

**COAST GUARD HERITAGE MUSEUM**

# **NEWSLETTER**

George Washburn - Editor Emeritus,      Publisher – CGHM  
Jack McGrath – Editor

Autumn 2012  
volume number 9

**In this Issue:**

Okinawa Diary,  
**Cape Cod Canal collision,**  
CDR Stewart Graham  
hangar,  
**Sailing on CGC Eagle**  
**(almost).**

## **COAST GUARD HERITAGE MUSEUM**

3353 MAIN ST. (ROUTE 6A)

P.O. BOX 161

BARNSTABLE, MA 02630

508-362-8521

EMAIL: [CGHERITAGE@COMCAST.NET](mailto:CGHERITAGE@COMCAST.NET)

WEB SITE: [WWW.CGHERITAGE.ORG](http://WWW.CGHERITAGE.ORG)



## EDITOR'S NOTES

**AS USUAL, IT SEEMS THAT THE NEWSLETTER IS BARELY MAKING IT INTO AUTUMN. IT HAS BEEN A BUSY AND SUCCESSFUL SEASON AT THE CGHM. OUR FINAL EVENT WAS THE BARNSTABLE VILLAGE CHRISTMAS STROLL ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2012. WE ARE NOW PREPARING THE MUSEUM AND EXHIBITS FOR NEXT SEASON.**

**THE OKINAWA DIARY IN THIS ISSUE WAS A RECENT DONATION BY BOB BONVILLE, JR. HE SENT US HIS FATHER'S DIARY AS WELL AS A TRANSCRIPTION. THESE GLIMPSES INTO EVERYDAY LIFE DURING WW II ARE ALWAYS INTERESTING. BOTH BONVILLES, SENIOR AND JUNIOR, SERVED IN THE USCG.**

**IN AUGUST, CAPTAIN VERNE GIFFORD, COMMANDER, SECTOR SOUTHEASTERN NEW ENGLAND, GRACIOUSLY INVITED BOTH MY WIFE, PHYLLIS, AND ME TO SAIL INTO NEWPORT, RI ONBOARD CGC EAGLE. ALONG WITH A LARGE GROUP OF OTHER INVITEES, WE GATHERED AT STATION CASTLE HILL FOR A RIDE OUT TO BRENTON REEF TO MEET EAGLE. UNFORTUNATELY, WEATHER CONDITIONS DID NOT PERMIT THE GUESTS TO BOARD EAGLE, BUT IT WAS A GREAT DAY ANYWAY. I WANT TO ESPECIALLY THANK THE TWO EXTREMELY BUSY GENTLEMEN WHO WERE COORDINATING THE ENTIRE EAGLE VISIT TO NEWPORT. CWO STEVE SILER AND VICE-COMMANDER ARNOLD GELLER ARE PICTURED BELOW.**

**THANKS, GUYS!!**

ARNOLD M. GELLER  
VICE-COMMANDER  
PROVIDENCE  
FLOTILLA 0708  
U.S.C.G.  
AUXILIARY



CGHM Photo

CHIEF WARRANT  
OFFICER  
STEVEN A. SILER  
U.S.C.G.  
SECTOR  
SOUTHEASTERN  
NEW  
ENGLAND

# MUSEUM NEWS

THE SPECIAL EXHIBIT ON THE FORT MERCER AND PENDLETON RESCUES WAS A GREAT SUCCESS. NOW WE ARE BEGINNING THE TRANSITION TO OUR PLANNED 2013 EXHIBITS.

WE WILL BE REARRANGING THE SECOND DECK AND INCREASING THE VIETNAM EXHIBIT AS WELL AS OPENING UP SOME AREAS FOR BETTER VIEWING.



*M. Maynard photo*

WE HOPE TO BE ADDING A GREAT NEW MODEL OF A 270' CUTTER, THE CAMPBELL, BY MIKE MAYNARD. WE ARE ALSO HOPING TO HAVE AN EXHIBIT DEVOTED TO ICEBREAKERS.

2013 WILL BE A CHAOTIC YEAR FOR US, SINCE, WE HOPE, THE TOWN OF BARNSTABLE AND THE MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION WILL BE DOING EXTENSIVE WORK ON THE WINDOWS THROUGHOUT THE BUILDING AS WELL AS SOME ADDITIONAL EXTERIOR WORK. WE ARE ASSURED THAT THE WORK WILL NOT INTERFERE WITH OUR OPERATIONS, AND WE ARE HAPPY THAT THE MUCH-NEEDED RESTORATIONS ARE PROCEEDING. BE SURE TO STOP IN AND SEE WHAT'S GOING ON.

*Jack*

# MUSEUM NEWS

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# **COAST GUARD HERITAGE MUSEUM**

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# COAST GUARD EVENTS

COAST GUARD AIR STATION CAPE COD RECENTLY DEDICATED A NEW HANGAR. THE HANGAR IS DESIGNED TO HOLD FOUR OF THE NEW HC-144A **OCEAN SENTRY** AIRCRAFT ACQUIRED BY THE CG TO REPLACE THE AGING **HU-25 GUARDIANS** AS PATROL AIRCRAFT.

THE **STEWART GRAHAM** HANGAR IS NAMED FOR COMMANDER STEWART GRAHAM, USCG (RET), WHO WAS USCG HELICOPTER PILOT #2. CDR GRAHAM WAS A PIONEER OF COAST GUARD AVIATION. HE WAS STATIONED FOR A TIME AT SALEM, MA, THE PREDECESSOR OF AIRSTA CAPE COD.

CDR GRAHAM SPOKE AT THE DEDICATION WITH VICE-ADMIRAL JOHN CURRIER, VICE-COMMANDANT. CAPE COD WAS VADM CURRIER'S FIRST DUTY STATION AS AN AVIATOR.

THE CGHM PROVIDED A DISPLAY OF PHOTOS, BOOKS AND UNIFORMS FROM THE PERIOD OF CDR GRAHAM'S SERVICE AND ALL OF THE HELICOPTERS THAT CDR GRAHAM FLEW IN HIS CAREER.

CDR GRAHAM CURRENTLY LIVES IN MAINE.



USCG photo

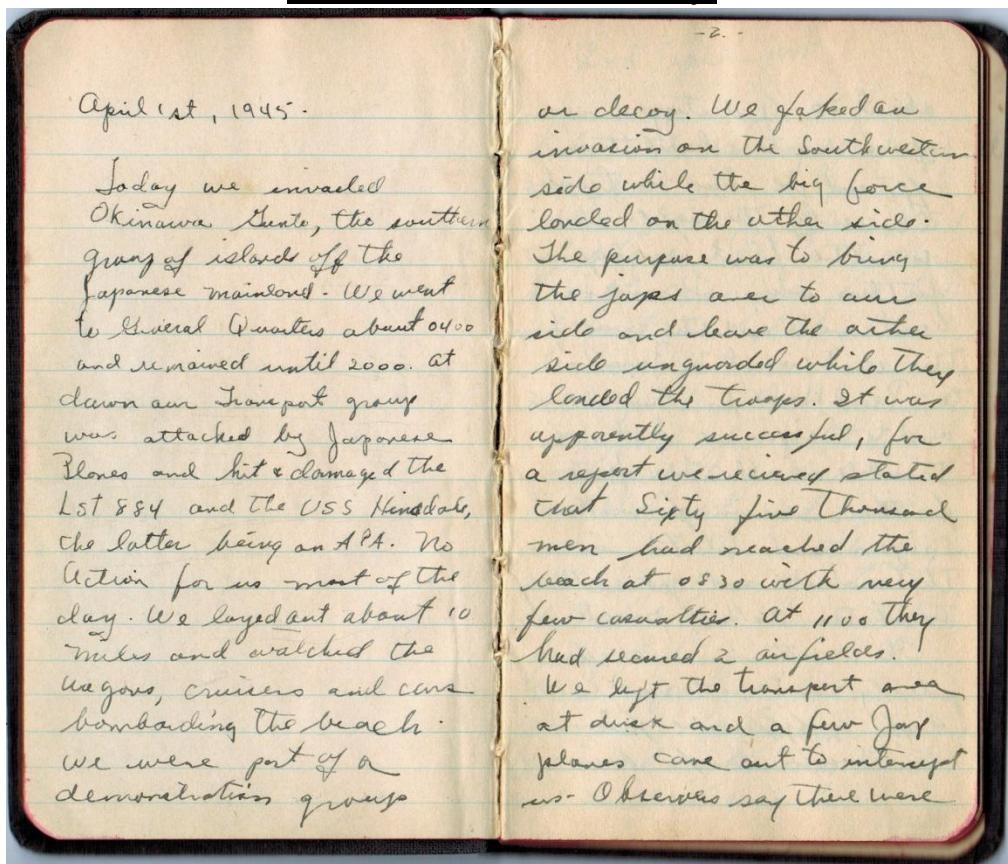


CGHM photos



# DISPATCHES FROM THE FLEET

## Dad's Okinawa Diary



Robert Bonville Sr. joined the CG in early 1939.

Soon after joining he attended Radio School, probably at Ft. Trumble.

During WW2 he was promoted to Chief Radioman. He had sea duty in Atlantic and Pacific during the war.

After the war he was stationed at the GG Training Station in Groton CT as instructor and again at the Institute there. While in Groton he was President of the CPO Club.

Other duty stations included:

1st District HQ Boston

CG Air Station St. Petersburg Fl.

CG Radio Station Miami

CGC *Pride* - Honolulu (formerly USS *Pride* DE-323)

CGC *Androscoggin* WPG/WHEC-68 - Miami

CGC *Ponchartrain* WPG/WHEC-70

CGC *Lansing* WDE-488 (USS *Lansing* DE-388) Korean War era

CGC *Courier* AK/WAGR/WTR-176

Promoted to Warrant officer and attended Navy Officers Advanced Electronics School in Great Lakes IL.

Retired CHRELE W3 in 1964.

Robert Bonville Jr. joined the CG in 1960 while father was stationed aboard the CGC *Courier* in Rhodes, Greece. He was sworn in aboard *Courier*.

He went to RM School right out of boot camp.

Graduated RM School as RM3 and assigned duty on the CGC *Bibb* WPG/WAGC/WHEC-31 - Boston

After the *Bibb*, volunteered for Operation Deepfreeze aboard the CGC *Eastwind* WAG/WAGB-279 - Boston, where he made RM2. Upon return from the ice he was assigned the CGC *Laurel* WAGL/WLB-291as RM-in-Charge in Rockland Me. until my hitch was up. He and his father mustered out the very same day, Jan. 4th 1964.

# DISPATCHES FROM THE FLEET

## Foreword

It is popularly believed that during times of armed conflict, American GI's located in battle zones, are expressly prohibited from keeping any type of personal diary, ledger or record of events. This strict security measure was designed to mitigate the risk of unauthorized, classified information from falling into enemy hands and be used against allied forces.

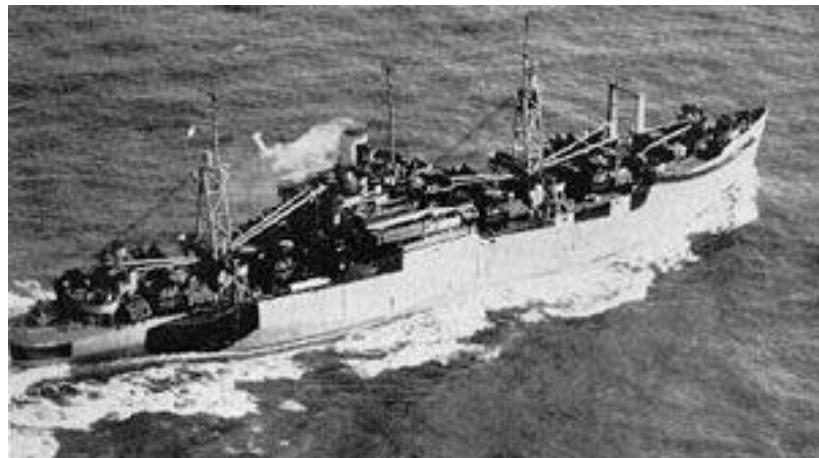
For whatever reason, my father Robert E. (Bob) Bonville Sr., chose to keep a diary and begin his entries on April 1st 1945, the day of the allied invasion of Okinawa during the closing days of World War 2 in the pacific theater. This diary was documented in the pages of a small black covered 4"x 6" Government Issue note book (fsn-50171) manufactured by the U. S. Government Printing Office. This diary and another one from April 21st 1944 (from his time aboard the USS Pride off of North Africa), were rediscovered shortly after my Mom's death in July of 2009.

Just over four years into his U. S. Coast Guard career, Bob Bonville was a Chief Radioman (CRM) aboard the *USS Theenim*, AKA-63. The *Theenim* was an *Andromeda* class attack cargo ship said to be named after a star in the constellation *Eridanus*. The *Theenim* was one of a handful of AKA's manned by a Coast Guard crew in World War 2. She served as a commissioned ship for 16 months.

The transcription of this diary is primarily for the benefit of my family. Stock photos taken during invasion of Okinawa are among the photos added to this document.

*Robert E. Bonville Jr.  
US Coast Guard  
Radioman 2nd Class  
1960-1964*

## Introduction



# DISPATCHES FROM THE FLEET

On 6 January 1945, *Theenim* got underway for Hampton Roads, Va. and a brief shakedown in the Chesapeake Bay – Virginia Capes area. After loading at Norfolk, the attack cargo ship got underway for the South Pacific on the 27th. The ship proceeded through the Panama Canal and Hawaii to the Solomon Islands, arriving at Guadalcanal on 5 March. Assigned to Amphibious Squadron 5, *Theenim* loaded troops and equipment and headed for the Marianas on 15 March. She sortied from the Saipan staging on 27 March with Task Group 51.2, Demonstration Group "Charlie", for the assault on Okinawa. *Theenim* arrived off the Hagushi Beaches on 1 April, but did not land her troops until the 3rd, when she began offloading mobile equipment and debarking Marines. Three days later she helped to splash a "Val", some 1,000 yards off her stern. On the 12th, her gunners shot down a "Zeke" that passed about 60 feet over her bridge. On the 15<sup>th</sup>, her gunners aided in the destruction of an "Oscar".

The next day, *Theenim* joined a convoy that was retiring to the Marianas, and she arrived at Saipan on 19 April. On 4 June, she stood put in Tanapag Harbor preparing to return to the Solomon's to pick up cargo and carry it on to Guam where she arrived on 3 July. For the next three months (the last phase of the fighting and the early days of the occupation) the ship shuttled supplies between Saipan, Manus, Guadalcanal, Espiritu Santo, Leyte, and Japan itself in Hokkaido, and Honshu. On 5 November, she departed Tokyo Bay for the US. She reached Norfolk in April of 1946. *Theenim* was decommissioned and returned to the War Shipping Administration on 10 May 1946 and was struck from the Navy list on 12 May of that year. *Theenim* received one battle star for World War 2 service.

This journal starts on April 1st 1945, and ends the morning of April 19th 1945.

## April 1, 1945 Easter Sunday

*"Today we invaded Okinawa Gunto, the southern group of islands off the Japanese mainland. We went to general quarters about 0400 (4AM) and remained until 2000 (8PM). At dawn, our transport group was attacked by Japanese planes and hit & damaged the LST 884 and the USS Hindale, the latter being an APA.*



*No action for us most of the day. We laid out about 10 miles and watched the Wagons, Cruisers and Cans bombarding the beach. We were part of a Demonstration Group or decoy. We faked an invasion on the southwestern side while the big force landed on the other side. The purpose was to bring the Japs over to our side and keep the other side unguarded while they landed the troops. The strategy was apparently successful, for a report we received stated that 65,000 men had reached the beach at 0830 (8:30AM), with very few casualties. At 1100 (11AM) they had secured 2 airfields.*

*We left the transport area at dusk and a few Jap planes came out to intercept us. Observers said there were about 20. A Destroyer and one of our escorts chased them off and we had no trouble the rest of the night. This was the first engagement for this ship.*

*Throughout our travels all the way from the east coast to Panama to Pearl Harbor to Guadalcanal to*

# DISPATCHES FROM THE FLEET

*Saipan, we had no trouble at all. The force for the invasion formed at Saipan and Ulithi in the Carolinas and got underway about the 26th of March. The weather is nice here; plenty cool but not cold, quite a difference from the south pacific areas".*

## April 2, 1945

*" Early in the morning at 0400 (4AM), we had general quarters and a lone Jap plane identified to be a "Val" or a "Kate" came over for a look, it must have been a recon because it made no attempt to attack any units.*



*We opened fire on him with everything but he wobbled out and got away. Later in the day we received orders to detach from the Demonstration Group and proceed to main port of the invasion beaches. We came around the island with no trouble and anchored over here, a few miles from Naha, the main town of Okinawa.*

*It is amazing, the number of ships in this place. There must be 1500 not including the Battleships and Cruisers. Have seen no Carriers but the planes are really there, they are all over the island, and we have good air coverage. The Nevada has been put out of commission temporarily; she is in tow at least.*

*In the evening we were called to battle stations again and several enemy planes were reported approaching from the stern. A Destroyer chased them off with A/A. ".*



# DISPATCHES FROM THE FLEET

## April 3, 1945

"We ran all night and this morning pulled up outside of "Yellow" beach to discharge our cargo. We are carrying 155mm guns and ammunition, will be glad when they get this ammunition off here. The Battleships have been blasting the beach all day.

Today is my honey's birthday. We are a day ahead of her time so it is still the second over home.



We came into the anchorage under heavy smoke screen today, couldn't see a thing out there. When it cleared we could see the beach and all the activity. The Japs are fighting a queer war out there. There are many reports of suicide planes and suicide boats. It seems that they send these boats out with one man and an explosive charge (bomb or mine). They ram a ship and blow themselves up with everything. The strangest thing is the swimmers. They have been swimming out under crates and boxes leaving charges at the transports. The men have orders to shoot at any floating objects that a man could hide behind, they have been shooting plenty"

## April 4, 1945

"Not much activity today. We moved in closer to the beach and have begun unloading. The bay is rather rough and the small boats are having a bad time.



Army Ducks are taking off the ammo. Several alerts, but no planes got this far. The interceptors from the Carriers took care of them before they got to the transport areas".

# DISPATCHES FROM THE FLEET

## April 5, 1945

"Another quiet day. Several air alerts, but again the aircraft were destroyed before they reached us. A midget submarine was in the transport area but made a couple of misses on a minesweeper.



*The Cans got after it and have heard no more about it. Reports from the beaches indicate that resistance is getting stiffer. The first few days were a snap but now they are near Naha, it's getting rough. Turned in early tonight".*

## April 6, 1945

"Had G.Q. at 0300 (3AM) and saw ships in the distance firing at air targets. Secured at 0600 (6AM). Had the morning watch from 0800 to 1200 (8AM to Noon). Had another G.Q. at 1300 (1PM). Lasted about 1/2 hour before the "all clear" came over the air. About 3:30 or 4:00 this afternoon we were called to General Quarters again. This was the real McCoy. The shooting started even before I got to my battle station.



*We could see the Battleships and Cruisers off in the distance; their guns were putting up plenty of A/A fire. The sky must have been filled with planes out there but they were being splashed before they reached the transport areas. Every now and then you could see one hit the water & explode. 2 suiciders got a Destroyer.*

# DISPATCHES FROM THE FLEET



*Later reports indicate at least 2 Destroyers were severely damaged by suicide flyers. After watching the firing in the screen area for about an hour, the transports started to open up on a plane coming in at about 2000 ft. over the beach to starboard. I have never before seen so much Anti-aircraft firing.*

*The sky was red with bursting shells and as I watched, a piece of shrapnel rickishayed off my helmet. The plane was definitely a suicider and continued to come towards us through the solid wall of fire. He was flying level and when he got over the area he put his nose down and gave it hell. About 500 feet from the transport anchored astern of us, he apparently lost control and dove into the sea, just missing a hospital ship by about 200 ft. When he hit the water an explosion that sent the Jap plane flying all over the area. The pilot could not have lived thru that firing. The suiciders have been pretty good out here up to today, they have made 15 hits on 16 try's. That was before today's action. He almost hit another ship that time too.*

*There were two planes, 1 about 500 yards behind the other. The flack got the other one before he got over the transport. He hit the beach and exploded either an oil dump or an LST. The flame was much more than just a plane burning, however no report has been received as yet. In the meantime, planes were trying to get past the Battleships and screen. No more got through. There must have been at least 20 or 25 planes shot down out here today. Air raids seem to be getting worse each day. A Destroyer also got a sub contact at least 2 miles from us. Nothing else heard".*

## Morning of the 19th of April, 1945

*"Much time has elapsed since my last entry but very much has happened. On April 7th, word was received that the remainder of the Jap fleet was headed for Okinawa. Adm. Mitchers force 58 was sent out to intercept it. The whole area was on edge until about 4 or 5 hours later when another report said the enemy task force had been met, engaged and defeated. Japans largest Battleship the Yamato and Heavy Cruiser Atamo were sunk along with several Destroyers.*



*It was definitely established that the Yamato was sunk. The reason I put that in is that it was claimed to have been sunk or damaged before in the battle the Battle of the Philippines'. The report stated that she belched smoke and fire, rolled over and slid under the waves. Since my last entry we have had a total of 51 separate air*

# DISPATCHES FROM THE FLEET

*attacks from the enemy.*

*Battle stations got to be routine and hearing the firing got so that it didn't bother us like it did at first. The only thing is that when you are below decks when you can't see the planes, when the ship starts firing its guns, you think "The Bastard is heading for us". After seeing the Suiciders work it worries you a little when they are up there.*

*There is a story out and about the suicide squadrons and it is probably the most likely explanation I have heard about them. It seems that they are, for the most part young fellows who have been all hepped up to this suicide "For the Emperor". There is much glory attached to dying, I have always heard this, but this is the first time I have seen it.*



*They have a mass 2 day funeral ahead of time in which all of them participate. They have all the women and Saki they can handle and then they are ready. Suicide pilots have been recovered and we found to be wearing a small tight skull cap, silk black pajamas under a flying jacket, and in one hand they held a little black book which might be some sort of Jap bible. They also wear what is known as a "Belt of a thousand stitches". This is a belt that is wider than a normal belt and has inscribed all sorts of good luck and religious charms.*



*The attacks they make are very effective and their batting average is high. Roughly I'd say they have about 95% hits. They seem to pick targets with comparatively low fire power or a ship that is isolated from the rest of the force. They have hit Battleships and Cruisers but not as much as the Destroyers and Sweeps. Incidentally the AKA-67 USS Starr, took a hit by a suicide boat. It was about a week or so I think. I mention this because Edna's husband is aboard. The damage was slight however and I doubt if he was hurt.*

*One night the Japanese fanaticism was clearly demonstrated. Enemy Betties came over Yonton and bombed the air fields. The planes in company flew around making targets of themselves to keep the fire away from the bombers. I have found out that Georgie Deek is definitely on the beach someplace. Wish I had a chance to look him up but hadn't.*

*As I write this we have departed Hagushi at Okinawa and have headed back to Saipan. It is a wonderful feeling, a comfortable feeling to be the hell out of there. As we were coming out Monday, the 9th, I had an opportunity to see a good air fight.*

# DISPATCHES FROM THE FLEET



*There wasn't much fight to it but anyway - 3 "Corsairs" were taking turns giving this "Zeke" a bad time. One at a time they would swoop down and pour lead into the Jap. Finally the Jap burst into flame and went down. It was comical to watch the "Corsairs" after they had shot him down. They all went into loops. It seemed that they were laughing or celebrating or something.*

*We are now only a day out of Saipan. I never thought this ship would look good to me, but after Okinawa, I'm sure I will enjoy it. Back to Saipan. Some good old American Beer and most important, my mail from home".*



**This was the last entry in my father's Okinawa Diary.**

# DISPATCHES FROM THE FLEET

## THE COLLISION OF THE MAUMEE SUN AND AMERICAN PILOT

After spending two and a half years on the cutter *Duane* doing weather patrols thirty days out on patrol and thirty days in port keeping the *Duane* in shape with an occasional Bermuda or Gitmo tour, being stationed at the Cape Cod Canal station was quite a change for me from sea duty. After settling in I soon found the duty varied and interesting. I found the time at the canal station more rewarding and challenging. I soon learned being a seaman on a 327' cutter was much different than doing search and rescue in a small boat. I was no great shakes as a seaman but the BM's soon did a pretty good job of tuning up my skills. As I recall we had a busy month of November 1965 at the Canal station with several calls for jumpers off the Sagamore and Bourne bridges along with our usual calls. Also, Chief Sousa Retired on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

The collision of the Maumee Sun and the American Pilot stands out as one of the most memorable incidents at the Canal station for those of us stationed there that year. We had all of our boats dispatched to the scene. I can remember leaving the station around 22:00 and not getting back until 12:00 the next day. Charles Spivey, an FN at the time, and I will try to remember what we can . Charlie and I both worked that operation. Charlie did double duty on that call taking the first calls to the station and later that night going out to work the scene. I will begin with what information I have been able to gather about the Maumee Sun and the American Pilot. Then will go into the recollections of the collision. If anyone out there was stationed at the Canal station at the time can remember more details, I will put them in the next newsletter.

## THE SHIPS



The Maumee Sun

### The Maumee Sun Underway 1964 Boston Harbor off Castle Island

Keel was laid down 27 September 1944. Was commissioned as a Maritime type (T1-M-A2) tanker hull, under The Maritime Commission contract (MC hull 2067) at the East Coast Shipyards Inc. Bayonne, N.J. Launched 29 October 1944.

Commissioned USS *Tetonkaha* (AOG-41), 8 December 1944. LT. Paul J. Hall, USNR, in command. Decommissioned 22 January 1946, at Mare Island, CA. Struck from the Naval Registry 12 March 1946. The *Tetonkaha* was transferred to the Maritime Commission for disposal on July 1, 1946. She was sold by the Maritime Commission to the Sun Oil Co. of Philadelphia PA and was renamed the *Maumee Sun*. She spent the time after the Second World War delivering #2 fuel oil up and down the East Coast mostly from Maine to Philadelphia. After the collision she went to New Bedford for temporary repairs then to a Boston dry dock for major repairs. I will list legal information regarding the collision later on in the story.

# DISPATCHES FROM THE FLEET

## Specifications

Displacement- 846 t.(Lt) 2,270t(ft).

Length - 220 feet, 6 inches.

Beam -37 feet.

Draft -17 feet.

Propulsion - Diesel direct drive, single screw, 720hp

Speed -10kts.

Complement - 12

## During WWII

### Armament

One single 3"/50 dual purpose gun mount.

Two single 40 mm AA gun mounts

Three 20mm gun mounts.

While serving under the Navy during the war she received several citations and campaign ribbons -- American Campaign Ribbon, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, World War II Victory Medal.

## The American Pilot

(The Mystery ship)



After spending about three months searching for records and information about the *American Pilot I* have come up pretty much empty handed except for some basic reported information obtained from news reports. The ship seems to have disappeared from public records including all ship building and shipyard publications and the past owners' public web information. According to the Corp of Engineers at the time of the accident she was owned by the US Lines out of New York. According to the Coast Guard investigation reports and documents she was owned by the Seaboard Shipping Company. I found one reference to a freighter *SS American Pilot* that was assisted by the Navy ammunition ship *USS Wrangell* with a medical emergency December 3, 1967. This was in the Pacific off of Southeast Asia. I also found a disciplinary action to one of her seaman absent without leave in May of 1967. The US Lines had a series of cargo vessels that were named American, Courier, Commander, Corsair, Contender and Crusader. All were a Type Break-bulk C4S-57A cargo ship.

All were delivered to US Lines in 1963. None were renamed *American Pilot*. The only conclusion I can come up with was that her name was changed perhaps more than once and the companies she was owned by have changed names and merged with other companies. This *American Pilot* is not to be confused with the one that was built in the early 1900's and served for a time as a training vessel. She was scrapped I believe in 1948. There is quite a bit about that ship on the web.

At this point I will give a general description of the US Lines American series cargo Type -Break

Bulk C4S-57A cargo ship. At least it will give you some idea of size and displacement.

Length- 535 feet. Beam - approximately 75 feet. Draft 31 feet. Single Screw 2,500 shp steam turbine. There are no photos of the *American Pilot* except those published in news accounts and in William Quinn's book Shipwrecks Around Cape Cod. Mr. Quinn has kindly given me permission to use them in this article.

# DISPATCHES FROM THE FLEET

**NOTES AND TIMELINE** On November 23, 1965 at about 2130 that night the *Maumee Sun* was being navigated across Buzzards Bay approaching Hog Island Channel from the Southwest enroute from New Jersey to Revere, Massachusetts. Speed was about nine knots. Heading was 032 deg T. William Pridgen was serving as master. At about the same time the *American Pilot*, having transited the land cut of Cape Cod Canal enroute from Boston to New York, was entering Hog Island Channel. The captain of the *American Pilot* was Mr. Lamb and the coastal pilot aboard was a Mr. Peter Govostes. At 21:33, the vessel on its own right-hand side of the channel passed Beacon 11 at about 12 knots on a heading of 219 deg. to make good 215 deg. T, the channel course. The intention of the *American Pilot* was to make a left turn into Cleveland Ledge Channel at the proper point as is usual for deep draft vessels.

*Maumee Sun* was observed approaching the south end of Hog Island Channel from the Southwest. (It is common practice for lesser draft vessels not to enter the marked and dredged channel at Cleveland Ledge but to cross the bay as *Maumee Sun* was doing.) Only the green side light of the *Maumee Sun* was seen. The *Maumee Sun* kept an apparently steady bearing. At about 21:38 the *American Pilot* swung two deg. to the left and remained on that heading for about a minute. Three times during the approach of the vessels the pilot of the *American Pilot* signaled one blast. No reply was ever heard. *American Pilot*'s speed was reduced to one half. Since the bearing of *Maumee Sun* had been moving towards its bow, *American Pilot* gave a danger signal, slowed and reversed when the vessels were about a quarter of a mile apart. The *Maumee Sun* took no immediate action after the danger signal because the master of the *Maumee Sun* did not think the signal was directed at him. Just before the collision the master of the *Maumee Sun* took the wheel himself and came full right and left. *Maumee Sun* was struck on the port quarter while still swinging right. Just prior to the collision the Army Corp of Engineers traffic controller at Wings Neck heard a ship's danger signal. The collision occurred at about 21:46 near Buoy "3" on the west side of the Channel.

## OUR RECOLLECTIONS

Charles Spivey FN

*I remember it was just before Thanksgiving 1965. The Freighter American Pilot was west bound, it had cleared the canal and was in Buzzards bay approach when it collided with the tanker Maumee Sun. It hit the Maumee Sun at about the port bridge wing. I was on the 2000-2400 watch. This happened before the watch change. My relief took over and that was when all heck broke loose. I remember he was working the UHF radio and I was working the VHF. We were busier than a couple of one armed PAPER HANGERS. We dispatched the 40 and 30 footers. At about 0300 we got a request to dispatch another boat. All we had was an wooden hulled MLB that we called the turtle. This thing only had a GMC 4-71 and was slow. The night was cold let me tell you, and in those days we did not have survival suits. Well anyway, we had to stop at the Maritime Academy and pick up some media types. When we got to the wreck, I transferred to the 40 footer as one man was due for liberty at noon. (That would have been SN Washburn) They kept the two ships together as they were afraid that the tanker would sink. The whole mess was underway, barely. We were passing pumps up to the tanker and it was pretty choppy. We kept slamming against the side of the tanker. It was a difficult situation at best. We had just passed a pump up when the boat lurched away from the tanker. SN Breede was caught off balance and fell between the 40 and the tanker. The 40 slammed up against the tanker although I was trying to fend it off. I lost sight of Breede and knew that he had submerged. I headed aft and was watching the wake when I saw him surface about 50 yds or so behind us. I grabbed a life ring said a prayer and let it fly. It landed no more than 2 or 3 feet in front of him.. With the water temperature I don't know if I would have a second chance, that he was wearing a heavy foul weather jacket and boon dockers. We got him aboard and Med evaced him for treatment for hypothermia."*

George Washburn SN

*"On the night of November 23, 1965 as I recall I was getting ready to hit the sack. I think It was sometime around 21:50. Some of the other guys who were not on watch were playing cards or perhaps in the TV room. Someone came in and said we got a collision at the west end of the canal. We need a crew. Before I knew it I had had been chosen for the 40 footer crew. After almost 48 years I can not recall all who were sent out. I think a Guy named Buba was the coxswain. While running down to get the boat ready I noticed how cold and calm the night was and the canal seemed pretty calm. Off we went full bore headed West the 40 footer bounced along. I can remember hearing Spivey on the radio doing comms with the Corp of Engineers and other vessels, including with Buba. I heard another voice which I did not recognize. Buba said "looks like we are going to have a long night, get out the fenders and some lines to work with. If the Maumee is taking on water then we will be working with pumps." When we got closer to the scene we could see the Maumee had been speared on the port side. The Pilot looked like she had stove in at least six or eight feet off the Maumee hull. I can remember the*

# DISPATCHES FROM THE FLEET

*smell of diesel or fuel oil as we got closer. What struck me as we circled her and awaited instructions I could see some of the Maumee crew smoking and leaning over the rail just as calm as can be. I had visions of puff the magic dragon if there was a fire. All of us on the forty footer were some unsettled. Adrenalin soon kicked in as we got to work hauling lines from the American Pilot to and around the Maumee. I seem to recall a line run under the Maumee and back to the Pilot. The rest of the night was spent shuttling pumps from other vessels on helicopters. At one point I was so busy working lines that a chopper lowered a pump behind me and nudged me with it, almost knocked me down. I can remember it being in a fifty gallon drum container. Later on we spent some time just circling the scene and I recall how a bunch of smaller boats were running around with lights illuminating the scene. We all took turns at the wheel while the other guys rested as we circled around. I can remember having lights shining in my eyes and losing my night vision. I think at one point I asked to be relieved. While Charlie and Breed were having their excitement we were chugging back to the station on the 36 footer. I remember we had some guy from the press aboard and I had the wheel of the 36 for a while. It took me a bit to settle down and get used to dealing with the current. By the time we got back to the station Breed was already back wrapped in a blanket. To this day I do not know how he got back."*

## Vessels that responded and assisted the Maumee Sun and American Pilot

Coast Guard Cutters *Escanaba*, *Yakutat*, *Hornbeam*. Plus the many small boats from various CG stations in the area. The Corp. of Engineers tugs *Manomet* and *Pocasset*. The Pilot boat *Reiner*.

By midnight we (The Coast Guard) had run a cable under the *Maumee Sun* and back over to the *American Pilot*. A barge had been delivered to the scene by about 0300 and some 650,000 gallons of home fuel oil had been transferred. All the time both vessels had been tied together and were underway to keep the *Maumee* from sinking. Within the next couple of days the *Maumee Sun* went first to New Bedford for temporary repairs then to Boston dry-dock for permanent repairs. The *American Pilot* went on her way with no apparent damage. From then on she seems to have disappeared from public records with the exception of the two incidents mentioned earlier in this article.

After the investigation of the accident the Master of the *Maumee Sun*'s license was suspended for two months for negligence for failing to keep a proper lookout and failing to navigate with caution after hearing a danger signal from the SS *American Pilot* thereby contributing to a collision with that vessel on August 9, 1966. Appeal was filed on August 12 1966 and perfected on 21 February 1967.

I have gathered information from the following sources:

Cape Cod Times, New York Times, Associated Press, The Boston Globe, The Coast Guard Atlantic Fleet Historian, The Naval Source Web page. The Merchant Marine Web page. Several WWII merchant and naval web pages. Legal reports and documents from The Coast Guard investigation into the incident. Data Bases from all major ship yards and dry dock in the US. At the time of this writing I am still waiting for information from The Corp of Engineers local historian Samantha Gray. For your information there will be a 100 year anniversary celebration at the canal of the opening of the canal in 2014 run by the Corp of Engineers.

With grateful thanks permission from William Quinn's several photos and some text from his book "Shipwrecks around Cape Cod".

If anyone out there can enlighten us with more info about the collision and the *American Pilot* the can e-mail me at [cwgpg33@comcast.net](mailto:cwgpg33@comcast.net).

Charlie and I can recall some of the guys we were stationed with at the time of this operation. I shall list them here and perhaps some of you can recall more.

BMC Sousa, BM1 Then BMC C. Josephson, EN2 Momm, EN2 Chinnis, SN Sullivan, SN Breede, CS2 Montez, BM3 Morton, SN Dykes, Greaves I think was a FN. SN Vasquez, EN2 Buba, BM1 and acting CO Richard Livesey.

George W. Washburn

June 2012

# GIFT SHOP

**WE HAVE T-SHIRTS AND POLO SHIRTS IN OUR GIFT SHOP. T'S ARE \$15, VARIOUS SIZES IN RED, BLUE, GREY, GREEN & STONEWASH. POLO'S ARE \$30, \$33 W/ POCKET. COLORS INCLUDE BLUE, RED, GREY. CALL FOR SPECIFIC AVAILABILITY & SHIPPING. WE ACCEPT MC, VISA, DISCOVER.**



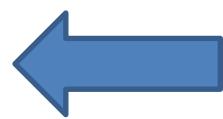
**82 FOOTER POLO**

T  
SHIRT

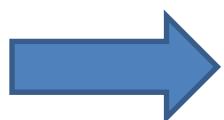


**GOAT (HU-16E) POLO**

**HH-52A POLO SHIRT**



**378 POLO SHIRT**



**HH-3F POLO SHIRT**



**GIFT SHOP**

# **COAST GUARD HERITAGE MUSEUM**

**“CHALLENGE COIN”**

**\$12**



**FRONT**



**REAR**

Dear Friend,

As 2012 draws to a close, the board of directors and volunteers of the Coast Guard Heritage Museum can look back at a successful year. During the past twelve months the museum has accomplished a great deal, including:

- Installing a new exhibit commemorating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the heroic rescue of the crews of the *Fort Mercer* and *Pendleton* off the coast of Cape Cod.
- Offering a hands-on educational program to over 125 Cub Scouts at Camp Greenough, featuring the scouts' creating their own model lighthouse.
- Welcoming several thousand visitors to the museum so far this season.

If you have visited the museum, you know that there are many interesting historical items on display, along with dedicated volunteers ready to tell the story of the USCG. Our constant goal is to improve the experience of visiting the CGHM. This year, we are looking for your help to move forward.

The Town of Barnstable, which owns the historic building housing the museum, has begun to make much-needed repairs and upgrades to the museum. Through grants and the Massachusetts Community Preservation Act, the town is in the process of implementing the first phase of the project, which will involve rebuilding or replacement of the windows and exterior repairs to stop water infiltration through the outside walls. These steps will allow us to open windows for the first time and will prevent further water damage to interior walls. We will be open as usual from May 1 to November 1, 2013.

In conjunction with this activity, we have begun an exciting long-term initiative that will dramatically reshape the museum in future years. Working with Jeremy Slavitz of Local History and Heritage Consultants, museum directors and volunteers have taken a hard look at the way the museum shares the story of the USCG with the goal of creating a new permanent exhibit on the museum's first floor that will give visitors a better understanding of the evolution of the USCG and its diverse 21<sup>st</sup> Century mission. Our goal is to make these upgrades during 2013, revealing the changes when we open for the season in May 2014.

Your support is crucial in our growth as a museum. We are asking for your support in completing these changes. We hope that you will consider helping to make these plans a reality. We would be happy to discuss additional giving opportunities, such as naming rights, if there is an interest.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,



Jack McGrath, President, CGHM

**COAST GUARD HERITAGE MUSEUM  
P.O. BOX 161, BARNSTABLE, MA 02630  
(508) 362-8521  
[www.cgheritage.org](http://www.cgheritage.org)**

**YES, I wish to make a gift of:  \$1000.00 (Admiral's Club)  \$500.00 (Captain's Club)**

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