

# USS MC CAFFERY DD/DDE-860

## SHIPMATES ASSOCIATION FALL 2019



**From The Editor:** Hello shipmates, spouse's and friends of the McCaffery. Welcome back.

In the previous issue I inserted cartoons from a well know author and cartoonist regarding Military life. I have been reminded that the items where probably copy-righted, and they are. I followed up with an E mail to the owner, Mr. Jeff Bacon of Broadside Blog , who graciously authorized The Association to use his material Enjoy !

If you make a contribution to the Newsletter, make the checks payable to James Bell The McCaffery Association may be noted in the memo. James Bell MM 2 60-63

### President's Message:

Hello McCaffery Shipmates,

I attended the Tin Can Sailors reunion in Jacksonville FL 22-26 September to check it out, see how well TCS runs their reunions, and to see if it is in the best interest of our Association to join up with them. The answer is Yes. The reunion, held in the Double Tree Hilton in downtown JAX, was very well organized, with excellent accommodations, good food, and reasonably priced optional tours. Tours included NAS JAX, NS MPT, St Augustine, a bus tour of JAX, and 3 river cruises. There were 346 Tin Can Sailors and spouses/guests in attendance, including two DD sailors from WWII, with 18 ships represented. I was joined by Pat Steiner, Ray Bergeron, and John and Dot Thomason, and together we represented the McCaffery. Conversations with attendees indicated that the TCS reunions are very popular, with many repeat attendees. The reunion next year will be in San Antonio Texas, at a hotel on the river, with boat tours, a tour to the Alamo and a tour to the Admiral Nimitz WWII Museum of the War in the Pacific in Fredericksburg. Based on what I observed at the JAX reunion, the McCaffery Association would do very

well by joining up with the TCS reunion in San Antonio, and I recommend that we do so.



### Details on the San Antonio TCS

reunion will come out early next year and will be published in the TCS N/L. It is tentatively scheduled for 27 – 30 September, Sunday through Wednesday. We most likely will have our own Hospitality Room. Most folks arrive on Saturday, and depart on Thursday. Although you do not have to be a member of TCS to attend the reunion, I recommend that you join. The membership fee is reasonable, and their N/L is excellent. We will publish details of the reunion in future McCaffery newsletters. All in all, I had a great time, and I anticipate that the San Antonio TCS reunion will be just as good.

### Fair Winds and Following Seas

Doug Hackett - President,  
USS McCaffery Shipmates Association



**BILL MASLAK HONORED** —  
In August,  
McCaffery Association President  
Doug Hackett and  
Vice President Rich

Kuroski traveled to Bill Maslak at his home in Verona PA to present to him a proclamation recognizing him for

his outstanding efforts in founding the USS McCaffery Shipmates Association. Historian Don Turk drew up the proclamation relating to Bill's work in documenting the history of the McCaffery from commissioning to decommissioning, and listing every shipmate who served on the MAC from 1945 to 1973, which Doug and Rich presented to him. They also presented a framed painting of the McCaffery for Bill to hang on his trophy wall.

## USS McCAFFERY ASSOCIATION

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Contact information, Veterans Affairs

<https://www.va.gov/> and

[https://  
www.benefits.va.gov/compensation](https://www.benefits.va.gov/compensation)

If you are a Veteran in crisis or concerned about one, connect with our caring, qualified responders for confidential help. Many of them are Veterans themselves.

**[Call 800-273-8255 and press 1](tel:800-273-8255)**

**[Text 838255 Start a confidential chat](#)**

**[Call TTY if you have hearing loss 800-799-4889](#)**

Get more resources at [VeteransCrisisLine.net](http://VeteransCrisisLine.net).

Snowbirds - Notify Ralph Despathy and the Editor of the winter address. This will save postage on returned letters.

## CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

Listed below are the shipmates that have contributed to the publication of the newsletter. Your continued generous support is needed and greatly appreciated. Please make payable to James Bell with McCaffery Association on the memo line when sending checks,.

Name	Year	Rank/Rate
Ashforth Donald A.	54-56	MM2
Azarian Edward M.	58-60	SK3
Benner Meryl K.	62-63	BT3
Blessman Donald F. (Joyce)	45-47	WT2
Cash Sr Leslie B.	58-61	LTjg
Catanzaro Mario F.	50-53	SN
Donatiello Nicholas E.	57-59	YN2
Dunham James W.	63-65	SN
Dunham Howard, R.	61-64	SN
Egan Gerald J.	55-57	SN
Foster Verne K.	55-58	FTA2
Hackett Douglas M.	61-63	LTjg
Henault Edmund L.	63-65	LT
Jaworowski Jr William J.	59-62	ET2
Lammey William J.	60-61	BM2
Lockhart Bruce W.	69-70	SN
Nebel Kenneth E.	69-72	LT
Patella John M.	51-52	MM3
Pielli Arthur A.	60-62	FN
Scheppers, August E.	65-66	RD3
Sikula Carl W.	72-73	BM3
Shoemaker William G.	65-68	BT2
Strickland Michael W.	66-68	CS3
Thomason John W.	66-69	SN
Turk J. Don	69-71	YN2
Yevincy June	46-47	In Memory of James BT3
Vroom James E.	68-69	LT

### **Ships Store:** USS McCAFFERY MERCHANDISE :

Blue Polo Shirts s-m-l-xl \$20.00, xxl \$24.00, xxxl \$26.00, white T's at \$8.50 with pic, blue T's with Tin Can Pic on back \$20.00 (limited supply), Pic's can be found on TCS web and Mac web.

Jackets \$35.00, xxl, \$38.00 Caps \$17.50, Lic Plate Holders \$8.00, Patches. "Drive Them Into The Sea" & "Hedgehogs" \$5.50 each/two for \$10.00. USS McCaffery Shoulder Patches \$2.50.

When placing an order, Send to **Ron Trippett** 36 South Main Street  
Topsfield, Ma 01983-1847

## A short account of Hurricane Donna, Impact to the McCaffery—1960

The Mac had recently returned to Newport RI from a three month tour of the Mediterranean. The engineering spaces were undergoing extensive maintenance work with all major equipment out of commission including the emergency generators. The storm formed off the coast of Africa Aug 29, 1960, swiping the Florida Keys and striking land near Fort Myers on Sept. 10.

'Deadly Donna' did not travel along the usual path that storms of her magnitude usually take. Instead of heading back to the Atlantic Ocean or the Gulf of Mexico, Donna took on the unusual distinction of being the only hurricane of record to produce hurricane-force winds throughout the U.S. East Coast from Florida, the Mid-Atlantic states and New England.

Donna continued her romp through the East Coast as a Category 2 storm, whipping every state from South Carolina to New York before slamming into New England on Sept. 12. Wind gusts of 130 miles-per hour were recorded in Rhode Island and a terrifyingly large 100-mile-wide-eye later crossed Long Island.

**A shipmates account:** We were in port receiving shore power with a dead plant. The USS Thomas DD764, was abreast of us who was fully operational. The weather became very severe. The two ships with McCaffery secured to the Thomas, were ordered out into Narragansett Bay open waters to ride out the storm. As the sea got rougher, the two ships

started rocking, stretching the mooring lines and banging into each other. The Mac took a beating around midships and Bridge, so did the Thomas. The bulkhead in radio transmitter room was pushed in about ten feet, large enough to make a hole in the deck, making the main deck visible below.

At this point, the Captain of the Thomas ordered complete separation from the McCaffery and under her power, sailed away. The Mac was completely without any power. The Engineering Department was frantically attempting to restore emergency generators and other equipment to provide electrical power. The ship was adrift heading onto the shore rocks at the Breakers Mansion in Newport. Emergency flares were sent aloft seeking help. Soon a sea going tug came alongside and attached securing lines which prevented a major disaster. Recollections from:

Steiner James W. Michias NY 58-63 RM2

Lammey Wil-liam, South Easton MA. 60-61 BM2

Bell James E. Hernando FL 60-63 MM2



### Benefits:

In January, a federal court ruled 9-2 in *Procopio vs. Wilkie* that Navy Vietnam veterans who served aboard ship but did not set foot on land should be presumed to have been exposed to Agent Orange and should therefore be eligible for benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs. This is a major victory that should mean benefits for as many as 90,000 veterans who served aboard ship and were exposed to Agent Orange. Lawyers had asked for deadline extensions to file an appeal twice since then, even though the VA said they won't challenge the court decision, but on Tuesday, June 4th, the DOJ finally confirmed that they won't argue against it. Many questions remain on funding and implementation of the court decision, so the issue is far from settled, but we will continue to monitor the issue and keep our membership informed of Blue Water Navy developments.



Claire, wife of Ralph Despathy SFP2 58-61, creates a quilt for each reunion; designating the place where we visit. Naval designed fabrics, the ship's picture at the center, the year and place of the reunion and blocks that attendees can sign "like a guest book" is the design of the top. It is raffled off and goes home with a deserving sailor. The best year was in Charleston, SC, when a McCaffery family member won it and took it home to its original ship's family. Mrs RR

Moving, changing e mail service or know some deceased shipmate?

Notify Ralph Despathy

631 Squaw Rock Rd, Moosup CT  
06354-1746

E Mail- despathy860@gmail.com.

Also notify the editor.



Garry Freese, STG2, 66-68, notified me of the McCaffery being admitted to the Agent Orange benefit program. He worked for seven years to push this item. He currently is receiving benefits and wanted to inform fellow shipmates. If you were aboard April 9, 1967 you could have been exposed while in the Mekong Delta. See item above for benefit contact information.

**Last Stand of the Tin Can Sailors : Probably The Best Destroyer Sailor History Ever Written**

We DD sailors have justifiable pride in our service on Tin Cans. Although DDs are called “small boys”, there is nothing small about the job that DDs do, or the bravery and courage of the men who sail in them.

In my opinion, the best history ever written about the bravery and courage of DD sailors is J. D. Hornfischer’s Last Stand of the Tin Can Sailors. The book is a history of how 3 DDs (USS HEERMANN DD532; USS HOEL DD533; USS JOHNSTON DD557) and 4 DEs (USS SAMUEL B. ROBERTS DE413; USS DENNIS DE405; USS RAYMOND DE341 ; USS JOHN C. BUTLER DE339) went into battle against a vastly superior Japanese Navy surface battle group comprised of 4 battleships (including the world’s largest battleship YAMATO with 18.1 inch guns), 8 cruisers, and 11 destroyers. In October 1944, American forces under General MacArthur were invading Leyte in the Philippines. The Japanese Navy sortied in 3 groups to attack the invading forces, with one group of BBs, CAs and DDs approaching from the south through the Surigao Strait, and the second approaching through the San Bernardino Strait. A third force approaching from the north was comprised of aircraft carriers with few planes, intended as a decoy to lure Admiral Halsey’s carriers and BBs away from the invasion area so the surface forces could attack the invasion forces. It worked.

With Halsey headed north after the carriers, the invasion forces were undefended. In the area were six CVEs, jeep carriers on merchant hulls designed for ground support and anti-submarine defense, with maximum speed of 20 knots and no armor.

The 3 DDs and 4 DEs attacked the Japanese surface force with torpedoes and 5” guns, causing significant damage, and surprising the Japanese forces with the audacity of their attack such that the Japanese admiral turned his forces around and fled the area. The invasion forces were protected. Two CVEs were sunk by the Japanese. The rest escaped.

The cost to the DDs was significant – HOEL, ROBERTS and JOHNSTON were sunk. Approximately 1/3 of the crews of the DDs and DEs were killed or wounded. The survivors from the sunken ships were in the water for 2 days before being rescued, with many dying from wounds, exposure and shark attacks. The Congressional Medal of Honor was awarded posthumously to the CDR Ernest Evans, the C.O. of the JOHNSTON, the lead ship in the attack on the Japanese forces.

The bravery, seamanship, and gunnery/torpedo accuracy saved the day, and this story provides a thrilling account of that battle. This is a book well worth reading, and makes you proud to be a Destroyer Sailor. Doug Hackett

An excerpt from chapter Nine: Surigao Strait, Following the nighttime attack on the Japanese fleet . At daylight seven heavy pillars of billowing black smoke could be seen on the horizon ahead. One by one these pillars of smoke disappeared as the ships from which they originated sank under the gunfire of other US ships. Hundreds of survivors were reported in the water, almost all of them refused to be rescued and were left to their fate.

*“It follows then as certain as that night succeeds the day, that without a decisive naval force we can do nothing definitive, and with it, everything honorable and glorious.”*

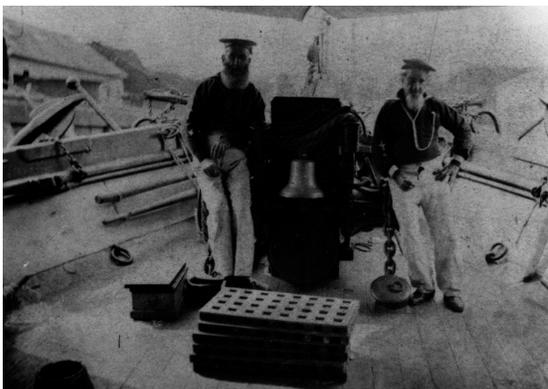
President George Washington, 15 November 1781

*“The Navy has both a tradition and a future — and we look with pride and confidence in both directions.”*

Admiral George Anderson, CNO, 1 August 1961.

USS *Ohio* (1838-1883). Two old salts on the ship's forecastle, circa the 1870s

U.S. Navy bells are part of the many artifacts removed from decommissioned vessels and preserved by the Naval History and Heritage Command. They may be provided on loan to new namesake ships, naval commands with an historical mission or functional connection, and to museums and other institutions that are interpreting specific historical themes and displays of naval history. Ship’s bells remain the permanent property of the U.S. Government and the Department of the Navy. Bells remain a powerful and tangible reminder of the history, heritage, and accomplishments of the naval service.



Number of bells	Bell pattern	Hour (a.m. and p.m.)							
One bell	1	00:30	04:30	08:30	12:30	16:30	18:30	20:30	
Two bells	2	01:00	05:00	09:00	13:00	17:00	19:00	21:00	
Three bells	2 1	01:30	05:30	09:30	13:30	17:30	19:30	21:30	
Four bells	2 2	02:00	06:00	10:00	14:00	18:00		22:00	
Five bells	2 2 1	02:30	06:30	10:30	14:30		18:30	22:30	
Six bells	2 2 2	03:00	07:00	11:00	15:00		19:00	23:00	
Seven bells	2 2 2 1	03:30		07:30	11:30	15:30	19:30	23:30	
Eight bells	2 2 2 2	04:00		08:00	12:00	16:00	20:00	24:00	



LTC Joseph P. McCaffery - BOUGAINVILLE 01 NOVEMBER 1943, CAPE TOROKINA LANDINGS

“While the 1st Battalion, 3d Marines was involved in fighting on the Cape, elements of the 2d Battalion, 3d

Marines, and the 2nd Raider Battalion were also engaged. These units likewise had to land in the face of rifle and machine-gun fire and having been landed out of position, had become thoroughly disorganized on reaching the beach. Companies were forced to move laterally on the beach, under fire, in order to reach their proper positions. In an effort to prevent additional confusion or immobilization by Japanese fire, Lieutenant Colonel Joseph P. McCaffery, Commanding Officer of the 2d Raider Battalion, moved under fire from mortars and automatic weapons, from unit to unit in order to dispose those units to insure maximum effectiveness of the troops. Initiating an attack which ultimately led to reduction of the Japanese positions, As the Marines cleared the

beach, they were stopped by machine-gunfire from a well-concealed bunker. McCaffery jumped into a trench, advanced about twenty yards, and was cut down by a Nambu machine gun at the other end of the trench. McCaffery was struck four times in the chest. Lieutenant Colonel McCaffery died aboard the U. S. S. George Clymer as a result of his wounds, but the inspiration which he had given his men, and the high esteem in which he was held, lived on”. His valiant and inspiring leadership was largely responsible for reorganization of troops ashore on beaches immediately to the left (north) of Cape Torokina.

McCaffery was awarded the Navy Cross posthumously for “extraordinary heroism while in command of the 2nd Marine Raider Battalion in action against enemy Japanese forces”

Source: Bougainville and the Northern Solomons, Historical Section, Headquarters United States Marine Corps 1948. The Battery Press, Nashville TN, pages 31 – (Modified)

The History of the McCaffery - 1946 Bill Maslak

On 1 January 1946, McCaffery was moored at Middle Lock, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

Commanding officer - CDR B.B. Cheatham  
McCaffery was undergoing training under Commander Destroyers, Pacific Fleet, which was composed of COMDESDIV 151 and COMDESDIV 152. McCaffery was attached to COMDESDIV 152 along with USS Norris (DD -859) and USS Harwood (DD-861). From 3 January through 16 January, she participated in exercises in Hawaiian waters that included tactics, AA tracking, AA firing, fighter direction, emergency drills and mail passing. On 8 January McCaffery was towed to the Navy Yard for installation of a main steam valve previously delivered to the yard for repair. On 24 January, McCaffery departed Middle Loch with USS Floyd B. Parks (DD-884), USS Norris (DD-859), and USS Harwood (DD-861) to report to Commander Seventh Fleet for duty. An alert watch was kept for floating mines.

During topside movies on 1 February, a man was reported overboard by USS Norris. A careful search of the area was made by all ships manning the rails and using searchlights. The search results were negative, and when the search was abandoned, lighted ring-buoys and colored sea markers were dropped in the vicinity.

On 4 February, the formation arrived at Apra Harbor, Guam, and moored until 5 February. While there, she refueled, loaded stores, and other provisions. McCaffery received on board \$6,120,000 in U.S. currency to be delivered to NavGroup China at Shanghai. She arrived at the mouth of the Yangtze River on 9 February, and was ordered to proceed to Tsingtao, China. McCaffery then proceeded to Shanghai to deliver the currency. With a Wangpoo pilot aboard, McCaffery steamed up the Yangtze River behind Harwood, and stood into Shanghai, mooring to Harwood and Barrien. Norris and Parks had left the group to proceed to Hong Kong. **For more history, visit [www.usdd860.com](http://www.usdd860.com)**

# USS McCaffery DD/DDE- 860

Shipmates Association

C/O James Bell, Editor

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Confidential crisis chat at [VeteransCrisisLine.net](http://VeteransCrisisLine.net)  
or text to **838255**

If you have E Mail service and receive this N/L by US mail, please consider E mail only.

This would greatly reduce the cost of printing and mailing. Notify Nick Donatiello at [NDonatiello@donatiello.net](mailto:NDonatiello@donatiello.net)

## THE SAILOR'S CREED

I am a United States Sailor.

I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States of America and I will obey the orders of those appointed over me.

I represent the fighting spirit of the Navy and those who have gone before me to defend freedom and democracy around the world.

I proudly serve my country's Navy combat team with Honor, Courage and Commitment.

I am committed to excellence and the fair treatment of all.

## Yankee Station off Vietnam

