

# POWELL POST

Volume 12 Issue 3

June 2006

## OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF USS HALSEY POWELL



### Points of Special Interest

- Skipper Mike shares information with you in the cover story.
- Welcome Mat on page two has two new names for the roster. We hope they will be able to come to the reunion.
- Ed Collender's autobiography continues on pages three and four with stories about Cornell, Staten Island and the Balance Crew, Norfolk.
- A repeat of the news from ML&RS about postal mailings is on page five. Please respond as necessary if you wish to continue postal mailings.

## SKIPPER MIKE SPEAKS

### NOW HEAR THIS

It's May 21 and I'm just hanging out waiting for today's Arena Football game (Teams TBA) on TV. Will probably get the Chicago game, but hope for the NY Dragons/Georgia game. Our son-in-law coaches at NY.

Been looking at road map to plan our trip to Warwick. Hope to spend a day at Gettysburg and stop in Philadelphia on the way. Will take a more northerly route home to enjoy the color in NY and PA.

The ML&RS reports that all is in good shape for the reunion and registration forms should be in the mail

in late June.

The airport to fly in to is NYFT Green in Providence (PVD). Boston Logan is \$100.00 + by taxi.

Hope to see many of you in Warwick.

### TIDBITS OF SHIP INFORMATION

You WWII guys might be interested to know, and maybe you won't really give a crap, I recently received a book full of Halsey Powell engineering info.

The Halsey Powell had two main condenser circulating pumps. They were 25" vertical propeller pumps. So you knew that,

OK, but did you know the Serial Numbers?

Pump	Driver
17747	2-A-8887-46
17748	2-A-8887-49

For you Korean Vets. At 0955 you docked (Dry Dock #1) US Naval Station, San Diego, 5/7/53. Bottom inspection showed both green and brown algae. You also had red rust. After cleaning and washing the 1st UC (undercoat) was 5/15/53. Temperature that day was 58° high, 53° low, with showers. After 72 hours 5/18/53, in clear weather, 69° high, 55° low you received 2nd UC.

(Continued on page 2)

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If you come to Warwick reunion I'll give you info on 3rd UC and info on painting the hull.

For those aboard at Regular Overhaul Mare Island 23 July 54—22 Oct 54 you had to test and repair primary battle telephone and associated cease fire circuits. This was done at a cost of \$4399.00.

I have an unanswered question and find nothing in my books of info. What coins were placed under the Mast when the Halsey Powell was built?

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## PRAYER LIST

Please pray for our POWs and MIAs. Pray also for those who serve our nation today, especially those in harm's way. Prayers are needed for our shipmates who are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness or any other adversity.

Pray especially for:  
Corky Anton  
Jerry Pistor  
Stu Hoffman  
Sanford Whitehurst

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## SPECIAL NOTICE

It is with sadness I must advise you that Jerry Pistor's wife Romaine died April 24th. She had a massive heart attack and stroke. Let's all keep Jerry in our thoughts and prayers.

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## BULLETIN

Fact: Many have paid their 2006 dues

Fact: Many sent extra. THANK YOU.

Problem: Most have not paid dues

Situation: Will be discussed at Warwick Business Meeting.

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Skipper Mike



## WELCOME MAT

The USS HALSEY POWELL Association welcomes the following recently located crewmembers. We hope to see you at our next reunion, and trust that you will become an active member of the Association. Welcome Aboard!

**Jerry Givens (1961-63) SF2**  
328 Maple Ave  
Panama City, FL 32401  
850-914-9443

**John Corley (1961-63) SF1**  
3419 Ingersoll  
Dallas, TX 75212  
214-637-4420



## TAPS

The Post was notified of the following shipmates' deaths since the last newsletter. Not all members died recently, but we just learned of their deaths. The entire crew sends our deepest sympathy to the widows, families and friends of the deceased. Please let ML&RS know if you learn of the death of a former shipmate so he can be recognized in here and on the Honor Roll at the reunion.

**Joseph Lewellyn (1960-62)**  
Died May 2005

**Jesse Blackman (1959-62)**  
Died March 16, 2006

**Julian White (1944-45) Lt.**  
Died August 15, 2005

**Ralph Creech (1951-55) SH1 S Div**  
Date of death not reported

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## Financial Statement

The cost of this issue is \$366.86 mailed to 447 members.

## STATEMENT OF PUBLICATION

The POWELL POST is the official publication of the USS HALSEY POWELL Association. It is published quarterly in March, June, September and December, *subject to receiving sufficient funding*. The Newsletter is funded by voluntary contributions from the membership. All members are encouraged to support the voice of the Halsey Powell by sending contributions to Mike Baker USS Halsey Powell Association.

The newsletter is intended to be a vehicle for the members to express opinions, make suggestions and especially to share experiences.

Unless otherwise stated, the views and opinions printed in the newsletter are those of the article's writer, and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the Association leadership or the editor of the newsletter.

All letters and stories submitted will be considered for publication, except unsigned letters. Letters requesting the writer's name be withheld will be honored, but published on a space available basis. Signed letters with no restrictions will be given priority.

Letters demeaning to another shipmate will not be printed; letters espousing a political position will not be printed.

The editor reserves the right to edit letters to conform to space limitations. Copyrighted material cannot be used without attribution to the author and publication. If you think an article printed in another publication would be of interest to your shipmates, send the entire article—do not paraphrase it and send it in your own words. Let the editor do that.

ML&RS, Inc. is not responsible for the accuracy of article submitted for publication. It would be a monumental task to check each story. Therefore we rely on the submitter to research each article.

You are encouraged to actively participate in the newsletter family by submitting your stories and suggestions.

## “THE STORY OF MY LIFE” BY ED COLLENDER

*Continued from the March 2006 issue.*

### CORNELL

I bought one set each of blue, white and “King” gray uniforms at J L Hudson’s and set off for Ithaca—in uniform—and got my first salute, early in the morning of May 1st from a Canadian sailor in Buffalo, while I was changing trains. I had practiced before but was pretty uncomfortable, thinking everyone in sight could perceive me as a greenhorn. The campus was beautiful—rolling hills, permanent substantial buildings and a campanile that played popular tunes during our class breaks as we marched to and fro. I was assigned to the lower level of Mennen Hall with Lewis Campbell as a roommate. In the connecting room were Bill Bunker and Doc Cameron. *(In alphabetical order as you may note.)*

The six AM morning reveille was a wild melee as 14 of us on that floor scrambled to wash and shave in two wash basins, and don our detachable collars and French cuff links, in time for muster, just 15 minutes after the bugle. Muster included calisthenics, and on that first day, it was doing pushups in the snow, in my new dress blues. Breakfast followed in a new 1500 seat mess hall, built for the occasion. Next on the program was filling out all of the Navy forms, wills and pay allocations. I signed my name 83 times that morning, and fortunately had established a checking account at the 1st National Bank of Chicago—by mail—with Mother as intermediary, so I had some place to allocate the bulk of my new income.

We were part of a Company of 300 souls that marched everywhere we went, in a column of fours, in the middle of the street. For we flatlanders it was murder as we went up the hills at a regular cadence. We didn’t dare drop out, as we were still in a probationary status. Classes included Navy Regs, Naval History

and the like plus some practical things like formatting Naval Correspondence. At four PM we switched to athletic gear and marched to the athletic field for supervised workouts, then showers, evening muster, dinner, and study ‘til lights out at ten.

After 30 days, the 28 engineers, Eng Duty Only types, all with industrial backgrounds, split off into a separate group with subsets of seven each, where we could march on the sidewalks. Then proceeded to review everything we had had in college plus some stuff on Naval Architecture and hull design. Lots of lab work but all miniaturized and pre-wired so that a 30 minute session was the equivalent to a nominal 3 hour lab period. We also had a one inch to the foot model of a single engineroom/fireroom section of the Battleship North Carolina where we could trace piping to our hearts content.

Saturday was Inspection, followed by noon liberty, and free to roam until six PM Sunday.

Here I learned to sing all the eastern college songs and drink, not necessarily in that order, as we descended on the Dutch Kitchen, the Country Club and various other haunts in Ithaca, in our Dress Whites, to live it up in the Ivy League style. Somehow I connected with a cluster of Music Department faculty who, intrigued with my familiarity with the tunes of my parents generation, invited me over to one of their homes for more of the same. The fraternities, including mine, were closing for the duration and every week another one would shut down with a farewell blast open to anyone. A keg on the front lawn was the invitation as students crowded around with their personal steins hung from their necks on lanyards. Gas rationing was in effect then and on more than one week end there was not a drop to be found in the entire town. But the buses rolled, and a group of young ladies from the IBM training school at Binghamton would come over to join in the fun.

Somehow we managed to complete the four months without winding

up in the Brig, and then the orders started to come in. Ten of us got new Fletcher Class Destroyers, including roommate Lewis Campbell, Ben Duffy, and Bill Brocoff. Bill Bunker got a Cruiser and Doc Cameron had a shipyard assignment. He was older, married and had worked for a boiler manufacturer. Fifteen got new Destroyer Escorts and the other two returned to their Coast Guard duties.

### STATEN ISLAND

After two weeks leave in Chicago, I proceeded to Bethlehem Steel, Staten Island, NY, to join the pre-commissioning detail of the USS Halsey Powell DD 686. The new Skipper would be William T McGarry, USNA ‘27. He had commanded the USS Jeffers DD 621 in the Sicilian operation and would bring along his Communication Officer, Ray Davis, and his yeoman, Y2c John Dowling, who would serve as the Captain’s General Quarters phone talker. Only one officer there at that time, Communications Ensign Harry Simpson. I roomed close to the shipyard but made it to Manhattan on the ferry every evening with Harry to visit some of the well known eateries and a few bars.

### BALANCE CREW, NORFOLK

That only lasted for a week or so as they shipped me off to Norfolk as Officer in Charge of the “balance crew” - some 220 non-rated enlisted men. They were assembled there going to various schools and taking their morning calisthenics under the direction of “Tunney” Chiefs, CPOs recruited from the ranks of athletic instructors (*recruited by former heavyweight boxing champion, Gene Tunney*). Almost everything was taken care of for me, except looking after little individual problems. I had a motor scooter and roamed the base. Some days I would ride a ship out for a day sail and observe their training activities as they shot at sleeves,

*(Continued on page 4)*

(Continued from page 3)

practiced ship handling or ran fire drills; as well as observing operations in the engine and firerooms. Other times I would go along without Sonar gang and practice making depth charge runs on a simulation trainer. Sort of like a pin ball game, I got pretty good at it. Social life was flat—base movies and Officer's Club. I lived in a 75 man double decker bunkroom and had a single, school type vertical locker, with all meals at the club.

I think it was weeks later when we broke camp about four AM and headed north via the Cape Charles Ferry to board a private troop train with a 50 seat diner. I had divided the 220 men into groups of ten so only had 22 guys to keep track of, but worried that someone would sneak off, looking for a bottle of hooch at some whistle stop, and get left behind. Each man was to receive two meals—and the final serving was being consumed as we rolled into Pennsylvania Station. Three stake body trucks were there to take us to the Brooklyn Navy Yard. What a midnight ride across Manhattan, as we turned corners, the packed trucks stakes would bend and I expected to see sailors and their gear scattered all over the street. They brought us into the Receiving Station at the Yard and wanted to check us in, but I said NO WAY! We have a ship waiting and that is where we are going. When we arrived at the dock, all of the rated men and officers were there to greet us. Every man had a bunk assigned and was escorted to same; and I climbed between sheets, relaxed in my new home, without the onus of command.

The next morning I met a few more officers—Exec Lt. Paul Adams, USNA '39, and my new department head, Ltjg Fred Fearnow USNA '43, and mustang Ltjg Badgett, both roommates, I had the top bunk and Fred had the bottom in the Chief Engineer's stateroom. I was to be responsible for the two firerooms and the auxiliary gang—machine shop, whale boat engines, refrigeration and the like. Then I went out on the dock

and saw the after half of the USS Murphy DD 603. It had been neatly cut in two by a Norwegian tanker. The DD skipper was just a little too daring and didn't know that the tanker couldn't stop on a dime. The cut was dead center on the number one stack, which was laying on the pier, but the number two boiler front was untouched. An engineer friend of mine from the previous class at Cornell was the only officer aft at that time. He assumed command and maneuvered the remains of the ship from the secondary conn (*on the #2 stack platform*) to recover almost all of those from the forward section before it sank. WAR is dangerous!

Other officers appeared, Gun Boss LT Pete Vail USNA '41, 1st Lt Harry Smith Northwestern '41, Ensigns Webb Hayes and Stirling Tompkins Yale '43, and Bernie Short, torpedoes. Others in Communications were Clarence Bjork North Dakota '41 and Dean Howard Ohio State '42. Our Supply Officer was Ens Frank Carey and the Doctor was Ltjg Bill Smith, Boston College '38.

*To be continued in the next issue.*

## 2006 HALSEY POWELL REUNION

**OCT. 4—8**

**WARWICK, RI**

**CROWNE PLAZA  
HOTEL**

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