We received orders to return to the United States, to our home port of Boston, Massachusetts,—so it was goodbye to the beautiful Mediterranean Sea, the azure blue waters of the Adriatic—goodbye to Neapolitan nights in Naples, and to the peaceful Isle of Capri.

Goodbye to the cruiser Manchester, as she had to stay on as flagship for the two destroyers that relieved the E. G. Small and Powers.

A fond farewell to all of the other pleasant places: Gibraltar, Nice, France; Genoa, Trieste, Venice, Rome, and Pompeii, Italy—to Athens, Greece; Trebizond, Turkey; Port Said and Alexandria, Egypt—that contributed so much to my memory bank.

I even offer a nod of the head as a gesture of “Adieu” to ports of call that although they may not have been among the friendliest, or the most picturesque, I am grateful for having had the opportunity to visit these ancient lands. So, by this gesture, I say, “So long,” to Tripoli, Egypt; Palermo, Sicily; and to Jeddah, all of which I am happy to have visited, and happier still to have survived those visits. There were times in those places when the issue of ‘survival’ was in doubt.

I have become aware that I have failed to mention another tour that the Red Cross made available to us. How could I??? It was a highlight trip for me, and to think I almost forgot to mention it. For shame!!!

During one of our stays in Naples, the Red Cross made all the arrangements for many of us from the Small, Powers and Manchester, to take an overnight train trip to Rome. (See, didn’t I tell you it was a highlight trip???) In fact, we were gone from Friday afternoon until Sunday afternoon.

We left Naples about midafternoon on Friday, and arrived in Rome late that evening, near midnight. We slept on the train, in our seats. It was all

(Continued on page 2)
coach, no sleeping berths. That was okay though, I had previous experience, my troop train trip from Great Lakes to Shoemaker, California qualified as a post graduate course in train coach travel; I had earned my master's degree in that field.

We spent all day in Rome. We, of course, went to the Basilica and Saint Peter's Square. No audience with the Pope, however. Bet when he found out I had been there and that he had missed seeing me, he gave someone particular hell for not letting him know.

The Basilica is the largest church I have ever been in. It is just huge, and there are no pews or seats of any kind in the section where they say Mass. When Mass is being said, everyone just finds a place to stand. The ceiling is way the hell up there in the Sistine Chapel. If I had been Michelangelo, I would have insisted that they provide me with a parachute. The frescos were still quite vivid, even after all the years that have gone by since they were painted.

We spent most of the day in and around Saint Peter's Square. There was a lot to see, and the traffic in that part of the city was just unbelievable, both the foot traffic and the vehicles.

We went back to the train about 10:00 PM, and we pulled out of Rome somewhere in the early morning hours, not too sure just when—I was completely bushed and had sacked out.

Like I said, we arrived back in Naples in the mid afternoon on Sunday. Super trip!

This brings to a close a nine month period of my life. And what kind of a nine months was it? As Walter Cronkite would say, "It was a nine months like all nine months, filled with those events that altered and illuminated my times, —and I was there."

Next installment: Boston, MA

STATEMENT OF PUBLICATION

The SMALL TALK is the official publication of the USS E. G. SMALL Association. From now on it will be published quarterly in February, May, August and November, subject to receiving sufficient funding. The Newsletter is funded by voluntary contributions from the membership. All members are encouraged to support the voice of the E. G. SMALL. A financial statement appears in each issue of the newsletter.

The newsletter is intended to be a vehicle for the members to express opinions, make suggestions and especially share experiences. Unless otherwise stated, the views and opinions printed in the newsletter are those of the article's writer, and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the Association leadership or the Editor of the Newsletter.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Balance after 11/04 issue $529.46
Funds received since 11/04 issue $367.30
Funds available for 02/05 issue $896.76
Funds expended for 02/05 issue $455.70
Ending Balance $441.06

Send contributions to ML&RS, Inc. at the address below.

Published By:
Military Locator & Reunion Service, Inc
PO Drawer 11399
Hickory, NC 28603
828-256-6008 (voice)
828-256-6559 (fax)
dinamlrs@charterinternet.com
karenmlrs@charterinternet.com
www.mlrsinc.com

"Our Reunions Work, So You Don’t Have To"

All letters and stories submitted will be considered for publication, except unsigned letters will not be published. Letters requesting the writer's name be withheld will be honored, but published on a space available basis. Signed letters with no restrictions will be given priority.

Letters demeaning to another shipmate will not be printed; letters espousing a political position will not be printed.

Military Locator & Reunion Service, Inc. is not responsible for the accuracy of articles submitted for publication. It would be an impossible task to check each story. Therefore, we rely on the submitter to research each article.

The editor reserves the right to edit letters to conform to space limitations and grammar.

You are encouraged to actively participate in the newsletter family, by submitting your stories and suggestions.
My good friend, Don Wayman, ex-radarman, notes that the Combat Information Center was enlarged during the South SFNS overhaul. Part of his change proved to be quite significant during subsequent events. The Sonar Control Room (“Sonar”), just forward of CIC on the starboard side of the 01 level, was moved to a sound-proof enclosure built into the crews’ berthing space (port side, aft) located beneath the crews’ mess (#3 deck). CIC was enlarged to include the former sonar room. The old WWII sonar was replaced by a new sonar echo-ranging equipment. Like all anti-submarine sonars, this equipment could not detect small objects, even at close ranges.

The sonarmen were now deprived of information they had obtained by 1) taking a few steps into CIC, or 2) poking their heads out the door from sonar to the 01 level (proximity to land, sea conditions, visibility, etc.) or 3) direct access to the Chart House fathometer. They were now berthed (below forward of the mess), stood their watches, and took their meals within a small area. With long periods of GQ (dawn/dusk alerts, plus shore bombardment operations) the sonarmen were probably the most isolated members of the crew, seldom seeing daylight.

More about this later. I’ll defer to Don to continue the story.

Bob von Allmen SO3 (1951)

Dear USS Small Naval Contacts,

I am Layne Larson, daughter of Stan and Lois Larson. About 1 year ago, I informed you of the loss of my father Stan. I have to now inform you of the loss of my mother, Lois.

She was killed in a car accident (not her fault) on Sunday, December 19th. She, too, is cremated and will be scattered at sea, as my father was.

Her memorial service will be in Perris, CA at the end of January.

We are grateful that she didn’t suffer, and know that she is with Dad, as she missed him terribly. She enjoyed keeping up with the Small news and the reunions. Thank you all and God’s Blessings.

The 2 Larson Navy Brats (daughters)
Layne and Lois Larson

Dear Ski,

Just thought I would let you know about my husband so you could pass it on to his fellow shipmates.

This year has been a tough one for Don (Founds). He was told of his cancer in January. Chemo and radiation treatment followed. He was operated on April 20th for what was supposed to be an easy 3 hour operation. He was in O.R. almost ten hours and 3 weeks in ICU. Since his discharge from the hospital, he had two strokes and some other health problems. We are hoping for a better 2005 for him.

Best regards,
Margie Founds
885 Villa Way
Fenley, NV 89408

Dear Sirs:

After reading the last edition of Small Talk newsletter, I decided to send copies of the pictures I have of the DD 838 Ernest G. Small. The pictures show the ship in dry dock in Kure, Japan, before a new temporary bow was installed so we could

(Continued on page 4)
(Continued from page 3)

ship her back to the states for major repairs. (See picture at bottom right of this page.)

I have also sent you a copy of the ship with the new temporary bow as we came into Los Angeles Harbor. (See picture on page 8.) I am happy to say it never leaked a bit.

I joined the Navy in Jan. of 1950 and the Small was my first tour of duty out of boot camp. I went aboard in Hunters Point in San Francisco. I was a Fireman at that time and had only been in the Navy 9 months when we hit that mine.

We went to General Quarters that day at approximately 5:30 PM because we were being fired upon from shore batteries. Our job was to go in close to shore to draw their fire, so the Battleship New Jersey could blow them out with their 16" shells.

My position was in the rear gun magazine hauling up 5" shells to gunners mates shelling the shore returning fire. When we hit that mine, it felt like the ship jumped 10 ft out of the water. We were very lucky because the Koreans came out blasting at us, as they thought they really had us, but a cruiser came in between us and shore and blasted the heck out of them.

I happened to be in the boiler room when the bow broke off in front of the 2nd gun turret. We got a command for full reverse. So I knew something bad was happening. We had to steam in reverse all the way back to Kure, Japan, approximately 500 miles. We all slept above deck with life jackets on, not knowing if we would make it back to port. There was a really bad storm that hit us just as we tied up to the pier. So again we were very lucky.

I was transferred off the Small when we got back to the states. I spent the rest of my time in the Navy aboard the DE 700 USS Currier. I made 2nd Class Ship Fitter before getting out of the Navy in November of 1954.

Yours truly,
Pete Russo

Mr. Russo also sent in the following newspaper article. (No date was attached.)

TORPEDO DESTROYER BACK AFTER LOSING 84 FEET OF BOW

USS Ernest Small, a 396-foot destroyer when she sailed from Los Angeles for the Far East eight months ago, measured only 311 feet when she returned yesterday.

Of the naval epics of the Korean War, the Small lost 84 feet of her bow to a mine or torpedo blast, yet managed to re-cross the Sea of Japan stern-first, weather a typhoon, receive a false bow, and return to her home port on the far shore of the Pacific.

Her skipper, Cmdr. Robert L. Neyman, son of Clinton A. Neyman, retired Navy captain who is now chaplain of the University of Southern California, related the Small's adventures.

Hit off Hongnam—

The destroyer was hit off Hongnam October 7, after a day of pumping five-inch salvos into Communist shore installations, he recalled.

Orders to break off the bombardment came at 5:55 PM, but a Red shore battery opened and the Small returned the fire, Cmdr Neyman said.

A few minutes later the destroyer was struck with a thunderous explosion, and a great gash, 54 feet long and 25 deep ripped in her port bow.

The blast killed nine and wounded 51—18 seriously—of the Small's 315 officers and men, Cmdr Neyman reported, that the opening of the Red battery saved the ship casualties from being incalculably heavier.

150 Rounds—

Had it not been for the Communist fire, most of the crew would have been at mess below in the smashed bow section. As it was, the Small fired 150 more rounds after she was damaged.

Further damage came three days later while the Small was struggling toward Japan. In heavy seas the 84 feet of bow broke away completely and had to be sunk by gunfire.

Thereafter, with the aid of a tug, the Small plunged stern-first 400 miles to the port or Kure, Japan.

24-Hr. Battle—

She had barely reached harbor when the typhoon of October 15 broke, compelling the crew to fight a 24-hour battle to save the ship from 107-mile-an-hour winds.

Fate relented after that, according to Cmdr Neyman, and the Small, her false bow in place just forward of her bow guns, re-crossed the Pacific without incident.

Two members of the crew, Chief Pharmacist's Mate Clinton V. Brandon of San Francisco, and Leo F. Huber, chief engineman, have been recommended for decoration as results of the Hangnam action, the skipper said.

This picture shows the ship in dry dock in Kure, Japan before a new temporary bow was installed.
THE GALLOPING GHOST

BY DONALD WAYMAN

Continued from Nov. 2004:

OUR MISSION
FROM
THE SEA WAR IN
KOREA
BY COMMANDERS CAGLE & MANSON &
UNITED STATES NAVAL
OPERATIONS: KOREA
JAMES A. FIELDS, JR.

The ships of Task Force 95 were to provide fire support, patrol, bombard and besiege the cities of WONSON and SONGJIN. Royal Marine Commandos were on a six-month mission into enemy territory. They operated from an APD, (probably HORACE A. BASS) and the submarine PERCH operating out of KURE.

According to Cagle and Manson: Task Force 77 was relieved of all front line air support and given greater interdiction freedom to destroy RR tracks as well as bridges. There had been increasing evidence of re-use by the enemy of the northeast coastal railroads.

While the carriers had been employed in giving close air support to the front lines, the REDS had taken advantage of the respite to repair the fractured rail system and to use “shuttle trains” between the broken bridges. US Reconnaissance and Naval aircraft had photographed the activities.

Rear Admiral Tomlinson (CTF-77) and Major General Frank F. Everest (Commanding General FAFIK) made the decision to alter the pattern of attacks. A list of key highway and rail bridges was prepared. They would be struck on a systematic basis; a bridges was prepared. They would be struck on a systematic basis; a

attacks. A list of key highway and rail lines, bridges and rolling stock, and to inflict casualties on such enemy troops and positions as possible.

This would be the first visit to Hungnam by U.N. Forces since the near annihilation of the 1st Marine Division at Chosin, and the reverse amphibious operation in December 1950. There quite possibly was a revenge factor in the planning of the attack. Ships on the firing line bombarded all day. We left the area enroute Songjin at 2345, arriving at 0640, on 6 October. We commenced shore bombardment at 0838, breaking off at 1430, to rescue a downed pilot. It was not uncommon to receive a call from a carrier with the news that they had ‘a bird in the water.’ I do not recall receiving the traditional ice cream reward for our humanitarian effort. Nevertheless, we were back on the firing line at 1515, either firing or screening until 1800, at which time we departed with Shields and Helena, for night bombardment at Kyozo Wan, south of Chongjin. We arrived on station, in darkened ship condition at 2345.

We went to G.Q. and fired illumination for the cruiser Helena, using an aircraft spotter. Shields was screening to seaward while we took on targets of opportunity. We had expended 427 rounds of 5”/38 ammuneion before securing from General Quarters. Reports on enemy damage included an oil refinery, ammo dumps, four boxcars, a railroad bridge span, and shore batteries. Casualties inflicted could not be determined. We left Chongjin at 0200 en-route Hungnam, arriving at 0930 on 7 October 1951.

Small was assigned screening duties for Shields and Helena until 1300, when permission was granted to take firing position. Enemy shore batteries were engaged off and on throughout the afternoon, while the minesweepers continued to sweep between our ships and the shore batteries. At 1755, shell splashes were reported off our port bow as enemy gunners took us under fire. The skipper took the conn trying to avoid the shellfire, while our gun mounts attempted to lock on the enemy artillery.

In the radar shack, I heard Helena over voice radio, order us to “Get the hell out of there,” obviously they had tracked us into the unswept area of the harbor. At 1901, an explosion lifted our bow out of the water. Power went out. Our knees buckled as the deck rose and threw us into the overhead. It seemed like slow motion, the bow reached its apex and settled back into the water, listing heavily to port. Battle lanterns provided light as we waited for more explosions, thankfully, there were none. It was then that we became more angry than scared...“Those bastards are shooting back!”

Damage control parties restored power, we put our headsets back on, CIC was back in operation. A reservist who had been reactivated for the Korean “Police Action” was taping his wallet in case we had to go into the water.

SO/3c Bob von Allmen, and a few radiomen were out on deck watching the gun battle develop when the blast occurred. They sought refuge under the torpedo mount as oil, sea water, and debris from the masts rained down upon them. Von Allmen came into the radar shack to see if

(Continued on page 6)
we could reach his buddies in the sonar room by phone, having no success, he left, followed by SO/2c Quentin Saylor, the Captain’s JV talker, stationed in CIC. They would attempt to reach the sonar crew below decks.

FROM CDR. NEYMAN’S BATTLE REPORT:
The repair party isolated and limited the damage immediately. Main engines continued in operation despite temporary loss of suction forward due to ruptured oil lines. Volunteers and repair party personnel removed the injured from the damaged area to the forward dressing station for first aid.

In the radar room, we were trying desperately to reach the sonar crew by phone; I had taken over Saylor’s headset. There was no response. The operations officer ordered me to keep trying. The effort was futile. We already knew what had happened, the sonar gang was in the impact area, they certainly could not have survived.

At 1835, after crew’s muster, it was determined that nine men were missing and fifty-one had been wounded. Helena sent a boat over with medical aid, and eight of the most seriously wounded were taken aboard Helena for treatment. Of the nine killed, six were in the sonar room, another was a seaman, a member of the secured gun crew of Mount 51 (out of ammo), and two were in the mess hall, on damage control station. One of them was Allen Schluetter, DC/3, who would never get to see his daughter, born just four months after his death.

ACTION REPORT OF 5-6-7 OCTOBER 1951 SUBMITTED BY COMMANDER NEYMAN DESCRIBES THE DAMAGE:
“Explosion opened a hole forty feet long, compartments A306-L, FO tanks A-3F and A-508F were flooded. Bulk head 48 was rolled up and bent in. First and Second Platform Decks were blown out and upwards. Main Deck was bulged at centerline of Frame 50 and wrinkled on port side at Frame 48. All steam lines, electric cable, ventilation and Fire Mains were cut or ruptured forward of Frame 60. All compartments and equipment between Frames 33 and 60 were damaged or flooded.”

Crewmembers with sleeping quarters forward lost everything that they owned. We would be re-issued a full clothing allotment and receive partial payment for personal items such as cameras and shaving gear.

At 2125 we cleared the area, proceeding with Shields and Hitchiti (ATF-103) enroute Sasebo. Inventory was taken of all ammo in the magazines. There were 400 rounds of 5”/38 and 2848 rounds of 40mm. Damaged ammunition was jettisoned. No one on board the Small would ever forget 7 October 1951.

Continued in May 05 issue.

A NIGHT AT THE BEEHIVE
BY HERBERT ROYSTER

For those who were not crew members on the USS Ernest G. Small (during her WESPAC deployment during 1964 to 1966) I need to set the scene for this tale. In Olangapu at Subic Bay, Philippines, was a bar named “The Bee Hive.” When in that port, the men of our ship came to adopt that bar as their home base. We basically just took over the joint. Admission into the Bee Hive was limited to who WE wanted...or who “Mamma-san” (the woman that owned/ran the place) told us could be in it. Mamma-san was the boss and no one to be fooled with!

During our time in port we stood three section watches, so that any night we would have maybe 200 men ashore on liberty. Of that number, maybe 30-50 (or more) would usually wind up at The Bee Hive during any night. To those reading this, it may sound like a lot of men, but remember when the fleet was in, just one carrier could put almost 2,000 men ashore on liberty.

Mamma-san came to like most of us, but she had a Marine boy friend, so she always was a little wary of her sailor men from the Small. She ran a very “Tight ship”! It was just a quiet little bar, with a juke box, a friendly bartender and lots of ice cold beer that made it OUR special place. Further, there was no horseplay allowed, when Mamma-san was present...which was almost always! Scene set, now it’s time for action!

There was I, along with my shipmates, enjoying a cool San Miguel at the Bee Hive. Well, if the truth be known...several cool brews had been consumed by all of us. Mamma-san’s boyfriend arrived and she announced they were going to see a movie that evening. When she left we all promised to be on our best behavior.

As I recall, it was a couple of guys off another ship who wandered into the Bee Hive, demanding ‘service’ and were...ahhhh...invited to leave OUR bar that started IT! A few minutes later, two ‘Soft Hat’ Shore Patrol men entered the front swinging doors to the place. They came in with an attitude, telling us that WE had NO say in WHO could or could not be in the Bee Hive!

OK, fine...we hear you and now you can leave too, was our basic response. So out the front doors they went. Only the doors were still swinging when a couple empty beer bottles crashed against them.

Back the two came, now they are REALLLLLY mad. They had a good rant and threatened to bring the “Hard Hats” if we don’t improve our behavior and attitude! WE don’t say ‘nuttin’! They leave, now 4-5 more empty beer bottles crash against those swinging doors.

A very short time later, the same two SP’s show up with two “Hard Hats.” They come in (walking through the broken glass appeared
to upset them somehow) demanding to know who threw the beer bottles. Ya know, strangest thing, nobody saw nothing! The four of them go from table to table and threaten each of us...to turn in our shipmates. That doesn’t work either. After basically “reading us the riot act” they leave, but again...as the last one clears those swinging front doors...another 1/2 dozen empties crash into them!

Now we get four “Hard Hats”, the two “Soft Hats” in the bar and more of the same are seen standing outside the front doors. We are all ordered to identify the offending culprits. That doesn’t work either. So, at random, they pick a couple of us and haul them off to the paddy wagon. That would teach us to be so uncooperative...yee, sure! Again. As the last of THEM clears the front doors...more empties fly!

Me, I was...ahhh...selected for my ‘free ride’ back to the ship, sometime around the 4th or 5th time the SP’s went in/out the front doors. I was taken to a ‘Cattle Car’ (that was parked just inside the main gate) for transportation back to my ship. I didn’t have to wait long for the Cattle Car to fill with some more of my shipmates and an assortment of scoff-laws from other ships.

The ride back to the ship was a real experience, in that every few minutes a fight would break out or someone would get sick or worse yet...there were no heads on the damn thing! Those who want to know more about that trip back to the ‘Dirty Ernie’ can just imagine the rest!

Upon arrival at the quarter deck of the USS Ernest G. Small, my group reported to the OOD, who took custody of us. Please note, I said...my group...as there were others. I seem to remember, every crew member in the Bee Hive bar that night got a free ride back to the ship...somewhere around 50 of us!

The next day, we learned our ship had beaten the carrier that was in port for having the most men...ahhh...taken into custody by the SP’s. So, then came time for us to receive our punishment, only...no one reports on (read here “rats on”) another shipmate. The Captain not having one person to directly blame for a beer bottle throwing...errr...accident, settled for chewing us all out and having the hat passed (for collection to repair the bar). That should have made all right with the world for us...WRONG!

Remember Mamma-san, she who returned (after all the action was over) to see what had happened to her bar. ‘Hell hath no fury’ would be an apt description of her attitude towards us after that. The next time I entered the Bee Hive, I saw her new employee, a large, evil looking armed guard. The guy’s job was to hang around, glare at us and make sure we would never get out of hand again...definitely NOT Mr. Friendly! We found that those nice little amenities that made the Bee Hive bar my/our own special place...WASN’T any more!

After that experience, along with some things that are best left as memories of my times ashore in Olongapo (even after 40+ years), I came to believe liberty there was just out there, floating on the vastness of the seas. It was the last means used to attempt to get us our mail...for we sailors who had not heard mail call sounded in many-a day!

A free-floating Mail Buoy was known to send out special types of radar reflections and sonar sounds to help find it. Sometimes, to aid the normal ship’s Look Outs, a very special Look Out watch needed to be set on the 01 level aft to help locate our Mail Buoy.

Ahhhh, yes, like it was yesterday, I can recall the process in which someone was selected to stand this very special watch. This potential watch-stander was always the newest recruit, fresh from boot camp and on his first cruise. He would hear a couple of Old Salts talking about the possibility of getting mail the next day from our Mail Buoy. If he inquired about this, he was encouraged to ask others to find out if they too had heard “the word.” Every crewman he’d then ask, would wax eloquently and wistfully about their hoping to get mail the next day.

The next day, right after noon chow, the Seaman Apprentice would be directed to report to a Petty Officer to obtain his required equipment. First, for safety, he needed to wear the largest Kapok life jacket aboard ship and provided with the biggest steel helmet that could be fitted on his head. Next, he had a powerful set
of binoculars hung around his neck. Lastly, he was supplied with a head-
phone-type sound powered phone that was on the ship’s normal phone
talkers circuit. This circuit also had Combat (CIC), Bridge, Sonar, along
with the Port and Starboard lookouts on it... and anyone else who wanted
to ‘come up’ on that line during his watch.

As the Mail Buoy watch pro-
gressed, Combat would report faint
reflections on their radar screen and
request he keep a “Sharp Lookout” in
that direction. Next it may be Sonar
that reported hearing an intermittent
contact that sounded like our Mail
Buoy coming on a different bearing.
Passing crewmen would always stop
to chat with this special watch-
stander. They might also help him
look for our Mail Buoy...as they
knew it would contain a letter for
them from their family or girlfriend.
This watch-stander was never
lonely or lacking for something to
do. As a reward for doing his duty,
his watch ended an hour (or so)
after it began.

The end of this watch come
when some officer noticed what was
going on and passed “the word” for
it to cease or when the watch-
stander suddenly realized some-
thing was wrong...as every possible
Mail Buoy contact turned out to be a
false alarm. The watch-stander
sometimes began to suspect all was
not right for other reasons...say,
upon hearing someone snickering
behind a bulkhead...then the game
ended early.

Anyway, after about an hour, he
would be told how he was the object
of an elaborate joke (well, kind of a
joke, as we all wished we could find
our Mail Buoy) that the entire crew
was in on. At that time he became a
real crewman of the USS Ernest G.
Small DDR-838...a person who had
taken one of his first steps in the
process of becoming an “Old Salt”!

WETSU shipmates,
Bert Royster STG2 1964-1966

This picture is of the USS Ernest G. Small with the new temporary bow as she came into
Los Angeles Harbor.