

## **“Old Floating Mines”**

In the mid-70s I was Chief of the MAAG in Taiwan, Republic of China (R.O.C.). Our function was to make the armed forces more efficient.

One day, CDR Randall and I were inspecting the coastal defenses on the western side of Taiwan. The old general in charge of the area was from the “old school” where anything goes if you were to try and land in his area. He showed us lines of fire kits along the beach, chains with explosives under them, etc. etc. Then he wanted to show us floating mines he had in an underground bunker.

CDR Randall didn't like going into this sort of place so I told him to wait by the bunker door and I would accompany the general inside. As we got well inside the bunker the old general kept slapping these WWII mines, which made me a bit nervous. These were the old mines you see in the movies that have the eight-inch spikes and if they touch the side of a ship, they go BANG!

As we proceeded on, I looked back and noticed CDR Randall frantically pointing upwards. Finally looking up, I saw spiders crawling all over the overhead and they were as big as a sandwich plate! Needless to say, I suggested to the general we get the heck out of there and move on to the next area!

## **“You Should Have Told Me”**

In the mid 70's in Taiwan, I heard that the R.O.C. Navy had a ship aground. After about six or seven days I was summoned to the Minister of Defense office and was informed that one of their destroyers had grounded on the southern side of the island. He requested I go there and see if it could be saved.

CDR Randall and I were enroute in a matter of two hours. We were met by R.O.C. Navy personnel and taken to the site. Due to the several days it had been on the beach it was obvious she was hard aground. Nonetheless, we climbed the ladder and went into the hull using flashlights. She was lying on her port side with about a 50-degree list. It was difficult but we managed to make it to one of the forward compartments where we found two huge boulders, and quickly determined she could not be pulled off the beach.

We returned to Taipei and I went to the Minister of Defense office to inform him that it was a salvage operation. I also told him had I known the day she went aground; we could have gotten a U.S. Navy sea going tug and most likely saved her. The Minister agreed and we parted as friends.

Submitted by CAPT Ace Trask, USN RET