

Chief Petty Officer Robert J Welch USN, Retired

A native of New Hill, North Carolina, Robert "Bobby" Welch entered the Naval Service in October 1993 at Recruit Training Command, Orlando, Florida. He attended Equipment Operator "A" School in Port Hueneme, California graduating in March 1994.

His subsequent duty assignments include Naval Mobile Construction Battalion ONE THREE THREE, Gulfport, Mississippi from March 1994 to March 1998 and Public Works Detachment, Naval Station Rota, Spain from March 1998 to May 2000. He separated from active duty in May 2000 and that following November joined the Naval Reserve assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion TWO FIVE Detachment 0825 at Naval Operational Support Center Chicago, Great Lakes, Illinois. In 2006, he was mobilized on one-year orders, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and served as the ALFA Company Operations Supervisor, Transportation Supervisor and Leading Petty Officer for NMCB 25 Detachment 1 located at Camp Al Taqaddum, Iraq. He served as the Officer in Charge of Detachment 0825 from 2009 to 2011. He retired as a Chief Petty Officer after 20 years of honorable service in February 2013.

He is a qualified Seabee Combat Warfare Specialist and his personal/unit awards include the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (2 awards), the Navy Unit Commendation (3 awards), the Meritorious Unit Commendation, the Navy "E" Ribbon (5 Awards), the Army Superior Unit Award, the Navy Good Conduct Medal (2 awards), the Naval Reserve Meritorious Service Medal (4 awards), the National Defense Service Medal (2 awards), the Iraq Campaign Medal with bronze campaign star and Fleet Marine Force Combat Operation Insignia, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, the Sea Service Deployment Ribbon (3 awards), the Navy and Marine Corps Overseas Service Ribbon (2 awards) the Armed Forces Reserve Medal with Bronze Hourglass and Mobilization devices, the Navy Expert Rifleman Medal, and the Navy Expert Pistol Shot Medal.

He continues his service by volunteering with Hereditary, Patriotic and Veteran Service Organizations, serving on various committees or as an elected officer at the local, intermediate and state levels. Most notably, with the Veterans of Foreign Wars, having served as a Post Commander from 2014-2016, District Commander 2016-2017 and finally as the State Commander for the Department of Illinois for the 2021-2022 term. He is currently serving as the VFW State Historian for the Department of Illinois.

His membership in these organizations include:

- General Society Sons of the Revolution
- Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
- Army & Navy Union of the United States
- National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution
- Naval Order of the United States
- Military Order of Foreign Wars
- Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Military Order of the World Wars
- American Legion
- 40 and 8
- Military Order of the Cootie
- Disabled American Veterans
- AMVETS
- Seabee Veterans of America

Bobby has a degree in Construction Management and is currently employed as an Engineering Equipment Operator with the US Army Corps of Engineers, Chicago, IL. He resides in Richton Park, IL.