

USS BRISTOL DD857

VETERANS

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Fellow Shipmates:

This is my last letter as the USS Bristol Association has come to a close. Our last reunion was held in Myrtle Beach, S.C. with fourteen shipmates in attendance, along with wives and guests, for a total of 32 people.

It was understandable that a lot of shipmates could not attend this final reunion due to COVID-19 and other health reasons.

The hotel accommodations right on the ocean were a home run.

The Board and I appreciated everyone who attended our reunions throughout the years. In 22 years, we only had to cancel two reunions due to uncontrollable circumstances. It was a great run.

Any monies left over after the Myrtle Beach Reunion, will be donated to a group called "Tunnels to Towers". This was voted on by the Association and will happen with the closing of the Association bank account by our Treasurer, Tony Molnar.

I want to certainly thank each and every member of the Board for their participation and in making my job easier.

Please stay safe; God Bless you till we meet again.

"I WAS A SAILOR ONCE"

This reflects memories of all of us and our time served aboard the USS Bristol. It is an essay

that I read in the Bristol Newsletter that Ed Lynch religiously puts out four times a year. I made some adjustments and additions to personalize it for this occasion, our last reunion.

I liked the sounds of the Navy – The piercing trill of the Boatswain pipe, revelry, all hands and the announcements that were made, good or bad.

I liked standing on the Bow in the early morning with salt spray hitting my face and clean ocean winds whipping by. The clang of the ship's bell on the quarter deck, harsh and strong language and laughter of sailors at work.

I liked Navy vessels, all types, especially aircraft carriers and destroyers; they were a team.

I liked the proud names of Navy ships, Yorktown, Essex, Intrepid, Wasp, The Hyman, Purdy, Beatty and Bristol.

I liked the tempo of the Navy Band, liberty call and the spicy scent of a foreign port.

Again, the sound of the Boatswain Pipe – All hands for working parties, loading ammo, stores and supplies that didn't always wind up where they should have.

I liked our crew, shipmates from all parts of the land; farms, small towns, large towns, the mountains and the prairies. From all walks of life.

I liked the sound of the word “Shipmates”. I trusted and depended on them as they trusted and depended on me. In a word, they were “shipmates” then and forever.

I liked the surge of adventure when the word was passed “Now Hear This, Now Hear This”, “Now station the special sea and anchor detail, all hands to quarters for leaving port,” sometimes not really knowing where we were headed.

The work was hard and dangerous, especially when G Q was sounded, a scramble to get to your duty station. General Quarters, General Quarters, all hands man your battle stations”. This was followed by the hurried clamor of running feet on ladders and the resounding thump of watertight doors as the Bristol transformed herself in a few brief seconds from a peaceful workplace to a “weapon of war”; ready for anything.

I liked the excitement of pulling alongside of a carrier, oiler or another destroyer. We would take on fuel, mail, stores. We also Hi-Lined a Chaplain for Sunday service in a good old Bo’sun chair. We would also exchange movies at that time.

The EM’s (Electrician Mates) would set up the projector on the fan tail or in the galley and any shipmates not on watch or special duty would enjoy a movie. Voices would always ring out – we saw this one, don’t you have anything new?

I liked the serenity of the sea after a day of hard ships work, as flying fish flitted across wave tops and sunset gave way to night.

I liked drifting off to sleep, lulled by the noises of the ship, large and small, that told me my ship, the Bristol, was alive and well and that my shipmates on watch would keep me safe.

I liked the quiet mid-watches with the strong aroma of coffee. Most of my watches were in the engine room on one of the main switchboards and taking readings throughout the ship.

Speaking of coffee, the Keurig coffee maker has nothing on us – in the engine room we had our own coffee maker. Our machinist would use a 5 inch shell casing and turned it into an instant coffee maker, hooking it up to a 600 LB superheated steam line, open the valve for a few seconds and you have INSTANT COFFEE.

Sometimes my night watch would take me up to the Bridge to check out our Running Lights. A voice would call out “hey Rats” (short for Ratcliffe) do you want to drive? I would say

“sure, what’s the heading?” We were all called by our last name or a nickname; mine was “Rats”.

In the early morning, the smell of coffee, chipped beef or SOS (shit on a shingle) told me what was being cooked for breakfast.

I liked it when we had all four boilers lit off and moving at flank speed (around 32 knots) and then there would be a faint whiff of stack gas.

I liked the proud names of the Navy, Halsey, Perry, Nimitz, Farragut, John Paul Jones.

A sailor would find much in the Navy, such as comrades in arms, pride in self and country, an adolescent would find adulthood.

In years that have come and gone when sailors are home from the sea, we still remember with fondness and respect, the ocean in all its moods; the calm, the storm-tossed water surging over our bow and signal flags snapping at the yardarm.

Having gone ashore for good, we grow humble about our navy days, when the seas were a part of us and a new port of call was over the horizon.

Thus, WE STAND TALL AND SAY “I WAS A SAILOR ONCE ON THE USS BRISTOL”.

Remember – wear your hats, your shirts, your jackets proudly whenever you can.

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Wallace Dann YNC was aboard the Bristol from 1944 to 1945 and is the last living Plank Owner in the Association. Wally and his wife Anne had attended reunions and more recently he attended with his Daughter Kathy Roberts. Wally was scheduled to be at the final reunion but a few weeks before, Kathy contacted us and said that Wally was doing fine but his Doctor felt he shouldn't travel to Myrtle Beach.

We were looking forward to him being there so we could celebrate his 100th birthday.

Kathy was kind enough to send a photo of Wally with the Certificate and award he received from the Governor of Maryland along with a copy of the interview that Wally gave to the Star-Spangled Banner.

The son of another Wallace Dann, an independent electrical engineer suffering with diminished income in the Great Depression, Wallace Dann, Junior, was born in Washington, D.C., in the last month of the Woodrow Wilson presidency. His mother was a clerk in the Department of Commerce, under Herbert Hoover as the Secretary. Wally best remembered experience of his pre-teen years was catching fish with a family friend from the Washington Tidal Basin. The fish was also a welcomed dish at the dinner table.

After his father died unexpectedly in 1933, Wally and his mother moved nearer to his mother's family in Baltimore. Wally went to Forest Park High School and graduated with the class of 1938. Of that time he recalls that Spiro "Ted" Agnew was an upperclassman who played the piano superbly at school assemblies. Wally cut lawns with a hand mower or shoveled snow for 25 cents and went door-to-door selling Colliers Magazine. An injured knee prevented him from continuing on the high school track team.

After graduation Wally was hired as a runner-messenger by the Mercantile Trust Company.

Along with Wally, several friends then opted to join the Baltimore Naval Reserve. Wally reasoned that by joining he would get more good training and have better odds to survive the impending war. By memorizing the eyechart, he successfully passed the physical on a second try and joined the Third Division of the Baltimore Naval Reserve Unit, which was also the USS HENDERSON (ATP-I)' Guantanamo Bay Naval Base Cuba.

Maryland Naval Militia, drilling at the old Fifth Regiment Armory on Howard St.

On short notice in October 1940, all three divisions of the Baltimore Naval Reserve Unit

were the first in the U.S to be activated. Dann recalls that the sailors were issued seabags,

boarded a train to New York City, then were trucked to embark on the USS Henderson

(ATP-I) in Bayonne, NJ, destined for Wally had specific memories of his first shipboard experience during the eight-day trip to GTMO. First, the Baltimore Naval Reserve Division was assigned to the Landing Party as an adjunct to Marine Corps in GTMO. Since their recently issued seabags had no Landing Force uniforms, the sailors dyed undress white uniforms khaki---boiling them in coffee in the huge urns of the troop ship.

Seaman Apprentice (E-2) Wally Dann was assigned a cleaning station on the deck a few levels

below the bridge. Wally managed to create unforeseen attention about his cleaning station when he hung some personal laundry to dry on a convenient "rope." He watched with great attention that the Captain had come out on the bridge above him. The Captain animatedly marched around the bridge, waving his hands in air until a master-at-arms petty officer arrived and ordered Seaman Dann to take down his laundry. Seaman Dann's skivvies were on the signal halyard!! The Captain was upset 'Never in his more than 20 years of naval service ... ' and a Navy warship was approaching that might be

looking for signals from the Henderson!" (The interviewer notes: "Imagine the signal man checking the Allied Signal Publication for a signal of skivvies and dungarees!") Upon arrival GTMO the reservists were assigned to the Gunnery Department, were berthed in tents. The reservists constructed and repaired Battle Rafts. These rafts were floating wooden targets for ships' gunnery practice. If gunners were successful, the reservists had a very busy day ahead. Later duties were to construct harbor nets and anti-submarine nets. Then Seaman Dann was assigned specifically as clerk for the Chief Gunner. Since there was no building with office space available, the Chief Gunners Mate used the porch on his family quarters as an office for Dann, his clerk, who recalled that occasionally the Chief's wife brought lemonade and cookies. Some other memories:

On one occasion before the War with Germany, while the sailors were installing the antisubmarine nets at the harbor entrance, a Germany submarine was on the surface observing their installation. A number of older, World War I, destroyers, known as "four stackers" were present as a very impressive congregation of warships. A new seaplane hangar was constructed which allowed the Gunnery Department to have space for an office. A new Gunnery Department Head arrived, who

had served in the Navy since the Spanish-America War. He encouraged Wally to seek advancement as a yeoman (Navy clerical and administrative specialist), instead of his plan to be an electrician. Wally was motivated to pass the Seaman First Class (E-3) exam for the salary raise from \$18 to \$21 per month. Soon after Seaman Dann taught himself typing and some basic shorthand, became a petty officer third class (E-4) and volunteered for transfer to other assignments beyond GTMO.

In March 1943 YN3 Dann was ordered to yeoman school in Melville, Rhode Island. With the training behind him, he advanced to YN 1 (E-6) as soon as he met time in service.

He was promoted to Chief Yeoman YNC (E-7) at five years of active service and assigned to Anti-aircraft Training Center, Princes Neck, near Newport, RI. After the Great Atlantic Hurricane of September 1944 demolished the Anti-aircraft Training Center, Chief Petty Officer Dann transferred to the Pre-Commissioning Unit of the destroyer USS Bristol (DD 857). The Bristol was building in the Bethlehem Steel Shipyard, San Pedro, California, for assignment to the U.S. Pacific Fleet. USS Bristol was commissioned on St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 1945. She did her shakedown and deployment training out of San Diego, then deployed via Pearl Harbor, HI, to

join the Japan Invasion Fleet in the Caroline Islands. Chief Petty Officer Dann was the senior clerical administrator on the USS Bristol, reporting to Commanding Officer and the Executive Officer. He was the battle stations talker for Captain, following and repeating the Captain's orders to all stations over sound powered phones.

While transiting alone the ship was alerted about a Japanese submarine. From the ship's bridge, YNC Dann witnessed torpedo wakes that passed ahead of the ship.

During an underway fuel



replenishment with the fleet oiler, USS Ashtabula (AO-51), Bristol was severely damaged. Her starboard anchor had caught on a line from the USS Ashtabula as Bristol was coming alongside and the fluke of the anchor ripped the side as it was dragged along. As Bristol neared Guam for repairs, she was for a short time misidentified as

enemy and just avoided being strafed and bombed by a friendly U.S. bomber.

USS Bristol was under repair as hostilities ended in August 1945. Wally recalled an excited crew member shouting "War is over. We dropped the 'platonie' bomb." In August 1945, the War Department began discharging servicemen with enough service points. Chief Petty Officer Dann

left USS Bristol at Mog Nog Island, Ulithi, Caroline Islands, and boarded a US Liberty ship for Portland, Oregon. He recalls the awesome sight of the hundreds of ships assembled for the Japan Invasion Fleet; and then the surreal "out of war" experience of waiters serving his table on the cruise back to the U.S.

After crossing Continental US by rail, YNC Wallace Dann was processed for discharge at the

South Street Naval Station in Boston in October 1945. When he returned to Baltimore, he was hired again for a more senior job at Mercantile Trust Co. and began a 5 year night school program for a law degree at University of Baltimore.

After graduating first in his 1950 law school class, Wally and a classmate opened a law practice in Dundalk. With an interest in the Reserve Naval Security Group Unit of Baltimore, he reenlisted in the Naval Reserve as a Chief Communications

Technician (E-7) and also applied for an officer's commission. Although he was offered an appointment as Maryland Assistant Attorney General, at the same time he was called to active duty for the Korean War and so had to decline. However, he served only a few days on active duty as a Chief Petty Officer before his commission as lieutenant (junior grade) came through; and he was then released from active duty.

Attorney Dann accepted a civilian appointment as Assistant General Counsel to the staff of the U.S. Army Quartermaster General. He recalls having to resolve a case of getting Mamie Eisenhower, President's widow, an ID card for the U.S. Army commissary. Although he was offered a U.S. Army commission, he chose to remain with the Naval Reserve and reconnected with the Naval Security Group in Baltimore. Being promoted through the officer ranks to Commander (O-5), he completed duty with the Security Group as its Commanding Officer. CDR Dann warmly remembers that the personnel under his command. They presented him with an officer's sword at departing change-of-command ceremony. He completed two more years of service on the staff of the Baltimore Naval Reserve Battalion at Fort McHenry and retired from service in October 1968.

CDR Dann, USNR (retired) connected with the Baltimore Chapter of The Retired Officers

Association soon after. He served as president of the renamed organization, Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) 2001-2004, and came back again as president to revive the Chapter in 2010-2011. He received special recognition from the National MOAA organization

at the Chapter's Annual Banquet in 2013.

MOAA President V ADM Ryan pins leadership award on CDR Wally Dann. November 2013

Special Recognition

VADM Ryan, USN (Ret.) gave special recognition to CDR Wally Dann in presenting the MOAA Leadership Award with lapel pin. CDR Dann was cited for "your dedication and persistence of effective and enthusiastic leadership which led to the revival of the chapter. Your exemplary leadership and selfless devotion were critical factors, contributing to the chapter's

name change-The Star Spangled Banner Chapter, which promotes the enthusiasm it imparts to the membership." CDR Dann responded with brief remarks about the three most important accomplishments of the chapter-strong support of the ROTC, work on legislative affairs, and shared camaraderie.

As the oldest Star Spangled Banner Chapter member, Wally Dann, will cut the ceremonial birthday cake with his naval officer's sword at the annual banquet in November 2021. Then he plans to present the sword to the Chapter for use in future ceremonies. In Memoriam

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Shipmates Comments On Serving In Bristol

Manny Calimquin, SKC (RET)

My fellow shipmates, these pictures of the Bristol appeared in my Facebook and thought of forwarding for your information. Sorry to miss the reunion because of health consideration, as you know at age of 82 is no longer as I was during our active duty years, but I am okay, BTW how was the reunion turn out to be. I am sure you guys as always recycled those old stories about our time on the Bristol. Remember the fight on board a bus with the crew of the USS Great Sitkin (AE) in Guantanamo in 1962" I was very apprehensive for (as I suspected) for paying damage of broken windows and seats of the bus.. XO LCDR Morel told me about it of the fight the following morning in the wardroom (was TN at the

time) and he was not that overly concern about it, because we are all drunk just had a good time at the EM club. The civilian driver got out of the bus quick and called security and in minutes we were surrounded by Marines and Navy SP. They marched us toward our respective ships like recruits. Any of you remember this craziness of us

Welcome Aboard,
Naval history is full of significant and interesting events. This brief history of what has transpired in the past and relate them to how these events have shaped the U.S. Navy today.

USS Bristol (DD 857), an Allen M. Sumner-class destroyer was launched on 29 October 1944 by the Bethlehem Shipbuilding, San Pedro, California and commissioned on 17 March 1945. She was the second ship of the United States Navy to be named for Rear Admiral Mark Lambert Bristol, who served as Commander-in-Chief

Indian Ocean, Persian Gulf, Cuban Missile Blockade, Mediterranean and Guantanamo Bay. USS Bristol served her country for 24 years, 8 months and 4 days of active, until decommissioned on 21 November 1969. She received one battle star for her World War II service and two battle stars for her Korean service.



Photo: Amsterdam, Holland, January 28 - February 5 1953, (L to R) USS Bristol (DD-857) and USS Johnston (DD-821) during a regularly scheduled port call.



Photo: Circa 1960.



Photo: Boston Naval Shipyard, August 1961.



Photo: USS Bristol (DD-857) refueling from the USS AMERICA (CVA-66) off the Virginia Capes, April 1 1965. Photo by PH1 Frank W. Greenwald, USN 1112103. From the collection of CDR Thomas B. Ray (USS Essex CV-9).

Editor's Note: My assignment during this evolution was on the bridge holding a grease pencil and recording course, speed, distance to America. When our "snipes" signaled that America should stop pumping fuel and commence blow back (to blow air in fuel line to clear any remaining fuel) America signaled that blow back complete our guys disconnected the fuel line from the forward starboard fueling station. Blow back

was still underway and #6 Navy Special Fuel Oil nearly killed the guys standing around the fueling station. Thank God no one got seriously injured



Photo: Taken in the Welland Canal, July 1965.



Photo: Destroyer Squadron 30 in Montreal July 1965.



Photo: USN #1120580. Chesapeake Bay, Virginia, April 26 1966, an aerial starboard quarter view of USS Bristol (DD 857) underway, outbound. US Navy photo by

PH3 R. J. Meckel, USN. US Naval Photographic Center, NS Anacostia, Washington D.C.



Photo: Off the east coast of the United States 1967.

Ed, as you write the last memorial about our time on the Bristol, I thought of sending you what I remember about my 5 years stay on board'.

I came aboard, May 1961 just turned 21 years old right after the Steward Apprentice School in San Diego. Took a Greyhound bus

From Diego all the way to Newport RI. It was a long ride but I enjoyed so much to see what America is all about. As a kid from the Philippines everything I saw on the way was so unfamiliar as there was still snow in some parts of my route. As I arrive in Newport, RI, just a walking distance where the YMCA was, It was a welcome sight as I saw Sailors around. I took a room for \$3.00 for the night and following morning I inquire about the Bristol and was just given a phone number to call. I was told that

the Bristol was not import (on a Med Cruise) and advised to report to the USS Yosemite, a Destroyer Tender. After two weeks on board the Tender, Bristol arrived in port. I reported aboard with just two white stripes on my dress blues.

As Stewards, we worked for the Officers. Our group was made up of Blacks, Filipinos and a Guamenian. One black TN refused to work and just sat in the mess deck saying he was all feed up working for someone else (Officers) as servant. The XO talked to him what he wants. Jerry "bird dog" Turner, this black TN, liked very much to work with the first Division, Deck Force. He got his wish and the XO, LCDR Hennesey recommended him to participate on the E4 BM exam. He passed that exam and so happy with the BM3 stripes on his dungarees. In another situation we lost one TN name Eduardo Montoya in an accident over mount 51, him as a loader during on one of our refresher training in Guantanamo Cuba in 1963. His leg was dangling by the mount gun pit and when "AIR ACTION", was given command from the bridge, suddenly the Mount turned automatic moving in every direction. Montoya's leg was

caught in less than quarter inch clearance between the gun and the pit and his leg was crushed barely hanging by the skin still on it. His life was saved by our a good HM1 Nunn (that he eventually got a medal for it). As this was happening the CO CDR Bress took control and led Bristol run to the max, so fast that few feet away from the pier made a reverse course that turn the clear blue water into a mud. on the Pier were bunch of Security, and ambulance trucks/personnel awaiting for the Bristol. Montoya's life was saved and few days later the CO, XO, LCDR Morel and most of us Stewards visited him in the hospital and saw the guy in tears with all the tubes, tapes and medical appliances attached to him. The attending Physician said as soon as his condition improved and safe for a flight, he will be sent to Philadelphia Naval Hospital for an artificial leg. I heard after ward that as soon as healed well enough, he was sent to USA Clark Airforce Base in the Philippines to recuperate and be with is family.,

I contributed few articles in pass newsletters to SKI, a former secretary and you can refer to that. While on board I served 4 CO's, CDRS BRESS, POWELL, JOHNSTON AND

BUTLER., XOS, GREEN, MOREL, HENNESSEY, 4TH ONE i FORGOT 4, SUPPLY OFFICERS; WILLEN, GOLDSMITH, LEHMAN AND KANALEY.. I made SD3 cross rate to SK3, took that exam while on reenlistment leave in US Naval Station Subic Bay, Philippines. After my leave as I arrived back on the Bristol moored in Brooklyn Navy Yard, everyone in the Quarter Deck were yelling I no longer a steward but an SK3. After 6 months I received Transfer Orders to ComNavMarianas, in Guam.

The journey I have been thru is kind of hard. Having been a Navy Recruit from the Philippines I arrived USA as non-resident alien. not even having a passport. My entry was about the on going Vietnam conflict which is contributory to the open recruitment of Navy Stewards in the Philippines. The country being a former colony of USA, we are given the privilege to join the service because for one thing no one from US born like to be stewards. The ending turned out to be good for me retiring as SKC and put, in another 21 years Federal Civil Service working for the Marines as civilian supply tech. Now fully retired married to the

same woman since December 1964 while I was assigned with the Bristol, with 3 grown sons and 4 grand children.. Now 82 years young and if the Navy will recall me during National Emergency. I am most willing to come forward.

In response to Paul's email:

Thanks, for the info. It sure is sad about the conclusion of our yearly reunion. The remnants of this whole thing was the USS Bristol License Plate frame on my two vehicles. I was asked few times about the ship and proudly say it was a veteran of WW II. Korea and Vietnam and mostly homeported back east. Lets get in touch thru email. Please, I like to have the last copy of the Bristol Newsletter by Ed Lynch. Thanks everyone. Manny, SK3.

Earl "Charlie Weaver

THIS WAS WHEN WE GOT THE GREENIE WEINE DOWN THE AFT ENGINE ROOM HATCH !
SEVERAL OF US WENT OVER TO HANK QUATTLEBAUM'S MOM'S HOUSE AND HAD A PARTY DRINKING HOMEMADE PEACH BRANDY - GOT PRETTY DAMN SNOCKERED AND FELL ASLEEP - WOKE UP AND SAID HOLY SHIT THE SHIP IS GETTING UNDERWAY FOR CUBA! WE ALL PILED IN A CAR AND HAULED BUTT TO THE PIER AND THERE SHE WAS

GIANT LEAP TO GET ON BOARD AND MADE IT BY!

Samuel Dalfanzo

I'm sorry that I couldn't make the reunion. I hope that sometime in the future the group can have a destination get together so we may be able to keep close relationships.

God bless to all,
Sam & Gerry



Marvin Marsh

Ed,, How to condense my time aboard the Bristol is a challenge but I will do my best.. The feeling when the ship pulled away on my first Med Cruise, All the subsequent cruises,, Walking the ruins of Ancient Greece , Cities like London, Glasgow, Amsterdam, Londonderry, (Kissing the Blarney Stone) Cork, Valpariso, Chile and many others. But my most memorable is while in port at Canne , France taking 5 days leave and with Radar buddy Bob Grissom going to the train station and buying tickets to Paris.. An all night trip across France on the

Orient Express type train!! 3 days touring all the famous places and I took pictures from atop the Eiffel Tower with my little Brownie Camera!!

But the most interesting story of all is how I got on the Bristol in the first place.. After Boot Camp I chose and was assigned Radio School. I was never much for school stuff but this Radio woke up my talents . Of the 19 students I applied myself and finished as Honorman!!

Everyone anxious as the Billets were posted looking for choice shore stations.. Honorman gets first choice so we got 19 Destroyers to pick from listed alphabetically with USS Bristol top one so I took it!!! What a deal!! Going through the Gatun Lock on the Panama Canal that my Grandfather helped build icing on the cake!!

Thanks to the Bristol for making my life special !!! Thanks to my 3 Sons for carrying on the tradition,, Retired 1st. Class Greg Marsh, Retired Chief Doug Marsh, (a Pentagon survivor) and Retired Chief Bob Marsh.. Sea Stories forever..

Richard Brusky

Richard told his story about serving in Bristol when he was a teenage farm boy from Ohio who only went to the 8th grade. In those days, there were no school buses to take Richard to high school.

Richard told his father that he was going to join the navy. His father took him to a local recruiting station where he applied for enlistment. When the recruiter asked about his high school education, Richard told the story about no school buses.

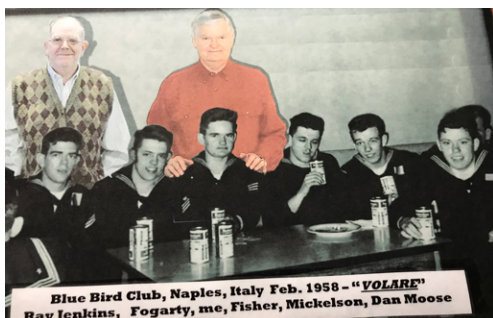
The navy, at the time, required a high school diploma as part of enlistment requirements. In any event, the recruited gave Richard the entrance exam, which he scored higher than high school graduates. Richard enlisted and because a BT (Boiler Technician). Richard made the round the world cruise that took that crew to Korea where Bristol participated in shore bombardment. Bristol received a Battle Star for her service in that conflict.

Richard has been accompanied by his son, Brian, who is a nuclear submarine veteran (Bubble Head) the past couple of reunions.

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Ray Jenkins Editor's note:

Ray Jenkins supplied many of our reunions with potato chips etc. produced by his company Uncle Ray's. On the back of each bag was a story about his life and times both as a boy growing up and his time on the Bristol. A few of the stories are included. There is a picture of Ray and a number of friends in the Blue Bird Club in Naples Italy in 1958. Tony Molnar's son in law had doctored the picture by inserting Ray and Tony as they looked 60 years later standing behind the 1958 Ray and Tony.



We hope that you enjoy the stories.

UNCLE RAY **CHAPTER 11** *Saves Thanksgiving*

I was 17 years old when I joined the Navy in September 1955. Before that I had been working in a foundry, but the Navy was more than just a place to get away from coal dust. My three years in the service were very special to me, and bring back a lot of fond memories.

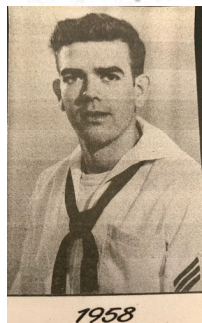
My entry into the food industry came aboard the USS Bristol, a destroyer, where I was a cook and baker. It was there that I learned what to do when life hands you lemons - or when life accidentally boils the meat off 12 turkeys hours before Thanksgiving dinner.

The night before, I had placed the turkeys inside three very large steam jacket kettles to thaw. The valve leaked, and on Thanksgiving morning 1957, I found a dozen bare turkeys.

Dinner was at noon. With no time to thaw more turkeys, I took the meat that had fallen from the bones and placed it in several deep roasting pans. Then I melted 20 pounds of butter, poured it over the turkey meat and added poultry seasoning and salt. I placed the turkey in the oven at 300 degrees.

Meanwhile, I used the water and drippings from the kettles to make turkey noodle soup and gravy, with a little left over to use in the dressing. We had cranberry sauce, mixed vegetables, hot rolls, tossed salad, and pumpkin pie for dessert.

After dinner, a line of more than 100 officers, crewmen and wives came by the galley to compliment the meal - especially the moist, tender turkey.



UNCLE RAY **CHAPTER 12**

A Good Deed Gone Bad

At 19 years old I was having the best time of my life. I had been a cook for about a year on board the U.S.S. Bristol DD857. We did a lot of sailing, Cuba, Puerto Rico, South America, Italy, Spain, Norway, Germany, England.

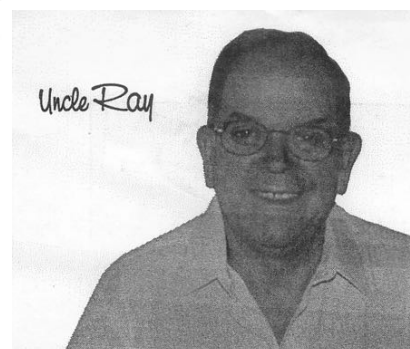
One day while in England our mailman went ashore to get the last bag of mail before we sailed. He came by the galley (kitchen) to tell me he had missed breakfast and did I have something to eat.

So I made him a bacon and fried egg sandwich. He took the sandwich and thanked me. A few minutes later I heard yelling coming from the passage way. Looking down the hall I saw the mailman spitting and telling me I was the worst cook in the navy.

He took the sandwich and threw it on the deck. Going back into the galley I thought what an ungrateful jerk he was. I took a wet towel and started to clean the grill. To my surprise there was a great deal of soap suds on the grill. Someone had used liquid soap the night before and put it where we kept the liquid shortening. Did I feel bad.

I went to the freezer and took out 2 beef tenderloin steaks (the officers food) and made the mailman 2 steak sandwiches and a gallon jug of chocolate milkshake.

As I gave them to him I thought he was going to hit me. But after I explained to him what happened, we both laughed.



THE LIFE AND TIMES OF UNCLE RAY CHAPTER 13

Riding Out the Storm

There is nothing so confident as a teenager. At 19, I was sure I could handle anything, and I was sure my ship could too.

The U.S.S. Bristol was a great destroyer, but the hurricane we encountered off the coast of Bermuda was a violent storm. We were told that we could not outrun the gale, but would instead have to ride it out – and what a ride we had.

The ship would lift out of the water and shake like a living thing. It would plunge back deep into the waves and roll to the port side, then back, plunge and roll to starboard. For the first 24 hours, most of the crew stayed strapped in their bunks. There was no food, and few were foolhardy enough to get themselves water.

I was a cook. The second day, another cook and I made it to the galley and were able to make coffee and sandwiches for 280 men. On the third day, we had coffee, sandwiches and soup.

The fourth day, everything was back to normal, though the sea was a bit rough. At dinner, we had spaghetti. One sailor left his tray on the table while he fetched a glass of water. When he came back, his tray was missing.

"What blankety-blank so-and-so took my food?!" he hollered. The answer came up moments later. The hatch was open to the sleeping quarters below the mess hall, and up came a sailor with spaghetti on his head. Boy, was he mad.

UNCLE RAY CHAPTER 14

Meets the love of his life

After I was discharged from the Navy in 1958, I came home to Detroit and worked as a baker. I bought a bright red 1961 Dodge Dart, and one morning I took it to the dealership for the customary 1,000-mile checkup.

Boarding a city bus for the ride home, I found it empty except for the driver and four young women. I took one look at Myrna Layton and knew where I would sit.

She looked surprised to see someone next to her on such a wide-open bus. I asked if she was going to work, but she didn't answer. Then I remarked on what a nice day it was, and she said, "Oh, quite."

"You must be from England," I said. She said she wasn't, and looked the other way, out the window. I told her I would like to buy her a cup of coffee, and, after a 30-minute ride, she finally agreed. At the coffee shop on the corner of Michigan Avenue and Cass, she gave me her phone number. I was so swept away that I left without paying.

(A week or so later I returned to pay for the coffee, but the restaurant had gone out of business. If the owner reads this, I owe you 20¢ plus interest. I have to admit that still bothers me.)

On my way to work on another bus four hours later, who should I see but Myrna, who was working a split shift at the telephone company. She was talking to a girlfriend. I asked the friend politely if she would mind sitting somewhere else. Myrna and I talked all the way to my stop.

We dated for about three weeks. One day I introduced her to my mother and father. Later, my mother told me that she thought Myrna might have TB.

I said, "Why would you say that?" She said, "Because she is so skinny."

Myrna and I married 10 months after we met. She continued to work as a telephone operator, and I became a salesman for a bakery.

I would get home one hour before her. So I would cook dinner for her and I. (I was previously a cook on the destroyer USS Bristol.) A typical supper would be pan-fried chicken, milk gravy and biscuits, mashed potatoes, buttered carrots, and heat-and-serve rolls. We did not have money to eat out because we were saving for our first home.

After a year or so and many of my dinners, I asked my dear mom if she still thought Myrna might have TB. Myrna was not quite as skinny as before. Mom said she looked great. She still does, and she never had TB.

That was 58 years ago. After three children, Jennifer, Sandra and Ray Jr., and a lot of wonderful memories, Myrna is still the love of my life.

UNCLE RAY CHAPTER 19

Soap's On

As a 19 year-old cook aboard the USS Bristol there are some interesting stories to tell.

Chief Davis was the boss. The cooks were Katz, O'Dell, Russo and myself. One morning Chief Davis came into the galley (kitchen) and said to Russo: "Did I see you throw the hashbrown potatoes from breakfast over the side?" Russo, who was from Brooklyn, NY replied "Yeah, what else would you have me do with them?" The Chief said "Look stupid, what you have left from breakfast use for soup to eat for lunch!" Russo's face got very red and you could tell he was furious.

The next morning we had pancakes for breakfast. After breakfast Russo was preparing lunch. He was stirring something in a 35-gallon steam kettle. We cooked soup and other things in the kettle. As Russo stirred, the Chief walked in. He said good morning and asked Russo what he was cooking. When Davis looked into the pot, he saw pancakes floating on the top. It was the Chief's turn to be mad.

A few days later Russo came into the galley to say "hello" to O'Dell and myself. O'Dell asked how he and the Chief were getting along. Little did Russo know that the Chief was in the pantry taking inventory about 15 feet away. Russo called the Chief a no good blankety blank and if he ever met him on the beach he'd beat his blankety blank. I tried to warn Russo, but he was on a roll. When he finally did cool down, O'Dell yelled to the Chief and asked if he had heard Russo. I felt really sorry for Russo that day.

.....

He keeps pieces of his old life close at hand. His first bank book and pair of glasses are tucked away at his home in Northville. His old wants and needs and setbacks are tucked away in his heart.

Jenkins took his first job at age 12, stocking shelves and slicing meat in a neighborhood store, and the job took two of his fingertips.

He spent three weeks in high school at Detroit Southwestern, then quit to work in a foundry where he coughed up black dust. By 17 he was in the Navy, cooking and baking aboard the destroyer USS Bristol.

When he mustered out in 1958, he came home and found work as a baker. Twice, his employer went out of business.

Now he is wealthy, not that he would ever bring it up. His company-president wardrobe runs to slacks and sport shirts. Today, he forgot to button down his collar.

He wears a Rolex, but it's used, a present from Ray Jr. and his estate jewelry business in Novi. If Jenkins is headed into the factory, he makes sure to pull down his sleeve.

Then he walks through the shop floor greeting his employees, who mostly address him as Mr. Jenkins no matter how many times he asks them to call him Uncle Ray.

Tony Molnar

The Bristol's effect on my life -- Tony Molnar

I'm 83 now but my 23 months on the Bristol helped shape my life.

In Oct. 1953 at 15 years of age I took my money out of the bank and took off from NJ to FL. This was mainly because of a problem I was having in

school. Unable to find a job in FL I returned home a month later and dropped out of school and went to work.

After six months I returned to a different high school and a year later I joined the naval reserve. It was a commitment of six years, including three years of active reserve, two years active duty and one year inactive. Boot camp in Bainbridge MD on an Easter vacation and reporting for active duty at the Brooklyn Receiving Station one week after graduation from high school.

When asked what type of assignment I was looking for I said a destroyer out of Newport that will travel a lot. I sure got that. In 22 months we made seven cruises, visited 12 countries, and crossed the equator to Chile (Shellback) and Arctic Circle to Norway (Blue Nose) in a 7 month timeframe.

Most important was having a chance to get off the deck force after only 5 months because of a manpower shortage caused by the last of the Korean War draftees getting off the ship.

I enjoyed the responsibilities and the challenges that the radar gang presented and became an RD3. My final memory of the Bristol was a few days before I was to get off the ship Lt. Murdoch (A fine officer and Annapolis grad) called me aside and asked me if I would be willing to extend for the upcoming Med cruise. He said if I was willing to, he would let me take the second-class test. I said to him "Mr. Murdoch, thanks but where I'm

going, I don't want to be second class anything".

The training and responsibilities on the Bristol led me to a career in Corporate Finance that included 14 years of night school earning Associate, Bachelors, and a Masters Degree in Financial Management.

My love of travel also continued and via business and vacation opportunities I have visited all 50 states 42 countries and every continent except Antarctica.

Family has also been a very important part of my life. My wife Barbara and I were married in 1960 and have three Daughters who gave us 9 Grandchildren. Barbara passed away in 2007. There are now 2 Great grand- children as well.

Maureen and I have now been married 11 years and she has been an integral part of the Association since then.

I discovered the Association accidentally in 1999 and have thoroughly enjoyed getting to reconnect with guys I served with as well as to bond with many others who came before and after me.

The final reunion was both a happy and a sad occasion.....

Walter Marczak

After 50 some years and retiring after 22 years sailing on seas and oceans about the world on various Naval vessels, anchored at Villa France during the Christmas holidays on the Bristol remains forever on my mind.

Walter Marczak BTCM ret.

Obituary for Donald Richard Marcus

6, 1967, he married Judy Lou Coulson, who survives.

Don worked at the Cherry Nook during his high school

reunions, and spending time with his grandchildren.

Don loved his family and his country. He was a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and for many years could be found selling poppies, attending Veterans' funerals, and talking with others (often over a donut) about his experience. Every year since the late 1960's, Don drove a flag float in the Palmyra and Blissfield Memorial Day parades.

In addition to his wife, Judy, Don is survived by his children, daughter Judy (David) Opalek of Hilliard, Ohio, and son Don (Dawn) Marcus of Palmyra; 6 grandchildren, Elizabeth, Alexander, and Isaac Opalek and Aaron, Zachary, and Kenzie Marcus; his sister, Diana Johnson of Phoenix, AZ; and special cousin, Leonard (Sonny) Hammermaster.

He was preceded in death by his parents and lifelong best friend, Jim Coudron. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests that memorial contributions be made to the Palmyra Fire Department. Online condolences and memories may be shared at



PALMYRA – Donald Richard Marcus, 82, of Palmyra, died at home Wednesday, July 14, 2021.

Born in Detroit on January 17, 1939, to Edward and Laudina Esther (Hammermaster) Marcus, Don moved to the Palmyra area in 1956, graduating from Blissfield High School in 1960. On May

years, and joined the United States Navy, serving aboard the USS Bristol DD857 from 1961 to 1966. He was employed by General Motors starting in 1966, first at the Tecumseh Fisher Body Plant until it closed in 1987 and retiring from the Powertrain Hydramatic plant in 2010. Since his retirement he enjoyed attending Navy

USS BRISTOL DD 857

22nd Annual Reunion
and
Final Veteran's Association Muster

Memorial Service

Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

Friday, October 29, 2021

Officiated by:

Association Leadership

Team

PRAYER: Pray in unison

Almighty Father, to You we commend
the lives of your children, our
shipmates of the USS Bristol, who
have passed on. We ask You to hear
our prayer as we speak, both in sad
memories but also in joyful faith.

Lord God, may they who used your
gift of life in the service of liberty,
enjoy abundant eternal life with You,
as your gift to all the faithful who love
You and serve others. Bring them,
Lord God, into your bright presence
of joy without pain. Amen

PRESIDER: Oh Lord our God, we offer
to You our petition for our departed
shipmates of the USS Bristol, in
reverence and respect for their sacrifice.
We bless You for the gift of their lives.
We believe your promise that they
continue to live and that we shall meet
again. All: Amen

PRESIDER: Lord God we ask You to
console and comfort the families of our
departed shipmates in the loss of their
loved ones who served so well.
All: Amen

PRESIDER: Lord grant that all who
served the cause of liberty aboard the
USS Bristol, who trust only in You, may
share the peace and happiness of eternal
life, with You in your heavenly
kingdom, now and forever.
All: Amen

PRESIDER: Hear the toll of the ship's bell.

XX (Strike the bell twice)

PRESIDER: Let the bell bring to your mind our departed Shipmates and remind you of the reverence we owe them.

XX (Strike the bell twice)

PRESIDER: Let us remember our obligations as citizens and to silently pray for our Shipmates.

XX (Strike the bell twice)

Please observe a moment of silence

PRESIDER: To remember our honored dead, the bell will be struck once after each name is read and a flower will be presented in their honor,

	Clark, Charles "Hoagie"	MM3	48 - 52
	Gall, William D.	ET2	49 - 51
	Germann, Richard Joseph	EM2	55 - 58
	Graveline, Alfred H.	MM2	60 - 60
Plank Owner	Hardt, John W.	GM3	45 - 46
	Holloway, James	SA	61 - 62
	Kolady, Richard J.	SM1	55 - 60
	Laufer, Berthold	BT2	58 - 62
	Leayman, Donald C.	LT	50 - 52
	Lewis, Johnny	CS2	66 - 68
	Marcus, Donald R.	MM3	61 - 66
	Moynihan, Paul	ET1	51 - 54
	Murphy, Edward A.	EM2	45 - 47
	Nixon, David C.	TM3	47 - 49
	Pappalardo, Joseph P.	BT3	48 - 50
	Smith, Joe Walter	YN3	52 - 53

XXX (Strike the bell three times)

PRAYER: Pray in unison

**Dear Lord we rejoyce that You accept
these our faithful departed shipmates
into your infinite domain. Grant to
them O Lord, your peace and rest.
Amen.**

THE NAVY HYMN

Eternal Father, strong to save, whose
arm does bind the restless wave, who
bids the mighty ocean deep, its own
appointed limits keep, Oh hear us when
we cry to Thee, for those in peril on the
sea. Amen.

PRESIDER: In conclusion we honor
them and salute our departed Shipmates,
until we reunite with them in the
everlasting kingdom of our Lord.

ALL IN ATTENDANCE STAND AT ATTENTION

HAND SALUTE

TAPS

This concludes our Memorial Service

Association President – Paul Ratcliff

Association 1st Vice President - Paul Kallfelz

Association 2nd Vice President – Duane Haugan

Association Treasurer - Tony Molnar

Association Secretary – Marty Walsh

Master-at-Arms – Don Tanner

Presider/Chaplain – MCPO Walter Marczak USN ret.



Spring 1966

Bristol left the Brooklyn Navy Yard on a reserve cruise that would take us into harms way by way of either a nor'easter or some other tropical storm. Bravo Zulu to our Damage Control Party and the officers and enlisted on the Bridge that night. Mount 51 was partially lifted off the main deck and caused flooding of the upper and lower handling rooms. The switches to start the pumps was located inside the lower handling room and had to be accessed by the access door in the Chief's Quarters. When the access door opened the sea water flooded the Chief's Quarters. A "bucket brigade" was able to get the water into the chief's head and secure the flooding by getting the pumps started and plugging the gap in the main deck. Bravo Zulu!

Don Marcus Memories



Ed
Lynch
Fantail
Phone
Talker



WELCOME TO
SEAMAN'S PARADISE
22 LAWS STREET Corner of GOLD ST.
for Exotic Floor Show
CHINESE, INDIAN, COLOURED & WHITE GIRLS
For all SEAMEN, MERCHANTS, TOURIST U.S.A. Marine
Free Transportation in our Car-J: 410
LOUISE prop.



“WHEN THE BRISTOL ALMOST LOST HER RUDDERS”

Doug Hardesty, TM3
Aug 1966—May 1968

“WHEN THE BRISTOL ALMOST LOST HER RUDDERS”

Doug Hardesty, TM3
Aug 1966—May 1968

This incident occurred in the fall of 1967. I was a Torpedoman's Mate, TM3, and the only TM on board. I was also a graduate of the Navy's AUW (Advanced Undersea Weapons) “A School” in Key West, Florida. The torpedo deck, torpedo tubes, and depth charge rack were my responsibility in the Weapons Department.

To briefly describe the depth charges and racks, the “rack” itself is on the fantail with a slight decline aft toward the edge of the fantail, so the depth charges can roll by gravity down the track and into the ocean. The rack has safety bars which are bolted in place to keep the depth charges secured and then placed further back on the rack so the freed expendable depth charges are allowed to roll down the track of the rack to “detents”, which are like up and down rotating chocks. The detents are operated by a lever on the bridge which is connected to the rack through a hydraulic line. To bypass this connection, a rotating handle connected to

the detents, with a squeeze-handle, lets an operator at the side of the rack manually roll the depth charges with the detents letting them roll off one at a time.

The depth charges are either a “mod” in a teardrop shape or the older “mod” in a barrel (ashcan) shape. The depth charges have an empty core in which are loaded a “pistol”, detonator, and booster, shaped something like a car's spin on oil filter, filled with an explosive mix. The center core is kept clean and dry on both ends by metal caps bolted in place. When arming the depth charges for detonation, the caps are removed and the aforementioned parts are installed. Both exposed ends of center core have a prong which is knocked off by “wiping blades” on each side to the rack as the depth charges roll off into the water. The deck side of the core has an adjustable dial-type depth gauge for setting the detonating depth. This dial is turned during its setting by a special circular wrench.

Now what happened was...the Bristol was on an anti-submarine training exercise with several other destroyers steaming at about 8 knots. GQ had not yet been set. The escape scuttle to after steering was open with a Gunner's Mate on watch wearing his headphones and watching the activity on the fantail.

I had previously received the order to arm two ashcan depth charges, one at 60' depth and the other at 90' depth. The safety

bars had been relocated freeing the two depth charges allowing them to roll aft and rest against their detents.

Then...the Weapons Officer, his name I will not mention, came back to the fantail. He asked, “Hardesty, is everything ready to go?” I said, “Yes, Sir”. Remember we were moving very slow and not at GQ.

Then for some reason (maybe he didn't trust my ability or my knowledge of the equipment), he walked over to the rack and squeezes the detent handle and moves the mechanism back and forth. The two depth charges, which were armed, rolled off the end of the rack almost together. Both in amazement and almost panic, I turned to the Gunner's Mate who was watching with about half his body out of the scuttle, and I said, “Call the bridge, two depth charges just rolled into the ocean”. I also raised onto my tiptoes knowing a shock was coming.

At that moment the 60' depth charge exploded causing the 90' depth charge to also explode at the same time. A black plume of water shot about 100' into the air and then the shock hit the ship. It felt like you were standing on a sheet of metal with about 6 people under it with sledgehammers hitting it at the same instant. Everyone on the fantail just stood there in awe. The Weapon's Officer had turned white as a sheet and the bridge was calling the Gunner's Mate

asking what had happened. The Weapon's Officer said, "I'd better go tell the captain what I did." And off he went!

He said later all the Skipper said was, "You should have called us so could have watched too."

I'm sure there was more than that comment said, and who knows what scuddle butt occurred later in the Wardroom.

All the after-compartments were checked and there were no split seams or other damage.

The Ole Bristol was built well! True story!

.....

Donald Reason

I was a Yeoman, stationed on the Bristol from 1947 - 1949. One of my favorite stories is -

Along with other ships, the Bristol was conducting local operations in the Atlantic, where we were in a line of 5 Destroyers. One of the crew, at some point, had snuck a dog, a spaniel that was named "Marlin Spike" aboard the ship. One day "Marlin" fell overboard from the Bow. The crew alerted the final Destroyer in line, who pulled out in search of the dog. Marlin was eventually located and rescued by that Destroyer, and at the next port was transferred back to the Bristol.

The Captain ordered me to type up a "Court Martial" for Marlin, as he had been AWOL.

As part of his court martial Marlin was "restricted to the ship" and ordered to always wear a life vest. This life vest was fashioned from other discarded life vests and fitted to Marlin. I have a picture of Marlin if it could be included, let me know.



Note the flotation jacket that the crew fitted on Marling Spike.



Thank you,

Donald Reason

.....

Martin "Marty" Walsh

I worked "down the hole", officially known as B-4 while on

the Bristol. Went from MMFN to MM3 and MM2 at the end of my 2 years. MM2 didn't help because it was too late to ease the dislike by a few of those that I worked for.

Got thrown off the ship on October 17 1963 because I would not "ship over".

A.A. Morel Jr, LCDR, was the XO at the time. He took a dislike to me because his shipping over speech didn't work. He was also somewhat "under the weather" with the strong smell of whiskey in his state room. I had been ordered to report to Morel's stateroom, on the double, and was sent back down the hole just as quick when I refused to ship over. The MM rating was a critical rating at the time so I did not want any part of four or six years because I was married with a daughter.

We were stationed in Newport, R.I. at the time but the Bristol was scheduled to transition down to the Brooklyn Navy Yard and the Reserve Fleet. Was discharged a few days before the Bristol left Newport so I had to travel all the way to Long Island by bus, a train, and another local bus. A.A. Morel knew I lived on L.I. but threw me off the ship a few days early so that I would have to travel all the way home humping my sea bag.

I weighed 129 pounds while aboard the Bristol and was skinny enough to fit through the after engine room Inspection Hatch to the Reduction Gear Housing. Every now and then the oil for the reduction gears, 2190-T, had to be changed. I was "the goat" for that cleaning job. Most of the oil was pumped out but what remained had to be removed by hand using a rag and bucket. Naturally as soon as I climbed into the reduction gear

housing, with a flashlight, bucket and rag, someone would put the inspection cover back in place and then bang on the housing with a hammer, for fun.

Marty Walsh,
a survivor.

Don Polcaro Memories

While in the Med. I was trying to find a Zippo Lighter that was plain. I finally find one on a tender in the Med. We got sent into the Red Sea to operate with the British. When the time was over and we were on the way back to the Med. going through the Suez Canal I accidentally dropped the lighter on the deck and it went into the Canal. now when I watch T.V. I watch the archeological programs about the Pyramids that's all I see is the Suez and the Nile Delta. Ha Ha. Don {Polecat} Polcaro.

Terry Hillestad Memories

After returning from a year in Viet Nam, I was stationed on the USS Bristol for the final two years of my four year tour with the Navy.

At that time, the Bristol was a reserve training ship stationed at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. We took reserves out for weekend cruises and sometimes we did two week cruises. The purpose of these cruises was to familiarize the reserves with the ship and let them operate it and stand watches under our direction and supervision. For the most part, they were willing learners and it was an enjoyable time meeting and teaching them.

We traveled up and down the Atlantic coast to 40 different ports from Halifax, Nova Scotia to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Some of the more memorable cruises were the one to Guantanamo Bay, which lasted 19 days, where on our return trip we sailed thru a hurricane off of Cape Hatteras. On another cruise to Norfolk, reserve officers were doing maneuvers and salted the boilers, losing power when trying to dock and ended up running the Bristol into the pier, resulting in the Captain at Norfolk asking us to kindly remove our ship from his port in not such kind words. The Dependants' Day Cruise was also great fun and an enjoyable experience as was meeting all the new people each time we cruised.

During my time on the Bristol, we also spent several weeks in dry dock in Hoboken, New Jersey and Newport, Rhode Island for repairs and maintenance.

We also participated in several burials at sea.

I enjoyed my time as a gunner's mate on the USS Bristol from September 1967 thru August 1969.

Terry L. Hillestad
GMG3

Ed Lynch Memory

December 1965 saw Bristol in the floating dry dock at Quonset Point, Rhode Island. The work required replacing the sonar dome, changing all the zinc plates on the hull, and, replacing the starboard screw, which was bent due to running onto a sand

bar entering Port Everglades, FL, with the Pilot onboard.

Anyway, work was progressing well except that the Naval Engineers were having a heck of a time getting that starboard screw off. Day after day they tried. They even tried blasting it off with a shape charge, no go.

"Big Dave" Davis, MM1, boss of Main Control, gave the engineers the clue to getting the screw off. He suggested that they heat the screw and freeze the shaft. Well, it worked. The screw got replaced, tested and we were ready to go back to Brooklyn. I guess the Captain was happy because he was scheduled to take leave over Christmas week.

We took the short cut via Long Island Sound and down the East River. It was a stormy night and I was at relaxed Sea Detail Station on the fantail. I had to peak out of the scuttle to the berthing compartment under the fantail. The wind was blowing pretty hard that night pushing us a little faster than usual. I didn't think too much of it until we passed under the Williamsburg Bridge rather fast. Then I heard:"Main Control Bridge all ahead two thirds, all ahead one third, all stop, all back emergency." It was then that we hit the camel (floating arrangement that kept the ship from hitting the pier). Our anchor was "at the dip" and it took off the bollards on the pier. Fortunately, the guy who was stationed in the chain locker did not get hurt nor anyone else.

Captain Butler, I guess, didn't go home for Christmas because we spent Christmas in Bayonne getting the bow fixed. Naval

Inquiry blamed it on the weather so we still kept a great skipper.

Speaking of Bayonne: I had Shore Patrol duty with one of the Ship Servicemen (can't remember his name). The Shore Patrol Officer told us to drive up and down Broadway; stop in the saloons to see if there were any sailors who wanted to be transported home (Jersey City, Bayonne, and Parts of Staten Island, NY).

We did find one lone sailor a little "shitfaced" who agreed to a ride home in Jersey City. After the transport, we returned to Bayonne Naval Base, gave our report and returned to the ship. Christmas in Bayonne. A lot of the guys on board were shitfaced when we got back on board. The "party" was in the machine shop (I think it was the Shipfitter Shop). The principal ingredient was alcohol that had been cut by the Snipes in Main Control. Bill Billings, MM2, Oil King, ordered denatured alcohol to clean the molybdenum jets that sprayed number six navy special fuel oil into the fireboxes. When the order arrived, I turned over the alcohol directly to Billings. When Billings checked the paperwork, the stuff that NAVSUPCTR, Bayonne, sent was on stock number different. They sent 100% alcohol, which is 200 proof. Billings returned the two five gallon pails to the Supply Office and said that he could not use this stuff.

What was I going to do with 10 gallons of hootch? I tried the Engineering Log Room Yeoman, no good. Then I tried "Doc" Aulls, no good. Just as I was trying to convince "Doc" that he should take the alcohol, "Big" Dave appeared behind me asking

what was going on. I explained what had happened and "Big" Dave said "I'll take care of it." Down to Main Control went the 10 gallons of alcohol. That was sometime in the late Spring or early Summer 1965. So, by Christmas 1965, the hootch was cut down to around 100 proof and the duty crew had a party.

.....

Paul Sims

Thanks for the great job you all have done in keeping the Bristol memory alive over this many years. There is something special about a person's connection with a ship that he (or she) has had the privilege to serve aboard. While you're aboard you might have some gripes about the ship, but if someone from another ship calls the Bristol a collection of rust and nuts and bolts, you are ready to take him apart. Anchor's aweigh for the last time! Best regards, LTjg Paul Sims-1951-1953

.....

Lenny Hodgins

Thank you to all my shipmates. It truly was a great run with many fond memories. Best wishes to you all. Len Hodgins.

.....

Bill Howe

Hi Tony,

Thanks for this Tony. So sorry I was not able to attend. And sad to know there will be no more. But as things of this nature, the end was inevitable. Thanks for all your hard work in the past. I have organized several things like this and I know what a big job it can be. I have never heard

of Tunnels to Towers. After some research, I would consider this an outstanding choice. (next to my savings account. ha, ha!!) Just out of curiosity, how much money was donated? Thanks again and best of luck to you and any of your future endeavors.

Bill Howe, SO2

.....

Gary Hults

I feel sadness after having read this message from Paul. It was a long run and always a delight to see The USS Bristol's Comrades. I belong to the Navy Club and American Legion so have an interest in how our Navy Veterans are doing. My thanks to the Officers who guided our ship for these many years. Great reunion sites. Great companionship. Great memories. Seems like we are losing a part of ourselves. Let us pray for one and all of us. Veterans Day would be a good time to rememimize of all the time we spent in the Naval Service and the friends we had. God bless us all. Of course this includes our spouses and others close to us during that time. And now that we have weighed anchor for the last time. We'll honor all our memories so sublime. We'll reminisce and hoist a brew. In a toast in Honor of our crew. USS BRISTOL DD 857.

.....

Dan Esposito Memories

Dear Ed,

Thank you for putting together this final newsletter. I'm attaching my little anecdote, chosen from so many stories of good times with my shipmates. (They more than make up for the "bad" anecdotes!)

*I will value the service and friendship of all my shipmates for as long as I live. If I could ever be of help to any of you, please call me.
Smooth sailing and may God bless you all.*

When I entered the Navy at the age of 17, I was very self-conscious because I had no money. (For example, I volunteered for sub service because I got \$50 a month for extra-hazardous duty pay.) And the whole four years I served, I never spent money on a new pair of shoes. When my shoes started to get holes in the bottom, I put I beer coasters in them from the bars I went to. I used to walk out of the bars, my pockets loaded with beer coasters. And my shoes always looked good because I spit-shined them to hide all the cracks in the leather. I can still hear the captain saying at inspection, "Esposito, the only thing holding those shoes together is the shoe polish." Early on, I was stationed in Newport RI, which was so cold in the winter I didn't need my whites. So I sold them. Because I was on the deck force, all I needed were my working blues, dungarees, and warm jackets. But then there was an opening in the C.I.C., and they sent me to radar school in Norfolk, where the dress code of the day was whites. And I didn't have any! So I went to each guy in the radar room and borrowed a set of whites from all of them. I had about 10 sets and each set had a different name penciled on them.

When I got to Norfolk, they pulled a surprise inspection. And, of course, all the whites in my locker had a different name! As they looked through my locker, they held up each one:

"Who's George Reil?" Then, "Who's Howard Jackson?" "Who's Pat Quinn?" "Who's Eddie Neuggerbauer?" "Who's Richard Szulczewski?" "Who's Robert Miller?" "Who's Chris Chillepas?" "Who's Ron Obenchain?" "And who's Hamlin Nelson!"

I tried to explain to them what I had done. But even after explaining, all the senior officers, who had lots of years of experience, had never heard of anything like that! So – maybe they didn't believe me. But I sure saved a lot of money!

Dan Esposito – Jan. 1950 – Apr. 1954
.....

Editor's Note:

I spent 22 years in the New Jersey Army National Guard. In that time, I met soldiers who served in all of the armed forces. Some served in Vietnam during that conflict, others served in the Dominican Republic episode in April 1965. In August 1990, Operation Desert Shield had some of my fellow soldiers called up and sent to Saudi Arabia. Since we were a training command, we didn't get anything early. During the air war part, we received our warning order to be prepared for activation. No sooner than we got "saddled up", the ground war part was over.

The point I am trying to make is that the folks with whom I have come in contact with this organization have impressed me more than all those 22 years in the guard.

Without being overly sentimental I want to thank the leaders who put heart and soul into doing the best they could for our

organization. That includes family members to help them with all of the minutia involved with their office.

Paul Ratcliffe even recruited his daughter and son-in-law to secure our location in Myrtle Beach, SC, for our last reunion. Bravo Zulu!

Tony Molnar, our treasurer and proofreader of our newsletters, along with Tony's wife, Maureen, worked consistently to provide for our association. Don't forget that Tony arranged for our website with Sam Candido, Webmaster, who Tony has to "harass" to send a bill for his services to our association.

Marty Walsh had the duty of being the Secretary of our association. If you think that is an easy job, not so. I did that job once.

Duane Haugan who has been our "Year Book" coordinator for many years. Even though Duane has not been able to attend the last two reunions he has still been able to put together the annual "Year Book". Last reunion photos thanks to Sam Dalfanzo and this years photos thanks to Don Singer and Marty Walsh

Finally, let's not forget the wives who helped the "Board" members past and present. Judy Marcus, Don Marcus' wife, has / had been a significant help when it came to helping Don, RIP, with the Ship Store duties. Judy sent me a package of memorabilia from Don's collection some of which I used in this newsletter.

Finally, thanks to all of you who have contributed over the years with your own stories.

