

Cogswell legends live on

Broken mast, massive roll remembered

Two Cogswell legends that always spur a discussion and contradictions are the stories of the massive roll the ship took during a late 1950s cruise and the tale of the broken mast that occurred after the Cogswell participated in Operation Hardtack, the first above ground Hydrogen bomb test.

Officer Tom Lillie has added some interesting information to the tale of the fallen mast during the 1958 WestPac cruise.

In the February 2019 Scuttlebutt, SN Jerry Jacobus recalled the day the mast broke while underway and in the August 2019 Scuttlebutt Officer Steve Messner added his differing perceptions to the same event.

Now comes Tom Lillie with his recollection and additional details to that unique incident.

Interestingly, Tom started out his Navy service as an enlisted man in the reserves who was a BM2 when he was offered a commission. When he returned to active duty as an officer he was assigned to the Cogswell.

He remembers making the transit from San Diego to Pearl Harbor with four other destroyers where the Cogswell arrived steaming on bunker C fumes, probably due to the drag caused by the sonar dome. ***(Continued on Page 20)***



Cogswell gets new mast in Pearl Harbor

Nulli secundus

February 2020

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Bellevue Reunion—Let's try this again

As we put 2020 in the rear view mirror, let's do a reboot of our planned reunion in Bellevue, Washington.

It is our hope and belief that by next June, the Coronavirus should be well under control or there will be a potential vaccine.

Sailors, especially destroyer sailors, are built to adapt and regroup and so please consider making your reservations soon.

You can find all the information you need to make a reservation and book rooms on Page 12 of the newsletter.

A message from President Frank Wille

Well, 2020 has been quite a year. A worldwide pandemic followed by protests in many cities. Let's hope that things calm down soon.

Because of the continued threat of COVID, your Executive Committee decided that there were too many risks to proceed with the reunion, as scheduled in September. George worked with the hotel and rescheduled the reunion for June 2021.

We will have the same block of rooms and reservations have been adjusted to fit the new schedule. My thanks to all members who responded to our inquiry about their reunion status.

Those members who have submitted their reunion applications can relax. The dates have been adjusted and we have your deposit on hold. Thank you for your understanding.

Our Navy has been in the news several times in recent months and many of the stories have been troubling. Two major ship collisions and a COVID outbreak on a ship. The tempo of operations has been high and training has suffered. We can all appreciate how easily these things can happen. We're grateful that Cogswell was a "lucky ship" which avoided these type of events. Be proud of being a tin can sailor.

Wishing each of you health and prosperity. Look forward to seeing you next June.

Frank Wille



Frank Wille, Zola Low, Lyna Low

NOW HEAR THIS! THE SHIP'S STORE IS NOW OPEN. NOW AVAILABLE NEW T-SHIRTS, SWEATSHIRTS AND BALL CAPS.

Selena Simmermann is the Ship's Store manager. She and husband Buddy have created some great new items. Her address is:

SK 67 Lake Cherokee, Henderson, TX
75652.

To reach her by phone, call 903-263-1059.

Hats, t-shirts and sweat shirts are available along with other items. Contact Selena for these items and she will mail them to you with just a small added shipping charge. **See Pages 7-8 for new items.**



Shipment of "NEW" stuff for the ship's store!

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515-419-6086



Director

Open

Ship's Store:

Selena Simmermann
SK 67 Lake Cherokee
Henderson, TX 75652.
903-263-1059.



ATTENTION!

If you have not received an e-mail message from the Cogswell Association in the past month it is probably because we do not have your valid e-mail address on file. Please send us your current e-mail address if it has changed recently. Send current e-mail address to: Secretary@usscogswell.com

Visit the Association Online

www.usscogswell.com
(It's new and improved)

**FINANCIAL STATEMENT
USS COGSWELL DD 651 ASSOCIATION
February 1, 2020 to August 1, 2020**

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

August 2020

Balance, February 2020		\$20,112
Income		
Dues	290	
Donation	50	
Reunion	1130	
Ship's Store	177	1,647
Expenses		
Assn Admin	543	
Refund	220	763
Balance, August 2020		\$20,996

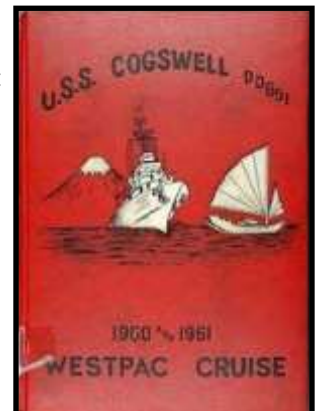
Need to replace a lost cruise book?

Perhaps somewhere along the line your treasured USS Cogswell DD-651 cruise book was misplaced or lost. Tom Lamson (RM3, 1967-68) found a link to a company which has reprinted copies of Navy cruise books. In checking the website we found the following years (1953-1960-1961-1962-1964-1965-1966-1967-1968) available for purchase.

We are not making any endorsement of this site, but are simply passing along the information in case you want to investigate further.

The price for the 1967 book was \$80. But it might be worth looking into the website if you want that piece of history for your family.

The cruise book cover at the right was designed by association member Jim Nelson (RM2, USS Cogswell DD-651 1958-61). In this edition you will see much more of Nelson's cartoon work and memorabilia which he has sent to the newsletter editor. The 1960-61 Cruise book is one of those listed as available at the website above.



USS COGSWELL ASSOCIATION

DATABASE STATISTICS as of 08/01/2020

- Active = 182 (paid dues are current) - 125 Life Members
- Inactive = 4 (have not paid dues for more than two years—house cleaning of these inactive members)
- New = 0 (New members found who were mailed a membership form, waiting for return.)
- No Interest = 571 (members who have indicated they have no interest in the Cogswell Association—some newly found who chose not to join)
- Deceased = 831 (known deceased shipmates—some newly found crewmembers)
- Not Located = 1714 (continues to be the largest number in database - we still need help locating)

New members— February 01, 2020—August 01, 2020

Last Name	First	City	State	Years Aboard	Rank
MONTGOMERY	JAMES	CONWAY	SC	51-54	SN

Known Deceased since February 01, 2020

Last Name	First Name	City	St	Years Aboard	Rank
BREAUX	WARREN	NEW ORLEANS	LA	45-46	PHM3
EBERT	DONALD	WEST BEND	WI	45-46	SN
HUBER	JOHN	MARMORA	NJ	43-46	SOM2 *
PEDERSEN	RICHARD	BURLINGTON	WI	51-54	BT2
ROSE	WILLIAM	WANTAGH	NY	45-46	EM3
SOULERET	WILLIAM	MECHANICSVILLE	VA	54-57	OFFICER

*PO= Plankowner

See list additional crewmembers who has passed at various times.

A letter from your editor

What a difference six months can make, eh? Right now I was supposed to be putting together the pre-reunion newsletter for our get together in Seattle. Well, we all now how that went, right? So while we regroup and plan for the same reunion next year let's be mindful of each other and dedicate ourselves to making every effort to join one another for the Bellevue, Washington reunion in June 2021.

With all this time I've had at home you'd think I'd be well ahead of schedule, but life has a way of interfering with all good intentions.

Recently I was remembering my time aboard the Cogswell after watching the Tom Hanks' movie "Greyhound." It's on Apple TV but I assume it will be coming out on DVD at some point. Well worth watching, especially for those of us who served aboard a Fletcher class destroyer. If you watch the movie you will notice the ship number, DD-548. That designation was actually a cancelled Fletcher class destroyer during World War II.

Many of the movie scenes were filmed aboard the USS Kidd DD-661 a museum ship located in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Revenue from the movie producer has helped upgrade much of the museum.

So when you get a chance watch the movie, it will bring back memories.

When I reported aboard the Cogswell the first week of November 1966 I had no idea how my life would change. As a native of Los Angeles I told my parents as they drove me to San Diego that as soon as I got aboard I would see how soon I could get liberty to catch a Greyhound bus and come home to visit.

Once on board and settled in my 1st Division quarters I inquired as to how soon I could get liberty. The 3rd Class Bosun's mate just chuckled and told me: "We're leaving in three days for WestPac, you're not going anywhere." I found my way to the pier, waited in a long line for the pay phone and called my folks and gave them the bad news.

Right out of boot camp I was a target for many pranks, especially after the 3rd Class BM found out I had actually attended one year of college. I remember him telling me "I hate college boys." I became a sure target for frapping lines in port and for any number of awful tasks. I was sent looking for 6 fathoms of waterline, a task that only ended after two hours when a kind Ltjg. Pointed over the side of the ship and showed me where the "waterline" was.



Me and San Miguel in Subic Bay

Later I fell for the request to bring a can of "relative bearing grease" from the Bosun's locker. To say I was gullible would be an understatement. Heck, look at me now, George Overman fished me into being newsletter editor. That actually turned out to be a good thing as I get to meet great shipmates all the time.

When I joined OC Division as a quartermaster striker I was assigned a rack right across from a guy named Fletcher, who as I recall had the worst morning breath of anyone I have ever known. My friend Jerry Gross was also a member of OC Division and we have reconnected through the Association (another great reason to come to a reunion). Gary Esterby and Ron Eberle are two other shipmates that have become friends again through the association.

After I joined the quartermaster crew I was taught how to set clocks throughout the ship. That involved going to nearly every space on the ship every week. The first time I climbed down the ladder into one of the engine rooms, one of BTs asked me if this was my first time down below. (He may have been tipped off by one of my fellow quartermasters).

When I answered it was, he and a couple others proceeded to initiate

my clean dungarees with some really foul grease and oil.

Those dungarees went over the side later.

Anyway, those are just some of the things I have been remembering during these quiet moments at home. We have lots of great tales in this edition and we'll have even more next time if you drop me an email at jlsm mediaservices@gmail.com or call me at 810-338-3015.

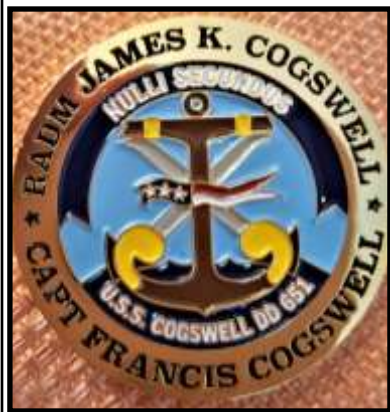
New Items in the Cogswell Ship's Store



Embroidered cap



Carry bag



Front 1



Front 2



Buddy Simmerman shows the size of the carry bag



Common back

See next page for exciting new USS Cogswell plaque.

See Ship's Store ad on Page 2 for ordering information.

Our terrific new ship's store operator, Selena Simmerman has acquired a few plaques and a blanket for sale. Additional quantities can be ordered. See page 2 and below for ordering information.

Use SHOP Drop Down Menu on Left to Browse or Use Search Beneath Cart On Right

Home Shop Our Story Contact Us Bulk Purchases

Shop > USS Cogswell 12" Laser Carved Wood Plaque



USS Cogswell 12" Laser Carved Wood Plaque

\$50.00 Free Shipping

Special Instructions

QTY

1

Add to Cart

Navy USS Cogswell 12" Laser Carved Wood Plaque Laser Carved Wood Plaque Use our contact form or e-mail me at marge@precisionwoodcraftingok.com. Be sure to include a phone number and e-mail address in case I need to contact you.

<https://precisionwoodcraftingok.com/> To purchase contact Marge@precisionwoodcraftingok.com. Include an email and phone number in case they need to contact you.

PRECISION WOODCRAFTING OK

11:08 AM 1/17/2020



Carolyn Sessions models the new Cogswell blanket.

Who can identify these two "hot babes" with a Cogswell connection?



We're still waiting for an answer to the question above.



TAPS



Warren Joseph Breaux Sr.

Warren Joseph Breaux, Sr., who served aboard the USS Cogswell DD-651 during World War II died April 5, 2020 in Algiers, Louisiana. He was 95.

Warren was a Pharmacist's Mate (PHM3) during his service on the Cogswell. He joined the Navy on Aug. 3, 1943 and served aboard the Cogswell in 1945 and 1946, leaving the ship April 15, 1946. He remained a member of the Naval Reserve from March 17, 1947 until March 16, 1955. He was called back to duty during the Korean War and served on the USS Constellation AH-15.

"(My Dad) was very proud of his service during WWII and the Korean War," said his son Ralph Breaux. "He loved the Cogswell and spoke about his time aboard her often in his later years. Thank you for keeping Dad updated on the crew of the Cogswell for many years. He enjoyed reading the updates and each email or newsletter always stoked a new story."

As a civilian he attended Tulane University and worked as an accountant with Baker Hughes. After his retirement he worked as a realtor. Warren was an active member of St. Andrew the Apostle Church and proudly served as a Fourth Degree Knight in the Knights of Columbus. He loved professional, amateur and high school sports in New Orleans.

Survivors include his wife of 60 years, Rose Giardina Breaux; two sons, Warren Joseph Breaux Jr. (Florentina) and Ralph Gerard Breaux (Gretchen); 8 grandchildren; and two great grandchildren.



Warren J. Breaux Sr.

Joseph W. Riston (late obit)

Joseph W. Riston, a member of the USS Cogswell DD-651 crew from 1966-68 died December 23, 2018 in Maryland.

He was an SFP3 and was born Sept. 9, 1945.

He is buried at Rocky Gap Veterans Cemetery in Flintstone, Maryland.

No further details were found.

Donald L. Ebert

Donald L. Ebert, who served aboard the USS Cogswell DD-651 during World War II died March 19, 2020. He was 92.

Born Jan. 17, 1928, Ebert served as a seaman aboard the Cogswell during the war.

Donald listed as his finest accomplishments his two daughters, Carole Konecny and Barb Kesselhon. In addition to his daughters, Donald is survived by his wife of 70 years, Shirley; six grandchildren and five great-grandchildren, along with nieces, neph-



Donald Ebert

ew and many friends. He was preceded in death by his beloved son-in-law Doug.

His daughter Carole said her father was proud of his World War II service.

"He always looked forward to attending the reunions (although he did not make the last one)," Carole said. "He will leave a big hole in our lives for love, his help over the years, his sense of humor and at times being a pain in the butt!"



John F. Huber III (Late obit)

John F. Huber III, who served aboard the USS Cogswell DD-651 from 1943-46 in World War II died Jan. 26, 2017 in Marmora, New Jersey. He was 91.

John joined the Navy in 1942 in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

After his Navy service John attended Temple University earning a bachelor's degree in Education. He played baseball and was a member of the Temple University swim team.



John Huber

He was former sales manager for Siracusa Realty before starting John Huber & Associates Real Estate. He was chairman and volunteer for many local organizations. For 7 1/2 years he hosted a television show called "South Jersey Issues."

He was a founding member of Temple University's chapter of Alpha Chi Rho National Fraternity and life member of Margate VFW. John was also the coordinator of our 2001 reunion in NJ.

Survivors include, his wife of 69 years, Rose Marie Ciesielski, three children, Chris, John and Janice; five grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren.



TAPS

(continued)



Richard Paul Pedersen

Richard Paul Pedersen died March 5, 2020 in Racine, Wisconsin. He was 89.

Richard was a BT 2 and served aboard the USS Cogswell DD-651 from 1951-1954. He was part of the crew that made an around-the-world cruise aboard the Cogswell.

Born August 25, 1930, Richard excelled in football and basketball in high school in Marinette, Wisconsin.

Following his discharge from the Navy, Richard Pedersen he returned to Marinette and married Marion J. Kiell. He went to Stout State College and earned a bachelor's degree in 1957 and a master's degree in 1958.

Richard taught at Hammond, Indiana Technical-Vocational High School and for 28 years at Horlick High School in Racine, Wisconsin. He was also advisor to the Future Teachers of America Club.

At the time of his retirement Richard was chairman of the Technical Education Department and an advisor to the Vocational Industrial Clubs of America.

During his life, Richard taught Sunday school and was a scoutmaster of Troop 225. Both Richard's sons achieved Eagle rank in the Scouts.

Following his retirement, Richard volunteered with a number of organizations, including serving 10 years on the Board of Directors of the Volunteers in Partnership with All Saints, serving as chairman of the scholarship committee, the project finding committee, the blood pressure screening committee and the Precious Hearts groups. He also delivered Meals-On-Wheels for more than 20 years and was a volunteer tutor. He was twice honored as Senior Volunteer of the Year.

Richard fondly remembered a "Stars and Stripes Honor Flight" that he and son Ron made on Nov. 5, 2016 to Washington, D.C.

"As I stood on the lawn at Arlington Cemetery looking at the 400,000 plus white markers, I realized how many have given their lives so I can celebrate my freedom," Richard wrote.

Survivors include his wife Marion (62 years), sons Ralph and Ronald; daughter Ruth; two grandchildren; two great grandchildren. In his obituary Richard left the following note:

"I am very proud of my children. All three of them have college degrees and have made very successful lives for themselves. I would also like to thank all of the wonderful students that made my teaching career such a wonderful experience. And, I could not be prouder of the great kids I had in my scout troop. A memorial service is pending.



William C. Souleret

William Casimir Souleret III died April 16, 2020 in Mechanicsville, Virginia. He was 87.

William was a Ltjg aboard the USS Cogswell DD-651 from 1954-1957. After his active duty service, he served in the Naval Reserve retiring as a Lieutenant Commander.

Jean Hulse Souleret, William's wife of 66 years, died two days before his death.

A graduate of Muncy High School in Pennsylvania, William attended Pennsylvania State University on a Navy ROTC scholarship where he earned his commission, followed by his service on the Cogswell.

Family members recalled how he enjoyed his cruises aboard the Cogswell.

In his civilian life, he worked for Aetna Life & Casualty, starting out as a claim representative in Pittsburgh. Promotions and relocations led the family to homes in Altoona, Pennsylvania, Hartford, Connecticut, Tampa, Florida and Richmond, Virginia. He retired as the claim department manager of the Commercial Insurance Division in Richmond after a 35-year career.

A member of Immanuel Baptist Church during much of his life in Richmond, he served as both a Sunday School teacher and Sunday school superintendent and "took joy in investing in the community as an active Gideon," his obituary said. Most recently he worshipped at Hanover Friends Church.

Survivors include; his children, David, George and Leslie Souleret and Amy Johnson and Cindi Glasgow; 15 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. He was buried at St. James Episcopal Church. Memorial services were pending due to the pandemic.



William Souleret

William Frederick Rose (late obit)

William Frederick Rose, died Sept. 20, 2016 in Westbury, New York. He was 89.

Be served as a EM3 aboard the USS Cogswell DD-651 during World War II.

He worked for New York Telephone as an engineer.

His wife, Caroline, died in 2015. He is survived by 3 daughters.

Additional former crewmembers deceased in the past but not previously reported

Last Name	First	City	State	Rank	Years Aboard
BATES	GEORGE	HAMBURG	AR	RMC	52,53,54
BRENNAN	JERROLD	WILKES-BARRE	PA	EMFA	52,53
CARTER	DALE	McCOOK	NE	GM2	52,53,54
CIAMPOLI	ARISTIDE	ALTOONA	PA	CSC	52,53,54
CIEPKA	JULIUS	DUMONT	NJ	GM1	52,53,54
COLLIER	HERMAN	KIRBYVILLE	TX	BM1	51,52,53,54
DAVIS	CLARENCE	FORTH WORTH	TX	MMC	52,53
DAY	EDWIN	WINCHESTER	KY	RDSN	52,53
DEL GUIDICE	J.	NEW ROCHELLE	NY	EMPFN	52,53
DELGUIDICE	JOHN			EMPFA	51,52
DERYN	JOHN	PERTH AMBOY	NJ	ME3	52,53
ESTES	DANA	BROOKLINE	MA	LTJG	52,53
FARELLA	ANGELO	NEW BRUNSWICK	NJ	FN	51,52,53
FEREBEE	MILTON	NORFOLK	VA	SD3	51,52,53,54
FITZGIBBONS	JERRY	GLEN ELLYN	IL	SOSN	52,53
FITZSIMMONS	T.	NEW YORK	NY	SA	52,53
FURGIUELE	JOSEPH	WASHINGTON	PA	BT3	52,53,54
HACKL	WILLIAM			FN	56,57
HALSTED	LARRY	OKLAHOMA CITY	OK	RM3	66,67
HOCHEVAR	ANTHONY			RM2	51,52
HOLDEN	DENNIS	TWEKSBUURY	MA	TMSN	51,52,53
HOLLAND	FREDERICK	EAST JORDAN	MI	RD2	51,52,53,54
HOLROYD	EDWARD	FITCHBURG	MA	SN	52,53,54
HUMES	RICHARD	JOPLIN	MO	MM2	51,52,53,54
JONES	BUREL			MMC	51,52,53
JORDAN	WILBER	SANDSTON	VA	SN	52,53
LARIVIERE	RICHARD	HOLYOKE	MA	SA	52,53,54
MALLARD	RICHARD			RM3	45
MEHRING	THOMAS	BROOKLYN	NY	LTJG	52,53
MURPHY	JAMES			RMN3	51
MYERS	DONALD	YORK	PA	SA	52,53
NITZ	HAROLD	TOPEKA	KS	SN	52,53
O'DONOHUE	RONALD	CHICAGO	IL	YN3	51,52,53,54
PEDIGO	EUGENE	GLASGOW	KY	SA	52,53
RUSTAD	GORDON	MODENA	WI	SA	52,53
RYAN	RICHARD	MINEOLA	NY	RMSN	53,54
SCHULLER	ROBERT	MINNEAPOLIS	MN	PN3	51,52,53
SINGER	JOSEPH	JAMESTOWN	NY	FN	52,53
SPIKES	ARON	PEARSON	GA	BM3	51,52,53,54,55
STAFFORD	IVAN	SAN BENITO	TX	MMC	51,52,53
STICKLE	WILLIAM	POUGHKEEPSIE	NY	MM2	51,52,53
STIKE	OAKLEY	MATOAKA	WV	BTC	51,52,53,54
STOLL	NORMAN			SA	51,52
SULLIVAN	BERNARD			SA	51,52
TROGDON	F.	WORTHVILLE	NC	BMC	52,53
UNDERWOOD	ROY	SAN DIEGO	CA	BT1	63,64,65,66
VALLUZZI	PAUL	HUNTINGTON STATION	NY	ET2	51,52,53,54
VOS	GEORGE	GRAND RAPIDS	MI	SA	52,53
WEEKS	CLIFFORD	SODDY	TN	GMC	52,53
ZITO	MICHAEL	BALTIMORE	MD	SN	52,53

2021 USS Cogswell booking reunion info

Date: Monday, June 7– 9, 2021

Where: Red Lion Hotel, 11211 Main Street, Bellevue, Washington, 98004 (Phone number 1-800-redlion)

Cost: \$79 a night (Great job Cogswell committee!)

Special Information: The hotel is two-story but does NOT have an elevator. If you need a first-floor room, book early. (Contact Julie Koske at 206.940.6270 if you have difficulty booking)

How to book online: USSCogswell DD-651 Reunion or you may have to copy and paste this address:

<https://www.redlion.com/create-booking?>

[property=6361&type=group&code=USSC0604&redirect=checkout&start=2021-06-04&end=2021-06-13](https://www.redlion.com/create-booking?property=6361&type=group&code=USSC0604&redirect=checkout&start=2021-06-04&end=2021-06-13)

Any reservations previously made will be automatically moved to the new dates. Those who made these reservations have nothing more to do. New Dates will be confirmed by reunion coordinator with each person.

The room rate includes a breakfast buffet for two people in one bed rooms and up to four people in two bed rooms.

Cancellation policy is 24 hours in advance. Parking is free.

The Monday night gathering will include an enhanced food layout so most will not need to go out for dinner. There will be the traditional raffle, but some really nice new offerings.



Banquet fun

Additional information will be coming on tours and other activities during the reunion.

Also joining us again this reunion will be members of the USS Wedderburn DD-684 Association.

Don't miss this chance to be with your shipmates on the West coast. The Bellevue/Seattle area has a number of great tourist attractions including the Space Needle, the Aquarium, Pike's Place, The Chihuly Exhibition, boat tours and much, much more. Tours of those places are pending the Covid—19 situation, which hopefully will be in a better place by then.

Fun things to do in the Bellevue-Seattle area

By James L. Smith
Newsletter editor

The greater metropolitan Seattle offers terrific sightseeing and great visual experiences. Of course, with the current pandemic situation it is unknown at this time what and in what form will be available 10 months from now, but we can all hope that with a potential vaccine and increased awareness and treatments we should be in a much better place by June 2021.



Space Needle

In recognition of that hope there are a number of outstanding attractions that will grab the attention of visitors.

In April 2019, my wife, Joan, and I spent three wonderful days touring the Seattle area.

The people were friendly, the public transportation (including a free downtown shuttle) were convenient and the dining options were plentiful and good.

Like most tourists we visited the Space Needle, which has been renovated at the top and the nearby Chihuly Gardens and Glass, which is a stunningly beautiful and unique display of the artwork of Dale Chihuly, a local artist who creates unique and beautiful art out of blown glass.

When I checked in August 2020, both the Space Needle and Chihuly Gardens were open on a limited attendance basis.

We had a beautiful dinner at one of the harbor restaurants and enjoyed our meal as we watched the numerous ferries taking and bringing commuters home.

Earlier we had taken a boat cruise around the harbor and it offered stunning beautiful views of the Seattle skyline and the surrounding islands and area.

On a whim we decided to spend some time at the Seattle Aquarium and found it to be a really unique place.

There are many hands on exhibits and rarely seen sea creatures. One of those was a huge octopus that you could get very close to, although that is not one of the hands on exhibits.

For those coming to the reunion, some of those stops, may or may not be available through tours which are currently being planned but if you plan right you will certainly have time to visit one or more of these things while still having time to meet with and enjoy the fellowship of shipmates.

So this is hoping that many of you will make plans to join all of us for the Bellevue, Washington reunion.



Seattle Aquarium



Harbor boat tours



Chihuly Gardens and Glass

Officer remembers Cogswell's last WestPac cruise

Becoming an engineering officer was the farthest thing from my mind. I had nearly failed my only engineering course at the California Maritime Academy, and my first two Navy assignments were in operations. Still, I had six months of engineering training at the Naval Destroyer School in Newport. I knew *something* about it.

In June, Ruth and I loaded up our car, said good-bye to our Newport friends, and headed west. When we arrived in San Diego, we moved into an apartment in Loma Palisades near Ocean Beach.

I reported aboard *Cogswell* a few days later.

The *USS Cogswell* was a *Fletcher* class general-purpose destroyer built by the Bath Iron Works in Maine in 1943. She saw action in the Pacific during World War II and was present in Tokyo Bay in September 1945 for the signing of the Japanese surrender.

The ship had four 600-psi Babcock and Wilcox Marine superheated steam boilers and four Westinghouse steam turbine engines. She could steam at twenty-seven knots with two boilers and up to thirty-five knots with all four boilers on-line.

For armament, *Cogswell* had four single-barrel 5-inch 38-calibre gun mounts—two forward and two aft—and three twin 3-inch 50-calibre gun mounts. For anti-submarine operations she carried one triple-tube torpedo mount, two hedgehog projectile mounts, and one depth charge rack on the fantail.

She was a formidable fighter in her day.

I found my first few months aboard *Cogswell* challenging, to say the least. Our grueling schedule didn't help.

We constantly alternated between underway operations and in port maintenance periods. Every day, numerous problems affected the operation of our main propulsion plant. Motors shorted-out and had to be rewound. Boiler tubes burst and needed to be replaced. Pumps lost suction or leaked and were repacked or repaired. Often, our best tools were duct tape and monkey goo. Sometimes the repairs caused only short delays in the ship's departure. Other times, the equipment casualties proved major, resulting in our missing underway commitments entirely.

Another limitation was this class of ship had only *one* evaporator—the distilling equipment used to convert salt water into fresh water—to both feed the boilers and provide fresh water for the crew. Most ships had two evaporators. If one broke, they still had a backup. If *Cogswell's* evaporator failed, we had only a few days to get it operating, or we had to head for the nearest port for repairs. All too often, we went without showers so what little water we had in the reserve tanks could be used to keep the boilers steaming.

I kept a small notebook in my pocket the entire time we were underway. I logged freshwater tank levels every four hours to keep track of our current situation.

Our engineers worked tirelessly to make repairs, often working through the night and over the weekend.

Ruth and I had a special understanding. If I couldn't leave the ship by nine o'clock, I slept aboard to avoid the commute. I spent many nights and weekends aboard ship while in port. Yet, when my guys struggled with main shaft bearings or boiler safety valves at two in the morning, I knew I had to be there.

If these conditions sound too severe, it's because they were. The few *Fletcher* class ships not modernized had been pushed to their limits during the Vietnam War. *Cogswell* was showing her age.

In October 1967, we sailed up the coast to Vallejo where the ship received a much-needed six-month overhaul at Mare Island Naval Shipyard.

Ruth and I moved into an apartment in the shipyard's Roosevelt Terrace naval housing complex. Our quarters consisted of a small living room and kitchen on the ground floor and a single bedroom and bath upstairs. Because the building was built prior to World War II—considered substandard housing by the Navy—we paid only forty-six dollars a month in rent. We didn't mind the austere conditions. We were near our friends and we were together. That's all that mattered.

Our daily routine became easier. We gave the shipyard a huge bundle of work orders. Now it was up to the yard workers to overhaul and repair the engines, boilers, compressors, pumps, electrical switchboards, and generators, and all the ancillary equipment which had been our responsibility.

We still had plenty of other chores to keep us busy. We chipped down and repainted all the engineering spaces, and refurbished the ship's ladders, doors, and smaller pieces of equipment. There was enough work to go around.

Then, for several weeks, we sat on the huge wooden blocks of a floating dry dock while the yard workers repaired our propellers and sonar dome. **(Continued on next page)**



“Lt.” John Athanson

(continued from page 14) One day, Senior Chief Comer called me down to the forward engine room. “You gotta see this.”

He led me to the port catwalk where a group of engineers circled a gapping six-inch hole in the ship’s bottom, halfway between the keel and the waterline.

“What the hell happened?” I asked.

“Dulyea here,” he pointed to a fireman, “was chipping and went right through.”

“Yeah, I’d say so,” I said. “That’s some kind of hole.”

“He just kept chipping away at the edges, looking for good metal. Except there ain’t any.”

We stood there looking at the hole.

“What do you think we ought to do?” Comer asked.

“I think we need to have the shipyard look at this,” I said. “No more chipping in the bilges until we figure this one out.”

“Yes, sir.”

It never ends.

I turned to go. “I’ll let the skipper know, and I’ll cut a work order for the ship’s supervisor.”

The shipyard brought in special X-ray equipment to determine the hull’s integrity and the extent of necessary repairs. The prognosis was not good. The hull was excessively thin in several spots. Workers removed a large section from around the original hole and welded a new steel plate in its place.

As a precautionary measure, I wrote *Engineering Department Standing Order No. 21*, which began, “Effective immediately there will be no chipping of the hull below the waterline in the four main engineering spaces ...”

A few weeks later—while chipping paint from one of the freshwater tanks which lined the ship’s sides in the forward and after engine rooms—another fireman drove his hammer through more deteriorated steel plating. This resulted in ***Engineering Department Standing Order No. 22***: “Effective immediately there will be no chipping of the fresh and boiler feed water tanks in the forward and after engine rooms ...”

Not only did these two incidents expose the aging conditions of our ship, they also forewarned her decommissioning two years later.

A new commanding officer walked aboard *Cogswell* that December. The change of command ceremony took place on the pier next to the dry dock.

Commander Fred Kraft was an unflappable skipper, who always maintained a good sense of humor, even in the most difficult circumstances. His very presence on deck lifted our spirit.

I always thought of him as the model commanding officer. Years later when I had to make command decisions, I frequently asked myself, *What would Fred Kraft do in this situation?*

In February 1968, we completed our shipyard overhaul and returned to San Diego.

We spent the next four months preparing for our deployment to the Far East. Several readiness inspections were conducted, followed by weeks of intense underway training. Then we exercised off the coast with the other destroyers assigned to our task group.

Cogswell departed San Diego on June 17, 1968 and headed for the Western Pacific. We would not return until the following December. We spent most of that time at sea, escorting the aircraft carrier *Constellation* in the Gulf of Tonkin.

During our country’s sustained air operations against North Vietnam—from the spring of 1965 to the fall of 1968—there were three carriers on the battle line, each conducting air operations for twelve-hours-on and twelve-hours-off. One carrier operated from noon-to-midnight, another from midnight-to-noon, and the third during daylight hours. This provided around-the-clock coverage, plus an additional effort during daylight hours when the strike sorties proved most effective.

Each carrier had up to four destroyers in company; one always in plane-guard station one thousand yards astern of the carrier. We frequently got this task.

Our job was to rescue pilots who ejected during aborted takeoffs or landings, or crew members who fell over the side. We always steamed with our starboard lifeboat manned and ready for lowering. The difference between success and failure was measured in minutes.

A continuous round of oilers, supply, and ammo ships passed through Yankee Station to replenish the carriers and their escorts. We required an alongside replenishment every few days.

Finally, there was the ever-present Soviet trawler, rigged with antennas and other secret communication devices designed to monitor our carrier strike operations. A U.S. Navy fleet tug kept a position between the trawler and the carrier groups. It came with an eight-by-ten-foot container crammed with special radio frequency jammers designed to interfere with the Soviets’ attempt to intercept our radio transmissions. (Continued next page)



Gulf of Tonkin

(continued from page 15) Altogether there could be up to twenty vessels operating on various courses and speeds within a twenty-mile operating area. Steaming in such close quarters was often stressful, especially during night operations or inclement weather.

One night, I had the mid-watch with our gunnery officer, Ensign Tom Collier. It was pitch-dark outside. I had trouble making out the horizon.

"John, who's *that* over there, about two points on the starboard bow?"

"Not sure. Maybe *Ingersoll*. They're supposed to be with the *Coral Sea* group, right?"

"I think so," Tom replied. "But shouldn't that group be over on our *port* beam?"

I thought about looking at the radar screen, but the eerie-green fluorescent loom seeping from the hood told me it was all clutter. "They were 'bout an hour ago, but *Connie's* made several course changes since then. I'm not sure. Do you think *that's* an escort from the *Midway* group? They haven't been seen since the second dog watch."

Tom didn't answer.

I moved over to the 21-MC squawk-box and hit the second switch from the left that patched me into the combat information center. "Combat, bridge."

"Combat, aye."

"Who's the contact bearing zero-nine-five degrees, about six thousand yards?" *And closing.*

A few seconds passed.

"Bridge, combat. We believe that's the *John R. Craig* rejoining the *Midway*. Ah ... they ... they were off refueling with the *Haleakala* earlier this evening. Do you want us to give them a radio-check?"

"No, that's okay," I said. "They just reversed course and are now heading away from us. We see her stern light. Maybe she belongs to *Coral Sea*. They're off in that direction, *somewhere*."

"Combat, roger."

Click.

"Man, this watch is dragging."

Tom went back to looking at the radar screen. I kept my eyes glued on the stern of the *Connie*.

The significant risks inherent in high-speed carrier operations were graphically brought home to every tin can sailor who served at Yankee Station, in the early morning of June 3, 1969. On that day, the Australian aircraft carrier *Melbourne* sliced the destroyer *Frank E. Evans* in two.

Melbourne had signaled *Evans*—one of five allied destroyers on its inner screen—to take up the plane guard position astern of the carrier. It was the fifth time that night *Evans* had carried out the maneuver. The sea was dead calm, the water moonlit. As an extra precaution, *Melbourne* had her navigation lights at full brilliance. Procedures clearly required the smaller vessel to turn *away* from the carrier before falling into position well astern. Instead, *Evans* turned *into* the huge carrier's path; a bad decision made by the officer of the deck, which put the two vessels *in extremis*.

Evans lost seventy-four crewmembers in the ensuing collision. Many struggled to escape the forward sleeping compartment where dislodged ladders jammed the doors. The unstable bow section turned topsy-turvy as it slipped beneath the surface. And the sailors' screams went unheard as their steel coffin slid into the abyss.

Later that summer, while I was serving with Beach Jumper Unit One, I met that same officer in the Subic Bay officers' club. We spoke about the ongoing investigation. I didn't ask him about the actual collision, although I wanted to. I thought of the proverbial saying: "There but for the grace of God go I..."

Other events during that cruise influenced the way I looked at things.

One morning, Chief Fisher told me our first class boiler technician in charge of the after fire room was about to be transferred; something we hadn't expected. There was no inbound relief.

"Who do you want to put in his place?" I asked.

"I want to use Leroy Underwood."

"Isn't there anybody else?" I scrunched-up my face as best I could, hoping Fisher would give me more choices.

Now, I must admit I didn't know Underwood well. I could picture him—but I didn't *know* his capabilities. Underwood was a second class boiler technician, and I didn't think a second class could handle the job. At that time, the after fire room was in the worst shape of the four main engineering spaces. Neglected for a long time—as much my fault as anyone else's—it needed strong, deck-plate leadership.

(Continued next page)



USS Constellation CV-64



USS Frank E. Evans DD-754 post collision

(continued from page 16) Fortunately, I had faith in my chiefs, and I accepted Fisher’s recommendation. Inwardly, I pictured my career slipping away. I was in for a big surprise.

I didn’t have time to dwell on this latest problem. The wardroom was short of qualified officers of the deck, so I was standing a three-section rotation on the bridge. A few weeks passed before I again thought about Underwood and the after fire room.

Fisher caught up to me one morning just as I got off watch. “Have you seen the after fire room lately?”

“No, I’ve been preoccupied on the bridge.” I realized that was a lame excuse as soon as I said it.

“You should go down there.”

“Why?”

“Just go down there, you’ll see.”

He had my interest now. I made a mental note to visit the fire room that day.

The first thing I noticed when I climbed down into the space was the mood of the boiler techs in the control room. They were all in good spirits, and they looked sharp. I sensed the change right away.

I talked to the men for a few minutes then stepped out into the heat of the fire room. It was like stepping into a blast furnace. Hot air filled my lungs and pressed against my eyes and skin. I closed the door behind me—my hand recoiled from the touch. I glanced over at the two men standing watch between the boilers.

“Cuttin’ in a ten,” the fireman said, as he slammed a burner barrel into the firebox.

The petty officer looked into the periscope to check the exhaust gases while he opened the steam valve to the forced draft blower. Then, aware I was standing there, he gave a limp wave at waist level to avoid letting the sweat trickle back down his arm.

The blower’s high-pitched whine made talking uncomfortable.

I waved and pointed aft. Then I headed straight for the rear of “Number Four” (boiler).

That area had always been a nightmare for me, particularly since the horrible fire aboard the carrier *Forrestal* that took so many lives a year earlier. Despite the push for fire safety, we frequently had excessive fuel oil in our bilges because of leaks and spills. To make matters worse, a spare space back there was converted into a paint storage locker; a prearranged accident waiting to happen.

Much to my surprise, I found the bilges clean and the paint cans removed. The equipment and bulkheads had been repainted, light bulbs replaced, and gauges repaired. All this had occurred within the past two weeks.

The after fire room stayed that way and eventually became the standard for the other engineering spaces.

I never questioned Underwood’s capability again. Nor did I doubt the potential for any crew member to fill positions of increased responsibility when called on. It all came down to attitude.

A few years later, I learned that Underwood was working in the boiler shop over at the old Development and Training Center. I stopped by to thank him for the great job he had done aboard *Cogswell*. By then, he had been promoted to first class petty officer. Underwood was glad to see me, although I think my lavish praise embarrassed him. His self-deprecating good nature kicked-in as he tried to downplay his contribution.

“Aw, sir, I was just doing my job.”

“You were doing more than your job, Leroy. And I wanted you to know how much I appreciated it.”

I still think of Leroy Underwood and what he accomplished during that demanding deployment.

That August, we rode shotgun for the guided missile destroyer *Wainwright* on a picket station a few miles off the coast of North Vietnam. Our two ships monitored attack and bomber aircraft as they entered and departed North Vietnamese airspace on their strike missions. Part of that job was to detect enemy aircraft or surface-to-air missiles lifting off from nearby air stations and coastal defensive positions, and to rescue our pilots who got shot down just off the coast. We were at modified general quarters the entire time—half the crew at battle stations for twelve-hour stretches.

We never saw any enemy aircraft or missiles.

By September, we were ready for a break. We left station and headed for a six-day port visit to Hong Kong.

We moored to one of the inner harbor buoys. From there we had a spectacular view of the busy commercial waterfront and the junks and ferryboats plying the narrow channel between Victoria Island and the Kowloon Peninsula. We were also in the stream of the many dead, bloated bodies of unfortunate Chinese bureaucrats that floated down the Pearl River Estuary from Guangzhou, and into the South China Sea beyond—a by-product of the chaos and violence of Chairman Mao’s Cultural Revolution during that period. It was a sobering history lesson. **(Continued next page)**



Engineering Space



China Fleet Club—Hong Kong

(Continued from page 17) The political climate in the crown colony had also changed since my last visit aboard *Morton*. Hong Kong's populace was divided over Chairman Mao's *teachings*. We were warned to pair-up while ashore and to avoid confrontations with the Chinese nationalists.

There was a waterfront facility in Hong Kong called Fenwick Pier. Actually, it wasn't a pier. It was a long wharf with a floating platform where our Navy launches and small Chinese sampans ferried sailors between ship and shore. A small canteen and gift shop offered a diversion while we waited for our boat rides. It also housed the shore patrol.

One evening, as I walked back to Fenwick Pier, I realized several Chinese youths were following me along the waterfront. They were a hoodlumpy bunch, up to no good. When I quickened my pace, they quickened theirs. Not a good sign. I calculated I had only three blocks to go before I reached the safety of Fenwick Pier, so I broke into a run. They did, too.



Fenwick Pier—Hong Kong

As I neared Fenwick Pier, two uniformed shore patrol petty officers step into the light. My assailants halted when they saw them, and I glided safely through the gate. I barely broke stride.

"Thanks, guys."

"No problem."

I jumped onto a Navy launch just as its crew slipped the bow and stern lines for the last trip of the evening. I made a mental note to be more careful next time. After Hong Kong, we steamed back to Yankee Station where we spent the next four weeks plane-guarding the *Constellation*. Then we got a reprieve. We sailed up to Yokosuka for ten days of upkeep before rejoining the carrier for one final week of strike operations.

The following month, we provided naval gunfire support off the coast. We plied the coastal waters from Pointe Ca Mau in the South to Hue in the North, doing pretty much what we had done on the *Morton* two years earlier. I think we fired on the same villages. From the messages we received from ground forces ashore, it appeared our gunfire was timely and accurate. The trouble with offshore support is that without actually *seeing* the enemy for ourselves it was difficult to grasp our real effectiveness. Some things never change.

Early in the Vietnam War, ships sailing off the coast rarely came under enemy fire. We controlled almost the entire coastline. Plus, we usually got no closer than two miles from potential enemy positions. Only once during the 1968 deployment did the ship's deck log record "suspected enemy fire." I was the officer of the deck at the time.

It was a lazy afternoon. We had just finished one fire mission and were heading for the next down the coast. A balmy breeze complimented the calm seas. I was standing on the starboard side of the bridge with my arms resting comfortably on the window ledge.

I scanned the water between us and the horizon for the umpteenth time looking for fishing nets that might foul our screws—a major occupation for watch officers in the South China Sea.

"Sir, the after lookout reports seeing a splash of water about a hundred yards astern."

I turned and looked at the lee helmsman. "What did he see?"

"He said he saw a 'splash', sir ... in the ship's wake."

The boatswain's mate—who had been leaning against the after bulkhead—walked out to the port bridge wing. I followed.

"You see anything?"

"No, sir."

I lifted my binoculars and looked aft.

Nothing.

A signalman on the flying bridge and some sailors on the main deck were also looking aft.

A few seconds passed before we saw the second splash. It looked like the splashes I had seen during gunnery drills.

"Left full rudder, all ahead flank. I have the conn."

"Left full rudder, aye, sir," repeated the helmsman.

"All ahead flank," said the lee helmsman as he rang up the engine order telegraph.

Heavy black smoke poured from the funnels as boilermen slammed extra burner barrels into the fireboxes four decks below. The ship shuddered slightly then groaned as she leaned into the turn.

"Mister Athanson has the conn," the quartermaster said. He made a note in the log.

"After lookout reports another splash, sir."

"Aye."

Others on deck called out.

"Tom, I'll give you back the conn after we settle out," I said to the junior officer of the deck.

"Yes, sir."

I ducked back into the bridge and glanced at the gyro repeater. "Steady on one-one-five."

"Steady on one-one-five, aye, sir."

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from page 18) I picked up the ship's telephone and hit the button to the captain's cabin. "Captain, this is the officer of the deck. I've just increased speed and come left. We've had a couple of splashes about a hundred yards astern. I think someone's shooting at us, sir."

"Okay, I'll be right out."

I returned to the port bridge wing.

The captain joined me twenty seconds later.

"I don't see it now, sir."

"What did it look like?"

"Like a shell exploding right on the surface."

"How far are we from the beach?"

"We were two thousand yards when I came left."

"Distance to the beach is twenty-seven-hundred yards, sir," the quartermaster reported.

We stood there for a moment.

"Open to four thousand then return to base course and speed," the captain said. "I'll be in my cabin."

"Aye, sir."

"You did the right thing."

I often think about that incident. If it were enemy fire, it was minimal and well off the mark. Those of us who witnessed it were more curious than alarmed. The entire event seemed impractical for such a peaceful and pleasant afternoon.

By then, Vietnam had become a war of questionable statistics and political rhetoric. We wanted to leave it all behind.

We made our final port visits to Subic Bay and Guam on our return trip home.

Finally, on December 19, 1968, we arrived in San Diego—just in time for Christmas. Although we didn't know it then, this would be *Cogswell's* last deployment.

Now, I was nearing the end of my six-year active duty contract with the Navy, and I started making plans for my transition back into the civilian world.

Then Uncle Sam graciously sent me a one-year involuntary extension—"universally mandated by the needs of the Vietnam War effort." I didn't think highly of it at the time, but it turned out to be one of those pivotal events that changed our lives.

In March 1969, I received orders for a one-year tour with Beach Jumper Unit One at the Amphibious Base in Coronado.

I left the *Cogswell* a few weeks later.

From Ensign to Captain

Cogswell's Engineering Officer enjoys long, distinguished Naval career

Captain John Athanson graduated from the California Maritime Academy in 1963 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Nautical Science, a Third Mate's license in the U.S. Merchant Marine, and a reserve commission in the U.S. Navy. He joined the Navy that fall with the rank of Ensign and orders to the USS Ashland LSD-1 as Navigation Officer. He made one nine-month deployment to the Mediterranean in 1964 and later that year participated in Operation *Steel Pike*, the largest peacetime amphibious landing exercise conducted by the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps, on the coast of Spain. In May 1965, he completed Air Intercept Controller and Anti-Submarine Air Control courses in San Diego and reported aboard USS Morton DD-948 as the CIC Officer, where he made one WestPac deployment, with extended operations as the Station Ship Hong Kong, Taiwan Patrol, and gunfire support missions off the coast of Vietnam.

In November 1966, he departed for Destroyer School in Newport, R.I., where he completed the six-month department head course and was promoted to Lieutenant. In June 1967, he reported aboard USS *Cogswell* DD-651 as the Engineer Officer. He held that billet during the ship's major overhaul, pre-deployment work-up, and last WestPac deployment, where *Cogswell* spent most of its time with the USS Constellation Battle Group on Yankee Station in the Gulf of Tonkin.

In 1969, Lieutenant Athanson reported to Beach Jumper Unit One, Naval Special Warfare Group, in Coronado, CA, where he served a one-year tour of duty as OinC of Team 12 deployed to WestPac in support of the Vietnam War effort. In 1970-1972, he attended the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA, where he received his Bachelor of Art degree in Government and was promoted to Lieutenant Commander. Upon graduation, he was assigned to the staff of Destroyer Squadron 23 as Material and Repair Officer. This tour included a six-month Indian Ocean deployment. He then completed a two-year tour as Operations Officer aboard the USS Paul Revere LPA-248, which was then reconfigured to serve as a task force command and control ship. In 1976-78, he served as the Executive Officer aboard USS Frederick LST-1184, with one WestPac deployment. He was promoted to Commander in May 1978. **(Continued on next page)**



Capt. John Athanson

(Continued from page 19) That summer, he was finally rotated ashore with a three-year tour of duty in the Middle East Branch of the Navy's Foreign Military Sales Office (OP-63) in the Pentagon in Arlington, VA. He spent the first six-months of that assignment as a member of a special JCS command and control team in-country Iran to shore up the Shah Pahlavi regime prior to the Islamic Revolution.

On August 1, 1981, Commander Athanson reported aboard USS Schenectady LST-1185 in Subic Bay as the ship's commanding officer. The ship had just started a six-month deployment with scheduled ARG-A exercises and port visits in Singapore, Mombasa, Diego Garcia, Albany and Sidney Australia, and the Philippines. Interim stateside operations included amphibious assault exercises in Hawaii; shadowing a Soviet trawler off our Northwest Coast; and San Francisco Fleet Week activities. A second six-month ARG-B deployment was spent on milk runs and fleet exercises in WestPac stretching between South Korea and the Philippines, including a major U.S.-ROK Team Spirit Exercise at Tok Sok Ri.

In 1983-84, Commander Athanson completed the one-year Senior Officers Course in Naval Strategy and Defense Economics at the Naval War College in Newport, RI, where he also obtained a Master of Arts degree in International Relations at nearby Salva Regina University. He was promoted to the rank of Captain in the summer of 1984. He then served a short 2-year term as Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans, Amphibious Group Three, in San Diego.

In 1986, Captain Athanson was selected by the Defense Intelligence Agency for a three-year tour of duty as the U.S. Defense and Naval Liaison Officer at the American Consulate in Hong Kong; an assignment that included the American Adjunct Consul position in the neighboring Portuguese enclave of Macao. This assignment was preceded by a one-year course in Chinese language and Asian area studies at the State Department's Foreign Service Institute in Arlington, VA. From 1987 to 1990, Captain Athanson and his joint services staff were involved in national intelligence reporting efforts, mostly focused on the PRC.

Captain Athanson's final tour brought him to Naples, Italy, where he served as the branch head of maritime operations in the Mediterranean at NATO's Southern Region Headquarters. He retired from the Navy on August 1, 1991, then worked in various civilian management positions in the electronic security industry for another 14 years.

John is 77-years-old and in his words, "fully retired." He and Ruth have been married 54 years and live in Weston, Florida, near Ft. Lauderdale. They have three sons, David, a computer consultant who lives with John and Ruth; Stephen, a Miami attorney. Stephen and his wife, Irina and granddaughter, Elizabeth (11) live two miles from grandpa and grandma in Weston. The youngest son, Michael is a Doctor of Archaeology, who lives in Oxford, England with his wife, Lizzie and two grandsons, Marcus (7) and Freddy (4).

John and Ruth spend several weeks annually in England visiting their family and touring the English countryside.

(Broken mast, massive roll continued from Page 1) After refueling, the Cogswell, headed alone to Johnson Island to participate in Operation Hardtack, the first and only above ground Hydrogen Bomb test blast at that point. All previous tests had been underground.

"At midnight it was as bright as day, you could see every detail," Tom said. "The blast was spectacular."

There was a problem though because the people at Pearl Harbor had not been notified and they believed they were under attack by the Japanese again because the blast was visible all the way to Hawaii. An embarrassed Navy cancelled a second test because of the furor caused by the first, Tom said.

The Cogswell was sent to Johnson Island because the Navy wanted to test the effect of the blast on various radar and radio frequencies and because the Cogswell had not been refitted with the newer versions it was one of the few that had equipment the Navy wanted to test.

It was during the trip back to Pearl that the mast broke and fell. It appeared that the stainless steel tubular structure had suffered extensive corrosion. While Tom's recollection of the mast casualty differs somewhat from Jerry's and Steve's his most vivid memories revolve around the trouble they had once they got to Pearl in getting a new mast.

"We thought when we returned to Pearl Harbor they would be all ready to set up a new mast for us," Tom said. "They couldn't find any blueprints for a Fletcher destroyer tripod mast." Over the years piecemeal upgrades had been made to the Fletchers, but some of them apparently were not completely recorded.

"Every (destroyer) had something different," Tom said. "It was the damndest thing I ever saw."

For nearly two weeks the ship sat in Pearl waiting for someone to dig up the drawings needed to construct a new mast. When construction finally started, someone apparently failed to notice the new mast was actually one meant for a destroyer escort. But that wasn't discovered until the Cogswell joined a carrier group for exercises.

During the exercises an admiral on the carrier wanted all the ships to display a set of five signal flags from a single yard arm during a specific drill, Tom said. Unfortunately for the Cogswell the shortened DE mast only allowed four flags (**con't next page**)



Broken mast

(continued from Page 20) to be displayed at a time. They had to put the fifth on a separate line and that did not please the admiral.



LTJG T. J. LILLIE, USNR
ASSISTANT COMMUNICATIONS

"The admiral went bananas," Tom said. They eventually tried using smaller signal flags designed for submarines, but they were practically unreadable due to their size even from the fantail of the Cogswell, Tom said.

"They were the size of a handkerchief," Tom said.

During another period aboard after a stop in Japan the Cogswell joined a task force of ships that included Korean and Chinese National ships of Chiang Kai-Shek for patrols off disputed islands off the Chinese coast during a tense period between the Nationalist Chinese and the Red Chinese.

At the time Mao Zedung's People's Republic of China and the Nationalist Chinese of Chiang Kai-Shek were in dispute over those islands.

Tom was the OOD on the bridge at the end of the line when the Sea Plane Tender who was leading the formation accidentally strayed inside the 12-mile limit claimed by the Red Chinese. When shots were fired, Tom had the Captain awakened and summoned to the bridge. The incident was over when the task force moved farther out into open sea.

The Cogswell was at the end of the line of ships to make sure none strayed, Tom said.

One of the most vivid memories for Tom and other crewmembers aboard the Cogswell during another cruise involved the massive roll the Cogswell took during the middle of the night while operating with a carrier task force.

Probably one of the most gripping recollections can be found on the Cogswell website (uss-cogswell.com) under the history tab. Jeff Noonan describes in great detail what he remembered about the incident and the subsequent search for a lost shipmate.

Memories are funny things, people recall the same event differently. The passage of years no doubt and the fading of details contributes to that, but also people see a momentous event from different perspectives so they see the same thing in a different way. No one version is probably totally accurate, but all contain what the observer remembers as accurately as they can.

Jim Nelson, RM2 (see cartoons elsewhere in this issue) remembers it as a rogue wave. Jeff Noonan also described it as a massive wave that came during a typhoon. Tom Lillie remembered that he was the OOD at the of the roll.



Cogswell in Pearl Harbor

Officer Walt Dziedzic also remembers being on duty in the CIC during the event.

"I was CIC Officer at the time and we had a rude inclinometer rigged in CIC on the VP board with a single divider suspended which showed the amount of roll. We had been rolling 40 - 50 all night when the port roll happened. The guys on watch said the last thing they saw before the power went out was the dividers passing 70!," Walt said.

Tom remembers the roll meter on the bridge stopped at 58-degrees. All agree that what came next was chaotic.

Sailors were thrown from bunks, including Jim Nelson, who was asleep waiting for his turn on watch. All power was out except the emergency lighting.

"I was tossed out of my rack," Jim said. When he got to the bridge to start his watch, a search was already underway for two missing crew. Both the captain and executive officer were on the bridge. One sailor was recovered the other was never found de-

spite an extensive search.

Jeff Noonan in his article describes how sailors were called to muster and initially 3 sailors were reported missing. One of those was found safe on the ship and the other was recovered in the ocean in what Noonan described as a "miracle." The third was lost.

"I was OOD during that fiasco," Tom said. Two sailors went over the side. One was recovered by a following destroyer, but another wasn't recovered until his body washed up on the South China coast, according to the official records of the inquiry.

The official message/teletype that went out from the Cogswell (a copy of which Tom still has) indicated that a seaman name Richard Ball, an aft lookout/phone talker had been washed overboard and not found after a long search. Daman Larimore, who was also on deck was washed off his feet by the same wave, was cited for coolness under stress as he threw life buoys in the water. Another crew member, Ralph Norris, an MMFN, was also washed overboard and suffered deep lacerations (Jim Nelson believes this man crashed through the depth charge rack) and was recovered by the USS Ammen DD-527.

Norris was transferred to the USS Kearsarge CV-33 for treatment of his wounds, according to the official teletype.

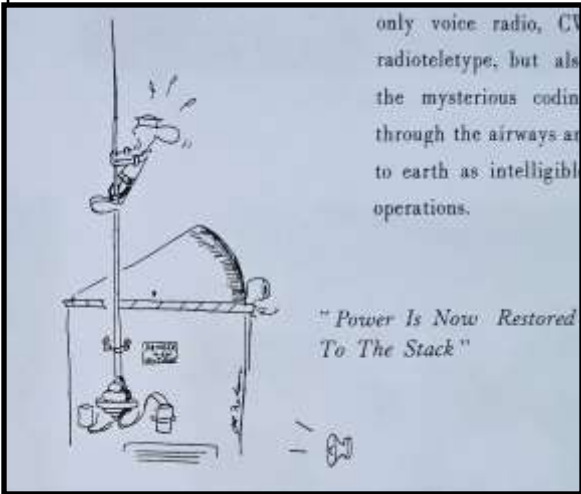
That incident led to a Board of Inquiry and because he was a reservist, Tom was concerned he might be the scapegoat.

Tom, 86, and his wife of 61 years, Marjorie live in a retirement community north of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. They have two daughters.



Tom Lillie

Jim Nelson (RM2) shares his cruise book art from the Cogswell's 1960-61 WestPac cruise



OC Division cartoon

James "Jim" Richard Nelson served aboard the USS Cogswell DD-651 from 1958 - 1961. Following his service Jim enjoyed a varied career including a six-year stint with the National Security Agency in Washington, D.C., a home builder back in Minnesota and in the late 1970s he joined a fledgling Cray Research, a supercomputer company that had about 30 employees when Jim came aboard.

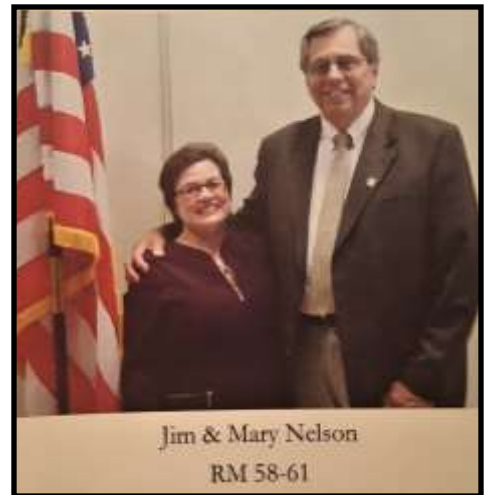
When he left after 12 years ending as operations director, the company had grown to more than 3,500 employees.

He then worked as vice-president of another manufacturing and computer distribution business and finally purchased a medium-sized company doing work for the Mall of America and the Twin Cities Airport.

After closing down his business, he joined the Habitat for Humanity as a volunteer through his church and ended up being construction manager for the seven county metro area in the Twin Cities.

(For more information see Jim's bio in the February 2007 Scuttlebutt at the Cogswell website.)

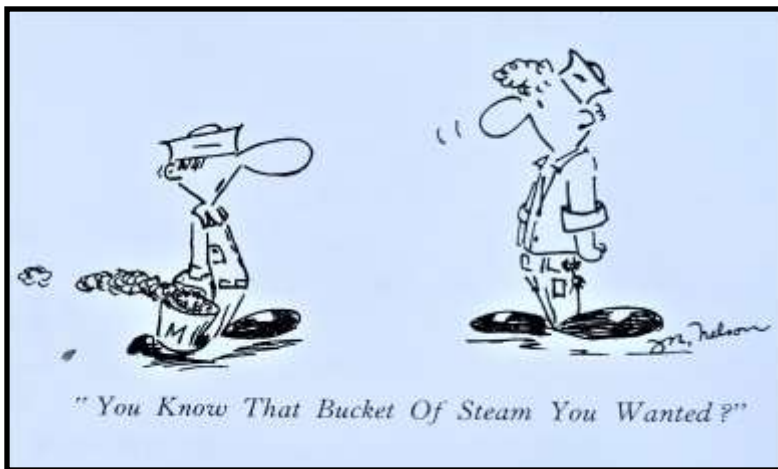
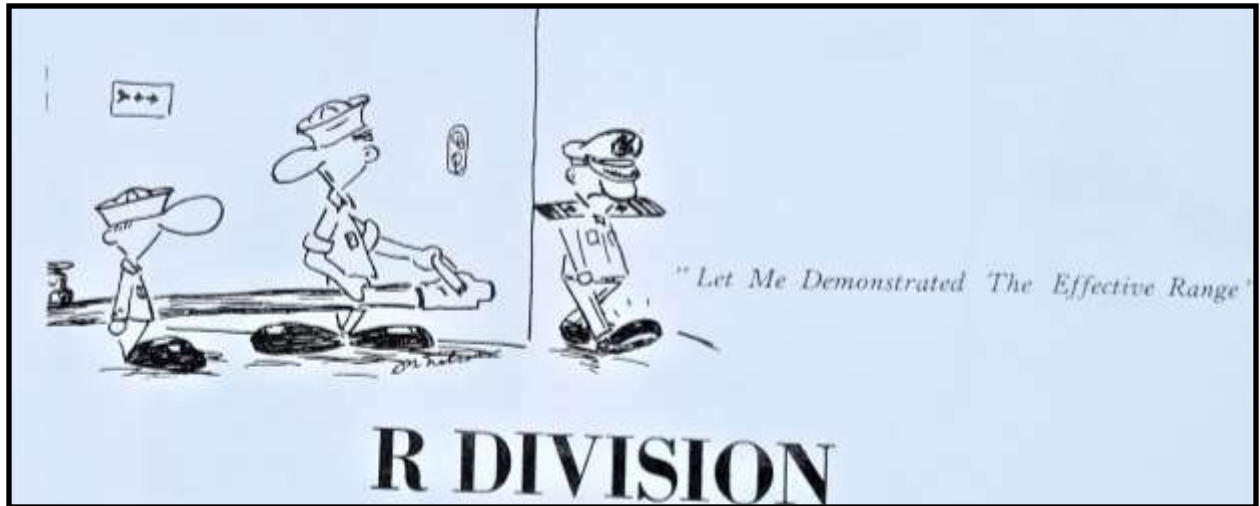
While he made a big impression with his art on the Cogswell he didn't really pursue it after his Navy service.



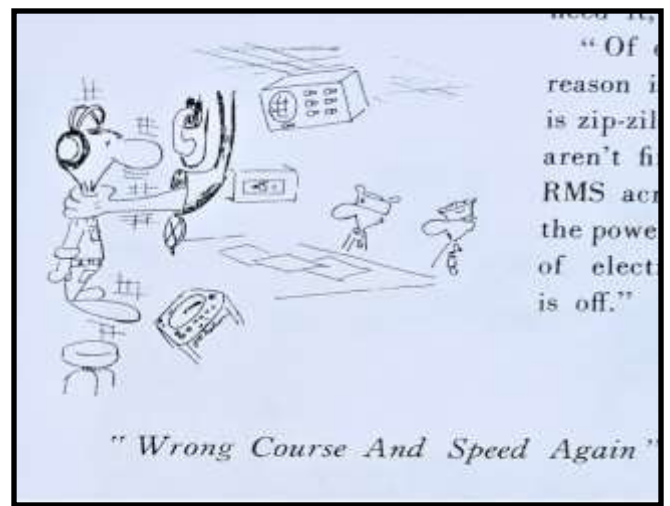
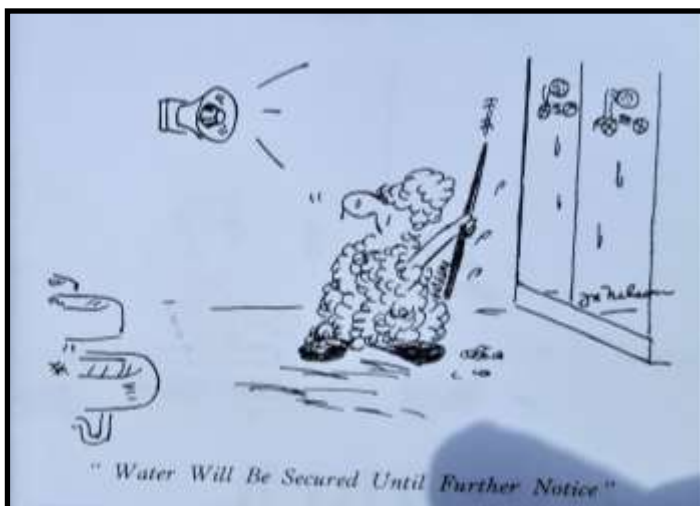
Having a little fun with each division, Jim found some humor to illustrate each of the cruise book pages. At left, Fox Division at right was 1st Division and above a little poke at the sonarmen.



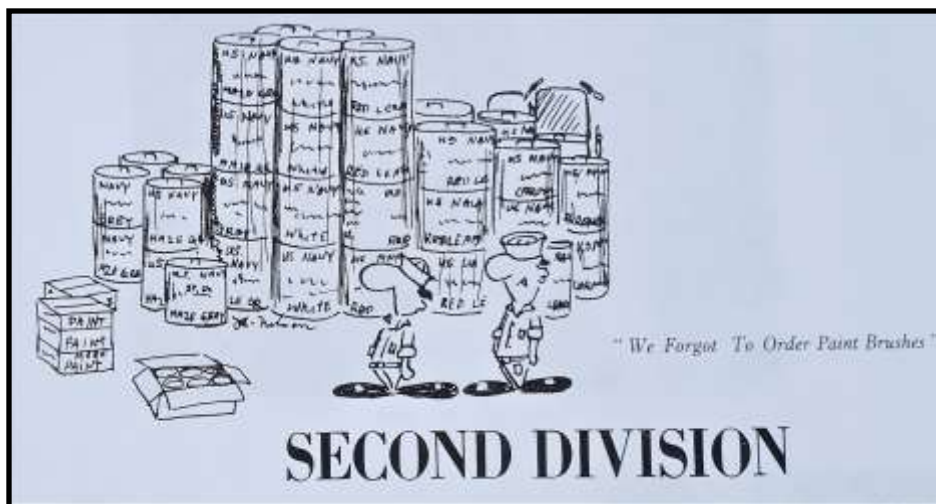
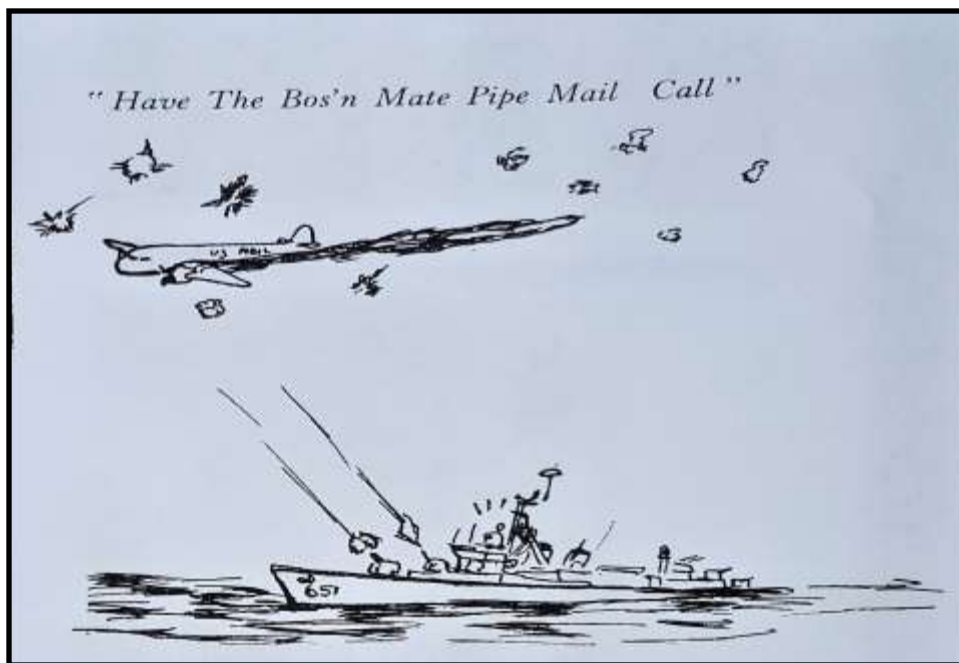
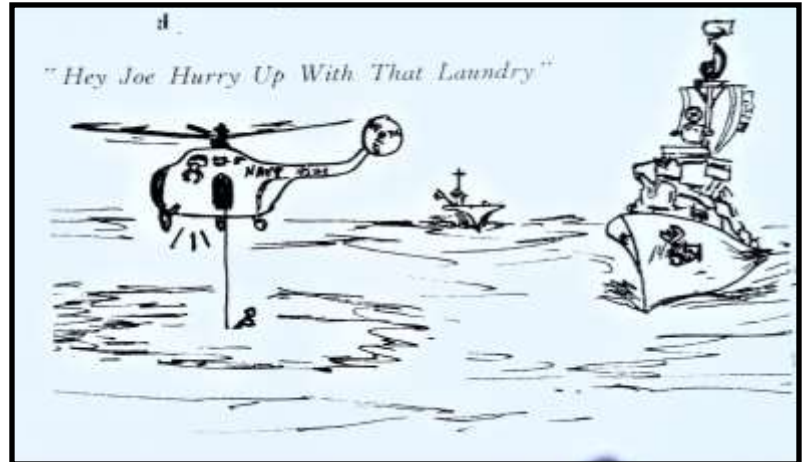
More fun cruise book art from Jim Nelson



Humor is the great morale builder in the military. World War II veterans had Bill Mauldin who told the combatants' story through his Pulitzer Prize winning cartoons that lifted the spirits of those doing the fighting. On the Cogswell, at least during one period the sailors had Jim Nelson to lift their spirits.



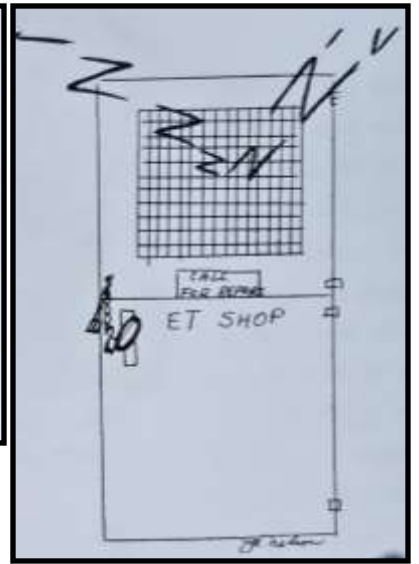
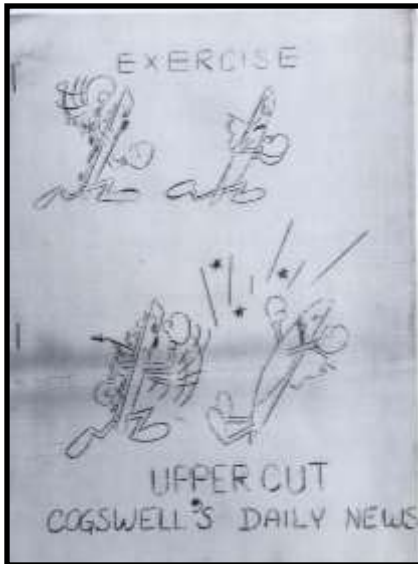
Jim Nelson cruise book art (continued)



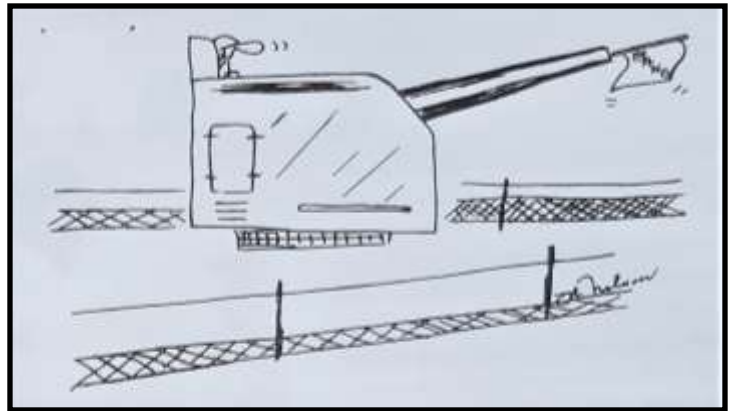
In addition to the cruise book art, Jim and the other Radiomen put out a newsletter each week on the cruise to keep the crew up to speed on what was happening back home. **(See next page)**

The teletype news was put into a booklet form and the cover was illustrated by Jim.

I remember being hungry for news from the States even though we were far away. (Laundry cartoon above was for Supply Division.)



Below (left) is the cover designed by Jim Nelson for the 1960 and 1961 Cruise Book.



1st Division



Thanks to Jim Nelson for sharing his cartoons then (and now) for our enjoyment.

One of the great things about getting together years after we all served with each other is that we discover the many talents that may have gone unnoticed or under appreciated during those times of service.

Clearly many, many Cogswell sailors, both officer and enlisted, went on to varied and successful military and civilian careers post-Cogswell.

Tin Can Sailors - A group worth joining

For those who love destroyers (and who wouldn't?) The National Association of Destroyer Veterans is a group you should consider joining. They publish a great quarterly newsletter and offer announcements of coming events of interest to anyone who has served aboard a destroyer. TCS supports museum ships across the country and membership offers free or discount admission to most of them. Field days offer a chance to work on a museum ship and Bull Sessions offer one-day opportunities to meet with other tin can sailors. To join call (800) 223-5535.

A membership also comes with free or reduced admission to many of the museum ships that are supported by donations from the Association.

To find coming events such as TCS reunions or Bull Sessions, go to destroyers.org or For more information on any event, see The Tin Can Sailor newspaper or call the office at (508) 677-0515.



Tell us your stories

Just a reminder that this is your newsletter. If it is going to be of interest to you we need to hear from you about what you want to read and hear about. Many of you have been very helpful, but others have been silent. We realize that you may be silent because you are happy or satisfied with the direction and content of the newsletter. If not, please let us know what you would like to read and hear. We all share a common experience, but within that common experience are many, many different stories, please don't keep yours a secret. Even if you don't think you are a writer, let us help you put your story together. Easiest way to do that is to contact Jim Smith at jlsmidiaservices@gmail.com or on his cellphone (810) 338-3015 and tell him your stories.

Check out new Cogswell website

If you haven't checked out the new USS Cogswell DD-651 Association website do yourself a favor and try it out.

usscogswell.com

George Overman did the association proud with his design of the new website. There are many new features including photos and videos.

You can also see the latest information on reunions and visit and read past newsletters there. Let us know what you think. (And thank George if you get a chance)

Mystery Solved!

Marv Grabill identifies crewmember photo

In the February 2020 Scuttlebutt we teased a photo of a Cogswell crewmember. True to his word Marv Grabill identified the mystery man as MM3 Glenn Leary who served aboard the Cogswell from 1964-66 in the aft engine room along with Marv and others, Richard Yarber included.



He was a member of the Association at some point. If you know Glenn let him know we featured his photo in the newsletter and try to get him to come back.

It doesn't take much to pick up the phone, call a former shipmate and see if they are interested in joining the association. The worst that can happen is they say no, but maybe they will say yes.

Time for a laugh



Helmsman with an attitude



A real groaner—Weevil brothers story

The older weevil brother had worked in Hollywood as the go-guy whenever an insect was needed in a movie, while the other brother had never amounted to much.

The army recruited the older brother, while the navy recruited the younger brother. That day, the navy won a battle, while the army lost a battle.

And the moral of the story is, when in the military, always go with the lesser of two weevils.



An awkward moment in After Steering

A married man is on a ship near an island a long way from home. He writes to his wife that he sees a lot of beautiful young women when he goes ashore and wants her to send him something to keep him distracted. The wife sends him an accordion and tells him to learn how to play it.

Six months later he arrives home and is eager to hit the bedroom with his wife. She said: "Let's see how well you play that accordion first."

USS Cogswell DD-651 Association

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