

POWELL POST

Volume 12 Issue 3

June 2006

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF USS HALSEY POWELL



Points of Special Interest

- Catch up on the news from old friends, as Skipper Mike shares his news with you in the cover story.
- Six new names for the roster are found on page two under Welcome Mat.
- Ed Collender's story continues on page three with "Commissioning," "Underway" and "Shakedown."
- Red Belden submitted a poem about "Old Sailors" on page four. Can you relate?

SKIPPER MIKE SPEAKS

NOW HEAR THIS

This will be short. It's August 13 and I have many little things to do to be ready for reunion. Ruth and I are stopping in Philadelphia for a couple of days on the way. Behind in yard work and garden is a weedy mess.

We have been going (since June 25) to Grand Rapids two and three days a week to spend time with our grandson at DeVos Children's Hospital. Been a sick little boy. If all continues to improve he could be home in another week.

Last week we met Corky and Char Anton and we all went to visit JoAn

Traut. It was a nice day.

A very hot, dry summer, not unlike the rest of the country, but when Lake Michigan water temperature hits 86°, it is hot!

Looking forward to seeing many of you at the reunion.

That is all.

PRAYER LIST

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

Pray especially for:

Corky Anton
Jerry Pistor
Stu Hoffman
Sanford Whitehurst
Felipe Salazar
Red Belden
Ray Parker
Harold Schmidt

MISC.

Once again this year we will accept door prizes at our Saturday banquet.

We will also have a 50/50 raffle. Please remember most will be flying to Providence so size and security concerns should be considered.

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!

John Ingram
11993 Clayton Ln
Victorville, CA 92392
760-948-9203

Donald Brooks (1954-55) CS3
8166 Wheschell Rd
Whitesburg, TN 37891
423-235-0672

Bill Campbell
1302 N Columbia Ave
Sheffield, AL 35660

Thomas Hickey (FN)
49 Alder
Exeter, NH 03833

Richard Willis (1957-62) BM3
14102 San Antonio Rd
Atascadero, CA 93422
805-466-7184



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

Theodore Kosciuczyk
(1944-46) GM 1/c Gunnery
Died May 18, 2006

Robert Boyd (Lt)
Died January 2006

Richard Martin
(1952-53) SN 1/c 1st Div
Died May 2006

Sherman "Jan" Garber
(1942-45) ARM1/c VT18
Date of death not reported

Jessie Blackburn
Date of death not reported

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.

2006 HALSEY POWELL REUNION

OCT. 4—8

WARWICK, RI

**CROWNE PLAZA
HOTEL**

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Have To"*

Financial Statement

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

“THE STORY OF MY LIFE” BY ED COLLENDER

Continued from June 2006.

COMMISSIONING

The ship was commissioned in Brooklyn a few days later on Monday, October 25, 1943, by the Yard Commandant, Admiral Monroe Kelly, followed by a Wardroom Luncheon for Officer's families and guests. I met Mrs. Halsey Powell there and Web Hayes' dad. Captain Hayes USNA '11 was the prospective skipper of the USS United States, our largest US passenger vessel which was being converted to a troopship. Then they all left, except for the four officer watch section. I had the 1200-1600 watch as Officer of the Deck. What a Baptism! There were several railway box cars of stores on the dock to be loaded and stowed, an all hands job...and then the torpedoes showed up. Not a single gunnery officer aboard, but the Chief Torpedoman and gang were expecting them and did a good job of getting them in their tubes.

Two weeks later, we welcomed two warrant officers to our wardroom—Machinist Frances Boreykowski and Gunner Edward Nevulis. Ski was a battleship sailor at heart but a destroyer veteran. He had been on the Duncan DD 485 on the night of 11-12-42 when it was sunk in the Guadalcanal area. He and the Chief Engineer had survived 30 days or more on a raft. A story about it had appeared in the Saturday Evening Post. More recently he had been on the DD Shubrick in the Italian campaign when a German Stuka dive bomber put one down the after stack. He had been cited for bravery in both actions. Ed Nevulis had been retired and was recalled from the Fleet Reserve to preside over our Main Battery Computer, a huge box with all sorts of knobs, dials and indicators all over the assemblage. This mechanical device of gears and cams with external servo mechanism inputs, controlled the five inch guns and could

track aircraft targets up to 450 knots.

The first order of business was to take a short trip up the East River to Long Island Sound to exercise all of the equipment and to anchor overnight. The trip on the river was sort of like a parade of one, as people in the apartments along the way hung out and cheered us on our way. I could just imagine that Sousa's "Washington Post March" would have been the most appropriate tempo as we proceeded at a stately 10 knots.

While still in Brooklyn, I had a 20-24 evening watch. Seaman Hildy Scheetz was my fantail sentry and I found him in the doorway of the after deckhouse. He was pumping his .45 and cartridges were all over the deck. When I asked him what was going on he said, "Mr. Collender, this gun won't shoot." After clearing the ammo, I gave it a try. Sure enough, he was right, but we did have a little talk on firearm safety.

A few more days and we were over at Bayonne to check the degaussing gear (*energized coils of wire that circled the hull to nullify the magnetic "signature" of the ship*). This time we had a liberty curfew of ten PM, as we were shoving off for Bermuda the next morning. Again I had the 20-24 watch. Most made it back in time, but around eleven I nabbed a couple sneaking aboard at the fantail and had them dutifully logged. One was Smith and the other was Jones. Upon checking the ship's roster the next morning, I could find no such names. At that time, all sailors looked alike to me and I had been had.

UNDERWAY

11-3-43 Underway the next morning, we were approaching the sea buoy about lunchtime and I had a nice big steak on my plate. Then the ocean swell began. I got queasy, went below to relieve my innards and returned to finish the steak. As Junior Officer of the Deck Underway that afternoon, I inspected the crew's mess. What a mess! Almost everyone was seasick. The deck was awash in water

(*probably a misoperation of the scullery*), and food, digested and otherwise. One interesting scene was an old salt scoffing down his chow while keeping an eagle eye on a pale faced sad sack hanging on the edge of his bunk above the mess table. Later the Captain took a turn around the deck and rolled a depth charge off of the stern rack. Instantly everyone recovered and made haste to their General Quarters Stations, presuming of course that this was their first combat action.

SHAKEDOWN

11-15-43 Bermuda was beautiful! The water was clear and one could see down to 50 or 60 feet at least in the lagoon. But most of the time we were underway—shooting at sleeves, chasing submarines or firing torpedoes with dummy warheads. The torpedo chase was fun for engineers as we had to go to top speed to recover the 35 knot fish before they sank. Another exercise was to practice underway refueling at sea from a tanker. My assignment was the after fueling station, and when the messenger wire came over, we were supposed to secure it to a two inch pipe deck davit. We did, and the davit carried away. End of exercise, but now we knew the drill. I showed the problem to Metalsmith Dick Schumaker and he made a "Pad Eye" from heavy steel plate and bolted it to the edge of the aluminum afterdeck house. If anything gave way now, it would be the entire deckhouse.

We did have a few days at anchor and, what became routine later, we were obligated to send four Officers to work out on the Submarine Attack Trainer where submarine and destroyer Sonar crews could duel. The electro-mechanical board was huge, about 30 feet square. The Captain took the first two exercises and missed miserably, as did our Exec Paul Adams and Gun. Boss Pete Vail, all with years at sea on

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

sub patrols. They laughed and joked about how far an EDO Ensign (*Engineering Duty Only*) would probably miss. Well, the first sub was hardly out of the gate when I nailed him clean. The trainer then put some fancy moves on the next one and when I was on a firing run I said, "Check Fire." I wasn't quite sure so opened up to come around for another run! Same results, another clean hit. Very quiet in the Captain's Gig on our return.

One day the Battleship Iowa BB 16 was transiting our training area with President FDR aboard. (*He was enroute to the Yalta Conference to meet with Churchill and Stalin, but we didn't know that.*) This was an excellent opportunity for destroyer torpedo training on a real target. Destroyer "Willie D" DD 579 William D Porter, was assigned the task. Allegedly, a dry run, no actual firing...

We heard the radio transmissions between the two..

DD-The fish is in the water.

BB- We understand this is to be a dry run (repeated a few more times)

DD- I say again, the fish is in the water (repeated a few more times)

About this time the torpedo track was spotted by the intended target, followed by:

BB- Have your Executive Officer assume command and return to port immediately. (*This was the last I heard of it until the year 2000 when the story came out in the Tin Can Sailor Newsletter.*)

We did have one liberty in Hamilton where a group of us wound up in a French perfume shop where the Madame explained the special allures of each of the different labels as they were daubed on wrists and palms.

To be continued in December 2006

FOR ALL YOU BROKE DOWN OLD DESTROYMEN OUT THERE

Submitted by Red Belden

Old Sailors sit and chew the fat
About things that used to be,
Of things they've seen,
The places they've been,
When they ventured out to sea.
They remembered friends from long ago,
The times they had back then.
The money they spent,
The beer they drank,
In their days as sailing men.
Their lives are lived in days gone by,
With thoughts that forever last.
Of bell bottom blues,
Winged white hats,
And good times in their past.
They recall long nights with a moon so bright
Far out on a lonely sea.
The thoughts they had
As youthful lads,
When their lives were wild and free.
They knew so well how their hearts would swell
When Old Glory fluttered proud and free.
The underway pennant
Such a beautiful sight
As they plowed through an angry sea.
They talked of the chow ol' cookie would make
And the shrill of the Bosun's pipe.
How salt spray would fall
Like sparks from hell
When a storm struck in the night.
They remember old shipmates already gone
Who forever hold a spot in their heart,
When sailors were bold,
And friendships would hold,
Until death ripped them apart.
Their sailing days are gone away,
Never again will they cross the brow.
They have no regrets,
They know they are blessed,
For honoring a scared vow.
Their numbers grow less with each passing day
As final muster begins.
There's nothing to lose,
All have paid dues,
And they'll sail with shipmates again.
I've heard them say before getting under-way
That there's still some sailing to do.
They'll say with a grin,
That their ship has come in
And the Lord is commanding the crew.

Author unknown

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