



# USS BRADLEY ASSOCIATION

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Newsletter, Early Winter 2003

## STATE OF THE ASSOCIATION

January 2003 marks the six months anniversary of the association. So much has happened since the July 2002 reunion. At this writing we have 85 former **BRADLEY** shipmates aboard the association, with many others contacted.

We also now have a **BRADLEY** website thanks to Webmaster Tom Lettington, a former **BRADLEY CO**. Check it out at [www.ussbradley.tfl.net](http://www.ussbradley.tfl.net)! All past newsletters and crewmember information forms can be found on the website. If you're signed aboard you can message everyone on the site. Hopefully this will make it possible for us to reach even more former shipmates.

This year's big challenge will be choosing a site and planning the 2004 reunion. The Board of Directors needs a lot of input from you, the association's members...our former **BRADLEY** shipmates. We've already gotten some good input from several members. We'd like to hear from anyone interested in helping or in making suggestions. We're still waiting for most of those opinion surveys about the reunion.

Our last **BIG CONCERN** is losing contact with former shipmates after finally getting reconnected. It has happened too many times already. How does it happen? It's really very easy. **If all we have is your e-mail address** and something goes wrong with it or your computer, we're out of touch! If you don't want to send the information sheets at **LEAST** send us your mailing address and telephone number, including area code. This way we shouldn't ever be out of touch. It's really tragic, to say the least, to lose contact after many years because we don't have your data.

## **BRADLEY'S FIRST WESTPAC CRUISE – July to December 1966**

The morning of July 2 of the holiday weekend was bright and clear in San Diego as **BRADLEY'S** officers and crew made all preparations for getting underway. To visiting families and friends all hands said that last good bye and by 10:00 the ship was underway

enroute to Westpac in company with Destroyer Division 71. **BRADLEY** had become the first U.S. Navy destroyer escort to deploy for extended operations with a general-purpose destroyer division. The three week transit period provided opportunities to put a fine edge on the many skills in tactical maneuvering, communications, ship handling, etc., which would become routine during Westpac operations and included brief logistics stopovers at Pearl Harbor, Midway, and Guam.

After four days in port at Subic Bay, P.I., **BRADLEY** was underway for Dixie Station off South Vietnam, where she rendezvoused with **USS INTREPID (CVS-11)** on 30 July to assume duties as plane guarding and screening destroyer. This was the first critical test of **BRADLEY'S** radically new engineering plant, and the ship's immediate reactions to the constant accelerations, decelerations, and high speed required for this assignment earned her a reputation of reliability and responsiveness which was to follow her throughout the cruise screening **INTREPID** during a transit to Yankee Station in the Tonkin Gulf, **BRADLEY** remained with her at that location through 9 August, when **INTREPID** and her escorts (**BRADLEY** included) were detached to proceed to Sasebo, Japan, for upkeep.

Sasebo: steep, terraced hillsides rising abruptly from the narrow harbor basin, with occasional farmhouse rooftops, or temple corners, revealed in glimpses through the welcome green of forest trees, rice and grass. Shopping amidst a confusingly impressive array of quality merchandise: chinaware, furniture, stereo and hi-fi gear, photographic equipment, fabrics and art objects. Softball games, always in sweltering humidity and, on one occasion, at night in a torrential downpour. Side excursions were made to the natural beauty of Unzen National Park and the seaport city, Nagasaki. It was a most refreshing, if not quite relaxing, interlude. Following a week of serene and rustic Sasebo, **BRADLEY** sortied with the task group on 24 August, enroute to a brief visit at Hong Kong, B.C.C.

Hong Kong: a spectacular sunrise passage through the harbor entrance into a cosmopolitan metropolis of many contrasts. Hong Kong was a meeting of East and West, with poverty and wealth, beauty and ugliness in an endless stream of contradictory impressions. Junks, water-taxis, floating restaurants, bicycles, rickshaws and pedicabs abounded in the harbor. Victoria Peak could be visited with its views of the harbor. The public square and the Hong Kong Hilton were frequently visited. **BRADLEY** crewmembers returned with certificates of origin and armloads of merchandise. For some, it was a \$75 phone bill. For most crewmembers, at least one headache and an empty wallet.

Underway 31 August for Yankee Station with the task group, **BRADLEY** arrived on 2 September, to spend the next two days as plane guard for **INTREPID** and **ORISKANY**.

On 5 September, **BRADLEY** was detached from Yankee Station operations to undertake a series of naval gunfire support missions in South Vietnam coastal waters. Following preliminary briefing sessions with Army and Marine Corps spotters, the ship proceeded to a station approximately 26 miles north of Qui Nhon in the II Corps area of South

Vietnam. Modified Condition One was set at dawn on 6 September and after a long half-day of waiting, the ship opened fire from 5 inch mounts 51 and 52 at 1400 the same day. Over the next five days, **BRADLEY** was to remain on call for fire 24 hours per day, expending a total of over 1200 rounds at such targets as enemy base camps, trenches, mortar positions, foxholes, and supply and infiltration routes. Much of the firing was done at night and all of it was done with an accuracy and rapidity of salvos, which so impressed the spotters that they called the ship "the best gunfire support destroyer we've ever worked with". During this time, **BRADLEY** was close-in witness to several air cavalry search and destroy-operations in and around coastal villages, supporting some such operations with her gunfire and the satisfaction of having made an important contribution proved considerable.

On 11 September, the ship (reluctantly) secured from shore bombardment to return to plane guard duties at Yankee Station, where she operated through 16 September. During this week, she was honored by a brief visit from Vice-Admiral John J. Hyland, Commander, U.S. Seventh Fleet, who came aboard by helicopter on 13 September for a short familiarization tour. On 17 September, she was detached to precede to Subic Bay for a three-day rest prior to her participation in a joint British-American Anti-Submarine Warfare Exercise Silverskate, during the last days of which she served as flagship for the screen commander, Commander Destroyer Squadron 23.

On conclusion of Exercise Silverskate, the ship conducted gunnery training in the water off the Philippines for two days after which she departed for Kaohsiung, Taiwan, on 1 October. Arriving at that port on 2 October, the ship remained through 14 October for an upkeep period alongside **USS AJAX (AR-6)**.

Underway from Kaohsiung Harbor the morning of 15 October, **BRADLEY** set her course for the Saigon River Delta in the II Corps area of South Vietnam, where she reported for further duty as gunfire support destroyer on the morning of 18 October. Much of her fire in this area, both from off the coast and from apposition in the Saigon River proper, was of the harassment and interdiction variety, designed to disrupt enemy activity by night either at designated locations or along suspected supply or infiltration routes. On the night of 21 October, the ship was called upon to deliver over 500 rounds of such shelling between the hours of midnight and 0500. On 28 October, the threat of her guns was used in conjunction with ground forces ashore to provide protective cover for the relocation of 395 South Vietnamese civilians from their small village near the town of Lagi to a safer area less exposed to the ravages of constant guerrilla warfare. Between 19 and 28 October, **BRADLEY** fired over 2700 rounds bringing her cumulative total of rounds expended against enemy positions in South Vietnam to over 4000 during fifteen days of shore bombardment.

From shore bombardment in the III Corps area, **BRADLEY** now proceeded north to report for duty with the USS **HALSEY (DLG-23)** and the Navy's Search and rescue Team in the Tonkin Gulf. During this period while assigned to this duty the ship stood ready to assist in the recovery of U.S. aircraft pilots downed by surface-to-air missiles or

anti-aircraft fire and was party to one successful long-range rescue affected by **HALSEY'S** helicopter crew.

Detaching from search and rescue duties after the first week of November, **BRADLEY** rounded out operational phases of her deployment with a shallow water sonar evaluation and ASW exercise period serving with the **USS KEARSARGE (CVS-33)** and the Anti-Submarine Warfare Task Group of the U.S. Seventh Fleet. She was detached 19 November for intended rest-recreation periods in Japanese ports prior to departing Westpac on return transit to the United States.

High winds, seas and swells precluded passage to Japan, however, resulting in **BRADLEY'S** departure for home via a four day stopover at Guam, from which port she got underway 4 December.

Joining a transit group consisting of destroyers **USS HAMNER (DD-718)** and **USS SOUTHERLAND (DD-743)**, the guided missile and guided missile destroyer **USS BUCHANAN (DLG-23)** in a rendezvous north of Midway, via Pearl Harbor, arriving in San Diego at 1000 on 21 December to close out the year with Christmas leave and upkeep in her home port.

Thanks to Chris Koon (DK1) a **USS BRADLEY ASSOCIATION**, Director for photo copying **BRADLEY'S** first cruise book for a look at **BRADLEY'S** first cruise.

## NEWLETTER ARTICLES

As I've mentioned before, your editor is running out of things to say in the newsletter. So many of you have told me how much you enjoy reading it. Thanks to Chris Koon, we know about **BRADLEY'S** first cruise. What about all of the others? Even if you don't want to write an article yourself, and I'm begging here...why not photocopy those cruise books? I'm just guessing here, but in the 22 years **BRADLEY** was commissioned she must have gone on, at least, 8 – 10 cruises. That's a lot of newsletter filler...shipmates! Lets get busy here!

We're also looking for details about **BRADLEY'S** decommissioning in December of 1988. Does anyone know who was her CO at that time? We'd like to reproduce the program from the ceremony in the newsletter. Anything that concerns **BRADLEY**, her officers and crew during those 22 years of commissioning is part of our history and we want to bring it to all of our shipmates.

### Shipmates!

Here's an update of former **BRADLEY** shipmates we've located and heard from since the Late Autumn 2002 Newsletter...James Bundrick (64-65); Jose Carvalho (65-68); Terry Crawford (65-66); Edward Dewar (73-75); Joe Fabri (74-75); Laury Wayne Frazier (72-74); Jerry Fuhr (70-71); Philip Gaida (75-76); Arturo Garza (81-84); (75-76); Mike Gensburger (1970's) Johnny Chad Hanna (83-84); Bill Hazelip (74-75); Al Heck (74-75); Steve Henslee (83-86); Yancy Jeleniewski (87-8); Randy Krzyston (81-83); Tom Lettington (75-77); Skip MacMichael (70-72); Don Marstein (86-88); Tim McDaniels (1960's); Peter Munley (76-77); James Pedlar (72-74); James Rice (80-84); Donald Ruhl (67-68); Bill Stafford (65); Terry Stafford (71-75); Bob Stanton (65-69); James Taylor (1960's); Joe Todd (65); John Vasquez (73-74); Jonathan Wales (72-74); Michael Walz (72-74); Alan Weseman (70-72); Paul White (74-76); Joseph Witt (1970's); Doug Wright (73-74); Bob Zetterberg (65).