

**BUMED Oral History Interview Synopsis and Glossary**  
**CAPT (ret.) John Sanders, MC, USN**  
**Commanding Officer, Naval Medical Research Center (NMRC)**

**Date and Location of Interview:** 14 May 2015, Silver Spring, MD  
**Interviewer:** André B. Sobocinski, BUMED Historian

**Synopsis:**

Captain John W. Sanders was born and raised in Chattanooga, Tennessee, received a Bachelor of Science from North Carolina State University in Raleigh, North Carolina. He entered the U.S. Navy through the Health Professional Scholarship Program and received his commission in 1988. He received a Master in Public Health and Tropical Medicine and a Doctorate of Medicine from Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana and was promoted to Lieutenant, Medical Corps, in 1992.

He then completed Internal Medicine residency training at the Naval Medical Center, Portsmouth, Virginia. Following specialty training, he served as the Internal Medicine Specialist and Infection Control Chairman at the Naval Hospital at Cherry Point Marine Corps Air Station, North Carolina. While at Cherry Point, he received an appointment as adjunct faculty to East Carolina University School of Medicine and developed a popular student clerkship in Internal Medicine. He subsequently completed an Infectious Diseases Fellowship at the combined program of the National Naval Medical Center (NNMC), Bethesda, Maryland and the Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, D.C.

In 1999 he became the Chief of the HIV Branch at NNMC. In 2001 he transferred to Naval Medical Research Unit No. 3, where he served as the Head of the Enteric Disease Research Program, the Chairman of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), and the Tropical Medicine Course Coordinator.

In 2005, he returned to NNMC to serve as the Chief of the Infectious Diseases Service and the Associate Program Director of the National Capital Area Infectious Disease Fellowship.

In August 2007, he became the Officer-in-Charge of the Naval Medical Research Center Detachment (NMRC Detachment), Lima and Iquitos, Peru. After leading NMRC Detachment through the process of full command designation, he was named the first Commanding Officer of the Naval Medical Research Unit No. Six in 2010.

He has been active in medical education at all levels, providing clinical and research mentorship for students, residents, and fellows, and received the NNMC Teacher of the Year award for 2000-01. An accomplished researcher, he has

published over 50 articles and 8 book chapters and is recognized as an authority in enteric diseases and infections of military relevance. He has served on the Enteric Disease Steering Committee and the Integrated Product Team for Bacterial Diarrhea Vaccines for the Military Infectious Disease Research Program and on the Programmatic and Scientific Review Board for the Infectious Disease Clinical Research Program of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS). He has served as an invited reviewer for several journals, including the American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, Clinical Infectious Diseases, and the Annals of Internal Medicine. He holds faculty appointments at the USUHS School of Medicine and the Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine.

In August 2011, Captain Sanders became the Executive Officer of the Naval Medical Research Center (NMRC), Silver Spring, Md. He assumed command of NMRC in August 2012. He retired in July 2015.

#### **Acronyms :**

BCG—Bacille Calmette-Guerin  
BUMED—Bureau of Medicine and Surgery  
CDC—Centers for Disease Control  
CO—Commanding Officer  
COCOMS—Combatant Commands  
DCM—Deputy Chief of Mission  
ETEC— Enterotoxigenic E. coli  
GSK— GlaxoSmithKline  
ID—Infectious Disease  
M1, BUMED—Total Force, BUMED Code  
MOM (Labs)—Military Operational Medicine Laboratories  
Naval Medical Research Center Detachment (NMRC Detachment)  
NAMRID—Navy Medical Research Institute Detachment  
NAMRU—Navy Medical Research Unit  
NAVAF—U.S. Naval Forces Africa  
NHRC—Naval Health Research Center  
NMRC—Naval Medical Research Center  
NSMRL—Naval Submarine Medical Research Laboratory  
OPNAV—Office of Chief of Naval Operations  
TVA—Tennessee Valley Authority  
USUHS—Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences

### **Key Personnel:**

Aronson, Naomi, COL, MC, USA—professor and director of infectious diseases at the Uniformed Services University, Bethesda, MD.

Antosek, L. Ed., CAPT, MC, USN served as a Navy flight surgeon for over 30 years. In 1989, he completed a Master's of Public Health and Tropical Medicine at Tulane University School of Public Health. Over the next several years, he served in a variety of positions including commander of the U.S. Naval Medical Research Unit in Cairo, Egypt. In 2004, Captain Antosek became the commanding officer of the Naval Medical Research Center and chief executive for the biomedical branch of the Navy Medicine Research Laboratory System.

Blazes, David, CAPT MC, USN—infectious disease specialty leader to the Surgeon General (2013 to present).

Burgess, Timothy, CDR, MC, USN—Naval Academy graduate and infectious disease physician. Burgess would later serve as Infectious Disease Clinical Research Program in Bethesda, MD.

Chung, Raymond, COL (ret.), MC, USA—served in the Army from 1975 through 2001. He finished his Army career as Chief of Infectious Disease Service, Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

Cline, Barnett (Barney) – Dr. Barnett Cline, Professor Emeritus, Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana, is the former Chairman of the Department of Tropical Medicine, former president of the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, and former member of the Armed Forces Epidemiological Board – a Federal Advisory Board to the U.S. Department of Defense. He is also a Diplomat of the American Board of Preventive Medicine. Working for the Center for Disease Control (CDC), and heading an active teaching and research program at Tulane, he has conducted extensive research and published numerous articles on tropical infectious diseases in Latin America, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. ([www.andeanhealth.org](http://www.andeanhealth.org)).

Diederich, Jerrold, HMC, USN—Command Chief and the Senior Enlisted Leader Navy Medicine Research and Development (2011-2015).

Earhart, Ken, CAPT (ret.) MC, USN, CO, NAMRU-3 (2007-2010).

Eberhardt, Mark, PhD—Director of Research Science, Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

Epstein, Judy, CAPT, MC, USN—Clinical Director of the Malaria Vaccine Program, NMRC, Silver Spring, VA.

Fujimori, Alberto (1938-)—President of Peru from 1990-2000.

Garcia, Albert Gabriel Ludwig (1949-)—President of Peru from 1985-1990 and 2006-2011.

Gasser, Robert, COL (ret.), MC, USA—infectious disease expert, formerly with Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

Haberberger, CAPT (ret.) Richard, MSC, USN—CO, NMRC (2009-2012).

Hoffman, Stephen, CAPT (ret.), L. MC, USN. From 1987-2001 Dr. Hoffman was Director of the Malaria Program at the Naval Medical Research Center where he built a focused professional team of over 100 individuals in the United States and overseas working on all aspects of malaria research, but especially vaccine development and genomics. Dr. Hoffman and his team were leaders in the effort to sequence the *P. falciparum* genome and conducted the first studies in the world that showed that DNA vaccines elicited killer T cell responses in humans. In early 2001 Dr. Hoffman retired from the Navy and joined Celera Genomics as Senior Vice President of Biologics to create a program to utilize genomics and proteomics to produce new biopharmaceuticals. He established this program, organized the effort that successfully sequenced the genome of the mosquito responsible for most transmission of malaria in Africa, *Anopheles gambiae*, and left Celera in August 2002 to found Sanaria, primary mission is to develop and commercialize whole-parasite sporozoite vaccines that confer high-level, long-lasting protection against *Plasmodium falciparum*, the malaria parasite responsible for more than 95% of malaria associated severe illness and death world-wide and the malaria parasite for which there is the most significant drug resistance. ([www.sanaria.com](http://www.sanaria.com))

Lasker Award—the Lasker Award has been given annually since 1945

to living persons who have made major contributions to medical science or who have performed public service on behalf of medicine. ([www.laskerfoundation.org](http://www.laskerfoundation.org))

Martin, Gregory, CAPT, MC, USN—noted infectious disease and bioterrorism expert. Martin is currently the director of the Infectious Disease Clinical Research Program (IDCRP) at the Uniformed Services University, Bethesda, MD.

Maves, Ryan, CDR, MC, USN—infectious disease physician at Naval Medical Center San Diego, CA (2015).

Montcalm-Smith, Elizabeth, CAPT, MSC, USN—XO, NMRC (2012-2015).

Monteville, Marshall, CAPT, MC, USN, CO, NAMRU-2 (2014-Present).

Oster, Charles, COL (ret.), MC, USA—former chief of the infectious disease service at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

Peterson, Kyle, CAPT, MC, USN—CO, NAMRU-6 (2013-Present)

Pimentel, Guillermo "Billy," CDR, MSC, USN— Deputy Director, Biological Defense Research Directorate. In 2014, Pimentel and Chief Diederich traveled to Liberia where they established two mobile Ebola laboratories (Island Clinic and at Cuttington University).

Riley, Terrence, CAPT, MC, USN (1947-2011)—a prominent flight surgeon, neurologist and author of *Ship's Doctor* (1995).

Savarino, Stephen, CAPT, MC, USN—at the time of this interview CAPT Savarino was the director of the Enteric Diseases Department at the Naval Medical Research Center. He also serves as chair of the Diarrheal Diseases Prevention Research Program Area for the U.S. Military Infectious Diseases Research Program at the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command.

Service, Dave, CAPT, MSC, USN—Commanding Officer of NAMRU-6 (2011-2013).

Tribble, David, CAPT, MC, USN—Director of General Infectious Diseases Program, Uniformed Services University, Bethesda, MD.

Walz, Stephen, CAPT, MSC, USN—Director Field Laboratories, NMRC (2004-2015).

Wierzba, Tom F., PhD, MS, MPH

### **Key Terms:**

Abbassia Fever Hospital—an old British built infectious disease hospital adjacent to NAMRU-3.

BCG(bacille Calmette-Guerin) is a vaccine for tuberculosis.

Bright Star— a military exercise lead by the United States and Egypt held every two years.

BUMED Code M1 (Total Force)—Principal resource manager and staff advisor to the Surgeon General for Navy Medicine Total Force (active duty, reserve, civilian, and contractor) manpower and personnel, and interface / coordination with M7 on training and education policies, programs, and practices.

Centro Medico Naval—flagship naval hospital co-located with NAMRU-6.

Charity Hospital (New Orleans, LA) was originally established as the Hospital of Saint John or L'Hôpital des Pauvres de la Charité in 1736. Today it is one of two teaching hospitals (along with University Hospital) that comprise the Medical Center of Louisiana at New Orleans.

Cobra Gold— Asia-Pacific military exercise held in Thailand every year. It is the largest Asia-Pacific military exercise held each year.

ETEC—Enterotoxigenic E. coli or ETEC is a common cause of bacterial diarrhea.

GlaxoSmithKline (GSK)— provides quick and easy access to ordering, product information, disease information, patient education, patient assistance programs, and more. The links below will connect you to tools and resources for you and your patients.(source. <http://www.gskvaccines.com/>)

Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)—now known as the Joint Commission—is a United

States-based nonprofit tax-exempt organization that accredits more than 20,000 health care organizations and programs in the United States. A majority of state governments recognize Joint Commission accreditation as a condition of licensure and the receipt of Medicaid reimbursement.

NAMRU-3 (Naval Medical Research Medical Unit), Cairo, Egypt—the beacon of biomedical research and bio-surveillance overseas, NAMRU is the longest running and largest OCONUS military medical research unit. Since 1946, NAMRU-3 has symbolized the very tenets of medical diplomacy and innovation that has marked the history of the NAMRU program.

NAMRU-3 Ghana Detachment—Established in 2001, NAMRU-3 Ghana detachment was originally conceived to promote malaria research in West Africa. It now strives to promote and maintain Infectious disease surveillance via capacity building, training, education, monitoring and evaluation; and to pursue infectious disease research based on contemporary needs. ([www.med.navy.mil/sites/namru3/](http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/namru3/)).

NAMRU-6— Located in Lima, Peru, NAMRU-6 began as a detachment of the Naval Medical Research Institute (NAMRID) in January 1983. With an understanding of the Peruvian government, NAMRID focused on infectious diseases of “mutual interest” to the host nation and the U.S. Navy. Later an independent field detachment of NMRI’s successor, the Naval Medical Research Center (NMRC), it was commissioned as NAMRU-6 in February 2011. CAPT Sanders served at the unit’s first Commanding Officer.

National University of San Marcos— Established in 1551, the National University of San Marcos is the most important and respected higher-education institution in Peru.

NSMRL (Naval Submarine Medical Research Laboratory)—Located in Groton, CT, NSMRL was established in World War II to conduct “mission critical studies in night vision, sonar, sound discrimination, and personnel selection. Today its mission is to protect the health and enhance the performance of warfighters through submarine, diving, and surface biomedical research solutions. ([www.med.navy.mil/sites/nsmrl](http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nsmrl)).

Naval Amphibious Base, Little Creek, VA is the major operating

base for the Amphibious Forces in the United States.

OraSure— Based in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, OraSure Technologies is a leader in the development, manufacture and distribution of oral fluid diagnostic and collection devices and other technologies designed to detect or diagnose critical medical conditions. ([www.orasure.com](http://www.orasure.com)).

Pennsylvania Hospital— Co-founded by Benjamin Franklin and Dr. Thomas Bond, Philadelphia's Pennsylvania Hospital first opened in 1756.

Peru Earthquake of 2007— On 15 August 2007, an 8.0 earthquake hit the coast of central Peru killing over 450 people.

Red Bank, TN—an enclave town surrounded by the city limits of Chattanooga, Hamilton County, TN.

RTS,S— Experimental recombinant protein-based vaccine for malaria.

Seven Naval Medical Research Commands— Seven Navy Medical Research Commands: Naval Health Research Center (NHRC), San Diego, CA; Naval Submarine Medical Research Laboratory (NSMRL), Groton, CT; Naval Medical Research Unit, Dayton, OH (NAMRU-D); Naval Medical Research Unit, San Antonio, TX (NAMRU-SA); Naval Medical Research Unit-Singapore (NAMRU-Asia); Naval Medical Research Unit, Cairo, Egypt (NAMRU-3); Naval Medical Research Unit, Lima, Peru (NAMRU-6).

Shining Path—Maoist guerrilla insurgent in Peru, active since 1980.

Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)—a government-owned independent corporation founded in 1933 to provide flood control, electricity generation, and economic development for the Tennessee Valley.

University at Cayetano Heredia (Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia) is a private university located in Lima, Peru. It was established in 1961.

Virginia Earthquake—on 23 August 2011, a 5.8 earthquake hit Louisa County, northwest of Richmond, VA. The main tremor could be felt by as many as one-third of the U.S. population.

