

POWELL POST

Volume 16 Issue 1

December 2009

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF USS HALSEY POWELL



Points of Special Interest

- *Jim Wyatt gives you a glimpse of some sites in Seattle for 2010 in his President's Message in the cover story.*
- *Welcome Mat on page two has two new names of the Halsey Powell roster. See if you recognize them.*
- *Did you ever hitch a ride while in the Navy? Read some stories about hitchhiking from your shipmates beginning on page two. Let's hear yours for next time.*
- *Mail Call on page three has a thank you from a shipmate who asked ML&RS to help him get in touch with an old friend.*

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Ahoy Shipmates,

Hope this letter finds you all in good health and looking forward to the Christmas season. This Thanksgiving, Joyce and I had 45 members of the family together for the holiday. I can't believe the amount of food we were able to devour. Next to having them all here for dinner, the best thing about it was having them all go home on Saturday. I guess I'm getting cranky in my old age.

I'm looking forward to seeing you all in Seattle next year. When I worked for the Air Force, I attended meetings about 4 or 5 times a year in Seattle and really learned to like the

area. There are a lot of things to do and see there, as well as many great places to dine. I especially enjoyed eating at Ivors Salmon House on Lake Union. In our Navy days, we all thought Seattle was a great liberty port.

The ferry ride over to Bremerton is a great way to spend the afternoon. I'm not sure what ships they have that we can tour, but I will find out and let you know in the next issue of the Powell Post. There are also ferries to the San Juan Islands, the Space Needle, wonderful museums and great shopping.

I received a phone call from Mike Jacobson the other day. He served on

the Powell from '64 to '66. He mentioned some of his old shipmates he is in contact with and hopefully we can get a contact for them and get them to attend the reunions. If any of you know of the name of a shipmate that we haven't been in contact with let me know. I will try to contact them and see if we can increase the attendance at the future reunions. It would be great if we could get more of the younger men that served aboard in the '60s to join with us at the reunions.

Here's wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Fair winds and following seas for you all.

Jim Wyatt



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!

Mike Jacobson
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"Our Reunions Work So You Don't Have

**USS HALSEY POWELL
2010 REUNION
OCT. 13-17
SEATTLE, WA
HOLIDAY INN SEATTLE AIRPORT**

ADVENTURES IN HITCHHIKING

Editor's Note: I sent out an e-mail asking for stories about hitchhiking while in the Navy. If you didn't receive an e-mail, please send in your story for the next issue. Here are the responses from your shipmates:

Skee Lisle:

After my ship, the USS Carmick DMS 33, as part of Task Force 3, returned home from China in 1946 where our job was to see that all Americans, British, Australians, etc., were safely removed from harms way as the Communists were closing in on Shanghai, we got orders to return to the states with Treasure Island to be our Base Port. One day I was told that I was chosen to wear the new enlisted men's test uniform. I was fitted with navy blue straight dress pants, Eisenhower jacket, pilot type hat, white dress shirt and navy blue tie. The liberty bell sounded and off I go to Vallejo, CA, my hometown, 24 miles northeast. It was easy to hitch a ride off the base, but after being dropped off on the southside of the Oakland Bay Bridge, there was a gathering of about 20 sailors all with our thumbs up in the air hoping to hitch a ride. Well, within 15 minutes or so, 19 of us got picked up. Yes, you guessed it right—little Old Skee Lisle, QM1st still with his thumb in the air and no takers. Was the reason that I looked like the enemy because of my new uniform? Well, four hours later I got home after a very nice person who must have thought I looked harmless picked me up. The next morning in my civilian garb, I walked the three blocks to the freeway (do not remember if the highways were called freeways in those days), put my thumb up in the air and the first car that stopped picked me up. When he heard my story of the day before, even though he was not going to San Fran, he drove me right to the gate of Treasure Island. There still were a lot of nice people in the old days. P.S. The outfit did not fly, but it was, I believe, a beautiful concept and was sorry it failed to be accepted.

Ralph C. Miller, SA, Deck Force:

In 1952 I hitched a ride on a reserve Navy PB4Y departing from Long Beach, CA to Grosse Ile, MI. My final destination was Pittsburgh, PA. The Navy PB4Y is a version of the B-24 Liberator bomber. There were 9 or 10 other hikers aboard.

The cabin of the PB4Y was unheated and very cold at altitude. During the flight the co-pilot would escort each rider to spend about 30 minutes in the heated cockpit. When it was my turn I asked the co-pilot where my parachute was located. He said I should have checked out the parachute before take off from Long Beach. It was a navy regulation that all aboard had to have a parachute, so the pilot decided to land at Olathe, KS Naval Air Station to pick up a parachute for me.

Then on to Grosse Ile. The weather at Grosse Ile was very poor with some ice on the runways. We made our approach and when we touched down, the nose landing gear collapsed and ended up off the runway into the dirt. Luckily no one was injured.

The time was about 2:30 am and I had to get to the Wayne County, Detroit airport.

Now the fun begins. I called a taxi cab and the 20-25 mile ride was the most scary thing I ever experienced. All the roads were ice covered and we skidded, went through red lights, did 360s and even slid off the road twice. We finally made it and the fare was \$20.00. A couple hours later I caught a United Air Lines DC4 and made the trip to Pittsburgh without incident. The air fare was \$10.

Haven't done any hitchhiking since then (cars, trucks, airplanes or bicycles).

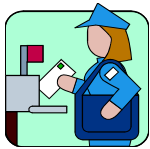
Jerry Dywasuk:

My favorite remembrance of a hitchhiking experience happened with my good buddy, Gary Mootry. It occurred in 1956, when Gary and I hitchhiked to Yuma, Arizona to

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spend a weekend with Gary's aunt and uncle. As I recall, someone from the Halsey Powell gave us a ride halfway there and we stood on a corner for at least 5 hours before we got a ride to complete the trip. It was a wonderful experience meeting new people, having home cooked meals and bonding with a shipmate. Hopefully Gary can add more details to this trip. (Gary, let's hear from you for the next issue.)



MAIL CALL

Dear Karen,

I just wanted to thank you once again for getting back to me with the contact information for Harold Haynes. He and I got to talk for quite a long time yesterday. He was really pleased to hear from someone thinking about his brother Joe. Harold and Joe were both on the Halsey Powell at the same time, both in the after fire room. Joe was the Petty Officer in Charge of the fire room and Harold was a BT3 working in the same fire room. We got to talk a lot about Joe. Joe retired as a Chief, moved to Redding, California and went to work for a hospital where he ultimately became Chief Engineer. Moved to another hospital in the same capacity.

When Desert Storm was launched and the USS Missouri was put back in commission, a detailer from the Bureau of Navy Personnel came to visit Joe to try to entice him to come back into the Navy as they were so short of experienced Boilerman. Joe told them he couldn't afford the cut in pay, Ha.

Anyway, I just wanted to thank you for putting two old shipmates in touch with each other to talk about and share stories about another shipmate. They both said they served under me as Engineering Officer. I always said we served together. That's what made things work in the Navy I knew.

Respectfully,
C.A. Smith

"THE STORY OF MY LIFE" BY ED COLLENDER

Continued from September 2009

BATTLE OF SURIGO STRAIT 1944

In brief Destroyer action, the time it takes for torpedoes to reach their target seems interminable. Hutchins, Daly and Bach, since launching theirs, had been under fire for twelve minutes, had executed one 180 degree turn and were about to make another when at 0344, three loud explosions were heard and round balls of orange fire were seen. Possibly from Fuso blowing up or fire from Yamashiro's guns.

The radar scope had changed—Yamashiro was pressing on Shigure and Mogami had sheered out to starboard and the others, all crippled, were drifting or trying to retire.

0349 Finally DesRon 54 Capt Smoot, had been screening our eastern flank. Destroyers got the word to deploy in three groups. Section one—Albert W Grant, Richard P Leary and Newcomb; Section two: Capt Conley, Bryant, Halford and Robinson passing east; and Section three: CDR Boulware, Bennion, Leutze and Heywood L Evans passing west.

0354—0359 Section two fired five each 8,380-9,000 yards all missed

0357—0359 Section three fired three at 7,800-8,000 yards, all missed

0404 Section one launched five each, Newcomb made two hits on BB Yamashiro. Grant tail end Charlie, received 18 hits on retiring and Newcomb came alongside to haul her clear.

These torpedoes accounted for 75% of the firepower in Nishima's Force.

BATTLE LINE VS NISHIMURA

While the Destroyer action was going on, Battle Line and two Cruisers groups were waiting for the enemy to come within range. At 0330 all three task groups were near the western side of the Strait steaming east. Nearest Leyte was the right flank, Adm Berkley's 2 CLs and HMAS Shropshire. Six miles east were Adm Oldendorf's left flank of 3

CAs and 2 CLs. West Virginia leading Battle Line, lay about four miles north of Louisville and five miles northeast of Phoenix.

0330 Adm Weymouth made signal to battle, to open fire at 26,000 yards. Adm Olendorf ordered all Cruisers to open fire at 15,000 yards. Five of these six battleships had been hit or sunk at Pearl Harbor and now it was time for revenge.

0352 BB Yamashiro slowed to 12 knots continuing on course firing at visible targets for she had no fire control radar supported only by CA Mogami astern and DD Shigure on his starboard quarter as "all hell broke loose" just then. Nishima never told Shima what was happening. He had to find out for himself.

West Virginia, Tennessee and California were equipped with the newest fire control radar and had a firing solution long before the enemy came within range. They opened fire at 0353. West Virginia got off 93 rounds of armor piercing 16" AP, Tennessee 69 14" and California 63 14" before checking. The other three, with older fire control radar, had difficulty finding a target. A few minutes later, Mississippi got on the big target and fired a full salvo at 19,790 yards. Olendorf had just ordered cease fire but she had not gotten the word.

Thus Mississippi had the honor of firing the last major-caliber salvo of this battle; and at the same time, sounding the death knoll of the old battle line tactics, which had been foremost in naval warfare since the seventeenth century.

All cruisers poured out an almost continuous stream of 6" and 8" main battery fire as well as 5" secondary guns. Some of this turned out to be friendly, hitting Grant, and near misses on others. Accordingly, Olendorf ordered cease fire to allow Destroyers to clear the range. This ten minute hiatus allowed the Japanese to

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retire. For Yamashiro, it was a short trip as she rolled over at 0419 and sank with Nishima and most of the crew. The few survivors, when recovered, were either too dazed or defiant to contribute any detail of the demise of their ship...CA Mogami under gunfire from McManes DDs caught fire at 0356. At 0402 a salvo from Portland exploded on the bridge, killing Captain, Exec and all Officers present. Other hits in engine rooms and fire-rooms slowed her almost to a stop. Of the two Battleships, only the burning stern of Fuso remained afloat, three destroyers were sunk or stopped by torpedoes in mid strait, a badly damaged cruiser and a damaged destroyer were retiring. For the victors, only Grant had been hit and that mostly by her own side.

12-25 0430 CDR Nishimo of Shigure sent dispatch to CinC Toyoda, with cc to Kurita, that all of Nishima's ships except Shigure went down under gunfire and torpedo attack.

SHIMA'S STRIKING FORCE REAR

Shima's second Striking Force included 2 CAs, Nachi and Ashigura, CL Abukama, (completed in 1925 and a Pearl Harbor participant) and 4 DDs. While still in the Strait, Abukama took a fish from a MTB and slowed to 10 knots. The rest continued on at 28 knots. Shima observed two radar targets at 13,000 yards. This was Shima's only contribution to the battle.

To be continued in future issues

RED'S JOKE CORNER

KIDS OPERATIONS

Two little kids are in a hospital, lying on stretchers next to each other, outside the operating room. The first kid leans over and asks, "What are you in here for?" The second kid says, "I'm here to get my tonsils out and I'm a little nervous."

AID & ATTENDANCE BENEFIT

"The Veteran's Administration offers a Special Pension with Aid and Attendance (A & A) benefit that is largely unknown. This Special Pension allows for Veterans and surviving spouses who require the regular attendance of another person to assist in eating, bathing, dressing, undressing or taking care of the needs of nature to receive additional monetary benefits. It also includes individuals who are blind or a patient in a nursing home because of mental or physical incapacity. Assisted care in an assisted living facility also qualifies.

This important benefit is overlooked by many families with Veterans or surviving spouses who need additional monies to help care for ailing parents or loved ones.

This is a "pension benefit" and is not dependent upon service-related injuries for compensation. Most veterans who are in need of assistance qualify for this pension.

Aid and Attendance can help pay for care in the home, nursing home or assisted living facility. A Veteran is eligible for up to \$1,519 per month, while a surviving spouse is eligible for up to \$976 per month. A couple eligible for up to \$1,801 per month.

ELIGIBILITY

Any War Time Veteran, with 90 days of active duty, 1 day beginning or ending during a period of War, is eligible to apply for the Aid and Assistance Special Pension. A surviving spouse (marriage must have ended due to death of veteran) of a War-Time Veteran may also apply. The individual applying must qualify both medically and financially."

For more information, and to download the forms needed to file for the Aid and Assistance program, please visit www.veteranaid.org.

The first kid says, "You've got nothing to worry about. I had that done when I was four. They put you to sleep and when you wake up they give you lots of Jello and ice cream. It's a breeze."

The second kid then asks, "What are you here for?" The first kid says, "A circumcision," The second kid says, "Whoa! I had that done when I was born. I couldn't walk for a year!"

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. 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 **James Wyatt**, 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.