Fair Winds and Following Seas to a Man of Honor

Description

Itâ€™s a day late, but BMCM(MDV) Carl M. Brashear, USN (Ret), is worth a few moments.

BMCM(MDV) Brashear

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Update 07/31/2006: Neptunus Lex has posted a report of BMCM(MDV) Brashearâ€™s funeral.

Link to the Navy News article on the funeral.

Update 08/03/2006: Military comâ€™s discussions on the article they have about Master Chiefâ€™s funeral. A few people who commented served with, or met the Master Chief.
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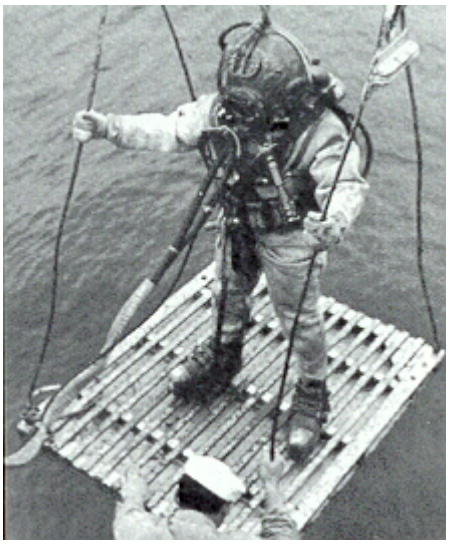
I canâ€™t comment on his life, other than I heard of him when I was commissioned. He was the legend we know of by then. He passed away Tuesday. I Would like to take you a little way into the world Carl Brashear worked in, so you might appreciate, all the more, what a heroic man he was

This is the insignia Boatswainâ€™s Mate Master Chief Brashear wore. It is silver anodized in color, not to be mistaken as the Diving Officerâ€™s insignia that is gold. The MDV insignia is far more prestegious. A master diver has come through all the salvage diving training, and is also a supervisor, not just someone who has been a SCUBA diver, 2nd and 1st Class diver, but also a Saturation diver. Along the way, the Master Diver will have learned an incredible amount of diving medicine to augment the skills gained as a salvor. The Master Diver is the real person in charge of the technical work on a dive. The Diving Officer present, is the one responsible for the work.



Until sometime in the 80â€™s, the Navy used the MK V diving gear to make salvage dives. Carl Brashear, missing one leg, dove in this equipment through out his Naval career. I spent two months in the salavge officer pipeline at the beginning of my time in the Navy, but found out it wasnâ€™t my calling.

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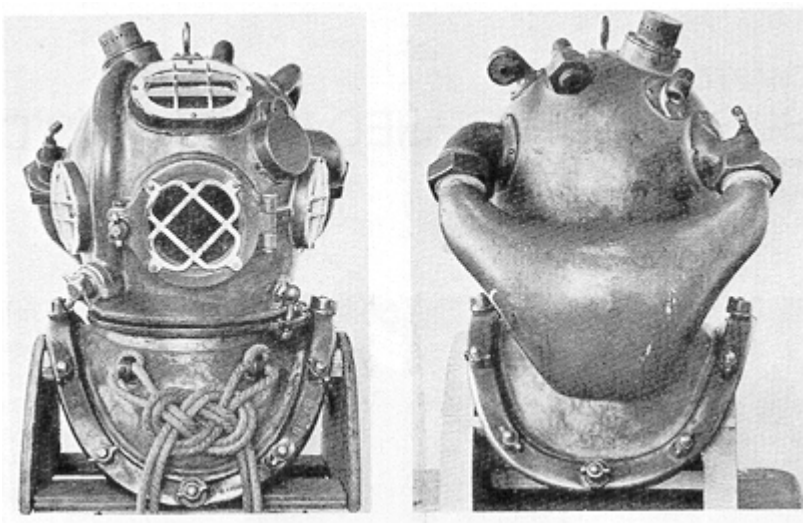
I mde my first indoc dive in one of these in Jan 77 at NAB Little Creek. I followed that one dive (which was a check off item to be able to go to diving school) with three weeks of MK V dives at Anacostia Naval Shipyard, Washington, DC, beginning in February 77. I recall the data like it was yesterday:

Rubberized cotton suit: 18#
Spun copper helmet and breastplate: 54#
Boots: 38#
Weight belt: 98#
Total: 210#

Do the math. Except for the weight of the boots, most all of that is positioned above the knees, where Master Chief has his amputation. So take the 40# off the 210# total and do walk around a rolling, heaving deck, getting to the water, and coming out. It is work, without a handicap of a stump scrapping in a prosthesis.



My diving officer training wouldnâ€™t have included saturation diving, which BMCM Brashear may have also been qualified. I canâ€™t recall it exactly, but it seems the extra equipment, part of which is the cannister of CO2 scrubbing chemicals attached to the back of the helmet that took the total weight of the suited up diver up 300 lbs.

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MK 12

It is a physically demanding duty to be a salvage diver, but these days, they have markedly improved equipment, and are now using the MK 12 rigs, witch can be used for several types of diving.

So thereâ€™s a little history to help you connect with the persistnet spirit that we know as BMCM(MDV) Carl Brashear.

Oh, and if you have one of these laying around you donâ€™t want, send me an emailâ€¦Iâ€™ll gladly pay the shipping!

Thanks to Mudville Gazette for the Open Post!

Category

1. History
2. Military
3. Navy
4. Technology

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