



A short note from Jeanne Allen (Wife of Tom Allen, Gunners Mate) gave us a little information about Tom. He retired after more than 40 years with CONRAIL. They enjoyed traveling before Tom's death in 1993.

"Doc" Steinhauser is engaged to the lady he brought to the Mobile reunion, Lois Hyska. In his note, "Doc" did not give a date for their marriage. He did say they were going on an extended trip to New Jersey, Canada and Arizona during June-July. Congratulations "Doc" and Lois.

Gil Nilges (Radioman) was on the cruiser SAVANNAH in 1943 when it was hit by the first guided missile used in WW II. The ship was in the Mediterranean. The Germans launched the missile from one of their bombers. The damage to the ship was extensive and the loss of life was in excess of 200. When the ship returned to New York, Gil was transferred to Miami, FL for training prior to joining the HOLT crew being assembled in Norfolk.

Clem Thrift and his wife, Kathryn, are planning to move to his native North Carolina later this year to be nearer his daughters and their families.

### **BINNACLE LIST**

Don Fredette is recovering from cancer and gets good reports on his condition.

Fred Davis is also doing well in his fight against cancer.

Ed Bouchard is recovering from surgery. He now lives in Atlantic City, NJ.

Bob Schieferstin is recovering from back surgery

This is the shortest sick list we've had in a while! Sure hope it stays that way.

### **OTHER STUFF**

We have been battling "0" in trying to locate the remaining 30 or so HOLT crew. In a letter to the National Records Center, in St. Louis, we got lucky and obtained the birth dates of a couple of shipmates. Matching the birth dates against the social security death list which lists the city & state where the person lived, we were able to verify that these were, in fact, the shipmates we were looking for (reported in the last newsletter). Armed with this info, we sent a list of about 10 names to the Records Center. This time, they would not supply the birth dates. Instead, they suggested we write the persons a letter, send it to the Records Center and they would forward the letter, if they had the address. We've done this on several occasions with no results.

### **NAVAL TRIVIA**

1. **AHOY** - This old traditional greeting for hailing other vessels was originally a Viking battle cry.
2. **BETWEEN THE DEVIL AND THE DEEP BLUE SEA** - In wooden ships, the "devil" was the longest seam of the ship. It ran from the bow to the stern. When at sea and the "devil" had to be caulked, the sailor sat in a bosun's chair to do the work. He was suspended between the "devil" and the "deep blue", a very precarious position when the ship was underway.
3. **EIGHT BELLS** - Aboard Navy Ships, bells are struck to designate the hours of being on watch. Each watch is four hours in length. One bell is struck after the first half-hour is passed, two bells after the first hour, three bells after an hour and a half, four bells after two hours and so forth up to eight bells at the completion of the four hour watch. Completing a watch with no incidents to report was "Eight bells and all is well." This practice goes back to the early days of sail. Sailor's could not afford to have their own

time pieces and relied on the ship's bell to tell time. The ship's boy kept time by using a half-hour bell shaped glass of sand. Each time the sand ran out, he would turn the glass over and ring the appropriate number of bells.

4. **GUN SALUTES** - Gun salutes were first fired as an act of good faith. The term comes from the days when it took a long time to reload a gun. It was proof of friendly intentions when the ship's cannon was discharged upon entering a foreign port.

5. **LOG BOOK** - In the very early days of sailing ships, the ship's records were written on shingles cut from logs. These shingles were hinged and opened like a book. The record was called the "log book." Later, when paper was available and bound into books, the record maintained its name.

Until next time, may good health, happiness and prosperity be yours. It is just a little over a year until our next HOLT reunion. **Start making your plans.**