

**GORDON CALDIS'  
EXPERIENCES  
IN  
WORLD WAR II**

**COPYRIGHT BY GORDON CALDIS  
DECEMBER 1997**

## **GORDON CALDIS' EXPERIENCES IN WORLD WAR II**

My World War II experiences really began December 7, 1941 with the dastardly attack on Hawaii by the Japanese. I was on campus at UND in Grand Forks when I heard of the attack on the radio. It was my senior year at the end of the semester.

President Franklin Roosevelt announced on the radio of the United States Declaration of War upon Japan. It was not long after that the draft started in motion for the conscription of people for the United States Armed Forces. My draft number was drawn among the first at the draft office in Thief River Falls, Minnesota. Although I was willing to enter the United States Armed Services, the timing presented a question in that I had just a semester remaining within which to receive a business degree in May, 1942.

Army, Navy and Marine Recruiters became active on campus and in many hometowns. I talked to Navy and Marine Recruiters. The U.S. Navy instituted V-7 Midshipman programs at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois and at Columbia University in New York, New York for college graduates. Because I was in my final semester at UND, and, because the midshipman schools were just becoming established and the classes were already full for the ensuing several months, the U.S. Navy assured me there would be sufficient time to finish college and receive a degree. Thereafter, I would be assigned a midshipman class at Northwestern or Columbia University. Under the circumstances, I felt this was a good opportunity and enlisted during the spring semester of 1942 at UND.

During the 1942 semester I lived in the Phi Delt House and roomed with Tom Hooker. I continued to work for my board at the Gamma Phi Beta Sorority House.

LeNore Ulvedal was a Gamma Phi and had helped me get the job when I was a junior. For our room and board we waited tables, wiped dishes, and seasonally shoveled snow and replaced storm windows and screens as well as tend the coal burning furnace. No cash involved, but these jobs were necessary for many fellows all over campus, and were the "scholarships" of our day for many athletes and other students.

Following graduation, the Navy advised that there were no openings in the midshipman schools for several months. Jim Eide, from Minot, N.D., and a brother Phi Delt and with whom I had played football, had also enlisted in the V-7 Midshipman program. Jim and I decided that neither of us had seen the ocean nor had seen seagoing ships, so that it would be a good idea to do so. Jim had a relative, Marge Eide, who lived in Seattle, Washington, and would show us around and we would try to get jobs in a shipyard to learn about ships and to also earn ourselves some money. So, we hitchhiked to Seattle. We did get jobs at Associated Ship Building Co., and we found a small apartment in a highrise building in downtown on Pike Street. Associated Shipbuilders was building Seaplane Tenders. The shipyard offered night classes in Shipfitting, so I enrolled and completed the course and became a certified "Shipfitter" with a raise in pay. A shipfitter positions the steel plates which make up the steel hull and bulkheads of a ship. When a steel plate is properly positioned, the shipfitter calls in the welders who weld the plates together for the completion of the ship's hull and bulkheads which separate compartments.

After several months in Seattle, Jim's and my Navy orders came through and we returned to North Dakota and boarded a train for New York and Columbia University. With Jim Eide and myself, there were several others with whom we were acquainted. Goodman from UND, and Swede

Johnson, Cliff Nygard and Nelson from N.D.A.C. Johnson and Nygard played basketball for N.D.A.C. and Nelson played football.

At the Columbia University Midshipmen School, we were issued the 13 button bell bottom apprentice seaman uniforms. Later on we were promoted to the rank of Midshipman. Jim Eide and I were in the same platoon and were in the same classes. We started out in John Jay Hall and later transferred to Furnald Hall. There were some 1200 men in our initial class. About 1100 graduated after a very concentrated session of four months. Two different classes were in session at the same time. Adrian Lorentson, from Thief River Falls, Minnesota, was in the other class at the time. At Columbia we organized a pick-up scrimmage with the Columbia University team. We had Swede Johnson, Jim Eide, Cliff Nygard, myself and some others. With Johnson, Eide and Nygard leading the way, Columbia University felt the sting of North Dakota basketball.

At Columbia, most Saturday mornings, we had a parade with some 2 1/2 thousand midshipmen and a terrific marching band. It was really quite a thrill and took place on an athletic field in the middle of the campus. One Sunday afternoon we had an exhibition parade at half time of a pro football game at Yankee Stadium. Also, each Sunday, we marched to Riverside Church for church services, which was located on Riverside Drive overlooking the Hudson River. One Sunday I saw my cousin, Edith Steinkraus, from Bertha, Minnesota, at church. Edith later invited me over to visit she and her husband. Edith was attending Julliard School of Music.

The Midshipmen were treated very well by many people in New York and suburbs. We would be invited to private homes for meals on occasion. Also, they would bus us to the party where we could dance with the debutantes, have refreshments and food, and then they would bus us back to Columbia. We met Mrs. George Raft, the wife of the movie star, on one

occasion, and she took a half dozen of us out for the evening on a couple of occasions. Free tickets for movies and Broadway plays were available, usually Saturdays. Charles Abberly, from New York City, was in our platoon, and was the son of the General Counsel for Radio City and the family lived on Park Avenue. One Sunday, he and his parents invited several of us for Sunday dinner. Their chauffeur picked us up at Columbia and drove us to their apartment building. We had a beautiful dinner served by a butler and maid. After dinner Mr. Abberly sent us by limousine to Radio City for the movie and show, and then afterwards we were chauffeured back to Columbia.

On another occasion, we marched to a pier on the Hudson River in upper Manhattan, and boarded a yacht for a navigational cruise. While waiting for the Captain to come aboard, a limousine drove up and the Captain came aboard. The Captain was David Rockefeller. Rockefeller became President of Chase Manhattan Bank, He apparently had leased his yacht to the U.S. Navy during war time.

Shortly before graduation, there were notices from different branches of the U.S. Navy announcing that we could volunteer for a particular branch if we desired to do so. Jim and I had been discussing the different possibilities and we decided to volunteer for P.T. Boat duty. We thought we would like smaller craft rather than the spit and polish of the big ship Navy. I was chosen for P.T. Boats and ordered to the sole P.T. Training Base, just outside of Newport, Rhode Island, called Melville, Rhode Island.

Jim Eide was not selected for P.T. Boats because of his height of some 6'5", because of the cramped quarters and low overheads aboard the boats. Jim received his second choice, being commander of a landing craft. Thus, the association of Eide and Caldis came to an end after years of great friendship.

While at Columbia, LeNore and I had talked from time to time and towards the end of my schooling, we decided to be married during my leave following graduation from Columbia Midshipmen's School. After I had been selected for PT Boats, and had learned more about the operations of the boats and the possible dangerous duty, I had some doubts about the advisability of LeNore and I being married before I went overseas. I thought it might be unfair to her should something happen to me. We then talked on the phone a number of times about the timing of our marriage. I also talked to her roommate. LeNore's roommate told me LeNore wanted to marry me upon graduation and didn't want to wait, and she also advised me that LeNore had had some proposals of marriage in California. When I heard about these marriage proposals, and the possibility of losing her if we delayed our marriage, I quickly reversed my thinking and we made definite plans to be married upon my graduation from Columbia. Following graduation I returned to Thief River Falls, Minnesota, and LeNore and I were married February 28, 1943 at United Lutheran Church, Grand Forks, North Dakota, F. I. Schmidt being the Pastor. It was a small wedding with immediate relatives and a number of LeNore's Gamma Phi Beta Sorority sisters. The wedding supper was at the Ryan Hotel dining room. LeNore and I left that same evening on the train for New York, New York, and Newport, Rhode Island, for the Motor Torpedo Boat Training School.

LeNore and I lived in two different rooming houses, and then in an apartment together with Gordon and Mermon Hanson, all in Newport, and then later we rented a bungalow in the country close to Melville, Rhode Island, the P.T. Training base. While there we jointly bought an old coupe, either a Ford or Chevrolet, for \$25 from another P.T. couple, for transportation. When we left some three months later, we sold the car to another newly arrived P.T. couple for \$25.

Upon graduating from P.T. School, Gordon Hanson and I were assigned to Squadron 17 which was being outfitted in New Orleans, LA., comprised of Higgins type boats. There were three types of P.T. boats being built, Higgins boats in New Orleans, Huckins boats in Florida, and Elco boats in Bayonne, NJ., across the bay from Manhattan, NY.

When we arrived at Squadron 17, we shortly were advised that there were two extra boats and two extra crews, so that inasmuch as we were the last crews to arrive, we were being reassigned to the training Squadron No. 4 at Melville, RI. Shortly thereafter, the two boats and two crews started the trip by water from New Orleans to Newport, RI., by way of Pensacola, Tampa, and Miami, Florida, and Charleston, SC., Norfolk, VA., New York and Newport, RI. We utilized some of the inside passageways in Florida and the Carolinas and Virginia.

On the trip, at Beaufort, SC., the boat I was on had a propeller shear off the drive shaft and made a hole in the hull bottom, so we were towed into dry dock for repairs. As I recall, we were there for about 10 days or so until repairs were made and spare parts received and installed, so then both boats continued to Rhode Island.

In the meantime, LeNore and Mermon remained in New Orleans and worked in a dress shop until we arrived in Rhode Island and sent for them to return to Newport.

At the training base I was assigned to PT 317 as the Executive Officer, second in command. After a time, the Captain was reassigned and I was made Captain of P.T. 317.

LeNore secured a job at the U.S. Navy Torpedo Station in Newport.

This reassignment to Squadron 4 stood me in good stead as it gave me an excellent opportunity to learn so much more about the boats and to

experience the handling of men and the responsibilities of being a boat captain.

The function of Squadron 4 was to train officers and enlisted men who were going through the P.T. training school. Officers and enlisted men had classroom instruction in all phases of training, however, those of us assigned as officers to the P.T. Boats Squadron 4 taught boathandling, gunnery and navigation to the student officers while engaging in training cruises to Boston, Massachusetts, and New York, New York, and points in between. We also engaged in gunnery practice out in the Atlantic Ocean with target tow planes and floating targets. Student enlisted men would be aboard during cruises and would observe the regular crew enlisted men while they were carrying out their respective duties as motor mechanics, gunners, torpedo men, quartermasters, cooks and radar men.

After a time in Squadron 4, I was assigned in April, 1944, to Squadron 36 which was being outfitted at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, across the bay from Manhattan, New York.

LeNore and I first rented an apartment in a brownstone building in Brooklyn, but we did not like the neighborhood. It was close to the Navy Yard. but we wanted to live in Manhattan where there was much more to see and do. We were able to sublet a one-room apartment in Tudor City, a large apartment complex just off 42nd Street close to Grand Central Station. At a large hotel adjacent to the station, there was a service center for members of the military. It arranged for our apartment and for the tickets to Broadway shows and radio shows. It was then we were able to see many shows that civilians would wait months to see. New York was very good to people in the military.

Our Squadron 36 boat hulls were being built in Bayonne, NJ., by the Electric Boat Co. (Elco) and then moved to the Brooklyn Navy Yard for



final outfitting as to guns and other equipment and supplies. I understand the U.S. Navy paid Elco \$250,000 per boat, and the Packard Motor Co, \$25,000 for each engine of which there were three in each boat.

At the same time, the crews and officers were being organized and assigned to the individual boats, and the base force also being organized and outfitted. I was assigned as boat Captain of PT 522 and Art Hanes of Birmingham, Alabama, assigned as 2nd Officer. Art was an attorney and after the war became Mayor of Birmingham, Alabama. Our crew was also being assigned as to specialties. Each boat had three V-12 1200 horsepower Packard Aircraft engines. Each engine had its own propeller.

Some of the squadron boats had two torpedoes and some had four torpedoes. PT 522 had two torpedoes. Each boat had a 40 mm anti-aircraft gun, single barrel, mounted on the stern. Each boat carried a smoke tank on the stern so we could lay smoke to hide or to distract the enemy. Each boat had two sets of twin 50 caliber machine guns, with each twin being mounted in a turret so the gunner could swing 360 degrees in firing the guns. Each boat also had at least two depth charges which could be set for a specific depth and rolled off the deck if an enemy submarine was located. Each boat also had a 20 mm anti-aircraft gun mounted on the bow. Torpedoes were set in racks and could be armed and then rolled off the boat.

I was appointed assistant gunnery officer for Squadron 36.

Each boat also had a 30 caliber machine gun mounted in the cockpit.

Each boat had radar, depth finder, range direction finder, and radio.

Also an intercom system for within the boat and also a powerful spotlight.

Each engine had its own manual gear shift located in the engine room located in the rear lower area of the boat. A seat was mounted between the three engines so that a motor machinist (there were three) would take turns

sitting in the seat to operate the manual shifts. In the cockpit there were three levers, one for each engine.

When a lever in the cockpit was pushed forward one notch, it gave signal on the control panel in the engine room, whereupon the motor machinist would manually push the shift forward to put such engine in gear. Likewise, if the cockpit lever was pulled back it signaled the engine be placed in reverse. Once the engine was in gear, the lever became the throttle and the speed would then be controlled from the cockpit.

Normally, when underway, all engines would be operating at the same time because one never knew when we needed greater speed, when the three engines were required for greater or full speed.

Each engine had outside exhausts on the stern at just above water level. A portion of the exhaust metal jacket was below water level. Flaps above the water line could be closed so that the exhaust was directed down into the water resulting in a much more quiet muffled sound. When on patrol, which was generally at night, we would be at idling speed, with exhaust flaps closed, so our engines were less likely to be heard by the enemy.

Otherwise, the three engines were very noisy and could be heard at great distance.

Among the gear issued to our squadron at the Brooklyn Navy Yard was heavy winter clothing, therefore we concluded we would be going to Europe.

Each squadron usually consisted of twelve boats, however, for some reason, Squadron 36 ended up with eleven boats.

Our squadron commander was Commander Tapaan and our executive was Jack Morrison (Second in Command). Tapaan played football for Southern California.

When the first squadron boats were fully outfitted, arrangements began as to being transported to our unknown destination. My boat 522, along with the 523 and 524, were placed aboard a large tanker.

Steel cradles for each of the three boats were welded on the top open deck of the tanker. Then by means of a large crane, each boat was lifted out of the water and placed in its cradle, whereupon the boats were lashed into the cradles with steel chains so the boats couldn't move and held securely in event of rough ocean waters.

When we were notified the first three boats (522, 523 and 524) and the tanker were leaving New York the next day in June, 1944, LeNore and I made arrangements for her to go by train to Grand Forks where she planned to stay with her folks until I returned to the United States.

Shortly after we left New York, we were advised that we were headed for the South Pacific. We were then asked to turn in our winter gear, which would be turned over to the U.S. Navy when we arrived at Panama. On the way to Panama, we stopped at Aruba in the Caribbean to load gasoline to be taken to the South Pacific. We then proceeded through the Panama Canal.

We spent several days in Panama City and in Colon, Panama, and then set out for the South Pacific. While in the bay at Colon, we were warned not to swim in the bay because of the vicious barracuda in the waters. We were told of a U.S. Navy man on a large U.S. Navy ship who had fallen into the water and killed by the barracuda before he could be lifted out of the water. Another Navy man had also fallen from a U.S. Navy ship and had the flesh from one leg stripped by barracuda before he was lifted from the water. A school of barracuda attack as a school and are able to strip the flesh in a short time. Our boats and tanker had no such mishap with barracuda.

We then left Panama for the South Pacific to New Guinea by way of the Galapagos Islands, which are off the coast of South America. When we passed through the Galapagos we saw a number of the giant turtles which are common to those islands. Some of the turtles are reportedly some 500 lbs. or larger.

It took us about 19 days to travel from Panama to Port Moresby, the largest seaport city, and where was located the only crane with capacity to lift a P.T. Boat which weighs some 55 ton with a war load.

We then commenced to operate in New Guinea and proceeded through Hollandia, where we contacted the Army and were able to secure anti-tank guns to add to our armament. Also, we were able to secure 20 MM guns. As a consequence, we then were able to install the two additional 20 MM guns and the anti-tank gun to each of the boats (522, 523, 524). The installations were made pursuant to the detail plans I had designed during the trip from Panama to Port Moresby. The purpose of the additional armament was to make our boats 'more of a gun boat because the function of PT boats seemed to be changing. It wasn't expected that the boats would have as much action against the big Japanese ships as had earlier taken place at the beginning of the war.

We advanced up and northwesterly of the north coast of New Guinea to the small island of Mios Woendi where a PT base had recently been established. The island was a cemetery for the natives in the area. It was a beautiful half moon shaped island with nice fine sand beaches. The engineers had built a number of docks for the boats and outdoor showers, as well as other facilities for dining and kitchen and storage of supplies.

It was at Mios Woendi where I saw Tweten from East Grand Forks, Minnesota. Also, it was where I returned to P.T. 522 one day and my good buddy, Bob Quale, from Thief River Falls, Minnesota, was working on our

radar equipment. What a coincidence. While at Mios Woendi, on several occasions we made a number of patrols and took Army scouts into New Guinea locations behind the Japanese lines.

The Japanese had taken a number of allied prisoners, including U.S. missionaries. PT 522 and other boats participated in night patrols and taking Army scouts close into the beach so scouts could go ashore to attack the Japanese guards. The scouts would secretly observe the prison schedules for a period of time, some two or three days, and then simultaneously kill the guards and free the prisoners. At a pre-arranged date and time we would return to the same location during the night and remove the scouts and prisoners back to our base. We greatly admired the nerve and skills of these scouts. On one occasion with the scouts, we took in a group of scouts. The tide was going out, so it was imperative to quickly unload the men and get back into deeper water. The last scout to disembark was a first-time scout who lost his nerve and wouldn't let go the gunwale of our boat, so one of our crew had to pry his fingers from the boat so we could leave the area and avoid being hung up on the beach and endanger the boat and crew.

On another occasion, our squadron commander contacted me about PT 522 making a reconnaissance daytime patrol. Invariably our patrols were nighttime because of daytime Japanese air patrols and Japanese shore batteries. The commander put it on the basis of it being a volunteer patrol rather than on the basis of being an order. Otherwise he would contact one of the other squadron boats. I wanted to accept the assignment and would get back to the commander within the hour. I had a meeting with my crew and explained the purpose of the patrol and that it was voluntary, and my inclination to accept the assignment. The crew was agreeable and I then advised the commander of acceptance.

The purpose of the patrol was to attempt to specifically pinpoint a Japanese gun battery which held a vantage point in the interior of a bay off the coast. We were to circle the interior of the bay at full speed so our spotting plane would locate the smoke from the battery if they fired at our boat. So, on the day set, PT 522 made the patrol circling around the bay at full speed, full speed being about 55 mph. The battery opened up on us and the patrol planes located it. The battery did hit our boat midships with one shell about two feet above the water line which shell made a hole through the hull. Fortunately, the shell was almost expended and stuck in the hull making a clean hole. If the shell had had more momentum it would have hit one of our gas tanks containing 100 octane aircraft gasoline. The boats carried 3000 gallons of gasoline. We were told later our attack planes wiped out the battery, so our Army forces could go more safely ashore.

Our PT 522 personnel were then scheduled for some rest and recreation in Australia, however, we were suddenly advised our trip was canceled and we were to leave for the Philippines.

Our trip involved our tender (supply) ship and our Squadron 36 and Squadron 33. Squadron 36 involved eleven boats and Squadron 33 twelve boats. All of the PT boats traveled under their own power, following the tender which supplied our food and gasoline. We made one offshore stop en route at Palau Island, where our U.S. troops were in the process of the invasion. Palau Island was a staging area for some U.S. Naval and Army forces, so that our PT squadrons were scheduled to continue on to Leyte Island where the initial invasion of the Philippines was to take place. We then continued westerly to Leyte Island and arrived where our Army forces had landed on the east coast in the general area south of the City of Ormoc where there was an air strip.

Leyte Gulf is a large body of water which lays to the east of Leyte Island. It was amazing and impressive to see the hundreds of U.S. ships of all sizes and types comprising the invasion force. Outside of Leyte Gulf in the Pacific there were larger support Navy vessels and aircraft carriers to give aerial support to the invasion forces.

There were some 44 PT boats in Leyte Gulf, with each two squadrons having a supply tender ship. Each tender ship had the ability to lift two PT boats out of the water, one on the port side and one on the starboard side, at the same time.

It was necessary for our PT boats and other ships to keep moving most of the time during daylight because of the Japanese aircraft attacks. Suddenly, during an aircraft attack against the larger ships with strafing and bombs and torpedoes, the Japanese planes began diving into the ships and did not turn away after their run.

We finally realized, after watching plane after plane go straight into our ships, that the Japanese had changed tactics and intended these Kamikaze attacks. We were all horrified when we saw these Japanese pilots were committing suicide. Over time we saw many of these Kamikaze runs and they were also attacking smaller craft. These Kamikaze were carrying bombs and felt that they had a better chance to hit their targets by flying all the way into the ships. These attacks were daylight attacks because they could see much better and thus more accurate. Our ships, including the PT boats, put up a tremendous volume of antiaircraft fire and they knocked down and exploded and set on fire dozens of Japanese planes, but many reached our ships and exploded and caused fires and caused many injuries and fatalities to our Army and Navy personnel.

All during this time, our Army forces had landed on the east coast beaches of Leyte and they were proceeding into the interior of the island.

The function of PT boats was to patrol the west side of Leyte from dusk to dawn to prevent Japanese reinforcements and supplies to the Japanese already on the island. All PT boat patrols involved two boats operating together. The west coast of Leyte was divided into zones, so that each two boats would stay within its assigned zone so as not to mistakenly fire on our own boats.

When we made a patrol we started out along the east coast in late afternoon with air cover by our air force until dark. We then continued around the end of the island to the west coast and then located our zone for the night. Our patrols were made at our slowest idling speed with mufflers closed so that we made a minimum amount of engine noise. There would be no lights. We had excellent radar which picked up any boats and located their position and distance. The radar enabled us to navigate by it and locate the beach and its distance from the boat. Our patrols generally were made fairly close inshore.

Our two boat patrols were called a division and the squadron commander and/or squadron executive would name which of the two boat captains would be division commander for a particular patrol.

The most common contacts for the PT Boats on the west coast of Leyte were Japanese personnel and supply barges attempting to land support troops and supplies. These barges had no radar and the PT Boats with radar could pick them up at a distance and could surprise them and enable the boats to destroy the barges and personnel and supplies. Numerous barges were destroyed by the PT Boats overtime and effectively limited Japanese reinforcements.

Shortly before dawn, the PT Boats would leave their respective zones and proceed to the south end of Leyte Island, where the Air Force would



meet us and provide air cover as we returned north on the east coast to Ormoc Bay where our tender ships were located.

On a particular early morning as PT 522 and companion PT Boat, together with another 2-boat division met up at the south end of the island, but our air cover did not arrive. Myself and the other three captains decided to attempt to hide in a small cove until our air cover arrived, because of the number of Japanese planes being active.

The four boats slipped into the cove where we could tie up to bushes on shore because of deep water.

PT 522 and companion boat tied up together side by side with the 522 on the outside. The other two boats tied up similarly to the rear of our two boats. All the boats stopped their engines. The sun was just coming up and was just above the trees. My crew was still in their gun positions. My executive officer and I were still in the cockpit. Suddenly we heard a plane engine and we spotted the Japanese plane at tree level coming right out of the sun, which was the reason we didn't see the plane earlier. The Japanese plane opened fire with its machine guns and its bullets were hitting the water towards PT 522 and companion boat. Fortunately for us, when the plane dropped over the tree tops and close to the water, the pilot had misjudged the angle so the bullets were barely missing the bow of PT 522 and hitting the water. The plane was close to the water and he couldn't turn into us as he was probably thinking his wing would hit the water. In the meantime my 40 mm gun crew on the stern were in place. A 40 mm is on a platform which rotates 360 degrees. There are two seats, one on either side, one seat for the pointer and one for the trainer. The pointer directs the vertical and the trainer the horizontal position of the barrel. The shell feeder stands on the platform and inserts the shell clips. Another individual stands adjacent to the platform and hands the shell clips to the feeder.

When we heard the plane the 40 mm barrel was pointed to the rear of the boat. I yelled to the gunners to fire when ready, whereupon the 40 mm crew started training the gun towards the plane, and they started firing. The 40 mm fired two shells as it was swinging around with the third shell making a direct hit and the plane exploded and hit the water and sunk. The only things left of the plane and floating on the water was one of the pilot's boots and the map he apparently had been holding on his lap. I watched the plane as it came in and it was so close I could plainly see the pilot's face. We all immediately started engines and 'moved out because there might be other Japanese planes in the area. PT 522 picked up the pilot's boot and map and turned them over to U.S. Navy Intelligence when we returned to the tender ship. The map showed the base where the plane had originated, which was helpful to our air force.

Shortly after the incident our air cover appeared and escorted us back to the Ormoc Bay area.

On another night patrol along the west coast of Leyte Island, the PT 522 was made division command of a two-boat division. It was a pitch black night. As usual our quartermaster Dick Russell was on duty in the lower cockpit observing the radar screen for the evening and for maintaining our position in our patrol area.

On this particular patrol, a well known New York war correspondent was a passenger riding on PT 522 and standing on deck behind the cockpit.

During patrol from the cockpit the executive officer handles the wheel and throttles and the boat captain not only gives orders to the executive officer but talks with the quartermaster as to radar information, and also holds two radio microphones, one for giving orders to the companion PT boat, and the second one for giving orders to the PT 522 crew.

In combat, with the two-boat divisions, it is imperative the second boat maintain close position behind the lead boat, so that they do not become separated and might fire upon one another in the confusion with the enemy craft. Thus the reason for the radio contact is to urge close position, and to give firing orders.

Suddenly quartermaster Russell advised me there were a number of pips on the radar moving towards the beach. It appeared that there were five smaller craft surrounded by three larger craft. They were proceeding at a slow speed.

I advised both boat crews of the approaching enemy group.

We closed towards the enemy at slow speed, and when the group was distinguishable by eye, I gave orders to speed up and make the attack run. I then gave orders to the gunners to pick a target and open fire when ready.

Our attack run was parallel to the enemy craft path, so we brought into play the broadside fire power from both our PT boats. We had surprised the enemy and our tracers were right on target as we proceeded along the enemy column. As we opened up our fire and our shells were striking many of the craft, the enemy craft opened fire towards our two boats, but the enemy shells were passing overhead, so that some of our tracers started raising above the enemy craft. I kept radioing the gunners on both boats to lower their aim into the craft, which they did, and again they were on target. The reason for high aim when being fired upon and close overhead, the gunners sometimes will inadvertently duck down which raises the gun barrel, but upon being reminded to lower the barrels and into the enemy craft, they did so.

During the first attack run, three of the smaller craft and one of the larger craft burst into flames and started sinking. In the light from the flames we could distinguish that the smaller craft were personnel and

supply barges, and the three larger craft were gunboats, very similar in size to our PT boats and had good speed.

After we completed our first attack run, we quickly circled around and made a second attack run. I chose to primarily concentrate on the two larger gun boats. The enemy gun boats apparently had somewhat comparable speed to our boats, and then speeded up and attempted to escape. In the next few minutes we chased them and exchanged fire whereupon the two enemy gun boats decided to separate and go different directions. My decision was to concentrate on the one boat, which we did, and there was additional fire exchanged, but the superior fire power and speed of our two boats resulted in the enemy gun boat exploding and it burned and sunk. Our radar enabled us to know where the enemy was located, but the Japanese obviously did not have radar and did not know our location so we could catch them and continue our attack.

The reason for our two boats sticking together at all times during combat being because of the danger of attacking one another had we separated and each attempted to take one of the enemy gun boats, it being difficult to distinguish one another because of the speed of the enemy gunboats and possible confusion.

It was concluded that we had tangled with three Japanese PT boats, primarily because of their speed and firepower and the fact that they were protecting the personnel and supply barges. It was clear that the Japanese did not have radar so that we could continue contact with the enemy during the engagement. From all we thereafter learned our incident was the only one involving what seemed to be Japanese PT boats.

We did not always contact the enemy, so our patrols were then routine, but our presence deterred enemy reinforcements.

Up until this time, because of enemy control of the northern passage around the island of Leyte, all of the PT boats had to use the southern route around Leyte in order to reach our patrol areas along the western coast of Leyte. The northern route was much more restricted in that it involved a small bay at Ormoc and then a more narrow channel and river which would make the boats more vulnerable because there might be insufficient room to maneuver if attacked.

The first trip had to be a daylight run in order to clearly see the proper route and ascertain any obstructions.

On a day where the forecast was for rain and low clouds, and might discourage enemy air activity, the squadron commander assigned a number of boats, including PT 522, to proceed through Ormoc Bay and the river and channels to the west coast of Leyte. At dawn, we proceeded into Ormoc Bay. There was a drizzle and very low clouds a few hundred feet above the water. All boats were on alert with guns at the ready.

Suddenly, a number of Japanese planes broke through the clouds with their guns chattering and exploding bombs. All boats were ordered to keep moving so that we would not be stationary targets. All PT boat guns put up a wall of anti-aircraft fire. The planes were so close we could see the pilots' faces. I ordered our gunners to fire at will. The PT 522 40mm gun crew picked out one Japanese plane and made a direct hit and the plane exploded. Our gunners picked out another plane and opened up and another PT boat close by also commenced firing at the same plane, whereupon the plane plunged straight into the water and sank, which was a joint effort by PT 522 and the other boat. Some of the other PT boats were also successfully hitting and destroying other planes. Then suddenly the Japanese attack

stopped and those not destroyed left the scene. We were then ordered to return to our tender ship area in the Leyte Gulf.

In leaving Ormoc Bay we saw the PT 524 being towed by another boat and we could see it had been hit by a near miss bomb.

Our crew checked the PT 522 boat for any hits, but fortunately we had escaped any damages and crew injuries.

PT 522 returned to our tender ship for gas, food and supplies and ammunition. We were standing on deck as they brought in PT 524, which was the worst sight I had ever seen, and one I shall never be able to forget.

PT 524, PT 522 and PT 523 had been aboard the tanker which carried us from New York to New Guinea, so we were well acquainted. In fact, Ensign Strawn Taylor had been on the PT 522 for a time and then was assigned to the PT 524.

As they tied up PT 524 to the tender, it appeared there had been only one survivor, the Captain. Strawn Taylor appeared to be dead at first, but was later moved and was still alive, but his body riddled by fragments. The Captain lost 3 fingers on his left hand as he held the throttles. The pointer and trainer on the 40mm gun were sitting in their seats, with both heads missing. All other crew members were also dead, both above and below decks. The hull had holes throughout. What had happened was a near miss by a bomb which contained metal scraps, so when it hit the water, the fragments sprayed nearly across the length of the boat. Many areas of the PT 524 were soaked with blood, which smell became almost impossible to eliminate as they later repaired it to be again placed in action. My PT 522 executive, Art Hanes, was then placed in command of PT 524.

#### BATTLE OF LEYTE GULF - TURNING POINT

~~A meeting of all PT Boat Officers of the 44 boats and squadrons was~~  
called for one of the tender ships. It was announced that the U.S. had broken the Japanese code and that they had organized an imminent three-prong attack against the U.S. Leyte invasion. The attack would involve virtually all of the remaining Japanese major ships.

A major Japanese fleet was to approach from the southwest and pass through Surigao Strait at the south end of Leyte Island and proceed northerly to Leyte Gulf where the U.S. 7th Fleet and the U.S. invasion fleet was located.

Another Japanese fleet was to approach from the west above Leyte, with a third fleet from the north proceeding to the south.

The Japanese knew that this would probably be their last opportunity for victory as the war had not recently been going well for them.

It was well that the U.S. had broken the Japanese code so that the U.S. could plan its defense as the Japanese plan had been well conceived. The Japanese westerly and northerly fleets were planned as diversionary forces to mislead the U.S. and so the Japanese main force would come from the south and surprise the U.S. 7th Fleet and invasion forces located in the Leyte Gulf.

The function of the PT Boats was to serve as lookout for the major Japanese fleet approaching from the southwest.

There were forty-two (42) PT Boats involved. All boats were divided into two (2) boat divisions. Each two boat division was assigned a zone on the easterly side of the Surigao Strait. The zones were each separated by about a mile, so that the PT Boats would not become involved with one another.

The primary function of the PT Boats was to be on the lookout for the  
first Japanese ships, and to then radio the U.S. 7th Fleet as to the time,  
together with the estimated speed of the ships, as well as the number and  
types of ships.

The secondary function of the PT Boats was to attack the Japanese  
ships and release all torpedoes. About one-half of the boats had two  
torpedoes, and the other one-half of the boats had four torpedoes, so there  
would be some one hundred twenty-six torpedoes released from the PT  
Boats.

It was a pitch black night so that visual observation was extremely  
limited. Our PT Boats each had excellent radar. Radar screens would show  
a "pip" for each enemy ship. One could also tell the approximate size of the  
ship by the size of the "pip."

When the Japanese fleet reached the entrance of Surigao Strait, the  
first PT Boat division radioed the time and speed. Then, as the many  
Japanese ships entered the strait, the first PT Boat division kept radioing as  
to the number and approximate sizes. Thus the U.S. 7th Fleet then  
proceeded to get into battle position.

When the PT Boats commenced making their torpedo runs, all hell  
broke loose when the Japanese big guns commenced firing. Also, some of  
the big ships turned on their spotlights in attempting to light up PT boats so  
they could better hit them. Then, most of the PT boats used their smoke  
tanks in order to screen themselves and make themselves more difficult to  
hit. If shells exploded close to the boat, a single puff of smoke could be  
released, the boat could turn sharply left or right, whereupon the shells



would zero in on the smoke puff and allow the PT boat to escape by change of direction.

Most of the boats were able to release torpedoes on the first attack, so thereafter it was a matter of evading the enemy shells. The PT boats were not to attack after firing torpedoes because the PT boat small guns did not have long range and also could do little damage to the Japanese battle ships, cruisers and destroyers. Because of the blackness of night and the size of the ships and their armor plate, the PT boats could not tell the effectiveness of their torpedoes upon the Japanese ships.

In the meantime, the U.S. 7th Fleet moved into position. The U.S. Fleet was proceeding broadside across the entrance of Leyte Gulf, which allowed the U.S. ships to bring its maximum fire power to bear upon the enemy.

When the Japanese approached the entrance to Leyte Gulf, the U.S. Fleet effectively blocked the entrance, so the Japanese ships had to make 180 degree turns, which meant when the Japanese ships were turning they exposed their broadside, their biggest target. This battle situation was called "crossing the T" in U.S. Navy terms and probably the most ideal big ship battle result. As a consequence, as the Japanese ships turned and reversed their path, the U.S. Fleet damaged and destroyed so many of the Japanese ships that the Japanese Navy lost its effectiveness and it was the beginning of the end for Japan. I would guess it was also the major psychological blow to the Japanese leaders, because they had assembled their remaining fleet for what they expected to be a crippling defeat for the U.S.

While we were in Leyte there was notice to us that a monsoon storm was approaching. Our Squadron 36 boats were ordered to anchor in this smaller bay off the gulf. Our boat, PT 522, dropped two anchors, one off the bow and the second anchor off the stern. The boats scattered so hopefully they wouldn't crash into one another. The winds started building up and rain was coming down in sheets. I made up a schedule of duty, in 30 minute intervals, for each of the two anchors. The assignment was for each man to tie himself to a cleat on the deck with rope, and to lie next to the anchor rope and to hold it with his hand or hands so as to attempt to ascertain whether the anchor and/or the anchor rope was slipping. I took my regular turn on the bow. I had never seen winds of that force or rains of that magnitude. During the daylight it was impossible to see more than three or four feet, and at night, of course, it was even more difficult to see anything. The wind took my breath away and I had to lay my head flat on the deck and attempt to protect my face with my arms and the hood of my rubber jacket. We also had rubber overalls under the jacket. The winds continued from early evening until the next morning about dawn. During my watch turn, the anchor rope remained taut and I could not feel that the anchor was slipping to any degree. When dawn broke, the rain and winds had let up. A crew member woke me up and I went on deck. The PT 522 and another boat had been carried by the winds and water up on the sand beach some two hundred to two hundred fifty feet from the edge of the water. We had not felt a thing and had had no clue the boat had moved from its anchorage. It was unbelievable. Our boats weighed some fifty-five tons.

We radioed our plight to our Squadron 36 Commander and his Executive Officer, who lived aboard our tender ship. They contacted the Seabees, which was the construction arm of the U.S. Navy, who worked on

U.S. Navy land installations. They put two or three heavy earth moving machines on metal barges and towed them some distance from their base to our location. The earth movers then dug channels from the water to each of the two boats.

The channels were dug deep enough so that when it was high tide, the water reached the boats so they then floated and a caterpillar then towed them into the bay where we were then able to start our engines and were able to get under way under our own power. However our three propellers and three shafts were bent to some degree and had to be replaced.

Shortly thereafter, we were ordered to participate in the invasion of Luzon, the northernmost province in the Philippines.

On our trip to Luzon we passed off shore of Manila and stopped briefly at the island of Corregidor in Manila Bay. Corregidor was the fortified protectorate for the City of Manila.

Corregidor was where General MacArthur and his family were hiding from the Japanese when they took over that area of the Philippines at the beginning of the Japanese invasion.

Commander Bulkley was the PT boat Captain, with his crew, who took General MacArthur and his family from Corregidor to Australia to escape the Japanese.

I became acquainted with Admiral Bulkley and his wife over the years when LeNore and I attended the PT Boat Reunions in several cities throughout the United States. Bulkley was quite regular in his attendance until he passed away in 1996.

When we arrived in Luzon we saw little action as the Japanese had withdrawn or were in hiding. We did make some patrols to attempt to locate Japanese forces. On one patrol we were to round the northernmost

point of Luzon, and ran into a monsoon storm. The waves were so huge they were engulfing our boats, so we turned back, afraid the boats would capsize and lose lives. It was nip and tuck until we returned back around the point of land and out of the force of the wind. Even after we turned the boat around each of the huge waves completely covered the boat so those of us topside lashed ourselves to the boat by rope.

In Luzon when on a patrol, we had a close call with a Japanese plane. It was at sunrise, the bright sun just above the horizon, when suddenly we heard the engine noise, and the plane came at us directly out of the sun. Fortunately for us the pilot had misjudged the angle to hit us. The plane was so close to the water surface and to the boat we could see the pilot's face clearly.

While in the Luzon invasion, we still worked with fighter planes who gave us air cover during daytime hours. On the radio we invited a pilot to make a patrol on our boat so he would be more familiar with our PT boats and our routine. The pilot asked me to make a patrol with him in his plane, which I accepted.

The Air Corps people laid down corrugated steel on the sand beaches for landing and take off strips.

The patrol I made was in a Night Fighter, which was a goodsized two-engine plane. I sat in a bubble above and back of the pilot cockpit. While on the patrol a Japanese Zero was spotted and the pilot dove to intercept but the Zero was too fast and pulled away and escaped the Night Fighter which seemed to be a larger and slower plane than the Zero.

War activities became practically nil. Some Filipinos contacted our PT people and invited our squadron basketball players to play their champion basketball team. Our squadron commander agreed, so he

spread the word among the boats and I decided to go ashore for the game. It would be the first time I would be ashore for many months.

Our squadron had a number of good college and high school basketball players. Ralph Amsden, from Marquette U was a 6'11" center and Ben Stephens was an all Big Ten guard at about 6'3" from Iowa U. I forget other names. When we went ashore we didn't know what to expect. It was an outdoor dirt court under two huge trees so the court was shaded. Our squadron team had a big height advantage so we beat them soundly. It was enjoyable to be on dry land and to do some running and get some exercise. The game seemed to be enjoyed by quite a large group of Filipinos.

Shortly thereafter, PT boats were assigned to the invasion of the Dutch portion of Borneo. The Dutch had developed oil fields in earlier years and had been taken over by the Japanese during the war. The PT boats were to serve as our U.S. Navy function to work with Australian troops who were to go ashore for the invasion to take back the oil fields.

In traveling to Borneo, we had to go from the northernmost province, Luzon, to the southernmost island of the Philippines, and then on south to Borneo.

When we arrived at the northeast part of Borneo at Tarakan, the oil port, we found that the oil fields were inland and could only be reached by our PT boats through narrow rivers and manmade channels. We then realized why the PT boats received the assignment, because the smaller boats would have access to the oil fields.

The Australian observation planes and scouts determined the location of Japanese troops and other oil field personnel. Then our PT command and Australian command coordinated attack plans.

The job of the PT boats was to line up in single file and to move at good speed parallel to the beach and to bombard the shoreline with all of our armament, the boats to keep circling repeatedly so as to put the Japanese under continuous fire. Some of our boats had earlier installed 6-inch rocket racks so that they had the equivalent of 6-inch shells which were more powerful than our regular guns. We also had 40mm guns which were also powerful and very accurate and had been responsible for most of the destruction of Japanese planes and boats and barges. The PT boat attack was during daylight for better accuracy. Of course, we were better targets for the Japanese, but our speed helped avoid damage from the enemy.

The observation planes and scouts then made the decision that the PT boat bombardment had been successful, and we were advised to cease fire. The Australian troops then moved into the beach and attacked the Japanese. We were advised later that the Australians had successfully taken care of Japanese troops and other personnel. However, the Australians were to continue mop up operations for some time to make sure there weren't any dangerous stragglers.

We continued to remain in the oil field area.

In the Borneo area, when on a patrol, we came across a single Japanese soldier floating on a makeshift raft. We took him aboard PT 522 and turned him over to authorities for interrogation.

The Dutch had established a living community for the operators of the oil fields, which was in the jungle. There was a large outdoor swimming pool, basketball court, tennis courts, and other facilities for a self-sufficient community. It appeared everything was in reasonably good condition and undoubtedly being used by the Japanese.

I swam in the pool several times, after the Australians determined the area was cleared of Japanese. Also the Australians wanted a basketball

game, so a PT boat team was organized and a game set up. They allowed me to join the team again, and comprised of the same fellows who played in Luzon. The Australians were much bigger than the Filipinos, and were rough and ready, but they hadn't had the experience and coaching, so the PT boaters won the game comfortably, but not without scratches and bruises to us. These games were greatly appreciated and enjoyed by the participants, as well as the opportunity to be on solid ground after being on the water for a long time.

Before I left the squadron to go home from Borneo, the Squadron Executive, second in command, asked if I would be interested in joining the regular Navy. He told me that he and the Squadron Commander would recommend me for a regular appointment as career Navy. I thought it over, but decided against it. It was my impression that unless one graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy, that a reservist would probably be at a real disadvantage in achieving the higher ranks as time went by. Also, I didn't like the idea of being away from home, again, for extended periods of time.

PT 522 had a great crew of men and took pride in the boat. Beginning with our being outfitted at the Brooklyn Navy yard, New York, N.Y., our Squadron Commander would call boat inspections from time to time. It was easy in the beginning when the boats were new, however, the longer the crew lived on the boat, the more difficult it became. We generally had some fourteen men and two officers, which increased later on when we would train future replacements.

I had learned earlier when I was in Squadron Four, the training squadron in Melville, RI. (close to Newport, RI. ) that there was no substitute for soap and water and elbow grease, rather than painting over the dirt, which some did. Also, on deck, it was important to thoroughly scrape the rust off the metal fittings before painting over the rust. Further, that our guns must be kept cleaned and oiled at all times, and thus ready at all times. Some officers didn't participate in the clean up procedures aboard their boats. I had learned in Squadron Four that if I worked with the men,

shoulder to shoulder, not with a buddy-buddy attitude, but in a business-like way, and personally worked hard with a bucket, soap and brush, that it seemed to provide a good example and motivated the men. And they were not apt to sluff off in my presence, and it showed that I had pride in the boat. In any event, PT 522 won every inspection, and the men took pride in that.

In Borneo, personnel on PT boats 522, 523 and 524 became eligible to return to the U.S. PT 524 personnel had been either killed or wounded, so PT 522 and 523 people were the first to be sent back home as determined by when replacements arrived. Jim Wolf, from Texas, was Captain of the PT 523, and myself, as Captain of PT 522, were the first in the squadron to be sent back because two captain replacements were the first to arrive. Also, Wolf and I had also been the first to leave the U.S. on the tanker from New York, along with PT 524.

Jim Wolf and I were able to catch a DC 3 cargo plane out of Borneo, which had an airstrip for the oil fields. We flew to New Guinea, where we were able to get aboard a troop-cargo ship for Long Beach, California.

When we arrived at the Port of Long Beach we took a cab to the Ambassador Hotel. As we were unloading our gear from the taxi, I felt a tap on my shoulder and I turned around and it was Clark Gable. He asked us if we had just returned from overseas, and where we had been and what branch we were in. We visited for a while until he rejoined his group and entered the hotel.

Jim Wolf and I stayed in the hotel overnight and separated the next day, he to Texas, and I to Grand Forks by train.

After a number of days in Grand Forks and Thief River Falls, my orders sent me to Melville, Rhode Island, to the PT base. Then, after a few days, they ordered me to Great Lakes, Illinois (outside of Chicago) Naval



Center. I went to the Commander's office to inquire about an assignment. The closest Naval Base to Grand Forks was the U.S. Naval Air Station in Minneapolis, Minnesota (Wold-Chamberlain), so I asked if I could be assigned there until I was eligible to be released from the U.S. Navy. Within three or four days I was advised that a U.S. Navy Separation Center had been established at the Minneapolis Navy Air Station to process upper Midwest Navy veterans in their separation from the U.S. Navy. I was assigned as an interviewing officer and left immediately for Minneapolis.

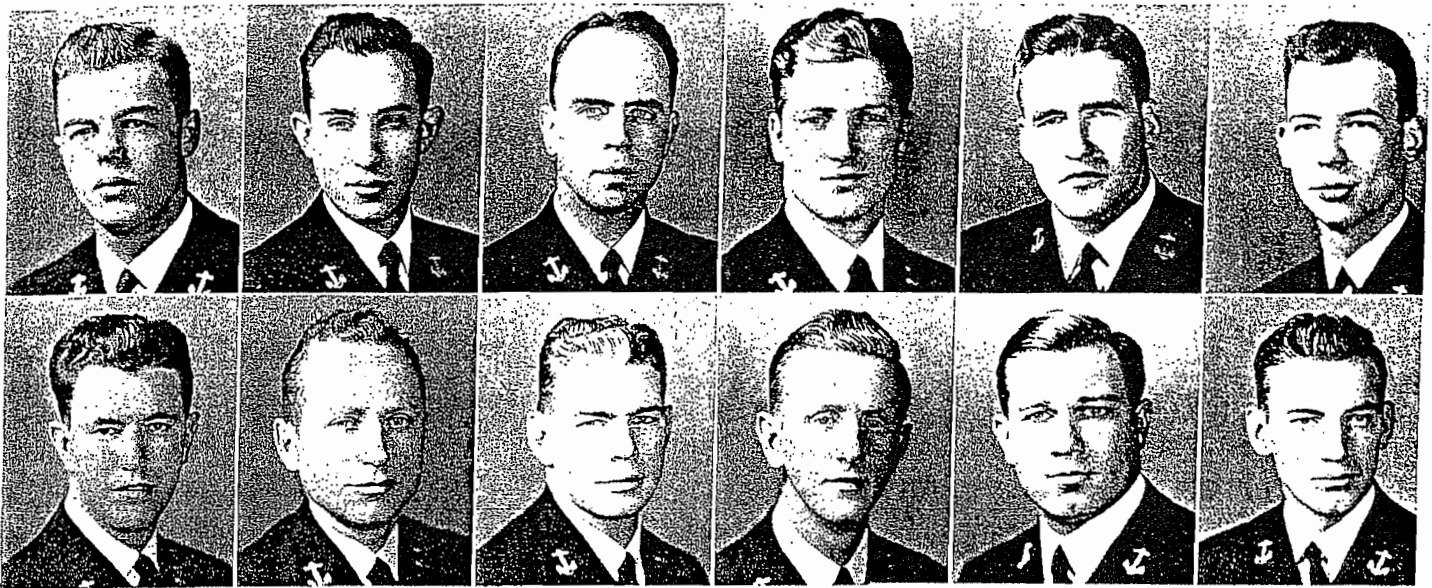
Upon arriving at the U. S. Navy Separation Center I checked into the Bachelor Quarters at the Naval Air Station and served there for several weeks.

I was the second ranking officer at the separation center, so my job was to supervise a number of interviewers who worked with personnel being discharged and with the necessary paperwork.

Lyle Huseby, a North Dakota attorney from Grand Forks and a UND graduate, was the ranking officer at the time, and when he was discharged from the U.S. Navy, I succeeded him and I became the Senior Interviewing officer, and was in charge of the Separation Center until I was discharged in 1946.

After being discharged, I returned to Grand Forks. For some time I had been thinking about future employment or future education. I leaned towards going to UND Law School and LeNore agreed, whereupon I enrolled at UND Law School and graduated in 1948.

-THE END-



"1942"

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY  
MIDSHIPMEN'S  
SCHOOL  
U. S. NAVY

Top Row —

Peter E. Broadbent  
318 Jackson Pl.  
Elkhart, Ind.  
Indiana U., '42  
*Production*

Arthur R. Broussard  
325 N. State St.  
Abbeville, La.  
Louisiana State U., '40  
*Teacher*

Robert E. Bryson  
101 N. Perry St.  
Hagerstown, Ind.  
Miami U., '37  
*Investigation Work*

Charles A. Burke  
5206 C St.  
Philadelphia, Pa.  
St. Francis College, '42  
*Time Clerk*

James G. Caldis  
118 E. Third St.  
Thief River Falls, Minn.  
U. of North Dakota, '42  
*Student*

Dean J. Call  
574 Monroe  
Gary, Ind.  
Indiana U., '42  
*Student*

Bottom Row —

Charles J. Callahan  
114 Parker Rd.  
Elizabeth, N. J.  
LaSalle, '39  
*Salesman*

Walter R. Campbell, Jr.  
1256 N. Mariposa Ave.  
Hollywood, Calif.  
Loyola U., '42  
*Optometrist*

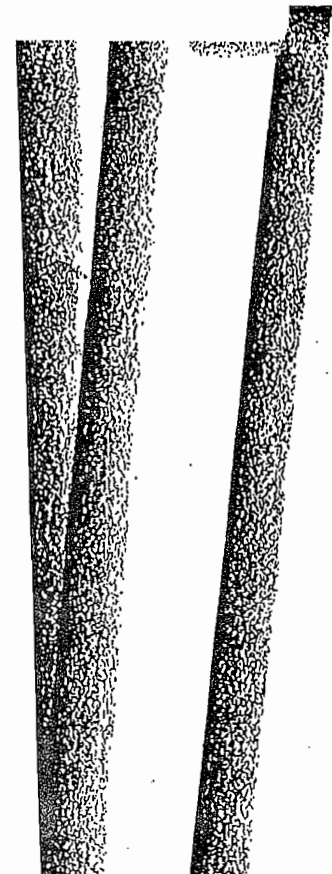
John A. Casebier, Jr.  
Fort Stockton, Texas  
Sul Ross State College, '42  
*Student*

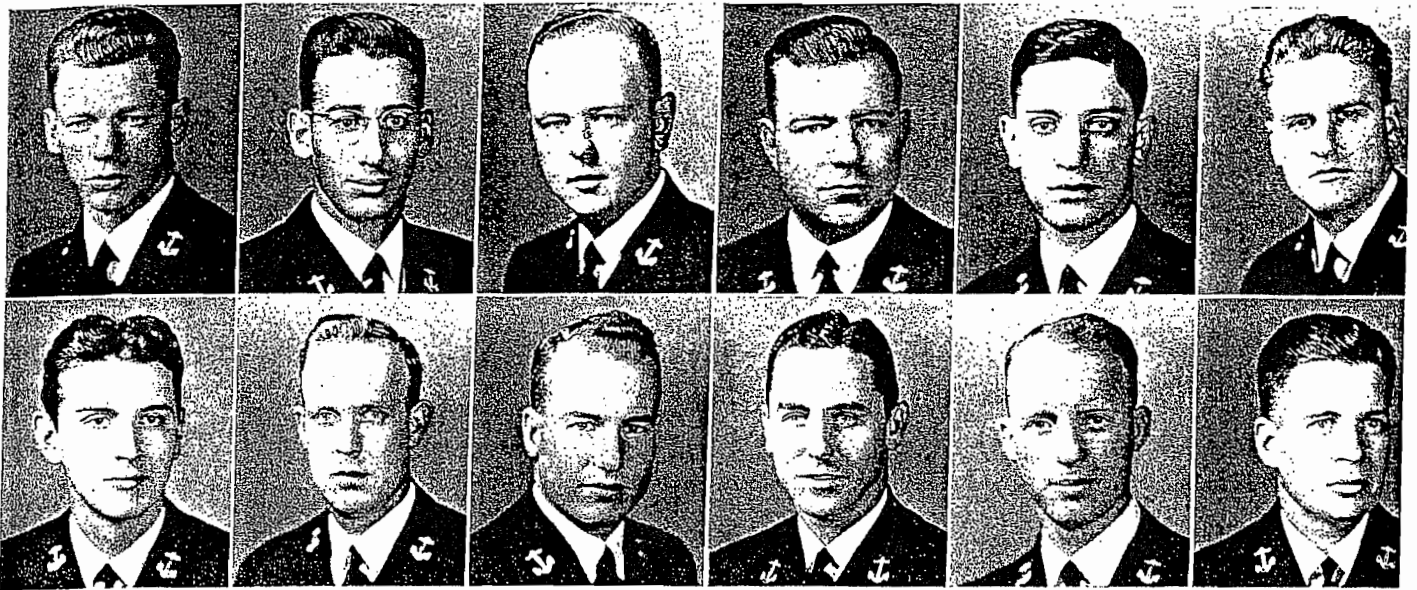
John J. Casey  
52 Prospect Dr.  
Yonkers, N. Y.  
Georgetown U., '42  
*Student*

Billie F. Caver  
Kilgore, Texas  
Texas College of Mines, '42  
*Student*

Boyd G. Clark  
Linn Creek, Mo.  
Central Mo. State Teachers, '42  
*N.Y.A. Supervisor*

ROBERT BRYSON—ROOMMATE &  
FRIEND  
CHARLES CALLAHAN—FRIEND





"1942"

JIM EIDE-GOOD FRIEND &  
TEAMMATE  
AT UNIVERSITY OF NORTH  
DAKOTA

*Top Row —*

William G. Diver  
2920 Burlington Ave.  
St. Petersburg, Fla.  
Lawrence, '42  
*Student*

Jean Domingue  
220 Elizabeth Ave.  
Lafayette, La.  
S.W. Louisiana Inst., '38  
*Income Tax Service*

D. L. Donnell, Jr.  
Oak Ridge, N. C.  
U. of North Carolina, '42  
*Civil Engineer*

Elmer L. Douglas  
115 S. Kline St.  
Aberdeen, S. D.  
E. Kentucky State, '38  
*Coach-Teacher*

Paul R. Dubinsky  
1202 W. Gladys Ave.  
Chicago, Ill.  
Central "Y" College, '42  
*Post Office Department*

Stanley J. Ehlenbeck  
3308 N. Cramer St.  
Milwaukee, Wisc.  
U. of Wisconsin, '40  
*Student*

*Bottom Row —*

Robert G. Ehmer  
8916 Skokie Blvd.  
Skokie, Ill.  
Purdue, '42  
*Civil Engineer*

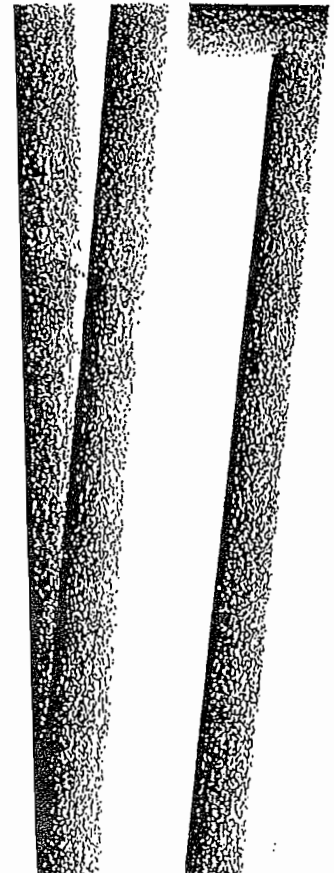
Jim R. Eide  
Minot, N. D.  
U. of North Dakota, '42  
*Shipbuilding*

Walter A. Elliott  
Fort Benton, Mont.  
Montana State U., '41  
*Student*

Elbert R. Emery  
14 Timber Lane  
Northbrook, Ill.  
Lake Forest, '36  
*Bank Teller*

Charles J. Erasmus  
308 N. Foothill Rd.  
Beverly Hills, Calif.  
U.C.L.A., '42  
*Student*

Arthur F. Evans, Jr.  
221 Stone St.  
Waynesboro, Ga.  
Emory U., '42  
*Student*





Dale Hanson  
Ness City, Kans.  
Emporia State Teachers, '42  
Teacher

Harland G. Hanson  
Mound, Minn.  
U. of Minnesota, '40  
Biologist

"1942"

GORDON HANSON—GOOD FRIEND WITH  
HIS WIFE, MERMON. HOUSEMATES  
WITH LeNORE & GORDON CALDIS



Morgan L. Harris  
1601 Drury Lane  
Oklahoma City, Okla.  
Baylor U., '41  
Salesman

Charles A. Hastings  
1946 Bever Ave., S.E.  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa  
U. of Iowa, '36  
Attorney



Merwyn R. Hatch, Jr.  
1709 Clifton Ave.  
Columbus, Ohio  
Vanderbilt, '40  
Importer

Richard K. Haxton  
605 Main St.  
Greenville, Miss.  
U. of Mississippi, '41  
Accountant



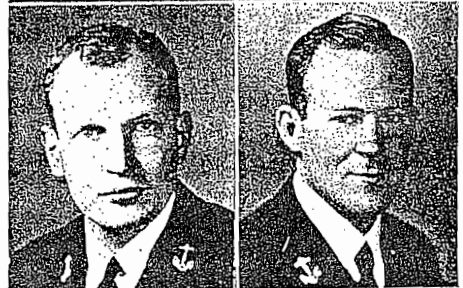
Dean A. Hedberg  
1189 Hague Ave.  
St. Paul, Minn.  
U. of Minnesota, '41  
Business

Warren H. Henderson  
901 Eagle Ave.  
New York, N. Y.  
City College of N. Y., '42  
Sales Department



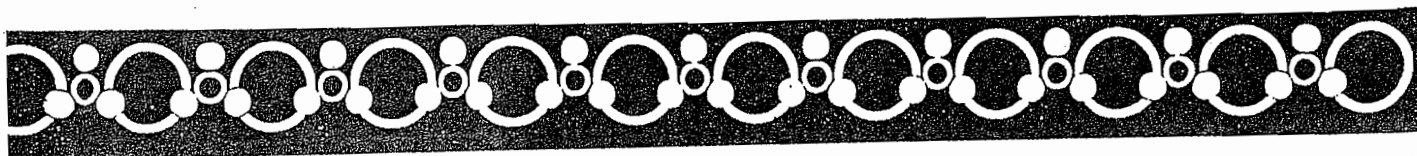
Robert T. Henry, Jr.  
228 Mountwell Ave.  
Haddonfield, N. J.  
Catawba College, '41  
Medical Student

Eugene T. Hoch  
702 S. Prospect St.  
Marion, Ohio  
Miami U., '42  
Student



Walter L. Hodde  
R. F. D. 9, Box 351  
Brenham, Texas  
U. of Texas, '39  
Wool Technologist

William R. Hollomon  
International House  
Berkeley, Calif.  
U. of California, '41  
U. S. Park Ranger



# Tenth Company

**T**HIS is it, men — the big event, and the last time we'll all be together under the banner of the "Tenth."

The four months whizzed by in a hurry, didn't they? Remember the first day we met — some of us got a glimpse of one another on the subway ride to Columbia, and immediately formed those favorable first impressions. "But who was that big, tall, sandy-haired fellow who walked like a Texas cowpuncher?"

"From Idaho, you say — from Weiser?"

"Oh sure, he's our Company Commander now — Jack Fagerstedt, and a rougher, tougher sailor you never met."

Remember when we first lined us as Apprentice Seamen in Livingston Hall? We certainly were a scared bunch of cookies, and little dreamed that one day we'd be actually shaking hands with the Captain and accepting commissions. Then those first few indoctrination days, the sore arms, the splitting headaches, shots, books, bell bottoms, boats and guns, more shots, orders, executive, sore feet, uniform measurements, still more shots. We shivered every time we saw a needle!

Came the "Bilge." What a sigh of relief we breathed when the "axe" failed to get us. How

proud we felt being sworn in as Midshipmen. That seemed like an end in itself but it was only a beginning.

Reams could be written about that first weekend liberty in those new, natty dress blues, and much could be handed down to posterity about the Saturday nights following. Certainly, we were on "trees" sometime or other, but those weekends in Pelham, Bronxville and Orange made up for the period of restriction. Even on fateful 2400 nights the men of the Tenth proved themselves socially.

None of us relished too much the idea of moving to the Prairie State, but we accepted our fate with something akin to alacrity; now, it seems, the decks of the ancient Battlewagon are still creaking and echoing the sounds of joyous holiday merriment. White Christmas or no, however, the middle of January found us mighty happy to return to the good ship John Jay, although we had actually come to appreciate the renovated "Illinois," with her glorious past.

The weeks rushed by, and here we are at the close of our Midshipman days — our Tenth company will soon be a ghost outfit, and we will take our places, small though they may be, in the vast struggle in which our Nation is engaged.

J. M. LAMB



*Left to Right:*

R. L. BRACKENBURY  
*1st. Platoon*

H. G. HANSON  
*Sub Commander*

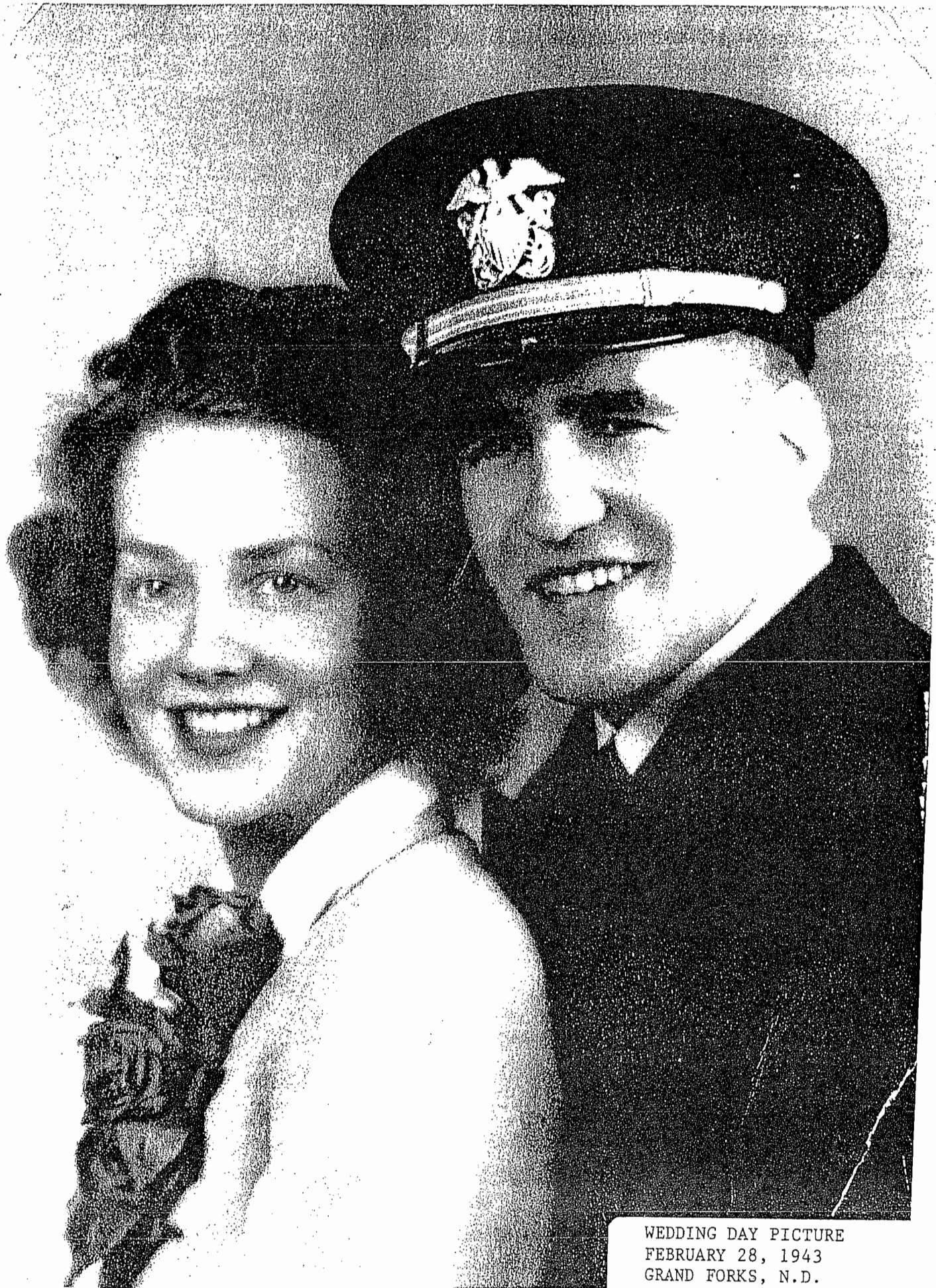
J. A. FAGERSTEDT  
*Commander*

R. S. EHMER  
*2nd. Platoon*

*Absent from picture:*

J. F. KOTCHIAN  
*Chief Petty Officer*





WEDDING DAY PICTURE  
FEBRUARY 28, 1943  
GRAND FORKS, N.D.

LANORE AND GORDON CALDICOTT

*1. Highest*

Officer had an an-  
ed with those words  
miss hearing what

student officers in  
at 23, for classroom  
announcement once

s planning to spend  
avigation!" Al Jor-  
n gunnery business

"but we'll soon find

railed over to Hut  
discovered, meant  
at the image of a  
een.

ist how it was done,

rained his machine  
enemy" to appear.

of clouds, a Jap  
sharp bank. Bob  
rise, a bell started

the instructor cau-

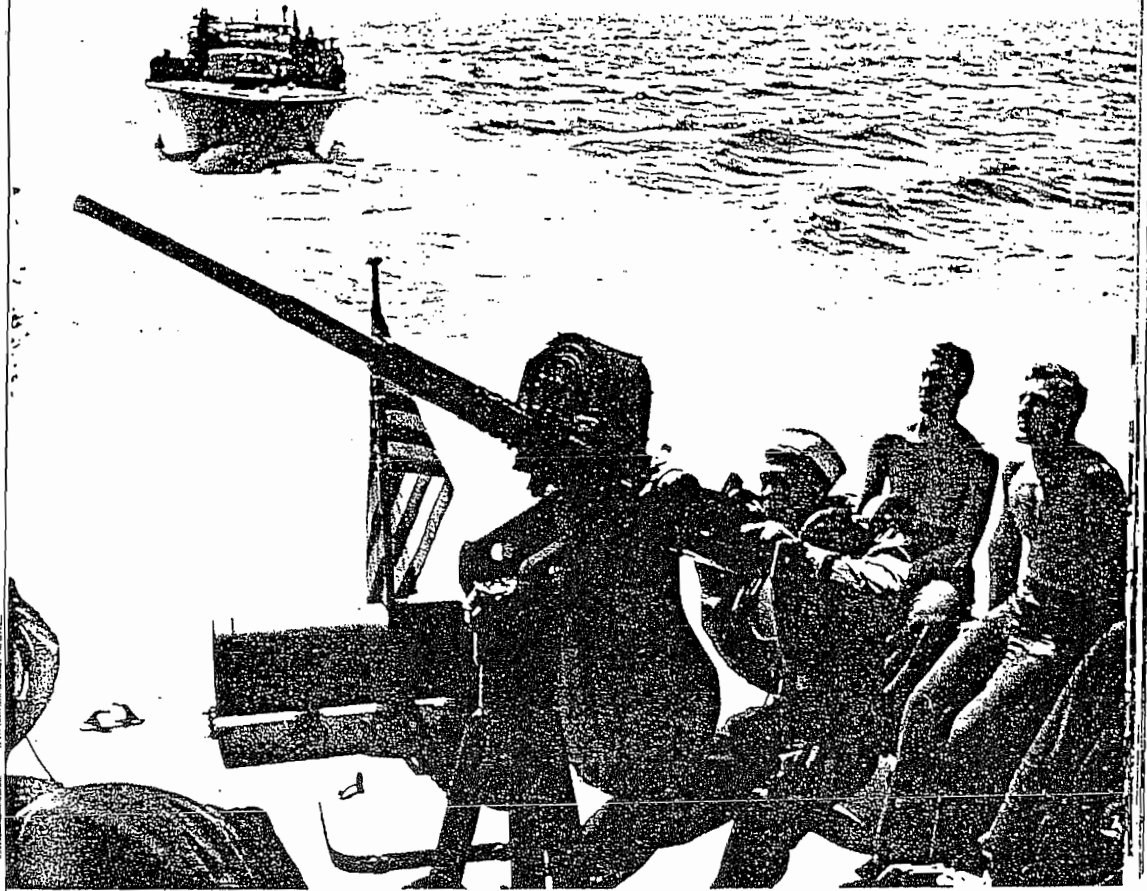


Photo by Carroll Van Arle

"LEAD THAT TARGET!" A gunner's mate tries his hand  
at the deadly Oerlikon antiaircraft gun.

TRAINING CRUISE OFF  
NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

"1943"

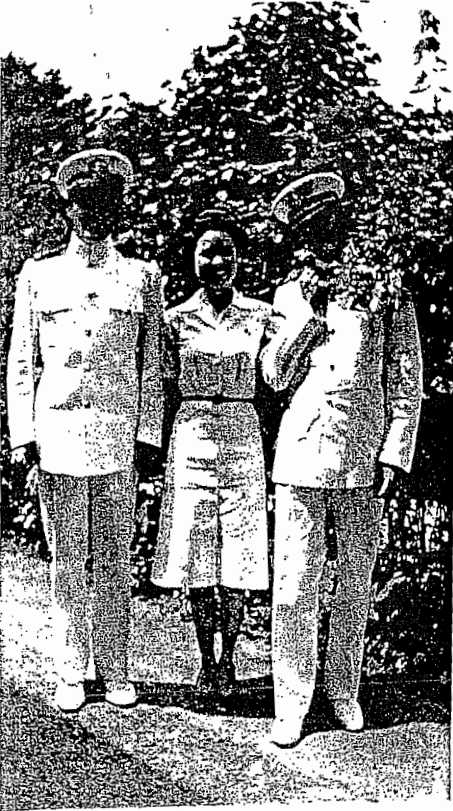
Books

6 inches wide by  
8 3/4 inches in length.  
hard cover - light green  
in color. Mosquito  
signia riding a  
torpedo. Another insignia

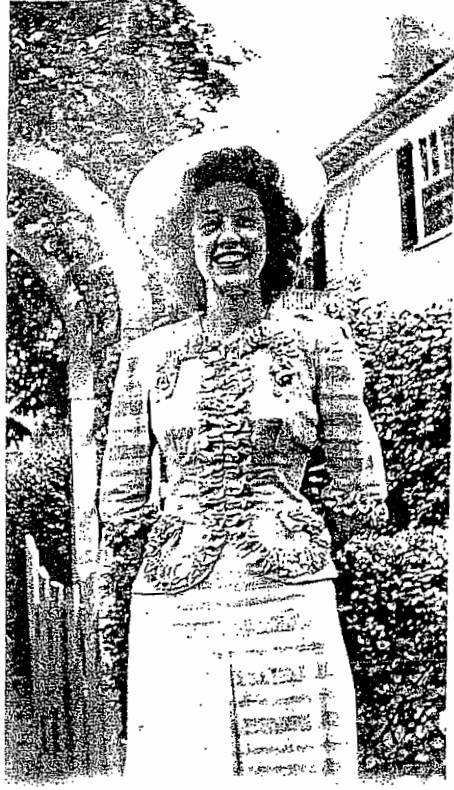
PT Boat

Bob Spearal Wins His Commendation at  
Melville

By Henry B. Lent  
New York - The Macmillan Co  
1943



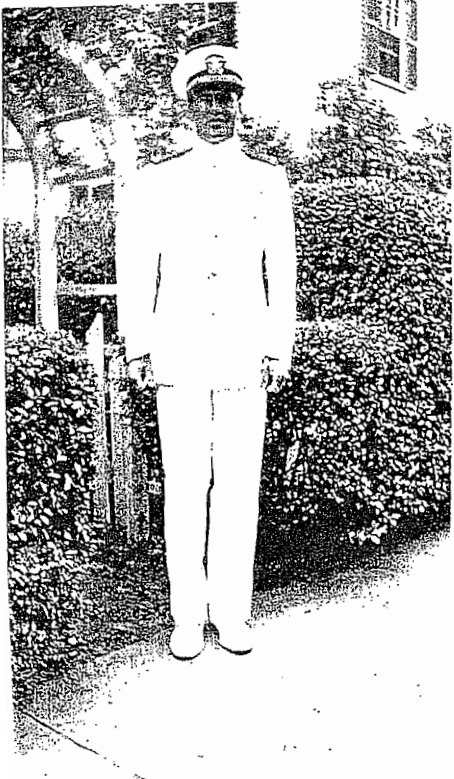
GOOD FRIENDS-  
MERMON HANSON, WITH  
"MY GORDON" AND  
"LeNORE'S GORDON"  
NEWPORT, R.I. "1943"



LeNORE CALDIS  
NEWPORT, R.I. "1943"



LeNORE CALDIS  
BROOKLYN PARK, NEW YORK, NY  
JUST BEFORE GORDON LEFT  
FOR OVERSEAS. "JUNE, 1944"



GORDON CALDIS  
NEWPORT, R.I.  
BEFORE LEAVING FOR  
BROOKLYN NAVY YARD AND  
FOR OVERSEAS. "1943"



LeNORE & GORDON CALDIS  
BROOKLYN PARK, N.Y.  
BEFORE LEAVING FOR OVERSEAS.  
"JUNE, 1944"



LeNORE & GORDON CALDIS  
WEDDING DAY-FEBRUARY 28, 1943  
UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH  
GRAND FORKS, N.D.

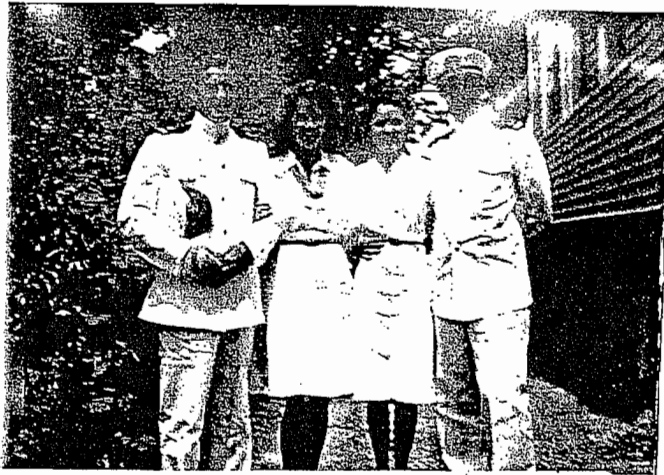


**JAMES GORDON CALDIS, Lt., Ron 4, 36.** Born 3/26/20, Bertha, MN, graduated Thief River Falls, MN, HS, 1938. Graduated Univ. of North Dakota, 1942 (business degree) and from Law School 1948. Enlisted in USN 1942. Attended Columbia Univ., New York Midshipman School from Oct., 1942, graduating Feb., 1943, class of 1,100 out of which 25 volunteers assigned to MTB school, Melville, RI. Completed MTB school Jun., 1943, assigned briefly



James Gordon Caldis

to Ron 17, New Orleans, then assigned Ron 4, Melville, RI, Training Ron as executive officer of PT 317, thereafter its captain. In April, 1944, assigned Ron 36, Brooklyn Navy Yard as captain of PT 522, then overseas June, 1944, to South Pacific. Boats unloaded from tanker Port Moresby, New Guinea. Ron proceeded through Hollandia, operated from Mios Woendi. Several occasions took army scouts into New Guinea who freed allied prisoners whom we removed. PT 522 sustained one shell hit. Served as gunnery officer and designed conversion of several Ron 36 boats to 3 bow 20 millimeter and 1 bow army anti-tank guns. Participated invasion of Leyte, Philippines, Battle of Leyte Gulf with numerous night patrols off west coast of Leyte. As leader of a two-boat division PT 522 engaged and destroyed two of three Japanese PT boats and three of five troop and supply barges. PT 522 also shot down two Japanese planes and shared credit of third plane. Participated in invasion of Luzon, Philippines, and invasion of Dutch Borneo. Returned to US to serve briefly at Melville, RI, Great Lakes Training Center, then served as Senior Interviewing Officer, USN Separation Center, Wold Chamberlain Field, Minneapolis, MN, until discharge as lieutenant (Senior Grade). Live and practice law in Grand Forks, North Dakota, and have served as State's Attorney and City Attorney. Wife, LeNore, and five children, Jack, Coralyn, Bill, Cammy and Lorna.



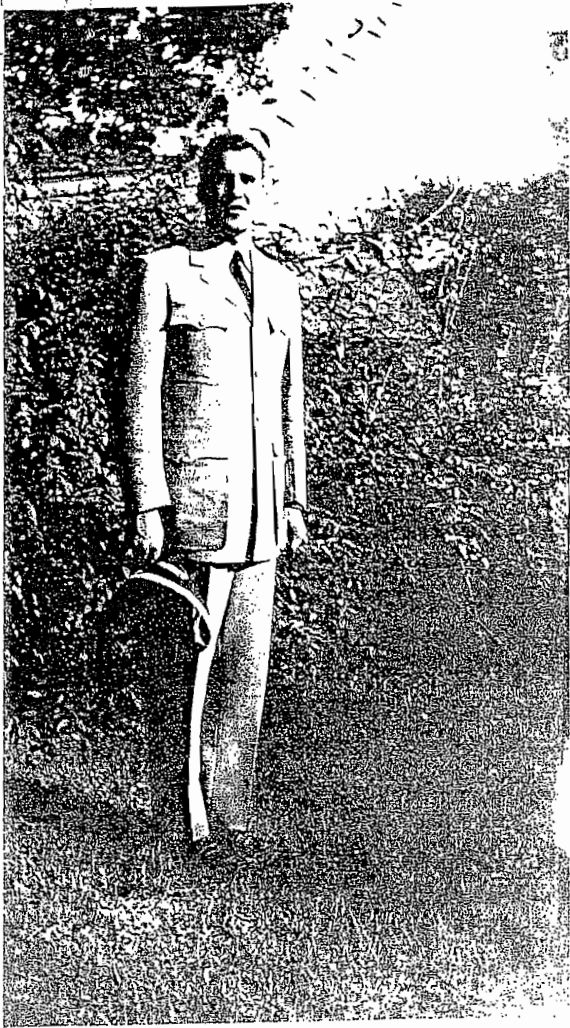
GOOD FRIENDS AT RENTAL BUNGALOW, RURAL NEWPORT, R.I. MERMON & GORDON HANSON LeNORE & GORDON CALDIS "1943"



GORDON CALDIS, OVERSEAS IN THE COCKPIT OF P.T. 522 PHILIPPINES "BATTLE OF LEYTE GULF"



LeNORE & GORDON CALDIS, SON JACK AT BERTHA, MINNESOTA FRONT OF GRANDPARENTS HOME WM. & MARGARET STEINKRAUS RETURNED FROM OVERSEAS. "1946"



GORDON CALDIS  
BROOKLYN PARK, N.Y.  
JUST BEFORE LEAVING  
FOR OVERSEAS.  
"JUNE, 1944"



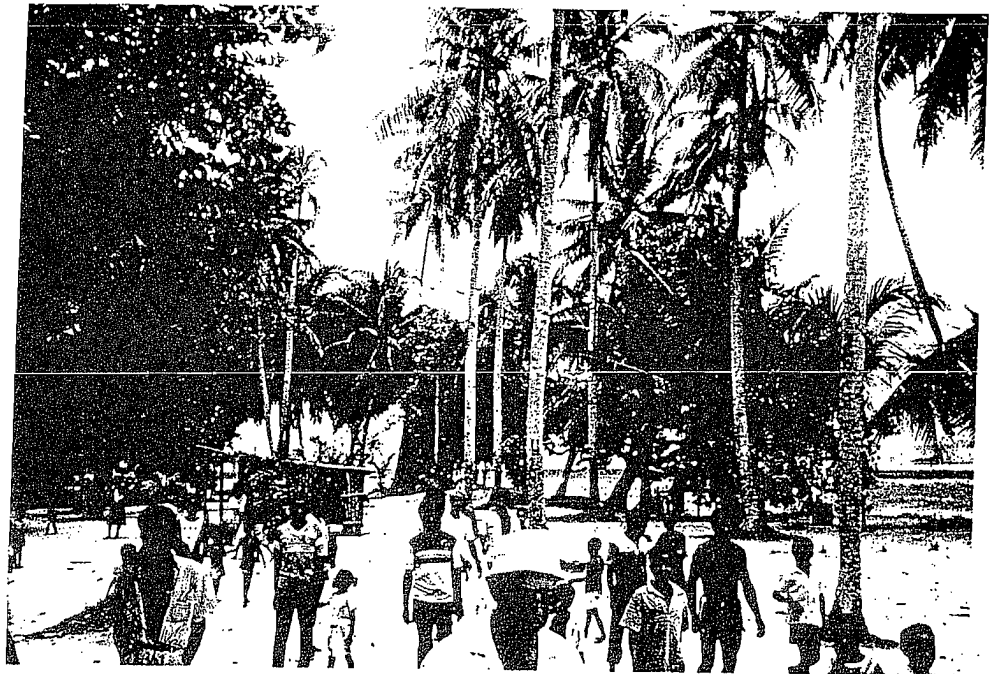
GORDON CALDIS  
NEWPORT, R.I.  
"1943"

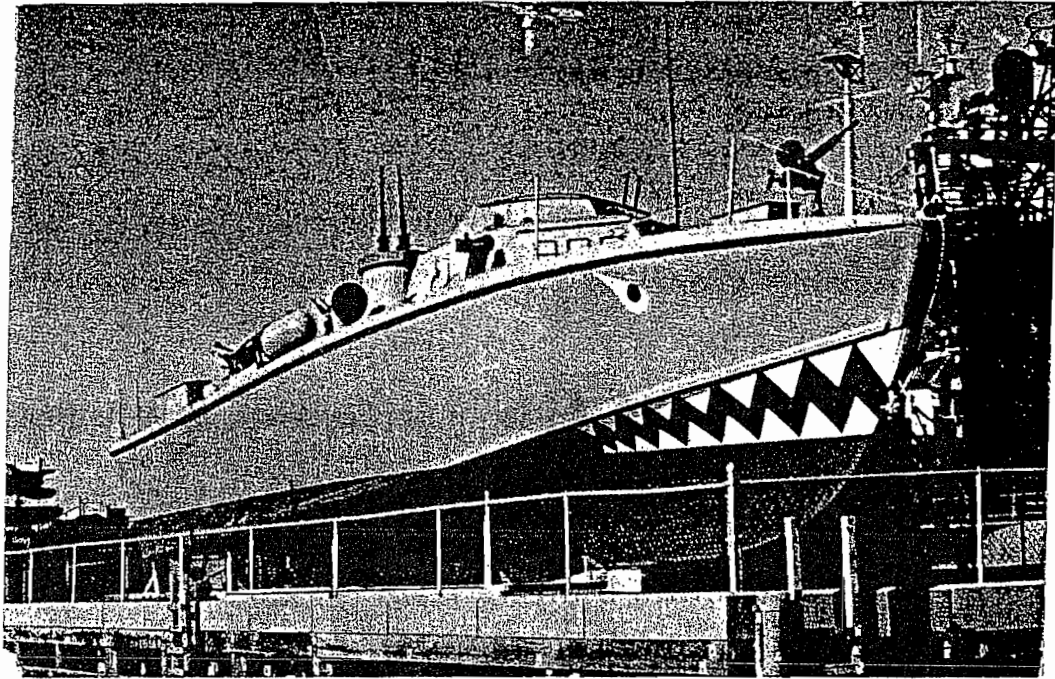


GORDON CALDIS  
BROOKLYN PARK, NEW YORK  
JUST BEFORE LEAVING FOR  
OVERSEAS. " JUNE, 1944"



THE ISLAND OF MIOS WOENDI OFF THE COAST OF NEW GUINEA WHERE P.T. BOATS HAD A BASE. THESE PICTURES WERE TAKEN AFTER THE WAR BY TOM BISSETT WHO SERVED FOR A TIME ON P.T. 522 AS EXECUTIVE OFFICER

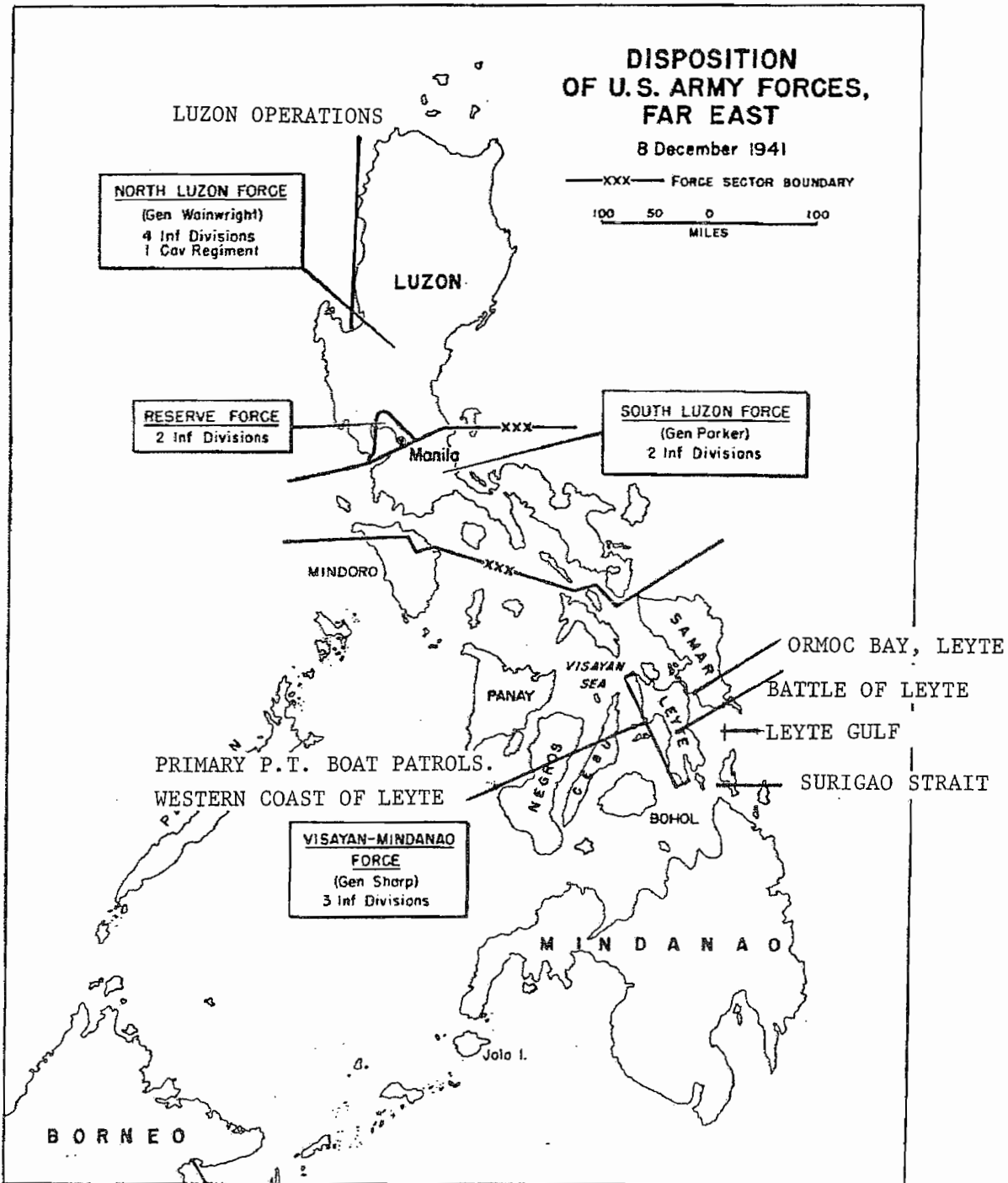




ONE OF THE P.T. BOATS AT  
THE P.T. BOAT MUSEUM  
FALL RIVER, MASSACHUSETTS

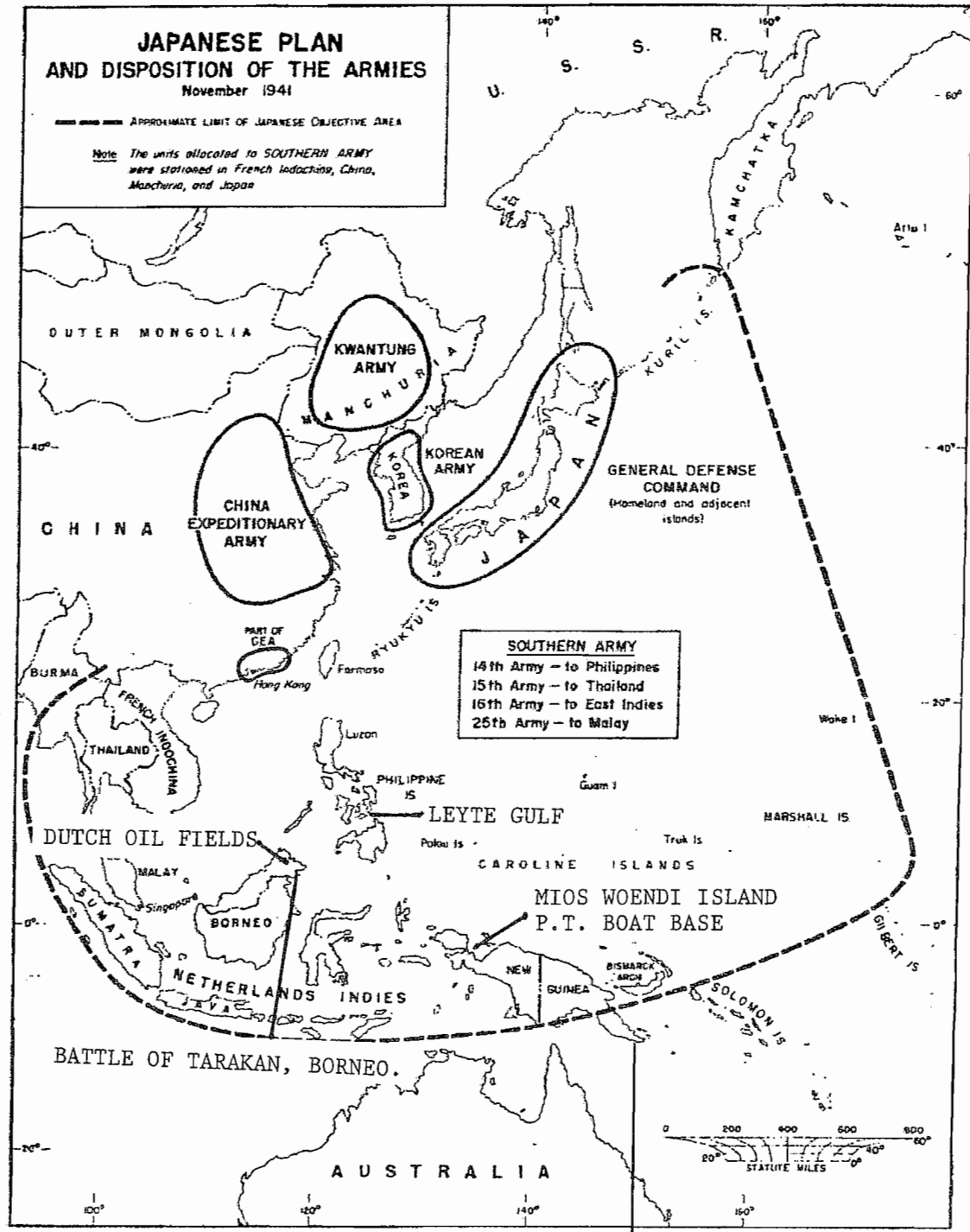


MIOS WOENDI ISLAND P.T. BASE  
OFF-COAST OF NEW GUINEA



MAP 2 TARAKAN, BORNEO-DUTCH OIL  
FIELDS

H. Damon



MAP 1

PORT MORESBY, WHERE P.T. BOATS WERE UNLOADED FROM TANKERS BY HUGE CRANES. EACH BOAT WEIGHED ABOUT SIXTY TONS

**“General Douglas MacArthur Returns” (1880-1964)**  
Commanded allied forces in the Pacific during World War II

During the time the U.S Armed Forces were securing the island of Leyte in the Philippines, P.T Boat Squadron 36, including my PT Boat 522, were present off shore when General Douglas MacArthur returned to the Philippines in 1944. This was to fulfill his famous statement “I shall return”, at the earlier time when MacArthur, wife and son, escaped the Japanese when they occupied the Philippine islands. PT Boat Commander Bulkley had transported MacArthur and family on a P.T. Boat from the Island of Corregidor to Australia in order to avoid capture by the Japanese troops. At the time of his escape, General MacArthur announced “I shall return”.

Our PT Squadron 36 were close off shore Leyte island, observing the general and staff already on shore with members of the press and newsreel cameras. One of our Squadron 36 PT Boats was selected to transport the general. I forget which number boat. At any rate, the general was transported out to the P.T. Boat in a small craft and climbed aboard. The P.T. Boat then proceeded toward shore as close as possible, whereupon he climbed aboard a small personnel landing craft which carried the general to the beach, where he waded ashore through the shallow water onto the dry land; which entire scene was being filmed by newsreel cameras on shore. This was the film which I am told appeared all over the U.S. and the world during the war and thereafter.

Over the years I became acquainted with then admiral Bulkley and his wife at National P.T. Boat reunions held in different cities around the United States. My wife LeNore and I attended a number of the meetings, primarily to get together with my Squadron 36 and P.T. 522 crew personnel and spouses and special friends.



Oct. 01, 2008 War on Terror Transformation News Products Press Resources Images Websites Cont



# 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

## Battle of Leyte Gulf

### Liberation of the Philippines

### October 20, 1944



## 'I Have Returned' Gen. Douglas MacArthur

When Americans stormed ashore at Leyte, it fulfilled a promise made by Gen. Douglas MacArthur made in the dark days following the fall of the Philippines to the Japanese in 1942.

October 20, 1944, was a day of redemption for Army Gen. Douglas MacArthur as he splashed ashore on the Philippine island of Leyte. It was a complete turnaround from the last time he had seen the islands.

The Japanese army had chased MacArthur out of the islands in March 1942. He had barely escaped Corregidor Island via a Navy PT boat. As he left the Philippines, he vowed, "I shall return."

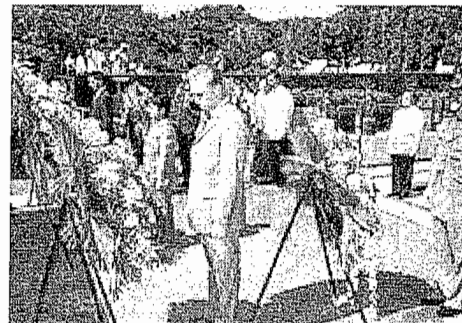
But it wasn't easy. By May of that year, the Japanese controlled everything from Burma to the Aleutians and threatened

fighting in the tropical Hell of Guadalcanal. U.S. Army and Australian forces forced their way through the jungles of New Guinea.

Each month, American might grew, and they took on the Japanese at Tarawa,

Peleliu, Biak, Saipan, Guam and finally America was ready to redeem MacArthur's pledge to the people of the Philippines.

With U.S. Army troops still fighting, MacArthur landed at Red Beach on



LEYTE GULF – The President of the Philippines, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, and the Honorable Francis J. Ricciardone, Jr., U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines, along with dignitaries from the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines participate in



Australia. American forces were fighting a desperate fight on land, sea and air.

Then in quick succession came the Battle of Coral Sea and the astounding U.S. Navy victory at Midway. The U.S. Marines began the long road back

Leyte, and, via radio, he addressed the Philippine people. "I have returned. By the grace of Almighty God our forces stand again on Philippine soil – soil consecrated in the blood of our two peoples. We have come, dedicated and committed, to the task of destroying every vestige of enemy control over your daily lives, and of restoring, upon a

a wreath laying ceremony during the 60th Leyte Gulf Landings Anniversary commemoration at MacArthur Landing Memorial National Park, Palo, Leyte, Philippines Oct. 20, 2004. U.S. Navy photo by Chief Petty Officer John S. Stadelman [Hi-Res](#)

foundation of indestructible, strength, the liberties of your people."

Much fighting remained, but the landing at Leyte began the liberation of a people.

## RELATED LINKS

- [Commemorative Program](#)
- [Leyte Campaign](#)
- [General Douglas MacArthur's speech](#)
- [War in the Pacific](#)
- [Leyte Landing](#)
- [The Battle of Leyte Gulf Timeline](#)

[Site Map](#)

[Privacy & Security Notice](#)

[About DoD](#)

[External Link Disclaimer](#)

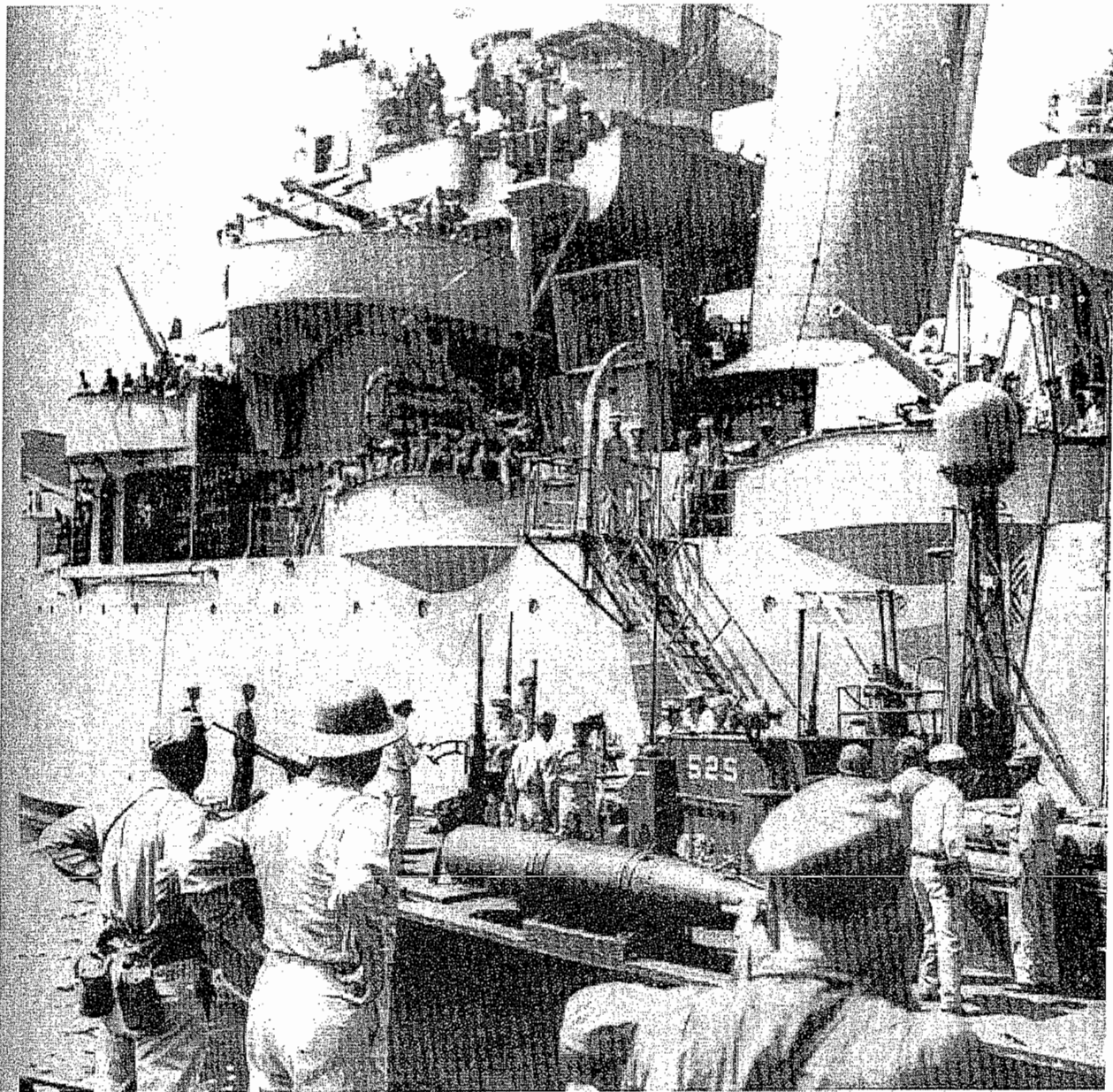
[Web Policy](#)

[About DefenseLINK](#)

[FirstGov.gov](#)




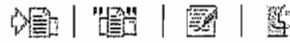
*General Douglas MacArthur aboard PT 525 which took him ashore at Tacloban, Leyte. Lt. General Walter Krueger, Commanding Officer, PT 525, is standing to the right of MacArthur. Courtesy of the United States Navy.*



*PT-525, with General Douglas MacArthur on board, ready to head for Tacloban, Leyte, on October 24, 1944. The boat captain of PT USNR. Courtesy of the PT Boat Museum.*

Total Posts: 136 | Joined: Feb 12, 2007 - 4:00pm | IP Logged

 **George Linck Son**



Posted on: Oct 13, 2007 - 3:10pm

★  
New Member

Wow. Thanks. In that second photo, I believe I see Dad - back almost to the c side of the front of the torpedo. He was that husky, and it looks just like his pr

I'll share this with him sometime after he returns from that national, WWII vet crew will be represented!

Walt (#5 son of the six of us)

# Just Some Photos

Just another WordPress.com weblog

- [Home](#)
- [Catholic Church Photos](#)
- [Philippines Links](#)
- [Photo Sets](#)
- [Thumbnail Pages](#)

## □“I Shall Return□.” MacArthur Landing Memorial - Palo, Leyte, Philippines

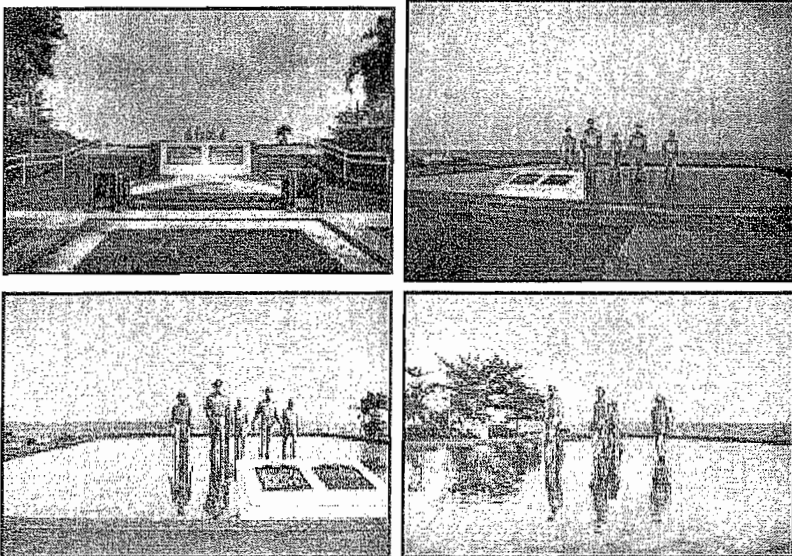
**March 30, 2008**

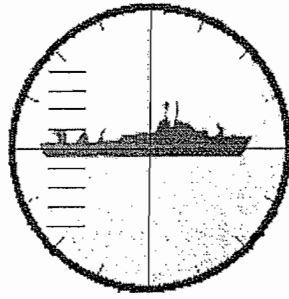
MacArthur Landing Memorial is situated in Red Beach, Palo, Leyte. The monument marks the spot where General Douglas MacArthur landed with the American Liberation Forces in October, 1944 starting the Battle of Leyte.

The Battle of Leyte in the Pacific campaign of World War II was the invasion and conquest of Leyte in the Philippines by American and Filipino guerrillas forces under the command of General Douglas MacArthur, who fought against the Imperial Japanese Army in the Philippines led by General Tomoyuki Yamashita from 17 October 1944 to 31 December 1944. The battle launched the Philippines campaign of 1944-45 for the recapture and liberation of the entire Philippine Archipelago and to end of almost three years of Japanese occupation.

**Municipality:** [Palo](#)  
**Province:** [Leyte](#)  
**Country:** [Philippines](#)  
**Date Taken:** 2/1/2008

**Keywords:** [Bay](#), [Beach](#), [Dusk](#), [Evening](#), [Historic](#), [Interesting](#), [Memorial](#), [Monument](#), [National Park](#), [Nightfall](#), [Reflections](#), [Sea](#), [Shoreline](#), [Statue](#), [Sunset](#), [Twilight](#), [War Memorial](#), [Water](#), [World War II](#)  
[View in Google Maps](#)





## Ships of the U.S. Navy, 1940-1945

### PT-522

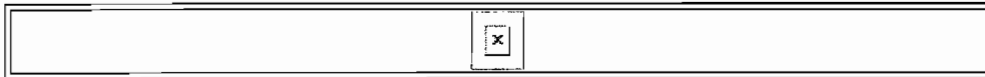
- PT-103 class Motor Torpedo Boat:
- Displacement: 38 tons
- Length: 80'
- Beam: 23'
- Draft: 5'
- Speed: 41 knots
- Armament: 4 21" XIII torpedoes in 2 tubes; 1 20mm, 2x2 .50 cal mg
- Complement: 17
- 3 4M2500 12-cylinder Packard gasoline engines; 1,200 hp
- Built at \_\_\_ and commissioned 1942-45

#### Additional Links:

- "Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships" -- USS

#### See Also:

- The [parent directory](#) for more information on this class and type
- [Reunion links](#) for scheduled reunions and possible contacts for crew lists
- [Sources of ship's documents](#): logs, action reports, etc.  
-- mostly from the [National Archives](#)



[Return to Ships of the U.S. Navy, 1940-1945: Motor Torpedo Boats](#)



[Return to Ships of the U.S. Navy, 1940-1945](#)

Last updated: March 32, 1998

*Feedback: corrections, additions, and comments are welcome!*

*Compiled and formatted by [Patrick Clancey](#).  
(see the [Main Page](#) for sources and methodology)*

## THE NEWS

ISSUE # NUMBER 1

DISNEY

SINGLE COPY FIVE CENTS

# TOONS AT WAR

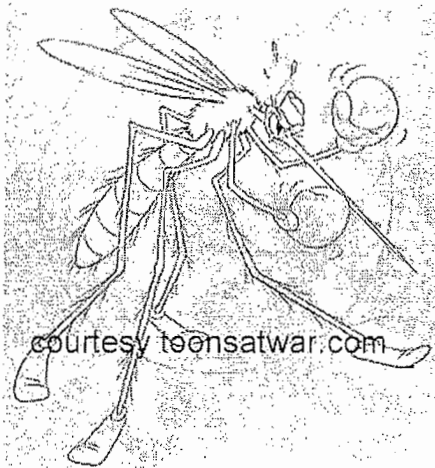
Exploring and Sharing the History of the  
Walt Disney Studio During World War II



Original Content  
Copyright 2007  
By David Lajak

THURSDAY, APRIL 05, 2007

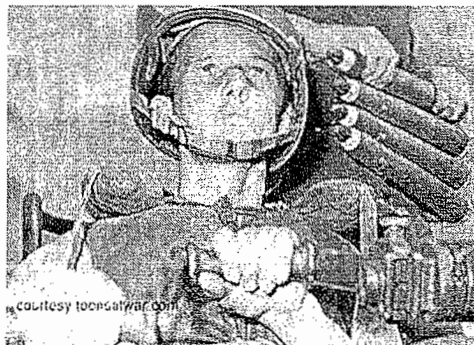
## Patrol Torpedo Boat Squadron (RON) 36



From my collection, another piece of original Disney combat Insignia art. The original request for this design was submitted by PT Boat Squadron (RON) 36 Commanding Officer LT. Commander Francis D. Tappaan in a letter to Walt Disney dated April 28th, 1944. Hank Porter created this nasty looking mosquito design for (RON) 36 the following month.

Disney artists created several different designs for various PT boat squadrons during the war, the most famous being the one for the so-called "Mosquito Fleet," which saw action in the Philippines at the war's outset. Click [here](#) and [here](#) to see the posts devoted to the "Mosquito Fleet" design.

RON 36 saw extensive action in and around New Guinea, Borneo and the Philippines. The squadron consisted of PT boats 522 through 532. RON 36 was commissioned in April 1944 and was decommissioned in October 1945. Several years ago I had the privilege of interviewing WW II veteran Walter Kundis, who served in RON 36 aboard PT 524.



## CONTACT ME

If you have any comments, questions, or items for sale, please contact me via email at [toonsatwar@yahoo.com](mailto:toonsatwar@yahoo.com)

## WANTED: DISNEY INSIGNIA

I am actively looking for Disney World War II related insignia items to add to my collection including original artwork.

## WANTED: DISNEY HOME FRONT

I am actively looking for any Disney World War II related home front items to add to my collection.

## LINKS

[Walt Disney Family Museum](#)  
[Vintage Disney Collectibles](#)  
[Disney History blog](#)  
[Michael Barrier](#)  
[Stuff From the Park blog](#)  
[Hank Porter](#)  
[2710 Hyperion blog](#)  
[The MousePod](#)  
[Gonzias Don't Blog](#)  
[Passport2dreams blog](#)

## BLOG ARCHIVE

2008 (41)

September (3)

September 20 (1)

Air Base Detachment,  
Gray Field - insignia

September 14 (1)

September 07 (1)

August (5)

Walter Kundra, Gunner's Mate 1/C, Ligayen Gulf, Philippines, January 21, 1945.

Walter joined the Navy in late 1943. He graduated from the Motor Torpedo Boat Squadron Training School at Melville, Rhode Island in March 1944. He was subsequently assigned to RON 36. Walter and his fellow PT shipmates accompanied their PT boats from the Mare Island Navy Yard to the South Pacific, via the Panama Canal, aboard converted oil tankers.

Walter's first wartime patrol took place on September 7th, 1944. During the course of the war PT 524 participated in numerous night patrols in which they often attacked Japanese transports. Other missions included the rescue of downed Allied pilots, helping Alamo Scouts rescue Japanese men from a Japanese labor camp and the transportation of Japanese prisoners of war back to various Allied bases. PT 524 was also attacked on several occasions by Japanese warships, bombers and fighters.

Walter attained the rank of Gunner's Mate 1/C at the young age of 20. Each PT was powered by three 1500 hp Packard engines capable of powering the boat at the equivalent of 50 mph landspeed. Each PT was armed with a huge array of weapons including a 40mm, 37mm and 20mm gun, two twin turreted .50 caliber machine guns, numerous single mount .50 calibre guns, four roll-off-the-rack torpedoes, one depth charge and a smoke generator.

On October 23, 1944, PT 524 was chosen as one of three PT boats to take General Douglas MacArthur, 7th Fleet Vice- Admiral Daniel Barbey and the Philippine President back to Tacloban.

PT 524 also took part in the Battle of Surigao Strait, the last major naval conflict between America and the Japanese.



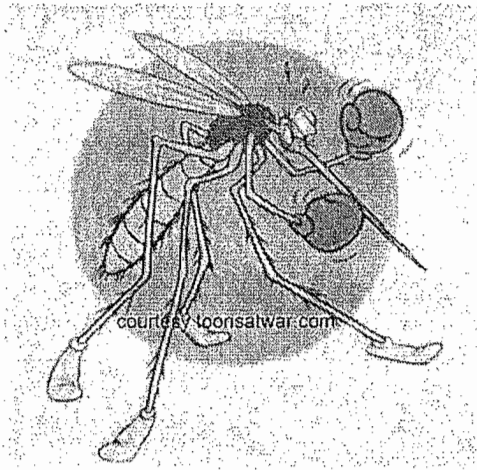
PT 524 returning from a patrol in waters off the Philippines.

Walter stayed in the military after WW II. He saw action in Vietnam and later joined the Air Force, where he was involved with the Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile system. I interviewed Walter via the internet. I have dozens upon dozens of emails that Walter sent to me describing his recollections of the war. He was also kind enough to send me over 150 photos of his boat and crew in action in the South Pacific, which I carefully made copies of.

The RON 36 design was painted on the charthouses of several PT boats in the squadron. The design also appeared in Walt Disney's Comics and Stories issue number 49.

54,197

- ▶ July (6)
- ▶ May (2)
- ▶ April (5)
- ▶ March (8)
- ▶ February (6)
- ▶ January (6)
- ▶ 2007 (38)
- ▶ 2006 (77)



The design as it appeared in Walt Disney's Comics and Stories issue number 49.

POSTED BY DISNEYDAVE AT 8:42 PM  
LABELS: AMERICAN UNIT INSIGNIA

**0 COMMENTS:**

[Post a Comment](#)

[Newer Post](#)

[Home](#)

[Older Post](#)

[Subscribe to: Post Comments \(Atom\)](#)



Allied Warships

**USS PT 522**

Motor torpedo boat of the ELCO 80' class

<b>Navy</b>	The US Navy
<b>Type</b>	Motor torpedo boat
<b>Class</b>	ELCO 80'
<b>Pennant</b>	
<b>Built by</b>	Electric Launch Company Ltd. (Elco), (Bayonne, New Jersey, U.S.A.)
<b>Ordered</b>	
<b>Laid down</b>	18 Nov, 1943
<b>Launched</b>	11 Feb, 1944
<b>Commissioned</b>	17 Mar, 1944
<b>End service</b>	
<b>Loss position</b>	
<b>History</b>	Sold in May 1946.

[Return to the Allied Warships section](#)

[Navy PT Boats](#)  
Bargain Prices. Smart Deals. Save on Navy PT Boats!  
[Shoppata.com](#)

[Surface Refurbishment](#)  
Worker & Environmentally Friendly Dry & Wet Coatings  
Removal Applic  
[www.SurfaceTek.net.com](#)

[Ship Info](#)  
Browse MadMariner's Info on Ships Daily Online Ship  
Information  
[www.MadMariner.com](#)

[Save 75% on Cruise Ships](#)  
Save Up To 75% On Cruise Ships! All cruise lines and  
ships.  
[VacationsToGo.com](#)

V V

Ads by Google

© 1995-2008 Guomundur Halgason