



USS BRADLEY ASSOCIATION

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Newsletter, Late Autumn 2002

USS BRADLEY.

(Reprinted From "Welcome Aboard" pamphlet supplied by the ship.)

BRADLEY was commissioned by the U.S. Navy at the San Francisco Naval Shipyard on 15 May 1965, adding to the operating forces embodying the latest and most formidable concepts in anti-submarine warfare. She was built for the Navy by Bethlehem Steel Company's San Francisco Yard, is the third of her class to join the active fleet, and the first of her class to join the Pacific Fleet.

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.

BRADLEY was designed and built as a destroyer escort, but she and the other ships of her class surpass previous destroyer escorts in size, armament and performance. In these respects, **BRADLEY** is even superior to most destroyers operating in the fleet currently.

One of the Navy's most sophisticated sonar systems have been installed in order to effectively employ the ship's modern weapons capabilities. The 70-ton underwater dome which houses this equipment had to be constructed separately from the ship and later attached to the hull.

BRADLEY'S propulsion plant is of new design also. New pressure fired system generators have replaced the conventional boilers, attaining 10% higher efficiency in a plant 50% smaller than the conventional type boiler.

BRADLEY is 414 feet long, and has a 44-foot beam, and a 25-foot draft. She operates as a unit of Destroyer Squadron TWENTY-ONE assigned to Cruiser-Destroyer Flotilla ELEVEN of Cruiser-Destroyer Force U.S. Pacific Fleet. **BRADLEY'S** home port is San Diego, California.

THE HISTORIC FLEET.

Did you know that the fleet of historic naval ships in the United States amounts to the 16th 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 submarine and a couple of tugboats.

Twenty-nine states have one or more historic ships on display within their borders. This fleet 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.

DESTROYER SAILOR ORGANIZATIONS.

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, 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.

DESA publishes a lively newspaper style journal called the DESANEWS. They also have a yearly convention, which I attended this past October 13-17, 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 are largely responsible for the excellent restoration of this WWII ship.

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

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.