

Turner Times

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 2

DECEMBER, 1998

WELCOME TO CHICAGO!!

The dates are set! The city is primed and ready! The Red Carpet is rolling out! Turner Reunion '99 is underway!!!!

Mark those calendars for August 11th through the 15th, when our shipmates and families will gather at the **Sheraton North Shore Hotel**. The hotel has 375 guest rooms and 20 meeting rooms, all recently renovated. Between events, you can relax in the indoor pool, sauna, Jacuzzi, exercise room or on the sundeck.

We arrive on Wednesday and depart on Sunday. Dick Shanaberger has obtained a very reasonable rate in the \$80-\$85 range, plus tax, for single and double oc-

cupancy. Additionally, Dick and Pete Varley are furiously planning the events for our Chicago reunion.

A trip to Great Lakes Naval Training Center is planned, where we will attend the

Recruit Graduation Ceremony as guests of the Navy. We will also tour the center and grounds. This should bring back a few memories, as many of you went to

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"Boot" at the Lakes and some also attended one of the many service schools there. Other tours are also in the planning stages. August is a beautiful time in the Chicago area, so be prepared for some fun. Those of you with "rugrats" still in tow, whether children or grandchildren, should bring them along.

Now is also the time to contact your shipmates and plan those mini-reunions. We've had some very successful ones in the past and hope to duplicate that success with the next reunion. Let's talk it up now and make the 1999 reunion the best and biggest one yet!

ALIAS "MOOSEHEAD"

BY MEL EDWARDS ('57-'59)

There were 575 destroyer hull numbers between the USS TURNER DD-259 and DD/DDR-834 and their active service was separated by 23 years. It is no wonder most of us know so little about DD-259. Thanks to Commander John Alden's book, Flush Decks and Four Pipes, we get a brief, but interesting, glimpse at how she was used, or misused, by the Navy.

DD-259 was commissioned in 1919. Her pennant was hauled down, as a result of treaty, just three years later in San Diego where she lay idle for 14 years. In 1936 she was stricken from the rolls and became YW-56, an ignominious water barge, being towed between San Diego and San Clemente Island. In 1942 BuShips was desperately searching for ASW ships and inquired about the ex-TURNER. The San Diego Destroyer Base pointed out that, among other things, her pro-

peller struts had been burned off and her turbines had been disabled with the cutting torch. She had no armament and no deck house: hardly "ready for sea." The District Commander also put his oar in the water because he needed a self propelled water, cargo, and passenger ferry to support the training base on San Clemente. On his recommendation BuShips and CNO concurred and the once proud "four piper" and lowly YW became the Moosehead IX-98.

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ALIAS MOOSEHEAD (CONT.)

(Continued from page 1)

Moosehead got power, a cargo hold and boom where the forward fire-room had been, four officers, 60 men, and two 4 inch/50' s, some light machine guns and depth-charges.

This was not the end for Moosehead; she began to grow. Her mission was expanded to training armed guardsmen, towing high-speed target sleds even though she was only capable of 21 knots on two boilers. Along the way BuShips was wondering what was happening to Moosehead and demanded an inclining test. When they looked at the data, they would not certify her for sea. Off came the guns and a number of others measures were taken to make Moosehead seaworthy.

Moosehead soon became the only "flush decker" to become a flag-ship during WW II. Commander, Operational Training Command refitted her to his own requirements. Out came the cargo hold. In went a CIC and some living quarters. The intermediate-stage turbines were re-activated, electronic equipment was installed as were more deck houses and two 3 inch/50' s. She now had six officers and 86 enlisted men, and up went the Admiral' s flag.

Moosehead (the ex-YW-56, ex-TURNER DD-259) served out the rest of WW II as one of the Navy' s most valuable training assets. In this most important role, the TURNER outlived all but just a few of her original sister destroyers. She didn' t serve at Okinawa, Iwo Jima, the Coral Sea or in any other engagement, but the good men who were trained on board her did; proudly and victoriously.

FROM THE OF THE PREZ

Firstly, I want to thank all of you for electing me as your association president. It is my honor and privilege and I hope to do as good a job as my predecessors.

Well, another happy Turner reunion has gone by, and already we are planning for the next reunion in Illinois. To ensure this coming reunion is as successful as our past reunions, I'd like to take this opportunity to reinforce something that I mentioned in Las Vegas; that is for each and every one of us to reach out to another shipmate and invite him to join us at the next reunion. Most of us are guilty of procrastination at one time or another, but let's put procrastination on the back burner and reach out to our fellow shipmates. After all, this reunion belongs to each and every one of us and its' success depends upon our participation.

What a heritage the men and women who have served in the United States Navy have left for the newer generations to follow! The Navy has the best of pilots in our carrier-based pilots, the best commandos in our SEALs, men with nerves of steel in our submariners, and the dedication and loyalty of all of the other men and women who serve on the various ships in our fleets. Destroyermen share in a very special subculture. They are the backbone (grunts) who are there when a tough job has to get done; from providing close shore artillery during an invasion of a beachhead or a ring of protection for a convoy, to chasing submarines, furnishing plane guard detail, and the myriad of other tasks assigned to destroyers. You are a very special breed, belonging to a very special club. Plagiarizing from the Marines with their motto of "The Few, The Proud, The Marines", we should adopt a similar one with "The Many, The Bold, The Navy." GO NAVY!!

In closing, and on behalf of the entire U.S.S. Turner Association, may I extend our Best Wishes to ALL and hope you enjoy a Happy Chanukah, Merry Christmas and a Healthy Happy New Year.

— Harry

OUR TURNER TIMES

WHAT WE REMEMBER ABOUT OUR TIME ON BOARD

Walter Sweikhart, '45

"As far as being a helmsman, it was a good job. At sea I was on call for 2 watches every 24 hours; 2 hours on the helm, 2 hours in after steering in case of breakdown, 8 hours off and then back to the same routine. After steering was the lousy part; you just sit there with the phones and wait for trouble or damage to the steering. You are buried in the very bowels of the ship. Sometimes it is so hot. At sea, the helmsman job is really not tough. It just depends on who is on the bridge. He is the only man you take orders from. He gives you the compass reading to steer; you repeat the heading and steer that course until he gives you another heading. If he is on the flying bridge and you are in the wheelhouse, he sometimes gets awfully close to a collision course. You still steer that course and hope the guy wakes up in time. Actually you steer only when in blue water. In tight conditions, the quartermaster takes over. Also at general quarters, I would leave the wheel and go to a 40 mm gun. When entering into a navy yard or a foreign port, a pilot would come aboard and take over. I was allowed a few points off before they would tell me to wake up. On the DE I was on, we were in a hurricane once. I could not hold the heading within 10 to 15 degrees, but no one could do better. That same hurricane took a 5" gun mount off a destroyer. In port, I was always the roving watch; just strap on a .45 automatic and roam all over the ship like a policeman: that I loved, get coffee at any time."

"I served aboard Turner from the launching until I was put ashore in San Diego, Ca. I was one of the first aboard (only 40 of us) and in the first group that was sent to Camp Pendleton, the marine base, where I was told to get to Boston for discharge. I had to pay my own way or I would be sent back to a ship. I had also served at Navy 1925 Fleet Post Office Naval Headquarters, Northwest African Waters, also known as Algiers. After that I served aboard the USS Fessenden, DE-142. We were a hunter killers sub search team along with 4 other DEs. Believe it or not, I never knew the names of them. One was the Pillsbury

and the others were just ships to me at that time. Also, along with us was the CVE Guadalcanal. I left two very close friends on board without the chance of telling them goodbye. About 20 of us were called to the stern and told we were going to be put ashore to be discharged and we had 20 minutes to get off or we would go with the ship. I thought I had found one friend, Louie F. Barlow. I wrote him a letter and never received a reply. The other was or is a Arnold De-Maris. Never have found him. Guess both could be gone."

"As I mention before, 40 of us were selected at Boston Navy Yard to go to Bath Maine to bring the ship to Boston for Commissioning. I had first pick as to where I was going to bunk: right by the fan. At the time I left the Turner, we had never really gone anywhere. We did go to the regular shakedown places; Virgin Islands, Bermuda, Cuba and so forth. Then we got orders to go to the Pacific. We went through the canal and into San Diego and I was put ashore. This was in November 1945. I know that on Thanksgiving Day we were going through Salt Lake City. I was discharged on December 24, 1945 at the Boston Navy Yard. ALL my traveling was on the Fessenden. I met my wife in the Boston Commons. The two guys I named above stood up for me at our wedding in Upper Marlboro, Maryland. Maryland is my home state. I was born in Washington D.C. I returned to Maryland after discharge and went to work for the Navy Department, Bureau of Supplies and Accounts, for the next 20 years working with computers. After that, I transferred to the Air Force for the next 8 years. I retired from the Gunter Air force Base in Montgomery, Alabama and have been retired for years. I went out when Nixon quit. I still get up every morning and I'm still breathing."

FROM THE
TURNERGRAM

FEBRUARY '68

TO THE FAMILIES OF ALL
TURNERMEN:

On the evening of 26 January, we were directed to proceed to the last known position of the Israeli submarine DAKAR and to take charge of the surface search for her. TURNER was the first ship on the scene, and was later joined by Turkish and Greek destroyers. We set up the initial search plans, established communications, and coordinated all surface search activities. It was a very busy time, particularly for our radiomen who handled an exceptionally high volume of incoming and outgoing messages during the two days that I was the "on-scene commander." We checked every oil slick and every floating object we encountered, and used every means possible to try to find DAKAR. On the night of the 28th I was relieved of that duty by the arrival of other U.S. Navy ships which had commanding officers senior to me. British, Israeli, and Lebanese ships also took part in the search. TURNER continued in the search until it ended on the night of the 31st, and was the only ship to participate in the entire search. It is unfortunate that we were unable to locate any trace of the submarine or its crew, and can only conclude that they met a tragic end in the more than 1,000 fathom depths of that part of the Mediterranean. TURNER's Executive Officer, LCDR V. P. MC DONOUGH, wrote the following in our Plan of the Day for 1 February to inform the crew that the search had ended, and I think it worthy of reporting here:

"At sunset yesterday, the search for the Israeli submarine DAKAR was officially ended. During the search, naval and air units of seven countries, including those historically not friendly to each other, took part. This demonstrated one of the most important laws of the seas. All ships are ex-

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TURNERGRAM (CONT.)*(Continued from page 4)*

GRAND CANYON is helping the TURNER TIGERS repair the ravages of storm, sea, and time, by assisting us with work which requires the use of her well equipped repair shops. By the time we depart Naples on the morning of February 17th, we will again be in combat ready state, ready to answer the call - "Trouble brewing - send the destroyers."

Sincerely,



D. E. Pauly

Commander U. S. Navy
Commanding Officer

Final Roll Call

We have learned since our last issue that these shipmates have answered the call of the Supreme Commander:

Batch, Joel	YNC	45-46
Bivens, Joseph W.	RD3	60
Bowen, Jack	Capt.	
Currier, Donald E.		DD648
Easto, Thomas	SA	60
Erkfitz, Donald A.	RD3	60
Marlowe, Richard	BT2	53-57
Mulligan, William J.	EMFN	60-61
Powell, Robert W.	SH1	48-53

**TURNER ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT - 1946**

Are you in this picture? Do you know who is? We know Jim Bostick is the WT1 at the right end of the last row. When the picture was taken, he was in charge of the No. 2 Fireroom. Chief Water Tender Griffin is third from the left in the front row. The chief at the right end of the front row was nicknamed "Smoky". The Chief Engineer, behind the scuttle, is LTJG Paul Roth. The *Turner Times* wonders if the following shipmates are pictured: Charles "Carlos" Cordova, Robert Gray, Anthony Guerrero, George Hadik, David Hogin, Richard Hollander, Donald Kiley, Elliot Recht, Walter Snyder, Paul Storms, Jesse Thompson and Herman Vickery? We know some of you are. If you are, let us know and we will let you all know who reported in. It might have the makings of a mini-reunion.

Photo courtesy of James (Jim) Bostick BTC '46, USN (Ret.)

