



USS BRADLEY ASSOCIATION

Established July 6, 2002

Newsletter, Late Autumn 2002

The ASSOCIATION PROGRESSES

Since the establishment of the **USS BRADLEY ASSOCIATION**, in July of this year, our ranks have slowly but surely been expanding. At the time of the July Pella Reunion we had the names and addresses of only eleven shipmates. Now after only a little more than three months a total of 33 former **Bradley** crewmembers have been contacted by the association. Another half dozen have sent e-mails and have received association data but have not given us an address or e-mail to date. Our goal is to include all Navy personnel who served aboard **BRADLEY** from Commissioning on May 15, 1965 to Decommissioning on September 30, 1988. Thus far three Plank Owners have been contacted as well as guys who served in the 1970's and 1980's. More on this topic is to be found later in this month's newsletter.

THE COMMISSIONING OF USS BRADLEY DE-1041

One of the **BRADLEY** Plank Owners, to join the association, Chris Koon, served aboard in 1965 and 1966. He's now retired and lives in Pensacola, Florida; a location he recommends for a future reunion site. We've had a couple of very interesting and informative telephone conversations (from my perspective at least) about the early days of the **BRADLEY**. He generously sent photocopies of the ship's commissioning ceremony brochure as well as the beginning pages of the first cruise book. He even sent the association a check for \$25 that will come in handy in producing and mailing newsletters. Thanks, Chris!!

Your editor plans on running articles based upon these two interesting documents. These documents are important to the development of a history of the **BRADLEY'S** commissioned years. We are all part of this proud history of service to our country. The early years of **BRADLEY'S** service were not always easy years to be identified as members of the U.S. Navy and the American military establishment, especially as the war in Vietnam became increasing more unpopular with many Americans. But serve we did and, especially with the perspective of many years, it's a matter of pride to all who served aboard **USS BRADLEY**.

Her first Commanding Officer was Commander Robert H. Robeson, Jr. Lieutenant Howard J. Squires was Executive Officer at commissioning. **BRADLEY** was built by the Bethlehem Steel Company, San Francisco, California. Her keel was laid on 17 January 1963. She was launched on 26 March 1964 and subsequently commissioned on 15 May 1965. **BRADLEY** was named for Captain Willis Winter Bradley U.S. Navy, who was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor "For extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty" during World War I.

"The design of the insignia of the **USS BRADLEY** was derived from ideas of personnel in her crew and incorporates the Bradley Family Coat of Arms. The red shield, silver chevron and helmet, and gold boar's heads are so derived denoting boldness, daring, war, fire and blood – a burning desire to spill blood for God and Country. The motto is taken from the Bradley Family also, and in translation means 'Thou Shall Be Free and Wise'." The brochure lists the names of 14 officers and 227 sailors, **BRADLEY'S** Plank Owners.

In addition to DK1 Chris Koons, it also lists: BTC Herbert P. Seymore and BT1 R. M. Leonard, all of whom are presently association members. These documents will be kept and made available to members at future reunions.

RECRUITMENT

It is requested that all association members be active recruiters. Thanks to ADS placed in *Legion Magazine* and *Proceedings* we have been able to contact many former shipmates. If your local newspaper or radio station makes space or time available for public service announcements, the fact that we have a ship's association should be made known. In addition, any member who belongs to other social or fraternal groups should try to use that organization and its publications to "spread the word". Even a letter to the editor, from time to time, may be in order. Think **USS BRADLEY ASSOCIATION!**

REUNION PLANNING

One of the most important functions of an organization such as ours is to sponsor, well planned and run, regular reunions where former shipmates can gather and tell those great "sea stories"! However, we haven't made much progress in getting feedback from you guys as to what type of reunion you want to hold, as well as when and where it should be. Information sheets were included with the last newsletter. All former **BRADLEY** crewmembers were asked to complete these forms AND RETURN THEM TO ME! Thus far I have received only three! Is this any way to run a ship's association? I think not! Now that summer's over and most folks are back to their regular routine, let's try to get the information sheet completed and returned by the middle of November. If we don't get started planning we're not going to have a reunion. Anyone who didn't get their information sheets knows how to contact me:

Bruce Gottsch, 20 Crambrook Road, New City, NY 10956 (845) 634-3993, bgottsch@optonline.net

SHIPMATES!

Since several former crewmembers have expressed interest in knowing who has been in contact with the association a list of names and dates served aboard (if available) is listed below:

Joe Barnett (73-75); William Barrett (71-73); Bill Billings (75); Dick Bottenberg (71-73); Kim Clifford (74-78); Duane Clifton (67-70); William Davis (71-73); Frank Drdek (67-70); Michael Eberhardt (72-74); Dennis Faricy (71); John Galle (83-84); James Gander; 69-71); Doug Goike (72); Bruce Gottsch (71-75); Leroy Grady (72-74); Kent Grass (73-74); Steve Green (72); William Hall (71-74); Tom Harvey; C. J. Hennen (70-72); David Hoskins (71-73); Edward Joyner (68-72); Richard Karnish (71); Ray Khalial (65-68); Robert Kiesel (68-71); Chris Koon (65-66); Gary Leifur (71-72); R.M. Leonard (65-66); Mark Locke (79-84); Richard Logsdon, Jr. (73-75); R.T. Losch (76-78); Brian Mark (75-81); Robert Mc Bride (72-75); Alan Miller (72-74); Jack Minster (71-73); Rick Schulz (72-73); Herbert Seymore (65-66); Irwin "Butch" Shatuck (72-75); Phil Simonis (74); Robert Sisson; (73-75); Doug Sjoberg (68-70); James Taylor (1960's); William Von Protz (70-75); Ralph Wilson (71-73) and Mike Wiseman (73).

Updates to this list will be made every few months. However, if someone would like to know if a buddy has contacted the association, as yet, or if I made an error, please let me know.

TIN CAN SAILORS.

Most of us are aware that destroyers have been referred to as 'tin cans' for years. There are several explanations for the origin of this name. Be it the thickness of their hulls (not too thick!) to how they ride in a rough sea (not too well!) the name has stuck. *Tin Can Sailors* is a group composed of ex-Navy personnel (24,000 strong!) who served aboard any destroyer-classed ship: DD, DE, DDG, Destroyer Tender etc. It holds a yearly convention, in a different city each year. It also sponsors local groups that hold several 'Bull Sessions' around the country per year for shipmates to get together, have a meal, a program and just plain talk. One of the group's real service is the support it gives to the eleven historic destroyers, in the historic fleet. The group has donated over one million dollar to the preservation of these ships. They sponsor 'Field Days' usually quarterly when members go aboard a specific historic destroyer and work on preservation,

have a meal on board and sleep aboard one or two nights. These usually occur over weekends and are important to the survival of these old “tin” warriors.

An interesting and entertaining journal, in newspaper format, is also published by *Tin Can Sailors* several times per year. Stories appear about specific ships, events in their history, ship’s reunions and historic articles about ship’s weapons systems and even recipes for good ole’ navy chow!

I attended one of their reunions, in Annapolis MD, last year, and thoroughly enjoyed it. Any shipmate interested in joining should visit their website: www.destroyers.org or write to: *Tin Can Sailors*, PO Box 100, Somerset, MA 02726. Dues are \$20 per year and the newspaper alone is worth the money!

DESTROYER-ESCORT SAILORS ASSOCIATION.

Another worthwhile organization is the Destroyer-Escort Sailors Association .WWII destroyer escorts had hull numbers from 1- 800 built for both the U.S. and Royal Navies. Design changes started with the EVARTS followed by the RUDDEROW, BUCKLEY, EDSALL, CANNON AND the John C. Butler classes. DE’s served in all U.S. conflicts from WWII through Vietnam from 1942-1973. Forty-three DE’s were converted to APD’s after commissioning and 56 others were converted during shipbuilding.

An additional 76 DE’s were built between 1952 and 1972. They are DEALEY, COURTNEY, **GARCIA**, BRONSTEIN, BROOKE and the KNOX class. (**BRADLEY** is a Garcia Class DE - Editor’s Note)

DESA publishes a lively newspaper style journal called the DESA NEWS. They also have a yearly convention, as well as local chapters, around the country, that sponsor meetings several times each year. The DESA sponsor’s and contributes to the upkeep of the **USS SLATER**, a destroyer escort from the historic fleet at Albany, NY. Their members located the **SLATER** in Greece and raised \$300,000 to tow it back to the USA. They are responsible for the excellent restoration of this World War II destroyer escort.

Their journal includes articles on people, destroyer escorts, including the 1000 Class Destroyer-Escorts (including Bradley 1041!), reunions and stories of interest. It’s another interesting publication for former DE types! They even have a Ladies Auxiliary.

I attended their recent convention, October 13-17, in Myrtle Beach, SC. The members and their officers were very helpful to our association and made suggestions as to how we could contact former shipmates.

Membership information is available on there website: WWW.DESAUSA.ORG. Or By mail: DESA, PO Box 3448, DeLand, FL 37721-344. Due are \$20 per year.

The Historic Fleet.

Did you know that the fleet of historic naval ships in the United States amounts to the **3rd largest navy** in the world? These are former navy ships that have taken on a second life through the efforts of groups of citizens, many former navy personnel, to preserve and exhibit them. Perhaps you live near one or more of these ships? The fleet includes four aircraft carriers, nine battleships, seven Coast Guard vessels, three Cruisers, 11 destroyers and destroyer escorts, nine escort and patrol vessels, six merchant cargo ships, twenty submarines and a couple of tugboats.

Twenty-nine states have one or more historic ships on display within their borders. This fleet also includes naval and non-naval ships from all periods including sail. Eight foreign countries: Australia, Canada, England, France, Germany, Greece, Netherlands and Russia, also have historic fleets.

Those interested in visiting or contributing to the preservations of these vessels should visit Historic Naval Ships at www.hnsa.org.