



**Cocktails with
the Admiral:**



*Drinks,
Espionage
And the
Secret History of
The American Century*



**Cocktails With the Admiral
Part Three:
Agency Business**

A Matter of Trust



(Tinker Belle holds down the business side of the Willow bar).

Willow was having one of those golden afternoons where the doors to the patio were propped open and the dust motes glowed in the rays of the lowering sun.

Jasper was running around as always- I don't know when he *doesn't* work- and Tinker Belle was handling the mixology behind the bar, awaiting Brett's arrival at cocktail hour to handle his second job of the day. He is actually a computer programmer, or a movie star or something most of the day.

Mac had motored over to the bar in the Jag, claiming to feel a little tired, but he was ready to speak, and I let him. Old Jim was listening to his MP3 player at the apex of the Amen Corner.

“So, it is the mid-1970s. You are moving around in the various staff elements of the IC Staff as a special assistant.

“I was. There were other personnel who were coming and going, as there was considerable turbulence in the staff, both personnel-wise and organizational. It was natural, since the Pike and Church commissions had made so many demands on the IC. As the DCI's agents for compliance, we tried to feel our way and better establish ourselves in the Community. We were still housed in the CIA building at Langley. Later we moved down to the old Selective Service building near the White House, since everyone thought that because we worked on the sixth floor of the Original Headquarters we were a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Agency.”

“The Agency still thought so, too, and that was twenty years later.”

Mac smiled over the rim of his glass. “We were still treated with suspicion by most elements of the IC. The work that we were doing, except in the program and budget areas, continued to be highly suspect by all concerned. Danny Graham took a crack at being the director of the staff, I think temporarily, before he became Director of DIA. He had served with us on the staff from the Schlesinger days, and he moved up to be interim director before Sam Wilson came. But I think it's safe to say that, after Bill Colby got himself well settled in as DCI -- he having been an old hand in intelligence, and he clearly knew where he was going- when Sam Wilson came in as Director of the IC Staff, I think Sam more than anyone else put order into the work of the IC Staff. It wasn't something that he could do too quickly, and it evolved over time. But he was there long enough to do it,

to actually accomplish it.”

"There is an ebb and flow to staff organizations. Look at the Director of National Staff. It is getting huge since it was implemented. But you were done with Program and Budget and were a trouble-shooter for Director Colby?"



(DCI William Colby testifies to Congress).

Mac nodded. “The DCI performed functionally and legally as the *Pater Familia* of intelligence. In a sense, we were clearly a projection of the DCI because he had legal responsibility reinforced by subsequent congressional actions to oversee and coordinate the whole shooting match- responsibility without the complete authority to tell people what to do. But many departments and agencies in the community outside of CIA continued to treat us with circumspection, if not outright contempt. They never took us fully into their confidence on things that they didn't think we needed to share. We were effective in coordinating and consolidating the program and budget.”

He took a sip of beer and smiled in pleasure. “In other activities,” he continued, “We didn't fare as well. In order to gain respect, and I think that's the best way to word it, the IC Staff, as it grew, tried to do things that they conceived as perhaps not being done well or as completely by the individual elements of the community and that could maybe be done better and more effectively centrally. That's one reason that we got into post-mortems, for example.”

"What was a 'post-mortem?' " I asked. Something like the USS *Pueblo* Damage Assessment you worked on at DIA?"

"Yes, but more comprehensive. The thinking was that the IC Staff should look over the involvement of several agencies in a given action from a strategic perspective, assess if it could have been done more effectively and make recommendations on changing things."

"I imagine that would be quite a threat to the agencies, if they thought they were being second-guessed after the fact."

"You bet. I think the post-mortem effort fell on its face because the other agencies, if they had performed poorly, didn't want to share it with the IC Staff or other elements of the Community who would try to grab their resources or mission. We did try, though. I participated in the *Mayaguez* post-mortem."

"That was the official last combat mission of the war in Southeast Asia, and we left Marines behind."

"Yes, and not a pretty tale. But I knew we were not getting the full story from all of the agencies and I *knew* we were not going to be able to write reports that would be complete and accurate. But as usual here in Washington, nothing is either of those things. I was happy in 1975. At that time, certain legal actions of the Attorney General put a job on the DCI's that required full-time attention and the continuity of at least one person in order to make sure things went smoothly. All I can say was that it was in the electronic surveillance area "

"You are being cagey, Admiral. Is that what we are *not* going to talk about?"

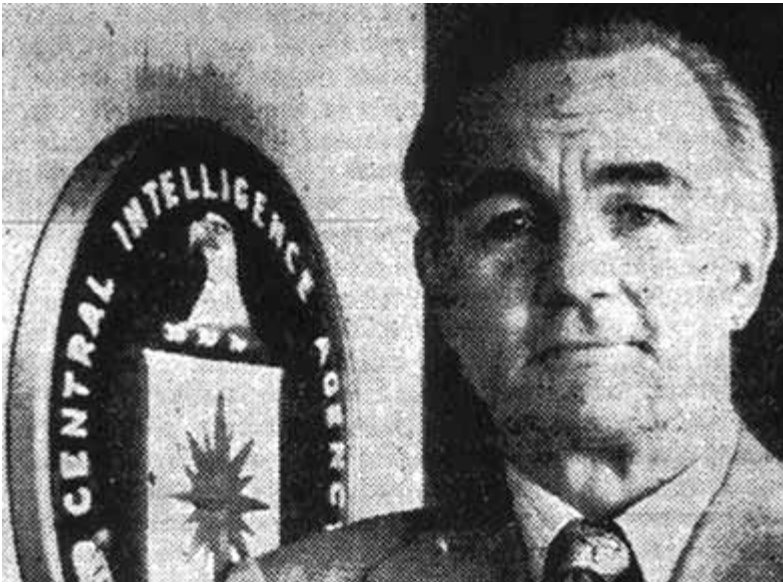
"The very one," he said, taking a sip of his beer. "I worked that program until I retired for the second time. Those duties took up about half of my time. In the rest of it, I worked things transition issues between the Ford and Carter Administrations."

"Now you getting into territory I actually remember," said with a laugh.



(JFK and Ted Sorensen at the White House. Photo AP).

"Whippersnapper," he said with a laugh. "I helped brief Ted Sorensen prior to his confirmation hearings, and frankly it was no surprise to me he didn't get confirmed. I thought in briefing him that he had relatively low regard or low appreciation for security. If you look it up when you get home, I think you'll find he was charged with some security laxity over time that didn't speak well for himself and for his earlier service to President Kennedy."



"Admiral Stansfield Turner became second choice, and he was brought in as a nominee. Admiral Turner spent, I think, approximately a month getting ready for his confirmation hearings. He was given an office in the Old Executive Office Building with a small group of people, most of whom he brought in with him from duty stations in the Navy. Some of the people had been with him since he was at the Naval War College at Newport and also had been with him over in Naples. They were neither intelligence officers nor intelligence experts, but the point was that Admiral Turner clearly relied on them ahead of the advice he got from other people."

I smiled, since it was a familiar story. "I knew one of them- I forget his name- but he was on the Senate Intelligence Committee and he told me once it was eerie working there. He said the Turner people were treated as almost being invisible."

"I think that is an accurate assessment. Of course, we were downtown and out of the Headquarters by then, and out of sight, out of mind."

"So you had an Intelligence Community that did not trust the IC Staff and a DCI who trusted no one."

"That is about the size of it. Our time with Admiral Turner was not a placid one."

"But you kept working right up through the election of Ronald Reagan as President?"

"I did. I was a special assistant to Bill Casey. That was an interesting man."

"I bet. And then you retired again in 1984?"

"Yes. We discovered that Billie was ill with something really sinister. Alzheimer's, the early onset kind. It was time for me to stay home and become a caregiver."

I gave a little shiver, since Dad had just succumbed to that cursed disease the past January. Watching his steady decline from dashing Naval Aviator and yachtsman to wasted shell was a wrench for five long years. "I know how awful the process is. You helped me a lot in knowing how to deal with it."

"We managed to keep Billie at home for almost ten years. And that is what got me involved with volunteering with the support groups. But that is another story."

I nodded in agreement. I reached for my wallet after underlining the phrase "fucking dementia" on the cocktail napkin in front of me. In many regards, Mac's third career might have been the hardest of them.

Semper Fi



(Tim, Mac and John, Early this Year)

*“If the Army and the Navy
Ever look on Heaven’s Scenes
They will find the streets well-guarded by
The United States Marines.”*

The word was passed later last week. Lt. Col. John J. Guenther, USMC (Ret), 79, passed away peacefully at his residence at The Jefferson in Arlington, Virginia, on 29 October 2009. A mutual friend, a colleague and neighbor, reported that John had been in declining health for the past few months. He had just observed his 79th birthday.

There is going to be a Mass was held in his memory at St. Agnes Catholic Church, in Arlington, VA, on Wednesday, November 4. A funeral Mass at the Ft. Myer Chapel and funeral with full military honors will be conducted at Arlington National Cemetery on Thursday, January 14, 2010, followed by a reception at the O’ Club. The death notice for John appeared in the Washington Post this morning. I scanned it but there was not much in it, except the personal information about his family.

John’s family was a lot larger than just those of his blood. In fact, it is more than a Corps.

Mike Decker, who relieved John at USMC HQ, commented on a long and distinguished career this way: “John Guenther enlisted in the Marine Corps in January 1948. In September 1950, Corporal Guenther landed at Inchon with the Seventh Marines. In November and December, Sergeant Guenther was in the S2 during the Chosin Reservoir battle.”



(This photo is from the first week of November 1950 during the battle with Chinese forces at Sudong-ni. Sergeant John Guenther is on the left.)

“He served other challenging/tough tours in Cuba, Vietnam, and East Germany. He was a great Marine who embodied the full measure and meaning of Semper Fidelis. John served more than thirty years in the Marine Corps and, upon retirement, continued to serve in a civilian capacity, rising to the civilian equivalent of BGen and serving as the Assistant Director of Marine Corps Intelligence.”

That is where I first met John, in the mid-1980s, in the old thread-bare Navy Annex on the bluff above the Pentagon. He was a legend even then. Based on his contributions to the Marine Corps across six decades, which included active duty and service as the senior USMC civilian, he is widely credited as the Father of modern Marine Intelligence.

On hearing the sad news, JoeMaz commented: “John Guenther was a friend and mentor to many of us. Most importantly to me, though, he was a living connection for my WWII Marine Corp Dad who fought at Guadalcanal, Cape Gloucester, and Peleliu who I lost in 1996. There are all too few of our WWII heroes left. Semper Fi.”

I had a chance to work with John early this year on an article he did on Strategic Surprise during the North Korean and Chinese invasions of the South. He described his reaction at seeing his first dead North Koreans hanging from an old Soviet tank, and just how cold it was walking out of Frozen Chosin.

The article was part of something larger John wanted to complete before his tour was over. Mac says that recently completed and submitted to Marine Corps Headquarters a thorough history of Marine Corps intelligence, a project that he has worked on for the past several

years.

All of us have lost a very good friend, Marine or not. He will be deeply missed.

Semper Fideles, John.

Always Faithful.

Mac's Porcupine Balls



A groundswell of interest rose over Mac's revelation at Willow that he is a past master of the pressure cooker, the most dangerous single device in the Socotra Test Kitchen. Check that. The pressure cooker is the only device that actually could produce high-velocity shrapnel during the cooking process.

I should interject here that our friendship began over common interest, and the totally logical decisions Mac did. His wife Billie was a fairly high-powered real estate agent in the northern Virginia go-go property market. She had the duty at the office one weekend, and realized that she could not operate the PBX system that she once operated with ease.

She also realized she was getting lost in places that she knew well. It was the beginning of something that was impossible to imagine: the theft of her memories and eventually her consciousness.

Mac did the right thing, as he always did in his life. He became a care-giver, and a coach for others who were entering the bizarre world of the "36 Hour Day" that families

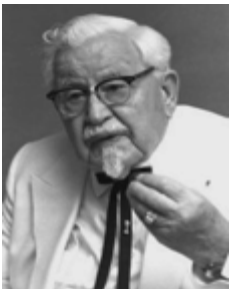
experience with the early onset of dementia.

Mac was able to keep her at the pleasant split-level home in North Arlington for a decade before it became too much, and Billie needed the care of a dedicated nursing staff. Along the way, Mac gave himself to mentoring support groups for both the Alzheimer's community and Prostate Cancer support groups that were sponsored by the Virginia Medical Center on George Mason Drive here in town.

There were also children and grandchildren to be fed, and so Mac dedicated himself to learning how to cook. We were at Willow one afternoon- I was in a foodie phase of my life, and I was interested. I was putting together a compendium of recipes from Spooks who had representational obligations at home and overseas, the can't miss ones that work even on short notice. I asked him about his favorite recipes. He took a sip of his ginger ale and thought for a moment.

“I liked the pressure cooker. It saved a lot of time. The deep-fat fryer is fine, and also provides a rich threat environment for the sensory altered experimental chef, and that is not at all a reach to the most deadly industrial cooking device, the pressure fryer. That device is normally found in fast-food restaurants that specialize in chicken, and the beauty of it is that it combines the inherent danger of really hot oil with the possibility of catastrophic explosion.”

The is, by the by, precisely how an itinerant gas station owner from Corbin, KY, got his start as a global icon. Harland Sander's pumped gas and sold fried chicken, which he served in his house next to the gas station. That might have been that, save for the expansion of the Eisenhower Interstate System in the 1950s. I-75, the fabled pavement that generally follows the path of the old Dixie Highway from the Soo Locks to Alligator Alley in Florida, by-passed once bustling Corbin, and at the age when most of us are dreaming of social security, Harlan found his gas station out of business.



(KFC Icon Colonel Harland Sanders in his trademark white suit. It is rumored that

the original was fashioned with armor plate due to the risk of exploding pullets.)

The Colonel took the proceeds from his first check from the SSA and started driving around middle America with a secret mixture of a few dozen spices, and a potentially deadly pressure fryer. The strangely compelling chicken he produced changed the history of Japan, among other nations, and led directly to *Loving That Chicken From Popeye's* and the outbreak of obesity in neighborhoods adjacent to the franchises.

I would like to experiment with an industrial plant, but have not got around to equipping the Test Kitchen with a rig. But I digress.

Mac said he would bring his old index card with his favorite recipe to our next meeting. "I can't cook at The Madison anyway. You can have it."

Next time we met I looked at the card, titled "Porcupine Balls."

"That is sort of unsettling," I said.

"It is a tasty mealtime treat that is fast and easy," Mac said, and proceeded to walk me through it.

"I don't have a pressure cooker," I said. "Too scary."

"Not a problem," replied Mac. "You can do this one without resorting to National Technical Means. Let me explain it."

He was a little foggy on exactly how long he cooked his meatballs in the pressure cooker, and I expect it is a trial-and-error thing, waiting either for the explosion or the perfect duration of the food under pressure. You can't just open the lid during the process to see how you are doing, after all, or rather, you can but will probably only do it once.

For a guy who won a couple global struggles, I accept that. But here is a higher and safer road for Mac's Balls:

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup *uncooked long grain rice*
- 1/2 cup *water*

- 1/3 cup *chopped onion*
- 1 teaspoon *salt*
- 1/2 teaspoon *celery salt*
- 1/8 teaspoon *pepper*
- 1/8 teaspoon *garlic powder*
- 1 pound *ground beef*
- 2 tablespoons *canola oil*
- 1 can (15 ounces) *tomato sauce*
- 1 cup *water*
- 2 tablespoons *brown sugar*
- 2 teaspoons *Worcestershire sauce*
-

Directions

In a bowl, combine the first seven ingredients. Add beef and mix well. shape into 1-1/2-in. balls. In a large skillet, brown meatballs in oil; drain. Combine tomato sauce, water, brown sugar and Worcestershire sauce; pour over meatballs. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 1 hour. **Yield:** 4-6 servings.

This is a guaranteed non-explosive dish. *Really.*

Posthumous



(Then-LT Joe Rochefort. A Great American, like Mac).

I have to tell you, Mac's bottle of chardonnay was not a modest vintage. It had woody notes, and was inviting in aroma and crisp in presentation. So was President Reagan when he gave the Distinguished Service Medal to Joe Rochefort.

The years fell away as I looked over at the binder on the coffee table in front of Mac. The first picture had the iconic movie-actor whose greatest role was that of President. He looked

fabulous, just as I remembered him from before the time his mind was stolen like Mac's beloved Billie, and the once-entrancing gaze became glassy and the jowls drooped regardless of what Mac tried to do.

"When was this, Admiral?" I asked.

Mac looked down at the binder. "May 30th, 1986," he said. "I had been working on it for three years, the first while I was still working for the DCI. Jasper Holmes tried, in the mid-1950s, when he was back to teaching at the University of Hawaii. He got shot down, along with Fleet Admiral Nimitz. The Redman brothers and that pompous Wenger character were still around at NSA and in Naval Communications. They awarded *themselves* the DSM and could not bring themselves to admit that they assassinated the character of a better officer than them."

"Joe Rochefort's leadership at Station Hypo was one of the key aspects of the victory at Midway. And the way he was treated was shameful and embarrassing," I said.

"True. But when President Reagan gave the DSM to Joe's family, there was justice. Of course, only a handful of people who were there knew it, but of course nothing is easy. It gets stranger. Joe's son and daughter were not talking. They had to have two medals and two citations."

"Families are funny," I said, thinking of my own. I looked curiously at the picture of the two Rochefort kids with the President of the United States, no animosity apparent.

"The son was an Army Colonel," said Mac. "Joe Junior. I guess he didn't want to get into a whole career fighting his Dad's battles. Joe Senior died in 1976, but he remembered the insult to his last days. His daughter- Janet Elerding- she was there, too ,with her whole family."

"I knew you took on the fight to get the medal awarded even though the statute of limitations for the award had passed."

Mac nodded as he flipped through the Kodachrome 8-by-10s. "I got through to Jasper Holmes, who was still alive then. He was in a nursing home in Honolulu, and it took a while to get him to understand what we had pulled off. But when he realized what I was talking about, he said it was Justice, finally. There was quite a tale about how it all came to

pass.”



(Distinguished Service Medal. It is second on the precedence list of Navy awards, following only the Navy Cross.)

“So the medal was denied twice? I didn’t realize that.”

“Yep. Fleet Admiral Nimitz recommended it to Ernie King, but on the advice of the Redman’s, his chief of staff denied it. Then it was turned down again after the war when Jasper tried to push it through. Bu the time I started, the three son-of-a-guns who torpedoed his cryptologic career were all in their graves.”

“SECNAV was John Lehman then?” I tried to remember. Mac nodded affirmatively.

“Yes. The package got lost on the OpNav staff, and it took a while to get it in front of him. But he was a believer.”

“Confusion in OpNav?” I snorted. “Go figure. But the second Reagan administration was a good one for the Navy. Remember the five hundred ships and Strategic Home Porting?”

“Yes I do,” said Mac. “I don’t think it was just Star Wars that sunk the Soviet Union. The whole thing is very much a Cold War story, but the Iranians are in there, too.”

“What do you mean, Admiral?”

“Well, I was working for Bill Casey before I retired from the Community Management Staff in 1981. I mentioned to him that we should try for an IC award since the DSM had been turned down twice. Casey told me that it was a Navy victory and it ought to be a Navy

medal, and we decided to go for it. The Iran Contra affairs had given the IC another black eye...”

“Like when *don't* we have a black eye? If we have a success we can't talk about it, and if we have a failure of any kind- operational or intelligence- it is always an Intel fuck-up.”

Mac laughed. “That has always been true, and even triumph only got Joe Rochefort transfer to command a floating dry-dock after making the primary contribution to the biggest naval battle since Trafalgar.”

“So this was all sort of a perfect storm that got Joe his medal?”

“It was. The package we put together never got to John Lehman. It had not been rejected as we thought. He didn't know about it until Eddie Layton's book was coming out and there was a lot of publicity about the communications intelligence we could finally talk about. George H.W. Bush had been DCI, and he was sensitive to the morale in the Intel Community. The President was committed to supporting the Contras in Nicaragua, and this looked like a good opportunity to highlight a great success.”

“Plus the Redman Brothers were dead,” I said.

“Yes, they were. But of course almost all the players in the actual event, 44 years before, were gone. Tommy Dyer. Jasper Holmes. Eddie Layton. Joe himself, of course.”

“Sometimes it is best to be the last man standing,” I said. “That would be you, Sir. Who else was at the ceremony besides you and the family?”

Mac smiled. “Not a bad turn-out,” he said, flipping to a typescript page with official stamps affixed top and bottom. “Let's see: The President spoke briefly and handed out the medals. The citation said that Rochefort's information 'served as the singular basis for Admiral Nimitz to plan his defenses, deploy his limited forces, and devise strategy to ensure U.S. Navy success in engaging the Japanese forces at Midway.”

“Awesome,” I said, taking a sip of the chardonnay and feeling the oaky richness slip over my palate and the fabric of the present give way to something else, Mac's spirit so immediate and powerful.

“Vice President George H.W. Bush was there, SECDEF Weinberger, DCI Casey and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Bill Crowe. Bill Studeman was there, too, though I can’t recall if he was Director of Naval Intelligence or NSA at that point.”

“I need you to know this,” he said calmly. He pointed to the typed memo with the stamps on it. “This is one of two things I value the most, though my family probably won’t care. It came from a friend of mine in St. Louis, right out of Joe Rochefort’s personnel file. It is the justification for the DSM. He flipped the glassine envelope over, revealing another handwritten letter. ”This is the one that I prize the most. It is the one that Admiral Nimitz wrote in 1958 when Jasper tried again to get the medal for Joe.

“Whoa,” I said. “That is a historic piece of paper. Good thing it didn’t go up in that big fire at the warehouse. How did you get it?”

Mac smiled and looked off in the distance. “My pal in St. Louis said I could keep these until I was done with them.” He closed the binder. “I am not done with them.”

I toasted him with my glass of chardonnay. “I suppose you should get around to deciding where these papers should go, Sir, But not yet. Not yet.”

Mac gave me one of those Sphinx-like smiles. “No,” he said. “Not just yet.”



(Mac and his bride Billie, 1948. Photo Showers.)

THE PROFESSIONALS



That night, Mac was eager to get home by eight, when the President was scheduled to address the nation from the Oval Office. It was about one of the wars ending, from what I could gather, though it seemed a little premature with nearly 50,000 troops still in country.

We were at Willow with an unexpectedly large turn-out by the civilian sector. The crowd of Regulars was thin, or late in arriving is a better way to put it. Jim and Pete were holding things down, and a Marine with the right haircut and tats extending down from the sleeve of his polo shirt was holding down our usual place at the 'L' of the Willow bar.

This gathering was a little impromptu, and called with some urgency, since deadlines were looming. I need to get the *25th Anniversary* issue of the *Quarterly* on the street, and thought I would weave Mac's recollections of World War Two into a sort of tribute to both him and the organization.

I'll be completely honest with you: I have been taking notes with Mac for a long time, and it is a body of work that already exists. I would prefer to put that together rather than scour the archives for gems from the last hundred-odd issues of the newsletter. I'm lazy, I guess. But the more I thought about it, the more I liked the concept.

There are a couple of unique truths that need to be remembered.

One is about the scandalous conduct of some Americans who went to their graves with their reputations intact and did so on the backs of others who did not. And there are errors in fact about who should be credited with key elements of the victory that was so

significant that it took sixty years to piss away the results of the sacrifice by so many.

And it is The Professionals who made it possible to tell the story before it all slips away.

See, without the Organization, I never would have known Mac, and the story of how it was founded had never bubbled to the surface.

That is why Pete drove all the way up from Warrenton to get his two bits in, and I am glad he did. He was sitting out on the patio in front of Willow when I strolled over from the office. We walked in and secured the corner nook where we could stretch out and get comfortable.

I waved hello to Peter the bartender as we walked in and signaled for refreshments.

“Peter!” I called out. “I’ll have a glass of your cheapest white!”

He looked back at me with a sly grin and nodded. Next to me, Pete considered his options. He is a beer man, like Jake, the Chairman of the Professionals, but I have given in to Willow’s polished allure and its wine list.

Truth be told, the pinot grigio they serve at happy hour prices is pretty damned tasty, and a great bargain. If I started guzzling the high-test, these little sessions can start to run into serious money.

I had my pad out and a decent pen with which to scribble random factoids.

Pete’s beer arrived, and Peter gave me a generous pour of the crisp white in a tulip glass. I did not know quite where to start with Pete’s story, since I know him only professionally, so I imagined myself being a real journalist and decided to start at the beginning.

“So how did this all come together?” I asked. “The formal founding we are honoring this year was in 1985, and I joined in 1986. Not that I paid a lot of attention to it. Drew Simpson, my boss at the Bureau, sort of threatened all of us working in Naval Military Personnel Command (MPC) Code 4411 if we didn’t sign up.”

Pete leaned forward, a little distracted by the direct lurch into the interview. “Well, here is how it began. I retired out of DIA, the Soviet Navy Branch at Arlington Hall in 1977.”

“Arlington Hall!” I exclaimed. “That is right across the street from Big Pink where I live. That would have been a fabulous commute!”

“Yeah,” he said, probably thinking of the 50 miles of concrete lunacy that separates Warrenton from the capital. “I went to work at BDM, for RADM “Shap” Shapiro. But once I was out of the Navy, I felt like I was losing track of some great shipmates. I happened to run into Bill Armbruster at the Fall Dining In. He was the detailer at the time, and naturally had access to all the retired addresses in the data base.”

“I don’t think they could give that information out now,” I said. “All that privacy stuff.”

Pete nodded gravely. “He gave me around 1,400 addresses, and I wrote a letter and had it printed, asking if anyone had interest in establishing a professional group to stay in contact. I paid for the postage and addressed them all myself.”

“What was the response like?” I asked.

Pete smiled. “I got nearly 400 responses, which is pretty astonishing for a mail solicitation. We went from there.”

“So who were the founding members?” I asked, trying to sip wine and keep writing legibly.

“Well, let’s see. There was Tony Sesow, who later went to the Naval Intelligence Foundation side of the house.

“He still runs the annual golf tournament out in Shenandoah,” I said. “I have never met him.”

Pete nodded. “Yep. Tony and me, and Art Newell, of course, who never came to meetings, since he was up in Newport running his clock repair business. Art was older than us, with World War Two service. Bill Bailey had got out and was an attorney, so he was a natural pick to be on the board of the new professional organization. And Mac, naturally. He was an Admiral and we wanted to have a Flag officer on the board.”

“I looked at the mast head on the first newsletter,” I said, referring to my notes. “Wasn’t Four-star Admiral Bobby Ray Inman on the board, too?”

I looked up and saw that Mac had arrived, clad nattily in his summer suit with a neatly knotted plaid tie on his blue shirt. Even with the scorching heat outside, he looked cool and relaxed.

We scooted around and got comfortable. “I heard you talking about Bobby Ray Inman, the first intelligence officer to make four-stars,” said Mac.

“Yeah,” I responded. “What was he then? Director of Naval Intelligence?”

“No, BRI was up at CIA by then, as the Deputy Director. Bill Studeman was the DNI. They were never at Langley together,” said Mac. “Of course, Bill got four stars up there as well.”

“We wanted a four-star on the board,” said Pete. “He agreed to do it, but he never came to the meetings. He was the one that did me in, career wise, when I was the Assistant Chief of Staff at Third Fleet. He was the PACFLT N2 at the time, and we were taking the staff ashore and relocating to Hawaii from San Diego.”

I extended my hand to Pete. “Happens to everyone, sooner or later, except for Bobby Ray and Bill. Put her there, Shipmate. I had that job, too.”

“Inman says his calendar is normally full a year in advance,” said Mac. “We normally had the meetings at my house in Arlington, and Art would call in from Newport.”

I noticed that the Second Greatest Fighter Air Intelligence (AI) I of all time had arrived, and was leaning on the bar waiting for Jim to produce a beer. He still wears his fighter crew-cut, grown out a bit, and he looked stylish in a well-cut business suit. He is leaving major command to join the private sector, and I was hoping that he might join our little band of gypsies down the street. I waved at him to come over, and he almost collided with the Good Doctor, who was running late as usual.

The two men shoe-horned their way into the conversation nook where we had relocated for this potentially important meeting. , and Mac grimaced at his Virgin Mary. “I can’t have olives this afternoon. Dental work today left me a little sensitive. But there is no horseradish in this thing. Anyone care for food?”

The Second Greatest Fighter AI of All Time demurred. He had a dinner with the Israeli Naval Attaché he had to get to, and shook hands all around. Mac glanced at the Neighborhood Bar Menu, which is still a great deal and Peter got the signal and came over, bringing a fresh bottle of pinot.

“Where is Sara-With-No-H?” asked Mac. The petite but fiery Lebanese waitress is a particular favorite of his, and I have to agree she is one of the prettiest women I have seen. Her dark eyes, with those exquisite lashes and delicate curved brow are deep enough to fall right into.

Peter frowned. “Sara is not with us any longer,” he said delicately.

There were groans around the table. “How come?” I demanded. “What happened? This is outrageous.”

Peter did not want to discuss the matter. “Let’s just say there was an issue with management.”

“Damn,” said Mac. “I suppose we will just have to go talk to her at that other place she works. That is down at Dupont Circle, right?”

“Yep. A place called Cobalt. She works the second floor service bar. We hung out the other night. She really resented being told that ‘too cute is too hard.’ She blew up, and demanded an apology. In the end she said she needed some time to cool off, and management told her to take just as much time as she wanted.”

“Don’t blame her, I sad sadly. “We are going to miss her,” I said. “How about an order of the Pork Spring Rolls, some deviled eggs, and the Miniature Fish and Chips?” Peter nodded with approval. The Good Doctor added a half order of the signature Flat Bread with Shrimp, and Mac said: “This thing is going to be over by eight, right?”

I nodded. “I can’t imagine going that long.”

The Good Doctor looked over and said he wanted to listen to the President, too. “He is going to declare an end to the combat mission in Iraq,” he said. “The United States has met its responsibility to Iraq, and it is time to turn the page and get back to the pressing problems at home.”

“Is this like the flight onto the aircraft carrier and the Mission Accomplished thing?”

“No, not quite. I think the President is going to praise the troops who fought and died in Iraq, and still mention that he thought the whole thing had been a mistake in the first place.”

“I understand that the enemy gets a vote in these things, too” I said darkly. “He is going to emphasize that his primary job is addressing the weak economy and other domestic issues, and I think he will make it clear that he intends to begin disengaging from the war in Afghanistan next summer.”

“That is not going to be good for business,” I said. “I think I have seen this movie before.”

Mac cleared his throat, having seen the whole double-feature. “We used to meet at Bolling Air Force Base for years, at the NCO Club. The events of 9/11 ended *that* when they locked down the base.”

“We can wrap the business end of this pretty quick,” I said, looking at my notes. “I just need the quick story of how this professional organization started, and how the Foundation came to be. Was it just a club for the old Flag officers?”

Pete shook his head in disagreement. “No way. Admiral "Shap" Shapiro was always interested, but in the background. He did not assume the Chairmanship of the Foundation until we got the legal opinion that we could not distribute funds through the Professional Association side of the house. That was about two years after we founded NIP.”

“Was that the original name?”

“No,” said Pete. “Originally, we were just going to be an organization of retired officers, instead of a comprehensive professional association of officer, enlisted and civilian intelligence specialists, active and retirees and with 501c3 tax status to do educational outreach.”

“Yep,” agreed Mac. “We batted around some names. ‘Naval Intelligence League’ sounded too much like the other one. ‘Naval Intelligence Retirees’ sounded too geriatric.”

Pete smiled. “We thought about Naval Maritime Intelligence Association, but that would have sounded like an enema.”

“We wound up calling it NIP, even though we were afraid they would call us little NIPers.”

“Which they did,” I said.

“The Foundation came about in a curious way. The Congressman from Virginia Beach got funding for a new schoolhouse at Dam Neck, since the USAF was going to close Lowry Air Force Base where we had our Air Intelligence School.”

“That is the Navy-Marine Corps Intelligence Training Center, right? My younger boy may go there if he gets his commission this winter.”

Mac nodded. “Interesting story, that is. They decided to name the building after Eddie Layton, the Fleet Intelligence officer for Chester Nimitz in the Pacific. Well, that ticked off Rufus Taylor’s wife Karin, and she wasn’t mollified by the fact that they named auditorium after Rufus, who was the first designated intelligence specialist to make three-star rank. She wanted to ensure that her husband was properly honored. She wanted to give NMITC skipper Bob Trafton \$10,000 dollars to endow a fund for awards to the top graduate of the Basic Intelligence Course in Rufus Taylor’s name.”

“Bob went to Bill Studeman to ask if that was appropriate, and the legal opinion was that the active Navy couldn’t take the money direct. We found a corporate lawyer in Richmond and he set up the Foundation for us, and Shap brought an advisory panel of four star officers to give it some kick.”

“And now, 25 years into it, we are consolidating NIP and NIF,” I said.

“Legal opinions change,” Mac laughed. “Just think how you guys will have to adapt the organization to the new structure of Naval Intelligence, as it gets folded into Communications, Meteorology, Cryptology and Public Affairs. The new Information Dominance Corps reflects the way things were before World War Two, when the Office of Naval Intelligence got into it with War Plans, and the Radio Wars started in the Navy.”

“You were there for all that,” I said. “That might be worth a look back for the 25th Anniversary issue.”

“It might,” he said. “I was just a fresh-caught deck officer in 1941, but I can tell you quite a story. In the meantime, I need to get back to the Madison and hear the President explain things from the Oval Office.”

“I’d be interested in an explanation for how this world came to be, Sir,” I said gathering up my notes. “Maybe we can get together at Willow again sometime soon.”

I waved to Peter for the check, and reached for my wallet. That is the only part about Willow, but the staff treats me well, since I like to tip 100%. At least while I can.

Showers, Followed by Showers



(Mac chats with HRH Elizabeth-with-a-Z, 2005, at the dedication of the WW II monument on the National Mall).

“What do you want me to do? Win World War Two again?”

–Shower’s Family Reunion Quote of the Week, 2012.

It had been a marvelous weekend, filled with camaraderie and family, and it was an honor to be part of the gathering of the far-flung Showers clan and assorted admirers and friends as they celebrated the life of our friend, mentor and guide.

The night before had featured the money quote of a Showers Beach Week on North Carolina's Outer Banks- the sort of ultimate come-back to trump the contentions of a younger and sublimely confident generation to the revealed and settled wisdom of another.



The Showers family had secured the Williamsburg Room on the second floor of the luxurious new Arlington clubhouse of the Army-Navy Country Club for the memorial event. The golf season was just starting in earnest, late on a Sunday afternoon, golfers coming off the course and the place coming alive.

The old clubhouse, the one whose central core went back to the founding days of 1924, is fully gone, and the new contour of the ridgeline now resembles what it must have looked like then the Civil War Arlington Line of defenses snaked across the highlands. The outlines of the earthworks of Fort Richardson that now nestle the ninth green on the clubhouse approach are much more dramatic.

The property was part of the Nauk Neighborhood, whose immediate progenitor had been a Freedman's Village established at the end of the war. It is still true that the defining event in the life of the Boomers is World War Two. When we say "the War," or "after the War," as a marking point for some event in the social life of the nation, that is the defining moment.

But not here. The War still will always refer to the years that the Union Army surged across the River and constructed an astonishing ring of forts, protected firing positions, sunken roads, and all of them bristled with guns from the Arlington highlands.



(Mac's sister, in from Iowa and looking spirited at 96 years young.)

Anyway, nice view from the new clubhouse, where the gathering of the Clan was just about complete. Mac's big sister was there, alert and vibrant with the same spirit of life that Mac always had. She was almost a dead ringer for her little brother, and with a walker just like his, and the same bright eyes that have seen nearly a century of life in These United States.



Mac's kids were there, and their kids, and a few of yet another generation crawling about with tiny trucks and jets, and some new arrivals still clinging to their mothers. Truly a multiple generational celebration of Mac's life, and pretty damned impressive.



Son-in-law Tom brought in an extraordinary case of fine wine that had been a favorite of Mac's, whose traditional wine of choice had been Gallo Hearty Burgundy, a vintage I recall vaguely from Mom and Dad's adventures in fine wine, and which I despise to this day. Mac's tastes evolved over time, and if he did not have this precise vintage before, it was from a winery of which he would have thoroughly approved.



(Two of the most beautiful granddaughters *ever* share memories of the man and his times).

So, Saturday at Willow as the critical mass of family increased. An afternoon in the Gardens of Stone to survey the place of eternal rest for our pal, and his reunion with his beloved Billie. Now, this afternoon is the main event.

Showers this morning, the meteorological version, and the weather guessers are saying things will dry up in time to accommodate the scheduling of the final military ceremony for Mac Showers this afternoon.



(Mac and his beloved Billie prepare for the Big Trip).

Scrimshaw



**CAPT Edwin Thomas Layton
Photo thanks to Bill Gonyo.**

(Eddie Layton's Captain picture. He appears this morning because of something special that happened last night. Bear with me- and photo thanks to Bill)

All right- this is one of those mornings. It is better than yesterday- that one started with Don-the-Builder's guys Tom and Jose showing up with the new back door at nine sharp at Refuge Farm, me on a conference call, and spiraled downhill, or uphill, from there.

There were such a dizzying number of things to consider: Burma and Gaza, one OK and the

other not; Maryland and Rutgers joining the Big Ten, bringing the count to 14 teams, which doesn't make any sense, but what the hell. Maybe they will add another six teams and we can have the Big Ten Squared.

I was thinking about Mac as I drove back up north, crunching out of the driveway with two large men ripping the door frame out of the back of the house, and as far as I know, intending to seal it up again before they left. Michigan played Iowa, always a tough game regardless of who was having a decent season, and that was the only time that Mac took a certain pleasure in poking me. He was the complete gentleman, of course, but when his Hawkeyes kicked our butts he was not shy about letting me know.

Anyway, for about the hundredth time I thought I needed to call him up, and the realization that I cannot still leaves me disoriented.

Mac's family was in town to do the estate sale for the unit he had at The Madison, and I got a kind invitation to go to dinner with them at Willow. I wandered over there after work, where things were at high PRF- pulse repetition frequency- for the big contract kick-off and the uncertainty that is swirling around the Government customer who does not have any more of a clue than the rest of us what is going to happen come this January.

I am sure everything is going to be fine, you know? I was working with Boats on further analysis of the oil-and-gas boom that is going to make everything fine, and will be quite useful as the global temperature cools over the next few decades. It will nice to be warm.

But anyway, Willow was welcoming in the growing dusk and the wine and stories flowed as they always do when Mac's family is together.



The selection of wine was fine. Liquor might be quicker, but this was very nice indeed. (Photo Socotra).

The table buzzed with conversation, and laughter as always. Mac's daughter was having the same dis-association issue that I was- thinking I ought to talk to him about something or other, and her habit in that is life-long. Clearing things out from Mac's apartment and the attic at the house surfaced some interesting things. Between the salad and the entrée, she pulled out an ivory-colored box and handed it to me. There was an object of similarly colored material, and a note yellowed with time along with a card.



Reading her note aloud made me blush, and I am not going to inflict it on you. But the square type-written provenance of the object brings us around to Eddie Layton, Mac's boss at PACFLT HQ during the war, and one of those historical figures who actually was in a position to change the world, and did.

Here is what his wife Miriam wrote to Mac and his wife Billie long ago, after Eddie passed on and Mac managed to get the Distinguished Service Medal presented to Joe Rochefort, the man responsible for providing the intelligence that stopped the Japanese cold at Midway:

Dear Mac and Billie –

My pleasure and gratitude to you for making it possible for me to be present at the Rochefort ceremony overflows! It was such a great thing to have accomplished.

For all your wonderful help and support I've looked around for something of Edwin's to send you. I know he would applaud this offering, I want it to represent my gratitude and

affection for all you have done for me.

A bit of background – the first year Jack Kennedy was in the White House the media announced that Jackie was giving her husband a piece of scrimshaw for Christmas. Not to be outdone, I wrote to a jeweler in New Bedford who made scrimshaw about sending cufflinks for Edwin's Christmas, He sent me two pairs on approval. Edwin was so delighted with them that we kept them both.

Several years later when we went to New England, we visited the whaling museum in New Bedford where he bought several rough ugly looking whale's teeth, learned the technique from the Jeweler and a new hobby was launched,

He polished the tooth, drew his picture on thin paper and using a dentist's scribe incised his design on the tooth and rubbed India Ink into the scratch marks. I feel it would please Edwin to know you have one of the four teeth he decorated with scrimshaw. He had great respect and affection for you too. I enjoyed seeing you and Billie so much.

My only regret was that the time was so brief. Thank you so much for your support and helpfulness over the last two years.

With love,

Miriam Layton

June 8, 1986

Mac typed the following note across the bottom of Miriam's letter:

(This letter accompanied the Layton-made scrimshaw received on 11 June 1986.)

I was stunned. And that is how Eddie Layton, the fiery intelligence officer that Mac had described to me so many times. I remembered the story he told about the end of the Pacific War- the Japanese had given up, and the victorious Allies were converging on the Sagamiwan to cement the victory with the signing of the treaty.

Eddie was there, along with the others who had guided the long struggle from Pearl Harbor

to Tokyo Bay- and all the way to Arlington National Cemetery.



(“Terrible” Turner, a hero and mule-headed naval officer.)

We were at Willow, of course, and I don’t need to remember what Mac said, since I still have the notes on my collection of bar napkins. “Eddie was playing acey-ducey in the wardroom of *South Dakota* when Admiral Richmond Kelly Turner strode into the space. “Terrible” Turner was in a state of high excitement. He was another of Admiral Nimitz’ personal guests. He executed all the amphibious landings in the Pacific, from Guadalcanal to Iwo Jima, after all. But he was a son-of-a-bitch to his staff, and liked the bottle. Eddie told me he was pretty fired up that evening. He started to shoot his mouth off and the wardroom hushed at the sound of the drunk four star’s booming voice.”

“What was he saying?” I asked.

“He was going off on Admiral Kimmel, of all things, the guy who was left holding the bag for the disaster that Terrible Turner caused by not passing critical radio intelligence to the commanders in Hawaii. According to Eddie, Turner was saying something to the effect that “Goddamned Kimmel had all the information and he didn’t do anything about it. The court of inquiry said so, and they ought to hang him up higher than a kite!”

“But it was Turner himself who did not allow the critical Bomb Plot messages go to Pearl Harbor!” I exclaimed. “He must have known that. The court of inquiry was a white-wash to scapegoat Kimmel.”

“You bet. Eddie sat there, stunned at what he was hearing. He had been there at the

beginning before the attack, and then here at the end, the architect of the disaster was shouting that Kimmel ought to be hung up by his fingernails.”

“I guess you can’t do anything against four stars,” I said thoughtfully, trying to imagine the scene in the wardroom of a big gray boat.

“Well, Eddie was pretty fired up, too. He corrected Turner in mid-rant. He told the Admiral that he had been there as Kimmel’s intelligence officer, and he had been there in person.”

“So what happened?”

“Eddie said the Admiral charged across the deck and grabbed him by the throat. Eddie was putting his dukes up to pummel the Admiral when the skipper of South Dakota, Emmet Forrestal, got in between them and broke it up.”

I looked at Mac with amazement. The idea of decking a four-star Admiral made me admire Eddie Layton even more.

Looking over at the white tooth on my table, I have a little piece of something very special, created by the same hands that almost duked out a four-star hero. What an amazing day.

Memorial



(Mac Showers visits Honolulu for the 71st Anniversary of the Battle of Midway in 2012).

It was 2012- Halloween was the day before and All Souls Day for the memorial service. It is an appropriate one for Mac, and held at the Faith Lutheran Church just east of my place at Big Pink on Route 50.

I was really disoriented- Admiral Paul stopped by Willow yesterday afternoon at cocktail hour and I wasn't there yet, hung up on some issue at work. Old Jim called me on the cell to summon me from my desk at the office across the street from the bar to chat at The Amen Corner.

The Macaroon Lady flew in from California to attend the service, and the regulars at the Willow bar entertained her. Then Mac's whole clan arrived, some in costume for the occasion, and we had plenty of wine and a fine meal in the dining room to commemorate the occasion. I clomped home later than usual and grateful to have power and now the Internet restored after one of Autumn's storms roared through.

I had to scour the place to find the bits of cloth and metal that will complete a Service Dress

Blue uniform. It could be the last time I wear it, and appropriately, it is the one that my Dad saved from his service in WW II.

I jotted down some words for the ceremony. Here they are. It is not enough and it is not particularly eloquent. But it is certainly how we all feel:

“It is a signal honor to be asked to talk a bit about the military career of our pal Mac. I still cannot quite believe that he is gone. When you knew the Admiral, in time you just came to assume that he was eternal.

It was important for Mac to help people understand things. He certainly helped me.

We starting talking several years ago. I enjoyed his company, and he enjoyed the beer, back when he could still get his doctor to agree to let him drink one or two. We spent hours and hours talking about his life and times.

As you might imagine, he had his stories down pretty well after seven decades, and I enjoyed mixing things up. Sometimes we would start on one thing and wind up somewhere else- like life in Depression-era Iowa, with the banks closed and only a barter economy enabling people to get by.

That he had to bring his recruiting officer to meet his mother Hedwig in order to get her permission for him to enlist.

I think you know the amazing events in which he played a part. The three that everyone knows are the first even fight in the Pacific at the Battle of the Coral Sea. Then the triumph of the code-breaker’s art in the epic Battle off Midway Atoll. Before that encounter, the Americans never won a battle against the Imperial Japanese, and after it, they never lost one.

You all have heard the story about how Station HYPO identified Admiral Yamamoto’s flight itinerary and enabled Air Corps P-38s to intercept and shoot him down in the Solomons in April of 1943. It is still controversial, though it was not to Admiral Nimitz at the time. “Kill the S.O.B.,” he said.

On the way through these famous tales, I found some things that just plain amazed me.

Mac was a Deck Officer- what we would know now as a Surface Warfare officer- though he never served on a ship. Big Navy had no idea what Station HYPO was up to, and periodically they would ask Mac to go to sea. As part of that, legendary submarine skipper “Mush” Morton asked him to go on a war cruise on USS Wahoo as a sort of orientation to the art of submarine warfare.

Mac mentioned that to me one evening as I was settling up my tab at Willow, and I casually asked him what happened.

“Jasper Holmes would not let me go. The guy I was supposed to relieve got off the sub, and they had to go one officer short in the wardroom. Good thing. They never came back.”

Which brings me around to the notion of fate. We agreed that much of his legendary career- at least at the beginning- was dumb luck. Half his class at Investigation School- the top of the alphabet- was ordered to Corregidor. In other words, from graduation to prisoners of war, just like that. Mac went to Pearl, just eight weeks after the attack, and the great ships still sunk in the mud of the harbor.

Dumb luck that the Officer in Charge of the Counter-intelligence office in Honolulu was unimpressed with Mac’s experience, and sent him off to that obscure billet working for Joe Rochefort.

By 1945 he was with Fleet Admiral Nimitz, closing the ring on the Empire of Japan in Operation Starvation, slipping target nominations on the sly to General Curtis “Iron Pants” LeMay. Walking around Yokosuka, Japan, five days after the surrender on a “courier” mission that his boss Eddie Layton arranged so he could see it. That is where that giant Japanese flag that is out at ONI came from, traded for a bottle of Three Feathers Whiskey to a young Marine guarding the last floating Japanese Battleship, IJN Nagato.

Amazing at every turn. After the war, bumping by chance into Admiral Forrest Sherman in the halls of Main Navy the very week of the transfer board that would establish the new structure of Naval Intelligence, and becoming an intelligence officer.

Convincing Marshall Tito’s people that he should have lunch with the Yugoslav leader in The White Palace.

Turning a so-so assignment at the Intelligence School at Anacostia into the first genuine

OPINTEL course to pass along the techniques that won a global war.

Suggesting that his colleague Rufus Taylor to transfer to intelligence at Arlington Hall Station. Ruf became the first intelligence professional to become the DNI, and the first to wear the three stars of a Vice Admiral.

At First Fleet, deciding to provide target materials to Navy pilots assigned to carry atomic weapons to use against the Soviet Union.

Returning to Pacific Fleet Headquarters as the Fleet Intelligence Officer- the same job in which Eddie Layton served in World War 2- to confront the conflict in SE Asia. Then Washington again, and Purple Dragon and the Pueblo Damage Assessment, and that big deal with Howard Hughes we are still not supposed to talk about.

And that is where we wander into things he preferred not to speak about on the record, but for which he was recruited to CIA by the legendary Bronson Tweedy, turning in his letter to retire on December 31, 1971.

I have paper napkins and notebooks with all of it, and since Mac reviewed them all, I feel that the unofficial and un-footnoted story will be true and accurate.

When he was done with government service in 1983, he started a third career. His experience with the cruelest disease- Alzheimer's- helped me through the decline and loss of my Mom and Dad.

I am going to miss him a lot. When I was typing this, I had the weirdest sense that I needed to call him up and ask him a question.

At the end of the day, what Mac Showers did was make a career out of helping people to understand things. What a man he was, and what a legacy. We were all honored to have shared the planet with him, and I am absolutely confident that I will see him again for liberty on the other shore.

So long, Shipmate."

Obituary

Naturally, Mac was always prepared. He decided to draft his death notice and have it ready for the family when it was needed. We did some of the editing near the Amen Corner at the Willow Bar. It was only appropriate:

Donald McCollister Showers was born Aug 25, 1919 in Iowa City, Iowa, the son of Charles N. Showers (1888 - 1973) and Hedwig Marie *Potratz* (1889 - 1980). He preferred to be called "Mac," an abbreviation of his middle name, McCollister, his paternal grandmother's maiden name.

Mac graduated from the State University of Iowa with a B.A. and certificate in journalism. His interest in the Navy led him to enroll in the Navy Reserve's fast track V-7 program and he attend the Northwestern University Naval Reserve Midshipman's School in Chicago.

Mac was commissioned an ensign on Sep 12, 1941. Trained in counterintelligence (CI), he reported for duty at the District Intelligence Office (DIO) in Honolulu, Hawaii. But DIO needed experienced investigators, so in February 1942 he was reassigned to the Combat Intelligence Unit, Station HYPO, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii commanded by [CDR Joseph Rochefort](#) (1900 - 1976).

Although he had no background in intelligence or code breaking, Mac quickly integrated himself to the mission of HYPO, which was to break the Japanese Naval code, JN-25. This was critical to provide [ADM Chester Nimitz](#) (1885-1966) with the intelligence he needed to best situate his forces for coming battles. Because of the intelligence that HYPO provided, Nimitz situated his forces in the best possible position to achieve surprise on the Japanese Navy at the Battle of Midway in June 1942.

When Rochefort left HYPO in the summer of 1942, Mac remained, serving under Rochefort's relief, [CDR William Goggins](#) (1898 - 1985). Mac played an important role in the 1943 shutdown of the airplane carrying Japanese Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto. When Yamamoto's itinerary was intercepted, Mac analyzed it to determine if it was a plausible schedule or not. It was, and his analysis led, in part, to the decision to target Yamamoto.

In 1944, Mac was selected to serve as deputy to [CAPT Edwin Layton](#) (1903 - 1984), Admiral Nimitz's intelligence officer, to establish a fleet combat intelligence center

(Advance Intelligence Center) on Guam. While at Guam AIC, he gave daily intelligence briefs and provided intelligence to the planners of the invasion of Japan.

In Oct 1946, Mac became one of the first naval officers to be designated an intelligence specialist.

On Jun 12, 1948, he married [Sarah Vivian "Billie" Gilliland](#) (1923 - 2002). They had a daughter and two sons.

Mac was selected for rear admiral in 1965, thus becoming the only member of HYPO to attain flag rank. During the Vietnam war, he was Fleet Intelligence Officer to the Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet, an assignment that CAPT Layton had previously held.

His last assignment was as Chief of Staff at the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). While at DIA, Admiral Showers was charged with heading an effort, called PURPLE DRAGON, to find and correct breaches of security which had become known to the North Vietnamese during the Vietnam War. Its findings led to greater combat effectiveness and saved lives in Vietnam, and its lessons were applied by the military to its operations in general.

Admiral Showers retired from the Navy on Dec 31, 1971. During his career, he had been awarded the Navy Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit and the Bronze Star.

Three days after retiring from the Navy, he embarked on a civilian career with the Central Intelligence Agency. In the early 1980s, he served as special assistant to CIA Director [William Casey](#) (1913 - 1987).

After 12 years with the CIA, he retired a second time in order to become a full-time caregiver to his wife, Billie, who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. Billie died in 2002.

After his retirement from CIA, Admiral Showers continued to lead an active life. He was helped to fund raise to find a cure for Alzheimer's. He traveled and spoke to groups, both civilian and military, about his experience at HYPO.

Admiral Showers was central to the effort to honor CAPT Rochefort's efforts at HYPO. Admiral Nimitz had nominated CAPT Rochefort for the Navy Distinguished Service Medal

(DSM), but it had been disapproved by the Chief of Naval Operations, [ADM Ernest King](#) (1878 - 1956). Although CAPT Rochefort had died in 1976, Admiral Showers shared the opinion of other surviving members of HYPO that CAPT Rochefort was deserving of the DSM.

In 1981 Admiral Showers wrote and submitted the paperwork to renominate CAPT Rochefort for the DSM. After some disappointment and an initial lack of success, the Secretary of the Navy eventually approved the award in 1986. Admiral Showers was able to arrange for the DSM to be presented to the Rochefort family by [President Reagan](#). The presentation ceremony took place on May 30, 1986 at the White House with Admiral Showers in attendance.

Although he never wrote a memoir of his own, Admiral Showers assisted others in sharing their memories of their service in the war. He assisted his HYPO shipmate, [CAPT Jasper Holmes](#) (1900 - 1986), in the writing of his 1979 book, *Double-Edged Secrets: U.S. Naval Intelligence Operations in the Pacific During World War II*. He helped Edwin Layton (who also retired a rear admiral) when Admiral Layton wrote his 1985 memoir, *And I Was There: Pearl Harbor and Midway - Breaking the Secrets*. In 2011, he wrote the foreword to Elliott Carlson's biography of CAPT Rochefort, *Joe Rochefort's War: The Odyssey of the Code Breaker who Outwitted Yamamoto at Midway*.

The Navy Marine Corps Intelligence Training Center in Dam Neck, Virginia, presents the "Rear Admiral Donald M. Showers Award" to the Honor Graduate of its Naval Intelligence Officers Basic Course.

In 2008 Admiral Showers was inducted into the National Security Agency's Cryptologic Hall of Honor, an honor previously extended to his shipmates at HYPO, CAPT Rochefort and [CAPT Thomas Dyer](#) (1902 - 1985).

Admiral Showers died Oct 19, 2012 at the Virginia Hospital Center in Arlington, Virginia with his two sons and daughter at his side. He was 93.