

BUMED Oral History Synopsis and Glossary
HMC (FMF) Eugene (Gene) Pasahow, USN, Ret.

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SYNOPSIS:

Chief Pasahow's adventure began in January 1955 at Boot Camp, Bainbridge, MD. At this time he was classified to be a Corpsman, dental tech, yeoman or personnelman. In May 1955, he was assigned to the USS *Pocono* (AGC-16) in Norfolk, VA and became an Assault Boat Captain - BMSN (Boatswain's Mate Striker). Later he became a striker in Sick Bay, which he admits was the "best move" he ever made and would lead to his future status as a Hospital Corpsman.

In June 1957 Pasahow went to HM "A" School, Bainbridge, MD. Later in October of that year, he was assigned to USNH Annapolis, MD to provide assistance during the flu epidemic. From December 1957 to June 1958, he was assigned to Cabiness Field, Corpus Christi, TX. When it closed he was transferred to USNH Corpus Christi, TX. In February 1959 Pasahow left the Navy for a brief period before returning in 1960.

In May 1963, after a tour in Japan, Pasahow received orders to the Navy Recruiting Station, Houston, TX.

In October 1966, Pasahow received orders to VA-35, Attack Squadron, Oceana, VA. After arriving at Oceana he found out that he had made HM1. He embarked on the USS *Enterprise* (CVN-65) and deployed to the Tonkin Gulf. During this time the squadron lost six pilots including James Kelly Patterson, a good friend of Pasahow who to this day is still MIA.

In October 1967, Pasahow went to Field Medical School, Del Mar, CA and then he was ordered to the USS *Independence* (CVA- 62) as leading Petty Officer.

In March 1968, he was ordered to Survival School in Virginia. Later that year, in May, he received orders to DaNang Naval Hospital in Vietnam. Three months later he was transferred to Chu Lai as senior Petty Officer. While in Chu Lai, Pasahow participated in MEDCAP missions and sweeps in the area with USMC and Army personnel.

In June 1969, Pasahow received orders to the Naval Supply Center, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. While there Pasahow made the rank of Chief Petty Officer.

In July 1973, I was sent to "B" School, San Diego, CA and then was assigned to the destroyers USS *Higbee* (DD-806) and USS *DeHaven* (DD-727). I was Chief M.O. for both ships. The ships were mothballed later that year and Pasahow was sent to El Toro Marine Base.

In 1976, Pasahow was transferred to I&I Corpus Christi. He retired in January 1978.

ACRONYMS

BMSN—Boatswain's Mate Striker.
MEDCAP—Medical Civic Action Program
USNTC—U.S. Navy Training Center
WESTPAC—Western Pacific

GLOSSARY

Attack Squadron VA-35—Originally established as Bombing Squadron VB-3B in 1934, Attack Squadron VA-35 was disestablished in 1995. The squadron was nicknamed the "Black Panthers" and planes often were marked by an insignia of a "diving panther."

Bainbridge—the U.S. Navy Training Center (USNTC) Bainbridge established in Port Deposit, MD in 1942 and was home to "boot camp" and Class "A" schools for Navy enlisted personnel. The site (part of the Tome Preparatory School) and name (Commodore William Bainbridge of Barbary Wars and War of 1812 fame) were selected by President Franklin Roosevelt. USNTC was first deactivated in 1947 and reactivated in 1951. The Training Command was finally decommissioned in 1976.

Betel nut—is a common stimulant used in Asia that has is associated with a number of health risks from cancers of the mouth to dental issues to even psychosis. The betel nut is mentioned in the song "Bloody Mary" ("... always chewin' betel nuts") from the musical South Pacific.

Captain's Gig— A boat used on naval ships as the "captain's taxi. "

Chinook— Boeing CH-47 Chinook is an American twin-engine, tandem rotor heavy-lift helicopter. Its primary roles are troop movement, artillery placement artillery, ammunition, fuel, water, barrier materials, supplies and equipment on the battlefield. Its secondary missions include medical evacuation, disaster relief, search and rescue, aircraft recovery, firefighting, parachute drops, heavy construction and civil development. (Source: www.boeing.com)

Echelons of medical care— Five levels or echelons of care. Level One: First Aid delivered at the scene. Level Two: Increased medical capability and limited bed space/basic primary care. Level Three: Represents the highest level of medical care available within the combat zone with the bulk of inpatient beds. Most deployable hospitals are modular, allowing the commander to tailor the medical response to expected or actual demand. Level Four: Definitive medical and surgical care outside the combat zone, yet within the communication zone/EAC of the theater of operations (TO). Level Five: This level of care is provided in the CONUS. Hospitals in the CONUS sustaining base will provide the ultimate treatment capability for patients generated within the theater. Department of Defense (DoD) hospitals (military hospitals for the tri-services) and Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) hospitals will be specifically designated to

provide the soldier with maximum return to function through a combination of medical, surgical, rehabilitative, and convalescent care. (Source: "Levels of Medical Care." *Emergency War Surgery*. www.brooksidepress.org)

Elsie the Cow— Mascot of the Borden Dairy Company created in 1936.

Forecastle—the forward part of a ship with the sailors' living quarters.

Fort Mason— Port of Embarkation to Pacific stations located in San Francisco, CA.

Freedom Riders in Mississippi, Missing— In June 1964, Civil Rights Freedom Riders James Cheney, Andy Goodman, and Michael Schwerner went missing in Mississippi. President Lyndon Baines Johnson ordered federal agents and military personnel to Mississippi to locate these missing young men. The bodies were later found and it was discovered that each had been murdered by the Klu Klux Klan.

Gavilan, Kid (Geraldo Gonzalez, 1926-2003)—World Welterweight Champion (1951-1953).

Grand Concourse— First conceived in 1890, as a means of connecting the Borough of Manhattan to the northern Bronx, construction on the Grand Concourse began in 1894 and it was opened to traffic in November 1909. The Grand Concourse was modeled on the Champs-Élysées in Paris but is considerably larger, stretching four miles in length, measuring 180 feet across, and separated into three roadways by tree-lined dividers, so some minor streets did not cross the Concourse. (Source: "Looking back at the Grand Concourse First Century," *The New York Times*, March 18, 2009).

Ladd, Alan (1913-1964)—legendary star of film noirs and westerns include the Oscar winning *Shane* (1953).

LaMotta, Jake (1921-)- Aka "The Bronx Bull," LaMotta was the Boxing middleweight champion from 1949 to 1951. He lost his title to Sugar Ray Robinson in a fight that has been called the St. Valentine's Day Massacre (14 February 1951). His 1970 memoir was later adapted to the film *Raging Bull* directed by Martin Scorsese and starring Robert DeNiro in the title role.

Loren, Sophia (1934-)-Italian born film star and sex symbol.

Massapequa— a hamlet located in Nassau County in Southeast Long Island, NY.

Patterson, James Kelly, LT, USN (1940-??)—was a pilot with Attack Squadron VA-35 (USS *Enterprise*) who was shot down over North Vietnam in 1967.

Patterson was never located and he is still listed as being MIA.

Striker— Striker—Sailor either designated or undesignated (but not in rating or occupational specialty), usually class E-1 to E-3.

Studebaker Lark—produced from 1959 to 1966, the Studebaker Lark was one of the first American "compact" cars.

The Boy on a Dolphin—a 1956 20th Century Fox film that is notable as Sophia Loren's debut in an English speaking film. The film tells the story of a Greek sponge diver (Loren) who uncovers an ancient Greek statue

of a boy on a dolphin and her efforts to sell it to the highest bidder.

USS *DeHaven*—commissioned in March 1945, USS *De Haven* was an *Allen Sumner*-class destroyer. She is the second ship to be named after Lieutenant Edwin DeHaven, a member of the Wilkes Expedition (1838-1842) and later a casualty of the Mexican War (1848). In December 1973, *DeHaven* was transferred to the Republic of Korea on 5 December 1973, and renamed *Inchon*. The ship was stricken and broken up for scrap in 1993.

USS *Enterprise* (CVN-65)—the first nuclear powered aircraft carrier and the longest Navy ship ever in commission (1961-2012).

USS *Higbee* (DD/DDR-806)—commissioned in January 1945, USS *Higbee* (DD/DDR-806) was a *Gearing*-class destroyer. Named after pioneering nurse and the second superintendent of the Navy Nurse Corps Lenah Higbee (1874-1941), *Higbee* was the first warship named after a woman. USS *Higbee* was decommissioned and struck from the Navy list on 15 July 1979. *Higbee* was sunk as a target on 24 April 1986 off the coast of San Diego, CA.

USS *Independence* (CVA-62)—a *Forrestal*-class aircraft carrier (and fourth and final member of the *Forrestal*-class super carriers). She was commissioned in 1955 and decommissioned in 1998.

USS *Maddox* (DD-731)—A *Sumner*-class destroyer that may or may not have been attacked in the Tonkin Gulf in August 1964. These events known as the Tonkin Gulf crisis would help escalate the war in Vietnam.

USS *Pocono* (ACG-16)—an *Adirondack* class amphibious force command ship that served as a floating command post with advanced communications equipment and extensive combat information spaces to be used by amphibious forces commander and land force commander during large-scale operations USS *Pocono* was originally commissioned in 1945 and decommissioned in 1949; she was recommissioned in 1951 and decommissioned in 1976. (source: "USS *Pocono*," www.wikipedia.com)

Webb, Clifton (1889-1966)—actor, dancer known for work in theater and in film.

Zip Gun—An improvised firearm commonly associated with criminals.