renovation of the Al-Jubayl Coast Guard “Station” building. Whenever we would pick up our Saudi Coast Guard interpreter, we were always amazed how poorly constructed and outfitted their building was in comparison to the opulent Harbor Defense Command building located a short distance away.

Their Coast Guard station building was a rudimentary concrete building with a few, mostly empty rooms, minimally outfitted and lacking functional furniture. Occasionally, we would enter the building to meet with the watch commander and were amazed at the ram shackled desk he was sitting at, with a couple pathetic chairs nearby. There was a five (5) foot wide, four (4) foot deep, alcove in the corner of the room, stretching up about nine (9) feet to the ceiling filled with equipment and personal gear piled high on top of each other, in a disorganized, haphazard manner.

As, over our time there, we had become friends with one of the watch Commanders (he was educated in the U.S.) and their Senior enlisted member, Chief Mohamed, both whom spoke pretty good English, we told them we wanted to do something for them before we left. The Saudi Coast Guard Chief, aware of what had been built at our compound, expressed an interest in making their empty areas inside their CG Station building a little more functional.

We brought some lumber and tools over to their location and built permanent shelving in the alcove for better storage of their equipment and personal items. We also built a much bigger, better and more functional desk for the watch Commander area, (similar to our Boathouse chart table), and a couple, more sturdy, chairs and benches.

They were very appreciative and thankful, and brought a couple of their Command Officers to our camp the next day to express their appreciation. They wished us well on our return to the USA and acknowledged our service. We knew then that we had the final closure needed, and now we were ready to go home.

Our Saudi counterparts expressed their appreciation for PSU-301(A) contributions and acknowledged our service



SECTION VIII:

Transition period begins – PSU-301(A) Relieved by PSU-301(B) Mid-March, 1991 – March 16, 1991

As the wartime operations began to wind down, and our relief unit PSU-301(B) arrived, in the second week of March, we began the transition, sharing our operational knowledge as well as transferring the equipment to them. We also brought them up to speed on the AOR, and unique and special considerations they may encounter. We then began to prepare for our departure.

PSU-301(A) crews often worked closely with British Forces, which had their own force protection at the port, and they came to our camp to say goodbye.

We also met a few Scottish Highland warriors, some of whom were bagpipers, that had relocated back to our area. The pipers often came over to our camp to play their pipes, and we thoroughly enjoyed this camaraderie in addition to the great music.

When the Sergeant Major Master Piper found out that we would be leaving to return home, and that a change of command ceremony was to take place, he offered to honor our unit by piping us off during the event.

I can't say for sure, but I do think that there wasn't a dry eye in our entire unit as the Sergeant Major Master Piper promenaded in front of the two PSU units while piping "Going Home."

PSU-301(A) - Mission Accomplished! Mid-March, 1991

What started out seven months earlier, with a ragtag group of older, minimally trained Coast Guard Reservists, over time, became a cohesive and exceptionally experienced group of individuals who became what the Coast Guard had envisioned what a Port Security Unit should be, an effective, and essential element, in securing a Port.

Not one vessel within our area of responsibility (AOR) was damaged by an enemy action, not one facility at the Port of Al-Jubayl was damaged due to enemy action and, most importantly, not one member of our unit was seriously injured or killed, during our deployment.

It was also very rewarding, when many members of our relief unit, PSU-301(B), expressed how surprised, and pleased, they were in what they were inheriting.

Additionally, many of the PSU-301(B) members expressed their approval and appreciation for our efforts, after viewing what had been created and accomplished. They also were impressed with what PSU-301(A) had established, which was a well organized and structured operation, with the appropriate, systematic controls firmly in place.

We thanked them for their comments, and wished them well, and asked only that they would continue the proud legacy of PSU-301(A).

Change of Command PSU-301(B) Presenting colors



Scottish Sgt. Major Master Piper honoring PSU-301(A)



PSU-301(A) personnel final muster in Saudi at Change of Command Ceremony



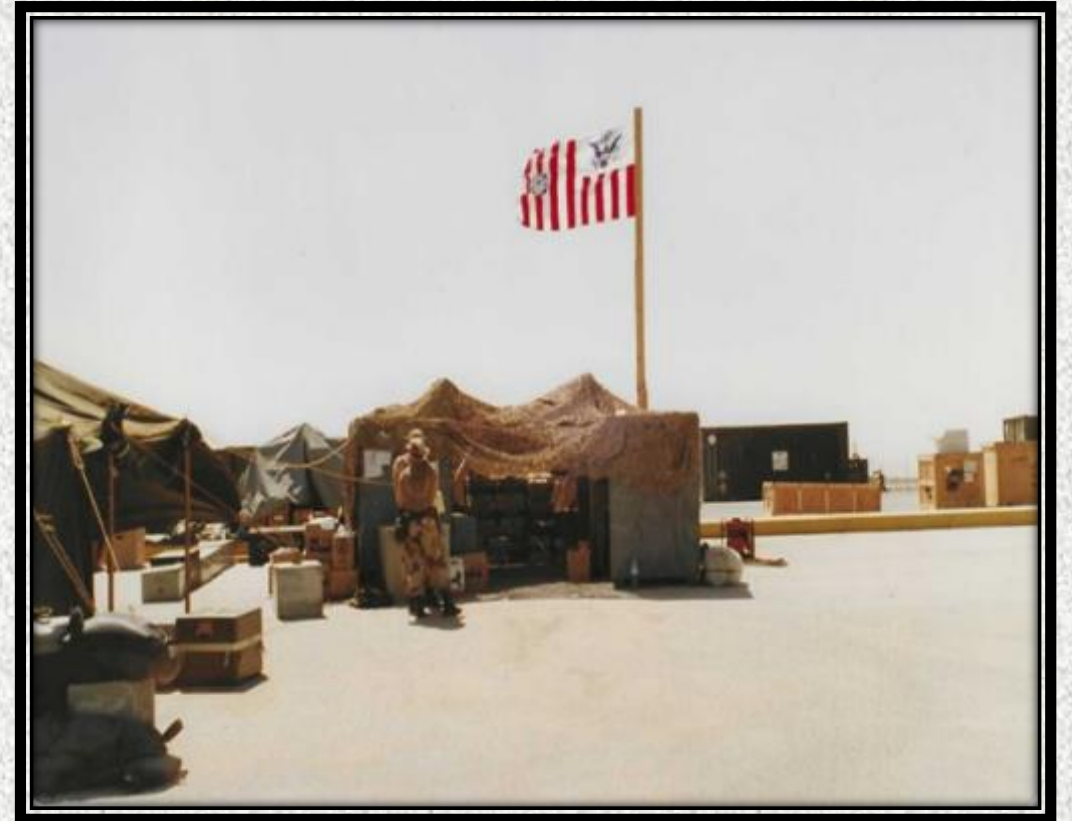
**PSU-301(A) properly relieved by PSU-301(B)
Well done PSU-301(A) Commander Scott McCone & Crew!
Mid-March, 1991**



PSU-301(A), Camp Al-Jubayl, Semper Paratus



PSU-301(A), Camp Al-Jubayl - came a long way from its modest start



To what became over time, the all-encompassing, stand alone, PSU-301(A) Camp Al-Jubayl, upon departure



**PSU-301(A) Last Day - We Will Never Forget
March 16, 1991**



**Last visit to town before departing Saudi Arabia
Hopefully no signs like this in U.S.A.**



SECTION IX:

Operation “Desert Farewell” commences for PSU-301(A) March 16, 1991

Operation “Desert Farewell” was the name given to the return of American units and equipment to the United States in 1991 after the liberation of Kuwait.

We were ecstatic when on March 8, 1991, General Schwarzkopf had delivered a farewell address to the troops in the theatre, authorizing the withdrawal of certain units for return to the USA. The first units directed to leave were mostly U.S. Marines and Army Combat Units, with a higher priority than other units, due to injured personnel and other considerations.

After our relief unit arrived, we were given approval to prepare to leave. Finally, on March 16, 1991, we received notice to send a bus load of our people to the airport. When they announced how many seats were available on a specific plane, waiting personnel from our unit were sent to fill them. This went on over a 24 hour period until all PSU-301(A) members had departed.

Although the trip over to Saudi Arabia was organized and methodical, the trip back became almost a free for all, as so many units were being relieved simultaneously. I am not entirely sure how many different planes the members of our unit departed on, (I believe it was six), but I do know the last twenty guys that I left with finally got a plane on twenty-four hours after the first members were able to leave.

**Departure from Saudi Arabia - return to U.S.A
PSU-301(A) Personnel anxiously waiting to board available plane**



Some PSU-301(A) members returned on military aircraft others on commercial jets



Some lucky PSU-301(A) members did not mind a stop, and short layover in Shannon, Ireland, and partake in a few refreshments, especially being as it was March 17, known in the USA as St Patrick's Day



Hello Bangor, Maine & Governor's Island, New York March 19, 1991

Some of our members left on military transports and some of our other members, like us, who left on the last flight, were lucky to get on commercial jets. Consequently, the long ride back to the USA, was unquestionably, much more pleasurable, than the flight over, six months earlier.

We made a brief stop in Shannon, Ireland for a quick refuel, and then landed in Bangor, Maine, nineteen (19) hours later after leaving Saudi Arabia.

The welcome in Bangor, Maine, was incredible, with hundreds of people holding American Flags, thanking us for our service and welcoming us back to the U.S.A. They provided us with refreshments and continued to express appreciation for our service and how proud they were of us. It couldn't have been a better welcome, and we will always have a warm spot in our hearts for the great people of Bangor.

We were quickly loaded on a Coast Guard plane for a flight to New Jersey and then transported by bus to the Governor's Island U.S. Coast Guard Base, in the heart of New York City Harbor.

At this time, we still didn't know where the rest of our unit was and we were very anxious to reunite with them.

Thanks for the great welcome Bangor, Maine!



Departing Bangor, Maine for transit to Governors Island



Not as comfortable as a commercial plane, but for quick transport to Governor's Island, it was more than acceptable.



Arrival at USCG Base Governor's Island March 19, 1991

Upon arrival at Governors Island, we had a great reunion with the rest of our unit, sharing with each other how we had been transported back to the USA.

We were then welcomed by numerous high ranking Coast Guard personnel and thanked for our service. The HQ Coast Guard personnel then asked if there were any immediate needs to address for us, and provided us information on what would happen over the next couple of days. They then left the rest of the day to us, and many of us took the ferry over into New York City, and the welcome by the locals there was also incredible

The second day, the first issue addressed was our physical and mental well being, through extensive medical exams and interviews. We then went through a debriefing period, with numerous interviews and attention to addressing our concerns and issues regarding the deployment. As previously discussed we brought to their attention our concerns regarding pre-deployment issues, challenges of the lack of equipment and obtaining of supplies, and most importantly the short comings of the open deck, TPSB "Raider".

This out-briefing period lasted a couple of days and after a thorough three-day debriefing, extensive medical exams and out processing, we were transported to the airport for return home, with the satisfaction of "Mission Accomplished" for a job well done.

**Arrival at USCG Base Governor's Island
PSU-301(A) proudly leaving Governor's Island for home
March 19, 1991 to March 22, 1991**

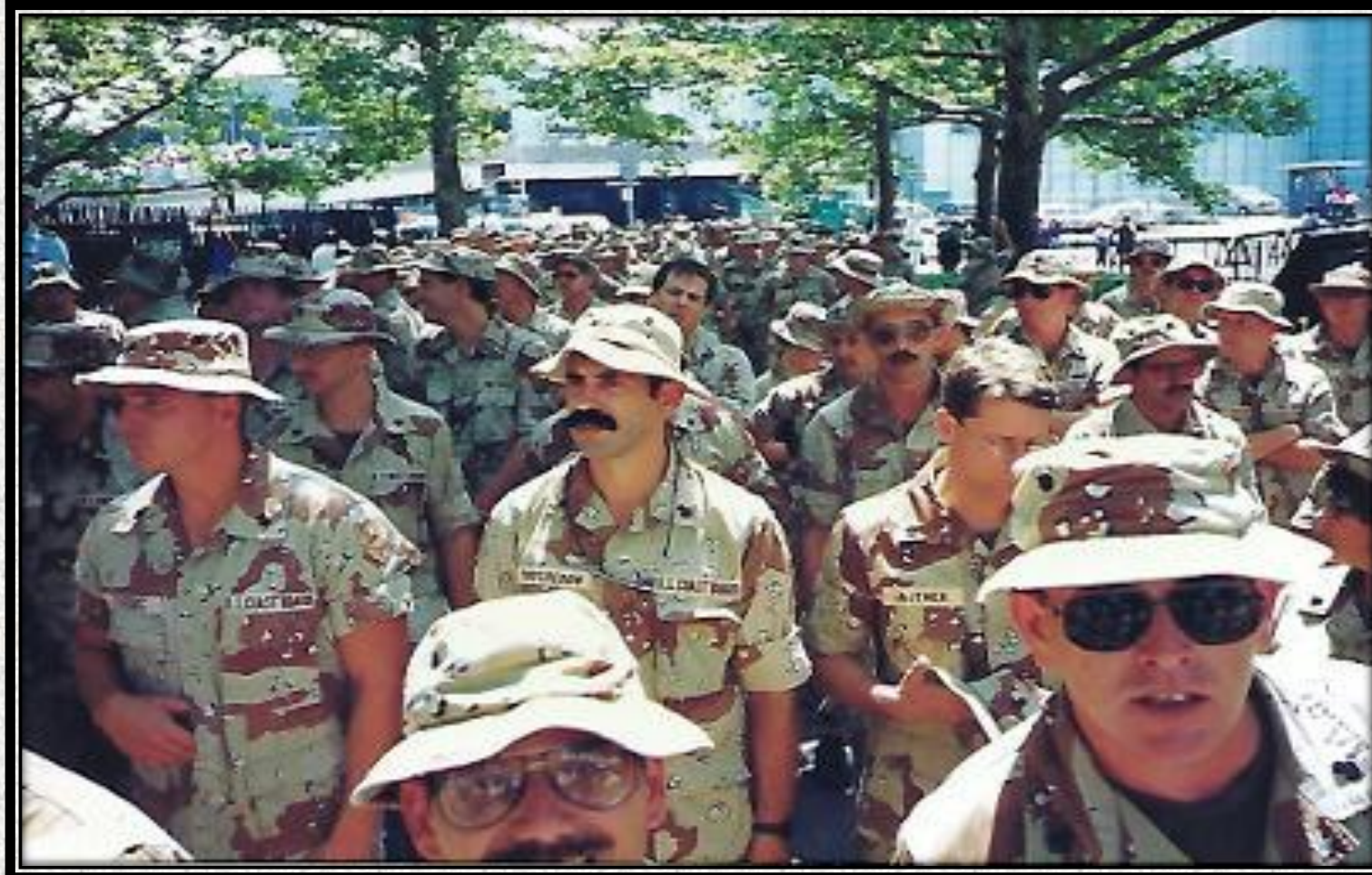


SECTION X:

Parades Honoring Gulf Vets held three months after return to USA, in July, 1991 in Wash. D.C, and a ticker tape parade in NYC



PSU-301(A) was well represented at parade



After parade some PSU-301(A) personnel and family members enjoyed sightseeing in NYC. Sadly, and Ironically, the World Trade Center Twin Towers are in background in the photo below on the right



Parade was a great tribute but also bittersweet

Although the parades were a great tribute to the Gulf War vets it was also bittersweet for the Gulf War vets, who were also Vietnam Veterans. We almost felt like traitors remembering the disrespectful, ungrateful welcome many Vietnam Vets had received in late 1960's and early 1970's, and wondering how all our Vietnam Vet brothers and sisters were feeling watching these parades.

I believe the parades in Washington and New York City were a direct result of what many surmise was a strong recommendation by General Schwarzkopf, as his significant experience in the Vietnam War, as a young combat officer, and later as Lt Colonel and Battalion Commander, he was not going let the troops go unappreciated again.

You only need to read his autobiography, **“It Doesn't Take A Hero”** to see what a great and thoughtful man he was, and how much he loved and cared about the troops.

Many people are unaware, have forgotten, or are too young to know how many of our U.S. troops died in the Vietnam War, which was approximately 68,000. Incredibly, from the year 1966 through the end of 1970 we lost a total of approximately 52,500 U.S. military personnel, for a average of just over 200 a week.

In retrospect, I just wish that all the Vietnam Vets would have been invited to the parades also, and honored as we were, upon our return from the Gulf War.

SECTION XI: PSU-301(A) recognized for exemplary service

MEDALS AND RIBBONS AWARDED TO PSU-301 FOR OPERATION DESERT SHIELD & DESERT STORM



**Top: National Defense Medal
 Southwest Asian Campaign
 Medal w/ 2 Battle Stars
 Bottom: Armed Forces Reserve
 Medal w/ Mobilization (M)
 Device
 Kuwait Liberation Medal
 (Saudi Arabia)
 Kuwait Liberation Medal
 (Kuwait)**



Order of Precedence

**CG Meritorious Unit Commendation Ribbon w/O
 device
 National Defense Ribbon
 Southwest Asian Campaign Ribbon w/2 battle
 stars
 Navy Sea Service Deployment Ribbon
 Navy & Marine Corps Overseas Service Ribbon
 Kuwait Liberation Medal (Saudi Arabia)
 Kuwait Liberation Medal (Kuwait)**



CG Meritorious Unit Commendation w/ Operational "O" Device	Navy Sea Service Deployment Ribbon	Navy & Marine Corps Overseas Service Ribbon
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SECTION XII: Summary, Tributes & Final thoughts

Some may wonder how this presentation came into being and why we are sharing this information at this point in time.

In early 2020, a few of us discussed having a thirty year PSU-301(A) reunion, and it was eventually scheduled for September 2020, in Buffalo, NY. During that time we had solicited pictures that were going to be shown during the reunion and started putting them into a PowerPoint, Unfortunately, that same year COVID hit and the reunion had to be cancelled.

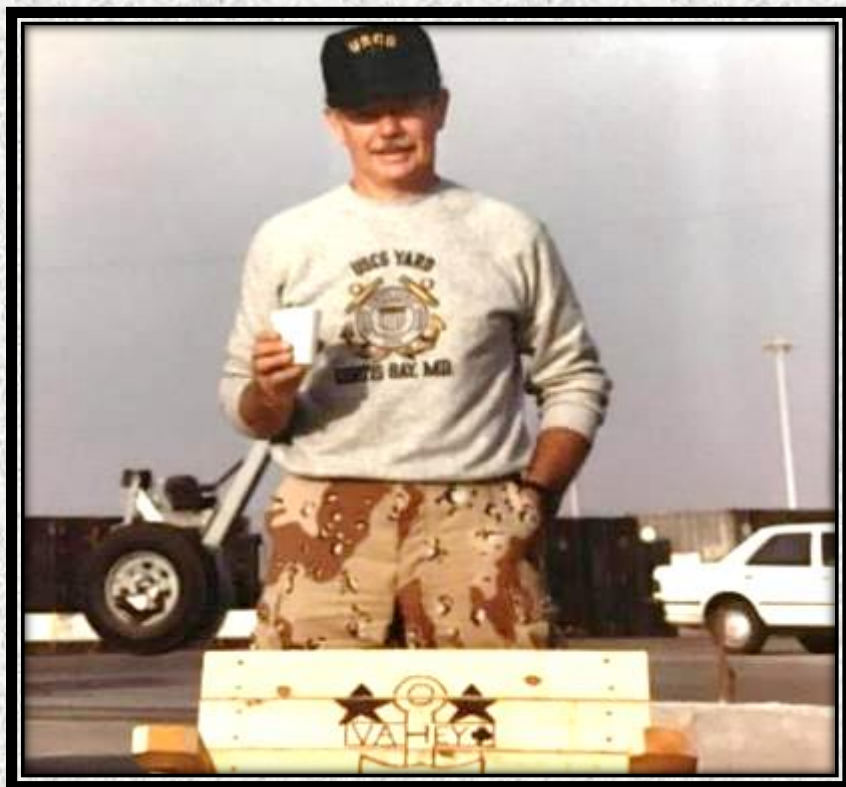
Then the end of last year after a few of our shipmates passed away, many of us touched base with each other to remember them. We then decided on scheduling another reunion in Erie, PA, the hometown of our PSU-301(A) Master Chief, Bill Vahey, for April 2023, and it was a resounding success.

During the reunion many other members of our unit offered to provide more pictures and commentary, and that is how this updated presentation came about.

It is also important to note that the great majority of our unit personnel were thirty-five years and older when we were activated, the oldest being fifty-six. Many of us had prior military service and that, along with our advanced age, helped us adapt to the many challenging situations we encountered along the way.

To our departed shipmates, this presentation is in their honor. We miss them all very much.

**Many Thanks from PSU-301(A) members to our Master Chief,
Bill Vahey, for his Leadership, Contributions, and Friendship**



Four-Star General Colin Powell congratulates MC Vahey, representing PSU-301(A), for outstanding service upon return from Persian Gulf War. PSU-301(A) Commander Scott McCone congratulates MC Bill Vahey for his 35 years of exemplary service to the military and our country at his retirement



**Master Chief, You were an inspiration, and we all learned a great deal from you about Honor, Commitment and Service
Thank You – The Troops!**

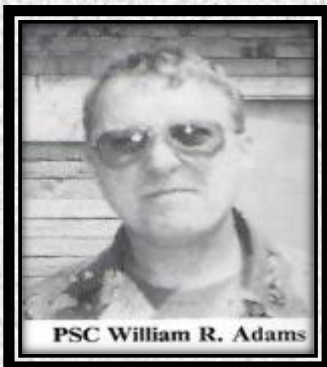


Remembering Special Friends

For some moments in life there are no words to express our heartfelt thoughts for the great people who have touched our lives. As it is with our fellow brothers of PSU-301(A) who are no longer with us. Although they are gone and will be unquestionably missed, they will never be forgotten. Rest in peace shipmates and until we meet again....

***“Fair winds and following seas,
may forever you feel, upon your cheek, the salty breeze.
Your spirit lives on in many a heart,
your words captured, and never to depart.
May your loved ones have the comfort in knowing,
to heaven is where you are going.
For all that they have to do is look above,
and they will be reminded of your love.”***

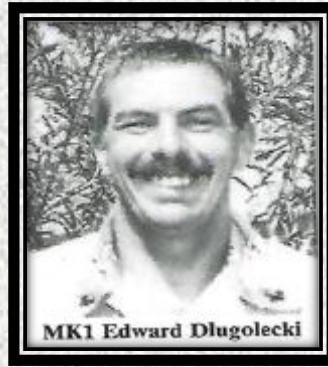
**In Memoriam for our deceased crew members (as of May 2023)
All embodied Respect, Honor, and Service to country**



PSC William R. Adams



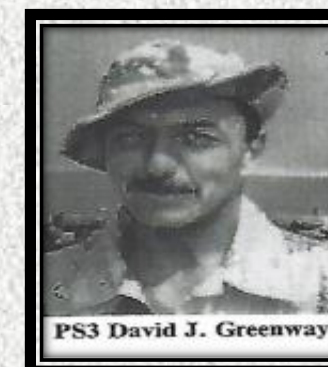
MK1 Stephen B. Boucheron



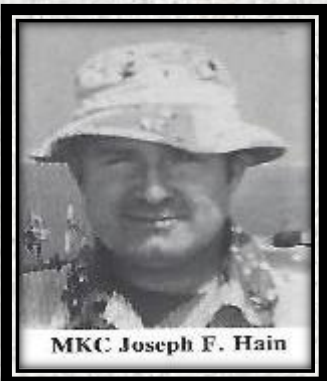
MK1 Edward Dlugolecki



MK2 Donald P. Fried



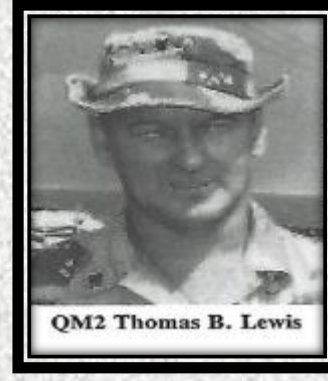
PS3 David J. Greenway



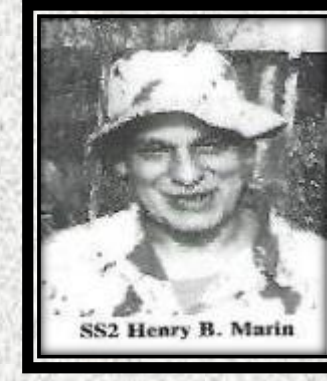
MKC Joseph F. Hain



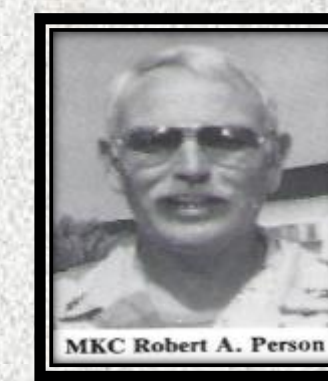
HSCS Gregory Kaszubowski



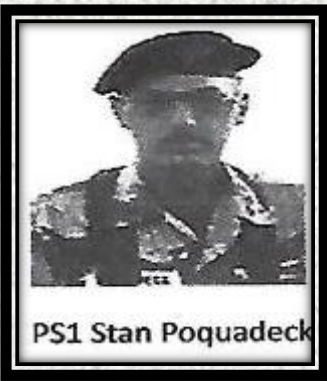
QM2 Thomas B. Lewis



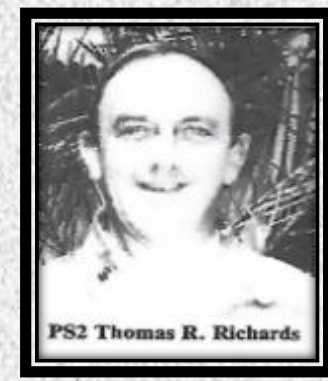
SS2 Henry B. Marin



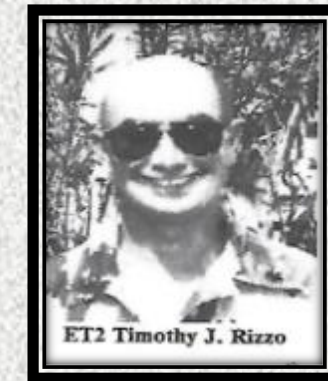
MKC Robert A. Person



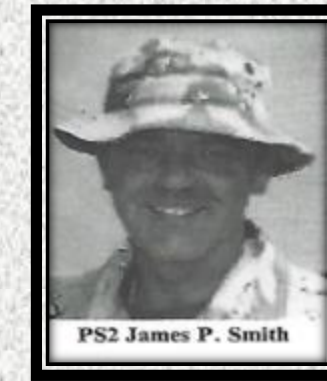
PS1 Stan Poquadeck



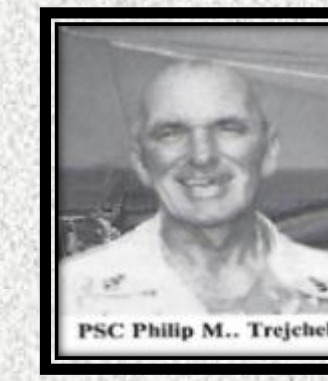
PS2 Thomas R. Richards



ET2 Timothy J. Rizzo



PS2 James P. Smith



PSC Phillip M. Trejchel

**“This Nation will Remain the Land of the FREE
Only so Long as it is the Home of the BRAVE”!!**



Final Thoughts

The author of this presentation, James Cudney, would again like to thank all of the PSU-301(A) members who provided input and pictures to make this PSU-301(A) historical overview possible.

As previously provided the great majority of the pictures were taken on site during our deployment by our unit members, and a few pictures thereafter. Additionally, various other information, including pictures, maps and historical information, were extracted from legitimate open source sites on the net, and General Schwarzkopf fantastic Autobiography, “It Doesn’t Take a Hero”.

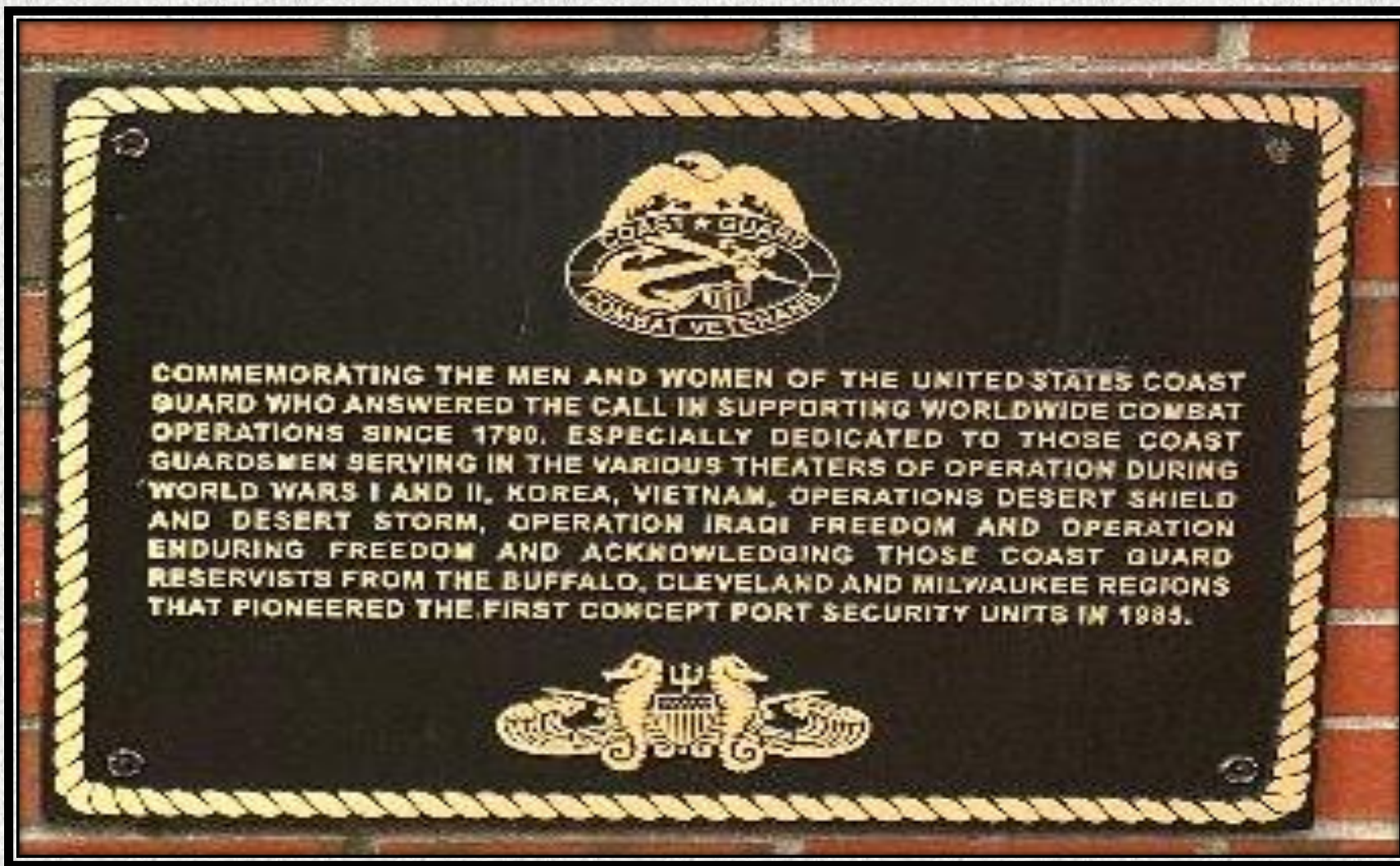
PSU-301(A) members are all very proud of their service and believe the success of the PSU’s during the Gulf War is one of the main reasons the Coast Guard continued the Port Security Unit program, and eventually expanded it to the well-deserved, elevated status it has today. The role of the PSU mission of today has now expanded to providing anti-terrorist force protection and coastal defense for missions inside and outside the United States.

To all the past, present, and future PSU members, we wish you the best and hope, as we did in PSU-301(A), you preserve and honor the proud tradition of the PSU, established during our deployment to Desert Shield/Desert Storm in 1990 and 1991, over thirty years ago.

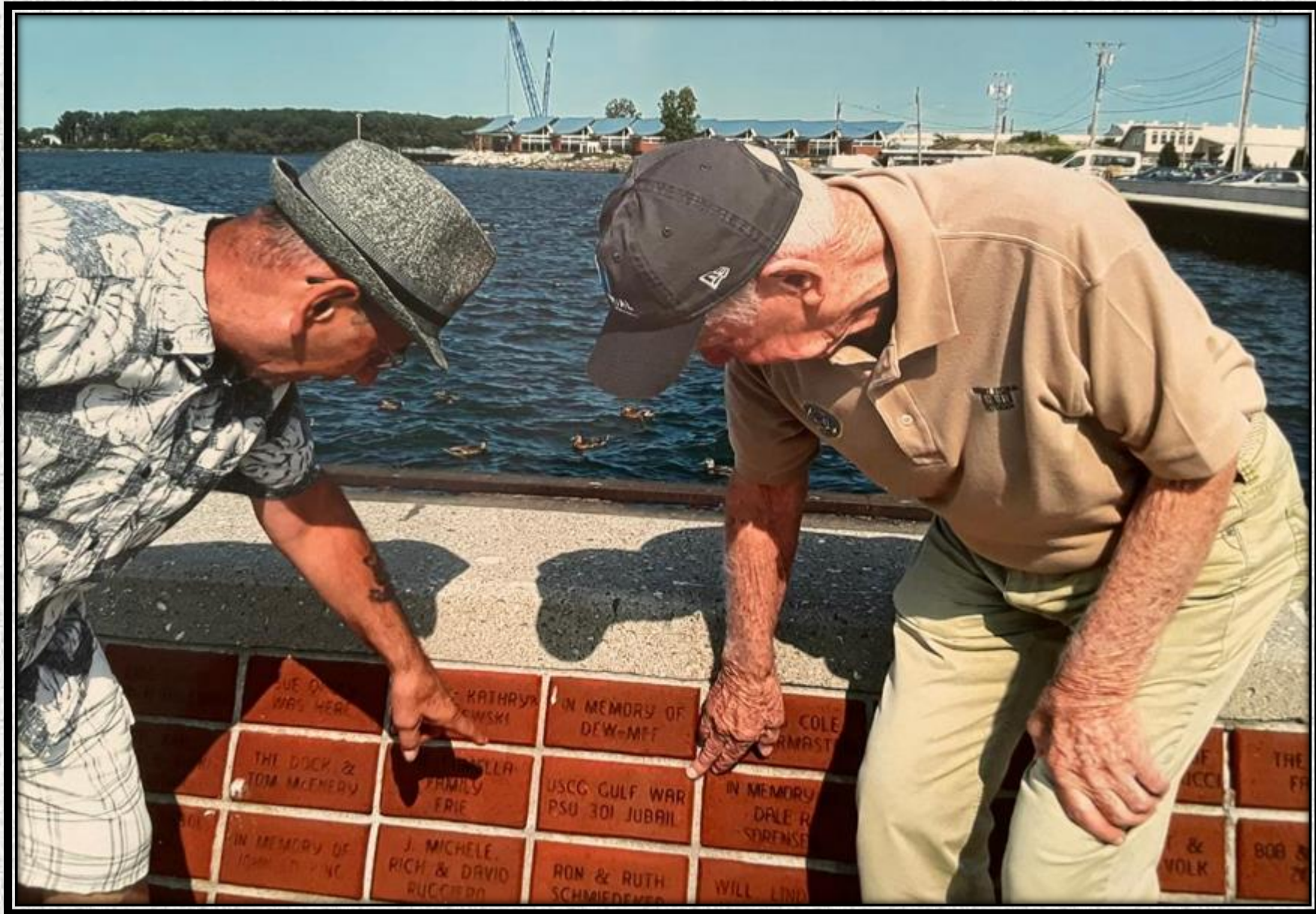
**PSU-301(A) Served proudly and with loyalty, dedication and honor
Semper Paratus!**



PSU-301(A) forever memorialized in Buffalo, NY at waterfront Naval Park



As well as Dobbins Landing in Presque Isle State Park on Erie PA waterfront



God Bless our United States Armed Forces

