

Turner Times



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THE ALAMO WILL REMEMBER US

By Mike Mania, BMSN, '53-'54

"REMEMBER THE ALAMO"--Who doesn't? We, who were at the TURNER'S fifteenth annual reunion, will never forget it or the host city in which this historic shrine is located--namely, San Antonio, Texas. What a city it is and what a reunion it was! Attended by sixty-seven former "Tin Can Sailors," late of the USS TURNER, and fifty wives and guests, most assuredly, no one left the reunion or the city disappointed. Everyone had a great time. As usual, kudos to the Turner Reunion Association officers for another job "well done."

The fun started Wednesday evening with a FREE welcoming buffet that almost proved too good to be true. For those who didn't attend, here's a little of what you missed: buffalo mozzarella and vine ripened tomato or spinach with Feta cheese salads, sliced New York strip loin with Morel sauce, roasted red peppers and steamed fresh vegetable de jour, assorted mini pastries and tarts, rolls, butter, coffee or iced tea. A person could have a love affair with that kind of food!

Thursday morning, two touring buses loaded to the gunnels with TURNER tourists, "weighed anchor" and embarked on a five hour city wide cruise. Stops were made at several important missions including The Alamo; San Jose Mission; San Fernando Cathedral. Another must-see was the Riverwalk and then to the Hemisfair, which was the location of the 1968 Western Hemisphere's Fair, which was followed by other interesting sights. The tour was topped off with shopping and lunch at El Mercado, a unique and stylish

Mexican market place. With everyone settled in on the buses after shopping, a happy group of tourists rode back to the hotel.

That evening, the buses were once again boarded and all enjoyed the scenic ride to the Lightning Ranch. Rumor has it this is the site of San Antonio's best chuck wagon supper and cowboy show. If you ask any of those who were in attendance, you would not get an argument about the truth of that statement.

The evening started with a demonstration by an old timer and his two thousand pound bull. It was hard to tell which one was the smartest, the old cowpoke or the bull. It evened out to a draw. Then onto supper and music.

The food was top quality, the cowboy music was wonderful and quite nostalgic as well. The band, known as "The Over The Hill Gang" (any resemblance to any person or persons depicted in the story on page six of this issue of the TURNER TIMES, is purely coincidental), had the audience singing and clapping in rhythm to their wonderful music. The end of their show consisted of a shoot-out between a Yankee and a Texan right on the stage. Joe Bennett represented Texas and Tim Fesig stood tall for the Northerners. Alas and alack, Tim wasn't quite fast enough on the draw and it became a major victory for Texas. A lot of laughs were enjoyed by all. Later, out in the ranch yard a cowboy roping champion and his horse put on a marvelous exhibition of trick roping.

Friday morning many enjoyed a ride to Fredericksburg and toured the Admiral Nimitz Museum. Many engaged in the fine art of shopping in the numerous stores that lined Main Street.

It was an interesting and educational tour to say the least, especially for Pacific War history buffs and ex-navy men.

The business meeting started right on schedule Saturday morning with elections of officers. Bernie Sciarpetti was elected to 1st V. P. and Roy Turcotte to 2nd V. P., both for one-year terms. After some discussion, Charleston, South Carolina, was chosen as the site of the 2008 TURNER reunion.

The banquet later that evening was a huge success as always and a great time was had by all. The room was filled with the 117 shipmates, family and friends that attended. As usual, the ladies chorus line sparkled, but the men responded in fine fashion with their own chorus line. Gotta close the bar sooner!

If any of you are skeptical about attending a TURNER reunion, let me assure you, your concerns are unfounded. During the four days of this last reunion, I have heard some very inspiring and complimentary comments by first and second time attendees. Here is just one example--"We have been to several others of my husband's ships' reunions and will never go back again. They were disorganized, the tours left a lot to be desired, the hotels and the food were not of the best quality, and most of all, the people were very clannish and snobby. We felt very uncomfortable. This is our first TURNER reunion and it is a complete opposite of what we experienced in the past with other ships' reunions. We're here to stay. Everything is just perfect, and the TURNER people are the friendliest people in the world."

Hope to see you in D.C. in 2007.

TIME FOR ANNUAL DUES

There are only have three ways we can raise funds to continue our good work: holding reunions, selling items from the Ship's Store and getting dues from our members. Our reunions are not big money makers. We basically break even. 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 the largest source of our funds: annual dues.

As a reminder, so far we have not excluded anyone who wants to participate in our association and we have kept our annual dues voluntary at \$20. And although printing and postage are the largest expense, 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 we put this last reunion to bed, it's time to ask for your support again.

During this past year, we added another 36 shipmates to our roster. We also maintained 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.

For the two years prior to last year, the percentage of shipmates that paid dues was 19.5%. This past year, however, only 235 shipmates paid dues, dropping the percentage of paying members to only 18.7%. We'd like that to increase back to the higher rate and maybe even break 20%.

If you want this Association to thrive, please mail your \$20 annual dues to Joe Stepanek at 9372 Duff Ct., Ellicott City, MD 21042. 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, please send whatever you can so we can continue to keep alive the memories of our ships.

FROM THE OF THE PREZ

Well, here we go again. The fifteenth reunion is behind us and I hope all the attendees had a great time in the land of big hats and cowboy boots. I can say for my part it was a great time; the country was beautiful and the food was outstanding. If anyone is counting, this was our largest reunion since 2000, with 117 shipmates and guests. Now that's more like it.

I hope you took the boat ride along the San Antonio River, the sights were very interesting and the shopping along the Riverwalk was very informational for the ladies of where to go back and shop. The weather was great and I hope everyone had a wonderful time.

Now it is time to think about the 2007 Turner Reunion. It is going to be in Arlington, Virginia. The location will be at the Crowne Plaza, Washington National Airport. The dates for the reunion are October 4th thru the 7th, 2007. More reunion information and a link to the hotel are on the "Reunions" page of our website. I do not have an agenda, but with Arlington being adjacent to the Washington, DC area we should look forward to

some great tours and scenery.

The Turner Reunion location for the 2008 year was picked at our Saturday Morning Business Meeting. The site was overwhelmingly chosen to be held in the Charleston, South Carolina area. No date is set at this time.

I would also like to congratulate and welcome my fellow officers. Bernie Scarpelletti was elected 1st Vice President and Roy Turcotte, 2nd Vice President, both for the next year. Glad to have you aboard.

I would like to thank all of the shipmates who continue to come each year to the Turner reunion, THANK YOU. Please keep returning. Also a special recognition goes to the fifteen (15) new shipmates who came to this year's reunion. For first time attendees, that's close to a record. We look forward to seeing you again next year and in the years thereafter. I hope we showed you a great time and you found some lasting new friends.

— Grant

CAPTAIN MCMULLEN PASSES

By Mel Edwards LT(jg) '57-'59

Captain Cornelius E. McMullen, USN (ret), Commanding Officer of the TURNER from 1957 to 1959, passed away in Stuart, Florida in June 2006 at the age of 86, following a lengthy illness.

Captain McMullen graduated from the Massachusetts Maritime Academy and served in the Merchant Marine. He was appointed an Ensign in the Naval Reserve on 20 April 1942.

He then served in USS Broome (DD-210) as Engineering Officer until mid-1944. Then served in USS Preston (DD-795) as Engineering Officer while PRESTON was engaged in the Leyte, Lingayen, Iwo Jima & Okinawa campaigns.

After WWII, he was transferred to the regular Navy and attended Mine Warfare School, served as XO of the USS Tanager (AM-385) and of USS Robinson (EDE-220.)

In 1949 and 1950, McMullen attended Cornell University and then assumed command of USS Pirate (AM-275) in Japan. USS Pirate was sunk in action against enemy aggressor forces in Wonsan, Korea on 12 October 1950. For service in Korea, Captain McMullen was awarded the Silver Star for "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity as Commanding Officer." The citation reads, in part, "A highly skilled and resolute officer, Lieutenant McMullen boldly directed his ship in the hazardous task of sweeping enemy mines from channels and anchorage areas of Wonsan in face of hostile gunfire. By this inspiring leadership throughout this period of intensive action, he contributed materially to the ultimate success of the operation. His marked courage, expert seamanship and steadfast devotion to duty reflect the highest credit upon Lieutenant McMullen and the United States Naval Service."

In 1951, he graduated from the

US Naval School, General Line at Monterey, California. In 1952 & 53, he commanded USS George (DE-697). After that, he attended and graduated from the Naval War College in Newport and on 22 April 1957, assumed command of USS Turner (DDR-834.)

Soon after he assumed com-



mand, a large number of the ship's officers completed their active duty obligation and were leaving the Navy or were going on to other assignments. The Navy replaced them with brand new Ensigns, leaving the captain with a wardroom of mostly inexperienced officers. However, for these new officers, who were transitioning from one phase of life to another with far greater responsibility, Captain McMullen came into their lives at just the right time.

Consequently, those who served under him will always be grateful and appreciate his trust and the opportunities he afforded them. He will be respectfully and fondly remembered by these men, all who served under his command and all those he met at our reunions.

The Captain was buried on September 11, at 11 A.M. at Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors.

\$ 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.

► DVD of 1961 Med Cruise photos — \$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.

***OUR* TURNER TIMES**

WHAT WE REMEMBER ABOUT OUR TIME ON BOARD

By Edwin Heacker, RDSN, '49-'51

I have always wanted to attend a ship's reunion, but in the past, felt that it was not possible...being too far away or too expensive, or both. One of my ship's buddies has hounded me to go to a couple of past reunions. He is Louis Czarnecki. I hope he's still living, although I tried to call him from the last address I had, and couldn't find him (Ed.-Yep.) He sent me old pictures of us together aboard the Turner. Others I remember are Culley, two different Richardsons, and a couple of Millers. Jim Colvard from Waxahachie, TX, R.P.Karz from NJ. I'd probably remember more names, once I get to thinking back. Also, I need to bring out photos and look for names on them.

I was a Radarman when they added the tripod mast to accommodate the new SX radar. "My" radar was the SR, the long-range search radar, which used the bedspring antenna, which took its place just in front of the new SX's antennas on the tripod. Of course, this installation, which turned our ship from DD into a DDR, was highly secret. We were forbidden to mention it, even to our families. At our first port in the Mediterranean, though, enterprising photographers sold us tinted, 8 x 10" framed aerial photos of it. I suppose we all bought one. I still have mine. I wonder whether anyone has an accurate ship's itinerary. I did have one for one of our trips to the Mediterranean, but one of our trips was changed. Also, there was the time our Executive Officer backed us down over a buoy cable, and we had to stop off for a few days in Valetta, Malta's dry-dock and get a new screw, which gave us one three-blade screw, and one four-blade screw. It was a rough ride back across the Atlantic, where we went back into dry-dock, and got the right screw installed.

The highlight of our stay in Valetta was a visit from the then Princess (now Queen) Elizabeth, who drove out past all of the shipyard workers to our ship, got out of her car, and waved to our crew, as we stood at attention. As everyone saluted, I slid my Kodak Retina camera from my pocket and, too frightened to put the camera to my eye, photographed the lifeline of our ship, showing only diagonal corners of her black car! At that time Valetta still looked like a bombed-out city.

Then there was the time in Istanbul, when my buddy, Jim Colvard and I met Nevzat Mutluer and Rami Yorgun at their World's Fair where I first saw

zig-zag sewing machines. If I had only brought back a Necchi and Elna then! Mutluer was an Electronic's Technician in the Turkish navy, having studied in Chicago. His girlfriend was Lieutenant-Commander Sally Brown, who lived in Chevy Chase, near Washington, DC. I took her some gifts from him, but just left them at the door with a note, as she was not at home. I suppose she got them. The other man was a pharmacist's mate, and had never been to this country. I'll bet those guys don't remember my name...if, indeed they remember anything! I think this must have been about 1949. Actually, after Gibraltar, Istanbul was our first foreign port.

**1949 Mediterranean Cruise of
The USS Turner, DDR 834**

Arrival, Port	Time	Date
Salonika, Greece	1000	September 30, 1949
Istanbul, Turkey	1535	October 5, 1949
	(SSD-1430)	
Piraeus, Greece	0845	October 11, 1949
Trieste, Italy	1045	October 16, 1949
	(SSD-1000)	
Argostoli, Greece	1257	October 23, 1949
Beirut, Lebanon	0850	October 28, 1949
Piraeus, Greece	0900	November 2, 1949
Tripoli, Libya	1600	November 12, 1949
Messina, Sicily		November 25, 1949
Toulon, France	0745	December 5, 1945
Augusta, Sicily	0900	December 12, 1949
Valetta, Malta	0840	December 13, 1949
Trieste, Italy	1121	December 19, 1949
Trieste, Italy	1300	January 3, 1950
Oran, Algeria	0900	January 8, 1950
Oran, Algeria		January 13, 1950
Gibraltar	1055	January 14, 1950

We left The Rock of Gibraltar 0800, January 17, and arrived Melville at 1326, January 26. Left Melville 0800 February 13th. Arrived in Boston, Massachusetts, at 1630, on February 13, 1950. At 1250 on February 17, left Boston, and arrived in Newport, Rhode Island at 1935 February 17th. Left Newport 0747 on February 22nd. Arrived in Norfolk, Virginia at 0725, on February 23rd. Left Norfolk at 1450 on February 23rd, 1950. Arrived Norfolk, Virginia at

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1846, on February 24th. Left Norfolk at 1035, on February 26th, 1950. (On Owl at 0617, on March 4th. (?) Left Owl at 1958, on March 7th (?) Arrived on Duck at 2110, on March 7, 1950. (?) Arrived in our home port, Newport, Rhode Island, at 1200, on March 24, 1950.

I had written the SSD-1430 above and smaller than the 1530 arrival time for Istanbul. I remember that going into port there seemed to take a long time. I remember getting out of the shower and being amazed that there was such a large city outside of America !!! I have thought since that it was our first port, and it could well have been. I started to leave the SSD numbers off, but left them, thinking another shipmate might remember. I figured the time we initially anchored, before settling into a more permanent spot. More confusing to me was the 3 last entries....The Owl, The Owl, and The Duck. At first I read as "Pt Owl", thinking these were PT Boats. Then I decided it was the 4th of March. I wrote the whole thing on a scrap of paper, and by the time I got to the bottom, my writing was tiny. Soon I'll scan it into the computer, so maybe someone else will remember and decipher it for us. JIM COLVARD! come to my rescue...!

I did become "ship's photographer" though with the arrival of a mysterious package (a heavy black trunk) telling me to hold it for further instructions. I don't remember whether we were underway, or anchored at the time. I do remember that every enlisted man aboard was on his hands and knees, scrubbing paint and polishing brass, preparing for the big sixth fleet Admiral's Inspection. My cleaning station was

the top of the bridge, and I was baking in the sun in a pair of cut off jeans, my long jeans and long-sleeve dungaree shirt hanging over a light fixture. I had a small radio up there with me for music, prepared to spend the day there, so did not realize they were passing the word for me for an hour, until they found me and rushed me down to the quarterdeck, tucking in shirt tail, and donning shoes as admirals covered in gold braid leaned forward to shake my hand! Come to think of it, we must have been in port (Iskenderun, Turkey?) for that Admiral's Inspection. Does any one out there remember what year that was.? I could swear I have the itinerary of that trip. I can see in my mind's eye the word, Iskenderun written in my little book ! The Admiral pointed to the shoreline and said, "Sunday morning I'll come out to the water and walk to the left, a mile or so. You come out in a boat and follow along parallel to the shore. Every time I raise my arm, take a picture of the shoreline.

I believe that camera was a K-2 aerial camera. It used 4 x 5 roll film. I loved using it. After completing the assignment, I took the remainder of the roll of film of gorgeous scenery of clouds rolling down the hills grazed by sheep. I took these photos through orange and red filters, so they should have been beautiful, but I never saw them. I delivered the film, to a "tanker(?)" for processing, and told the man that I wanted the extra negatives, but never got them. I've gone on to collect around a hundred cameras. So a "ship's photographer" was born!

Final Roll Call

Since our last issue we have learned that these shipmates have answered the call of the Supreme Commander:

Anders, Joseph J.	45-46	S1c
Bogard, Robert D.	69	SN
Brooks, Harold G.	USS Moosehead	
Dimmick, George W.	47-48	QM2
Gatewood, Robert P.	47-48	ENS
Gill, Thomas	46-47	S1c
Hatcher, James H.	54-55	BT
Hicks, Haston "Al"	62-65	GM1
Keys, Dr. Lynn	47	LT(jg)
Lowe, Melvin L.	USS Moosehead	
Marshall, Thomas F.	61-64	ET2
McCulley, Bobbie	47	F2c
Moore, Thomas E.	56-59	BT3
McMullen, Cornelius E.	57-59	CO
Runne, James W.	45-46	GM3

We Are the TURNER

By Mel Edwards LT (jg) '57-'59

From 1945 to 1969, there were fifteen USS TURNER Commanding officers. Eleven are now deceased as are who knows how many members of their crews.

By its very existence, the TURNER Reunion Association honors all of our shipmates who have made the "Final Roll Call." We, and those who have gone ahead, are the TURNER. She was a strong little ship that weathered the storms of the oceans, and world events, by virtue of the seamanship and competency of those who sailed her. It is our goal to continue to ride out the storms of time by communicating, associating and coming together annually.

Let's be active. Let's attend our reunions and let's search out shipmates. Let's also contribute to the TURNER TIMES. Contributing to the newsletter is a small, yet welcome, service rendered to our shipmates.

THE "OVER THE HILL" GANG – PART 2

By March Tucker, IC3, '60-'62

Because we were finally out of jail and going back at last, we were pretty excited. When the plane taxied up to where we were gathered, the rear door opened and an officer stood in the doorway looking down upon us. For what reason I don't know but I looked up and asked "Where did that pilot get his wings? Sears?" I shouldn't have said that. That officer was the pilot. After a few choice words about respect, he ordered that I be handcuffed to my seat. What difference that made I have no idea, but I flew to Norfolk handcuffed to my seat. That was really a good thing because the plane was so full of people several had to stand or sit on the floor but I was given a seat.

Our arrival in Norfolk was back to the Navy, home sweet home we thought. NOT! We were taken from the plane and placed in a Shore Patrol panel truck for transport to the base brig. Most of you know what a panel truck is, they are not made today, but when the back doors were closed it was DARK in there. I held my hand up to my nose and couldn't see it. The driver thought it funny to run up to a stop sign and slam on the brakes. Since you could not anticipate these moves we always piled into the front in a heap. When he accelerated it was a rabbit start and we all piled into the rear doors. Can you imagine how many stop signs there are between the air station and the brig on the opposite side of the base? Needless to say we were bruised in several places upon our arrival.

The brig was run by jarheads. Our welcome was typical: bad-assed jarheads with enough extra harassment to make a sailor's blood boil. They really wanted you to strike out so that they could use their sticks on you. I was able to keep my cool. Processing consisted of being deloused, showered and otherwise a lot

of time running around in your birthday suit. I spent three days in a cell across the passageway from several cells of guys whose sexual orientation was questionable and who loved to flirt. It was clean and the food was regular navy.

When you go AWOL in the Navy I think you are expected to take everything the Navy ever issued you. I didn't know this, because everything I left aboard TURNER I had to purchase again. I had to have a full sea bag. Every piece of Navy clothing I had taken with me was inventoried and subtracted from, a full sea bag. All that I didn't have, they issued it to me again, which wasn't free. I had to pay for those missing items through the Navy's thoughtful payroll deduction plan. It's a good thing I didn't go AWOL during the winter, or I would still be paying the Navy for the blues.

After three days I was taken to Captain's Mast. The Captain heard my story, turned to his aide and said "I don't want this one. Send him back to his ship." He asked if he put me in a restricted barracks would try to run and I assured him I would not. I just wanted to get back to my ship. I was escorted to a building in the middle of the base that had a fence around it. These were very nice accommodations after the last 10 or 15 days. At Captains Mast, I asked the Captain about my buddy Mike and he determined to send him back also but poor Mike was left in the brig and never transferred to the restricted barracks with me. Mike has a real tale to tell about that experience too. You should ask him sometime.

After about 5 days in the Holiday Inn (Restricted Barracks) I was told that I was leaving. Pool tables, television, two man rooms: it was pure heaven. We were marched to chow by stick chasers each meal and watched as we ate and then marched back. The stick chaser escorted me

to the Admin building for processing. I had to stand with my nose against the wall until called upon. I was given a form that listed about every office on the base including the library, sick bay, dental clinic, and many others I have forgotten. The idea was you went to each one of these "departments" and get their signature on your form. I did this alone, no stick chaser or any escort and I had to cover the whole base except the ships at the piers to get signatures. When I finished this project and returned to the Admin building, I was told that I couldn't go today after all (I think they forgot Mike) and I was told to stand with my nose against the wall and wait for a stick chaser to come after me from across the street. Some things never made sense to me and this was one of them.

The next day I was told I was leaving again. The old stick chaser escorted me back to the Admin building and this time Mike was there, too. After some discussion about whether Mike and I had to do the trip around the base for signatures trick, a reasonable, sensible LTJG decided that I had done it yesterday. Mike had been in the brig and had not visited any base library and such and that we didn't have to make those rounds. We were loaded into a station wagon and driven, by armed guards, to the Greyhound Bus station in Norfolk. There we were given two bus tickets (which were also under the payroll deduction program) and told to go back to our ship.

Mike and I arrived back in Brooklyn as I remember early Sunday morning. We first went to our old barracks where we were informed that the crew had moved back to the ship. I don't remember much of that night, actually the first night aboard a ship. We eventually

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THE "OVER THE HILL" GANG – PART 2 CONT.

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found a bunk in the right compartment and got a couple hours of sleep. Most of the guys who were also friends had gotten out or transferred, especially those who had covered for us that first weekend. I found out I was the only IC man left aboard and that thought kind of scared me. After all, what did I know and who was going to teach me?

Mike and I got to spend Sunday getting acquainted with the ship and shipmates. That sliced up tuna on life support was now a sleek beautiful ship and she looked really good. I found several new pieces of equipment that were my responsibility and I had never seen anything like them before. Like the new pit sword and its now electronic controls, rather than the old bellows system I had learned in school. I hoped it worked well because I had no ideas how to fix if it didn't.

Monday we were reminded that the Navy had unfinished business with Mike and me. It was now time for punishment for what we did. We were ready and we wanted to get this behind us and live normal ship board lives. We were taken to the Captain for MAST. He was pissed at us, not so much for being over the hill, but because we had missed 33 days of work on the ship. Yes we had been gone for 33 days, 11 days AWOL and 22 days trying to get back. The Captain (which one I forget) awarded (yes, awarded) us a summary court martial.

Someone else needs to tell this part of the story if anyone is interested in hearing more but I'll cut to the chase. Our court martial results were (for me) 30 days hard labor, reductions in rank and a \$50 fine. Due to extenuating circumstances of (1) only IC man left and the ship was leaving before my 30-day brig time was up, and (2) A Fireman Apprentice could not go to sea unless they had been to sea before, the brig time

was changed to 30-days restriction but only in port time counted. We spent a lot of time at sea the next 3 months and it seemed like I was aboard that ship for months before that restriction was up. The \$50 fine doesn't sound like much, but I also had to pay for that seabag I had to buy and the bus ticket. I think it was Christmas before I knew what my pay check was supposed to be. Back in those days my monthly pay was only \$84 or \$86 with sea pay.

For a long time it was hard for some of my superiors to give me a liberty card. I used to thumb home to visit on long weekends and I know that some wondered if they would ever see me again. Today, in retrospect, I wish I hadn't gone AWOL but teenagers are not working with a complete mind. They have to grow up before they make good decisions. That's my story and I'm sticking to it.

TRUST AND FATE

After my AWOL experience, and perhaps a little bit of attitude of devil may care, I don't think that some of my officers trusted my movements on liberty. I had one officer "friend" LT Shannon, the engineering officer aboard TURNER. If not for him, I believe a liberty card would have been a vague memory.

I really wanted to reform my actions and attitude after the AWOL experience, however sometimes fate just keeps interfering with your efforts. One such incident happened to me, I think sometime in December, maybe January of '60 or '61. We were getting underway at 7:00 am and I had been assigned to stay aboard the night before to light off the gyro in time to get underway. Mr. Shannon understood the gyro and that it could be started in advance so that I could spend the last night in port with my family rather than aboard. I was given permission

to start the gyro the evening before and be back aboard before sailing at muster. This sounds like a normal thing to do and no problem. Wrong!

For some reason known only to the Supreme Powers, my alarm did not go off that morning. I awoke at, I think, 0640. Now that's only 20 minutes before sailing not to mention that I should have been there already. I didn't own a car and depended upon a shipmate to pick me up every morning for a ride to the ship. He's long gone. I jumped out of bed to get dressed while my wife went to a pay phone to call me a cab. The cab arrived about the time I was ready and I ran out and jumped in with some admonition to the driver that we had 10 minutes to get to dockside. A normal 20-minute trip to the main gate, he, somehow, made it in 10.

As the cab started around a traffic circle near the entrance to the base, I looked across a ball field directly across from the TURNER and I could see them taking in the lines and the gangway. I jumped out of the cab, I think, while it was still moving, and ran across the ball field as fast as I could. The tugs were pushing the ship away from the pier, the gangway had been pulled aboard and there was maybe 10 feet between the pier and the ship. My shipmates were yelling to jump and while in full stride I sailed -across that gap and landed aboard with one foot. My shipmates gabbed me and pulled me aboard, I had made it.

I don't remember the consequences of that incident, but I'm sure Mr. Shannon took some heat for letting me go home that night. It was also another "nail in my coffin" as far as trust from the other officers. Every time I went on weekend liberty I'm sure there were those who wondered if they would ever see me again.

