

SHIP'S HISTORY
U.S.S. THE SULLIVANS (DD-537)
1943 TO 1965

The Sullivans

The five Sullivan brothers were all born in Waterloo, Iowa, between 1914 and 1920. George and Francis Sullivan, the two oldest, both enlisted in the Navy on 11 May 1937, and served in Hovey (DD-208) into June 1941. On 3 January 1942, George and Francis--accompanied by their three younger brothers: Joseph, Madison, and Albert--reenlisted to avenge a friend who had been killed in Arizona (BB-39) during the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 1941. All five Sullivans subsequently joined Juneau (CL-52) at New York, N.Y., on 3 February 1942.

Juneau initially served in the Atlantic, but was transferred to the Pacific in the summer of 1942. She took part in the Battle of Santa Cruz Islands and later in the fierce night battle off Guadalcanal on 12 November 1942. In that action, a torpedo severely damaged the ship and knocked her out of the fight. The following morning, the crippled cruiser joined up with the San Francisco (CA-38), Helena (CL-50), Sterett (DD-407) and Fletcher (DD-445) in retiring from the battle area. Juneau struggled to make 18 knots, and down by the bow, handled sluggishly. Limping through the glassy-calm sea on 13 November, she thus presented a tempting target for Japanese submarine I-26 which lurked nearby. One torpedo or possibly two, undetected in time, hit the damaged cruiser forward and set off her magazines; the resultant violent explosion tore the ship apart and she went down in just 42 seconds.

Four of the Sullivans failed to make it topside in time to abandon their doomed ship, but George, wounded the night before, managed to make a raft. His wounds, however, caused him to succumb within hours after abandoning. Only ten of the some 140 survivors thought to have survived the immediate sinking were rescued.

(DD-537: dp. 2,940; l. 376'5"; b. 39'7"; dr. 13'9"; s. 35.2 k.; cpl. 329; a. 5 5", 10 40 mm., 7 20 mm., 10 21" tt., 6 dcp., 2 dct., cl. Fletcher)

The Sullivans (DD-537) was laid down on 10 October 1942 at San Francisco, Calif., by the Bethlehem Steel Co.; originally named Putnam the name The Sullivans was assigned on 6 February 1943, and the name Putnam assigned to DE-249; launched on 4 April 1943; sponsored by Mrs. Thomas F. Sullivan, the mother of the five Sullivan brothers; and commissioned on 30 September 1943, Comdr. Kenneth M. Gentry in command.

Following shakedown and post-shakedown availability, The Sullivans got underway for Pearl Harbor on 23 December for training in company with Dortch (DD-670) and Gatling (DD-671), and arrived five days later. From 29 to 31 December, the ship operated with Task Unit (TU) 19.15.5 off Oahu, in the screen for carriers Cowpens (CVL-25) and Essex (CV-9). Assigned to Destroyer Squadron (DesRon) 52 in January, The Sullivans conducted further training exercises in the Hawaiian area until 16 January 1944, when she steamed out of Pearl Harbor with Task Group (TG) 58.2, bound for the Marshall Islands. En route to Kwajalein Atoll, the ships practiced tactical maneuvers; on 25 January, Battleship Division (BatDiv) 9 joined up, and two days later, as the force neared their target, picket destroyers were ranged ahead on the alert for contact with the enemy.

On 24 January, TG 58.2 arrived at the dawn launching point for pre-

mission air strikes against Roi. The Sullivans screened Essex, Intrepid (CV-11), and Cabot (CVL-22) as they launched nearly continuous raids for two days running. On the night of 29 and 30 January, bridge lookouts on the destroyer noted gun flashes off the starboard bow of the formation and closer investigation revealed this to be Burns (DD-588), single-handedly destroying an unescorted Japanese convoy of small merchant ships which had happened to cross her path while she steamed to rejoin her task group. "Lucky devil," wrote The Sullivans' commanding officer in his ship's war diary, "she (Burns) took full advantage of her luck and soon had all four ships blazing merrily and beyond salvage."

The Sullivans continued her operations with TG 58.2 to the north and northwest of Roi and Namur Islands in the Kwajalein group until 4 February, when the group retired to Majuro to refuel and replenish. The warship then underwent routine upkeep and overhaul, conducted drills and allowed what recreation was practicable from 5 to 12 February, with an occasional tour of entrance patrol and pilot duty destroyer as well.

Underway at high noon on 12 February, The Sullivans screened the sortie of TG 58.2, outward-bound for Truk. The same carriers whose planes had blasted Roi and Namur steamed in the van--Essex, Intrepid, and Cabot--now headed for the Japanese fortress-base in the central Pacific. As at Kwajalein, the carriers launched what seemed to be nearly-continuous air strikes against Truk from the time the group arrived at its launching point on 16 February. "No enemy opposition of any kind was encountered," wrote The Sullivans' commander, "indicating tha the initial attacks came as a complete surprise."

While the enemy may have been slow to react at the outset, they soon struck back--torpedoing Intrepid at 0010 on the 17th. The carrier slowed to 20 knots and lost steering control with her steering compartment flooded. The Sullivans, Owen (DD-536) and Stembel (DD-644) stood by the stricken carrier and escorted her to Majuro for repairs. Reaching Majuro on 21 February, the destroyer soon sailed for Pearl Harbor, arriving on 4 March for a drydocking and routine upkeep.

Underway again on 22 March, The Sullivans covered the sortie of TG 58.2, 58.9 and 50.15 from Majuro, en route to Palau, Yap and Woleai Islands. On the evening of the 29th, while approaching the target area, enemy aircraft attacked the task group, but were driven off by the antiaircraft fire from the ships. The Sullivans then screened and served on task group picket duty during the air strikes, turning-to to aid in beating off an air attack on the evening of 30 March.

After returning to Majuro for replenishment, the warship again entered the fray against the Japanese, screening TG 58.2 during air strikes on Hollandia, Tanamerah, Wakde and Aitape--in support of the amphibious operations on Dutch New Guinea. Rain squalls delayed the initial strikes but once the skies had cleared enough to permit air operations, they proceeded apace without enemy interruptions.

By the end of April, The Sullivans was en route to yet another operation--air strikes on the Japanese based at Truk. On 29 April, during one of these raids on Truk, the Japanese retaliated with a low-level strike against the American force. Four Japanese planes, at an altitude of 10 to 500 feet, came in low and fast--picked up on radar at 16 miles. The formation opened fire when the planes came within range, The Sullivans

opening up with one 40-millimeter twin mount and all five 5-inch guns. Two aircraft splashed into the sea due to the firing of the formation, and one crossing ahead of The Sullivans was taken under fire and crashed in flames on the port beam.

The Sullivans arrived off the northwest coast of Ponape on the afternoon of 1 May, providing cover for the battleships led by Iowa (BB-61) which were to conduct the major bombardment itself. A slight haze hung over the island, and low cumulus clouds obscured the tops of the peaks on the island. Although on the disengaged side of the screen, The Sullivans fired at extreme range--18 rounds at Tumu Point. Near the end of her firing, she noted a good target of opportunity--three beached Japanese landing barges, and accordingly shifted her fire--only to soon receive the general cease-fire order shortly thereafter.

Breaking off the action, the task unit retired under air cover from TG 58.1, with South Dakota (BB-58) in the lead. During the retirement, The Sullivans refueled from Yorktown (CV-10) and arrived at Majuro on 4 May. The upkeep, as usual, was relatively brief, however, as on the 14th, TG 58.2 sortied--bound for Marcus and Wake Islands. Launching the first strike at 0800 on the 19th, the American carriers kept up nearly continuous air strikes with no enemy interruptions for three days. On the third day, Hickok (DD-673) dropped out of formation with a steering casualty and The Sullivans stood by to render assistance, and both ships soon rejoined the formation after the completion of Hickok's repairs.

The Sullivans and her sister destroyers conducted a thorough but unsuccessful search for a suspected submarine en route back to Majuro; on 6 June, The Sullivans got under way again, bound for Saipan, Tinian, and Guam, to screen the carriers in conducting air strikes. On occasion while in the screen, The Sullivans' radar picked up enemy "snoopers" around the periphery of the formation--on one occasion, TG 58.2 shot down one in flames after 0315 on the 12th.

The second day's strikes against Saipan, supporting the American landings there, took place on the 13th. Assigned to the duty of communication linking station between task forces, The Sullivans remained within visual sighting distance of both TG 58.1 and 58.2 during the day. She later picked up 31 Japanese merchant seamen after their ship had been sunk offshore, held them as POW's, and delivered them to flagship Indianapolis (CA-35) at 1703 on the 13th.

On the 19th, Japanese aircraft attacked the Task Group. The Sullivans picked up a plane visually at a range of less than five miles--this aircraft one of a large raid detected by radar minutes earlier. "Judies," diving from 23,000 feet, pressed home their attacks--one, taken under fire by The Sullivans, took tracer fire from the ship's 20- and 40-millimeter batteries, and crashed just short of the horizon moments later. American air attacks against Pagan Island, made without enemy retaliation, topped off the Saipan-Tinian-Guam strikes for the moment, and The Sullivans returned with TG 58.2 to Eniwetok for routine overhaul and upkeep.

Underway on 30 June, The Sullivans steered a westerly course towards the Bonins, in continuing support operations against Saipan and Tinian. During this operation, the Sullivans served as fighter-direction ship for TU 58.214, eight planes from Cabot. Subsequently rejoining TG 58.2, learning en route that a Vought OS2U Kingfisher from Boston (CA-69) had already effected the rescue.

On Independence Day--4 July-- , The Sullivans joined Bombardment Unit One (TU 58.2.4) to conduct a shore bombardment of air fields, reported shore batteries, and other shore installations on the west coast of Iwo Jima. The heavy ships in the group opened fire at 1500, and smoke and dust soon partially or completely obscured targets along the western shores of the island--making spotting difficult. The Sullivans, second ship in a column of destroyers, opened fire at 1548 on planes parked on the southern airstrip. After three ranging salvos, the ship commenced hitting twin-engined Bettys parked in revetments along the strip. Five planes blew up--eight other planes were probably damaged by shrapnel and burning gasoline--all in all a good day's work for The Sullivans. Minutes later, an enemy ship resembling an LST came under The Sullivans' gunfire and caught fire astern. While Miller (DD-535) closed to complete the destruction of the enemy ship, The Sullivans and the remainder of the bombardment unit withdrew and rejoined TG 58.2 at 2035.

From 7 to 22 July, TG 58.2 operated south and west of the Marianas, conducting daily air strikes on Guam and Rota Islands, before returning to Garapan Anchorage, Saipan, to allow the carriers to replenish bombs. Underway at dawn on the 23rd, The Sullivans accompanied the task group as it sped towards the Palaus to conduct strikes on the 26th and 27th. She joined TG 58.4 for temporary duty on 30 July, and continued air strikes until the 6th of August, when she joined TG 58.7 (heavy bombardment group) and operated with TF 34 until 11 August, when the group returned to Eniwetok for rest and replenishment.

The Sullivans trained off Eniwetok before upkeep and topping-off ammunition and provisions, and then undertook operations with TF 34 until the dissolution of TF 34 on 3 September--at which time she became a unit of TF 38.

While amphibious operations then unfold in the Palaus, TG 38.2, Rear Admiral Gerald F. Bogan commanding in Bunker Hill (CV-17), began neutralizing air strikes in the Philippine Islands. At dawn on 7 September, The Sullivans served on radar picket duty for TG 38.2 through the strikes of the 9th and 10th of September. From 1800 on 12 September, the ships noted an increase in air activity, observing many bogies who showed a propensity to merely orbit the formations--snoopers. TF 38 conducted further strikes on the central Philippines on the 13th and 14th, and then shifted course to the north to subject Manila to air attacks commencing on the 21st. Three days later, American planes again hit the central Philippines.

Returning to Tanapag Harbor at dawn on the 28th, the Sullivans went alongside Massachusetts (BB-59) for ammunition, provisions, and routine upkeep. The cross-swells in the anchorage swept the destroyer hard against the battleship's steel hide, however, damaging The Sullivans' hull and superstructure. A brief period as anti-submarine patrol proceeded the ship's pushing on for Ulithi on the 1st of October, where she arrived at dawn.

While undergoing tender repairs alongside, Dixie, The Sullivans formed part of a nest of destroyers blown away from the tender during a heavy storm which lashed the anchorage. Lines parted between Owen (DD-536) and Stockham (DD-683) allowing Stockham, Colehan (DD-658) and The Sullivans to drift free downwind. The Sullivans got up steam "in a hurry", and collided with Uhlmann (DD-687) while getting underway to sortie from the

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area and anchor off the reefs to the eastern side of the atoll. Many small boats were being tossed about, and The Sullivans rescued four men from Stockham's gig before it disappeared beneath the waves. But the trouble was not over yet for the Sullivans--her anchors failed to hold and she dragged them across the anchorage bottom, anchoring twice before she got a good hold, only to be soon ordered to sortie with TF 34 because of the tempest.

As the storm abated over the 3rd and 4th, the warship returned to Ulithi to complete the abbreviated tender overhaul alongside Dixie.

At 1615, on 6 October, The Sullivans sortied for Formosa and the Ryukyus, refueling from Mississine (AO-59)--the oiler destined to be sunk at Ulithi within a month's time. Reaching launching positions at 0530 on the 10th, the ships began their final run-in towards the target, refueling on the 11th. Shortly after dark on the 11th, Japanese snoopers buzzed around the formation--"the night fighters played with them all night," recorded The Sullivans' skipper.


Commencing air strikes against Formosa on the 12th, the planes returned to the carriers at 1846 recovering anti-submarine patrols and combat air patrols. While the last of the planes touched down on the carriers' decks, radar spotted the first of many Japanese aircraft coming down from the north. For the next six hours, the Japanese subjected the American task force to continuous air attacks--an estimated 50 to 60 aircraft taking part.

Nearly 45 minutes after sunset, The Sullivans sighted a "Betty" on the starboard side, coming in low, and took it under fire. During the next 15 minutes, the formation to which The Sullivans was attached shot down three planes; between 1856 and 1954, the destroyer herself took five planes under fire. Maintaining a speed anywhere between 18 and 29 knots, the formation undertook eight emergency maneuvers. Timely turns and the great volume of gunfire thrown up by the ships repulsed the enemy air attacks time and time again.

The second phase of the attack began to unfold between 2105 on the 12th through 0235 on the 13th. The Japanese increased the use of "window" to jam American radar transmissions and flares lit up the evening with ghostly light. At speeds between 22 and 25 knots, The Sullivans and the other ships in formation executed 38 simultaneous turn movements. "The bridge personnel," noted the action report, (were) "busy keeping station, since the nearest ship was 1200 yards away."

The formation made smoke whenever enemy flare-dropping planes approached, creating an eerie haze effect which served to effectively baffle the enemy torpedo planes. Through deficiencies in her ammunition, "flashless powder" cartridges in six cases turned out to be "smokeless powder," and the resultant gun flashes temporarily blinded bridge personnel.

The next day, the carriers again launched strikes on Formosa, and during the night retirement phase of the day's activities, the formation again came under attack by Japanese torpedo-carrying Betties which struck home this time and damaged Canberra (CA-70). The Sullivans received assignment to TG 30.4, the group convoying damaged Canberra to Ulithi, at 1100 on the 14th. Wichita (CA-45) soon passed a towline to Canberra and took the stricken heavy cruiser under tow. On 14 October, torpedo-carrying Betty bombers struck Houston (CL-81). Following this



attack, a combined "cripple division" of Canberra, Houston, and their escorts (including The Sullivans) retired from Formosa toward Ulithi on the 14th.

Things progressed well until the 16th, when the Japanese mounted a heavy air attack to attempt to finish off the "cripples." Houston reeled under the impact of a second hit astern, and The Sullivans opened fire on the "Francis" which had made the attack. The Japanese plane crashed into the sea opposite the outside screen on the other side of her victim. The Sullivans then took a second "Francis" under fire and it, too, crashed, this time off the bow of Santa Fe (CL-60), after being taken under fire by the cruiser, The Sullivans, and Stephen Potter.

The Sullivans rescued 118 Houston men on the 16th, to house them despite the small amount of survival emergency rations and stores until the 18th, when she transferred them to Boston. While the cripples were making their way to Ulithi, a Japanese surface force, going after the "bait," attempted to close the formation before TF 38 intervened to send them back northbound. The Sullivans transferred salvage gear to Houston and helped with the ship's many wounded. For his part in directing the destroyer's rescue and salvage attempts, Comdr. Ralph J. Baum received his first Silver Star.

On 20 October, The Sullivans joined TG 38.2 for scheduled air strikes on the central Philippines in support of the Leyte landings. At dawn of the 24th, reconnaissance located a Japanese surface force south of Mindoro, and the American carriers launched air strikes all day against the force from the mouth of the San Bernardino Straits. That morning, a Japanese air attack developed, and the Sullivans downed an "Oscar" fighter while in the carriers' screen. Enemy "snoopers" continued to make life uncomfortable for the American forces, and came around, as was their custom, in the late afternoon and after dusk.

By 25 October, enemy forces were sighted coming down from the north; TF 34 was formed, including the Sullivans, and headed north, following the carrier groups in TF 38. At dawn on the 25th, the carriers launched air strikes to harass the Japanese surface units, now some 60 miles north. At 1100, TF 34 reversed course, topped-off the short-legged destroyers with fuel, and formed fast striking group TG 34.5 with Iowa (BB-61), New Jersey (BB-63), three light cruisers and eight destroyers--The Sullivans included. The American force missed the Japanese by three hours, but ran across a straggler. Although the American forces claimed to have sunk an Atago-class cruiser, Japanese records fail to confirm this.

After sweeping south along the coast of Samar for cripples, The Sullivans and other units of TF 34.5 reported back to TG 38.2. The destroyer then remained in the Philippine area, screening the fast carriers and standing by on plane guard duties, through the early part of November. At dusk on 19 November, during one of the many air attacks fought off by The Sullivans during this tour with TG 38.2, the destroyer damaged a Betty by gunfire, watching it disappear over the horizon, smoking but stubbornly remaining airborne.

On 25 November, The Sullivans bagged a Japanese plane before the Task Group to which she was attached returned to Ulithi two days later. The destroyer undertook training exercises from 8 to 11 December, before rejoining TG 38.2 to screen them during air strikes on Manila and southern Luzon from 14 December. On the 17th, running low on fuel, The Sullivans

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commenced refueling but with the weather worsening minute by minute, the fueling operation was broken off. A full typhoon swept through the Fleet, with the wind clocked at an estimated 115 knots on the morning of 18 December. Several ships were damaged by the winds and water; three destroyers were sunk. The Sullivans' "lucky shamrock" painted on her funnel appears to have helped her good fortune. She emerged from the typhoon undamaged and commenced searching for men lost overboard from other ships on the 20th. The lingering bad weather resulted in cancellation of air strikes, and The Sullivans retired to Ulithi early on the day before Christmas.

After a brief cruise from Ulithi to Manus and back, escorting Iowa, The Sullivans sortied from Ulithi on 30 December bound for Formosa to screen TG 38.2's air strikes supporting the Luzon landings. Heavy seas broke off the plans to make a high speed tunein on the target during the night of 6 January 1945, and the ships were forced to make a fast run-in on 9 January. During the evening, the task force passed through Bashi Channel, and entered the South China Sea, making a run towards Cam Rahn Bay, Indochina, to conduct air strikes against shipping reportedly there. Three days later, carrier planes from TG 38.2 swept over Saigon and Cam Rahn Bay, hammering at Japanese shipping.

A bombardment group, TG 34.5, was formed soon after the conclusion of the air strikes in an attempt to go after possible cripples and dispatch them by surface gunfire. Accordingly, two battleships, two heavy cruisers, three light cruisers, and 15 destroyers formed TF 34.5 and headed in to Cam Rahn Bay, only to find it devoid of what they had hoped to find--Japanese shipping. Throughout the day, however, carrier pilots had better luck--they had a veritable "field day" with coastal shipping. During subsequent air strikes on Hainan Island and Hong Kong, The Sullivans served on radar picket station, ten miles ahead of the task group. When air strikes were launched against Formosa again on 21 January, the destroyer continued this duty.

A brief respite for upkeep at Ulithi in late January preceded the ship's deployment with TG 58.2 covering the carriers as they launched devastating air strikes against the Japanese homeland itself--against Tokyo and targets on Honshu on 16 and 17 February. From the 18th through 21st, American carrier-based air power struck at Japanese positions contesting the landings on Iwo Jima. Four days later, more strikes were scheduled for Tokyo, but bad weather forced cancellation of these plans. Retiring from the area, TF 58 fueled and commenced a high-speed run-in at Okinawa at noon on 28 February. Later that day, The Sullivans sighted a drifting mine and destroyed it with gunfire.

At dawn on 1 March, Hellcats, Avengers, Dauntlesses, and Helldivers pounded Japanese positions on Okinawa, the ships of the task force encountering no enemy opposition from sea or sky, and they soon retired towards Ulithi. The routine rest was, as usual, relatively short, for The Sullivans sortied twelve days later, bound for Kyushu and southern Honshu, supporting the Okinawa operations.

Once again screening for TG 58.2 on 14 March, The Sullivans stood by as the carriers launched air strikes as good weather aided the American air operations. But the broken cloud cover, however, served to aid the Japanese, allowing their aircraft to close within range of the American ships before a visual sighting could be taken. On 20 March, The Sullivans fueled from Enterprise (CV-6) at 1152, clearing the carrier's side five

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minutes later when a kamikaze alert sent the ships scurrying.

At 1439, The Sullivans commenced maneuvering to go alongside Enterprise again--this time to pick up a part for her FD radar antenna. Soon, however, another enemy air attack scattered the ships that could do so. As a line had not yet been thrown across to the carrier, The Sullivans bent on speed and cleared the carrier as other ships in the task group opened fire on the attackers. A Japanese plane plunged through the anti-aircraft fire and crashed Halsey Powell (DD-686) astern as she was fueling alongside Hancock (CV-19). The stricken destroyer lost steering control and started to veer across the big carrier's bow and only rapid and radical maneuvering on Hancock's part averted a collision.

The Sullivans soon closed Halsey Powell to render emergency assistance. She slowed to a stop eleven minutes later and lowered her motor whaleboat to transfer her medical officer and a pharmacist's mate to Halsey Powell when another kamikaze came out of the skies, apparently bent on crashing The Sullivans. At 1610, the destroyer's radar picked up the "Zeke" on its approach, and as soon as the motor whaler was clear of the water, The Sullivans leapt ahead with all engines ahead flank.

Bringing right full rudder, The Sullivans maneuvered radically while her 20- and 40- millimeter guns sent streams of shells at the "Zeke", which passed 100 feet over the masthead and escaped. Meanwhile, Halsey Powell steadied on course at five knots. The Sullivans maneuvered to keep the stricken ship's field of fire clear while she herself strove to be able to keep her own bearings open. Directed to proceed to Ulithi lagoon together, The Sullivans and Halsey Powell cleared the area soon thereafter.

Their troubles, however, were not yet over. At 0046 on the following day, 21 March, anxious lookouts noted flares to the east, where no "friendly" forces were known to be. The two ships steamed on, and at 0212 a plane closed from 18 miles. Like the proverbial "ships which pass in the night" unaware of each other's presence, the Japanese plane flew on, leaving the two American destroyers unmolested.

At 1045, The Sullivans picked up another plane, closing from 15 miles. Visually identified as a twin-engined "Francis," the plane was taken under fire at 10,000 yards with The Sullivans' 5-inch battery; Halsey Powell joined in, too, and within a few minutes, the "Francis" crashed into the sea about 3,000 yards abeam of The Sullivans. At 1250, a combat air patrol (CAP) Hellcat from Yorktown (CV-10) under direction from Halsey Powell, splashed another "Francis," and at 1320, a CAP Hellcat from Intrepid downed a "Nick" or "Dinah," directed by The Sullivans.

On 25 March, The Sullivans and Halsey Powell arrived at Ulithi, the former for upkeep prior to training exercises and the latter for repairs to the kamikaze damage. On 1 April, The Sullivans joined up with TG 58.2 (temporary), composed of Randolph (CV-15), Hunt (DD-874), and Tingey (DD-539), to perform plan-guard duties before returning to Ulithi on the 3rd for ammunition and water.

The warship rendezvoused with TF 58 off Okinawa, supporting the carriers supporting the landings on the island. On 15 April, the ship, while operating on radar picket duty, came under enemy air attack, with The Sullivans downing one plane and emerging unscathed. She continued with the task group, conducting radar picket patrols ranging from 12 to

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25 miles out from the main body of the force, through late April. At dawn on the 28th of April, she embarked war correspondents and a naval observer from Commandet, TF 58 staff, for Okinawa.

Rejoining TG 58.3 at 1600 on the 29th, she commenced fueling from Bunker Hill, but a kamikaze alert interrupted the replenishment, forcing The Sullivans to ring up speed and break away from the carrier's side. During the resultant action, Hazelwood (DD-531) and Haggard (DD-555) were both kamikazied.

From 29 April to 29 May, TG 58.3 continued to support the troops ashore on Okinawa. During this time period, the "Divine Wind," or Kamikaze, swept down from the north and relentlessly pressed suicidal attacks on American ships--everything from landing craft to battleships, destroyer escorts to carriers were fair game for those Japanese pilots determined to die for their emperor in a blaze of glory.

One such victim was Bunker Hill--crashed by a kamikaze at 1101 on 11 May. The Sullivans, in the screen, closed to render assistance, and, as in her earlier escort duty with stricken Houston, picked up survivors--some 166 in all--and proceeded with the task group to rendezvous with TG 50.8. She then transferred survivors and replenished her fuel bunkers to join Waldron (DD-699), Ault (DD-698) and Stephen Potter rejoining TG 58.3, then proceeding to conduct air strikes on Kyushu.

Three days later, in an air attack which spanned from 0700 to 0800, gallant old warrior Enterprise (CV-6) was kamikazied. In the melee, four enemy planes were shot down--one by the Sullivans--in what proved to be her last wartime operation in the Pacific theatre.

The Sullivans anchored at San Pedro Bay, Leyte Gulf, for recreation and upkeep on 1 June. She departed Leyte on the 20th, in company with the rest of DesDiv 103, for the west coast via Eniwetok and Pearl Harbor for a navy yard overhaul. The destroyer arrived at Mare Island on 9 July, and commenced her overhaul two days later, which lasted through the month of August. She thus missed the final fleet activity which rang down the curtain on the last act of the war. Worn down by harassment from the massed armada of American seapower off her coasts and by the unforeseen destructive power of two atomic bombs, Japan accepted the unconditional surrender terms of the Potsdam Declaration on 15 August and the war in the Pacific was over.

Meanwhile, The Sullivans completed her refit, conducted sea trials from 2 September and then underwent a tender overhaul alongside Shenandoah (AD-26) until 15 September. She then reported to Commander, 11th Naval District for placement in inactive reserve status. On the 15th, she unloaded all ammunition and proceeded to the Naval Repair Base, San Diego, for decommissioning.

On 10 January 1946, The Sullivans was placed out of commission in the Pacific Reserve Fleet at San Diego, and remained there until May 1951, nearly one year after Communist North Korean forces had invaded South Korea. Intervention on behalf of the southern Koreans by the United Nations included land, sea, and air forces of the United States. As part of the American naval buildup, many World War II vintage destroyers were placed back in commission. Activated at San Diego, The Sullivans was recommissioned on 6 July 1951.

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The destroyer operated locally in the San Francisco area until she headed south, transited the Panama Canal, and pressed on northward for Newport, R.I., to commence a tour of duty with the Atlantic Fleet. During the winter of 1951 and 1952, the warship conducted training and exercises off the east coast and into the Caribbean before preparing to deploy to the Far East in the fall of 1952.

The Sullivans departed Newport on 6 September for Sasebo, Japan, via Colon, Panama Canal Zone, San Diego, Pearl Harbor and Midway. She arrived at her Japanese destination on 10 October, only to get underway on the 11th to join Task Force 77 off the eastern shores of Korea. The destroyer served in the escort forces screening the fast carriers launching repeated air strikes to interdict supply lines and supporting United Nations' ground forces battling the Communists. Remaining on this duty until 20 October, The Sullivans then steamed to Yokosuka, Japan, for a brief refit.

After cruising to Buckner Bay, Okinawa, for a 5 to 14 November visit, The Sullivans rejoined TF 77 from 16 November to 3 December, continuing her screening activities and serving as plane guard. During this second tour with TF 77, The Sullivans supported the carriers as they made the northern-most stab at North Korean supply lines, approaching within 75 miles of the Soviet Russian base at Vladivostok, USSR. MIG-15 fighters approached the TF, but Combat Air Patrol Grumman F9F "Panthers" downed two of the attackers and damaged a third in the first over-water engagement between jet fighters.

On 5 December, the destroyer arrived at Sasebo for a refit which took until 14 December to complete. Departing on the latter date, she joined up with United Nations forces blockading Korean coasts--interdicting seaborne traffic and bombarding shore targets both to support Allied ground troops and interdict enemy supply operations. Arriving in Area "G" the following day, The Sullivans soon made contact with the enemy--on 16 December, the warship cruised off Songjin, an important rail terminus and supply center. She bombarded trains and tunnels at this key site north of Wonson, and for the next few days, conducted frequent shellings to prevent the daylight or nocturnal repairs of train tracks and buildings, destroying railroad flat cars, rolling stock and storage depots.

On Christmas Day 1952, The Sullivans scored direct hits on a railroad bridge but was taken under fire by Communist gunners ashore. Fifty rounds from Communist guns failed to touch the ship, although near-misses showered the warship's decks with shrapnel. Counter-battery fire from the ship was later estimated to have destroyed at least one of the troublesome shore batteries.

Her Korean tour soon at an end, The Sullivans sailed from Yokosuka on 26 January 1953 for Buckner Bay, en route to the United States. On her way home, the warship called at Hong Kong (7 to 11 February); Subic Bay (12 to 17 February); Singapore (21 to 22 February); Colombo, Ceylon (28 February to 2 March); Bombay, India (4 to 6 March); Bahrein (9 to 11 March); Aden (15 to 16 March); before turning northward up the Red Sea to the Suez Canal, transiting the canal and heading for Naples, Italy, and then Cannes, France. After a brief fueling stop at Gibraltar, from 1 to 2 April, the warship arrived at Newport on 11 April.

The destroyer conducted local operations out of Newport through the

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mid-summer of 1953, before she deployed to the Mediterranean for a tour of duty with the 6th Fleet. The Sullivans remained in this duty through the end of the year, and returned to her home port of Newport on 3 February 1954, for local operations off the east coast and into the Caribbean through May 1955. She again deployed to European and Mediterranean waters from May to August of that year before returning to Newport and a schedule of local operations.

The Sullivans continued this routine of east coast-Mediterranean alternating yearly deployments. One sidelight to the ship's name, her ship's historian noted that the first "obvious" attempt to claim the title of "Flagship of America's Irish Fleet," came on 17 March 1956 when she conducted a port visit to New York City. With her famous shamrock flying, the veteran destroyer played host to some 2,500 visitors who braved a blizzard to visit the ship.

Another deployment to the Mediterranean occupied the ship from April to July 1956. The Sullivans also cruised in the Red Sea, operating off Nassawa, Eritrea, with calls at Djibouti, Aden, and Bahrein. The warship returned to the United States via Gibraltar and underwent a regular overhaul in August which saw the installation of new sonar gear and other modern electronic equipment. She continued her regular deployments between the east coast and the Mediterranean through 1957.

The summer of 1958 saw troubled events occur in Lebanon, and President Dwight D. Eisenhower ordered American ships into the waters off the coast to land troops, to protect Americans, and stabilize the tense situation. Accordingly, The Sullivans provided support for the initial landings of Marines at Beirut, Lebanon; later, the warship returned to the United States for a three-month navy yard overhaul and subsequent refresher training in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Returning to Newport in March of 1959, The Sullivans joined a Hunter-Killer group based around Lake Champlain (CVS-39). Later deployed on a midshipman training cruise, combined with Anti-Submarine Warfare operations, the destroyer sailed for another Mediterranean deployment before returning to ASW exercises off the east coast for the last three months of 1959.

January through March of 1960 saw The Sullivans conducting local operations out of Newport, with an interspersed overhaul at Boston, before she headed south for ASRCO evaluations off Key West, Fla. During this deployment to southern climes, the warship participated in the rescue of five survivors from a crashed Air Force KC-97 Stratotanker off Cape Canaveral.

Participating in NATO fall exercises in the succeeding September, The Sullivans visited Lisbon, Portugal, prior to a quick trip through the Mediterranean, Suez Canal, and Red Sea, culminating in a cruise to Karachi, West Pakistan. In late October and into November, the veteran destroyer participated in Operation "Midlink III"--joint operations with Pakistani, Iranian, and British Navy units. Returning through the Mediterranean, The Sullivans conducted exercises with the French Navy and with the 6th Fleet arriving home in time for Christmas, 1960.

In January 1961, The Sullivans assisted in the sea trials of Abraham Lincoln (SSBN-602) off Portsmouth, N.H., before steaming south and taking part in Operation "Springboard." While in the Caribbean, she visited

Martinique, in the French West Indies. Before returning to Newport in early March, The Sullivans supported Marine landing exercises at Vieques, Puerto Rico, and then supported Hunter-Killer exercises upon her return to Newport.

In April, this group--Destroyer Squadron 20--received assignment to cover the Project Mercury Spaceshot. After intensive training in the waters off Florida and at Mayport, Florida, The Sullivans joined Lake Champlain and took station. On 5 May 1961, Comdr. Alan Shepard's space capsule passed overhead and splashed down--to be speedily rescued by helicopters from Lake Champlain.

The Sullivans then participated in a Midshipman's Cruise in June, combining this with fleet operations off the east coast, and visited New York and Halifax, Nova Scotia in the course of this cruise. While at the latter port, she played host to 2,000 people who visited the veteran destroyer on Canadian Navy Day.

From September 1961 to February 1962, The Sullivans underwent a major overhaul in the Boston Naval Shipyard, Boston, Mass. She proceeded to Guantanamo Bay soon thereafter, where she commenced training for her new duty, that of a School Ship. She subsequently served as a Model destroyer in which officer students could see and learn the fundamentals of proper destroyer operation; engineering exercises were conducted both at sea and in port, and the embarked students could garner ship-handling experience. Together with USS Kidd (DD-661), The Sullivans conducted the first Destroyer School Cruise to Guantanamo and Puerto Rican waters in May, 1962.

In August and September of that year, The Sullivans teamed with Abbot (DD-629) for the second school ship cruise in October, as the United States and Russia stood "eyeball to eyeball" over the issue of Soviet missiles in Cuba. The Sullivans joined American naval forces enforcing the blockade of Cuba, supporting the Guantanamo Naval Base. Returning to Newport after tensions had abated, the veteran destroyer spent Christmas in her home port, preparing for the third school cruise in January 1963.

On 7 January 1963, The Sullivans got underway from Newport, bound for Guantanamo Bay and San Juan, Puerto Rico. She returned to Newport for local destroyer school operations; the unfortunate loss of Thresher (SSN-593) off Boston on 10 April 1963 resulted in the destroyer's supporting the emergency investigations into the submarine's tragic loss.

For the remainder of 1963 and into the first few months of 1964, The Sullivans continued, as before, in the training of officer students. On 1 April 1964, the destroyer was transferred to the Naval Reserve training force, and her home port was accordingly changed to New York City, N.Y. Departing Newport on 13 April, the warship soon arrived at New York and took on her Selected Reserve crew. Her first cruise with the Reserves took the ship into the North Atlantic for ASW exercises and to Halifax, Nova Scotia for liberty. By the end of this relatively brief duty, she trained upwards of 500 Reserve officers and men, and visited such ports as St John, New Brunswick, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, and, in a warmer clime, Palm Beach, Florida.

On 7 January 1965, The Sullivans was decommissioned at Philadelphia Naval Shipyard, and inactivated. She remained in reserve, out of com-

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mission, through the later 1960's and into the 1970's. As of 15 March 1977, she was being processed for donation to the city of Buffalo, N.Y., along with decommissioned cruiser Little Rock (CG-4), to serve as a memorial.

The Sullivans received nine battle stars for World War II service and two for Korean service.

DIARY OF NAVAL SERVICE

Gerard M. Lehner

1942-1952

1942 Nov. 26 Enlisted.
 Dec. 12 Sworn in.
 Dec. 29 Went to Great Lakes NTS for Boot training.

1943 Mar. 13 Seven day Boot leave.
 Mar. 22 Returned to Out Going Unit.
 Mar. 26 Assigned to Electrical school at Perdue University.
 July 15 Graduated 2nd in a class of 198 as a 3rd Class Electricians Mate.
 July 17 Left for Consolidated Edison Co. in NYC with ten days delay in orders.
 July 27 Reported to Receiving Ship, Pier 92 and attended school at the Waterside plant at 40th St. and 1st Ave. in NYC. Consolidated Edison Co.
 Sept. 1 Finished course but still at Pier 92.
 Sept. 6 Left New York for Receiving Ship, Treasure Island, San Francisco. Assigned to DD537, USS The Sullivans.
 Sept. 30 Ship commissioned.
 Oct. 29 To San Diego for shake down cruise.
 Dec. 3 Back to San Francisco, taking on stores.
 Dec. 23 Left Frisco.
 Dec. 24 Some place between Frisco and Pearl Harbor.

1944 Jan. 1 Operating with carriers 100 miles west of Oahu, T.H.
 Jan. 16 Left Pearl Harbor for the war zone. In company with 2 first line carriers, Essex CV9 and Intrepid CV11, 1 converted cruiser carrier Cabot CVL22, 6 destroyers (2100 ton), 2 DEs, 3 tankers and the anti-aircraft cruiser San Diego.
 Jan. 20 About 170° west long. and 13°15' north lat. Attacking force, 6 first line carriers, 6 converted cruiser carriers, 8 baby flat tops, 16 battleships, 95 destroyers, 8 DEs, 12 cruisers, tankers and transports - 65000 to 75000 Marines and soldiers + landing craft. About 300 combat ships all told, heading for Kwajalien atoll in the Marshall Islands. We are to protect the carriers whose planes will attack Roi Island. Our position will be NW of atoll about 100 miles away - just outside the Jap air reconnaissance patrols.
 Jan. 21 Refueled from tankers. Got 25 gals. of ice cream. The after hose pulled loose and a Warrant officer and 4 guys were covered with oil. Approx. position is 174° west longitude and 5°30' north latitude.
 Jan. 22 Crossed the Equator and was initiated into the "Royal Order of The Deep" and am now a full fledged "SHELLBACK". Some fun; will have to tell you about it. 179° west longitude and 00°00' latitude.
 Jan. 23 Steaming as usual - sub contact - lost it. Nothing unusual.
 Jan. 24 Steaming as usual. Sighted other Task Force, 3 carriers and 7 cans, on the horizon. Had sub contact at night, chased it, lost it.
 Jan. 25 Rendezvoused with 3 new battleships (Alabama, North Carolina and South Dakota) and 6 cans. Refueled from tankers. Sub contact at night. Guess he's following us. Hope we get him.
 Jan. 26 Proceeding. Supposed to attack on 29 Jan. Troops to land on D day, 31 January.
 Jan. 27 Joined by heavy cruiser, Indianapolis, carrying Admiral Halsey. 200 miles from Jap. air base - expect attack. No attack.
 Jan. 28 Refueled from the South Dakota.

1944 Jan. 29 G.Q. sounded at 0130. Burns (DD588) sank 3 small cargo ships and a tanker, quite a sight burning on the horizon. G.Q. sounded again at 0330, Jap planes approached to within 10 miles but didn't find us.

Jan. 30 Battleships bombarded island from dawn 'til 1330. Planes bombed in between shells. Still no sign of heavy opposition.

Jan. 31 Demolition teams blew up reefs at 0230. First wave landed at about 0430. Planes out bombing again.

Feb. 1 Main body of Marines and soldiers landed on Majuro, Kwajalien, Roi and Namur. Encountered resistance on Namur, Kwajalien and Roi islands. The rest were seized without much fighting. Listened to the men in the tanks on the radio, real interesting.

Feb. 2 Marines cleaning up.

Feb. 3 Submarine patrol.

Feb. 4 Dropped anchor in Majuro atoll - more ships here than at Pearl.

Feb. 5 Still at anchor. Islands all around us are exceptionally beautiful. Marines only encountered 3 Japs on this atoll. Cleaned out Roi and Kwajalien. Going swimming at 1300 - water is 82° and clear as crystal.

Feb. 6-10 Remained at anchor. Swam every day. Took on fuel and stores and received mail from the States. Hell of a lot of ships here.

Feb. 11 Lost a man today, Johnson. He was alone in the Motor Whale Boat Inshore. Just disappeared! Presumably drowned.

Feb. 12 Got under way for a two day air strike at Truk, same group as before.

Feb. 13 Steaming north about 300 miles from the Marshalls.

Feb. 14 Refueled about 100 miles from Eniwetok atoll. Attacking force is three carrier task groups in the form of a triangle with 58.3 at apex nearest Truk, 58.1 south and 58.2 (our group) north. Feb. 17 is D day. D-1 we go in at 25 knots to a position 60 miles from Truk. Waves of planes will leave every 15 minutes starting at 0800 until 1800. Move out at 25 knots and back again on D day. Marines will land on Eniwetok atoll on D day.

Feb. 15 Sixty-five miles from Truk (the Caroline Islands). Launched the first wave of planes at 0800, got them asleep. G.Q. all day 'til 1800. General alarm at 2130. Jap torpedo planes, can't see them but they are there. Plenty of firing. Intrepid took a "fish" (torpedo) about 0100. Killed a few men and knocked out her steering engine and rudder. At 0130 The Sullivans, 3 other destroyers, 2 cruisers and the Cabot(CVL) ceased operations and started to escort the Intrepid back to Majuro. She's too good a target without her after steering gear. GLAD! Getting kind of hot right there. Someone said the "fish" that got her went right under us. Too close for comfort.

Feb. 17 Heading for Majuro. The sea is running high. We go over one wave and through two.

Feb. 18 Still rough. Some of the bow plates on the Steven Potter DD538 collapsed. Sure is rough. Our planes sank two cruisers and a can at Truk. 14 ships on fire, transport sunk, ammunition ship blown up, 17 planes shot down and 40 destroyed on the ground by the Intrepids pilots. She lost six planes fires started all over the island.

Feb. 19 Still steaming toward Majuro. Not too rough now. Riding over all the waves. Supposed to arrive at 1730 tomorrow. Wonder how the guys we left to continue the attack on Truk made out. They must have caught hell. Glad we pulled out!

Feb. 20 Still steaming.

Feb. 21 Entered Majuro atoll.

1944 Feb. 22 Got the results of the Truk raid. 201 Jap planes and 23 Jap ships. The Intrepid was the only ship of ours that was damaged. Remain at Majuro. The rest of our task force & those at Truk raided the Marianas Islands. They did a good job. Made EM2.

Feb. 23 Stayed in Majuro. Went swimming, Officers & Chiefs had a beer party on shore. They can hardly move now because of sunburn.

Feb. 28 Left Majuro for Pearl Harbor. Will get camouflage paint and sound gear repair.

Feb. 29 Steaming with a light brown haze (optimum fuel use).

Mar. 3 Arrived Pearl Harbor, liberty and recreation. Camp Andrews rest area. No camouflage, all hands scraped hull instead.

Mar. 15 Left Pearl Harbor for Majuro.

Mar. 20 Arrived Majuro, refueled and resupplied.

Mar. 22 Left Majuro bound for Palau Island, 1000 miles west of Truk, for a 3 day air strike. Force is larger than the Truk raid.

Mar. 23 Steaming with a light brown haze. Crossed the International Date Line, it is now the 25th.

Mar. 25 Picket duty all night.

Mar. 26 Sighted by Jap snooper. Our position and course has probably been relayed to Jap subs. Expect sub attack tonight. Owens DD536 drops depth charges on sound contact about 2100. Might have been a sub. Nothing comes of it. Refueled.

Mar. 27 101 ships in force; 6 new wagons, 5 CV's, 6 CVL's, 4 CVE's, 12 heavy cruisers, 4 light cruisers, 60 cans, 4 tankers. Plan is for 500 fighters and 500 bombers and torpedo planes to hit Palau on K day and K+1 and K+2. TG 50.1 will go north and hit Yap on K+2 then pull out after that. Planes are going to mine the harbors and passages - hope to bottle any ships in there. First strike is 72 fighters to destroy planes in the air and on the ground. Next strike are mine layers then bombers and planes. K day is 30 March. We are supposed to bomb some other island between Palau and Truk on the way back. Sighted again today by Jap snooper. Position and course again given to subs. Another sound contact, Lost it.

Mar. 28 Sea is very smooth, almost like glass; no danger of sub attack in this sea. Topped off all fuel tanks from CVE (Santee).

Mar. 29 Shot down a BETTY (twin engine bombing and torpedo plane). All quiet until 2100. Enemy planes attacked, not many. Group shot down 3 or 4 and the rest left.

Mar. 30 K day - first wave goes in, strafes - 2 light cruisers and 13 merchant ships in harbor. Second wave leaves. Waves leave about every 3/4 of an hour. 1600 activity ceases. Base destroyed, all ships sunk - buildings and hangers burned or blasted - planes burned - airfield is in shambles. Nothing left to bomb or strafe, harbor entrance is mined. Supposed to pull out tonight and head for Yap. 2000 - attacked by high altitude bombers - dropped one bomb and beat it. Patrol planes intercepted 11 torpedo planes, shot down 7, 5 escaped. Numerous contacts at different distances. Our Combat air Patrol (CAP) splashed 9 dive bombers. We're bombed again for about 15 minutes. Near miss on the San Francisco.

Mar. 31 Patrol planes shot down enemy planes 18 miles astern of us. Rendezvoused with 58.1 which hit Yap. Started back.

Apr. 1 Hit Wolei Island all day long. Haven't heard any results of the raid.

Apr. 2 Proceeding to a fueling rendezvous.

Apr. 8 Arrive Majuro atoll, refuel, reprovision, take on ammunition and have a beer party on the island.

1944 Apr. 13 Left Majuro for Hollandia with Task Groups 58.1, 58.2, 58.3. 50,000 troops. D day is 21 April.

Apr.14-20 Routine steaming - no alarms.

Apr. 21 First attack sent in.

Apr. 22 Nothing all day. GO at 1930 - planes dropped flares all around us, didn't find us. Sent up night fighters to get them - didn't. Lit up carriers to retrieve planes, it looked like Coney Island; still the Japs didn't come in.

Apr. 23 Lamp lighters again.

Apr. 24 Still here.

Apr. 25 Saw Army planes. Still working over Hollandia.

Apr. 26 Picket duty. 30 miles ahead of TG. Radar on the Miller DD535 is out, ours is screwed up - got lost.

Apr. 27 Found the TG again. Heading for Truk. Going to bomb it again. Force shot down 3 BETTYS, CAP got two, Gatling DD671 got one.

Apr. 28 Going to Truk, planes strike tomorrow morning and bomb all day today and the 29th and 30th. On May 1 we proceed with the battlewagons to Ponape Island and bombard it.

Apr. 29 Dawn GO. Carriers launch first strike at 0747. General Alarm. 15 torpedo planes heading for us. CAP shot down 10, 5 got through to us. Quite a show. I was in the forward repair party and replaced the injured 2nd loader on the starboard forward 40mm AA gun. He was flash burned from the firing of #2 5"/38 of the main battery. I worried about taking his place but was so busy passing shells that I do not even remember the #2 gun firing. The torpedo planes come in real low, shells exploding and tracers all over. We, the task group, took care of them, only two dropped their fish and they didn't hit anything. Three of them were hit by 5" shells and disappeared in balls of fire. Two were set afire by 40mm and 20mm. They crashed in the ocean. Picked up one of our pilots today. His motor was hit by AA fire over Truk. He made it back to the TG but his engine quit. He says he saw our SHAMOCK and ditched near us. Expecting an attack tonight. GO but planes driven off by the CAP. Two men killed and ten wounded on the Tingey DD539 by our own shrapnel.

May 1 Shelled Ponape.

May 2 Arrive Majuro, our semi-permanent base.

May 11 Leave Majuro Atoll heading for Manus Island in the Bismark archipelago.

May 19 Scuttlebutt was wrong. We're hitting Marcus Island north east of the Marianas. Japanese call it Minami Tori Shima. Destroyed a few planes on the ground and wrecked installations. Lost about three planes.

May 23 Hit Wake Island - caused considerable damage, no losses.

May 25 Spotted two torpedo wakes - didn't hit any ships. Spent whole day looking for sub.

May 27 Return to Majuro.

June 6 Leave Majuro. Supporting the invasion of the Marianas (Guam, Saipan and Tinian), 200 ships taking part. Supposed to bomb Tokyo 10 days after the capture of the islands. Captain announced the capture of Rome and the invasion of France today. Good dope.

June 7 D-day is 15 June. Make first air strikes on Saipan on D-3. We have 14 wagons, 15 carriers, about 15 cruisers and 146 cans. Innumerable cargo, transport and landing craft. Also have support of land based bombers. Japs have about 1300 planes available including those from the Empire, the Phillipines, Truk, Yap and Palau. We have more planes than that with us. The Jap Fleet may be operating south of the Phillipines. Who knows, they may come up. Marines will land on Saipan first, then on Tinian and Guan on different days.



1944 June 8 Met cruisers and wagons. Our TG 58.2 consists of 4 carriers (2 first line CV's, 2 CVEs), 3 heavy cruisers, 2 battlewagons (Iowa & Jersey) and 9 cans.

June 9 Refueled from tankers. CAP shot down a BETTY.

June 10 Steaming with a light brown haze. CAP got another BETTY.

June 11 Topped off tanks from the New Jersey. CAP got a HELEN. We are now 30 miles ahead of the group acting as scouts and fighter directors. Up to us and the planes with us to intercept enemy planes and surface craft. 200 fighters going in today to try to neutralize Jap aircraft on Guam, Saipan and Tinian. First bombing strike goes in tomorrow. 5 other cans with us - 10 miles apart fanwise. GO at 0300. Formation of Jap planes flew over, we opened fire but didn't hit any. They attacked the main force. Tracers and gunfire make a good show from 30 miles away. They got one of them. A great ball of flame. Looked like sunset on the horizon. Signalman tells me we're only 12 miles from the group. Seems we pull back for night picket duty. First strike launched at 0430.

June 12 Still 30 miles ahead. Waiting for word about first strike. No results yet. Return to force, acting as liaison between 58.2 and 58.3. All quiet.

June 13 About 20 miles from Saipan, can see mountain tops. Smoke very discernable. Picked up a downed pilot this morning, also picked up 31 Japanese from an AK (a small coastal freighter) that was caught outside the harbor and dive bombed. Some of them are Korean and seem to be very young. Battleships are shelling islands now. Caught 30 Jap merchant ships in there; not bombing them - catch them when they come out. Don't want to mess up the harbor, we'll need it later. Group has sunk 8 AKs, 1 DD and 6 corvette type ships. No air opposition today. Destroyed about 40 aircraft on the ground. Bombing defenses in preparation for amphibious landings. Proceeded to within 10 miles of Saipan to transfer prisoners to the Indianapolis. The whole island, except one end, seems to be on fire. Ammunition dumps are exploding and fuel supplies and towns are blazing. Noticed quite a few ships in the harbor intact and others along the shore burning and on their sides. We are laying off Saipan with the New Jersey and the Iowa for the night. Hope some of the ships leave the harbor.

June 14 Only 1 sampan left the harbor last night. The Hickox DD673 sank it with 2 shots. With the carriers again about 25 miles from Saipan and Tinian. the carrier Wasp. Saw Ed Lebedin, a buddy from Perdue Electrical school. The fighter strike on the 11th got 127 planes and a few merchant ships. Reports indicate that Jap fleet of 4 BBs, 6 CVs and 8 CAs are heading our way. They should arrive sometime the day after tomorrow.

June 15 TG 58.1 and 58.4 leave tomorrow for Bonin Island, one day air strike. We fuel tomorrow. Reports say Jap fleet is definitely heading for the Marianas. Our subs have been sent to intercept. Air search is extended to cover possible approaches. Expect action on 17 June. Troops land between 0830 and 0900. GO at 1930, just after dark. Planes attack our formation but CAP and antiaircraft fire drive them off. Others hit 58.3 that is just over the horizon. Talk about fireworks! Sky is filled with tracers and gun flashes. Five planes burst into huge blossoms of flame. No ships are hit. Jap fleet arrives sometime tomorrow. They will have to cross our sub line, hope they get hit hard there.

June 16 Troops meeting heavy resistance on Saipan. Transferred a few pilots from the Bunker Hill to the "Big E" (Enterprise). Picked up a man that fell off a carrier. We are going after the Jap Fleet. Should meet them at midnight. We went out to investigate a surface target at 2200. Fired at target but it submerged. Spent three hours dropping depth charges on sound contacts. Don't know if we hit anything.

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1944 June 17 0400 and nothing doing yet. Dawn GO at 0515. Maybe something will turn up then. A little nervous. don't like the prospect of a real big surface engagement.

June 18 Having trouble finding the Jap Fleet. We should contact them tonight according to latest reports. We have a battle line consisting of 7 wagons, 12 heavy cruisers and 20 cans. The 8 carriers, 6 light and AA cruisers, with their screens, are about 20 miles behind the battle line. We're with the carriers.

June 19 Contacted the Jap fleet! No surface but plenty of air action. GO from 1030 until 1600. Dive bombers, fighters and torpedo planes from enemy carriers. We (the TG) shot down 150 to 200 planes, about half the Jap carrier force. Our pilots are calling it "The Great Marianas Turkey Shoot".

June 20 Quiet all day. Very low on fuel. Search planes spotted the Jap Force at 1530, 2 groups - 8 carriers plus a couple of cruisers and cans. Don't know where the battleships are. All our planes went after them. Waiting for results. Got report that one of our submarines sunk a carrier. 2000 - planes are not back and no word either. The Bunker Hill and the Wasp were slightly damaged by near misses yesterday. GO just after 2000 to recover planes - very dark. Many planes cracked up on the carriers and in the water, others ran out of gas before getting back. DDs are busy picking up pilots and air crews.

June 21 Dawn GO. Sent another strike after the Jap ships. Yesterdays sorties sank quite a few and damaged others. Picked up three men in a rubber raft. They had run out of gas. Big carriers and cans joining the battle line. Going after the enemy fleet.

June 22 Enemy fleet eluded us. We're heading for Enewitok. Investigated pilots reports of two rubber rafts - empty - no identification.

June 23 Report of attack on enemy fleet. 1 carrier sunk, 1 carrier left burning and probably sunk, 1 carrier hit by 3 or 4 1000# bombs, 3 tankers sunk, 2 burning, 1 DD sunk, 2 badly damaged, cruisers and wagons damaged. We shot down 350 planes altogether. We're going to hit Pagan Island and then return to Enewitok.

June 24 Hit Pagan Island.

June 27 Arrive Enewitok. Island is really battle scarred.

June 29 Beer party on shore. Played baseball - stiff tonight

June 30 Left to strike Chichi and Iwo Jima on 4 July, return and then to Saipan to relieve force supporting landing operations. Love and Carberry transferred Stateside yesterday.

July 1-2 Steaming with a light brown haze.

July 3 TG 58.1 sent in a fighter strike, they shot down 25 planes, destroyed 5 BETTYS and 7 ZEKES on the ground.

July 4 Dawn GO. Sent in first wave of planes. 2nd wave went in about 1000. We, plus three other cans and the cruisers Boston and Canberra, made up one bombardment group. 7 cans and 4 light cruisers made up the other group. Commenced bombarding at 1515, really raised hell. The SULLY definitely destroyed 5 BETTYS and probably 8 more. Scored hits on a small cargo ship. Range throughout between 14000 and 18000 yards. Very profitable day.

July 5 Dispatched to pick up two pilots in rubber rafts 2 miles from Pagan Island. Got to island just after dark but the pilots had been picked up by an SOC float plane. The Old Man decided to investigate the anchorages of the island. Stood in to about 1½ miles and circled the island. Could see very plainly - full moon. Island has two active volcanos. Most of these islands are of volcanic origin. Anchorages are empty and we didn't draw any fire. Surprising.

1944 July 6 Normal. Discovered leak in after bulkhead. Sending in air strike against Guam in the morning and then we're going to bombard. We didn't bombard.

July 7 Just another air strike.

July 8 Starting tomorrow, Guam is to be bombed and shelled until 21 July. Invade that day. We stick with the carriers again.

July 9-11 Boy! Is this boring. Nothing happening at all.

July 11-20 Same stuff. Bomb and shell every day.

July 21 Invade Guam

July 23 Put in to Saipan for one night. Carried reporters from carrier to shore. Watched Marine or Army artillery shooting at Tinian, next to Saipan.

July 24 Headed for Palau and Yap.

July 25 Hit Yap and Palau. Tinian invaded today.

July 26-27 Bomb Yap and Palau.

July 28 Return to Enewitok for major overhaul. Will have steady work repairing and up dating things we couldn't work on at sea.

Aug. 30 Leave Enewitok with carrier task force. Supposed to raid Palau and then Mindanao in the Philippines. Invade Palau 15 Sept.

Sept. 1 Joined carriers

Sept. 7 Launched fighter strike against Palau.

Sept. 8 Launched bombers to hit Palau. Cruisers and cans sank 46 sampans.

Sept. 9 Launched strike against Mindanao.

Sept. 10 Mindanao empty. Moved up to Samar and Negros.

Sept. 12 Struck Samar and Negros, between Mindanao and Luzon. Not too far from Manila.

Sept. 13-14 Struck Panay, Cebu, Samar and Negros. Destroyed 500 odd planes and 100 odd ships.

Sept. 15 Invade Palau. Fire in the galley! A 440 volt power panel blew up. The bakers were mixing dough for bread and the concentration of flour dust was high enough to become explosive.

Sept. 15-20 Steaming north.

Sept. 21 Struck Luzon. Sank ships in Manila Bay and Cavite. Strafed and bombed Clark and Nichols fields.

Sept. 22 Hit Luzon again. More ships sunk and planes destroyed.

Sept. 23 Sea very rough; barometer dropping. A typhon is coming.

Sept. 24 Ship is taking 35 to 40 degree rolls; the whole force is running away from the low pressure area.

Sept. 25 Out of storm - nice and clear, water very calm. Struck Cebu, Negros and Samar.

Sept. 28 Tied up along side the Massachusetts off Saipan.

Sept. 29 Left Saipan for Ulithi in the western Carolines.

Sept. 30 Pretty rough. The Miller (DD 535) lost a man over the side.

Oct. 1 Arrived Ulithi. Tied up to the Iowa. Moved to anchorage.

Oct. 2 Moored to Dixie, a destroyer tender.

Oct. 3 C100 - winds and waves increased, broke away from the Dixie and dropped anchor. Harbor filled with drifting small craft. Anchor dragging. Going to put to sea and ride out the storm. Boy! It's rough; rolling 48°. There isn't a dry spot on the ship. All kinds of loose gear rolling and sliding around. We thought we had secured everything for rough weather.

Oct. 4 Back to anchorage in Ulithi. Still very rough.

Oct. 6 Underway to strike Okinawa Jima. It's between Formosa and Japan, about 450 miles from each place.

Oct. 7 Everything lashed down.

Oct. 9 Calm at last. We have 10 Essex class carriers and 10 CVEs, 10 BBs, and innumerable CAs, CLs, AACLs and DDs.

Oct. 10 Launched strikes - sank a lot of ships, downed many planes - no opposition.

1944

Oct. 11 Fueled.

Oct. 12 Attacked Formosa. Downed 124 planes, 94 destroyed on the ground - sank 16 AKs. Destroyed aluminum and alcohol plants, set hangers, warehouses and barracks afire. Cabots fighters just shot down 6 BETTY's approaching our group. Staying here tonight and resuming strikes on Formosa tomorrow. Lost 22 of our planes. GQ sounded at 1800 and lasted until 0300, shot down about 10 planes.

Oct. 13 Attacked Formosa again. Score for two days - 221 airborne planes, 125 on the ground, 15 AKs, 8 sub chasers and 11 small craft. GQ at 1800 again, attacked a few times by torpedo planes. Canberra hit. Dead in the water, has to be towed. TG 38.1 staying here tonight - fighter sweeps in the morning. B29s bomb tomorrow. TG 38.4 attacks Luzon.

Oct. 14 Quite all day until 1700. GQ until 2400 - torpedo planes. No hits.

Oct. 15 Escorted Houston to TG 38.3 to take Canberras place. Escorting Canberra to Ulithi in company with Miller, 2 other DDs, Cabot, Sante Fe and Mobile. Canberra behind tug. GQ 1700 - 2330, torpedo planes again. Houston is hit by three "fish".

Oct. 16 Houston towed by Boston, very low in water. Our force consists of Cabot, 9 DDs, 4 cruisers and 2 crippled cruisers. Speed 4 knots. We'll be within easy flying range of Formosa's land based planes for three more days. Units of Jap fleet are out looking for us. TG 38.2 & 38.3 are standing by in the northeast. It looks as though we're being used as bait. 1400 - GQ, twin engined torpedo planes. Houston hit again, sinking slowly. We, SULLY, got two more planes. Picked up 15 men, three dead. Went alongside Houston to take some men off. Cabot and Cowpens fighters intercept 60 plane raid. Cabot pilots shot down 30 and Cowpens got 19. The rest left.

Oct. 17 We have over 100 men from the Houston, she has a scuttling crew aboard but is still afloat. Another man died. Buried with military honors.

Oct. 18 Transferred survivor to the Boston. Cabot got two more BETTYs.

Oct. 19 Out of range of Jap planes. Houston and Canberra both under tow. Guess we'll get them back.

Oct. 20 Rejoined TG 38.2. Sent in air strikes to support Leyte landings.

Oct. 24 Attacked by enemy planes. The SULLY shot down an OSCAR.

Oct. 25 Head north with the carriers to intercept an enemy force reported there. Refuel from BB. Joined with Iowa, New Jersey, 3 CLs and 7 other DDs to race back south to aid the landing force which is under attack by Japanese surface units. Too late! Did help sink a straggling cruiser.

Oct. 28 Screening carriers. Many air attacks. Stay in the Phillipine area.

Nov. 19 Damaged an attacking BETTY today. It was smoking but went out of sight without crashing.

Nov. 25 Shot down another plane.

Nov. 27 Returned to Ulithi. Will conduct training exercises for the next three weeks.

Dec. 14 Leave Ulithi with TG 38.2 to launch air strikes at Manila and southern Luzon.

Dec. 17 Refueling - bad weather. Cease refueling.

Dec. 18 Hit by a full typhon. Winds today 115 knots. Seas running extremely high. We lose sight of the carriers in the troughs of the waves.

Dec. 20 Searching for men from the Spence, the Hull and the Monaghan. All three cans rolled over and sank during the storm. Men also washed overboard from other ships. One carrier had its flight deck peeled back and a DD lost its #1 5" mount. I'll worry about storms from now on. Thought these cans were made to stay afloat. Picked up very few men. Must have lost seven or eight hundred men from the three ships.

1944 Dec. 24 Arrive Ulithi - refuel and take on ammo.
 Dec. 25 Christmas. Underway with Tingey and Iowa for Manus Harbor. Iowa going into dry dock, something wrong with a strut bearing. Belly robbers gave us as good a Christmas Dinner as they could manage.
 Dec. 26 We raised Manus. Too late to enter harbor.
 Dec. 27 Enter harbor at 0700. Signalmen say the island has crocodiles, malaria and elephantitis. Left Manus without the Iowa for Ulithi at 1715. Jap subs out about 60 miles. A big invasion force left just before us. LCIs, LSTs and transports.
 Dec. 29 Back in Ulithi.
 Dec. 30 Leave in company with TG 38.1, 2, and 3 to conduct air strikes against Formosa and Luzon in preparation for invasion of Luzon on Jan. 9th.

1945 Jan. 2-3 Strike Formosa, weather very rough. Cease operations here. Pretty cold. Latitude 22^{ON}. Finding out which heaters don't work. Haven't used them since I don't know when.
 Jan. 4-6 Strike Luzon air fields with our fighters. Raiders land in Lingayen Gulf.
 Jan. 7-9 Blanket Luzon air fields with our fighters. Main force lands in Lingayen Gulf. 7000 ships and 54 admirals.
 Jan. 10 Enter China Sea up around northern Luzon, 70 miles from Formosa.
 Jan. 11 Heading south - sweeping the China Sea of enemy shipping. Going down to CamRanh Bay in Indo-China. Jap fleet units supposed to be there.
 Jan. 15 Still with the carriers. Air strikes on Hainan Island and Hong Kong.
 Jan. 21 Hit Formosa.
 Jan. 23 Back to Ulithi for upkeep.
 Feb. 16 With TG 58.2 carriers. The admirals changed, the air groups changed, the TG numbers changed and we just turned our hats around and stayed. Air strikes at Tokyo and other targets on Honshu Island.
 Feb. 17 Continue air strikes on Japanese homeland.
 Feb. 18-21 Support landings on Iwo Jima.
 Feb. 25 Supposed to hit Tokyo again but bad weather cancels flying.
 Feb. 28 Refuel and head for raid on Okinawa. Destroy a drifting mine with 20mm fire.
 Mar. 1 Planes attack Okinawa. No opposition.
 Mar. 2 Back to Ulithi.
 Mar. 14 Bound for Kyushu and Honshu, supporting Okinawa invasion.
 Mar. 20 Refuel from the Enterprise. 1439 - attacked by suicide planes. One crashes on the stern of the Halsey Powell. She has lost her steering room. Stern under water and #5 mount is awash. We send Dr. Bassan and Doc McCrae over in the motor whale boat to help with the wounded. 1610 - under attack again. Halsey Powell can do 5 knots. We are ordered take her back to Ulithi.
 Mar. 21 1045 - Attacked by a FRANCIS - shot it down. 1250 - CAP from Yorktown splashes 2 more BETTYS under our fighter direction.
 Mar. 25 In Ulithi.
 Apr. 1 Out with TG 58.2 - plane guard duty.
 Apr. 3 Back to Ulithi for fuel and ammo.
 Apr. 15 With carriers off Okinawa. Shot down another airplane.
 Apr. 28 Took correspondent into Okinawa. In harbor all night under a smoke screen. Jap bombers just drop bombs in the smoke. We can't see to shoot at them. Bad situation.
 Apr. 29 Refueled from the Bunker Hill. Air attacks again. Two cans hit by suicide planes.
 May 11 Bunker Hill hit by suicide plane. We pick up 166 men.
 May 20 Enterprise hit by suicide plane. We shot down another Jap plane.
 June 1 Anchored in San Pedro Bay in Leyte Gulf.

1945	June 20	Leave the war zone for the West Coast via Eniwetok and Pearl Harbor. Scheduled for complete overhaul at Mare Island yard. Leave and liberty. First in a year and a half.												
	July 1	Advanced to Electrician Mate 1/C												
	July 9	Arrive Mare Island, California. Home for 30 days leave.												
	Aug. 15	War ends as I'm on the way back to Mare Island.												
	Sept. 1	Sea trials after overhaul and refit.												
	Sept. 15	To San Diego for decommissioning.												
1946	Jan. 10	The SULLY is taken out of commission and left mothballed in San Diego.												
	Jan. 25	I leave for Lido Beach, NY, with ten days delay in orders for discharge. Discharged from the Navy.												
1951	Jan. 19	Received orders to report for active duty on 15 March.												
	Mar. 14	Passed physical; back on inactive duty as ICI. Waiting orders to active duty. Married with 2 children.												
	Apr. 16	Ordered to Brooklyn Navy Yard Receiving Ship.												
	Apr. 17	Transferred to Green Cove Springs, FL, assigned to USS Snowden DE 246. She's in the Mothball fleet. Have to get her ready for sea.												
	June 1	Not a water tight hatch on the ship. All top side cables and electric boxes rotted out. Telephone jack boxes the same. Mothballing, in our case, was not a success. Sea trials to check operation of equipment. First time I ever saw Gunners Mates afraid to fire guns. Put a thirty foot lanyard on the 3" open mounts and stood behind the deck house to fire them. Have two breech mechanisms for six 20mm guns.												
	July 1	Proceed to new home port, Newport, RI. Shake down and training. With the exception of the Captain and one Chief Motor Mac, the entire crew is made up of unhappy recalled reserves. The Snowden is a straight diesel ship. Everything smells of diesel oil.												
		Cruise to Guantanamo, Cuba, for exercises.												
		Back to Newport.												
		Landing exercises with Marines at Vieques Island off Puerto Rico.												
		Donkey boiler burns up. Bearings on one main engine burn up. Into Guantanamo for Court of Inquiry and temporary repairs.												
		More training and ASW exercises.												
	Dec. 12	Home for 15 days leave. Christmas at home with my wife and children.												
	Dec. 28	Back aboard Snowden. Training cruises, exercises, can't keep up with cans. Our flank speed is 20 knots. Heard the "SULLY" is back in commission.												
		Made us escorts for fast logistical ships (ammo and supply); can't keep up with them either.												
		We now do figure eights for antisubmarine patrols. No one has to wait for us this way.												
1952	April	Into the Philadelphia yards for major overhaul. Replace all top side hatches and cables and boxes. Replace entire mast with new mast and cabling. Replace open 3" mounts with automatic threes.												
	MAY 7	Discharged! Head for home from Philadelphia.												
Decorations		<table border="0"> <tr> <td>combat Action Ribbon</td> <td>NY State Conspicuous Service Cross</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Good Conduct Medal</td> <td>Philippine Liberation Medal-2 Battle Stars</td> </tr> <tr> <td>American Theater Medal</td> <td>Philippine Independence Medal</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Asiatic Pasific Theater Medal-9 Battle Stars</td> <td>Meritorious Mast</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Victory Medal</td> <td>Philippine Presidential Unit Citation</td> </tr> <tr> <td>National Defence Service Medal</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	combat Action Ribbon	NY State Conspicuous Service Cross	Good Conduct Medal	Philippine Liberation Medal-2 Battle Stars	American Theater Medal	Philippine Independence Medal	Asiatic Pasific Theater Medal-9 Battle Stars	Meritorious Mast	Victory Medal	Philippine Presidential Unit Citation	National Defence Service Medal	
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* NOT FOR PUBLICATION *

PARTICIPATED IN THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS AGAINST THE ENEMY DURING OPERATIONS WITH THE FIFTH FLEET AND THIRD FLEET:

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1. Occupation of the Marshall Islands, January 29, 1944, to February 16-17, 1944.
 2. First Carrier Borne Air Strikes against Truk, Caroline Islands, February 16-17, 1944.
 3. First Carrier Borne Air Strikes against Palau, Yap, and Woleai, Caroline Islands, March 29, 1944 to April 1, 1944.
 4. Occupation of Hollandia and Aitape, New Guinea, April 22 to April 29, 1944.
 5. Carrier Borne Air Strikes against Truk, Caroline Islands, April 29 to May 1, 1944.
 6. Shore Bombardment of Ponape, Caroline Islands, May 1, 1944.
 7. Carrier Borne Air Strikes against Marcus Island, May 19-20, and against Wake Island, May 23, 1944.
 8. Capture and Occupation of the Marianas Islands, commencing June 11, 1944.
 9. Air Action with the Japanese Fleet, June 19-20, 1944. Later known as the First Battle of the Eastern Philippines.
 10. First Carrier Borne Air Strikes against Chichi Jima in the Bonin Islands, and Iwo Jima in the Kawan Islands, July 3-5, 1944.
 11. Shore Bombardment of Iwo Jima, Kawan Islands, July 4, 1944.
 12. Carrier Borne Air Strikes against Guam and Rota, Marianas Islands, July 7-21, 1944, in support of amphibious landings and operations on Guam.
 13. Carrier Borne Air Strikes against the Palau Islands, July 26-27, 1944.
 14. Air Support during the amphibious operations on Peleliu, Palau Islands, September 7, 17, and 18, 1944.
 15. Carrier Borne Air Strikes against Mindanao, Southern Philippines, September 9, 1944; against Leyte, Samar, and Negros in the Central Philippines, September 13, 14, and 24, 1944; and against Manila and Luzon, Northern Philippines, September 21-22, 1944.
 16. First Carrier Borne Air Strikes against Okinawa Jima and other Islands in the Ryukyu Retto, October 10, 1944.
 17. First Carrier Borne Air Strikes against Formosa, October 12-13, 1944. Assisted in escorting two damaged ships from enemy waters, October 14-19, 1944.
 18. Air support during amphibious operations on Leyte and Samar, Central Philippines, October 20-27, 1944.
 19. Second Battle of the Eastern Philippines, October 25-26, 1944. Assisted in sinking a Japanese Cruiser.
 20. Carrier Borne Air Strikes against Manila and Luzon, Northern Philippines, October 29, 1944, November 5, 6, and 25, 1944, and additional strikes on December 14-16, 1944, in support of amphibious operations on Mindoro.
 21. Air Strikes against Formosa, January 3, 4, and 9, 1945, and on Luzon Island, January 6-7, 1945, in support of Amphibious Operations in Lingayen Gulf, Luzon Island.
 22. Carrier Operations in the South China Sea including air strikes against Camranh Bay, Saigon, French-Indo-China; Formosa; Hongkong, Canton, Swatow, and Hainan, South China, January 10-21, 1945.
 23. Carrier Borne Air Strikes against Formosa, Okinawa Jima, and other Islands in the Ryukyu Retto, January 21-22, 1945.
 24. First Carrier Air Strikes on Tokyo and Yokohama, Honshu Island, Japan, February 16, 17, and 23, 1945.
 25. Air Support during Amphibious Operations on Iwo Jima, Kawan Islands, February 19, 21, and 22, 1945.
 26. Air Strikes on Okinawa Jima and other Islands in the Ryukyu Retto, March 1, 1945.
 27. Air Strikes on Kyushu Island and Kobe Area and against units of the Japanese Fleet on March 18-19, 1945. Escorting damaged vessel from enemy waters, March 20-25, 1945.

A PAPER
WRITTEN BY MORTON E. BASSAN, MD
USS THE SULLIVANS MEDICAL OFFICER
DD 537

Prefixed by:

Press agent Bassan, they call me! How's Kelly- and is there a junior?

I believe most of the factual matter is correct but I don't have your memory for dates and places!

Bassan

(note from Bassan to John Stock, a fellow officer on the Sullivans).

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SOME FACTORS FOUND VALUABLE IN MAINTAINING MORALE
ON A SMALL COMBATANT SHIP

By Morton E. Bassan, MD

The purpose of this paper is to present the factors that were found effective in maintaining an unusually high level of morale aboard a small combatant ship. It is not intended to discuss all the theoretical aspects of the genesis of morale. For our purposes let us define morale as that will to fight and the maintenance of that will to fight, with a reasonably happy frame of mind, for long periods of time in the face of both danger and deprivation of the usual comforts of life .

Morale is very much the concern of physicians because they, having at their command knowledge of so many of the determinants of human behavior, can be very instrumental in creating the desired mental attitude in the fighting man as well as the civilian. Morale is very closely related to mental health. It is well established that the number of psychiatric casualties in a military unit depends largely on the morale of that unit. Loss of manpower from psychiatric disorders, therefore, can be kept at a minimum only by controlling the factors which determine morale. One of the combat psychiatrist's chief function is to advise the command on morale problems.

Two basic factors determining morale are motivation and control of environmental stress. Motivation is the more important of the two. However, no matter how great the motivation, morale will break if there is no emotional relief.

Here we will discuss some methods which were so effective in alleviating environmental stresses that after twenty-one months of sea duty and eighteen months of actual and constant front line naval warfare duty, the spirit aboard this particular ship was so high that the ship was referred to as the "Queen" of it's squadron. No unique methods were used, but, by intelligent and considerate use of materials at hand, quite remarkable results were obtained. In contrast to it was another of the squadron's destroyers on which morale had fallen to such a low ebb that after eighteen months of front line duty all the chiefs, most of the officers and fifty percent of the crew submitted requests for change of duty or rest and rehabilitation leave.

The ship under consideration is the USS The Sullivans, a 2100-ton destroyer. This ship left the States 2 days before Christmas of 1943, and joined the fifth fleet in January 1944 for the invasion of the Marshall Islands. From that date until June of 1945 all of the Pacific invasions and almost every Pacific air strike and raid were participated in. This includes the invasions of the Marshall, Mariana, Caroline, Philippine, Bonin and the Ryukyus Islands whose highlights were Saipan and Iwo Jima. Two heavy surface engagements off the Philippines and also the Okinawa campaigns were experienced. Besides this were the lesser campaigns for our task force in support of part of the New Guinea campaigns, the invasion of Palau and almost thirty air strikes on various Japanese points from such minor raids as those on Yap to those first carrier based air raids on Truk, Tokyo, the Philippines and the Chinese coast. Each air strike lasted 1 to 3 days and often was carried on in sight of land.

The men on this ship saw several severe tropical typhoons, in one of which three destroyers like our own capsized with almost all hands lost. They crossed and recrossed the equator over twenty times. They saw half a dozen large carriers such as the Franklin and Bunker Hill in flames; they saw hit and helped escort from the Japanese coast at terrifyingly low speeds our own cruisers and destroyers which had been damaged by aerial torpedoes and kamikazes. They had near misses from a dew bombs and a very near miss by a suicide plane. They underwent approximately one hundred enemy air raids and saw many enemy airplanes shot down overhead, accounting for at least 8 themselves.

All in all, they experienced a great deal. However they had tremendous protection from our own carrier based planes and from the task forces' hundreds of antiaircraft guns, so that the danger from combat, though quite real, was not usually terrifying. The attacks on our task force lasted at most thirty to sixty minutes at a time. However, the most disagreeable part of the whole thing was to most of us the awful monotony between periods of battle. Every time the task force went out the ships kept underway at least thirty days, once forty-five days and during the Okinawa campaign were scheduled to keep underway for over three months. At the end of the forty-five period we were eating rice, beans and stew, having even run out of most of our dehydrated foods. And when at the end of one of these cruises we made a port, we found ourselves in a desolate coral atoll, among the first arrivals.

In the beginning there were no recreational facilities at all. the atolls were chosen solely as being anchorages at convenient logistic points for floating storehouses. When recreational facilities were established they were at most a native hut in which a bar was set up for the officers and the inevitable wire empty compound was constructed for the enlisted men. The stay in those ports averaged about seven days during which time the enlisted man was unusually lucky to get off the ship twice for a liberty. And then a liberty consisted of only about three hours on a small desolate island where he got a maximum of three cans of beer, more usually two, and often warm at that. Few men got on the beach more than fifteen times during those eighteen months. And what was even more difficult, during the period from March 1944 until June 1945 no women was ever seen.

The name of the ship in it self is very significant. The USS The Sullivans was named in honor of the five Sullivan brothers who all lost their lives when the USS Juneau was lost early in the war. Their name and the Sullivan family's sacrifice for the war effort was built up into a minor "cause celebré". A tremendous amount of publicity was given to the Sullivan brothers, the Sullivan family and to the ship named after them. A separate war bond drive with special posters was established to build the ship. Sullivan families all over the country made contributions. The launching of the hull was attended with much fanfare. She became an extremely well known ship and the men who served aboard her were associated with, and identified themselves with a popular and glamorous unit. Later a motion picture was made or the lives of the Sullivan brothers and was shown throughout the country, the fleet and on this ship. Many newspaper articles appeared praising the ship, its actions, and the crew. All of these articles trickled back to the crew through letters from home and aided in sustaining the men's opinion of themselves as an important group. Shortly after reaching the combat area, a large green shamrock was painted on the forward stack and on the whaleboats so that the ship was quickly recognizable. And recognized it was, for invariably when it went along side to pass mail or fuel from large ships, their bands, if playing, would quickly switch to something on the order of "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling". On St. Patricks day the admiral would remember to send greetings. In port, when its men answered the usual question, "What ship are you from?", someone was sure to say, "Oh yes, you're the ship named after the Sullivan brothers, with her twenty-five to thirty men named Sullivan aboard." The ship was well liked as a smart, able, colorful ship, and this was reflected in the proud attitude of all the men serving aboard her.

During the pre-commissioning stage all the men were quartered at the receiving ship in one draft assigned to the ship. During this period they grew to know one another, their chiefs and many of their officers and received intensive instruction in the duties of their rates at various shorebased schools. They were also given lectures on some of the new habits and ways of life they would need aboard ship, 80% of them never having been to sea before. Motion pictures of shipboard hygiene as well as the usual first aid and sex hygiene motion pictures were shown to them. During this period every man was given a chest x-ray, complete dental treatment, and an attempt was made to have individual interviews. This was continued aboard ship during the first few weeks in an attempt

to weed out potentially unstable individuals. As the men were observed during the shakedown, personality evaluations could be made in more detail. Through this procedure about half a dozen frank neuropsychiatric cases were uncovered and, by the end of the period, approximately forty men were transferred as being inept or not adaptable. This was a routine procedure, for about fifty men in excess of the normal complement were taken aboard at the beginning of the shakedown cruise to allow for misfits.

The day of the commissioning was held in one of the large hotels for all hands and their wives and friends. This afforded an excellent opportunity for the Commanding officer to address the ships company in an informal way, explaining to them the task that lay ahead.

The ships first Captain was a very exacting, demanding taskmaster. Over eighty percent of the men came to his ship directly from boot-camp. Only one third of the officers had ever been to sea which means only seven had any first hand idea of their jobs. However, by an intensive pre-commissioning period and a strenuous shake down training program the officers and men were forced to learn their jobs thoroughly. This particular Captain was an excellent organizer and administrator but had the unhappy genius for making all his subordinates miserable. At the end of five months overseas duty most officers were scheming some way to get away from him twenty-four hours a day.

Yet through his very faults and terrorism he made every officer learn his job well, insisting that they become proficient in various aspects of ship handling, gunnery and navigation so that almost all officers developed a full confidence in their own abilities and the men, in their leaders. Severe as he was with the officers he was lenient with the chiefs and other enlisted men, and he instituted several policies which were materially valuable to the happiness, contentment and efficiency of the crew. In all fairness to him it must be said, that when he was relieved, he left a very efficient ship and a well trained but very unhappy demoralized group of officers. Those men, however, who did not come in direct contact with him, were in good spirits.

The new Captain, a particularly pleasant, easygoing and extremely friendly person, was the perfect relief. He was content to have the officers run the ship and their own departments. The wardroom became a place of cheer; the bridge gang was able to live in peace, and contentment reigned.

Among the important policies the first Captain established was a stern discipline of the officers who were expected to learn their jobs, maintain the ship and teach their men. The officers, in turn, were expected to be stern with their men but in a different way from the Captains overbearing sternness. He made it clear from the first that the men, especially the chiefs, got preferential treatment in all respects. He insisted that there be no Captain's masts except for the most serious offenses. All other charges had to be handled by the division officers or the Executive Officer with consequent smooth settling of the usual troubles enlisted men get into. On the other hand he was quick to have commendatory Captain's mast for any display of heroism or unusually meritorious action. Thus the men soon realized that their discipline was going to be strict but fair, and that they would get recognition for well done jobs. After an action during which any gun crew or the ship as a unit did well, the Captain expressed his appreciation and compliments over the public address system.

A rather different method of watch-standing than that used on most ships was established. Each cruise lasted about thirty days during which the crew was divided into three sections and each section stood the same watch for that cruise. The same men stood the twelve to four, the four to eight and the eight to twelve watches with no dogging of the watch. Thus the men were able to regulate their daily work and personal routine with greater regularity and much more satisfaction. To allow the men with the twelve to four watch more rest, all the sleeping compartments were kept dimmed and quiet until ten AM and a general rest period was maintained throughout the ship from one to three PM. With this routine everyone was able to get sufficient rest except during periods of prolonged or frequent General Quarters.

To enable the men to get as much rest as possible, dawn and dusk General Quarters were abandoned except on strike days, and then only dawn quarters were held. General Quarters was sounded only when attack was assured, thus avoiding unnecessary false alarms and the "all clear" sounded as soon as was reasonably possible so that the periods of battle alertness were as short as they could be.

A definite policy of not having water hours was set up. During the commissioning and fitting out period the conservation of water was carefully explained to the men. Whenever water consumption became too large, the fact was made known over the public address system and with the cooperation of the men, water hours never had to be instituted unless the machinery broke down, which happened only a few times. All hands cooperated on conserving water and there was sufficient quantity for everyone without enforced restrictions. This was one of the few ships I know of that did not have water hours.

The food was kept at the maximum in quality and quantity that logistics allowed. The captain insisted that the Paymaster go over the government allowed ration allowance for the men and that the food be as well prepared and as tasty as could possibly be turned out. This was greatly appreciated by the men. On all holidays an especially fine menu was planned including candy, cigars and cigarettes. As far as possible, during prolonged actions and immediately after all action, coffee and sandwiches were served to all hands.

From the very beginning of his command the first Captain insisted that the ship be kept spotless. It is quite difficult to keep a destroyer clean because the deck forces are not large, the compartments are crowded and paint was difficult to obtain in the forward area. Yet the First Lieutenant was compelled to see to it that the job was done and every officer was made personally responsible for the area of the ship under his direct supervision.

It is frequently felt that the dirtier the outfit the more rugged the group. Yet this Captain realized that cleanliness was an important factor in the feeling of well-being, and insisted that the ship, the officers and the men be kept as clean, neat and well dressed as was at all possible. The policy paid dividends, for not only did the men feel better and take pride in keeping their quarters neat and livable as a home, but the insistence on cleanliness reduced the incidence of skin diseases, which in hot and humid tropical climates can reach alarming proportions.

One of the largest single factors that maintained the men's excellent spirit was the careful announcement to them at the beginning of each cruise of the aims of that particular operation. This was distinctly not in accordance with the security program but was more than worthwhile. On the first day out of port the Commanding Officer would have assembled on the deck all hands not on watch, and address them in person, and have his announcement carried through the whole ship by the public address system. A detailed account, abstracted from the General Operation Plan was presented, telling our destination, the purpose of the strike, an analysis of our forces, an analysis of the enemy forces, the date set for "D" Day and any other pertinent data. Then the men could ask any questions. The release of anxiety seen in the men when truthfully informed of their destination made the value of this breach of security plainly visible. Once they knew where they were headed and the odds against them they would eagerly pitch into the routine preparations and drills that were only monotony if left without a concrete and immediate goal. Were the strike to be even against such a fortified bastion as Truk or into the China Sea, all hands knew roughly what might be expected, and although the opposition might be expected to be tough, that undefinable feeling of fear of the unknown was dismissed and the general attitude was, "Well, this might be a rough trip, so let's get ready."

That this was so well demonstrated after a change of command. The new Skipper did not give out such information, and in the beginning only announced the word when the destination was reached. During this period, at the outset of each operation, the men were obviously worried and the main and often topic for scuttlebutt was "Where are we going and what are we in for?" The drills lacked the enthusiasm previously demonstrated and the men were visibly anxious. After several trips the former plan was again carried out, with demonstrable upswing in spirits.

There had been maintained for about ten months a daily newspaper of world news as gleaned from the radio press and supplemented by ship's news, banter and friendly ribbing. On Sundays a special supplement of cartoons, poems and stories submitted by members of the crew was added. The little paper was greeted enthusiastically by all hands and its appearance was awaited each day. It was usually distributed to the crew while they were lined up for midday chow and was useful in breaking the monotony of standing in line. (Standing in line for everything from chow to short arm inspection was always one of the favorite gripes.) The paper was discontinued because of a paper shortage, but a radio program was instituted in its place. While the men were in noon chow line, the communications officer would read over the public address system the daily news as given over the radio press. Added to this was an abstract from the secret naval radio of all the news

pertinent to our fleet and task force that could possibly be announced plus the news of the progress of the Marine and Army forces whose operations we were supporting. Thus any of our losses or gains were immediately made known to the crew. Such news of our losses came out in the general press usually after a delay of at least a month. The men were thus taken into the "know" and felt they belonged to the "inner group." This helped to breach that frequently wide gap between the privileges and information granted the officers as compared to those available to the men.

Following the newscast a thirty minute program of recorded music was broadcast. This music was later replaced by a thirty to sixty minute rebroadcast of popular radio programs available on recordings. In addition to these daily routine broadcasts a powerful radio set was maintained tuned to stateside radio stations and piped to the various living compartments via the public address system.

During actual strike and support days the walkie-talkie radios of the inter-tank and inter-plane radios on the beach-heads were picked up and broadcast giving a most exciting, and almost ringside, account of the battle. The reaction among the crew to the extremely difficult and hazardous fighting by the Marines and Army was immediately evident by their show of sympathy for the ground forces and the realization of the relatively easy and comfortable life aboard ship. Personal gripes dropped to zero.

A religious program was instituted rather late, and was found to be greatly appreciated and very useful. The system was followed exactly as on larger ships although we had only a lay Chaplain. The quartermasters even made up a church pennant which was run up on Sunday morning when church services were piped down. Prior to the services a thirty minute period of religious music was played throughout the ship over the public address system. The reaction of the men to these services was clearly shown by their enthusiastic letters and, for those religiously inclined, a definite need was filled.

For another small group, musical entertainment of a classical nature was available. The ward room had a minor library of recordings which were freely loaned to the men, and a few of the men had small personal collections. Later the ship subscribed to a monthly delivery of good modern and classical selections with which we increased the number of our daily programs.

Only a meager athletic program could be carried out but aboard ship were available a striking bag, boxing gloves, skipping ropes, wrestling mats, medicine balls and fishing gear. Water polo balls were available for use during swimming call and on beach parties soft balls, gloves and bats, footballs, volley ball and even a badminton set were at hand. Surprisingly, good use was made of this equipment. Teams were organized by divisions for competition ashore and the best of the players organized as a ship's team to meet the other ships in the squadron. A case of cold beer was put up for the winners and became a hotly contested prize.

Because of the very infrequent beach parties and the short duration of each, alcoholic beverages were at a premium. Beer was carried in large quantities, but locked up, to have it for the men when in port in the advanced bases where beer would be otherwise unavailable. Then it was iced and issued ashore, three cans per man per beach party. But rarely could each man get on more than one beach party in any port.

On very special occasions a can of cold beer was issued to all hands at one meal during the day. The can of beer, although it hit the spot, in itself did not amount to much, but the realization that the Skipper was "putting his neck out" very far to give his men a little extra pleasure did mean a great deal to them. Whiskey was available at sick bay, and dispensed rather freely, especially when the men became soaked and chilled or in other special circumstances not necessarily medical.

A library of about four hundred volumes, mostly fiction and mystery, was maintained. No strict check was kept on who had the books, but each time in port word was passed to turn in all books not being read. These then were swapped with other ships thereby adding about seventy-five new titles per month. In addition naval headquarters mailed fifty to sixty new paper books each month. Magazines were also subscribed to.

Movies were held every night on deck when in port and were shown daily underway when possible. Arrangements were made to have an afternoon and evening show for the crew and an evening show for the officers. We were able to swap movies frequently and often had three to four new titles per week even in the battle area. Movies were regularly attended by all hands and were undoubtedly the most popular recreation.

A small amount of photographic gear was accumulated and a small darkroom established. Motion pictures of the ship in action, of various ship functions and parties such as inspections, commendation masts, shell-back initiations and battle shots were made and occasionally shown. Still pictures of most of these events and of individual groups of the men were made and given to the men to mail home. The men were particularly anxious to have pictures of themselves to send home to the folks they had not seen for one to two years.

On a destroyer the medical and surgical facilities as well as skilled personnel are at a minimum. For one period of six months we were never in contact with a shore-based hospital or hospital ship. The only consultation was with larger ships. None of these ships had X-ray equipment large enough for major work. Frequently the best and only procedure was to keep our serious patients aboard and give them the best nursing care possible. Often the second Captain, at his own suggestion, had the sick or injured man moved to his own stateroom while he lived in his sea cabin. This action by the Captain made a profound impression on the whole crew.

Occasionally a man was evacuated to a base hospital, only to be bounced back, labeled "No disease" after a glaring inadequate examination. In such instances the Commanding Officer was very prompt in returning the man to the hospital, accompanied by most vitriolic letter, assuring at least an adequate examination. Adequate dental care was difficult to attain from hard pressed tenders, but an arrangement was always made with larger ships to have their dental officers look after our men. No man had to have teeth pulled because of prolonged lack of attention

. While at sea many enlisted men were transferred to the states to schools or to new construction. Orders for such transfers came from the Bureau of Personnel as requests for so many men of a particular rate. A careful policy, which was previously explained to all the men, was carried out in selecting the most deserving men for transfer. Some ships had used this transfer method to get rid of their undesirable men while the good men found that their good work only served to keep them at sea. On our ship, the very best men knew that they would be rewarded by a very fair chance to get home. In eighteen months about forty percent of the original ship's company did get back. Some men who could have gone back refused to go, preferring to stay with this ship. After eighteen months of continuous front-line duty the gunnery officer had a minor problem on his hands when he had to send back one of his fire-control men. None of the men eligible wanted to go!

New men continually came aboard in drafts of ten to twenty as replacements. These men were shown through the ship, carefully instructed in their duties by their respective chiefs, interviewed by their officers and given physical examinations and the inevitable immunization shots. The men were thus quickly oriented on the ship and felt that a sincere interest was being taken in their welfare.

In twenty-one months none of the original ships complement, after the first weeding out, were evacuated as neuropsychiatric casualties with the exception of one officer, who should have been hospitalized before the ship was commissioned, but whom the Commanding Officer refused to transfer until the officers work became completely worthless. Of the replacements only two were evacuated, both of whom had had much previous sea duty culminating in serious symptoms of combat fatigue for which they had been examined, yet returned to sea without further study. If the statistics may be weighted by these facts, it may be said that there were no neuropsychiatric casualties developing solely from duty aboard this destroyer in twenty-one months, one and a half years of which were in continuous advanced naval warfare.

In recapitulation it will be seen that none of the factors mentioned could be considered singly as the thing that kept the men going. All the factors mentioned contributed to an intangible element that always seems to avoid lucid description. That is the presence of real harmony of interpersonal relations between the officers, the officers and men, and among the men themselves. There was never a serious or angry argument and never any fights among the officers and seldom among the men. And, surprisingly enough, there seemed to be no particularly conscious effort on the part of anyone to be exceeding polite or likable. A spirit of good fellowship pervaded the ship and seemed to remain constant in quality. Considering the cramped and unpleasant living conditions the men on a destroyer have and the prolonged and hazardous duty with practically no leave or off-the-ship recreation on this ship, the maintenance of morale at its continued high level was quite remarkable

. An easy-going, yet efficient attitude became manifest. All hands were really confident in their belief that theirs was without a doubt the very best ship afloat; and comparisons with sister ships easily sustained this belief. The irritable, hateful, sullen and mean attitude that frequently develops in a closely packed and confined group of men never appeared. There was very little of the particularly distasteful attitude of military overbearingness and seemingly useless discipline during the first Commanding Officers term and none at all during the second Commanding Officers term. All hands seem to have early adopted the attitude that they had ahead of them a particularly ugly and distasteful job, yet could and would see it through with as little friction but as much ease and pleasure as could possibly be injected into the situation. All hands felt that they were fighting for one another and not against one another.