



Quarterly Newsletter of the Coast Guard Tug Association

www.cg-tugs.org

Volume 1, Number 2

"SEMPER PARATUS"

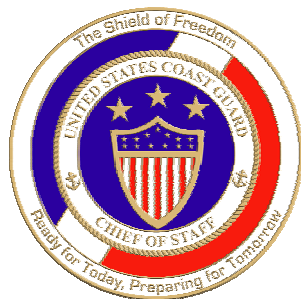
Spring 2006

Meet Our Next Commandant

By: Sandy Schwaab

In February 2006, President George W. Bush nominated Vice Admiral Thad W. Allen to be the 23rd Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard – a terrific choice! Having met and worked with VADM Allen on several occasions and followed his activities in the recent past, I believe he will bring new life and direction to our Coast Guard and focus on efforts to continue the Coast Guard's role as the "premier Maritime Service" we have all come to know. While the nomination process is still in progress at the time of this publication, there is little doubt of his confirmation. CONGRATULATIONS VADM Allen!

(Bio source: USCG Web Site)



Vice Admiral
Thad W. Allen
Chief of Staff
U.S. Coast Guard



Vice Adm. Thad W. Allen assumed duties as Chief of Staff, U.S. Coast Guard and Commanding Officer, Coast Guard Headquarters, Washington, D.C., in May 2002. Vice Adm. Allen oversees general management functions of the Coast Guard. He is also currently the Chairman of the Department of Homeland Security's Joint Requirements Council.

Vice Adm. Allen was designated the Principal Federal Official in Sept. 2005 for hurricane Katrina response and recovery activities in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. He additionally served as Principal Federal Official for hurricane Rita response and recovery activities in Louisiana.

Prior to his assignment as Chief of Staff, Vice Adm. Allen served as Commander, Coast Guard Atlantic Area, where he was the operational commander for all Coast Guard activities in an area of responsibility spanning five Coast Guard Districts, over 14 million square miles, involving 26,000 military and civilian employees, and 27,900 auxiliaries. He served concurrently as Commander, Fifth Coast Guard District, and Commander U.S. Maritime Defense Zone Atlantic. Vice Adm. Allen led Atlantic forces in the Coast Guard's response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

In his previous flag assignments he commanded the Seventh Coast Guard District and directed all Coast Guard operations in South Carolina, Georgia, most of Florida and throughout the Caribbean; and was the Coast Guard's Director of Resources, where he was responsible for formulating the Coast Guard's budget, developing long range plans, and managing the Coast Guard's performance plan.

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You know you're "Old Guard" if there was a can on the bulkhead of the berthing area labeled

**Butt Can,
Ash Receptacle**



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"From the Editor..."

I'm proud and happy to say that member response to our first edition of the "IN TOW" newsletter has been overwhelmingly positive. Doug and I will both admit that it has been a "labor of love" and, often, some frustration. But, it is that much more gratifying to both of us to know that the outcome was well worth the effort. Thanks to our members and others for the "kudos." As "editor," I'd like to clear up some possible misconceptions of how this publication has come to be, and give due credit to other members for their efforts and contributions.



"In Tow" Editor, Sandy Schwaab

The concept of this CGTA Newsletter is the "brain child" of our Prez, Doug O'Dell. He is our Webmaster and "publisher" – the guy that has the programs and knows how to work them. Our other officers (see left) have reviewed, commented, and approved the content of the newsletter and helped to make it the publication you have seen. My job, as editor, is to ensure that the format works, that it is publicly and academically appropriate, and that our articles are grammatically correct and readable – in other words, "crossing the Ts and dotting the Is." The BZs directed to me (and I thank you all) are a melding of several folks dedicated to the continuation of this association. I thank them all for their confidence in me!

It is my intention to ensure that this newsletter will support and promote the ideals of the CGTA. We may be a small, yet significant, group of CG Vets who deserve recognition for our efforts and will always feel a camaraderie of serving in the tug fleet of the USCG.

Semper Paratus,
Sandy



CGC Penobscot Bay WTGB-107 (USCG Photo)



"Historical Tidbits and other Maritime Trivia"

by: Sandy Schwaab

Each of our military services have had their share of celebrities who have served, either in war or peace; many are familiar, some obscure. A few notable examples include Actor Audie Murphy who was the most decorated soldier in WWII, earning the Congressional Medal of Honor; the Army can also claim swing band leader, Glenn Miller, and, of course, Elvis Presley; the Air Force has Actor Jimmy Stewart, who flew bombers over Germany & rose to Colonel in the USAF Reserve. There are many more. But, how many of us know what celebrities served in the Coast Guard? Believe it or not, there are quite a few. How many of them do you know?

Celebrity Coasties

Sloan Wilson - Author
Alex Haley - Author
Nick Adams - Actor
Arthur Godfrey - Entertainer
Victor Mature - Actor
Lloyd Bridges - Actor
Gerard Altoff - Author/Historian
Claiborne Pell - Senator (RI)
Caesar Romero - Actor
Jack Dempsey - Boxer
Monte Markham - Actor/Producer
Arnold Palmer - Golf Pro
Rudy Vallee - Singer/Actor
Humphrey Bogart - Actor
Sid Caesar - Actor/Comedian
Frank Murkowski - Senator (AK)
Gower Champion - Dancer/Actor
Buddy Ebsen - Actor
Blake Edwards - Writer/Producer/Director
Otto Graham - Football Player/Coach
Robert Horton - Actor
Tab Hunter - Actor
Sam Nunn - Senator (GA)
Patrick Wayne - Actor
Gig Young - Actor
Gene Taylor - Congress (MS)
John Perry - Producer
Guy Madison - Actor
Lee Bonnell - Actor
Robert Campbell - Producer/Director
Howard Coble - Congress (NC)
Dennis Dalzell - Producer
Ted Turner - Businessman
Bill Delahunt - Congress (MA)
Tom Philpott - Editor (Navy Times)
John F. DeCuir - Art Director/Production Designer
William O. Harbach - Producer
Robert Stevens - Actor
Jimmy Buffet - Singer

(Sources: www.laesser.org; USCG Historian's Office; Coast Guard Magazine, various issues.)



Buddy Ebsen



Jack Dempsey



Arnold Palmer



Victor Mature



Lloyd Bridges



Ruddy Vallee

The "Prez Sez"

By Doug O'Dell -

We are beginning our 2nd quarter in 2006, and third year for the existence of the CG Tug Association. Growth this quarter has continued to break all expectations. We've had 35 new members sign on and fully expect to break last year's growth. I am sure they will all find the CGTA to be every bit the close knit group of Coasties they remember while serving in their respective tugs. To all of our new members . . . **"Welcome Aboard."**



CGTA President - Doug O'Dell

We're six months away from Reunion 2006. As you know, we are having it again at the CG Academy in New London. Plans are shaping up on events and arrangements and, again this year, Sandy Schwaab will be the honcho with help from Dave Mathieson and Joe Breneman. Thanks guys . . .

This year's reunion will be up-scaled considerably from last year. We will have a block of rooms reserved at the Mystic Hilton in Mystic, CT with a meeting room set up for us to meet and display memorabilia and chew the rag. There will also be a hospitality suite, with open bar and snacks set up there as well. Our business meeting and banquet dinner will be at the Coast Guard Academy Officer's Club on Friday.

A tentative schedule of events and activities is included in this issue, on the CGTA website, and by email, and "snail mail."

With our reunion being expanded, we find ourselves in need of donations. It is our desire that the CG Tug Association remain dues free. This practice is rare in an organization such as ours, and we hope to continue this policy well into the future. As we grow, this may very well have to change. Our funding is based on voluntary donations alone. We only solicit donations through quarterly fund raising drives and at reunions. Those who have made donations in the past, we thank you. Anyone who can afford to contribute now, please do so. Those who are not able to donate now, we hope you will be able to in the future. We hope to maintain a healthy treasury in order to cover our meager operating budget. It is at reunion time that the greatest need exists. We have no salaried or paid officers and all work is provided on a voluntary basis. So please, with Reunion

2006 fast approaching, see if there's anything you can do to help us provide a memorable experience for all. Anyone wishing to make a contribution please contact us either through the website or by email. My email address is CGTA @ sbcglobal.net.

A venue for reunion 2007 or 2008 is still up in the air. Some have suggested places such as Cape May and Baltimore. Baltimore has a very prestigious Coast Guard presence and would be a great place to have our reunion. Cape May would be also, even though some may still wish to forget about that place. I'll admit, Cape May was a rough place to have gone through but, admit it guys, many of us wouldn't be what we are today if not for the valuable skills and discipline learned at that base. It would be a great place to revisit. Anyway, we will need to discuss where to have our next reunion while at this year's event, so give it some thought and bring them with you or submit ideas to me through the CGTA website.

I would also like to bring to your attention the on-going work of the Tamaroa Foundation to preserve the CGC *Tamaroa* and her illustrious history. Their road has been a rocky one and their need both in financial issues and volunteer workers is never ending. Anyone interested in being part of their efforts are encouraged to contact their organization at <http://www.tamaroa.org>, or by contacting us through the CGTA website. We'll put you in touch with the right people. The *Tamaroa* is one of our own . . . A CG Tug. We need to "Look Out For Our Own".

As you're all probably aware, the *Snohomish* has finally found a permanent home and will soon be working again breaking ice and towing ships. Our member and chief engineer of the SS *Badger*, Chuck Cart, has her on charter and is presently fitting her out for service. We will be providing you updates as we get them. We are very pleased we were in some small way able to help save the *Snohomish* from her pending doom a couple years ago by getting her connected to her present owner, Franz Von Riedel, of the Northeastern Maritime Historical Foundation.

Finally, let me thank Sandy Schwaab for his enduring efforts as Editor of "In Tow." We have had many kudos about issue number one and it is the fine work he had brought forth that has made it a top notch publication.

Again, Thanks to all CGTA Members - Doug O'Dell

You MIGHT be a Coastie if...
Members of other services visit your work space and shout, "Wow, I haven't seen one of those in 20 years."

Commandant - continued.

A specialist in operations both in the coastal and off-shore environments, Vice Adm. Allen has served in three Coast Guard cutters; the *Androscoggin*, *Gallatin*, and *Citrus*, which he commanded. His coastal operations command assignments include Captain of the Port / Group Long Island Sound, Conn.; Group Atlantic City, N.J., and LORAN Station Lampang, Thailand. Vice Adm. Allen's other assignments included a tour as search and rescue controller in the Greater Antilles Section, San Juan, Puerto Rico; Intelligence Watch Officer at DEA/INS El Paso Intelligence Center, El Paso, Texas; Chief Budget Officer, Maintenance and Logistics Command, Atlantic, Governors Island, N.Y.; Deputy Project Manager, Fleet Modernization and Rehabilitation (FRAM) Project, and Assistant Division Chief, Programs Division, Office of the Chief of Staff, Coast Guard Headquarters.

Vice Adm. Allen is a native of Tucson, Ariz. He graduated from the U. S. Coast Guard Academy in 1971. He holds a Master of Public Administration degree from the George Washington University and received the Distinguished Alumni Award in 2000. He also holds a Master of Science degree from the Sloan School of Management of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In 2003, Vice Adm. Allen was elected a National Academy of Public Administration Fellow.

Vice Adm. Allen is married to the former Pamela A. Hess of Champaign, IL. She is the Assistant Dean for Student Services at the George Mason University School of Management. They have three grown children, Amanda, Meghan and Lucas and two grandchildren, Zachary and Andrew. Vice Adm. Allen is the son of Clyde and Wilma Allen. Clyde Allen is a retired Coast Guard Chief Damage Controlman and World War II veteran.



Grand Daddy Hudson - USRC Hudson

CG Tug Association - Reunion 3, 2006

SHIPMATES! The initial plans for our 3RD Reunion of the Coast Guard Tug Association have been set! Following our last get-together at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, the vote was unanimous to hold this year's gathering again in New London, CT. It was also suggested that we expand our time together to a THREE-day event. Your wishes are our command and we hope to bring you a memorable experience.

Dates: Thursday, 21 September – Saturday, 23 September 2006

Location: Hilton Mystic, Mystic, CT and the U.S. Coast Guard Academy

A general meeting room, block of 25 rooms, and a Hospitality Suite have been provided at the Hilton. Additionally, the hotel has 2 in-house restaurants, a full bar, and pool. Room prices are set at \$119.00 per night. The Hilton is also within walking distance to several additional restaurants, Mystic Aquarium, and Mystic Village (great shopping!) and 1 mile from Mystic Seaport Museum. Call **1-800-445-8667** BEFORE 1 SEPTEMBER to make your reservation (additional rooms may be added if required). When calling, identify yourself as being with the CG Tug Association.

Attendees will be responsible for their own individual travel, lodging, (some) local transportation, banquet cost, and any "unplanned" events. **Please return your registration forms NOT LATER THAN 1 September 2006** so we can have an accurate "head" count.

Tentative Agenda:**Thursday, 21 September:**

0900 – Arrival, registration, and "sea stories" at Hilton Mystic.

1600 – 2400 Free bus transportation to Foxwoods Resort Casino.

Friday, 22 September

1230 – Board transportation to New London for tour of USCGC *EAGLE* (pending schedule).

1430 – Board for trip to USCG Academy. Arrive +/-

1500 – walk grounds, exchange, etc.

1545 – Muster on Academy Parade Ground for Review of Corps of Cadets (dedicated seating & recognition of our organization).

1700 – 2300 Retire to CGA O'Club – Happy Hour, annual meeting, banquet.

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Reunion Continued

For purposes of our reunion, a long-standing tradition in military clubs will be suspended – “you may enter COVERED here, without buying the bar a round of cheer” (military ball caps and/or ribbon racks, are acceptable and encouraged)!

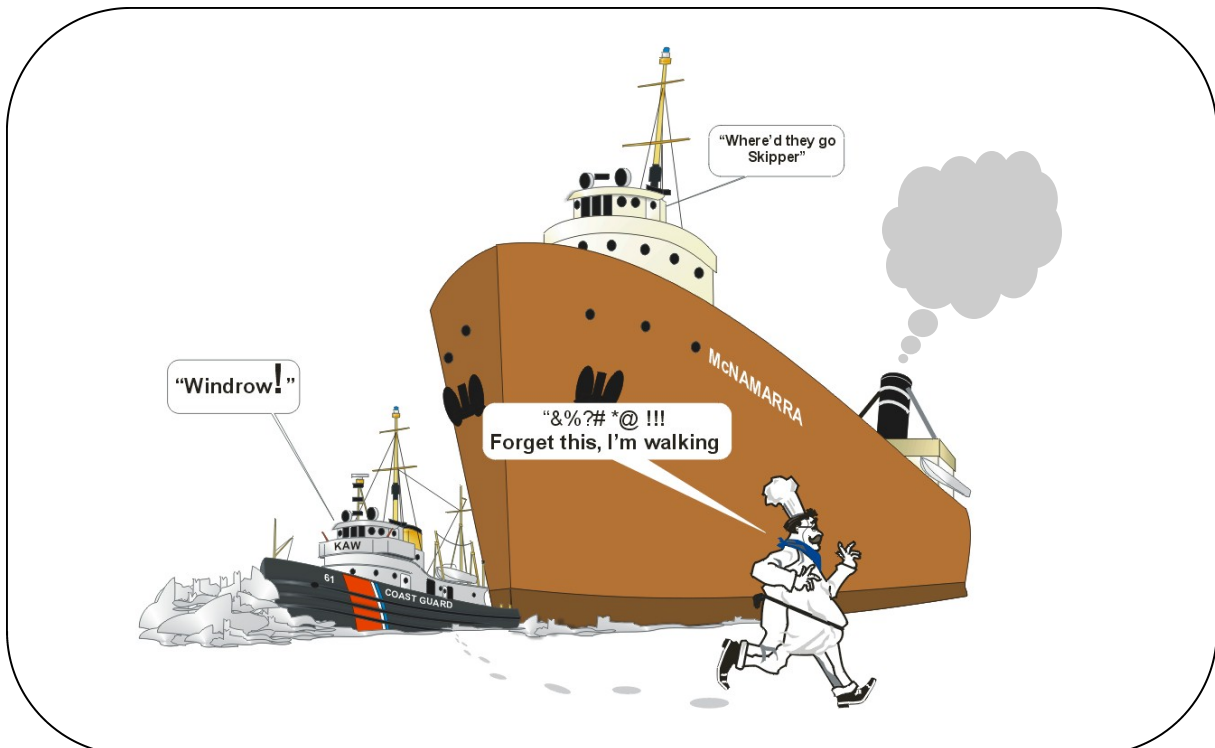
Also, this year, it has been suggested by several retirees to be in uniform for our events at the CGA. With that in mind, any active duty or retired members are welcome and encouraged to “break out the old sea bag” and attend in their appropriate uniforms. For active duty personnel (and retirees from 1974-on – “Bender Blues”), the Uniform of the Day would be “Tropical Blue Long” or “Service Dress-Blue Bravo;” either would be acceptable. For retirees before 1974, the Service Dress Uniform you retired in (blues or khaki) would be acceptable. We’ll all make a splendid sight! **Please note the uniform question on your registration form.**

Saturday, 23 September

Attendees are free to congregate in the general meeting room and Hospitality Suite or to visit local amenities listed above.

1800 – Farewell gathering in the Hilton Meeting Room; secure.

As we are not an incorporated Association, we need your help to establish a solid treasury. Therefore, we are asking that our members help us out. We need your donations to help us finance our Association’s mailings, furnish supplies, support our reunions, and assist in “up front” financing for future events and memorabilia. Any donations to the “cause” would be greatly appreciated and are tax deductible!

"Chug-a-lug, Tug"



The CG Tug Association is a non-profit veteran's organization located in Cleveland, Ohio, whose mission is to preserve the heritage and history of U.S. Coast Guard Tugs, and to continue the camaraderie and Esprit de Corps of those veterans who served in them.

Our goal is to educate the public of the vital role these cutters played in search and rescue, icebreaking for commercial shipping, and maintaining aids to navigation; and highlight the important role they played in United States maritime history.

Learn about the Coast Guard's work horse cutters. Learn about their rolls in maritime safety, past, present and future. Learn what it is like to be

"Guardian Of The Seas".

Welcome Aboard New CGTA Members This Quarter

Mark Jenkins (Snohomish)
 Chris Elam (Naugatuck)
 Dave "Red" Hill (Sauk)
 Steve Phillips (Ojibwa)
 Charles Cart (Tug Snohomish)
 BMC Stephen B. Atchley (Hawser)
 John D. Clark (CG Engineering)
 Larry Jordan (Snohomish)
 Brian L. Kelley (D3 Engineering)
 Chris Collins (Modoc)
 Bob Porter (Bitt)
 Ken Long (Hudson)
 Tom Thomas (USS Lipan)
 David G. Hawthorne (Capstain, Catenary)
 Samuel S. Holmes (Manitou)
 Reid Crispino (Arundel)
 Michael Bollinger (Naugatuck)
 Norman J. Lagowski (Ojibwa)

Mike Powers (Mobile Bay)
 Ron Gamble (Yocona)
 Raymond W. Cook (Sauk)
 Adrian Willis (Raritan, Cherokee)
 James E. Bradley (Cherokee)
 Franklin J. Bullock (Pendant)
 CAPT Robert L. Desh (Ojibwa)
 LTJG Cory D. Cichoracki (Bristol Bay)
 William Douglas Sharp (Yankton)
 BMC Randy Gilmer (Mobile Bay)
 Kenneth T. Laesser (Mahoning)
 LT. Eric Peace (Neah Bay CO)
 BMC Chris Johnson (Neah Bay)
 J.W. "Boomer" Cassaboom (Tackle)
 Curtis Jones (Catenary)
 Bill Casey (Charleston Navy Yard)
 Mike DelPonte (Sauk)

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP 258

Where are they now?

Last issue's "Where are they now" featured the Snohomish. In this spring issue, we bring you another phenomenal story of the CGC *Kaw* and how she became the Capt Diane. This is her story . . . By Doug O'Dell.

The USCGC *KAW* WYTM-61

The *Kaw* was one of two 110-foot tugs built and launched by the Coast Guard Yard in 1942, the other being *Manitou*. They differed from the *Arundel*-class 110-foot tugs only in their machinery installation. The *Arundel*-class (and consequently the *Kaw* and *Manitou*)

were a follow-on to the 110-foot *Calumet*-class tugs and were capable of breaking ice up to three feet thick. These tugs were officially referred to in the Coast Guard *Description of Cutters* document as a "Harbor Cutter." *Kaw* was commissioned on 1 March 1943 and was assigned to the 1st Naval District. She was based out of Portland, Maine until October 1944 when she transferred to Sandwich, Maine. On 1 January 1945, she assisted the CGC *Nemesis* following that cutter's collision with the SS *Felipe de Neve*.

From 1946 until 1948, she was stationed at Portland, Maine and assigned to the peace-time tasks of law enforcement, port security, search and rescue, fire-fighting, and light icebreaking duties. These included outer harbor and anchorage patrols, customs boardings, transportation, vessel boarding and motorboat inspection, waterside surveillance, quarantine boarding, providing support for local Coast Guard commands, and towing assistance. Her crew also assisted in "winterizing" aids to navigation. On 2 March 1947, she located the disabled F/V *Lucy and Evelyn*, which had been lost by the CGC *Algonquin*. *Kaw* towed her to New Bedford, Massachusetts. On 27 December 1947, she fought a fire at a pier in Portland.



CGC *Kaw* circa 1978

From 1949 to 1951, she was stationed at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, then, from 1952 until 1979 at Cleveland, Ohio. From 22 April to 6 May 1952, she towed the CGC *Tahoma* from Cleveland to a rendezvous with CGC *Cherokee* and gave up the tow to *Cherokee*. In February 1965, she broke ice in Cleveland during a particularly harsh winter. On 4 May 1965, she towed the disabled cutter *Ojibwa* to Buffalo, New York.

Throughout her career in the Great Lakes, her primary job was domestic ice-breaking. On 31 January 1969, she helped break up an ice jam below Monroe, Michigan, thereby removing a threat of flooding to the city. In 1969, she cleared ice jams at the mouth of Rock River to relieve flooding in the city of Rocky River, Ohio. The *Kaw*, along with other 9th District YTM's, 180's, and shore stations, offered SAR assistance to the many vessels in distress across Lake Erie and Lake St. Claire during the ferocious 4th of July storm that crossed the lower Great Lakes in 1969. In 1970, she assisted the National Transportation Safety Board in the recovery and investigation of the Tag Airliner that went down northwest of Cleveland, bound from Burke Lakefront Airport in Cleveland, to Detroit.

The *Kaw* served diligently in the Ninth CG district, providing icebreaking in keeping shipping lanes open for operation "Coal Shovel," "Oil Can," and provided emergency icebreaking relieving ice congestion at various rivers leading into the Great



Gaelic Tug Roger Stahl

Lakes and avoiding major flooding for communities along the Lakes.

As with any aging fleet of ships, the *Kaw*, along with all the other WYTMS, prepared to be decommissioned.

On June 22, 1978, the *Kaw* was decommissioned. She was purchased by Calumet Marine Towing Company of Chicago, Illinois. She was converted to twin screw, with keel cooling installed, twin rudders, and the stern squared off. With the modifications above and no engines, on July 20, 1995, the *Kaw* was sold to North American Barge Line, a sister company to, and later merged into Gaelic Tugboat Company of Detroit, in exchange for a crane Gaelic owned. A pair of EMD 12-567CE engines with gear boxes were installed in the Former CG Tug.

A towing winch from the Great Lakes Dredge and Dock Company was converted to hydraulic and installed, as were two 6-71 Detroit Diesel 100kw generator sets. The project continued with the installation of new radios, radars, GPS, and gyro compass navigation equipment.

The quarters and galley were totally rebuilt and 15 tons of fixed ballast was installed. As the rebuild project neared the end, fleet engineer Roger Stahl announced his retirement at the age of 75. So, in honor of his 25 years with Gaelic Tugboat, and 27 years with Dunbar and Sullivan dredging company, the *Kaw* was re-named *Roger Stahl*.

In August of 2003, the *Roger Stahl* was sold to Jim Felton, owner of Florida Keys Harbor Service in Key West, Florida. Felton renamed her *Capt. Diane* and she sailed for Florida.

The Captain Diane

The Capt. Diane's Skipper, Captain Dave Ghidoni, provides the following as an update to the CGC Kaw / Capt. Diane's work and life in Key West.

In the summer of 2003, my boss and owner of Florida Keys Harbor Service, Jim Felton, dispatched me to De-

troit, Michigan to pick up our new tugboat. After loading up a rental car, I made a three day trip and arrived at the Gaelic Tug Yard on the Rouge River. The tug we were to name the *Capt. Diane* was in dry-dock for a survey and to get some zinc plates welded on below the waterline. Needless to say, when I saw her for the first time she was a little intimidating, especially realizing that I only had two days to get to know her systems and prepare everything for the trip through the St. Lawrence Seaway and down the east coast of the United

States. The Gaelic crew was really helpful and accommodating and, upon arrival of my crew, we left for points south. The trip through the seaway was uneventful and we used the time to familiarize ourselves with the tug before we had to bring her back out to the big water. Our first stop was Portland, Maine where we rested and refueled. Upon get-

ting underway, we were forced into New London, Connecticut by a tropical storm and a following hurricane where we spent time repainting her superstructure. Once the weather cleared, we had a smooth ride down the coast and arrived in Key West, Florida in September after a thirty eight day total trip.

After a quick paint job and the hanging of tires along her sides, the *Capt. Diane* was ready to work.

We knew that the primary focus of our tugs was to provide service to the Key West Harbor, but almost immediately, the advantages of having higher horsepower and better creature comforts became evident. Also, because we are the only big tugs in the Florida Keys, we knew we'd be asked to provide a variety of services outside the harbor.

One of our first rescue callouts was to stop a 200 ft. freighter, which was unmanned and broke free in a storm, from hitting the coral reef. That was a night time operation and probably the first time we used the towing winch in any kind of weather, but made it back with the "God Givens" in a very short amount of time.



Capt. Diane as she looks now owned by Florida Keys Harbor Service



EMD 12-567GE engines



Submarine assist



View thru windows of pilot house



Generator room

We shortly realized that the boat was inadequately air conditioned, and the lack of an autopilot made the trips we were doing a lot more difficult, so we installed both. A newer, more comfortable helm seat was added, along with an upgrade of navigation instruments.

The *Captain Diane* has made two trips to the Dominican Republic and Haiti. The first trip was towing an older, large car ferry from Key West to Manzanillo Bay, DR. The second time was a rescue mission retrieving a flotilla from Key West to Haiti consisting of two shrimp boats, two tugs, and three heavy equipment barges. A storm came up and separated the boats, sinking a tug, both shrimpers, and a barge. We were able to rescue the crew of one of the shrimp boats before it sank and found and towed the tug *Mona Larue*, disabled in Great Inagua, Bahamas, along with two barges, and delivered them safely to their destination in Haiti.

Since we have owned the *Captain Diane*, she has been called out to a variety of missions from assisting U.S. Navy aircraft carriers that anchor off Key West for shore leave to towing disabled Coast Guard cutters. We also assist the many tugs, freighters, and tankers that transit the Florida

Straits with breakdowns, deliveries of parts, fuel, and water, along with an occasional crew change.

Of course, our priority is the support of the traffic in busy Key West harbor. Cruise ship traffic is heavy and

every month a USNS jet fuel tanker visits to provide fuel for the jets at Boca Chica Naval Air Station so we always push on them during their rotation in and out.



Modernized Bridge

As far as the future outlook for *Captain Diane*, things seem bright. The U.S. Navy is conducting a 36 million dollar dredging operation in order to bring in a fleet of destroyers which are to be based in Key West. This will really open up our harbor to greater frequency of foreign military ships, as well, and we anticipate helping them with their docking and support needs.

In closing, we are too proud to be stewards of the ex-CGC *KAW* and try to keep her in a constant state of readiness in keeping with her past history and traditions.

Even though she is an ice breaker, and we've never had ice in Key West, she does her job and stands as a proud reminder of the men that have served on her and the missions she has accomplished.



The galley and mess deck of the Capt Diane as she is now.



Sources: *Kaw Memoirs*—Doug O'Dell - Cutter History File. USCG Historian's Office, USCG -HQ, Washington, D.C.— William Hoey Gaelic Towing, Dave Ghidoni, Florida Keys Harbor Service.

Photos: USCG Historian's Office - Franz VonReidel, Scott Best, Neil Schultheiss, Wade Streeter and Mike Nicholls, Jimm Felton (Florida Keys Harbor Service)

"Dirty Tricks Committee"*By: Dan R. Riksen CO CGC Ojibwa 1971-74*

A hundred and ten foot WYTM with 20 or more men on board tends to grow smaller in direct proportion to the amount of inclement weather that it encounters. This is particularly so when shipping on the Lakes has stopped and the vessel is essentially frozen in for the winter. Exterior maintenance in freezing temperatures is limited to those jobs that are absolutely necessary. Painting of living spaces is impractical due to the number of people living in the confined spaces on board and the lack of adequate ventilation when the vessel is buttoned up against the weather. And, to be practical, how much "soogying" and training can any of us stand?

As Commanding Officer of OJIBWA in the early 70s, starting my second winter aboard, I was again faced with this situation. OJIBWA had finished breaking ice for shipping in the Toledo, Detroit, Port Huron area and had returned to Buffalo for the winter. Long liberty periods had been granted to compensate for the weeks we had been deployed and ice probes to prepare for the opening of Buffalo Harbor in the Spring were still a couple of months away.

To lift morale, and with apologies to Admiral Dan Gallery, USN, from whose books I gleaned the idea, I asked the crew to form a "Dirty Tricks Committee." Since BRAMBLE, a 180' ice-breaking buoy tender, would be down in the Spring to help us open Buffalo for shipping, she would be the focus of our committee. The ground rules were simple. The jokes would have to have some class and could not cause any damage to BRAMBLE. In other words, painting her anchors pink would not be permitted. The last requirement, since I was a W-3 warrant officer at the time and BRAMBLE'S CO was a LCDR, was that the jokes could not put me

in line for a Court Martial. With that encouragement, the crew went to work preparing for the arrival of BRAMBLE.

Spring arrived and OJIBWA began ice probes to ascertain the composition of the ice fields at the Buffalo end of Lake Erie. To those not familiar with the Great Lakes, the natural flow of water is North East down Lake Erie, through the Niagara River and into Lake Ontario. The prevailing winds are also from the South West. Both of these factors tend to make for heavy ice fields in the vicinity of Buffalo. For instance, the freezing thickness of ice in Lake Erie could be 12 inches. As the



PHOTO BY: BOB DESH

wind blows across the ice causing one ice field to raft up on another, you may end up with a field 24 inches thick. As the wind blows across that field, the same thing happens and you have 48 inches of ice; and, again, 96 inches. As long as the temperature stays below freezing, the open water created by rafting of ice will freeze again. This process all along Lake Erie resulted in ice flows over 12 feet thick in areas off Buffalo during my tour there. Conducting ice probes allowed us to "chart" the area and plan where we could break track to open Buffalo for shipping.

OJIBWA met BRAMBLE in open water West of Port Colborne that Spring and returned in company to Buffalo. Since BRAMBLE was senior, her CO became the OTC (Officer in Tactical Command). As such, he "invited" me to his wardroom the following morning to discuss the day's work. OJIBWA was directed to move the track a little further off the shoals near the Canadian side while BRAMBLE would straighten out the entrance to the pack off Port Colborne. Both ships sailed on their assigned missions.

Those readers that were born after the 1940s probably never heard of a shaving cream called Burma Shave.

Burma Shave, however, advertised their product on a series of small signs approximately 5" by 30" or somewhere near that size. These signs were placed on short poles along the roadside and each contained a couple of words that made up a short rhyme in the series similar to the following:

"The place to pass—on curves—you know—is only at—a beauty show—Burma Shave"

BRAMBLE, who at the end of the day had to return along the fresh track broken by OJIBWA, was treated to a series of signs planted on short poles in the ice that read:

"OJIBWA's track—amidst the flo—leads BRAMBLE back—to Buffalo—Burma Shave"

The signs were apparently well received by BRAMBLE's crew, but her CO stopped and had them removed so they were never seen by commercial interests. They did, however, set the stage for the next days operation.

After a meeting the next morning, both ships sailed in company to clean up the track near the entrance to the pack off Port Colborne where there were a series of heavy pressure ridges. The 180s and 110s made a good team. Although their horsepower was similar, a 180 displaced substantially more which allowed her to carry through a pressure ridge that would require a 110 to back and ram to get through. A 110, while she didn't have as much displacement, had a much stronger horsepower to displacement ratio which allowed them to back and ram faster and rarely let them get stuck; 180s would frequently get stuck. When they did, they would swing an "ice sinker" from side to side with their boom, causing the ship to list and break suction with the ice. It was used similar to the "heeling tanks" on the Wind-class icebreakers. BRAMBLE's ice sinker was a 10-ton cement block painted white with black dots to resemble a die.

BRAMBLE got stuck in a pressure ridge. She called for OJIBWA to come break her free. Unbeknownst to us, her CO had passed the word for all hands to "watch the horsepower of this tug." Accordingly, a good percentage of her crew was on deck as we approached. BRAMBLE was swinging her ice sinker. OJIBWA was coming up to her on a slow bell through broken ice that was far less than an impressive display of our horsepower. As OJIBWA passed close aboard, our BM1 was on our bow, very solemnly swinging a boat hook back and forth to which was secured a length of marline and a cardboard box, painted white with black dots. BRAMBLE's entire crew, less a slightly red-faced CO, was clapping and cheering.

Although Buffalo was opened for commercial traffic that year without further gestures on OJIBWA's part, there was a certain amount of tension aboard BRAMBLE the next few days as they waited for the other shoe to drop.

"In Tow" thanks Dan Riksen and Bob Desh for their contribution. This story is typical of the friendly rivalry that existed between the 110s and 180s. At the end of the day, we were one and all up at the local "watering hole" laughing about it over a beer.



CGC Ojibwa led the way back to Buffalo with Bramble following close behind. Photo by Bob Desh

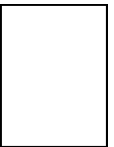
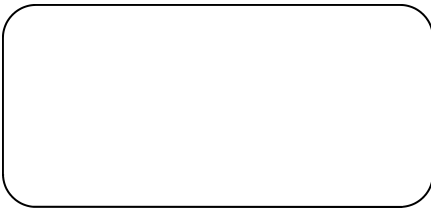
We would like to feature your sea story, tall tale or out and out misconception, in the "In Tow" Newsletter.

Do you have a story like this? We want to hear it. Please visit www.cg-tugs.org and submit it to us.

You MIGHT be a Coastie if... you've had people say to you, "The Coast Guard is military?"



Ex-USCGC Comanche sits idle at Foss Waterway in Tacoma. She'll be the newest addition to the Museum Fleet at the American Fleet Tug Museum in San Mateo, CA.



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