

THE US NAVY SEALS

THIS ARTICLE IS IN FOUR PARTS



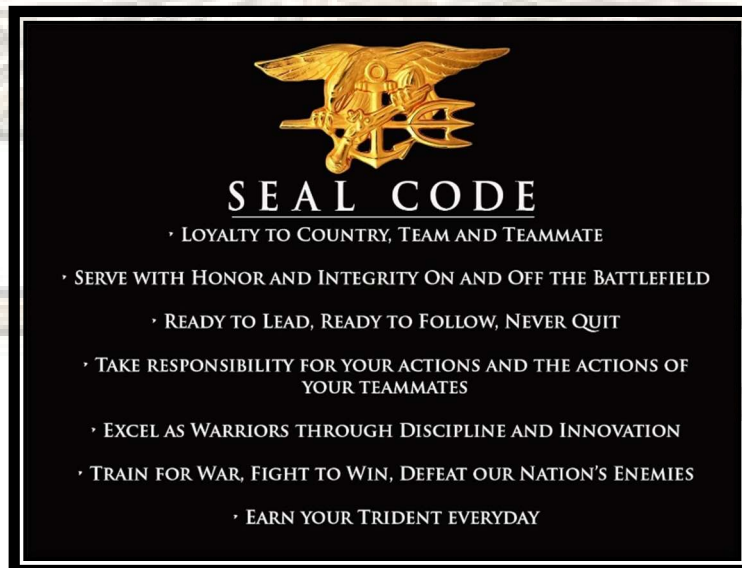
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PART ONE

THE BIRTH OF SEAL TEAM SIX



After more than 3,000 Marines were killed in the Battle of Tarawa (November 1943), it became clear that the U.S. military needed better pre-invasion intelligence.

Enter the Naval Combat Demolition Units and Underwater Demolition Teams (UDTs), the forerunners of today's SEALs. After World War II, however, these special operations forces largely disbanded.

But beginning in 1950, with the outbreak of the Korean War the Navy called on the UDT "frogmen" again, and quickly expanded their operation.

In 1962, as the conflict in Vietnam began ramping up, President John F. Kennedy established the first two Navy SEAL teams out of the existing UDTs. The SEAL acronym comes from Sea, Air, and Land, the three environments where the Navy's special operations forces are trained to operate. At the height of the conflict in Vietnam, eight SEAL platoons were deployed there on a rotating and continuous basis and close to 50 SEALs were killed in Vietnam from 1965 to 1972.



In late 1980, after the humiliating failure of Operation Eagle Claw, the aborted mission to rescue 53 American hostages seized at the American embassy in Tehran, the Navy asked Commander Richard Marcinko to build a SEAL unit that could respond quickly and fiercely to terrorist crises. Marcinko was a seasoned veteran, having enlisted in the Navy in 1958. He served two tours in Vietnam, where he commanded a much-feared SEAL platoon, and earned the Silver Star, four Bronze Stars with combat "V" (denoting heroism), two Navy Commendation Medals, and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Silver Star. He was reportedly given six months to get the new counterterrorism operation up and running or the entire project would be scrapped.



To review the entire Operation "Eagle Claw" copy and paste the below link into your browser:

<https://www.specialforceshistory.info/opns/operation-eagle-claw.html>

Though only two SEAL teams existed at that time, Marcinko called the new group SEAL Team Six, supposedly because he hoped Soviet analysts would overestimate the size of the U.S. forces. Two assault groups, named after the Navy colors of blue and gold, formed the core of the group. The Blue Squadron, with the Jolly Roger pirate flag as its insignia, soon earned a reputation for recklessness, while the Gold Squadron identified more with knights or crusaders. Marcinko left after several years (he formed another anti-terrorist unit, Red Cell, in 1984, but in 1990 was convicted of military contract fraud and served 15 months in prison) and in the early 1990s the Navy reportedly stepped in to revamp Team Six's leadership and operations, turning it into the professional and effective—yet still boundary-pushing—force it is today. Officially, SEAL Team Six doesn't even exist.

As Dick Couch and William Doyle write in their 2014 book “Navy SEALs: Their Untold Story,” the U.S. Department of Defense rarely publicly acknowledges the existence of the Naval Special Warfare Development Group, or DevGru, the cover name for Team Six. Its official mission is developing new equipment and tactics for the general Navy SEAL organization, which also includes nine unclassified teams. Unofficially, however, SEAL Team Six carries out some of the military’s riskiest missions, the ones considered too dangerous for conventional troops.

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Team Six and the rest of the Navy SEALs have found themselves playing a more active role than ever, ranging from the remote, mountainous regions of Afghanistan to war-torn cities such as Baghdad. The SEALs, including Team Six, carry out clandestine, high-impact operations that would be impossible for larger, conventional forces. They also perform on-the-ground reconnaissance and intelligence gathering before planned attacks by those larger forces. Though traditionally SEALs were associated most with (at least partially) water-based missions, they are equally likely to carry out missions on land and in the air.

Three successful operations in recent years pulled the SEALs, and Team Six in particular, out of the shadows and squarely into the global spotlight. In April 2009, Somali pirates captured Captain Richard Phillips of the merchant ship MV Maersk Alabama and held him hostage inside a small, enclosed lifeboat. The American destroyer USS Bainbridge was towing the boat to calmer waters in the Indian Ocean when ransom negotiations stalled, and the three SEAL Team Six snipers on the warship shot and killed the three pirates holding Phillips. Details of the rescue made international news and formed the basis for a major Hollywood film, “Captain Phillips,” starring Tom Hanks. In January 2012, Team Six operators skydived into Somalia to save two hostages, American aid worker Jessica Buchanan and her Danish colleague Poul Thisted.

By far the highest-profile Team Six operation—and the most famous special ops raid in history—was Operation Neptune Spear, which ended in the killing of Al Qaeda mastermind Osama bin Laden in Abbottabad, Pakistan in May 2011. The culmination of a 10-year manhunt directed by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the raid on bin Laden’s compound was carried out by 23 or 24 SEALs (according to varying accounts), accompanied by a Pashto translator and a combat dog. It took less than 40 minutes.



As the role and importance of SEAL Team Six has expanded greatly since 9/11, so has the danger. As the New York Times reported in 2015: “More members of the unit have died over the past 14 years than in all its previous history.” Repeated assaults, parachute jumps, rugged climbs, and blasts from explosives have left many battered, physically and mentally.”

Today, the top-secret headquarters of SEAL Team Six are located at the Dam Neck Annex of the Oceana Naval Air Station, just south of Virginia Beach. Elite operators from regular SEAL teams are chosen to join Team Six in a competitive process known as “Green Team.” Two more assault groups, Red Squadron and Silver Squadron, have joined the Blue and Gold, for a total of some 300 operators in all. Members of the Grey Squadron, known as the Vikings, are trained specifically to drive the high-speed boats and other vehicles used by Team Six, while the Black Squadron, which began as Team Six’s sniper unit, has taken the lead in gathering intelligence since the 9/11 attacks.

Women—who are excluded from the rest of Team Six—can serve in the Black Squadron, which is estimated to have some 100 members stationed throughout the world.

PART TWO
THE COSTLIEST DAY IN SEAL TEAM HISTORY



The Tangi Valley, located along the border between Afghanistan's Wardak and Logar provinces some 80 miles southwest of Kabul, is a remote, inaccessible area known for its resistance to foreign invasion. Alexander the Great suffered heavy troop losses there during his campaign in Afghanistan in the fourth century B.C. In the 1980s, mujahideen fighters in Wardak and Logar provinces devastated an entire division of Soviet fighters

In 2009, U.S. forces from the 10th Mountain Division of the U.S. Army established a base in the Tangi Valley area after it became clear the Taliban had taken advantage of low coalition presence there to establish a stronghold within striking distance of the Afghan capital. As the United States and NATO allies began a drawdown of their troops in the spring of 2011, U.S. forces turned over the Tangi Valley outpost to their Afghan counterparts. They continued to run operations in the area, however, using helicopters and special operations forces to combat groups of insurgents in the region.

Under cover of darkness on the night of August 6, 2011, a special ops team that included a group of U.S. Army Rangers began an assault on a Taliban compound in the village of Jaw-e-Mekh Zareen in the Tangi Valley. The firefight at the house went on for at least two hours, and the ground team called in reinforcements. As the Chinook CH-47 transport helicopter (call sign: Extortion 17) carrying 30 U.S. troops, seven Afghan commandos, an Afghan civilian interpreter, and a U.S. military dog approached, the insurgents fired on the helicopter and it crashed to the ground, killing all aboard.

Of the 30 Americans killed, 22 were Navy personnel, and 17 were SEALs. These included two bomb specialists and 15 operators in the Gold Squadron of DEVGRU, or Team Six, the highly classified unit that conducted the raid that killed Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden at his compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan the previous May. None of the operators killed in the Afghan helicopter crash had been involved in that mission, officials said. In addition to the SEALs, the others killed in the Chinook crash included five other Naval Special Warfare (NSW) personnel, three Air Force forward air controllers, and five Army helicopter crewmembers.

The attack on August 6 was the most devastating day in SEAL Team Six history, as well as the single largest loss of life for U.S. forces since the war in Afghanistan began in October 2001. More than twice as many NSW personnel died in the Wardak crash than were killed on June 28, 2005, during Operation Red Wings.

That day, June 28, 2005, eight SEALs and eight members of the members of the Army's 160th Special Forces Operations Regiment (SOAR) were killed when insurgents shot down their Chinook helicopter in Kunar province, near Asadabad.



Three SEALs involved in a firefight on the ground were also killed, in what would stand as the deadliest day in NSW history since the Normandy landings on D-Day, June 6, 1944.



Matthew G. Axelson, Daniel R. Healy, James Suh, Marcus Luttrell, Eric S. Patton, and Michael P. Murphy pose in Afghanistan on June 18, 2005. Ten days later, all but Luttrell would be killed by enemy forces while supporting Operating Red Wings, which also claimed the lives of Danny Dietz and 13 other Navy SEALs.



As funerals for the fallen sailors and other servicemen took place throughout the United States, a team of specialists conducted an official investigation to determine the cause of the crash. The resulting report, delivered in October 2011, concluded that a Taliban fighter shot down the Chinook with a rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) as the helicopter neared its landing zone, and that “all operational decisions, linked to the incident, were deemed tactically sound.”

Some later questioned the official narrative of the Extortion 17 crash, even suggesting the attack could have been an inside job, with Afghan forces tipping the Taliban off about the mission beforehand. Others criticized the planning and execution of the mission, including the decision to fly the helicopter into an area where it could be easily shot down and the use of a conventional helicopter rather than one designed for special operations missions.

Family members of some of the SEAL Team Six operators killed in the crash, along with some military personnel, claimed that the U.S. government had turned the members of the elite unit into a target by revealing their role in the bin Laden raid. A congressional oversight committee even held a controversial hearing into the events surrounding the crash in early 2014.

Though the U.S.-led coalition formally ended its combat mission in Afghanistan in December 2014, the war has continued for more than two years beyond that point, marking its 15th anniversary last October. As of 2016, some 9,800 U.S. troops remained in Afghanistan. The Department of Defense estimates the total number of U.S. service members killed in Afghanistan at 2,254. Meanwhile, the civilian toll of the war grows ever higher; one estimate, by the organization International Physicians for the Prevention of War, put the total number of Afghans killed in the first 12 years of the conflict at some 220,000



PART THREE

10 KEY MISSIONS

D-DAY LANDINGS – 1944

On June 6, 1944, some 175 members of Naval Combat Demolition Units (NCDUs), predecessors of the Navy SEALs, were among the first invading forces to arrive on the beaches of Normandy. Approaching under heavy German fire, the demolitionists used explosives to clear the way for the massive invasion of some 5,000 vessels, 11,000 planes, and more than 150,000 Allied soldiers and sailors. The NCDUs at Omaha Beach were awarded the Presidential Unit Citation, one of only three presented for military actions at Normandy. Of the NCDU personnel on Omaha and Utah Beaches, a total of 37 were killed and 71 wounded; all casualties were the result of enemy action, not mishandling of the explosives. This 52 percent casualty rate represented the bloodiest single day in the history of Naval Special Warfare.

INVASION OF OKINAWA – 1945

After the loss of more than 3,000 Marines in the Battle of Tarawa in November 1943, the U.S. military turned to the Navy's special operations forces to gather intelligence and navigate the islands of the South Pacific ahead of Allied invasions. Before the invasion of Okinawa on April 1, 1945, the crucial last step in the Allies' island-hopping campaign toward mainland Japan, nearly 1,000 members of the U.S. Navy's Underwater Demolition Teams (UDTs) performed reconnaissance, surveyed and cleared the beaches for the landing of some 450,000 U.S. Army and Marine forces. In all, some 3,500 UDT "frogmen" served during World War II, taking part in almost every major amphibious operation in the Pacific; a total of 83 were killed. The UDTs were one of the most heavily decorated combat units in the war, earning 750 Bronze Stars, 150 Silver Stars, one Navy Cross, and several Presidential Unit Citations.

VIETNAM WAR – 1965-1975

During the Vietnam War, the newly created SEAL teams—called SEALs for their ability to operate in the environments of Sea, Air, and Land—were initially tasked with training indigenous South Vietnamese forces to operate as maritime commandos. Later in the conflict, 12-man SEAL platoons rotated in and out of deployment in South Vietnam, honing their battle skills and launching their reputation as an elite special ops force. They often operated at night, deploying from boats and helicopters to carry out short direct-action missions like ambushes, hit-and-run raids, personnel recovery, intelligence collection, and reconnaissance patrols. The Viet Cong dubbed the fearsome SEALs the "men with green faces" for the camouflage face paint they favored.

INVASION OF GRENADA – 1983

Growing tensions between the United States and Grenada boiled over in late 1983 when President Ronald Reagan ordered U.S. forces to invade the tiny Caribbean island nation and overthrow its new hardline communist government. Operation Urgent Fury, as it was officially known, marked the first time Navy SEALs had seen combat since Vietnam. SEALs provided pre-assault reconnaissance during the invasion and successfully rescued and evacuated Sir Paul Scoon, Grenada's governor general, who

had been placed on house arrest after he invited the United States and other Caribbean nations to intervene militarily.

One group of SEALs tasked with capturing the island's only radio tower narrowly avoided disaster after communication failures left them holed up and under heavy attack from Cuban and Grenadian forces. After destroying the tower and fighting their way to the water, they managed to swim to the open sea, where they were picked up several hours later by a reconnaissance plane.

CAPTURE AND ARREST OF MANUEL NORIEGA – 1989

Six years after the invasion of Grenada, the SEALs were called into action in another Caribbean nation: Panama. Not only had the country's president, Manuel Noriega, been indicted on drug trafficking charges in the United States, but his security forces were accused of harassing American citizens living in Panama. In December 1989, President George Bush launched **Operation Just Cause**, aimed at deposing Noriega and bringing him to justice. A SEAL mission to disable Noriega's Learjet at Paitilla Airfield to prevent him from escaping succeeded at a heavy cost, as four SEALs were killed and eight wounded. Eventually, several SEAL platoons tracked down and surrounded Noriega, who had taken refuge in the Vatican embassy in Panama City, before he ultimately surrendered on January 3, 1990.

OPERATIONS DESERT SHIELD AND DESERT STORM – 1991

When Saddam Hussein's Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait in August 1990, the Navy SEALs—along with the rest of the U.S. military—faced their first large-scale conflict since Vietnam. During the buildup to the first Gulf War, SEALs performed key reconnaissance along the Kuwaiti coastline. With the international coalition's ground operations set to begin in early 1991, SEAL operators planted explosives on the coast that, when detonated, convinced the Iraqi defenders that an amphibious landing was imminent. The Iraqis committed more forces to the coast, making them more vulnerable to the subsequent thrust into central Kuwait by the U.S. Marine Corps.

OPERATION RED WINGS – 2005

On June 28, 2005, a four-man SEAL patrol on a mission to capture a high-ranking Taliban leader in Afghanistan's Kunar Province crossed paths with several local goat herders. After determining they were not enemy combatants, the SEALs let them go according to the rules of engagement. All too soon, however, Taliban fighters attacked the patrol; three of the four SEALs were killed, while the fourth, Petty Officer Marcus Luttrell, was left unconscious and seriously wounded. (Luttrell was later rescued, and would write about the mission in his best-selling memoir "Lone Survivor.") Lieutenant Michael Murphy, who posthumously received the Medal of Honor for his actions trying to save his team, and the two other SEALs killed in the firefight weren't the only casualties of the day: Eight SEALs and eight members of the Army's 160th Special Forces Operations Regiment (SOAR) deployed to rescue Murphy's team also died when the enemy shot down their Chinook helicopter.

Additional information on Operation Red Wings is available at:

<http://www.americanspecialops.com/navy-seals/operations/operation-redwing/>

RESCUE OF CAPTAIN RICHARD PHILLIPS FROM SOMALI PIRATES – 2009

Among the best-known SEAL successes of recent years was the rescue of Captain Richard Phillips, master of the merchant ship MV Maersk Alabama, after four Somali pirates took him hostage in April 2009. Three of the pirates fled the ship in a small lifeboat with Phillips and headed for the Somali coast, with U.S. Navy ships in pursuit. During the standoff that followed, a contingent of Navy SEALs parachuted into the area and boarded the destroyer USS Bainbridge. On Easter Sunday, April 12, when it looked as if the pirates were about to shoot Phillips, the crisis came to a dramatic end. Three SEAL snipers on the fantail of the Bainbridge aimed and squeezed their triggers simultaneously, killing all three pirates in the bobbing lifeboat some 90 feet away. Details of the hostage rescue were later made public, and the events would later be depicted on the big screen in the hit movie "Captain Phillips," starring Tom Hanks.

KILLING OF OSAMA BIN LADEN (OPERATION NEPTUNE SPEAR) – 2011

The 10-year manhunt for the mastermind of the 9/11 terrorist attacks concluded on May 2, 2011, when helicopters from the Army's SOAR (Airborne) deposited some two dozen SEALs, along with a Pashto translator and a Belgian Malinois combat dog, at the compound of Osama bin Laden in Abbottabad, Pakistan.

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After methodically clearing the first and second floors of the compound, the SEALs advanced to the third floor, where they found the Al Qaeda leader and killed him. In addition to bin Laden, several other adults were killed in the raid, but some dozen children in the compound were left unharmed. The entire operation took less than 40 minutes. Like the snipers who took out Phillips' captors, the SEALs who killed bin Laden were reportedly operators from the Naval Special Warfare Development Group (DEVGRU), better known as Team Six. When their involvement later became public, the SEALs, and particularly Team Six became the subject of global fascination, as the elite fighters who pulled off the highest-profile special ops raid in history.

RESCUE OF AID WORKERS IN SOMALIA – 2012

American aid worker Jessica Buchanan and her Danish colleague, Poul Thisted, were working for a nongovernmental organization called the Danish Relief Council when they were kidnapped in late 2011 and held for three months by armed men near the town of Adado in north-central Somalia. On the night of January 25, 2012, an Air Force Special Operations plane carried around two dozen operators—mostly from DEVGRU—to a location about two miles from where the hostages were being held. After parachuting down and walking through darkness to the camp, the SEALs managed to surprise the kidnappers, killing all nine of them within minutes. Buchanan and Thisted were evacuated in helicopters to an American base in Djibouti, where they received medical treatment. Buchanan later chronicled the experience in her book "Impossible Odds," describing the moment on the helicopter when one of her rescuers handed her a folded American flag. "I just started to cry," she wrote. "At that point in time, I have never in my life been so proud and so very happy to be an American."



PART FOUR

MEMORIALS, MONUMENTS & GENERAL INFORMATION

THE NAVY SEAL MUSEUM



The Navy Seal Museum in Fort Pierce, Florida

The National Navy SEAL Museum is the only museum dedicated solely to preserving the history of the United States Navy SEALs and their predecessors. Located in Fort Pierce, Florida, the Museum resides on the training grounds of the original Navy combat divers, the Frogmen.

Built to honor the men who served with fortitude and dedication, the Navy SEAL Museum first opened its doors on Veterans Day in 1985. From humble beginnings, the facility has experienced tremendous growth, achieving national stature in 2007.

The main objective of the Museum remains the promotion of public education by providing the opportunity to explore the history of the United States Navy SEALs through interactive exhibits while honoring the fallen at the Navy SEAL Memorial and caring for those warriors' families through the Trident House Charities Program.

A public monument honoring Navy SEALs was long overdue - until the Museum created one on the Virginia Beach Boardwalk ([see below](#))

Although a great number of SEAL forerunners trained in Ft. Pierce during World War Two starting in 1943, the earliest SEAL predecessors came together in Virginia Beach in 1942. These volunteers for special missions distinguished themselves in combat during Operation TORCH in North Africa later that year.

Over time, the SEAL Museum and then other major SEAL heritage sites erected identical Naked Warrior statues to honor their Frogmen, leaving Virginia Beach as the sole SEAL heritage site with no SEAL marker for the general public.

US NAVY SEAL MONUMENT



THE NAKED WARRIOR

This situation was corrected on July 20, 2017, when the Virginia Beach Navy SEAL Monument was dedicated. Visually striking and loaded with layers of significance, it is a compelling tribute to the SEALs including those before and those to come.

The Monument stands on the Boardwalk facing the Atlantic Ocean at 38th Street, a scenic and dignified public place frequented by locals and visitors alike.



To read the words on the stone at the base of the statute please copy and paste the below link into your browser

<https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=165141>

SO YOU WANT TO BE A SEAL



NAVY SEALS RUMOR BUSTER- WHAT IS TRUE AND WHAT IS NOT

<https://www.military.com/military-fitness/navy-special-operations/navy-seal-rumor-buster>

HOW TO ENLIST TO BECOME A NAVY SEAL

<https://navyseals.com/buds/seals-how-to-enlist/>

THE FACTS

WHAT ARE MY CHANCES OF BECOMING A NAVY SEAL?

The Navy recruits approximately 40,000 people each year. Due to the popularity of the Navy SEALs, almost half of all recruits express an interest in becoming a SEAL, but most do not meet the qualifications. According to Military.com, only about 6 percent of SEAL applicants meet the requirements.

WHAT ARE THE AGE REQUIREMENTS TO BECOME A NAVY SEAL?

Applicants must be from 17 to 28 years old. Waivers for men ages 29 and 30 are available for highly qualified candidates. Men with prior enlisted service as SEALs who are seeking to become SEAL Officers can request waivers to age 33.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO BECOME A SEAL

All SEALs must go through the 24-week Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL School and then a 28-week SEAL qualification training program. Only 1% of sailors who enter BUD/S school complete it -- and that's not the end of training. Training for a first deployment can take as much as 30 months.

HOW MANY SEALS ARE THERE IN THE NAVY?

There are eight SEAL teams. Each team has six platoons and a headquarters element. SEAL platoons consist of 16 SEALs -- two officers, one chief, and 13 enlisted men. A platoon is generally the largest operational element assigned to a mission.

DISCLAIMER

PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT EVEN THOUGH THIS INFORMATION HAS BEEN TAKEN FROM WEBSITES & OTHER SOURCES THAT APPEAR TO BE AUTHENTIC, I CAN NOT ENSURE THAT ALL THE DATA IN THIS ARTICLE IS ACCURATE AND CORRECT.