

Aaron Farrior

From: "Aaron Farrior" <bare4@cox.net>
To: "Aaron Farrior" <bare4@cox.net>
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2008 4:49 AM

Am

*DOUG
I PUT THIS
TOGETHER FOR
OUR NAVY FRIENDS
WHEN THEY ASK
ME WHAT DO
PJS DO. USE IT
IF YOU CHOOSE*

Hi there.

Gerry Flowers and Bob Holmes, among others, asked me why Pararescuemen were required to attend the Navy Underwater Swimmers School in Key West. Allow me first to relate a little background about how Pararescue came to be, who we are, and what we do.

In August 1943, Lt. Colonel Donald "Doc" Flickinger, Sergeant Harold Passey, and Corporal William McKenzie made a parachute jump into the dense jungle of Burma to rescue a group of downed Airmen. That successful parachute rescue mission led ultimately to the formation of the Air Rescue Service together with the Pararescue career field in 1946. The U.S. Navy and Coast Guard both contributed greatly during this era by developing enhanced capabilities for water recovery by upgrading flying boat technology from the PY-4 and PY-5 to the improved high wing twin-engine PBY1.

In 1943, a mixed group of about 25 individuals from the U.S. Army Air Force, U.S. Coast Guard, and Canadian Air Observers were given parachute training at the U.S Forest Service Smoke Jumper's School in Missoula, Montana.

These first Pararescuemen (PJs -- Pararescue Jumpers) were organized into local base rescue units.

On 29 May 1946, the Air Transportation Service formally established the Air Rescue Service with PJs, airplanes, aircrew members, and support personnel. The mission was to acquire such training that would allow rapid PJ deployment anywhere, anytime, around the globe to quickly rescue downed pilots and be capable of extending assistance to anyone else needing help. Between 1946 and today there have been a total of only about 2,500 Pararescuemen.

To insure adequate medical treatment of survivors, the PJs were given extensive medical training. PJs have been trained to go any where in the world to survive and thrive. Mountains, forests, deserts, and oceans were, and still are, our training grounds.

In the early 60's NASA started to call upon the Air Rescue Service to assist with spacecraft and space hardware retrieval. During manned space

10/30/2008

flights, Pararescuemen and their support aircraft and crew were deployed to strategic sites around the globe. In the event a primary splash-down site could not be reached, Pararescuemen, already airborne, raced the spacecraft to the splash-down site to jump and recover craft and crew. I'm proud to say that PJs A/2C Glenn M. Moore, A/1C Eldridge M. Neal, and S/Sgt Larry D. Huyett recovered Gemini 8 astronauts David R. Scott, and Neil Armstrong in an emergency Pacific Ocean landing on March 17, 1966.

While stationed in Hawaii around 1959-60, and surrounded with more water than land, Pararescuemen began to experiment making ocean parachute jumps with self-contained underwater breathing apparatus (SCUBA). The initial SCUBA gear was purchased in Honolulu at a store called, "Toys for Men." Ocean deployment with full SCUBA gear would allow the PJs to parachute into any ocean in the world to provide survival assistance, medical aid, and effective logistical coordination to insure a successful rescue.

The Air Force initially assigned SCUBA training for all PJs at the U.S. Navy Underwater Swimmers School at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. At about the same time Pararescuemen started attending the other Navy schools in Key West and the U.S. Navy Second Class Divers School in San Diego.

During those initial times, the Air Force was so short of potential Pararescuemen that it provided waivers for men up to 38 years old. Tragically, one PJ died during training. The Navy had a 30 year old limit for going to the school. After Tom Rowe died at Key West, the Air Force quickly adopted the Navy's age limit of 30.

Fast forward to 1964 and North Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. These were the countries where all the supplies traveled to support the Viet Cong in South Vietnam.

American pilots from all branches of the services were starting to get shot down far behind enemy lines in these countries. PJs were crewed with every Rescue aircraft in Southeast Asia. In addition to being part-time door gunners on these aircraft, it was their primary mission to be lowered by hoist and cable to the ground to give emergency medical assistance to aircrew survivors, get them on the hoist and up to the airplane to safety.

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> During the term of the deployment of Pararescuemen to combat in Vietnam,
 > PJs were awarded the following commendations: 1 Medal of Honor
 > (Pitsenbarger); 10 Air Force Crosses; 79 Silver Stars; over 100 0
 > Distinguished Flying Crosses; thousands of Air Medals and other awards.
 > Our PJs of today train and are in combat with Special Tactics troops
 > around the world. The Pararescue career field is unique in the annals of

- > military history because we are trained exclusively for combat rescue and
- > survival. If a PJ recruit is injured in training, the Air Forces
- > classifies that as a combat related injury. You'll not find another such
- > outfit in any other military anywhere else in the world.
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- > Due to a high attrition rate we recruit extensively. There's a PJ
- > detachment at Lackland AFB, Texas, where we interview every Air Force
- > recruit to find PJ volunteers. Of those who initially qualify, we start
- > them on a 10 week physical training program. Usually about 80 will start
- > and about 8 to 10 will finish. Those who do will be directed into a 2-year
- > 'Pipeline' training program. At the end of the Pipeline training only 4 or
- > 5 will graduate as Pararescuemen.
- >
- > Now you know the rest of the story.
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- > Living by the motto: These things we do that others may live.
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- > CMSGT Aaron Farrior -- PJ Retired
- > Key West graduate September, 1962
- >

~~THE ENDING~~



Buddy Line



Newsletter of Fraternal Order of Underwater Swim School, Key West, Florida

November 2008

FO/UWSS Reunion May 14-17, 2009 Panama City, Florida

Update from Reunion Committee

Plans for the Reunion Schedule include the following activities. The Ice Breaker on Thursday night will be followed by a tour day on Friday and a fish fry that evening. Tours will be to the Naval Diving and Salvage Training Center and EDU, both with goodie locker stuff for sale, and a visit to the Man-in-the-Sea Museum.

We are working on a static display and demos, where practical, of some of the new toys available to today's military diver, to include the latest SDVs (the unclassified stuff – which may not be much) display. (Before they move away to Hawaii)

There will be some special events for the ladies and we are discussing some sort of boat/snorkeling trip or harbor tour for all hands. Saturday morning is the breakfast/business meeting. The ladies will have a separate breakfast with guest speaker/entertainment. The Banquet is Saturday night

Additional information and registration forms will be in the February Buddy Line.

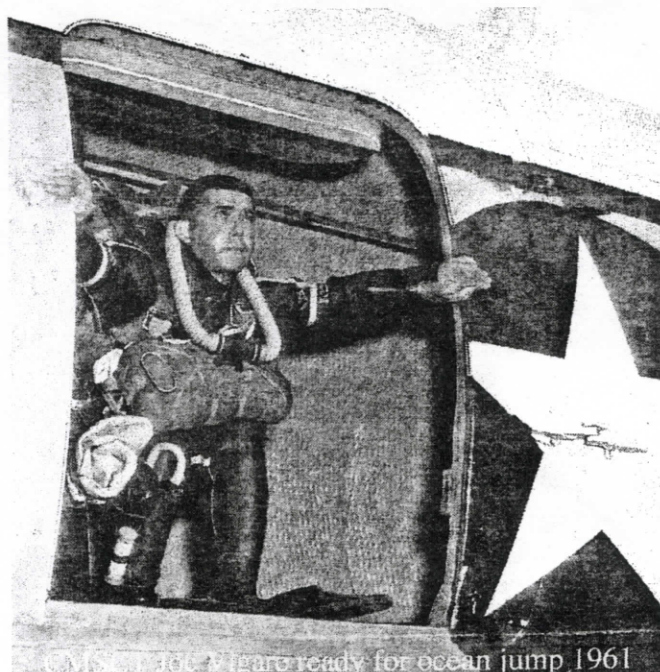
Sixty rooms have been blocked for us at the Visitor Quarters. Forty seven suites have queen beds and can accommodate two persons. Thirteen suites have a bed plus a sofa sleeper.

To make reservations at the Q's, contact Anne Sawyer: anne.sawyer@navy.mil or call (850)234-4217 or (850)234-4556. When you email/phone, please reference the Underwater Swimmer's School Reunion 14-17 MAY09 group. When making Q reservations by phone, you may not get an answer; just leave a message and she will get back to you within 24 hours.

The information required for making reservations includes for all: first/last name, rank, active?, retired?, how many in party?, last 4 of social, billing address for

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The PJ Story by Aaron Farrior



CVS 100 Vignette ready for ocean jump 1961

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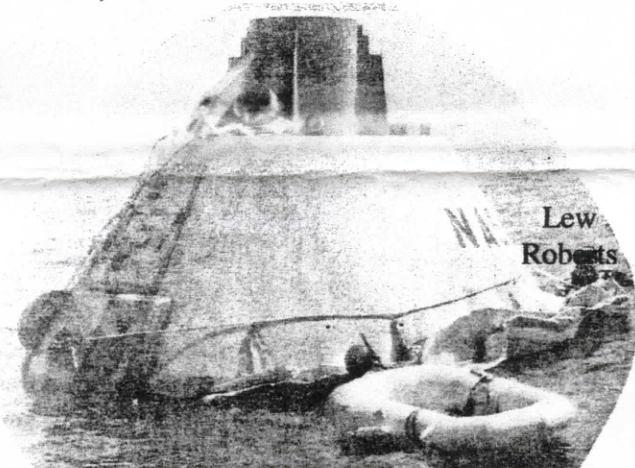
The PJ Story – continued from page 1

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Due to a high attrition rate we recruit extensively. There's a PJ detachment at Lackland AFB, Texas, where we interview every Air Force recruit to find PJ volunteers. Of those who initially qualify, we start them on a 10 week physical training program. Usually about 80 will start and about 8 to 10 will finish. Those who do, will be directed into a 2-year 'Pipeline' training program. At the end of the Pipeline training only 4 or 5 will graduate as Pararescuemen.

Now you know the rest of the story. Living by the motto: *These things we do that recovery by live.* CMSGT Aaron Farrior -- PJ Retiree PY-4 and PY-graduate September 1962

PBY1.

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