

John Dungan Jr. History

In 2014, the Oceanographer of the Navy had Senior Enlisted Leadership from the Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command (NMOC) gather and create a Senior Enlisted Annual Award ([NAVADMIN 240/14](#)). It would recognize senior enlisted in the oceanography community afloat or ashore for their leadership, performance, special accomplishments, and expertise in forecasting and analysis in the applied sciences of meteorology and oceanography in support of fleet operations.

In early 2015 I was selected as the first recipient of the John R. Dungan Award ([NAVADMIN 006/15](#)). I felt a sense of duty to find out more about John and what he accomplished during his career. I started with reading the history the Naval Weather Service Association (NWSA) and a few other websites that mentioned him, and I came across a website that contradicted the history NWSA had detailed. In the [NWSA History](#), it stated, "Chief Quartermaster John R. Dungan USN changed his rating to Chief Aerographer while at Pensacola, and thereby became our first." The website ([Command History of the NASP METOC](#)) included an excerpt of a logbook entry that stated "On 27 June 1924, the first entry mentioning the Aerographer rating was made in the log entry:... John Dungan, Rating changed from CSM to CAEROG."

I started wondering what in the world was going on? Why did we have different information on such a critical moment in our history? So, I went to Ancestry.com and Fold3.com to look up service connected content that could clear this question up. I first came across a Muster log that mentioned a John Dungan Jr. and not a John R. Dungan. Now I had two issues, first the rating conversion and then John's actual name. I recorded all the information from all the archived historical data and compiled the differences. The only information I could find that was not making sense was the information we were going by from the NWSA. The rating at conversion and the name were incorrect.

I downloaded as many documents that I could, and I matched every detail from Service number to SSN, and then I started looking at Census data and began to compile an exact description of John Dungan Jr's life and service. I had a pretty good idea that now I could prove that he was a Chief Signalman at the time of conversion and that his name was John Dungan Jr. and not John R. Dungan as previously believed.

The earlier account of who he was and what his rating was, came about a passed down version of those who knew him and not proven with official data. His shipmates used to call him J.R. and when it came time to document him in history it was assumed he was John R. and not Junior. The records for the Pensacola office were not submitted to the Navy History Center because Command History was not required by the History Center back in 1924.

I found a document that suggested John Dungan Jr. enlisted as a signalman and was absorbed into the QM rating which served as an umbrella rate to many sub-ratings to include Pigeons mate "QM(P)", Signalman "QM(S)" and Aerographers "QM(A)"). The Quartermaster rating had gone through considerable changes between 1920-1924 and being that they were an umbrella to many ratings it is understandable that QM would have been accepted as Dungan's source rating at the time of conversion to CAEROG. In June 1921, Signalman became a rating out of the QM umbrella and so Dungan went from QMC to CSM before attending AG A school at Pensacola, FL.

	MERITORIOUS CONDUCT WORTHY OF SPECIAL MENTION. (Note date.) OFFENSES OR CAUSE OF DISBRATING. (Note date.)	PUNISHMENTS. (Note the date of issue of appointments and change in rating.)	SIGNATURE OF COMMANDING OFFICER.
1		RECORD CLEAR	G. C. DAY
2		RECORD CLEAR	G. C. DAY
3		QUALIFIED ENL. 1st CLASS	
4		Record class	A. ALTHOUSE
5		RECORD CLEAR	J. F. HINES
6	6-30-21 SAL. Chgd. to C.S.M. Accord Bu. Cir. let 16-21 May 2, 1921		J. F. HINES
7		RECORD CLEAR	J. F. HINES
8	12/31/21	RECORD CLEAR	J. F. HINES
9		RECORD CLEAR	H. C. Gearing, Jr.
10		RECORD CLEAR	H. C. Gearing, Jr.
11		RECORD CLEAR	H. C. Gearing, JR.
12	DEC 31 1922	RECORD CLEAR	H. C. Gearing, Jr.

13		RECORD CLEAR	H. C. Gearing, Jr.
14		RECORD CLEAR	H. C. Gearing, Jr.
15		RECORD CLEAR	H. C. Gearing, Jr.
16		RECORD CLEAR	H. C. Gearing, Jr.
17		<i>Final Qual</i>	
18	3-31-24	Record clear	J. J. RABY
19	5-13-24 Completed course of instruction in the Aerological School on 9 May 1924 with a final mark of 3.75.		J. J. RABY
20	6-13-24 Rating changed this date to Chief Aerographer (Permanent Appointment), in accord. with Bu. Nav. Letter May 6/21/HM of June 10, 1924.		J. J. RABY
21		RECORD CLEAR	J. J. RABY
22	9-30-24	RECORD CLEAR	J. J. RABY
23	10-29-24 Discharged this date with HONORABLE DISCHARGE. CSC#44628, on account of expiration of enlistment.		J. J. RABY

Address no. _____
out Bureau of Navigation,
Department, Washington, D. C.

Nav631/EMH

NAVAL AIR STATION, PENSACOLA
Correspondence (

NAVY DEPARTMENT
BUREAU OF NAVIGATION
WASHINGTON, D. C.

June 10 1924

From: Bureau of Navigation
To: Commanding Officer, US Naval Air Station,
Pensacola, Fla.
Subject: Dungan, John, Jr., CSM., 1321914, USN.,
Talbot, Arthur E., S2c, 3106323, USN.,
re. change of rating
Reference: Your letter May 13 1924

1. You are authorized to change the rating of Dungan, from Chief Signalman, to Chief Aerographer, permanent appointment, and retain at Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Fla.

2. You are authorized to change the rating of Talbot, from Seaman, 2nd class to aerographer, third class, and to transfer him to the USS Langley.

W.R. Shoemaker
Chief of Bureau

V.L. Kirkman
V.L. Kirkman
By direction

12-4
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Then I stumbled on a January 1980 Aerograph and realized that on page 14 it stated, "On 27 June 1924, the first entry mentioning the Aerographer rating was made in the log: "John Dungan, Rating changed from CSM to CAEROG.". We had it right all along but somehow the information was not kept current and our history went from a well-documented one to a hear-say and the rest was history.

John was a superstar! He was the first Chief Aerographer, an enlisted pilot (Lighter than air program), in the group of first Warrant Officers, and retired after almost 40 years of service as a lieutenant Commander.



Written by AGCS Enrique Acosta Gonzalez, USN, Retired