

Turner Times



VOL. 8, ISSUE 1

WEBSITE: WWW.USSTURNER.ORG

OCTOBER, 2004

NORFOLK REUNION

By Pete Varley, DC2, '66-'69

The hurricanes could not stop us. Neither could the shadow of traveling over the anniversary of 9/11. The 52 shipmates (9 first-timers) and 54 guests who attended the Norfolk reunion, braved it all and made it a great occasion.

The location was ideal. Situated on the waterfront of the Elizabeth River, we could watch the river traffic from a number of vantage points. We were also next to the Waterside Mall that housed a number of shops and restaurants, including Joe's Crab

Shack, Outback Steakhouse and Hooters. There was never a want for good food. Also within walking distance were the USS Wisconsin, Nauticus, the Naval Museum and the General Douglas MacArthur Memorial.

(Continued on page 6)

CAPTAIN C. C. DUDLEY PASSES AWAY

C.C. Dudley, the 12th CO of DD/DDR-834, died on February 9, 2004. Captain Dudley began his sea service in 1944 as a member of the Merchant Marine, retiring from the Navy with four stripes in the summer of 1978. His last job was Commander, Navy Recruiting Area Three in Macon, Georgia. In these 34 years he had 15 Navy assignments. He served on eight merchant steam ships and six of the Navy's. Command-

ing the TURNER, his only Navy sea command, was one of the high points of a successful Navy career. Not only was he our "skipper", he was also XO of the USS Northhampton, the President's Flagship. During his naval service, he was awarded the Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal, Navy Commendation Medal and several more medal and ribbons.

After his naval service, he

was very active in health care, forming his own home health agency. In addition, he also founded the Retired Officers Association, Northeast Georgia Chapter and had served as the president of the Georgia Association of Home Health Agencies. He was a 32nd Degree Mason. Our skipper will be sorely missed at our reunions. His smile lit up the room.

TOM SHINGLETON-WEBMASTER-DIES

Tom Shingleton died on October 9, 2004. As some of you know, Tom missed the reunion in Norfolk, although he and Judy wanted to come.

Tom had been feeling weaker and weaker in the past few months and finally succumbed to congestive heart failure. He was a tireless volunteer

who stepped up a few years ago when we asked for help to create a website for our association. Tom dug in and

(Continued on page 6)

TIME FOR ANNUAL DUES

Our Association only has three ways to raise funds to continue our good work: holding reunions, selling items from the Ship's Store and soliciting dues from our members. Our reunions are not big money makers. The Mobile reunion made as little \$2 per attendee. Savannah and San Diego lost money. The ship's store also provides cash for us to operate, but we price our items very close to our cost. That brings us to annual dues.

As a reminder, we do not exclude anyone who wants to participate in our association and we have chosen not to increase our \$20 annual dues and to keep dues voluntary. We keep ALL shipmates on our mailing list, send ALL of them the newsletter and they are ALL eligible to attend reunions, whether or not they pay dues. As a reminder, dues cover the "year" between reunions, and NOT a calendar year. As we put the Norfolk reunion to bed, it's time to ask for your support again.

During this past year, we added another 106 shipmates to our roster, including 3 newly located "Plankowners." Additionally, we continued to improve the "Turner Times" and our website to keep the memory of our ships alive and let all of our shipmates, and their families, know the news of our association. These efforts, along with the rest of our association's business, cost money.

During the 2001-2002 dues year, 18.2% of members paid dues. In 2002-2003, it dropped to 17.3%, this past year I'm pleased to report that 245 members, or 19.5% of shipmates paid dues. As far as I know, that's a new record and all I can say is a big "Bravo Zulu" to us and "Thank You."

Please unlock that wallet or checkbook and mail your \$20 annual dues to Mike Quinn at 15022 Hix Street, Livonia, MI 48154. We realize many of you are on a fixed income and others may have more than one reunion association looking for dues. If \$20 is too much, send whatever you can so we can continue to keep alive our memories of our ships.

FROM THE OF THE PREZ

Another note started while traveling. This time I am somewhere between Chicago and Oakland.

To those of you who couldn't make the thirteenth reunion you missed a good one. Thirteen is certainly not a unlucky number for the Turner Tigers. We may have traveled to Norfolk in some rain but by Wednesday evening the weather couldn't have been better. The dinner cruise was very enjoyable with some interesting sights along the way.

The hotel location couldn't have been better either. We were right on the Elizabeth River with access to all of downtown Norfolk and an easy water taxi ride to Portsmouth with it's historic district. Lorraine and I did a lot of walking on both sides of the river.

Another site we managed to make time for was Nauticus, just a few blocks from the hotel. The USS Wisconsin BB64 is moored alongside the museum. Both were a real experience, bringing back memories of times on the Turner.

With the good times had at this reunion, I am looking forward to our next meeting at Philadelphia. I've been to Philadelphia quite a few times and found all the museum's and other sites very interest-

ing. One thing you should do when there is spend some time at the Reading Market. It is a unique place. The only place I know anything like it is Pike's Market in Seattle. The Reading Market has a decidedly Amish flavor with stalls of many different foods and goods. And what good would be a trip to Philadelphia without sampling a cheese steak right from the source.

As mentioned elsewhere in the newsletter we urgently need backup volunteers. Our organization runs so well due to the hard work of a few volunteers who take care of our web site, put together the Memory Book, and produce the Turner Times. All these activities need someone who is at least familiar with what it takes to do the job and could fill in if needed. This point was recently brought home when Tom Shingleton passed away. Tom's hard work on creating and keeping our award winning web site running smoothly will be really missed. Our condolences go out to Judy Shingleton. None of us are getting any younger and it is only prudent that we make sure the things that make our organization what it is are continued.

— Tim

TURNER IN MONACO



Our photo in the last issue has generated a lot of comments. Here are some of them.

As you know, I am new to the Association, but I noticed the article in the most recent newsletter. I was on a Med cruise in the Fall and Winter of 1955-1956. And we spent Christmas and New Year's Day in Monaco. It seems to me that was when Grace Kelly's engagement was announced and the marriage occurred in 1956. Maybe I'm mixed up on my dates as far as the engagement & marriage. I left the Navy and Turner in September 1956. The article and picture brings back good memories. Regardless which Med cruise was involved, the sun bathing note was the same. At about 10am, the range finder trained to starboard and other interested guys started looking. Good port, mild, sunny weather and water skiers out for fun and Onassis' yacht (and others) lit up for the holidays. Yours truly, Gerard "Red" Frank, '55-'56, IC2

Some things don't add up. Perhaps Mel and the Joes can help clear up the confusion. First, when we were in Monaco in December '58, we were with the Bailey and pointed in the other direction. Second, Princess Grace and Rainier were married in 1955. Therefore, the Prince wouldn't have been in the states asking for her hand in marriage. I don't recall a visit from Princess Charlotte or many of the other memories that Allan had of the visit. Is it possible that he's referring to an earlier Monaco visit by the Turner? Dave Bodendorf, '57-'59, ETN2

I had the same thoughts except for the location of Prince Rainer. I'm certain, almost anyway, that Princess Charlotte did NOT come onboard. However, my memory is surely no better than Alan's. I do not think I ever saw a picture that did not include the Bailey from the 58 visit. However, we the crack *Turner Times* staff don't write 'em and we accept no blame regardless of the seriousness of the transgression. Mel Edwards, '57-'59, Lt (jg)

I would have to get out my pictures to be sure, however my '57 cruise book said that we returned to Newport on May 31 1957. I believe that it is not likely that we turned around and went back in '57. This is not impossible though. Lets face it none of our memories are foolproof. Joe Bennett, '56-'59, ETR2

I kept track of our Liberty Ports in a World Atlas. We were definitely in Monaco during the winter of '55-'56. P.S. I remember looking through the binoculars, too. Ronald Adkins, '54-'57, GM3

Editor's Note: It appears that Turner was in Monaco more than once; December/January '55-'56, possibly in 1957 and December '58. On the later visits, she was moored next to the Bailey and, obviously, that ship is not in this picture. As for Grace Kelly and Prince Rainier, here are the correct dates. Their engagement was announced on December 28, 1955 and they were married on April 12, 1956. One thing is clear regardless. If you are ever moored at Monaco, bring binoculars!

\$ SHIP'S STORE ¢

The following items can be ordered from Carl Ackerman, 7436 Daisy Cir., Macungie, PA 18062, Ph: (610) 398-0145. All items are postpaid. Please make checks payable to Carl L. Ackerman.

- ▶ Up-to-date rosters — \$5.
- ▶ Turner baseball caps embroidered with Turner logo — \$16.
- ▶ Mesh polo shirts embroidered with Turner logo. Colors: Red, White or Navy Blue. Sizes M to XXL. All sizes come with a pocket — \$35. Sizes 2XL to 3XL — \$40.
- ▶ Sweat Shirts embroidered with Turner logo. Colors: Navy Blue or Gray. Sizes M to XXL — \$45. Sizes 2XL to 3XL — \$50.
- ▶ Zippo™ Tape Measures, 1.5" square, with Turner Logo — \$10.
- ▶ **NEW ITEM-DVD of 1961 Med Cruise photos — \$10.**
- ▶ **NEW ITEM-Pen/Letter opener set in maroon with "USS Turner DD/DDR 834." — \$10. Pen only, maroon/black — \$5.**
- ▶ **NEW ITEM-"13th Reunion-Norfolk" large display calculator — \$10.**
- ▶ Denim Shirts: Short sleeve, light blue with dark blue Turner Logo. Sizes M to XXL — \$45. Sizes 2XL to 3XL—\$50.
- ▶ Ship's patches: Both the Tiger and Double Eagle, 4" round with color embroidery. Also official Navy patch just like on the ball caps. Blue/gold lettering of "USS Turner DD/DDR 834" around gray destroyer profile. 3"H x 5"W. Cost is \$5 per patch.

OFFICIAL REPORT OF THE SINKING OF USS TURNER, DD-648
AS RECORDED ON BOARD THE USS SWANSEY, DE-248
WHICH TOOK PART IN THE RESCUE OPERATIONS

3 January 1944

1. At anchor 5 miles bearing 328 T. from Ambrose light awaiting clearance to channel. Orders of CTF64 to get underway at 0715 and proceed to Navy Yard Brooklyn were not carried out as scheduled due to an explosion and final sinking of the USS TURNER. The original explosion on board the USS TURNER was observed from this vessel at 0618, by the O.O.D. and J.O.O.D. who were on the flying bridge of this vessel at the time, and by several enlisted men that were on duty topside. Their impressions were of a rumbling, rather than a sharp noise of explosion and of flames leaping above the TURNER in a volcanic effect. Three projectiles that resembled rockets, appeared above the flames and curved outward in wide arcs. This vessel was anchored 3000 yards, 330 degrees true from TURNER at this time.

2. CO was called and preparations were begun immediately for getting underway. General quarters was sounded at 0623. Several explosions were noted on about this time, though not of great violence. At 0635 this vessel was underway and proceeding at best speed toward TURNER. Fire and Rescue party was ordered to assemble on starboard side main deck with full equipment. Men were ordered from GQ gun stations as necessary to man line handling details, and to assist repair parties. Hoses were fixed and manned to side. All searchlights were manned and trained toward TURNER. This vessel approached TURNER from aft and to port with intention of going alongside. At 0645 SWASEY had approached to within 500 yards of TURNER when it observed that a small craft was moving in to TURNER'S port quarter. This fact made going directly alongside impossible so motor whaleboat was lowered immediately and fire and rescue party of 15 men dispatched to board TURNER if possible. SWASEY then moved forward and managed to get within approximately twenty yards of the fire. All hoses were used that could be brought to bear in vicinity of the fire but the volume of water we were able to get over was pitifully ineffective for a flame of that magnitude.

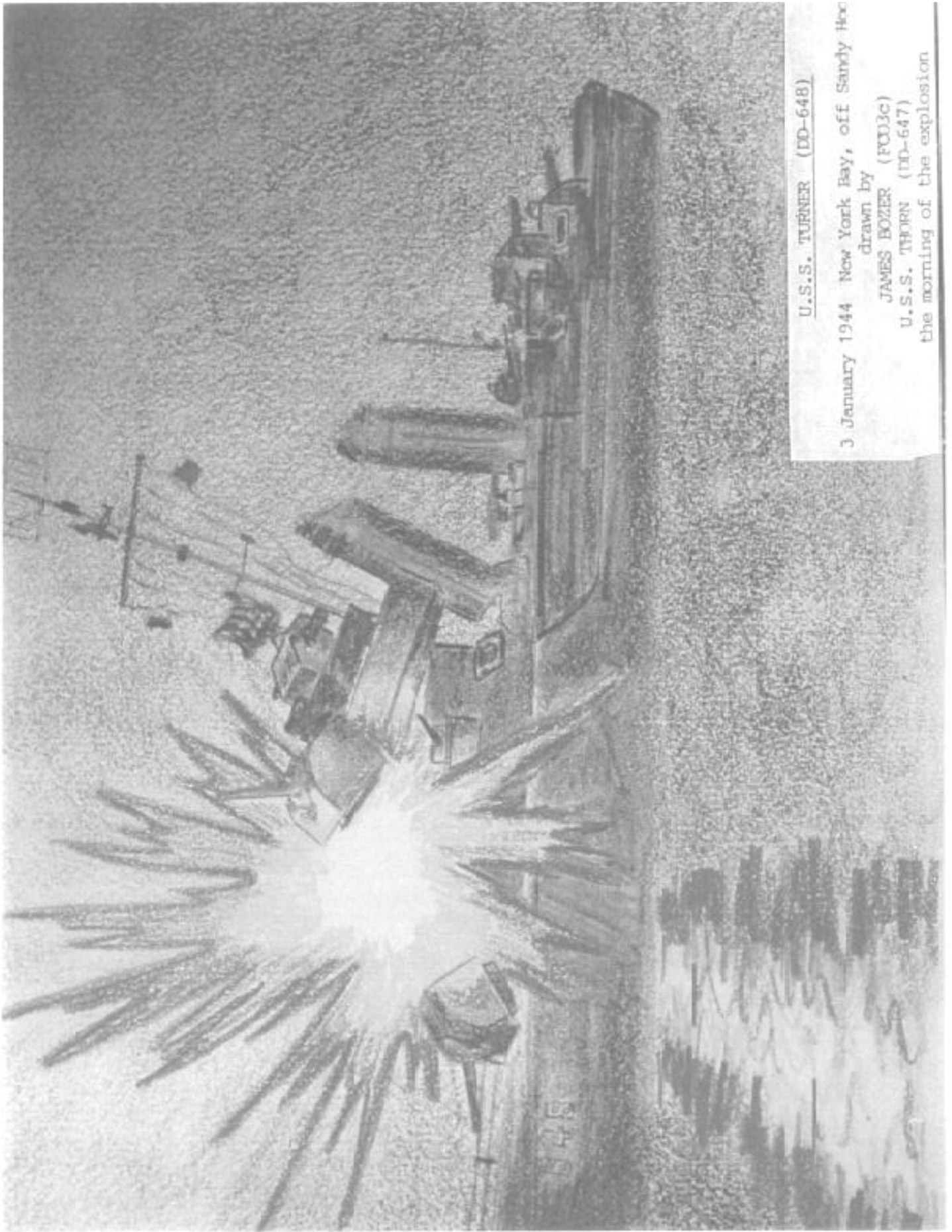
3. TURNER, at this time had a large hole in her port side in vicinity of #2 turret four to six feet at main deck, tapering "V" shaped to about two feet from the waterline. Brilliant flames, bright yellowish in color billowed out this hole and through the main deck and were blown by the wind across the entire bridge superstructure which by this time was also on fire. Number two turret appeared to have been blown completely away by the original explosion. Number one turret was forced upward and forward. The bridge superstructure was badly twisted and torn and appeared to have been blown upward and aft. There were no personnel on deck in the forward part of the vessel at the time. Several who had been on the forecastle when we arrived had jumped overboard to starboard and were subsequently picked up by small boats.

4. When danger of becoming fouled in TURNER'S anchor chain became imminent, SWASEY came ahead and crossed the TURNER'S bow to port illuminating the water to assist small boats in picking up survivors. A coast guard cutter was observed on TURNER'S starboard quarter, close aboard. There was a hole in TURNER'S starboard side about abreast of number two turret, approximately ten feet wide at edge of main deck tapering "V" shaped to the edge of the waterline. The plate from the hole had been peeled forward, outward and downward. There was a man in the water holding himself afloat by this plate. He was in a dazed condition and had a head wound from which he was bleeding badly. He was picked up by one of the small boats. During all of this time small explosions were occurring continuously in forward part of TURNER. She was then on approximately even keel. When no further men could be seen in the water on starboard side, SWASEY was backed down so her searchlights could bear on TURNER'S port side. Both rescuing boats then pulled away from TURNER'S stern end. SWASEY was maneuvered so as to come alongside TURNER'S port side again. Before this could be effected however there was a violent explosion just forward of amidships (0650) and

TURNER took a sharp list to starboard (about 15 degrees) and fuel oil began to pour out of the rupture on port side. SWASEY ordered all small boats to immediately clear the vicinity over the "bull horn". The explosion showered SWASEY'S decks with flaming debris which was immediately extinguished. The oil flowing from the port side promptly became ignited and was carried aft by the wind. The paint along her entire side caught fire, running across the decks and up her after deck housing. Depth charges along the side in "K" gun racks began to burn. The starboard depth charge racks appeared to be empty but the port racks appeared to contain about five charges. The after one was the first one to ignite. No depth charges are believed to have exploded. Explosions were being heard in various parts of the ship now that are believed to have been 5 inch ammunition. The smaller explosions of 20 MM and 40 MM were constant at this stage of the fire. This explosion at 0650 cleared the entire forward housing which toppled over the starboard side.

5. At 0750 a terrific explosion occurred aft of #2 smokestack and TURNER immediately capsized to starboard and sank except for a small portion of her bow which remained floating about three feet above water. Her sound head appeared to be lowered. At about fifty feet from the stem, slightly to port of the keel, there was a mass of twisted steel about five feet in diameter that appeared to have been forced bodily through the bottom, extending about three feet beyond the plating. TURNER floated in this condition until 0827 when she disappeared completely below the surface. SWASEY dropped a marker buoy where TURNER went down.

6. At 1440 a buoy tender entered the area and was directed to the wreck by SWASEY. A buoy was dropped 50 yards 215 true from TURNER. SWASEY continued patrolling the area until relieved at 1558 by SC 1323, and orders from CTF64 to proceed to Navy Yard, Brooklyn, New York.



U.S.S. TURNER (DD-648)

3 January 1944 New York Bay, off Sandy Hook
drawn by

JAMES BOZER (PO3c)

U.S.S. THORN (DD-647)

the morning of the explosion

TOM SHINGLETON & VOLUNTEERS-CONT.

(Continued from page 1)

learned how to do that and then created and maintained our multiple award winning USS Turner website.

When we had problems with the initial location of the site on AOL, Tom researched and found a new location for our site to be housed. He then converted all the website files to the new site and it has been trouble-free since then. Tom and his "can-do" spirit will be sorely missed.

Because of Tom's passing, we're looking for a shipmate to volunteer to continue Tom's great work and to keep the website current and update it about 4 times a year. Of course, if the new webmaster wishes to change and improve our site, so much the better.

Another of our volunteers wishes to be relieved of duty. Nils Rueckert has been working with the Dunning Company every year to create and edit our Reunion Memory Book. He gets the photos everyone takes at the reunion and creates interesting pages for our book. He also proofreads the book for accuracy. We need someone with an eye for graphic design and accuracy to work with the Dunning Company to get the book published. Of course, Nils' replacement should be someone who has attended the reunion being memorialized.

We need both replacement volunteers immediately. If we cannot find replacements among our shipmates, we will have to hire outside personnel for these tasks. If you want more information or wish to volunteer (I know, never volunteer, but this is different!), please contact Pete Varley. His contact information is on page 8 of this newsletter.

NORFOLK-CONT.

(Continued from page 1)

Our reunion began with an evening cruise on the Elizabeth River and dinner aboard the Spirit of Norfolk. It was about the only way that most of us would have a rolling deck beneath our feet again and it felt good. The food was excellent and plentiful and the entertainment top notch. On Thursday, we toured Virginia Beach and the more historic areas of Norfolk. Friday we rested, which was good, because we needed to recharge for Saturday, when we were "turnin' and burnin'" again.

Our first stop was the Norfolk Naval Base where we were welcomed aboard the USS Hawes, FFG53, an Oliver Perry Class Frigate. It felt like old times as we all scooted up and down ladders and passageways. After the Hawes, we lunched at the Officer's Club. Yes, we were allowed on the Base and on an active Warship on 9/11.

Our business meeting went very well and LCDR Peter Wren, who was on the first ship on the scene of the USS Indianapolis disaster, gave a wonderful narrative.

At our Banquet, lively entertainment, good fellowship and wonderful food were plentiful. Our special guests were Len and Judy Antrim Laylon. Judy is the daughter of Captain Richard Antrim, the 2nd CO of Turner. People danced all night and I think I even have pictures of some sort of chorus line!

One interesting note. Our Armed Forces Reunion Representative, Stasi, kept staring at Don Chevalier's Vietnam MIA wrist bracelet when he checked in. Finally, she asked to see it and discovered that it bore the name of her uncle who has been missing in action since 1968! We all had a misty moment at that. Another great reunion!!

Final Roll Call

Since our last issue we have learned that these shipmates have answered the

Dargan, Marion	50-51	LTJG
Dudley, Calvin C.	63-65	CO
Halter, James T.	51-55	RD2
Halter, Joseph P.	51-55	RD2
Reed, Ralph A.	46	S1
Shingleton, Thomas G.	59-60	SN

Mail Call 

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Since President Fesig and Editor Varley both served on the Turner when I did, I am happy to contribute \$100 to the cause. Maybe I'll get to see some more accounts of life onboard when I was there. It would be a stretch to say I enjoyed my time aboard the Turner, but for a young man it was a great character development experience. Also, in looking back, I am very proud to have had the opportunity to serve my country in the military.

Mason McGowin, '68-'69, Lt (jg)

Editor's note: Thank you Mr. McGowin. Your generosity is very much appreciated. OK, you Turner Tigers from the late 60's, who earned the Order of the Black Sea Tiger, searched for the sunken Israeli submarine Dakar, and watched Polaris launches, let's hear from you. (And I know you officers have a few sea stories to tell, also)

SEATTLE SURVIVOR.



AT FORT HANCOCK, N. J.—Chief Gunner's Mate Edward G. Koessner of Seattle (left) and Chief Machinist's Mate Curt Ashley of Rhinelander, Wis., were among members of the crew rescued after the explosion which sank the destroyer Turner off Sandy Hook last Monday morning with considerable loss of life. The craft was preparing to move when a series of explosions split the hull and started fires which could not be controlled. Coast Guard craft from nearby stations assisted in the rescue work.

I was on the Turner (DD-648) from pre-commissioning in 1943 until January 3rd, 1944. I also have been in touch with John McDonald. Due to health problems, I am not able to attend the reunions. This \$50 check is to be used as the Association wants. Sure sorry I didn't know of this group when it started. Thanks for all the news items. Brings back many memories. I was a GM1 when I was assigned to the Turner and promoted to CGM 11/43 on the Turner. Thanks, again.

Ed Koessner, '43-'44, CGM

Editor's Note: Thanks, Ed, for providing a copy of the newspaper clipping. In case you can't read the caption, Ed Koessner is on the left with CMM Curt Ashley on the right. Both are relaxing after being rescued.

We realize that's it's hard to come up with our dues of \$20 every year to help support the Association's efforts to preserve our memories of Turner and the Navy. These two shipmates, among others, have gone above and beyond the call of duty and we thank them.

