

Turner Times

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1

NOVEMBER, 1999

A C.O.'S TRIBUTE

Editor's Note — It was 30 years ago that the decision was made to decommission DD/DDR-834 and sell our proud ship for scrap. To conclude our anniversary year, here are the remarks Captain Chertavian made at the decommissioning ceremony.

**By Armen Chertavian,
Commander, '68-'69**

Throughout our careers in the United States Navy, we find ourselves having many good days, many glad days, some depressing days, some sad days. Today, September 26, 1969, must be classed as a very sad day because it marks the end of a lifetime of twenty four years and three months for the United States Ship Turner, destroyer number 834; she will be decommissioned and stricken from the Navy records.

She was born on June 12, 1945, in the waning months of World War II; several years before many of the men gathered here had seen the light of day. Her designation was changed in 1949 to that of a radar picket destroyer, but she was redesignated as a destroyer in 1969. Her configuration was changed several times, ending with a complete modernization in 1961. However, despite these many changes, one thing remained constant in Turner--that was a spirit among shipmates seldom found in ships of our great Navy. For example, last week I received a letter from a Chief Petty Officer who served on

Turner in 1955. He regretted deeply to hear that she was to be decommissioned, and stated that his Turner duty was the best of his career.

In recent years, Turner became known as the Tigership. Her men were called Turner "Tigers", and were never satisfied to take second place in any situation. This positive attitude prevailed to the end. In her last year of operations, Turner engaged in

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two Mid-shipmen cruises, a f i v e m o n t h s Mediterranean deployment, and five weeks of other commitments. The highlight of the Mediterranean deployment was a transit into the Black Sea in December, 1968. The resulting publicity found Turner in the headlines of newspapers throughout the Free World, and every man on board stood a little bit taller when Turner moored in Athens, Greece for a well deserved rest upon completion of the transit.

Her competitive spirit was

proven again in August 1969 when she was awarded the coveted Battle Efficiency "E" among the ships of Destroyer Squadron EIGHT. Also, she received the Antisubmarine Weapons and Operations "A" award.

Throughout July and August 1969, the Turner "Tigers" were working twelve hour shifts in preparation for her sixteenth Mediterranean deployment. Quite unexpectedly, Turner found herself listed among those ships of our Navy now being deactivated because of the large cut in the funds available for the defense of our wonderful country.

True, Turner was getting on in years, but she was still capable of operating with the newest ships of the line, and her four boilers never failed to steam at full power when called upon. Additionally, her weapons systems were classed as among the best maintained in the destroyers.

Recently, I heard Turner categorized as an "old suit"; one which should be thrown away. However, I never believed in throwing away my older suits until new ones were in the closet. Nevertheless, we in the military do trust the wisdom of our civilian leaders, and support their judgment and decisions with our lives, if need be. Replacement ships are being procured, and many

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TRIBUTE (CONT.)

FROM THE  OF THE PREZ

(Continued from page 1)

of you younger men will serve proudly on these modern vessels. But never forget that a ship is nothing more than a mass of steel until such time as her crew breathes a life and spirit into her.

For over twenty four years, Turner has been known as a "Real Steamer." No price tag can be placed on the value in goodwill extended by showing our flag during fifteen Mediterranean deployments. In the last four years, Turner has averaged eight months out of every twelve away from her home port. The hardships endured by families due to the extremely long separations of their sailormen can never really be understood by our civilian population. To the many wives of all Turner sailors, past and present, Turner must surely thank you for allowing her to share your men for so many months at a time. If Turner could speak, I believe that she would quote to her men the following words written by Rudyard Kipling:

"What is woman that you forsake her,
And the hearth-fire and the home-acre,
To go with the old gray Widower-maker."

Today, United States Ship Turner, your life comes to an end. Your memory will live on. The hundreds of officers, and thousands of men, who have walked your decks salute you. Your country thanks you for your service.

My daughter reminds me that it's not a "big" birthday or anniversary unless it ends in a five or zero. If that's the case, we have a few notable anniversaries to mention this year.

The first event took place 90 years ago, in 1919, when a new flush deck, four stack destroyer was christened as the first U.S.S. Turner, DD-259. Although she had a short life as a United States Destroyer, barely 3 years, she had a very interesting life from there on. In 1936, she became a water barge, but in 1942, when the Navy needed ships, she was reactivated and designated IX-98, and became a training ship. She served this purpose throughout the war and eventually she became the only WWI flush deck destroyer to become a flagship during the WWII.

The next anniversary is of a tragic event that took place 55 years ago, in early 1944, when the second U.S.S. Turner, DD-648, exploded and sank off Ambrose Light, taking 153 officers and men to their deaths. John McDonald and Jim O'Connor, who served on DD-648, joined us at this reunion and for that we're thankful. Sometimes good things come from tragedy. During the heroic efforts to save the Turner crew, we saw the first use of a helicopter in a life-saving role, rather than a military one. Plasma was flown from New York to the rescue site and the lives of many Turner crewmen were saved by this effort.

The last anniversary I'll mention is of the event that took place 30 years ago, when the third U.S.S. Turner, DD/DDR-834, was also lost; this time not to explosion and fire, but to age, politics and cost cutting. Of all her namesakes, this Turner saw the most service as a United States Destroyer. She served in the Pacific and the Atlantic fleets. She took part in the atomic bomb tests at Bikini Atoll. Once she was assigned

to the Atlantic fleet, she took part in Project Mercury as part of the recovery force. Even with 24 years of dedicated service, or possibly because of it, in 1969 Turner was decommissioned and sold for scrap. It's been 30 years since I walked her decks. There are times when I'd give almost anything to be able to do so again, and I'd take all of you with me.

None of the TURNERS exist any longer. Ships are only made of so much steel, copper, brass, aluminum, and paint. No matter how well they've served, they come and go, whether by disaster or the stroke of a pen. What is really important is all of you.

Each of those ships was manned by a crew; flesh and blood individuals who banded together and worked toward a common goal: to make that collection of metal and materials into an efficient machine for whatever purpose the Navy decided was best. YOU, my shipmates, are what made those ships live and breathe.

Whatever the fate of our ships, the most important outcome is that every year some of us choose to come together, with our former shipmates, to be with people we lived with, worked with, argued with, and endured with. These were the men who were our second family while we served on TURNER. We come together each year to remember and honor the ships we served on, but more importantly, to remember the men with whom we shared all those experiences, both good and bad. Wherever life has lead us; whatever has been our fate, one thing we will always remember is our time on TURNER with our shipmates.

— Pete

CHICAGO REUNION. SMALL, BUT MIGHTY

If you were to ask the 80 people who gathered in the Chicagoland area for our 8th reunion, I think most would say "WOW" All in all, we had a great time.

Our first impressions of the hotel were reinforced throughout our visit: Classy, service-oriented and well maintained. All the staff were friendly; complementary newspapers were available and fresh apples were always at the front desk for those who needed a snack.

Registration went well, with banners announcing our arrival. The usual snacks and beverages were at hand to refresh those telling "sea stories." At the registration desk, we also had the opportunity to sign a petition to the Secretary of the Navy to request that another U S Navy fighting ship be named U.S.S. Turner. More about that on page 8. Write a letter for us, if you can.

The trip to the top of the Sears Tower, a mere 1,450 feet, was a little too fast for some, but the view, between the clouds, was inspiring. Some mentioned the need to have pressurized elevators for a trip that high. Once there, it was unusual to look at the city around us and be able to look DOWN on the traffic and news helicopters below!!!

After that, we adjourned to Navy Pier for a refreshing walk and lunch right next to the lake. Of course, we later saw all the usual tourist attraction, such as Wrigley Field, Soldier Field, the site of the Valentine's Day massacre and the spot where John Dillinger finally met his end at the hands of the FBI at the Biograph Theatre.

The visit to Great Lakes Recruit Training Command was, for most, the highlight of our reunion. We had the chance to see over 900 young people join the ranks which we had once visited. The ceremony was complete with the spirit of "Honor, Courage and Commitment" we would expect. I believe we all relived a little of our time at "Boot" with that visit. By the way, I later received a letter of apology from Rear Admiral Edward E. Hunter, Commander of Recruit Training

Command, for his oversight in not mentioning our members as Honored Guests. If you've never had a Rear Admiral apologize to you, I can tell you, it's a good feeling!!!

After the graduation, we enjoyed seeing the many facilities that remain at the Navy's only Recruit Training Command. After our lunch at Port O'Call, which overlooked Lake Michigan, we continued our tour to the Service School Command, where so many of today's naval personnel receive the skills they will need. Vince McDonough especially enjoyed this part as he was Commander of the Service School Command from July of ' 82 until September of ' 84.

Saturday brought us to the lakeshore again, but to the Museum of

Garrett Lockee, Capt. John Callaway and Capt. Armen Chertavian (who came all the way from Belgium!!). We were also honored to have one former EO, Capt. Vince McDonough, join us.

Again, this year, Bill Metzger supplied many of the door prizes and also provided each ladies with a lovely corsage. The Grand Prize was somehow won by Capt. Callaway. Hummm, I wonder how he did that!?

When all the raffles were finished, the prizes were gone and all the speeches were over, we settled in to listen to those songs that we all remembered. Some even learned a few new steps with the Macarena!! Those who survived that experience finally bid each other a goodnight and smooth seas until next year.

NEWS FLASH

This just in!! Reunion dates for 2000 have been set. We will convene between October 25th and the 29th, in Providence RI, at the historic Johnson and Wales Inn. More to follow in future newsletters. Until then, reserve those dates with the powers that be.

Science and Industry. We roamed all over, some of us touring the U-505, the only German Sub captured during the war. Some visited the coal mine or walked through the Boeing 727 suspended from the ceiling. There was something of interest for everyone.

Saturday evening brought our official festivities to a close. We gathered for our banquet to visit again and honor all our shipmates, both present and AWOL. We were fortunate to have three past COs with us this year. Our thanks to Capt.

A CHANGE AT THE HELM

During our non-existent Change of Command ceremony, Pete Varley (' 66 69) has relieved Harry Tice (' 57) as President of the Turner Reunion Association. John Byron (' 45 ' 46) is starting the rounds again as Vice President. We are fortunate to, again, have Mike Quinn (' 56 59) and Dick Shanaberger (' 51 55) signing on for another cruise as Treasurer and Secretary. Those two guys are "lifers".

All of them have given much for the betterment of the association which keeps us sailing along. While it is a labor of love on their part, it is a gift to the rest of us, and we thank them. We also thank the others who are working in the background. Especially the wives. And we thank Harry for a successful year as President. In his year, the association grew bigger and better. To all who had an oar in the water, WELL DONE!

If you didn't attend this year's reunion, we need to understand why, so we can make future reunions more attractive to you! Copy this page, complete the survey and mail to Pete Varley, 202 Shadowbend Dr., Wheeling, IL 60090. We'll consider all your suggestions and publish the results here. Please help make this a better association

Name (optional) _____ Home State _____

Have you attended prior reunions?

Yes No If Yes, how many?

Why didn't you attend this year? Check all that apply.

Didn't like the activities offered <input type="checkbox"/>	Travel Costs too expensive <input type="checkbox"/>	Not a good time to get away <input type="checkbox"/>
Not an interesting city <input type="checkbox"/>	Hotel room too expensive <input type="checkbox"/>	Too busy at work <input type="checkbox"/>
Travel from home difficult to this city <input type="checkbox"/>	Activities/Food too expensive <input type="checkbox"/>	Health/Age problems <input type="checkbox"/>
Not interested in reunions <input type="checkbox"/>	Not interested in the activities <input type="checkbox"/>	Usually attend but not this year <input type="checkbox"/>

Other (use more paper if needed) _____

I'd attend more reunions if they were held in this location.

West Coast cities <input type="checkbox"/>	East Coast cities <input type="checkbox"/>	Upper Mid-Western cities <input type="checkbox"/>
Pacific North Coast cities <input type="checkbox"/>	North Atlantic Coast cities <input type="checkbox"/>	Lower Mid-Western Cities <input type="checkbox"/>
California area cities <input type="checkbox"/>	Gulf Coast area cities <input type="checkbox"/>	No Preference/Other <input type="checkbox"/>

How often should reunions be held?

Every year Every other year Doesn't matter

Given your schedule, in what month is it easiest for you to attend? _____

When you considered this year's reunion, how did you feel about the cost vs. the quality you thought you'd get for:

Hotel? Quality good/Cost high <input type="checkbox"/>	About right <input type="checkbox"/>	Cost good/Quality low <input type="checkbox"/>
Activities? Quality good/Cost high <input type="checkbox"/>	About right <input type="checkbox"/>	Cost good/Quality low <input type="checkbox"/>
Meals? Quality good/Cost high <input type="checkbox"/>	About right <input type="checkbox"/>	Cost good/Quality low <input type="checkbox"/>

What other types of reunion activities would interest you? For example, more military or navy oriented activities, having the reunion on a cruise ship? Use more paper if needed.

Annual Dues of \$20: Too high Just right Too low

Newsletter: Too Dull/Boring Too flashy/More info than I want I love it like it is
I'd like to see more: Photos/ Shipmate memories Association news
Should the Turner Time be sent only to dues paying members? No

Internet Site: I have seen our site Needs improvement I love it like it is
If you haven't seen it, why? No computer No access to the Internet Not sure how to do it

OUR TURNER TIMES

WHAT WE REMEMBER ABOUT OUR TIME ON BOARD

Jim Bostick, BTC, '46-'48

Dead in the water. The Turner was leaving Bikini atoll from our assigned position for the second atom bomb test that took place there. We, in the fireroom, received word that we will steam on this bearing into Pearl Harbor. The next word was secure #1, #2 and #4 boilers and steam into Pearl Harbor on #3 boiler only. These orders were carried out. Funny how easy steaming can turn into an emergency.

Our periscopes were showing orange and the oil pressure falling. Engine rooms 1 and 2 were notified of an emergency and they secured all unnecessary equipment that uses steam. A stop has been rung up and steam pressure was falling. The steam was so low that you can see the filaments in the light bulbs. We are now at the mercy of the sea.

H. W. Turbeville, WT, was over on the starboard side, running the fuel oil service pump manually. We had shifted to a stand-by tank of oil. I tested the new tank of oil just by feel. The oil felt fine to me and I told Turbeville "Good oil". The next step; get the boiler lit off!

The normal procedure is to use a torch to light the boiler, but this is an emergency. The #3 boiler was still hot enough to light off for this emergency. So brick work it was.

The man checking water in the boiler was told to watch his water level. Steam was coming up; the engine rooms were notified. It was a sweet sound to hear #1 generator revving up to normal RPMs and you could not see the filament in the light bulbs anymore.

I know the Captain has been notified and I imagined a smile coming over his face. Once again, normal steaming and heading for Pearl Harbor.

On the way to Pearl, 1946. So you thought it was all fun and games. After the contaminated oil emergency, a spring hanger broke loose and left a 600 pound steam line hanging. Only

volunteers were allowed in #2 fireroom; two for the burners on saturated and superheater and a man checking water in the boiler.

CWT Griffin and I climbed on top of #3 steam drum to survey what we could. We rigged a chain fall and lifted the steam line where it should be. We made the best repairs we could, considering the situation. Once again, the Captain smiled.

Off the China coast in 1947 in a typhoon. We are steaming on #3 & #4 boilers and the Captain wants the #1 fireroom ready to light off. One small item exists; a stackcover is on #1 stack. The USS Turner was rocking and rolling. I was near the #1 fireroom and met our Chief Engineer, Lt. Paul Roth. He said to me, "I need a volunteer - You!" I said "What did I volunteer for?" He said, "We're going up the stack and cut off the stack cover!"

He took the port side and I the starboard side. If you lost your grip, the word is "bye-bye". It's a good way to make the obituary column. My knuckles were snow white from hanging on. When the Turner rolled, it seemed you could touch the ocean from the top of the stack. My "volunteering" over, I was glad to be alive.

Also, Jim sent the TIMES a copy of the 1941 menu from the Black Cat Cafe (a well known establishment to the Fleet) in Honolulu. We won't print it all, but do you remember when you could go there for breakfast and have bacon, ham or sausage and eggs, toast and hash browns for thirty five cents? The coffee was free. At lunch you could have a cheeseburger (a hamburger with cheese in those days) for twenty cents, follow it with a fifteen cent pie a la mode and wash it down with a coke for another nickel. In the evening, on the way back to Pearl Harbor, you could get a Porterhouse steak with mushrooms for a buck. Sounds impossible? It may have been, if you were only making \$21.00 a month.

Ed Correia, BTC, '50-'56 Re-members Pearl Harbor

On the morning of December 7th 1941, Fireman 1/c Edward G. Correia was just finishing breakfast onboard the USS DETROIT (CLB-8) when General Quarters was sounded. He rushed to his GQ station in the Number 4 Fireroom. The boilers were full of water so they immediately lit fires. Ed says, "What a mess to find out where the water level was! But, WT 1/c McCoy, a good Irishman, ordered me topside to take off the stack cover." As ordered, Ed made it topside, climbed the stack and with his trusty jack knife began cutting the stack cover away. It was then that the DETROIT's 3 inch anti-aircraft guns began to fire and Ed saw a Japanese plane inbound and strafing the ship's quarter deck. "I came off that stack as fast as I could", he recalls. But there was a casualty, Ed lost his knife, which he wishes he still had, and the whereabouts of the stack cover remains an unknown.

In the meantime, a torpedo hit the USS RALEIGH. The explosion lifted the stern of the DETROIT (luckily) permitting a second torpedo to pass under the DETROIT and explode on Ford Island.

After getting underway, Ed went up to the scuttlebutt to get water for the fire gang. Looking out a porthole, he saw that the ARIZONA was afire. Flames were trying to burn the United States flag and he could see the heat waves moving it. The DETROIT continued underway and the ARIZONA passed from Ed's view, but he wonders to this day if the ARIZONA's colors survived. Fifty eight years later, Ed recalls "**That day in my life is just like yesterday.**"

WHO HAD FUN THIS YEAR??

We'd like to thank all those who joined us this year in Chicago. See if your friends or shipmates were there. Here are this year's attendees, in no particular order.

John L. Overstreet
 Nancy Kelly
 Clyde C. Grider
 Fran Schindler
 Tom Shingleton
 Judy Shingleton
 Pete Varley
 Marge Varley
 Allison Varley
 Robert Pritchett
 Thomas S. Beard
 Margaret Beard
 Raymond E. Walsh
 John Byron
 Margaret Byron
 Angie Kostakis
 Harriet Gasparri
 Kenneth Gustavson
 Marion Gustavson
 Armen Chertavian
 Natelie Bhatti
 Richard Hummel
 Caroline P. Hummel
 Ed Wielgus
 Raymond Leistikow
 Diane Leistikow
 Arthur T. Thompson
 Lucinda M. Thompson
 Dave Bodendorf
 Joan Bodendorf
 Phil Livingstone
 Gail Livingstone
 John McDonald
 Glenn L. Phillips
 Elaine Phillips
 Mike Quinn
 Lucy Quinn
 Bernie Sciarpelletti
 Barbara Sciarpelletti
 John D. Callaway
 Janet Callaway
 Lou Czarnecki

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TIME FOR ANNUAL DUES

Reunion '99 is now history. As our business year runs from reunion to reunion, this means our association is beginning a new fiscal year. That also means it's time to solicit annual dues.

During this past year, we added an additional 105 shipmates to our roster. Additionally, we continued to print, expand and improve the "Turner Times", to keep the memory of Turner alive and to let all of our shipmates, and their families, know the news of our association. New this year was the launching of our Internet site "Homeport Turner", which has already won may awards for its design and spirit. We don't have to tell you that all these efforts, along with the rest of our association's business, cost money.

The cost of printing (newsletters and search postcards), supplies and postage is this association's largest expense!! Last year, we spent over \$2,700 on these items alone. Our only sources of income this year will be from the ship's store merchandise we sell, the raffles held at the reunion and your dues. We need your support to continue these efforts and preserve our association!

Unlike other reunion groups, in an effort to not exclude anyone who wants to participate in our association, we have chosen to keep our \$20 annual dues voluntary. We keep ALL shipmates on our mailing list, send ALL of them the newsletter and they are eligible to attend reunions, whether or not dues are paid.

Unfortunately, last year only about 12% of the shipmates on our roster paid dues. If we are to continue our mission of keeping Turner's memory alive, we **must** reverse that trend!

So, please dust off that check-book and unlock that wallet and mail your \$20 annual dues to our Treasurer Mike Quinn at 15022 Hix Street, Livonia, MI 48154. We know many of you are on a fixed income and others may have more than one reunion association looking for dues. If \$20 is too much for you, please send whatever you can so we can continue to keep alive our collective memories of Turner.



For those who didn't attend this year's reunion, a Turner Reunion Memory book with photos and other interesting material will soon be available. To order, send \$20 or Visa/Mastercard, to Reunion Services, The Dunning Company, PO Drawer 759, Theodore, AL 36590.

The following items can be ordered from Carl Ackerman, 7436 Daisy Cir., Macungie, PA 18062. Ph: (610) 398-0145

Turner baseball caps embroidered with Turner logo are \$15.

Up-to-date rosters are \$4.

Mesh polo shirts embroidered with Turner logo. Colors are red, white or blue. Sizes M to L come with a pocket. XL has no pocket. Cost is \$40.

All items are postpaid



TURNER WARDROOM-EARLY 1969

Top Row: LT W. E. Kearns, LT S. M. Daugherty, CDR A. Chertavian, LCDR V. P. McDonough, LT. K. P. Tomlin, LTJG E. M. McGowin, LTJG P. Hatch. Middle Row: LTJG M. J. Carpenter, LTJG C. R. Mousseau, LTJG T. H. Tucker. Bottom Row: LTJG D. W. Houghton, ENS K. T. Coyle, LT L. G. Roth, LTJG R. E. De Castro, LTJG D. J. Spaustat.

—Photo courtesy of Armen Chertavian CDR '69, USN (Ret.)



TURNER ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT ; 1946

Do you remember this picture from our December 1998 issue? Bobby Cobb, F2, '47, sent in the names of nearly all the men in the photo. Here are the names, from left to right. 1st row: Tibbens, HF; Blackwell, Jr. WH; Weisdorf, CF; ?; Griffen, MR; Simon, JR.; Butterfield, HG; ?; Roth, Paul; ?; ?; Green, J; Sarni, JW; ?; Duett, EW; ?. 2nd row: ?; Bowen, VW; Bilicic, A; Twyman, R; Brune, F; ?; Doyle, CMJ; McDougale, MJ; Wolf, L; Cobb, BB; ?; ?; Leak, LN; Heltzel, NE; Goens, HL; ?; ?; Biggins, HB; Schultz, CF; ?. 3rd row: Crumpton, HL; ?; ?; Powers, CE; ?; Eby, JF; Petrovoic, A; Schreiber, NE; ?; ?; Wesdenko, D; Angel, LP; ?; ?; ?; Bartles, DL; Turbeville, HW; Guy, JH; Schragger, M; ?; Ferraro, D; ?; Henkenis, R; ?; ?; ?; Bostick, Jr. J. There should be a prize for this effort!!! Thanks, Bobby.

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

WHO HAD FUN THIS YEAR?? (CONT.)

- Ruth Tomlinson
- Tim Fesig
- Lorraine Fesig
- Terry McGivern
- Tom Traber
- Laurie Traber
- Richard L. Shanaberger
- Shirley Shanaberger
- Carl L. Ackerman
- Madge Ackerman
- Arthur Breen
- Helga Breen
- Bruce "Clancy" Coxe
- Jean S. Coxe
- Nils Rueckert
- Beverly Rueckert
- Joseph R. Stepanek
- Helen Stepanek
- Jessie Thompson
- Madeline Thompson
- Harry Tice
- Gerrie Tice
- Joe Jacobs
- Russ Wilson
- Halma Wilson
- Jerry Weitz
- Dick Harris
- Vince McDonough
- Kathryn A. McDonough
- James O' Connor
- Carroll Huffines
- Mike McLaren
- William Metzger
- Margaret Metzger
- Margaret Metzger
- Bud Metzger
- Garette Lockee
- Sally Lockee
- Bob Streibel

