

The DALY NEWS 2010

Spring EDITION



A Semi - annual publication dedicated to the memory of the those who served aboard the USS Daly DD 519

LOOKING BACK

Navy Cross Citation Awarded to Admiral Visser for role in "Battle of Surigao Straits"



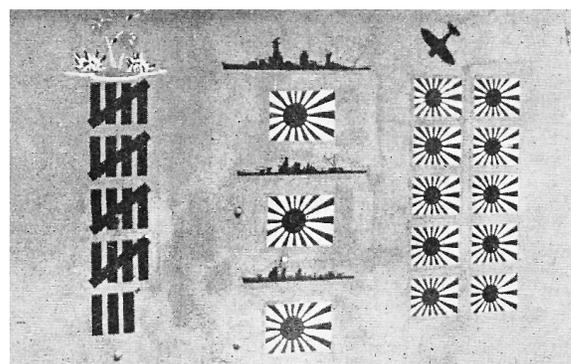
Admiral Visser
Commanding Officer
USS Daly DD519
1943 ~ 1944

In the 2009 Fall Edition of the Daly News, the feature article, "My Memories of the USS Daly" by Charles Dunn, included his personal experience during the Battle of Surigao Straits on October 25, 1944. This battle brought together the last great conflict of battleships in naval history. During the course of this battle the Daly along with other destroyers in the squadron, launched a torpedo attack on the main Japanese force and was responsible for three torpedo hits that damaged the battleship Yamashiro to the extent that it became vulnerable to the direct fire of larger naval guns of the US Forces and was eventually sunk.

This year will mark the 66th anniversary of that decisive battle fought by the gallant crew of the Daly. Admiral Visser, the commanding officer was later awarded the Navy Cross, our nation's second highest award for his fighting spirit in leading the Daly into battle.

"For Extraordinary heroism as Commanding Officer of the USS Daly in action against major units of the Japanese Fleet during the battle of Surigao Strait, October 1944. When the large enemy task force consisting of battleships, cruisers and destroyers was discovered coming through the Surigao Strait, the Captain of the USS Daly vigorously took his ship into action. Skillfully maneuvering in the congested seaway while directing the firing of his guns and torpedo batteries, he scored numerous hits on the powerful enemy ships which resulted in the enemy's virtual destruction. By his gallant fighting spirit the Captain of the Daly contributed to the great victory achieved by our forces in his historic engagement, and his fortunate and unwavering devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

S. James Forrestal (Secretary of the Navy)



The Daly's WWII scorecard posted on the bridge.

Man the Torpedoes! All Ahead Full!

This description of the torpedo attack was taken directly from the USS Daly Cruise Book published in 1946 after the Daly was retired from the fleet.

Shortly after sunset, on October 24, 1944 the Daly was relieved from her fire-support duties to rejoin the US Naval Forces in the Leyte Gulf. This group proceeded to the western entrance of Surigao Bay to intercept a strong Japanese surface force reported approaching the southern entrance to the strait.

The enemy was estimated to have three battleships, four heavy cruisers, four light cruisers, and ten destroyers.

During the night, US motor torpedo boats kept track of the enemy and advised the US Naval Force of their position. The Daly was part of this force.

At 0248 hours the Daly's surface radar contacted the enemy force, and at 0321 the 519 in company of two other destroyers of Des Ron 24 commenced a high speed attack on the heavy units of the enemy ships.

The Daly crew, who were already at general quarters, were eager to see what their destroyer could do in spite of the tremendous odds they were facing.

The enemy, alerted to the approaching destroyers, made an attempt to illuminate the area. Their big guns trained on the US Destroyers, laid down a heavy barrage but it failed to stop the advancing squadron. Not one US ship was severely damaged.

Just before the Daly was in range to launch a half salvo of torpedoes at the main body, two enemy torpedoes buzzed by, not more than 50 yards ahead of the bow.

The attack continued with the Daly doing 30 knots, as the ship steamed into the most dangerous position they had ever faced. But the crew, with their hearts in their throats, were ready to carry through. A spread of five torpedoes were launched at an enemy battleship. After the torpedoes ran their course, the men that were stationed topside during the battle, noted three tremendous explosions in succession as three of the well placed torpedoes found their target.

This was just the beginning for the Daly. A second attack was made using just the 5-inch 38 guns, hurling salvo after salvo into the enemy ships. First hit was an enemy destroyer, taking several hits. Then with guns blazing, the Daly hurled repeated salvos into a Japanese heavy cruiser, completely catching her by surprise.

Every salvo fired by the Daly ripped up the steel decks, exploding her ammo magazines causing the ship to burn furiously, crippling the ship and leaving her powerless in the water.

During the course of the battle the Daly guns had crippled a heavy enemy cruiser, a second large vessel and a destroyer. Her torpedoes did enough damage to the battleship that it became a target for the heavier US guns to finish it off. It was later learned that the battleship was the Yamashiro, which eventually sank.

October 29, 1944, the captain announced to the crew of the Daly that the ship was going to return to the states for a much needed rest and overhaul on the west coast. There were cheers from everyone.

Before setting sail, Captain Visser relinquished his duties to Commander Richard Bradley Jr. USN. With a new skipper in command, the Daly headed home.

Actual wording of message passed on to crew, taken from Navy files

*In a communique from Commander Destroyer Squadron Twenty Four on October 31, 1944;
"In my preliminary report you were credited with three hits on a battleship. A job well done by you all".*

This is exclusive of other credits to the Daly during the Battle of Surigao Strait. Officially the ship claims:

Three torpedo hits on enemy battleship, causing it to slow and making impossible its escape from the guns of our cruisers and battleships.

Seriously damaged and set afire one heavy cruiser making impossible its escape from the guns of our cruisers and battleships.

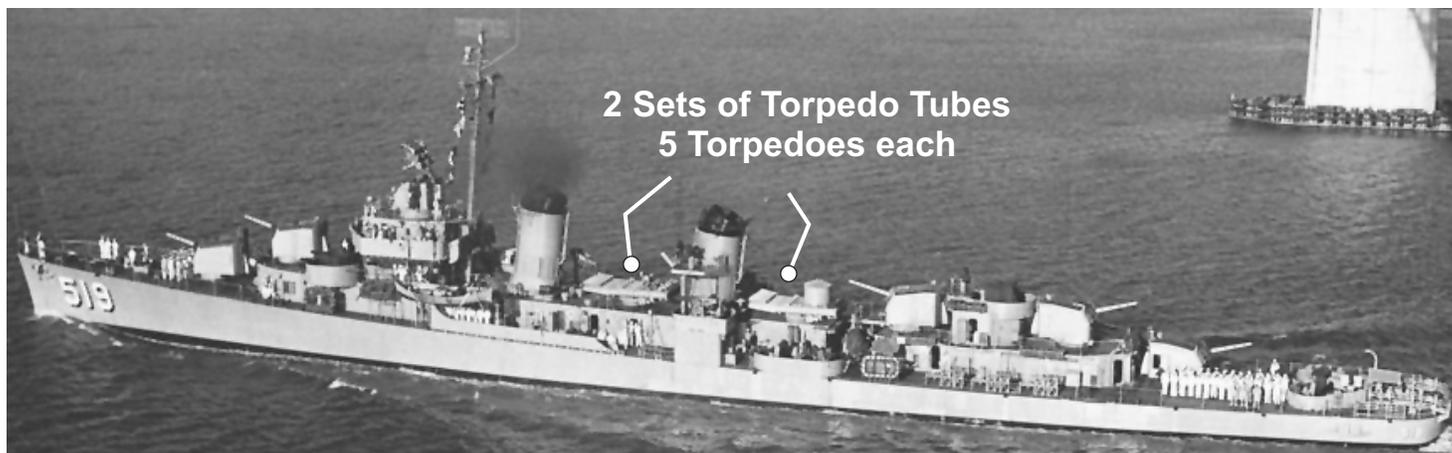
Hit and damaged one heavy ship.

Hit and damaged one destroyer.

A.E. D'Ambly, Jr. LT USNR Executive Officer



Practice launch of MK 15 torpedo



The Daly, a Fletcher class destroyer of 2100 tons, carried five Mark 15 Torpedoes in two separate tube mounts on either side of the two stacks on the 01 deck. This photo was taken in August of 1951 after the Daly had completed it's initial shakedown cruise. She was re-comissioned in July 1951 after several months of extensive yard work in Charleston, SC, Naval Shipyard where the ship had been in mothballs since 1946..

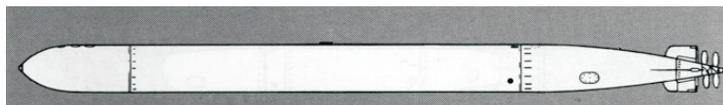
Some interesting technical notes about Torpedo Warfare by TMC Javier Granados of Portland, Oregon who served on the Daly 1958 to 1960

When a destroyer makes a torpedo attack, it has to get in position fast to launch the “fish” (torpedoes), then, get out just as quickly. In torpedo school we were trained to be able to launch a spread of five torpedoes within 30 seconds. The reason is, in a naval gun battle when a ship is straddled by enemy fire, one round over and one round under, the third round is usually on target. The objective is to get the fish in the water before an enemy round finds it's target.

When firing a spread of torpedoes from a quintuple torpedo mount, any number of torpedoes can be selected from 1 to 5. In a spread, the torpedoes are launched in sequence one after another, number 5 being the first to launch. Each fish has a separate gyro setting that controls the torpedoes heading, relative to the ship and adjacent torpedoes. Once they are in the water they fan out much like spreading the fingers on your hand, in order to cover as wide an area of the target as possible. This compensates for any course change by the enemy target to evade the torpedoes. The size of the spread between each fish is determined by the size of the target ship, distance to the target, and speed. For instance a battleship would require a wider spread then a smaller ship such as a cruiser or destroyer however, torpedoes are rarely fired at destroyers because cannon fire can be much more effective. Smaller craft are also much more maneuverable and can change course more quickly, making them more difficult a target to track.



A single MK 15 torpedo being launched from a 4 tube mount during an attack drill.
 Specifications: 24 ft in length, weight 2,840 lbs., diameter 21 inches.
 Max. Range/Speed: 6,000 yards at 45 knots
 Guidance System: Gyroscope
 Warhead: 825 lbs of explosives



MAIL CALL



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Comments:
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In the past month I have received two packages of mail from Charles A. Fast, who served on the Daly from 1944 until his discharge in 1946. The content proved to be very interesting. It included copies of the ship's log from the time he arrived aboard the Daly until the ship returned to the states after the Japanese surrender. He also sent me a bound copy of the Daly Cruise Book from the WWII period. The photos in this book are highly prized as there are so few and could only be taken by an assigned officer. No other cameras were allowed on board.

I took the liberty of copying some of the photos from the book into my files to use on the Daly web page and in stories published in the Daly News. I have also had requests from other readers trying to find a better photo of a parent, grandfather or uncle who had served on the ship and appeared to be in one of the group photos. Unfortunately many of the photos are of poor quality, having been printed with a coarse screen. They do not readily lend themselves to good reproduction. Even with the use of a computer enhancing program, some of the photos cannot yield the detail required for good quality.



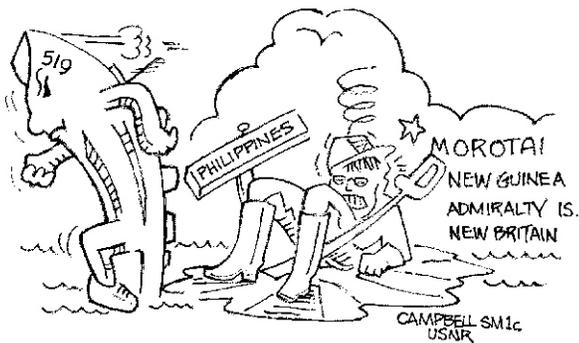
Above; Charlie recently visited a destroyer similar to the Daly that is now a ship museum. He was photographed in the forward engine room that was once his duty station while on board the Daly.

Charlie was drafted into the Navy, May 23, 1944 while living in Toledo, Ohio. He took boot camp training at the Great Lakes. From there he was shipped to Shoemaker, CA and after sometime boarded the USS General Houze, (APA 134) and sailed for the Phillipines. The ship crossed the Equator and Charlie became a "Shellback" after the initiation ceremony. He reached the Admiralty Islands and on September 8, 1944, and was assigned to the USS Daly.

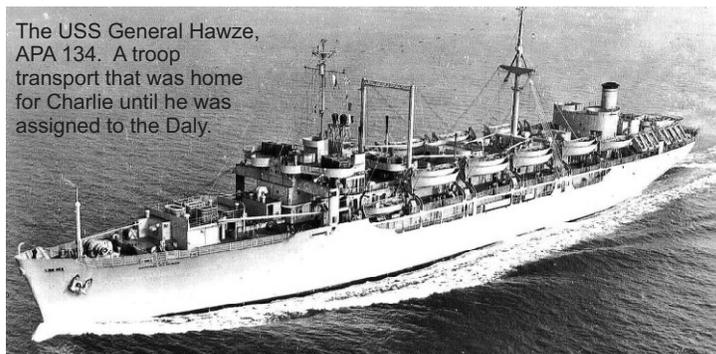
He returned to the states after the war and sailed through the Panama Canal to Charleston, SC. He was discharged 16 March, 1946 in Toledo, Ohio.



USS Daly DD519 ~ 1942

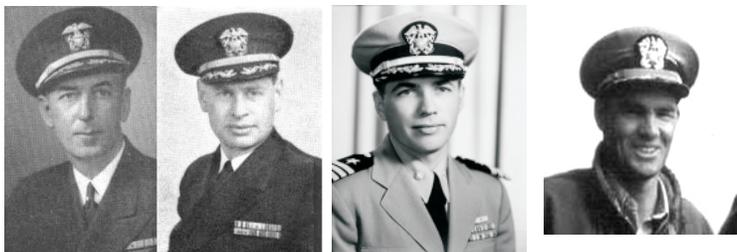


There are drawings and cartoons as shown above posted throughout the WWII cruise book. They obviously relate to the fighting spirit of the Daly. The artist is noted as Lawrence Campbell, SM1c USNR, in the crew listing. Unfortunately I have no further information of his whereabouts.



The USS General Hawze, APA 134. A troop transport that was home for Charlie until he was assigned to the Daly.

Captains of the USS Daly DD519



Visser
Bradley
1943 - 1946

Thatcher
1951-52

Johnson
1953 - 54



A tribute to
a few of our
past shipmates



1942 Plank Owners



Lest We
Forget

