

E. Andrew Wilde, Jr., Editor

**The U.S.S. *DeHaven* (DD-469) in World War II:  
Documents, Recollections and Photographs**

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The U.S.S. DeHaven (DD-469) in World War II

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E. A. Wilde, Jr.  
July, 2000



*Any man who may be asked what he did to make his life worthwhile can respond with a good deal of pride and satisfaction, "I served in the United States Navy."*

*- President John F. Kennedy, addressing the new class of midshipmen at the United States Naval Academy on August 1, 1963.*





*The destroyer U.S.S. DeHaven (DD-469) was sponsored by Miss Helen N. DeHaven, of Ardmore, Pennsylvania, granddaughter of Lieutenant Edwin Jess DeHaven (1819-1865). (Official U.S. Navy photograph.)*

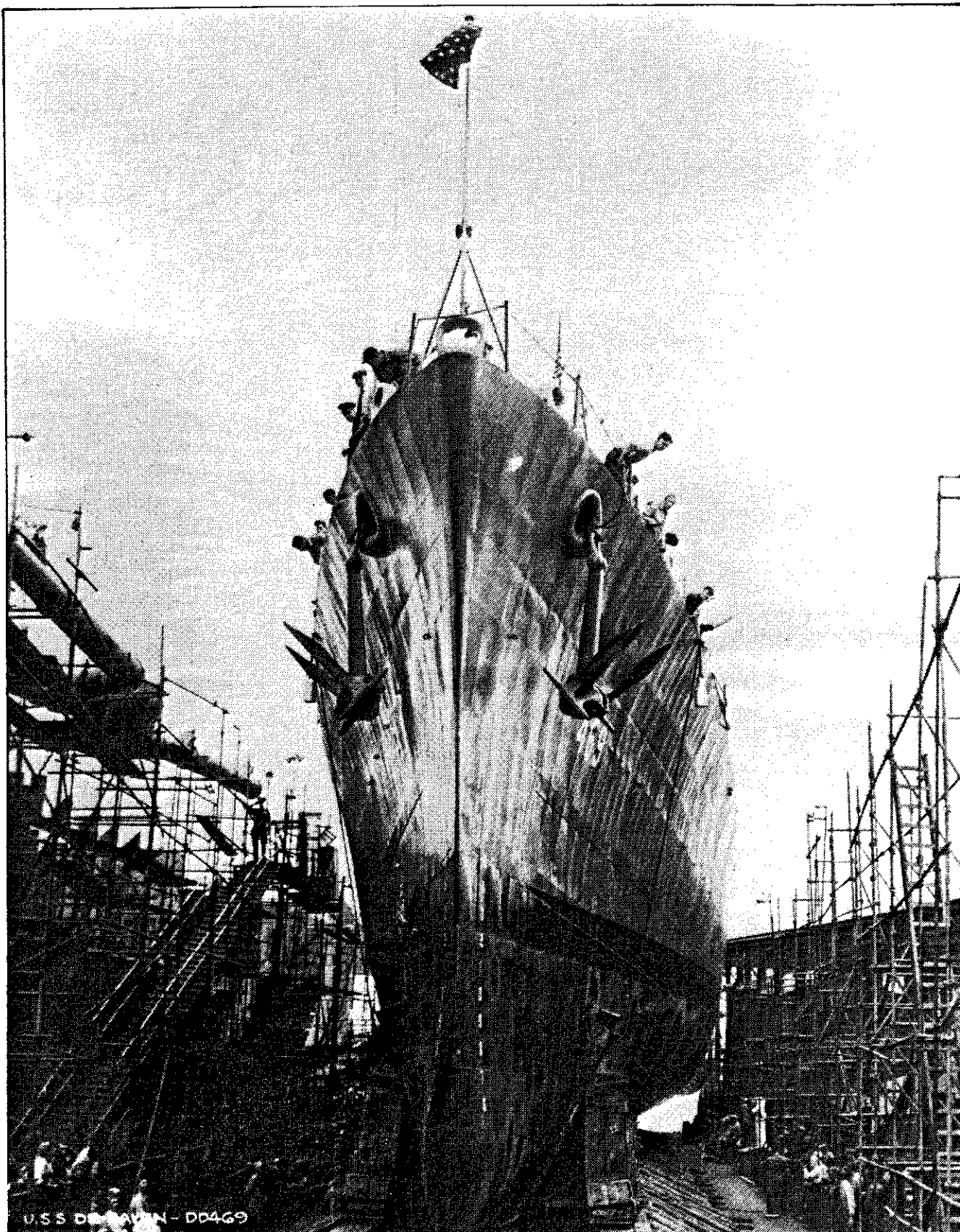






Miss Helen N. DeHaven gave it her best shot when she christened the U.S.S. DeHaven (DD-469) at the Bath Iron Works, Bath, Maine, on the 28th of June 1942. Champagne bottles used at christenings are fitted with a slotted aluminum casing or a fine mesh to prevent broken glass from endangering the sponsor. To assure a frothy splash when the bottle is broken, the champagne is kept at around 60 degrees by an insulated bag or, in winter, an electric heater. (USN photo.)





USS DEHAVEN - DD469

The launching of the 2,050-ton destroyer U.S.S. DeHaven (DD-469) at Bath, Maine, on 28 June 1942. After a fitting-out period the vessel steamed to the Boston Navy Yard in September where she received her fire-control and search radars. She was commissioned there on 21 September 1942, Commander Charles E. Tolman, USN, in command. (Official U.S. Navy photograph.)



## U. S. S. D'HAVEN LAUNCHED SUNDAY FROM IRON WORKS

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### Breaks Production Records at Big Shipyards

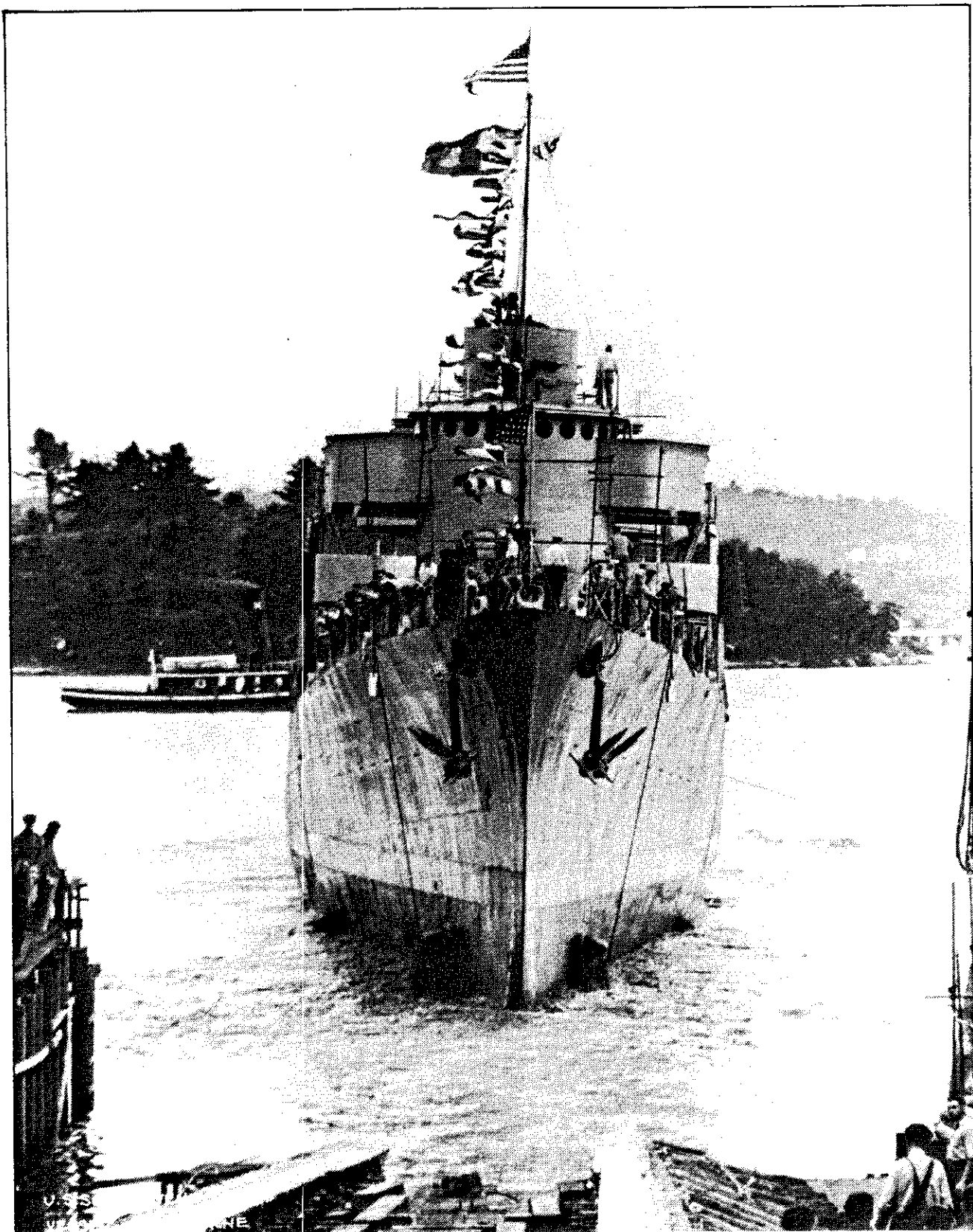
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Shattering still another production record, the USS DeHaven, sixth destroyer to be launched from the Bath Iron Works Corp., in as many months, slipped quietly into the waters of the Kennebec Sunday afternoon. It was the third Sunday launching in the history of the firm and the 47th ship of its type to be constructed here.

Several hundred spectators lined Carlton Bridge, many grouped on the Woolwich end, to witness the spectacle but only a few were invited inside the yard. And many on the bridge did not see the ship until it was well out into the river for there were no whistles or clamor as she began to move slowly toward the river. Not until the bow had dropped from the ways did the two tugs assisting her salute with three blasts from their respective whistles.

Sponsoring the ship was Miss Helen N. DeHaven, Ardmore, Penn., a granddaughter of Lieut. Edwin Jesse DeHaven, USN, in whose honor the ship was named. Lieut. DeHaven, commander of the Grinnell rescue expedition in 1850-51, failed in his attempt to rescue the explorer Sir John Franklin but discovered and named Grinnell Land while on the mission.

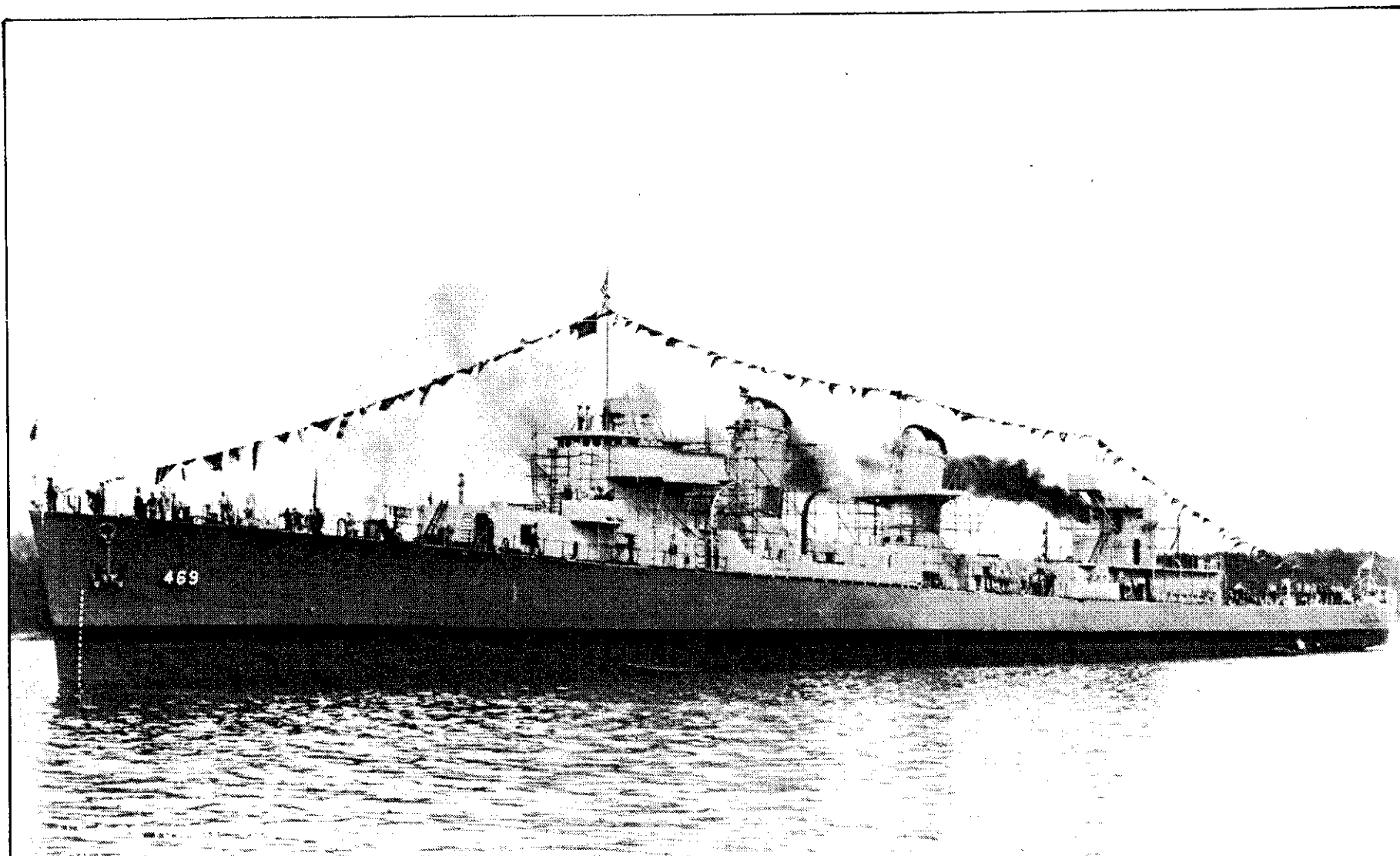




This bow view of the U.S.S. DeHaven (DD-469) as she was launched shows the closed, rounded pilothouse with open wings on early Fletcher-class destroyers. About a year later the rounded face of the pilothouse was squared off, and an open bridge platform around the pilothouse was incorporated in ships of this class to improve the all-around visibility of the conning officer. (Official U.S. Navy photograph.)







The Fletcher-class destroyer U.S.S. DeHaven (DD-469) officially displaced 2,050 tons (standard), but ships of this class were commonly called "2,100-tonners." The DeHaven was laid down on 27 September 1941, launched on 28 June 1942 and commissioned on 21 September 1942. (U.S. Navy photograph.)

Length (overall) 376' 6"

Shaft Horsepower 60,000 h.p.

Beam 39' 8"

Rated Speed 35 knots

Main Armament: Five 5-in./38 dual-purpose guns; ten 21-in. torpedoes.



Ships Data Section  
Public Information Division  
Office of Public Relations  
Navy Department

HISTORY OF USS DE HAVEN (DD 469)

It is the fortune of some ships to fight valiantly and victoriously to the end of a war and return to friendly shores with bands playing and bunting streaming. Other ships fight with equal courage only to sink during battle with some unscathed, others interned in hospitals with still others committed to the deep. There is little fanfare for scattered groups of survivors returning to home shores for reassignment. They are men who have taken a beating for a victorious cause. Such were the men of the USS DE HAVEN, a ship whose spirit continued to live in the hearts of the men who survived her.

The destroyer USS DE HAVEN was authorized by an Act of Congress on 27 March 1934. Built at the Bath Iron Works, her keel was laid on 27 September 1941 and she was launched on 28 June 1942. Miss Helen N. De Haven, of Ardmore, Pennsylvania, granddaughter of Lieutenant Edwin Jess De Haven, for whom the ship was named, served as the ship's sponsor.

Edwin J. De Haven commenced his naval career with his appointment to the U. S. Naval Academy on 20 October 1829, and served on board the United States Ships NATCHEZ and ERIE in 1830 - 31. During twenty years of distinguished service, he served aboard many famous ships. In 1839 he served aboard the USS VINCENNES, flagship of the U. S. Exploring Expedition under Charles Wilkes, which made the famous cruise to the Antarctic and among the Pacific Islands. Serving aboard USS SOMERS, he took part in the first expedition against Alvarado in the early part of the trouble with Mexico. Placed in command of the Grinnel Rescue Expedition in 1850, De Haven lead the search for Sir John Franklin and made scientific explorations. The two vessels of the expedition, ADVANCE and RESCUE, were caught in the ice west of Greenland in September and drifted for nine months. The expedition failed to find Franklin but discovered and named Grinnel Land. At the beginning of the Civil War, he requested active duty, but was pronounced physically unfit. Placed on the retired list in February 1862, De Haven remained on waiting orders until his death, 1 May 1865.

Commissioned on 21 September 1942 at Boston, USS DE HAVEN (DD 469) had as her first skipper, Commander Charles E. Tolman. Commander Tolman had served most of his time on submarines

before taking over this new destroyer of the FLETCHER class. The executive officer, Lieutenant Commander J. P. Huntly had come from the aircraft carrier USS YORKTOWN which had been sunk in the Battle of Midway.

From Boston, Massachusetts, the destroyer steamed to Casco Bay, Maine for shakedown training. Several weeks were spent taking training and exercise cruises from Casco Bay before steaming to Boston for post-shakedown availability. Arriving at Norfolk, Virginia on 8 November, DE HAVEN joined USS SAUFLEY, USS COLUMBIA and USS INDIANA on a voyage through the Panama Canal by 14 November and on westward to the war in the Pacific.

The crew of DE HAVEN plunged through the Pacific groundswells day after day and finally saw land again for the first time upon their arrival at Tongatabu on 28 November 1942. The crew had their first liberty here and everyone went ashore and ate coconuts and explored the tropical terrain before departing for Noumea the next day to escort a convoy. The ships of the convoy were taking Army troops to Guadalcanal to relieve some of the Marines who had been there since the beginning.

Departing Noumea on 3 December, the destroyer protected the troopships on the voyage to Guadalcanal, where unloading and loading commenced on 7 December. It was one year since hostilities had started but the ship was not celebrating anniversaries. DE HAVEN screened the transports for about a week off Lunga Point, occasionally patrolling outside Tulagi Harbor.

During the period spent in the Solomons region, the personnel became more polished in their specialties, such as radar, fire control and sound gear. The ship was at Guadalcanal for about a week. While she patrolled, the various ships of the convoy went away one by one until DE HAVEN was left with the last ship which had difficulty unloading. Several voyages between Guadalcanal and Espiritu Santo completed the year 1942 and brought DE HAVEN to Espiritu Santo during the early part of January, where she joined a large part of the South Pacific force which was anchored there.

From this anchorage, the ship received orders to rendezvous with the tanker SS WILLIAM IRISH and escort her from Noumea to Espiritu Santo. Following this assignment, the crew of the destroyer had a chance to go on a few swimming parties although the ship could grant no real shore liberty since all the ships there were on two-hour notice.

DE HAVEN was assigned to Task Group 67.5 under the command of Captain Briscoe, Commander Destroyer Squadron FIVE, who's flag was in USS FLETCHER. Other ships in the group were destroyers USS RADFORD, USS NICHOLAS and USS O'BANNON. This group was under Admiral Halsey, who had a new idea for stopping the "Tokyo Express." This force was called the "Cactus Striking Force" and was broken down into small units to conduct hunter-killer search against submarines and other vessels in the lower Solomons area. The "Express" was the name given to the Jap ships which approached Guadalcanal at night and brought supplies to the Jap troops. They would drop supplies overboard on rafts and let the tide carry them in. While DE HAVEN was patrolling, the "Express" never attempted to aid the Japs on shore.

This mission was soon halted for the bombardment of Guadalcanal and Kolombangara Islands in the Solomons. The destroyers, in addition to escorting the cruisers of the BROOKLYN-ST. LOUIS class to the scene of the bombardment, took an active part in shelling the shore establishments themselves. The targets were principally the Villa and Stanmore Plantations, where it was believed the Japs were bringing oil and supplies for their aircraft. It took about two days of steaming to get to the destination and around midnight of 20 January, the ships arrived off Guadalcanal.

The destroyers, in cooperation with the Army, pounded the Japs on shore almost daily. They were apparently afraid to reveal their positions and did not answer with return fire. But the men on DE HAVEN knew that they were laying it on hot and heavy for the firing was accurate and destructive.

On 24 January, the destroyers steamed to Kolombangara Island, into the long reach of Kula Gulf and worked over the Villa-Stanmore Plantations and other targets. As soon as the bombardment was over, the destroyers raced out of Kula Gulf and caught up with the cruisers. On the way back to Guadalcanal, the ships were followed by twin-engined bombers. The Japanese planes dropped flares which were somewhat disconcerting. However, no bombs were dropped as the ships presented poor targets by heading through one rain squall and into the next. Arriving back at Florida Island, DE HAVEN continued patrol operations there until February.

During the day on 1 February, DE HAVEN was operating with Task Group 67.5, supporting the movements of six LCT's and one seaplane tender incident to the establishment of a beach-head at Marovo on Guadalcanal. In the afternoon the destroyer was engaged in anti-submarine patrol, covering the return to

their base of two LCT's. At 1445, when about 3 miles south of Savo Island, the skipper of the ship was notified by a shore control post that they were in condition Red.

DE HAVEN went to general quarters immediately and steered a course to the northeast. At 1457, a flight of nine unidentified planes was sighted broad on the starboard beam at 25,000 yards. The ship's guns were ordered to track the planes until they could be identified. The planes were on a course on which they would pass well astern of the ship. About a minute later, the planes were identified as enemy and six of them changed course sharply and came directly toward DE HAVEN.

All guns opened up and three of the Japanese planes were sent spiralling in smoke and flame to splash into the sea. However, all six planes are believed to have dropped their bombs. DE HAVEN was hit by three bombs and further damaged by a near miss. All way was lost after the first hit and shortly thereafter the ship began to settle by the bow. No serious fires were seen but a cloud of yellow smoke hovered over the ship for about a minute as the bow began to settle into the water.

The commanding officer was killed on the bridge by a bomb explosion which wrecked the superstructure. Lieutenant J. J. Rowan survived and had this to say: "I was on the bridge when the second bomb exploded near it. My leg was badly injured and my shoe blown off, but I was lucky.....The ship was seriously damaged and began to sink rapidly. I crawled to a place where I could fall into the water and paddle away. The quick thinking of Ensign Clem C. Williams (the only officer who was not killed or wounded) saved many lives. He set all the ash cans (depth charges) on safety before he left the ship. If that hadn't been done, the ash cans probably would have gone off under water and men swimming nearby would have been badly injured or killed.

With the stern going up and the bow sinking under, Ensign Williams checked to see that no one else was on deck before he plunged over the side into the water. About 30 seconds later, the destroyer's stern rose sharply and she went down to the bottom. Williams made it to a floater net on which about a dozen men were clinging. The water was heavy with fuel oil but the current was carrying them toward Savo Island. The morale of the men was very high and the appearance of an OS2U KINGFISHER overhead did nothing to dispell the high spirits. One of the men waved his hand at the plane as it circled overhead. An LCT which DE HAVEN had been escorting approached the scene with its ramp down and all survivors in sight were helped aboard by the energetic men of her crew. Ensign Solomon, who was the skipper of the LCT did a fine job

of maneuvering his vessel into favorable positions for getting the men out of the water as quickly as possible. First aid was rendered to the wounded and morphine was administered to those who were in severe pain.

It was not long before the destroyer NICHOLAS came alongside to remove the stretcher cases and the FLETCHER soon eased alongside to take aboard the remainder of the survivors who were put ashore at Lunga Point on Guadalcanal. The wounded were removed from the NICHOLAS and taken by ambulance to the base hospital there. When the survivors could be checked against the muster list, it was found that of the fourteen ship's officers, ten were killed or missing and three were wounded; among the 299 enlisted men, 157 were dead or missing and 35 were wounded.

The high tradition set by USS DE HAVEN was carried on by the second destroyer named USS DE HAVEN. The new ship had to be a fine ship with a fine crew to hold high the torch of freedom for which the men of DD-469 fought and died. The things we Americans believe in, live for and enjoy can be attributed to the valor of such as these.

#### S T A T I S T I C S

STANDARD DISPLACEMENT:	2,050 tons	<u>ARMAMENT</u>
OVERALL LENGTH:	376' 6 inches	5-5"/38 Calibre Guns
BEAM:	39' 4 inches	10-21" Quintuple Torpedo Tubes
SPEED:	35 knots (plus)	40MM and 20MM Anti-Aircraft Batteries
		Depth Charges

Stencilled: 5/6/48





History of the U.S.S. DeHaven (DD-469)\*  
(A 2,050-ton Fletcher-class destroyer)

DD-469: dp. 2,050; l. 376'6"; b. 39'8"; dr. 17'9";  
s. 35 k.; cpl. 273; a. 5 5", 10 21" tt., 6 dcp., 2 dct.; cl.  
*Fletcher*)

*De Haven* (DD-469) was launched 28 June 1942 by Bath Iron Works Corp., Bath, Maine; sponsored by Miss H. N. De Haven, granddaughter of Lieutenant De Haven; and commissioned 21 September 1942, Commander C. E. Tolman in command.

*De Haven* sailed from Norfolk and reached Tongatabu, Tonga Islands, 28 November 1942 to escort a convoy of troopships to Guadalcanal to relieve the Marines who had been there since the invasion landings in August. *De Haven* screened the transports off Guadalcanal from 7 to 14 December, then sailed out of Espiritu Santo and Noumea in the continuing Solomon Islands operations. She patrolled in the waters of the Southern Solomons to stop the "Tokyo Express," the nightly effort to supply the beleaguered Japanese troops still fighting on the invaded islands, and took part in two bombardments of Kolombangara Island during January 1943.

On 1 February 1943 *De Haven* screened six LCT's and a seaplane tender establishing a beachhead at Marovo on Guadalcanal. While escorting two of the landing craft back to their base in the afternoon, *De Haven* was warned of an impending air attack. She sighted nine unidentified planes and opened fire as six swung sharply toward her. She splashed three of these planes, but not before all six had dropped their bombs. *De Haven* was hit by three bombs and further damaged by a near miss. One bomb hit the superstructure squarely, killing the commanding officer at once. All way was lost after the first hit and the ship began to settle rapidly, sinking about 2 miles east of Savo Island. One of the LCT's she had escorted rescued the survivors. She lost 167 killed and 38 wounded.

*De Haven* received one battle star for World War II service.

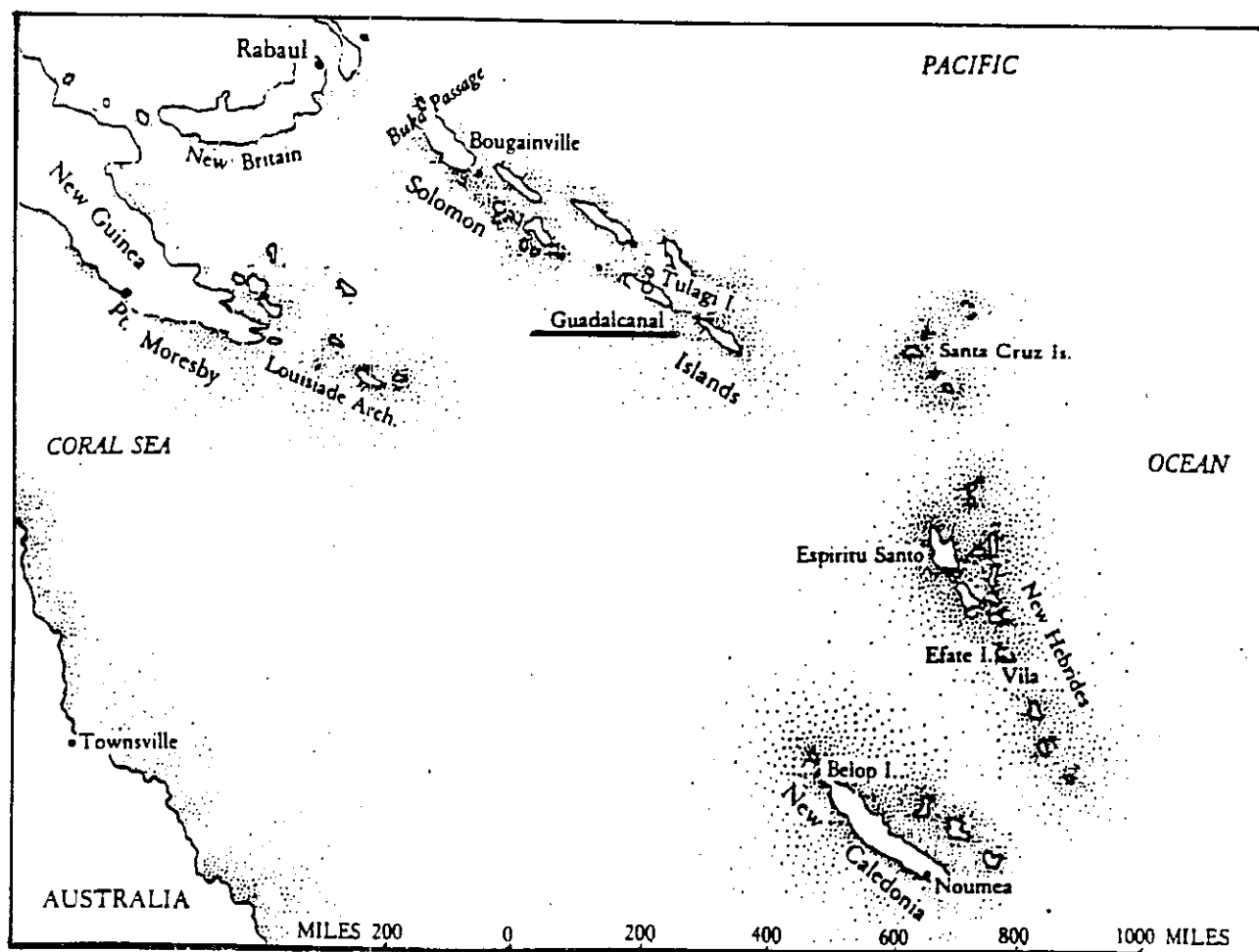
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\* From the Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships, Volume 2. (Naval Historical Center, 1963)

Editor's Note: DeHaven or De Haven? Authorities differ. I have chosen "DeHaven" to agree with the action reports typed in 1942, a booklet on the builder, Bath Iron Works, and the naval historian RAdm. Samuel Eliot Morison, USNR.



## Guadalcanal and the Solomon Islands in World War II



*Noumea to Rabaul. (Courtesy Australian War Memorial)*

In the summer of 1942 the Solomon Islands, streaming 600 miles southeast from New Britain (upper left), assumed a great strategic importance. For the Japanese, their seaplane base at Tulagi (center) and the airfield they were completing on Guadalcanal formed part of a defensive perimeter for their principal base at Rabaul. For the United States, these bases in the lower Solomons threatened both her supply lines to Australia and her advance bases in the New Hebrides and on New Caledonia.

The decisive Guadalcanal Campaign began on August 7, 1942, when the U.S. Marines seized both Tulagi and the airfield across the bay. It ended six months later when the Japanese evacuated their remaining troops.

The victory was truly a turning point in the Pacific War. A captured Japanese document read, "Success or failure in recapturing Guadalcanal . . . is the fork in the road which leads to victory for them or for us." After the island was secured the Japanese offensive was over, and the Allies began their long island-hopping march to Tokyo Bay.

E. A. Wilde, Jr.  
February, 1996



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DECLASSIFIED  
ACTION REPORT

ORIGINAL

USS DE HAVEN

DD-469

SERIAL 022

25 JANUARY 1943

REPORT OF ACTION, BOMBARDMENT OF VILA-STANMORE  
PLANTATION, KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND, MORNING OF  
24 JANUARY 1943,

47372



**CONFIDENTIAL**  
**DECLASSIFIED**

January 25, 1943.

From: The Commanding Officer.  
To : The Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet.  
Via : (1) The Commander, Task Group 67.5.  
(2) The Commander, Task Force 67.  
(3) The Commander, South Pacific Force.

Subject: Report of Action, Bombardment of Vila-Stanmore Plantation,  
Kolombangara Island, morning of January 24th, 1943.

Enclosure: (A) Track Chart  
(B) ComTaskFor 67 Operation Order No. 2-43

1. At 0209 this vessel bombarded Vila-Stanmore Plantation, Kolombangara Island, Latitude 08-08-00 South, Longitude 157-09-00 East. This ship was operating in company with Task Group 67.6 in accordance Commander Task Force 67 Operation Order No. 2-43 contained in his A16-3, serial 0042, of January 21, 1943. This ship was a part of Task Unit 67.6.2 under command of Captain Briscoe. This task unit consisted of four destroyers - NICHOLAS, DEHAVEN, RADFORD and O'BANNON. Task Unit 67.6.1 consisted of the cruisers NASHVILLE and HELENA. These two units composed Task Unit 67.6, the Bombardment Group, in the direct command of Admiral W. L. Ainsworth, Commander Task Force 67.

2. In preparation for this action, Task Force 67, including Bombardment Group and Support Group, sortied from Espiritu Santo at 0600 January 22, 1943. The task force took cruising formation, cruisers in line of divisions, destroyers in an anti-submarine screen, and steamed at twenty-one knots, zig-zagging in accordance with Plan 6 by a route east of Espiritu Santo Island and west of Guadalcanal to point "K", Latitude 9-30 South, Longitude 158-50 East, reaching this point at 1900 January 23, 1943. At 2000 the Support Group, Task Group 67.7, retired to Tulagi Harbor by a route south of Guadalcanal, north of San Cristobal Island through Sea Lark Channel. The Bombardment Group took course 294 T, speed 20 knots, proceeding along the Northern Coast of New Georgia Island toward the Kula Gulf.

3. At 2345 O'BANNON left formation to search Kula Gulf. At 0000 went to General Quarters.





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January 25, 1943.

Subject: Report of Action, Bombardment of Vila-Stanmore Plantation,  
Kolombangara Island, morning of January 24th, 1943.

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4. At 0015 at least three aircraft were sighted flying over and around the formation. It was believed at this time that these planes were the "Black Cats" assigned to spotting and reconnaissance duties with the Task Group, although some doubt existed because these planes were flashing the character "U" when "V" was the correct recognition signal.
5. At 0030 took station in column astern of HELENA at 1000 yards distance.
6. At 0058 steadied on 230 T entering Kula Gulf.
7. At 0121 changed to the approach course, 216 T.
8. At 0156 NASHVILLE changed to the firing course, 340 T, and opened fire at 0159½ followed by HELENA two minutes later.
9. At 0201 changed course to 270 T. This course was maintained for four minutes during which I had opportunity to observe the cruiser fire. It appeared to me that all their salvos were well placed although my position was not particularly well suited to spotting. The most remarkable thing to me was the volume of fire they put out - I counted six salvos in the air at one time from the NASHVILLE.
10. At 0205 changed to firing course 340 T and with Sasamboki Island bearing 269 T at 0209 opened fire on the plantation buildings in Square Item, with the RADFORD astern of us firing on Square Easy. There were no fires visible up until the time the destroyers opened fire but flames shot up immediately after the first salvo. We naturally assumed that we had hit the jackpot with the first nickel, but have since been informed that the fires were actually started by the cruisers. I find my crew a little hard to convince.
11. Employed salvo fire for thirty seconds waiting for a spot from the "Black Cats" but when this was not forthcoming, shifted to rapid fire as I was positive we were hitting in the right place. I discovered after we had ceased firing that no spots were received because all the plugs in the transfer panel in radio central had jumped out with the first salvo and continued to jump out with succeeding salvos. This situation will be remedied immediately.



U. S. S. DEHAVEN

January 25, 1943.

**CONFIDENTIAL**  
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Subject: Report of Action, Bombardment of Vila-Stanmore Plantation,  
Kolombangara Island, morning of January 24th, 1943.

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12. During this firing run received a T.B.S. report that a ship was standing out of Blackett Strait. At the time this report was received we were about three and a half miles from the beach. With the visibility as it was we couldn't have helped seeing a ship had there been one there and no stranger showed up on the PPI screen of the SG radar. AA fire from the beach continued throughout this firing leg and although none of the bursts appeared directly above us, my assumption was that it was directed at the "Black Cats." We made no attempt to silence these AA batteries.

13. At 0219 changed course to 030 T and increased speed to 30 knots, opening fire on Buki Harbor at 0220. At 0223 shifted fire to Bambari Harbor. At 0226 ceased firing and changed course to 055T to rejoin the formation. Took position 1500 yards on port quarter of HELENA at 0306. Observed several flares dropped from planes during this part of the retirement and knew that we were being tracked by the Japs. At 0402 the HELENA opened fire on a plane target. Firing was intermittent from this time until 0443. Observed one plane in a cloud of smoke on the water to the right of the formation but did not see the plane fall and can not say definitely whether the HELENA or RADFORD should be credited with shooting it down. DEHAVEN did not fire at any time because the SC radar was inoperative and, while we picked the planes up with the FD, it was difficult to stay on them except when the ranges were too great to fire. Am convinced, as a result, that the SC must be used to track the FD on the target for night AA firing.

14. At 0551 secured from General Quarters and set Condition 2.

15. The performance of all hands during the bombardment was exemplary and no individuals are deserving of special praise or censure.

16. There were two minor personnel injuries - one man sustained a badly bruised hand when he caught it between the rammer spade and the powder case while loading. The other dropped a projectile on his foot but stayed at his post throughout the bombardment.

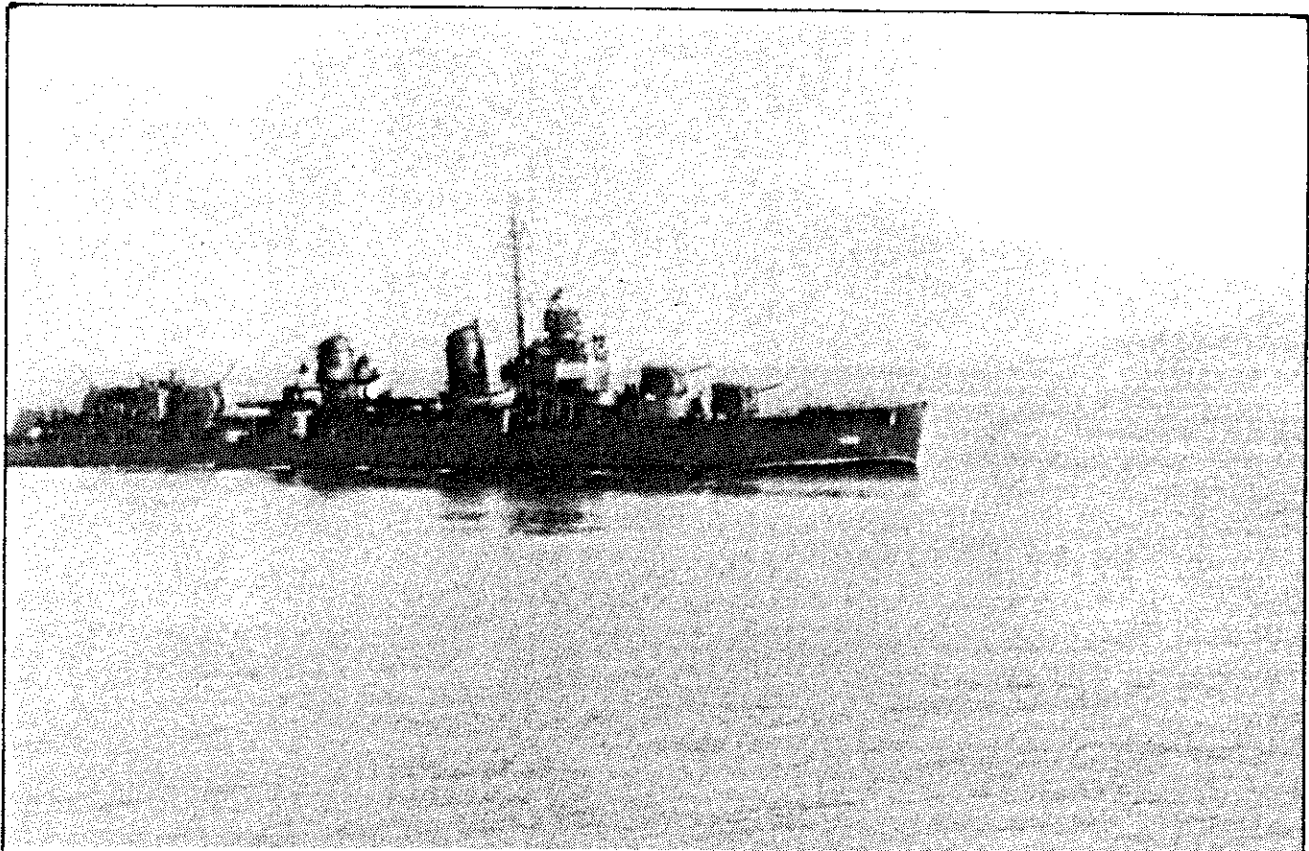
17. Material performance was excellent and fire was uninterrupted.

18. A total of 612 rounds AA common was fired from all guns. No 40 m.m. or 20 m.m. ammunition was expended.

C. E. TOLMAN

Retyped: 26 April 1996  
E. A. Wilde, Jr.





The U.S.S. DeHaven (DD-469) (Comdr. C. E. Tolman) passing to the north of Savo Island (at right) on January 30, 1943, seen from the U.S.S. Fletcher (DD-445). The U.S. commissioned 175 of these Fletcher-class destroyers in two and a half years during World War II. The DeHaven was the first ship of this class to be lost when she was sunk on February 1, 1943. Seventeen others were lost due to enemy action, and one went down in a typhoon. (Official U.S. Navy photograph)



*Excerpt from Destroyers in Action  
by Richard A. Shafter.\**

*"A Lovely Ship"*

*Destroyers!* Mention the word and the layman's mind will conjure up a picture of a little ship steaming death-defying, head-on into the fire from an enemy battlewagon's heavy guns. In the heavy seaway the little ship is tossing like a cork, with the white water breaking high over her bows. Then suddenly she swerves hard to starboard. There are a couple of splashes on her portside and a moment later appear the bubbling wakes of the tin fish she has sent on their voyage of destruction. And a short while later there is a terrific crash. The enemy's sides and decks are clothed in sheets of smoke and flame from the explosions that tear her inwards apart. And another naval battle is won.

It is an inspiring picture that has adorned many a calendar sent by solicitous ship's chandlers and seed stores to their customers, to be remembered by for the rest of the year. The practice looks different. Whether it's even more romantic than the calendar artist envisioned, or just a drab, humdrum existence, depends very largely on the point of view of the individual man who crews a "tin can." One thing, however, can be said for it: it's most versatile. If Kipling's crack about the liner has of late found an officially sanctioned variation to describe the glamour girl of the Navy, "The Carrier, she's a Lady," then it can safely be varied once again: "The destroyer, she's a workhorse."

Pulling binder, hay rig, threshing machine or the "democrat" for the family on its way to church, it's all one to a farmer's workhorse. A Navy workhorse may be on antisubmarine patrol today: dropping depth charges in their prescribed pattern all over the spot where the cooperating Navy flier believes he has seen the underwater raider; tomorrow, she may be riding herd on a convoy of merchantmen: running breathlessly and tongue-lolling around her flock, shoos stragglers into line, and then tackling, in the manner of good and faithful sheepdogs anywhere, all enemies regardless of size and number, whether aircraft, surface squadron, or wolf pack. Or they might install a pair of steel ovaries on her decks and give her a load of ugly horned eggs to drop in waters the enemy's fleet is certain to traverse. Then again, they might give her a

pair of paravanes to tow and send her out to sweep the channels leading to a new invasion beach clear of the mines which the enemy himself has sown there, and then the next day convert her into a fast transport and send her in with a deckload of Marine Raiders who are to establish the first beachhead foothold. And while weird landing craft are yet on their way with reinforcements, supplies, tanks and artillery, the destroyer that has landed them will stand by to give the Leathernecks who are digging themselves in on the narrow coral strip whatever fire support her 4- or 5-inch guns are capable of.

Then again, on duty with a task force, the destroyer is in the van and on the flanks of the capital ships, scouting, protecting, running interference and when the actual engagement begins, throwing a smoke screen around the carrier or battlewagon to spoil the enemy's gunnery. When disaster comes, when carrier, battleship or cruiser has received the deadly wound that causes the decks to buckle and burst with the explosion of magazines and fuel tanks, it's the destroyer that rushes in close, though the heat may blister what patches of paint are still left on her sea-bitten plates, and takes off the men still left alive after the unsuccessful battle to save their doomed ship. As the hull of the big capital ship slowly drifts down with the tide, a roaring inferno, yet still floating, it is the destroyer's job to come in and send the once proud craft to the bottom with a torpedo, to save her from the last ignominy of having her dead body defiled by the enemy's hands.

Rescue missions generally are hardly more than mere routine assignments among the manifold jobs that are a destroyer's lot. Many a flier, shot down by ack-ack, or forced down in a gale, later got back in the fight simply because some indefatigable DD would not give up the search. A quart of whiskey for her skipper and ten gallons of ice cream for her wardroom became the traditional price that any carrier gladly paid to a DD for each of its fliers delivered back aboard or safely landed in port.

"Let the DD's do it!" has almost become axiomatic with the Navy whenever there is a particularly unpleasant or difficult job under discussion. Their speed, their maneuverability, their relatively high firepower

for their size, and their comparatively low building price, have made destroyers not merely the most versatile, but ton for ton the most efficient, naval craft ever devised. They are the Navy's true "expendables."

The spirit of the little ships reflects itself in that of their crews. Destroyermen are a bit apart from the rest of our man-of-war men. On their small ships they have to do without many of the comforts the crews of carriers, battleships or even cruisers enjoy. They live in cramped quarters. There is no canteen or ship's service booth where a man might get a coke, an ice cream or western story pulp magazine. Yet the destroyer man, though he beefs about it all and swears it's a dog's life, in his innermost heart glories in the hardships his particular trade imposes upon him. He's inclined to look down on the men from the big ships as "softies." His walk is a "destroyer roll." His hat sits precariously on one eyebrow. He is the bane of the Shore Patrol.

He'll abuse his ship roundly as the most uncomfortable, leakingest, buckingest crate that ever went to sea. But let somebody else pass unfavorable comment on her and he's up in arms. Asked why he wasn't applying for a transfer after he had given a lengthy and extremely critical recital of his ship's famed action, a survivor of the *Borie* put it all in a nutshell. "Me? No, thanks! There's too much red tape on a big ship for me. On a destroyer you know everybody with their good sides and their faults. And everybody knows you. You can't sham on a DD. You gotta be a sailor, mister."

Destroyers get into the blood not merely of the men that serve in them, but of anybody who has been given a chance to get acquainted with them. Even a master of the hard-boiled school of writing like John Steinbeck can wax dithyrambic over a little ship. After spending part of his correspondent's tour of duty aboard a DD he wrote:

"A destroyer is a lovely ship, probably the nicest fighting ship of all. Battleships are a little like steel cities or great factories of destruction. Aircraft carriers are floating flying fields.

"Even cruisers are big pieces of machinery, but a destroyer is all boat. In the beautiful clean lines of her, in her speed and roughness, in her curious gallantry."



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ACTION REPORT

COMMANDER TASK GROUP 67.5  
(COMMANDER DESTROYER SQUADRON 5)

SERIAL 065

6 FEBRUARY 1943

REPORT OF OPERATIONS - JANUARY 16, 1943 TO  
FEBRUARY 2, 1943.

COVERS ACTIVITY OF CACTUS STRIKING  
FORCE (USS NICHOLAS, USS DE HAVEN,  
USS O'BANNON, USS RADFORD) DURING  
THE LAST DAYS OF JAPANESE RESISTANCE  
AT GUADALCANAL.

47271



From: Commander Task Group SIXTY-SEVEN POINT FIVE.(CDS-5)  
To : Commander South Pacific Force.  
Via : Commander Task Force SIXTY-SEVEN.

Subject: Report of Operations - January 16, 1943 to  
February 2, 1943.

Reference: (a) Comsopac OpPlan 3-43 as modified by  
OpPlan 4-43.

Enclosure: (A) Comtaskgroup 67.5 General Doctrine  
for Night Attacks by Destroyers.

1. Task Group 67.5, NICHOLAS, DEHAVEN, O'BANNON, RADFORD, departed BUTON at 0525 GCT January 16, and proceeded to CACTUS in accordance with directive outlined in reference (a). The speed of the formation was set at 25 knots to arrive at CACTUS prior to darkness January 17 in order to carry out bombardment planned for daylight on January 18. On the morning of January 17, the Task Group fired off-set practices using full radar control to familiarize new ships with the procedure and in preparation for night engagements. The results of these shoots were very encouraging and indicated a high degree of gunnery and radar control training in these ships.

2. Just prior to arrival at CACTUS, late afternoon, January 17, despatch information was received postponing the bombardment scheduled for January 18. This force anchored in Tulagi for the night. On the morning of January 18, Commander Task Group 67.5, in NICHOLAS, proceeded to Lunga Point and landed for a conference with the Commander Naval Base, CACTUS. Present at this conference were the Commanding General, CACTUS, Senior Naval Aviator, CACTUS, Commanding Officer of the Black Cat Group, Commanding Officer of the Scouting Plane Group and Flotilla Commander of PT boats. The general plans of operations in the area were discussed and an operating plan for night action in the vicinity of Esperance and Savo, utilizing Black Cats, PT boats and Task Group 67.5, was promulgated. Copies of this plan, CACTUS OpPlan 1-43, have been forwarded direct by Commander Naval Activities, CACTUS.

3. Effort was made to contact merchant shipping and APs present for fuel but only the CRESCENT CITY was available, all the others present being diesel drive. The CRESCENT CITY had just completed fueling all other destroyers present and could spare only 50,000 gallons which was taken in the NICHOLAS. Marine Artillery observers reported on board prior to darkness with plans for the following days bombardment.

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4. At 1815 GCT January 18, Task Group got underway from Tulagi to carry out the bombardment plan. Bombardment objectives, in general the reverse slopes not reached by artillery, were divided among the four ships present, each ship having six objectives plus any targets of opportunity which might become available. Fire was well controlled and appeared to be very effective, particularly in view of reports received from ground forces which later passed through some of the areas taken under fire. Approximately 650 rounds per ship were expended. At 0240 GCT January 19, Task Group 67.5 was released from this duty and returned to Tulagi anchorage. At 0845 GCT, upon receipt of despatch orders from Commander Naval Base, CACTUS, Task Group 67.5 got underway and stood out to take station northwest of Florida Island as laid down in CACTUS Operation Order 1-43. The weather cleared after sunset with a brilliant full moon with very few clouds and it is believed that this change in the weather probably caused the "Express" to turn back. Stations were patrolled until 1630 GCT, at which time the attack forces were ordered to return to base.

5. At 1900 GCT January 19, the NICHOLAS proceeded to Lunga Point and embarked the Commanding General, CACTUS, Major General PATCH, and his staff. The remainder of the Task Group proceeded to Tulagi anchorage. NICHOLAS stood up Guadalcanal coast line and enroute, bombarded two enemy positions at Visale at close range, then proceeded to Beaufort Bay, arriving at 2330 GCT and landing General PATCH at that point. At 0145 GCT January 20, Major General PATCH returned aboard and NICHOLAS proceeded to Lunga Point arriving at 0551 GCT and disembarked Major General PATCH and his staff. At 0607 GCT Task Group 67.5 departed for BUTTON, speed 26.5 knots in order to fuel and load ammunition and join Task Force 67.

6. Task Group 67.5 arrived BUTTON at 0530 GCT January 21 and immediately proceeded to fuel to capacity and load ammunition which was completed at about 1500 GCT January 21.

7. Operations in connection with Task Force 67 covering the bombardment of Kolombangara have been covered in separate correspondence. Upon the arrival of the Bombardment Group at Purvis Bay, destroyers were fueled from the cruisers and at 0400 GCT January 24, Task Force 67 less Task Group 67.5 departed for BUTTON.

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8. The Task Group Commander shifted his pennant to FLETCHER on January 25 following her arrival in CACTUS Area. During daylight this force made anti-submarine searches between Lunga Point, Esperance, Savo and Tulagi with no contacts. The O'BANNON was released to return to BUTON in accordance with Commander South Pacific Force despatch 150542 of January, 1943. At 1030 GCT January 26, this Task Group took patrol stations on a line southeast of Savo continuing the anti-submarine search and prepared to intercept the "Express" reported enroute. At 1535 GCT enemy planes were detected in the vicinity of the formation and at 1545, while maneuvering at 30 knots, one plane dropped two bombs off the starboard bow of the FLETCHER. The bombs fell roughly 300 yards clear of the ship on the starboard bow. Fire was opened on the plane, the formation opened out and commenced high speed zigzags and the plane withdrew. At 1600 GCT enemy planes were picked up in the search lights east of Lunga Point and two ships in the formation opened fire on these planes. Shortly thereafter enemy planes made an approach on the NICHOLAS and DEHAVEN and dropped at least two bombs in the vicinity of the NICHOLAS. During the firing of this group, which then took place, one plane was definitely seen destroyed and one very probably. Both planes were observed to be on fire but only one was definitely seen to crash. All planes appeared to retire from the area and "Condition Green" was announced. At about 1700 GCT, FLETCHER and RADFORD proceeded to Lunga Point and picked up Artillery Observers and General PATCH for the morning bombardment. Bombardment objectives were in the vicinity of Visale and were completed at 2300 GCT, January 26. FLETCHER and RADFORD rejoined Task Group off Tulagi and at 0530 GCT, January 27, the Task Group stood out for the designated patrol area off Cape Esperance and Coughlan Harbor. At 1715 GCT, while steaming in line of bearing 135°(T) in the vicinity of Esperance, all ships in the formation made a surface contact by Sugar George in close to the beach off Kamimbo. Range from the FLETCHER was 7200 yards on contact and about 4200 yards from RADFORD. It appeared that the submarine had just surfaced since all four destroyers reported contact simultaneously at varying ranges. In as much as two New Zealand corvettes were operating in this area, care was taken to insure that the investigating ships, the RADFORD and NICHOLAS, did not open fire on friendly vessels. At the time of the contact there was a heavy rain storm over the area and visibility was at a minimum. RADFORD and NICHOLAS closed the contact which was tracked on a course of 169°, speed 18, later changing course to 189°. RADFORD overhauled the contact, at 20 knots steaming in its wake, and had just

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gained visual contact dead ahead when the submarine sighted her and crash dived. The RADFORD at this time was close enough that air venting was heard and ran over the spot dropping two 600 pound charges. The failure to drop a full salvo resulted from scrambled communications caused by an effort to fire only the starboard depth charge throwers, the submarine having turned to starboard on the dive. The RADFORD's position at this time was fairly close inshore off Coughlan Harbor and all efforts to regain contact were ineffective. However, a persistent strong odor of diesel oil remained in the area and at daylight the patrol plane which had been requested, reported an entirely new oil slick off this position. The entire Task Group remained in the area conducting a careful anti-submarine search until 0145 GCT January 28, in an effort to regain contact with negative results. Subsequent photographs made by the Army indicated a new submarine hulk submerged on the reefs off Kamimbo with much oil still exuding. It is believed that the submarine was fatally damaged by the RADFORD's attack and ran ashore on the reef in an effort to escape. A full report of the RADFORD's attack is being forwarded separately.

9. At 0830 GCT January 28, arrived on patrol station north of Russell Islands. At 1150 GCT this group was approached by a plane not showing IFF but believed at the time to be a Black Cat. The plane was challenged by light and did not reply but continued to make what appeared to be a bombing approach on the FLETCHER. FLETCHER opened fire when the plane was at close range (500 yards) whereupon the plane immediately showed IFF and turned on running lights. Voice communication was established and the plane proved to be a Black Cat on patrol. At about 1600 GCT January 28, New Zealand Corvette KIWI was observed firing off Visale and later reported having bombed a submarine with depth bombs, set it on fire, rammed it three times and chased it in on the beach. At daylight the submarine was clearly visible on the reef with some forty feet of its bow sticking from the water at an angle of roughly 45 degrees. At 2100 GCT January 28, FLETCHER returned to Tulagi to obtain water; the remainder of the Task Group maintaining anti-submarine search northwest of the unloading area at Lunga Point. At 0445 GCT, FLETCHER rejoined the Task Group and proceeded to patrol area north of Russell Islands to intercept possible small craft ferrying troops or munitions to Guadalcanal. This station was maintained until 1900 GCT January 29, at which time the Task Group stood in toward Lunga Point for anti-submarine patrol.

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10. At 0500 GCT January 29, FLETCHER picked up, off Savo Island, a Japanese survivor from submarine destroyed by KIWI the previous night. The man was determined later to be a seaman from the submarine and his story, as told to the CACTUS Intelligence Unit, was reported to have revealed little of the submarine's activities. At 0630 GCT arrived on station off Point "William" and took up patrol in that area for the night. No contacts were made by this group during the night but at 1700 the New Zealand corvettes reported attacking four Japanese landing barges off Visale. The corvettes reported the definite sinking of two barges, apparently empty. It was further reported that these barges were of high speed and armed with 20 millimeters. Task Group 67.5 proceeded towards this position but on arrival at daylight could see no indications of a landing. Two barges on the beach at Visale, which appeared to be undamaged, were fired upon and destroyed. Visibility was very poor until well after daylight precluding earlier bombardment of this area. Task Group 67.5, at 2050 GCT, stood in towards Lunga Point detaching one destroyer at a time to return to Tulagi for fuel. At 0930 GCT January 31, took up patrol station in the vicinity of Point "Uncle" and carried out anti-submarine patrol during the night. No contacts were made but the Black Cat patrol reported sighting two high speed craft southeast of Santa Isabel Island, retiring to the northwest.

11. Prior to daylight, this group contacted U.S.S. STRINGHAM proceeding to Nugu Point, this point having been selected for landing instead of Marovovo as originally planned. The landing from the STRINGHAM was effected without opposition at 1930 GCT January 31. As soon as it became evident that no bombardment would be required at Point Nugu, Task Group 67.5 patrolled from Esperance to Nugu covering the approach and landing of the LCTs coming from Lunga. A total of six LCTs were employed steaming in pairs some thirty minutes apart. At 0030 GCT February 1, condition "Red" was signalled from CACTUS Control. At 0035 GCT, enemy twin engined bombers were seen retiring from the direction of Esperance across the bow of the formation. The leading ships, NICHOLAS and RADFORD, opened fire on the first plane with negative results although some bursts were sufficiently close to make the plane take radical evasive tactics. At 0045 GCT a second plane attempted to cross ahead of the formation at a range of approximately 6000 yards. The third burst was observed to demolish one engine and apparently wreck the tail controls. The plane spun in, crashing in flames roughly two miles ahead of the formation. RADFORD recovered the effects of two of the personnel of the plane and was directed to forward this material to the Intelligence Section, Commander South Pacific Force. Ten Zeros were observed retiring astern of the

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formation well out of gun range. RADFORD and FLETCHER continued screening the last two LCTs loaded with troops, and the DEHAVEN and NICHOLAS covered the return of the first four LCTs now unloaded and returning to Lunga. At 0330 GCT, all LCTs were unloaded and were returning to Lunga, accompanied by STRINGHAM, FLETCHER, and RADFORD.

12. At 0330 GCT, enemy planes were reported by CACTUS Control, approaching from the northwest in two groups. These planes were not visually observed coming in but were detected on Sugar Charlie radar well beyond gun ranges. At 0400 GCT, carrier type dive bombers were observed to the northwest of Savo and at about 0415 GCT, it was reported on the CACTUS Control circuit that one LCT had been bombed. This report was erroneous and at 0430 GCT, NICHOLAS reported that the DEHAVEN had been sunk about one mile south of Savo Island. FLETCHER and RADFORD proceeded at high speed to the scene and FLETCHER removed 126 survivors from two LCTs for transportation to CACTUS. NICHOLAS had already removed 16 wounded survivors and was enroute CACTUS. At 0645 GCT, completed unloading survivors and Task Group 67.5 stood out to take station south of the Russell Islands. The "Express" had been reported to be definitely on the way, consisting of sixteen destroyers.

13. As well as could be ascertained, in the brief time available, from survivors, the DEHAVEN and NICHOLAS were separated some five miles escorting two LCTs each toward Lunga, the DEHAVEN being about one mile south of Savo Island when she was attacked by dive bombers. The planes had been sighted but apparently not identified and commanding officer's permission to open fire was withheld until the attack had developed. The first bomb, estimated as either 500 or 1000 pounds, struck the bridge structure demolishing it. Shortly afterwards two bombs struck the fireroom and engineroom spaces. The ship was reported to have broken amidships and sank within a few minutes. The exact chronological order of bomb hits was somewhat vague and is best determined from the report of NICHOLAS, copy of which has been forwarded.

14. At 0900 GCT, February 1, while northwest of Cape Esperance on course 225°, enemy aircraft were detected by Sugar Charlie radar, closing from the northwest. They passed astern and broke up into three groups of at least two planes each. One group immediately made an approach from the port quarter. Course was changed to South and speed momentarily increased to 30 knots



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during the attack, using continuous individual zigzags. At 0930 GCT, fire was opened by the formation on the planes at a range of 8,500 yards. This plane group retired sharply toward the northward. Shortly thereafter at intervals of ten or fifteen minutes successive approaches were made from the stern and quarters of the formation. On the third attack one plane was shot down after the range closed to 2400 yards; both 5-inch and automatic weapons were used on this run. Thereafter the attacks turned off at a greater range when fire was opened. No bombs were observed to be dropped in any of these attacks. At 1130 GCT, when Task Group 67.5 was some 15 miles south of the Russell Islands, the planes retired to these islands and circled over that position. The "Express" had then just arrived off Esperance and an effort was made to return to an attacking position, first trying an approach in as close to the Guadalcanal shore as outlying reefs would permit. Almost immediately this move was detected and the Jap planes moved in to attack. The first approach being on the starboard bow from the direction of Guadalcanal, causing a change of course to westward. Several salvos were sufficient to turn this attack off, but any attempt to approach an attacking position undetected was definitely now out of the question. Several other attempts to approach the Russell - Esperance line were tried, using low speed from different directions, but in each case these moves were apparently observed by the planes and the formation was forced to turn away in order to unmask batteries to bear on the planes. It was apparent to me that these planes might have had radar since their distances from the formation was between 15 and 20 miles and believed too great for visual sightings under the overcast conditions then prevailing. The above tactics continued until 1600 GCT, when the "Express" was reported retiring. At this time the planes were observed, by Sugar Charlie, retiring to the northwest. Task Group 67.5 arrived off Esperance at daylight and assisted in picking up survivors of the PT boats, searching in the area until it appeared that all had been rescued. This Task Group then commenced fueling at Tulagi, in succession, being interrupted at frequent intervals by "Conditions Red". At 0900 GCT, February 2, FLETCHER and RADFORD underway for rendezvous with Task Force 67 in accordance with Commander South Pacific Force's despatch 020442 of February, 1943. NICHOLAS, GRAYSON, and BUCHANNAN, the latter two having just reported, were detached and ordered to proceed as directed by the above despatch.

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15. Based on the two weeks operations in the CACTUS Area, the following comments and recommendations are submitted:

(a) GENERAL OPERATIONAL INSTRUCTIONS.

In order to simplify the operations of the Task Group and to reduce voice and other transmissions to a minimum, Enclosure (A) was promulgated to all ships. These instructions were later amplified by signal and in conference to take care of changing conditions.

It was particularly stressed, after enemy air activity increased in the area, that ships should always operate in close company for mutual protection and for better all round offense. The Task Group was divided normally into two sections, the FLETCHER and RADFORD being Section One, and DEHAVEN - NICHOLAS Section Two.

When investigating sound contacts the ship nearest the contacting ship was ordered to assist in developing the contact and to add protection against air attack.

Full Sugar Charlie search by all ships, both day and night was directed, with Sugar George in use during darkness and low visibility. All contacts, both air and surface were broadcast over TBS, the Task Groups primary communication circuit.

It was repeatedly directed that all planes not showing IFF were to be assumed as enemy planes until definitely identified otherwise. In this connection it was noted that many CACTUS planes returning from patrols or other missions failed to show recognition until they were either directed by "Recon", the aircraft control tower, or until challenged by light. This was a continuous source of unnecessary alerting the ships personnel especially when operating at night or outside the Savo-Esperance line during daylight, but gave valuable opportunity for frequent fire control drill under pressure.

The Black Cats were particularly annoying in the above respect, displaying an amazing curiosity in this Task Group's movements; this in spite of definite information, promulgated daily, of the Task Group's nightly operation areas. On practically every night at least one of these planes approached dangerously close to the formation and unnecessarily risked losing the plane. The fact that several enemy planes penetrated the defenses to Henderson Field by following friendly planes landing, was further

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reason to view with suspicion any planes approaching the formation at night. On several occasions enemy planes turned on their running lights when in the vicinity of the Task Group.

(b) INFORMATION RECEIVED:

Communications were generally excellent and the rapidity of transmission of pertinent early information was excellent. Black Cat information was of the greatest assistance at night, with the exception of the night of February 1-2. On two night movements of the various groups in the "Express" on this night could not be obtained. At no time during this nights operations could I obtain a definite picture of the enemy disposition or accurate location of his component units once he was reported 20 miles northwest of Savo, close aboard the Russells. I was particularly interested to know if any units were south of the Russell - New Georgia line and only after a strenuous half hours visit by "Black Cat Two" did I get him away from the formation and on a search to the northwest for this information. This was the same pilot, I believe, upon whom we fired on on the night of January 28th. An additional bit of missing information on the night of February 1-2 was the presence of own Dauntless planes in the Savo-Esperance area after 1130 GCT. Not until I read the Senior Aviator Guadalcanal's despatch report the following morning was I cognizant of their being in the area.

(c) NIGHT ANTI-SUBMARINE SEARCHES:

In night anti-submarine searches the Task Group was formed on line of bearing, distance 1500 yards and sweeps through the area to be searched made at 15 knots, using both sound and Sugar George. Sweeps of roughly twenty miles were normally made covering the approaches to the suspected area from different directions on each sweep. The submarine believed to have been destroyed by the RADFORD on the morning of January 28 apparently came "down the slot" between New Georgia and Santa Isabel and was probably enroute south and west of Guadalcanal. His plotted course, after surfacing, did not indicate any intent toward entering the Visale - Coghlan Harbor area. The submarine destroyed by KIWI however, was definitely engaged in operations on the beach at Visale or Komimbo, being detected close inshore, and observed to have landing craft secured on deck.

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(d) ANTI-AIRCRAFT TACTICS USED:

When enemy aircraft were reported in the vicinity and especially at night, the Task Group was formed in a loose column and maneuvered by TBS at speeds up to 30 knots using continuous individual zigzags. Contacts and solutions were also put out by TBS when time permitted. All night firings were with full radar control using Mark XXXII fuses in part of the battery and time fuses in the remainder. Automatic weapons were used when the ranges permitted. Continual drill was necessary in order to be able to shift the target from Sugar Charlie to Fox Charlie and director, in sufficient time to open fire with a good solution at ranges of 6000 to 8000 yards. The problem was considerably complicated when operating in close proximity to land, which was the general situation. However, after a few days and nights of actual shooting, all ships appeared to be able to get on in time to put up an effective fire.

The Mark XXXII fuze, referred to by the crew as "Tojo", appeared to function even better than early reports indicated, with very few prematures noted. One casualty occurred in FLETCHER when the nose broke off in loading, the plastic fragments jamming the breech. The plug was forced home and the shell unloaded through the muzzle. It appeared to function normally, detonating some fifty feet off the water.

The plane shot down on February 1 was definitely a victim of this ammunition.

(e) AIRCRAFT REPORTS:

The reconnaissance reports of aircraft were generally excellent and were invaluable in estimating the general situation. The following discrepancies in aircraft contact reports were noted:

- (1) Times of contacts as reported were usually omitted and if the report was relayed, the enemy's position became only approximate due to unknown time delays in transmission.
- (2) Ships speeds, as reported by aircraft, usually are in error if the speed is high. The error is always on the high side. This seems to be a universal error among pilots, particularly at night. All night bombings observed to date

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have been misses ahead of the ship, indicating too high an estimated target speed. The same is reported to be true by the PTs at CACTUS. On the night of February 1-2, Jap destroyers were reported retiring at 45 knots although their subsequent positions reported showed a speed of roughly 32 knots.

(f) AIR COVERAGE:

The general coverage for all operations observed, was four fighters. Commander Task Group 67.5 is not in a position to say if this is sufficient, but with the "strung out" type of operations such as the landing at Point Nugu, which operated as planned, this coverage seemed to be inadequate and proved to be insufficient to protect the entire operation.

(g) ENEMY OPERATIONS AND TACTICS:

(1) Ground forces: The ground forces of the enemy were conspicuous by their ability to camouflage their beach positions and to take advantage of jungle covered terrain. On only two occasions were any troops actually sighted, although ships operated within 2000 yards of the beach during several of the bombardment operations. On the other hand, our forces were clearly visible, particularly the bivouac areas in the high unwooded areas. Tents, motor vehicles and personnel could be clearly observed in all rear areas. This point was pointed out to and observed by the Commanding General, CACTUS on both trips made with this Task Group.

(2) Surface Craft: No large surface craft were contacted. The tactics used, however, were obviously those employing a greatly superior fast force, depending upon air protection and submarines used defensively.

The light craft (high speed landing craft) were used in areas where no opposition was expected or where their speed was sufficient protection.

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- (3) Submarines: These craft apparently did not operate during daylight, as evidenced by the complete absence of contacts after dawn, during the period covered by this report. It is believed that the Jap submarines lay on the bottom in the many available hideouts in the vicinity of the Russells, New Georgia and Santa Isabel Islands.

When detected at night they showed little tendency to use escape tactics, but rather preferred to attempt to gain the comparatively shallow waters of the outlying reefs. Surface operations at night seemed to depend upon visual detection of our forces.

- (4) Enemy Information Service: It was most apparent from the beginning that the enemy was fully cognizant of the disposition of all of the CACTUS forces. If Task Group 67.5 was operating on the Santa Isabel side of the approach to Esperance, enemy activity was always on the Russell Island side and vice versa. Every effort was made to mask the approach to the night's operating area by staying inside Savo Island until after dark and by indirect approach to the area. This information most likely came from enemy aircraft which generally arrived in the area about dark, although there was a general feeling at CACTUS that there was possible "inside leak of information".

(h) Recommendations:

- (1) That every emphasis be placed upon training of fire control parties for full radar control firing. This training must emphasize rapid shifting of the target from Sugar Charlie radar to Fire Control Radar and director in order that the Sugar Charlie type can continue an uninterrupted search thereby preventing "sneakers" from coming in from the opposite side. Where multiple targets are on the same general bearing, this problem is not an easy one and requires much practice

**DECLASSIFIED**

February 6, 1943.

Subject: Report of Operations - January 16, 1943 to  
February 2, 1943.

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- (2) That present automatic weapon night firing must be rigidly controlled and directed along the 5"38 tracer path, until suitable radar controlled directors are available. This would appear to be the most logical present method of control.
- (3) That during any air attacks, night or day, high speed with continuous individual maneuvers should be basic doctrine. A loose column formation permits greatest freedom of action.
- (4) That all friendly aircraft be indoctrinated in the principle that until they properly identify themselves they will be treated as enemy planes. Proper identification should be construed as more than proper IFF or signals, but also actions that cannot be mistaken for unfriendly maneuvers. This war is bad enough with enemy planes harrassing ships in the combat zone, without the added attraction of being also dogged by your own planes. This is particularly true at night when quick visual identification cannot be made.

  
R. P. BRISCOE.

Copy to: (direct)  
Comsopac  
Cincpac  
ComdesSopac  
COM NAV BASE, CACTUS





~~SECRET~~

1. Unless otherwise directed torpedoes will be fired prior to opening gunfire. This even at the expense of taking some opposing gunfire in order to reach a point of vantage.
2. Torpedo spreads of half salvos will be a maximum of 4 torpedoes, leaving one in each mount for emergencies.
3. Retirement after firing torpedoes will be away from the target, at high speed, to avoid possible counter torpedo fire. Ships fire and turn away individually and regain position in column as soon as possible.
4. Torpedo target for each ship will be -
  - (a) If AKs are APs are present, these will be primary targets. Ships will fire at opposite number from van. Example: If three AKs are present, 1st three ships fire on ships in the order of column, 4th and 5th ships concentrate on 1st and second target.
  - (b) If heavy or light CLs present same procedure applies.
  - (c) If only DDs present, count off from the van. Fire at the nearest column if more than one.
5. If any enemy cripples are left behind, leave them to be knocked over later. Concentrate on the live ones.
6. During daylight all ships search continuously with S.C. Use only S.G. and Firecontrol Radars at night until close contact is obtained.
7. Normal night gunfire will be by radar control, using short ladders to insure getting early hits and start fires for illumination.
8. Speed signals by TBS, or other voice channels will be made using the code word "WALK" followed by numerals 1 to 6 indicating speeds of 15 knots to full power. Examples:

"WALK ONE" - 15 knots	"WALK FOUR" - 30 knots.
"WALK TWO" - 20 knots	"WALK FIVE" - 35 knots.
"WALK THREE" - 25 knots	"WALK SIX" - full power.
9. Courses and bearings will be indicated by voice signals, the true course or bearing being obtained by adding or subtracting a given number of degrees which will be signalled for each night.
10. Direction of retirement only will be indicated, using "GREEN GREEN GREEN" or "RED RED RED" over TBS.

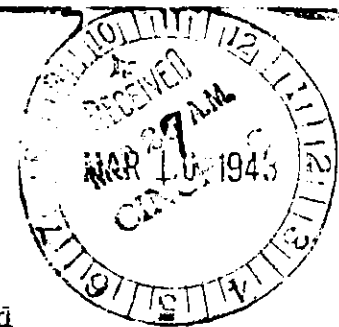
/s/ R. P. BRISCOE,  
Captain, U.S. Navy,  
CTG 67.5.

ENCLOSURE (A) TO CTG 67.5  
ltr. AL6-3 (065) of  
6 February 1943.



A16-3/(90)

Serial 0444

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
**DECLASSIFIED****SOUTH PACIFIC FORCE**  
OF THE UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDERSECOND ENDORSEMENT on  
CTG 67.5 Conf.Ltr.  
A16-3 (065) dated  
February 6, 1943.

From: The Commander South Pacific Area and  
South Pacific Force.  
To : The Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet.  
Subject: Report of Operations - January 16, 1943 to  
February 2, 1943.

1. Forwarded.
2. This is an excellent report covering a lengthy period of arduous duty well done.
3. It is unfortunate that academic considerations led to the practice of pilots turning off IFFs. This practice has repeatedly caused confusion and in some cases has led to serious consequences. Strict compliance with Comsopac 250223 February has been directed.
4. Commander South Pacific Force does not concur in Task Force Commander's opinion that the TBS is not the best primary circuit for tactical communications. In addition to the security provided by its short range, the TBS is crystal controlled both for transmitting and receiving and thereby eliminates errors in tuning which are the predominant causes of communication failure when other types of equipment are used.

*W. F. Halsey*

W. F. HALSEY

Copy to:  
CTF 67  
Comdesron 5  
Comdespac  
Comairsopac



Serial 076

Flagship of COMMANDER TASK FORCE SIXTY-SEVEN

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ **DECLASSIFIED**

March 2, 1943.

From: Commander Task Force Sixty-Seven.  
To : Commander South Pacific Force.

Subject: Report of Operations of Task Group Sixty-Seven  
Point Five - January 16, 1943 to February 2, 1943.

1. Forwarded. The Task Group Commander is to be congratulated for this splendid report of a very busy period in the Guadalcanal area. A chronological survey of the action reports submitted by the individual ships shows that this Task Group was underway and engaged in active operations against the enemy almost continuously day and night for the period covered by this report. In addition to the action reports summarized herein, Commander Task Group 67.5 in NICHOLAS with O'BANNON, DE HAVEN and RADFORD participated in the night bombardment of the Vila-Stanmore Plantations in Kula Gulf, New Georgia, and the subsequent action against enemy aircraft, both of which have been the subject of previous reports.

2. A summary of the activities of Task Group 67.5 covered in basic report shows that these destroyers conducted three bombardment actions against Japanese installations on Guadalcanal; that they were in action against enemy aircraft on four occasions; that on three occasions they were bombed by enemy aircraft. In these air actions a total of 18 bombs were dropped by enemy dive bombers on three ships of this Task Group, causing the loss of the U.S.S. DE HAVEN and slight damage to the U.S.S. NICHOLAS, the U.S.S. FLETCHER escaping with no damage. Reports received to date indicate that the Task Group shot down 7 enemy planes certain and 4 probables, and that the U.S.S. RADFORD probably destroyed one submarine. During the time that this Task Group was not engaged in shore bombardments or in action against aircraft, they were endeavoring to stop the operations of the "Tokyo Express" by night, and conducting anti-submarine sweeps to prevent these latter vessels landing stores and supplies for the enemy.

3. The Task Force Commander will not comment at length on the recommendations made in the basic report, except to concur heartily and sympathize generally with him in his troubles with proper identification of friendly aircraft and their failure to show IFF. Rigid compliance with Comsopac's 260223 February is necessary or some of our own planes will of a certainty be shot down. Excerpts from this report regarding coordination of the SC and FD radars are being disseminated throughout this Force.

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A16-3 Flagship of COMMANDER TASK FORCE SIXTY-SEVEN  
Serial 076

March 2, 1943.

CONFIDENTIAL

Subject: Report of Operations of Task Group Sixty-Seven  
Point Five - January 16, 1943 to February 2, 1943.

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3. (Cont'd)

In connection with the remarks about the Mark 32 fuze, it is noted that both planes shot down in full radar control by the RADFORD were the victims of Mark 18 fuzes.

4. Communications. The Task Force Commander does not consider the TBS to be the best primary circuit for operations in and about Guadalcanal. Agreeing that once the action is joined it makes little difference which system is used, I believe the bridge radio on a medium high frequency voice circuit would be preferable to the TBS. Task Force 67 Cruising Instructions, Section F, paragraph (D) (2) (g), are applicable:

"Under certain conditions the medium frequency warning net should be used rather than the TBS. A case in point is when the use of the TBS is almost certain to disclose our presence in close proximity to the enemy, whereas detection of our warning net with attendant delay in DF interception could not be accomplished in time to do him any good. Commanding Officers must be the judge in such cases."

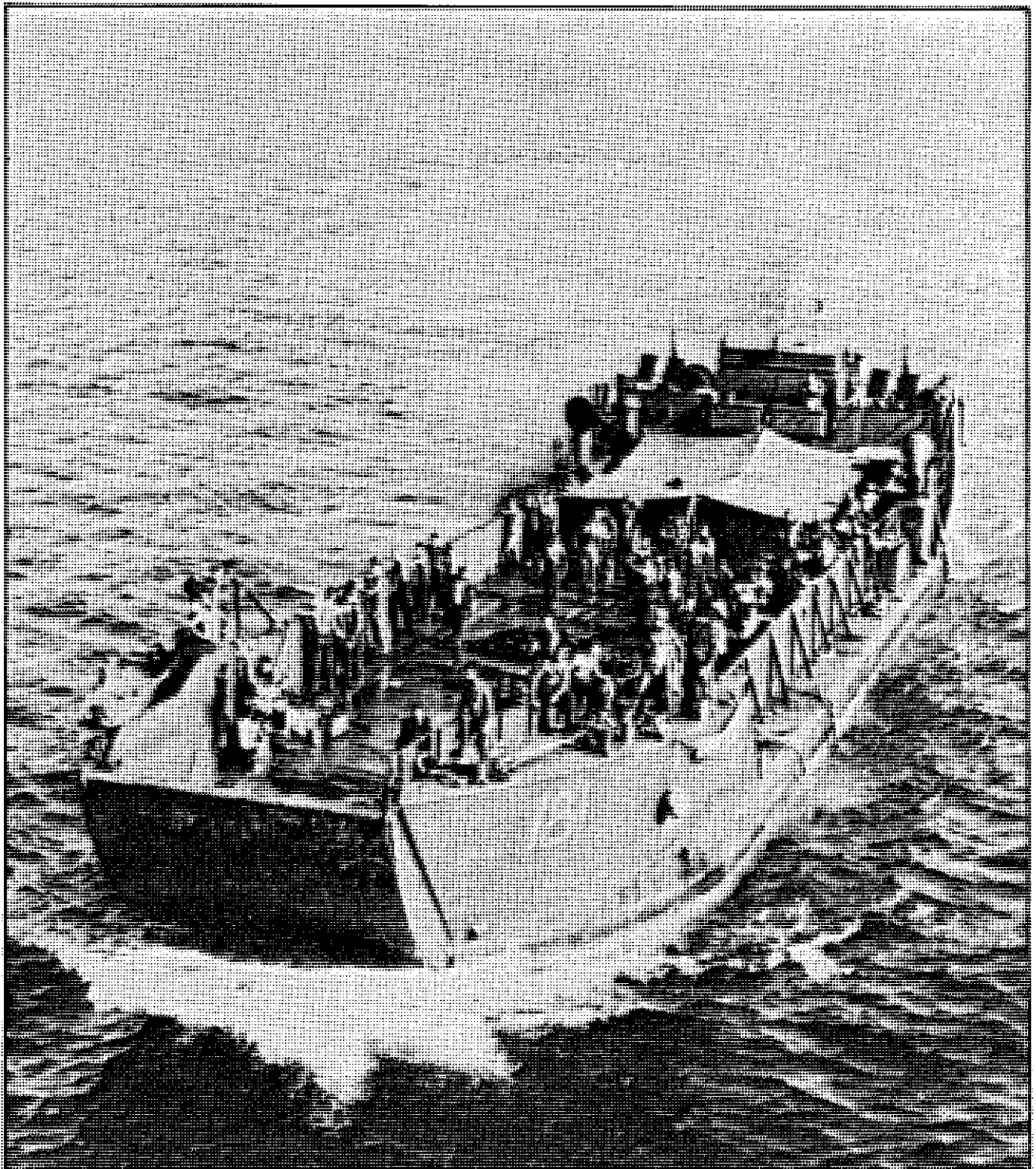
In the present case the enemy would have to find your voice frequency before he could listen in and hear everything you have to say.

5. Air Coverage. The Task Force Commander is not familiar with the operational problem or the assignment of fighter coverage for the operation in which the DE HAVEN was lost. Since the destroyers were necessarily separated and probably forced to operate at moderate speeds in screening the LCT's it would certainly seem that more than four fighters should have been on guard for this operation. Since Condition RED was in effect additional fighters had undoubtedly been sent up to get the Japs coming in. I have seen no reports other than that of the NICHOLAS, but the fact is inescapable that at least 14 dive bombers got through on the DE HAVEN and NICHOLAS, and the answer as always is not "How many fighters is enough", but that "More fighters might have saved a ship".

6. The Task Force Commander is forwarding recommendations for awards in the premises.

Copy to: Cinpac  
Comairsopac  
Comdespac ; Comdesron 5

  
W. L. AINSWORTH.



One of the two landing craft (LCT's) which rescued survivors of the U.S.S. Ottawa (DD-469) when she was sunk by enemy dive bombers between Guadalcanal and Savo Islands on 1 February 1943. After she was hit by three bombs the ship broke in two and sank in about two minutes. Casualties were very heavy: 169 killed and 40 wounded. (Official U.S. Navy photograph.)





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ORIGINAL

## ACTION REPORT

SENIOR UNWOUNDED SURVIVOR, USS DE HAVEN (DD469)

SERIAL 2

FEBRUARY 5, 1943

LOSS OF U. S. S. DE HAVEN.

[COVERS SINKING ABOUT 2 MILES SE OF  
SAVO ISLAND, WHILE RETURNING FROM  
LANDING TROOPS AT VERAHUE, GUADALCANAL,  
1 FEBRUARY 1943.]

46277

OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND LIBRARY



February 5, 1943.

From: The Senior Unwounded Survivor, USS DEHAVEN (DD469).  
To : The Secretary of the Navy.  
Subject: U.S.S. DEHAVEN (DD469) - Loss of.  
Reference: (a) Article 841, U.S. Navy Regulations.

1. In accordance with reference (a) it is reported that the U.S.S. DEHAVEN (DD469) was lost due to enemy action on February 1, 1943, about two miles southeast of Savo Island in approximate latitude 9 degrees 9 minutes South, longitude 159 degrees 52 minutes East.

2. During the day of February 1, 1943, the U.S.S. DEHAVEN was operating with Task Group 67.5 supporting the movement of six LCT's and one AVD incident to the establishment of a beachhead at Marovovo on Guadalcanal Island. In the afternoon of February 1, 1943, the DEHAVEN was engaged in the anti-submarine patrol covering the return to their base of two LCT's.

3. At 1445, when in position about due south of Savo Island, distant 3 miles, circling the LCT's at 15 knots, her Commanding Officer was notified by Cactus Control on 3785 Kcs that condition was Red. The ship went to General Quarters immediately and steered a course approximately northeast, speed 15 knots. Two more boilers were lighted off, but were not cut in. At about 1450 speed was increased to 20 knots. At about 1455, speed was decreased to 15 knots.

4. At about 1457 a flight of nine unidentified planes was sighted broad on the starboard beam, distant 25,000 yards, position angle about 25 degrees. The planes were on approximately course 270 degrees True, flying at medium speed. Immediately the main battery and shortly afterward, the machine guns that would bear were ordered to train on them. The planes were identified by the fire control party about one minute later, as enemy dive bomber type. The fire control party reported ready to open fire at that time and requested permission to do so. The bridge talker acknowledged, but permission to open fire was not granted.



February 5, 1943.

Subject: U.S.S. DEHAVEN (DD469) - Loss of.

5. When the planes reached a position about on the starboard quarter, six of them changed course sharply and came directly at the DEHAVEN. Both main battery and machine guns opened fire at this time, but all six planes are believed to have dropped their bombs. The ship was hit by three bombs in quick succession and was, in addition, damaged by one near miss. All way was lost after the first hit and shortly thereafter the DEHAVEN began to settle by the bow. No serious fires were seen. About two minutes after the last hit, the DEHAVEN was seen to sink. It is believed that her water-tight integrity aft of the after fireroom was not breached. The word to abandon ship was not passed.

6. The Commanding Officer, Commander Charles E. Tolman, U.S. Navy, is believed to have been killed on the bridge by a bomb explosion, close by, which wrecked the superstructure.

7. As a result of the loss of the DEHAVEN the following personnel casualties occurred:

OFFICERS:-	- - - - -	1	-	Unwounded
		3	-	Wounded
		<u>10</u>	-	Missing (Including probable deaths)
TOTAL		14		

ENLISTED MEN	- - - -	107	-	Unwounded
		35	-	Wounded
		<u>157</u>	-	Missing (Including probable deaths)
TOTAL		299		

8. The statements included in paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 above are submitted as the result of a conscientious attempt to reconstruct the disaster from the statements of reliable enlisted survivors who were at key stations before and during the attack, and who were unwounded. They are as near to the truth as can be ascertained, after taking into account the excitement of the action and shock of the disaster.

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ROUTE 10- *Conveying*  
NO 100 4 17 1943

*Clem C. Williams Jr.*  
CLEM C. WILLIAMS, JR.

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455-43





The Fletcher-class destroyer U.S.S. Nicholas (DD-449) (Lt. Cdr. A. J. Hill) during a speed trial off Rockland, Maine, on 28 May 1942. The Nicholas was operating with the DeHaven on 1 February 1943 when both ships were attacked by dive bombers, but she escaped with minor damage, two killed and six seriously wounded. Her motor whaleboat assisted the LCT's they were escorting in picking up the DeHaven's survivors, and she transported sixteen stretchers cases to Lunga Point on Guadalcanal. (Official U.S. Navy photograph.)





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ACTION REPORT

USS NICHOLAS

DD 449

SERIAL 04

3 FEBRUARY 1943

ACTION REPORT.

[ COVERS ACTIONS AGAINST SINGLE JAP  
PLANE OFF CAPE ESPERANCE WHILE  
EN ROUTE LANDING VERAHUE, GUADAL-  
CANAL, SOLOMONS, 1 FEBRUARY 1943. ]

47490

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DD449/A16-3/A9  
Serial No. 04  
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C-O-P-Y  
U. S. S. NICHOLAS

February 3, 1943.

From: The Commanding Officer.  
To: The Commander in Chief, U.S. PACIFIC FLEET.  
Via: The Commander South Pacific Force.

Subject: Action Report.

Reference: (a) Cincpac conf. serial 01751, dated June 21, 1942.

Enclosure: (A) Form "Report on Action vs Aircraft" and Sketch  
and List of Casualties to Personnel and Material.

1. On February 1, 1943, Task Group 67.5 was ordered to cover the landing of troops near Maravovo Mission, Guadalcanal Island.

2. After the landing, the U.S.S. DeHAVEN and U.S.S. NICHOLAS were ordered to escort three landing craft transports (LCT) back to their base. At 1443, word was received over the warning net circuit that Condition Red existed at Henderson Field. Ships were now two miles southeast of Savo Island. At 1450, received a report via the same circuit that enemy planes were over the northern tip of Florida Island. At 1452 sighted planes about 5000 feet altitude in the direction of Florida Island and nearly over the DeHAVEN. At 1452½ leading plane commenced diving on that ship. An attempt was made to notify the DeHAVEN by TBS at the same time, but no acknowledgement was received.

3. At 1453 first bomb struck the DeHAVEN on the port side amidships, immediately causing a tremendous burst of flame to envelope the central part of the ship, which appeared to remain on a steady course and to slow down. Six bombers were seen to dive. The second bomb appeared to hit on or just abaft the bridge structure causing heavy black smoke to cover the entire ship. After the third bomb dropped, what appeared to be the forward magazine exploded at 1458, causing a column of heavy black smoke to rise about 300 feet in the air. The bow and stern were just visible at this time and it appeared that the ship had broken into two parts and was sinking.

4. At the time the first bomb struck the DeHAVEN, machine gun fire was observed and just before the second bomb struck, several rounds were fired from the forward five inch guns.

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DD449/A16-3/A9  
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Serial No. 04

**U. S. S. NICHOLAS**

CONFIDENTIAL

Subject: Action Report.  
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5. Upon first receiving the aircraft warning, the NICHOLAS went to General Quarters and increased speed to twenty-five knots. Six dive bombers broke off and attacked the DeHAVEN. Eight others continued on to get the sun behind them and also to take advantage of a low cloud (at about 5000 feet). At 1454 commenced firing with the main battery. At 1455 first bomber commenced his dive and machine gun battery opened fire. The order, "Full right rudder" was given to the helmsman and speed increased to 32 knots.

6. At 1457 near hit caused loss of steering control by the bridge and rudder to return amidships. Control was shifted to the steering motor room and full right rudder was again ordered.

7. In all, eight planes made the attack on this ship, each dropping one large bomb, its full load. None struck the ship directly. The type of enemy aircraft was identified as the Aichi Type 99 N SEDE. The size of the bombs are believed to have been five hundred pounds. However, from the destructive explosive effect the bombs had upon the DeHAVEN and from the fact that each plane carried only one bomb, it may lead to the opinion that the weight was on thousand pounds. Altitude of release 500 feet.

8. Ammunition expended was as follows:  
56 rounds 5"/38 cal., 96 rounds 1.1"/75, 1440 rounds 20 m.m.

9. Material casualties were slight. All the bombs struck the water at distances from the ship ranging from twenty feet to two hundred feet, the fragments piercing the ship's structure generally throughout. An oilline at Gun # 3 was ruptured. The electrical supply to Gun # 5 and 1.1"/75 was severed. The SC-1 radar antenna was hit, but the instrument continued to operate. The leads to the rudder Follow-up indicator on the bridge were severed.

10. MOIR, Robert L., Jr, 656 22 80, SOM3c, V-2, USNR, and FOX, Furman (n), 355 83 40, GM2c, V-6, USNR, were killed in action. MOIR was acting in the capacity as JV telephone talker in secondary control; FOX was a member of the gun crew of No. 5 gun, main battery. Six men were wounded seriously and transferred to the Base Hospital at Lunga; several others received minor flesh wounds, were treated, and returned to duty.

Serial No. 04

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**CONFIDENTIAL** S. S. NICHOLAS

Subject: Action Report.

11. The enemy planes retired to the northward via Savo Island, and this ship put a boat in the water and assisted the LCT in picking up the DeHAVEN survivors, which were later transferred to Lunga, Guadalcanal Island.

A. J. HILL.

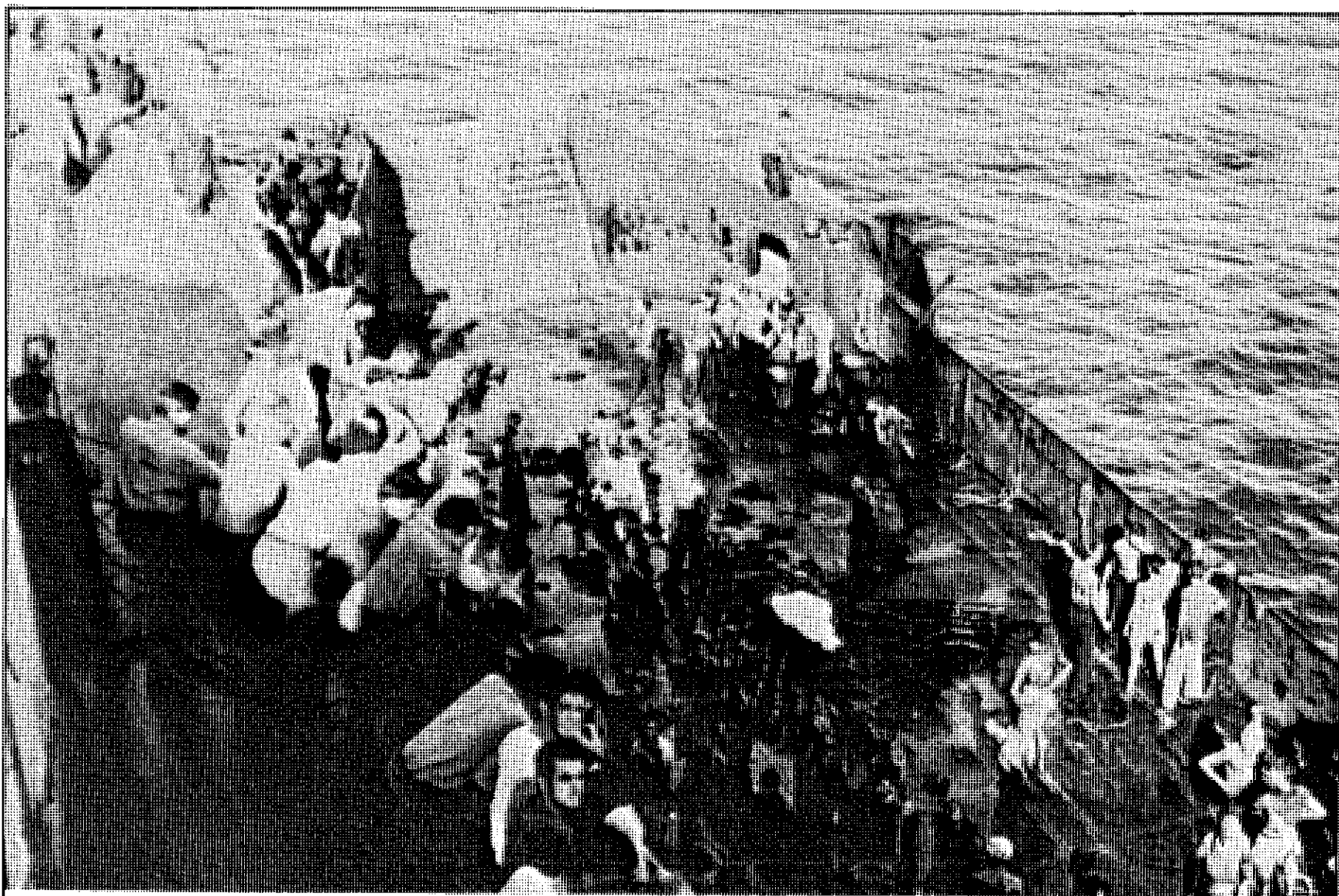
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CincPac (Advance)

CTF 67.

CTG 67.5





A landing craft with De Haven survivors alongside the U.S.S. Fletcher (DD-443). Earlier, those seriously wounded had been transferred to the U.S.S. Nicholas (DD-449) and put ashore at Lunga Point, Guadalcanal. The Fletcher, flying the pennant of their squadron commander, Captain R. P. Briscoe, ComBattRon FIVE (and CTG 67.3), then took the remaining survivors to Lunga Point. (Official U.S. Navy photograph.)







Lead ship of her class, the destroyer U.S.S. Fletcher (DD-445) (Cdr. W. M. Cole) was nearby when the DeHaven was sunk and closed the area at 25 knots to assist in the rescue effort. She arrived on the scene about an hour and a half after the DeHaven went down. Two LCT's transferred 128 of the survivors they had rescued to the Fletcher, and she delivered them to Lunga Point. The DeHaven was identical to the Fletcher except that the DeHaven had a twin 40-mm. Bofors mount on the raised gun platform aft, between Mounts 3 and 4 (and another on the fantail), while the Fletcher was fitted with an older quad 1.1-inch/75 mount in this position. (Official U.S. Navy photograph.)



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U.S.S. FLETCHER

DD445

JUNE 30, 1942 to	
SEPTEMBER 30, 1942	- 44012
OCTOBER 1-31, 1942	- 44191
NOVEMBER 1-1942 to	
DECEMBER 1, 1942	- 44970
NOVEMBER 29, 1942 to	
DECEMBER 31, 1942	- 78767

|| DIARIES FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY THRU  
|| NOVEMBER (EXCEPT FEBRUARY) 1943,  
|| FILED WITH LOG SIZE DIARIES.

FEBRUARY 1-28, 1943	- 78768
DECEMBER 1-31, 1943	- 65408

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# DECLASSIFIED February 1943.

Patrolling as before in area south of Savo - Esperance line. At dawn covered U.S.S. STRINGHAM and LCTs engaged in Army landing operation southeast of Cape Esperance (Nugu Point). 1120 Condition RED. 1134 Enemy bombers reported over Henderson Field. 1142 RADFORD, NICHOLAS opened fire on a retiring and careless Jap twin-engined bomber. Bomber hit by AA fire and crashed into water. Total 4 Jap 2-engined Mitsubishi type bombers sighted retiring to northwest at low altitude from direction of Guadalcanal. 1220 Condition GREEN (all clear). 1235 RADFORD closed wreckage of Jap plane to recover bodies and miscellaneous gear for intelligence purposes. 1432 Condition RED. NICHOLAS, DeHAVEN covering two LCTs between Savo Island and Cape Esperance. FLETCHER and RADFORD covering three LCTs and STRINGHAM off Nugu Point, Guadalcanal. 1530 DeHAVEN reported sunk by Jap dive bombing attack southeast of Savo Island. Proceeded at 25 knots to close area of sinking. 1612 NICHOLAS reported via TBS that injured survivors were on board - CDS 5 directed her proceed Lunga Point. 1640 two LCTs transferred total 128 DeHAVEN survivors, including officers and men, to FLETCHER. Officer survivors are as follows: Lt. Archie Fulder; Lt(jg) J.J. Rowan, USN; and Ens. C.C. Williams, USN. 1648 Proceeded to Lunga Point to transfer survivors to beach. 1749 Survivors transferred via landing craft. Proceeded to join RADFORD and NICHOLAS near Savo Island. Formed scouting line for A/S sweeps enroute area south of Cape Esperance - Russell Is. line to intercept "Tokio Express" of some 16 DDs. 2000 Condition RED. Formed column in order FLETCHER NICHOLAS, RADFORD. 2030 Unidentified plane closed formation, opened fire with all batteries. Plane turned away, no bombs dropped. 2045 Plane again closed formation, opened fire, plane turned away. 2101 Plane(s) repeated harassing tactics for purpose of preventing an undetected approach on flanks of "Tokio Express" DDs. FLETCHER, NICHOLAS, RADFORD remained south of Cape Esperance - Russell Is. line prepared to strike Tokio Express. No information available from searching PBYS as to location. At 2320 large fires or fire noted in general direction of Savo Island. Later determined to be Jap DDs being torpedoed and bombed.

2 February 1943.

Task Group 67.5 operating in area south of Esperance - Russell line as before. "Tokio Express" of 16 DDs closing Guadalcanal. Attempts of TG 67.5 to make surprise gun and torpedo attacks on Jap force were frustrated by harassing tactics of Jap aircraft. PT boats and dive bombers made repeated attacks on Jap DDs - results not observed. 0620 Proceeded to area just south of Savo Island to search area for own PT boats (2 missing) and survivors. PT boats recovered about seven members of crew of one destroyed PT boat - wreckage visible over relatively large area. No indication noted of Japanese ship wreckage. 0830 Entered Tulagi Harbor for fuel from ERSKINE PHELPS.



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Narrative by: Ensign Clem C. WILLIAMS, Jr.  
Sinking of the  
USS DeHAVEN in the  
South Pacific.

Film No. 66  
Rough Transcript: HATCH  
Smooth Transcript: DUNHAM  
3 June 1944.

Copy No. / of three copies.  
Recorded: 22 May 1943.

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138746

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U.S.S. DeHaven (DD-469)

Narrative by Ensign Clem C. Williams, Jr., USNR  
22 May 1943

Editor's Note:

This oral history, recorded just a few months after the DeHaven was sunk off Guadalcanal, is so rich in details and personal observations that I am including it in its entirety. Unfortunately, the first page of the transcript (at the U.S. Naval Historical Center/Washington Navy Yard, Operational Archives Branch) is barely legible, so I will paraphrase his introductory remarks.

E. A. Wilde, Jr.  
April, 1996

Ensign Williams was in the ROTC unit at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut. He was commissioned about two weeks after graduating in June, 1942. After attending various service schools he reported to the DeHaven, nearing completion at the Bath Iron Works, Bath, Maine.

The ship was commissioned on 21 September 1942 at the Boston Navy Yard. After being fitted out with fire control and search radars the DeHaven steamed to Casco Bay, Maine, for several weeks of shakedown training.

\* \* \* \* \*

(Continue on to page two of the unedited transcript.)

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Before I go ahead, I'd better tell you a little about the physical appearance of the ship and perhaps a little bit about some of the officers. The DeHAVEN is in the 2100 ton FLETCHER-class destroyer and has two stacks, flush deck carrying five, five-inch 30<sup>00</sup> guns with two twin mounts of 40 mm. guns and at the time we left Casco Bay we had four twenty mm. We were equipped with the latest radar devices, except for IFF. The Captain of the ship, Comdr. Charles E. Tolman was sort of my ideal of a very fine naval officer. He had served for most of the time since he'd been graduated from the Naval Academy in submarines. This was his first command. He'd commissioned the submarine SPEARFISH and had a great deal of experience with that.

Lt. Ware:

How old was Captain Tolman?

Ensign Williams:

Well, I can only venture a guess. He graduated from Annapolis in 1925, and so I guess that makes him about 35.

The Executive Officer of the ship, Lt. Comdr. John P. Huntley, was fresh from the YORKTOWN. He was, I think, a Gunnery Control Officer on the YORKTOWN and had been in the Navy on active service since about 1931. We had a number of other officers. I think some of them might be notable. One of them was a Damage Control Officer who was Harry H. Johnson, of Boston, Massachusetts. He's a graduate of Harvard College in 1938 and he was also from ROTC. He had had considerable experience on the Staff of ComDesLant and on some small patrol boats off the coast of North America in the Atlantic.

The ship's doctor was one of the most notable personalities aboard. He was John Hall Bates, who had gone to Yale Medical School and had interned with a hospital in Montreal where he had spent the last year treating war casualties from England. Dr. Bates' quick wit and good spirits kept the morale of the wardroom up during even the most trying times, that came later.

The training during the shake-down period was most important and we never quite felt that it was completed as it should have been. That is, we felt that all the way up until the last day of the ship, we were still in training, but as soon as our graduation exercises took place we set off for Norfolk, Virginia, where we picked up the SAUFLEY, the COLUMBIA, and the INDIANA. We spent one night there and started south. The next port we hit was Panama. We went through the Canal and the next day set off for the broad Pacific.

The Pacific voyage was fairly uneventful except for one time when we tried to fuel at sea from the INDIANA. It was the first time we

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had fueled at sea and we took a little too sharp an approach angle and rammed the INDIANA and cleared off a couple of her stanchions on deck and punched a hole in the port side of the forecastle on our ship, which we patched up with mattresses, and sent to the INDIANA for help in the way of a welding machine and some people who might be able to repair it. We were a long ways from land at the time. The next time we saw land, we saw absolutely no land at all until we hit Tongatabu, where we had our first liberty for a long time and we all went ashore.

Lt. Ware:

Do you remember the approximate date when you got to Tongatabu?

Ensign Williams:

We arrived at Tonga, it was about the last week in November. I think it was around November 25th, although I'm not certain. We all went ashore and ate a lot of coconuts, and we tried to find some beer but there wasn't any. We set off the next day for Noumea. We were in Noumea about a day and a half, and we were told that we were to take a convoy of ships carrying Army troops up to Guadalcanal relieving some of the Marines who had been there since the very beginning. We were, of course, very excited about it and sort of scared, but the trip was fairly uneventful. We left Noumea about the 2nd or 3rd of December, we spent about at least a week at Guadalcanal on this trip screening the transports as they unloaded and loaded off Lunga Point, and staying nights in Tulagi Harbor. Occasionally we were on patrol outside Tulagi Harbor. We stayed, oh, I guess we went down to Espiritu Santo from there, I think.

Lt. Ware:

May I interrupt you a second to ask how secure were you in your anchorage at Tulagi. Did they have a submarine net, or a boom or---

Ensign Williams:

Well, there was no submarine net whatsoever at Tulagi and we were always sort of wondering what we were going to do if anything actually did happen. There was a ship on patrol outside the entrance at all times when there were ships inside, but it really wasn't satisfactory coverage of the harbor entrance and we kept certain ships on a listening watch at the entrance of the harbor, but they were anchored in it and it would have taken them some time to get under way if they had picked anything up. That situation remained virtually unchanged. To my knowledge there's no protection, no better protection now.

At that time the submarines were fairly active around there, and there was a PC boat which had been in the area for sometime whose commander came aboard, told us that he had been working on these midget submarines which had been lying off a reef over against Guadalcanal and coming in in the morning when the transports were coming over, but as

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far as I know, we've had relatively light casualties due to submarines, we've cleared them out pretty well now. We went back down to Noumea because we'd been steaming pretty constantly, our nights in Tulagi harbor were very, very brief and we usually had general quarters about three o'clock in the morning and consequently we gave the place the name "Sleepless Lagoon".

Our first impression of Guadalcanal was a pretty important one I think, because that impression and the impressions that followed, which were not considered greatly, not altered, I think were contributing factors to the eventual fate of the ship. Out of Tulagi Harbor a squadron of PT boats was operating, going on patrol every night as we came in usually and while we were there they had no action at all that I know of--the first time that we were there that is. When we were patrolling off Lunga Point, covering all the transports, we had a great deal of difficulty in the very beginning and this difficulty lasted until February 1, when everything ended. In getting any clear picture of the aircraft situation--planes were coming in to Henderson Field and taking off constantly, saw flights of every type of Navy plane, a number of Army planes were coming in at that time.

We made a practice of keeping track of all the planes in the area as closely as possible. Our fire control party and orders to train the batteries on all unidentified planes until they were identified, but planes were almost invariably, in fact invariably during that particular stay, friendly planes and so we had no action nor did we have any inclination to fire at all, but I had a feeling that if enemy planes had come in undetected they might have been able to do some damage at that time, because with the large number of friendly planes around us, the psychology of the thing leads you to think that all planes are friendly. It is quite fatal.

During all this period in the Solomons region, our personnel working their radar and the sound was becoming more and more thoroughly indoctrinated, and we felt that our shake down was finishing up in a way, but we never felt absolutely certain that we were a seasoned ship by any means. We were there at Guadalcanal for about a week and while we were there the various ships in the convoy went away one by one until we were left with the last one which had difficulty unloading. The ships were four pretty well-known transports and cargo ships in the South Pacific by now, the PRESIDENT JACKSON, the PRESIDENT ADAMS, the CRESCENT CITY, and the MERCURY. Those ships had been called "The Four Musketeers" in a great number of actions and they were very seasoned in the kind of warfare they carry on down there.

While we were there screening these ships, two occasions in which "condition red" was announced to all ships in the vicinity by Cactus Control, which is the local radio station for ships and aircraft engaged in patrol activities in the Guadalcanal area. As soon as the condition red came through the transports took in their anchors and got underway immediately. They were very old hands at this and lost no time at all.

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We set off in a column, the transports were in a double column I think, headed straight towards Tulagi, while the destroyers were deployed about them in a manner so as to screen them, but none of these conditions red brought any enemy planes. Each time we got out into the middle of the bay there between Florida Island and Guadalcanal and the condition went green again and everything seemed safe so we went back and commenced with our operations. These were very annoying more than anything else, at first we were excited but the fact that no enemy planes came down tended to have the effect of "Wolf, Wolf," on us and we went to general quarters, and did the job, but we were never particularly worried about the situation.

From this first trip we went back to Noumea with the MERCURY which finally got unloaded and tied up to the DIXIE for a minor overhaul. We had some engine room difficulty and some patches had to be put in our boiler casings. We were alongside the DIXIE for about three days and in the harbor there for about five days. We set off again for Guadalcanal just in time to miss having Christmas in Noumea. I think we set off about the 22nd or 23rd of December, 1942, and I remember distinctly being in "Torpedo Junction" just to the west of San Cristobal Islands, the southernmost Solomon Island, on Christmas Day and we were approaching Guadalcanal. I think we arrived at Lunga Point on the 26th in the evening, or perhaps on the 27th in the morning.

Lt. Ware:

Can you tell us something about the weather conditions on that Christmas day, and what kind of observances, if any, you had?

Ensign Williams:

Well, Christmas day unfortunately was like any other day. We were in "Torpedo Junction" and we all had to be on the lookout. We had our turkey dinner as usual, the same as the Navy has all over the world on that day, but outside of that, the day was pretty much a day of business. The weather was very clear and calm all the way up, we ran into no difficulty whatsoever.

Lt. Ware:

How about the temperature?

Ensign Williams:

The temperature was very hot.

Lt. Ware:

About how many degrees?

Ensign Williams:

Well, I don't know how many degrees but it was enough to make you

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perspire constantly, and you wouldn't want to go barefooted on deck, for fear of burning your feet.

This time we stayed in Guadalcanal until New Year's day, we were in Tulagi Harbor on New Year's Eve and we had again no celebration whatsoever. We continued our work of screening and one time we were, during this last week in December, 1942, we were told of an enemy task force of destroyers or cruisers headed our way. We set off toward the north to try to intercept them. There were about seven destroyers, seven United States destroyers present in that area at the time so we figured that some of us were bound to get them, but they apparently didn't come down, or we missed them so we missed action again that night. We spent more time patrolling outside Tulagi Harbor this time than we had before and we became friends with people on the beach and sort of old hands. The commander of the PT squadron there came aboard this time, Lt. Westholm, who told us a little bit about his PT activities but he's such a soft-spoken fellow that you'd hardly, he wasn't very informative and you'd really hardly think that he was a PT commander, but his men, I've heard since then, think very, very highly of him. He was "Prep Westy". PT's were all designated as Prep and then whatever the name of the commanding officer was.

January was our first eventful month and our last. We left the Solomons region in the first week of January for Espiritu Santo where we joined a large part of the South Pacific force which was anchored there. From there we received orders to go south and pick up a small tanker which was standing out of Noumea and we rendezvoused with the tanker. It was called the WILLIAM IRISH and he was a Merchant Marine tanker and we had the usual difficulty in liaison between Merchant Marine ships and United States Navy ships. We took the WILLIAM IRISH back up to Espiritu Santo and sat there for a couple of days. This time we sent a couple of swimming parties ashore and people went over to the DIXIE, which had moved up to her base there, to have their teeth fixed and attended to a few routine matters. Didn't get much rest even there because we were on very short notice. That is, we were usually, except for the first day, I think we were under two hours notice at all times. Most of the ships there are on very short notice and consequently you can't plan on any protracted dental appointments, or you can't plan on what you are going to do tomorrow. We had no real shore liberty there.

We were assigned to Admiral Halsey who had a new idea for stopping the Tokio Express which continued to come down even though we were there. The express consisted of light cruisers and destroyers in moderately sized forces, nothing too large. They were active around Cape Esperance during the months of December and January. We never actually encountered them, however. This force which Admiral Halsey sent up there was designated the "Cactus Striking Force". To it were assigned five destroyers of our class--the newest thing the Navy had to offer--and the other ships were the RADFORD, the NICHOLAS, the FLETCHER and the O'BANNON.

This task group designated as Task Group 67.5 was under the command of Captain Briscoe who was ComDesRon 5, at this time. He had his pennant on the FLETCHER at one time, and on the NICHOLAS at one time, and on

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the O'BANNON at one time. He shifted it almost daily, it seemed. The mission of the "Cactus Striking Force" was to conduct a hunter-killer-search against submarines in the lower Solomons area and to stop the Tokio Express, using all the weapons at its command. We were to be based at Tulagi and special provision had been made for fueling our ships at Tulagi. Until this time we had had to come down to the New Hebrides for our fuel or had to take on fuel from transports and sometimes their fuel was low so we were sort of on the spot but in the month of January a hulk oiler was sent up to Tulagi Harbor and was anchored there and all it did was fuel destroyers that patrolled out of the harbor.

The DeHAVEN and the O'BANNON and the RADFORD and the NICHOLAS set out for Cactus, which is the common name for Guadalcanal. In the second week in January 1943, as soon as we steamed up there at 25 knots, I think we expected to intercept the enemy task force which was supposed to be headed down that way and immediately we went on patrol steaming on a line of bearing at intervals of 2,000 yards and covering about 5 miles of water laterally by steaming back and forth patrolling in that formation.

Just as the task group was getting really organized and settled down to the task of operating out of Tulagi another ComSoPac's operation plan, 243, came out and we were told that all of us were to take part in a raid on Kolombangara Island in the northern Solomons, or in the middle Solomons just north of New Georgia Island. We were told that we were to escort a group of cruisers of the BROOKLYN class for a bombardment of certain shore installations on Kolombangara Island, principally at the Vila Plantation and the Stanmore Plantation where we had reason to believe that the enemy was bringing oil and supplies for their aircraft at Munda.

It took us about two days to get there and we arrived about midnight of, I'm certain of the date, it was about January 20th, 1943, the entrance to Kula Gulf, between New Georgia Island and Kolombangara Island.

Oh, in the meantime the task force had been split into two forces. This was Task Force 67. The Task Force had split into two groups, one group, the destroyer support force, was laying off about 100 miles away, while our group composed of the cruiser HELENA, joined the NASHVILLE and the destroyers DeHAVEN, RADFORD, NICHOLAS, and O'BANNON, set off to precede the attack group. The O'BANNON had the tough job in this operation. She was to enter Kula Gulf which is about, which is a very, long Gulf, it's about six or seven miles across, I think, perhaps narrower than that, and at least 15 or 20 miles long.

In order to get to our bombardment position, we had to steam the entire length of Kula Gulf, and it wasn't until we began to steam away, when we turned to come out of the Gulf that we commenced our bombardment. The operation was very beautifully timed so that a sweeping destroyer came out safely before the cruisers went in, and we all went in on an approach course of 216 true and turned to a course of bearing directly for the target at Vila Plantation and then after about a minute of steaming on that course, turned to a course, I think, it was 030 true, and

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about a minute after the cruisers started their bombardment. Each of their ships were bombarding with 15 six-inch gun salvos and were firing at a terrific rate. It looked like machine gun fire almost. About a minute after they started firing, the destroyers which were bombarding, the DeHaven and the RADFORD commenced their bombardment, our fire lasted about 15 minutes. The fire was certainly accurate and destructive and we moved on up, bombarding the Stanmore Plantation and bombarding in various harbors, we didn't know quite what was in the harbors. During this operation we were assisted by the new Black Cats which had arrived in at the Cactus area and were spotting our fire and conducting reconnaissance for enemy ships in that area at the time. On the way up we had been challenged by an unidentified plane. The wrong challenge was made I think until this day we are a little uncertain as to what that plane was but it was possible that it was a Black Cat. Sometimes people get their identification signals mixed up.

Q. Will you tell us what Black Cats are?

A. The Black Cats are PBV 5s, regular PBV's with special radar equipment so that they can fly successfully at night. They have been very useful in locating enemy ships in the area. In addition, they have the under sides of their wings and the hull of the plane painted black and they are just absolutely impossible to see from the ground. Their spotting was invaluable during this operation.

As soon as we finished our bombardment we started to get the hell out of there because it was no place to be. We set out at top speed. Our destroyers were considerably behind the cruisers which had finished their bombardment several minutes before we finished ours, and we finally caught up with them several miles outside of Kula Gulf and they were steaming for home.

On the way back towards Guadalcanal we were followed and trailed by a number of what appeared to be enemy two-engine bombers, which were only seen once, but they dropped flares all around us and constantly threatened us, the cruisers opened up with their anti-aircraft fire and gave a beautiful night display but I don't think they shot down any planes. The flares were very annoying and they made us all very jumpy but we used, what I'd consider very good evasive tactics, heading for rain squalls in the area and following them down as far as we could, and then heading for other rain squalls, sort of like puddle jumping.

We secured from general quarters at about four o'clock that morning, and rendezvoused with the cruisers in Purvis Bay which is one of the better, but not very widely known harbors in Florida Island. There the destroyers fueled from the cruisers and the cruisers set off with some destroyer escort to Button, but our ship with the other members of the Cactus Striking Force, which was now joined by the FLETCHER--Captain Briscoe shifted his pennant to the FLETCHER at this time--stayed at Florida Island and commenced their patrol operations which lasted through, I think, February 2nd.



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I neglected to mention one function of the Cactus Striking Force, which was to be a general work horse for the Commander of Naval Activities in the Solomons Area, that is we were to bombard the beach at various times when it was practicable and when it might help land operations.

The Cactus Striking Force served a good-deal of the time during the day at bombarding to assist the final push of the American forces on Guadalcanal in chasing the Japs towards Cape Esperance. The line at Kokumbona had been broken by now and it was pretty much a matter of a few weeks before he was finally eradicated. In addition to shore bombardment we went on our regular patrol which was a day and night operation. We were in Tulagi Harbor only to pick up mail sometimes and take on fuel and supplies. We used up a good deal of ammunition in our shore bombardment so that twice we had to take on ammunition and during our time here we picked up some Mark 32 fuses which were brand new out there and we didn't know very much about them. We only had one chance to use them which I shall tell you about later.

In our patrol operations and during this last two weeks we patrolled at night between Florida Island and Russell Island, and between Cape Esperance and Russell Island and sometimes between Russell Island and Santa Isabel Island. We maintained a constant Sail George radar search, which incidently would be extremely effective for night operations under poor visibility conditions, and of course, our Sail Cast radar was working all the time too, at night.

During this time we went out to get the "Express" once when he came down but he escaped us again and one time a number of Japanese landing barges were encountered by some New Zealand Corvettes which were also on patrol, mostly on an anti-submarine patrol, off Cape Esperance. These Japanese landing barges were apparently headed for the Russell Islands and were, although we could never tell exactly what they were doing, they seemed to be either landing troops or taking them away and I am rather inclined to think now that they were taking them away, evacuating Japanese Generals and state papers.

These New Zealand corvettes had a very brisk action with them one night but we were about 20 miles away at the time. We got down there just in time for them to disappear. One night on patrol in very heavy weather, we all got a fine Sail George radar contact which we tracked down although we were unable to ascertain exactly what its identity was because of the known presence of the New Zealand ships in the area, and the New Zealand ships didn't keep us very well posted about where they were. The RADFORD went in for the attack though and discovered it was a submarine which surfaced immediately upon getting within visibility range, and the RADFORD attacked with the depth charges. Photographs the next day indicate that the submarine was fatally damaged by the depth charges and is lying on the bottom now.

Another night during this week we were patrolling, going on our regular anti-submarine patrol, this time inside the bay, what we chose to call the bay, going in between Florida Island and Guadalcanal. Our familiar term for it is "Iron Bottom Bay" because of the great number

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of actions that have gone on there. This time we knew that there was a condition red and all the ships in the task group went to 35 knots, between 30 and 35 knots at various times and went into their dance, which means very rapid maneuvering and evasive tactics to avoid any type of aircraft attack. This night was a very clear night with a full moon, it seemed to be a full moon. I think it was. Visibility was very good and on at least one occasion the group was attacked. The ship astern the DeHAVEN, the RADFORD, was attacked by what seemed to be a dive bomber which dropped one bomb just off the starboard bow about 100 yards. The bomb did no damage whatsoever.

During that night, also, we assisted the anti-aircraft fire on Guadalcanal in its fire against the nightly Japanese plane which flies over just to bother people more than anything else, as it very rarely does any damage, commonly known as "Washing Machine Charlie". It was very active that night and the place was pretty well lighted up by anti-aircraft fire. The DeHAVEN and one other ship in our task group, picked up the plane on our search radars and then shifted to fire control radar and fired on the plane in full-radar control, apparently quite successfully, although we are not certain of the results. This was the first time that we had fired in full-radar control which is now recommended as doctrine for night anti-aircraft action.

All these nights that we were on patrol, especially when we expected the "Express", or thought that there was a possibility that he might come, the ship remained at general quarters all night, and after about a week of this, together with our regular watches during the day, we got pretty tired.

All this time we were maintaining a constant under-water sound search, so as to screen an entire front of about five miles and maintaining our Sail George radar search. On the night of January 31st, we were informed that we were to operate with the STRINGHAM, which is an auxiliary transport, and a number of LCT's in making a landing at Marovovo around to the southwest of Cape Esperance. This was to be a flanking movement, encircling movement with Army troops, and we expected to hasten the end of the Jap on Guadalcanal. We set out very early in the morning and joined the group, including the STRINGHAM and six LCT's which are large tank lighters, they carried about 100 troops each I think. We effected the landing about ten o'clock that morning, it was probably earlier. No opposition was encountered. We were prepared to give them fire support if they wanted it but they didn't need any, they just didn't run into anybody.

And, oh yes, during that morning there was a condition red in which Guadalcanal was attacked by a flight of enemy two engine bombers which dropped their bombs on Henderson Field and struck out to the northwest passing right over our formation. All the destroyers nearby opened fire on the planes and two planes were shot down. An attempt was made to retrieve the pilots, but they were both found dead.

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In the afternoon, of February 1, 1943, we were escorting the two leading LCT's, I've forgotten the numbers of them to, back to Lunga Point from the Marovovo operation. The LCT's were empty now and they're very slow, even at top speed, so that our operation consisted mostly of circling them as they came out and giving them anti-submarine coverage. We didn't get any sound contacts at all during that time, but our ship, the DeHAVEN was escorting the first two of the six back. That is, we had to round Cape Esperance and turn up between Cape Esperance and Savo Island in order to get back to Lunga Point. Between 1415 and 1425 and 1430 that afternoon a condition red was announced by Cactus Control but no enemy planes appeared.

The DeHAVEN had gone ahead with the two leading LCT's and left the NICHOLAS which was in our section of the task group, about five miles behind. They were well outside of the Esperance-Savo line and we had gone on into position approximately southeast of Savo Island.

At 1445 Cactus Control came out with another condition red and our ship went to general quarters. From reports by enlisted men who were at key stations during general quarters I have a number of facts about what happened after that. My battle station was on the fantail with the after 40 mm. twin mount. I operated the director and directed the fire of the gun. Two men, survivors in the after engine room, informed me that when general quarters was sounded we had two boilers lit off. During the early part of the day we had all four boilers cut in, but about noon, or a little after noon, two of them were secured with the Captain's permission. At general quarters at this time two other boilers were lit off, but they never were cut in. As soon as general quarters was sounded or very shortly thereafter the Captain brought the ship up to full speed. We had been steaming at 15 knots at the time circling the LCT's. The Captain brought the ship up to full speed, which is 20 knots. And then, three or four minutes later from the report of Lafer, machinist's mate, first class, in the after engine room, the ship went back to standard speed, 144 revolutions, 15 knots.

During this time everybody was at battle stations, was keeping a sharp lookout. A flight of planes was seen at about 1457 broad on the starboard bow at a distance of something more than 12 miles. These planes were unidentified, there seemed to be a flight of about nine of them. The numbers are somewhat inexact, at least there's a possibility that they are inexact, but seemed to be about nine of them, nine planes. They were headed on a course which would pass us astern, considerably astern. They were not flying at very high altitude. At that range the position angle seemed to be about 25 degrees, but it was probably less than that. Our fire control party, immediately trained on the planes and all the main battery guns and the machine guns were brought to bear on them. The range-finder operator, who had extremely good eyes, shortly after the planes were first seen identified them as dive bomber types, the HE 99 type, which has fixed landing gear, and he even said he saw the red circles on his wing, on their wings.

The planes flew in a steady course and they were not flying so fast

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and nobody, none of the men on deck were able to identify them positively. The fire control party identified them and reported the fact the way they identified them to the bridge. The Gunnery Officer requested permission from the bridge to open fire at this time. The ship had taken a course approximately northeast and was now steaming at 15 knots or thereabouts and was on a steady course, was not using any evasive tactics at all.

Just before the planes reach a point about broad on the starboard quarter the word came down to me, I was wearing the phones of the fantail, the word came down to me, the machine gun control officer, Lt. Archie Fields of the United States Navy, to open fire on the planes. We got our battery firing immediately, but I found that the Mark 51 director, which I was using for firing was not operating right so we shifted our gun into local control and continued firing. The planes peeled off, six of the planes peeled off and came down on the ship from the starboard quarter. They were not at a very high angle of dive but about 45 degrees, or perhaps a little more. All six planes apparently dropped their bombs.

In the meantime, as the planes peeled off, the main battery commenced firing. The forward guns fired an unknown amount, inasmuch as we have no one left to tell us about it, but the after guns, one gun is said to have gotten off about ten rounds and the others smaller amounts. The guns, the after guns, were supplied with projectiles with Mark 32 fuses, three of these projectiles in each mount for ready use and these projectiles were fired at this time. It's believed that at least one of the two planes which we feel quite certain we brought down, after it had come over the ship, was struck by a burst from one of these projectiles. The attack was over very quickly, six planes came down and dropped their bombs.

The first bomb apparently landed amidships on the port side about the position of the condensers in the engine room, in the forward engine room. From other ships this was seen to blow out the port side of the ship at that point, and it loosed great quantities of steam which quickly circled all over the ship.

The next bomb hit forward of the forward stack and knocked the forward stack over, but I don't think it penetrated very low because there were men who were in the galley at the time, which is right under the forward stack, there were men in the galley at the time who are still here to tell and they claim the galley was not hurt at all.

A third bomb hit forward of the superstructure. I was on the fantail so I couldn't quite see where it did hit, but it went off with a tremendous explosion and immediately the ship was covered with a heavy yellow smoke and I'm led to believe that this bomb reached the forward magazines and caused them to explode. The bridge structure was demolished by this bomb, the director was thrown off its base, back into the area between the forward stack and the main deck, apparently right by the mast which was snapped off at this time.

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As soon as the <sup>La Ferr</sup> first bomb hit in the condensers the steam power dropped to zero. ~~La Ferr~~, in the after engine room, recalls watching the steam pressure go down to zero. He said that after the first bomb hit the steam pressure went down to zero, but the power was still on, he still had electric power, but the electric pumps tripped out. In the after engine room he and Lieutenant Kimmelman, who was the officer in charge there, and they were the two senior men in the room, tried to fix things, but they weren't quite aware of what was going on. They tried to contact the bridge over the JV circuit, the Jig Victor circuit at this time, but the bridge had no information for them.

On my gun, the power for training and elevating the gun went out after the first bomb hit, consequently we had to shift into manual control which is very difficult with the heavy 40 mm. mount. We kept our gun firing, but some of the greener members of the crew finding themselves in the exposed position had to be replaced temporarily. The Fire Control Officer, Lieutenant Adam DeKers was in the Director at this time. He kept constant control over his guns and found that when they lost power, or he ordered them when they lost power, to shift into local control and designated targets. When the explosion in the forward magazine threw the director cut he was standing in the seat of the control officer's station in the director and wasn't seen anymore after that.

As soon as the smoke blew away it was apparent that the ship was settling by the bow and slightly, with just a slight list to port, but not a very heavy one. I looked up and saw the superstructure was mangled and I saw very few people on deck. A group of people on deck were awaiting for the word to abandon ship, they didn't know whether the ship was sinking or not, but stayed very calmly by their stations until the word was given them. I took the liberty on the fantail to pass the word to abandon ship to that group of men in the absence of further authority.

All this took place about 3 o'clock. I think that the attack began a couple of minutes before three and the whole thing was over and the ship was out of sight not more than five minutes later. As soon as it was quite apparent that the ship was going down and going down very fast we made an effort to set the depth charges on safe. The torpedoman had seen to it that the depth charges were on safe, I checked them. We didn't want to repeat some of the previous disasters resulting from failure to do that. No attempt was made to recover confidential publications because the bridge structure was pretty well demolished and it was believed that the ship was going down before we'd have a chance to do anything like that.

We picked up a few of the wounded men on deck and put them over the side. Kowski, the Chief Bos'n's Mate, and Lane, another Chief Bos'n's Mate, assisted in getting two cork life rafts over the side and they were really life nets, and people commenced to jump over the side. Everybody was in rather scanty clothing because some of them had been sleeping during the day and it was very hot anyway, and when I left the deck, and finally took to the water, the ship assumed a list, I mean

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was down by the bow by about 30 degrees. It was very difficult to get a footing on deck then and she was going very fast. There was no one else left on deck to put over the side that I could see.

Lt. Ware:

Where were you during most of this period, in the quarter deck and the fantail around there?

Ensign Williams:

During the early part of this period, I was inside of the 40 mm. gun shield on the fantail, at first at the director and then by the side of the gun while she was firing. Then as the heavy smoke went in I left the station and went out on deck to investigate to see what had happened and saw to it that some of the wounded men were picked up and put over the side and everything that should have been done was done that I could think of in that short of time, because the ship was settling very fast.

Lt. Ware:

You couldn't get forward at all?

Ensign Williams:

No, I couldn't get forward because, in the first place the forward part of the ship was pretty well in the water at that time, and I had no communication with any of the other officers. There was one other officer on deck near me, that is he was on the forward 40 mm. gun, but he wasn't seen after the bomb blast that penetrated the port of the ship aft. I mean the port side of the ship amidships. That was Ensign Ralph Huey.

The water by this time was covered very thoroughly with oil, very thick oil, fuel oil, and everybody that jumped in got a good mouth full of that and everybody was pretty badly scared by this time because we didn't know whether they were going to come back, or we hadn't really seen what happened to the planes that we'd gotten, the reports that the two planes were down came to me first through an officer's cook who was standing on the port side and saw two planes fall, he believes, as a result of our fire, and also from the account of the commanding officer of the NICHOLAS which was still about five miles away at the time. We got in the water and some of us had life jackets and some of us didn't. They even used the ship's life ring which I understand is practically never used as a life preserver. We picked up as many of the people as we could see.

When the ship disappeared from view, about 3 seconds later, there was an under-water explosion. The intensity was not severe enough to injure anybody in the water. I was very close to it at the time. I was in such a position that I might very well have been hurt by it, but it seemed to be a boiler explosion, or something like that. It was not of the character of a depth charge explosion. Very quickly the LCT's in the vicinity, which had also been firing their 20 mm. guns at the planes

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firing at us and which, I think, are credited with one or two of the planes, speeded over to us as fast as they could go, which is very slow. They were about a mile away from us I think at the time the ship went down and we were all drifting fairly rapidly towards Savo Island, we were about two miles off Savo Island at the time, to the south and east of the Island.

The LCT that picked me up was commanded by Ensign Herbert Solomon and he conducted what I consider outstanding operations in the way of picking up survivors and assisting with first aid to those that needed it. He let down the ramp of his boat and stood out there himself, dragged many a fellow who was pretty well pooped out at this time, into his boat. He had limited first aid supplies aboard the ship. He had regular battle dressings and had a limited supply of morphine and sulfanilamide. There was just enough morphine to go around to the people who really needed it and they were treated properly with it and sulfanilamide was used where men had open wounds. For men with burns we couldn't do anything except keep them comfortable and keep them from getting any further burn from the sun which was extremely hot and bright at this time, being right in the middle of the afternoon.

Ensign Solomon headed back, after picking up what survivors he could, headed back to Lunga Point. Soon afterwards he was overtaken by the NICHOLAS which picked up the survivors who were wounded and administered medical treatment, and the FLETCHER which came along side with Captain Briscoe aboard, and it had come from quite a distance. The FLETCHER, which took aboard the unwounded survivors, the ambulatory survivors, gave them an opportunity to wash off the oil, with diesel they had ready for the purpose, to wash up and try to cool down a little bit, but while we were aboard the FLETCHER we had another general quarters and we were stuck on deck not knowing quite what to do when they were having general quarters.

I reported to Captain Briscoe on the bridge of the FLETCHER and gave him as much as I could say right off of about what happened.

The FLETCHER took us back to Lunga Point, where we were disembarked by way of landing boats and we landed at Guadalcanal where we were put in the custody and care of a Captain Shock and Captain Maples, the two Naval commanders there, Captain Shock is Commander Naval Activities in the Solomon Islands, Captain Maples is Commander of the Base at Cactus, at Lunga Point.

There we were given an opportunity immediately to wash up and to count noses. That was the first time we had any idea of the terrific loss which the ship had suffered. We simply had every man muster, sign in and then we weren't able until about two weeks later to check off the list of the survivors we knew about against the total muster list of the ship.

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We were given clothes, food, and cots there at Guadalcanal, and the wounded were evacuated as quickly as possible by airplane, that is within the next two days all of the people that were seriously wounded and needed x-ray facilities or further treatment were taken by transport plane to the base hospital at Button, and the rest of us were left there on Guadalcanal running our own little government and getting over it. The first few nights there were extremely sleepless because "Charlie" came over every night and the anti-aircraft fire was very heavy and there was constant danger from falling flak rather than from falling bombs.

Lieutenant Fields, who had a foot injury, delegated me to write the official reports on the sinking and he was evacuated about two days after we landed. The Command at Lunga Point was extremely hospitable and extremely considerate of our group of survivors, which numbered about 110. There were, these were mostly rated men with just a small number of non-rated men and I was the only officer left after the wounded were evacuated.

The three officer survivors were three very good friends of mine, all Naval Academy men, Lieutenant Archie Fields, who was machine gun officer, and somehow or other just didn't get hurt, it was only through the grace of God, I could imagine, because he was on the superstructure in a very exposed position and did not leave his station. He managed, he directed machine gun fire throughout the entire attack. He was in the class of '40 at Annapolis and from the class of '42 at Annapolis was Lieutenant (j.g.) John J. Rowen, who had only been aboard our ship for about three weeks. He was also aboard the VINCENNES when she was sunk and he is getting quite tired of the water around Savo Island.

The other, oh, Lieutenant Rowen was on the bridge and he is still the best authority as to what happened on the bridge during the attack. He was Communication Officer and at the Captain's side most of the time. He's now recovering from a very serious leg injury in the San Diego Hospital. The other survivor was <sup>Ensign</sup> Lieutenant Bernard W. Freeze of the last class at Annapolis, the class of 1943, who had been aboard the ship since the very beginning and who was in the plotting room, down below decks at the time of the attack. He stayed down there throughout the attack and as soon as the control, as soon as we lost power he stayed on the phones and encouraged the men over the phones. He was the only man to get out of the plotting room. And he suffered very severe burns all over his body because at the time he was just in his scivvy shirt as he had been sleeping just before general quarters. These three officers were taken out immediately.

During the first week in February our crew was sitting peacefully on Guadalcanal and living a rather peaceful day but a rather unpeaceful night in our fox holes. We had to use everybody else's fox holes because we hadn't had time to dig our own. We were pretty numerous as there wasn't room for everybody, but finally we set up a camp, directed by the Commander of the Lunga Point Naval Base and were just making ourselves at home when, on February 7, we were directed to leave with a transport task group which was standing off Lunga Point at the time. And from



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there we went to New Zealand and civilization.

As a result of the loss of the DeHAVEN 175 men and 10 officers were lost. There were 35 wounded in addition, and I think there were 107 men and one officer unwounded. The Commanding Officer of ship was killed by the bomb which apparently exploded the forward magazine. Most of the bridge personnel was killed at that time, those that were not in the pilot house or in the chart house, that is.

As a final word, I'd like to just sort of sum up my impression of the principal lessons that I learned from the whole experience, and which I think might be valuable for people who find themselves in the same situation someday. The most important thing, it seems to me, was the matter of identification and this was the result of various psychological and physical circumstances of environment at the time. Planes had been flying around us in large numbers all day and a good part of the night and various other times during our various trips to the area, and the case of "wolf wolf" is I think a pretty pertinent one. We had had innumerable threats and so often they had not come.

Besides that there was simply the concrete business of doctrine. I am quite certain that if the destroyer gunnery doctrine had been carried out, as it was, but I think a little belatedly, the ship would not have found itself in such a situation. However, when you are up there for so long sometimes doctrine loses its importance, we lose our feel for doctrine. We think of specific situations in such a way that we are liable to miss the boat and I think that it is most important to stay on the ball no matter how fatigued or extended operations for long periods of time may effect you physically. In other words it's your skin. The other thing that seems to be most important is the matter of boiler power and the evasive tactics which are also doctrine, but that I think if we had had boiler power we could have taken evasive tactics. As it was we didn't have the boiler power available at the time and we were sort of stymied from the beginning. I think that is all.



U.S.S. DeHaven (DD-469)

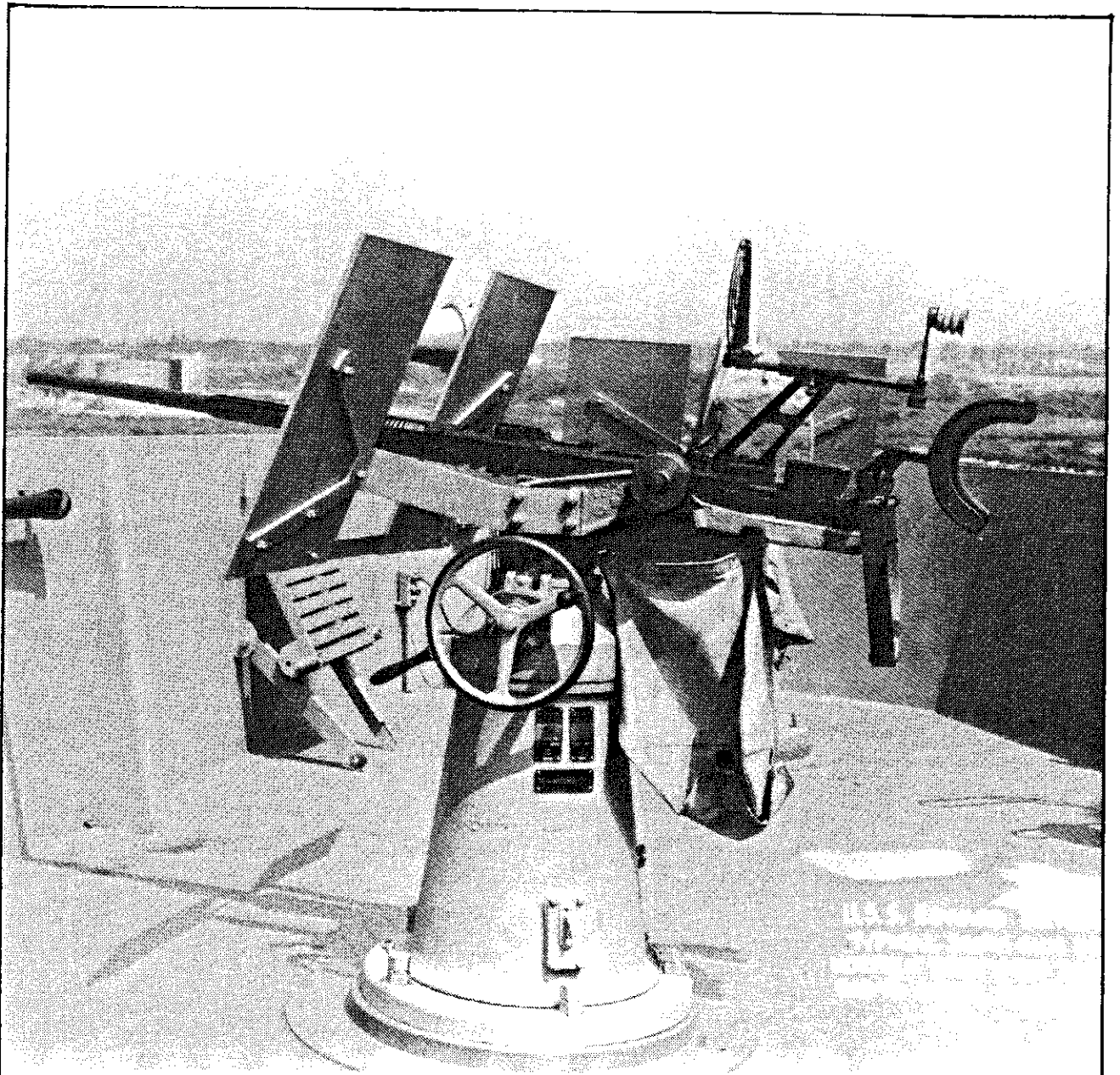
Recollection of Commander Archie R. Fields, USN (Ret.)\*  
(Ltr. to Cdr. E. A. Wilde, Jr., USNR (Ret.), 11/14/95)

"... All three hits came from the starboard side. I saw them all! I was on a small deck just below and aft of the main director which sat on a barquette with slots in it for lookouts. I had sound-powered phones on to the Machine Gun Stations aft, and I had a talker with phones to the Bridge. The main battery was tracking the 'Vals', and we were waiting for permission to commence firing, but the order never came. A 20-mm gun on the starboard side was the first to open up. I followed his tracers and saw a Val in a 45-degree dive - a glistening gray-green color, like a pretty toy. When the bomb cut away my first feeling was, 'Unfair - why are they using such big ones?!' It was plainly coming dead on. I shoved my talker into the lookout station and went in behind him. There was a thump and a big blast. When I stepped out and looked down at the port side I saw a 15-ft. hole at the water line. Another bomb was a near miss aft. Another bomb was going to hit amidships, and we dove for the lookout station. I remember a thump as it hit, but no explosion. When I came out I saw a Val skimming away to port with 40-mm splashes behind it. I called, 'Mount 41, elevate!, elevate!' That was the only command I gave, because another bomb was coming, dead on. Back into the hole and then a huge blast. We were rattled around inside like dice in a cup. It was black and stinking with explosive gas. We were scrambling around looking for light until I spotted an opening below me and dropped out onto the small deck which slanted about 30 degrees aft. The whole superstructure was blown over at a 30-degree angle. The director was gone. The ship was a pile of steaming, oil-smeared junk. I worked over to the port side, one foot on deck, the other on a rail, and saw the water level about two feet below and nothing forward. We just stepped into the water and started swimming."

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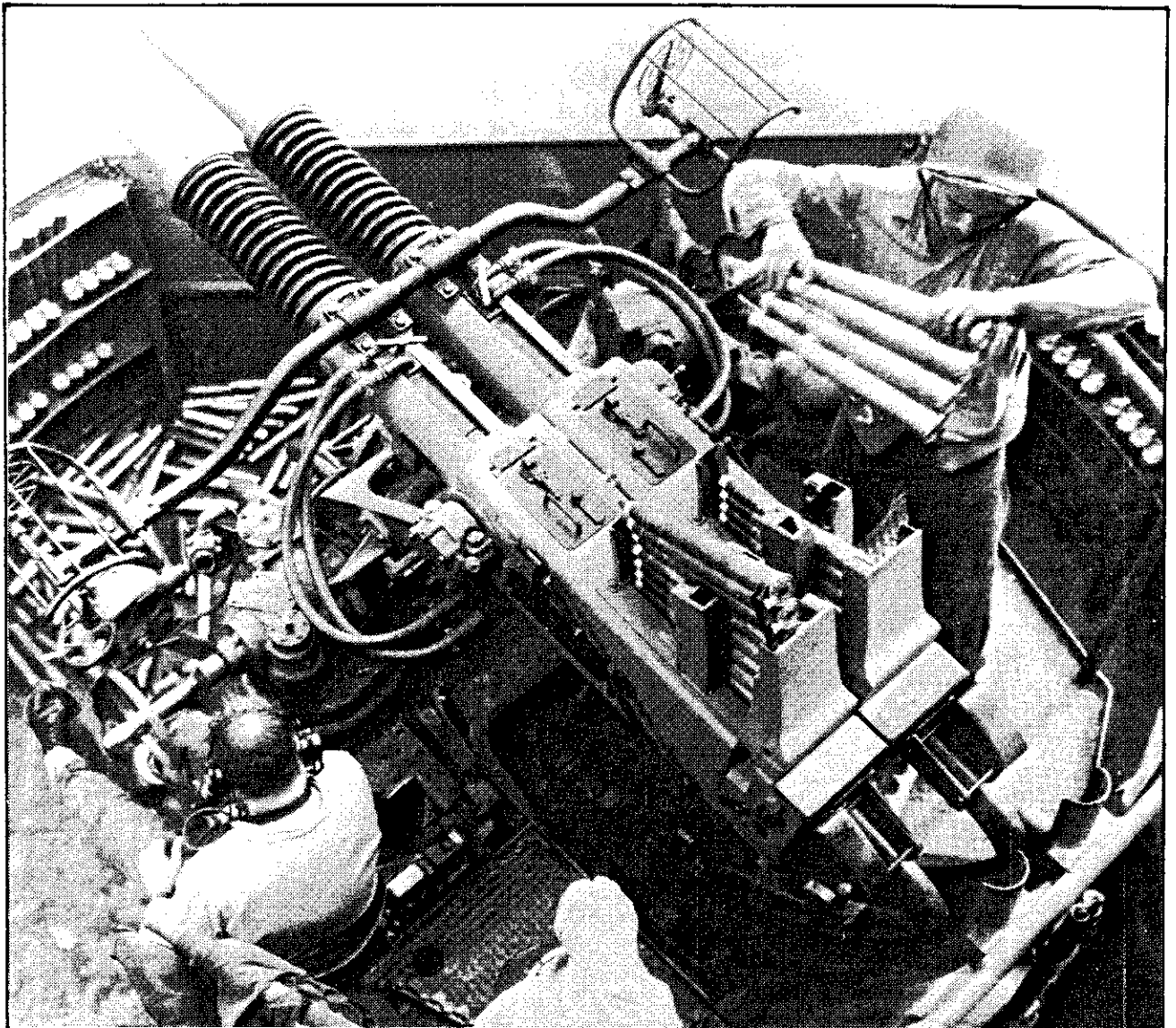
\* Lt. Fields was the Machine Gun Control Officer when the DeHaven was sunk off Guadalcanal on 1 February 1943 by Japanese dive bombers. He directed the fire of two twin 40-mm Bofors mounts and four 20-mm Oerlikon machine cannons.





*In 1941 the 20-mm Oerlikon air-cooled machine gun began to replace the .50-cal. water-cooled machine gun as the Navy's standard light antiaircraft weapon. (It was also called a machine cannon because it fired explosive shells.) This early Mark 4 version with an open-ring sight required a four-man crew: the gunner, a trunnion operator (to adjust the height of the gun carriage) and two loaders. When fitted with the Mark 14 gyroscopic sight, introduced in 1943, a range setter was also required to enter range data. The Oerlikon had an effective range of 1,600 yards and fired at a rate of 450 rounds/minute. (Official USN Photo.)*





*The 40-mm Bofors gun fired a two-pound explosive shell with an effective range of about 2,800 yards. It was primarily an antiaircraft weapon, but destroyers also used their 40-mm's against enemy strongpoints when they provided close-in gunfire support during landings. The gun crew for a twin mount consisted of a pointer, a trainer, a gun captain and four loaders (two for each barrel). The Bofors was capable of firing about 160 rounds/barrel/minute, but the number of rounds actually fired depended on the ability of the loaders to provide an uninterrupted supply of ammunition. (Official U.S. Navy photograph.)*





U.S.S. *DeHaven* (DD-469)

Recollection of Captain John J. Rowan, USN (Ret.)\*  
20 November 1995

After reporting I soon met with the Commanding Officer, CDR Charles E. Tolman, USN, and the Executive Officer, LCDR John D. Huntley, USN. I was informed that I would relieve LT Johnson as the Communications Officer and Custodian of Registered Publications and that my Battle Station during General Quarters would be on the bridge as Officer of the Deck.

On 2 Jan. 1943 the ship departed Espiritu Santo for Guadalcanal. During January I stood one watch in three as underway OOD, effectively eight hours a day under normal conditions; however, while in the Guadalcanal area, the ship spent an inordinate amount of time at General Quarters, so I found myself on the bridge anywhere from 12 to 18 hours a day. I found time to relieve LT Johnson as Communications Officer, but we did not find the time to lay out the Registered Pubs so that they could be inventoried and I could relieve him as the Custodian. Further, so much time was spent at GQ that it was difficult to find time to function effectively as the Communications Division Officer.

I remember vividly that the experience was exhausting. I also remember well that the ship steamed frequently in the vicinity of Savo Island, day and/or night, and twice put into Tulagi for some ammo replenishment. Twice in one week I stayed at my GQ Battle Station as OOD on the bridge for 30 straight hours, standing on my feet the entire time.

We were frequently pestered at night by "Washing Machine Charlie," a Japanese scout plane whose engine noises were loud and sounded like a washing machine or egg beater — take your pick. He frequently dropped flares at night to light up our formations but rarely did he drop bombs. He cleverly stayed over the formations because the ships were reluctant to fire at him for fear of hitting other ships in the formation. He was a horrible nuisance to us because he kept us up most of the night and prevented us from getting any sleep.

The night of 23-24 January 1943 a Task Group comprised of the light cruiser *Nashville*, heavy cruiser *Helena* and destroyers *Nicholas*, *Radford*, *O'Bannon* and *DeHaven* steamed up the "slot" to Kula Gulf in order to shore bombard Kolombangara Island. At this time it was the most northern foray of U.S. Navy ships from the Guadalcanal area. All ships fired on Kolombangara, but there was no return fire. The real spectacle was to see the *Nashville* in a "rapid fire" mode raining shells on Kolombangara. The impression one had of the tracers was that it was like watching someone spray with a garden hose slowly from left to right and back from right to left.

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\* Excerpt from his letter to Cdr. E. Andrew Wilde, Jr., USNR (Ret.), with a few very minor corrections. Ltjg. Rowan reported on board the *DeHaven* on New Year's Day, 1943, just a month before she was sunk.

The first 2100-ton destroyers in the Guadalcanal area were not designed with a Combat Information Center (CIC). The PPI scope and operating position for the SG surface search radar was in the Navigator's shack aft of the Pilot House. It was an interesting sight to watch occasionally the Navigator (Executive Officer) pilot the ship in and out of Kula Gulf by the use of ranges and bearings on a small island in the western part of Kula Gulf and on Kolombangara Island. This was the first time I had seen the surface radar and PPI scope used for piloting. Upon return to Guadalcanal and Tulgai it was business as usual--deck watches and/or General Quarters.

Life on board a destroyer in the tropics of the Southwest Pacific was not comfortable. The *DeHaven* did not have air conditioning. The ship was almost always in either Condition I (batteries manned and all hatches and doors completely closed) or Condition II (batteries half-manned and half of the doors and hatches selectively closed). A closed steel ship in the sun is like a bake-oven that gets hot and stays hot. The limited number of fans in the Officers Quarters and in the crew's living compartments were treasured because they sometimes permitted sleep without perspiring too much.

1 February 1943 was intended to be like most other days in the Guadalcanal area — continuously busy and with a good chance for contact with the Japanese coming down the slot from Rabaul. Starting early that day the *DeHaven*, along with the other destroyers in the squadron, escorted six LCTs from (approximately) the north-central part of Guadalcanal around Cape Esperance and to the western side of Guadalcanal. This end-around operation involved a landing of some Marines and their combat equipment. By early afternoon the end-around operation was completed and the destroyers of the squadron were providing escort for the LCTs returning to the base at Guadalcanal. The *DeHaven* and the *Nicholas (DD449)*, which was about five miles behind the *DeHaven*, were providing escort for two of the LCTs. When the *DeHaven* was about one mile south of Savo Island and headed east, a flight of seven (bridge count) Japanese planes was spotted to the south in a position west of Henderson Airfield on Guadalcanal. The planes were headed generally northwest and were about 15,000-18,000 yards from the *DeHaven*. If the planes had stayed on that course, they would have cleared the ship's starboard quarter by about 10,000 yards, or astern by about 15,000 yards. As the planes neared the starboard quarter they changed course to the north and headed for a position closer to our stern from where they could attack. Until then permission to commence firing the 5" AA Battery had been withheld by the Captain, I believe, in the hopes that if we did not fire on the planes, they would not bother us. However, as the planes were headed for our stern, the order to "commence firing" was given. Soon thereafter the planes peeled off one by one in rapid succession to begin their dive bombing runs. The Captain, who had the conn, and I were on the starboard wing of the bridge at the pelorus just outside the Pilot House while this situation was developing. When it was obvious we were being threatened, the Captain ordered full speed (20 knots) and left full rudder. I immediately went into the Pilot House to insure that the man at the Annunciator and the Helmsman had understood the engine order and the rudder change, respectively, which had been ordered by the Captain. (The Helmsman was Quartermaster 2/c Beemus, of whom I shall write later.) I then looked out the port door of the Pilot House to ensure we were not in danger of running into Savo Island. I returned to the Captain on the starboard side just in time to see the first bomb land amidships and, effectively, break the ship's back. A second later the second bomb landed in the vicinity of the forward stack, knocking the stack over and lifting the 5" Gun Director off its foundation. At that traumatic moment I went back into the Pilot House to check on the Helmsman — a meaningless gesture since the ship had already lost steering control. This was a fortuitous move for me, because just at this moment the third bomb landed on the #2 5"

Mount and caused its magazine, if not that of the #1 Mount also, to explode. In the Bridge and Pilot House area only the Helmsman and I survived this explosion.

The magazine explosion had a violent effect on the Bridge and Pilot House. They were wrecked by the explosion, inasmuch as they are only about 10-12 feet behind the #2 Mount and its magazine. The deck seemingly convulsed and moved underneath me about one or two feet in a sternwise direction, causing me to collapse on the deck. Sitting in an upright position, stunned, I noticed that my lower right leg was dislocated at the knee and the leg was sitting in my lap. My first thought was that, even if I survived, I would lose the lower part of my leg. I could not feel any pain in the leg, not recognizing then that my body was in shock. I was aware that the ship was sinking because of the bomb damage and because it had a heavy list to starboard.

The air was filled with dark, acrid smoke and vision was obscured. The blast had loosened and torn numerous items from the bulkheads and overhead, and these things fell to the deck. I crawled to the pelorus area on the starboard side and somehow crawled over the 3-4 foot bulwark which was made easier by virtue of the starboard list. I had enough presence of mind, knowing the condition of my right leg, to fall into the water head first rather than feet first so as not to rip off my lower leg upon entering the water. I estimate that I fell about 8-10 feet through the air. At the time I was abandoning ship from the vicinity of the starboard pelorus, I did not see Captain Tolman or any other person in the area. Apparently they had been blown overboard by the blast from the magazine of the #2 5" Mount.

Upon surfacing after my dive into the water, I pulled lanyards on my rubber inflatable life belt; thankfully, the life belt inflated, both the top and bottom halves. My right leg was a problem in that it was out of joint at the knee and I could not use it to paddle or swim. To control my lower right leg I floated on my back and supported the right leg by keeping the left leg under it. In this condition I paddled with my hands to get away from the sinking ship to ensure that I did not get sucked under with it as it went down.

I did not see much of the ship after I got into the water, but what I did see was massive wreckage. It appeared the ship sank in three parts, because the ship's broken back, where the amidships was already under water, made it appear that the after section and the bridge section were no longer joined. I believe the two parts separated upon sinking. The bow area forward of the bridge was already gone when I took my first look at the forward part of the ship. My time estimate is that it took less than four minutes for the ship to disappear after the first bomb landed amidships.

One of my first concerns for survival was that the depth charges in the stern area still on the racks would explode once the sinking ship would sink to the depth set on the depth charges. This did not happen. It was not until I read recently in Clem Williams's narrative that he had taken the time to ensure that the depth charges were disarmed before he abandoned ship. To my dying day I will be grateful for this act. If this had not been done, it is likely that I, along with many others, would have died from the great pressures of depth charges exploding nearby. I regret that Clem died in 1992, because I would now like to have thanked him for what he did.

The water where the survivors were swimming was covered with oil. Fortunately, the oil did not catch fire, or else the casualty numbers would have been even higher than they were. There is not much that I could have done to combat a surface oil fire while swimming or floating

in my condition. At best I could have only flailed or splashed with my hands and arms to try to keep the fire away from my hands and face. Because of my leg injury, I do not think I could have survived very long if a surface oil fire had started.

It was not a long time, an estimated 30 minutes, before the motor whaleboat from the *Nicholas* came to pick me out of the water. I was still in shock and until that time I did not feel much pain. However, when the boat crew pulled me out of the water, lifting me by the shoulders, the pain in my right leg, which was dangling at the knee, was excruciating. I cannot remember how I got there, but my next memory is that I was lying on the deck of the *Nicholas* in a wire stretcher, clothes still oil-soaked. While there I remember that LCDR Robert Montgomery, the movie actor and our Squadron Communications Officer, came by to ask if he could do anything for me. I will always be grateful to the crew of the *Nicholas* for their efficiency and for their bravery in rescuing the *DeHaven* crew members under these dangerous circumstances. Certainly, I owe my life to them.

Before long I was taken on the stretcher to an LCT which had come alongside. The LCT took me and I do not know how many others to a finger pier on the north side of Guadalcanal. From there I was taken to a Field Hospital near Henderson Airfield. That evening, 1 February 1943, in the emergency operating tent, I was bathed and cleaned up from all the oil. My right leg was placed in a temporary splint. At some point I was given my first shot of morphine which I would continue to receive daily for the next 10 days.

My bed at the Field Hospital for two nights and one day was a cot underneath shady palm trees. I mention this because each of the two nights a Japanese plane or planes dropped bombs on Henderson Field. There was no foxhole for me in which to climb, so I had to remain on the cot — horizontal and about 18 inches above ground. This is not an enviable position to be in if bombs are exploding nearby. Fortunately, bombs did not come near so the worry and anxiety were for naught.

On the morning of 3 February I was medically-evacuated in a DC-3 plane from Henderson Field to Espiritu Santo. From there I was taken by ambulance to dockside where a boat was waiting to take me to the *Relief*, a hospital ship, which was waiting in the harbor. The *Relief* departed soon for Auckland, New Zealand. On 4 February I went into the surgery operating room where my leg was set and I was placed in a spica cast, a cast which covered the entire torso and the right leg except the toes. The leg was thus immobilized for the next month. The official diagnosis was "compound fracture right tibia," but in reality the dislocated knee was much more serious because of the damage to the ligaments and tendons in the knee area.

In Auckland the patients were taken to the hospital at the Mobile Operating Base (MOB). On 10 February a troopship took several hundred patients aboard and sailed for San Diego, where it arrived 28 February. Ambulances were waiting to transfer the patients to the San Diego Naval Hospital. In early March 1943 I had an operation to remove "bone debris" from the knee area and was given a new but lighter splint. This was followed by numerous sessions of hydro, electro and physio therapy over the next several months.

While I was in the hospital I was twice visited by Beemus, QM 2/c, the Helmsman next to whom I was standing when the third bomb exploded the magazine of the #2 Mount. From him I learned we two were the only survivors from the Bridge and Pilot House area. Additionally,

there was only one survivor from the Plotting Room, Ensign Bernard Frese, and one person from the Gun Director whose name I do not remember. In summary, there were only four survivors from forward of the #1 stack — and I was lucky enough to be one of them. As best I know Beemus and I were the only two survivors from the *DeHaven* to be sent to the San Diego Naval Hospital. Soon after, Beemus was sent to another hospital so I lost track of him.

The sinking of the *DeHaven* and the knee injury had two very happy endings for me. First, I met my bride-to-be at the Naval Hospital while I was still a patient. Mary Thompson and I were married 8 July 1943 at the St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church in Mission Hills, and we honeymooned in Laguna Beach for a delightful month. We raised three sons and celebrated our 52nd wedding anniversary with a trip to Russia for three weeks during the summer of 1995. The second happy ending for me was that the talented medics at the Naval Hospital ensured that my leg injury was healed and restored sufficiently for me to resume a naval career after 10 months of hospitalization.

# # #



**U.S.S. *DeHaven* (DD-469)**

**Recollection of Captain Bernard W. Frese, Jr., USN (Ret.)\***

**2 May 1996**

A miracle by definition is an event that apparently contradicts known scientific laws and is hence thought to be due to supernatural causes, especially an act of God. My survival on the day the U.S.S. *DeHaven* (DD469) was sunk was indeed a miracle as you shall come to understand.

The morning of 1 February 1943 I had the 0800-1200 watch as Officer-of-the-Deck on the bridge. We were escorting the LCTs loaded with American troops to the north end of Guadalcanal so they could cut off the escape of Japanese troops from the island. Completing my watch I went to the wardroom and had lunch. After lunch I inspected my assigned spaces on the ship, a daily routine to ensure their readiness for combat and to correct any deficiencies noted. Upon completion of this inspection I returned to my stateroom and showered. That was a rare treat in the hot humid climate of the area.

As I started to dress the general quarters alarm went off. All I had time to do was slip on my pants and a pair of sandals before racing to my battle station in the main battery Plotting Room.<sup>1</sup> The main battery director then acquired aircraft at a range of over 10,000 yards, too far away for our guns to be effective. The aircraft were flying on a course opposite of ours on our starboard bow. As we tracked the planes they were identified as possible Japanese bombers. The 5-inch battery was trained out and shifted to automatic tracking, ready to fire on command.

We tracked the planes past our beam when they changed course to the right and started an approach toward us. As the computer<sup>2</sup> operator I was aware of the whole picture. The Gunnery Officer, Lt. Adam William DeMers, in the director, called the Bridge to get permission to open fire. To do this he had to switch his phone to the JA (Bridge) circuit. The planes were definitely coming in now, a hostile move, so I switched to the JA circuit to see what was holding up the firing order. I heard the JA talker tell Lt. DeMers that the Captain was on the TBS (radio) trying to get help in the form of air cover from CACTUS<sup>3</sup> Control. The planes were on our starboard quarter coming in fast now and within effective gun range. I couldn't raise Lt. DeMers on the gun circuit, so I gave the command to commence firing. The gun captains would not fire on my order and said they were waiting for the Gunnery Officer to give the order.

Shortly thereafter there was a jolt and an explosion. We had taken a direct hit amidships in the engineering spaces. We lost electric power completely. The guns were helpless and the computer useless. Our first effort was to see if we could isolate the electrical shorts and get the guns back in operation. It was futile. Meanwhile the ship took a near miss on the port side and another hit forward. Men from the repair party came into the Plotting Room at that point. All told

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\* Letter to Cdr. E. Andrew Wilde, Jr., USNR (Ret.), complete, with very minor editing. Editor's notes are on page 4.

there must have been seventeen people in there counting my fire controlmen, the IC board operators and the repair party. The guns had switched to complete manual control and were being loaded by hand, a very difficult and ineffective capability. I yelled all the encouragement I could.

All hell broke loose at that point. Suddenly a brilliant white light appeared, coming from a point forward and slightly above the Plotting Room. There was no sound. When the light appeared I felt sick all over. The room turned fire red and everything started to move. The fire controlman at my right<sup>4</sup> passed me in mid air. The computer turned over on the Chief Fire Controlman on my left.<sup>5</sup> I was blown into the fire-control switchboard, and somehow my legs were under the overturned computer. Everything turned pitch black with an acrid smell. All I could hear was a tinkling sound like the glass icicles on the Christmas tree used to make.

My forehead was impaled on pronged switches. I had to push against the switchboard to get my head free. Then my legs were pinned under the computer. I tried to rip my pants loose, but they wouldn't tear. The room was filling with liquid which I thought came from the fuel tank abaft the Plotting Room. The oil was starting to get up to my neck, and I felt a pang of desperation. Then it occurred to me to open my belt and zip down my zipper. It worked, and my legs came out. Halfway to a standing position my telephone jack came up short. Unhooking it, I was finally free, but it was still pitch black with the oil rising steadily. Actually the ship was sinking, but I didn't know that at the time. At that point I started praying. There were several other unidentifiable voices in the darkness. My inclination was to climb to get above the oil. I reached up and grabbed a pipe upon which I heard a sizzling sound. Looking up, the pipe was red hot, and it was with difficulty that I pulled my hand free.

At this point it was apparent that my eyes had difficulty staying open. Still trying to climb, a voice out of nowhere yelled, "She's going down fast!" I forced my eyes open and saw that I was out of the Plotting Room with water up to my waist. The ship around me was a shambles of twisted metal. Looking to see which way the water was I dove in, wondering if a jagged piece of metal would slice me open. Swimming a short distance I heard another voice say, "There she goes." Turning over on my back and forcing my eyes open again and looking up, I saw the ship's propellers directly above my head and the ship ready to plunge to the bottom. Needless to say I set a record doing the backstroke and getting out of the way as the ship sank. There were several underwater explosions but no churning of the water like a depth charge would make. The oil on the water must have been six inches thick, and there was lots of debris floating around, but nothing big enough to support my weight.

There I was all by myself, naked, with no life jacket. At that point my heart was beating like a trip hammer, so fast it was impossible to count the beats. Hearing others yelling, I forced a look around and saw the LCT picking up survivors at a considerable distance away, too far for me to swim. A yell for help brought someone over to me. He had a life jacket and held me up until the LCT pulled us out of the water. They stood me up and I collapsed on the spot. A young sailor survivor held my head in his arm comforting me, for which I was eternally grateful. Though feeling no pain up to that point, Ensign Williams gave me a shot of morphine.

Transferred in a stretcher to the main deck of the U.S.S. *Nicholas* (DD449), the ship's doctor examined me, looking at my eyes and listening to my heart. Then he covered me up with a blanket. Someone sitting on the deck asked the doc about me and the doc said I was dead. Mustering some strength I pushed the blanket down from my head. The sailor sitting near me



uttered some colorful metaphors and yelled for the doctor to come back. Apologizing for his error the doctor dressed my wounds as best he could and ordered me transferred to the beach at Guadalcanal in the first boat going ashore. On the beach in an open-walled hut all the stretcher cases were lined up while another doctor determined their immediate needs and ordered them to a medical unit. The patients were laid out in a row, and each patient was removed as soon as the doctor gave the order. The man ahead of me was removed. Then the doctor examined me and moved on to the next patient without any orders regarding me. A while later Lt. Fields came up and looking at me said, "Hi, Huey, glad to see you made it." "I'm not Huey, I'm Bernie," I said. "Call down to the doctor and ask him where they are going to send me." Fields did, and the doc said that they would bury me later. Fields informed the doc that I wouldn't like that and that the doc had better come up and talk to me about it. More colorful metaphors from this doc, but I was able to convince him that I was alive. That was the second doctor that gave me up for dead!

Placed on a jeep, the driver started for the medical tent I was assigned to when the air raid siren went off. He stopped the jeep and said that he was not supposed to move during an air raid. Worried that I might lose consciousness, I implored the driver to move on, which he did after hearing my story. Machine gun fire over our heads brought us to a halt again, and some sergeant gave the driver a lot of lip about driving during an air raid. After hearing my story he jumped on board and guided us to the medical tent assigned for treatment. They gave me three units of plasma first off which brought on pain beyond description. From the time I was picked up by the LCT I had been in complete shock with chills and all. It was now six hours later. Up to that time I had felt no significant pain.

After applying temporary dressings they moved me to a tent for the night. Bombs started dropping, and all patients in the tent were moved to a foxhole. Unable to breathe, two daring corpsmen carried my bunk back up into the tent where I spent the night in excruciating pain, bouncing up and down as the bombs hit. The pain seemed to build up to a peak then subside for a while, only to build up again. The next morning the tent was a mass of shreds where shrapnel from the bombs had passed through it. My diagnosis was first, second and third degree burns with numerous shrapnel wounds, a fractured skull and crushed feet. Sixty percent of my body was covered with burns. My wounds were dressed every day, and on the third day I heard that all the other *DeHaven* wounded had been flown to Espiritu Santo. I asked the corpsman dressing my wounds when I was to be transferred, and he informed me the doctors expected me to die any minute and didn't want to waste the space on the plane. Two days later I was flown out.

In Espiritu Santo the experience was quite different. A doctor Williams took charge of me and reduced the pain of my burns by spraying me with a mixture of paraffin and sulfa drugs. They cut up paraffin and put it into a flit gun (one used to spray bug killer), mixed in sulfa drugs and melted the mixture over a flame. Then they sprayed it on my burns which covered most of my torso and arms. The congealed mixture kept the air out and reduced the pain considerably. Doctor Williams worked on my ruptured ear drums and got them to heal together properly. I was still black with oil and hadn't been on my feet for ten days, so a trip to the shower was in the offing. Putting my feet on the ground was another very painful experience, but I somehow managed to walk to the shower which was a pipe coming out of a hill with a stream of water. The corpsman who led me to the place told me to watch the ground where I was walking and that he would watch for falling coconuts. I was still naked but didn't seem to mind the native women and children in the area.

In the quonset hut where I lay were Marines with malaria and bullet wounds in various parts of their bodies. Across from me was a Marine with ninety percent of his body burned but still living. The only place he wasn't burned was his feet, protected by field shoes while he flew through the air, a flaming torch from the top of a gas truck that had been hit by a bomb. Later he was Exhibit A while I was Exhibit B in the Auckland, New Zealand, Mobile Hospital #4 when visiting doctors came for a tour. Neither one of us was supposed to be alive.

This is not the end of my story since I could go on for hours with little incidents of interest. Strange as it may seem, while being transferred from Espiritu Santo to New Zealand on the U.S.S. *Tryon* (APH1) a First Class Fire Controlman stationed on that ship asked me about his brother, the Chief Fire Controlman who died on my left. Later at home on leave in Cincinnati, Ohio, I got a call from an Army major who was the brother of the Third Class Fire Controlman who died on my right that day on the *DeHaven*. They were the only two people to contact me about members of the crew.

My experience on the *DeHaven* shaped my attitude towards combat and my entire naval career which lasted thirty years. I retired as Captain on 30 June 1972.

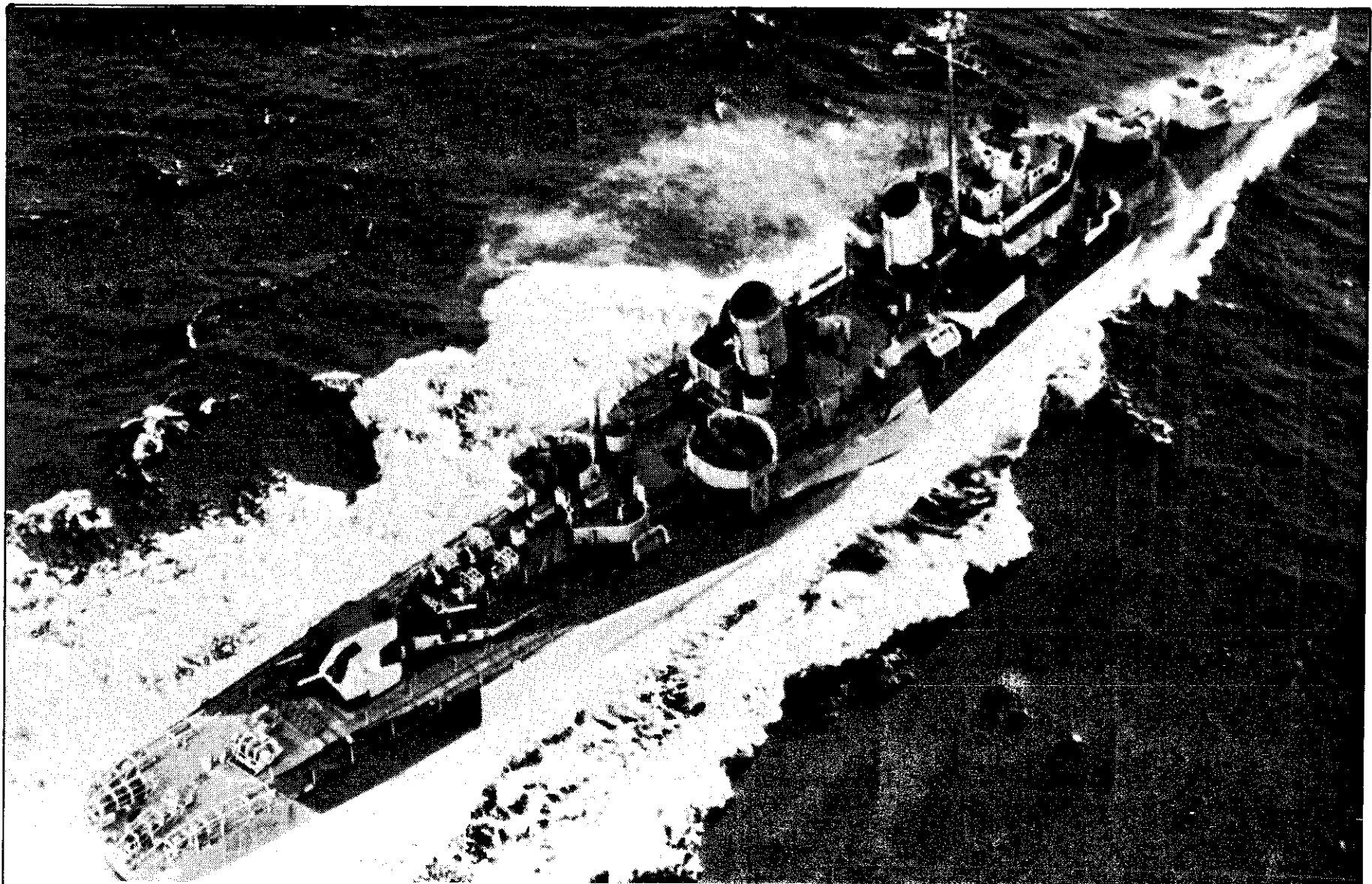
Do I believe in miracles? Very definitely! My wounds healed satisfactorily, and I required none of the scheduled plastic surgery or other rehabilitation normally applied. I was assigned to my second destroyer, the U.S.S. *Chauncey* (DD667), and reported to her commissioning detail in late May 1943. During the entire experience it never entered my mind that I wouldn't heal completely. It bears out the adage in the Bible, that "As ye believe so shall ye be!" God Bless America.

# # #

Editor's Notes:

1. The I.C. (interior communications) and Plotting Room on *Fletcher*-class destroyers was located on the centerline, one deck below the main deck in the forward part of the ship (below the bridge superstructure).
2. The computer was a massive mechanical device which generated bearing and elevation orders to the 5-inch guns. (LWH: 4'x3'x3')
3. "CACTUS" was the code word for Henderson Field on Guadalcanal Island.
4. BIEGEL, Charles N., FC3c
5. BORK, Edward (n), CFC

E. Andrew Wilde, Jr.  
Commander, USNR (Ret.)  
16 May 1996



The destroyer minelayer U.S.S. Tolman (DM-28), named after the commanding officer of the U.S.S. DeHaven (DD-469), Comdr. Charles E. Tolman, USN, who was killed when his ship was sunk by Japanese dive bombers off Guadalcanal on 1 February 1943. This view, taken after the commissioning on 27 October 1944, shows the minetracks which stretched aft from 'midships along both sides. Note that the depth charge projectors ("K"-guns) have been relocated to the "01" level, just forward of the after 5-inch gun mount. The Tolman's hull was that of a 2,200-ton Allen M. Sumner-class destroyer. (U.S. Navy photograph.)



**Commander**  
**CHARLES EDWARD TOLMAN**  
*United States Navy*

Charles Edward Tolman was born in Concord, Mass., on June 25, 1903. He was graduated from the Naval Academy and commissioned in June, 1925. He was promoted to Lieutenant (jg) on June 4, 1928; Lieutenant, June 1, 1935; Lieutenant Commander, August 1, 1939; and Commander (temporary) on August 1, 1942.

Commander Tolman served aboard the U.S.S. UTAH and later the U.S.S. WORDEN until 1927, when he reported to the Naval Torpedo Station, at Newport. He next went to the Submarine Base at New London, and then served aboard the submarines U.S.S. O-4 and U.S.S. S-22, in order. In 1932 he was ordered to the Naval Academy, and in 1934 he went back into the submarine service, aboard the U.S.S. S-46. In April, 1935 he was ordered to command the U.S.S. S-30. His next duty was in the Office of Chief of Naval Operations, and in July, 1939 he assumed command of another submarine, the U.S.S. SPEARFISH. In 1941 he became attached to the staff of Commander Submarines, Atlantic Fleet. He commanded the destroyer U.S.S. DE HAVEN from August, 1942 until her loss on February 1, 1943 in the Pacific, when he was officially reported as missing in action.

Commander Tolman held the American Defense Service Medal with Fleet Clasp; the Asiatic-Pacific Area Campaign Medal; the Purple Heart; and the Navy Cross, with the following citation:

"For extraordinary heroism against enemy Japanese forces in the Solomon Islands Area, January and February 1943. While skillfully directing his destroyer against reinforcements and supplies for hostile troops at Guadalcanal, Commander Tolman courageously operated his ship, as group leader, during bombardment of enemy held plantations on New Georgia Island and was directly responsible for demolition of important plantation buildings in addition to the large fires and explosions which were set off in adjacent munition dumps. Later, during a screening operation covering a troop landing, his ship was viciously attacked by eight Japanese dive bombers. Although a bomb struck the navigating bridge, stopping the ship dead in the water, Commander Tolman determinedly continued the vallant action until two internal explosions destroyed the DE HAVEN. By his outstanding personal valor and relentless fighting spirit, he contributed immeasurably to the destruction or evacuation of all Japanese forces on Guadalcanal."

The U.S.S. TOLMAN was launched on August 13, 1944 at the Bath Iron Works, Bath, Maine. The sponsor was Mrs. Helen Tolman, widow of the late Commander Tolman.

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*The U.S.S. Tolman (DM-28) was commissioned at the Boston Navy Yard on 27 October 1944. This page from the commissioning ceremony program is courtesy of Nancy Covino Klare.*



## A MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR JOSEPH A. COVINO

By Owen F. Hayes (DD-699)

On Sunday, February 7, 1993, a Fiftieth Annual Memorial Service to honor the memory of radio Seaman 1/c Joseph A. Covino was held aboard the Battleship Massachusetts in Fall River, Mass. Seaman Covino was one of 167 men lost (146 survived) aboard the Fletcher class destroyer USS DEHAVEN (DD-469) during the battle for Guadalcanal when DEHAVEN was struck and sunk by three bombs from Japanese aircraft. The USS DEHAVEN was commissioned just 133 days before her loss and Seaman Covino was just 16 years old at the time - both youngsters by any standard.

For the past 50 years the sister of Joseph Covino has held memorial services in his memory as well as contributing sums of money to Tin Can Sailors, Inc. in his name for the restoration and maintenance of the radio shack aboard destroyer JOSEPH P. KENNEDY, JR. (DD-850), which is in memorial status at Fall River, Mass. Though Tin Can Sailors are no longer headquartered aboard destroyer KENNEDY the radio shack is being kept up by volunteers and Battleship Cove workers to maintain a bright and clean room in Covino's honor.

A plaque is visible to visitors viewing the radio shack explaining the memorial and mentions the sponsors of this room as the Covino family and Nancy and Al Klare, sister and brother-in-law of Joseph Covino. Nancy and Al have been both members and supporters of Tin Can Sailors, Inc. since its inception and have been running the Mass. State Bull Sessions for many years.

A wreath was placed in front of Seaman Covino's name on the Memorial List

of more than 13,000 Massachusetts dead from World War II. The wreath was to have been cast upon the waters but due to cold weather and frozen water the wreath was instead placed in the Memorial Room aboard the battleship.

The Executive Director of the Battleship Cove, Capt. Guy A. Archambault, USN (Ret.), called for the colors, which were presented by the Tin Can Sailors Color Guard, followed by a brief eulogy, a bugler playing Taps, and then the presentation of the wreath. The benediction was given by a Navy chaplain.

Following the ceremony a coffee and cake social time was held in the wardroom so attendees could socialize and meet three of Joseph Covino's fellow crewmen who survived the sinking and were present for this occasion.

Then radioman John Donovan of Dorchester, Mass. (now 71), Chief Commissaryman Jim Garrison of Abington, Mass. (73), and Seaman 1/c William Cullity, of Kissimmee, Fla. (67), were the three survivors present to honor one of their mates. Bill Cullity, who flew up from Florida for the service, served in boot camp with Covino and was also just 16 years old when he enlisted in the Navy by a little deception of eradicating the correct age from his birth certificate.

Nancy Klare and husband Albert, a disabled Navy veteran of World War II, plan to continue the tradition of this memorial by placing annual "In Memoriam" ads with death notices in local newspapers of February 1 (the date of the sinking) each year.





U.S.S. DeHaven (DD-469)

List of Officers, 1 February 1943<sup>1</sup>

** <u>Tolman</u> , Charles E.	CDR	USN	Commanding Officer
** <u>Huntley</u> , John D.	LCDR	USN	Executive Officer
** <u>DeMers</u> , Adam W.	LT	USN	Gunnery Officer
** <u>Brown</u> , Ivan L.	LT	USN	Engineering Officer
* <u>Fields</u> , Archie R.	LT	USN	Ass't. Eng. Officer
** <u>Clark</u> , Robert S.	LT	USNR	First Lieutenant
** <u>Johnson</u> , Perry H.	LT	USNR	Damage Control Officer
** <u>Kimmelman</u> , Isadore E.	LT	USNR	Ass't. Eng. Officer
* <u>Rowan</u> , John J.	LTjg	USN	Communications Officer
* <u>Frese</u> , Bernard W.	ENS	USN	Ass't. Gunnery Officer
** <u>Foster</u> , William B.	ENS	USNR	
** <u>Huey</u> , Ralph L.	ENS	USNR	
<u>Williams</u> , Clem C.	ENS	USNR	
** <u>Bates</u> , John H.	LTjg(MC)	USNR	Medical Officer

\* \* \* \* \*

<sup>1</sup> Compiled from a computer-generated casualty report prepared after the war, a narrative by Ensign Clem C. Williams, USNR, recorded on 22 May 1943 and the recollections of surviving officers.

\* Wounded on 1 February 1943 when the ship was sunk by enemy dive-bombers south of Savo Island, Solomon Islands.

\*\* Killed on 1 February 1943.



U.S.S. DeHaven (DD-469)

Muster Roll of the Crew on February 1, 1943<sup>1</sup>

AALGAARD, Selmer O.	638-98-55	F2c	USNR
ACHESON, James D.	300-78-77	S2c	USN
AIELLO, Michael J.	706-24-44	S2c	USNR
**ALBERICO, Joseph M.	607-41-50	S2c	USNR
**ALLEN, Charles C.	623-19-76	S1c	USNR
**ALLEN, Solon L., Jr.	611-79-52	F1c	USNR
ANDERSON, Herbert S.	620-77-17	F2c	USNR
*ANDREWS, Roy Charles	100-36-34	CMM	USNR
**ANTOLOSKY, John (n)	652-62-89	S1c	USNR
ANUSKEVITZ, John C.	244-20-81	S1c	USN
AQUAFRESCA, Michael A.	666-45-23	S2c	USNR
**ARCHAMBEAU, Carl (n)	623-21-07	F1c	USNR
ARDAIZ, Carl P.	632-71-02	S1c	USNR
ARMSTRONG, Warren (n)	607-40-72	S2c	USNR
**ARTOWICZ, Theodore J.	706-19-25	S2c	USNR
**ASHWORTH, George E.	606-65-90	S2c	USNR
**AUGE, James J.	620-75-80	S2c	USNR
AUSTIN, Marvin G.	642-35-52	S2c	USNR
**AUTHIER, Charles H., Jr.	208-66-88	F1c	USN
AYCOCK, John C.	624-49-92	F2c	USNR
**AYERS, Herbert W.	204-69-87	S2c	USNR
BACK, Charles J.	280-01-61	S2c	USN
*BACON, Lawrence G.	283-31-51	PhM1 c	USN
**BAILEY, Walter E.	612-56-19	S2c	USNR
**BAKER, Edward S.	623-19-70	SOM3c	USNR
BAKER, Kenneth H.	652-62-84	F2c	USNR
BALDOSIER, Dale A.	620-77-78	F2c	USNR
*BALLEK, John (n)	224-99-79	S2c	USN
**BALUT, Andrew J.	666-45-02	F1c	USNR
**BANOVICH, Peter (n)	614-69-45	S2c	USNR
**BARKS, Charles W.	669-07-57	S1c	USNR
**BARKS, John W.	669-07-58	S1c	USNR
BARNES, Irven O.	393-50-63	S1c	USN
BARNES, James H.	272-4 0-06	TM2c	USN
**BARRETT, Arthur P., Jr.	208-67-20	E2c	USNR
**BARTLEY, John W.	706-24-48	F2c	USNR
**BARTONEK, Eugene J.	628-70-95	S2c	USNR
BATTS, James N.	634-45-22	S2c	USNR
**BAUGHMAN, George W., Jr.	287-22-44	GM3c	USN
**BAXTER, Arthur J.	706-36-62	F1c	USNR
*BEEMUS, Dale William	368-45-95	QM2c	USN
**BELHUMEUR, Normand P.	204-50-81	F1c	USN
BELMORE, Fred (n)	305-39-73	S2c	USNR
BENIT, Elmer G.	622-84-91	S2c	USNR
BENNETT, Harvey K.	305-39-49	S2c	USN

BERENDS, Elmer (n)	622-85-10	S2c	USNR
BERNARSKY, Metro (n)	244-20-60	S2c	USN
BERNDT, Ralph T.	611-22-16	F2c	USNR
*BETTENCOURT, Joseph	204-70-08	S2c	USNR
BIBBO, John L.	202-40-99	S2c	USN
**BIEGEL, Charles N.	632-51-82	FC3c	USN
**BIGGS, Harold L.	612-56-00	S2c	USNR
**BIGLOW, Robert (n)	638-67-92	S2c	USNR
BILODEAU, Ernest G.	204-70-12	S2c	USNR
**BIRKENSHAW, Jerome (n)	633-32-23	S1c	USNR
**BIRTWISTLE, James J.	706-37-54	MM3c	USNR
BISHOP, Austin C.	634-44-64	F2c	USNR
**BLACKWELL, Cletus E.	337-89-43	S2c	USN
BLUNK, Charles W.	634-44-65	S2c	USNR
*BODAK, John (n)	642-35-65	S1c	USNR
BOGARD, Thomas H.	634-45-20	S2c	USNR
BOGGS, Joe C.	634-45-23	S2c	USNR
*BOLAND, Maurice H., Jr.	666-44-51	S2c	USNR
**BOLTON, Harry A.	342-25-09	MM1c	USN
**BONHAM, Glenn M.	305-40-12	S1c	USNR
BORGLUM, Harry J.	638-99-60	S1c	USNR
**BORK, Edward (n)	250-36-86	CFC	USN
BOWEN, Vernon W.	291-75-14	F2c	USNR
*BOWERS, Samuel L.	614-68-77	F2c	USNR
**BOWMAN, Forest (n)	287-12-63	EM1c	USN
**BOYLE, Lawrence J.	706-37-58	S2c	USNR
**BRACHA, Melvin G.	393-49-69	RM2c	USN
**BRADLEY, Stephen M., Jr.	607-41-25	S1c	USNR
**BRADY, Charles W.	224-99-34	S2c	USN
**BRANT, Frederick J.	706-36-65	S2c	USNR
BRASSARD, Gerard A.	204-69-77	S2c	USNR
**BRAUN, Eric W.	706-37-59	F1c	USNR
**BRAY, Wylie R.	341-95-85	EM1c	USN
*BREINING, Albert Louis	706-36-66	S2c	USN
*BRESLEY, William E., Jr.	706-37-60	F2c	USNR
**BRICKERD, John M., Jr.	256-33-58	S1c	USN
**BRIEAR, George H.	620-77-32	F1c	USNR
**BRIGGS, Robert G.	250-38-58	CY	USN
BRITTAIN, Francis R.	654-25-91	S1c	USNR
**BROCHU, Walter R.	202-33-61	S2c	USN
**BROOKS, Raymond L.	623-20-22	S2c	USNR
**BROWER, Edward R.	650-94-86	S2c	USNR
**BROWN, Ernest F.	612-36-44	S2c	USNR
BROWN, Luttie A., Jr.	626-74-99	S1c	USNR
BROWNSTEIN, Max (n)	706-36-06	S2c	USNR
BRUNK, Raymond E.	279-55-56	WT1c	USN
BUDNIK, Lucian S.	642-35-86	F2c	USNR
BURNS, Richard M.	204-50-95	S2c	USN
BURROUGH, "C" "E"	295-43-92	EM2c	USN
BURTO, William C.	600-43-43	RDM3c	USNR

BUTTERWORTH, Robert H.	244-21-30	S2c	USN
**BYLOW, Vernon E.	212-81-28	S2c	USN
CALTAGIRONE, Theodore C.	706-23-52	S2c	USNR
**CAMMARATA, Philip J.	300-31-19	S2c	USN
**CAMPBELL, Neil J.	224-99-53	S2c	USN
CAMPION, John T.	224-99-81	S2c	USN
**CANTWELL, William J.	202-41-21	S2c	USN
**CARINA, William G.	706-36-71	F1c	USNR
**CARLSON, Edwin D.	204-69-75	F1c	USNR
CARR, Edmund W.	618-27-11	S1c	USNR
CARROLL, Joseph M.	244-21-26	S2c	USN
*CARROLL, Richard Leonard	212-81-85	S2c	USN
**CARTRIGHT, William E.	342-28-55	S1c	USN
**CARVALHO, Antone (n)	204-71-06	S2c	USNR
**CARVALHO, Benedict M.	607-43-08	F1c	USNR
*CASTELLANO, Alfred A.	600-19-50	RM3c	USNR
CAVENAUGH, Dewey E.	262-67-61	GM2c	USN
**CHALMERS, William J.	244-20-53	S2c	USN
CHAMBERLAIN, Irving L.	204-70-23	S2c	USNR
**CHAPPELL, William R.	279-73-52	S1c	USN
**CHARETTE, Paul R.	607-46-04	F1c	USNR
CHRONISTER, Joseph S.	628-20-25	RM3c	USNR
*CIFELLI, Michael David	706-36-73	S2c	USNR
CIMO, Philip (n)	646-71-32	RM3c	USNR
CIOFFI, Ralph S.	666-44-96	S2c	USNR
**CLARK, Carl D.	632-10-70	S1c	USNR
**CLARY, Gilbert J.	341-88-15	MM1c	USN
**CLUGSTON, John W.	654-38-59	S1c	USNR
CLUTTER, Karl W.	311-68-69	S1c	USN
**CLUTTER, Leroy A.	311-61-69	S1c	USN
**COCHRAN, Henry H.	552-04-66	S2c	USNR
COLBURN, Alexander C.	607-42-97	F2c	USNR
**COLLINS, Arthur A.	244-20-77	F1c	USN
**COMEAX, Joseph D.	274-84-59	S2c	USN
COMPTON, Raymond C.	670-81-71	S2c	USNR
CONINE, William H., Jr.	706-37-67	S2c	USNR
CONNER, Robert E.	328-84-83	S1c	USN
**COOK, Kenneth J.	372-20-30	EM2c	USN
COOPER, Frank B., Jr.	607-39-06	F2c	USNR
**COOPER, Walter J.	244-21-25	F1c	USN
*CORLEY, Ralph George	337-85-49	SOM3c	USN
COSTA, John J., Jr.	607-40-62	F2c	USNR
COUGHLIN, Arthur W.	204-69-97	S2c	USNR
**COUGHLIN, Charles J.	202-41-08	S2c	USN
**COVINO, Joseph A.	202-41-13	S2c	USN
CRANE, Hubert E.	642-36-10	S1c	USNR
**CROTEAU, Thomas E.	607-46-03	S2c	USNR
CRUDGINGTON, Robert A.	295-63-74	S1c	USN
CULLITY, William M.	202-39-98	S2c	USN
**CURRIER, David H.	607-41-01	S2c	USNR

CURRIER, Frank R.	204-69-56	S2c	USNR
**CUSHING, Daniel F., Jr.	202-40-86	S2c	USN
**CUSHING, Thomas M.	224-99-82	S2c	USN
**CUSHMAN, Lawrence W.	207-11-06	SM1c	USN
DAHMS, Horace (n)	706-37-71	S2c	USNR
*D'AMBROSIO, Frank Joseph	706-37-72	S2c	USNR
*D'ANNA, Joseph J.	646-81-05	RM2c	USNR
DAVIDSON, Carl Wilburn	626-28-08	S1c	USNR
DAVIDSON, Harold E.	626-62-06	S1c	USNR
**DAVIDSON, Howard L., Jr.	266-48-63	MM3c	USN
**DAVIS, Dwight G.	337-28-51	RM3c	USN
**DAVIS, Frank G., Jr.	607-43-57	S2c	USNR
**DAVIS, Kenneth W.	337-30-02	Cox	USN
DAVIS, Thomas H.	204-69-82	S2c	USNR
DAWSON, Lyman G.	668-77-92	SOM3c	USNR
**DAY, Chartley B., Jr.	342-08-99	GM3c	USN
**DEANGELIS, Earl A.	607-43-18	S2c	USNR
**DE BERNARDO, Marco L.	224-99-55	S2c	USN
*DELLA VENTURA, James V.	642-35-79	F2c	USNR
**DE LUCA, Peter W.	706-36-81	S2c	USNR
DENEHY, Edward J.	202-41-17	S2c	USN
**DENNERY, John E.	244-20-72	S1c	USN
**DE VORE, Thomas L.	662-70-05	F1c	USNR
DICESARE, Joseph (n)	614-48-14	SOM3c	USNR
**DICKINSON, Donald B.	321-32-17	M1c	USN
**DI LUCCA, John (n)	214-66-98	MM1c	USN
**DISTER, George W.	614-04-97	MoMM2c	USNR
*DI TULLO, Joseph William	706-36-82	F2c	USNR
**DIXON, Cletus H.	620-16-09	MM3c	USNR
DONOVAN, John J.	607-45-90	S2c	USNR
**DORAN, Edward J.	244-21-29	S2c	USN
DOUGHERTY, Walter (n)	360-02-05	Cox	USN
DOULAS, Nick (n)	654-31-86	F2c	USNR
*DRISCOLL, Charles Joseph	607-39-42	F2c	USNR
**DUKE, William R.	706-24-72	S2c	USNR
**EASTWOOD, Harry M.	238-57-74	TM1c	USN
*ELAM, Leonard Owen	376-62-91	TM3c	USN
FAJARDO, Lorenzo (n)	150-06-38	OS1c	USFR
FAULK, Robert W.	356-45-15	S1c	USN
**FELTER, Frank C.	358-55-01	MM1c	USN
**FINCHER, John E.	356-08-38	MM1c	USN
*FIREBAUGH, Vincent C.	413-49-86	RM2c	USNR
*FORD, Egbert Arthur	385-70-09	S1c	USN
FOYDA, Alexander S.	207-29-49	TM3c	USN
FULK, Robert, Jr.	337-31-66	Cox	USN
GARRETT, Clarence L.	265-83-57	BM2c	USN
GARRISON, James W.	279-56-59	SC2c	USN
GAY, William G.	262-50-78	S1c	USN
**GEIGER, Clair J.	316-47-77	CGM	USN
**GIBSON, Bertrand E.	337-30-79	S1c	USN

**GLADD, Jack N.	355-73-94	CWT	USN
**GOMBOS, Joseph	610-95-22	EM3c	USNR
*GONZALES, Rafael (n)	497-97-73	CK1c	USN
**GREENE, Everett A.	664-10-17	Y3c	USNR
**GRISSOM, "O" "C"	287-54-36	SG2c	USN
**GROUND, Orla L.	372-12-45	MM3c	USN
**HALL, Arlis I.	274-46-34	MM3c	USN
**HALLQUIST, William L.	328-62-57	Cox	USN
HANCHETT, George E., Jr.	328-54-74	S1c	USN
*HAPPICH, Francis William	644-20-88	Bkr3c	USNR
*HAUGEN, Roy (n)	410-95-16	SK2c	USNR
**HEIDEMANN, Reuben F.	328-64-92	MM3c	USN
**HENDRICKSON, Imanuel (n)	393-54-64	SF3c	USN
**HIGDON, Harley R.	321-36-33	MM1c	USN
**HOLLAND, Michael (n)	283-06-16	CTM	USN
**HOLTE, Victor R.	328-64-23	SM3c	USN
HOPKINS, Herbert A.	382-22-21	CM1c	USN
**HOUGH, Warren C.	206-90-61	SM1c	USN
**HUMPAGE, Howard W.	223-19-77	MM1c	USN
HURLEY, Floyd H.	262-36-16	GM3c	USN
HYRE, James L.	258-31-42	S1c	USN
**JACKSON, Jimmie L.	356-22-35	MA1c	USN
**JOHNSON, Joe M.	267-76-02	CSF	USN
**JONES, Willard F.	624-32-02	TM3c	USNR
KAUFELT, William E., Jr.	658-40-66	SOM3c	USNR
*KELLY, William Hayes	662-40-99	RDM3c	USNR
**KORPETER, Michael (n)	212-48-54	GM2c	USN
**KOSA, Frank S.	223-81-08	MM2c	USN
KOWALSKI, Stephen R.	250-31-11	CBM	USN
**KRUEGER, Albert F.	368-28-84	MM3c	USN
LA FERR, Henry E.	380-77-42	MM1c	USN
LAINE, John E.	212-10-07	CBM	USN
LAKE, Ronda, Jr.	287-29-45	B2c	USN
*LEE, Richard Kermit	611-32-19	FC3c	USNR
**LEE, Robert E.	628-48-90	SC3c	USNR
*LEWIS, Calvin Judson	274-69-94	S2c	USN
**LUSTER, Clarence (n)	640-35-29	MA3c	USNR
**MARSHALL, Thomas H.	266-57-71	EM3c	USN
**MARTIN, Edward (n)	385-88-61	S1c	USN
**MARTIN, Milford C.	287-24-87	WT2c	USN
**MATTHEWS, Victor Y.	223-61-62	MM1c	USN
**McALISTER, Farmer L.	346-45-84	CMM	USN
**McAULEY, Claude C.	372-15-76	MM3c	USN
**McCALL, Eugene B.	360-02-58	S1c	USN
*McPHERSON, Albert Edward	336-38-28	CGStd	USN
**MESSER, Robert W.	342-44-74	F1c	USN
*MILLS, Reginald (n)	337-12-33	GM2c	USN
**MURPHY, David, Jr.	666-06-77	EM2c	USNR
**MUSHELL, Peter (n)	337-39-67	Cox	USN
**NATION, Edward H.	272-39-67	MM3c	USN

**NELSON, Leslie V.	638-75-73	S2c	USNR
**NEVITT, James L.	287-23-58	MM1c	USN
NOBLE, Quentine R.	287-22-96	FC1c	USN
*NOTTINGHAM, Jack Robert	624-92-55	S2c	USNR
**OLIVER, John D.	299-91-86	MM2c	USN
**PATTON, Willie L.	604-71-01	MA3c	USNR
*PIERCE, Arthur James	636-73-52	MA2c	USNR
**POOL, Robert W.	337-59-27	S1c	USN
**POWELL, Vester H.	346-62-47	MM2c	USN
PRICE, James T.	356-68-42	S1c	USN
**PUMPHREY, Clyde C.	382-58-99	F1c	USN
**RAMEY, Glenn A.	337-21-75	MM3c	USN
**RANDALL, Lewis D.	385-79-78	MM3c	USN
**REDISKE, Manley A.	385-89-07	FCM2c	USN
**REHN, Ray P.	413-42-39	MM3c	USN
ROSENFELD, Emanuel W.	604-17-92	S1c	USNR
ROYER, Elmer L.	337-54-93	F2c	USN
*SAVAGE, Jones (n)	266-07-35	FC3c	USN
**SCOTT, Franklin A.	266-00-77	MA1c	USN
**SCOTT, Marvin W.	656-09-11	WT2c	USN
SELEN, Alden A.	328-13-84	CM	USN
SHINGLEDECKER, Jay V.	320-98-55	CY	USN
*SHOWE, Jean William	258-19-01	WT2c	USN
**SIGNS, Howard H.	311-20-38	Cox	USNR
**SIMPSON, Ivan A.	375-66-08	CRM	USN
SINCLAIR, Arthur M.	279-66-54	EM3c	USN
**SLATSKY, Mike (n)	271-63-28	CQM	USN
SMEDLY, Harry S.	382-32-33	S1c	USN
SMITH, Raymond K.	626-75-33	S2c	USNR
SPEERS, Edward B.	405-77-66	GM1c	USN
STEVENS, Gerald F.	37207-79	EM1c	USN
*STEVENSON, William Robert	291-58-57	SK3c	USN
**SUCHOMEL, John O.	320-95-25	BM1c	USN
SUGDEN, John G.	664-44-77	EM3c	USNR
**SWALLING, Cato H.	414-49-66	MM2c	USNR
**SZEBELEDY, Louis (n)	214-71-43	CPHm	USN
**TAPLEY, Edwin H.	268-42-21	PhM2c	USN
TOFFERI, Tuure Ludvig	666-44-97	F2c	USNR
**TYLER, John L., Jr.	265-98-85	GM2c	USN
**UPCHURCH, John R.	261-61-62	CWT	USN
**VIEIRA, Gilbert (n)	607-43-32	S2c	USNR
WARD, Emil J.	410-70-00	TM2c	USN
WARREN, Milton (n)	633-12-61	E2c	USNR
**WEBB, Eugene U.	266-12-45	MM3c	USN
**WELLS, Rupert A.	337-29-01	MM3c	USN
**WHITE, Robert L.	602-15-86	MM3c	USNR
**WHITEHEAD, Irvin L.	395-32-05	EM1c	USN
WILBUR, Frank E., Jr.	201-93-99	F1c	USN
**WILLIAMS, Dewey (n)	273-89-82	CEM	USN
WILLIAMS, Leroy (n)	636-73-73	MA3c	USNR



WILSON, Maurice E., Jr.	300-31-14	MM2c	USN
*WILSON, Robert Thomas	385-83-79	F1c	USN
**WRAY, Charles L., Jr.	299-60-81	BM2c	USN
**YOUNG, Chauncey A.	207-15-30	WT1c	USN
*ZAILSKAS, Vitold Frank	223-17-30	RM1c	USN

\* \* \* \* \*

Notes:

1 Source: The ship's personnel diary on microfilm at the National Archives. Report Of Changes sheets through 1/16/43 were examined, and the muster roll for the quarter ending 12/31/42 was updated to reflect transfers, men received and changes in rate.

\* Wounded (\*\* Killed) when the ship was sunk by Japanese dive bombers on February 1, 1943, according to a machine-generated casualty report at the National Archives prepared by the Bureau of Naval Personnel after the war.

Summary of Casualties:

	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>Not Wounded</u>	<u>Complement on 2/1/43</u>
Officer	10	3	1	14
Enlisted	158	37	105	300
TOTALS	168	40	106	314

Reconciliation to the ship's casualty lists included with the action report of 2/19/43:

BALLEK, John, F1c, and BOWERS, Samuel L., F2c, shown above as wounded, are included on the ship's unwounded list.

BARTLEY, John W., F1c, shown above as killed, is included on the ship's wounded list.

BODAK, John, S1c, is shown above as wounded to agree with the ship's personnel diary entry on 2/16/43 recording his transfer to the hospital ship USS Solace. He is not included in the casualty report at the National Archives nor in the ship's wounded list.

E. A. Wilde, Jr.  
May, 2000



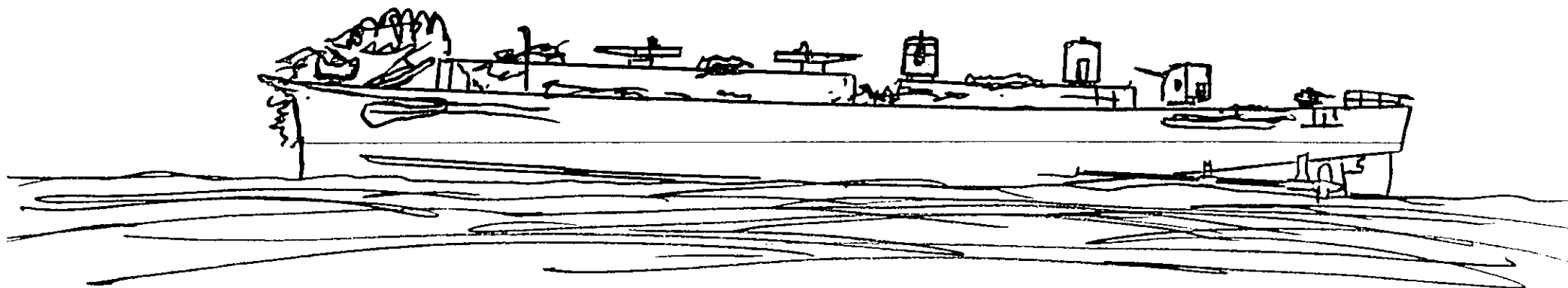
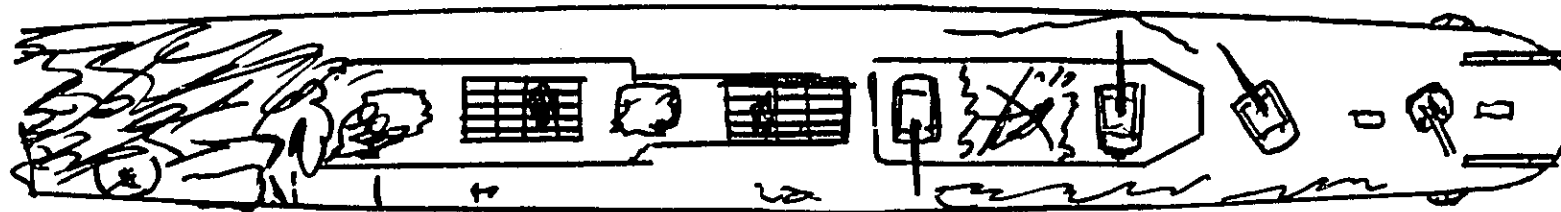
Naval Historical Center  
Washington Navy Yard  
901 M Street, S.E.  
Washington, DC 20374-5060

## USS DE HAVEN

Approximate Configuration of Wreck

July 1992

Deck View & Port Side



Rough Scale: 1" = 30'

C.R. Haberlein Jr, 29/10/92





*The monument overlooking Purvis Bay, an inlet in Florida Island, about twenty miles northeast of Henderson Field on Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands. Dedicated on April 30, 1944, this bronze plaque reads: "In memory of the officers and men of the United States Navy and Allied Navies who gave their lives - - Iron Bottom Bay - - 1942-43 - - Dedicated by Members of the Iron Bottom Bay Club - - Port Purvis, Solomons Islands - - 20 March 1944." U.S. Navy ships lost in the vicinity include seven cruisers and fifteen destroyers. (Official U.S. Navy photograph taken in 1945.)*



HOLD FOR RELEASE  
MORNING NEWSPAPERS  
JUNE 5, 1944

## PLAQUE DEDICATED TO OFFICERS AND MEN LOST IN "IRON BOTTOM BAY"

A bronze plaque, the first and only battle memorial so far erected in the Solomons Islands, was dedicated April 30, 1944, to the officers and men of the United States and Allied Navies who died in the fierce battles in "Iron Bottom Bay."

The plaque was unveiled on a small palm-studded hill overlooking Purvis Bay, inlet in Florida Island, British Solomons Islands. On the hill now stands the Iron Bottom Bay Club, an officers' recreation center built by the Seabees. In the bay below, approximately a half million tons of ships of the U.S. Navy, and of the enemy lie on the bottom. It was there that such noble men of war as the cruisers ASTORIA, VINCENNES and CHICAGO were sunk in battle. About 270,000 tons of Jap ships sank there.

The Reverend James Edwards, representing the Anglican Bishop of Melanesia, unveiled the memorial before a gathering of Naval officers and enlisted men on the hill, site of the original episcopal residence of the Bishop of Melanesia, which was dismantled by the Japs. The land is owned by the Church of England. A Protestant and a Catholic chaplain of the fleet gave the invocation and benediction.

Rear Admiral Robert W. Hayler, U.S.N., of 800 East Washington Street, Muncie, Indiana, who participated in the last sea action fought in Iron Bottom Bay -- the Battle of Tassafaronga, November 30, 1942 -- spoke briefly. He paid tribute to "all those members of the Allied land, air and sea forces who in the beginning fought against such fearful odds and in every case accomplished what they set out to do."

"Our enemy overran Tulagi early in April, 1942" Rear Admiral Hayler began. "On May 4, just two years ago, one of our carrier task forces struck Tulagi and sent to the bottom some four ships -- thus starting a series of actions which resulted literally in paving the bottom of the sea in this vicinity with ships.

"On July fourth of the same year, the Japanese landed in considerable strength on Guadalcanal and a little more than a month later, on August 7th, our troops landed here and at Guadalcanal. It was many months thereafter before we had forces and equipment really adequate for the tasks assigned us.

"It is altogether fitting," Rear Admiral Hayler continued, "that this tablet be erected in the Purvis Bay Area, because it was on this side where our troops first landed and where we suffered our greatest losses."

Addressing Reverend Mr. Edwards, Rear Admiral Hayler said:

"You and your associates will have no difficulty in remembering those early days. And since your work will continue long after ours is done, we give this memorial into your keeping. In so doing we know that it will remain a lasting tribute to those for whom it is dedicated, and a source of inspiration and courage for those who come hereafter."

Reverend Mr. Edwards said in reply that he was proud to accept in the name of his Bishop the "sacred duty of caring for the shrine. It will be cared for with respect love and dignity. God grant that we may always be inspired by their deeds."

The plaque carries this inscription: "In memory of the officers and men of the United States Navy and Allied Navies who gave their lives -- Iron Bottom Bay -- 1942-43 -- Dedicated by Members of the Iron Bottom Bay Club -- Port Purvis, Solomons Islands -- 20 March 1944".

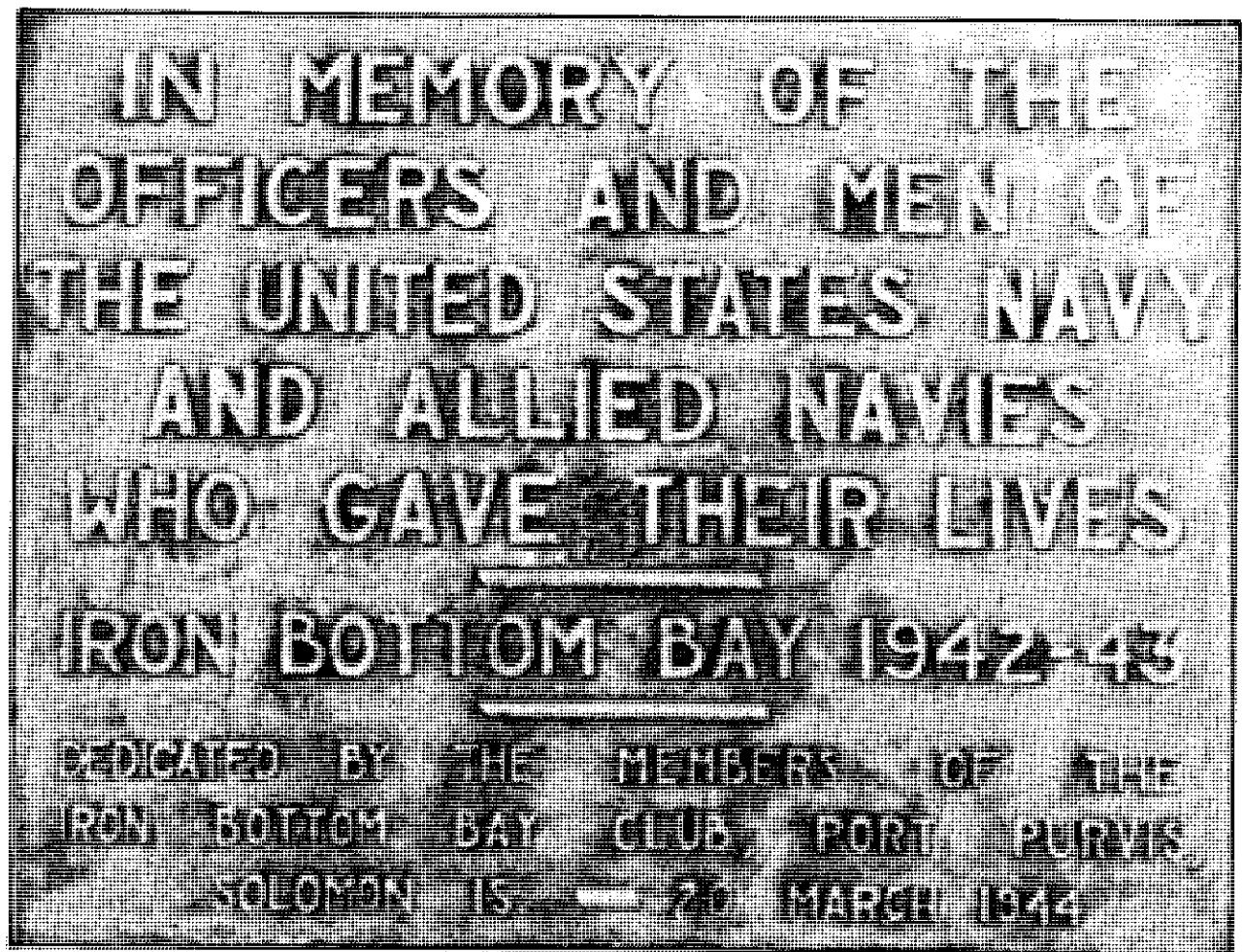
United States ships that went down in the Iron Bottom Bay and vicinity were: ASTORIA, QUINCY, VINCENNES, ATLANTA, JUNEAU, NORTHAMPTON and CHICAGO, cruisers; JARVIS, USS BLUE, DUNCAN, BARTON, CUSHING, LAFFEY, MONSSEN, PRESTON, WALKE, BENHAM, DEHAVEN, and AARON WARD, all destroyers; the destroyer transports COLHOUN, GREGORY, LITTLE, the tanker KANAWHA; the transport JOHN PENN; fleet tug SEMINOLE; two cargo ships and four PT boats. The Australian cruiser CANBERRA also was lost there.

Japanese ships sunk in the area include two battleships, three cruisers, eleven destroyers, eight transports and seven other auxiliaries.

Captain Andrew G. Shepard, U.S.N., 235 Cobbs Hill Drive, Rochester, New York, first president of the Club, composed the words on the plaque. Frank Czajkowski, Quartermaster, Second Class, USNR, of 20 Milton Avenue, Amsterdam, New York, designed the lettering. A fleet tender made the plaque.

The Club was an outgrowth of several small and inadequate officers' recreation centers-- the Club Des Slot, the APD Beach and the PT base recreation center -- to which officers came between battles of the Solomons. Rear Admiral A. Staunton Merrill, U.S.N., of Natchez, Mississippi, formerly a Task Force Commander in the South Pacific, is credited with the initiative in the movement to build the club. He since has been ordered to Washington as Director of the Navy's Office of Public Relations. Captain Grayson B. Carter, U.S.N., El Cordova Hotel, Coronado, California, is currently president of the Club, and was present at the unveiling.





*"For us who were there, or whose friends were there, Guadalcanal is not a name but an emotion, recalling desperate fights in the air, furious night naval battles, frantic work at supply or construction, savage fighting in the sodden jungle, nights broken by screaming bombs and deafening explosions of naval shells."*

- Commander James C. Shaw, the major contributor to Volume V of Samuel Eliot Morison's History of United States Naval Operations in World War II: The Struggle for Guadalcanal (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1949). Rear Admiral Shaw, USN (Ret.) died on December 4, 1988.

Editor's Note: Rear Admiral Shaw's widow, Elizabeth R. P. Shaw, has graciously shared with me the letters her first husband, Commander Van O. Perkins, USN, wrote in 1944 relating how he arranged the dedication ceremony for this monument at Purvis Bay, Florida Island. The intent was "to make this a permanent part of America," in recognition of the hard fighting and great personal sacrifices which characterized the Guadalcanal Campaign. Commander Perkins was killed in action aboard the U.S.S. Birmingham (CL-62) on October 24, 1944, during the invasion of the Philippines.

E. Andrew Wilde, Jr.  
March, 1995



The Monument at Purvis Bay, Florida Island,  
Solomon Islands, as it looked in August, 1993.  
(Dedicated on April 30, 1944)



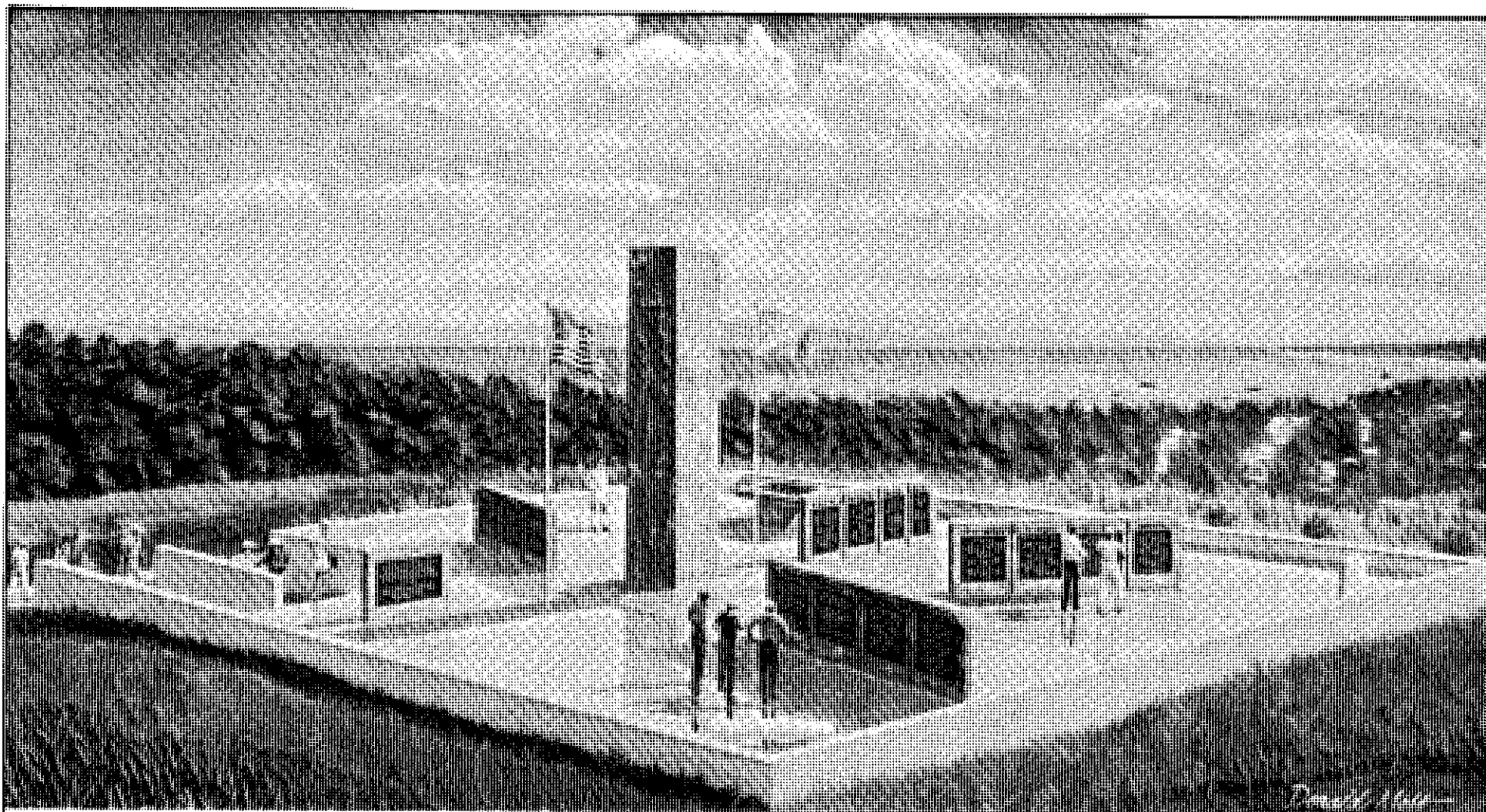
Photograph courtesy of Joseph G. Micek, AUS, treasurer of the Guadalcanal Solomon Islands War Memorial Foundation. Mr. Micek reports that the Officer's Club at the top of the small hill no longer stands, but that the area immediately around the monument is fairly well kept up. (EAW)



*"They fought together as brothers in arms; they died together and now they sleep side by side. To them we have a solemn obligation - the obligation to insure that their sacrifice will help make this a better and safer world in which to live."*

*- Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, USN, at The Surrender on board the U.S.S. Missouri (BB-63) in Tokyo Bay, 2 September 1945.*





The American WWII Memorial overlooking Point Cruz and Iron Bottom Sound, Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands, was dedicated on August 7, 1992, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the landings there by the U.S. Marines in World War II. About 20,000 people attended the ceremony, including many service personnel and over 500 foreign visitors. Many of the local residents walked for days in order to witness the dedication. Panels list the U.S. and Allied ships lost or damaged in the campaign and describe the seven naval battles fought in nearby waters. The polished red granite used in the walls with the panels and in the 24-foot high pylons were delivered to the site by the Royal Australian Navy. The Guadalcanal-Solomon Islands War Memorial Foundation raised \$500,000 and the U.S. Government authorized \$750,000 to cover construction costs. (Picture and panel inscriptions courtesy of Joseph G. Nick, the Foundation's Treasurer and Project Manager.)

WALL: 2 - TITLE: VESSELS SUNK OR DAMAGED I  
04/25/1991 PANEL 106 - TYPE D - FACE L

U.S. AND ALLIED NAVAL VESSELS  
SUNK DURING THE GUADALCANAL CAMPAIGN  
7 AUGUST 1942 - 9 FEBRUARY 1943

AIRCRAFT CARRIERS

HORNET, WASP

HEAVY CRUISERS

ASTORIA, CHICAGO, NORTHAMPTON, QUINCY,  
VINCENNES, CANBERRA (ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY)

LIGHT CRUISERS

ATLANTA, JUNEAU

DESTROYERS

BARTON, BENHAM, BLUE, CUSHING,  
DE HAVEN, DUNCAN, JARVIS, LAFFEY,  
MEREDITH, MONSSEN, O'BRIEN,  
PORTER, PRESTON, WALKE

MOTOR TORPEDO BOATS

PT-37, PT-43, PT-44, PT-111,  
PT-112, PT-123

TRANSPORTS

COLHOUN, GEORGE F. ELLIOTT,  
GREGORY, LITTLE

FLEET TUG SEMINOLE



U.S. AND ALLIED NAVAL VESSELS  
DAMAGED DURING THE GUADALCANAL CAMPAIGN  
7 AUGUST 1942 - 9 FEBRUARY 1943

BATTLESHIPS

NORTH CAROLINA  
SOUTH DAKOTA

AIRCRAFT CARRIERS

ENTERPRISE, SARATOGA

HEAVY CRUISERS

CHESTER, MINNEAPOLIS, NEW ORLEANS,  
PENSACOLA, PORTLAND,  
SALT LAKE CITY, SAN FRANCISCO

LIGHT CRUISERS

BOISE, HELENA, SAN JUAN,  
ACHILLES (ROYAL NEW ZEALAND NAVY)

DESTROYERS

AARON WARD, BUCHANAN, FARENHOLT,  
GWIN, HUGHES, LA VALETTE, MAHAN,  
MUGFORD, O'BANNON, PATTERSON,  
RALPH TALBOT, SMITH, STERETT

DESTROYER MINESWEEPER ZANE

CORVETTE

KIWI (ROYAL NEW ZEALAND NAVY)

MOTOR TORPEDO BOAT PT-59

TRANSPORTS

BARNETT, ZEILIN

CARGO SHIPS

ALCHIBA, ALHENA

SEAPLANE TENDER MC FARLAND



WALL: 1 - TITLE - THE NAVAL CAMPAIGN  
04/25/1991 PANEL 104 - TYPE C - FACE R

#### THE NAVAL CAMPAIGN

FROM THE INITIAL LANDINGS ON 7 AUGUST 1942 TO THE JAPANESE EVACUATION OF GUADALCANAL IN FEBRUARY 1943, THE U.S. AND THE JAPANESE NAVIES WERE ENGAGED IN SEVEN SPECIFIC NAVAL BATTLES. IN ADDITION, THROUGHOUT THE CAMPAIGN, NUMEROUS SMALLER NAVAL ACTIONS TOOK PLACE INVOLVING CRUISERS, DESTROYERS, NAVAL AIRCRAFT, MOTOR TORPEDO BOATS AND SUBMARINES IN WHICH PLANES AND SHIPS OF BOTH SIDES WERE DAMAGED OR SUNK. SO MANY JAPANESE AND AMERICAN SHIPS OF ALL CLASSES WERE SUNK, INCLUDING TRANSPORTS AND CARGO SHIPS, THAT THE WATER AREA BETWEEN GUADALCANAL AND FLORIDA ISLAND BECAME KNOWN AS "IRONBOTTOM SOUND."

THE FIRST SIX ENGAGEMENTS WERE MAJOR NAVAL BATTLES: FOUR OF THESE WERE NIGHT GUNFIRE ACTIONS AND TWO WERE CARRIER-AIR BATTLES. THE SEVENTH (RENNELL ISLAND) WAS A TYPICAL SEA-AIR BATTLE SIMILAR TO MANY OTHERS FOUGHT DURING THE GUADALCANAL CAMPAIGN, BUT THE ONLY ONE OF SUFFICIENT MAGNITUDE TO BE RECORDED IN AMERICAN NAVAL HISTORY WITH A NAME OF ITS OWN.

1. SAVO ISLAND, 9 AUGUST 1942
2. THE EASTERN SOLOMONS, 24-25 AUGUST
3. CAPE ESPERANCE, 11-12 OCTOBER
4. THE SANTA CRUZ ISLANDS, 26-27 OCTOBER
5. NAVAL BATTLE OF GUADALCANAL, 12-15 NOVEMBER
6. TASSAFARONGA, 30 NOVEMBER
7. RENNELLS ISLAND, 29-30 JANUARY 1943



WALL: 2 - TITLE: VESSELS SUNK OR DAMAGED III  
04/25/1991 PANEL 108 - TYPE C - FACE L

JAPANESE NAVAL VESSELS  
SUNK OR DAMAGED DURING THE  
GUADALCANAL CAMPAIGN

<u>SHIP</u>	<u>SUNK</u>	<u>DAMAGED</u>
BATTLESHIPS	2	
AIRCRAFT CARRIERS		1
LIGHT CARRIERS	1	1
HEAVY CRUISERS	3	5
LIGHT CRUISERS	1	2
DESTROYERS	11	20
SUBMARINES	6	
TRANSPORTS	13	
CARGO SHIPS	5	



The U.S.S. DeHaven (DD-469) in World War II

Photograph Credits:

<u>Description</u>	<u>Source Code/Ident. No.</u>	
Sponsor, Miss Helen N. DeHaven	NA	19-N-38366
Christening, Bath, Maine, 6/28/42	NA	19-N-38368
Launching, Bath, 6/28/42	NA	19-N-38362
Afloat after launching (bow view)	NA	19-N-38361
After launching, full length view	NA	19-N-38360
Stbd. beam off Savo Is., 1/30/43	NA	80-G-284577
LCT-181 from <u>Fletcher</u> (DD-445) 2/1/43	NA	80-G-284581
<u>Nicholas</u> (DD-449), port bow, 5/28/42	NA	19-N-36881
LCT-181 alongside <u>Fletcher</u> , 2/1/43	RWP	N-4813
<u>Fletcher</u> , aerial, stbd. bow, 7/18/42	NA	19-N-31243
20-mm Oerlikon mount, May 1942	NA	19-N-31965
Twin 40-mm Bofors mount, April 1944	RWP	N-6569A
USS <u>Tolman</u> (DM-28), aerial, 10/44	NA	19-N-100030
Monument, Purvis Bay, Fla. Is., 1944	NA	80-G-275700
Monument plaque (on above)	NA	80-G-240318

\* \* \* \* \*

Key to Sources:

NA    National Archives II  
      8601 Adelphi Road  
      College Park, MD 20740-6001  
      Still Picture ref.: (301) 713-6625, Ext. 234  
      (Request addresses/price lists of private vendors)

RWP   Real War Photos, P.O. Box 728, Hammond, IN 46325

E. A. Wilde, Jr.  
July, 2000





The U.S.S. DeHaven (DD-469) in World War II

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Books:

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- COMDESRON 5/Commander Task Group 67.5, 2/6/43
- USS DeHaven (DD-469): 1/25/43, 2/5/43
- USS Nicholas (DD-449), 2/3/43

Conversations:

- Cdr. Archie R. Fields, USN (Ret.), survivor
- Capt. Bernard W. Frese, Jr., USN (Ret.), survivor
- Charles R. Haberlein, Jr., Naval Historical Foundation
- Joseph G. Micek, AUS (Guadalcanal War Memorial Foundation)
- Capt. John J. Rowan, USN (Ret.), survivor

Miscellaneous:

- The Bath Daily Times on microfilm at the public library, Bath, Maine.
- "The Battle Books" at the National Archives for a listing of the DeHaven's casualties on 2/1/43 (a machine-generated casualty report prepared by BuPers c. 1946)
- Oral history transcript, Ens. Clem C. Williams, 5/22/43, Operational Archives, Naval Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard.
- Personnel Diary (Muster Rolls), DeHaven, on microfilm, National Archives.
- Ships' Histories Branch file for DeHaven, Naval Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard.
- War Diary, USS Fletcher (DD-445), National Archives.

E. A. Wilde, Jr.  
July, 2000



#### 2006 ADDENDUM

*Dedication in 1944 of the Monument at Purvis Bay, Florida Island, British Solomon Islands, to honor ". . the officers and men of the United States and Allied Navies who died in the fierce Battles in 'Iron Bottom Bay'" during the Guadalcanal Campaign, August 7, 1942 to February 9, 1943.*

#### Editor's Note:

*Around 1995 Elizabeth ('Bettsy') R. Perkins Shaw sent me copies of several handwritten letters she had received early in 1944 from her first husband, Commander Van Ostrand Perkins, USN (K.I.A.). In 2002 most of his letters were included in Bettsy Shaw's memoir, Beside Me Still, published by the Naval Institute Press shortly after she died. However, his letters regarding the dedication ceremony were edited out by the publisher.*

*This addendum consists of typed excerpts from these letters plus a remarkable photograph of the dedication ceremony which I discovered only a few years ago (National Archives II: 127-GW1008, #80929).*

*E. Andrew Wilde, Jr.  
June, 2006*



Florida Island Monument on Purvis Bay  
(Dedicated on April 30, 1944)

Excerpts from letters written to Mrs. Elizabeth R. P. Shaw by her first husband, Cdr. Van Ostrand Perkins, USN (KIA '44) in 1944:

Today was one of those days - in fact, it was the first busy one I've had in a long time. I was away from the ship all day and couldn't write more on this letter this morning and afternoon, as I expected to, and get it in the mail. It will go tomorrow.

Well, my busy day was about the memorial ceremony we plan to have. I went with a Captain Carter on what I thought would be an hour's visit with the Admiral to iron out the details. The Admiral set the date for this Sunday and indicated what he would like to have and who he wanted to have invited, etc.. Well, I am the "glad hand boy", so I got the list of guests typed up and arranged and started the dust flying on some of the details. Like getting the chaplains lined up and telling them what we want, getting the band arranged for and so forth. Then this afternoon Captain Carter gave me one of his fast boats and I went five miles or so up the line to another part of the naval settlement extending tidings and invitations to certain U.S. naval and New Zealand-Australian naval people. I didn't get back to the ship until after five. It was an interesting boat ride I had though, because I'd never been up to that part of the area before. There are no roads as I've said, and it's all jungle between here and there - so all communication has to be by boat and not by cars.

Tomorrow I have to go over to \_\_\_\_\_, about 20 miles across the bay, and call on more dignitaries and invite them, get a Vice Admiral to agree to make a speech and arrange for photographers and publicity from a Photographic Squadron. That will be another full day's job I fear.

I enjoy doing this, however, for many reasons, not the least of which is the fact that I get off the ship all the time and am getting a regular Cook's tour of this area, seeing it at close hand. Much of it is well known and famous which I've seen from the distance but have never really been close to. Of course it is all so built up now by us that it would be unrecognizable almost to those who first landed.

It is amazing what kind of people Americans are. We land in the middle of the jungle and in no time have a little area cleared, through which we build roads, put up piers, storehouses, shops, etc. - and where there are roads you must watch to see that you aren't run over by jeeps, giant trucks and everything on wheels. There is nothing permanent here, and I doubt if much money has been wasted, but we certainly do move in on a place with our machinery. I'll bet we have more trucks, steam shovels, tractors, etc. in a small area like this than all the contractors in the Philippine Islands had together, and if the Japs judged us by our efforts in the Philippines, how wrong they were.

There must be much consternation in Tokyo these days, because



in the Pacific the war is humming along at a great rate; probably even better than most of us realize.

\* \* \* \* \*

We had a meeting of the Board of Governors of the Club, and I find that on the Board are a Captain, four Commanders, four Lieut. Comdrs. and two Lieuts.. I am glad I have the job, because this being in such a history-making area, they have plans to make it a sort of permanent part of America by erecting a suitable plaque and having the little monument dedicated with a large ceremony and so forth. So I, having a very personal interest in any dedication, volunteered to serve on the committee for the arrangements of this ceremony. It gives me a great deal of pleasure to know that they are going to do something to commemorate and make a permanent record of the achievements that resulted from the hard fighting and unimaginable hardships and work that has taken place in this area. You probably have to have fought over it and come back to get the feeling that I have. People who arrive today can't ever imagine what it was like "in the old days."

\* \* \* \* \*

I've enclosed the little program for our ceremony which took place this morning. It went off very well and very smoothly I thought, and I had a front row place to stand - right where the activities were. There were numerous cameramen taking pictures, and I expect that they will send me a set in as much as I asked for it, organized them and gave them all some beer afterwards.

Friday I flew over to \_\_\_\_\_ in one of our planes to line up and invite the "big wigs" stationed there and the press. It certainly was a delightful trip. It was a beautiful day, and it was nice to fly and to see some of the country from the air, as scenically - and from a distance - it is very grand looking.

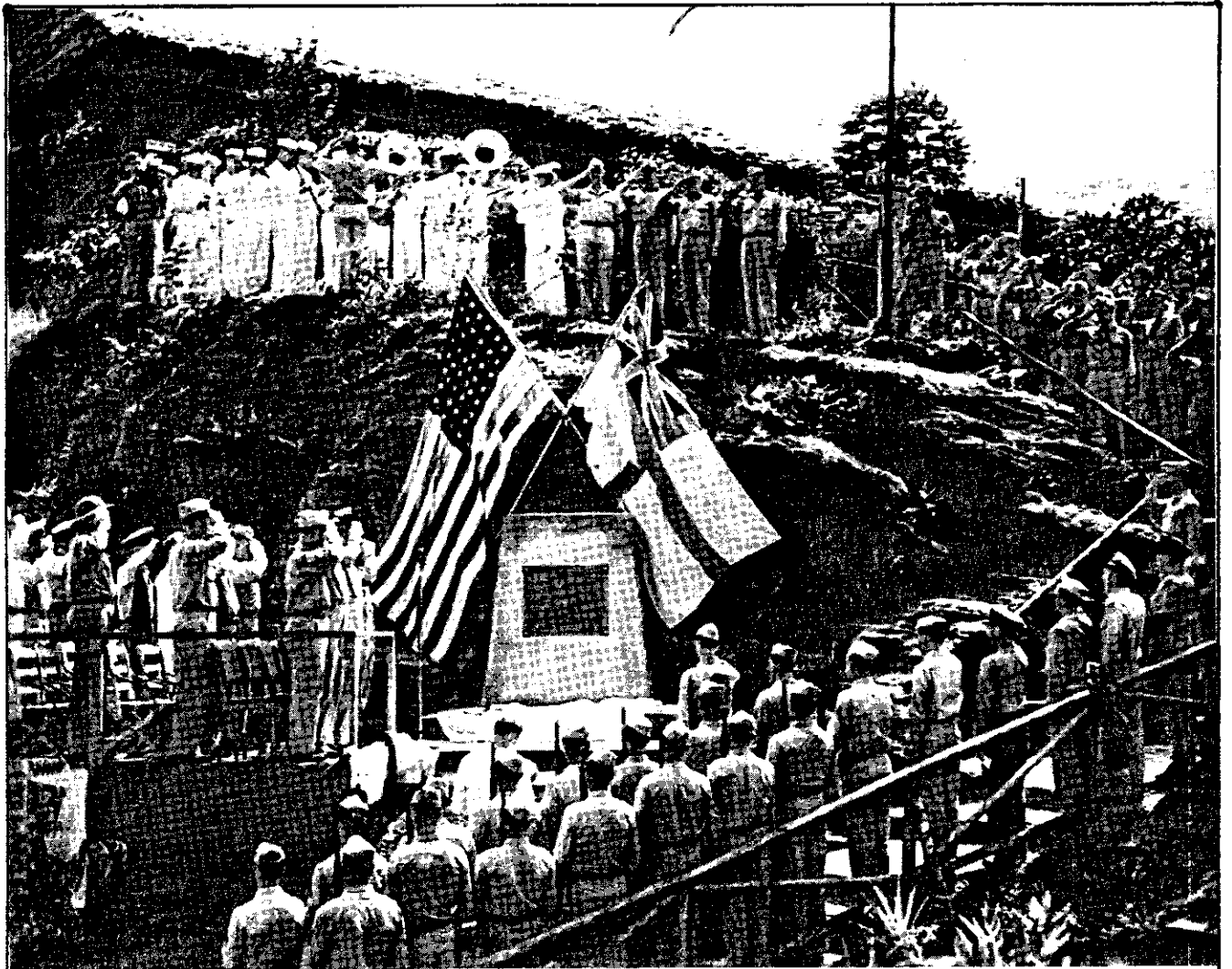
After we landed I got a jeep and driver from one of the officers, and in driving around inviting the guests I had a good chance to look things over and was duly impressed by the activity, accomplishments and mud.

I saw Ronnie Rankin this morning at the ceremony and expect to have a few beers with him later this afternoon. I also bumped into two people you don't know. One was the ex-Chief Boatswain's Mate of the Atlanta - he is now an officer - and the other, a lad who was on one of the destroyers that got sunk that unforgettable night. We were together in the hospital in New Zealand. It certainly was nice to see those two again. I always like to see old friends, and particularly when we have something great in common.

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*A bronze plaque, dedicated "In memory of the officers and men of the United States and Allied Navies who gave their lives at Iron Bottom Bay, 1942-43," was unveiled on April 30, 1944. The plaque overlooks Purvis Bay, an inlet in Florida Island, British Solomon Islands Protectorate, about twenty miles northeast of Henderson Field on Guadalcanal. U.S. Navy vessels sunk by the enemy in the Bay and near vicinity included seven cruisers, twelve destroyers and three destroyer transports. (Archives II, College Park, MD)*



### About The Editor

E. Andrew Wilde, Jr., Commander, USNR (Ret.), received his commission through the NROTC Program at Dartmouth College in 1950. Following graduation he saw action off Korea aboard the USS Douglas H. Fox (DD-779) when this destroyer dueled with numerous North Korean shore batteries in the Sea of Japan. Many of the photographs he took during this period have been donated to the Naval Historical Foundation, and two of them appeared in the coffee-table book, The Navy, published by the Foundation in 2000. After completing three years of active duty he began a civilian career in public accounting and later in management positions at Raytheon Company in Waltham, Massachusetts.

In 1993 he developed a strong interest in naval history and began editing a series of illustrated ships' histories primarily of U.S. destroyers sunk in World War II. Primary source documents such as action reports, ships' war diaries, medal citations and muster rolls are included in these histories as well as many firsthand accounts. His booklets are not for sale, but he sends complimentary copies to the survivors and to the families of crewmembers killed on these vessels.

Commander Wilde is a life member of the Naval Historical Foundation and the U.S. Naval Institute.



Historical Compilations by the Editor:

(Destroyer/Destroyer Escort Hulls in World War II)

<u>United States Ship</u>	<u>Date Sunk/ (Damaged)</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Killed/ Wounded<sup>1</sup></u>
<u>Aaron Ward</u> (DD-483)	04/07/43	Guadalcanal	42/139*
<u>Barton</u> (DD-599)	11/13/42	Guadalcanal	164/32
<u>Borie</u> (DD-215)	11/01/43	North Atlantic	27/00
<u>Colhoun</u> (APD-2)	08/30/42	Tulagi	51/18
<u>Corry</u> (DD-463)	06/06/44	Normandy	24/55
<u>Cushing</u> (DD-376)	11/13/42	Guadalcanal	72/67
<u>DeHaven</u> (DD-469)	02/01/43	Guadalcanal	168/40
<u>Douglas H. Fox</u> (DD-779)	(05/17/45)	Okinawa	10/36
<u>Drexler</u> (DD-741)	05/28/45	Okinawa	158/54
<u>Duncan</u> (DD-485)	10/12/42	Guadalcanal	48/35
<u>Emmons</u> (DMS-22)	04/06/45	Okinawa	60/78
<u>Fiske</u> (DE-143)	08/02/44	North Atlantic	33/65
<u>Glennon</u> (DD-620)	06/10/44	Normandy	25/49*
<u>Halligan</u> (DD-584)	03/26/45	Okinawa	160/43
<u>Hammann</u> (DD-412)	06/06/42	Midway	84/63
<u>Laffey</u> (DD-459)	11/13/42	Guadalcanal	59/114
<u>Lansdale</u> (DD-426)	04/20/44	Mediterranean	49/76
<u>McFarland</u> (AVD-14)	(10/16/42)	Guadalcanal	12/13
<u>Meredith</u> (DD-726)	06/09/44	Normandy	35/28
<u>Monssen</u> (DD-436)	11/13/42	Guadalcanal	145/37
<u>Perry</u> (DMS-17)	09/13/44	Angaur/Peleliu	8/17
<u>Preston</u> (DD-379)	11/15/42	Guadalcanal	117/26
<u>Spence</u> (DD-512)	12/18/44	Luzon, P.I.	315/24
<u>Strong</u> (DD-467)	07/05/43	Cent. Solomons	45/61
<u>Walke</u> (DD-416)	11/15/42	Guadalcanal	82/48

\* \* \* \* \*

Notes:

\* Total for two engagements with the enemy

1 Including those presumed dead more than a year subsequent to the date they were reported missing either due to enemy action or by drowning.

E. Andrew Wilde, Jr.  
Commander, USNR (Ret.)  
June, 2005



Locations Where Historical Compilations by the Editor  
Are Available For Researchers

<sup>1</sup> Air Zoo, Guadalcanal Campaign Collection, Potage, Michigan  
ECU Manuscript Collection, Joyner Library, Greenville, NC  
Louisiana Naval War Memorial Library, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

<sup>2</sup> Maine Maritime Museum Library, Bath, Maine  
Mariners' Museum Research Library, Newport News, Virginia  
Mystic Seaport's G. W. Blunt White Library, Mystic, Connecticut

National Archives II Library, College Park, Maryland  
<sup>3</sup> National D-Day Museum Library Collection, New Orleans, LA  
National Museum of Pacific War, War Studies, Fredericksburg, TX

Naval Historical Center, Navy Dept. Library, Washington Navy Yard  
\_\_\_\_\_, Operational Archives Branch, Washington Navy Yard  
\_\_\_\_\_, Ships' Histories Branch, Washington Navy Yard

Naval War College, Naval Historical Collection, Newport, RI  
N.Y. Public Library, 42nd & 5th Ave., Room 315, New York, N.Y.  
<sup>2</sup> Portland Public Library, Portland Room, Portland, Maine

<sup>4</sup> Tin Can Sailors, Inc., Research Library, Somerset, Massachusetts  
US Naval Academy, Nimitz Library Special Collections, Annapolis  
U.S. Naval Institute, History Division, Beach Hall, Annapolis, MD

U.S. Navy Memorial's Research Library, Washington, D.C.  
USS Slater (DE-766) Library, Albany, New York

\* \* \* \* \*

Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Only ships which participated in the Guadalcanal Campaign:  
Aaron Ward, Barton, Colhoun, Cushing, DeHaven, Duncan, Laffey,  
McFarland, Monssen, Preston, Walke.

<sup>2</sup> Only Bath-built ships: DeHaven, Drexler, Emmons, Meredith,  
Spence, Strong

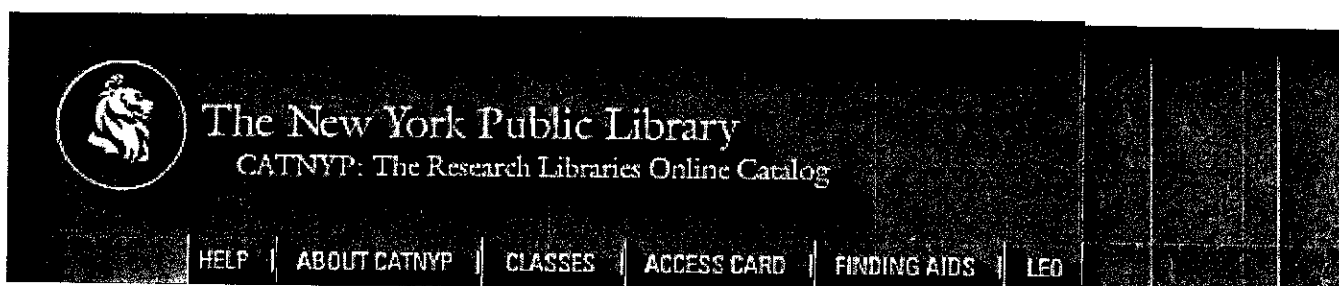
<sup>3</sup> Only ships sunk off the Normandy Beachhead: Corry, Glennon,  
Meredith

<sup>4</sup> By appointment only: (508) 677-0515

E. A. Wilde, Jr.  
June, 2006







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