



# AVIATION BOATSWAINS MATES ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER - 2003

*From The President,  
Roy Harrison "Wow"*



's I looked back over my 25 years of naval service I would never have expected the opportunity to serve as your president for two years.

We dare not forget the men who laid out our path, before most of us were born, the retirees! We are grateful and do honor each and every one of you, past and present! This association would not be what it is today if you had decided to go home and get old! Your torches have

been passed from AB to AB and we proudly accept it.

I wish to thank all who have labored with me over the past year and I look forward to working with you once again. I pray that the coming year will be blessed with peace and prosperity for all.

For many years we have been called to carry the burdens of Naval aviation, we have not and will not shrink from this responsibility; we welcome it, the energy, the faith, the dedication, which we bring to this endeavor will bring a new chapter in Naval Aviation, our Navy and all who serve in it, and the glow from our faces will truly light the world.

**WE ARE AVIATION BOATSWAIN  
MATES AND DARN PROUD OF IT!**

*Freedom Is Not Free*

By Major Kelly Strong

I watched the flag pass by one day, it fluttered in the breeze.  
A young man in uniform saluted it, and then he stood at ease.  
I looked at him in uniform - so young, so tall, so proud,  
With hair cut square and eyes alert, he'd stand out in the crowds.  
I thought how many men like him have fallen through the years?  
How many died on foreign soil?  
How many mother's tears?  
How many pilots' planes shot down?  
How many died at sea?  
How many foxholes were soldiers' graves?  
No, freedom is not free.  
I heard the sound of taps one night, when every thing was still.  
I listened to the bugler play and felt a sudden chill.  
I wondered just how many times that taps had meant, "Amen"  
When a flag had draped a coffin of a brother or a friend.  
I thought of all the children, of mothers and the wives  
Of fathers, sons and husbands, with interrupted lives.  
I thought about a graveyard at the bottom of the sea,  
Of unmarked graves in Arlington,  
No, freedom is not free.

**GOD BLESS OUR TROOPS!**

*From The Vice President,  
R.D. Jones*

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"Greetings Shipmates and fellow AB's. I want to take this opportunity to introduce myself. I am LCDR R.D. Jones, Aircraft Handling Officer on USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75). I am honored and privileged to serve you as Vice President for 2003-2004. LT Doug Thornton did an outstanding job during his tenure and you can expect nothing less than the same from me.

Lastly, our shipmates in San Diego have great momentum going as we gear up for the 2004 Working Group. Plan now to be in San Diego if your schedules allow. Plan early. Plan ahead. The Pax River Chapter did an outstanding job on this year's Working Group . . . Congratulations Shipmates on a job well done. The Norfolk Chapter has started preparations for 2005. Can't you feel the excitement and energy! We need to continue to bring honor to the founders of this great organization and that starts with recruitment. As LT Thornton (our recruiter of the year) says, "Each one bring two". That should be the mantra for each of us to follow.

That's all for now shipmates. Please feel free to contact me if there is anything I can do for you.

*From The Secretary,  
Terry Santiago*

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Well, I made it through my first Symposium at Pax River (and their first too!) Thanks to all their support & assistance. For first-timers, I think "we" did a great job! I am really looking forward to San Diego.

I have struggled a bit with this newsletter, but I will try to improve, if any of you have any input or ideas, please feel free to contact me. All help is appreciated, please update addresses and phone numbers. It was wonderful meeting so many of you and I am looking forward to seeing you all again in San Diego. Joe and I send our love & best wishes for the holiday season!!

*From The Treasurer,  
Stoney Burke*

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What a SUPER Working Group conference and Symposium. The Patuxent River Chapter did a SUPERB job! From the membership table to the events and merchandise tables and through the hospitality room, NO TASK WAS INSURMOUNTABLE for them. To quote on old Master Chief I knew - YOU AB'S DONE GOOD!!!! I personally want to THANK ALL OF YOU WHO HELPED MAKE MY STAY WONDERFUL! One of the gals (name escapes me now) was pregnant and doing her share. She had to leave to give birth, another AB is born. Another GREAT achievement was OVER 30 COMMANDS had representatives at the conference. Recorded Registrants only numbered 250, but I am sure the total count was much higher. I think that having registration with membership may have been the problem. A lot of attendee's probably Life members did not register because of the membership table being at the same location. ALL memberships from the conference have been mailed. Did not get yours??? Let me know. Earl Smith, "Blast-off", took ill during the conference and was taken to the hospital. Earl, hope all is well with you now and you are avoiding those spiders. We did not make any money in Pax River, the Chapter went into the red. A few more Vendors would have helped. The San Diego Chapter is well underway with preparations for 2004. Looking forward to returning to San Diego and some trips over to the Little Club in Coronado. We will be headquartered at the Westin Hotel in downtown San Diego. For those that could not make Pax River, hope to see you in San Diego. If not, then in 2005 somewhere in the Tidewater area.

All my best.

# 2002-2003 ABMA Board of Directors

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## **JAPAN**

ABH1 Severin



# ABMA Scholarship News

It gives me great pleasure to announce the recipient of the 2003 Isabella M. Gillen Memorial Scholarship. The 2003 scholarship recipient is Gabriela Estrada, daughter of ABHCS Marco Estrada. Gabriela is in the NROTC Program at Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Va. seeking a degree in communications.

Competition was tough this year so encourage your applicant to continue the hard work and keep those grades up. Remember, applications are due annually June 1st.

The ABMA would like to thank the following for this year's contributions to the scholarship fund.

CWO4 (RET) ARLIE SINKS  
AMERICAN SAFETY TECHNOLOGIES  
ALLIED ENTERPRISES, INC.  
JACKSONVILLE CHAPTER ABMA  
CDR (RET) ROBERT GILLEN  
Ms. DONNA HAGGERTY  
LCDR (RET) RICH PITT  
BENTLEY C. LEWARE  
LAKEHURST CHAPTER ABMA  
CWO4 (RET) TYRONE AND MARSHA  
ROBUCK  
ANONYMOUS  
THE TOM GIBNEY FAMILY

Until next time - AB's for world peace,  
*Lanny A. Vines*  
ABCM (Ret)



*Dear Aviation Boatswain's Mate Association,*

*I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of the Aviation Boatswain's Mates Association. I am the proud 2003 recipient of the prestigious Isabella M. Gillen Scholarship Award. I would especially like to thank all AB's for their many contributions to this award. I am currently attending Old Dominion University and plan to major in Communications.*

*Recently, I completed my NROTC indoctrination. I enjoyed discovering just how far I can challenge myself. I guess that is to be expected when a Marine Gunnery Sergeant becomes your "best friend" for a week. Again, I cannot thank you enough. All of this would have not been possible without the contributions the AB's have made.*

*Sincerely,*

*MIDN Gabriela B. Estrada*

**Scholarship applications are due annually by June 1st.**

**Download the application from:  
<http://www.abma-usn.org>**

**Special Thanks to:  
Arlie Sinks for donating \$1000 to the  
Scholarshi Fund This Year!!**

**By BOD Approval  
Scholarhip Amount Has  
Increased to \$2500!!**



*Lieutenant Commander Mark Swain Short,  
United States Navy Retired  
2003 ABMA Living Legend*

Why should this nominee be selected as ABMA Living Legend?

LCDR Mark Swain Short's military record was an enviable one that was and remains worthy of emulation. His record clearly speaks for itself and the Aviation Boatswain's Mates community. As a young man of 18, joining the Navy, his Basic training in San Diego, CA, his first aircraft carrier the USS Boxer CV-21 working in catapults and arresting gear, making cruises to Korea, then shore duty at Catapult & Arresting Gear Test Site, Patuxent River Maryland, then back to the USS Midway CVA-41 as a Chief Petty Officer working again in Catapults & Arresting Gear. Then in the 60's working as the Hanger Deck Chief on the USS Shangri La CVA-38. The USS Ranger CVA-61 was next with a cruise to Viet Nam. Upon making Ensign, he was assigned to the USS Enterprise CVAN-65 as the Crash & Salvage Officer, with cruises to Viet Nam. Tour at Cherry Point Marine Base in North Carolina

as the Water Salvage Officer, the Catapult & Arresting Gear Maintenance Officer, making Med an Viet Nam cruises. The tour at the Schools Commands and being the Flight Deck Officer on the USS Lexington CVT-16, at Pensacola, FL and finally his last tour of duty at Sherman Field as the Crash & Salvage and Runway Support Officer.

LCDR Mark Short is a true ABMA "Living Legend" one that we should never forget. Looking over his career, and the careers of our already selected Living and Posthumous Legends, them taking numerous "greenie's" still wet behind the ears and turning them into professional, dedicated sailors and Aviation Boatwain's Mates. Our personal heroes, which have made our way as sailors and Aviation Boatswain's Mates much easier.



*Congratulations AB's of the Year - 2003*

**Atlantic: ABFI (AW/SW) Karl C. Thomsen**

**Pacific: ABHI (AW/SW) Jitindra Sirjoo**



## *From The Historian*

The subject of who the first AB was is of interest to many AB's. The navy had many aircraft carriers, blimps, seaplane squadrons, and naval air stations, the Naval Aircraft Factory at Philadelphia in commission in 1944 when the first AB's were officially designated. That means that there were many thousands of them. Almost all of these men had been doing the job before becoming the first AB's.

I have personally seen the certificate that AB1 Bud Snyder has, which proves that he became an AB1 in 1944. It is my guess that at least one of these first AB's kept a souvenir copy of the list with his and every other AB at his pay grade names on it. A copy of the official listings of the first AB Warrant Officers and Limited Duty Officers is also of much interest.

I request that anyone who know of anyone who has a copy of the original September 1944 listings of AB's contact me: Vic Pinion at my home mailing address: 1825 Glade Springs Road, LaFollette, TN 37766, phone 423-566-1952 or email vpini4@aol.com

### *Congratulations 2003 Conference Oldest and Youngest AB's*

Oldest (shhh) - ABCM (RET) Adrain Hart  
September 29, 1925

Youngest (eeek) - AA Stephen Fowler  
June 4, 1985

### **ABMA MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL RATES INCREASED EFFECTIVE AUGUST 2002**

1 year - \$13.00

3 year - \$36.00

5 year - \$60.00

Reinstatement - \$15.00

Note: \$2.00 initial entrance applies

## *2003 ABMA Board of Directors Agenda Items*

1. Determine if E4 and below (and) spouses will be subsidized for banquet tickets. Motion made and carried to continue to discuss this at the first BOD meeting at each symposium. Any in need are to notify secretary as soon as possible. We will help those who need help.

2. Request for inclusion in the ABMA Isabella M. Gillen Memorial Scholarship Fund in the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). Treasurer will finalize with submission of IRS Form 990 for CFC approval. Item open until CFC decision is made. Treasurer will submit application NT 1 December. Treasurer will provide update. Scholarship Fund increased to \$2500.

6. Based on 2001 BOD approval, ABMA newsletters were mailed only to individuals who contacted the Secretary requesting a hard copy. 2002 BOD discussions and approval was made to change to:

1) E-mail newsletter notification to each member. If email is unknown, mail a hard copy; and  
2) Newsletter will change to an "annual" recap of the symposium in the Fall and "pamphlet" in the Spring providing particulars for the upcoming symposium (reservation information, points of contact, etc.)

Amend: Copies to be mailed to all members. Also, will be put on website.

7. Eagle Systems will continue to support the ABMA & retain files.



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## The First AB CWO5

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I feel honored, proud and humbled to be selected for CWO5. It means more to me than I feel I can ever adequately express. I'm also happy because it opens more doors for other ABs. It's certainly a dream come true and it shows that the Navy is willing to reward top performance.

I got my hopes up when I found out that I was in the promotion zone. A lot of credible people told me that my chances were really good, so my hopes were sky high when the board met. I was on leave when the board results were released, and I found out I'd been selected by looking at the BUPERS Web site that Friday morning. I ran into the bedroom to tell my wife and then into my son's room to tell him. Then, the celebration was on!

I followed the Navy CWO5 issue closely right from the beginning. I remember feeling disappointed when ADM Boorda, who was the CNO at the time, said that a CWO5 rank wouldn't be good for the Navy. He felt that it would slow down promotions. After hearing that, I felt it was a dead issue, but some time

later, I read the Community Perspective by the Program Manager in the Aviation LDO/CWO Directory, and in it he wrote that CWO5 wasn't a dead issue. I was certainly happy to see that and continued to follow things very closely.

When I saw the results of the planning conference in which prospective W-5 billets were identified, I was pleased, but I was also starting to think that W-5 would be something that would come along after my career was over because I was getting close to mandatory retirement. Finally, the rank was approved thanks to the leaders of the mighty Navy LDO/CWO community who continued to fight because they knew that CWO5 is indeed a GREAT thing for the Navy, and to all of them I am truly grateful.

I still find it hard to believe, especially being the first AB to achieve the rank of W-5. I'll wear the rank proudly and in honor of the AB Chief Warrant Officers who came along before me and had such a positive influence on me. I mean people like Bos'n Dill (my first Bos'n and my teacher), Bos'n Haverleski (a true leader), Bos'n Rizzutto (a motivator), Bos'n Winston (an inspiration) and Bos'n Hayes (a legend), just to name a few. My W-5 bar will be worn with them in mind and I'll do them proud. For me, there is no higher honor.

*Eric R. Brown*  
CWO5 (Select)

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## Hall of Honors

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The Pensacola, AB School, Hall of Honors has dedicated an appropriate area to recognize those AB's who have served as President of the ABMA, and those AB,s who have been designated as "Living Legends" within our organization.

We currently have 10 of our former presidents suitably depicted. However, pictures of the following former presidents are still required (black and white or in color , in uniform) They are: Lcdr Tom Gregory, 78 to 79. ABCM Bert Gorczyca, 79 to 80. Lcdr Joe Breslin, 80 to 82. ABCM James Tuck, 82 to 83. Lcdr Preston Jones, 83 to 84. CWO4 Lee Snodgrass, 84 to 85. CWO4 C.L. Moorehead, 89 to 90. ABCM Charles J. Ramsey, 90 to 92. ABCS Wally Hamaker, 98 to 99. Cdr Mike Weeks, 00 to 01 and Lcdr Jimmy McLaughlin,

ed except for Lcdr Harry Clair and [Hayes, Edward D-CIV] LCdr Mark Short We also need (close to retirement time) pictures of our Posthumous "Living Legends", They are: Cdr Larry Wiltzious, ABCM Fred Terrazzano, and CWO4 Robert Langmaid. In addition, I hope it will be possible to secure from the ABMA National Secretaries archives: the biographies of all of our selected "Living Legends". (living and posthumous) That way we can effectively depict (along with pictures) their various contributions during their service to our Nation and the AB Ratings .

The address of the school is: Naval Air Technical Training Center, Air Training Department (attn: Mr. Ed Hayes) 230 Chevalier Field Avenue. Pensacola, Florida 32508.  
*Best Regards, Ed Hayes*



## *Tidewater Chapter*

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First off we want to thank the AB's of Pax River for the outstanding job they did putting this year's Symposium/ working conference together. Those of us that had the opportunity to make the trip had a great time! Thanks.

The Tidewater Chapter ABMA is doing very well. We are proud to have LCDR RD Jones as the national VP and as Chairman of the next Symposium here in Norfolk (2005).

Continue to stay safe! Keep your head on a swivel!  
God bless you and your family, and God Bless America!

## *Jacksonville Chapter*

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Thanks to Pax River for a great job and Pensacola for a great Fall Jam!

Jax Chapter is gearing up for the annual Spring Jam at the Suwannee River (April 1-4) See enclosed flyer.

We have been trying hard to boost membership here in Jacksonville, unfortunately we haven't been real successful.

We need your support!

We all look forward to seeing you all here in April!

Good Health and Happy Holidays to all!

## *San Diego Chapter*

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The San Diego Chapter has been hard at work preparing for the 2004 ABMA Symposium.

The Westin Hotel Downtown Horton Plaza has been selected and contracted for as the Host Hotel.

The Symposium dates are 27 July through 1 August 2004.

Rooms have been blocked from 24 July through 1 August 2004, the Hotel will also extend these rates from 3 days in advance and 3 days after the booked dates for those who want to come early or stay late.

Room Rates:

Regular room, single or double occupancy = \$99.00

Deluxe room, single or double occupancy = \$119.00

Reservations can be made by dialing 619-239-2000

There are several RV places to choose from. These are just a few:

Admiral Baker Field Full Hookups - 619-556-5525

Fiddlers Cove Water and Electric / dump station  
619-522-8680

Chula Vista RV Resort & Marina/up scale - 800-770-2878

Coastal Trailer Villa 619-276-0612

Campland on the Bay, Pacific Beach 800-422-9386

We also have 2 Navy Lodges.

Naval Station 32nd St. and Harbor Drive 619-234-6142

Naval Air Station North Is. 800-628-9466

We are looking forward to hosting all our fellow AB's, their families and our #1 vendors here in San Diego.

If there is any additional information required please feel free to call Bill and Rosemary Wagner at 619-276-1184 or 619-855-1524 or by email @ [daddywags703@aol.com](mailto:daddywags703@aol.com),

We will provide updates to the webmaster as they occur.

## *Gulf Coast Chapter*

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The Gulf Coast Chapter is getting all geared up for the Jamboree that is coming up which happens twice a year with the Jax Chapter and any other AB's that care to join in for a great time of fun and fellowship with all your friends and shipmates. We have lots of good things planned and hope everyone that can will come join in.

The Chapter had the pleasure of having Bob Gillen and Donna Haggerty at our August meeting, we enjoyed their visit with us, and anyone else that is in the area on the 3rd Thursday of the month drop in and join in the meeting with us, we meet at the Moose Lodge Home of #557 located on Lewis Street.

The Chapter is getting ready to man a booth at the Air Show, this will be one of our fund raising projects. We are looking forward to a good time and lots of hard work.

We are glad that our President Tim Knauber is out of the hospital from surgery as well as Rick Contini, glad you guys are out and back to work.

As most of you know we lost a good friend and shipmate back in July, Skip Lopez. Skip was instrumental along with others in getting the Chapter going again, and was a diligent worker when his health would permit. Skip will be greatly missed.

Those that attended the Symposium had a great time, and looking forward to the next one in San Diego.

So until next time, Let's join each other and pray for our troops and world peace!

Gulf Coast Chapter

Virgle Culberson

## *Lakehurst "Mother" Chapter*

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Greetings all from beautiful Lakehurst, NJ, the stone that sharpens the spear of freedom. Recently, we have seen changes abound in the every changing world of technology and science. From the local changes in the 11F12 Catapult simulator at NATTC Detachment, to the operational testing phases with the Electromagnetic Aircraft Launching System (EMALS). We have seen the beginning of recent fleet developments as experienced with the Auto-Read Program installed aboard the USS Harry S. Truman (CVN-75) and the Arresting Gear Cross Check System aboard the USS George Washington (CVN-73). It is obvious that our world of the safe and efficient handling of aircraft, "From Take-Off to Touchdown" is ever changing and our need for the "Technological Generation" to be welcomed within our organization to share in these changing times. Whether you are in town attending the recently re-structured ALRE Maintenance Technician Course at NATTC, Hasing out the fat at the ALRE Conference, or just plain passing through; stop in and experience all the fine signs and opportunities that Lakehurst has to offer.



## The Silent Ranks

I wear no uniforms, no blues or army greens.  
But I am in the military in the ranks rarely seen.  
I have no rank upon my shoulders. Salutes I do not give.  
But the military world is the place where I live.

I'm not in the chain of command, orders I do not get.  
But my husband is the one who does, this I can not forget.  
I'm not the one who fires the weapon, who puts my life on the line.  
But my job is just as tough. I'm the one that's left behind.

My husband is a patriot, a brave and prideful man.  
and the call to serve his country not all can understand.  
Behind the lines I see the things needed to keep this country free.  
My husband makes the sacrifice, but so do our kids and me.

I love the man I married. Soldiering is his life.  
But I stand among the silent ranks known as the Military Wife.

- Author Unknown

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## AB Positions Available

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US Navy AB Mates:

DPA in San Diego, CA is looking for experienced US Navy Aviation Boatswain's Mate, (ABE, ABF and ABH) Subject Matter Experts, to help design Computer Based Training.

Duties include:

- \* Responsible for the technical and operational accuracy of the subject matter undergoing training product development for systems, subsystems, or equipment.
- \* Assures the technical and operational accuracy of the subject matter undergoing training product development during the instructional systems development process or systems approach to training process.
- \* Works with the design team to ensure the content is accurate, meets military standards, and contractual requirements. Excellent writing, editing and computer skills desired.

Must qualify for Secret Clearance.

DPA provides competitive compensation. Please send resume and salary req. to [hr@dpatraining.com](mailto:hr@dpatraining.com)  
EOE [www.dpatraining.com](http://www.dpatraining.com)

Assume you have all seen the reports about how Sears is treating its reservist employees who are called up? By law, they are required to hold their jobs open and available, but nothing more. Usually, people take a big pay cut and lose benefits. as a result of being called up....Sears is voluntarily paying the difference in salaries and maintaining all benefits, including medical insurance bonus programs, for all called up reservist employees for up to two years. I submit that Sears is an exemplary corporate citizen and should be recognized for its contribution.  
(confirmed)

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Good Morning ABMA Secretary and Treasurer,  
Being a ABF now for over 13 years and a current member of the ABMA, I would enjoy giving the AB community back what has been given to me. Currently I am searching for other AB's to form a new AB chapter here at NAS Sigonella, Italy. Looking over the ABMA chapters, I noticed that NAVEUROPE did not have a chapter which was discouraging to me. Over the past year I was selected as AB of the Year for NAS Sigonella and was unable to attend the ABMA Symposium due to a lack of funds. What it boiled down to is that we were without a chapter along with a handful of other bases scattered across NAVEUROPE. I am looking to fix the problem and form a ABMA Chapter for AB's to discuss areas of concern like mine and propose actions on matters affecting our personnel, command, and community. I have downloaded all the applicable information from the ABMA web site and will discuss our intentions in regards to by-laws, electing chapter officers, and tax requirements. With your permission I intend to move on with this request to form a ABMA chapter here at NAS Sigonella, Italy.  
ABF1 (AW) Wilber T.E.  
Security Dept. Training LPO  
Departmental PRT Coordinator

## *Secured Flight Quarters*

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I am convinced, our Father, that your fondest feelings are reserved for the least pretentious and most genuine of us. I am sure that Aviation Boatswain's Mates are some of your favorites. Certainly Aviation Boatswain's Mates have yet to find the virtues of humility, or soft-spokenness or gentleness....they do lead with their jaws...and seem always ready to fight than to switch. They can be singled out by their red eyes, and by a grubbiness, which is a mark of their trade. But their wills match their strong backs...and their love of each other is a wonderous thing to behold. They are the salt of the deck...and their saltiness is honest and open...and they are uniquely your sons. We are grateful to them...as you love them specially, we mark them particularly tonight. Bless them every one...and forever keep them from harm and hurt. In Christ's name...Amen  
R.W. Bedingfield, Chaplain (USN)

LCDR (AB LDO) RETIRED & ABMA LIFE MEMBER  
HANS PETER "PETE" MISCH  
ABHC RET. & ABMA LIFE MEMBER DONALD A. "TINY"  
ALEXANDER  
EVA SINKS, WIFE OF ABMA LIVING LEGEND, LIFE  
MEMBER, RETIRED CAFSU REPRESENTATIVE AND CHIEF  
WARRANT OFFICER ARLIE SINKS  
ABH2 NATHANIEL C. HAMILTON  
ABCOM WILBERT MARTIN  
ABE1 WILLIAM L. TOLIN  
NANCY WYATT, WIFE OF CW04 RETIRED & ABMA LIFE  
MEMBER JACK D. WYATT  
CAFSU REPRESENTATIVE, ABCM RETIRED & ABMA  
RETIRED LIFE MEMBER LEWIS A. WISENBAKER  
ABCM RETIRED & ABMA LIFE MEMBER MICHAEL HOBAN  
ABHC THOMAS K. O'SHAUGHNESSY  
ABMA LIFE MEMBER & FORMER ABE2 FRANK AFAFF  
ABHC MICHAEL D. MAST  
ABEC DONALD A. ENNIS  
ABF1 MIKE MELNICK  
ABHC ROBERT A. SMITH  
ABF1 RICHARD A. SARK  
ABH1 CHARLES R. GRIFFITH  
ABH2 BOBBY R. ROBERTS  
ABHC JON D. LANGDON  
BETTY L. KRAFFT, WIFE OF ABEC RETIRED AND ABMA  
LIFE MEMBER JAMES KRAFFT  
ABCM DONALD J. HYNES  
ABCM JACK D. McIE  
ABHC ROBERT J. O'MALLEY  
ABG3 PHILIP R. HARRIS  
ABI1 SYLVESTER RATUTENBERG  
ABH1 DAVID M. WILSON  
ABH1 NEIL ROBERTS  
LCDR AMBLER "SKIP" LOPEZ

## *The Watch*

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For many years  
The sailors have stood watch  
While some of us were in our bunks at night  
These sailors stood the watch  
While some of us were in school learning  
our trade  
These shipmates stood the watch  
Yes...even before some of us were born into  
this world  
These shipmates stood the watch  
In those years when the storm clouds of war  
were seen brewing on the horizon of history  
These shipmates stood the watch  
Many times they would cast an eye ashore  
and see their families standing there  
Needing their guidance and help  
Needing that hand to hold during  
those hard times  
But they still stood the watch  
They stood the watch for many years  
They stood the watch so that we,  
our families and  
Our, fellow countrymen could  
sleep soundly in safety,  
Each and every night  
Knowing that these sailors stood the watch  
Today we are here to say  
"Shipmates...the watch stands relieved  
Relieved by those You have Trained, Guided  
and Lead  
Shipmates you stand relieved....  
We, have the watch"



# ABMA BOATSWAINS MATES ASSOCIATION

Aviation Boatswains Mates Association  
Terry Santiago  
301 Lazy Meadow Drive East  
Jacksonville, FL 32225-3496  
[www.abma-usn.org](http://www.abma-usn.org)

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## *The Aviation Boatswain's Mate Insignia*

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Our insignia, bearing crossed anchors with wings, has stood for gallantry, productivity and dedication for nearly fifty years. Many excellent AB's have given their limbs and in too many cases their lives, performing the feats of the flight deck. Allow me to break the insignia down and put it into the right perspective for you.

The anchor is a heavy device used to secure a sea-going vessel or boat to a specific spot in a body of water. A single well-trained AB is an anchor. They secure their watch stations, whether it be securing aircraft on deck, fueling and defueling aircraft, directing aircraft around the deck, salvaging damaged aircraft, making aircraft settings on the arresting gear engine or hooking up and launching aircraft off our catapults.

Our insignia has two anchors. This signifies that we can't do our jobs alone. We must rely on each other and combine our knowledge and talents to fulfill our role on every flight and hanger deck. Just like a symphony orchestra in an amphitheater, we perform the marvelous spectacle of carrier air operations. We see

each other at our worst and our best and we assist each other through the rough and dangerous times that are always present. We teach each other, we test each other and though it is never stated, we love and respect each other deeply. Like the identical crossed anchors, our souls are bonded in friendship forever.

Then there are the wings. To put wings on a set of anchors in itself is superfluous. In retrospect, it would take very powerful wings and a strong back to support them in flight. AB's have the strong backs and the determination to get the job done no matter what the sacrifice. Unfortunately, those sacrifices are many and I would hope that they don't go unrewarded.

Remember the old fable about whenever a bell chimes, an angel gets its wings? Well, whenever you hear ship's bell sound, more AB's have sacrificed their time and used their professionalism to earn their wings. Our wings should signify that we have earned and secured our place in heaven.

By:  
CW04 Douglas L. Chaney (AB Bos'n) (RET)