

## MACK M. BOYNTON

By Franklin Anderson

Mack Boynton served the Navy in many and varied capacities. He was on the cutting edge of Diving, Salvage and Rescue operations as well as interacting with the Philippine guerillas just prior to the Japanese invasion of the Philippines and General MacArthur's evacuation. He advanced through ratings and ranks at a rapid pace, being one of the youngest Warrant Officers in the Navy. He performed admirably during the Korean War conducting recons, interdiction of lines of communications and blowing up the Hungnam Port facilities. He perfected a method of changing screws on ships that saved the Military money and operational down time. Mack was charged with establishing and operating a diving school at Naval Station San Diego. He was involved in the early studies for the formation of SEAL's and later was instrumental in establishing the First SEAL team. He retired after 26 years of active duty.

Mack Boynton was born July 29, 1918 in St. Ignace, Michigan. In 1928 his family moved to Sheboygan, Wisconsin. In high school he became acquainted with fellow classmate, Archie Kuntze. Upon graduation in 1936, Mack enlisted in the Navy and his friend Archie Kuntze went to the Naval Academy; their paths were to cross throughout their military careers. Mack attended Norfolk Naval Training Station, and upon graduation, as a Seaman Second Class, was assigned to the USS Utah (AG-16), a radio controlled Target Battleship. He entered the Service right after the Great Depression and our Military was very short on funds. His starting salary was \$21.00 a month. Captain Brown, the Commanding Officer of the Utah, was from Mack's hometown. When the Captain heard that Mack was on board he had him assigned as his orderly, a position normally filled by a Marine. The Captain also received the hometown newspaper and passed it on to Mack. They often had discussions about hometown events and also what rating Mack would like to follow in the Navy. Mack indicated that he wanted to be a Shipfitter and he was assigned to that division. He has many fond memories of his time on the Utah, which now rests rolled over in her berth in Pearl Harbor, serving as a memorial to this day.

In 1939, upon being rated Shipfitter Third Class, he was transferred to the USS Argonne (AS-10), a Base Force Flag Ship and Repair Ship. He became qualified as a Hard Hat Diver while on the Argonne. When the submarine USS Squalus went down in 240 feet of water off Portsmouth New Hampshire in 1939, just about every rescue and repair ship in the area was ordered to assist in the rescue and salvage. The USS Falcon (ASR-2) was on station within 24 hours and was used as a diving platform for the McCann Rescue Bell and subsequent salvage operations. Mack received Temporary Additional Duty (TAD) to the Falcon. His friend BM1 Martin Sibitzky, was the first diver on the Squalus. He secured the downhaul cable for the rescue chamber on the forward torpedo room hatch. This was the first time the rescue bell was used on an actual rescue operation. The after section of the submarine was flooded, but the forward section was still pressurized. The 33 personnel in the forward section were rescued. The submarine was salvaged and became the USS Sailfish, and went on to serve in WW II.

While on the Argonne, Mack became tired of swinging around the buoy in San Pedro and wanted duty on a ship that was underway most of the time. In those days, the only way to get a transfer was to swap with someone of similar rate on another ship. He located a Shipfitter on the USS Chaumont (AP-5) who wanted to transfer. Their ships met in Pearl Harbor about six months later and the swap was made.

The Chaumont was one of the Navy's two Transports that were used to transport Military and Embassy personnel and their families to and from duty stations. These ships made four or five trips a year traveling from the East Coast to the West Coast and on to the Asiatic Station. They stayed in each port only long enough to load and off load passengers and cargo. One of the missions of the USS Chaumont was to keep the Asiatic Fleet supplied with ammunition, personnel, and materials needed to maintain operational capability. Asiatic ships did not rotate, personnel did. Maintenance was scheduled at Cavite Navy Yard in the Philippines. Ships would remain on the Asiatic Station indefinitely. The Chaumont also had the responsibility of keeping the Marine garrison at Peking, China supplied. The port of entry was the northern Port of Chinwangtao. Supplies for the Marine garrison were off loaded on to ancient railroad flatcars for the trip inland to Peking. This was a slow, one day journey. Navy and Marine officials were advised that Chinese bandits were operating in the area and security must be provided for the trip. Mack, a First Class Petty Officer, was assigned to be in charge of the armed guard on the train. They wore dress whites, leggings and cartridge belts with ammunition for their WWI rifles. In route to Peking, the bandits would come charging down the hills on scruffy horses, whooping loudly and waving long swords in their attempt to overtake the train and plunder the cargo. When the bandits got too close the guards would fire over their heads and the bandits would retreat. The guards stayed overnight at the Marine garrison where they were graciously wined and dined. They returned to Chinwangtao the next day without casualties on either side. These were exciting times filled with adventure for a young Sailor on the China Station.

On Mack's last trip on the Chaumont, and the Chaumont's last trip to the Orient, they departed Pearl Harbor, just prior to December 7, 1941. The Chaumont had a load of torpedoes for the Asiatic Fleet and were to meet the USS Holland (AS-3), a submarine tender, in Manila. The Chaumont was escorted by the USS Portland, a heavy cruiser. A few days after leaving Pearl Harbor, word was received of the Japanese attack. The Portland immediately departed to search for the Japanese Battle Force - their last signal to the Chaumont - "Good Luck." When the Chaumont arrived in Manila, the Holland had departed for Darwin, Australia and the Japanese landing in Manila was imminent. Mack went TAD to the USS Blackhawk (AD-9), a repair ship, and the Chaumont proceeded to Darwin to rendezvous with the Holland. The Blackhawk was desperately trying to get submarines and

other vessels that were undergoing repair ready for sea as the US Forces, including General MacArthur, were evacuating from Manila to Bataan and Corregidor. While in Manila, Mack became acquainted with Ferdinand Marcos, a young Philippine officer. Marcos was recruiting men to fight the Japanese from mountain hideouts on Luzon and invited Mack to join in his cause - Mack declined. Mack then went to the Navy Yard at Cavite to find transportation back to the Chaumont in Darwin. At Cavite he met LT Buckley who was Commander of the PT Squadron who Mack had done some work for in Manila. LT Buckley offered Mack a crew spot on one of the four PT Boats that were going to Mindano with MacArthur - Mack declined. He finally hitched a ride with a submarine to Darwin where he rejoined the Chaumont. They stayed in Australia long enough to make needed repairs and then proceeded to Pearl Harbor.

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor there was a great demand for divers for the enormous salvage job. Mack received TAD orders and joined other divers from the Fleet. This is where Mack and John Roe first met. They continued their friendship through the years until they both retired from the Navy. There was a definite shortage of divers and diving equipment. They found that a standard gas mask would work just fine if you sealed the inhale unit, removed the canister and made a fitting for the ¼ inch hose. They also obtained some World War I cartridge belts from the Army, filled them with lead, which made excellent weight belts. This modified light weight diving gear was excellent for entering the sunken ships. The Navy desperately needed the screws from the sunken ships to use on new construction. The biggest problem the divers encountered was how to break the screw loose from the shaft. With some experimenting they found the secret was to back off the dunce cap, but leave it on the shaft, which they did with the help of a crane and a spanner from the shipyard. They developed a formula of using one turn of primer cord for every inch of shaft diameter. The primer cord was wrapped around the shaft just forward of the screw and when the primer cord was fired, the screw was backed off right against the dunce cap. A sling was secured around the screw and the crane hoisted the screw to the surface. When Mack's job was finished there, he returned to the USS Chaumont in Seattle. This duty had been especially grim for Mack as one of the ships he worked on was his favorite former ship, the USS Utah. The Chaumont then embarked troops to Kiska and Attu for operations against the Japanese.

Five Transports, including the Chaumont, were converted to hospital ships in anticipation of heavy casualties in an invasion of Japan. Mack, now a Warrant Officer, didn't look forward to duty on a hospital ship so he applied for and was accepted in Deep Sea Diving School (DSDS) at Navy Yard, Washington D.C. Here he became reacquainted with CPO John Roe, who was one of the instructors. After graduation from DSDS, and now a Master Diver, he became Diving and Salvage Officer for the Third Naval District and had additional Duties as Diving and Salvage officer, Naval Submarine Base, Key West, Florida. In November 1943 he was commissioned as an Ensign. Mack and his crew were responsible for all diving operations in the district. He became an expert on changing screws on vessels, using the knowledge he gained at Pearl Harbor. One of his major projects was the replacement and repair of the underwater sections of the water line, which brought water to Key West from the mainland of Florida. The Navy also maintained large inflatable offshore gasoline storage facilities that required an annual inspection. Mack selected his leading civilian diver and himself as they were the most experienced divers for that task. On the bottom, at 180 feet, they encountered huge coral outcroppings which restricted their movements and an extremely strong tide took all their efforts to accomplish the inspection. Mack checked the time on the bottom, and signaled the other diver that it was time to ascend. Recompression stops were made and the two divers surfaced without incident. As the diving boat was proceeding back to Key West, both divers began experiencing pain in their elbows and knees which Mack recognized as symptoms of the Bends. There were no Diving Medical Officers on the Base, but Mack had some Diving Medicine Training. There was a decompression chamber on the base which the two divers entered. Mack took them to the prescribed depth and started the long trip to the surface, making the required stops along the way. By the time they surfaced, after recompression, a large crowd had gathered including the CO of the Base. Mack and the other diver were placed in a waiting ambulance and taken to the Naval Hospital for observation. While at the hospital Mack was surprised to find Frank Briggie, an old friend and shipmate from the USS Utah. They had a good reunion and they remained close friends until Frank's death in 2002. Mack was released after three days with no ill effects from the Bends. He remained in Key West until 1946 when he returned to the Fleet for duty aboard the LST 1140. He assumed the Duties as First Lieutenant, Gunnery Officer and Executive Officer. He was promoted to Lieutenant and became the Commanding Officer in 1947.

In 1948, Bureau of Naval Personnel (BUPERS) encouraged Mustang Officers to apply for duty with the Underwater Demolition Teams. Mack applied and was accepted. He received orders to report to UDT-3. At that time it was all on the job training; there were no classes. Periodically, the Teams would go to San Clemente Island for Recon and Demo operations. Chief Tex Modesett conducted his own style of training by giving all newcomers a half-pound block of TNT and had them go down to the beach and detonate it. Mack, having graduated from Deep Sea Diving School, was qualified in all phases of diving and UDT was a welcome challenge.

UDT THREE played significant role in the Able and Baker detonations at the Nuclear Proving Grounds of the U.S. Government /Bikini Atoll. In March 1946, during the initial planning stages of Operation Crossroads, it was determined that the people of Bikini Atoll must be moved to another location in the Marshall Group. After many unsuccessful attempts, the Bikinians were settled on the uninhabited island of Kili which was surrounded by a coral reef that prevented access to the island by boat. In 1948 Lt. Mack Boynton was assigned the task of blowing a channel through the reef so boats would have a clear passage to the island. There was an existing Copra Plantation on Kili that the Germans had abandoned during WW I. The Bikinians were now harvesting the Copra which they needed to export as it was their only industry. During WW II the Japanese wanted the Copra and had attempted to make a channel, but failed. Mack surveyed the area and selected a site for the channel. He determined the best blasting procedure and work commenced. At low tide shape charges were used to blast holes in the coral and the shot was fired at high

tide since high tide provided an excellent tamping effect. At the next low tide the holes were filled with C-3 and again fired at high tide. After the desired depth had been reached Mark Eight (MK-8) explosive hoses were used in a crisscross pattern and also fired at high tide. After each shot many sharks swarmed into the area for the fish kill. Mack and his men respected their presence while work continued. The Bikinians also collected fish after the blast and invited the men to delicious meals of fish and rice. The platoon's efforts had been successful, and upon completion there was a beautiful, blue water channel through the reef. The Bikinians had monitored the whole operation and to show their gratitude, prepared a celebration and farewell party. Mack was given a ceremonial head dress and the seat of honor beside the King Juda and the platoon was feted with dancing, food and drink. The following morning the entire village assembled for the farewell. Mack was very careful with the final Muster as he suspected that some members of the platoon would have liked to remain on this island paradise.

When the Korean conflict broke out, a detachment of UDT -3 was in Japan, and the remainder of the Team was in Coronado. In September 1950 the fighting was heating up, and General MacArthur was on the move and wanted to make a landing at Inchon, on the west coast of Korea. Mack and UDT-3 left Coronado with elements of the First Marine Division (1st MARDIV) on the USNS General William Weigle (T-AP-119) and sailed non-stop to Kobe, Japan. They embarked on an APD (Fast Amphibious Transport) and proceeded to Inchon, where they assisted the Fleet by reconning the beach in preparations for landing the Marines. The landing was scheduled for 15 September 1950. However, on the night of the 14th the signal "Land the Landing Force" was received and the invasion was underway. It took just an hour to take Wolmi-do, which overlooked the other landing sites. The daring amphibious assault changed the course of the Korean War. After the landing UDT spent a week clearing the channels for incoming tanks, munitions and supplies. The only diving equipment they had was Pirelli lungs and dry suits. Most diving was free diving when planting explosives. GEN MacArthur wanted another landing to the south, so UDT-3 embarked on the USS Horace A. Bass (APD-124), and proceeded down the west coast, anchoring off the beach of Katsupaoui-po, where they were to conduct a night reconnaissance. Five IBS's (inflatable boats small) proceeded to the beach, LT Boynton in the number one boat. The beach was concave with a cliff along the right flank. The recon had just commenced and Mack's boat was about 100 yards offshore, when he heard a command from the hill directly to his right. Heavy fire commenced, and the men rolled off the boat into the water. Mack had binoculars around his neck and a radio between his legs. A shot hit the radio, knocking it away. The air was rushing out of the IBS as it had been hit repeatedly. The men scattered and started swimming to sea, while receiving heavy enemy fire. They would dive, swimming underwater as long as they could hold their breath, and when they surfaced for air, they would receive fire, again. Mack distinctly remembers the red streaks underwater from the tracer shells. Finally, they were out of range from the rifles, but had lost sight of each other. Mack began swimming toward the ship, and sighted one of his boat crew who was wounded, he assisted him about two miles to the Bass, where they were picked up. Mack had been given up for lost. He swam up to the ship and shouted "Ahoy, The Bass, can you give me a course to San Diego?" Once the swimmers were all picked up the Bass and supporting Destroyers bombarded the snipers on the beach. Later, the Captain told Mack that it would have been a hell of a swim from Korea to San Diego.

On 12 October 1950, they were working off Wonsan, and the area was heavily mined. There were several minesweepers trying to clear the area, and were taking fire from the beach. While trying to evade the shore fire, the minesweepers, Pledge and Pirate hit mines and sank; the UDT's assisted in rescuing the crews. Then the UDT's were used to locate and clear the area of mines. It was tedious work and finally a new technique was developed. The use of helicopters in conjunction with UDT's was initiated. The helicopters flew over the area and located the mines, then the UDT's would swim in, and detonate them. The war was proceeding extremely well and, at this point the, North Korean's were on the run.

On 27 October 1950, Mack was ordered to report to Rear Admiral Lyman A. Thackrey on the Flag ship at Wonsan. He was escorted to the Admiral's cabin where he was greeted by Brigadier General Lewis B. Puller. The General said he had six LST's loaded with 1st MARDIV and wanted to know where he could get a dry ramp for them. Mack had already completed a recon and mine search and found an excellent, steep beach with good exits at Iwon. General Puller was very pleased to hear this. Mack and his detachment were directed to return to Iwon to assist in the landing. The landing proceeded in conjunction with the 7th Infantry Division on the morning of the 29th of October. Every LST was able to make a dry landing. They were met by Mack and his detachment welcoming them ashore. After the operation, GEN Puller personally thanked Mack for the excellent recon information which contributed to the successful operation. It was Mack's great pleasure to work with General "Chesty" Puller. After the landings, Mack and his detachment conducted a house to house search in Iwon for enemy agents. During the search a Korean man holding a large painting of Stalin approached Mack and gave it to him. ADM. Thackery soon confiscated the painting and had it inscribed "Liberated by UDT-3", and hung it in the wardroom of the Flag ship. The United Nations forces had reached the Yalu River that marked the border with China. Responding to that threat, Beijing sent more than 180,000 People's Army troops to stop them. General MacArthur told the United Nations on 28 November "We face an entirely new war." He ordered all forces remaining in the area to begin their March to the Sea to be evacuated by the Navy at Hungnam. Gunfire from the Navy would maintain the cover needed to protect the operation. The U.S. Navy ships of Task Force 90, under the Command of Rear Admiral Doyle, were ordered to evacuate Hungnam.

UDT-3 Detachment Bravo consisted of LT Boynton, CPO Baxter, CPO Eartle, Gunners mate John Kelly, PO Dela Cazada, PO Maxwell, and others. They had been conducting clandestine operations behind enemy lines in the area between Wonsan and Hungnam and interdicting lines of communications, when on 10 December 1950, they received orders to proceed to Hungnam and report to Rear Admiral Doyle on the Flagship. Their orders were to load the Port of Hungnam with explosives and "SEND IT UP IN ONE BIG BLAST," when the last ship leaves the harbor. ADM Doyle emphasized that they would only have one chance for success, as they would probably be under enemy gunfire when the defense perimeter was withdrawn. He strongly stressed the

importance of turning the Port of Hungnam into a "wasteland" to deprive the enemy of its use. The USS BEGOR, (APD-127) under the Command of Mack's old friend CDR Archie Kuntze, arrived with a full load of explosives for the operation. The first targets selected were the giant overhead cranes. Explosive MK 8 hoses were hoisted up by block and tackle and secured; other charges were placed around their base. Then charges were placed around all other dock facilities and buildings. Railroads were a prime target. They found several railroad cars loaded with aerial bombs, which proved to be an excellent source of explosives. Another stockpile of bombs was also located nearby, and became a UDT supply area. While the APD crew ferried explosives for the Detachment, UDT was working around the clock. Some of the Begor's men and a few ROK soldiers helped carry demolition materials.. The major problem they encountered was the heavy traffic of both military and civilians who were being evacuated through the area where UDT was planting explosives. Stringing the Primer Cord on telephone poles solved the problem with traffic. Despite Chinese attempts to break through the line, the U.S. troops held, and by 24 December 1950, 105,000 troops and 91,000 civilians were safely embarked on the waiting ships, along with 350,000 tons of supplies and equipment.

General Puller and his First Marine Division would celebrate Christmas in Pusan. Only two ships remained, the flagship with ADM Doyle and the Begor that was to evacuate Detachment Bravo. The last firing assemblies were attached when Bravo Detachment began receiving enemy gunfire. As prearranged, the MK 13 flare was ignited and the scattered detachment rendezvoused at the seaward end of the breakwater. The final charge was placed on the lighthouse. The Chinese troops were entering Hungnam and gunfire was increasing. LT Boynton mustered his men: "ALL HANDS ACCOUNTED FOR." LT Boynton radioed the Flagship: "Imperative we fire NOW, Chinese will soon discover and cut our explosive train." Flagship to Bravo: "Fire when you are ready.

With ignition of the firing device -- "FIRE IN THE HOLE" -- The Port of Hungnam erupted into total destruction. The amount of explosives detonated that day is unknown due to the large number of bombs and other explosives that were located in the port. It was estimated to be over 20 tons of high explosives and the largest known non-nuclear explosion at that time. Detachment Bravo had worked around the clock to accomplish this almost impossible mission under extremely adverse conditions. Mack considers this operation to be one of the most memorable of his Naval career -- its success due to the magnificent performance of each and every one of the small band of UDT personnel.

After Hungnam, UDT-3 remained on the BEGOR, and CDR Kuntze and Mack enjoyed their reunion. For months they alternated between administrative reconnaissance behind their own lines and guerrilla drops behind the enemy's front. One reconnaissance was made in North Korea when the ship was covered with a solid sheet of ice, and the rubber suited UDT swimmers had icicles hanging from their noses and eyelids. The temperature was 12 below zero.

On 10 July 1951, the first peace talks between opposing forces were held at Kaesong. The operational missions for UDT'S were decreasing. UDT-3 returned to their base at Camp McGill, Japan. The camp was an old Japanese Army base and was now used by Naval Forces between operations in Korea. While at Camp McGill, Mack was delighted to find his old friend Martin Sibitzky, who he had not seen since the Squalus Operation. Martin was now the OINC of the Naval Beach Group Detachment in Japan.

It should also be mentioned that Camp McGill was the site of the infamous forty-mile hike. Mack noticed that boredom and inactivity were setting in and in order to keep the men in shape he ordered a surprise march. Early one morning the men were told to fall in with packs and weapons. The destination and duration of the hike was not mentioned. With Mack leading the Team, the forced march took them to Chigasaki and back in one day, a total distance of forty miles. Most of the team completed the hike, however some fell along the way. One man was sorry that he had worn new boots that hadn't been broken in, and many were wringing blood from their socks. Years later one of the men told Mack that the only thing that kept him going was that he planned to march right over Mack's back if he went down.

Upon returning to Coronado, Mack received a call from BUPERS, advising him that Commander Submarine Forces Pacific (COMSUBPAC) was in the process of establishing a submarine rescue facility on the West Coast, within the 11th Naval District. BUPERS indicated that with his previous experience in diving and salvage, he was the prime candidate for the job. Mack reported to the Naval Station, San Diego as Diving and Salvage Officer. He was also ordered to establish a diving school to train divers in the use of the McCann rescue Bell and to provide diver training for the Fleet. Mack was further directed to hold submarine rescue operations under the direction of Commander Submarine Flotilla One ( COMSUBFLOT ONE). Huge inflatable rubber pontoons had replaced the old rigid and cumbersome pontoons used on the Squalus. These pontoons were capable of tremendous lifting power and much easier to use. He was also advised that he had collateral duties as OINC of the target Repair Base, Point Loma. The Navy maintained large targets, towed by Fleet Tugs for firing exercises for the Fleet. The repair crews consisted of both civilian and navy personnel. The diving facility was also responsible for all search and rescue operations west of the Mississippi River. They received many calls for search and recovery. Some of the operations were in places such as Montana, Wyoming, Arizona and other disaster areas, including sea rescue. Two of the Navy Divers attached to the Diving barge were Harold Nething and Joe Staley, who were also between UDT tours. During this time, Mack became one of the best recruiters for UDT. Mack established physical training similar to UDT training at the diving school. During divers training classes he would observe each student and then, selectively, suggested to a few that they consider joining UDT.

About this time the paper work for Mack's exploits in Korea finally caught up with him and an awards ceremony was held at the Naval Station. These are a few of the commendations and awards received the Korean conflict. Mack received many more during his Naval career.

"The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting he BRONZE STAR MEDAL to: LT MACK MARTIN

BOYNTON, UNITED STATES NAVY, for services as set forth in the following CITATION:

"For heroic service as a Member of Underwater Demolition Team THREE, attached to the U.S.S. BEGOR during operations against the enemy aggressor forces in Korea from 12 to 24 December 1950 and from 29 April to 4 May 1951. During the redeployment of friendly forces at Hungnam, Lieutenant Boynton participated as a member of a ten-man team, which planted over twenty tons of explosives at strategic points throughout a period of seventeen hours and aided materially in demolishing the docks and harbor facilities in order to deny these installations to the enemy. Later he unhesitatingly volunteered to swim ashore to hostile beaches to ascertain enemy strength and the disposition of sentries and, although constantly endangered by active hostile patrols, signaled the landing element and ably guided the boats ashore when the beaches were considered safe for landing operations. By his marked courage, exceptional skill and selfless devotion to the completion of these vital missions in the face of grave hazards, Lieutenant Boynton upheld the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service." Lieutenant Boynton is authorized to wear the Combat "V"

For the President, R.B. Anderson, Secretary of the Navy

Another Citation from the United States Naval Forces FAR EAST reads: CITATION

"For meritorious and heroic achievement while serving with Underwater Demolition Team THREE in an advanced element engaged in night landings during the period 30 June to 8 July 1951. Without regard for his own personal safety, he served as Officer in Charge of a LCR, which landed non-English speaking personnel in total darkness on beaches far behind enemy lines where hostile forces could be observed. The judgment and professional skill displayed by Lieutenant Boynton in maneuvering through known minefields, contributed greatly to the success of each operation. His devotion to duty was outstanding and in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Services"

Commendation Ribbon with Metal Pendant and Combat Distinguishing Device are authorized.

C.T. Joy, Vice Admiral, U. S. NAVY, Commander Naval Forces, Far East

LT BOYNTON was also awarded the PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION "For extraordinary heroism in action against enemy aggressor forces in Korea from 15 September to 11 October 1950. In the face of a determined enemy and against almost insurmountable obstacles, including disadvantageous tidal and beach conditions on the western coast of Korea"- successfully effected the amphibious seizure of Inch'on in an operation without parallel in the history of amphibious warfare."

For the President, Dan A Kimball, Secretary of the Navy

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During his tour of duty at the Naval Station Mack received a call to inspect the screw on an LST that was scheduled to depart for WESTPAC the following day. His divers found one blade bent on the port screw. There were no dry-docking facilities available at that time, and would not be for another week. COMPHIBPAC (Admiral Yeager) went high order. COMELEVEN and the ship Repair Facilities were going "round and round." Mack contacted the Captain of the Repair Facility and told him that if he could have the LST for one day, he would change the screw. This would have been a big job for the repair facility as the normal procedure was to bring the ship into dry dock, start the pumps and set the blocks. The dock is pumped dry, and there are several inspections as the water is pumped out. All the facility workmen were civilians, and considered it a fairly difficult task to change screws. The Captain of the Repair Facility asked Mack how he was going to get the screw off, and Mack said; "BLOW IT OFF!" Mack thought the Captain was going to have a heart attack. The Captain then discussed the situation with COMPHIBPAC, who was also skeptical of the idea. A short time later a Navy sedan flying a three- star Flag pulled up along side of the diving barge. Admiral Yeager stepped out, and he and Mack talked it over. Then Admiral Yeager said "GO FOR IT." The LST was moved to Pier Two forward of the diving barge, and Mack and his men commenced work early the next morning. Using the procedure he had helped develop during the Pearl Harbor salvage operations, they backed off the dunce cap, and also packed some brown gummy packing material (Monkey S- - t) over the primer cord to help deflect some of the force of the shot away from the strut bearing and the hull. The divers surfaced and they yelled, "FIRE IN THE HOLE!" The screw was backed off against the dunce cap. Evidently the CPO quarters were in the stern section of the LST, and when the shot was fired, all of the Chiefs came scrambling topside. The rest of the operation went smoothly, and the LST departed on schedule. The next day Mack received a call from Admiral Yeager's aide, and he was invited to have lunch with the Admiral at USNAB, Coronado. During lunch Admiral Yeager advised Mack that COMPHIBPAC had saved thousands of dollars in repair facility money, but most importantly was time saved by not tying up the ship in Dry Dock and missing movement. The Admiral was interested in making the operation standard procedure. Mack discussed the idea with the Captain of the repair facility and his department heads. When the information got to the civilian superintendents, who were "Union," they became visibly upset that Navy personnel would be replacing them in that activity. Mack was ordered to cease and desist. Admiral Yeager wanted to show his appreciation and invited Mack to lunch again. The Admiral wanted to know if he was ready to come back to UDT, as CO of UDT-1. Mack's two years were about up at COMELEVEN, so he gladly accepted the offer. Mack has always said, "You never know what a few turns of Primer Cord can accomplish." He received his orders to be COUDTONE, as the numerical relief for LCDR Harry Cole. The change of Command was on 15 January 1954. The following month UDT-1 became UDT -11. CDR Douglas Fane was COMUDUONE, and each Team had its own CO, as COMUDUONE was an independent Staff assignment.

In 1954, the Team was actively engaged in operations in Alaska for the July-September reconnaissance training exercise

directed against Dutch Harbor and Kodiak Island. The Team left Alaska and prepared to deploy in its entirety for a WESTPAC tour. The Team had barely arrived in Japan when were tasked to search and recover a downed helicopter and bodies from the Sea of Japan. The seven bodies were recovered expeditiously and the Team received commendations from two branches of the service for the recovery of the aviators and for setting buoys and lines to the aircraft for recovery.

Mack believed in keeping his men busy, and it wasn't long before they were involved in a very strategic operation in the evacuation and demolition of the Tachen Islands in February, 1955. At a meeting with COMNAVFE, (Commander Naval Forces Far East) Mack was made aware of the apprehension held by participants at all levels, up to the Joint Chief of Staff, as they would be placing a sizable naval force right in China's backyard. They further could be under direct artillery fire from China's shore batteries. China had been battering the island's defense for months. The situation had deteriorated to the point that General Chiang Kai Chek had requested assistance in the evacuation of his people.

The Tachens, garrisoned by hundreds of Nationalist Chinese troops and civilians who had fled from the mainland when the Communists took control, were under constant bombardment across the narrow strait separating the Islands from the mainland. The US had pledged to support the survival of the Taiwanese Government, but due to the constant shelling, the islands had to be evacuated. Their small force was not strong enough to extract the personnel and equipment while under direct gunfire, much less destroy all of the munitions and emplacements remaining without outside help. After an appeal to the United Nations, Task Force 76.1 was constituted, which was comprised of a Fleet of UN ships under the Command of Captain N. J. Frank Jr. It was winter and the temperatures were frigid, especially in the water. Two platoons of UDT-11 were ordered to embark on the USS Horace A BASS (APD-124) with full operating gear, and a full complement of explosives. Mack was a hands on skipper and elected to accompany the two platoons. He was advised to tread lightly, and to be alert for any actions on the part of the Chinese Communists. There would be no pre-operational reconnaissances as it could alert the Chinese of their intentions. When the UDT-11 Detachment boarded the BASS, none of them were aware of the political importance of the job at hand. The importance of a successful evacuation was a "save face" for the Nationalist Chinese. It was just another routine operation for Mack and his men. However, in route, as all of the ships joined CTF 76.1 with two cruisers (1-US, 1 Australian), several destroyers, the BASS and a number of Nationalist Troop vessels, they began to realize it wasn't the usual type of operation. On board the BASS, Mack carefully briefed his officers and men on specific assignments based on the limited intelligence available. He further discussed how each of the men would protect our personnel in the event of artillery, air or sea attacks. Mack left no stone unturned.

Within minutes of reaching the islands, UDTs first reconnaissance group boarded an LCPR and headed inland. As the initial landing party neared the beaches, it was clear the islands had been taking quite a beating. The UDTs followed a small, local fishing boat through the minefields in the approaches, and were met by the Nationalist Chinese Marines on the beach. Paths through minefields were carefully marked; locations of placements and munitions were identified and assigned to specific individuals. Once both parties were ashore, in less than two days, UDT's were able to destroy all the existing military structures, wire an estimated 30-40 tons of ammunition for destruction, provide life saving parties for evacuation of close to 1,000 personnel, and prepare for the final demolition. LTJG Muckleroy had the task of completing the final primer cord runs to the ammo caches. They were all conscious that a single artillery shell hitting their primer cord could ruin their day. After the "all clear" was given by the Chinese Commander who was to leave on the next to last boat, they prepared to set off the final charges. At this point LTJG Muckleroy asked Mack Boynton if LTJG Van Alderwurl could also stay with PO1 Leo Hamil and himself. Mack in his usual and stoic manner said "No, I don't want to lose more than one Officer!" They shouted "FIRE IN THE HOLE!" and it was like a Fourth of July Fireworks display. The explosions were reminiscence of the Hungnam destruction of the port facilities. Ironically, it was Mack Boynton who happened to be in charge of both of these large explosions.

The USS BASS, with the UDT Detachment, returned to Taipei, where the Team was directed to conduct joint training for the fledgling members of the Nationalist Chinese Frogmen. The Nationalist Chinese frogmen would subsequently participate in many forays on the Chinese mainland. During this period of time, LT Boynton and the APD Skipper were invited to a banquet, hosted by General Chiang Kai Chek and his lovely wife, Madam Chiang Kai Chek. Later, Mack described her as one of the most fascinating women he ever had the pleasure of meeting.

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The letters of Commendation to those involved in the operations reflected the serious nature of the operation and the sigh of relief when it was accomplished in such a proficient and timely manner, without loss of life. The Chief of Naval Operations sent out a message on 13 February 1955 saying "My admiring congratulations on a superb performance. The thorough planning, instant initiation and expeditious handling of the evacuation operation reflects the greatest credit on all hands. Furthermore, I consider that the forces involved, by their power and proficiency, served well to further policy; in the best interests of the United States. I commission you both to convey my proud appreciation and my congratulations to appropriate subordinates." Subsequently, Commander Seventh Fleet sent a letter to "Lieutenant M.M. Boynton, USN as Commanding Officer Underwater Demolition Team ELEVEN assigned to Operation task Group 76.1 for the Tachen Operation have performed the assigned mission in an outstanding manner. Working in cold muddy water for long hours and in mined areas they were able to insure the amphibious evacuation force against losses caused by mined beaches and obstacles, as well as performing numerous demolition missions and supplying critical information concerning the beaches to be employed for the evacuation. My personal thanks for their invaluable service."

A. M. PRIDE

There were other letters of commendation including one from Commander Amphibious Squadron One in which he stated:

"The performance of duty of Lieutenant Boynton and his detachment was superb and outstanding in every respect. He exercised

initiative and foresight in his conduct of his part of the Tachen Evacuation. The prompt and capable support rendered by him was all that enabled the Tachen Operation to proceed as quickly as it did. It was a rare privilege to have him and his groups work with me".

N. J. FRANK JR.

\* \* \*

Upon completion of the Taiwan mission, the Team returned to Camp McGill, Japan . As stated previously, Mack liked to keep his men busy, as it kept them in operational readiness.. He encouraged them to participate in athletics, and they won the Camp McGill Football Championship. Thereafter other teams refused to play with them, as they were too rough.

Shortly after Team Eleven returned from WESTPAC, a detachment was ordered to participate in surveys with the first fleet to resupply the DEW LINE Facilities. During these operations, they cleared channels with explosives, and dove on the USCG BURTON ISLAND. Some of the men were on a Beaver Aircraft that crashed in the Artic Ocean, no one was injured, and the detachment helped recover the damaged aircraft. They received several Commendations from the highest level for the classified nature of their work under hazardous conditions

Mack's tour as CO UDT ELEVEN had passed the two-year mark when he received a phone call from his old friend CDR Kuntze, who was now in BUPERS and the UDT Detailing officer. CDR Kuntze wanted Mack to come to Washington, D.C. for a two-year tour to fill a new RDT&E billet he was establishing. It was an opportunity to help develop new equipment and techniques to be utilized by the UDT and EOD. Further, CDR Kuntze indicated that there was a lot going regarding the future of the Underwater Demolition Teams and he wanted Mack to be involved. Mack accepted the invitation and he received orders to Washington.

On 27 March 1956, LCDR Mack Boynton was relieved by one of his old friends and shipmate LT T.R. Fielding. During the Washington tour, CDR Kuntze and Mack spent a lot of time with CNO considering the feasibility of establishing a "Special Warfare Group." CDR Kuntze had been expounding on the operations that UDT had conducted in Korea, especially behind the line operations far beyond the High Water Line. COMUDU TWO LCDR Don Gaither was also called to Washington periodically to provide comments and recommendations. Mack was assigned an office at Main Navy Department on Constitution Ave. This primary duty was in BUORD, with collateral duties at CNO, and as liaison officer with another government agency that was working with limpet mines. The discussions that CDR Kuntze, LCDR Don Gaither and LCDR Mack Boynton conducted were the foundations of the SEAL Team concept that was to become a reality in January 1962. The actual discussions had proceeded to the activation point several times, budgetary conditions were not favorable. Many of the higher echelon felt that UDT's responsibility should stop at the High Water Line. However, CDR Kuntze was very eloquent in explaining how well UDT had operated behind enemy lines. After two years they had formulated plans to form a Special Warfare Organization.

During his tour in Washington Mack made many contacts, and was instrumental in ensuring that quality officers were assigned as CO's in the UDT's. CDR Kuntze contacted Mack and indicated that COMPHIBPAC required a replacement for CO UDT ELEVEN (CDR Fane), and discussed the available officers. Mack immediately recommended LCDR John Roe for the assignment. John Roe had previously been CO of UDT 12 and had done an outstanding job. John was currently stationed at Key West, Florida as CO of the Underwater Swim School.. At that time, Mack also indicated that he would like to return as CO UDT -12 and COMUDUONE. He and John Roe were close friends and he wanted someone who he could work with.

While in Washington Mack had worked in Research and Development on many items for UDT and EOD. It often took two or more years to see items through development, test and evaluation before making it to the operational Teams. UDT had suffered a casualty due to a faulty firing device. Mack worked on several new types of firing devices, but he always felt the old systems employed in Hungnam and the Tachen Islands were still the most dependable. There were many other research projects under development, but his greatest efforts were working in concert with CDR Archie Kuntze and LCDR Don Gaither COMUDUTWO, in developing the groundwork for the establishment of a SPECIAL WARFARE GROUP.

After two years of discussions on the future of UDT's, it was recommended that the new units should be commissioned, consisting of the operational experience that UDT had established, and incorporating the new warfare concepts learned during the Korean conflict. UDT's had been denied opportunities in training, such as Jump School, material allowances, boats and diving equipment, by using the old slogan "It's not in your mission". They emphasized that the new units should not be bound by this thinking. New units with new missions was the way to go. They recommended a new unit with a broader and more flexible mission, unit formation, personnel allowances, material allowances, and financial backing. In 1958 LCDR Boynton received orders back to Coronado to assume command of UDT-12. and COMUDUONE. Upon leaving Washington Mack had lunch with CDR Kuntze who remarked, "During your tour as COMUDUONE, you will see the new Units formed, and what we have recommended will come to fruition."

May 16, 1961, President Kennedy emphasized the orientation of existing forces for Naval guerilla warfare capabilities. CNO moved quickly, and the conception of SEAL Teams became a reality. COMPHIBPAC called a pre-organizational meeting with their Staff and representatives of UDT. The meeting was also attended by Commanding General Fleet Marine Force Pacific. The General was not hesitant in declaring that the SEAL's should become a unit of the Marines. At this point, LCDR Boynton respectfully suggested that it would be easier to train a Navy man to shoot a weapon than to train a Marine to swim. CNO made

the decision that SEAL's would be Navy and concurred with COMUDUONE and COMUDUTWO that personnel from UDT would comprise SEAL Team One and Seal Team Two. CMDR Kuntze called Mack and advised him that all of their efforts and recommendations while Mack was in Washington were the basis for the new SEAL Teams, and directives would be issued for the SEAL Teams formation. CMDR Kuntze assured Mack that the UDT's would not be disbanded in the near future. CMDR Kuntze also asked Mack to nominate a Commanding Officer for SEAL Team One and SEAL Team Two. After considering all the outstanding officers in UDT-12, Mack nominated LT David Del Guidice to be CO SEAL Team One. Mack directed CO UDT-11, Bill Thede, to nominate an officer for SEAL Team Two. Thirty-four officers and enlisted personnel from UDT-11 and UDT-12 were ordered to report no later than 2400 1 January to COMUDUONE (LCDR Mack Boynton) for duty in SEAL Team One. Thus SEAL Team One at the direction of Mack Boynton was established by LT Del Guidice on 1 January 1962.

Mack as the new COMUDUONE initiated many worthwhile actions. With the assistance of CO UDT ELEVEN Underwater Demolition teams were encouraged to participate in parachute training, when deployed to Okinawa. After the parachute team was formed it was named "LEAP FROGS" by team member, Joe Thrift. They also started the TRUNKLINE, which was COMUDUONE's information bulletin.

Mack worked with astronaut, Gus Grissom in the early stages of the capsule recovery program. They were involved in perfecting the swimmer phase in the recovery of capsules of the Gemini Space Program. Early in America's manned space program, NASA opted for water based landings for the recovery of the spacecraft and its crew. COMUDUONE became part of task force 130 under control of the Pacific Recovery Control Center (RCCP) at Kunnai, Hawaii. The training program involved UDT swimmers being embarked on the aircraft carrier which was most likely to be the first on the scene at splashdown. Sea King helicopters stationed on the carrier with UDT swimmers aboard would be launched well in advance of capsule recovery. At splashdown, the swimmers would exit the aircraft with a flotation device. It was inflated and secured around the capsule in the event that there was any danger of the capsule sinking.

In 1967 Mack was deeply saddened to learn of Gus Grissom's death in the Apollo spacecraft accident.

Mack was the first UDT Officer to hold down and RDT&E billet for UDT's in Washington D.C where he had made valuable contacts. He continued these liaisons and encouraged the exchange of ideas with the Naval Ordnance Test Station, the Naval Weapons Evaluation Facilities, the Atomic Energy Commission, General Dynamics, General Electric and other facilities and organizations for the continuation and development of new weapons and equipment.

Mack also wanted to enhance the training program and further develop a sense of unity within the teams. He developed a plan to take forty men at a time down the Colorado River on a five day IBS paddle. In the initial plan he wanted to make the trip through the rapids of the Grand Canyon. This route was being used by commercial rafters in large rubber boats. They objected strongly, saying that UDT's wanted to turn the river into a military training area. The Department of Interior concurred, so Mack moved the paddle to a new location. He chose Needles, California to Yuma as that would be a five day trip. Often the temperature in that region reached 120 degrees during the day and there were frequent swim calls. Each man was issued a small box of survival rations which consisted of "gruel bars." At the end of each day the men scrounged for snakes and frogs or anything else that was edible. At one point they raided a farmer's corn field and dined on raw corn. Smokers found that they could do without tobacco for five days. Drinking water was provided by the river. The arduous twenty hour days of paddling in extreme temperatures took a toll on the men, but they all survived, (which was the purpose of the trip). Only one man had to be put ashore due to illness to make his way back to Coronado. On the return trip to the base they stopped at a place that sold date milkshakes which sounded great after five days on the river. Mack told the men that they could have one if they could afford it – Tex Modesset was heard to remark, "Capt'n, you're all heart!" Mack was the only one to make all three of the Colorado River trips.

Mack was a master of planting seeds and watching them grow. Through his and the officers initiative they got approval for team patches, but met opposition when they asked for berets. Once the command had an unannounced visit from Admiral Yeager. He subsequently sent Mack a letter of congratulations on the appearance of the command and the conduct and enthusiasm being displayed. He also thanked Mack for some lobsters he had received.. Mack and John Roe were very diplomatic and when team members brought back lobster from the dives they offered some of them to the admirals. ADM. Yeager was a strong supporter of UDT and took every opportunity to enhance and promote the development of the teams within the Department of the Navy. He would often ask Mack UDT demonstrations to entertain international dignitaries as well as many movie stars. Mack once suggested that they change the name of Underwater Demolition Teams to "Underwater Demonstration Teams." The admiral was not too happy with that remark.

The Teams were on the move under the leadership of these outstanding Commanding Officers, Mack and John Roe. This was the first time that both teams were under the command of Master Divers. It's noteworthy that Mack as CO UDT TWELVE/COMUDU ONE and John Roe as CO UDT ELEVEN had both enlisted in the Navy at an early age, and had advanced through every rate and rank from Apprentice Seaman to UDT Commands. Mack continued to select outstanding individuals for Command of Team Eleven when John Roe retired. He approved LCDR William L Thede and later LCDR Wendel Webber. The selection of good Commanders started to pay off with outstanding reports coming in concerning the operational capabilities that were being displayed by the UDT's. The period of late 1961 until Mack's retirement in December 1962 were chock-a-block with activities. The Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) was coordinating with Mack on the development of Special Weapons for employment by UDT's. Mack's background in RDT&E was proving beneficial in this coordination and events in the successful evaluation of weapons. At the same time, the formation of the SEAL TEAMS was complete, and Mack directed the establishment of SEAL TEAM ONE to be effective on 1 January 1962.

The Teams were gaining experience in varied capacities through the conduction of Cable Operations through out the Pacific;



Nuclear Test Series assistance. The Teams gained approval to design and wear uniform patches, which further instilled pride in the Unit. The Teams were severely undermanned due to the high attrition of trainees coming from the Training Unit, and lack of a career programs for Officers and men Most Officers only served from 1 to 2 years before leaving the Navy or going back to the Fleet. There was very little continuity with the Teams for advance training and operational capabilities. The enlisted men were basically experiencing the same problems, and those who elected to stay in the Teams were at disadvantage in competing with the Fleet for advancement.

Upon establishing SEAL TEAM ONE, the paucity of men was more evident and actions were taken to recommend through the Chain of Command the establishment of a Career Program. This action ultimately was approved, but only after years of floating back and forth through the Navy. At the same time, actions were taken to form and Operational Support Group for the Conduct of Special Warfare. Mack gave LCDR Webber the task of coordinating and presenting this concept throughout the Navy It took almost a year to succeed, but Naval Operational Support Groups were established on the East and West Coast - Not only did this give impetus to the organization, but was also an incentive for Officers and men to stay in the Navy

As the Command was growing, so were the responsibilities. In August 1962 an operation was conducted that included representatives from the Naval Weapons Evaluation Facility and the Atomic Energy Commission to effect the compatibility of a new weapons system. The demand for representation and the employment of UDUONE Personnel in more sophisticated operations lent impetus to the formation of Naval Operational Support Groups. Mack had brought the Teams back from almost sure extinction to a viable Organization that was being involved in many special and unconventional warfare type operations. The growth of the organization can be directly attributed to the outstanding capabilities and leadership of LCDR Mack Boynton. Mack's legacy of accomplishment can still be seen throughout the Navy and specifically in the outstanding accomplishments of SEAL TEAMS.

Mack retired from the Navy on 1 December 1962. During his time in the San Diego area he had found a ranch site in Valley Center. He built his home on a hill top with an ocean view, and soon began to develop his land. Colorado River irrigation water had just become available and Mack established the first tree farm in the area. There was a demand for seedling citrus trees so Mack planted Mineola Tangelos in lots of five-hundred which he sold to commercial growers as fast as he could grow them. After ten years of successful tree culture, and Mack's dream of being a gentleman rancher fulfilled, he sought a new venue for retirement.

Sedona, Arizona became his new home. He had visited family and friends there for years and he had always enjoyed the small town atmosphere and spectacular beauty of the area. It wasn't too long before he realized that inactivity was not for him, and a new friend who was a supervisor with the U.S. Forest Service, asked Mack if he would be interested in becoming a Forest Ranger. Mack was in uniform, again! He was assigned to the area of Coconino National Forest between Flagstaff, AZ and Sedona, which included Oak Creek Canyon and Slide Rock Park. His duties were primarily in enforcement, including protection of Indian ruins, illegal wood cutting, drug operations, and campground security. Arizona State Parks purchased the Slide Rock Park area and Mack served with the State Parks in the same capacity until he retired in 1990.

The "Ozarks" always held a special fascination for Mack. The mountains, forest, and lakes were very appealing and in 1991 Mack and Sharon began a new adventure. They built a home on a point overlooking Beaver Lake, near Rogers, Arkansas. They had six acres with a quarter-mile of lakefront and a boat. The water was warm and the fishing was good. They enjoyed the area for six years until Mack's thoughts returned to the Sea.

In 1996 they moved to Hansville, Washington where Mack was back in his element. Their home was situated at the convergence of Hood Canal and the Straits of Juan de Fuca. Mack could watch the Navy ships coming and going, as well as Trident Submarines from the submarine base at Bangor. After living in Washington for seven years, they decided to change location, again.

In 2003 Mack left the Sea, again. He and Sharon moved to Oregon where they are enjoying the sunshine, the beautiful mountains, and many lakes. Mack relates that exploring the lakes of Oregon in a kayak is a far cry from the days he spent on the "survival trips" down the Colorado River with the men of UDT. Sharon says that Mack has never completely adapted to being a civilian. His first love will always be the Navy and the men he served with, however, life is good and he enjoys it to the fullest.

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Credit for this biography rests with one man, Franklin Anderson. I know of no other person who would willingly take on this project. His patience, determination, and a strong penchant for accuracy is indicative of his fine career as a Naval Officer. Franklin and I served in the Navy's Underwater Demolition Teams during the time when the very existence of UDT was in doubt. The mission of UDT was changing due to lessons learned during the Korean Conflict, and a new Special Warfare unit was being created. As a group, we fought and won the battle to establish the Navy SEALs. From the beginning of UDT to the SEALs of today, they are a rare breed of men with whom I am very proud to have served.

From Seaman Apprentice to Commodore; It was one of the greatest pleasures and accomplishments of my life to serve in the United States Navy, and to ultimately become Commander Underwater Demolition Unit One/Commander Underwater Demolitions

Teams, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

To Franklin Anderson, my sincere thanks and a hearty, Well Done!

Mack M. Boynton

