

RANDOM THOUGHTS OF RALPH WINANT who served on the USS PHILADELPHIA 1938-1941. He taped these memoirs and sent them to Steve Stofko. He recalls some of the good times and the bad time enjoyed or endured on the old Philly.

Sy Massey was from Verdon, MS not LA as you indicated in your last letter. George Morrissey died, I hear. Remember the purple rage the captain flew into when Morrissey attended quarters with a tailor-made jumper with a zipper yet?

Buchinski got a job in the shipyard on Staten Island with the rest of us who were discharged prior to WWII. Buch drank a lot, got fired and went back in the Navy. He was assigned to a training center in the Chesapeake Bay called the Solomon Islands where they trained landing craft personnel. Buch, a bos'n mate and a seaman recruit took a boat across the bay to Virginia and did a little drinking. On the way back they ran aground on a sand bar so they jumped out and pushed the craft off the bar, refloated and proceeded back to the base not noticing the kid did not get back in; so bos'n and Buchinski were charged with murder. Things looked bad but their lawyer did some snooping and found out the C.O. of the base was a crook so he prevailed on the C.O. to drop the charges--so Buch went to war. After the war Buch got married to a big, big woman and they had a lot of kids. Their apartment was in the middle of Harlem. God knows whatever happened to him.

A guy named Mason attended Merchant Marine O.C.S. at Fort Trumble, New Haven, CT and got his 3rd Engineer's license. Mason was one of the guys who transferred from deck to engine after 2 years on deck. I next ran into him in England and he was a chief engineer of a liberty ship but still with a 3rd Engineer's license. A guy named Fleming went to Fort Trumble too. He wanted to be an instructor; it seemed he was married and wanted to avoid getting killed. Seems to me Chas. Koval went to Fort Trumble but maybe not; in any event about 30 ex-Philly sailors were attending when I did. Bob Fleming, a guy from Jersey City, and I were mess cooking together and I caught him swiping plates from my rack so we had a grand old fight which I think ended in a draw after about an hour.

"Dickie" Foster was one of the good guys and I can't see him living in Conn--that rebel from Kentucky. .

Whatever happened to Buck Burkholder, Stan Kazorowski, Charleston Fl/c McKnight the China Boy and Sea Gull Morrison.

I met Lt. Cdr. Crocker before he passed away when they were preparing for a reunion in Long Beach. Since I was assigned by my company to go to Iran, I missed the reunion. Met the Chief After Engine room named Rhodewalt. He was the Navy recruiter in Portland, OR. I guess he's gone now. I don't belong to the Legion or to the VFW; in fact my brother a 33-yr Navy man tipped me off to the Association. I guess he saw an article in one of the naval publications.

The story on Foushee at a time when I was in "A" Division, #2 whaleboat (a boat crew was usually on watch) and we were in a pretty bad storm. The crew was lashed to the superstructure on a short tether and a giant wave broke aboard the ship and Foushee, who was walking down the deck inspecting the various lashings, was knocked off his feet and went swishing by me out of control. I grabbed for him and hung on. After the wave subsided he got up and glared at me and proceeded with the inspection. So if he lives to be 100, it's my fault.

Do you remember my stint in the brig for whistling? I could imitate a bos'n pipe pretty good and I did not really like to eat cold chow; so I piped down in the black gang quarters and all hands would troupe in to the mess deck and start eating. The Master-at-Arms was naturally upset with this sort of conduct as it indicated a

