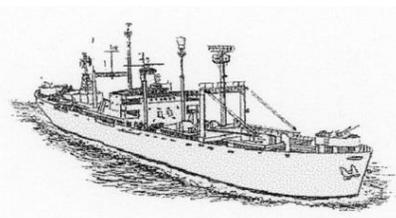


SEA STORIES

send your sea stories to
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submitted by Reggie Walker, RM3, USS Guardian AGR-1, 1956-58

I served on the Guardian from early 1956 to end of 1958 on a kitty cruise. for what it is worth here is my story as i recall it... we were on station when sitting at the supervisors desk I hear dit dit dit dah dah dah dit dit dit on 500 kc. As it came the second time I jumped up and got to a station and immediately told one of my seamen to turn on and tune up the SRT transmitter. From what i could figure, we were the only one to hear the message coming in from the Andrea d Orea. I'm sure most can remember it off the coast of Massachusetts. As we were actually the closest ship to her but having a top speed of only about 8 knots it was determined not to go to the rescue so instead I contacted other ships in the vicinity and relayed her co-ordinates to them. Shortly afterwards those ships were able to establish contact with the Andrea d Orea.....end of my story.



After many years I found it gave me the satisfaction of knowing that my service in our US Navy was very worth while. We were young and did a proud service to our country (if I may be melodramatic). To this very day I have no regrets and cherish the fact that I was able to belong to a proud service. I often think of some of my shipmates and smile at the good old days as the curtain is drawing near. I hope all the members of our organization here are well and comfortable.....

From: Richard W. Phelps, RD2, USS Searcher AGR 4, 1959-62

If my memory serves me it was December 1959 on my first cruise on the USS Searcher. I was a seaman apprentice serving as a radarman after finishing school in Norfolk. Sometime ten to 15 days prior to Christmas the ship while on station in the North Atlantic was engulfed in a rather severe storm. Two things happened during the storm that I shall always remember. Those who served on these ships remember that the stern during heavy weather would go under while riding the heavy seas. Well being a young (19) year old sailor I and one other person were standing on the fantail next to the aft gun enjoying the ups and downs. Suddenly the fantail went under and my friend and I were in the water thinking that this is how life ends. To our good fortune we were tangled in the various parts of the large gun and survived the dunking without being washed overboard. An hour later we were summoned to the Captains cabin and given a strong lecture on staying off the main deck when the ship was riding out a storm. What we did not know was that there had been no announcement to stay clear of the main deck, which was most likely an oversight, which had we perished would have led to a problem for the CO.



As if this was not enough the next day the USS Searcher lost its prop and wallowed in heavy seas until an ocean going tug arrived and towed us to Boston for repairs. If I recall we were back on station before Christmas.