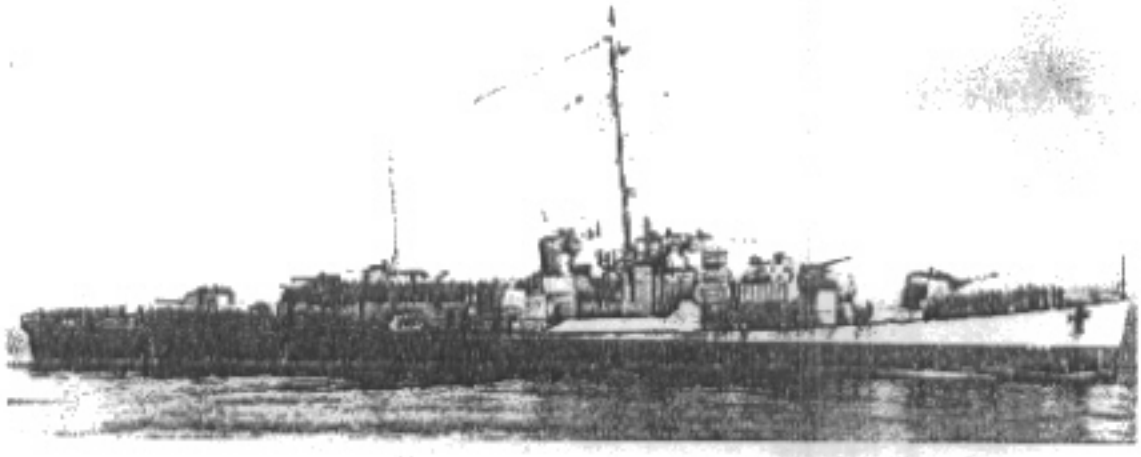
HOLT HAPPENINGS



A Newsletter for and about the crew and their families.

Vol IV No 4

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ON THE BINNACLE LIST

Unfortunately, the list seems to grow with each passing quarter. **Abe Silver** is being treated for multiple myeloma. **Kess Adams** fell earlier this year injuring both legs. His condition is aggravated by his long term diabetes. **Phil Corriher** is still having health problems associated with the stroke he had earlier. **Harold Roid** has to have oxygen on a full time basis with his emphysema. He also has macular degeneration.. **Randolph Cowart's** health has continued to deteriorate since his wife passed away last December. His daughter, Ramona, reports that he is totally wheelchair bound these days. These are the latest ones we have learned of having health problems.

Ralph Parks, Bob DeAngelis., Frank Shepherd, Sue Eazer, Cate Dettling, Harry Helgeson, Russ Coates, Phil DeFosses, Garnett Howard and Bob Swartz were reported on in a prior newsletter. Let's keep all these shipmates in our prayers. A card, a note or a call would help to make these shipmates feel better and would be greatly appreciated.

OUR DECEASED SHIPMATES

Lloyd Trent (Seaman) died on 4 August. He is survived by his wife, Vickie. Lloyd and Vickie attended our 1996 Charleston reunion and we had a great time reminiscing about the old times.

James Guttoso died 25 August. He is survived by his wife, Rose.
Ginny Manville (wife of Chief Quartermaster Jack Manville) died 3 September. She is survived by a son, John Manville.

Our last mailing to **Maxine Crain** (wife of William Crain, Seaman) was returned simply marked "Deceased" with no other explanation.

We mourn the loss of these shipmates and spouses and extend our deepest sympathy to their families.

MISSING SHIPMATES

Mail sent to Willard Price in Baltimore Maryland and to Harry Helgeson in St. Paul Minnesota has been returned by the post office as undeliverable. Attempts to locate them have proven futile. If anyone knows how to reach either of these shipmates, please let me know.

A BOOK ON AND ABOUT THE HOLT AND HER CREW

For some years now, there has been talk on occasion about writing a book about the HOLT and her crew. Each time this was discussed, it was called a good idea, but no one stepped up to the plate and volunteered to author such a tome. That is, until at the last HOLT reunion when Jeff Cope, son of Glenn and Helen Cope, decided to take on the project. Since then, Jeff has accumulated a mass of data about the ship, mostly technical stuff and official records. While this is good background information, he needs to have the human interest stuff and that's where each of you come in.....you have a story, an anecdote, a humorous tale, a memorable liberty, an incident that involved the ship....there must be hundreds of these out there. Only you can relate them, so please do. It does not have to be a long tale, nor do you have to write it in publishable form. Just put down on paper you stories and send them to Jeff Cope [redacted] or give him a call at [redacted] Or you can E-mail him at [redacted] Please give this your immediate attention. We want the book to be as intersting and informative as possible. To be so, **your help is needed!**

Jeff has done an outstanding job in establishing and maintaining the HOLT web site on the Internet. If you have not done so, you are urged to go to www.ussholt.com and see just how much data is available about our little DE.

Matter of fact, he has done such a good job with the web site that the Destroyer Escort Sailors Association has given it an **AWARD OF EXCELLENCE** for keeping the memories of the destroyer escorts alive. The citation from DESA reads

> "It is with pride and honor that the Destroyer Escort Sailors Association awards to you our DESA Award Of Excellence. As you know, this award is given only to the best-of-the-best and cannot be applied for. Your site meets and exceeds the criteria for this award. You are to be commended for your devotion to keeping alive the memories of DE 706 and her fine crew. Well done, Jeff"

To which we all join in a Well Done to you, Jeff,
from the crew.

ADMIRAL NIMITZ FOUNDATION

On the weekend of September 18 - 19, Lois and I went to Fredericksburg, TX to attend a symposium on "The Battle of Leyte Gulf", presented by the Nimitz Museum on the War in the Pacific. Initially, Lois was reluctant to attend as she thought it would be boring, but after listening for a few minutes to the presentations, she was captivated by the events and thoroughly enjoyed herself. It was a very interesting program telling the story of how a few small aircraft carriers, CVE's, a couple of destroyers and destroyer escorts, known as "Taffy 3", (their radio call sign), took on a much superior Japanese force which included six heavy cruisers, three battleships, including the mighty Yamamoto (with 18" guns) and a host of destroyers. Can you imagine the little destroyer escort, SAMUEL B. ROBERTS (same configuration as the HOLT) making a torpedo run on heavy cruisers, taking salvo after salvo of shells from the battleships, returning fire with its 5" guns! The ROBERTS, along with destroyers, HOEL and JOHNSON and escort carriers, ST LO and GAMBIER BAY, all from the task unit known as "Taffy 3" were sunk that fateful morning of October 25, 1944 about 30 miles east of Samar Island in the Philippines. The enemy also suffered many losses by torpedo attacks from our ships and by dive bombing and strafing by naval aircraft. This battle occurred just a day after the noted battle of Surigao Straits, where the battleships and cruisers of Admiral Oldendorf decimated the Japanese fleet attempting to come up the straits from the south.

What made the symposium so real was the fact that several authors of books about the battle were there to talk about their research into the incidents. Also, many of the survivors of ships that were sunk in the battle were present to add the realism that only first person

accounts can do. Despite the fact that our Navy knew about the sinkings and there were

other ships in the area, many of the survivors were in the water for more than 50 hours before being rescued. Some drifted ashore on Samar and were picked up by Coast Watchers and native Filipinos.

For an interesting book on the subject of The Battle Off Samar, "The Last Stand of The Tin Can Sailors" by James D. Hornfischer tells an outstanding story of naval warfare, human sacrifice and extraordinary bravery by ordinary sailors.

The Nimitz Foundation periodically presents these type programs. In the fall of 2005, they will present one on the Presidents which will discuss the roll that each President of the United States played in WW II. The Navy was well represented by future presidents during WW II as Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter and Bush were all naval officers, with Truman and Eisenhower being Army and Reagan being Army Air Force.

THIS AND THAT FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

Terry Sutherland (son of Don Sutherland, Sonarman) missed the reunion due to his daughter graduating from high school.

Edna Davis, widow of Fred Davis (Machinists Mate) writes that she is still connected to the military life. Her son, Jeff, will complete 24 years in the Army next March . She allowed as how she thought she was about through writing letters to men in the service, but now her grandson is taking basic training in his ROTC unit from the University of Maryland.

To those of you who remitted $10.00 and a photo for inclusion in the WW II Memorial Registry, please be patient. Each one has been sent in but to date there is such a backlog, that they have not been entered. We will let you know when this occurs. We have entered the entire crew of the HOLT in the registry. However, if anyone desires to have their photo entered, please make a check out to "WW II Memorial Photo" for $10.00, attach a photo and send it to Bill Morgan. We will file the application and let you know when it has been accomplished.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The following was written by Lt (jg) Don Ballard who joined the navy in 1935.

THE OLD OUTFIT

Come gather around me lads and I'll tell you a thing or two
About the way we ran the Navy in nineteen forty two.
When wooden ships and iron men were barely out of sight
I am going to give some facts just to set the record right.
We wore the ole bell bottoms with flat hat on our head
And we always "hit the sack" at night never "went to bed".
Our uniforms were worn ashore and we were mighty proud
Never thought of wearing civies, in fact, they were not allowed.
Now when a ship puts out to sea, I'll tell you son, it hurts!
When suddenly you notice that half the crew are wearing skirts.
And it's hard for me to imagine a female boatswains mate
stopping on the quarterdeck to make sure her stockings are straight.
What happened to the KiYi brush and the old salt water bath?
Holystoning the decks at night 'cause you stirred the Bosun's wrath.
We always had our gedunk stand and lots of pogey bait.
And it always took a hitch or two just to make a rate.
In your seabag all your skivvies were neatly stopped and rolled.
And the blankets on your sack had better have a three-inch fold.
Your little ditty bag ...it is hard to believe just how much it held
And you would not go ashore with pants that were not spiked and belled.
We had scullery maids and succotash and good old S.O.S.
and when you felt like topping off, you headed for the mess.
Oh, we had our belly robbers, but there were not too many gripes
For the deck apes were never hungry and there were no starving snipes.
Now you never hear of Davey Jones, Shellbacks or Polliwogs
and you never splice the main brace to receive your daily grog.
Now you never have a dog watch or stand the main event
You even tie your lines today - back in my times they were bent.
We were all two-fisted drinkers and no one thought you sinned
If you staggered back aboard your ship - three sheets to the wind.
And with just a couple of hours sleep you regained your usual luster
bright-eyed and bushy tailed - you still made morning muster.
Rocks and Shoals have long since gone and now it's U.C.M.J.
Back then the old man handled everything if you should go astray.
Now they steer the ships with dials and I would not be surprised if someday
they sailed the damned things from the beach - computerized.
So when my earthly hitch is over and the Good Lord picks the best
I'll walk right up to him and say, "Sir I have but one request

Let me sail the seas of Heaven in a coat of Navy blue
Like I did so long ago on earth in nineteen forty two.

Pictured at left, left to right; Standing—Clem Thrift, Al Boorman, Glenn Cope, Jim Detthing, Paul Pickett, Don Fredette, Karl Nease, Bob Hoover, and Al Gebauer. Seated—Bill Morgan, Jay Decker, Oak Ramsey, Doc Steinhauser, and John McCauley. Not present—John Meenan.

We had a fine hospitality room on the top floor of the hotel with a view of the San Antonio skyline from three sides. In lieu of the traditional closing banquet on Saturday evening, we traveled over to Hondo, TX, to have a BBQ dinner at the 7A ranch, which is a family-owned working ranch. Although our group is getting smaller, there is no lack of enthusiasm as everyone had a great time renewing their relationships. Seems we picked up where we left off two years ago and added more to the body of lore surrounding the ship and crew. The group opted to hold the 2006 reunion in the Washington, DC/Annapolis, MD, area.

WILLIAM J. MORGAN, Reunion Coordinator, 3356 Northaven Road, Dallas, TX 75229

2006 REUNION

Our 2006 reunion is planned to be in Annapolis, Maryland or in the Washington, DC area, depending on hotel availability, our reunion needs and cost considerations. We will begin the planning right after the first of the year and hope to have a final plan in place by late spring. We'll give you the dates and details ASAP. Meanwhile, ***stay healthy, have a good holiday season and stay in touch with one another.***