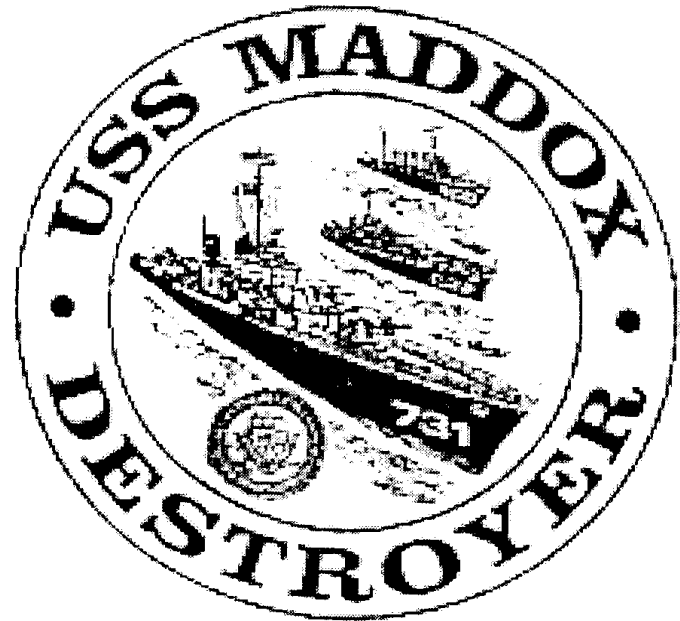




USS MADDOX DESTROYER
ASSOCIATION
12686 W. HWY 55
YORK, SC 29745-8748

TO:



USS MADDOX DESTROYER ASSOCIATION

12686 W. Highway 55
York, SC 29745-8748

June 2012

USS Maddox Association Officers and Board

Officers

President:	Al Raines	2012
Vice President:	Dan Holland	2012
Secretary:	Bob Wannamaker	Appointed
Treasurer:	John Bayley	Appointed
Chaplin:	Rev. Justin McMenamy	Appointed
Parliamentarian:	Cliff Gillespie	Appointed
Historian:	Roy Hyer	Appointed

Board of Directors

Jim Slattery	2012
Hoot Gibson	2012
Dennis Stokhaug	2012
Robert Graham	2012
Bob Dinwiddie	2013
Earl Miller	2013
Edward Schultz	2013

Appointed Positions

Nominating Committee Chairman:	Hoot Gibson
Reunion Committee Chairman:	Jim Slattery
Membership Committee Chairman:	Dennis Stokhaug
Webmaster:	Dennis Stokhaug
Newsletter Editor:	Kathy Stokhaug



A Message from the President

It is hard to believe that it has been a year since our last reunion in Branson. It has been a very busy year, but so far I have managed to make it this far in pretty fair shape.

Our bags are packed, hotel reservations made and the GPS is programmed for the trip to Reno. There will be plenty to do and lots to see; Joyce has a great tour planned - be sure to pack your walking shoes. For those not taking the tour, the Hospitality Room will be open and ready for the poker games, story retelling and meeting up with friends that we haven't seen for a year or longer.

If you are driving to Reno – drive carefully. If you are flying – sit back, relax and hope your pilot flies safely. No matter how you get there, be sure you get there safe and sound and allow enough time to enjoy the trip.

Al

DID YOU KNOW?

There are over 100 bands in the U.S. military costing over \$300 million a year. That is going to be reduced by 10% over the next 5 years because of the reduction in the military budget.

Incredible Story

Submitted by John Bayley

From November 1943, until her demise in June 1945, the American destroyer "William D. Porter" was often hailed - whenever she entered port or joined other Naval ships - with the greeting: "Don't shoot, we're Republicans!" For a half a century, the US Navy kept a lid on the details of the incident that prompted this salutation. A Miami news reporter made the first public disclosure in 1958 after he stumbled upon the truth while covering a reunion of the destroyer's crew. The Pentagon reluctantly & tersely confirmed his story, but only a smattering of newspapers took notice.

In 1943 the Willie D as the Porter was nicknamed, accidentally fired a live torpedo at the battleship Iowa during a practice exercise. As if this weren't bad enough, the Iowa was carrying President Franklin D. Roosevelt at the time, along with Secretary of State, Cordell Hult, & all of the country's WWII military brass. They were headed for the Big Three Conference in Tehran, where Roosevelt was to meet Stalin & Churchill. Had the Porter's torpedo struck the Iowa at the aiming point, the last 60 years of world history might have been quite different. The USS William D Porter (DD-579) was one of hundreds of assembly line destroyers built during the war. They mounted several heavy & light guns, but their main armament consisted of 10 fast-running & accurate torpedoes that carried 500-pound warheads. The destroyer was placed in commission in July, 1943 under the command of Wilfred Walker, a man on the Navy's fast career track.

In the months before she was detailed to accompany the Iowa across the Atlantic in November 1943, the Porter & her crew learned their trade, experiencing the normal problems that always beset a new ship & a novice crew. The mishaps grew more serious when she became an escort for the pride of the fleet, the big new battleship Iowa. The night before they left Norfolk, bound for North Africa, the Porter accidentally damaged a nearby sister ship when she backed down along the other ship's side & her anchor tore down the other ship's railings, life rafts, ship's boat & various other formerly valuable pieces of equipment. The Willie

Incredible Story (Cont'd)

D merely had a scraped anchor, but her career of mayhem & mishaps had begun.

Just twenty four hours later, the four-ship convey, consisting of Iowa & her secret passengers, the Willie D, & two other destroyers, was under strict instructions to maintain complete radio silence. Since they were going through a known U-boat feeding ground, speed & silence were the best defense.

Suddenly, a tremendous explosion rocked the convoy. All of the ships commenced anti-submarine maneuvers. This continued until the Porter sheepishly admitted that one of her depth charges had fallen off her stern & exploded. The 'safety' had not been set as instructed. Captain Walker was watching his fast track career become side-tracked.

Shortly thereafter, a freak wave inundated the ship, stripping away everything that wasn't lashed down. A man washed overboard & was never found. Next, the fire room lost power in one of its boilers. The Captain, at this point, was making reports almost hourly to the Iowa about the Willie D's difficulties. It would have been merciful if the force commander had detached the hard luck ship & sent her back to Norfolk, but no, she sailed on.

The morning of 14 November 1943 dawned with a moderate sea & pleasant weather. The Iowa & her escorts were just east of Bermuda & the president & his guests wanted to see how the big ship could defend herself against an air attack. So, the Iowa launched a number of weather balloons to use as anti-aircraft targets. It was exciting to see more than 100 guns shooting at the balloons, & the President was proud of his Navy. Just as proud was Admiral Ernest J King, the Chief of Naval Operations; large in size & by demeanor, a true monarch of the sea. Disagreeing with him meant the end of a naval career. Up to this time, no one knew what firing a torpedo at him would mean. Over on the Willie D., Captain Walker watched the fireworks display with admiration & envy. Thinking about career redemption & breaking the hard luck spell, the Captain sent his impatient crew to battle stations. They began to shoot down the balloons the Iowa had

Incredible Story (Cont'd)

missed, as they drifted into the Porter's vicinity.

Down on the torpedo mounts, the crew watched, waiting to take some practice shots of their own on the big battleship, which, even though 6,000 yards away, seemed to blot out the horizon. Dawson & Tony Fazio were among those responsible for the torpedoes. Part of their job involved ensuring that the primers were installed during actual combat & removed during practice. Once a primer was installed, on a command to fire, it would explode shooting the torpedo out of its tube. Dawson, on this particular morning, unfortunately had forgotten to remove the primer from torpedo tube #3. Up on the bridge, a new torpedo officer, unaware of the danger, ordered a simulated firing. "Fire 1, Fire 2," & finally, "Fire 3". There was no Fire 4 as the sequence was interrupted by an unmistakable whoooooohhhing sound made by a successfully launched & armed torpedo. Lt. H Steward Lewis, who witnessed the entire event, later described the next few minutes as what hell would look like if it ever broke loose.

Just after he saw the torpedo hit water on its way to the Iowa & some of the most prominent figures in world history, Lewis innocently asked the Captain, "Did you give permission to fire a torpedo?" Captain Walker's reply will not ring down through naval history, although words to the effect of Farragut's Immortal 'Damn the torpedoes' figured centrally within.

Initially there was some reluctance to admit what had happened, or even to warn the Iowa. As the awful reality sunk in, people began racing around shouting conflicting instructions & attempting to warn the flagship of imminent danger. First there was a flashing light warning about the torpedo which unfortunately indicated the torpedo was headed in another direction. Next, the Porter signaled that the torpedo was going reverse at full speed! Finally, they decided to break the strictly enforced radio silence. The radio operator on the destroyer transmitted "Lion (code for the Iowa), Lion, come right." The Iowa operator, more concerned about radio procedure, requested that the offending station identify itself first. Finally, the message was received & the Iowa began turning to avoid the speeding torpedo.

Incredible Story (Cont'd)

Meanwhile, on the Iowa's bridge, word of the torpedo firing had reached FDR, who asked that his wheelchair be moved to the railing so he could see better what was coming his way. His loyal Secret Service guard immediately drew his pistol as if he was going to shoot the torpedo. As the Iowa began evasive maneuvers, all of her guns were trained on the William D Porter. There was now some thought that the Porter was part of an assassination plot.

Within moments of the warning, there was a tremendous explosion just behind the battleship. The torpedo had been detonated by the wash kicked up by the battleship's increased speed. The crisis was over & so was Captain Walker's career. His final utterance to the Iowa, in response to a question about the origin of the torpedo, was a weak, "We did it."

Shortly thereafter, the brand new destroyer, her Captain & the entire crew were placed under arrest & sent to Bermuda for trial. It was the first time that a complete ship's company had been arrested in the history of the US Navy.

The ship was surrounded by Marines when it docked in Bermuda, & held there several days as the closed session inquiry attempted to determine what had happened. Torpedo man Dawson eventually confessed to having inadvertently left the primer in the torpedo tube, which caused the launching. Dawson had thrown the used primer over the side to conceal his mistake. The whole incident was chalked up to an unfortunate set of circumstances & placed under a cloak of secrecy.

Someone had to be punished. Captain Walker & several other Porter officers & sailors eventually found themselves in obscure shore assignments. Dawson was sentenced to 14 years hard labor. President Roosevelt intervened; however, asking that no punishment be meted out for what was clearly an accident.

The destroyer William d. Porter was banished to the upper Aleutians. It was probably thought this was as safe a place as any for the ship & anyone who came near her.

She remained in the frozen north for almost a year, until late 1944, when she was re-assigned to the Western Pacific. However, before leaving the Aleutians, she accidentally left her calling

Incredible Story (Cont'd)

card in the form of a five-inch shell fired into the front yard of the American Base Commander, thus rearranging his flower garden rather suddenly.

In December, 1944, the Porter joined the Philippine invasion forces & acquitted herself quite well. She distinguished herself by shooting down a number of attacking Japanese aircraft. Regrettably, after the war, it was reported that she also shot down three American planes. This was a common event on ships, as many gunners, fearful of kamikazes, had nervous trigger fingers.

In April, 1945 the Porter was assigned to support the invasion of Okinawa. By this time, the greeting "Don't Shoot, We're Republicans." was commonplace & the crew of the Willie D had become used to the ribbing. But the crew of her sister ship, the USS Luce, was not so polite in its salutations after the Porter accidentally riddled her side & superstructure with gunfire.

On 10 June, 1945, the Porter's hard luck finally ran out. She was sunk by a plane which had (unintentionally) attacked it from underwater. A Japanese bomber made almost entirely of wood & canvas slipped through the Navy's defense. Having little in the way of metal surfaces, the plane didn't register on radar. A fully loaded kamikaze, it was headed for a ship near the Porter, but just at the last moment veered away & crashed alongside the unlucky destroyer. There was a sigh of relief as the plane sunk out of sight, but then it blew up underneath the Porter, opening her hull in the worst possible place.

Three hours later, after the last man was off board, the Captain jumped to safety of a rescue vessel & the ship that almost changed world history slipped astern into 2,400 feet of water. Not a single soul was lost in the sinking. After everything else that happened, it was almost as if the ship decided to let her crew off at the end.

Written by Kit Bonner, a noted Naval Historian



BOOK CORNER

We have recently heard from Claude Aldrich who served on a new destroyer, USS Van Vulkenburgh DD656 in 1944-1946. This is a story about his trip in WWII and the rough times they had in Iwo Jima & Okinawa plus the China coast and Japan. The name of the book is "A Boy, A Ship & A War" and is available at BooksToBelieveIn.com and on Amazon.com.

If you have a book that you enjoyed, let us know & we will include it in our "Book Corner".



**2012 MADDOX REUNION
RENO, NEVADA
AUGUST 16 - 19, 2012
Ramada Hotel and Casino**



Hotel reservations **MUST** be made before July 15th in order to get the reduced room rate of \$71.17 (inclusive) so don't forget to call the hotel at 1-775-786-5151 and tell them you are with the USS Maddox Reunion Group and give them this group code: CGMADO. This rate is good from Aug 13th - Aug. 21st. The hotel has free airport shuttle service. There is also a pool & fitness center. The hospitality room is always open and we look forward to seeing everyone there.

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!!



Maddox Memories

By Bob Bernal GM3

I was on the Maddox from 1957-1959. The article by YN2 Lund brought back memories of my duty on the Maddox. If my memory serves me right, the Maddox was the first USS Naval ship to visit Brisbane, Australia since WWII. It was a great visit for me & my fellow sailors. While going to Brisbane, some of us crossed the equator for the very first time. There was a ritual involved for those individuals, the photos below will tell the story.



After a port call to New Guinea I also recall the sea as calm as could be, just like glass. I don't know what caused that, but some mentioned they were ground swells. I remember it looking like rolling hills, not a ripple, only a crest, then a deep trough. One would look up & see a hill of water on both sides, then the next moment we were on top looking down. I recall one or two mess cooks went overboard. One was SM Schwartz,

As to the damage to the Maddox, we were on a high speed or shakedown run after leaving for the US of A. We were informed that we might hit the tail end of a typhoon, but I think we were right in the middle of it. Four of us were in the torpedo shop on the main deck, starboard side, two of us sitting on the work bench, one standing, & PO Chavira sitting in a chair leaning on the bulkhead. We felt a crashing blow to the bulkhead & the ship rolling to starboard but then upright again. Another hard blow & rolling, but it seemed it was not coming upright this time. PO

Maddox Memories (Cont'd)

Chavira landed on top of us on the work bench. If my face looked like the others, I was scared to death. We made it to the passageway, & we weren't walking on the deck, but going towards the life jackets. The ship finally came upright but it felt like a long time before it did, even though it was probably just a few seconds. The starboard side was as YN2 Lund indicated. The torpedo tubes on 01 deck were out of center. The 5-inch aft gun mount, which was where I worked, was off center. We couldn't center it because the locking pin was bent.

When we finally pulled into Pearl Harbor we saw a sign on another ship that said something like "Captain's Taxi Service" available. Again, I'm relying on memory of some 50 years ago. If I'm corrected by other readers of the "*Howgoesit*", I stand corrected.



HOWGOESIT TRIVIA



KNOW THE ROPES

This expression comes from sailing. The original allusion was to the experienced sailor who knew all the ropes aboard ship.

LANDLUBBER

From the Danish *lobbes*, meaning "clown or bumpkin". The term means any person who lives on land and, therefore, acts inexperienced and/or awkward aboard ship.

PEA JACKET

The term pea jacket comes from the Dutch pig or pije, meaning a thick coat of felt & refers to the cloth used in making pea jackets.



If you guessed this is Bob Wannamaker, you are correct!

Bob liked his original Corvair Spyder, that he drove in California while in the Navy, so much that he went looking for another one. He finally found this 1964 blue Corvair Convertible in GA. By searching the VIN number he found that the car was original down to the aftermarket seat belts. The car has been repainted the original color and basic original interior and top. The car reminded Bob of his original Corvair so it is now enjoying life in SC. with Bob and Sarah.



LOOKING FOR:

We have recently heard from Tom who was on the USS Cunningham in 1954-1955. He knows that they sailed with the Maddox & is wondering if anyone knows what other ships sailed with them. If you know, please let us know so we can notify him.



This picture was recently sent to Dennis from CDR USN (Ret) Barry Coombs. He is a volunteer with "Find A Grave" and came upon this tombstone in a cemetery in Tryon, NC. It reads: In memory of G.M.3/C Marion "Pig" Williams who gave his life for his country aboard the U.S.S. Maddox July 10, 1943.



From the Editor:

Found an interesting article in our local paper about the new "Littoral Combat Ships" that are being built in Marinette, WI. They have just turned over the 2nd of these ships, The LCS-3 Fort Worth to the Navy. The Fort Worth resembles a high-tech version of a Civil War-era ironclad, at least from the front. The 377 foot vessel is designed to patrol close to shore (which is the meaning of littoral). It will be used within 200 miles of shore-lines to neutralize pirates, mines & other threats. The key feature is its ability to switch quickly from one combat mode to another. Switching equipment modules will transform the ship from a mine or submarine hunter to a surface war vessel, for example. A conventional ship of this size would carry a crew of 200 with 11-14 on the bridge. The Fort Worth requires only a 44 member crew including the 3 needed for the bridge. An example would be, there will only be 6 members of the crew in the engineering department and they all will be cross-trained to do each other's jobs. The crew must have a high level of experience and will train for at least 18 months before actually boarding the ship. The crew will also undergo about 60 days of training before they take the Fort Worth to its commissioning in Galveston, TX. The quarters are nicer than on current larger Navy ships with private bathrooms & double bunks, rather than triple. Two crews will alternate four-month tours of sea duty. Sounds like a far cry from the USS Maddox Hummm?

Dennis has come across some information about the nuclear tests that the Maddox was involved in which happened in 1962. This testing was called Operation Dominic Nuclear Tests. Although they claim the amount of radiation was insignificant, you can find out more about a compensation program by calling the National Cancer Benefits Center at 1-800-414-4328. You can read more about this by typing Operation Dominic Nuclear Test in your search engine.

Kathy Stokhaug

Chaplain's Corner



FREEDOM

At the moment, this topic & or subject is everywhere. With July 4th in front of us & since this is the Chaplain's Corner, that is, it deals with the spiritual or religious side of our lives, we need to spend a little time & thought regarding some of what is confronting all of us in our Country at the moment. I will be stating truths -- that is to keep it logical & express some consequences. Freedom!

Like any freedom, religious liberty requires constant vigilance & protection, or it will disappear. This is our American heritage, our most cherished freedom. Many (and some say most) of our forefathers left their homelands in order to escape the tyrannical practices of state established religions -- that is no freedom of conscience practices were allowed. Our nation's founders embraced freedom of religion as an essential condition of a free & democratic society. So when the Bill of Rights was ratified, religious freedom had the distinction of being the First Amendment. Religious liberty is indeed the first liberty. If we are **not** free in our conscience beliefs & our practice of religion, all other freedoms are fragile.

So, is our most cherished freedom truly under threat? If our obligations & duties to God are impeded, then we can no longer claim to be a land of the free. What is being mandated by our present federal government is to force its people to relinquish (go against) their formed consciences & comply with a new set of rules (administrative laws).

If the present ones stand & become the order of the land, one must ask -- **what will be next?** Review boards (not medical/ doctors) determining whether someone is allowed to have a medical procedure or perhaps even decisions to euthanize the too sick

Chaplains Corner (cont'd)

to cure? All it takes for evil to exist in the World is for good people to do nothing. As this goes to print, people of **faith** from many, many denominations are facing the issue because it is an American issue.

As your Chaplain, my request is that we all join in "prayer" asking for divine graces to get all of this worked out. May God sustain us in His peace & give us His strength for His work that has yet to be accomplished in our lives. We lift up in prayer those who are sick or suffering at this time.

A Servant of the Lord,
Rev. Mr. Justin McMenemy, Chaplain
USS MADDUX DESTROYER ASSOCIATION
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E-Mail: JMcMe1528@aol.com

PRAY FOR THOSE DECEASED SINCE OUR LAST "HOWGOESIT"

Gene Curless, Bob Nussmaum, Bill Ludlum, Clyde Carroll,
George Oard "Pappy", and Robert Sherrod.

May our God of Mercy welcome them home.

May they rest in peace

Amen