

Stories by
Jack Brawdy

USS HART

USS CHAMPLIN

Stories by Jack Brawdy

USS HART

USS CHAMPLIN

"BEEN THERE—DONE THAT"

FIRST MEETING WITH A TINCAN

In the month of December, 1942, I had been in the U.S. Navy a total of five months. I have to say they were a hectic five months. War had been declared and this country was caught up in a war fever and fervor the likes of which our land had never seen. After the attack on Pearl Harbor Dec. 7th and the Roosevelt declaration of war on Japan, thousands of young men were crowding the enlistment stations and signing up in the various branches of the military. I had chosen the Navy and had been rushed off to Newport, R.I. for 8 weeks of boot camp and then 16 more weeks of primary torpedo school. In between these two periods of time I was allowed to go home and show off my new uniform to Mom & Dad and all of the family.

I don't know how I ended up being a torpedo-man. Just before Pearl Harbor I had left boarding school, a seminary up in Canada after five years of intensive bookwork. Tools and my hands hardly ever came in close contact but the Navy said I had an aptitude for such work after seeing the results of those tests we all had to take soon after joining the Navy. Anyway, I graduated from torpedo school in Newport and armed with my little certificate I was sent to a place in New York City called Pier 92 (I think) for further assignment.

After 53 years I don't remember too much about Pier 92 except it was very large and there must have been hundreds of sailors there at the time waiting for new orders. There were old salts, new apprentice seamen almost all rates and class anxiously scanning the bulletin boards looking for their names everyday. Life was fairly easy on the pier but boring with not too much to do! I watched the boards like everyone else and one day my name jumped out at me but it wasn't for further assignment, it was for mess duty the following day. I hit the sack that night resigned to my fate among the pots and pans but fate took a hand in my future when along about 3:00 a.m. that hand shook my shoulder and an authoritative voice told me to get up and pack my sea bag. Your outta here!!!

The next thing I remember I was on the back of a pick up truck with another sailor, dress blues and seabag's careening across town (New York) heading for the Brooklyn Navy yard. You have to keep in mind that it was December and very cold and by the time we arrived we were so frozen we could hardly get out of the truck. We went aboard a long gray object tied to the pier. I had never seen a Navy ship before let alone being this close to one. I didn't know what it was until an officer with a side arm said to us, "Welcome aboard gentlemen, this is the U.S.S. Champlin, Destroyer 601. We will be getting underway later in the morning and you will be berthed at that time". He put us in a small compartment right off the quarterdeck and told us to get some sleep. As I dozed off trying to get warm I remember the vibration or hum of the engines coming up through the deck.

In what seemed like only five minutes that vibration turned into a mighty roar and as I jumped up and looked out the hatch it was daylight and the pier area was moving right before my eyes! I couldn't understand it and as I watched I got sick to my stomach and just made it to the side before I up-chucked my last meal from Pier 92. I started to focus and realized the truth of the situation. The pier was not moving, I was, and the ship was, and the long gray thing from the night before was a destroyer and we were all headed for Casablanca, North Africa and whatever other ports and duties the future held for us. Four hours aboard, arriving in the middle of the night, and getting seasick. My first meeting with a Tin Can wasn't exactly memorable, but I'll never forget it.

Go Navy!
Jack Brawdy

Addendum: The other sailor who boarded that night with me was Ken Blatchford TM 2/c

P.S. A pickup truck in the middle of December... Absolutely Ridiculous!

The Champlin and Me
April 15th, 1944 (My God, that's 54 years ago)

I woke up that morning and prepared myself for another day of duty aboard the U.S.S. Champlin DD601. It was wartime and I was a member of the U.S. Navy doing my share in the defense of our country in WWII. That particular day started out like any other aboard ship but it sure changed for me later that morning! The 601 was in the ship yard for repairs after the submarine action. I was working on the torpedo mount when I received a summons to report to Lt. Baughns cabin and was informed that I was being transferred to advanced torpedo school in San Diego, California. The course was to last 8 weeks and then I was to return to the Champlin to resume my torpedo duties. Little did I know it at the time but things didn't work out that way.

I left that very day heading for the West Coast via railroad out of Grand Central Station in New York City. I had seven days to get to San Diego so I called Mom & Dad in Pittsburgh to expect me and I was able to spend two days with them and the family on my way west. When I finally arrived for the beginning of my advanced training I was told that I had 30 more days "delay in route" leave time coming before classes started. Here I was on the San Diego navy base, not knowing a soul, just a few bucks in my pocket and the opportunity to go back home for four weeks. What was a guy to do?

While discussing my plight in a group waiting for the chow hall to open, one of the men called me aside, pulled out a wad of bills and I mean a big one and told me to take what I needed for the train ride back to Pittsburgh. He had won the money in a crap game the night before and he knew I was coming back for the start of school. A complete stranger to me but we wore the same uniform with torpedo rates on the right arm and he said he was glad to help. Suffice it to say he was a godsend and I took him up on his offer. I bought my ticket and got on the train and raced back to Pittsburgh for a wonderful bunch of days with the family. I often wondered why the Champlin people didn't know I had that leave time coming. I think they knew I wasn't coming back because I was traveling with my service record. All the way to California, back to Pennsylvania then back to the West Coast

for school. Upon reflection, considering the prize involved and knowing it was wartime all the inconvenience and train riding was well worth it.

The advanced torpedo school in San Diego was almost over and I was looking forward to getting back to the Champlin and all my old shipmates. One day while working on a torpedo that had just been fired and retrieved from a practice run someone tapped me on the shoulder and I turned around and there was Cy Donaldson standing there grinning at me. He had been a 2/c torpedo man on the Champlin and was sent out to this school like myself only he was an instructor and now a 1/c looking forward to becoming a chief. We talked a while about our days on the 601 and when he knew I was returning he sent his regards to all of the old crew.

Graduation day finally rolled around and to my very great surprise I found out I was not returning to the Champlin. I was transferred to Treasure Island, San Francisco to await assignment to a new destroyer in the Pacific Theater of operations. It was the beginning of the second phase of my Navy career. Incidentally, Cy Donaldson was the first ice cream man aboard the Champlin. When he left I inherited the job and they eventually transferred me. Do you think they were trying to tell us something?? Nah! Maybe it was because we only served vanilla!!

Jack Brawdy

Addendum: My new ship turned out to be the U.S.S. Hart-DD594-a Fletcher class destroyer.

"BEEN THERE—DONE THAT"

THE GOOD HUMOR MAN

One day I had been working up on the torpedo mount and whatever I was doing I needed something from the torpedo shack. When I got down there, Lieutenant Davis, one of the ship's officers had a burner with a torch and he was cutting out a section of the bulkhead directly above the hatch entrance to the shack. Sitting on the deck was a big piece of equipment that the lieutenant wanted to put into the torpedo deck area. It was bigger than the hatch and in order to get it in he had to enlarge the entrance. What in the world was it? It would take up a whole corner of our work area when they finally got it in. I walked right into that assignment, me and three or four other strong backs. Must be some piece of testing equipment for the torpedo's or maybe something to do with the depth charges. A mixing machine for the explosive powder perhaps? Anyway we got it in place, the bulkhead above the hatch was welded back together and the lieutenant was un-wrapping the instruction sheets. Cy Donaldson, one of our 2/c torpedomen seemed to be the man designated to operate the "thing" so I went back up on the torpedo mount. Little did I know at that moment that the "thing" would play a big role in my future on the Champlin.

Lieutenant Davis was the supply officer for the 601. He had more to do with material things like food to eat and all the other supplies that kept a destroyer crew able to do their jobs efficiently. Equipment for the torpedo shack just didn't seem to fall into that category. When I finally got down to the shack later that day the place was a beehive of activity. A few of the guys were helping Cy set up that "thing" in the corner. It had an electric lead and had to be adapted to the outlet in the workshop. The accompanying packages were being opened and it finally dawned on all of us what we were dealing with. No secret weapon, no special testing machine, no black powder mixer. The packages contained paper cups and cans of white powder mix and vanilla extract. What we had was an ice cream mixer and maker! The torpedo shack was the new gedunk stand on the ship and Cy was our "Good Humor" man. Of course we all thought this was hilarious. A 2/c torpedoman would be dispensing cups of ice cream to the crew of the Champlin. It would make him very popular and very busy because he had to

make the stuff on his own time. Being a 2/c he had other more responsible duties to perform.

It never worked out that way. Cy Donaldson for some reason or another was transferred off the ship and that left a vacancy on the ice cream team, Someone had to be the designated hitter and it had to be a torpedoman and sure enough it had to be me!

I had to learn the job quickly cause the word had spread, the crew wanted their gedunk and the torpedo shack was a very popular stopping off place. Ice cream and torpedo's just didn't seem to go together so why the torpedo work area?

I made the ice cream at night and sold it the next day for 5 cents a cup. For some unknown reason we only had vanilla flavor but it was ice cream and tasted good sometimes out there in the middle of the Atlantic on those long convoy voyages. Donald Higgins helped me make the stuff and I know for a fact that he and I and the other torpedomen got our fill of vanilla ice cream. There were times while making it we never even touched the stuff. As far as popularity was concerned, it was really my boyish good charm that won everyone over, not my skill in making ice cream... All that time spent in trade school learning about torpedo's and depth charges and there I was being the "Good Humor" man on the U.S.S. Champlin, DD601.

To all those who don't remember the gedunk making machine on the ship, just ask me, I'll tell you all about it!!!

Jack Brawdy

Addendum: Why only vanilla??

Milk Cans and a Tin Can

My mother had three sisters who never married. They all lived together, shared their resources and possessions, and took care of each other. As time passed by, they acquired some very nice household articles and collectible artifacts. As time tolled by, the Lord saw fit to call these three aunts of mine, one at a time until they were all gone.

Having no children of their own, the task of disposing of their small estate fell their nephew (me), my wife, Ruth and our kids. While sorting through their belongings, I found an old milk can probably 35 or 40 gallon capacity. As soon as I saw it, I wanted it. It was painted black and gold, with an American flag and eagle on one side. The can itself is in excellent condition. The aunts used it as a decorative piece in their living room. The milk can now occupies a prominent place among my nautical collection. Every time I look at it, the memory of milk cans of a bygone era come flooding back.

Ships, specifically destroyers, and milk containers at first glance do not seem to go together, but let me make the connection. During World War II, I served aboard the USS Champlin DD601, a 1600 ton destroyer of the Benson class. Among its many assignments, the Champlin participated in a lot of convoy duties in the Atlantic Theater, escorting and protecting supply ships to Europe. As a consequence of this type of duty, our ship would be at sea for long periods of time. Food and

other supplies would run low, and sometimes we would run out completely. We always heaved a great sigh of relief when we got back to the States, 'cause we knew fresh food and provisions would be waiting for us. Fresh things like fruit and eggs and whole milk.

Whole, white, cold Grade A milk! What a treat it was for us to taste the stuff. As the 601 tied up to the dock, the greatest sight in the world was to see people waiting with those huge milk cans to bring them aboard. The first "chow down" after docking, the star item on the menu was milk. I drank this "nectar of the gods" until I thought I would burst. Every shipmate around me was doing the same thing. That powdered white substitute we got at sea, I could never learn to like it, but we had to use it or do without. I used to dream sometimes of a cold, tall glass of real milk while standing on my watches. I dreamed of other things, too (didn't we all?), but there were times when I would gladly have given them ^{Ten} bucks for a glass of milk.

That scenario with the big milk cans was played out every time we returned to New York and the navy yard. It was always pure joy to see the white treat on our menu even if sometimes it was only for a short period of time.

The big milk can that I have from my aunts can probably be classified as an antique by today's standards, but I intend to keep it with my other mementos. It's not a war relic, but it could be I guess. It certainly is a connection for me for the memory of those cold, tall glasses of milk along time ago

aboard the USS Champlin DD601.

Jack Brawdy

TM 2/c

Addendum:

To this day, I drink a lot of milk, but it's only because I like it. I wonder?

FLEA MARKETS AND THEIR MANY TREASURES

The USS Wren DD568, the U.S.S. Hurst DE 250, and the U.S.S. Langley CVL-27 were all United States warships that participated in our country's struggle against Germany and Japan in WWII. I became familiar with the names of these particular ships because of my many visits to a flea market where I go in search of articles for my hobby. I collect nautical things and flea markets are a great source for finding such things.

Sunday mornings when the weather is co-operative, usually in the summer time, you will find me persuing my treasures and haggling over the asking prices when I do find something interesting I always wear a baseball cap and I have three favorites that I rotate on a weekly basis. One says "Tin Can Sailors", one says "USS Hart DD594", and one says "USS Champlin DD601". These flea markets attract lots of people, both buyers and sellers, and I get into a lot of conversations about the hats I wear. I'm always comparing notes with other old sailors and lots of questions like what was Tin Can? Where did you operate? Did you shoot any Germans? How many guns on a destroyer? How fast could you go? One man asked me how we kept our meat and fruit and vegetables fresh on the Champlin on long voyages. He didn't believe me when I told him we actually had refrigeration fifty-five years ago.

This flea market that I have been talking about has two parts, indoors and outdoors. A lot of permanent stands are set up inside and one of them belongs to a lady who sells figurines of all kinds some of them nautical. I buy from her from time to time and one day she asked me about my Champlin hat and wanted to know if DD stood for destroyer. When I said yes she said her dad had served on a destroyer called Wren out in the Pacific. Another lady who worked for the first one spoke up and said her dad had been on the air craft carrier Langley. He had been a prisoner of war of the Japanese and had died very early as a result of torture he had endured at their hands. As she told her story tears welled up in her eyes. The DE Hurst I mentioned above belonged to an old gentleman with a flowing white beard. He had served on the Hurst doing alot of convoy duty in the Atlantic. We often compared notes and the possibility exists that we may have crossed paths on some of those Atlantic convoys so many years ago. He on his DE Hurst and I on the DD Champlin. He is a seller at the flea market. Potpourie is the way I would describe his stand.

One day during late summer I was doing some research work on my web-tv when I found a new web-site that dealt with the histories and profiles of war ships from WWII and even had pictures! I made copies of the records of the three ships mentioned in my little essay here and found pictures of the Wren and Langley. The next Sunday I gave this material to those two ladies and old sailor. Well now! you would think I had given them a big bundle of cash. The ladies knew very little of their dads ships and they thanked me profusely. The Hurst sailor knew quite a bit about his ship but found out from what I gave him

what happened to it after the war. (Sold for scrap)

So you see from what I have written here why I like flea markets and what I am able to find there. It's not always material things on some of those Sundays. Words like self satisfaction, commarderie, sea stories, best describe the real treasures out there. By the way, I get fifteen % of discount now at the ladies knick-knak stand.

Jack Brawdy

P.S. The name of this flea market? You will not believe it! " Trader Jacks."

A FIRST LOVE

There has been a lot written and talked about concerning the history and exploits of the U.S.S. Champlin DD601. All of us who served as crew members and officers have stories and experiences to tell. Our annual reunions and now our web-site perpetuate these memories and keep fresh in our minds what the ship means to all concerned. I would like to add another little story at this time to bring maybe another perspective at least from my point of view. And it was literally from my point of view.

The date was August 12, 1945. The war in the Pacific was winding down, in fact it was only two days later that Japan officially surrendered. On that particular date I was a torpedo man 2/C on the USS Hart DD594. I had left the Champlin and gone to advanced torpedo school in San Diego and then was assigned to the Hart out of Bremerton, Washington. After shakedown cruise she went directly to the Pacific theater of operations, a new ship and a new crew.

On the date mentioned above, the Hart had just arrived from Subic Bay in the Philippines having escorted fuel ships loaded with high octane gasoline for aircraft. We all had heaved a great sigh of relief when we finally got away from those babies. A Japanese air strike anytime during that trip would have sent all of us on an early journey to the pearly gates. We were assigned an anchorage spot, one of many there in Okinawa. There were many ships of all classes around us as we dropped anchor and started to settle in. A Benson class Destroyer was our nearest companion and as she swung around a little, her hull number came into full view. It was one of the most pleasant surprises of my tour in the Pacific. I could not believe my eyes, 601. That tin can anchored over there was the Champlin, my old ship. After double checking that hull number I started jumping around and pointed her out to anyone who would listen. I got a hold of my torpedo officer on the Hart, Mr. Rosa, and made arrangements for me to visit the Champlin the next day. Seeing that hull number brought back many pleasant memories.

While serving on the Hart I kept a personal diary and my entry for August 12, 1945 stated that I had sighted the 601 and that most of my early experiences were on the Champlin, over in the Atlantic. "She was a fighting ship if ever there was one, convoy duty, submarine warfare, shore bombardment, she had done it all and now had come over to help in the Pacific".

My diary entry for August 13, 1945 tells me that I actually took a whaleboat trip over to the Champlin but could not get aboard 'cause she was getting underway for somewhere. What a disappointment! I was eagerly looking forward to the look on the faces of the torpedo men when I walked into the torpedo shack and said "Hi guys" in Okinawa. Especially Stover and Don Higgins.

Seeing the Champlin that day so long ago was like bumping into the high school sweetheart you had your first crush on. The heart went pitter-patter, a little shortness of breath, but the reality set in and life went on. In my case I had found a new sweet-Hart but those old feelings would always linger.

I wonder what the odds would have been if I had bet that someday the two ships that I served on during WWII, the 601 and 594, would be anchored side by side out there in the Pacific? It happened on August 12, 1945 at Okinawa. Only for a few brief hours but it happened. Seems like yesterday. For those few hours I was a very happy young sailor. Of course this is all from my point of view.

Jack Brawdy

DIMENSIONS IN WHITE

Last Tuesday I gathered up my short shopping list and headed for Ames Variety store. Tuesdays at Ames is Senior Citizens day and that means 10% discount for all of us old folks. I visit Ames quite often on Tuesdays. Their merchandise is quality stuff and savings can be considerable. Don't go in the mornings though, you can be trampled to death in the Seniors rush for the free cookies and coffee the store offers.

Last Tuesday was memorable for me in this respect. I was headed for the hobby and collectables department when I was confronted by a short jovial gentleman with a big smile on his face. He reached over and patted me on the stomach part of my anatomy and said "I'll bet the white uniform you wore fifty years ago wouldn't fit over that tummy now". As he spoke his eyes were on the baseball cap I wore that particular day. He read U.S.S. Champlin DD601. At this part of my story I have to mention that when I am out in public (stores, flea markets, post office, ect.) I usually wear a military cap.

After I regained my composure (after all it's highly unusual for a stranger to pat your belly in public) I could tell from the smile on his face he was poking fun at my rotundness 'cause his "figure" was rounder than mine. Turns out he was an old destroyer sailor himself. His whites or dress blues or dungarees wouldn't fit him anymore either he said. We talked for a while about our old ships and life in the navy until his wife came looking for him. "Happens all the time" she said. We shook hands and parted. He served aboard the USS Plunkett DD431. A September reunion in Buffalo NY. They meet every two years he said. "Getting too old to do it annually" he said.

Later that evening I got to thinking about the white uniforms not fitting anymore and a thought struck me about the "uniformness" of the white uniforms we all wore. They were all made the same, sure, but the way they fit were very, well, sailor like. I went to the Champlin web-site and scrolled down to Photos and took a good look at all the pictures presented. The "uniformness" mentioned was due to the fact that all tummys shown were flat and lean. That's why the uniforms looked good! Either the navy did a fantastic job of recruiting perfect specimens or it was Mother Nature's way of producing young vital well shaped males. The passing of the years sure made a big change in the original dimensions, whoever was responsible.

The body stats may have changed for some of us over the years and the whites are just a memory but for those of us who are still functioning, that part of the body between the ears allows us to remember our destroyer experiences, the nice fit of the uniforms, attendance at our yearly reunions, and the satisfaction of reliving it all on the Champlin web-site. The waist line may have changed but our minds bring it all back when called upon to do so.

The wearing of the military hats provide for me the little antidotes described above. It happens quite often and proves to me there are a lot of old tin can sailors out there who like to remember regardless of the dimensions of their tummys!

Jack Brawdy

UNNECESSARY?

The 60th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor will be observed on December 7th. In light of the terrible attacks by terrorists on September 11, the inevitable comparisons will be made about the two tragedies. Both horrific events plunged this country into war and it will always be argued about which attack caused the greater effect on America. In any prolonged discussions, the use of the atom bombs as instruments of war will come up. The bomb's terrible destructive power. Many people called it over kill. Japan was on the ropes, they said. Totally unnecessary. Here are a few words on the matter from my point of view.

The two atom bombs ("Little Boy" and "Fat Man") that were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki Japan in 1945, killed 70 thousand and 35 thousand people instantly and caused terrible damage to the two cities. These events brought about an early surrender by the empire of Japan and an end to that war. At first glance the figures of death that jump out at you are staggering and the thought, how could we have done such a thing, is very much on our minds. Explanations were necessary.

On April 15th, 1944, I was transferred off the Champlin and sent to advanced torpedo school and upon graduation I was ordered to Bremerton, Washington and assigned to a new Fletcher class destroyer, the U.S.S. Hart DD594. After shakedown cruise off San Diego, me and the Hart sailed for Pearl Harbor and the south Pacific. We got out there in time for the invasion of Okinawa and a few days on that infamous radar picket line (26 allied ships sunk by the kamikaze suicide planes). The Hart and her new crew received her baptism of fire but emerged unscathed and went on to perform many other assignments before she and all the other forces on scene received their orders for the major invasion of Japan. None of this happened of course, all invasion plans were cancelled because we used the bombs. Soon after, the surrender took place and eventually we all came home.

Fast forward now to the year 1997. That's 52 years after the cease of hostilities. The Hart reunion group met in Baton Rouge, LA., that year and at our banquet that Saturday night our old navigation officer got up and revealed to us for the first time what our assignment had been back then for the invasion. The U.S.S. Hart and the other destroyers of her division were to proceed up around the high coast of Honshu, the Japanese home island and position themselves directly opposite their main air fields and when the word came down we were to commence firing our guns and keep firing until we expended all our ammunition. We were to prevent all enemy planes from taking off and landing. Needless to say we would have been annihilated! Their defenses in that area would have blown us out of the water.. We were to stay on station even when we had no more bullets. Keep those planes on the ground! We were expendable!

Harry Truman's decision to use the atom bombs as instruments of war literally saved our lives and gave us of the Hart the opportunity to go home and live the rest of our American lives.

After Japan's surrender, the U.S. Army found thousands of tons of ammo holed up everywhere, especially on Honshu - a million men under arms in the home islands, 5350

kamikaze planes still left and as many more ready for orthodox use. 5000 young men were training for the kamikaze corps.¹ Those planes were to be used on our invading forces before they got ashore. If they made it, they had the million man army to fight. The loss of life would have been tremendous on both sides.

That banquet night in 1997, the members of the Hart reunion group drank a toast to Harry Truman and his decision to use those bombs. Despite the terrible consequences of their use, they shortened the war and prevented the unimaginable carnage that the invasion of Japan would have caused.

Personally speaking, this old sailor was able to come home and live the American Dream. Fifty-six years of the good life and counting. A happy marriage (54 years), and four beautiful children, four grandchildren and a long and healthy retirement. The use of those bombs unnecessary? Not to my way of thinking! My favorite president? The man from Missouri.

Jack Brawdy

¹ stat sources "Two Ocean Navy"-Sam Elliot Morison

THIS AND THAT AND OTHER THINGS

Jack of the dust-Commissary man in charge of loading stores.

Early provisions were dry goods-beans, etc., and created much dust when take aboard.

Since war of 1812 only one U.S. warship has struck its colors. The gunboat U.S.S. Wake, which surrendered without firing a shot on Dec. 8, 1942. She was tied up to a dock in Shanghai and surrounded by Japanese troops.

Homecoming pennants-long multi-colored streamers flown from the mainmast as a ship returns victorious from a war. By tradition, one foot long for each day away from home. Ships sailors made them. Did the Champlin have one?

Price of victory for U.S.S. Navy in WWII including Marine Corps and Coast Guard:

56,206 dead

80,259 wounded

8,967 missing

3 years and 8 months of participation in WWII.

WWII Stats-Worldwide

40 million lives lost

293,000 American lives lost

4 trillion dollars-cost

71 destroyers lost

American Population during WWII-120,000,000

12 million men in armed forces-peak of war

1 million projected to be lost in invasion of Japan

Only Americans were to be used in Japanese invasion.

1500 B-52 bombers and U.S.S. oldest battleships would bomb and shell entire nation to oblivion. The invasion forces would include an entire railroad system with locomotives to replace the railroads that would be destroyed. (When Japan surrendered and the invasion was cancelled, all supplies were dumped into the ocean.)

"The U.S.S. Navy could probably win a war without coffee, but would prefer not to try."
Sam Eliot Morison

After fuel oil, the most precious fluid in the Navy, was coffee. The fleet lived on coffee consuming it in endless gallons.

In normal circumstances a battleship used about 250 gallons a day. When a ship went into action, daily consumption doubled.

First carrier battles were fought during Pacific war and there haven't been any more since 1944.

American Submarines were very successful in the Pacific war, but sustained the highest percentage of losses of any branch of the service. That percentage was 22%.

At full steam (sustained) the typical U.S.S. destroyer would run out of fuel in 4 days.

American occupation forces in Japan during late 1940s expended an average of 200 million dollars a year on prostitutes providing a considerable stimulus to the local economy.

It is estimated that several hundred boys under the age of 17 managed to enlist during WWII using false documents. Youngest to serve in Navy since Civil was Calvin Graham of Fort Worth, Texas. Forged mother's name on enlistment papers. Served on battleships South Dakota during Guadalcanal campaign and was wounded. When his age was found out he was sent home. Navy later arrested him for desertion when he failed to return to his ship. When his true age was established, he was dishonorably discharged and denied medical benefits. When he reached legal age he reenlisted in Navy but it took special legislation to restore his benefits. He was 12 years at time of original enlistment.

German submarines sunk 400 ships in the year 1942 alone.
754 German submarines were lost in WWII.

Standard depth charges used during WWII on destroyers:

600lb-MK-7- rolled from stern racks.

300lb-MK-6-fired from K-guns of Y-guns.

Weights referred to weight of explosive-total charges weighed 720lbs and 420lbs.

Torpedoes were Mark-15-wartime cost \$10,000

24 ft long-3,841 lbs heavy-825 lbs of HBX(dynamite)

3 speeds

26 ½ knots-range 15,000 yards, 33 ½ knots-range 10,000 yards.

45 knots-range-6000 yards

Spherical iron balls called horizontal stabilizers were located on each side of the ship's compass. Anybody know the sailor term for these objects?

Wakayama-an industrial city located in the southern part of Honshu, Japan was devastated by B-29 bombing raids preparing for the main invasion. After the Japanese surrender, in the book "The Saga of DE 343" American sailors describe coming back from liberty in Wakayama dressed in whites, passing army occupation forces just coming ashore. I guess the Navy ships in the area granted shore leave almost immediately. The Champlin anchored at Wakayama Japan for 12 days, Sept 22 to Oct 3, 1945. No big guns info.

Most of the above facts and figures found in the following books:

1. The Ocean War - Samuel Eliot Morison
2. Marching Orders - Bruce Lee
3. Victory at Sea - James F. Dunnigan and Albert A. Nofi
4. Little Ship, Big War - Comm. Edward P. Stafford U.S.N. (Ret.)
Saga of DE 343

"I REMEMBER"

This is March 7, 1985 and I'm sitting here in my living room with a cup of coffee watching the early morning TV news. They are telling the story of the 40th reunion of American and German soldiers at a place called Remagen. It had to do with the failure of the Germans to destroy a bridge there, that allowed the Allies to enter Germany and shorten the war. Film clips were shown of the fierce fighting that took place in 1945 there. Then the cameras showed those same soldiers at both sides at the ceremonies today. The aging process shown in the faces of those men made me realize that 40 years is a long time. A long look in the bathroom mirror showed the same aging process in my face.

I was a part of that war, too, having served in the U.S. Navy as a tin can sailor in both theaters of operation. I was a torpedoman on two destroyers, the U.S.S. Champlin DD 691 in the Atlantic and the U.S.S. Hart, DD 594 in the Pacific.

In the human body, the brain is a magnificent piece of equipment. I had to say that because I'm sitting here in a quiet room, no distractions and calling upon my brain to go back in time 40 years and more and recall the events and things that pertain to my life as a tin can sailor. The news event I mentioned above had the advantage of using old film clips, but I'll rely solely on memory.

At the time, I was serving aboard the Champlin, which was in drydock in the Brooklyn Navy yard for repairs. One day my division officer told me to pack my seabag, I was being transferred to advanced torpedo school in San Diego, California. He said I would be back in eight weeks. Boy, was he wrong! I should have known 'cause I was carrying my service record with me. Passed through Pittsburg (my home town) on that long train ride to the coast. If I'm asking myself now why we didn't fly? Got all the way to the school in California, only to be told I had a thirty day "delay in route" leave before classes started. (This is a typical example of the saying, "The right way, the wrong way and the Navy way"). Went back to Pittsburg (by train), spent some time with the family and returned to San Diego (by train). Those long train rides coast to coast were something else. I recall the generosity of the townspeople towards the service men where ever the train stopped. They passed out box lunches, fruit, coffee, sandwiches, etc., at the railroad stations. I remember a young Marine sitting across the aisle on my coach. He sat next to a good looking lady. I judged to be ten to fifteen years older than he. Once they became acquainted, it was quite a twosome. They made love all night and slept all day, sit up style. Memorable, because when we arrived at the Los Angeles station, she met her husband (an Air Force officer) and the Marine met his girl. Those reunions took place side by side in the station. Oh, the hardships of war!

The comments here about the kind of people at the train stops bring back memories of how the people of this country came together during World War II to help in any way possible to win the war. Bond drives, scrap collections, living with rationing, etc., helping the service men. (Like giving box lunches to traveling sailors). The citizens at home really did their share. I recall how proud the townfolk were of their service people when they came home on leave.

My dad was active in the American Legion in those days (he was a veteran of World War I) and one time I got home during one of their monthly meetings. He insisted I tag along for the evening and to my great surprise and embarrassment, I received a standing ovation and welcome from all those old veterans. It seems my dad had told them of my duty on a destroyer. I was a "tin can sailor" fighting the "hush" in the Atlantic. I was their "hero" of the evening. I mention all this to illustrate the way people were during those war years. There were heroes on the home front too. I realize that "the American way", as practiced in those days was a meaningful part of my life and sustained all of us in whatever effort we were called upon to do (by the way, my dad served as chairman of the local draft board).

Advanced torpedo school in San Diego was quite comprehensive. We knew about tests on fish, what was in them, dimensions, etc. torpedo school, Newport, R.I.). In advanced school, we plotted courses, fired them, retrieved spent fish, serviced them etc. They sent us to classes for enemy plane education, how to use gas masks, fire prevention, all this and more. The eight weeks went by rather quickly.

I don't recall how it happened, but after graduation, I was sent to Treasure Island, San Francisco and placed into a vast pool of manpower a waiting reassignment. The priority was being given to the Pacific theater. As new destroyers were being built and near completion, their crews were being formed from pool of trained men on Treasure Island. We checked a bulletin board every morning for our names to appear. If memory serves, I waited for about a month. Life was good on Treasure Island. Liberties every night in San Francisco, top flight entertainment from Hollywood every day, good meals and absolutely nothing to do but wait for orders. (By the way, do any of you remember how cold it got in Frisco at night after the sun went down? We always took a peacoat on liberty.)

My orders finally came, I was sent to Puget Sound Navy yard in Bremerton, Washington to be a torpedoman aboard a new destroyer, the U.S.S. Hart, DD 594. The ship wasn't quite finished yet when I reported. We lived on a house boat close by in the yard. The new crew was put to work almost immediately aboard the ship. The new skipper insisted on long work days and stressed the importance of getting the ship ready for shakedown cruise as soon as possible. Most of my memories center around the torpedo gang, how quickly we became acquainted. We worked as one team getting organized and the equipment ready. We were from all over the country and that included a few "rebels". Quite naturally they were proud of the fact that they were here to win the war in the shortest time possible cause they were "fightin' men" picked to do the job. They'd show us "yankee dogs". Every day we worked, getting ready to fight W.W. II for real. We fought the Civil War over again in our "discussions". Looking back now I'm surprised in remembering how deep rooted they were in their convictions.

The working parts for our torpedo mounts and depth charge firing mechanisms came to the ship packed in heavy grease and we all worked very hard cleaning and assembling this equipment and making sure it all worked properly. Writing about these things now, I'm surprised by the fact that the only men I distinctly remember were those in the torpedo gang and a few of the officers.

Those days in the navy yard seemed like utter confusion. The crew swarmed over the ship like a bunch of bees. The construction people were finishing up all various projects. Members of the crew stood fire watches with extinguishers as ship yard welders worked on the ship. I mention this to highlight a cute story of a torpedoman striker who always volunteered for this assignment and always

stood fire watch for the same welder. It so happened, this particular welder was a lovely young female. They met on the ship, fell in love, dated during shakedown cruise whenever possible and got married before we sailed for the Pacific incidentally, there were alot of women working in the shipyards in those days.

Looking back now, I remember how it all came together. The confusion turned into efficiency and all that hard work and activity paid off. When the commissioning day rolled around, we were prepared.

The commissioning ceremonies for the Hart impressed me a great deal. It was a beautiful day, the sun was shining, a Navy band played military music, flags were flying and the crew and ships officers and guests were all present. Invitations had been given to the crew to mail to our parents and wives and loved ones, but a lot couldn't make it because of distance. My parents weren't there, but kept the invitation and I have it to this day. Looking back now, I'm impressed with the Navy for giving each ship the full treatment for such a event, considering the circumstances, wartime and the need to get those ships out there. It just seemed like it all came together that day. Here we were, a bunch of young Americans from all over the country, already formed into a efficient crew participating in an event that brought us together with the ship and made us a part of the U.S. Navy. We were ready. There was an excitement in the air, like everything was "alive". That's how it affected me and I was proud to be a part of it.

One thing that comes to mind now as I write this was the fact that I personally felt alot of confidence and "belonging" to this ship and crew. I chalk this up to my experiences and training aboard the other ship, the ~~CASPER~~ ^{CASPER}. I was a "veteran" now and felt I could contribute. In the back of all our minds, we knew it was wartime and we knew where we were going, but we didn't talk about it much. When that fact did pop into my mind, it always translated into a knot in the pit of my stomach. Suffice it to say, we were all too busy and too tired to worry about it much.

During our stay in the Navy yard, the entire torpedo gang was sent to Keyport, Washington for a week to visit a plant that manufactured our torpedos. We worked with the people putting these fish together. We actually assembled them and handled every part that went into them. These workers came from all over the country and were very cooperative with the sailors. I remember how impressed I was with the cleanliness and efficiency of the place. This extra training for us was called schooling and duly noted in our service records. It was part of that "little bit extra" that the new skipper was asking of his crew.

We made alot of our liberties in Seattle, across Puget Sound from Bremerton. We had to take a ferry boat to get there. About an hour's ride as I recall. I remember now as I write this, how beautiful it was in that area. Our chief torpedoman was from Seattle, or had spent alot of time there and had alot of connections or phone numbers. Right before shakedown cruise, he decided to throw a party for the entire torpedo gang. He wanted to show his appreciation for all the hard work we had done. With special permisson, we were granted a weekend passtogether. In the meantime, he had called his "girl" in Seattle and she arranged dates for all of us. They were waiting for us when the ferry pulled in. Picture a gang of sailors and girls shopping together for groceries and booze, then hiring enough cabs to take us to a big old house on the outskirts of town. We got there about 5:00 Pm on a Friday and never came out till late Sunday night. That was a party like you wouldn't believe. Needless to say, we were all eternally grateful to the chief for giving us such a grand thank you. Also needless to say, we all performed our "duties" in the best traditions of the Navy.

Writing about it now makes me realize how important it was in those days that when the opportunity presented itself, tin can sailors enjoyed their liberties and leave time to the hilt. It recharged our batteries and gave us things to talk and brag about on long stretches of sea duty.

My memories and recall abilities don't tell me too much about our shakedown cruise. I know we sailed up and down the coast of California. I do remember the hard work, the never ending drills and practice, the constant firing of the guns. I realize now as I try to write about it that a shakedown cruise was an experience unto it self. It was sea duty of the hardest kind. We had to get the bugs out, in a word. We did this every day for almost two months. Besides our regular duties, all of us had to take turns on the .20 and .40 mm guns, firing them and familiarizing ourselves with their operation. The guys that showed the best ability as "shooters" became the back up people for the regular gun crews, if the need ever arose.

One day all the petty officers of the torpedo gang were called topside with THE assistant gunnery officer. We were taught the fundamentals of handling and firing a .45 service revolver. It was amazing how many men up to this point never fired this weapon. I had gone through boot camp, two torpedo service schools, served aboard another destroyer and had never handled this gun, let alone fire one.

The Hart worked with a tanker at sea fueling and refueling every day. There were other observers aboard, besides our own people. This procedure was in addition to our regular drills and training. I found out later, that our ship was being used in research operations to perfect refueling techniques for destroyers at sea.

Our depth charge K-gun general quarter crews were made up of torpedomen. Depth charge maintance was the responsibility of torpedomen. These crews competed against another in loading and firing drills. They were timed with a stop-watch and the crew that completed the entire operations in the shortest time was declared the champion. Later, when we joined the fleet, this competition was expanded and the entire destroyer squadron competed against one another. Ship against ship. It made these necessary drills very interesting and the men very proficient.

A clean ship is an efficient ship and an efficient ship will make a good fighting ship when the time comes. This theme was established in all our minds on that shakedown and sure was put into practice everyday. We had inspections all the time, both equipment and personnel. Other than the training of the crew and the performance of the ship, cleanliness was number one item and it remained that way up until the time I left the ship. There was a certain amount of pride connected with it. Looking back now, I remember how smart the ship looked when we would come back from liberty. I remember the comments of the refueling ships crew members when we would pull along side. The "cleanest ship in the Navy", we were told and I believed it, because that's the way the skipper did things.

I mention these interesting things about the "extra" training we got only to spotlight the thoroughness of the training and the character and make up of the captain we had. As my diary pointed out, there were times when I hated his guts, but looking back now, I know it was all necessary. When the time finally came to go to sea, we were prepared.

There's not much more I can add to all of this except to say that being a tin can sailor was a significant part of my life. I served on two fine ships and was fortunate to have known such fine shipmates. Any other destroyer man who would sit down and write about his life on a tin can would be different, but the basic feelings would be the same. Pride in having belonged to one of the best organizations in the world

, tin can sailors.

Most of my entries here have centered around the beginnings of a fine ship call Hart because I recently submitted a diary I kept while serving on that ship. Before being assigned to the Hart, I served on a destroyer called Champlin DD 601. She was part of the war in the Atlantic. The stories of her participation are well documented. Most of the battle stars I have were earned while on this ship. Submarine warfare, convoy duty, shore bombardments, it's all there. Her exploits would make a fine story to be written about.

I belong to a reunion group of tin can sailors that served on the Champlin and every year we get together with our wives and have a good time. We always manage to win the war all over again. Maybe someday I will make an attempt to get the Hart gang together. I wonder if that old skipper is still living? In the meantime, I'll fly my American flag on all the holidays, check on my wrinkles in the mirror, but most of all, I'll remember.

By Jack Brawdy



"BEEN THERE - DONE THAT"
- HART STORIES -



AS MOST OF YOU HART SHIPMATES REMEMBER, AFTER HAVING BEEN ASSIGNED FOR DUTY ON THE 594 WE LIVED ABOARD A HOUSEBOAT IN THE BREMERTON NAVY YARD. FOR A SPELL CAUSE THE SHIP'S CONSTRUCTION WASN'T QUITE COMPLETED. ALL HANDS HAD QUITE A BIT TO DO ON THE DESTROYER EVERY DAY AND WE WORKED SIDE BY SIDE WITH THE BUILDERS. STANDING FIRE WATCHES WITH EXTINGUISHERS AND THE WELDERS WAS ONE OF OUR DUTIES. ONE DAY WHILE ON LUNCH BREAK THE WELDER I WAS WORKING WITH SHOWED ME HOW TO MAKE A DECORATIVE BRACELET OUT OF THREE STAINLESS STEEL WELDING RODS. THE RODS WERE STRIPPED, WELDED TOGETHER AT THE ENDS, TWISTED INTO A DECORATIVE DESIGN AND THEN FLATTENED. THE HARD PART WAS THE FLATTENING PROCESS. OVERHEAD IN THE NAVY YARD WERE GIANT CRANES THAT MOVED EQUIPMENT BACK AND FORTH AND ACROSS THE NAVY YARD BELOW. THEY TRAVELED ON LARGE WHEELS ON TRACKS MUCH LIKE A LOCOMOTIVE ON A RAILROAD TRACK. THE IDEA WAS TO CLIMB UP THE CRANE RIGGING, LAY THE TWISTED RODS ON THE OVERHEAD TRACK AND WAIT FOR THE CRANE WHEELS TO PASS OVER THEM. PRESTO! THE FLATTENING PROCESS. I HAD SEEN SOME OF THE FINISHED BRACELETS AND DECIDED THAT I WOULD MAKE ONE FOR MY GIRL BACK HOME. I WENT THROUGH THE WHOLE PROCESS, GOT MY BRACELET MADE AND NOT LONG AFTER, THE HART PUT OUT TO SEA ON SHAKEDOWN CRUISE, AND EVENTUALLY SET SAIL FOR HAWAII TO JOIN THE FLEET. I SPENT MANY LONG HOURS OF MY FREE TIME SITTING IN THE TORPEDO SHACK, SHAPING AND SHINING THAT BRACELET. WHEN IT WAS FINISHED I WANTED TO MAIL IT TO THE GIRLFRIEND BUT THERE WERE NO MAILBOXES OFF THE COAST OF OKINAWA AT THAT POINT IN TIME, SO I HAD TO WAIT UNTIL THE WAR WAS OVER AND DELIVER THE BRACELET IN PERSON. SHE LOVED THE DARN THING, BUT SHORTLY AFTER MY RETURN, SHE RETURNED THE BRACELET PLUS MY ENGAGEMENT RING. SEEMS THAT WHILE I SPENT ALL THOSE HOURS WORKING ON THE BRACELET IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC SHE FOUND SOMEONE ELSE BACK HOME. I ENDED UP GIVING THE DAMN THING TO MY KID BROTHER; WHO KNOWS WHERE IT IS TODAY! I ALMOST BROKE MY NECK CLIMBING THAT CRANE RIGGING IN THE NAVY YARD TOO!

JACK BRAWDY

"BEEN THERE - DONE THAT"

- HART STORIES -



While the Hart crew was still living on the houseboat in Bremerton Navy yard and all of us were working very hard to get the ship and equipment ready for shakedown, Chief Torpedoman Blair came around and told the entire torpedo gang to prepare for a trip. All fifteen of us were being sent to Keyport, Washington for a week to work in a torpedo manufacturing plant. Don't remember if all the destroyers out of the Bremerton Navy yard did this, I seem to remember it was the

Captain's idea. Anyway the next morning we all went to the train station for the trip to Keyport (We did a lot of traveling by train in those days), As we walked in a group down the train platform to board our coach, the chief was counting heads and he came up short one man. The train was ready to leave and we were missing a body. He became very agitated at this unwelcome disruption and when he found out the name of the tardy sailor he was twice as mad. Dick Wlazlinski was a torpedoman striker better known to all of us as "Ski". A lot of people thought he marched to the beat of his own drummer. Minor trouble followed him around all the time and if one were able to check it out his name came up a few times at Captain's Mast. He hailed from Pittsburgh and was of Polish persuasion. When I was trying to locate people for the Hart reunion group I found him living in South Carolina. He had stayed in the Navy after the War, retired and was a member of our reunion group until he died a couple of years ago. Anyway, back to the train station. "Ski" was the missing one but just when we all thought Chief Blair was going to have apoplexy we heard a shout and here he comes, running down the platform to join us and lo and behold he had a beautiful young lady in tow, a gorgeous blonde who came along to kiss him goodbye. And believe it or not she was willing to kiss us all goodbye. All we had to do was step up one at a time and plant one on her. Let me emphasize, this young lady was very kissable. Out of the group of fifteen, other than Ski, how many do you think took her up on her offer? One! Can you imagine? Only one and the ironic part of the story was the fact that he was one of the two married men in the group. As

I remember the scene he really planted one on her too! I can't mention his name cause he still is a happily married man. We all got to Keyport and soon were busy learning how to build torpedoes but for a long time "Ski" and the other

"BEEN THERE - DONE THAT"

- HART STORIES -

"opportunistic" didn't let us forget our chance to kiss a pretty girl goodbye. We were all young, virile, good looking sailors who certainly at that moment didn't perform our "duties" in the best traditions of the Navy. As time went by, however, if memory serves, we had many opportunities to correct our first mistakes and all "traditions" were lived up to.

Jack Brawdy

PS. I don't remember if Chief Blair kissed the blonde or not. I think he was just happy that "Ski" showed up that day.

"BEEN THERE - DONE THAT"

- HART STORIES -



WHEN THE WAR BROKE OUT IT BECAME NECESSARY FOR THE ARMED FORCES OF THE U.S. TO RECRUIT HEALTHY YOUNG MEN (AND LATER YOUNG WOMEN) FOR THE VARIOUS BRANCHES OF THE SERVICE. PHYSICAL EXAMS HAD TO BE PASSED TO QUALIFY, BUT EVEN HAVING BEEN ACCEPTED AND BEING IN FOR VARIOUS PERIODS OF TIME MEDICAL THINGS COULD AND DID HAPPEN (EVEN TO ABLE BODIED SEAMEN). SOMEWHERE IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC I DEVELOPED A BAD TOOTHACHE THAT WOULDN'T QUIT AND I NEEDED SOME DENTAL ASSISTANCE. WE WERE OPERATING WITH A CRUISER AT THE TIME (PROBABLY THE MINNEAPOLIS). WHILE AT ANCHOR SOMEWHERE MYSELF AND OTHERS WERE SENT OVER TO THE CRUISER BY LIFEBOAT FOR DENTAL WORK REQUIRED. LIKE ALL RED BLOODED AMERICANS, I HATED DENTAL ATTENTION. I SAT DOWN IN THE CHAIR WHEN MY TURN CAME AND NOTICED THERE WERE TWO DENTISTS. THEY FOUND THE BAD TOOTH AND DECIDED TO PULL IT. DURING THE PROCESS THEY DISCOVERED I HAD A COUPLE OF OTHER SMALL CAVITIES THAT NEEDED FILLED. THE OLDER OF THE TWO OFFICERS STARTED THE DRILLING PROCESS, BUT HE STOPPED AND HANDED THE DRILL TO THE OTHER GUY. DURING THE COURSE OF THEIR CONVERSATION BACK AND FORTH, IT TURNS OUT THE YOUNGER OFFICER HADN'T HAD MUCH EXPERIENCE IN DRILLING TEETH. HE HAD BEEN RUSHED INTO THE SERVICE BECAUSE THEY NEEDED DENTISTS. "ON THE JOB TRAINING WILL TAKE CARE OF THAT IN A HURRY", THE SENIOR DENTIST SAID. AS THE DRILL DECENDED IN THE "GREEN" HAND TOWARDS MY MOUTH, MY HAND SHOT OUT AND I GRABBED HIM BY THE WRIST AND JUMPED OUT OF THE CHAIR. THEY WERE BOTH QUITE PERTURBED, BUT BEING SCARED ANYHOW, I TOLD THEM NO ROOKIE DENTIST WAS GOING TO PRACTICE ON MY TEETH. I FINALLY CALMED DOWN, SAT DOWN AND THE OLDER DENTIST FINISHED MY WORK. AS I LEFT SICK BAY THAT DAY, I TOLD THE TWO OF THEM NOT TO TALK IN FRONT OF THE PATIENT IN THE CHAIR OR THAT RECRUIT DENTIST WOULD NEVER GET ANY EXPERIENCE DRILLING TEETH! OTHER MEMBERS OF THE HART CREW SOON FOUND OUT ABOUT THE "ROOKIE DENTIST". (I SPREAD THE WORD BY WORD OF MOUTH). IF MY SHIPMATES HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH IT THE "DRILL" OFFICER WOULD BE LEFT WITH AN EMPTY CHAIR.

JACK BRAWDY

"BEEN THERE - DONE THAT"

- HART STORIES -



EONS AGO WHEN I WAS A TEENAGER I PALED AROUND WITH A GROUP OF NEIGHBORHOOD KIDS ABOUT TEN IN NUMBER. WE GREW UP TOGETHER AND DID EVERYTHING TOGETHER. HAD OUR OWN SOFTBALL TEAM, SANG TOGETHER IN THE CHURCH CHOIR, EVEN HAD A PING-PONG LEAGUE WHICH WE PLAYED ON MY MOTHER'S OLD KITCHEN TABLE. ACROSS THE STREET FROM MY HOUSE WAS AN OLD ATLANTIC GAS STATION WHERE JACK (ONE OF THE GANG) GOT A JOB PUMPING GAS TO SUPPLEMENT HIS WIDOWED MOTHER'S INCOME. JACK DROPPED OUT OF SOME OF OUR ACTIVITIES AND IN ORDER TO SEE HIM MORE OFTEN THE REST OF US STARTED TO HANG AROUND THE STATION. WHILE HE GREASED CARS AND CHANGED OIL WE USED TO PUMP GAS FOR HIM, SOMETIMES THREE AND FOUR OF US AT A TIME. THE OWNER OF THAT GAS STATION GOT MANY COMPLIMENTS ON THE SERVICE HE PROVIDED. I TELL THIS PART OF THE STORY TO EMPHASIZE THE CLOSENIT ASPECT OF OUR ASSOCIATION WITH EACH OTHER. JACK WAS JACK ~~WAS~~ BAPTIZED AS SUCH. I WAS BAPTIZED JOHN BUT CALLED JACK, SO THIS IS REALLY A STORY OF TWO GOOD FRIENDS CALLED JACK. IN THE MIDST OF ALL THIS FUN AND GROWING UP, AN EVENT CAME ALONG THAT PUT AN END TO ALL THESE ENJOYABLE ACTIVITIES. IT WAS CALLED WORLD WAR II. NO MORE PING-PONG, NO MORE PUMPING GAS, OUR IMMEDIATE FUTURE TOOK A DRAMATIC TURN TOWARD ADULTHOOD. THE TEN KIDS THAT GREW UP TOGETHER SEPERATED AND JOINED VARIOUS BRANCHES OF THE ARMED FORCES. THE TWO JACKS INLISTED IN THE U.S. NAVY. OUT OF BOOT CAMP, ONE JACK (BAPTIZED JOHN) WAS SENT TO TORPEDO SCHOOL AND EVENTUALLY ENDED UP A PETTY OFFICER ON A SHIP CALLED HART DD594, SERVING ITS COUNTRY IN MANY PLACES AND MANY WAYS IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC THEATER OF OPERATIONS. THE OTHER JACK'S NAVY CAREER WAS A COMPLETE MYSTERY TO THIS JACK CAUSE WE TRAVELED DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS ONCE WE JOINED THE NAVY. ABOUT 2 1/2 YEARS HAD PASSED (THE HART WAS MY SECOND SHIP) WHEN ONE DAY THE 594 PULLED ALONGSIDE A FLEET TANKER FOR REFUELING. THE SEAS WERE A LITTLE CHOPPY SO THE TWO SHIPS WERE BOUNCING AROUND LIKE TWO CORKS IN A BATHTUB. THE MEN ON THE TANKER MOVED UP AND DOWN LIKE PEOPLE ON AN ELEVATOR. TORPEDOMEN DURING REFUELING OPERATIONS DIDN'T HAVE TOO MUCH TO DO, SO I WAS WATCHING THE FACES OF THE TANKER SAILORS. ON ONE OF THE PASSES, MY PULSE QUICKENED CAUSE I THOUGHT I HAD SEEN A FAMILIAR FACE. NAH! NOT WAY OUT HERE!. I WATCHED REAL CLOSELY ON THE NEXT PASS AND SURE ENOUGH, THER HE WAS ON THE TANKER, 9000 MILES AWAY FROM HOME, MY OLD PING-PONG BUDDY AND FRIEND. IT WAS JACK

"BEEN THERE - DONE THAT"

- HART STORIES -

(BAPTIZED AS SUCH), I SCREAMED AND HOLLERED AND GOT HIS ATTENTION AND HIS EYES BULGED AND HE SCREAMED AND HOLLERED. AT THAT MOMENT THAT JACK AND THIS JACK (BAPTIZED JOHN) KNEW WHAT THE NAVY HAD DONE TO THE TWO OF US. WHEN THE WAR WAS OVER, WE BOTH GOT HOME OK, COMPARED NOTES AND CONTINUED ON INTO ADULTHOOD. DIFFERENT JOBS THOUGH. THEY TORE DOWN THE OLD GAS STATION AND BUILT NEW APARTMENTS. JUST ANOTHER PLEASANT EXPERIENCE FOR ME TO REMEMBER WHEN I'M THINKING OF MY SERVICE TIME ABOARD THE USS. HART. DD594 DURING WWII. AFTER 53 YEARS THE TWO JACKS (OR JOHNS) STILL CORRESPOND

JACK BRAWDY

"BEEN THERE - DONE THAT"

- HART STORIES -



Early on the morning of August 9, 1945 The U.S.S. Hart conducted firing and torpedo exercises, then returned to Subic Bay for refueling and instead of anchoring, received surprise new orders to leave immediately for Okinawa. Along with the U.S.S. Wiley, we were escorting two fleet tankers loaded with high octane gasoline for aircraft. I remarked in my little diary at the time that an enemy air attack on our formation would cause quite an explosion and probably blow us all to kingdom come, thankfully that didn't happen, but it took us

three days to reach our destination. Progress was slow due to the slow speed of these tankers. We arrived Okinawa safe and sound and was very much surprised to see that the place had undergone a complete facelifting and a mighty base had been built. There were thousands of planes there and many, many ships of all descriptions and class. The Hart delivered the tankers, refueled and proceeded towards its assigned anchorage. It was at this part of our completed assignment that I received one of the most pleasant surprises of my tour in the Pacific. Close by at anchor was a Benson class destroyer with a big old 601 on her bow. It was my old ship the U.S.S. Champlin. The sight of her brought back many pleasant memories. Most of my early navy experiences were on the Champlin over in the Atlantic Fleet. She was a fighting ship if there ever was one. Convoy duty, sub warfare, shore bombardment, she had done it all and now she was part of the Pacific fleet. Got permission the next day to go visit my old shipmates but could not get aboard cause she was getting underway. That was rather a proud few hours for me to be able to see my two ships at the sametime, the 601 and the 594. On the 14th we received orders to return to the Philippines escorting fourteen LSM's. In the afternoon the big news finally broke. The Dmi news agency announced the information that Japan had accepted the peace terms. From that moment on the U.S.S. Hart was a unit of the peacetime navy. The Whitehouse announced the news to the country the next day. The short period of time we were in Okinawa on this assignment the base underwent three aerial bombardments. I think the enemy knew the end was near and they were trying to inflict as much damage as possible. In spite of the great news we had received, the ship remained in a high state of alert all the way back to Subic Bay. I

"BEEN THERE - DONE THAT"

- HART STORIES -

know that everyone was happy and a lot of plans were being made for civilian life. Somewhere on the ship someone was making our homeward bound pennant.* From my point of view it was a remarkable few days, both the end and the beginning of many things. On the 9th of August the beginning of this particular voyage. Instead of the Japanese blowing up the high octane gasoline on our two tankers, the second atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki, Japan, this hastening the accepting of the U>S> peace terms and the end of the war. It was the beginning of the rest of our lives and the end of the Japanese dominance in that part of the world. From that date August 14, 1945. I personally had to serve four more months as a destroyer sailor before seeing the end of my navy career. The pleasure of seeing my two ships side by side was icing on the cake and even today after fifty-three years I think of that remarkable six day span. I guess such memories never really end.

Jack Brawdy

* The sailor who made the homeward bound pennant was Donald F Ricer New London, Ohio
By tradition a homecoming pennant is one foot long for each day the ship was away from home.

A VIEW FROM AFAR

Early on the morning of August 9, 1945, the U.S.S. Hart conducted firing and torpedo exercises, then returned to Subic Bay for refueling, and instead of anchoring, received surprising new orders to leave immediately for Okinawa.

Accompanying the U.S.S. Wiley, we were escorting two fleet tankers loaded with high octane gasoline for aircraft. I remarked in my little diary at the time that an enemy air attack on our formation would cause quite an explosion and probably blow us all to kingdom come. Thankfully, that didn't happen, but it took us three days to reach our destination. Progress was slow due to the slow speed of those loaded tankers.

We arrived at Okinawa safe and sound and were very much surprised to see that the place had undergone a complete face-lifting and that a mighty base had been built. There were thousands of planes there and many, many ships of all descriptions and class. The Hart delivered the tankers, refueled and proceeded towards its assigned anchorage. It was at this part of our completed assignment that I received one of the most pleasant surprises of my tour in the Pacific. Close by at anchor was a Benson class destroyer with a big 601 on her bow. It was my old ship the U.S.S. Champlin. The sight of her brought back many pleasant memories. Most of my learning navy experiences were on the Champlin when she was part of the Atlantic fleet. She was a fighting ship of the first rank. Convoy duty, submarine warfare, shore bombardment, she had done it all and now she was joining forces in the Pacific area. I got permission the next day to go visit my old shipmates, but could not go aboard 'cause she was getting underway. That was rather a proud few hours for me to be able to see my two ships at the same time, the 601 and the 594.

On the 14th we received orders to return to the Philippines escorting fourteen LSM's. In the afternoon the big news finally broke. The Dome' news agency announced the information that Japan had accepted the peace terms. From that moment on the Hart and the Champlin were units of the peacetime navy. The Whitehouse announced the news to the nation the next day.

The short period of time we were in Okinawa on this assignment, the base underwent three aerial bombardments. I think the enemy knew the end was near so they were trying to inflict as much damage as possible. In spite of the great news we had received, the ship remained on a high state of alert

"BEEN THERE - DONE THAT"

- HART STORIES -



- Armies, Church and Holidays -
Back in October of 1945, the U.S.S. Hart was anchored in the well known city of Weiheiwei, China in company with its almost constant companion, the U.S.S. Metcalf. The two ships were waiting for further orders along with other naval units of the North China sea patrol. We were in pursuit of certain Japanese forces who had to be convinced that the war was over and that the motherland had really surrendered. It was a Sunday afternoon and the call went out for Catholic Church party in the main city of

Weiheiwei to visit the church there. It was a long time since I had been inside a church so I climbed into my undress whites and joined the group of six that made the trip from the Hart. What an experience it turned out to be!

Just as our whaleboat hit the dock area, Two armies of Chinese soldiers, one communist one nationalist, overran the city. They seemed to come from everywhere. They treated us in a very hostile manner, surrounding us, carrying guns with bayonets. It took quite a bit of persuasion to convince these guys we only wanted to go to church. The mayor of the city finally showed them our intentions were peaceful. Even at that, they marched us up the center of the street to the church and when the services were over they took us directly back to the dock area. The place was overrun with soldiers, sand bag placements, machine gun nests and a whole lot of hostility, they were ready to fight each other for control of this town but for the moment we were the "intruder" and as we got back into the whaleboats, they were actually shoving and spitting at us. The church itself was very beautiful, the priests were French missionaries, they could not speak English. The pastor had been here for 45 years.

After services we visited the wine cellar and the good fathers treated us to some delicious port wine made from grapes grown in their vineyards. How ironic! China is in the old world and here we were, a bunch of sailors from the U.S.A. setting foot for the first time in that old world on October 12, 1945, Columbus Day! Those soldiers scared the hell out of us, but while being scared, couldn't help but notice the shabby condition of their uniforms, old beat up tennis shoes and WW I wrap around leggings. They were filthy dirty, but their guns were real enough and we were more than glad to get to our ships that Sunday afternoon. Never did

"BEEN THERE - DONE THAT"

- HART STORIES -

get an answer as to their reasons for being mad at the Americans Navy for being there. Maybe they wanted to back the Japanese out all by themselves. After all they had plenty of justification for wanting to do so. Maybe they were just jealous of our nice white uniforms and shiny black shoes, considering the condition of their own outfits. Come to think of it, which army was hasselling us so vigorously, Nationalist or Communist? At any rate alls well that ends well and I think I would do it all over again for a couple more glasses of that homemade French Missionary wine.

Jack Brawdy

"BEEN THERE - DONE THAT"

- HART STORIES -



I thought I would write this little story while I was in a football frame of mind. Maybe writing about football will erase the sadness I am feeling over the loss the Pittsburgh Steelers sustained last Sunday that eliminated them from a berth in the 1998

Superbowl. I only watch the game now and root for hometown victorys but I remember a particular football game I played in. Some fifty-three years ago in a place called Grande Island, Subic Bay in the Philippines. It was August 6, 1945 and the torpedo gang of the U.S.S. Hart (15 strong) was having an afternoon picnic. The morning hours had been spent helping to paint the living compartments, so it was a real pleasure and relief to be off the ship and out in the fresh air. These picnics were held by division while the fleet was at anchor, a recreational activity when possible, a break from our wartime routine. The day our picnic was scheduled it rained cats and dogs and it looked like Noah's orginial deluge. When we hit the beach we sank in mud to our kneecaps. We had beer, steaks, cheese, bread, potatoes, hard boiled eggs and a football. A football and thereby hangs a tale. Two of the men kindled a fire, started the steaks and prepared the other food. I don't remember how they kept all that grubdry cause it was raining beyond belief. I remember eating my share of it so they must have done a good job. While all this food preparation was taking place, the football game of the century was taking place. Six men on a side in mud kneedeep we struggled back and forth for about two hours. Didn't dare center the ball for fear of losing it. Such a game has never been played in the history of the sport. Cuts and bruises meant nothing. Our clothes were stained a deep shade of brown and we were covered with clay from head to foot. Touchdowns andrazzle-dazzle plays were plentiful. We were all Pro-Bowlers that day in the rain in the Philippines. Yes one side won and one side lost, but that didn't mean a thing in that game. Fun and enjoyment and good food for all andescape from our destroyer duties for a few hours, thats what counted at the time. Steaks, beer and a football in the middle of the Pacific in the middle of a war. What more could youask for? Our bodies the next day told a different story but it was well worth it! Before leaving to return to the Hart we all jumped into the bay, clothes and all and tried to wash the muck off. It was in

"BEEN THERE ~ DONE THAT"
- HART STORIES -

the salt water that we found out how many wounds we had. It was a sorry but happy bunch of torpedomen that climbed aboard the ship that night and gratefully hit the sack. All except one that is. Yours truly had to stand a mid-watch and had to put off # Dreamland until 0400. Steaks, beer and football (or softball) were enjoyed by other divisions of the ship as time permitted at Subic Bay back in 1945, but August 6, 1945 was my day to play football and writing about it now and remembering, kind of eases the sting of the recent Steelers loss. Jumping into the salt water fifty-three years ago. Now that was a sting! By the way if you are planning a picnic anytime soon don't forget to bring along a football.

"a Grande time was had by all"

Jack brawdy

"BEEN THERE - DONE THAT"

- HART STORIES -



HATS OR BETTER YET, BASEBALL CAPS ARE A BIG THING IN THIS COUNTRY OF OURS.

SEEMS LIKE EVERYBODY WEARS ONE,

ADVERTISING OR TOUTING ONE

ORGANIZATION OR ANOTHER. I LIKE TO WEAR BASEBALL CAPS AND OVER THE YEARS I HAVE ACCUMULATED QUITE A COLLECTION. FOR PURPOSES OF THIS STORY I WENT DOWN TO THE BASEMENT AND COUNTED MY CAPS. I

HAVE OVER 100. MY COLLECTION

REPRESENTS THE PITTSBURGH PIRATES, PITTSBURGH STEELERS, THE PITTSBURGH PENGUINS, PITT UNIVERSITY, (YOU WILL NOTICE I AM A HOMER), THE COMPANY

WHERE I WORKED, THE UNION I BELONGED

TO, THE HIGH SCHOOL MY KIDS ATTENDED, THE HIGH SCHOOLS MY GRANDCHILDREN ATTENDED, THE TOWNSHIP WHERE I LIVE, I COULD GO ON AND ON. SOME FUNNY HATS WITH CUTE SAYINGS. I HAVE ANOTHER COLLECTION OF HATS THAT I WEAR ALL THE TIME, SMALL IN NUMBER, BUT THE ONES I AM PROUDEST OF. TWO SETS OF EACH, ONE SET TO WEAR AND ONE SET TO HANG IN MY DEN AND ADMIRE.

THE CAPS TELL ALL WHO TAKE THE TIME TO READ THE INSCRIPTIONS THAT I SERVED ON TWO DESTROYERS DURING WORLD WAR II, U.S.S.

CHAMPLIN DD601 AND U.S.S. HART DD594 AND THAT I WAS A TIN

CAN SAILOR. I WEAR ONE OR THE OTHER OF THESE HATS ALMOST

EVERYWHERE I GO, GROCERY STORE, GAS STATION, POST OFFICE AND

FLEA MARKETS, AND THERE BY LIES A STORY WORTH TELLING. I

ATTENDED A FLEA MARKET ONE SUNDAY AFTERNOON IN ALLIANCE,

WHERE WE WERE SPENDING A WEEKEND WITH MY OLDEST DAUGHTER

WHO LIVES IN OHIO. ON THIS PARTICULAR DAY I WAS

AT THE FLEA MARKET AS WE BROWSED THROUGH THE TABLES OF

VARIOUS ITEMS, A MAN APPROACHED ME AND INQUIRED ABOUT MY HAT.

AFTER A BIT OF CONVERSATION IT TURNED OUT HE ALSO WAS AN EX DESTROYER SAILOR FROM THE KOREAN WAR ERA. WE COMPARED NOTES

FOR A COUPLE MINUTES, THEN WENT OUR SEPARATE WAYS. A FEW

MINUTES LATER A YOUNG GIRL TAPPED ME ON THE SHOULDER AND

ASKED ME IF I WOULD COME OVER AND TALK TO HER DAD. IT WAS

THE SAME MAN I HAD JUST TALKED TO. SEEMS THAT DD594 ON MY

HAT TRIGGERED SOME MEMORIES FOR HIM AND HE WANTED TO TALK.

HE TOLD ME ABOUT A TERRIBLE EXPLOSION THAT OCCURRED IN ONE

OF THE ENGINE ROOMS OF HIS SHIP ONE NIGHT WHILE HE WAS OFF

DUTY AND SLEEPING. IT WAS HIS AREA AND WORK STATION AND

HAVING BUDDIES DOWN THERE HE RUSHED DOWN TO ASSIST THEM.

THERE WERE FATALITIES AND MANY CASUALTIES AND IN SAVING ONE

OF THE TRAPPED SAILORS, HE WAS BADLY BURNED, THEY ENDED UP

IN A NAVAL HOSPITAL AND EVENTUALLY RECEIVED A MEDICAL

DISCHARGE. THE NAVY DECORATED HIM FOR HIS HEROISM AND HE

"BEEN THERE - DONE THAT"

- HART STORIES -

RECEIVED A DISABILITY PENSION FOR A PERIOD OF TIME, BUT THEY TOOK PART OF HIS PENSION AWAY FOR SOME REASON OR ANOTHER. HE WAS APPEALING HIS CASE AND NEEDED HELP FROM ANY SOURCE THAT COULD ASSIST HIM IN HIS EFFORTS. I REFERRED HIM TO THE TIN CAN SAILORS ASSOCIATION AND THEIR HEADQUARTERS IN MASS. THE STRANGE PART OF THIS IS THE FACT THAT THIS MAN HAD NEVER TOLD HIS CHILDREN WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO HIM. THEY SAT THERE WIDE-EYED AS HE UNFOLDED THIS STORY TO ME. FOR SOME UNKNOWN REASON MY HART HAT HAD TRIGGERED A DESIRE IN THE GUY TO TALK AND AFTER WE PARTED, THE KIDS WITH TEARS IN THEIR EYES, THANKED ME PROFUSLY FOR LISTENING AND HELPING. THESE KIDS WERE YOUNG ADULTS SO THIS OLD DESTROYER SAILOR HAD KEPT HIS MISFORTUNES TO HIMSELF A LONG TIME. I HAD A STRONG FEELING OF SELF SATISFACTION AND PRIDE FOR HAVING WORN THE HART HAT THAT PARTICULAR SUNDAY. THE KIDS PROMISED TO LET ME KNOW HOW THEIR DAD MADE OUT BUT I NEVER HEARD FROM THEM. BY THE WAY, ~~WAS~~ ADAMS, OF OUR REUNION GROUP LIVES IN ALLIANCE, OHIO.

STAN

JACK BRAWDY

"BEEN THERE - DONE THAT"

- HART STORIES -



PATRICK H. HART WAS A NAVY PILOT. LT HART WAS A TORPEDO BOMBER PILOT WHO SERVED IN TORPEDO SQUADRON 3 ABOARD THE CARRIER YORKTOWN DURING WW II. LT HART AND HIS ENTIRE SQUADRON WAS KILLED IN ATTACK ON JAPANESE FLEET DURING BATTLE OF MIDWAY. OUR SHIP THE U.S.S. HART DD594 WAS NAMED FOR THIS GALLANT YOUNG PILOT WHO GAVE HIS LIFE IN A VAIN ATTEMPT TO SINK JAPANESE SHIPS IN THAT BIG NAVAL ENGAGEMENT. HIS MOTHER MRS EMMA HART SPONSORED OUR DESTROYER AT THE LAUNCHING CEREMONIES IN 1944. I OFTEN WONDERED ABOUT HIM AND WHAT HE MAY HAVE LOOKED LIKE. THE

EXPRESSION "IT'S A SMALL WORLD SOMETIMES" IS USED BY MANY PEOPLE AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER IN THEIR LIFETIMES. THAT FACT OR BELIEF MAY BE TRUE IN THIS CASE. MANY YEARS AFTER WW II WAS OVER AND I HAD MARRIED AND HAD MY OWN FAMILY AND OBTAINED A GOOD JOB WITH GENERAL MOTORS, WE BOUGHT A HOME OUT IN THE SUBURBS ABOUT 11 MILES FROM THE G.M. PLANT. I FOUND OUT A FELLOW WORKER LIVED ONLY TWO BLOCKS FROM MY HOUSE, SO WE MADE ARRANGMENTS TO RIDE TO WORK TOGETHER. WE WORKED AND RODE TOGETHER FOR A LONG TIME AND HAD MANY CONVERSATIONS ABOUT MANY SUBJECTS, FAMILY, ILLNESSES, CHILDREN, BASEBALL, ETC. ORDINARY EVERYDAY CONVERSATIONS. ONE DAY WE GOT TO TALKING ABOUT OUR MILITARY CAREERS DURING WW II AND OUR EXPERIENCES IN THE SERVICE WERE STRIKINGLY SIMILIAR. HE HAD BEEN IN THE NAVY LIKE MYSELF AND HAD SERVED IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC ON CARRIERS AND DESTROYERS. HE BELONGED TO TIN CAN SAILORS ASSOCIATION AND ATTENDED HIS OLD SHIP'S REUNIONS. I DID ALL THESE SIMILIAR THINGS EXCEPT MY SEA EXPERIENCES WERE CONFINED TO TIN CANS. ONE DAY UP AT HIS HOUSE WE WERE LOOKING AT SOME OF HIS WAR MEMENTOS HE BROKE OUT A BOOK THAT SOMEONE HAD WRITTEN ABOUT HIS OLD CARRIER. IT HAD A COMPLETE DOCUMENTATION OF THE SHIP WITH LOTS OF PICTURES. AS I WAS SLOWLY TURNING THE PAGES, THE CAPTION BELOW ONE OF THE PHOTOS JUMPED OUT AT ME. IT WAS A GROUP PICTURE OF TORPEDO SQUADRON 3 AND RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE WAS PATRICK H. HART, EXEC. OFFICER OF THE SQUADRON. I KNEW THEN AND THERE WHAT HE HAD LOOKED LIKE, THE KID OUR SHIP THE HART HAD BEEN NAMED FOR. I MADE COPIES OF THAT PHOTO AND DISTRIBUTED THEM TO MANY MEMBERS OF THE 594 REUNION GROUP. THAT CARRIER MENTIONED ABOVE^{AS} THE U.S.S. YORKTOWN. CV-5. NOT ONLY WAS PATRICK H. HART A MEMBER OF HER CREW, BUT MY RIDING AND WORKING BUDDY AND OLD DESTROYERMAN, SMITTY, WAS ABOARD WHEN THE YORKTOWN WAS SUNK. HE WAS RESCUED BY A DESTROYER

"BEEN THERE - DONE THAT"

- HART STORIES -

AND LATER WENT ON TO SERVE ON THE U.S.S. CHARLES AUSBOURNE DD570 IN THE LITTLE BEAVER SQUADRON COMMANDED BY THE FAMED ARLEIGH(30 KNOT) BURKE). I HAVE A MODEL OF THE YORKTOWN IN MY COLLECTION TODAY. COME TO MY HOUSE AND SEE IT SOMETIME!

JACK BRAWDY

"BEEN THERE - DONE THAT"

- HART STORIES -



"The Devil made me do it!" This expression or declaration has been used many times in many ways by many people when they did foolish things or got in serious or even frivolous trouble that they had to explain. On October 10, 1943 a new destroyer escort slid down the ways of the Dravo shipyards on Neville Island in Pittsburgh, Pa. It was called the U.S.S. Durick and given the hull number 666. Soon after her launch and short shakedown training period, the Durick was sent out to the Atlantic fleet and assigned to the anti-

warefare units fighting the German submarines. Among it's 215 member crew was a young sailor from Pittsburgh named Fred Niepp. It was just pure coincidence that a Pittsburgh native son was assigned to a ship made in Pittsburgh. The Durick got the 666 number because it was the next number up at time of launching. Fred and his ship made it safely through the war both performing their "at war" duties in the best traditions of the U.S Navy. Incidentally our paths may have crossed at one time or another because my first ship the U.S.S. Champlin was there at the same time, doing the something, chasing German U-Boats. Fred was an electricians mate in the navy and today has a shop in the West End section of Pittsburgh specializing in neon lighting. One day and old friend of his who had been a destroyer sailor in the war asked him to build a likeness in neon lights of his old ship, hull number and general outline. It turned out so nice that Fred built one for himself and hung it in the front window of his store. Everyone in the neighborhood soon found out that the 666 had been his ship during the war and

Fred was quite proud of his creation, Until the phone started ringing in his shop. How dare he display the devils number 666 so prominently in this neighborhood! If he wanted to worship the devil, go somewhere else and do it! He tried explaining his reasons for displaying the number, but the phone callers would not be pacified. 666 to them was the devils number. They didn't even see the outline of the ship. Now he understood the hostile stares he got when he wore his navy ballcap with U.S.S. Durick DE666 emblazoned on it. He hadn't known anything about 666 and the devil and the strong resentment among certain peoples against such beliefs. He was just another proud navy veteran among us who loved and remember^{ed} his old ship and found a novel and new way to show

"BEEN THERE - DONE THAT"

- HART STORIES -

it. In my case the hull numbers remembered were 594 and 601.

In Freds case the ship's number was 666 and the devil certainly didn't make him do it! The ships display in Freds Shop window comes down soon for Cristmas decorations but

I'll bet you a Navy ball cap, the Durick and her number 666 will once again be on display in the West End of Pittsburgh.

Jack Brawdy

addendum:

A Fletcher class destroyer called Black was built during the war. Her hull number was 666! I wonder if she had any such problems? Probably only the devil knows.

"BEEN THERE - DONE THAT"

- HART STORIES -



I got fired one day last spring. I didn't like it one bit. I am a retired person, 76 years of age, living on a pension and staying home most of the time. I still got fired and Ruth and I had to do some fast scrambling, She was part of it too. The phone rang one day and I was surprised to hear from the insurance agent with whom we carried our home owners protection policy. He said he had lost his job due to a corporate takeover of his company by a larger outfit and they didn't want to do business with small potatoes like us. The new owner company sure enough sent us a termination notice, giving us 30 days to find a new company. Our agent lost his job, we lost our coverage all this out of a clear blue sky after years and years of doing business with the same people. Believe it or not this is a destroyer story and it will become clearer as the tale unfolds. Ruth and I shopped around and finally decided on the company with which we have our auto insurance. The agent came to the house for the first interview and after filling out the necessary papers and taking a bunch of pictures, she asked to see the electric fuse box in the basement. The fuse box is located right in the middle of my nautical collection with lots of ship models and pictures and pirate mugs, etc and mementos of my WW II destroyer days. She stopped and looked around and when she saw my U.S.S. Hart DD594 ball cap she told me her dad had a cap like mine and wore it all the time up until he died a few years ago. When she found out I was an old destroyer sailor we talked a long time about her dad, his ship and it was amazing what she knew about destroyers (World War II types). She had been very close to her dad and talking to her was just a pure joy for me. You could see the pride in her eyes when she told me he had served aboard the U.S.S. Mertz, DD691 in the South Pacific. She finally checked the fuse box (wiring ok) completed the paper work and said she would be back in a week. Just about this time I had been building a Fletcher class destroyer model I had found at a local flea market. It was almost completed and I had intended to make it another U.S.S. Hart to add to my collection but I got a bright idea and made it the U.S.S. Mertz instead and mounted it on a display stand. When the young lady came the following week I presented the model to her in memory of her dad. She was absolutely flabbergasted

"BEEN THERE - DONE THAT"

- HART STORIES -

and gave me a big hug and kiss with tears running down her cheeks. She gave us the new home owners policy, took the ship model home to show her mom and family. The image of her dad's ship now sits in her insurance office in a prominent place for all to see. Ruth and I got the home owners policy we needed, a new insurance agent and probably made a friend for life. Gee Whiz! It's the very least I could do for a Tin Can Sailor who "Had Been There and Done That"

Jack Brawdy

"BEEN THERE - DONE THAT"

- HART STORIES -



The 1998 winter olympics will be held very soon. This time around, the games will take place in Nagano, Japan. The Japanese are known for their special ceremonies and the weekend before the games begin, sacred (to them) bell ringing festivities will take place. The Nagano Olympics will be a major celebration of World Peace. Motoichi Godo of Japan will play a special role in the ceremony of the bells at the Zenko-ji temple one of the oldest Buddhist centers in that country. The privilege of participating was bestowed upon him because he was a WWII Kamikaze. When Godo was 17 years old he was recruited by the Japanese Navy and trained as a human torpedo, the Imperial navy's version of the notorious Kamikazes. He did not think he would live out the year. It was the summer of 1945. His unit was responsible for guarding a strip of Japanese coastline against invading American ships. It was a one way trip for him and his torpedo sub and he knew it. But Japan surrendered on August 15, 1945 and saved his life. He is 69 years old today and because of his past he has a special feeling about peace and he says "The war that I fought in should never happen again". His country looks upon him as a hero because of his Kamikaze role in WWII. I hope that when the Olympic ceremonies begin he will reflect a little bit on Harry Truman's decision to use the atom bombs to end the war. Five years ago (1993) in Baton Rouge, La the U.S.S. Hart reunion group was meeting and at its banquet that Saturday night, Syd Rodgers the 594's navigator at the time, revealed to all assembled the role of the ship in the overall invasion of Japan. Along with our faithful friends, the Metcalf, the Shields and the Wiley, We would have proceeded up the coastline of Hanshu and sought out two Japanese airfields. Our mission was to deny access and takeoff to all Japanese planes while the main invasion was taking place. According to Syd it was truly a suicide mission and only four people aboard knew about it. But a wonderful thing happened on that August 15, 1945. Japan surrendered because Harry Truman decided to use the atom bombs. We all drank a toast to President Truman that night because he not only saved Motoichi Godo's life, he saved our entire destroyer division and all hands aboard. Wouldn't it have been ironic if this piece of Japanese coastline that this Kamikaze veteran had been assigned to defend was the

"BEEN THERE - DONE THAT"

- HART STORIES -

same area that the Hart would have operated in? A seventeen year old kid strapped inside a torpedo, steering his deadly load toward an American destroyer in a life giving effort to save his country. Fantasy you say? Perhaps. An atom bomb was dropped on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. An atom bomb was dropped on Nagasaki on August 9, 1945. Japan surrendered on August 15, 1945. These three events eliminated all speculation on what might have happened and sent us all home alive and thankful that it ended the way it did.

Jack Brawdy

Addendum: The overall code name for the invasion of Japan that didn't take place was Olympic! The information concerning Motoicki Godo was in the sport pages of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette January 29, 1998.

"BEEN THERE - DONE THAT"

- HART STORIES -



It was a cold, cold day in a place called Taku-Bar, China. It was December 1, 1945 and The U.S.S. Hart was spending some time here just one of the many stops in this area on assignment in what was called the North China Sea Patrol. It was exactly three months since Japan had signed the peace documents aboard the Missouri. It was so cold the Captain held the personnel inspection in the compartments, in dress blues, "foul weather parade" the Navy called it. Usually after Saturday inspections, it was holiday routine for balance of

day, but inspite of the cold the sun was shinning, so painting was ordered topside for the balance of the morning and we received stores aboard in the afternoon. I mention all this to show it was a typical day aboard the Hart and it was, except for me and twenty-seven other shipmates. It was our last day aboard the 594. That evening on my way to the movie Ens. Rosa told me to pack my seabag, I was being transferred to another ship for transportation home and discharge. Wow! just like that! As I packed my bag "Going home finally" kept ringing in my ears. Mom and Dad and all the rest just a few short days away now. Or so I thought. Our orders for transfer hadn't really come out of the blue. In spite of having enough points for discharge many of us had to wait many days over because of the lack of transportation. The next morning at 0730 we departed the Hart. It was both a sad and joyful occasion. Sad saying goodbye to my former shipmates and the ship itself and joyful cause visions of home kept dancing in my head. I have to admit my eyes were moist that morning. We all reported aboard the U.S.S. Union AKA 106 for the long trip home. It was a very slow cruise for some reason. It took about 30 days to reach San Francisco and somewhere along the way, some tainted meat was fed to us and we all came down with dysenary. Australian hare they called it. Always remembered that because I've never been so sick in my life. We lived in our bunks and made many trips to the head. Anyway we made it and I had recovered enough to get on a train and make another long trip across the country to Sampson NY and final discharge. Or so I thought. I wasn't feeling too well and they put me in the base hospital for an extra two weeks for recuperation, but finally they fattened me up a little bit and gave me a discharge from the US Navy and put me on a bus

"BEEN THERE - DONE THAT"

- HART STORIES -

for Pittsburgh, Pa and home. Or^{so} I thought. Half way across the Pennsylvania turnpike the bus broke down and we had another long delay. When we finally got back on the highway we discovered the heater wasn't working. It was the middle of January and very cold but we didn't stop again and four hours later it finally happened. Home seet home! The whole family was there to greet me, I had turned blue with the cold, stiff as a board, about twenty-five pounds under weight but I had that ruptured duck on my shoulder and after cargo ships, trains, and buses, I was home and eager to dig into my moms good home cookin

End of an Odyssy

Jack Brawdy