



# USS BRADLEY ASSOCIATION

Established July 6, 2002

## Holiday Newsletter 2002

A very Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and a Healthy and Happy New Year to all BRADLEY shipmates and their families. Our ship's association is just six months old but has contacted nearly sixty former crewmembers. The year ahead will, hopefully, enable us to contact many, many more of our former shipmates and alert them to the existence of the association. One of the major purposes of a ship's association is to plan and hold reunions where we can get together meet and reminisce with our old buddies. To better organize and move the association forward in 2003, I've asked several former crew members to join me as a board of directors for the association. Many important decisions are on the horizon and one person can't and shouldn't make these decisions alone. The directors will serve until our next reunion at which time the members present can elect a complete slate of officers. Thus far the following former BRADLEY crewmembers have agreed to serve: Chris Koon (65-66), Jack Minster (71-73), and Bill Barrett (71-73). I'm waiting to hear from several other people and will report to the association about membership of the board in the future. If you would be interested in serving on the board of directors, please let me know. **ALSO...WE'RE STILL WAITING FOR THOSE INFORMATION SHEETS!!!!**

We are fortunate to have two wonderful articles authored by two former BRADLEY crewmembers in this newsletter. I think they serve as excellent examples of what any of you can write and share with our former BRADLEY brothers and sisters. Think about writing something about your experiences for a future edition of the newsletter. Neither of these people are professional writers...just shipmates who served aboard the BRADLEY.

### USS BRADLEY 1970-1975

I reported aboard USS BRADLEY DE-1041 on 2 October 1970, for duty as Leading Fire Control Man and Fox Division Leading Chief Petty Officer, just after the ship returned to San Diego from West Pac. STC Lewis Laforce, also reported aboard the Bradley at about the same time. He and his wife Georganne and their family became lifelong friends and we still get together as often as possible. Our initial interest was trains, steam engines in particular, and we chased them all over the Far East. In Kao Shung, Taiwan we were treated to the sight of a very old Belpaire Boilered 2-6-0 working the waterfront and the piers. It was very rusty and leaked steam from almost every joint, it was beautiful. I was advanced to Senior Chief Petty Officer and did three tours to Vietnam aboard the BRADLEY, each tour lasting from seven to nine months. We did just about everything a Destroyer could do; plane guarded for Aircraft Carriers, did anti-shipping patrols, shore bombardment, mine sweeping and disposal, Special Black Operations, etc. We fired the last rounds fired in shore bombardment in Vietnam. I also qualified as a Fleet Qualified Officer of the Deck (Ship Driver). While aboard the BRADLEY in 1974/75, I became deeply involved in a special project to bring computers aboard ships to help with the maintenance support effort. I spent three weeks at "Bunco Ramo Corporation," in Thousand Oaks, CA, going to a computer school and developing the installation design, maintenance forms and system parameters for the BRADLEY. Then I helped with the installation and startup during an overhaul in San Diego. We had a Central processor unit and three major input/output stations, Deck,

Ops and Engineering. To my knowledge this was one of the first attempts to put computers/processors aboard a ship to help with the maintenance and overhaul work. The project was successful and got to the point where we could print out our maintenance and repair forms on the ship and send them to the repair facility or shipyard via a computer tape. I did presentations for the US Navy Brass and Senior Canadian Armed Forces officials, with regard to the computer project, which were well received.

The ship always had a good crew and a good chief's quarters. The officers generally were good and competent. The CO, when I reported aboard, was a real good one and smoked little "De Noboli" cigars. He later went on to be Admiral in Charge of the Grenada Island Invasion... When I started training to stand watches underway, I appreciated his counsel and training and coolness under pressure.

The rumor topics when I went aboard was the recent West Pac cruise, the try to rescue the USS Pueblo, the snowman on the flight deck off Korea, the shortage of toilet paper during a portion of the cruise, and the Peanut Butter episode...

As I understand it the ship ran short of Peanut Butter while the ship was at sea. Several of the crew from Georgia wrote home about it and the ship had a Congressional Investigation over it. Several dignitaries visited the ship and brought numerous recipes for using peanut butter. For months after, we had Peanut Butter at each meal in some form or another... Meals that had Peanut butter glazed ham, Peanut Butter glazed chicken, Peanut Butter glazed pork chops, Peanut butter this, and peanut butter that. And we **ALWAYS** had Peanut Butter and Jelly or Jam and bread on the Mess Decks, 24/7, for all the rest of the time I was aboard. The CPO cook aboard, at the time I reported aboard, was an excellent cook and one of the best I served with during my 21 years of active duty.

Remember going for replenishment with the USS Shasta, and how her crew always sent over several cases of Shasta sodas at the conclusion of each replenishment exercise.

The toilet paper incident was sort of serious, as Bradley was sent out on a detached duty assignment and only occasionally met with a support ship for re-supply. Bradley ran out of toilet paper... POD's and any other paperwork were in top demand for obvious reasons... Several messages went out requesting the essential commodity, but to no avail. One of the supply ships recovered and returned one of Bradley's fenders, lost overboard during a replenishment, painted it up like a large roll of Scott toilet tissue... It didn't solve the problem, but the humor was appreciated....

How about the PO2 cook who made such good mid-rats that darn near the entire crew either got up or stayed up just to eat mid-rats... and it got so expensive for the ships budget, that mid-rats were restricted to the on coming and off going watches only... except, of course, for the Peanut Butter, Bread and Jam/Jelly, always available...

There was the West-Pac Cruise where we went up to San Francisco to join up with the USS Ranger CVA-61 and escort her to the Tonkin Gulf by way of the San Bernardino Straits... We joined off the Golden Gate in a bad storm and while the Ranger was taking green water over the flight deck, we played submarine. I remember the storm being so bad that all we could do was stand watches and or try to stay in your bunk and sleep. Chow was soup, sandwiches, and coffee for about four days... The highlight of the incident was the Ranger flashing over a message by light to ask us if we were danger of sinking, as we were going under two waves and sometimes surfacing on the third wave. A day or two from San Francisco, one of the Bos'n of the watch was knocked unconscious while making his rounds inspecting the ship. We were

concerned we lost him overboard, but fortunately found him near the potato storage bin, between the boats.

Does anyone remember the "RAT Searches." Twice that I recall. Once, when we tied up out in the stream of buoys, in Kaohsiung Harbor, Taiwan, just forward of a rusty old merchant ship under going repairs. We didn't get the rat guards out fast enough and had several large visitors come aboard from the merchant ship. A good portion of the crew spent several hours chasing them down with baseball bats and CO2 extinguishers while wearing Heavy Gloves which delayed liberty in port... The second time was at the Manila Pier, near the Philippine Presidential Yacht, when they tried to come aboard at night across the brow. We had to set a RAT Patrol Watch of several people near each mooring line, shore connection and the brow.

Yes, I recall the night and the several hundred feet of fishing net I wrapped around the screw near HUE, Vietnam. And how we had to limp to Da Nang to get it removed... Sorry about that...

Some important points... We, the BRADLEY, fired the last 5 inch gun rounds at Vietnam just before the Final Cease Fire.

How about after coming off almost 45 days on the gun line, only to go out for some much needed training. I had some minor problems understanding it at the time, but now realize the importance of re-looking at your training to eliminate any bad habits picked up, and to re-enforce the correct procedures.

Standing watches underway and being trained by CWO Shaw are some of the memories that really stand out. STC LaForce and I competed against each other as we learned and developed our skills of ship handling and working with the watch sections. For all those that suffered or stood watch with me, Thank You! from the bottom of my heart, you were and are a great bunch of guys.

Two episodes stand out. One involved the CVA and the other, one of the BRADLEY'S little quirks. Steaming in formation, at 20 knots, with a CVA and several other destroyers, and trying to hold 500 yard spacing intervals, the carrier signal for one maneuver and did a completely contrary one that almost caused the collision of several ships... The CVA's later comment, via flashing light, to all concerned "OOPS." About an half hour later, still formation steaming and still at 20 knots, now in a column formation, we noticed the we seemed to be closing the CVA rapidly, she had slowed down and not told anybody before doing so... This is when our throttle decided to jam at 20 knots. As I tried to fishtail the ship to slow it down, the ship astern of us was now coming up our starboard side, with a third ship also close astern of us. About this time the CVA send over a message "exercise complete reduce speed to 14 knots." We were able to ease the ship to port and away from the other ships and finally get the throttle un-jammed, but it did get a little hairy there for a while...My thanks to MMC Thompson and his watch section in the machinery spaces for helping us get through that incident...

One of my fondest memories is of Gun Mount 51, loading and firing 25 rounds in less than one minute and getting 23 TTB's on Target. A hell of a job by the loaders and handlers, in the mount crew, from First Division ... A 5"/38 gun is only suppose to fire about 16 to 18 rounds per minute...

Does anybody remember the RODEO the ship put on in the Philippines, or how about getting stranded in Manila during the Typhoon??? The fantail Cookouts and Fantail beach??? And how about Monte Carlo nights on the Mess Deck??? The several Typhoons we were involved with at sea??? Going up to San Francisco and having some of the BRADLEY family aboard some meals and several aboard for a short cruise back to San Diego???

How about Hong Kong with it's China Fleet Club and the Kowloon Pier Shopping area??? Shopping for clothes and shoes in Hong Kong??? How many ate at the Parisian Grill, or one of

the Floating Restaurants in Aberdeen Bay??? Sometimes just sending the bar girl or boy out for some dinner from the corner stand was an adventure... Getting the ship cleaned and painted in Hong Kong??? Or there was port visits to Manila, Subic Bay, Yokosuka, and Sasebo and Beppu, Japan. The stops in Oahu, Hawaii, Guam, and Midway Islands to refuel the ship and a quick trip to the exchange for goodies... The Goonie bird on Midway really live up to their name, but they are beautiful. The bus trip down to visit Taipei, from the port of Tanshui, Taiwan. The trip up to the Inlet near Tacoma, WA for the sonar testing and the CPO initiation at one of the two drinking establishments in Gig Harbor, WA... I recall a great view of McNeil Island Federal Penitentiary...

Chief LaForce almost got me into serious trouble... We were out with the Squadron Commander and Staff aboard running sonar test of one type or another. After several days of testing, tempers and moods got a little tight, so I thought I would bring LaForce back to reality if I sneaked into Sonar Control and gave him a friendly jab and tickle in the ribs... Sonar Control was a very dark cubby-hole just off CIC and I had no trouble sneaking in, however just as I was about to tickle Laforce, a light flashed on one of the sonar consoles and I noticed it was not Laforce I was about to tickle, The Squadron Commander, Commodore Tesh!!! I almost really goofed on that one. Lew Laforce did lighten up, later, and he still laughs about the "almost incident".

SKC Sasser, senior enlisted supply type, was affectionately known as **N.I.S.** (Not In Stock), as that is how his Supply people usually marked submitted material request chits.

BMC Ernie Nadeau, a very competent Bos'n Mate, was at times, teased. Once, I recall, was when a replenishment ship sent over a forward rig that looked like a Gordian knot. Poor Chief Nadeau was wrapped up in it trying to get it untangled when the C.O. looked over the rail and down at him and teasingly asked if he was trying to have sexual relations with the tangle lines or what??? The Capt realized that Ernie was doing his best and that the rig sent over was a mess.

I departed the Bradley, April 1975, with many fond memories and several long time friends.

William A. Von Protz, FT Senior Chief Petty Officer

## **A BRADLEY ENCOUNTER.**

It was Fleet Week in New York City, sometime in the mid 1990's. The exact year is unsure. My son was and is a big Helo fan. The USS Guadalcanal (an LPH) was due to retire, so a chance to see MORE Helos! At first I said NO! to his invite, but, "Who Knows?" "You may meet someone you know"! How true!

The Guadalcanal was tied up north of the Intrepid Air, Sea and Space Museum, at the Cruise Line Piers. At the quay wall, bow to the quay was two tin cans. The one inboard was U.S. Navy and outboard, a Brazilian, D30. I said to my son Kevin, "Wait, look at that ship", I know it isn't... but close! "That's what the Bradley was"!

After many Helos and Marines, I left my son and his friends to get some air on the flight deck, of the INTREPID, and walked forward to look at the "old" DE! Written on the stern, though painted over, but still visible was: B-R-A-D-L-E-Y. Now I knew, for old times sake, our next stop!

Later, on the U.S. Navy DD, "Are you here for a tour"? "No – Crossing Over"! So we made our way to the "Big B" (My Nickname). No one could speak English on the Quarterdeck, so I said, "USS BRADLEY"? – "Yes"? By then a translator was found and my tour started, (which I finished!) Great Fun! Port side forward to MT51 (my office at NGFS) and all over the ship! I had 15-20 sailors from Brazil in "My" tour! Upon leaving I was given a complementary ball cap (D30 Pernambuco) either by the XO, CDO, or OOD!? The ship was clean...No Rust, and Looked Sharp!

Bill Barrett, W-2.