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Navy Diver Enrolls Here

Will Study Ocean, 'Frontier Of Future'

An internationally renowned explorer of the ocean depths enrolled for graduate work in oceanography this week at A&M.

He is Lt. Commander Donald Walsh, who joined Jacques Piccard of Switzerland in recording the deepest ocean dive in history in 1960. They went down seven miles in the bathyscaph Trieste to the ocean floor of the Marianas Trench, 200 miles southwest of Guam in the Pacific Ocean.

For his part in the record-shattering dive, Commander Walsh received the Legion of Merit from the President of the United States and numerous other awards from various organizations, including recognition as one of the 10 outstanding young men in the nation in 1960 by the Junior Chamber of Commerce.

Commander Walsh, although on full time duty with the Navy, will be on scholarship for his work toward a masters degree in oceanography. His aim is to gain the academic background to allow him to advance in the oceanographic field.

"The people in the oceanography department have really given me a break, and I am grateful for the opportunity to apply myself," Commander Walsh commented. "I looked over the offerings of several schools and decided A&M has the best general background in the country for all around training in oceanography."

A graduate of the U. S. Naval Academy, Walsh has 11 years of service in the Navy, but says he has always been a sailor.

Asked if he planned to get his doctorate at A&M, Walsh commented, "That would be presumptuous of me to say. Right now, I don't know whether I can do the graduate work. I'll tell you this. I'm really going to try."

"Inner space is the frontier of the future, even more than outer

space, although there's no comparison now," he said.

"The Navy is trying to make the ocean transparent, but is just on the threshold of solving the problem. We are thinking now in thousands of yards, when the problem is thousands of miles. I want to be one of the pioneers of innerspace exploration."

Commander Walsh's exploits

with the "Trieste" have been written and illustrated in Life magazine, Reader's Digest, the National Geographic and other publications. He has traveled thousands of miles and made hundreds of talks about the dive and the future of oceanography.

"There's not enough training of oceanographic scientists. Where else can man go to pioneer but the ocean," he explained.

"I'm not knocking aerospace, but man is ready to leap into the cosmos although 71 per cent of our planet is virtually unknown."

"The Soviets have the largest oceanographic program in the world, but the U. S. is taking steps to achieve parity and superiority. In times of cold war tension of powerful submarine force could strangle world trade, and 98.2 per cent of world trade is by ships. We have to defend against a surprise missile attack from beneath the sea. And we have to prepare a defense of the sea lanes of commerce," he continued.

Commander Walsh plans to continue "telling the gospel" for the Navy and in behalf of oceanographic progress. He is scheduled to speak at the Smithsonian Institute Feb. 17 on "The U. S. and the Oceans."

The 33-year old officer has a varied background. A native of Berkeley, Calif., he won a competitive appointment to the Naval Academy in 1950. He served two years aboard a cargo ship after graduation before joining the submarine service. In 1959 he was made officer in charge of Bathyscaph Trieste, a post he held for three and one-half years.

Commander Walsh lacks only his thesis for a masters degree in political science from San Diego State College. He plans to complete that work in addition to a self-study course toward a general law education.

Hobbies are numerous for Walsh. Photography, sailing, scuba diving and travel are major interests.

His wife, Joan, plans to do work at A&M toward a degree in zoology.

"It's one of the few things Don doesn't know a lot about," she confided. She, too, is a photography bug, likes to travel, and plans to take instruction in scuba diving here.

The Walshs live at 405 Fairway in Bryan.



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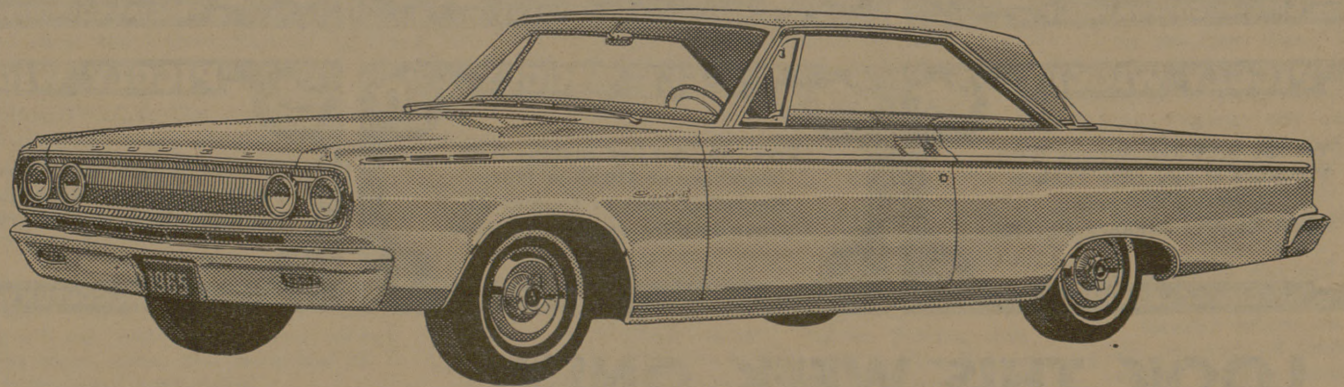
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