

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS TO ALL WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS TUCKER HISTORY

## MANY THANKS TO ALL TUCKER SAILORS WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS PROJECT!

It is a labor of love that I have for the experience of being a part of a special chapter in US Naval History. That chapter is a small part of what is affectionately known as "Tin Can Sailor". I was one of those sailors aboard the **USS Henry W Tucker (DD/DDR 875)**. All Gearing Class destroyers, and **TUCKER** was only one of 98 of them, have many common experiences, and there are probably around 30,000 men who can claim to have been aboard a Gearing Class Destroyer. All of these Destroyers were built in the late stages or shortly after WWII, and most were in service until the mid 1970's, or approximately 30 years of Naval service. Sixty of these destroyers were subsequently sold to other navies of the world, and continued to be in service for another 15 to 20 years. Presently there are only two Gearing class destroyers available for public view as Museum ships. They are **USS Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. (DD 850)** at Fall River MA. and **USS Orleck (DD 886)** now on display in Orange TX.

I cannot claim that this **TUCKER** history compilation was my idea, nor has it been my work alone. This project, still in progress, is the result of many hours by many individuals contributing their valuable time to see this get to where it is today. I came to be a part of an already recognized desire to pull together several sources of histories of **USS Henry W. Tucker (DD/DDR 875)** into one cohesive document.

Throughout my time on this project, starting after the 2004 **TUCKER** reunion in Charleston SC, these individuals have been a major part of this effort, and I have been very fortunate to have their guidance, and suggestions.

Those who I call the original "gang of five", are the ones that got me going. Many more individuals provided a wealth of information on various years of their experiences aboard. I will try to list them by year as best as I can.

### **Bob Miller MM3 (1962-1965)**

First, and foremost, this effort could not have even got off the ground if it were not for the leadership and many labors by Bob Miller. For many years now, He has been the "finder" of **TUCKER** crewmembers. There are an estimated 3000 Navy men who could claim to be aboard **TUCKER**, and Bob has so far located at least 1700 of them. Every day, through his tireless efforts, he has continued to locate more. In addition, he originally began to compile the pieces of **TUCKER** history that was known at the time. In the process of finding **TUCKER** sailors, he has come to possess many photos, personal diaries, sea stories, and other attempts at documenting the **TUCKER** history during that individual's time aboard. We regularly phone each other about many aspects of this history. He has been a valuable proofreader, and has been closely involved with design (look and feel) of the history. Also, through Bob's personal interest in capturing and making available all twelve **TUCKER** cruise books, he has provided me with a multitude of photos, and text from these books that I borrowed liberally for this history project.

### **Pat and Bill Siler (Bill BT3 1962-1964)**

Bill's wife Pat is the web master for the **TUCKER** website. When I had initially agreed to "help" with the history effort, I was presented with a fat three ring binder filled with bits and pieces of history, copies of photos, newspaper clippings, and a couple of attempts at capturing **TUCKER's** history by former Commanding officers. Little did I know at that time I would be the one to begin to sort it all out. Pat has been one my most valued proofreaders, with respect to proper grammar, spelling, and has kept me focused on the standards by which to present this product. Additionally, through her posting of the "Memories" and "Guestbook" correspondence, I have come upon many interesting sea stories and personal experiences. From these, much research into **TUCKER** events has led to a more personal account.

### **Erik Mezger LTJG (1958-1961)**

Eric Mezger was for many years a supporter of the **USS Henry W. Tucker** and the **TUCKER** dedicated website. When I began this endeavor, Pat Siler recommended that Eric be "in the loop". This was a wise decision, because Eric became my mentor about the technical details of the ship as it existed prior to it's 1963 FRAM overhaul. Although my communication with him began with E-mails, he would regularly call me from Switzerland where he lived with insights into the various technical and operational details of **TUCKER**. If I got something wrong, he would always let me know. It is with regret that I learned of his passing in March of 2008. Although I never met him in person, I will always be proud to have known him.

### **Paul Machart YN3 (1962-1965)**

Paul has been a supporter of **TUCKER** longer than I have, and he began his own effort to document his time aboard. He sent me his lengthy text, which blossomed into a continuous string of E-mails about the validity, details of

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS TO ALL WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS TUCKER HISTORY

events, and especially the dates they occurred. Additionally, Paul also has taken time to proof read several revisions of various years of **TUCKER** operations. I value his inputs, especially those years for which he was a crewmember.

### Tom Byrne RM2 (1960-1962)

At the 2004 Charleston reunion, I found that Tom had an interest in writing the history. I merely “volunteered” to help him with that effort. Tom helped me get started by providing me with the materials he had already acquired. Further, he was the 5th member of my original gang of five that kept me going by their encouragement and help with the organization of this effort. Tom provided much proof reading and suggestions along the way.

**The history, now divided into 7 sections of about 5 years each, had quite a number of people who contributed. This is my list of those who made contributions. I hope I have not forgotten anyone who should be on this list.**

### Section 1, (1944-1949)

#### 1944 –

- ✂ Research into other ships named Tucker was provided through the efforts of **Bob Miller MM3 (1962-1965)**.
- ✂ Help with identification of the original armament in the diagram was provided by **Erik Mezger LTJG (1958-1961)**
- ✂ Details about the SP-8 height finding radar were supplied by **Virtus R. “Skip” Welch ET2 (1945-1947)**.
- ✂ A description of the 20mm guns and a photo of them were provided by **Herbert R. Stoner GMSN (1951-1955)**

#### 1945 –

- ✂ Several sea stories about the days after **TUCKER** commissioning and operations in the Caribbean and East Coast were related to me by **Thomas J. Taylor SF2 (1945-1949)**

#### 1946 –

- ✂ The **TUCKER** timetable for port visits in Japan and the Ryukus Islands along with a description of duties was provided from the personal diaries of **Walter Auffermann SM2 (1945-1946)** and **Stanley Wood SN1/c (1944-1946)**

#### 1947 –

- ✂ The description of the attempted rescue of the pilot from the downed reconnaissance plane on the Chinese Mainland was provided by **Fred “Fritz” Birtch Jr. LCDR (1947-1949)** This information is from chapter 23 of his own book about his career in Naval Service.

#### 1948 –

- ✂ Most of the details of the atomic test, Operation Sandstone came from the Radiation Analysis document located on the **TUCKER** website, however, some details were related to me by **Thomas J. Taylor SF2 (1945-1949)**. Much additional detail came from **James C. Headrick RM3 (1947- 1949)**. These details allowed me to further research and verify the events prior to and after Operation Sandstone.
- ✂ The certificate, awarded to individuals for participation in Operation Sandstone, was provided by **Fred “Fritz” Birtch Jr. LCDR (1947-1949)**.

#### 1949 –

- ✂ The **TUCKER** movement and operations detail for the year 1949 was provided by **Bill Edstrom FC2 (1948-1951)**. Bill had previously purchased copies of all the deck logs and personnel rosters for his time aboard. He loaned them to me for research.
- ✂ The vivid story of the evacuation of Shanghai and the stuffed tiger picked up in Amoy was provided by **Don Murray LT (1948-1949)**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS TO ALL WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS TUCKER HISTORY

~~✂~~ The story and picture of the dog "Four Bits" was provided by **Eugene Harris MM2 (1947-1951)**

### Section 2, (1950-1954)

#### 1950 –

~~✂~~ The 1950 **TUCKER** movement and operations detail were provided by **Bill Edstrom FC2 (1948-1951)** from his deck logs. Bill also provided me with information about Bird Dog Station and shadowing President Truman.

~~✂~~ The story of the DESDIV 32 dance band along with the pictures were provided by **Ray Schmiedecke SO2 (1949-1952)**.

~~✂~~ The story about the storm in February was told by **Despard Humphrys SN (1950-1951)** in a letter to Pat Siler, and then confirmed for details and date by Bill Edstrom's deck logs.

#### 1951 –

~~✂~~ **Robert Anderson LTJG (1950-1952)** provided 4 photos taken during his 1951 Korean deployment. All the Anderson photos were actually provided to me by **Jack London LT (1951-1953)**.

~~✂~~ The **TUCKER** movement and operations detail for 1951 along with details of the Wonsan Harbor incident, and **USS Walke (DD 723)** striking a mine were provided by **Bill Edstrom FC2 (1948-1951)**.

#### 1952 –

~~✂~~ Again, 4 more photos were provided by **Robert Anderson LTJG (1950-1952)**.

~~✂~~ Several photos, Color slides, and most of the detail for the 1952 Korean deployment was provided through the book of letters home titled "All my Love" by **Jack London LT (1951-1953)**

~~✂~~ Another diary of ship movements and activities for the 1952 Korean deployment was provided by **Paul Lewis Jr. LTJG (1950-1952)**

#### 1953 –

~~✂~~ The year 1953 information was taken almost entirely from the deployment cruise book. The typhoon information was found on a website dedicated to western Pacific typhoon data.

#### 1954 –

~~✂~~ The year 1954 information was taken almost entirely from the deployment cruise book. The typhoon information was found on a website dedicated to western Pacific typhoon data.

~~✂~~ Some **TUCKER** movement detail was found in the **USS Orleck (DD 886)** deck logs project on the web.

### Section 3, (1955-1959)

#### 1955 –

~~✂~~ The year 1955 information was taken almost entirely from the deployment cruise book. The typhoon information was found on a website dedicated to western Pacific typhoon data.

#### 1956 –

~~✂~~ The year 1956 information was taken almost entirely from the deployment cruise book.

#### 1957 –

~~✂~~ The year 1957 information was taken almost entirely from the deployment cruise book.

~~✂~~ The photo of **TUCKER** preparing to moor in Brisbane Australia is from the "Photographic history of the US Navy" website, where it is labeled "unknown location".

#### 1958 –

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS TO ALL WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS TUCKER HISTORY

~~✂~~ The details of the rescue of the yacht Stardust was supplied by **Roy K. Steele SHSN (1958-1960)**.

~~✂~~ The remainder of 1958 activities was from the deployment cruise book.

### 1959 –

~~✂~~ The details of the **TUCKER** retrofit with new communication and radar gear, was supplied by **Erik Mezger LTJG (1958-1961)**. Note that Erik was also the cruise book editor for this 1959 deployment.

### Section 4, (1960-1964)

### 1960 –

~~✂~~ The image of the DESRON 3 patch, the Yokosuka harbor chart, the Tokyo Bay relief map, and the Mount Fuji photo were all supplied by **Bob Miller MM3 (1962-1965)**.

~~✂~~ The details of the **TUCKER** deployment and mission responsibilities, were supplied by **Erik Mezger LTJG (1958-1961)** The DESRON 3 arrival in Pearl Harbor as described in the Honolulu Star Bulletin was supplied by **Roy K. Steele SHSN (1958-1960)**.

~~✂~~ The photos of the Christmas party in Yokosuka were supplied by **Tom Byrne RM2 (1960-1962)** from the "Destroyers 60 Years" cruise book.

~~✂~~ Some **TUCKER** movement detail was found in the **USS Orleck (DD 886)** deck logs project on the web.

### 1961 –

~~✂~~ **Richard Baker FT1 (1959-1961)** told me his own story of the appendicitis attack, and his highline transfer.

### 1962 –

~~✂~~ The near collision with the aircraft carrier **USS Ranger (CVA 61)** was detailed by **Bob Miller MM3 (1962-1965)**.

~~✂~~ The photos of the Buddha statue in Beppu, **TUCKER** in Acapulco, and **TUCKER** in the Panama Canal were provided by **John Anderson SN (1962-1964)**.

~~✂~~ Much of the details of **TUCKER** operations were supplied by **Paul Machart YN3 (1962-1965)** from his own history compilation. This included the story of the Marine evacuation from Thailand. Paul also provided details of the shadowing of a Russian submarine during the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis. The photo of the homeward bound pennant was a photo taken by Paul also. After the homeward bound journey, Paul provided the details of the stop in Acapulco Mexico, traversing the Panama Canal, and the final leg to Boston. **Paul** also supplied the photo of **TUCKER** with the homeward bound pennant. This photo was also color enhanced by **Bob Miller MM3 (1962-1965)**.

~~✂~~ The passage through the Panama Canal photo was provided by **John Anderson SN (1962-1964)**.

### 1963 –

~~✂~~ Pictures of the ship in Dry Dock in the Charleston Naval Shipyard were supplied by **Paul Machart YN3 (1962-1965)**.

~~✂~~ The story of **TUCKER** hitting the pier in Boston was supplied by **Clifford Kinson ETR2 (1962-1965)**.

~~✂~~ The photo of the damage to the pier in Charlestown was provided by **John Anderson SN (1962-1964)**.

~~✂~~ Further engineering details about hitting the pier including the sketch of the engine order telegraph were supplied by **Bob Miller MM3 (1962-1965)**.

### 1964 –

~~✂~~ The photo of passage through the Panama Canal and the photo of **TUCKER** in Acapulco and the highline transfer with **USS Small** were provided by **John Anderson SN (1962-1964)**.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS TO ALL WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS TUCKER HISTORY

- ✂ The swim call photo and details were supplied by **Paul Machart YN3 (1962-1965)**.
- ✂ Some of the details of **TUCKER** entry into the Tonkin Gulf after the Incident were related to me by **Harry W. Kinsley Jr. LCDR (1964-1965)**.
- ✂ The photo of receiving mail at sea, and the photo at Tiger balm Gardens in Hong Kong were my own photos.
- ✂ Much 1964 information came from family-grams written home to Tucker families by Captain Wilcox. These family-grams were sent to me by **John Kray GMM3 (1963-1966)**.

### Section 5, (1965-1969)

#### 1965 –

- ✂ The masthead for the newspaper TIN CAN TRIBUNE was copied from an edition sent to me by Pat Siler, wife of **James W. "Bill" Siler BT3 (1962-1964)**.
- ✂ The "at sea" game tournaments, including the Acey-Deuce pageant were chronicled by **Paul Machart YN3 (1962-1965)** in his own history. Further details of the Acey-Deuce pageant was written in a family-gram written by **CDR B.C. Wilcox (1963-1965)**. A copy of that family-gram was sent to me by **Bob Miller MM3 (1962-1965)**.
- ✂ The photo of **TUCKER** preparing to re-arm was taken from **USS Vesuvius (AE 15)** by **Ira Stoker MM2**, a sailor aboard **USS Vesuvius (AE 15)**.
- ✂ Recollection by **Paul Machart YN3 (1962-1965)** led to the exploded gun barrel story of the **USS Somers (DD 949)**.
- ✂ The story of radar repair assistance to the **USS Reclaimer (ARS 42)** was my own personal experience.
- ✂ The Shellback certificate for crossing the equator was my own personal copy.
- ✂ The photo of the Vietnamese Patrol boat alongside **TUCKER** was supplied by **Ray B. Womack Jr. BT3 (1964-1967)**.
- ✂ The encounter with the Russian Submarine, and the sub's subsequent maneuver to get away was related to me by **Harry W. Kinsley Jr. LCDR (1964-1965)**.
- ✂ Much 1965 information came from family-grams written home to Tucker families by Captain Wilcox. These family-grams were sent to me by **John Kray GMM3 (1963-1966)**.

#### 1966 –

- ✂ The photo of **TUCKER** flying the homeward bound pennant was supplied by **Bob Miller MM3 (1962-1965)**.
- ✂ The details of the Long Beach Yard modifications for the crossbar and Hut were provided by **David Harrington ETR2 (1969-1972)**
- ✂ Some 1966 information came from family-grams written home to Tucker families by Captain Williams. These family-grams were sent to me by **John Kray GMM3 (1963-1966)**.

#### 1967 –

- ✂ The story of the fire aboard **USS Forrestal (CVA 59)** was from one of the **FORRESTAL** websites, but John McCain's involvement was told to me by **Erik Mezger LTJG (1958-1961)**. The McCain details and photo came from a John McCain website.
- ✂ More details for 1967 came from a family-gram written by **CDR Sheldon D. Kully (1967-1969)**. The family-gram was supplied to me by **Michael McDermott LTJG (1968-1969)**.

#### 1968 –

- ✂ Almost the entirety of 1968 **TUCKER** activities is from the book "WESTPAC" written by **James W. Sadler YN2 (1968-1969)** James offered not only his book for reference, but supplied some of his research background materials, and many photos taken by him during this time. I have used 4 of his photos for 1968.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS TO ALL WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS TUCKER HISTORY

More details for 1968 came from four family-grams written by **CDR Sheldon D. Kully (1967-1969)**. These family-grams were supplied to me by **David Harrington ETR2 (1969-1972)**.

A total of four photos were used that were supplied by **David Harrington ETR2 (1969-1972)**.

### 1969 –

Seven more pictures taken by **James W. Sadler YN2 (1968-1969)** were used for 1969. Additionally, James supplied a scan of his wallet-size shellback card for inclusion. Also, James took it upon himself to re-write my poor attempt at **TUCKER's** involvement with the EC-121 shoot down incident. Finally, James brought to my attention a Navy website dedicated to the US Navy Style Guide. This allowed me to place this writing more in keeping with proper Navy standards.

The Humanitarian medical aid ashore was detailed by **Michael McDermott LTJG (1968-1969)**. He was the **TUCKER** public affairs officer at the time. **James W. Sadler YN2 (1968-1969)** also had an account of this incident in his book "WESTPAC".

More details for 1969 came from three family-grams written by **CDR Sheldon D. Kully (1967-1969)**, and one family-gram written by **CDR Warren L. Story (1969-1971)** These four family-grams were supplied to me by **David Harrington ETR2 (1969-1972)**.

The delayed trip back to Yokosuka for Christmas was related to me by **James Meuleveld RMC (1968-1970)**.

One Hong Kong photo was used that was supplied by **David Harrington ETR2 (1969-1972)**.

### Section 6, (1970-1973)

#### 1970 –

**TUCKER** movements and activities for 1970 are almost entirely from the Cruise Book for this deployment.

Some **TUCKER** movement detail was found in the **USS Orleck (DD 886)** deck logs project on the web.

#### 1971 –

**TUCKER** movements and activities for 1971 are almost entirely from the Cruise Book for this deployment.

More details for 1971 came from a family-gram written by **CDR Paul C. Nelson (1971-1972)**. This family-gram was supplied to me by **David Harrington ETR2 (1969-1972)**.

#### 1972 –

The account of the underway appendix operation and the An Thoi visit and honoring the remains of Douglas Manka were supplied by **Robert (Doc) Laity SN (1972)**.

The Christmas Caroling celebration at the end of the Vietnam War was detailed in a "Memories" E-Mail by the XO of **TUCKER**, **LCDR Eugene Hall (1972-1973)**. The photo of the Christmas caroling was from the last **TUCKER** cruise book.

#### 1973 –

The photos of the Huey Helicopter on deck, the photo of **TUCKER** in Sidney Harbor and the photo of the flag lowering ceremony for **TUCKER** decommissioning were posted on the **TUCKER** website and were supplied by **LTJG Paul Kinnaly (1972-1973)**.

### Section 7, (Marcilio Dias (DD 25) (1974-1994)

This section comes from a translation of the Brazilian Website dedicated to Dias by **Michael McDermott LTJG (1968-1969)**. Mike graciously translated from Portuguese to English and back for my E-mails to and from Antonio Fernandes De Souza.

The photo used in the 1986 section was supplied by **Antonio Fernandes De Souza**, Brazilian crewman aboard Marcilio Dias.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS TO ALL WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS TUCKER HISTORY

✂✂ Another photo found on the Brazilian “Marcilio Dias” website was reproduced for 1984.

✂✂ The very well done poem “**Tucker’s End**” was written and supplied by **Troy A. Krause CS3 (1972-1973)**.

### Appendix A, Medals and Ribbons

✂✂ The ribbon rack layout and most of the research into the medals and ribbons earned by crewmen as a unit of **TUCKER** was supplied by **Bob Miller MM3 (1962-1965)**. He contacted many **TUCKER** crewmen to check on their DD-214 form for what medals they were eligible for.

### Appendix B, Facts and Statistics

✂✂ Again, **Bob Miller MM3 (1962-1965)** had a hand in this section. We had many discussions about **TUCKER** Ports of Call, and about Latitude and Longitude of **TUCKER** locations. But above all, Bob had a familial interest in finding all the brothers who served on **TUCKER**, and he provided that list.

**Much thanks to all who assisted –**

**Gary T. O’Neil ET3 (1963-1966) Editor**