



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY


USS JAMES E. WILLIAMS (DDG 95)
FPO AE 09575-1204

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Ser 95/210
29 May 06

Honored Veterans and Distinguished Guests,

I regret that I am unable to attend the dedication of the Tidewater Memorial to Brown Water Navy veterans, but I think the reason for my absence is fitting for the occasion. It seems appropriate that while this dedication is taking place, the warship named for one of our Brown Water heroes, Boatswain's Mate James Elliott Williams, is deployed overseas, in the Fifth Fleet Area of Operations. We strive daily to ensure that our accomplishments are commensurate not only with the achievements of BM1 Williams, but also with the achievements and sacrifices of all Brown Water Navy veterans. It is vitally important that we have memorials like the one dedicated today to remember the heroes of our past, those who returned as well as those who did not.

Today's United States Navy is creating a new Riverine Force. Because of those who have gone before and those with us today, like our honorary shipmates the Gamewardens, we will be able to build a force that may some day live up to the legacy left to us by the Brown Water Navy of Vietnam. Thank you for all that you have done and all that you continue to do in support of our Navy and this great nation. God Bless you all.


IAN M. HALL