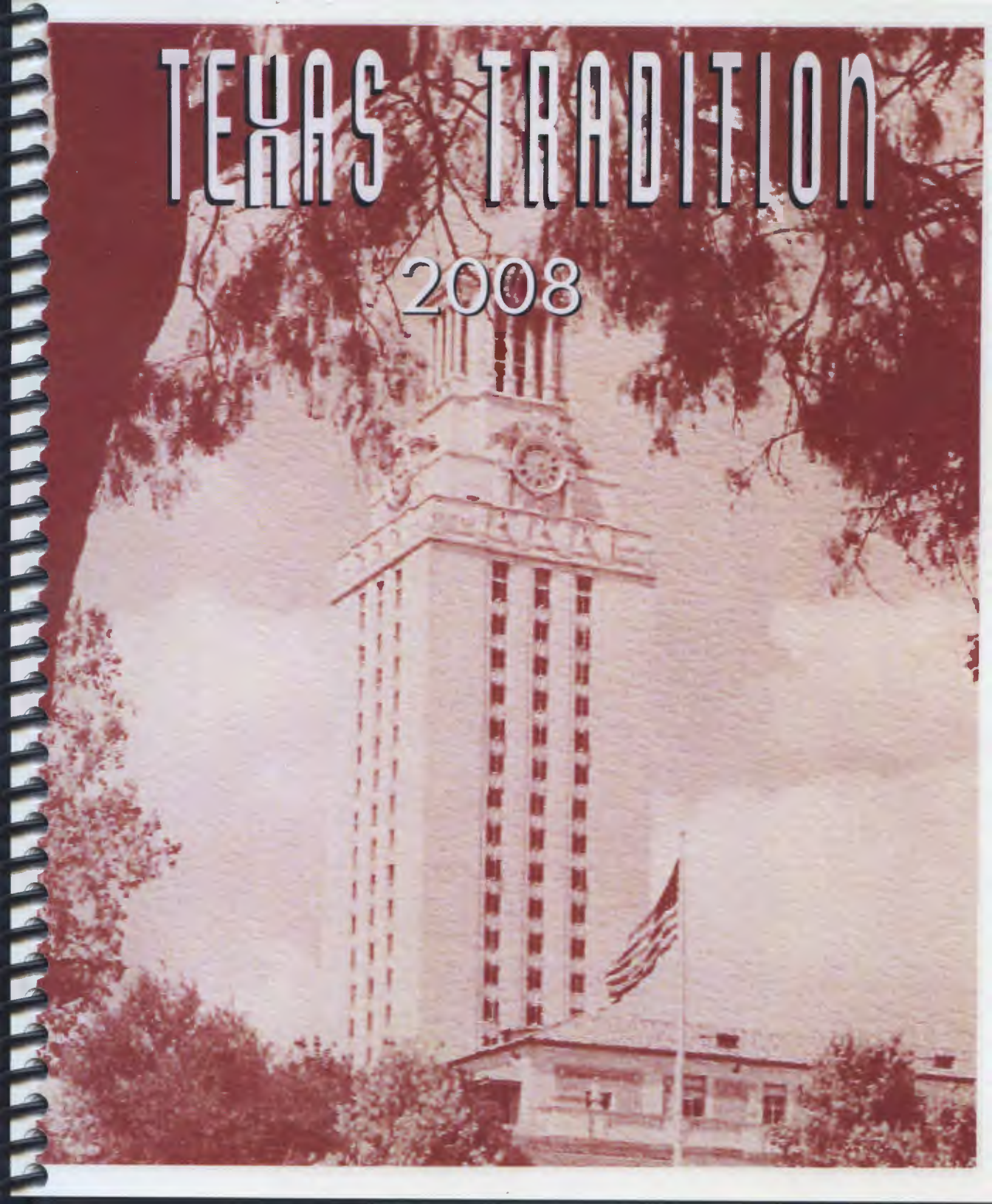


TEXAS TRADITION

2008



TEXAS TRADITION

2008

A Collection of World War II Histories
submitted by

Men of the NROTC
University of Texas

1943-1945



FROM THE EDITOR

The World War II classes of the University of Texas NROTC are generations removed from the time of their wartime experiences, but they maintain a deep-rooted respect for those among their ranks and acquaintances who served their country in this time of war.

Regrettably, the reality of dwindling numbers of living classmates has resulted in an incomplete record. Time or circumstance can be an enemy in an effort such as this. The activities of daily life, developing careers and raising families interfered with a concern for recording and preserving their experiences in World War II. Those whose histories were unobtainable leave an unfortunate gap, for they shared this great adventure as well.

Written and verbal accounts varied greatly, but the personal accounts had many things in common: love of country, obligation to duty, appreciation of opportunity to grow and mature into productive citizens and pride in their commissions as Officers in the United States Navy.

Their wartime experiences had a profound effect on their lives. They admitted to gaining knowledge of their worth as a person, learning the value of thinking beyond themselves and working as part of an organized unit. They returned to civilian status with an added maturity, leadership skills and a genuine satisfaction for having fulfilled an obligation to their country willingly and well.

It was my privilege and pleasure to compile these historical accounts into a narrative format. I hope that readers from whatever generation, present or future, who read this small volume, will be mindful of a call to valor that was answered willingly by young men of Texas during a dark and challenging time in our nation's history.

Marge Flados

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FOREWORD

This booklet of histories from verbal and written accounts is published with great pride. In February 1944, Renfro C. Norris and I, with the help of an outstanding staff, published the first Texas Tradition. There were 198 NROTC members in that book, all but 15 from communities and cities within the State of Texas. Most of us had graduated from three-year high schools, which meant that many of us were 16 and 17 years of age when we entered the University and when we received our Commissions most of us were under 21 years of age.

These historical accounts tell the story of young men, selected for their intelligence and potential for leadership, men who would spend 2-1/2 years in an accelerated college-level program in preparation for commissioning as Ensigns in the United States Navy. It is a story of boys becoming men and willingly assuming the role of Naval Officers aboard ships at sea.

This booklet provides a way to share the story of what many of these young Texans from the wartime classes of the NROTC at the University of Texas contributed to their nation during World War II.

We carried out our assigned duties and held our own with the best the Navy had to offer. We are very proud to have served and will always honor in our heart and soul those who gave their lives in our common cause.

Native Texan, Chester Nimitz, as Naval Officer in Charge, is credited with establishing the NROTC in 1926. The Unit at the University of Texas was established in September of 1940.

Admiral Chester W. Nimitz stated in his address to the 1946 Naval Academy's graduation class: "So often timely inspiration, which some call genius, marks the successful leader, but, in reality this inspiration or genius is the result of lessons well learned or experience properly exploited. Intellectual gifts need to be matched by a sense of responsibility and devotion to duty and by sufficient adaptability, flexibility and resourcefulness to meet a totally unexpected crisis."

William T. Barnhouse, Class of 1943

Dedication

This history of the wartime classes of the Naval Reserve Officers Corps at the University of Texas in Austin is dedicated to the memory of those from our ranks who served with honor and gave their lives in the service of their country.

ETERNAL FATHER, STRONG TO SAVE: THE NAVY HYMN

The "Navy Hymn," has long had a special appeal and meaning to seafaring men in the United States Navy and it continues to serve as a musical benediction at special events. The original words were written as a hymn in the year 1860 by a clergyman of the Church of England, the Rev. William Whiting (1825-1878). The following year in 1861 the words were adapted to music written by another English clergyman, the Rev. John B. Dykes (1823-1876).

In 1879, Lieutenant Commander Charles Jackson Train an 1865 graduate of the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis was director of the Midshipman Choir and inaugurated the practice of concluding each Sunday Divine Services at the Academy with the singing of the first verse of this hymn. The tradition has held fast.

The words have been changed in minor ways several times since the original hymn was written due to changing aspects of our culture, particularly the advent of the field of aviation and the recognition of the presence of women who serve in the Navy. It still remains one of the most moving hymns of all times.

*(Information taken from the Naval Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard,
Washington, D.C.)*

Eternal Father, Strong to save,
Whose arm hath bound the restless wave,
Who Bid'st the mighty Ocean deep
Its own appointed limits keep;
O hear us when we cry to thee,
For those in peril on the sea.

O Christ! Whose voice the waters heard
And hushed their raging at Thy word,
Who walked'st on the foaming deep,
And calm amidst its rage did'st sleep;
Oh hear us when we cry to Thee
For those in peril on the sea!

Most Holy spirit! Who did'st brood
Upon the chaos dark and rude,
And bid its angry tumult cease,
And give, for wild confusion, peace;
Oh hear us when we cry to Thee
For those in peril on the sea!

Lord, Guard and Guide the men who fly
Through the great spaces in the sky,
Be with them always in the air,
In dark'ning storms or sunlight fair.
O, Hear us when we lift our prayer,
For those in peril in the air.

KILLED IN ACTION

John Newton Cowan, Port Arthur, Texas, Class of 1944. Killed aboard the USS Ticonderoga (CV-14) hit by enemy fire while off the coast of Formosa.

Vincent Rauber, Austin, Texas. Class of 1943. Lost on a submarine that disappeared while on patrol.

William Wyman Stephens, Sierra Blanca, Texas. Class of 1944. Killed in a turret explosion aboard the USS Mobile (CL-73).

Shirley Carl White, Port Arthur, Texas. Class of 1944. U.S. Marine Corps. Killed during the invasion of Iwo Jima.

Jack David Thompson, Vernon, Texas. Class of 1944. Killed during the Normandy Invasion of France.

EPITAPH FROM APOSTROPHE TO THE OCEAN

And I have loved thee, Ocean! And my joy
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy
I wanton'd with thy breakers — they to me
Were a delight; and if the freshening seas
Made them a terror — 'twas a pleasing fear
For I was as it were a child of thee,
And trusted to thy billows far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane — as I do here.

By Lord George Byron

NROTC AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

When the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps was established on the campus of the University of Texas in September of 1940, there was no shortage of volunteers. Understandably, many new high school graduates throughout Texas sought the opportunity to become officers in the United States Navy. Many more volunteered than were accepted into the program.

Two Naval Science courses were required each semester and the remaining course hours could be applied to their major field of study. A uniform and some exercise clothing were issued and Thursday was the one day of the week they wore uniforms and performed basic drill exercises.

A first taste of what the future held came in June of 1941 when they were sent to the Naval Air Station at Corpus Christi, Texas for Summer Training Cruise. During this first summer in the program, they received \$21.00 a month.

Everything changed after the bombing of Pearl Harbor in December of 1941. The nation mobilized for war and the young men seeking NROTC training knew it was their war to win. Except for enlisted men coming into the program from the Fleet, men in the NROTC program were generally 16 or 17 years of age and received commissions in the Navy before reaching their 21st birthday.

To man the ships of war, necessity dictated acceleration in graduating the NROTC classes. Semesters became trimesters and in July of 1943 members of the NROTC were sworn into the US Navy as Apprentice Seamen and placed on active duty status which removed the possibility of their becoming Selective Service draftees. Midshipmen were assigned to Andrews Dormitory and their pay scale advanced to \$50.00 a month.

Wearing uniforms became mandatory and calisthenics in the early morning became routine. The members of NROTC were faced with a taste of the military life: formations, curfews, physical fitness and the serious nature of the subject matter. The sight of uniforms on campus made an impression and the close order drilling never failed to draw an audience.

So began the impressive saga of bright, willing, talented, young men matriculating through the classrooms of a great University in preparation for participation in a world war. Except for the first two classes in 1943, once the required Naval science courses had been completed candidates were on accelerated status and could be granted commissions before completion of degree requirements.

After commissioning many went to specialized training schools, some received orders directly to ships of the line: battle ships, cruisers, destroyers, but many were assigned to smaller vessels. Landing craft and support ships were needed in large numbers for

prospective amphibious landings in the Pacific and the Normandy landing in France and there was a dire need for junior officers to man those ships.

There were 7 classes commissioned before the end of World War II. There were 3 classes commissioned after war's end and in June of 1946 the trimester schedule was discontinued and a semester schedule resumed.

These members of the NROTC at the University of Texas represented the best that Texas had to offer and they felt privileged to study and prepare for assigned roles of leadership. Their NROTC officers instilled in them a love for the Navy and love of country, traits that became integral to their lives thereafter.

In retrospect, none would claim to be a hero although to their families and to the nation, all were heroes. There was a job to do and they did it with pride and honor. Most felt they were but a small link in an enormous chain, but there can be no strength in a chain without the integrity of each individual link. This common bond of service to their country in time of war, bound them to one another in a special way. This bond, rarely verbally acknowledged, is always understood and felt deeply when any of the 198 of them are in each other's presence.

RECOLLECTIONS AND REFLECTIONS

The events of World War II, are receding into the mists of history, however, the passage of time in no way diminishes the contribution made by young men of the University of Texas NROTC, toward a successful conclusion to World War II.

Most have not written their war memoirs, nor have they recorded their experiences except on a very personal and informal basis. Acquiring and preserving written and verbal accounts of their wartime experiences perpetuates an appreciation for their contribution to heritage and tradition, that will extend far beyond the time of their natural life times.

Some were as young as sixteen when they entered the NROTC and not out of their teens when they were commissioned as Ensigns in the United States Navy and sent aboard their assigned ships at sea. When an effort was made to acquire a history of their experiences, many seemed reluctant, not wanting to paint a picture of derring-do. When questionnaires were distributed and interviews conducted in an effort to seek information about their wartime experiences, their statements reflect a consensus about certain people and events.

People grow to maturity with lasting memories of a favorite teacher or mentor. The midshipmen at UT felt that CDR. D.J. Friedell, Executive Officer of the Corps, holds a lasting memory for them. This man, two generations removed in age, with his ramrod erect bearing and passionate love for the Navy made an indelible impression on these young warriors-in-training.

Nothing escaped his discerning eye. His gravelly voice and gruff manner hid a caring heart. Everyone had a CDR Friedell story to tell. Norman Flados, class of '44, entered the program undersized and under weight. Two and a half years later he was near 6 feet tall and over 180 pounds. Before the commissioning ceremonies, CDR Friedell greeted him with this comment, "Son, you've grown a lot. What's the matter? Do you have a gland?"

During Seamanship 101, the class will never forget when Plebe Tim Woods "corrected" CDR. Friedell about port side being on the right! Tim didn't forget either.

After his freshman class finished the Signal bag Work ahead of time, K.E. Rippel recalls the Commander rewarding them by sending the sophomore class (upper classmen) to the end of chow line. Grant Stoddard stated that just knowing the Commander was one of the memorable experiences in his life.

Many years after the war ended, while at the Naval Hospital at Corpus Christi, Texas, Norman Flados heard an unmistakably familiar voice coming from one of the rooms down the hall. A Corpsman was lecturing a patient on why he should make his bed, as was the rule. There was no doubt as to whose voice it was that answered the Corpsman. Walking

down the hall, Flados found that venerable old curmudgeon looking much the same as he did back in his NROTC days and raising sand as only he could. On leaving after a short visit, Flados quietly told the Corpsman the Commander shouldn't have to make his bed, that he had earned the right of having someone do it for him.

James A. Gray recalls "watching classmates climbing through my dorm window on the ground floor in Andrews Dorm late at night in violation of the 8 P.M. curfew, and crossing the creek from Little Campus to University campus on a rope, hand over hand, and it seemed no great challenge."

After climbing out of a first floor window, Ralph Fuge, Class of '44, recalls taking nurses from Seton Hospital sailing on Lake Austin and after a pleasant night-time sailing experience being greeted back at the dock by a delegation of nuns waiting for their return.

Littlefield Home, an old Victorian mansion at the corner of 24th and White Avenue, housed the NROTC staff offices. Hume Cofer, Class of '43, recalled a situation in the Littlefield Home when it was standard operating procedure for the four-striper in command, who had no inter-office communication system, to yell out for whatever staff member he needed, including his executive officer, CDR. Friedell.

The ego of youth is an amazing thing. Francis Tormollon, in pilot training on the East Coast, decided to come to the University of Texas and join the NROTC program. He said, "I had the nerve to send telegrams to the President of the University and to the Commanding Officer of NROTC advising them that I was on my way to Texas to apply for admission and that my records were being forwarded by mail!"

John Wildenthal remembers writing a letter to UT President Homer P. Rainey to request that he change the commissioning exercises of February 1944 from Hogg Auditorium to Gregory Gym because Hogg Auditorium was not large enough to seat all members of their families, much less faculty and friends. John said, "I delivered the letter to Dr. Rainey at his home about 7:30 A.M. a few days before the ceremony. At noon that day, the Austin radio news reported that the location would be changed to Gregory Gym."

There were dunkings and dousings in Littlefield Fountain and the usual hi-jinks of college age students. There was a rule about no cars on campus but many remember the sight of Clayton Baird's yellow convertible moving across campus with no obvious driver at the wheel. He explained he was "driving", but from a very low position in the front seat.

Carrying wooden rifles, they marched in review for visiting V.I.P.s. They played an active role in campus sports, clubs and activities; they sang in Glee Club, marched in the Longhorn Band and participated in Drum and Bugle Corps presentations. Bill Barnhouse, Class of '43, recalls being a member of a Special Drill Unit Team at a UT football game. He said, "We were unable to hear the commands as we performed and we fell apart on the field at half time!"

Early morning calisthenics was not always pleasant, it was either too cold or too hot. And there was always John Doole, Class of '43, Company Commander, feeling no sympathy for the tired or the weary as they made their way back to the dorm.

The presence of men in uniform had its effect on the girls on campus. Dating a midshipman took on special meaning and rush parties provided the setting for meeting girl friends. Many married their college sweethearts. The Ring Dance held special meaning except for one fellow who mentioned his date refused to kiss him at the propitious moment.

One night after a midnight movie, Henry J. Williams, Class of '44, recalls loading his 1933 Chrysler roadster with eight fellow classmates and heading for Fredricksburg. Before they could make it back to Austin, hunger had set in. He said, "None of us had any money, and we became hungry enough to try to run over a chicken in the road so we could have something to eat."

Lifelong friendships were formed during this special time in their lives. The camaraderie, the common goal of wanting to serve their nation in time of war, their developing love for the Navy and their desire to become commissioned officers held them together in a common purpose that transcended all else.

The NROTC schooled them in Naval Science, and served to introduce them to the discipline, the responsibility, the leadership qualities and attitudes necessary to inspire men to follow them into battle. It was a rather daunting expectation for young men, in some instances, not yet out of their teens. Of necessity they were asked to go from 17-year-old high school students to confident mature naval officers.

The sense of belonging and fellowship felt on campus carried over to shipmates. They felt reasonably well prepared to fulfill their roles and confident that they could handle what was served up to them. They expanded their knowledge where and when they could whether in special training schools or aboard the ships to which they were assigned.

Once at sea, maturity came fast and the learning experiences were sure. The lessons continued except now it was responsibility, teamwork, perseverance, leadership in emergency situations and thinking outside themselves. Maturity and a sense of responsibility came fast to these young officers once they were at sea and engaged in the serious effort of winning a war. They learned how much they didn't know and how important it was to learn from their more experienced fellow shipmates. Some were on ships with battle-seasoned crews. However, Ralph Fuge went to sea with officers and crew who had never been to sea before. Coping skills were their survival.

Dan Krausse said, "I had the good fortune of having a Chief Gunners Mate with thirty years experience in my gun turret crew. He "adopted" this shave-tail who was in command, and saved me from embarrassing mistakes on several occasions. He gave me credit I was not due and made me look good. This was a valuable lesson learned, one that I used

many times in later life.”

Clayton Baird stated, “At Balikpapan I was on morning watch when the Skipper sent word for me to report to the wardroom. After I went in, he told me to take his chair at the table. On my plate was a sign saying “Mother pin a rose on me for today I am a man. It was my 21st birthday.”

Bill Barnhouse recalled, “ The first time I was in charge of passing mail to a cruiser. The Chief Bo’sun mate was trying to have some fun at my expense since he knew I was new. He asked me to give the orders to pass the mail. My answer was, ‘Do it just like you did it last time and if I see anything I don’t like, I will let you know’.” He later came to me and said, “Sir, I thought I had you!”

On Tinian, Bill Barnhouse accompanied members of his crew to pick up mail and they were left ashore by their ship because they had detoured to pick up souvenirs. They broke the seal on the mailbag, and stuffed the gun, helmet and bayonet souvenirs inside. They, along with the mailbag, had to be transferred to the USS Kidd underway. When the mailbag hit the deck on the Kidd, there was a loud clang. The Captain said, “Boy, that’s heavy mail,” but he never mentioned it again.

Sylvan Polunsky noted that their ship spent time in the South Pacific and it was so hot, the crew threw the heaters overboard because they were taking up much needed space. But later after the war was over and the ship was sent into Korean waters in winter they wished they had them.

Sylvan Polunsky stated, “Back in San Diego after tying up, everyone went ashore except one CPO. The next morning when everyone returned to the dock, the ship was gone. We commandeered an LCVP, toured the harbor and found the ship aground at the far end. The CPO reported that a wind had come up, the anchor didn’t hold, part of the bottom collapsed, pumping out the water was unsuccessful and it was hopelessly aground. The Navy decided to scrap it on the spot.”

Receiving command of a ship was common for those who entered service in 1943 and 1944. Many ended up as commanding officer of the ship they reported aboard when they were Ensigns. For many it was due to attrition and the mass exodus of the Reservists leaving the Navy at war’s end.

In Polunsky’s case, he was given orders to report as Commanding Officer of the LC (FF) 792 docked in Puget Sound, Seattle only to discover the other three officers aboard were two Lieutenant J.G. s and one Full Lieutenant and he was still an Ensign! But he had been to sea and they had not.

When asked how they handled stress, most gave stress short shrift, and stated they coped, or drank coffee or slept, but no one gave it much importance in their day to day concerns. They were young, didn’t think much about it and considered it part of life at sea

in the Navy.

Finding their ship in harm's way or the crises of being hit by enemy fire resulting in deaths and damage were their defining moments. They mentioned the challenge of riding out typhoons or being anywhere in proximity to the USS Missouri during the official surrender of Japan in September of 1945. Being in Japan after war's end and viewing the damage done by the atomic bombs dropped on Nagasaki and Hiroshima also proved unforgettable.

Those who were in Buckner Bay, Okinawa in April 1945 preparing for the invasion of Japan experienced one of the worst typhoons in history with near 200-knot winds. After the storm the harbor was a scene of capsizing ships, sunk and damaged ships, grounded vessels, ships recovering from collisions and other wind damage. This typhoon was followed by a second shortly thereafter.

Even though the contingent of UT NROTC numbered less than two hundred men, during the Pacific Island campaigns it was uncanny how often they found themselves ashore in the same places, which always called for a celebration.

Ivan Elmer wrote that he met his father-in-law, (whose daughter he had married six months before) for the first time at the headquarters of the 10th Army on Okinawa where he was Chief Engineer.

While in Japan, Ralph Fuge told of trading liquor to the departing Marines for their Jeeps. All the officers aboard his ship obtained Jeeps and were able to tour around Japan in their bartered vehicles.

With few exceptions, most felt that the Reservists with whom they served were competent and showed the leadership necessary to carry out the duties of ship's officers. Many remained in the Naval Reserve Units in their areas and served in the Korean Conflict five years after their discharge from duty during World War II.

How do they view their experience as members of NROTC at the University of Texas? All treasure the friendships they formed. To a man they felt that one of their most satisfying achievements was receiving their commission as Ensign in the United States Navy. They left UT on a fast track for learning military discipline, setting priorities, accepting and fulfilling the obligations of leadership. They were commissioned officers in the United States Navy and were eager to do what they felt had to be done.

Their service and experience at sea? Most say it had a lasting profound effect on their lives. Many learned to love the sea. Ivan Elmer stated, "Doing dawn, noon and dusk navigating that gave a view of sun, moon and stars, could be incredibly beautiful to behold." They came home with an appreciation of how fortunate Americans are to have the system of government they enjoy and they felt a deep gratitude for their nation's economic reliability to provide a high standard of living.

They felt the awe of first glimpses of national landmarks: Oahu, Diamond Head and Point Loma Light in San Diego and the Statue of Liberty. They witnessed their crews showing greatness in times of crisis and they learned life could be tenuous in battle situations. Many mourned the loss of shipmates and friends who made the supreme wartime sacrifice, a sacrifice they knew was theirs to make, if need be. They witnessed destruction on a grand scale: destruction of ships, planes and land facilities. There was profound gratitude for returning home with a whole body. Along with intense thankfulness for good health, they returned knowing they had done their duty to their country.

Home they came, filled with a drive to finish their interrupted educations and get on with their lives. They married, raised families and many saw members of their families serve in subsequent wars. Their post-war record is one of achievement in scholastic, civic, corporate and legal activities. They became a generation of innovators who earned and deserved the sobriquet bestowed upon them as "the greatest generation".

MLF

PERSONAL HISTORIES

MAX ALLEN

Class of '44

I received my commission at age 19 and was sent for Amphibious Training at Solomons, Maryland and Little Creek, Virginia. I reported aboard the brand new LCI 801 and was sent to the Pacific Theater of Operations. By stages and in convoy we crossed the Pacific via Pearl Harbor, Guam, Ulithi to Leyte in the Philippines. It was there that we underwent our first air attacks by the Japanese.

On the West Coast we had been re-fitted with 3 mortars so we were now designated an LCI (M). We staged in Leyte for Okinawa. We took part in several invasions of outlying islands as a front line gun ship. On Easter morning, April 1, 1945, the battle for Okinawa began. We continued to undergo bombing attacks at night and kamikaze attacks by day until V-J Day. We were a small ship but we were credited with shooting down one kamikaze.

After the end of the war our ship was sent to various ports in Japan and China, which provided some interesting sightseeing. We carried negotiating parties to Yingkow in Manchuria in an attempt to prepare the way for the landing of Chinese Nationalist troops. Negotiations broke down and the rest is history.

I served aboard LCI (M) 801 from the time of her commissioning until her de-commissioning in Orange, Texas. I started out as Communications Officer but ultimately served as Executive Officer as well as Commanding Officer. All our officer cadre were Reservists.

En route from the Pacific to Orange, Texas I served as XO and then Commanding Officer of the LCI (M) 801. I took my ship through the Panama Canal without the assistance of a pilot. So many ships were making the passage, there was no pilot to take us through and we were told to proceed on our own, which we did. I was 21 years old at the time.

After receiving a law degree from Harvard Law School, I practiced law in Boston, MA. I remained in the Naval Reserve and retired after 28 years with the rank of Commander. In the interim years, I have maintained a general civil law practice. I also served as Honorary Consul for the Government of India in New England and Director of Inmate Legal Services at the Plymouth County Correctional Facility.

I have been a member of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts, founded in 1638, the 3rd oldest military organization in the world, after the Swiss Guard in Rome and the Honorable Artillery Company of London.

JAMES E. ALLISON, JR.

Class of '43

After graduating as a member of the first NROTC class I received orders to the USS Davis (DD-395). The ship was assigned to Atlantic convoy duty and made several convoy crossings between New York and various English ports. On June 5th 1944, USS Davis was underway from Milford Haven, Wales to join a convoy en route to Baie de la Seine for the invasion of Normandy. USS Davis arrived 7 June and five days later while on patrol, repelled an enemy torpedo boat attack. Returning from Devonport, England on 21 June, with a support convoy, she was heavily damaged from an explosion on the port quarter, probably caused by a mine. After emergency repairs she continued on to Charleston, South Carolina for permanent repairs and returned to active convoy duty in December 1944.

After graduation from University of Texas Law School, I moved to Houston and joined the young law firm of Vinson, Elkins, Weems & Searls and in time became a full partner. I worked in the section of Oil and Gas law and served in an advisory capacity on numerous civic, church and corporate Boards.

CLAYTON D. BAIRD

Class of '44

I joined the UT NROTC in September of 1941 at the age of 17 and was commissioned in February 1944. I was sent to Submarine Chaser Training Center in Miami and then to sea duty aboard the Edwin A. Howard (DE 346). As part of a "hunter/killer" group, we escorted troop ships in the Atlantic and Mediterranean before being sent to the Pacific. I served in the usual junior officer slots and found it hard to get enough sleep. We had a well-trained crew. After transfer to the Pacific we were assigned to TF 78 Amphibious Group as part of the 7th Fleet.

We supported various landings, notably at Davao Gulf, Mindanao Island in the Philippines. When Marine F4U's strafed enemy positions, it was the first time I saw napalm used. We were sent down the Gulf every night and one night a Japanese PT boat sank one of our freighters and we were ordered to close the beach. The enemy would take a shot at us, using smokeless powder that made them difficult to spot. We shelled the PT base heavily and we must have hit a fuel dump because of the large explosion that followed. There were no more raids after that.

We were part of a Mine Group that went to Balikpapan, Borneo and supported the sweepers and frogmen before and during that invasion on July 1, 1945. We were close to the beach one day when an LCVF pulled up near us and this big guy waded ashore. It was General McArthur himself. After photos, he walked back aboard and they took off.

When Japan surrendered my ship was in Leyte Gulf and I was at Pearl Harbor taking a CIC course update. At one time or another, I served as ASW Officer, Assistant Communications Office, CIC Officer and Senior Watch Officer. I had top-secret clearance so I decoded secret messages and kept up to date on what was happening. My battle station was on the bridge as Officer of the Deck and I paid close attention to the skipper's orders.

We had been told we would be in the first wave of the planned attack on mainland Japan. We were to be prepared to attack Kyushi, Japan by November 1st and we were getting ready.

One morning when I was on watch, the skipper sent word for me to come by his cabin before chow... I reported and he said let's go to the Wardroom. When we arrived, he told me to take his chair. The overhead was covered in colored paper and on my plate was a sign which read, "Mother pin a rose on me for today I am a man." It was my 21st birthday.

After the Japanese surrender in August of 1945 we were part of the occupation force in Japanese waters. We had been lucky. We were hit only once, by shrapnel, and we suffered no casualties. This whole experience taught me about teamwork and leadership.

After the War was over, I worked in the family bakery business, started out washing pans and sweeping floors, retired as Chairman of the Board after 50 years service. I served 20 years as a Reserve Peace Officer in Harris County and retired as a Lieutenant.

WILLIAM T. (BILL) BARNHOUSE

Class of '44

After graduation I was sent directly to the USS Kidd (DD-661) a Fletcher Class Destroyer on duty in the South Pacific. I became Assistant 1st Lieutenant, Damage Control, and Automatic Weapons Officer. We were charged with defending fast carriers, rescue of downed pilots, shore bombardment and anti aircraft and anti submarine duty.

USS KIDD was named for Rear Admiral Isaac C. Kidd, who was killed aboard his flagship, USS Arizona BB-99 on December 7, 1941 during the bombardment of Pearl Harbor. Our logo was the Skull and Cross Bones that was painted high up on the forward smoke stack and we were the only ship ever granted permission by the U.S. Navy to fly the Jolly Roger from our mast.

Our crew was well trained and our Commanding Officers were competent (some excellent) all were Regular Navy. We served in New Guinea, Philippines, Leyte Gulf and Okinawa, where we were hit in the forward fire room by a kamikaze, resulting in 38 killed and 78 wounded. This was the saddest and most memorable of my time at sea.

Participating in the Island-hopping campaigns earned the USS Kidd 8 battle stars. She saw extensive duty in the Korean War and earned 4 more battle stars.

USS KIDD is now a museum and National Historic Landmark berthed in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. She is the only Fletcher class destroyer restored to her 1945 conformation and condition and a most suitable memorial to those men of courage, bravery and sacrifice who served aboard her in her gallant actions of two wars.

I visit the USS Kidd on April 11th of each year (the day she was hit) and on other occasions, as do my children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

The final honor paid the USS KIDD was having her name bestowed upon a modern destroyer, the USS KIDD DDG-100.

I left active duty in '46, and the Reserves in '54. I enjoyed a successful career including that of president of Gas Company of New Mexico, subsidiary of Southern Union Gas.

FRANK W. BELLOWS

Class of '44

We all received our first taste of military discipline during our NROTC training and it served us well. After commissioning in February of '44, I was sent to the Pacific where I served in Engineering Battalions attached to various Marine Divisions. These Marine troops ranged from Guam to Japan to China. We were stationed in Japan during the period of occupation. Later in Manchuria, China we were involved with disarming some remaining Japanese forces.

We were aware of the Navy's preparations for the invasion of mainland Japan, so when Japan surrendered on August 14, 1945, it was the most memorable day of my entire Navy wartime experience.

ARTHUR K. (SWEDE) BERGSTROM

Class of '44

My first duty assignment was COMSUBLANT, Bermuda on the USS-5 an old World War I boat used as a training submarine. I graduated from Submarine School in New London, Connecticut and was assigned to COMSUBPAC at Pearl Harbor. After training schools in gunnery and deep sea diving, I was assigned as Sub Relief crew aboard the Sub Tender USS Proteus in transit to Guam. I was transferred to the USS Blackfish (SSN 221) and was Gunnery Officer, Asst. Torpedo Officer and Watch Officer. (All Watch Officers were qualified Diving Officers)

Our crew had to be at peak readiness; generally true of submarine crews. Our chow was great. We would depart on a 60-day patrol with 2 tons of boned steaks in the freezer. We also had an ice cream machine aboard. We ate well! Breakfast was poor, (no eggs). I offset that problem by having the 12-4 watch. The baker was in the galley at night doing his thing, so the sweet rolls were just coming out of the oven when I got off watch. Then I would sleep until the noon meal. Among our 9 officers, five were Annapolis trained and four were Reservists and I was comfortable serving under our senior officers.

We were part of a wolf pack on my first patrol, in the South China Sea. We found no enemy ships, but we destroyed a transmission tower on Pratus Island with our 5"-25 Cal. Deck Guns. We had the excitement of being strafed by our own planes north of the Philippines. Our second patrol was mostly lifeguard duty off Japan recovering downed aircrews that had to ditch. We spent some time in the Yellow Sea intercepting small supply vessels out of China. Our last recovery was a B-24 crew that had been hit on a run over Nagasaki. We then headed back to Guam with a total of 28 airmen on board. They used our toothbrushes, smoked our cigarettes and the air was blue with their battle stories. Later we learned that the P-51s giving us air cover during our lifeguard duty off Nagasaki were flying out of Iwo Jima Airfield!

One deep impression was watching 3 hospital ships returning to Guam during the Iwo Jima invasion carrying the wounded from that terrible battle.

We would leave for patrol with 103,000 gallons of diesel fuel in our tanks, a consideration when operating a submerged sub that operates with neutral buoyancy, balanced fore and aft. The fuel that was stored in aft main ballast tanks was used first so the ballast tanks could be converted to its normal purpose to make faster dives. Since fuel is lighter than water, this changeover had to compensate for the overall trim of the boat. During one of these conversions, I was the diving officer on duty and the engineering officer had calculated the necessary trim adjustment. The auxiliary man pumped trim water forward instead of aft making forward heavy and aft light! When I made the dive, the down angle

continued to increase as well as our depth. We were passing 150 feet and the down angle was approaching 30 degrees. I did the last resort and blew the forward main ballast tanks and we came up to the surface at a 30-degree up angle! The Captain came boiling in to the control room for an explanation. I didn't have one at the time but we had time on the surface to find out! We were over the Mariana Trench at the time where the Pacific is over 20,000 feet deep.

When I reported aboard the Blackfish all the crew sported beards except the Executive Officer. One night the baker was making donuts, the grease caught fire, singed his glorious red beard and that was all the Exec. needed to outlaw all beards on board and it took me weeks to re-learn the identities of the men.

I was at "rest camp" on Talafofo, Guam when the war ended and a truck dropped off 2 cases of green beer at our hut for our celebration. We were severely restricted at this so called "rest camp" because some bypassed Japanese soldiers had recently waylaid a crew from another boat, killing 24 men for their shoes and clothing. No more hikes were allowed! A far cry from the rest camp at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel, in Honolulu where Ray Anthony and his band played in the Officer's Club daily during cocktail hour and on weekends. It seems the whole band had enlisted in the Navy.

I returned to the University after being mustered out of the service, finished my degree and worked in management positions for several large corporations.

FRANK E. BERTUCCI

Class of '45

In February of 1945, I was sent to the Pacific Theater to an LCI in the 7th Fleet. I was Supply Officer, Deck Officer and later Assistant Engineering Officer. The ship's complement was 25-30 men and I enjoyed that. Our crew was about as well trained as most, and the food was as good as our cook, who had been trained to be a torpedo man, could make it!

I served under three Commanding Officers, all were competent, each with different leadership styles, but all treated the crew well. Although our ship had combat drills we did not participate in any combat duty while I was aboard. I was at Guam when the war ended and we then proceeded to the Atlantic, via the Panama Canal, to Charleston, South Carolina where our ship was decommissioned.

I felt that our NROTC training instilled discipline and taught us how to prioritize our specific activities aboard ship. Released from the Navy in May of 1946, I remained an Inactive Reserve until 1957. I joined the family business where I have been a part of keeping the same wholesale beer business operating successfully during the length of my working career.

C.H. (BUTCH) BRITTON

Class of '44

I was not sent to specialized training but directly assigned to USS Ocelot, IX 110, on duty in the Pacific Theater. The USS Ocelot was an unclassified, wood-hulled, barracks ship built in 1919. During WW II she was re-fitted and converted to Flag Ship for service Squadron 10 as a Supply Ship. I was Assistant Navigator, and progressed with experience to Navigator and Division Navigational Officer. As a supply ship we had the advantage of getting 1st crack at the food supplies we were carrying. The food was pretty good, but standing midnight watch was not.

We had a green crew and our Commanding Officer was, too. Interestingly he collided with a British cruiser near Ulithi and an AOG in Guam. He was either very unlucky or ill-equipped for command. Probably, the latter.

We were next to the carrier USS Randolph near Ulithi when she was hit by a dive bomber and sustained serious damage to her flight deck.

We arrived in Buckner Bay, Okinawa on 13 September 1945. Three days later the typhoon hit and we went aground. This stands out as a most stressful event since our lives were in peril and in fact my roommate lost his life during that storm.

I was on Okinawa with a beached ship, when the war ended. The Ocelot was refloated but on October 9th, a short few weeks later another typhoon hit and she went aground again and broke in two. The USS Howell needed a Navigator; I reported aboard after leaving the USS Ocelot.

Wartime Naval experience far surpasses classroom theory when preparing a person for combat and it is then and only then that we learn to make valuable decisions, learn how to conduct ourselves in an emergency and to mature as an individual.. There is great satisfaction and pride in service to one's country.

After leaving the Navy in 1946, I worked in the family Jewelry and Photo Processing business in McAllen Texas.

JACK A. BROOKSHIRE

Class of '43

After commissioning I attended Submarine Chaser Training in Miami, Florida and after graduation I was anxious to get into the active fleet. I was assigned to Rescue Vessels or "crash boats" and served in the Atlantic. Our crews were well trained and some of my Commanding Officers were excellent and some just average at their job.

I participated in no formal campaigns. Our tasks were those of rescue. It was a sad and stressful responsibility to retrieve and take possession of the remaining body parts of fliers killed in air crashes. My shipboard duties were mostly involved with conning the boat.

After leaving the Navy, I became an attorney and have worked in various courts: City Judge, District Judge – 58 District Court of Texas in Jefferson County and Justice on the 9th Court of Appeals of Texas.

WILLIAM ALVIN BURNS

Class of '44

I received orders to report aboard the USS. Sproston DD-577, a Fletcher Class destroyer. After anti submarine sweeps and patrols off the Aleutians in August of 1946 Sproston DD-577 was sent to the South Pacific where she screened transports off Leyte during the campaign for the Philippines.

During subsequent patrols Sproston is credited with downing several enemy planes and engaged enemy submarines off the coast of Saipan. The ship received 2 battle stars, and later served in the Korean War and the Viet Nam War before being decommissioned for the last time.

DON E. CAIN

Class of '43

I was a member of NROTC at the University of Texas from September 1941 until April 1943 and was commissioned early to enter the Navy. I was assigned to the United States Naval Reserve Midshipmen's School at Northwestern University, Chicago, Illinois.

Later I was a "plank owner" and served aboard the aircraft carrier, USS Kearsarge (CV 33). The Navy was preparing for the invasion of mainland Japan, but the war ended for all of us after President Truman ordered atom bombs dropped on Nagasaki and Hiroshima.

In 1950 and 1951, I served in the Korean War aboard the USS Craig (DD-885) and participated in the bombardment of Wonsan Harbor.

I finished law school and practiced law, ultimately becoming a Senior State District Judge.

ROY R. CAMPBELL

Class of '45

I reported aboard the USS Enoree (AO69), a fleet oiler on duty in the South Pacific. I served as Watch Officer, Radio, Radar and Signal Officer and Communication Officer.

As a member of task Force 30.8 our job was to keep the ships at sea supplied with oil and other supplies. We were steaming toward Bahrain in the Persian Gulf to take on another load of oil when the atomic bombs was dropped on Japan.

We serviced ships near Okinawa during that battle and were off Tokyo, Japan during the surrender.

I owned Campbell Lumber Company.

KIRK CANSLER

Class of '44

After receiving my commission in December of '44, I was sent to the Pacific Theater aboard the LCI (Landing Craft Infantry) 341. The most harrowing experience we endured was riding out a typhoon in an LCI.

In March of 1945, I ran into Howard Lowe on Leyte. After visiting at the local officers club, Howard was taking me back to my ship in the jeep when we were caught in a violent rainstorm, we ended up staying in a makeshift BOQ, drenched to the skin.

I will always remember returning from the Admiralty Islands, on the way to Pearl Harbor in our LCI, underway alone at sea, with no operating radio. However, while ashore in Pearl Harbor I had the good fortune of hitting the jackpot on a slot machine.

My interests after the war were my family, my church and my business which was building houses with steel framing.

JOE CHESNICK

Class of '45

I was just 17 when I joined the NROTC program at the University. After 3 years I was commissioned in February of 1945 and received orders to report for duty aboard the light cruiser, USS Boise (CL 47). While being transported to my ship on a baby aircraft carrier, we were caught in a typhoon and not allowed topside because the waves were up to 110 feet high.

The Boise was in the 7th Fleet at Subic Bay, Philippines when I reported aboard and she had already participated in several invasions and had credit for destroying 6 or 7 enemy planes. The normal ship's complement was 1100 men.

I served in the Gunnery Division (20mm and 40mm) and later served in the C.I.C. (Combat Information Center). As could be expected this ship was battle-tested and had a well-trained crew. The senior officers were Regular Navy but there were many Reservists among the junior officers. I had some "on the job training" to be sure, but I felt reasonably prepared for what I was expected to do. We lost one enlisted crewmember during my time aboard the Boise.

We participated in campaigns for Borneo and one Philippine Island and our mission was to provide shore bombardment before the troops landed on the beach. In preparation for the invasion of Japan, we were sent stateside for installation of new electronic equipment.

On two different occasions, General Douglas MacArthur used our ship for transportation. One day as I stood admiring the sunset, I turned and noticed the General was standing about 6 feet behind me. I knew he was a stickler for military etiquette so I jumped to attention. He said "at ease", asked my name and where I was from. I told him, he nodded and walked away smoking his corncob pipe.

After the War ended, USS Boise was sent to Philadelphia to be put in mothballs and I was ordered to the USS Savannah, also headed for mothballs.

Just being a part of my ship's personnel was a wonderful experience. I learned a lot on the job, but felt well prepared to perform what duties were assigned to me.

I was discharged in late 1946, returned to the University, received a degree in Business Administration and have been in the home furnishing business.

HUME COFER

Class of '43

Having planned to study law, with only a 3-hour bookkeeping course to my credit, it was an educational jolt to find myself studying advanced math, including trigonometry and the Great Circle Formula in Navigation after joining UT NROTC.

Our class was accelerated, commissioned and sent to special training schools or sea duty. I was one of the few people in that class who received a degree (B.A.) before being ordered in October of 1943 to Midshipman School at Northwestern University in Chicago.

I was assigned to a Landing Craft Tank for duty in the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific as Part of LCT Flotilla 5. Our mission was to supply the three divisions holding the perimeter, move the Army out en route to the Philippines and move three Australian Battalions in. By the time I arrived aboard, the Solomons were secure and our ship stayed in the area until the surrender of the Japanese. I served as Assistant Officer in Charge, then Officer in Charge. I didn't feel that our ship's complement was very well prepared for combat, so it was fortunate that we didn't experience any. Interestingly we heard gunfire down the beach which qualified us for one battle star.

Most of us dealt with shipboard stress quietly, but I never liked going alongside merchant ships at sea in heavy weather to take on freight needed elsewhere by the Army. We punched a hole in a merchant ship with our ramp one day, not exactly a high point for me. Our only fatality was a crew member killed in a truck accident.

Most of our ship's officers were Reservists including our Commanding Officer. He must have been efficient and had some ability because I do not recall any fouled up orders or incorrect radio orders when we arrived beside a ship or the beach. . We were lucky to have a good cook aboard so our chow was pretty good.

On the atoll Green Island, the last black buoy coming in was missing. A merchant ship Captain did not know this and as soon as he passed the last black buoy, he turned sharp to port and went aground. We three LCTs were the only power boats on the Island and we dropped our stern anchors, put lines to the ship, and pulled like the devil, but couldn't get him off. Later, we went back at high tide and finally managed to free the ship.

I was at Green Island when the war ended. After the War was over, I was Executive Officer and then Commanding Officer of an LCI (Rockets) that was moored on Lake Union in Seattle where I stayed until our ship was towed to Bremerton and decommissioned.

After being mustered out of the Navy, I entered Law School and subsequently practiced law, mainly litigation, for 25 years and served as a trial Judge for 25 years over civil and criminal cases. Looking back that math that I had to take helped me more in my lawyer/judge career than I ever expected that it would. Five decades in the courtroom have persuaded me that our most serious national problem is the diminishing quality of public education.

JOHN F. COOKE

Class of '44

I was in the class commissioned in June of 1944. I served aboard the USS LSM 280 as Gunnery and Communication Officer and later aboard the USS LSM 26 as Executive Officer and Commanding Officer.

I took release from the Navy in Japan and as a civilian lived in Tokyo for four years running the Consumer Price Survey of US bases in Japan and also with Research Programs, associated with the Economic and Scientific Section of SHQ and SCAP.

I am a retired banker and farmer.

MALCOLM E. CROSS

Class of '44

After commissioning at UT, I received orders to Submarine School in San Diego, California followed by a second 30 days at the Submarine School in New London, Connecticut. At Pearl Harbor I received orders to serve in relief crews on the Sub-Tender, Apollo, which set sail for Guam.

I was then transferred to the submarine, Tench SS-417, where I was Assistant Communication Officer. The enjoyment of reading battle reports made up in a small way for the less enjoyable job of decoding reports. Our crew on the Tench was well trained and the food was very good. The cook was from Cleveland, Texas!! Our Captain and Executive Officer were Regulars but the rest of us were all Reservists.

When submerged, depth charges were scary. Then we had the added excitement of having one of our fired torpedoes make a circular run, turn back on us and pass under our boat.

Our two war patrols lasted for a total of 65 days and were considered very successful. On the 1st patrol we were up north of Honshu, Japan. We were credited with 7 ships for a loss of 16,000 tons. The Captain received a Navy Cross for that patrol and I received a Letter of Commendation with ribbon. This patrol lasted 37 days.

My second patrol on the USS Tench was in the East China Sea and the Yellow Sea. We sank 15 small craft for a total of 1,600 tons. This patrol lasted 28 days. Both patrols were considered successful and resulted in receiving the Submarine Combat Pin with One Star.

The war ended with us in the Yellow Sea and shortly thereafter we were sent to New London Connecticut. I stayed in the Reserves until 1950 and left the Navy with the rank of LT.

As a civilian, I went into business with my father in The Ewell Cross Gun Shop, Inc. After 48 years I sold the business and retired.

FRANKLIN J. (SANDY) CROW

Class of '45

After commissioning I went to NTC in Miami, Florida to receive training in fire control, damage control and submarine warfare sonar. I received my gunnery training as a member of a training unit on a Destroyer Escort.

I did not receive orders to report aboard a ship. I was sent to San Francisco for five weeks to learn operation and handling of the Higgins craft. I was ordered to Coronado CA and assigned to SLCU 64. (Standard Landing Craft Unit) I stayed in the BOQ at the Landing Craft Training Center and had 4 to 7 Higgins M boats and crews to work with. Each boat could carry 20 Marines and we seriously began practicing beach landings in preparation for the invasion of Japan.

I was in Coronado, CA when the war ended. Back then, there was no bridge to the Island. The Navy arranged for our unit to ferry hundreds of sailors in our patrol crafts and M boats to the landing in downtown San Diego, so they could celebrate the Japanese surrender.

After a week my boats did liberty duty for the ships anchored off shore and in October '45, I was sent to Long Beach. My training days were over. I took a job moonlighting with a night crew rough necking on a drilling rig at Signal Hill.

I really liked the Navy and thought about signing over, however, I knew I would do better working for myself. I was discharged in July of '46.

I returned to the University with the intention of finishing a degree in Architectural Engineering, but before school started I went to Minneapolis and bought some construction equipment from the War Assets for Veterans. I had saved the money I made in the oilfields and used it to start my own company in August of '46. My career has been interesting, and varied: construction, buying and leasing property and owning a sizable piece of farm/ranch land in Nebraska.

NELSON E. DAVENPORT, JR.

Class of '44

After attending Materials Preservation School in the Philadelphia Navy Shipyard, I received orders to the heavy cruiser, USS San Francisco (CA-38). We were Flagship for Cruiser Division 6 operating with a carrier strike force under the command of Admiral Halsey.

The USS San Francisco stayed in Asiatic-Pacific waters while I was aboard her. We were in the battles for Okinawa, Iwo Jima and the Philippines. For some strange reason, on 13 different occasions, the Japanese claimed to have sunk our ship. I am living proof that they didn't. My duties were that of Turret Officer and Division Deck Officer. Our greatest challenges were fighting the kamikazes and other surprise surface vessels.

After returning to civilian life I was General Sales Manager for Rockwell International. I was also co-owner of Shadow Brook, a facility, used for weddings, banquets, business meeting and gourmet dinners.

A. M. DERRICK, JR.

Class of '44

After commissioning in February of 1944, I received orders to the USS Edward C. Daly (DE-17), an Evans-class short hull destroyer escort. Our ship was sent to the Bering Sea in the Aleutians, where we were assigned as guard and weather ship for planes flying the circle route from Attu to Paramushiro. In early '45 we headed for Saipan and served as escort to HMS Ranee as far as Guam. We were assigned sea rescue patrol between Iwo Jima and Saipan. We continued this patrol until after the war in support of planes supplying the occupation of Japan.

I liked the Navy well enough to stay in the Reserves. I retired as a Lieutenant Commander.

After the war, I received a B.S. in Petroleum Engineering from the University of Texas and M.S. degree from the University of Houston. I was employed with Stanolind Oil and Gas Company and later with El Paso Natural Gas Company until my retirement in 1986. I was active in numerous petroleum organizations and technical committees.

JOHN RUMSEY DOOLE

Class of '44

I spent 2 years aboard a Motor Minesweeper (YMS 411), a 136 foot wooden ship with a crew of 34, four of whom were officers. We did sweeping, anti-sub patrol and air-sea rescue in the Saipan-Tinian area. One of our first post-war sweeping assignments was to Bonin Island to clear minefields around Chichi Jima and the Japanese Naval base at Truk in preparation for receiving the Japanese surrender.

Our CO was the senior officer of our task group and was designated to receive the official surrender of Truk from the Japanese Commandant. The Japanese Commander presented him with his ceremonial dagger and his Samurai sword as a token of surrender.

I served as Commanding Officer of USS YMS 411 from 13 November 1945 to 16 May 1946. During that time we were part of a task group assigned to clearing mines in and around Haha Jima and Chichi Jima in the Bonin Island group. We narrowly avoided a swept mine which surfaced directly ahead of us.

We of the NROTC have some great memories from UT: special friends and roommates, early morning calisthenics, life in Andrews Dorm, the Ring Dance of 1943 and of course, that grand old man, CDR Fridell, who made a lasting impression on all of us.

I graduated from the University in June of 1947 and was an agent in the life insurance business, associated with the Principal Financial Group since 1967.

JAMES D. DYER

Class of '44

Commissioned after 26 months in NROTC, I was sent to the USS Zeilin (APA 3), a Navy Attack Transport and Flagship with 50 officers and 500 crew, (25 Flag, including the Commodore). I served as Jr. Assistant Gunnery Officer, Deck Officer, Boat Landing Officer and became O.D. for Sea Anchor Detail. I also became Ship's Secretary. I felt that the crew was well trained and fully prepared for combat. We had a sizeable contingent of Regular Navy people aboard. We were actively engaged in carrying troops, their equipment and supplies from Hollandia to Iwo Jima, the Solomons, the Admiralty Islands, Leyte and Luzon.

I was Officer of the Deck, the morning of January 13, 1945, off the coast of Manila, when a Japanese suicide plane swooped down from a low cloud, made it through our gunfire and hit us. His right wing struck the port king post and boom serving #6 hatch, the fuselage swung inboard under the radio antenna and crashed on the starboard side of the "housetop". His payload of explosives went off on impact and showered our decks and started fires. Damage topside was extensive, most of the superstructure was blown away, deck framing bent and buckled, several staterooms totally destroyed. The plane's engine landed in one of the landing boats. Seven men were killed, three were declared missing in action and thirty were injured. There were many burials at sea.

In spite of the damage sustained, we continued on our way with the convoy. The Zeilin was repaired in time to participate briefly in the Iwo Jima campaign before returning stateside for permanent repairs.

I recall that while near Goat Island in San Francisco Bay we went aground and were high and dry until the tide came in and tugs pulled us free. The C.O. was not reprimanded, perhaps one of the benefits of being a Flagship.

Memories that come to mind: Lt. CDR Candler's peculiar way of bringing one down to size, Ralph Fuge's version of "Navy Blues" and post-war meetings on the field, with friends after the Texas-OU game (until we were made to stay off the field).

I felt inadequately trained in gunnery, but the NROTC experience left us well trained for most other duties. Our training taught us leadership.

In interim years, I have been active in the farm and cattle business, civic, governmental and church activities.

IVAN ELMER

Class of '45

After commissioning in February, 1945, I was ordered to the USS LCI(G) 21, a gunboat in the Seventh Amphibious Force, Pacific Fleet. We had the Group Commander aboard, and almost immediately I began helping with navigation for the group. Early on we operated in Philippine waters, primarily hunting guerrilla craft and shore batteries in southern Mindanao. In July we provided close-in fire support for the capture of Balikpapan Borneo, in the last multi-nation amphibious operation of WWII. Then we returned to Subic Bay, Phillipines, where we were preparing for the invasion of Japan when the war ended. We escorted troop ships carrying soldiers and marines to Okinawa, Korea and China with for the occupation. While taking dawn and dusk star shots and a noon sun shot as navigator, I was Communication Officer, Cryptographic Officer and Censor for crew mail, while taking my regular turn at sea as Officer of the Deck. On shore I served as Supply Officer.

My ship had been among the first 12 amphibious vessels to enter the Pacific in 1942, and many of the officers and crew from those years were still on board when I joined it. It was refitted as a gunship in 1943 and equipped with a 3-inch cannon, two quad 40-millimeter guns bow and stern, and twin 20-millimeters plus 50-caliber machine guns spaced at arms-length along its rails. We even had depth charges on the stern.

The ship had been shot up, beached, had patches welded over her holes and re-floated several times. The conning tower was covered from main deck to the bridge with rows of miniature Japanese flags representing the 21's "kills."

The crew called it "The Lucky 21," with good reason. For all their combat experience, the worst injury of a crew member in the intervening 30 months was by our lead Gunner's Mate. While manning the main 3-inch gun, his .45 caliber pistol fell out of its holster, hit the deck, discharged a bullet that hit him in the buttocks. The Corpsman handled his injury.

We were at General Quarters countless times, not always as a response to enemy action, but at a night-time sound or sighting of what could be an enemy. The Balikpapan operation landed several thousand U.S., British and Australian troops and involved gunfire from cruisers, bombing, strafing, and mine warfare. Our job was to "lay to" parallel to the beach and shoot back at any gun flashes from shore. I was in charge of some 20mm guns on main deck.

This action brought one of our closest calls. After the assault, we patrolled the waters offshore. As we left a patrol area at the end of one watch, we waved to our relief ship as it passed on an opposite heading. We had traveled only a few hundred yards when that ship hit a mine in the waters we had just vacated. The blast injured several officers and crew and disabled the ship.

A second close call came in September 1945, navigating through 150-knot typhoon winds en route from the Philippines to Okinawa. Keeping station 1000 yards abeam and astern, we could see that waves were higher than our 58-foot masts. The entire bow section of our sister ships would be out of the water as far back as the conning tower before crashing down as they passed over the crest of the wave. It was amazing that we did not break apart.

NORMAN D. FLADOS

Class of '44

After S.C.T.C. training in Miami I was sent aboard the PC 782 in the Aleutian Sea Frontier. We convoyed, patrolled and delivered supplies to the out-lying islands of the Aleutian chain. It was cold, foggy, windy and our ship never stopped heaving about. The old British Admiralty charts we used were inaccurate and navigating was a challenge until Loran came into use. I welcomed being transferred to the South Pacific where the fleet was being made ready for the expected invasion of mainland Japan. I spent over two years aboard the PC 782 and eventually served as her Captain I liked everything about Navigation and nothing about Supply and Commissary. All our ship's officers were Reservists.

I shall never forget the sight of the aircraft carrier Franklin making her way into Pearl Harbor after a severe aerial bombardment near Kyushu off the coast of Japan. She looked like iron lace as one could see daylight through her superstructure and her hull.

I stayed in the Navy after the war and served aboard USS PC-ER, a research ship operating along the Atlantic seaboard. After completing Submarine School in Groton, Connecticut, I served in the USS Sea Owl (405) stationed in the Panama Canal Zone. While stationed there, I contracted polio and was given a medical discharge from the Navy in 1950.

Being in the Navy provided a growth process, mentally, spiritually and intellectually. We all left the comforts of academia anxious to get to sea, we came back with a maturity that can only be gained by the experience of fulfilling an obligation willingly and well. I regret none of it.

After returning to the University where I completed a B.S. and M.Ed. degree, I attended Texas A & M where I received another B.S. and a Ph.D. in Plant Pathology. I taught college for several years than moved to the Rio Grande Valley where I had farming interests.

MACON (MAC) FREEMAN

Class of '44

I was assigned duty aboard the USS Runnels (APD 85), formerly DE 793. I was Boat Officer, Asst. 1st Lieutenant and later, O.D. at special sea detail, 1st Lieutenant and Gunnery Officer. We were on the picket line at Okinawa and we escorted ships of the 3rd Fleet off the Coast of Japan. We were in the landing at Yokosuka and were with the first Navy Group into Hiroshima. Our ship assisted with the evacuation of American Prisoners of War from the mainland Japanese prison camps.

Japanese Army and Navy suicide boat units on Hachijo Jima surrendered to a task force of a heavy cruiser with Marines, a destroyer and my APD, among others. It was our job to dispose of all the surrendered Japanese munitions by dumping them in the deep sea. An explosion during this process almost cost me my life and one of our boats was lost doing this job.

I have a degree in Journalism and have been active in managing my investments. I served on the President's Council of the Houston Advertising Federation.

I shall always remember the camaraderie among my classmates in the NROTC. I am grateful that I could study at a great University and serve in a great Navy.

RALPH FUGE

Class of '44

I was sent to amphibious training school in Norfolk, Virginia after which I received orders to report aboard an LST (Landing Ship Tank or Large Slow Target). At Gulfport, Mississippi we picked up our cargo, 50,000 cases of beer and delivered what was left of it to Pearl Harbor. We had a real problem with "breakage" on that voyage, especially with the better brands. Morale stayed high. Then we were sent into the South Pacific.

I was Gunnery Officer, and ultimately held every position on the ship except Commanding Officer. The ship was comfortable as ships go, but I felt we weren't as well prepared as we should have been. Time and experience took care of that. We had exceptionally good anti-aircraft gunners who shot down numerous kamikazes. When I first reported aboard, I learned that I was the only person who had ever been to sea and my experience was in sailboats. The two Commanding Officers under whom I served were inexperienced, as well.

Food was good until we started getting Australian mutton and we would load it on one side and dump it off on the other side. One time we were very low on provisions and were told to go alongside a nearby battleship, that they would give us "40 tons" of provisions. We went alongside and banged then, which offended them. They gave us provisions, but it was all orange marmalade. We could eat just so much marmalade, so we took our marmalade around to the nearby anchorages to trade and barter for food.

We participated in the battles for Leyte, Iwo Jima, Okinawa and Ie Shima. What stands out in my mind happened after we landed at Ie Shima; we watched journalist Ernie Pyle's body transported from shore to a ship for transport home to the United States.

I had built a sailboat using the pontoons from a minesweeper and was sailing it alongside the ship when we sustained an attack by a kamikaze. We survived that.

On our second trip to Iwo Jima, we came in at high tide, it was low tide by the time we had unloaded our cargo and we found ourselves stranded with only our stern anchor in the water. The next high tide came to our rescue.

War can get up close in an LST. We hit the beaches and saw close contact with the enemy. Ie Shima had a double reef that the frogmen had blown through in two places. We were the only LST that made it to the beach. We had been told that the enemy had already been dislodged from positions overlooking the landing site but when we came in, we were greeted by Japanese gunfire from the cliffs above us.

While at Okinawa the kamikazes started coming, we were on the outer edge of the anchorage making smoke which is like an arrow, pointing down to you from the air. One of them fell onto our deck as he went across.

Anchored in a small cove near Okinawa, we had a hard time dislodging the 150-foot LCT that we were carrying on our main deck and the convoy left us to figure it out. We were supposed to list to one side, pull the chocks and let it slide off the side. It didn't. We did all the things the books told us to do but nothing happened. By that time we were all alone in the anchorage. It was at that unfortunate time that a Japanese suicide boat hit us in the stern. It blew a hole 10 feet by 10 feet in our starboard quarter. We had one screw that wouldn't work and we had to dog the doors off to keep the water from coming in. We sported that big old hole in our side for the remainder of the war. However, the LCT slid off very smoothly!!!! After that we were a "bastard" ship and never were with other ships in transit, mainly due to the gaping hole in our side we couldn't stay up with the rest of the line.

After the war ended we were sent to the Sea of Japan and were a "guinea pig" ship. We were sent over the mine-swept area to make sure there were no mines left. Lousy duty. We would go for hours with nothing in evidence then all of a sudden mines would pop up all around us. We were also a "dump ship". Ships headed back to the States would dump their ammunition on our main deck. In spite of Navy Regs, we had fuses and all sorts and sizes of shell lying around each other on our deck. A real coping problem.

In July of '46, I returned to civilian life, resumed my studies and graduated with a degree in Geology. I worked as a geologist in the oil business until my retirement.

FRANCIS W. GERLING

Class of '45

Going from being a 17 year old high school student to commissioned officer in the United States Navy in less than 3 years was a challenge requiring a certain amount of maturity and confidence. I was one of many that did just that by way of NROTC. After commissioning, I received orders to the LSM 249 on duty in the Pacific.

The war was over and I was a "replacement". When I reported aboard, the captain of the LSM 249 told me how glad he was to see me because he had every intention of going home and turning the ship over to me! Ultimately that is what happened. At the age of 21, I became skipper of the LSM 249 and with the help of the well-trained CPO s aboard, I took the ship wherever we had orders to go.

I lettered in football and have many great memories of time spent in NROTC at UT.

After leaving the Navy I returned to college and graduated from the University in 1950 with a degree in engineering. I am retired from a consulting engineering firm.

CHARLES R. GRAHAM

Class of '44

We all made the most of our college days while getting ready to serve in the war. After commissioning in '44 I received orders to the PCE 894 in the Aleutians. Our job was to chase Japanese submarines in the cold, windy, wet Aleutian waters and drop depth charges if indicated.

I also served aboard the PC 601 in the South Pacific and I served as her Executive Officer and later her Commanding Officer.

I returned to UT for a degree in Economics then to Columbia University for a Masters Degree. I worked with the US Army of Occupation in Germany as Educational Advisor for many years. I was assigned to assist in establishing educational programs for members of the armed forces who had not completed their education.

In later years I raised, showed and sold registered Longhorn cattle.

JAMES A. GRAY

Class of '45

After 2-1/2 years in the NROTC it seemed quite special graduating and receiving my commission. I received orders to report aboard the LCI (M) 431 in the Philippine Islands. We were part of the 7th Amphibious Force of the Pacific Fleet. I liked the informality of a small ship but didn't like the space limitations aboard. The food didn't vary much and fresh foods were scarce or non-existent.

This ship had participated in several invasions and the officers and men were well prepared and well trained. Our Commanding Officers were well qualified and efficient and they were Reservists like myself. We took part in the Borneo invasion in June of '45 and we worked with mine sweepers to clear and destroy mines before the invasion. We led the first wave of troops to land on the beach.

It was surprising to see the efficiency of large numbers of ships and their personnel involved in a coordinated invasion. We worked with the Mine Sweepers and it was stressful to contemplate the possibility of striking one of the mines.

Late in the War, we had received our Operation Plan for the upcoming invasion of Japan and were rehearsing our role of leading the first wave of First U.S. Cavalry Troops to be landed on Japanese soil.

After seven months aboard the LCI (M) 431, I was sent to a supply ship located on the Whangpoo River near Shanghai, China where we helped supply the U.S. Fleet in the China Sea. I was there when the war ended. After the war, our ship transported Naval Intelligence Officers to various islands in the Philippines to collect information for upcoming war crimes trials of the officers and leaders responsible for atrocities committed during the war. At one time or another I served as Executive officer of both ships on which I served.

I felt my service in the Navy made me a more mature, disciplined and responsible person and it was certainly a lesson in living and working with other people. I received a B.B.A degree and a Law Degree from the University of Texas and practiced law in Caldwell, Texas for 55 years before retiring.

JOHN HILL

Class of '44

The NROTC years were good ones and I particularly enjoyed keeping in good physical condition. However, I must admit I haven't done as well since. For some reason, LT. CDR. Candler was always dressing me down for not being as neat as he thought I should be.

After I was commissioned an Ensign in the Navy, I was sent for specialized amphibious training in Maryland. On completion, I received orders to the LCI (FF) 572, a flotilla flagship and we saw duty in Leyte Gulf, Philippines under "Bull" Halsey's overall command.

Upon arrival I was made Communications Officer. My Commanding Officer was a great leader and a good ship handler and he was also a Reservist. I ultimately became Executive Officer and Commanding Officer of the LCI 572. We had a great, well trained crew, however, one of our sailors managed to fall overboard and we had the rather humorous task of fishing him out of the Pacific Ocean.

We participated in the landing on Mindanao which proved to be uneventful as landings go. It was an unpleasant sight dealing with returning prisoners in the Phillipines and during overland travel we saw a lot of war residue.

When the War ended, I was in Manila waiting to go to China. Looking back, I feel the NROTC prepared me rather well for service aboard ship, especially in Navigation.

After discharge from the Navy I resumed my education in law at the University of Texas. I became a lawyer, served as Texas Secretary of State, Attorney General and Chief Justice of the Texas Supreme Court.

BERNIE HILLEN

Class of '45

Membership in a Michigan Naval Air Force Reserve via V-12, then on to NROTC resulted in my commissioning at UT and being ordered to Radar School in Honolulu, Hawaii. I reported for duty to the USS Chife AM 315, a minesweeper based in Sasebo, Japan whose duty it was to sweep the Straits of Tsushima. The Chife AM 315 was designated Flagship, and along with the Commodore's Staff, we had 6 other officers. This made for some crowding and necessitated my being assigned to a bunk that pulled down from the bulkhead in the Wardroom.

I began as Communications Officer and O.D and after a little time and experience, became Engineering Officer. The war was over but there was still work for minesweepers such as ours. The Straits of Tsushima had been mined by aircraft and our job was to sweep those water free of mines. Exploding mines can be stressful; it was particularly so as we watched a sister ship hit by mines in the process of sweeping.

A surprisingly memorable sight was seeing a large Catholic Cathedral in the center of Sasebo, Japan.

Before my departure from the Navy I was re-assigned to an LST, that we took from the shipyard in northern California to San Diego on its shakedown cruise.

I returned as soon as possible to UT and completed my Mechanical Engineering degree. Later, I went into the florist business and was active in State, National and International Boards involved with that business.

I found my Navy experience interesting and stayed in the Naval Reserve for 20 years.

HENRY P. HODGE

Class of '44

After commissioning I was sent for specialized training in anti-aircraft identification, gunnery training at Great Lakes, Illinois, to the Submarine Chaser Training Center in Miami, Florida, then on to Sound School in San Diego and Fire Fighting School in San Pedro, CA. I received orders to the USS *Staunch* AM 307, a 180-foot minesweeper of the Admirable class. She had a complement of 94 men and 9 officers. Her armament consisted of one 3"50 dual purpose gun, two single-mount Bofors 40 mm guns and six Oerlikon 20mm guns. She had minesweeping gear with the capability of sweeping anchored, magnetic and acoustic mines. She had fine sonar gear as well as depth charges, k-guns and a hedgehog to attack submarines. Our primary mission was sweeping mines and our secondary mission was performing anti-submarine patrols. I was a "plank" owner of the USS *Staunch* and I served aboard her from the time of her commissioning until a few months before she was decommissioned.

I served in many capacities including Commanding Officer. I loved that ship and her crew was outstanding. The Navy training turned a bunch of kids into real fighting sailors. The officers were also well trained and competent, all were Reservists. When our radar went out, we had a young radio technician who could dismantle it into a thousand pieces, work on it nonstop until it was running like new.

We were in the Asiatic-Pacific Theater where we conducted minesweeps, anti-submarine patrols and provided anti-submarine escort for other vessels. We swept the waters for mines off the beaches of Iwo Jima and Okinawa prior to troop landings.

One of the most stressful times was at Okinawa when we were all under attack by kamikaze planes. We could not tell on whom they would dive. Our ships filled the air with anti-aircraft shells armed with proximity fuses and sometimes they presented a threat to our fleet. If such a shell did not explode by proximity to a kamikaze it would fall back down among our ships and explode from proximity to the water at a height of about 50 feet. If one of these shells was bursting in our area, it made us nervous because we couldn't see them coming.

One morning on patrol in the Pacific, copies of a "newsletter" mysteriously appeared around the ship. It was typewritten and contained short, exaggerated and outrageous accounts of everything going on aboard ship. The authors were never identified. We all looked forward to each issue. This continued for a few months, but the newsletters finally became so outrageously slanderous that the Captain ordered that it be stopped. Much to our disappointment.

I was in San Pedro Bay in the Philippines when the war ended, and what a celebration took place. After the war ended we swept mines around the Japanese home island and across the Tsushima Straits. We had witnessed the tremendous build up of the fleet in preparation for the invasion of the Japanese mainland but now we knew that we had survived the war and would be headed home.

I formed an extremely close bond with my shipmates on the USS *Staunch*, and I have treasured that relationship for my entire life. My whole wartime naval experience strengthened my patriotism and love for my country.

BRUCE JAMIESON

Class of '45

After NROTC, I received orders to the USS Gentry (DE 349, a John C. Butler Class Destroyer Escort) on patrol duty in the Philippines. After the Japanese capitulation on 15 August 1945, USS Gentry continued escorting convoys out of Leyte Gulf to Manila Bay and Okinawa. We did weather patrol and air sea rescue patrol and escorted ships carrying homeward bound troops from the Island campaigns. We did this until November of 1945 when we departed Leyte Gulf for the United States and the usual decommissioning process that was the fate of countless ships of the line.

I was called back from the Inactive Reserve into the Navy during the Korean War in '51 to '53 and served on the USS Harry F. Bauer (DD 738 – DM 26) . This ship was launched as a Destroyer but was converted into a Destroyer mine layer and became the DM-26. We stayed in the Atlantic the entire time.

I completed my degree. Until my retirement my brother and I ran the family film business, Jamieson Film Company.

ANDREW JOHNSON

Class of '44

After leaving NROTC, I was sent to the USS South Dakota (BB-57) in the Pacific where I was assigned duties in the Combat Information Center. The USS South Dakota was comparatively young as battleships go since she was commissioned in March of 1942. She had been a part of numerous Task Forces in support of fast carriers. even before I served aboard her.

She was active in the Marshal Islands, Marianas, Palau, Yap and Ulithi. She supported fast carriers and shelled the beaches before the landings on Saipan and Tinian. She participated in the Battle of Philippine Sea, (Marianas Turkey Shoot) and supported landings at Iwo Jima and Okinawa. She lost 24 killed, 27 wounded in one battle and sustained an explosion late in the war that killed 11 aboard.

We delivered the first gunfire attack, by a heavy warship, on the Japanese home islands including Honshu and Tokyo on September 15th, the day Japan surrendered. This was the last strike of the War.

The USS South Dakota was anchored near enough to the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay on September 2, 1945 for me to observe the signing of the Japanese surrender through binoculars from the deck of our ship.

I finished my education and have practiced law in the interim years.

T. LAWRENCE (LARRY) JONES

Class of '44

Living in Andrews Hall, our class concerned themselves with morning mustering, following the progress of the war and straining with others to get into the fray. What an experience.

I took courses at the Sub Chaser Training Center in Miami along with many others from our class. I then received orders to the DE 771 USS Sutton that was part of a "submarine killer group" in the Atlantic Ocean. Our two anti-submarine patrol "killer groups" intercepted six German submarines in mid-Atlantic. We destroyed five and captured the sixth, the U-234, which was the first German submarine to surrender after the war ended in Europe. U-234 surrendered to the USS Sutton.

Taken from news accounts of the incident, the Executive Officer from the USS Sutton "led a boarding party aboard U-Boat 234 and found it was running for Japan, carrying a military mission including a General, Der Flieger Ulrich Kessler of the Luftwaffe, complete with monocle. There had been 2 Japanese aboard but when they found the Germans planned to surrender the boat, both committed suicide. The general had in his possession, a paper-bound copy of Walter Lippman's "U.S. War Aims". The sub was carrying uranium for use in atomic bomb experiments, plans for V-2 rocket bombs and jet propulsion plans.

When General Kessler stepped aboard the boat that was to transfer him to the USS Sutton, he faced aft and saluted. Judson Catlett, Coxswain, of Kewanee, Mississippi was too busy to salute and said, "That's okay, general, just carry on". The captured U-Boat (and its crew) was towed into Portsmouth, New Hampshire and turned over to the Coast Guard.

I have practiced law in the interim years. We spent 20 years in New York City then moved to Washington D.C. where I practiced law with the firm of Hunton & Williams.

JACK G. JORDAN

Class of '45

After leaving the University, I was sent to Newport to learn Steam Engineering. I served for six months aboard a Sea Going Rescue Tug (ATR 82) stationed off San Francisco, California. Our assignment was to push barges to their destinations.

I applied for and was accepted into Medical School and became a Family Practitioner. I still maintain my practice in Floydada, Texas as of the time this book goes to press.

TEDDY A. KLEIN

Class of '44

As a member of the Class of '44, I would probably be one of the few who could say I had been Dorm Commander (house mother) to a bunch of sailors living in a girls' dormitory at the University of Texas. After being commissioned, I received direct orders to the USS New Jersey (BB-62) on duty at Mog Mog in the Pacific Theater. My first assigned position was as Junior Division Officer (16"/50 Fire Control) Division.

I particularly liked the fact that I could spend some time below decks where it was air-conditioned. I spent 18 months aboard the New Jersey and felt that our ship's complement was well prepared for combat. The food was great. We were under the able command of Admirals Halsey and Spruance, and I remember Captain Wooldrige as an outstanding leader.

We participated in the Iwo Jima and Okinawa campaigns and we survived 600 Japanese suicide plane attacks. I always felt glad that I was aboard the New Jersey. The sinking of the Japanese Battleship, Yamato, provided some stressful moments and we were greatly relieved when Yamato went down.

I spent my entire naval experience on the USS New Jersey and was still aboard when the war ended. Although my NROTC training didn't really prepare me for duty aboard a battleship, I received excellent training after I got aboard. My experience in the NROTC left me with a sincere appreciation of the Navy.

I was mustered out in June of 1946, and in the interim years I was President and CEO of Klein Funeral Homes and Klein Memorial Parks.

I shall always feel proud of my Navy service on the USS New Jersey.

DAN M. KRAUSSE

Class of '45

I was 16 back in 1942 when I entered NROTC and I worried that I was going to miss all the action! In May 1945 I graduated at age 19 shortly before the war ended with Japan, with a BS in Naval Science and the rank of Ensign, USNR. I was sent to Technical Radar School at Bowdoin College in Maine, followed by Navy Gunnery School at Washington Navy Yard. My sea duty finally arrived with orders to the USS Wilkes-Barre (CL-103) where I became Main Battery Turret Officer.

Because transportation to the Western Pacific was difficult at that time, I finally reached the "Willie-B" after it arrived at San Pedro Harbor in February 1946. In short order I was living vicariously the war stories of the Willie-B which were many and varied. The USS Wilkes-Barre was a relatively young ship but had an impressive war record that included 4 battle stars and 13 burials at sea. Before I reported aboard, she had sustained a kamikaze attack and had also assisted the badly hit Carrier Bunker Hill, taking 67 of her injured off the ship. I was told that an officer rescued from the stricken Carrier during the Battle for Okinawa had died in my cabin. Admiral McCain, grandfather of Senator John McCain, had commanded her at one time.

She was part of CruDiv 17 attached at various times to the Third and Fifth Fleets. Her mission had been primarily AA Screening for the aircraft carriers and retrieving downed pilots, with occasional detachment for bombarding shore targets on Japan's home islands.

Thirty days after I joined the Willie-B, we weighed anchor for a voyage through the Panama Canal to our homeport at Philadelphia Navy Yard where the Willie B had been commissioned in 1944.

While on watch during our passage off Cape Hatteras, a storm repeatedly rolled us in excess of 20 degrees. The OOD told me that a typhoon in the South China Sea had given the ship a roll of more than 35 degrees.

In early June, 1946, I was placed on reserve status and returned to UT to complete my studies. It is a humbling experience to recognize my good fortune in missing the war when I am in the presence of real veterans who gave so much. My good fortune included a Gun Captain in my turret (Chief Gunners Mate with 30 years experience) who for whatever reason "adopted" this shave-tail who was in command. He saved me from embarrassing mistakes on several occasions. He gave me credit I was not due and made me look good. This was a valuable lesson learned that I used many times in later life.

I received a degree in Chemical Engineering from the University of Texas (1947) and attended Harvard Business School. Several years later I was honorably discharged from the Navy with the final rank of Lieutenant JG.

I was active in the development and the corporate management of numerous gas, oil energy, banking and investment companies. I have chaired corporate, research, investment and educational Boards in the state of Texas and hold 2 patents on chemical processes licensed to 14 companies and 6 foreign countries.

RICHARD R. LE ROUAX

Class of '45

After my graduation in May of 1945, I reported aboard the USS Pennsylvania (BB 38). Designated a "super dreadnought" battleship this grand old battlewagon had a long, illustrious history and earned eight Battle Stars for her service in World War II. She was damaged during the attack on Pearl Harbor, took shot and shell in numerous campaigns in the Pacific War and suffered an ignominious end as a target ship during atom bomb tests on Bikini Atoll.

En route to Okinawa in July, a shore battery fired a shell that passed right over my head and all the way through the superstructure of the ship. It did not detonate. Lucky for me.

In August of 1945 while anchored alongside the USS Tennessee in Buckner Bay, Okinawa, a Japanese torpedo plane slipped in through the cloud cover undetected and launched a torpedo that hit the Pennsylvania well aft. We suffered extensive damage that left an enormous hole in her stern. There were 20 men killed, 10 injured and many compartments flooded. With the help of 2 tugs the USS Pennsylvania got under way and was towed to a dry dock on Guam Island, arriving in early September. A large steel patch was welded over the hole and repairs made so she could return to the US under her own power. This she did, sailing for home with escort. En route #3 shaft slipped away inside the stern tube, slipped aft, and divers were sent down to cut through the shaft. The shaft and propeller were both cut away and dropped into the sea. Shipping water and with only one screw turning, USS Pennsylvania limped into Puget Sound Bremerton Navy Yard on October 24th, 1945.

I was called back for duty during the Korean Conflict and was Executive Officer aboard the USS Antalock, a Military Sea Transport Service troop transport ship that carried troops to and from the Korean War zones.

After receiving a UT degree in Business Administration, I was purchasing agent for Great Lakes Carbon Corporation, Texas Instruments and DSC Communications. I maintain an interest in farming and ranching in northeast Texas.

THOMAS M. LEMON

Class of '43

Graduation as an Ensign from the UTNROTC in May of 1943 began a Naval career that lasted 23 years as an active duty officer. His was a career that experienced many oceans, many ships and many positions in peacetime and war. He served aboard the USS Richmond and aboard the USS Stembel operating in Korean waters. In 1955 Lemon became Assistant US Naval Attaché and Assistant Naval Attaché for Air in the Netherlands and Belgium. He is past Commanding Officer of the USS McCaffery, was Commander of Destroyer Division 601 and was Commander, Cruiser-Destroyer Force Representative at Key West before joining RADM E.C. Outlaw's Staff in 1964.

He was Captain, Chief of Staff and Aide to Hunter-Killer Force, Atlantic / Commander Carrier Division 16, for one year before his retirement with the rank of Captain.

After leaving the Navy, Tom served as Director of Industrial Relations for White Consolidated Industries until his retirement.

(Information above received from family member)

CARL LAURENT LICHTER

Class of '44

I was headed for the Submarine Service when I left Austin in 1944 and attended orientation in Bermuda on two different submarines, the Roger 6 and the Roger 3. Both were old World War I models that had been taken out of the mothball fleet for use as training vessels. I had suffered a severe leg injury that made further training for Submarines impossible.

I attended Destroyer Escort training in Miami and was assigned to the Joseph E. Connolly (DE 450) that was still under construction. After a shakedown cruise to GTMO and fine-tuning at the Brooklyn Navy Yard we headed for Saipan in the Pacific by way of the Panama Canal. Later, when heading to Okinawa harbor we met countless ships evacuating ahead of a typhoon and we changed our course as well.

We never formed up with a division and remained an independent vessel after that. It seemed to me that our assignments sometimes bordered on the goofy.

After the surrender of Japan in Tokyo Bay we escorted a Tender that had been converted into a Supply Ship. It was designated a Flag Ship, as well, and sometimes it seemed to us the Admiral was joy-riding from supply depot to supply depot.

We went to Manila, Okinawa, Shanghai and Nagasaki, staying 3 or 4 days in each port.

We were then assigned to escort a Fleet refueling vessel, anchored off the Korean Coast. We left Korean waters and spent Christmas Day 1945 at anchor at Saipan. Soon thereafter we were ordered back to the United States.

I finished my degree in Mechanical Engineering and worked for Hughes Tool Company in Houston for 8 years and Dresser Industries in Dallas for 31 more years before my retirement in 1985.

JOHN WILLIAM LOVE

Class of '44

Being commissioned after my training with the NROTC was a memorable experience for me. And looking back, the dunking of the first class in Memorial Fountain was a good memory, as well. After receiving my commission in '44, I was sent to the Norfolk Navy Yard for training with 5", 3", 40mm and 20 mm guns. I received orders to the USS Boggs DMS 3, an old WW I, 4 piper, converted to a 3 piper Destroyer Mine Sweeper. I went aboard in San Diego and we joined the Pacific Fleet out of Pearl Harbor preparing for the expected invasion of Japan.

I first served as Assistant Engineer, Assistant Gunnery Officer and later as Gunnery Officer. The officers aboard were all Reservists and well qualified to do what they were expected to do. I can say the same for the crew, they were trained to do their jobs and did them well. We did not participate in any of the Pacific campaigns, but were in fleet training for the future invasion of the Japanese mainland. When the war ended, I was on watch, and our ship was crossing a reef into Entiwetok.

After I left the Navy in May of '46, I finished college. I spent a short time with a newspaper in Corpus Christi, then 23 years with Superior Oil Co. in Lafayette, Louisiana and 30 years as an oil lease broker.

JAMES E. LOVELESS

Class of '44

My first 6 months after commissioning was spent aboard the Atlantic-based USS Hubbard (DE 211) on convoy escort duty in the Atlantic. My brother, L.E. Loveless, received almost identical orders including to CIC School. When our new DEs were both on shake-down cruises in the Caribbean, I almost fell off my ship one day when I looked up and saw my brother coming across the deck to say hello.

After completion of CIC training I was sent to the USS Sands APD 13 stationed in the Pacific. I served as CIC Officer, Boat Officer and Public Relations Officer while on the Sands. The ship had already experienced encounters with the enemy and had a seasoned crew. My opinion of my two Commanding Officers was mixed.

Our ship participated in the landings and battles of Lingayen Gulf, Iwo Jima and Okinawa. At Iwo Jima, Japanese small boats tried to ram us and put a hole in our ship. While patrolling between Japan and Okinawa we endured the kamikazes. Three of the six ships in our division were hit by kamikazes and sustained considerable damage.

Aboard the Sands, I relieved a Boat Officer who had won the Navy Cross. I knew nothing about those boats, how to start them or run them, but luckily an under-water demolition team came aboard that brought their own boat crews. Interestingly, the head of the boat team was a Texas Aggie.

My ship was in San Francisco when word came in about the surrender of Japan. There I was Officer of the Deck, tied up to a pier in San Francisco while the rest of the officers and crew peeled off the ship and headed for the nearest celebration.

My experience and time spent with the Navy served me well. I left the service in July of 1946, I finished my degree and went on to receive an MBA from Stanford University.

LOYAL E. LOVELESS

Class of '44

Orders were received to report for duty aboard a Destroyer Escort which was being completed in Port Arthur, Texas. After a shake-down cruise off Bermuda the next six months were spent escorting ships headed for Tunisia off the coast of the Africa. L.E. attended CIC School (Combat Information Center) in Miami, Florida at the same time as his brother, J.E. Lovelace.

He was assigned to a Destroyer Escort on the West Coast which rendezvoused in the Pacific for the invasion of Okinawa. His ship was also among the many being readied for the invasion of the Japanese mainland. By August, the War was over.

For anyone who experienced it, one of the most memorable events had to have been the typhoon that hit Okinawa in 1945. The destruction of ships at Buckner Bay was devastating and costly.

Brothers L.E. Lovelace and J.E. Lovelace were members of the same class at UT NROTC and their naval careers followed a parallel path. Because he was married and had more "points" L.E. was discharged sooner than his brother. He returned to UT to earn a B.S., M.S. and Ph.D. in Bio Chemistry.

(The above information was received from James E Lovelace, brother of Loyal E. Lovelace)

THOMAS P. LOVETT

Class of '45

I was sent to the LCI (G) 69 in the South Pacific, 7th Amphibious Force. We supported the Australian invasion of Borneo. Then we were sent north to Okinawa in preparation for the invasion of Japan, but the Japanese heard I was coming and surrendered.

I spent a couple of long nights: one, when we were stranded high and dry on a sand bar 100 yards off the coast of Borneo on D-2. We spent the whole day with the Australian geophysical unit laying channel buoys. In the evening as the tide was going out, we were in for a long night of watching. The second memorable event was the typhoon at Okinawa.

I will always remember Plebe T. Woods in Seamanship 101 "correcting" Cdr. Friedell about port side being on the right.

Before retiring, I accumulated 4 academic degrees.

HOWARD R. LOWE

Class of '44

I first served aboard an LST in the European Theater of Operations and participated in the Normandy Invasion. Our ship was hit by a buzz bomb (V-1 rocket) in the Thames Estuary. Our Group sustained a disastrous E-boat attack with acoustic torpedoes off South Hampton (Lyme Bay) during D-Day rehearsal with the loss of 3 LSTs and fatalities of soldiers, about 500, and sailors, about 200. A real fiasco.

I was shipped out to an LST in the Pacific 7th Fleet and served as Executive Officer. Our ship participated in most of the Philippine campaigns including the invasion of Borneo, which was the last invasion of WW II. I ran into Ed Gay at Moritai prior to the Borneo campaign and we were surprised to learn we had both been at Normandy on D-Day. Our ship and many others were awaiting the invasion of Japan.

Prior to the Normandy invasion we were off the English coast awaiting D-Day orders. Our skipper fancied himself as a ladies' man. He had brought an English girl on board and had her in his cabin. He came into the wardroom and announced his latest conquest. He was two-sheets into the wind. It was but a few minutes later that we were notified that the ships were sealed. I never saw anyone turn as pale and become sober so quickly. He was stuck – you could almost see his mind desperately planning how he could get her off the ship. He tried all of us in the wardroom and each one said, "Capt., no way – I don't want a firing squad." In desperation he got the mail orderly, a Yeoman striker to slip her ashore. The striker managed to get her past the Army MPs. We all surmised how the guard received a treat from a very scared English girl. A day or so later the striker became a 3rd Class Petty Officer.

When the first atomic bomb was dropped, I was at Subic Bay where the fleet was staging for the invasion of Japan. A great celebration ensued.

I remained in the Reserve for 14 years after the War ended. I returned to UT and became a geologist/petroleum engineer and have worked in many parts of the world as well as the US and Canada. I owned and managed my own international consulting firm and oil company. I am still actively engaged in the petroleum industry with widespread experience in the Middle East. During my career, I have lectured extensively and have sat on numerous professional, educational and industrial Boards and Foundations.

ROBERT T. MARTIN

Class of '45

I spent 8 months on the LSD 13 (Landing Ship Dock) USS Casa Grande, first of its Class. At 457 feet in length, her well deck could carry 18 LCM s plus 3 LCU s. She carried a complement of 17 officers and 237 crewman.

The War was winding down. We were in close proximity to Japan and China and I saw many Pacific Islands, visited Tokyo and parts of China. I also had the memorable experience of weathering a typhoon and a tidal wave.

I returned to finish my education and I have spent the interim years running my own business.

BEN McDONALD

Class of '45

Like so many others I was 16 when I joined the NROTC and 26 months later I was an Ensign in the United States Navy. I was sent directly to the heavy cruiser, USS Wichita (CA 45) operating in the Pacific. The Wichita had seen extensive service and ultimately received 13 Battle Stars. I became a Gunnery Officer and later, Communications Officer. Our main targets were the kamikazes and suicide boats and we got a few along the way. The crew was well trained and the chow very good.

The upper level officers were all Regular Navy, however the junior officers were mostly Reservists. We participated in the battles for Leyte, Lingayan Gulf, Okinawa and became a part of occupying forces in Japanese waters. We survived many close encounters with Japanese submarines, kamikazes, torpedo planes, shore battery fire and mines.

In March as part of Task force 54 we set out for Okinawa, the last great invasion of WW II, and we were off Okinawa when lookouts spotted a periscope to starboard. Making an emergency turn, the ship avoided the torpedo that was fired. Another time, we barely missed being rammed by a carrier. Both incidents, too close for comfort.

The Wichita was damaged twice. She was hit by a small shell that penetrated a fuel tank 5 feet below the water line. A month later in April of 1945, she was hit by friendly fire when a 5-inch shell hit the port catapult resulting in the death of one man and injury of 11 crewmembers.

A mine sweeper came alongside one day to pick up some "gidunk" (ice cream) from us. They sent two men aboard to carry the canister back to their ship. In the meantime, general quarters (red alert) was sounded, but the mine sweeper refused to cast loose until it got their gidunk canister aboard their ship! This resulted in their two men being left aboard our ship for a couple days. Ice cream can be important in time of war!

We spent months preparing for or participating in the assault on Okinawa. At War's end, we were the first ship to reach Nagasaki waters after the minesweepers did their job. We were there to escort the USS Haven into the harbor to pick up American prisoners of war. The American P.O.W.s were underground when the atom bomb hit and were relatively safe but the general area of Nagasaki was one of destruction and an awesome sight. Our ship became a part of the "magic carpet" fleet that brought back homecoming servicemen.

I returned to UT and received my law degree. I practiced law, taught college level law courses, did consultant work with gas and minerals, did some ranching, writing and have my Captain's License in the U.S. Coast Guard.

WILLIAM W. (BILL) McGINNIS

Class of '44

After commissioning, I served aboard the USS Hermann (DD 532), a Fletcher class (light) destroyer. The Heermann had quite a war history before I reported aboard and she managed to keep her record as a ship in the center of the action until war's end.

We screened transports and landing ships in the battle for Leyte. (The USS Hermann was known to be the only U.S. destroyer that survived direct engagement with enemy heavy cruisers and battleships).

After repairs were made at Mare Island, California we headed back to the Pacific for picket and anti-submarine duty off Iwo Jima where we sank a small surface vessel and rescued 7 of its crew. Also, we were credited with sinking Japanese submarine (I-56).

On August 15 of 1945 we were attacked by a suicide plane. We shot it down. As it turned out this was one of the last actions of the Pacific War since an end to hostilities had been declared a few hours before this encounter.

It was an awesome sight entering Tokyo Bay as part of the U.S. occupation force. The USS Heermann was a great ship with a very competent crew and it was a privilege to serve aboard her. She received nine battle stars.

JOSEPH W. McKNIGHT

Class of '44

Having entered NROTC at 16, I was still but 19 when I was commissioned and sent to Anti Submarine Training in Miami, Florida. I received orders to report aboard the PC 1731 in New Orleans. We stayed in the Atlantic Theater on anti submarine patrol for a time and then served as a Rescue Ship in the Azores.

I served as Communication Officer and Executive Officer on the PC 1731. We had a congenial, well-prepared crew aboard. All the officers were Reservist except one. Our mission was to get the convoys through whatever submarines were on the prowl.

It was stressful when our ship was blown aground in a 90- knot gale in a hurricane off the Florida Keys. We also had a scare when our ship almost collided with a drifting mine.

The food was pretty good, but the cooks sometimes took a few liberties in what they prepared. I was standing watch on our ship in the Azores when we received notice of the surrender of Japan.

I left the Navy and finished my degree. I was a Rhodes Scholar and took 2 degrees at Oxford. After practicing law in New York City, I moved back to Texas and taught law at SMU and was active in writing the Texas Family Code Laws. I have acquired a very fine collection of rare law books, about 600 volumes.

BANKS McLAURIN, JR.

Class of '44

I received orders to the USS Portland (CA33) and was assigned to the Main Battery Plotting Room and was J.O.D. Watch Officer. Named after Popeye's little boy, our ship was called the "Sweet Pea" in the history books. The USS Portland had an illustrious war history and received 16 battle stars. While conducting operations in support of Okinawa campaign she underwent 24 air raids, shot down 4 enemy aircraft and assisted in downing 2 others. We were around Okinawa for a week before the landing and stayed there until after the War ended.

I was on the bridge one night when an aerial torpedo hit the ship, bounced off and exploded about 1000 feet away from the ship. We shot down 5 kamikazes in one day.

USS Portland was designated to accept surrender of the Carolinas at Truk Atoll where Admiral Murray accepted formal capitulation from the senior Japanese military and civilian officials in a ceremony aboard our ship.

I had my BSCE degree at the time of my commissioning. After the war I developed an interest in genealogy and have written 9 books. I am also a collector of various things including old stereograph slides of naval vessels.

KENNETH W. (CHUB) MERRITT

Class of '45

I was aboard the LCI (G) 70 from 1945 to 1946. We participated in the invasion of Borneo escorting under-water demolition teams prior to the invasion. We rode out the hurricane / typhoon inside Buckner Bay at Okinawa.

We were practicing for the invasion of Japan inside Subic Bay in the Philippines when the war ended. I stayed on the LCI 70 until she was sent home to San Diego to be de-commissioned.

In interim years I have been a stockbroker.

GEORGE G. MILLER, III

Class of '44

After Submarine Chaser Training (SCTC) in Miami I was sent aboard a Patrol Craft (PC-S) whose duty was to patrol for submarine activity. We were in the Gulf of Mexico for a time and later sent to the South Pacific.

I completed work on a Ph.D. in business from UT and taught in New York City and at the University of Texas.

JOE A. MOSS

Class of '45

I reported aboard the USS Buckingham (APA 141), an Attack Transport duty in the Pacific Theater. My ship was involved in the campaign to retake the Philippines. I had the experience of watching the wake of a Japanese torpedo go under our ship and also the sight of a kamikaze that strafed us then chickened out of dying for the Emperor at the last minute.

I was still in the Philippine Islands when the War came to an end. We were loading wounded onto our ship for transport to the closest hospital facility. The USS Buckingham became part of the "Operation Magic Carpet" fleet and carried returning veterans back to the U.S.

I was Assistant Navigator during this time. When I returned home I joined the Navy Reserve and was called to active duty during the Korean War. I was Staff Officer in Mine Squadron 4 and Staff Legal Officer-Commander with Atlantic Mine Force until September 3, 1952.

I completed a BBA from UT in 1948 and a law degree in 1950. I have had an extensive legal practice. I have been legal counsel to a series of oil companies and a member in good standing on various civic and corporate Boards. Ended up in "Who' Who in the World."

(While a student at UT, I will never forget the fellowship connected with eating cookies and cakes in Clayton Baird's dorm room on Saturday afternoons. Compliments of his grandmother, the "Mrs. Baird" of Mrs. Baird's Bread Company.)

JEROME LYONS MURTAUGH

Class of '45

My primary service during the War was as a member of an Underwater Demolition Team. After the War was over, I finished law school and practiced law.

RENFRO C. NORRIS

Class of '44

Commissioned as an Ensign in 1944, orders were received to report aboard the attack transport ship, USS Doyen (APA -1) that saw action in the Pacific Theater of Operations. Classmate, Bert Wolford was aboard also. Serving as Communications Officer until June of '44, I received orders to transfer to the Division Commander's Staff on the USS Bolivar (APA 34).

The Bolivar ranged far and wide in the Pacific Theater and we spent our time transporting troops and their equipment to the battles in the island chain. Once disembarked, we picked up the wounded from the battles we were supporting. We were underway for Guam in July and remained a week after disembarking reinforcements troops and their equipment then we headed for Leyte, where we disembarked troops and carried out the casualties. We took on a battalion of the Army's 37th Division at Bougainville and headed for Lingayen Gulf.

We would unload the troops then take up the wounded and head for the nearest hospital dispersal center. In January we picked up wounded from the USS California which had been hit and sustained extensive damage.

When we arrived at Iwo Jima we stayed off shore for 10 days receiving casualties, and left carrying 450 that we delivered to Saipan where they were treated and shipped back to stateside hospitals.

After the war the Bolivar was part of "Operation Magic Carpet" transporting troops back to the United States. Our ship received 5 Battle Stars for service during World War II.

I returned to college. I received an Edward R. Murrow scholarship in Communication Studies to Washington State University. I completed work on my Ph.D.

O. GLEN PATE

Class of '44

I reported aboard a Destroyer Escort after I left the University as an Ensign from the February Class of 1944. My ship saw duty in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, Bizerte, North Africa, the Philippines and Tokyo, Japan. We also saw service near Kwajalien for the Bikini Atomic Bomb Tests. I also had the opportunity to visit Japan.

Probably most notable of my experiences was a 13,000-mile tow aboard a kamikaze damaged old four-piper destroyer from Lingayen Gulf near the Philippines to Terminal Island, California.

I appreciated the enthusiasm and great friendly spirit shown by fellow NROTC members. The NROTC faculty was tough and thorough in training but seemed to care about our future.

I received a Petroleum Engineering Degree from UT and worked for Schlumberger Petroleum.

JAMES E. PATTERSON

Class of '44

I entered the NROTC via the V-12 program: inactive duty for one school year then sixteen months of active duty before my commissioning. I have many pleasant memories of my time there. (i.e. the air raid-like sounds made by other midshipmen when LT. CDR Candler dropped by the dorm in the evening).

I was sent directly to my ship at Ulithi in the Carolina Islands, but spent some interim time on the USS Missouri on her maiden voyage to the Pacific. I then reported aboard the USS Orvetta (IX 157), a converted merchant ship, (MS Tampa) built in 1921. For the next 19 months I would serve as her Navigation and Communication Officer. I did some patrol duty one week on Mog Mog Island, Ulithi Atoll and later several nights in Shanghai. I enjoyed the association with other shipmates but disliked OOD duty between midnight and 0800.

Our ship's complement was probably as well prepared as possible for being on a ship with one stern mounted 4-inch gun and three or four 20 mm guns. We made few trips to sea, and when we did, we were escorted by destroyers. We probably had the best chow in the fleet because we had the service squadron's supply office aboard. The Third, Fifth and Seventh Fleet ships requisitioned their food supplies from our ship and we had first shot at the food. Our ship did not participate in any Pacific battles. Our mission was not one of combat.

I shall never forget the sight of harbor-wide flares and tracers on San Antonio Bay between Leyte and Samar when it was announced that Japan had surrendered.

Late one afternoon while returning from the Officers' Club aboard the Captain's gig, the Captain decided to go for a swim and jumped out of the gig, clothes and all. I and several other officers were aboard, including one of my NROTC classmates, Stanley Plettman, who heroically jumped in to save him. That same officer, who wasn't wild about sea duty or the Navy, later graduated at the top of his class at the UT Law School!

After I left the Navy I worked in the real estate business for twenty years and became Senior Vice President for an S & L company and later became Regional Manager for eastern Missouri. I worked in that position until I retired in 1986.

I often think back to my NROTC and Navy days and realize that they had a lifetime effect on me in terms of personal honor. I took the term "an officer and a gentlemen" and a quote from the Watch Officer's Guide, "a Naval Officer has the nicest sense of personal honor" very seriously. Throughout my lifetime I felt a personal obligation to uphold those standards. I have always been grateful to the Navy for that.

SYLVAN POLUNSKY

Class of '45

I was sent directly to the USS LCI (G) 68, a gunboat in the South Pacific, 7th Amphibious Forces. I started out as Supply Officer, and worked through all positions including Executive Officer.

We were at Brunei Bay, Borneo on D-Day minus 3 following minesweepers and destroying cut mines. One of the sweepers we were following was hit by a mine and destroyed.

We had just 3 or 4 qualified deck officers so our watches were long and we drank lots of strong, bad tasting coffee to stay awake. My C.O. was competent and experienced, most of the crew were also seasoned sailors.

The huge number of ships assembled in Buckner Bay, Okinawa preparing for the invasion of Japan was an awesome sight. During that time we experienced 200-knot winds in one of the worst typhoons in their history. We took turns commanding the ship and keeping it underway in the harbor in order to stay afloat, and when reversing course all the men were put outboard to counterbalance the ship so it wouldn't capsize. Ships were continually running into each other. After 36 hours we were sent to survey the harbor which presented the scene of hundreds of ships sunk, damaged or aground. There was a second typhoon a short time later but we survived by anchoring on the other side of the Island at Naha and tying up with several other LCIs.

After the war was over our ship, LCI (G) 68 was sent from Okinawa to Jinsen, Korea via Shanghai. In Shanghai, we were quarantined in the Yangtze River prior to being allowed to dock. China has river people who spend their entire lives on water boats. As OOD I noticed the sailors usually walking around the ship were missing. The CPO solved the mystery when he explained that one of those riverboats was a "red light" boat and it was floating just off our fantail.

I received orders to take command of the LC (FF) 792, landing craft flotilla flagship, located in Seattle. I took command, still an Ensign, with a Lieutenant and 2 Lieutenant JGs on board. They had never been to sea, so this 19-year-old Ensign became their Commanding Officer. It was a maturing process.

The ship had been overhauled and we were to take it out for a sea trial. Between the open sea and our ship, there were a number of drawbridges and a Pilot came aboard to get us out of the harbor. The drawbridges only opened when the proper alphabetical symbol was sounded.

After leaving the harbor he directed me to pull into a dock immediately behind a cargo ship. He told us not to tie up, that he would jump off the bow when we were near the dock. We approached the dock pretty fast. We were instructed not to run our newly overhauled engines at top speed just yet, but the pilot failed to mention we had a 15-knot current pushing us in.

Our top speed was 12 knots, I started backing the engines with little effect and finally had to back them full to slow the ship down. I would say we hit the dock rather hard. I think it must have bounced the pilot off the bow. We also cut the stern lines of the cargo ship at our bow and it started drifting away from the dock into the stream.

I had a feeling I could be court-martialed, so didn't wait for something to happen. I turned the ship around as quickly as possible, left through the Strait of Juan de Fuca for the trial run in the Pacific.

Returning after dark, I didn't ask for a pilot. At every drawbridge we started sounding the alphabet and when we got to the right letter the bridge would open. The next day we sailed down the coast to the Astoria Oregon Navy Yard where the mothballing was to take place.

Upon arrival, the Admiral in command of the base sent an order suspending me from command for 10 days because I didn't have a garbage detail on the dock! After the mothballing was completed, we received an order to send all personnel to the base for reassignment. I gave orders to the whole crew, including myself, to return home, and we did.

I returned to UT and received a BBA and a BS in Naval Science, the degree granted to those who met the requirements during their time in NROTC. The government notified me I was entitled to seven more semesters at their expense. I went back for two years to complete that last semester. I filled in with interesting courses such as astronomy, marriage and morals, etc. I finally graduated with 180 hours of academic credit. My dad didn't think I was ever coming home to work. My family was in the supermarket business.

HARRY REED

Class of '43

Half way through NROTC I transferred to V-7 and was commissioned in October of 1943. I will always remember taking seamanship from CDR Friedell and Navigation from LT CDR Candler.

I was sent to Naval Mine Warfare School in Yorktown, Virginia and then assigned to the USS YMS 270 and duty in the Central Pacific I served as Minesweeping Officer, Communication and Commissary Officer. Our ship was well prepared for combat and the leadership aboard was excellent. The officers were all Reservists.

We were part of the assault in re-taking the Marianas. And then there was the time our ship's evaporator broke down and we had to go without water for 20 hours. Luckily it rained and we caught rainwater to drink.

I was impressed with the beauty of the natural scenery of New Caledonia.

We were in dry dock in Washington State when we heard the news of the surrender. A short time after V-J day I was transferred to the USS YMS 7 as Commanding Officer.

Over all, I felt our training at UT was good, particularly in celestial navigation. My Navy experience made me into an adult sooner than I had planned.

By June of 1946, I was released to the Inactive Reserves and was a civilian once again. I resumed my education, received a law degree and practiced law for 58 years. During that time I have been Mayor of Bellaire, Texas, a General Attorney for Shell Oil and Professor of Law at South Texas College of Law in Houston.

RON RHOME

Class of '43

I chose the Marine Option for Second Lieutenant and after graduation proceeded to Marine Reserve Officers Class at Quantico, VA. I became part of the Marine Detachment aboard the Heavy Cruiser Flagship, USS San Francisco (CA) 38. The San Francisco had seen heavy service, ranging far and near in the South Pacific as well as the battle for Attu. She had been bombed and shelled and had lost dozens of crewmembers. Three members of her complement received the Medal of Honor, and was the first ship to receive a Presidential Unit Citation during WW II. She received 17 Battle Stars.

I reported aboard her in the Pacific Theater and was Junior Marine Officer and later Detachment Commander. We participated in the battles for the Marianas, Leyte Gulf, Luzon, Iwo Jima and Okinawa, most notable being "the turkey shoot" and the Battle of the Philippine Sea where the Japanese lost 600 planes in one day. The kamikazes were a challenge, for we couldn't stop them all.

Our ship searched for survivors of the 3 destroyers lost in the typhoon in October of '44. We engaged in successful close in fire support of Marines on Iwo Jima.

On September 2, 1945 the USS San Francisco was Flagship of a force taking part in the surrender of the Japanese in Korea and North China. We stayed in the area until December 1945 as a show of force to the Soviets in Manchuria.

I volunteered for active duty during the Korean Conflict and served as Executive Officer of Marine Corps Procurement in Washington DC

I received an MBA from Harvard Business School which led to a successful business career in the corporate world. I worked for U.S. Steel and was President of Rhome & Co., Inc. I have served on numerous advisory Boards and have given time, effort and endowments in support of professional development, College of Natural Sciences, at the University of Texas.

KARL E. RIPPEL

Class of '44

All good things come to an end. The camaraderie our class enjoyed, the intramural team sports and especially CDR Friedell provided lasting memories.

I served aboard small craft: the PC 1171, the PGM 27 and the DE 705. The toughest time was riding out 2 typhoons in Buckner Bay, Okinawa. We went aground during one of them. We weren't alone. The destruction in Naval ships was terrible. We were lucky we went aground, many sank.

In retirement, I was active in fund raising for Church World Services and have been an entertainer as a Shriners' Clown.

ALTON SCHOLL, JR.

Class of '44

I received orders to report aboard LST 678, that was later converted to a barracks ship LST and renamed APB 44 USS Presque Isle. After Naval amphibious training at Fort Pierce, Florida, we headed for the Asiatic-Pacific Theater.

My commanding officer was a Reservist, an excellent ship handler and navigator. The companionship/friendship of fellow junior officers made up for the tedium of sea duty. We were well prepared to furnish logistic support to small craft or personnel in need of water, food, medical supplies, fuel or sleeping space. Because we were a barracks ship, we had huge storage facilities for food, (frozen, fresh or dry) so our chow tended to be great.

We provided logistical support for the Iwo Jima campaign and anchored off the beachhead for 10 days. We participated in a diversionary landing on Okinawa on D Day 1, followed by several months anchored off the invasion beach providing tender, housing and supplies where needed. We rescued a crew after a suicide plane hit a neighboring LST during this diversion. There were almost nightly attacks by Japanese suicide planes over our anchorage and we tried to stay hidden from view by using our smoke generators. A rather stressful time.

When the war ended, we were in Leyte Gulf along with many other warships undergoing preparations for the upcoming invasion of the Japanese mainland. When news came that the war had ended, the sky was like a giant fireworks display for hours, we too, used our armaments to celebrate the end of the war.

We participated in the occupation of Japan and saw duty at Aomori, Northern Honshu and we had port director duties at Otaru /Hokkaido for two months.

There may have been some shortcomings in our training at UT but we were young, eager and learned fast on the job.

After war's end, I remained in the Reserves for 11 years, completed a B.S. and M.A. at the University of Texas. Worked as a petroleum engineer for a time followed by 24 years of teaching science in middle school.

C.A. SCHUTZE

Class of '43

I was sent to the light cruiser USS Mobile (CL) 63 in the Central Pacific Theater. The Mobile was a new ship and was attached to a fast carrier task force. By the time she had been at sea for one year she had traveled 70,000 nautical miles in operation against the enemy. There were very few places in the Pacific Theater of Operations that she had not visited as part of an assault or bombardment group. We furnished fire support and carrier screening from one end of the Pacific to the other. We stayed engaged but never suffered serious damage.

Mobile was in a "flycatcher" group for a while whose mission was to detect and destroy Japanese suicide boats before they could cause any damage. We participated in the Battle of the Philippine Sea, Battles of Okinawa and Leyte Gulf.

Sent to Japan after the war ended, Mobile supported the occupation and transported liberated Prisoners of War on the first leg of their journey back to the United States. She was part of the fleet that became known as "Magic Carpet".

While in NROTC, I was Battalion Commander at Andrews Dorm and also in the Drum and Bugle Corps. I completed my degree in May of 1948 and in the interim years have been active in my business, Navy League and Retired Officers Association.

HAROLD SELKE

Class of '44

After commissioning I was sent to Amphibious Forces in the Pacific to the LST 677 which was converted to APB 43 (USS Yolo). I started out as Attack Boat Officer but ultimately served as Ship's Navigator. We had a fine, well trained, willing crew and the chow was great. Our Officers were Reservists and/or Mustangs and did an excellent job.

Most notable was our participation in the invasion of Okinawa in March '45. We stayed in the area for 89 days endured kamikaze attacks, as did the other ships.

We were in San Pedro Bay, Leyte, making ready to hit Red Beach 2 off the coast of Kyushu, Japan when the war ended. We immediately left for 5 months of occupation duty at Yokohama, Japan.

I returned to UT, completed my BBA and became a CPA.

WELDON G. SHUDDE

Class of '43

I was sent to the USS Chauncey (DD-667) a Fletcher Class destroyer. We were on anti-submarine patrol and participated in the assault on the Admiralty Islands. We were off British and Dutch New Guinea for the assault on Hollandia, the Marianas and Saipan. In July we were in Guam screening carriers covering the landings of Leyte Gulf.

The ship steamed to within 17 miles of the Japanese home island of Shekoku and assisted the damaged carrier, USS Franklin to leave Japanese waters after being shot up off the coast of Kyushu.

It was picket line duty and many kamikazes during the assault on Okinawa. The Chauncey took part in the first bombardment of Japan. and was standing off Tokyo as part of the 3rd Fleet on VJ Day.

After a BBA I returned to the family clothing business, Shudde Brothers, Inc. in Houston, Texas.

JOE H. SMITH

Class of '44

After commissioning I was sent to Small Boats and Demolition School at Ft. Pierce, Florida and after finishing training was sent to the attack cargo carrier, USS STARR (AKA 67) in the Pacific. I served as Communication Officer, Small Boats Officer and Custodian Officer. (Enjoyed decoding as Communication Officer)

Our ship hauled cargo through out the Pacific plus China, Japan and Vladivostok. We participated in the Iwo Jima and Okinawa invasions and our ship received 2 Battle Stars.

At Okinawa our ship was raked from stem to stern by an explosion. We had been attacked by a Japanese suicide boat that had exploded as it contacted one of a cluster of STARR's landing craft that were moored alongside. The explosion was sufficiently removed from the side of the ship and the water absorbed much of the shock. The ship suffered damage but not as severe as it could have been under the circumstances.

After the explosion, my crew and I launched the nearest small boat and we discovered two Japanese hanging on our anchor chain. One was an officer and I have his sword as a souvenir.

Because of this experience, which my Captain considered commendable, I was sent out every night aboard an LST for the purpose of searching for Japanese swimmers and small boats whose purpose it was to blow up our naval vessels. That was stressful. My ship was at Okinawa for 68 days.

The Navy experience helped me to mature and I must admit I got a lot more out of my last year in college when I went back to finish my BBA degree.

I own my own sales company, Joe H. Smith Co. Ltd., which sells metal alloys to distributors on a nation-wide basis.

MICHEL F. (MICKEY) SMITH

Class of '44

I served as a Platoon Officer with Underwater Demolition Team 13 at Iwo Jima and at Okinawa. Memorable experiences include having to stand watch on a sub-chaser despite being violently seasick. A good second was being strafed by our own U.S. Navy planes during the battle for Okinawa and finally getting them called off through "Mayday" to Mt. McKinley.

I also will never forget teaming up with a V-12 friend from California named McInerney to develop a betting pool for the UT-A & M football game only to find out the day before the game that our bets weren't covered from College Station!

I still sail but it is in a 30 foot Sabre Sloop on Chesapeake Bay!

CHARLES A. STACEY

Class of '43

While a member of NROTC there were many special events and occasions. I shall never forget a gas mask drill after which we went directly to the library and there was hardly "a dry eye."

After graduation I was sent to the Destroyer (DD 609) USS Gillespie, a ship that ultimately won 9 Battle Stars. She ranged from New Guinea to Tokyo Bay. In 1944 the Gillespie operated in the Solomons and around New Guinea as well as screening activities and amphibious assaults on Pileliu. We escorted supply ships and supported the 77th Infantry and 1st Cavalry assaults on Ie Shima off Okinawa.

We experienced a kamikaze attack and air attacks in April of '45. Two planes attacked us one morning, the first tried to dive into us, but spun off into the sea. We shot down the second one before it could do us any harm.

We screened warships during the pre-invasion bombardment of the Japanese home islands and continued to patrol and escort until September 10th when we anchored in Tokyo Bay.

The USS Gillespie was ultimately used as a target ship and was sunk in training exercises in 1973.

H. GRANT STODDARD

Class of '43

After graduation I attended advanced training at the Naval Gun Factory in Washington D.C. followed by Advanced Fire Control School. I was then sent to the USS Madison (DD 425) on duty in the Atlantic, the Mediterranean and ultimately the Pacific. We were part of the Anzio Invasion where we sank a German sub. During the Southern France Invasion we sank seven one-man subs. In the Mediterranean we patrolled to keep subs from getting near the invasion beaches of Southern France on D-Day and we assisted in sinking another German Sub. (We sank 2 German submarines, seven one-Man submarines and at least 21 floating mines.)

One night as our ship was pursuing an Italian MAS boat (similar to a PT boat) between Anzio and the Tiber River, the Captain would not let me try to sink it with the 40 mm guns even though he had illuminated it with 5" star shells and a 36" search light. But how can an Ensign argue with a Four Striper?

I served in many capacities including AA Gunnery Officer, Radar, Sonar and Engineering Officer. I liked the variety in duties, but did not like being a part of 5 knot, 100- ship convoys in the Atlantic. We had a well-trained crew.

Most unforgettable event was our 12-hour dash at 40 knots to the scene of the sinking Indianapolis to assist in the search for survivors. We were the 2nd or 3rd ship to arrive on the scene, lit our 36" search light, put the Captain's gig in the water but we found only bodies. We transferred our ship's Medical Officer to an LCI that had picked up as many men as they could hold, all litter cases. He accompanied them to the Philippines and we picked him up later.

We got to the Pacific in time for the latter days of the Okinawa invasion. When the Germans surrendered we were underway from San Diego to Pearl Harbor, when the Japanese surrendered we were in Tokyo Bay along with a good many other ships. After the war, we escorted occupation troops headed for the west coast of Japan.

I returned to UT to complete my degree in Electrical Engineering. I had a very productive and satisfying career with Texas Power and Light. I worked in High Voltage Design for 36 years.

FRANCIS CHARLES TORMOLLAN

Class of '43

(The following account was taken from longhand notes written on a legal size pad by Francis Tormollan, Class of '43, and furnished by his widow, Miriam King Tormollan.)

I had attended the Naval Academy, had been employed with Baltimore Consolidated Gas and Electric Co. and had become a licensed pilot before arriving in Austin and being accepted into the University of Texas NROTC program. I wanted to be in the United States Navy.

Three years later I was commissioned as an Ensign and reported to Norfolk to await assignment in destroyers. I attended all of the gunnery schools the Navy could offer. After about two months of going to school, we in the "pool" were desperate for a ship. We visited the destroyers in port and asked if they needed gunnery types and were turned down. But the C.O. of the USS Davis DD 395 told us "no, but if you know where we can get an engineer, we could use one." So I became Assistant Engineer in the USS Davis, and we sailed the next day.

When the ship left New York for the invasion of Normandy, I had the good fortune to be sent to Destroyer Engineering Schools. During that time, the Davis had been hit by a mine and limped back across the Atlantic on one engine for needed repairs at Charleston, S.C. Navy Yard. I returned to a USS Davis that had undergone drastic changes. The Yard cut all of her deckhouse down to the main deck, lifted the engines through the soft patches and set them on the dock for repairs. They put her back together again as a new ship. The only things that were the same in her silhouette were the two 5" twin mounts forward and aft and her midship stack.

Once made sea-worthy the Davis became the Flag Ship for a convoy screen and made many trans-Atlantic crossings before the end of the war in Europe. She was being prepared to join the Pacific Fleet when the Japanese surrendered. I served as Engineering Officer and later as Chief Engineer as well as Underway Watch Officer on the bridge. I had the sad duty as Engineering Officer to put the USS Davis through the lay up and decommissioning process.

I received orders for the USS Arnold J. Isbell DD 869 and had the pleasure of seeing a ship built, launched, fitted out, commissioned and put to sea. By summer of '46, I was Navigator and Executive Officer, quite a change from the engine room. The Isbell operated along the East Coast, until after I left her. In 1947 I took command of PCE 882, operating out of Guam. Later I returned to the States to attend General Line School in Monterrey, California followed by some shore duty at the Naval Reserve Training Center

in Montgomery, Alabama. I was assigned to US NOCS in New Port, R.I. where I taught celestial navigation. After a sea assignment on the USS Forrest Royal as Executive Officer, I opted to take medical retirement and return to Austin, Texas.

I left the Navy in 1953 and resumed my studies. I received Bachelors and Masters degrees in Electrical Engineering. I was active in research in electro magnetic studies and was an Associate Professor in Marine Engineering at Texas A & M University at Galveston. I founded the Marine Engineering department and created the curriculum for both Marine Engineering and Deck Departments. Due to his efforts, the school became accredited as a four year college as well as a training school for merchant mariners.

I retired in 1990.

MATHER L. WALTRIP

Class of '45

After graduation I was sent for training in what would have probably been a PT boat division. But in the meantime, the war had ended and things were quite different from what we had anticipated before graduation and the subsequent surrender of Japan.

I was sent to Naval Headquarters on Guam and placed in charge of the Japanese prisoners of war held on the Island and surprisingly, found my self assigned as Landscaping Officer for the Base. This duty was rather pleasant.

After I left the Navy, I received my MBA from Northwestern University and had a successful career in the sale of building hardware materials.

JOHN WATKINS

Class of '45

I had been in the V-12 program at UT from '43 until summer of '45. The War had ended by the time I was commissioned in Los Angeles in November of 1945. I was sent directly to my ship, the troop transport, USS Niagara (APA 87) on duty in the South Pacific. I served as Engineering Officer first, then First Lieutenant. I appreciated the Chief Petty Officers aboard being very supportive and helpful to me. We had the added problem of a seriously flawed Executive Officer. It was unpleasant being ordered to bring compass alcohol to the Executive Officer for his own use. I avoided him as much as I could.

In July of 1946, the USS Niagara was designated a target ship for the Bikini Atoll atom bomb test. Our ship was painted orange, ship's personnel were removed, and from a distance of 15 miles we witnessed the results of that test, first hand. A memorable event.

By the fall of 1946 my time was up and I was anxious to return to UT to finish my degree in Civil Engineering. I was Senior Executive of a major steel company for 43 years and have been very active on Corporate, Civic, Church, School, Community, Military and Youth Boards and Committees.

My family has a strong Navy tradition: my brothers were Admiral James D. Watkins USN (ret.) CNO '82 to '86, and Captain George C. Watkins USN (ret.) senior test pilot, with 30 years service.

HERMAN WETEGROVE

Class of '44

I attended Submarine Chaser Training in Miami after I was commissioned. Several of my NROTC classmates were doing the same and were able to attend my wedding to Winnie Raymond while we were in Miami.

I attended Anti-Submarine Patrol training in Norfolk, Virginia and received orders to the YP 455. We patrolled the Atlantic coastline, looking for German submarines that had made their presence felt in the Atlantic during that time.

Later, I received orders to the YP 631 on duty in the Pacific Theater and we patrolled off the China coast. En route to my ship, our Navy transport plane made a crash landing over Formosa and we landed in a rice paddy. The locals, not knowing if we were friend or foe, presented us with a few tense moments, but we were finally able to communicate to them that we were no threat to their safety.

I remained in the Naval Reserve and was called to active duty during the Korean Conflict in 1950. I was temporarily aboard a tanker, but spent most of my active duty time at the Eighth Naval District Headquarters in New Orleans.

I had completed my degree in Petroleum Engineering and worked for the Texas Railroad Commission after graduation, but later became a consultant in the oil and gas business.

JOHN WILDENTHAL, JR.

Class of '44

After commissioning I was sent to Great Lakes Naval Training Station for airplane recognition training, followed by Sub Chaser training in Miami. I received orders to the USS McFarland (DD 237), a WW I type destroyer which did plane guard-duty for carriers training Navy pilots off the coast of California. After one year, I was transferred to the USS Dyess (DD 880) one of a dozen radar picket ships outfitted with over 50 radars and other communication equipment. We were being trained to precede the invasion forces of the home Island of Japan. It is my opinion that the entire surviving UT NROTC would have fit in a phone booth if it had not been for the atomic bombs. Luckily the War ended when it did.

I was Communications Officer on the McFarland and First Lieutenant, Deck Division on the USS Dyess. When we went from Portland, Maine to Japan for occupation duty, I was Officer of the Deck, four hours on, four hours off, for the entire trip because our Regular Navy C.O was very tense and felt comfortable with me and another officer for that duty. We were underway for Japan when we received notice the War had ended.

We served as escort for the first group of Congressmen who visited Hiroshima about six months after the atom bombs were dropped.

After completing law school, I practiced law and served in public office, the last 24 years were spent as a Municipal Judge in Houston.

(Comment: The Navy of today compared with the Navy of WW II, would be about like the Navy, as we knew it in WW II, compared to Old Ironsides. I attended the commissioning of the USS Texas, a nuclear submarine that will not need refueling in its next 33 years at sea. The sub does not need a periscope to monitor radio traffic or detect what is in close proximity.)

ARTHUR D. WILLBERN, JR.

Class of '44

I received orders to the USS Arkansas (BB-33), an old WW I vintage battleship. I served as an Engineering Officer aboard this ship as we supported landings at Normandy on D-Day and landings off southern France. It was a sight to remember. Cruising through the hundreds of ships of the invasion Fleet on the 5th of June and anchoring 4,000 yards off Normandy's Omaha Beach on D-Day, the 6th of June.

In July we were in the Mediterranean providing fire support as part of "Operation Anvil." in the initial landing on the southern coast of France.

After the War in Europe ended we were sent to the Pacific where the Arkansas carried out shore bombardment before landings and supported troops during the battles for Iwo Jima and Okinawa. We spent 46 days off the coast of Okinawa in support of that invasion. We were in Philippine Island waters at war's end.

After VJ Day, we became a part of the "Magic Carpet" fleet of ships that shuttled American troops home from overseas.

Used as a target ship for the atomic bomb test at Bikini Atoll, the Arkansas wouldn't sink as planned and was finally sent to the bottom of the sea 24 days later by the 1st underwater nuclear test at Bikini Atoll. USS Arkansas had received 4 Battle Stars for her service in WW II.

HARRY F. WILLIAMS

Class of '43

I deployed to a Destroyer in the Atlantic, and we participated in the Normandy Landing on D-Day. As part of a "Hunter Killer" Group, we captured a U-Boat crew. Our ship saw duty in the Mediterranean as well.

After the European War ended, I was reassigned to the Pacific Theater and served on a Destroyer Minesweeper, DMS and our ship took part in the Okinawa campaign.

Because of their speed, power and shallow draft, 42 obsolete pre-war, four-stacker destroyers were converted and designated DMS, (Destroyer Mine Sweeper). The fourth boiler, fourth stack and torpedo tubes were removed. The depth charge racks repositioned forward from the stern and angled outboard. The stern was modified to support sweep gear: davits, winch, etc. We were also given engine power with the capability for sweeping magnetic and acoustic mines.

The "claim to fame" for a DMS class ship? The fictional USS Caine in the movie The Caine Mutiny was a DMS like the one described above.

After the war I went back to school and graduated in May of 1946. I have maintained ranching interests.

HENRY J. (HANK) WILLIAMS

Class of '44

After attending US Navy amphibious training in Solomon Island, Maryland, I was assigned to LCT (5), Flotilla 4 in the European Theater where I was Relief Officer in Charge and then Officer in Charge on my ship. We were part of the invasion of France at Normandy.

The best part was the lack of command supervision – independent operations. The least enjoyable was the lack of on-board showers. Our crew had rate training only, we survived. We were ordered to re-float a dead barge that had gone aground and while doing so we were hit by a German 88. One of our most stressful times occurred in the June storm of '45 when we lost our anchor, were beached by the storm surge, and were rammed twice by out-of-control craft.

Highlights include being in London during V-2 raids, being in Paris 1 week after it was liberated and flying in a B-17.

It was a notable experience rescuing the armed guard and the crew from the sinking USS Stanley Morgan after it was bombed. We were in Cherbourg off-loading ammunition when the war ended in Europe.

Ultimately I saw action in the Korean Conflict and left the Navy after the beginning of the Vietnam War.

I spent 22 years in the Navy and served on 7 ships: an LCT (CO), two YMS' (CO), an AM (XO), a CL, (CIC Officer) and CA (CIC Officer and Fire Control Officer) and a CAG (Operations Officer). I have gone through 6 major schools, some minor ones and have been on three Staffs. I was Commanding Officer of a Guided Missile School, Asst. Bureau of Ordnance Technical Liaison Officer for Polaris guidance and Fire Control and Fleet Readiness Officer at CincPacFlt.

After I left the Navy I served in many managerial and / or executive posts that necessitated 62 moves, (17 states, 3 foreign countries and 1 territory).

JIM W. WILSON

Class of '44

I was assigned to LCI (L) 656 as part of her original crew; we put the ship in commission straight from the builder which made me a "plank owner". This was followed by training at the Amphibious Training Base in Solomon, Maryland and a shakedown cruise in Chesapeake Bay. As a new officer taking my turn at the conn, I learned "by doing" which was an operating lesson that I never forgot.

Part of the training program was giving all the new deck officers some experience in "conning" the ship in Chesapeake Bay. I had the conn one rainy, misty morning with wind blowing up waves of 2 to 4 feet. Overall conditions in the open conning tower were not too bad. Only the signalman and I were present, and we expected to be relieved in a very short time so we could go below, dry out and have chow. The Captain had laid out a course to a designated buoy at which time we were to change course.

Off our starboard side we sighted a buoy that looked right, but neither of us could make out the number because rain kept getting our binoculars wet. I for sure was not going to change course at the wrong buoy and foul up my assignment, so I told the signalman we would go over close enough to be sure. I then ordered the helmsman to turn "15 degrees right rudder".

An LCI has a flat bottom, draws about 6 feet aft and 3 feet by the bow when empty, and will roll and pitch with small waves and a little wind. We were headed into a quartering wind with waves off our port bow. We had rolled a little on the course we were on, but as soon as I turned 15 degrees starboard we began taking the wind and waves broadside on our port beam and we really began to roll. The crew and officers, were at chow and we could hear dishes hitting the deck along with equipment that was not tied down. About 30 seconds later the Captain was up and asked, "What the hell is going on?" My answer did not fit a good naval response, but he did not say too much to me. I received an operating lesson that I never forgot!

As Commissary Officer on a new ship we started with long lists of equipment and supplies we were authorized to have on board. We had to convert these lists to requisition forms. For about 2 weeks I started out each day with a truck and a working party going to warehouses with a handful of requisition forms. We never got everything on our list, so we were to come back in a few days or try another warehouse. There was one thing that helped. Most of the warehouses had WAVES doing the paper work, this made it easier to make up a work detail. The bad part was, once back at the ship we couldn't just dump it aboard. Everything had to be "stowed for sea". We later learned that is easier said than done. On our first day at sea, several items did change their location and we all had a new understanding of what is meant by the term, "stow for sea".

We passed through the Panama Canal headed for the Pacific Theater. The LCI (L) 656 had 3 officers and I had been an extra and caught most of the duty that did not fit the XO or the Engineering Officers' idea of what they should be doing. In San Diego I was transferred to the LCI (M) 351 which had been converted to a mortar Support Craft and had 4 Officers and a crew of 10. I was Gunnery Officer and Commissary Officer.

We staged at Guam before the invasion of Iwo Jima and witnessed many LCI (G)

gunboats returning from delivering demolition teams that had gone in before the invasion to destroy the underwater obstacles. All of them had been hit and we wondered how some were able to make it back in their condition. We had no way of knowing how many or how bad their losses had been. They had been where we were heading and it made the war very real, up close and personal.

On my first landing operation, the invasion of Iwo Jima, I could not believe the size of the fleet. There were ships as far as the eye could see, and everything seemed to work like clockwork. By the time our group arrived, the battle ships and cruisers had started the pre-invasion bombardment. The APAs unloaded troops on LCVPs and the first wave left the line of departure right on schedule. Our slot in the invasion was directly behind the third wave of LCVPs; and we hit the line on time and started in. We fired over the heads of the first three waves of LCVPs after the large ships had to cease firing. We fired all the way in and turned away just before we hit the beach. It worked out as planned and just the way we had done in earlier practice landings with the Marines.

We were armed with 40 mm and 20mm antiaircraft weapons to which were added three 3.2-inch army chemical mortars. The mortar is one of the oldest and simplest weapons and fired by dropping the shell down the barrel. Under rapid-fire conditions the barrel can become hot enough to cause a misfire, which results in the round going only a short distance.

We were about halfway in on our firing run to the beach and as Gunnery Officer, I happened to be watching our port side mortar crew as the loader dropped in a shell. I heard a "whoosh" instead of a "thud". I knew what had happened: a misfire. Then everything went in slow motion. I saw the shell come out of the barrel and travel about 6 feet in the air and drop nose first on the steel deck. I froze. I knew that theoretically it should not be armed until it had traveled some 200 to 300 feet, but I also knew that if it was armed, I and most of my three mortar teams were going to get blasted. Fortunately for us the shell was made to do as it did and there was no explosion. I asked one of the crew to throw the shell overboard, and we got on with the business of battle.

The toll was terrible for the ground troops, but overall, the organization and execution seemed faultless. I felt then that nothing could stand up to our Navy, and that it was a matter of one step at a time. After the invasion of Okinawa we witnessed kamikaze air raids and it was the first time I saw bodies floating in the water. We were relatively safe, for the kamikazes were after larger vessels. It was a notable experience.

At one time or another I held most positions aboard an LCI: Communications Officer, Watch Officer, Commissary Officer, Ships Service Officer, Deck Watch Officer, Gunnery Officer and Commanding Officer. I had two Reservist Commanding Officers that were very competent. Our ship's crew was competent as well, some having participated in the Normandy D-Day landing. I took seriously the duties and responsibilities to my country, my naval assignments and the men who served under me. I grew up during my time in the Navy.

Discharged in '46, I completed work on my BBA and spent most of my life in the oil business in various roles such as sales, scout, landman, exploration, marketing and contract manager. I spent 35 years with American Trading and Production Corporation in Abilene and Midland, Texas.

WILLIAM H. (BILL) WILSON

Class of '44

After Sub Chaser and Mine Warfare Training School, I received orders for duty aboard a mine sweeper that carries a complement of 4 officers and 40 enlisted men. We spent a year sweeping mines, laid down by German submarines, in the sea-lanes at the entrance to Chesapeake Bay. I served as Gunnery Officer, Commissary Officer and eventually as Executive Officer. I liked being on a small ship and I felt the crew was well trained. Most of our officers were Reservists.

We were sent to the Pacific and at Guam, on our way to Okinawa, we saw several ships with their superstructures blown off by Japanese kamikazes. The kamikazes had been busy. Aside from our general purpose, at Okinawa our job was to lay outside the main fleet and make smoke to cover the other ships against the Japanese planes. We survived several attacks and 2 typhoons.

Ours was one of the 7 ships selected to enter Tokyo Bay to sweep out the mines (theirs and ours) so the Battleship Missouri could steam safely into the Bay. I watched the Japanese go aboard to sign the peace treaty with General McArthur. We watched the USS Good Hope steam into the Bay and pick up the prisoners of war that had been held on the Japanese mainland. We stayed around Japan for 6 months to sweep out the contact mines. I visited Hiroshima.

I volunteered to go back into the Navy during the Korean Conflict and spent 2 years in Rhode Island where I helped train navy recruits and also trained potential officers for the Navy. My experiences created in me a real love for the Navy. I retired from the USNR as a Lieutenant Commander.

I resumed my studies in Law and after a time with Bethlehem Steel Company moved back to Texas, bought some ranch land and went into the cattle business. I have practiced law in the interim years in Ryan and Lawton, Oklahoma.

J. SAM WINTERS

Class of '44

I already had my degree when the class of '44 received commissions and I was ordered aboard the USS Isherwood (DD 520), a Fletcher Class destroyer. I reported aboard in Dutch Harbor, Alaska where our group of destroyers and cruisers did anti-submarine sweeps and bombarded naval and air installations on Matsuwa in the Kurile Islands. We operated out of Adak and always in the fog. I served as First Assistant Gunnery Officer, Torpedo Officer and later as Division Officer then First Lieutenant.

I was sent to school at Pearl Harbor to learn anti-submarine warfare, launching of torpedoes from a destroyer, conning a ship and directing fighter aircraft to intercept enemy aircraft. One day we witnessed President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Admiral Nimitz and General McArthur drive by on their way to a meeting with CINPAC to plan the island hopping strategy leading to the landing in the Philippine Islands and Okinawa.

I joined my ship again and we were soon en route to landings on Leyte Island in the Philippines where we took part in the landings on Leyte, supported landings of Lingayen Gulf, Subic Bay and Luzon Island. A cruiser carrying Douglas McArthur, joined our group, laid off while we went in and when the beach was secure, he waded ashore and made his "I have returned" speech.

We were subjected to intermittent bombing and suicide attacks during this time and I remember one kamikaze diving on an LST and hitting it about the gunwhale. We watched as it failed to detonate and fall over the side into the sea.

One night while on watch in the Combat Information Center, a radarman picked up a prominent contact at the maximum distance for a submarine. The Captain was notified and we went to general quarters. Three depth charge attacks were made. Due to the darkness of the night it was impossible to determine the result. The next morning we found some debris on the water but its source was inconclusive and we proceeded on to Leyte Gulf.

We escorted troop ships headed for landings at Kerama Retto, which had to be taken before the battle for Okinawa could begin. Our group suffered numerous kamikaze attacks and air attacks were taking a big toll. We were hit aft by a Japanese plane that took out the number 3, 5" gun. We had multiple fires including a ruptured depth charge stuck in the depth charge rack that exploded, knocking a large hole in the main deck and in the side. There were 83 officers and men listed as killed, missing or wounded.

Interestingly, I plotted the Kamikaze that struck the ship in CIC while on watch and at general quarters. A stressful experience.

The sight of damaged destroyers at Kerama Retto was awful. At Okinawa, of the

ships taking part in the battle 119 were crashed into by kamikazes and 43 were sunk or scrapped. On March 28th, we could see the battered hulk of the destroyer USS Halligan (DD584) aground on Tokashika Shima. The invasion of Okinawa began April 1st and our Task Force provided fire-support. At night we would team up with other large ships form a circle and sail in the direction of Japan to intercept any Japanese ships that might seek to disrupt the invasion.

Because we had training in fighter direction, we were ordered from our position during the landing on Ie Shima to Radar Picket duty north of Okinawa where four destroyers had been sunk or badly damaged by kamikazes. From that position we could direct Navy fighter planes to intercept Japanese aircraft orbiting above our ships. Coming off that duty was like a vacation!

We headed back to San Francisco and after extensive repair, we were doing a speed run test outside of San Francisco Bay when we received the message that Japan had surrendered. We immediately returned to the ship yard but everyone had left to celebrate the surrender and we had to lower a boat over the side and put a crew on the pier to handle our lines so we could tie up to the dock.

We sailed for New York City in the company of 5 other ships and in November '45 participated in the Navy Day Presidential Review, firing a 21-gun salute to President Truman who was embarked on the destroyer, USS Renshaw.

I stayed aboard until Isherwood was de-commissioned then reported aboard the John R. Craig (DD 885). After the War the Craig went to Tsingtao, Tientsin and Shanghai, China where I left her to return home, arriving in May 1946.

I practiced law and I am senior shareholder in the law firm of Clark, Thomas and Winters. I have sat on many advisory boards, both public and private.

ALBERT WOLFORD

Class of '44

I reported aboard the USS Doyen (APA-1), an attack transport ship with a complement of 453 men and an ability to transport 1,100 troops. I served as Wave Guide and Life Boat Officer, Assistant Gunnery Officer and Watch Officer Under Way.

She had seen duty in the Aleutians, the Gilbert Islands and Kwajalein. After I reported aboard she went on to serve as support of the amphibious assaults on Saipan, Guam, Leyte Gulf, Lingayen and Iwo Jima. We received casualties from the Iwo Jima assault for 10 days.

Classmate Renfro C. Norris, Class of '44 UT NROTC was aboard the USS Doyen (AP 1), also.

We transported casualties from battle zones and after the war carried returning troops between Pearl Harbor and the West Coast. Our ship received 6 Battle Stars for her service in World War II.

I received a BBA in 1947 and was in the Building and Lumber Business. I was President of United Salt Corp. and was affiliated with Texas United Chemical Co.

GEORGE WOOD

Class of '45

There were a lot of funny things that happened while we were at UT. We ordered 100 free items on penny postcards, as advertised in a pulp magazine, and had them sent to one of our own classmates who was always complaining that he never received any mail. The captain called the unit together threatening to send the culprit to boot camp if he identified him. He didn't.

After being commissioned I was sent to Naval Supply School at Harvard University. My first duty station was on Guam where I served as Communication Officer for the Naval Supply Depot.

After the war ended, I attended a War Crimes Trial of a Japanese Admiral who was charged with cannibalism and hanged for his crimes.

I stayed in the Reserves and was called back into the Navy during the Korean War and served on the destroyer USS Willsie and later on the Destroyer USS Ramey, which was the flagship for a destroyer screen for a fast carrier group operating off the Korean coast.

I served as Torpedo and Depth Charge Officer. It was very comforting to have a Chief Petty Officer who knew more than I. My most stressful moments were when we attempted to sink a Russian submarine. We had good chow which was enjoyable, but that was offset by an X.O. who wanted to be "captain", which was not.

After leaving the Navy, I become an investment banker specializing in tax-free municipal bonds as well as equity securities.

*I want a ship that's westward bound to plough the rolling sea,
Oh, it's home again, and home again, America for me!
To the blessed Land of Room Enough beyond the ocean bars,
Where the air is full of sunlight and the flag is full of stars.*

Henry Van Dyke