

MCC(AW/EXW/SW) William F. Gowdy Fleet Combat Camera Pacific

MCC Bill Gowdy is a native of the San Fernando Valley in Los Angeles, California. He graduated from Canoga Park High School in 1978 and enlisted in the Navy in 1979, making him one of the longest-serving members of the Navy's public affairs/visual media community.

He graduated from Recruit Training Command, San Diego, California, in December 1979, reporting Photographer's Mate "A" School (Naval Schools of Photography) in Pensacola, Florida in January 1980. He reported to his first duty station, Atlantic Fleet Audio Visual Command, Norfolk, Virginia, in April 1980, where he rose from PHAR to PH2 and completed Motion Picture "C" School in Pensacola, Florida.

In August 1983 he transferred to Fleet Audio Visual Facility Lemoore, where he was selected for the Navy's Advanced Motion Media program, then held at the University of Southern California's prestigious School of Cinema, class of 1984/5. He is presently the only graduate of that program still serving.

Upon completion of the program he reported to Fleet Audio Visual Command Pacific, San Diego, California. When the unit changed names to Fleet Imaging Command Pacific, he was realigned under the command's newly re-established Combat Camera Group Pacific. While there he made two deployments to the unit's Detachment Alfa at NAS Cubi Point in the Republic of the Philippines, and additional deployments throughout the Pacific Fleet AOR and rose to the rank of PH1.

In 1990 he transitioned to the Naval Reserve, assigned to Reserve Combat Camera Group Pacific where he served as production LPO and Admin Officer. During this time he worked for a number of production companies and cable television networks in the Los Angeles area in a variety of production positions ranging from satellite uplink operator and segment producer to video editor and sound designer/engineer.

In 2001 during a 6-month recall he decided he missed the camaraderie and work ethic the Navy offered and started the process to return to full active duty. This process, deemed by his recruiter to be a long shot, became a reality with the events of September 11th of that year.

With his transition back to active duty complete in January 2002, he was assigned to Fleet Combat Camera Group Pacific. He was promoted to Chief Petty Officer in 2003 after returning from a deployment to the CENTCOM AOR where he documented the invasion of Iraq among other events and qualified as Enlisted Aviation Warfare Specialist. He made four more deployments to both the CENTCOM and PACOM AORs during his tour as well as multiple shorter TADs in both regions before transferring to USS Blue Ridge (LCC 19) in Yokosuka, Japan, in February 2007.

On board Blue Ridge he was LCPO of the newly aligned Media Services Division and, during gaps in the PAO and Division Officer billets, was "triple-hatted" as ship's PAO/Protocol Officer, Media Services Division Officer and LCPO. While on Blue Ridge he qualified as Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist.

In January 2009 he reported to Commander Navy Region Southwest as Managing Editor of Navy Compass, the regional newspaper. When the paper folded due to economic reasons soon after his arrival, he was reassigned to Naval Base Point Loma as PAO. He spent eight months on an Individual Augmentee tour as PAO for Expeditionary Medical Facility Kuwait. Upon his return he terminated shore duty.

In July 2011 he reported to his present command, Fleet Combat Camera Pacific where he has made one deployment to Afghanistan managing a 15-person joint Combat Camera team in support Combined Joint Special Operations. While there he qualified as Expeditionary Warfare Specialist. He presently serves as Combat Camera's Administrative Officer.

Chief Gowdy's awards include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Navy & Marine Corps Commendation Medal (3 awards), Navy Achievement Medal (5 awards) and many personal and unit awards.