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For the men and women of the Coast Guard Acquisition Directorate

CG-9 NEWS AND NEWSMAKERS

A Shared History: CG-9 and Coast Guard Cutter Thetis

By Michael Valliant (CG-925)

The people of the Coast Guard's Acquisition Directorate (CG-9) come from diverse backgrounds and experiences. In a small, sea-going service, however, common experience can not only link colleagues' careers, it can help to shape the future of Coast Guard acquisition. For six members of CG-9, one such connection is service aboard the Coast Guard Cutter Thetis, 10th ship of the 270-foot Famous-class and one of the hulls modernized by CG-9's Mission Effectiveness Project (MEP).

Coast Guard Cutter Thetis, a 270-foot Medium Endurance Cutter, conducts vital Coast Guard missions from its homeport in Key West, Fla. A number of CG-9 leaders have served aboard the Thetis, providing valuable lessons learned as the Acquisition Directorate prepares to acquire the future Offshore Patrol Cutters. U.S. Coast Guard photo.

Program Executive Officer, Rear Adm. Bruce Baffer (CG-93) served two tours on Thetis, one as the Engineer Officer (EO)–from 1994 to 1997–and the second as Commanding Officer (CO), from 2002 to 2004. Capt. Doug Schofield, project manager for the Offshore Patrol Cutter (CG-9322) served as Thetis' CO from 2010 to 2012, just before reporting to CG-9. Cmdr. Tim Newton, project manager for polar icebreakers (CG-9323) was Thetis' EO from 2002 to 2005. Cmdr. Vernon Craig of the Asset Project Office (APO) was a student engineer and EO-in-training from 1996 to 1998. Carl McGill of the Surface Systems Contract Division (CG-9125) was Thetis' Prospective Executive Officer (PXO) before commissioning in 1989, and the ship's first Executive Officer (XO) from 1989 to 1991. Roland Davis, of the Office of Strategic Planning and Communication (CG-925) served as Thetis' Operations Officer, from 2001 to 2003. Baffer, Newton and Davis served in the same wardroom as did Baffer and Craig.

Together, CG-9's Thetis alumni have a total of 26 years experience at sea aboard Medium Endurance Cutters (WMEC), which will be replaced by the Offshore Patrol Cutters (OPC). Serving aboard Thetis imparted life lessons to each member of the group. Looking forward, their com-

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bined experience will provide the Coast Guard with valuable knowledge that will help guide the acquisition of the OPCs.

Building on a Heritage of Readiness

Built by Derektor Shipyards between 1984 and 1986, Thetis is the third cutter to be so named. The first was a steam-powered barquentine commissioned in 1899, and the second was a 165-foot twin screw, diesel-powered patrol boat commissioned in 1931.

In early December, Baffer and other members of CG-9 took a trip to the National Archives, where they viewed the original deck log of the second Thetis.

"In 1942, during World War II, Thetis sank a German U-boat off of Key West, Fla." Baffer said. "They sank it with a depth-charge. The commanding officer was a lieutenant junior grade and the deck watch officer was an ensign. The day they sank it, they used 400 gallons of water, then the next day, they celebrated and used 800 gallons of water. It was fascinating to read the original account in the log."

Key West is also homeport of the current Thetis. Although this generation hasn't had to worry about U-boats, other challenges have helped Thetis alums build experience that today supports the acquisition workforce. For example, McGill, then a lieutenant commander serving as Thetis' XO, remembers the day the Coast Guard accepted the ship from Derektor, which was on strike at the time.

"It wasn't the typical ship acceptance," McGill said. "Then again, there is no typical ship acceptance. They gave us the choice of sticking around and getting the discrepancies fixed or taking the ship. So we took the ship."

The crew spent the next six months in Baltimore, at the Coast Guard Yard, fixing discrepancies – a foreshadowing of McGill's current job in contracting. The real challenge during that time, though, was getting the crew ready, he said.

"When you put an entire crew together, with no experience working together, that's the harder part. Getting the new crew trained to safely sail and operate a new cutter was a little different than what we were used to in the past," McGill said. "The PXOs communicated doctrine and what they were doing and that was passed down from ship to ship, so it didn't have to be re-generated uniquely, which was good."

Cmdr. Tim Newton (CG-9323) and Capt. Doug Schofield (CG-9322) stand at the bow of Coast Guard Cutter Thetis during Schofield's change of command ceremony in June, Jacksonville, Fla. Both Newton and Schofield served afloat tours on the Thetis before coming to the Acquisition Directorate. U.S. Coast Guard photo.

Key West

The Coast Guard's WMECs are homeported along the East Coast of the United States. Based out of Key West, which lies within the Southern Command joint service theater of operations, Thetis' missions include migrant interdiction, fisheries protection and counter-drug law enforcement. The ship boasts 16 snowflakes for cocaine busts and has a reputation as a strong drug enforcement cutter.

"During my last two drug busts, we lily-padded helicopters off of ships in excess of 80 miles away to stop over two tons of cocaine from coming into the country," Schofield said. "Those cases were truly due to the crew of Thetis having robust language skill sets; they were one of the most diverse crews I have ever sailed with. We had crew members with fluency in at least six languages" "

In addition to determining the types of missions the cutter conducts, the Key West environment provides challenges for the engineers serving on board.

"The water down there is warm and salty and it never freezes, so you get a corrosion cycle that is more aggressive than in many other places," Baffer explained. "You've got very minimal support down there. There was one crane in Key West, so if someone was building a pool that weekend, you didn't have access to it. The sector didn't have its own crane and there were very few welding shops; the ship repair folks had to come down from Miami."

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The result was that the officers and crew became more self-reliant and resourceful. When Baffer was EO, the crew replaced the existing bolts throughout the entire auxiliary salt water piping system with stainless steel bolts, having determined that the up-front cost would be mitigated by the long-term benefit of not having to replace corroded parts. Some fifteen years later, when Thetis was drydocked at the Coast Guard Yard for MEP, Baffer noticed they were still there.

"When I was EO under Rear Adm. Baffer, we used to walk around doing the materiel inspections every month while we were underway," Newton said. "He would walk around and point out things that he had done when he was EO that were still there. And his point was, he said, 'Tim, you know you've done something right because it stands the test of time, and the things that you foul up or that don't get all the way right, someone will have replaced.'"

Although Key West borders the tropics, the climate there sometimes made life aboard ship more comfortable than being ashore.

Davis recalled the first time the temperatures in Key West dropped into the mid-30s.

"That was the first time I noticed that my apartment didn't have any heat," Davis said. "So I went up to the ship and I was surprised that about three quarters of the crew were there. I wasn't the only one that didn't have heat."

Mission Effectiveness Project

Thetis underwent system upgrades at the Coast Guard Yard in January 2005, before the MEP had been so-named and before the Legacy Sustainment Support Unit took over the cutter upgrades. Newton was the EO during that time.

"We spent an entire eight weeks getting ready to bring her up here," Newton said. "We spent all of the holiday season in port, turning on pre-heaters down in Key West that had maybe never been turned on since it was delivered; trying to coax the heating system into running so we would have heat when we came up here."

The ship completed its 11-month MEP availability in February 2012. Schofield was Thetis's CO while it went through MEP and immediately noticed the difference the upgrades made.

"During MEP, we took out the entire propulsion control system and most of the alarm sensor equipment and replaced it with a more state of the art, computerized Main Propulsion Control

Staff at the Coast Guard Yard in Curtis Bay, Md., inspect the Coast Guard Cutter Thetis while the ship is drydocked during an 11-month availability to receive upgrades through the Mission Effectiveness Project. U.S. Coast Guard photo.

Monitoring System (MPCMS)," Schofield said. "The new console is truly amazing even though a significant amount of training was required to learn the new system"

Grooming the system so that the controls and the bridge match what is happening in the environment has become easier compared to the old, solid-state electrical system, explained Schofield.

"With the new system, you literally the mechanical system is correctly configured, then the electrician pushes a button to align it on the software and you are done," he added. "So my three to five-day electrical groom is now less than a minute. That really brought us into the 21st century from a ship control and monitoring perspective."

"It's great to get direct feedback right here in CG-9 from a knowledgeable CO who was using the system just a few months ago. That's when you know we're making a difference to the fleet," Baffer said. "Ken King, Rusty Hummer, (both in CG-9323), and Ahmed Majumder (CG-9321) all played a large role in bringing the new MPCMS system to the MEP cutters. It developed as an outgrowth of the National Security Cutter (NSC) project, and the Coast Guard's ongoing effort to develop a common MPCMS for all new cutter classes."

Lessons Learned

Design compromises made during the development of the 270s created many of the challenges that MEP and other efforts are helping to overcome. Looking ahead to the OPC, the Coast Guard is applying another important lesson: ensuring that the budget is sufficiently resourced, and that cost estimates are cor-

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rect to avoid having to make suboptimal design choices late in the development process as the next generation of cutters takes shape.

Other lessons learned have come from practical experience with the characteristics of the 270-foot cutters. For example, those who have sailed aboard the 270-foot WMECs will agree that the Famous-class are notoriously difficult to maneuver, Baffer noted.

"The 270s don't have a bow thruster, though they should have had one," he said. "They are the most difficult cutter we have in the Coast Guard to drive and maneuver."

Based on that experience, the Coast Guard plans to design the OPCs with a bow thruster.

"I think all of us are trying to mitigate [maneuverability problems] on the future hulls because WMECs go into places where you can't always get tugs and are difficult to get in and out of, a situation we see that every day with the 210s and 270s," Schofield said. "We're not always going into modern ports."

In other ways, serving aboard Thetis and her sister ships taught CG-9's fellow 270 sailors life lessons that have helped to shape not only the careers of a handful of senior acquisition professionals, but the Coast Guard's broader surface community.

"Thetis was my first afloat tour and my third tour in the Coast Guard," Craig said. "I arrived there as a senior j.g. and made lieutenant while on the ship. The underway experience was like drinking from a firehose, but I learned so much while I was underway. I don't think that's unique to Thetis, but I think it's unique to the underway experience and how it serves to matriculate and develop future leaders and future officers."

Baffer and Newton had similar experiences.

"When I look back at my EO tour, three years on Thetis was the toughest tour I ever had in the Coast Guard," Baffer said. "There is so much that's outside of your control. And you were at the end of the food chain – you didn't have the support, you didn't have help, you just had to find a way to do it yourself."

During Baffer's tour as Thetis' CO, Newton also served as the cutter's EO.

"There's nothing like drifting in the Windward Pass with no power and no propulsion, explaining to the captain what you think might be going on down in the engine room, as he's then laughing and telling you his experience when the exact same thing happened when he was EO," Newton said. "After that, my next tour was at the White House and I really didn't have as much stress in those three years."

What do you miss most from your time on the Thetis?

Schofield: Coffee on the bridge wing, spending time with the crew.

Craig: We had a good cook when I was on board. He made master chief. That guy could make paella that was to die for.

Davis: The Caribbean port calls.

Newton: I miss the small crew and the port calls. When the admiral was on board he always brought his bike and so a lot of the islands down in the Caribbean, we've ridden our bikes over the top of the mountain and around by the beach. I couldn't keep up with him back then and I probably can't keep up with him today, he still rides his bike to work.

The Coast Guard Cutter Thetis holds fond memories and lessons learned for the CG-9 staff that served aboard the medium endurance cutter, which is homeported at Key West, Fla. U.S. Coast Guard photo.

McGill: I miss the port calls, the crew size. But I also learned to scuba dive down there. I can't swim so I had to learn to scuba dive. I sink.

Baffer: I just liked getting underway and going somewhere. Where it was just you and the crew and it was the adventure. What comes next? Are you going to get migrants, are you going to make a drug bust, are you going to be able to pull off the next chase? What's going to happen? There was also an unknown when you left the pier. You were doing something that was important and you had to do it yourself, you had to be resourceful.

Hickey Receives MIT Best Thesis Award

Prior to reporting to the Project Resident Office (PRO), Lockport, La., Cmdr. Jon Hickey completed his Master's Degree in System Design and Management (SDM) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Hickey learned this fall that, in addition to being published in short form by the International Journal of Risk Assessment and Management, his master's thesis had been selected as the SDM program's best thesis.

Cmdr. Jon Hickey (PRO Lockport) presents his diploma at his graduation, summer 2012, from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Hickey's Master's Degree thesis was selected as the best thesis in MIT's System Design and Management program. U.S. Coast Guard photo.

"It was a surprise and an honor," Hickey said. "I found out that my thesis was selected for the MIT SDM Best Thesis Award as I was getting off a plane in Key West, Fla., to visit one of the cutters. It was exciting news because it brought some recognition to the Coast Guard in terms of our ability to do research and analysis, and present it in a way that's recognized as quality work for the program."

Hickey's thesis applied Systems Theoretic Accident Model and Processes (STAMP), a system safety modeling and analysis tool, to Coast Guard Aviation. After receiving a strong endorsement for his thesis proposal from Vice Adm. John Currier during the Vice Commandant's visit to MIT to provide a key note speech on leadership, Hickey worked closely with Coast Guard aviation program managers to conduct his research and analysis.

In October, Hickey briefed the aviation program managers, who included O-6s from the Office of Aviation Forces (CG-711), the Office of Aeronautical Engineering (CG-41) and the Division of Aviation Safety (CG-1131). Not only was the group's feedback positive, they also plan to further pursue a number of Hickey's recommendations, including considering incorporating the STAMP modeling and analysis tool as part of their mishap investigative procedures.

"It was great because you wonder with all the work that goes into a thesis, if anyone will ever actually read it," Hickey said. "To get positive feedback and see my work being discussed by people with the influence to make changes goes beyond expectations."

Hickey will be presenting his thesis analysis and findings to the Annual STAMP Symposium at MIT in March 2013.

The Master of Science in Engineering and Management from MIT is Hickey's third master's degree and provides him new ways to approach and think about managing the Coast Guard's on site activities for the Fast Response Cutters (FRC).

"At the MIT SDM program, they try to teach you how to think, not what to think. They want you to look at things from a systems perspective," Hickey said. "So when you come from school to a program like the FRC, it's a good fit. The FRC program doesn't just involve a complex asset; you have to work within the Coast Guard acquisition world and all of its interfaces, including the sponsor, the technical authorities, program management, contracting, the shipbuilder, sub-contractors and vendors—it's a complex environment. I'm not the guy who tells people how to weld, but I do coordinate across all the different stakeholders, so a systems perspective of how everything works together is important."

CG-9 Faces: Mark Schwender (CG-9324)

Mark Schwender (CG-9324) is now the deputy project manager for the Sentinel-class Fast Response Cutter project. U.S. Coast Guard photo.

There isn't much that Mark Schwender (CG-9324) doesn't know about Coast Guard patrol boats; Schwender has been helping the Service acquire them since 1997. In October, the Coast Guard again tapped into his expertise when he became deputy project manager for the Sentinel-class Fast Response Cutter (FRC).

Schwender previously served as the FRC project's technical director, from October 2006–October 2012. Before then, he was the technical director for the Coastal Patrol Boat (CPB) project, from June 1997–January 2010, during which time he also assumed the duties of deputy project manager for the CPB, from April 2002–August 2003.

Additionally, Schwender was able to apply his knowledge by playing a leading role in the development and execution of the Mission Effectiveness Project (MEP) for the 110-foot Island-class patrol boats. As the lead naval architect for the 110 MEP, he is responsible for all testing and evaluation, review of design changes and configuration management.

Schwender cites several mentors that helped him develop professionally. One is Master Chief (ret.) Frank Tatu, a key influence in Schwender's decision to focus on a Coast Guard career in patrol boats. Another mentor, who guided Schwender to his job with the CPB project, is Orie Davis, also a former Coast Gaurdsman. Schwender worked for Davis at Maintenance and Logistics Command Atlantic (MLCA), where he served as the assistant section chief and program manager for the Paxman engine in the Patrol Boat and Small Boat Section of the Vessels Division. While at MLCA, Schwender's responsibilities included type desk manager for 82-foot and 110-foot WPBs, as well as 110-foot WSESs. He became the lead type desk manager for small boats, and developed and implemented several intermediate engine repair contracts. Schwender went on to develop and manage the Paxman engine repair program for the entire Coast Guard.

As an officer in the U.S. Naval Reserve, Schwender has served aboard the guided missile destroyer USS Arleigh Burke (DDG 51), the patrol hydrofoil USS Aquila (PHM 4), the patrol hydrofoil USS Gemini, the vehicle cargo ship USNS Bellatrix (T-AKR 288), and the vehicle cargo ship USNS Pollux ((T-AKR 290).

A licensed third assistant engineer in the U.S. Merchant Marine, Schwender has served aboard the SS Argonaut (Farrell Lines), SS Humacao (Puerto Rican Marine Management, Inc.), MV American Eagle (Pacific Gulf Marine), MV Alex Bonnyman Jr.(Mærsk Line), and SS Energy Independence (Keystone/New England Power).

Schwender is a 1989 graduate of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, Kings Point, N.Y. He received a Bachelor's Degree in marine engineering, and a U.S. Coast Guard Third Assistant Engineer's License for steam and motor vessels of any horsepower. He is a member of the American Boat and Yacht Council and holds an Accreditation in ABYC standards. He holds acquisition certifications at Level II in project management and Level I in testing and evaluation and has a Masters Certificate in project management with the George Washington University, Washington, D.C.

Reflecting on a distinguished career with Coast Guard patrol boats and the FRC, Schwender recalls moments when his efforts, along with those of everyone on the FRC team, have really paid off.

"When you first see the boat in the shop, it's one thing," Schwender said. "But the first time I stepped on board, and I heard the engine running, I got the sense that it was the heart beat of the vessel. To turn it over to the hands of the operators and hear their feedback tells us that we're doing a pretty good job on getting the requirements right."

Natives of Lynbrook, N.Y., Schwender and his wife Kimberly were married in 1999 and currently live in Springfield, Va., with their daughters Stephanie and Valerie.

Eshelman Selected as Coast Guard Winner of 2012 DHS ThinkEfficiency Campaign

Bobbi Eshelman, of the Coast Guard's Shore Infrastructure Logistics Center (SILC), has been selected as one of the winners of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) 2012 ThinkEfficiency Campaign.

Of nearly 1,000 entries, Eshelman's is the only Coast Guard winner, and the Service's only finalist. Eshelman's idea is part of the basis for the DHS-wide initiative, "Training Facilities and Equipment," which also includes ideas submitted by Michelle Velasquez from U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and Gregory Gaut and Kevin Kerns from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. Their proposal is to identify opportunities to share training facilities and commonly used training equipment across DHS.

"Ms. Eshelman's ideas showed sound business judgment and will contribute tremendously to the efficiency and effectiveness of DHS training," said Claire Grady, Head of Contracting Activity for the Coast Guard (CG-91). "We are very fortunate to have someone like her working as part of our procurement community. I could not be more impressed or more proud of what she accomplished and the contributions her ideas will make to the success of DHS."

New Assignments for CG-9 Flag Officers and O-6s

The Coast Guard recently announced upcoming assignments for flag officers, senior executive service and O-6 officers. The announcement included news for current and future Acquisition Directorate leaders.

- Rear Adm. Jake Korn (CG-9) will be the next commander of the Coast Guard's Seventh District
- Rear Adm. Bruce Baffer (CG-93) will be the next assistant commandant for acquisition (CG-9)
- Rear Adm. (select) Joseph Vojvodich (Sector Long Island commanding officer) will be the next program executive officer (CG-93)

The CG-9 O-6 officers departing their acquisition posts include:

- Capt. James Martin (CG-931), who will be the commanding officer of the Aviation Logistics Center, Elizabeth City, N.C.
- Capt. Austin Gould (CG-926), who will be the commanding officer for Sector Miami
- Capt. Rich Lorenzen (CG-9EA), who will be the commanding officer of Air Station Clearwater, Fla.
- Capt. Patti McFetridge, who will be the commanding officer of Air Station Borinquen, Puerto Rico.

Congratulations to the members of CG-9 on their upcoming posts! Stay tuned for future Inside Acquisition articles on departing and incoming CG-9 leaders.

CG-9 PANCAKE BREAKFAST PHOTOS

Katie Powers (CG-9125), Capt. Patti McFetridge (CG-9331) and Gene Lockhart (CG-9331) procure breakfast from the CG-9 and CG-93 front offices as part of the CG-9 Pancake Breakfast fundraiser. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Luke Clayton (CG-925).

CG-9's dedicated Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) volunteers—Jaurin Joseph (CG-926), Lt. Cmdr. Warren Judge (CG-9335), Robin Dorsey (CG-9126), Pesebra Cartright (CG-931), Freda Buchanan (CG-913) and Cory Tatum (CG-9132)—pose with some of the prizes won from the "Game of Chance" portion of the CG-9 Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser. The "Game of Chance" raised $629 for the CFC charitable organizations. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Luke Clayton (CG-925).

Giao Phan (CG-93D) and Rear Adm. Bruce Baffer (CG-93) ensure that pancake specifications are met. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Luke Clayton (CG-925).

Capt. Rich Lorenzen (CG-9) and Cmdr. Tom MacDonald (CG-93), the CG-9 and CG-93 executive assistants, serve up pancakes for hungry Acquisition Directorate staff. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Luke Clayton (CG-925).

CG-9 staff members rush the mess hall for pancakes served by CG-9 and CG-93 senior leadership. In total, the event raised $1,329 for the CFC charitable organizations.

Customer satisfaction and happy faces, along with raising money for the CFC, were among the highest priorities for the CG-9 and CG-93 flag officers and Senior Executive Service staff during the CG-9 Pancake Breakfast fundraiser.

Acquisition Directorate

"The Coast Guard Acquisition Directorate empowers a workforce motivated by leadership, integrity, and teamwork to deliver the assets and systems that increase operational readiness, enhance mission performance, and create a safer working environment."

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