

1965

SECTION I  
ORIGIN AND HISTORY

Part A: Coast Guard Air Station, Bermuda

1. The Coast Guard SAR Group, Bermuda, was commissioned on 31 October 1952, and was fully operational on 1 December 1952. The SAR Group consisted of a Rescue Coordination Center, a major Coast Guard Cutter, and an Air Detachment with 3 PBM and 1 JRF aircraft. The SAR Group was established as a tenant of the U. S. Naval Station, Bermuda.

This SAR Group was a segment of an overall program in which the Coast Guard met and fulfilled certain Navy and Coast Guard responsibilities.

2. After the SAR Group was placed in commission, CINCLANTFLT designated CO, NAVSTA, Bermuda as Naval Rescue Commander and assigned an area of Naval SAR Responsibility extending approximately 300 miles in all directions from Bermuda. CO, NAVSTA in turn, delegated Naval SAR Responsibilities, including the duties of Naval Rescue Commander, to the Coast Guard SAR Group, Bermuda. The Coast Guard has retained the Bermuda Naval SAR responsibilities to the present time.

3. In July 1954, the SAR vessel training program was established by the Air Detachment. This program provided a means to:

- a. Train personnel of major USCG Cutters in the techniques and procedures of Search and Rescue.
- b. Train Air Detachment personnel to a high level of proficiency through realistic SAR exercises.
- c. Develop, evaluate, and standardize SAR techniques and procedures.
- d. Develop and evaluate SAR training aids and SAR training lectures.

Bermuda is an ideal location for conducting SAR vessel training because of its central location with respect to all major USCG Cutters on the eastern seaboard, and its generally good weather which obviates expense involved from cancellation or delays of drills due to poor weather. Alternate locations with comparable weather would be Miami or Key West, Florida. These locations obviously would necessitate much longer enroute time for cutters from the northeastern states. This training is conducted during the period that the cutter is in Bermuda performing SAR standby duties, thus insuring further economies.

The first full year of the SAR vessel training program saw 15 major USCG Cutters trained. This program has continued and now includes 23 major USCG Cutters. The program is conducted on an average of once every two weeks.

4. On 30 June 1954, the SAR Group office at Bermuda was disestablished and the Air Detachment assumed the duties previously assigned to the SAR Group. At this time Coast Guard units in Bermuda were shifted from the operational control of Commander, Eastern Area to the operational and administrative control of Commander, Fifth Coast Guard District.

5. On 11 October 1958, the Aero-Radio Station of the Air Detachment was given improved and expanded SAR communications capability, redesignated as a Secondary Radio Station, and established as a Sub-Unit of the Air Detachment. The main purpose of this expansion was to provide satisfactory capability for participation in the Atlantic Merchant Vessel Reporting System (AMVER). This system was developed under the statutory responsibility of the Coast Guard for developing, establishing, maintaining, and operating rescue facilities for the promotion of safety on and over the high seas. AMVER utilizes an electronic computer to maintain a comprehensive and effective merchant ship plot which greatly improves SAR capabilities, in addition, the Radio Station provides adequate communications over the area within the Third and Fifth Coast Guard Districts which cannot be adequately served by the district primary radio station.

6. The Loran Monitor Station was originally established in trailer units. This temporary arrangement was relieved by construction of a modern permanent building in 1963. The Loran Monitor Station is located adjacent to the U. S. Naval Facility on Tudor Hill, just a short distance from the Naval Station.

The Loran Monitor Station works closely with the master station at Carolina Beach which is the location of the Group Commander for the east coast Loran-C transmitting chain. Its duties make it a vital link in the Loran-C network.

7. In November of 1963, the Air Detachment moved from the Naval Station to Kindley Air Force Base due to deactivation of the Navy seadrome. The Loran Monitor Station and the Radio Station remained at the Naval Station.

On 1 July 1964, the parent activity was redesignated Coast Guard Air Station, Bermuda, and the Secondary Radio Station was redesignated as a Radio Station. The Radio Station and Loran Monitor Station were retained as subunits.

8. Mission of the Coast Guard Air Station, Bermuda:

a. Provide Coast Guard SAR coverage on and over the high seas in order to protect commerce using the air and sea route approaches to the United States.



b. Contribute to the implementation of the ICAO North Atlantic Regional plan for services to civil aviation in that portion of the North Atlantic where the United States provides the services.

c. Execute the Coast Guard's coordination responsibilities under the National SAR Plan for the ocean areas of the Bermuda sector of the U. S. National Atlantic Maritime SAR Region.

d. Perform the duties and functions of Naval Rescue Commander within the Navy Bermuda area of responsibility.

e. Provide effective communications support for Search and Rescue, for the Atlantic Merchant Vessel Reporting System, and for the Commander Fifth Coast Guard District.

f. Provide monitor and accuracy control of the east coast Loran-C navigation system.

g. Provide major USCG Cutters with realistic and standardized SAR training and SAR exercises.

#### 9. Coast Guard units in Bermuda.

In fulfilling the mission of the Air Station, the Coast Guard maintains the following units in Bermuda:

a. Coast Guard Air Station (3 amphibious HU-16E aircraft)

b. Coast Guard cutter (major cutters are rotated on this duty every four weeks).

c. Rescue Coordination Center (provides coordination of all civil and military SAR in the Bermuda SAR Sector).

d. Radio Station

e. Loran Monitor Station.

#### 10. Geographical Considerations.

Bermuda is strategically located for SAR purposes. It is the center of a 700 mile arc from Nova Scotia, Eastern U. S. Coast Line, and San Juan. (The nearest point of land is Cape Hatteras, 670 miles westward). Thus a 350 mile arc from Bermuda will be an approximate equal-time line for SAR unit response from either Bermuda or the eastern seaboard of North America. (Varies with type of aircraft or vessels available) In terms of SAR aircraft speeds, this places a large area within about 2-3 hours flying time of trained SAR units. In addition, Bermuda is a focal point for overseas air routes and shipping lanes.

## SECTION I

### Part C. United States Naval Station Bermuda:

The United States Naval Station, Bermuda, comprising 260 acres, is under the military command and administrative control of Commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic Fleet, and was commissioned on April 7, 1941, as a U. S. Naval Operating Base, which includes a U. S. Naval Air Station and a Marine Detachment. During the years of World War II the station performed a valuable service in helping to fight the serious submarine menace by performing wide patrols both by sea and air, by training crews from visiting ships, by harboring large task forces enroute to their war time duties, and by supplying much needed recreational facilities at Riddles Bay and elsewhere for ship's officers and men long at sea. In other words a full-scale Naval Base service was provided for our fleet and any of our allies who were in the area.

The Naval Station itself is currently comprised of approximately 550 men and officers.

The present mission of the U. S. Naval Station is to provide logistic support for the U. S. Naval Facility, visiting units of the fleet for the office of naval research and to provide limited support of transient shipping.

#### Marine Barracks: (Tenant activity of NAVSTA)

The Marine Barracks provides perimeter security guards for the Naval Station, Naval Facility, and guards for the station's brig. They provide additional security for other short-term military and emergency operations as directed.

#### United States Coast Guard Radio Station:

The United States Coast Guard Radio Station is located on the U. S. Naval Station.

#### The United States Coast Guard Loran Monitor Station:

The United States Coast Guard Loran Monitor Station is located adjacent to the Naval Facility on Tudor Hill.



## SECTION II

### Part A. Geography, History, and Politics

1. Location, topography, and climate: Bermuda is an archipelago 760 statute miles southeast of New York City. It is one of the most isolated land areas in the world, the nearest point of land being Cape Hatteras, N. C., 660 statute miles west. The archipelago consists of seven islands and about 150 islets; however, the terrain is very hilly. The climate is mild, with temperatures rarely above 90 degrees in the summer or below 50 degrees in the winter. Year around humidity averages over 75 percent. Annual rainfall averages 60 inches, and is more prevalent during the winter.

Prevailing winds are southerly with an average velocity of twelve miles per hour.

Spring - - a beautiful time of the year; pleasant, warm, with light rains. Flowers are in full bloom, adding much color and pleasant fragrance to this picturesque island.

#### Summer:

Though not actually a tropical island, summer days can be quite warm. Fortunately, sea breezes are usually present to counteract high humidity and high temperatures. The result - pleasant summer climate.

#### Fall:

This season is easily recognized by its cooler, windier, shorter days. It is still quite suitable for most outdoor activities.

#### Winter:

Temperatures in the low 50's plus high humidity can penetrate to the bone. High winds are common during the winter.

### 2. Size, population, ethnic groups:

Total land area is about 21 square miles - 24 miles in length and, on the average, less than a mile wide. Slightly in excess of two square miles are leased to the United States for military bases. The civilian population numbers 47,000 (1964 estimate). In addition to the 6,000 American personnel and dependents assigned to the two U. S. bases another 2,000 or so Americans reside on the island all or part of each year.

In fact, there is an average of about 500 Americans to the square mile in Bermuda, more than any country in the world including the United States. There are more than 3,000 immigrants from the British Isles, about 1,000 each from Canada and the British West Indies. Also approximately 1,000 Portuguese, most of whom come from the Azores on a contract basis as farmers and gardeners. Several hundred Europeans - Germans, Austrians, Swiss, French, and Italians - are employed mainly in the colony's hotels.

### 3. Government Organization:

a. Branches of government: The executive branch consists of the Governor, who is appointed by the Queen, and an Executive Council, composed of the Colonial Secretary, the Attorney General, the Colonial Treasurer and six members appointed by the Queen. The legislative branch consists of (1) a legislative council composed of the chief justice, the Colonial Secretary, the Attorney General and eight members appointed by the Queen, and (2) a House of Assembly with 36 members. Under the terms of the parliamentary election act, 1963, Bermuda was divided into 18 electoral districts, each of which returned two members to the house of assembly in the elections of May 16, 1963.

b. Powers and duties: Strictly speaking, Bermuda is not a crown colony. Although key officials are appointed by the crown, they traditionally exercise no veto over the enactments of the local legislature, and the colony is therefore autonomous in its internal affairs. In foreign affairs, however, it is bound by the policies and treaties of the mother country.

### 4. Background Information

a. Historical review: Bermuda was discovered in 1503 by a Spanish mariner, Juan De Bermudez, but, due to treacherous surrounding reefs, no attempt was made to settle. In 1609, about 150 British colonists under the command of Admiral Sir George Somers sailing for Virginia on his flagship, the Sea Venture, became separated from the rest of the fleet during a storm and ran aground in Bermuda's reefs. For ten months, they lived off the land while constructing two ships. Proceeding to Virginia, they found famine conditions. Admiral Somers returned to Bermuda to fetch food, but died on the island shortly after arrival. His remains were taken to England, where the crew's description of Bermuda or the Somers Islands, as it also became known, aroused great interest. In 1612 the king granted the Virginia company an extension of its charter to include the island, and later that year 60 colonists settled on the eastern most island and founded the town of St. George, the oldest English - speaking, continuous settlement in the western hemisphere. Succeeding colonists settled further westward, and the town of Hamilton was founded in 1790 to provide a centrally located port. In 1815 the seat of government was moved to Hamilton. Until recently, the colony remained an outpost of 17th century British civilization. In the early years of this century it became a popular attraction for wealthy American, British and Canadian tourists. The protective tariff act enacted by the United States in 1930 cut off Bermuda's once-thriving agricultural export trade and spurred the colony to develop it's tourist industry, which has become it's principal economic asset representing, directly, as much as 65-75 percent of the total economy.



b. Political conditions: After years of mounting pressure against a system whereby the franchise was restricted solely to property owners, the parliamentary election act of 1963, became law upon the governor's assent on January 12, 1963. This law extended the franchise to all eligible voters reaching the age of 25, with the owner of not less than 2,000 square feet of land entitled to an additional ballot. The introduction of universal adult suffrage in the 1963 elections has not significantly altered the traditional composition of the house of assembly; a majority of members elected are conservative in outlook. The first election saw emergence of a political party (progressive labour party) which captured six of the 36 seats in the house of assembly. The United Bermuda Party was formed late in 1964.

c. Economic Conditions: Most Bermudians earn their income from the tourist industry. In 1963, 204,181 visitors of whom 164,512 were Americans - spent in excess of 33 million dollars in the colony. Bermuda derives roughly \$10 million annually from U. S. bases through contracts to local firms, salaries to local employees, private expenditures by base personnel, and rental payments for 1,700 off-base housing units. There are no heavy and few light manufacturing industries, a very small fishing industry, and an inadequate agricultural output. As a result, almost all manufactures and foodstuffs must be imported. The United States supplies about 50 percent of all imports (Bermuda is the U. S. best customer on a per capita basis). The government earns two thirds of its revenue from import duties; it imposes no income tax, no sales tax, no inheritance tax, and no profit tax. Heavy import duties are reflected in retail prices with the result that cost of living is high. Nevertheless the island has enjoyed ever-increasing prosperity since the end of World War II; there is no involuntary unemployment.

#### 5. American Consulate General:

The first consular agent for the United States in Bermuda was appointed in 1818. The office was raised to a consulate general in 1951 and is currently staffed by four Americans and seven local employees. The consul general is the ranking United States official on the island.

#### 6. Historical Dates:

1515 ..... The colony discovered by the Spanish exployer, Juan Bermudez, from whom it gets its name.

1593 ..... Henry May, an Englishman, shipwrecked on the island, remained five months before sailing for Newfoundland in a boat built of native cedar.

1600 ..... Samuel Chaplain, founder of Quebec, Canada, sighted the island but did not land.

1609 ..... Shipwreck of "Sea Venture" on July 28 with party of 150 colonists, including Sir George Somers, enroute to the infant colony of Virginia.

- 1610 ..... On May 10, Somers and shipwrecked companions sailed for Virginia in two small vessels built of native cedar, the "Patience" and "Deliverance."
- 1612 ..... Richard Moore sent out from England as Bermuda's first governor. He established the first permanent settlement here.
- 1620 ..... First general assembly of Bermuda met in St. Peter's church, St. George.
- 1684 ..... Crown agreed to let the people of Bermuda govern themselves under royal supervision.
- 1775 ..... On night of August 14, British magazine at St. George's entered and 100 kegs of powder stolen, shipped to General Washington's men at Boston.
- 1815 ..... Seat of government moved from St. George's to City of Hamilton, the present capital.
- 1834 ..... Bermuda legislature abolished slavery.
- 1874 ..... Bermuda introduced game of tennis to the United States.
- 1944 ..... Women won the right to vote.
- 1946 ..... Motorization act passed admitting automobiles to Bermuda.
- 1963 ..... Parliamentary election act gave the vote to the general population. Previously only land owners could vote.

#### 7. Roofs in Bermuda

With striking regularity, first time visitors to Bermuda ask: "Why are all the roofs painted white?"

In a word, the answer is: Its the law.

It all stems from the fact that Bermuda is solely dependent upon rain as its source of fresh water. There are no fresh lakes or rivers in the 21 square mile island group. Although a number of "fresh water" wells have been drilled, salt water seepage has rendered the majority of them useless.

Some of the major hotels have conversion units which change the salt water, but every private residence in Bermuda relies on rain water for cooking, bathing, washing and drinking.

This explains the unique conflict of interest which exists between Bermudians and visitors. The tourists cry when it rains; the residents rejoice.



The roofs of Bermudians homes, therefore are not only attractive, but utilitarian as well. The shallow steps of terraces which shape the roofs channel the rain water into a drainpipe and then into a storage tank beneath or beside the house.

In an effort to ensure that this water is free of impurities, the government requires that each roof be periodically lime-washed. Gleaming white house-tops are the result.

Further, the government will also supply ---- free of charge ---- to residents, a quantity of goldfish and guppies which keep the walls of the storage tank free of algae.

Thus it is that each Bermuda house has a white roof, has its own water works, and even, on a modest scale, its own aquarium.

Due to the periods of little or no rainfall on the island, all persons residing either on one of the American bases or "on the beach", know it is a good idea to conserve fresh water. Thus, when you leave a faucet running when it is not in use, you may be taking away a glass of fresh water, water to cook your next meal, your next shower, or perhaps, the water to make ice cubes for a cool drink on a hot Bermuda day.