

Turner Times



VOL. 9, ISSUE 3

WEBSITE: WWW.USSTURNER.ORG

JUNE, 2006

THE "OVER THE HILL" GANG – PART 1

By March Tucker, IC3, '60-'62

After boot camp and IC "A" school and a "C" school in San Diego, I felt very fortunate in receiving orders to TURNER and back to the East coast. I had married my high school sweetheart during Christmas leave and was anxious to at least be on the same coast with her. Important background here is that after boot camp I received 15 days leave and went home to promptly impregnate my sweetheart. During Christmas, I received another 15 days of leave and traveled home to marry the sweetheart. I, again, received 15 days leave when I left San Diego to report to the TURNER. So, I have been in the Navy for about 8 months and I have enjoyed 45 days of vacation already. This man's Navy is not bad so far.

I reported aboard in, I think, February 1960, at the Brooklyn Naval Shipyard where TURNER was undergoing a FRAM II overhaul. An ugly duckling at best, sitting there in dry dock looking like a cut up tuna on life support. But that's another story. It was soon time for what I had implanted into my sweetheart to be born. Now the reader must understand the mind and heart of a 19 year old, torn between being a husband and soon to be father and a sailor whose dedication has not yet formed a bond of priorities. Pressure from the wife carries a lot of

weight, especially at the time her need was paramount in her mind and the Navy would just have to wait its turn.

So the day comes when I have to ask to go home for the birth of my first-born. My wife calls to explain the urgency and importance of my coming home. The doctor calls to reinforce the need for my presence at the birth. So, with all this importance in my mind I request leave. Up until now, the Navy has been very generous with its leave policy so I was disappointed when my request was turned down. I was also accepting of the rejection. I called to explain I could not come home and why. That was totally unacceptable to my wife; the birth would not happen without my presence, she and the baby would be scarred for life IF she survived the birth.

The one thing you can depend upon in the Navy is the advice you get from your shipmates, especially the sea lawyers. I was advised to go to the Chaplain and my wife should go to the Red Cross and between them they could move mountains. To make a long story short, neither accomplished moving any mountain. Maybe they blew some dust around, but to no avail. So now comes decision time, what should I do? Actually, I would have been accepting to receive a telegram announcing my fatherhood but I couldn't be responsible for permanent emotional damage I envisioned my absence would

cause. There were hints from my shipmates that I could make it home and be back before anyone noticed I was gone. I thought, "Yeah I can do that." I got my liberty card from the Chief (don't remember who) and a "Be careful, you have enough money?" The 2nd class electrician I worked for slipped me \$5 and told me to "get outta here." I became convinced that I could make it home for the delivery and back before anyone really noticed I was gone.

Now this part of the story gets strange. A shipmate and good friend, one Mike Magnoni (BTFN), decided that he would go with me for moral support. From this point to our eventual return to the TURNER, Mike's story is far more interesting than mine and he should be encouraged to tell it for this newsletter. So the two of us thumb our way to West Virginia for the immediate birth of my first-born.

Upon our arrival Mike and I kind of split up. I stayed at my in-laws house with my wife and he stayed with my parents but we made a pact that if either of us got caught that we would turn in the other so that we could stay together. Our timing was off. My wife was not in labor upon my arrival home. This little detail caused all of the plans I had made for a quick-trip go down the drain. My wife didn't start labor until the doctor induced it two days later. I think we left the ship on a

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\$ SHIP'S STORE ¢

The following items can be ordered from Carl Ackerman, 7436 Daisy Cir., Macungie, PA 18062, Ph: (610) 398-0145. All items are postpaid. Please make checks payable to Carl L. Ackerman.

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- ▶ Turner baseball caps embroidered with Turner logo — \$16.
- ▶ Mesh polo shirts embroidered with Turner logo. Colors: Red, White or Navy Blue. Sizes M to XXL. All sizes come with a pocket — \$35. Sizes 2XL to 3XL — \$40.
- ▶ Sweat Shirts embroidered with Turner logo. Colors: Navy Blue or Gray. Sizes M to XXL — \$45. Sizes 2XL to 3XL — \$50.
- ▶ DVD of 1961 Med Cruise photos — \$10.
- ▶ Denim Shirts: Short sleeve, light blue with dark blue Turner Logo. Sizes M to XXL — \$45. Sizes 2XL to 3XL—\$50.
- ▶ Ship's patches: Both the Tiger and Double Eagle, 4" round with color embroidery. Also official Navy patch just like on the ball caps. Blue/gold lettering of "USS Turner DD/DDR 834" around gray destroyer profile. 3"H x 5"W. Cost is \$5 per patch.

FROM THE OF THE PREZ

"Hello everyone and welcome to San Antonio. I am so glad to see so many familiar and so many new faces I can get to know." I will have great pleasure of speaking the above words at our 15th Turner Reunion in San Antonio, Texas on September 13th thru 16th, 2006. I hope you are in the process of making your reservations and checking the clothes you will bring with you to see if you have gained weight. I know I have.

Make sure you get your hotel reservations in very early since the number of rooms dedicated to the reunion is limited and you do not want to miss out on reserving a room in the hotel where the reunion will take place. Also, make sure that you get your reservations in to the Armed Services Reunion by their deadline. For this reunion that deadline date is August 11, 2006. Please make every effort to attend the reunion. You will not be disappointed.

We have many great events planned this year. On Wednesday, September 13th at 8:00 a.m. the Hospitality Room and The Ship's Store will be open and at 6:30 p.m. a **Free** Welcome Buffet is planned. This is a great chance to greet old friends and welcome the many new faces we hope will be there.

On Thursday, September 14th a tour of San Antonio via a luxury coach is planned. That evening a Chuckwagon Supper and Cowboy Show will take place at the Lightning Ranch featuring a band and cowboy humor; poetry and songs are all part of the show that will entertain you.

On Friday, September 15th we will enjoy a scenic ride to Fredericksburg to tour the Admiral Nimitz Museum.

On Saturday, September 16th, as it will be for each day of the Reunion, the Hospitality Room and Ship's Store will be open. At 10:00 a.m. the Business Meeting and Election will take place. This year, we need to nominate and elect a Second Vice President for a one year term, until 2007 when all Officers are elected. Those of you who would like to contribute and help lead our organization in future years, get ready to throw your hats into the ring. We will also talk about the 2007 and 2008 reunions. We encourage all persons to attend, (yes, the spouses are welcome and do have a vote.) In the evening will be the big banquet, door prize drawings, picture taking and fun for all.

I have talked to many of you on the phone and via e-mail telling me how interested you are in being there. I hope that the new attendees who I have talked with will come up to me and introduce yourselves; if not, I will be seeking you out. We will have the Hospitality Room open as much as possible, where we all can meet and trade stories. The Ship's Store will be located in the same room and will have scheduled times it will be open and will be staffed by persons who can assist you. We will be anxious and pleased to meet and talk to any and all of you.

I have been told that there are many specialty restaurants along the river walk. Shopping is within walking distance for the ladies. I am looking forward to September and hope you are also.

— Grant

CAPTAIN LOCKEE HONORED

In 2005, former Turner CO, Captain Garette E. Lockee, who commanded the ship from August 1960 to February 1962, was honored in Tennessee. A life-sized bronze bust was unveiled at the National Bird Dog Museum in Grand Junction, located about 45 miles east of Memphis.

Captain Lockee was recognized for his over decade-long 1989-2001 presidency of the organization, as a museum curator, and as a tireless fundraiser and manager of the early building construction, including three additions. He was one of the primary activists in creating the non-profit Bird Dog Foundation. A lover of all dog breeds, his canines qualified for the National Championship for point-

ers and setters, and he was elected to the Field Trial Hall of Fame in 1995.

Captain Lockee has likewise been recognized by the State of Tennessee, not only as an exemplary public servant and consummate professional in his Bird Dog Museum efforts but for the respect he earned in his long Navy career. He has attended three Turner reunions to date, in 1995 (Virginia Beach), 1997 (Jacksonville) and 1999 (Chicago).

The Captain lives in nearby La Grange, Tennessee with his wife Sally, became a great-grandfather in October of last year.

Congratulations, Captain Lockee!

"OVER THE HILL" – CONT.

(Continued from page 1)

Thursday and my son was born June 30, which was a Saturday. Why I didn't go back Sunday as planned I don't remember but I do remember that my wife was kept in the clinic for a day or two, maybe three. I just had to be there to take the baby home with her. This change in plans played havoc with things aboard ship where, (so I was told later), people were covering for me and I let them down. For those of you who are reading this and who were responsible for the cover up, my sincerest apologies. I had no intentions of letting you down like I did.

I enjoyed the thrill of bringing the baby home and spending a few days with him and the wife after the birth. After a couple of days of this, I understood that it was time to go back so I called Mike at my parent's house and told him that tomorrow we were going back and to get ready to thumb back.

The next morning it was raining. I had brought my raincoat but Mike had not so we were waiting for the rain to stop to start out. My wife was pressing my whites and I had on the pants waiting for the jumper when the phone next to me rang. On instinct I answered it. It was the local Justice of the Peace who told me there were a couple of MPs in his office looking for me. I went peacefully to the JP's office around the corner where two Army MPs were there to greet me. I informed them that I was going back voluntarily within the hour. They convinced me it would be better to turn myself in to them because (1) my over the hill time would stop at that moment, and (2) the Navy recruiter would give me a bus ticket back to the ship and I wouldn't need to thumb.

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OUR TURNER TIMES

WHAT WE REMEMBER ABOUT OUR TIME ON BOARD

By Henry Barham, '45-'46, SK3

I served on board the US Turner from the time of her commissioning in the Spring of 1945 until April 1946. I was Storekeeper 3rd Class and the Supply Officer was Mr. Leland MacPhail. The majority of the original crew met at Norfolk and we underwent gunnery training, etc. prior to heading to Boston and meeting our new ship. After reading one of the letters of John Reevy (November, 2005), I think the early travels of our ship should be told, so that some of the later crew members will know just where she sailed.

The first trip was the shakedown cruise to Guantanamo Bay. Then we returned to Boston. While in Boston, we received orders that would send us to the Pacific Theater. Mr. MacPhail told me that if I wanted a leave, I could go home for a week and then meet up with the ship in Lake Charles, LA. I accepted his offer and hitchhiked all the way to my home town of Marion, Illinois. I was lucky and was home after only 18 hours and two rides.

I met the ship and reboarded at Lake Charles. The part of John's letter that tells about the water fight and the second visit to Cuba must have been while I was on leave. From Lake Charles, we headed to the Panama Canal and the first port on the Pacific side was San Diego, then on to San Francisco. After staying there a few days, we headed to Honolulu. After being in Hawaii for several weeks we headed North. We all knew what that meant, but I don't remember much talk about it among the crew. When we were near Midway, one of our crew members got very sick and the Captain left our task force and went into Midway and got our shipmate into the hospital. We then rejoined the other ships still heading North.

It was shortly after this that we got the word that the big bombs had been dropped and that Japan had surren-

dered. So how the end of the war found Turner in Cuba and the reason for the big water fight is a mystery to me (Ed.-Without the Ship's logs, I can't answer the question of where Turner was when Japan surrendered. Maybe some of you other Plankowners can settle that one.)

We were the first ship into Kobe Bay, Japan, even before the mine-sweepers had a chance to get there and clean up the Bay. The surface mines that we could see were destroyed by our 20mm guns. The city of Kobe was really in ruins. My first leave in Kobe showed desolation. No one was in the streets, the houses and huts were all boarded up, but once in a while you could see someone peeking out at us. After about a week, people were all out in the streets, kids playing and they realized we were not the bad guys after all. At the Ship's Store, I was selling more candy and chewing gum than ever before, and the crew was passing it all out to the kids. After this, the ship went to Yokohama and then to Tokyo. That's where I left the ship and headed back to the States. I am now 80 years old and I have no idea of the dates we were at each of these ports, but I believe the sequence is in order. Due to some health problems, I have been unable to attend a reunion, but the good Lord willing, my wife and I are going to plan on attending in San Antonio.

By Don Becker SN, '53-'54

I was going over the June 2003 *Turner Times*, when I came across an article by Don Culley, RD3, '49-'51. He said that during an Atlantic crossing they survived a forty-five degree roll.

I have a better story. On April 20th of 1954 between Barcelona, Spain and Genoa, Italy at 10:15PM during a severe storm, the TURNER took a roll and went over on our port side. Before she could right herself, we took another hit. The total roll was

fifty-eight degrees. Our capsizing point being sixty-three degrees, it was quite a thrill.

Mike Mania (BMSN, '53-'54) reminded me of this several years ago. At the time, we were relieving each other on a bridge watch. It is something we will not forget.

Enjoy reading the *Turner Times*.

PS: First liar doesn't have a chance.

PPS: Also sending a picture of Mike Mania, Richard Johnson, Gene Pollock and me. We all have made an effort to find Gene Pollock, but haven't as yet. He lived in Ohio at this time in 1954. In Picture, L to Right, Don Becker, Mike Mania, Richard Johnson, Wilbur (Gene) Pollock. Anyone know where Gene is?

(Editor-With Don's clues I searched for Gene Pollock again. His name, on the roster, was Wilbur E. Pollock. Through our efforts, we found that Wilbur (Gene) Pollock died in 1988. Sorry, men).



At the Zig-Zag Club, Naples, January 31, 1954

By Bill Jacoby, '49-'52, ET3

I arrived aboard Turner in San Diego in January 1949 as a Fire Control Striker from Boot Camp. We were the Flagship and Commander Carlson was our Captain.

In April of '49, we went to the East Coast through the Panama Canal.

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OUR TURNER TIMES – CONT.

(Continued from page 4)

The Pacific was beautiful; deep blue water, dolphins, school of fish, sea turtles and sea snakes. The Atlantic was a dirty, green gray. In September we went on our Med cruise. It was the roughest and calmest body of water ever. I had the Mid watch on the bridge during a storm. We rolled and I looked at the clinometer and it read 63⁰, believe it or not! We did 50⁰ rolls in the north Atlantic and they didn't bother me except if you woke up at night and the ship was at the bottom of the roll and quivering. You didn't know which way it was going to go. Another time in the Med the sea was like a mirror; perfectly calm at dusk-purple and orange.

One time we backed into a buoy chain and damaged one screw. We went to Valetta, Malta to change screws but they only had a three bladed one and we had four (or visa versa) so we cruised on two differently bladed screws until we went to Boston. While in Malta, we saw the Prince and Princess of England (now Queen Elizabeth) on a ship away from us. AN aircraft carrier back from the Med had stanchions bent on the flight deck due to green sea.

I took a 2 day trip to Rome and saw Pope Pius. I remember the dive bombing in Greece, on the hills with Communists. I believe some guys were up there drinking with them when it started. Also when we went to Trieste, some of the guys went to Yugoslavia. I believe we were also the first American ship to go to Spain in 13 years when we went in January, 1952. I went to Electronics School from the fleet in January 1950 so I missed the 1950 Med cruise, but went in 1949 and 1951.

The Biggest Roll??

Did you know that off Genoa in 1954 the TURNER took a roll of 58 degrees? (Ed.— Oh, Yeah? Read all the above. Seems some shipmates have a different memory.)

“OVER THE HILL – CONT.

(Continued from page 3)

Sounded good to me. I told them about Mike and they said we could go pick him up on the way to the recruiter. They escorted me to my in-laws house where I got my gear and off we went to my parent's house to get Mike.

On the way we went through the big town of Montgomery WV a car struck a kid on a bike. The MPs got out to help. This caused a delay in our trip to the Beckley recruiting center about 50 miles away. The city police told the MPs about an Air Force AWOL in the next town.

After picking up Mike (who was still in bed asleep) the MPs headed for the next town to try to find the Air Force AWOL. They found him quickly, but the guy took off into the woods to get away. The MPs eventually caught him, but there was another delay and it is now close to their quitting time. Rather than taking Mike and me to the processing center in Beckley, we were very close to Charleston where they were stationed. The MPs took us to the recruiter in Charleston to turn us in. The Navy had a more efficient way of handling AWOLs if they were not a flight risk. The Navy would buy you a bus ticket and send you back to your command. The cost of the ticket would come out of your pay later but it was clean and simple. All the other services took you to a local jail until someone came after you. We were looking forward to getting on the road back to the ship.

The recruiter came out to the MP truck and looked at us and told the MPs that he had seven guys in his office that he was trying to get into the Navy and he didn't have time for us. He told the MPs to take us to the county jail and he would come after us later. Later to us meant that evening but as it turned out it was days. I think we were

picked up on a Tuesday, maybe Wednesday, and we next saw a recruiter on Saturday.

Our stay in the Kanawha County Jail was a memorable experience in itself. Breakfast consisted of oatmeal, a sausage patty (sometimes), a biscuit and a cup of coffee, EVERY DAY. Lunch and dinner was pinto beans and corn bread, EVERY DAY. The cockroaches were so thick that every step you took was a crunching sound. They got into everything. We tried staying awake all night so that they wouldn't crawl into our mouth when we were asleep but we never made it awake all night. I had 2 packs of cigarettes and 50 cents when we were locked up. Mike had about the same. We gave away half of our cigarettes to the mostly Army guys in the cell block with us because they hadn't had a cigarette in days and because, we were only going to be there a very short time. It became obvious that we were not leaving soon, so I got word to an uncle who lived nearby and he came to visit. He gave us money so that we could buy tobacco and rolling papers and we learned to roll cigarettes. The next day my parents, my wife and new baby came to visit. I wondered at the time what my son would think of me if he were old enough to understand.

On Saturday my recruiter came for us but our hopes were deflated when he took us to the main recruiting depot in Ashland KY where I was originally sworn into the Navy. They processed us and sent us to the luxurious Boyd County Jail in Ashland Ky. The wife of the jailer did the cooking in this much improved facility. She fixed us a big fried chicken dinner on Sunday after we told her about our meals in the previous jail. The jail was clean and not bad, for a jail.

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Honor Men Lost at Sea

New York — John McCue, in civilian dress, former Torpedoman on the USS Turner, DD-648, holds a wreath he later tossed overboard in a service at sea for the men who died on the vessel. The Turner was lost at this spot off Sandy Hook. McCue is from Jackson Heights, Long Island.

Official US Navy Photograph — Purchased by Pete Varley from eBay.

Need a DD-214?

If you need a DD-214, Report of Transfer or Discharge, or NA Form 1038, Certification of Military Service, log on to <http://vetrecs.archives.gov> and follow the directions. If you do not have a computer, write to: Military Personnel Records, 9700 Page Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63132-5100. The service is free.

Eyes Eyes, Sir!

by W. T. Door

One of the boatswain mates told me this story so I know it's true. He said one of our shipmates had been having trouble with his eyes. He made an appointment for an examination at the Navy Hospital. He went over early one morning and checked in. Prior to being examined he was seated in the waiting room. In came a four striper (he assumed was the commanding officer) who greeted him and asked him what his problem was. He said, "Well Captain, after I have been reading all day my eyes get tired." This prompted the captain to ask; "If you stand up all day do your legs get tired?" "Yes sir" our shipmate replied, to which the captain said, "Well son, why don't you go back to your ship and get to work." (*Editors note: No more HMO complaints please.*)

Final Roll Call

Since our last issue we have learned that these shipmates have answered the call of the Supreme Commander:

Bridges, Walter M.	47-48	FC2
Imperiale, Carmine P.	55-58	CSSA
Kelly, Kenneth G.	52-53	RM2
Martin, Billy D.	53-55	BM3
May, Don H.	46-47	S2c
Mietlowski, Edwin E.	53-55	FP1
Sorensen, John D.	46	BM2
Van Wart, Peter	60-65	MM2

NOTICE

Dick Shanaberger's zip code has changed. It is now 17408. Please make a note of this in your records.

"OVER THE HILL" — CONT.

(Continued from page 5)

On Thursday we were taken from the jail to the airport in Huntington WV where we stood out in full view of the waiting passengers in the terminal, in hand cuffs and bound together in a group of about 10 guys. A Navy reserve plane makes rounds of the Naval district picking up AWOLs and other Navy passengers and flying them to Norfolk. As we stood there in hand-cuffs, we watched the pilot make three passes at the runway before setting it down. In West Virginia, airports are built on top of mountains and the runways are somewhat short. They say that is to help the pilot, because when he gets to the end of the runway, he's 500 feet up and should be able to make it from there. Our pilot seemed to have trouble setting the plane down near the end of the runway and tried for the middle, which left him a little short of coasting room.

Stay tuned for the further adventures of March and Mike in the next issue of the Turner Times.

Mail Call

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

any of this type info.

I was ship's company from '50-'52. I went right to the Yosemite from Boot Camp to the YOSEMITE as a QM striker. Kept watching these cans come and go and we just sat there on the coffee grounds while the tin-can sailors were seeing the world. This was a little to much for a 17 year old farm boy from Michigan so when I heard a Yeoman striker from the TURNER was looking for a "swap" (those were the good old days - no EPDOLANT) and the ship was leaving for the Med, I got my chit together and got everything approved and transferred in one day. (Told the ship's office on the TURNER I could type and I was hired).

Left the next morning for the Med and I got sick before we passed Block Island and stayed sick for three days, sleeping on laundry bags and living on donated apples and oranges. Once that was over I enjoyed every minute of my tour on the TURNER and I believe that had a lot to do with my decision to stay for twenty years.

Just a couple of memories that come back without much coaxing:

We took a head count in '51 of the ship's company because it seemed every other guy was a rebel and believe it or not, over 80% of the crew were "Rebs" and 90% of them were all from Alabama.

In '52, the Sixth Fleet made a major invasion of Spain (they had just lifted the border which had been closed since '39) and we were among the first American ships. Our liberty port was Alicante and I can guarantee you no one has had a liberty like we had, the details of which should be discussed over cold beers with no women present.

1952 was also the year we collided with a hurricane a day or so out of Gibraltar on our way home. Thirty to fifty foot swells with 20 foot waves on top (we should have got sub pay). Nothing but horse-c**k sandwiches for about three days. Beat our gun tubs almost flat - knocked Mount 51 out of the stops and had to get volunteers to get it cabled to stop the swinging. Lost our whale boat. Had a jeep lashed down on the Port side aft of the mid-ships passage and that ended up over the side and had to be cut loose. My Division PO ended up going back to Michigan and marrying my sister (still going strong). I guess I could keep going because the more I think, the more I remember but I think I'll save it for the reunion.

Jerry Dennis, '50-'52, YN3, now YNC, Retired

Sir,

I am involved in a large cruise book project encompassing over 7,540 USN/USCG ship cruise books. I am trying to locate digital photos/scans of the front covers of the following TURNER cruise books to include in my work: 1947-48, 1954, 1965 and 1966. Would you or your shipmates have such images? I'd gladly provide you, your shipmates, or the USS TURNER Association with the credits.

As far as I know, these are the only cruise books published for Turner. Do you agree? If you can help, please contact me.

Sincerely,
Rick Dillard
OSCM(SW), USN, Ret.
Email: drallidr@yahoo.com

Hi Pete:

Picked up the info on the Turner reunion from this month's VFW magazine. I have already received the reunion info from Dick Shanaberger and have been attempting to contact some of my old Turner shipmates who don't receive

