

# USS Henry W. Tucker DD/R-875

<http://www.geocities.com/Pentagon/7401>

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Ahoy Tuckermen:

We had hoped to get this newsletter out sooner, but here it is finally. Those of you who attended the reunion in Biloxi know it was a success. Those of you who didn't, missed a good time.

We had over 100 shipmates in attendance and a total of 200 people at the reunion. It was great to see so many happy faces. Some of these people hadn't seen each other for over 50 years! Lots of guys brought cruise books, photographs, documents, maps and all sorts of memorabilia. Many happy hours were spent looking at all the materials. Bob Miller (62-65) held court in the back of the hospitality room throughout the reunion with his laptop. He had the crew list available so he could do lookups for people looking for shipmates.

Jim (63-65) and Nancy Julius were our excellent bartenders. Bill (61-64) & Carmen Hargraves sold T-Shirts, Mike (61-64) & Gwenda Dale sold baseball caps, Paul Machart (62-65) and several other guys manned the registration table. Paul also helped out wherever needed. Charlie "Boats" Kerr (68-70) did a great job of supplying the snack table, making two trips to the commissary, before he went AWOL (had to drive his sister-in-law back to Florida due to a job emergency). Pat was kept busy making name badges, compiling information on "new" shipmates, and answering questions.

On Friday morning, Chuck Ruth (63-65) took a group on a tour of Ingalls Shipbuilding. They were also treated to a very nice lunch in the executive dining room.

Also, a group played golf on Friday morning at the Seabee Base in Gulfport.

Also on Friday morning, Betty Grochowski, wife of Frank (71-73) conducted a rubber stamp craft workshop. Judging from the large group and the laughter, I'm sure the women had a wonderful time and learned a lot.

Lots of interesting items were brought by many of the crew members and their wives for the raffle, which was held after the business meeting on Friday afternoon. It was a lot of fun. We had two grand prizes. One was a 10" crystal plate with an etching of the Tucker, her name and hull number, and her years in commission, donated by Pat & me. This was made at Pairpoint Glass Company on Cape Cod MA. The other was a HWT jacket patch, sent to us by LCDR Sam Moore (RADM Ret) (54-55). We had it framed. The plate was won by CDR Fred Hoepfner (53-54) and the patch by Leo Leaser (48-52).

On Saturday morning, two busloads of shipmates and their wives and friends went to Mobile, Alabama to tour the USS Alabama (BB-60), a submarine and an aviation exhibit. With assistance from Leroy Wood (60-64), I led a memorial service on the fantail of Alabama (I apologize for being a bit emotional). I read the names of all the men we knew had passed away. Leroy rang the bell once for each man. We then went exploring. As a BT, I enjoyed going down into one of the fire rooms. We BT's all agreed we could still fire up the boilers of the Tucker with our eyes closed. We had a wonderful barbecue lunch in the aviation hangar.

On Saturday night, we had an excellent buffet dinner. The food was very good and the room was quite festive. Mike McDermott read a letter sent by Ricardo Ibsen, an officer in the Brazilian Navy who served on the Marcilio Diaz (formerly HWT) in the early 90's. Ricardo informs us he plans to attend the next reunion. We look forward to meeting him and hope he can convince some of the other Brazilian shipmates to attend as well. Several other shipmates got up and told "sea stories". Also at the dinner, Jean Fortenberry, wife of Burrell (50-54) read a poem she wrote about the Tucker and her crew:

## An Honored Farewell

When the USS Henry W. Tucker slid  
down the ways  
She began a career of meritorious days.  
She served the U.S. Navy gallantly  
during war and peace.  
Then, after becoming part of the Brazil  
Navy  
A target practice torpedo caused her  
engines to cease.  
She took each of you Tuckermen down  
to the sea –  
Becoming part of our country's history.  
So stand tall and be proud as you salute  
the Tucker an honored farewell.  
Then place in your memory, the stories  
to tell.  
She was a good ship until her time was  
gone –  
And on her last cruise –  
She went down to the sea ALONE.

If anyone would like a list of reunion attendees with their addresses, etc., we can e-mail a list out. If you don't have e-mail and would like a list, please send a SASE to us and we'll send you a copy of the list.

A photographer took group photos on Saturday night. I know we haven't received our pictures yet and several people have contacted us about it. According to Shannon Sheridan of Sheridan Photography in Jackson, MS, most of the photos are done and the rest will be done and all will be mailed out shortly. We had an e-mail from Ron & Jerry Ann Holt, who said they received their photo, so hopefully we'll all get ours soon.

We have received a shipment of 100 baseball caps. These caps are of equal quality but much less expensive than the original order that we sold at the reunion. Harry Felder told us of a company in Georgia that manufactures the caps as well as doing the embroidery. There is no "middle man" so the price is lower. We will be charging \$11, which includes the cost of mailing and \$1 to go to the reunion fund (to help pay postage for newsletters, general expenses, and seed money for deposits, etc. for the next reunion). We already have orders for over 20

caps and will fill those orders first. If you want to order caps, please send a check for \$11 payable to the Henry W. Tucker Reunion Fund to us at the address at the end of this newsletter. Yes, Pat made me pay shipping & handling for my cap, even though I only have to walk across the dining room.

The next reunion is planned for San Diego in 2002. Errol Samuelson (69-74) has agreed to be the point man in San Diego. He has enlisted George Red Boy to be his "sub jefe". If anyone who lives in the San Diego area is interested in helping with the organization of the reunion, please let us know and we'll have Errol get in touch with you. I know your help will be most appreciated.

An updated crew list is now available on the auxiliary website. Just click on the link on the main website. The list includes only the names, rate and years of service of people we have located. There will be a link to e-mail addresses, but the addresses and phone numbers won't be listed (for privacy). Please contact us for addresses and phone numbers. If you know the whereabouts of anyone whose name is not on the list, please let us know. We have over 2,500 names in total, but only have addresses, etc. for about 500, so we have a long way to go. If you would like a list of people who served at the same time you did, let us know. We can sort the list by year and make a printout or copy them into an e-mail message. We can do the same for an individual, so if you're looking for someone in particular and we have him, we can send it to you via e-mail. If you'd like a list but don't have e-mail, please send an SASE and we'll send you the list.

We have a few e-mail address changes:

Bob Miller: millerbrothers875@hotmail.com  
Ed Bell: elbell@netexpress.net  
Joe Schwab: ggnpop@hotmail.com

The reunion was a financial success as well as a great time. The Reunion Fund checking account now has a balance of \$5,164.33. Thanks to all who made donations. We feel sure that the reunion in 2002 will be another success and

there will be less stress about how we're going to pay for everything. Our main expense between reunions will be photocopying and postage for newsletters, which we hope to send out 4 times a year. We looked into getting a bulk mail permit, but the volume isn't large enough to make a significant difference in postage costs. The bulk mail permit costs \$90 per year, and we wouldn't save that much over the 4 mailings per year to make it worthwhile. We will reevaluate this as the membership grows.

I noticed in my Tin Can Sailor newsletter that my name was listed as one of the top recruiters (twice), which means that several of you have joined TCS. Hopefully, you enjoy the newsletters and their excellent website as much as I do. They have a Shipmate Registry, and many of your HWT shipmates are listed.

**<http://www.destroyers.org>**

Ed Bell sent an e-mail referring us to the military section of Classmates.com. It's a website where you can look up high school classmates and post your information. They also have a military section. Yesterday, there were

about 21 listed under USS Henry W. Tucker DD-875 and 3 under USS Henry W. Tucker DDR-875. We encourage you to check the site out. You can register free and use the site, but if you want to be able to e-mail people you find on the site, you will have to become a paid member.

**<http://www.classmates.com>**

If you have any news for the next newsletter, a poem, story or cartoon to share, we'd love to include such things in each newsletter. We will have updates on the San Diego reunion in upcoming newsletters.

James W. (Bill) Siler, Jr., BTC USNR Ret  
BT3 1964-66

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