Ropeyarn Sunday â€œSea Storiesâ€• and Open Trackbacks

Description

Weekly Open Trackbacks. A â€œsafe harborâ€• to â€œsuggestâ€• to readers they should take a chance on you(r writings). Go for it.

From last weekâ€™s Sea Stories, I discussed the ship at sea always being a place of noise, and I indicated Iâ€™d tell more of that this week. Here it is.

On my second ship, one of my collateral duties was that of Gunnery Liasion Officer (GLO), which entailed being the person who managed the trageting of the shipâ€™s guns against shore targets, via a spotter, on the ground or in the air, who would identify and fix target positions.

default watermark

As part of our â€œshakedownâ€• training (it was a newly commissioned ship), we had to train in this mission area, and we took a trip from San Diego harbor (homeport) to the west to the firing range off San Celmente Island and I proceeded to practice a skill I first learned in the school rooms of the Fleet Training Center.

I stood at the Dead Reckoning Tracer (DRT), which, for the purposes of this work, was converted to a plain old chart table. The operation specialists had laid out the grid reference charts for the area, and set up the radio circuits and sound powered telephone headsets. Status boards (large hanging, edge lit plexiglass sheets) were redrawn with the format for the fire missions we would be tasked with and positioned so I could easily read them from where I stood. My tools, up to three stopwatches, a sharpened No. 2 pencil, dividers and the â€œCommanche Board,â€• also were out for use.

So, â€œperchedâ€• several decks above, and away from the fore and aft 5â€³54cal MK 45 gun mounts, I would still be able to hear the gun laoding mechanisms doing their work. Two decks below the guns, the magazine crews would pick the type ammuntion and powder charges from their storage and place them in the hoists. Hydraulics and mechanical systems would rapidly raise the 76 lb projectiles and the powder cases up to the gun mount, where they were automatically loaded into a tray before the ram then shoved them into the waiting breech, to have the breech block slam into place behind them, awaiting patiently for the electrical charge that will begin the â€œexplosives trainâ€• on itâ€™s path to sending the sleek bullet hurtling towards itâ€™s assigned target.

I felt the operation as much as I heard it. I felt the forward gun, Mount 51, and heard it fairly clearly, but I mostly felt Mount 52, probably 350 feet aft of me in straight distance measurement, insulating itself from me thru multiple bulkheads and 4 decks of aluminum and steel. The firing of either mount, was clearly unmistakable, as I became practiced on sending high explosives many miles away on the word of a disembodied voice on the radio.

â€œOn Station, Ready for Call for Fireâ€• begins the sequence, alerting the forward observer you are available to pummel the enemy who dares to enter his field of viewâ€¦..

More laterâ€¦

Category

1. "Sea Stories"
2. History
3. Military
4. Military History
5. Navy
6. Open Trackbacks

Date Created
December 13, 2006
Author
admin

default watermark