

# USS TURNER JOY (DD-951) NEWSLETTER

## *THE 21MC*

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April 12, 2022

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First Lieutenant (1967-68)



***THE SHIPS MOTTO: "ESSE QUAM VIDERI" - TO BE RATHER THAN SEEM TO BE!***

### **From the Introduction to 'FOLLOWING ORDERS'**

The well-researched treatment of the greatly publicized Tonkin Gulf Incident by Chad James in "Following Orders: 'Protect a US Asset'" (copyright 2021 Chad James) offers a realistic explanation of the details of this historic incident. For your edification, below is the introduction to his book...

**It has been 57 years since the Tonkin Gulf Incident. That is when the USS TURNER JOY (DD-951) was given her new assignment for protecting the USS Maddox (DD-731) and the Commodore of CTG 72.1/ComDesDiv 192 operating Desoto Patrol in the Tonkin Gulf. We, who were there, want the American public to know what we saw and what we did during our assignment to 'Protect a U.S. Asset' while operating in the Tonkin Gulf. This is our story.**

On 4 August 1964, in the Gulf of Tonkin, two United States destroyers are steaming in international waters for a routine night of patrol. Aboard Turner Joy the degree of combat readiness has been downgraded from General Quarters to Condition Three Watch steaming. Crew members not on watch are unwinding from a long day, finishing dinner, with some just beginning a movie.

The expected serenity of the night is abruptly interrupted by a message over the PRI-CI voice net in CIC (Combat Information Center) from the commodore's staff embarked in USS Maddox. The essence of this message is 'Torpedo Boat attack imminent, go to General Quarters.'

Since the Commodore is in charge of both ships and embarked in the Maddox, the Turner Joy has to be in a following position and must respond quickly and appropriately to all orders.

No one on board the Turner Joy could have imagined the impact the next several hours would have on the escalation of the Vietnam conflict, nor the debate it would generate for decades to come. The events of 4 August 1964, now commonly referred to as the Tonkin Gulf Incident, served as catalyst for the Tonkin Gulf Resolution which escalated the United States involvement in what we now know as the Vietnam War. It is the relationship between the Incident and the Resolution that has kept the Incident under decades of scrutiny.

In the 57 years since 4 August 1964, the question has lingered, “**What really happened during the night of 4 August 1964 in the Tonkin Gulf?**” Politicians, historians, intelligence personnel, military officers, academicians, etc., have reviewed the data and published their position papers or written books. Most implied serious doubt as to whether an attack ever took place. Some commentators went so far as to indicate that the Tonkin Gulf Resolution was a result of false information from over-eager sailors chasing whether conditions, flying fish, or ghosts. All of these reviewers have one thing in common. **None of them were there.** \*\*

Many of the men who served on the Turner Joy during this incident disagree, and are disappointed by the conclusions of the aforementioned authors.

This has served as an impetus to tell their story. The individuals contributing to this collection of eye-witness accounts understand that the reader and ultimately, history, will come to their own conclusions. It is in this spirit that the men who lived the events of the Tonkin Gulf Incident offer their collective experiences for the public’s consideration. No conclusions should be reached without evaluating the input of these witnesses. (Please observe all of the bibliographies included in this journal.)

In this journal you will meet the ship’s captain, officers, non-commissioned officers, and enlisted men. Many of these men were never interviewed by the various reviewers.

You will learn:

- The USS Turner Joy was manned by intelligent, competent and dedicated individuals who executed their duties in a manner consistent with the highest levels of US Navy tradition. The quality of these individuals has been demonstrated time and again in their subsequent Navy and civilian careers.
- No false information submitted concerning this action, only info that the ship actually experienced.
- There was an important period between the beginning of the action and the arrival of naval air support.
- There was an important difference in time zone reporting (most documents follow -8 Hotel time zone, whereas CTG 72.1 was following -7 G time zone during the Desoto patrols.)
- There was an important operational question as to where the attacking **aircraft(sp)** on the 4<sup>th</sup> Aug. came from ((they arrived from the east/northeast, not from west/northwest). This easterly direction of travel for Desoto patrol placed it at the nearest and closest point of any operational PT craft. This was employed at PT boat bases on Hainan Island, China.

The reader will experience the contributor’s professionalism, conviction, and integrity. History does not offer many opportunities for future generations to hear the voices of those who actually participated in an historic event. These written and video accounts are such an opportunity. Don’t miss it.

In 1964, the crew of the Turner Joy offers these accounts in honor of the 58,000 fellow service people who lost their lives in the Vietnam war and dedicate this journal to the children and grand-children of those who served on the USS Turner Joy (DD-951).

**\*\* (Editor’s Note: As just one of many examples of contemporary thinking, I quote from Tom Brokaw’s book on the ‘60’s – “BOOM!” – page 157)**

“...I slowly awoke to the fact that president Johnson wasn’t telling the truth about the Tonkin Gulf Resolution [which gave him greatly expanded authority to wage war in Vietnam after what turned out to be an illusory attack on an American warship]”

N. B.: Brokaw refers to the Turner Joy/Maddox here, actually **two** warships, to be accurate. Short shrift is given to the fact that USS Maddox was under confirmed torpedo/heavy machine gun attack on 2 August 1964; of itself, an act of war. Observe that the characterizations “fact,” “telling the truth,” and “illusory” are all arguable conjectures within the context of the time, and NOT necessarily established fact, as we will discover in the telling of this story.

**\*\*** For an excellent eye-witness account of the Tonkin Gulf Incident by CDR William Buehler (USN Ret.) I refer you to the old **ussturnerjoy.com** website under Gallery, ACCESS VIDEOS, “An Account as witnessed by CDR William Buehler” video of about 1:09 hrs duration. CDR Buehler was OOD - Ops Officer in USS Maddox for both 2 and 4 Aug 1964 action.

## **PRESIDENT'S CORNER:**

### **VOTING PROCEDURES FOR THE NEXT REUNION.**

Tod Hale, Mike Stockreiter, Dave Leverenz, and Jim Chester: [jimc951@hotmail.com](mailto:jimc951@hotmail.com) will keep tabs of the results. VOTE NOT LATER THAN 5-31-22

Voting **Jacksonville, Florida** for next reunion e-mail Tod Hale: [hiwaysailor951@yahoo.com](mailto:hiwaysailor951@yahoo.com)

Voting **Branson, Missouri** for next reunion e-mail Mike Stockreiter: [mstockreiter@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mstockreiter@sbcglobal.net)

Voting **San Diego, California** for next reunion e-mail Dave Leverenz: [dleverenz@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dleverenz@sbcglobal.net)

Voting for a September '22 reunion **OR** an October '22 reunion, email Jim Chester(above).

**RESULTS WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE NEXT TJRG 21MC NEWSLETTER**

**We are sad to report the loss of our former website, [www.ussturnerjoy.com](http://www.ussturnerjoy.com) which has been taken away from us through copyright infringement.**

The EXCOM has this item for action.

The end of the COVID pandemic has been reported by Dr. Fauci of the CDC on 4-27-22.

### **USS TURNER JOY REUNION GROUP AUDITED FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE 12-18-21 to 12-31-21 CY 2021**

<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Transaction/Event</u></b>	<b><u>Checking</u></b>	<b><u>Savings</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
12/1/21	Balances per NFCU C/B & S/R	1281.92	13505.19	14787.11
ADD REVENUES:				
12/21-12/29	Membership Dues	260.00	-	260.00
12/21-12/27	Membership Donations	72.00	138.00	210.00
11/30/21	Interest Income	0.01	2.08	2.09
SUBTRACT:				
12/21-12/23	Gen Mailings	18.96	-	18.96
12/21/21	Postage	34.80	-	34.80
12/31/21	Balance per C/B & S/R	1560.17	13645.27	15205.44

### **UNAUDITED FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE**

**1-1-22 to 4-12-22 CY 2022**

1/1/22	Balance(s) Forward	1560.17	13645.27	15205.44
ADD REVENUES:				
1/7-1/25	Membership Dues	1230.00	-	1230.00
1/2-1/25	Membership Donations	225.00	470.00	695.00
12/31/21	Interest Income	0.01	2.64	2.65
SUBTRACT:				
1/13/22	Reimb for MC21 newsletter	479.18	-	479.18
1/13/22	Reimb for TJRG Secretarial Svcs	270.00	-	270.00
1/27/22	Balance per Bank, C/B & S/R	2266.00	14117.91	16383.91

  

1/27/22	Balance(s) Forward	2266.00	14117.91	16383.91
ADD REVENUES:				
2/5-2/14	Membership Dues	60.00	-	60.00
1/2-1/25	Membership Donations	205.00	85.00	290.00
12/31/21	Interest Income	0.02	2.94	2.96

<b>SUBTRACT:</b>				
2/1/22	Office Supplies Audit Prep	87.63	-	87.63
2/1/22	Office Supplies/print Audit Prep	35.12	-	35.12
2/2/22	USPS GEN Mail/Postage	22.50	-	22.50
2/2/22	USPS EXCOM Mailings	7.80	-	7.80
2/9/22	USPS General Mailings	4.72	-	4.72
2/27/22	Reimb Audit Prep Expenses	26.95	-	26.95
2/27/22	Balance per Bank, C/B & S/R	2346.30	14205.85	16552.15
		<u>2346.30</u>	<u>14205.85</u>	<u>16552.15</u>
2/27/22	Balance forward	2346.30	14205.85	16552.15
<b>ADD REVENUES:</b>				
2/28-3/9	Membership Dues	60.00	-	60.00
3/5-3/9	Membership Donations	110.00	140.00	1250.00
2/28/22	Interest Income	0.02	2.72	2.74
<b>SUBTRACT:</b>				
3/7/22	Office Supplies/print	19.15	-	19.15
3/8/22	USPS EXCOM MailingAudit	57.19	-	57.19
3/27/22	Balance per Bank, C/B & S/R	2439.98	14348.57	17788.55
		<u>2439.98</u>	<u>14348.57</u>	<u>17788.55</u>
3/27/22	Balance Forward	2439.98	14348.57	17788.55
<b>ADD REVENUES:</b>				
4/5/22	Membership Donations	50.00	40.00	90.00
4/9/22	Special Donations – Greyhound	2500.00	350.00	2850.00
4/9/22	Membership Dues	20.00	-	20.00
<b>SUBTRACT:</b>				
4/9/22	USPS GEN Mail/Postage	35.60	-	35.60
4/12/22	Balance per Bank, C/B & S/R	4974.38	14738.57	19712.95
		<u>4974.38</u>	<u>14738.57</u>	<u>19712.95</u>

**TAPS:** It is with Great Regret that we report the following shipmates who have passed on:

**Bert J. Mackaman** of Salem, OR, died 25 Jan 2021. Bert was born in Dallas, TX on 9 Jan 1942. He graduated from US Naval Academy in 1964 with distinction. He served from 1964 through 1970, completing tours of duty aboard USS Strauss (DDG-16) and USS Turner Joy (DD-951). He attended medical school at University of Texas, Galveston, graduating in 1974. Bert is survived by his wife Dee; son John “Randy” Mackaman (Susan); son Gerald Mackaman (Susan); grandsons James, Jonathan, Joshua, Josiah; Dee’s daughter Lisa and granddaughter Kourtney, Dee’s son Mike and grandchildren Chloe and Colby.

**Theron Frederick Noth**, 81, of Tavernier, FL, died 8 Mar 2022. He was born 19 Nov 1940 in Norwalk, WI. He is survived by his wife, Fern, after 54 years of marriage; daughter Julie Alexander, son Scott(Scarlett); grandchildren Alana, Malia, Iris, Oliver, and Max. Theron graduated from North central College, Naperville, IL, and Naval Officer Candidate School, Newport, RI. Lt. Noth served two tours in WestPac aboard USS Turner Joy (DD-951). He was employed at GTE North for 27 years and State Farm for 10 years.

**LT. James Russell Calabrese**, 72, USN (ret) of Reva, VA, died 25 Dec 2021. He was born 27 Apr 1949 in Valparaiso, IN. He is survived by his wife of 47 years, Doreen; children Jennifer, Lindsay, and Thomas. As well as grand puppies Rourk and Lil Lady.

# 2022 – 202\_ USS TURNER JOY REUNION GROUP MEMBERSHIP

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
Spouse/Partner: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State & Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home/Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Member E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates Served Onboard: \_\_\_\_\_ Rank/Rating on TJ: \_\_\_\_\_  
Years of Active Duty: \_\_\_\_\_ Retired: \_\_\_\_\_ Retired Rank/Rating: \_\_\_\_\_  
Present Occupation/Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

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Comments for possible inclusion for the 21 MC  
newsletter: \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Donations: They are always welcome! Currently the funds for the TJRG are “fully replenished” and the Federal IRS and State Conversion costs are paid for! Thank You So Much! Now, as a regulated 501 ( c ) 7 tax exempt, non-profit, Veteran’s Social Group and State of Washington Charitable Organization operating under IRS Rule 501 (a), we are a healthy Veteran’s Organization. We are always seeking donation funds for follow on reunions: Donations in fiscal categories have been reported by name per IRS RR&G’s!**

**Annual Dues: They are \$ 20.00 per year (NOV/DEC). Membership Dues may be paid in advance for the year and more out years. Your Dues and donations subsidize all reunion activities!**

**Please send this application with your check payable to:  
USS Turner Joy Reunion Group  
c/o Jim Chester-President  
1330 Thompson Street  
Carson City, NV 89703-0605**