



# USS WADDELL (DDG 24) MEMORIES FROM FEBRUARY, 1966

*A collection of shipmates memories*

Reporting the actions of Search And Rescue (SAR) Task Unit 77.0.1, in the Tonkin Gulf during the Viet Nam Conflict, early in February, 1966.

## Prolog

My name is Terry Trisel, LCDR, USNR, retired. I had the honor serving aboard the USS Waddell (DDG 24) during the Viet Nam conflict. I reported aboard for duty as the Damage Control Assistant in October, 1965. When released from active duty in October, 1966, I was the Engineering Officer, supervising hull repairs, with the ship in Dry Dock. Recent events have roused 44 year-old memories in me and some of my shipmates. These memories should be preserved and shared. This document will piece together a story based on the memories of my shipmates and documents that they have provided. It is limited to one week of action in February beginning on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day, in 1966. This was a very active week.

The best way to explain life aboard a war ship in a war zone is to think about a lot of 24/7 work, almost no social time, and very little sleep. This results from being on port and starboard watches (4 hours on and 4 hours off), at General Quarter stations almost daily, and getting supplies, fuel, food, mail, and ammo at night. The main factor why this seemed more like hard work instead of fighting a war was the fact that Waddell was always several miles offshore and we did not have to come face to face with the Viet Cong. There were incidents during the first week in February that reminded us that there was an enemy.



USS Brinkley Bass



USS Waddell

### **February 3, 1966**

The day after arriving on station, the Waddell and the USS Brinkley Bass (DD 887) were working together as Task Unit 77.0.1, South SEARCH AND RESCUE (SAR) Station, about five nautical miles east of Ngoc Lam, North Vietnam, just north of the 19<sup>th</sup> parallel.

As on previous SAR duty we operated with a number of Helicopters from carriers and land bases. The choppers on this day were from the carrier USS Ranger. We had been warned that big shore batteries in North Viet Nam were very active and we should be ready to engage if ever called upon to get close to the shoreline.

## **Flint River 605 Check-Six.com**

On February 3rd, 1966, only a little over a month after his arrival on the USS KITTY HAWK (CVA 63), LT Gerald L. Coffee and his navigator, Lt. Robert T. Hanson (assigned the call sign "Flint River 605") were on an intelligence gathering mission against a heavily defended portion of North Vietnam. After their first photo run of their target, they radioed that they were going to overfly it one more time.



At 1313 local time, their aircraft, a RA-5C, Naval Bureau #151625, was hit by enemy fire. The primary damage, a hydraulic system failure, caused Coffee to lose control of the plane, and it spun out of control. It was observed to explode as it hit the water near the coast of North Vietnam, east of Nghe An Province, near Cap Bouton. No parachutes were seen, but the broadcast from an emergency survival radio beeper was heard by an escorting aircraft, call sign "Black Lion 112", and based on this information, a Search-And-Rescue (SAR) effort began in what the North Vietnamese later called "The Battle of Quynh Luu".

## **Noon, February 3, 1966**

About noon, both destroyers received a call that a pilot was in the water, very close to the borders of China and North Viet Nam. The Bass was south of the area, Waddell to the north, when the call came in. Choppers were called and both ships proceeded at 'Full Speed' toward the downed pilot. Upon arrival, the pilot was seen alive and afloat in the water, very close to a harbor, next to the Red China border. He was only about 800 yards from the shore, and he was in very dangerous waters. The assigned helicopter was delayed some minutes in arriving.



The very big guns from above and behind the harbor and inland on the mountain side opened fire on Bass and Waddell. Two large Chinese Junks approached the pilot, one from the north and one from the south. Bass and Waddell each began to return fire on the big guns and also fired upon the junks. The chopper arrived and was about to recover the pilot, but as the cable was lowered toward the pilot; the chopper took a direct hit in the middle of the fuselage. The pilot of the chopper reported that his technician was hit and that he must retreat because his ride was falling apart. He quickly pulled back and headed to sea. A report was received that

the chopper fell about 5 miles to the west and the pilot and co-pilot were rescued by our second 'SAR' chopper.

The Bass got a hit on one of the junks; it flamed out, and later sank. The second chopper became involved in the rescue of the crew of the downed chopper and they could not respond immediately to our operation. As both ships were dealing with shore batteries and self-defense from those big guns, the second junk, coming from the south, pulled the pilot aboard. He was captured, alive. After about 15 minutes of trading fire with shore batteries, the Task Force Commander decided it was time to retreat to safer waters. The Bass fell into column behind the Waddell, and both commenced zigzag maneuvers. The big guns were becoming more accurate as we came into their best range. They were most effective as we reached 11 miles at sea. After moving out of their range and before losing sight of the harbor, we could see some of the total of 33 NAVY AND AIR FORCE aircraft dropping bombs on the gun emplacements and on the back side of the harbor.

This marked the first time that shore bombardment by U.S. Navy ships had taken place in North Vietnam. *For more info about the downed aircraft and its crew, read APPENDIX 1.*

## **February 4, 1966**

Daylight hours were used to continue operating with choppers in a number of 'SAR' missions. At about 1900, Waddell and Bass headed southeast to rendezvous with the USS Navasota (AO 106) for refueling.

### **CIC LOG ENTRIES USS WADDELL (DDG 24) February 4, 1966**

2155 Maneuvering to take standby station on USS Navasota (AD 106)

2214 Base course is 315<sup>0</sup> (T); Base speed is 12kts, first line on deck. Commenced personnel transfer on amidships highline.

2254 All lines clear.

2310 On lifeguard station, secured the refueling detail.

2321 c/s 12kts, USS England (DLG 22) alongside to port of Navasota; highline of personnel commenced.

2337 Personnel transfer completed, USS England (DLG 22) clear.

## **Formal Board of Investigation**

2330 Station assignments in the replenishment formation were as follows: ENGLAND alongside NAVASOTA to port, BRINKLEY BASS 2000 yards ahead of NAVASOTA and WADDELL as lifeguard 1000 yards astern of NAVASOTA.

2335 COMDESDIV 132 made the following signal to WADDELL and BRINKLEY BASS: "Execute to follow, Form 1, Juliet Papa 4 Bravo Course 277, Speed 20."

2338 COMDESDIV 132 executed his Form 1 signal.

Upon execution of the Form 1 signal WADDELL came to base course 277°T, speed 20 knots, and assumed formation guide.

Upon execution of the Form 1 signal BRINKLEY BASS commenced a standard rudder turn to the left to 215°T at 12 knots, proceeding to her assigned station 1000 yards astern of WADDELL.

2340 COMDESDIV 132 executed a signal by the immediate execute method to change formation speed to 25 knots.

Upon execution of the speed 25 signal both WADDELL and BRINKLEY BASS increased speed to 25 knots.

Shortly after execution of the speed signal the conning officer in BRINKLEY BASS ordered left standard rudder, new course 155°T.

## **CIC LOG ENTRIES USS WADDELL (DDG 24)**

2341 Brinkley Bass approaching on collision course, bearing 304.5°T, successive bearings showed 10° of right bearing drift.

2342 Commanding Officer assumed position of conning officer.

2344 Left full rudder, left hard rudder, collision alarm sounded. Rudder shifted to right hard. Collision sustained starboard side amidships.

2349 All engines ahead 1/3rd, c/c 030<sup>0</sup> T, Steering control lost on the Bridge, after steering assumed control.

2352 All engines stopped. Set General Quarters.

2353 General damage sustained: 4 foot by 5 foot hole, frame 107-127, plus some structural damage. No personnel casualties. Steering control regained on the bridge.

### **LT David Breithaupt (USS Waddell)**



Dave Breithaupt

After we completed refueling, I relieved LT Reid Pendleton as OOD. After the Bass broke away from refueling, the Bass was ordered to take a position astern of Waddell. I took a position standing on the starboard wing and continued to monitor Bass's bearing. As it became clear to me that the bearing was not changing, I informed the Captain, who was on the wing as well. We called Brinkley Bass, inquiring as to their intentions, and received no response. I said to the Captain that I was going to come left now to avoid a collision, even though Waddell was supposed to maintain

course and speed. The Captain said no, I'll take the Conn. I think he was certain that the Brinkley Bass would maneuver, assuming that their Captain would be on deck. When we were finally in extremis, the Captain then made a very slick move in order to have the Bass hit the Waddell rather than the Waddell's bow making first contact with the BB. Since the Waddell was new construction, its steel was of a material to withstand some impact whereas the Bass could have suffered even greater damage than did occur. The Captain probably saved a lot of lives with that maneuver.

### **LTjg Terry Trisel (USS Waddell)**



Terry Trisel

When our refueling was complete, I was relieved as JOOD and found my bunk for some needed sleep only to be awakened by the collision alarm. While putting my shirt and pants on, I felt Waddell shudder as the collision occurred. As I left for my battle station I took a quick peek out at the starboard main deck and saw nearly everything had been ripped off.

After reporting to the bridge that the hull was intact, with no leaks, I left DC Central to inspect the starboard hull, below decks. There were places where the frames were bent, but none were broken. All of the hull plate welds were holding.

Topsides on the main deck was another story, there was a lot of damage. Life lines, and davits had been ripped off and the aluminum, main deck, bulkhead amidships was crumpled. At the crew's mess scullery, the bulkhead was missing.

Our Damage Control teams worked through the night and well into the next day making repairs to restore facilities and make us weather tight again.

### **RD3 James D. Caldron (USS Waddell)**



I spent most of my time in the Combat Information Center (CIC), which is home to the Radarman at sea. I was on the 2000-2400 watch the evening of the 4<sup>th</sup>.

The days and nights for that time of year were more than you could expect. The winds were unusually strong, but the skies had been clear and the temperature was in the mid 80's. It was almost like being off the coast of southern California. The Gulf waters were a little choppy, but to sailors used to riding a tin can, these waters were calm.

We had picked the Navasota up on surface radar earlier and were starting to close. I had been relieved off watch by a fellow Radarman early. About 2340 I left CIC and went to our berthing compartment. I had planned on getting as much sack time as possible because we were on port and starboard watches. My head had just tilted back when the intercom cracked and a hurried voice yelled, "STAND BY FOR COLLISION, STARBOARD", and then immediately, General Quarters was sounded. It did not take long to reach the ladder to the hatch overhead, exiting our berthing compartment. I believe all of us in the compartment reached the ladder at the same time. The Damage Control people had just battened it down solid. They did their job too well for this sailor.

I felt the Brinkley Bass hit us starboard side and felt the ship shutter as the Bass dragged down our side. There were about ten or fifteen sailors in the compartment, located just below the 01 level, at water line. There was not a thing we could do at that moment but wait and for me at least, hope that I would not hear any running water. There was no panic among the group. Nothing was said at the time that I can remember. I do know that I was thinking that if my *time* had come, I sure did not want to go this way. I would venture to guess that all of us in that compartment that night had, for lack of a better word, some pretty dumb thoughts running through our heads. To our relief the Damage Control party opened the hatch about fifteen or twenty minutes later and the first thing I remember doing was going topside and breathing lots of fresh air as I headed for CIC.

### **FT2 John Cherriman (USS Waddell)**

I was on the mess deck having MIDRATS, when the announcement came, "STANDBY FOR COLLISION STARBOARD SIDE". Those on the mess deck all moved in unison to the port side. I don't know why, but I felt a little amused at this. Then the thought of being amidships and if

this ship sinks, I am in big trouble. I don't have my life preserver with me! (I can't swim very well).

### **FTG2 William Stover (USS Brinkley Bass)**



Smokey Stover

I was on watch in the gun fire director, just to be relieved for the mid-watch by another Fire Control Technician. I had on a headset which allowed communications with the bridge. I heard the commands to cut speed to 2/3<sup>rd</sup> and to bring the ship to the left to start a column maneuver. The captain was apparently in his sea cabin just behind the bridge.

A lookout (Seaman) yelled that we were on a collision course. Others were screaming. The Captain heard the noise and came running onto the bridge. He ran to the wing hatch and immediately began to take action. He screamed very loudly a series of commands. He yelled, 'This is the Captain, I have the Conn, Right Full Rudder, All Emergency Back, sound the Collision Alarm, and brace for shock. At this same time, my watch relief had just climbed upon the top of the director. The hatches on the top of the director were open. He put his head inside and calmly told us that we were going to collide with the Waddell. I stood and looked out of my hatch and then braced for shock.

I watched in amazement as the Bass collided with Waddell. We hit at mid-ships. The Bass rode up and down as the collision was in progress. A rooster tail of sparks 100 feet high emanated from between the Bass and Waddell. As the Bass pulled away from Waddell, I could see light coming from the holes just ripped into the hull of Waddell. The Bass drifted to a stop and then began to sink in the bow area.

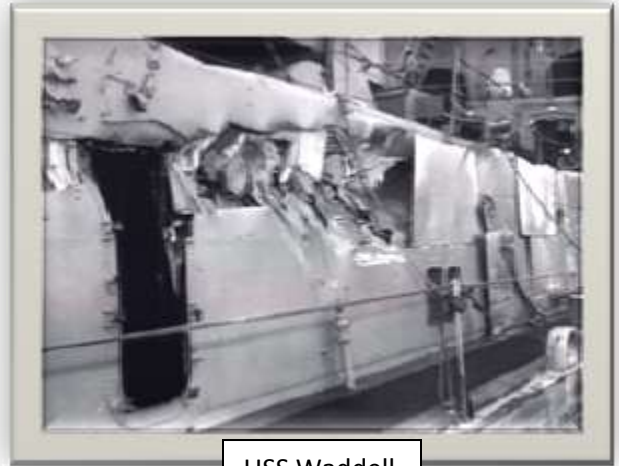
The ship's crew was quick to respond. Within a few minutes we heard that there was no loss of life. Everyone brought mattresses, wood and tools including pumps. Within a few minutes the decision was made to ask for assistance because we were losing the battle with inflow of water. We had completely destroyed 40 feet of the bow. The gash was about 20 feet high. Although most of the damage which provided holes and allowed inflow of water was above the water line, water was coming in from the ship's bobbing in a heavy sea state. The USS Navasota responded to our call. They put a big boat in the water with timbers, pumps, tools, other materials and a Damage Control Team of 16 Seamen, led by LT James Henry Breem. Together with our crew this Damage Control Team fought water inflow through the night. By morning they had saved the ship. The Bass was afloat.

### **February 5, 1966**

**RD3 James D. Caldron (USS Waddell)** We were lying to, just after midnight on the 5<sup>th</sup>, while the damage was being assessed, and to check for casualties. The Ship turned on Break Down



USS Wadell



USS Waddell

lights and we were mustered on station. There were no injuries and no personnel missing. The C.O. of the USS England (DLG 22), relieved us as TU 77.0.1, and departed the area. The report from the Bass was one shoulder injury to her crew. At 0435, the Break Down lights were turned off and Navigation lights were turned on.

**FTG2 William Stover (USS Brinkley Bass)** A chopper, from the USS Ranger, arrived about 0900, to ferry the Damage Control Team from the Navasota. The last of the personnel to be lifted onto the apron of the chopper was the team's Chief Petty Officer. Disaster struck again, just when the Chief was being brought on board the chopper. The chopper lost stability, turned at least 180 degrees and flipped upside down. In the process, I stood in amazement as I helplessly watched while the Chief fell from the chopper as it flipped. The chopper hit the water, exactly on the Chief, about 10 feet from the fantail of the Bass. I slide down the ladder to the deck below and again fixed my sight on the chopper. Personnel on the fantail and the main deck and our own dash flight deck were throwing life jackets and life rings into the



USS Brinkley Bass



USS Brinkley Bass

water. I found life rings where I was, and heaved them into the water. The sea state was high and the Bass was basically dead in the water. The Bass and these men began to drift apart. They were grabbing life jackets and life rings which would support them if they remained in the water for a prolonged period.

### **RD3 James D. Caldron (USS Waddell)**

Three sailors *were* missing and were not recovered. The Waddell, still able to move about freely even with the damage, directed her efforts into closing on the downed helo to pick up the survivors. We closed to within 100 yards of the helo, and were called off from the rescue. A few minutes later, a second helo from the Ranger arrived to pick up the survivors. We were close enough to the downed helo to yell at the sailors setting on the helo that was upside down in the water. We could have picked these sailors out of the water at that time, and to this day I know those sailors wondered why we went past them and turned away. We tried to tell them that another helo was in route, but I do not think they could hear us. All of this took place between 0900 and 0930 that morning of the 5th. For more on the missing sailors, read APPENDIX 2.

What transpired from 1235 to 1250 the afternoon of the 5<sup>th</sup> is why, in describing events such as this to anyone but servicemen, seems unbelievable? Another helo, from the USS Ranger, ferrying personnel from the Navasota to the Waddell and the Bass, crashed into the sea. The cause of the crash was tail rotor failure. Among the passengers on the helo were five sailors from the crash earlier in the day. A helo from the USS England picked up all personnel from this downed helo.

The Waddell headed to Subic Bay, PI, late in the evening of the 5<sup>th</sup>, along with the USS Navasota. The Waddell remained in the Naval Repair Facilities, Subic Bay, until the 24<sup>th</sup> of February, 1966, and headed back to Vietnam and Naval Gun Fire Support missions in the Vung Tau area with the USS Topeka (CLG 8).



### **FTG2 William Stover (USS Brinkley Bass)**

The Bass pulled into Da Nang, South Viet Nam the next day. Navy UDT guys went down and checked out damage below the water line. They welded chain in strategic places and advised the Captain to proceed to the Philippine Islands at 5 knots. We proceeded to Subic Bay, Philippine Islands arriving sometime on February 7, 1966.

After receiving her temporary bow in Subic Bay for the trip back to the States.

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## APPENDIX 1

Name: LT Gerald Leonard "Jerry" Coffee, USN

Unit: Reconnaissance Squadron 13, USS KITTY HAWK

Both LT Coffee, who had endured a broken right arm & dislocated elbow, and Hanson successfully ejected and parachuted into the gulf. Several vessels were put out from the shore to capture the crewmen. Coffee was picked up by militiamen in one of the boats, the same Vietnamese who, moments before, had nearly killed him by firing a barrage of bullets into the water. He was now a Prisoner of War (POW).

LT Coffee recalled that he had seen his navigator alive in the water about 12 meters away and thought that he had been picked up in one of the other boats. Coffee also reported that, shortly after his capture, a guard indicated by gestures that LT Hanson was dead and had been buried on the beach. Coffee was shown his identification card.

On February 12, 1973, Lt. Coffee was part of the first group of Prisoners of War released as a part of "Operation Homecoming" - the first flight of 40 U.S. prisoners of war left Hanoi in a C-141A. He had been held in captivity for 2,566 days.



On January 21st, 1974, Hanson, who had been promoted to Lieutenant Commander while his status was "Missing in Action," was legally declared dead. On November 3rd, 1988, the Vietnamese, who had previously denied knowledge of LT Hanson, "discovered" and returned his remains to American authorities, who positively identified them as Hanson's on February 17th, 1989. His name appears on Panel 04E, line 135, of the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington DC.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### A Note from The Virtual Wall:

While the SH-3 helicopter was designed and equipped for antisubmarine warfare, it was commonly used for inter-ship transportation among the 7th Fleet ships operating in the Tonkin Gulf and South China Sea areas. The USS NAVASOTA (AO-106) was a fleet oiler and replenished the warships with fuel oil, aviation gasoline, and jet fuel.

During operations offshore Vietnam, three NAVASOTA crewmen were lost at sea when the SH-3A (Bu. No. 149926) they were aboard, from the USS RANGER (CVA-61), went down. As with most at-sea losses, their remains could not be recovered. The three men were:

- Chief Shipfitter Bernard J. Sparenberg, Baltimore, MD
- Shipfitter First Class Glenn E. Asmussen, Washington D.C.
- Shipfitter Second Class Dan D. McConnaugehay, Artesia, CA

## APPENDIX 3

[TET, what could have been !!]

USS WADDEL (DDG-24)  
FPO San Francisco 96601

### PLAN OF THE DAY

5 FEBRUARY 1966, SATURDAY

OOD (Condition III)

0800-1200 LTJG BREITHAUPT  
1200-1600 LTJG BATCHELDER  
1600-2000 LTJG PENDLETON  
2000-2400 LTJG BREITHAUPT  
0000-0400 LTJG BATCHELDER  
0400-0800 LTJG PENDLETON

Duty Division – DECK/GUN  
Working Uniform – Dungarees  
Duty MAA – JONES, IC2

Sunrise –0730  
Sunset – 1851

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### DAILY ROUTINE EXCEPT AS FOLLOWS:

0730 Stow light lock curtains  
0815 Air Controllers and Designated Officers briefing in the Wardroom  
1000 Officers lecture in the Wardroom. Division Petty Officers pick up early mess passes for Noon meal  
1330 Abandon Ship Drill. Do not provide

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### NOTES:

1. Don't forget the little Red box on the Mess Deck. Get all those cruise book pictures, negatives, Cartoons, poems or other items you think may be of interest (and printable). We need material so the initial cruise layout can be completed. Remember, we're getting closer then you realize, to the end of cruise time.

Subscriptions for the cruise book will be on sale on the Mess Decks payday. \$1.00 deposit will be accepted and the maximum cost is not to be more than \$2.50 total, per man. Let's go this is the 1<sup>st</sup> WADDELL cruise book.

2. The following message was received from COMSEVENTHFLT concerning Thursday's SAR incident: "I'm extremely proud of your initiative in attempting to save the life of RA5 crewmen in face of heavy opposition".

3. The following message concerning the SAR incident was also received: "By your aggressive action in today's RA5C SAR effort you've shown that destroyer spirit which gets on with the job regardless of odds. TF 77 airmen feel confidence in your presence in the Gulf when the chips are down. Well Done." RADM J. R. REEDY.

4. A Barbecue will be held on the fantail (weather and operations permitting) on Sunday beginning at 1600. GAGNON'S Gourmets will be on board to provide Epicurean delights that are bound to please the most discriminating tastes. On the entertainment side we will feature at great expense live? From a smashing engagement at the Black Rose in Sasebo, none other than Uncle Fred and his Freeloaders. The price is right! (Free). So don't make any liberty plans for Sunday, come to the cookout!

J. P. KVEDERIS  
LCDR USN

## APPENDIX 4

USS WADDELL (DDG-24)  
FPO San Francisco 96601

8 April 1966

Dear Families and Friends of WADDELL,

As Commanding Officer of this Ship and her seasoned crew it is my pleasure to write to you in an attempt to bring you up to date on events aboard WADDELL since the last Family Gram of 1 December 1965.

One of the most pleasant tasks of my naval career was to assume command of WADDELL, the finest ship in the Navy. I reported aboard and relieved CDR C. J. BOYD in Hong Kong Harbor on 25 January 1966. Almost immediately I could sense the high morale and dedication to duty that is prevalent throughout the ship. The destroyer men in WADDELL can be proud of our fine ship and you can be justly proud of your men who are aboard.

Since last December the time has passed quickly. We were called upon to perform tasks that required many long hours of hard work. However, we did not mind the workload because the tasks were interesting and, most of all, significant to the war effort in Vietnam. Yes, the time did pass rather quickly: all except that is, with the last several days in transit back to Long Beach. Knowing our job was done and that many loved ones were waiting at home made those last days drag out to where minutes seemed like hours. But today we are back in Long Beach after a six and a half-month absence. Today many families are reunited with loved ones who were missed for so long. For others whose families, unfortunately, are not close enough to welcome us home, the wait will be a little longer. However, through a very liberal leave schedule all will have the opportunity to visit with their families soon. The sacrifice of separation is not without its rewards. We have to make our country safe from the ravishing's of war and we have helped other not so fortunate people fight for freedom and human dignity. There is always much fulfillment in knowing that an unpleasant job has been well done.

The whole month of December and a few days in January were spent deep in the Tonkin Gulf on special operations. Unfortunately, the details of these operations cannot be given. I can say, however, that the mission was vital to the war effort and required all the skill and ingenuity the men of WADDELL could muster.

During the Christmas Holiday the crew tried to capture some of the Yuletide spirit by decorating the ship, caroling, and having a big Christmas Day dinner. Three Christmas trees and the trimmings were brought aboard and stowed prior to departure from Long Beach. These were brought out and set up as well as many beautiful displays that were ingenuously designed by various Divisions. Everything imaginable from electron tubes to pipe cleaners were used in concocting these displays. Each was a work of art, and the committee for determining the best display really had their work cut out for them.

In December, many gifts of cookies and candy were received on board from individuals and groups who simply wanted us to know that they cared about us and our welfare. Needless to say this had a profound effect on the whole crew. Where names and addresses were included, many of the crewmen replied with letters of sincere appreciation.

During the month of January, WADDELL was off the line, so to speak, and most of the time was spent in upkeep, and rest and recreation (usually referred to as R & R). The ports visited were Sasebo, Japan and Hong Kong, BCC. No doubt most of you will be receiving souvenirs from these very interesting places.

Towards the end of January it was time to get back on the line. After a short visit to Da Nang, Vietnam, WADDELL proceeded back to station in the Tonkin Gulf.

It was in the Gulf of Tonkin that WADDELL sustained extensive damage in a night collision with the USS BRINKLEY BASS on the 4<sup>th</sup> of February 1966. WADDELL's repairs were rushed to completion by the crew and the Ship Repair Facility in Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines in an extremely short time of 15 days. Once again WADDELL crewman showed the stuff they were made of. When the chips were down they became more determined than ever to get the job done and to get back on the line where our services were needed. Upon completion of repairs WADDELL was then assigned support duty near the entrance to the Saigon River. While on station, WADDELL fired over 2100 rounds of five inch ammunition amounting to well over 70 tons of explosives at Viet Cong targets which included assembly areas, supply dumps and enemy structures. Spotters consistently reported "Extremely accurate long range fire" and "Beautiful: Right on the money".

Upon completion of Naval Gunfire Support duty WADDELL returned to Subic Bay, R. P. for a brief upkeep period. In Subic Bay, Destroyer Division 132 was reunited and sailed together for Long Beach via Guam, Midway and Pearl Harbor.

Since departing Long Beach, last September, WADDELL has steamed a distance equivalent to 2 times around the world and has burned nearly three million gallons of fuel oil. Because we spent a very large percentage of our time at sea far from the services of a port, we were required to undertake 37 underway replenishments which were supplied by U. S. Navy auxiliary ships that provided fuel, food, mail and material. We have stopped at many interesting ports of the world, having visited Hawaii, Republic of the Philippines, Republic of Vietnam, Japan, Okinawa, Hong Kong, Guam and Midway.

In the foreseeable future, at sea periods will be at a bare minimum. From now until about the first week in May, WADDELL will be in a leave and upkeep period including tender (repair Ship) availability. There will be a couple of weeks of local at sea training operations and toward the last week in May WADDELL will enter the Long Beach Naval Shipyard for permanent repairs of the collision damage.

Now that we are back in Long Beach, I am looking forward to the pleasure of meeting many of you personally. You are not only welcome but urged to visit on board when you can. The coffee is always on and there is a friendly cup waiting for you.

Sincerely,

G. J. WALKER  
CDR, USN  
Commanding