

BOOK REVIEWS

the reader gains a deeper appreciation of patrolling, the life of a Canadian soldier, and the war in Afghanistan in general than would otherwise have been achieved in a more expansive and superficial memoir. The second strength is Flavelle's honest, naked portrayal of the events contained within the patrol. The emotions are raw, and there is no attempt to make himself into a hero or political motivation to justify the Afghan War. Instead there is only an attempt to understand himself and his constitution as events unfold around him.

This memoir is deeply personal, vulnerable, and refreshingly candid. It is highly recommended to anyone interested in Canada's military involvement in Afghanistan, or those that ponder the nature and traditions of soldiering.

Marshall S. Horne is a third year PhD Candidate with the Centre for Military and Strategic Studies at the University of Calgary.

A Sense of the Sea: Our View of the Sea and How We Got It

by Brian G. Whitehouse

Halifax: Glen Margaret Publishing, 2012

228 pages, paperback, \$22.95

ISBN 978-1-897462-23-2

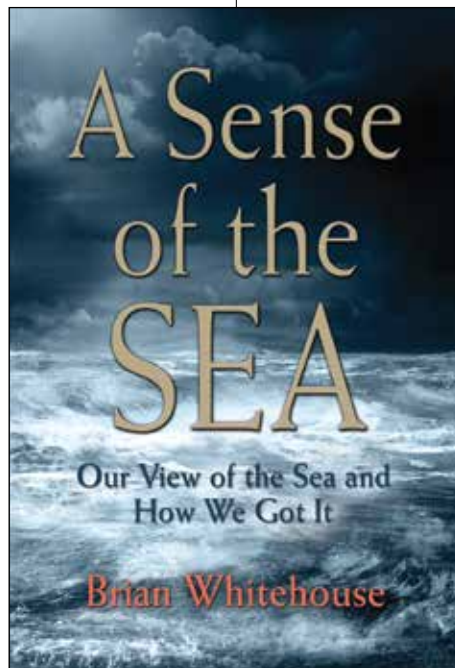
Reviewed by Dan Hutt

What does the ocean mean to people – to individuals and to society as a whole? That is the question Brian Whitehouse answers in his first book, *A Sense of the Sea*. An avid sailor, oceanographer, and former Executive Director of the influential Alliance for Marine Remote Sensing, Dr. Whitehouse charts a fascinating course through the history, technology, and popular culture of the ocean. The journey is a personal one, drawing upon Whitehouse's childhood with his British navy father, his experiences on ocean weather ships as a young university graduate, and his deepening understanding of the sea as a professional oceanographer.

A Sense of the Sea consists of two parts, *The Ocean We Know* and *The Ocean We Perceive*. The first part presents the development of the science of oceanography and the methods used to observe the ocean. Compared to other disciplines, oceanography is a very new science. Our ability to understand the dynamics of the ocean is based upon technologies that matured as recently as the 1990s – Earth observation satellites, supercomputers, and the Internet. Whitehouse explains the importance of being able to model and forecast the ocean. Not only is it critical for naval operations, but the next advance in weather forecasting depends upon ocean modelling. That is because the weakest link in weather forecasting today is accounting for the influence of the ocean upon the atmosphere.

Of particular interest to readers of the Canadian Military Journal is Whitehouse's contention that the science of physi-

cal oceanography grew out of military research – funded mostly by the US Navy, but also by the former Soviet Union, France, and a few other countries. The argument that military research created modern oceanography is made convincingly in *A Sense of the Sea*. Even the Foreword is written by Secretary of the Navy Chair in Oceanography at Scripps institution of Oceanography, Dr. Walter Munk. Thus, during the Cold War, while the public viewed the ocean as a biological wonder, thanks largely to Jacques Cousteau's Undersea World TV series, navy-funded marine scientists concentrated upon the physics of the ocean. Today, operational oceanographers provide deployed naval forces with forecasts of every conceivable ocean quantity including currents, sound speed profiles, through-water visibility, waves, and even bioluminescence.



In *The Ocean We Perceive*, Whitehouse examines the ocean through the prism of popular culture. The underwater scenes in the 1965 James Bond movie *Thunderball* gave the impression that technology could enable people to live easily underwater. Yet, the story is inspired by the real-life Cold War conflict that played out underwater as it did upon land and in space. Whitehouse uses the 2004 movie *The Day After Tomorrow*, where melting polar ice causes a global climate crisis, as a vehicle to explain the world-wide ocean sensing infrastructure that is much more extensive than the public realizes.

Whitehouse recounts the story of Jacques Yves Cousteau's and Émile Gagnan's invention of the underwater breathing apparatus they called the aqualung (later known as Self Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus, or SCUBA). SCUBA was a significant development in exposing the public to the beauty and mystery of the undersea world, yet ultimately it did not contribute much to our understanding of the physical ocean. That role fell to more remote technologies, such as drifting autonomous buoys, Earth observation satellites, and sea gliders.

Whitehouse's early perception of the sea was derived from his father, a Royal Navy NCO who emigrated to Canada

BOOK REVIEWS

in 1953 and became an officer in the Royal Canadian Navy. A tour of Canada's last aircraft carrier, HMCS *Bonaventure*, made a great impression upon the author as a boy. One chapter of *A Sense of the Sea* traces the decline of the Royal Canadian Navy, from the 1950s through integration of the Canadian Forces in 1967, as seen by a young man with a navy dad. Frustrated with the navy during the 1970s, the elder Whitehouse imparted a key piece of advice to his son: "Don't join the navy."

Following his father's advice, Brian Whitehouse satisfied his fascination for the ocean by spending three years working on ocean weather ships in the North Pacific. This experience

led to graduate school at Dalhousie University and a career as an oceanographer, and it is part of the inspiration for *A Sense of the Sea*.

A highly original book, I found *A Sense of the Sea* thoroughly engaging. It gave me pause to reflect upon and to appreciate my own connections with the sea. My next stroll along the beach will be a deeper experience because of it.

Dr. Dan Hutt is a defence scientist with Defence R&D Canada – Atlantic in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. He is currently Head of the Underwater Sensing Section.

Black Ops, Vietnam. The Operational History of MACVSOG

by Robert Gillespie

Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2011

320 pages, \$41.95 (HC)

Reviewed by Bernd Horn

This book was a pleasant surprise. Admittedly, when I looked at the dust jacket cover art my first reaction was to think, "not yet another 'kill 'em all and let God sort them out'" history on special operations forces (SOF). However, once I cracked the cover, it became abundantly clear that the book was a very well-researched, well-written history of the Military Assistance Command Vietnam Special Operations Group (MACVSOG).

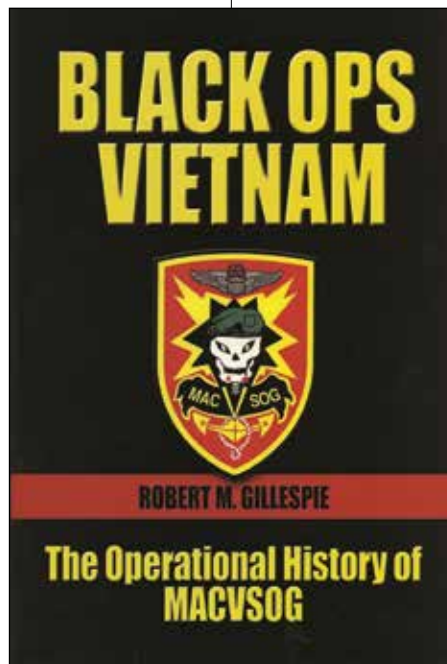
The book starts with an overview of American involvement in Vietnam and special operations prior to the creation of MACVSOG in 1964. The author then takes a chronological approach, methodically running through the life of the organization from 1964-1972, when the formation was dismantled. Each year becomes a chapter, and Gillespie provides an overview of key events, concepts, operations, organization, and programs. Furthermore, each year follows a similar template or construct, so it is easy to track evolution and changes within MACVSOG, as well as its activities. As such, the book becomes an excellent primer and resource tool. Due to the very nature of this approach, the book does not provide the definitive word on all aspects of the organization, activities, or events in Vietnam, but the author has done an admirable job of balancing quality and significance of content with quantity. Although topic areas are handled in a relatively succinct manner, he has expertly filtered the data, and he provides an incredibly complete and concise summary for each of the years covered, and

their respective content. He has, in essence, created a marvelous source book.

What is impressive, aside from the tight narrative, is the fact that the book balances its succinct fact-based approach, rich with detailed statistics and data, with dramatic and exciting vignettes that capture the courage, drama, and heroism of the MACVSOG operators themselves. Specifically, he provides vignettes of winners of the US Congressional Medal of Honor, and also vignettes applicable to some specific operations. This adds a degree of action to an otherwise-historical summary. It also adds context to the operations, and their degree of difficulty in the context of the greater conflict and the geographical location.

The book is also filled with wonderful little-known facts. It brings forward the reality that within the realm of military affairs, there are very few new problems. The book covers the introduction of computers needed to sift through data; the problems associated with coalition operations, specifically, *working with and trusting allies*; the importance of air assets and communications; and the difficulty of fighting a limited war under considerable military and political constraints.

Of great interest is the author's coverage of the psychological warfare component of MACVSOG and the group's efforts at infiltrating the North, and conversely, trying to stymie the avalanche of troops, equipment, and supplies flowing into the South by way of the Ho Chi Minh Trail. The accounts of agents trying to infiltrate, the phantom drops and agents, the counter-intelligence battle, and the use of special tactics to stop SOG teams interdicting the Ho Chi Minh Trail were fascinating. For example, the SOG teams were so successful that the North Vietnamese were forced to take dramatic action. They began to employ a layered defence of trail watchers, individuals maintaining observation on all possible landing zones [LZs] (in fact, by



In *A Sense of the Sea*, sailor and oceanographer Dr. Brian Whitehouse presents the sea we grew up with and the one that is coming. Read this book to rediscover the sea, and to realize how you obtained your sense of it. About the Author. Brian G. Whitehouse was conceived at sea, as his British parents emigrated to Canada via the port city of Southampton. Reviewed in the United States on January 7, 2012. I read *A Sense of the Sea* yesterday and honestly.....thoroughly enjoyed it. I read it in one session, that's how much I enjoyed it. I particularly enjoyed the way it was presented. Fact, sprinkled with personal history and stories to tie it all together. The seas of the world have a profound effect on our lives. Discover the most beautiful sea and ocean quotes ever. Planet Earth has five great oceans and 113 seas. They represent 72 percent of the surface of the globe, and together they've been an endless source of inspiration for humankind. The oceans and seas have been changing lives since the dawn of time. Saline water is part of who we are, even when it claims souls and dreams. Humans have always experienced an intense relationship with the oceans. Pouring feelings into the seas is an ancient practice. We've done it through philosophy. We all have a sense of the sea, but we can sense something without understanding it, and most of us grew up unaware of major advancements in our knowledge of the sea. Some of us even grew up thinking... read more at Kobo. We all have a sense of the sea, but we can sense something without understanding it, and most of us grew up unaware of major advancements in our knowledge of the sea. Some of us even grew up thinking... read more at Kobo. *A Sense of the Sea*. Booktopia has *A Sense of the Sea, Our View of the Sea and How We Got It* by Brian G. Whitehouse. Buy a discounted Paperback of *A Sense of the Sea* online from Australia's leading online bookstore. Booktopia has *A Sense of the Sea, Our View of the Sea and How We Got It* by Brian G. Whitehouse. The Ocean is the heart of the planet. Water covers more than two-thirds of the Earth's surface. Sea plants, like Posidonia, produce 70% of the oxygen we breathe. How we are emptying the ocean. Overfishing explained. What is biodiversity change? Holding 97% of the water of our planet, almost all rain that drops on land comes from the sea. The ocean absorbs CO2, to keep the carbon cycle, and accordingly temperatures on earth, in balance. It is like our global climate control system. 3. It is an important source of food. The ocean is the number one source of protein for more than a billion people. Fish accounts for about 15.7% of the animal protein consumed globally (2). Although, not everything is fish and seafood. Read Common Sense Media's *Song of the Sea* review, age rating, and parents guide. Your purchase helps us remain independent and ad-free. Get it now on. Searching for streaming and purchasing options Expert Review X of Y. Common Sense review | 0:55. *Song of the Sea*. Crítica en español. X of Y. Official trailer. *Song of the Sea*. X of Y. X of Y. How do the characters in *Song of the Sea* demonstrate communication, courage, and perseverance? Why are these important character strengths? What is the movie saying about strong feelings?