

## USS Braine (DD-630)

The keel for the USS BRAINE-DD630 was laid at the Bath Iron Works on October 12, 1942. Accelerated construction continued until launching on March 7, 1943. During the construction period, the assembly of officers and crew began.

The first officer to report was Ensign Arthur F. Moricca, a graduate engineer of Rennslear Polytechnic Institute. The first Commanding Officer, Commander John F. Newman, Jr., USN soon reported to Bath. He was followed by officers Ensign John D. Hotchkiss, Asst. Engineering Officer; Lieutenant John T. Evans, First Lieutenant; Lt(jg) Henry J. Watters, Communications Officer; Ensign William M. Eastman, Supply Officer; Lieutenant George W. Montgomery, Gunnery Officer.

The new officers and crew observed the construction of the ship to become familiar with its components and operation. Although it was winter, the crew members enjoyed the serenity of Maine and the delicious sea food served in the many restaurants in the area.

On a crisp and breezy winter Maine day with ice still on the river, the sponsor's party assembled. Mrs. Daniel L. Braine, Brooklyn, New York and wife of the grandson of Admiral Daniel Lawrence Braine, USN for whom the vessel was named, wielded the bottle of champagne. With traditional words, Mrs. Braine christened the new destroyer UNITED STATES SHIP BRAINE - DD630 and launched her into destroyer history.

As the ship came to rest in the middle of the Kennebec River, it was obvious that there was still a lot of work to be done before the BRAINE could join the fleet. Installation of boilers, turbines, electric panels, gun mounts, communication and navigation equipment, as well as all the items to accommodate the crew's living quarters.

Meanwhile, in Boston, Massachusetts, the first roster of officers and crew were assembling. The core of the crew were old men of twenty-five, battle-hardened veterans of Coral Sea and Guadalcanal. Newly commissioned officers fresh from college were being trained in navigation, gunnery, communications and engineering.

Around the country in training schools, men were being trained for special ratings-- Radarmen, Gunners Mates, Torpedomen, Machinists Mates, Water Tenders, Quartermasters, Cooks and Bakers, Radiomen, Yeomen, Sonar Operators and Electricians. Recruits from Great Lakes, Sampson and Bainbridge Boot Camps were getting their first look at a destroyer. They would soon develop the rolling walk that proudly identified them as Tin Can Sailors.

On 11 May 1943, after two months of additional outfitting at the Bath Iron Works, the USS BRAINE - DD630 embarked on a short voyage from Bath to Boston, manned by the skeleton Navy crew and construction workers (including some women) from the Bath Iron Works.

In the afternoon of May 11, 1943, at 1500 at the Charlestown Navy Yard, in the shadow of the USS CONSTITUTION and Bunker Hill, the United States Ship BRAINE - DD630 was commissioned. The Captain of the Yard turned the ship over to her first Commanding Officer, CDR John F. Newman, Jr., USN. The Ensign, the Jack and the Commission Pennant were hoisted and the first watch set.

After the commissioning, the plank owners and the new crew members reporting aboard became familiar with their new home and their duties as destroyer men. Stores and ammunition were loaded for the first cruise. The ship was ready for sea duty and the shake-down cruise to test her power plants, guns and torpedoes and to train her crew in their routine duties, as well as their assignment and training at a General Quarters station in preparation for

combat. The Special Sea and Anchor Detail was ordered to prepare the ship for leaving its mooring. The BRAINE slipped silently from its mooring, got underway and sailed out of Boston Harbor toward the Atlantic Ocean. The first day the BRAINE sailed to Casco Bay, Maine near Portland to test for power and maneuverability.

Men from small towns who had never seen the ocean were awed by its beauty and vastness and soon learned to respect her power. As the engines revved up to flank speed the BRAINE crashed through the sea with water boiling up behind her. The first signs of sea sickness appeared among the green crew. Tests were conducted daily and the ship returned to anchor every evening.

The crew members were assigned to their watch station and their General Quarters station. While at sea, the crew stood watches at their assigned station for four hours with eight hours off during which time they performed the regular duties of their rate, took care of their personal hygiene or slept.

Although some men were assigned a General Quarters station connected with the duties of their rating, most were assigned some other station. The strong, husky men of any rate were usually assigned as loaders in the ammunition magazines or the main battery handling rooms and turrets. Others were assigned as spotters for enemy aircraft, damage control parties and manning the smaller 40mm and 20mm anti-aircraft guns.

One duty from which there were no exemptions was the loading of ammunition and stores. Lines were formed and the powder charge and projectiles were passed along to their final location. The loading of food stores was handled in a similar manner, but occasionally a case of pineapple or pears would disappear down a hatch to the engine room.

After several days, the BRAINE departed for Bermuda for additional testing and training. The first morning they heard for the first of hundreds of times the irritating bleating sound, designed to break through the deepest sleep--the call to General Quarters for dawn alert.

The men would scurry through the passageways and up the decks colliding with each other. It took a few tries before they learned that to go forward on the starboard ladders and deck and aft on the port side. The two weeks in Bermuda were spent on intensive training of the crew. Testing and training of the ship's armament consumed hours of time. Planes hauled a target drone for anti-aircraft practice.

For the first time the thunder of the five inch guns were heard as they were tested and the handlers drilled in their operation. Other gun crews were trained on the twenty and forty millimeter anti-aircraft guns. Crew members stationed inside the ship (in the engine and fire rooms, the radio shack, magazines, etc.) soon learned to identify the different sounds of the guns.

The torpedomen soon put to use their school training on the actual firing of practice torpedoes. They were so good that they fired a dummy torpedo into a sister ship. Spotters were trained on the bridge to spot and identify various types of enemy aircraft. New officers learned and practice navigation skills and manning the conn--the responsibility for operation of the ship underway.

After completion of testing in Bermuda, the ship returned to Casco Bay. The Captain had been alerted to the operation of German submarines in the area and proceeded north with caution in the company of another destroyer. During a mid-watch a surface target appeared on the radar and the crew went to real General Quarters for the first time. The target did not respond to a radio or signal light challenge. With guns loaded and tracking, the BRAINE closed

to 4000 yards and illuminated the target with searchlights. A very scared and mad merchantman was revealed.

As the ship passed between the two destroyers, the merchant captain cursed us and told us to turn out the goddamn lights before the Germans got us all. Fortunately for the two green crews of the destroyers, it was not the enemy. This is the first report of "enemy action" for the BRAINE but it was never entered in the logs.

The BRAINE then proceeded on to Casco Bay for more testing and training. The BRAINE returned to the Navy Yard at Charlestown in Boston for additional outfitting and loading of stores in preparation for her trip to the Pacific and the unknown hazards that lie ahead.

Finally in early August 1943, the BRAINE was ready for war and was ordered to join the Fleet in the Pacific Theater of War. The BRAINE embarked silently to sea and her appointment with destiny. After a brief stop at Norfolk to rendezvous with the Cruiser USS CHESTER (CA27), the BRAINE immediately encountered an enemy--not one of the Axis powers, but Mother Nature herself. Off Cape Hatteras, North Carolina, the convoy encountered a hurricane. For two days the BRAINE was tossed about by the stormy seas, gigantic waves breaking over the superstructure. At times the ship was in danger of being swamped. At one point the CHESTER reported that the BRAINE had disappeared from its radar. Ensign Donald Johnson, the Officer of the Deck, reported that the ship rolled past the 45 degree inclinometer, but another monstrous wave up righted the ship.

Passage on the main deck was impossible and the crew moved on the superstructure clinging to lifelines for support. Serving meals was out of the question, not only from the rolling and pitching of the ship, but all but the most experienced seafarers were sea sick. The Chief Stewards Mate, Hubert Brownlee, an old hand at rough seas, walked around with piece of ham fat hanging out of his mouth, the sight of which sent many a sailor to the rail. It was thought that one man had been lost, but he was so sick he lashed himself to the 20mm gun shield on the fantail to spill his guts over the side.

At last the storm subsided and the weary, seasick crew assessed the outcome. There were no personnel casualties, except for queasy stomachs. The side of No. 1- 5" gun turret was caved in from a wave. The BRAINE was ordered to Trinidad for repairs and then passed through the Panama Canal. The ship continued north and training continued for the crew at their battle stations. The ship passed under the Golden Gate to San Francisco. The ship was refurbished with stores and ammunition and passed under the Golden Gate again; this time on her way to the serious business of war, as part of a screening escort for troopships bound for Pearl Harbor.

As the BRAINE drew close to Hawaii, the sight of the Diamond Head came into view and as the ship entered Pearl Harbor they witnessed a "monument" all had heard about and seen in newsreels.

As the crew, dressed in whites, stood at attention and honored the entombed crew of the USS ARIZONA and the realities of war struck home. Much of the carnage from the Pearl Harbor attack was still visible. The BRAINE continued training for combat, particularly with the anti-aircraft weapons, firing at a towed target. The BRAINE took on stores and ammunition and left Hawaii on her first combat assignment. In late September the BRAINE left Pearl Harbor and once underway at sea, Captain Newman announced our mission. The BRAINE would be part of the submarine screening force for a high speed carrier task force attack on Wake

Island, a small dot on the map of the Pacific Ocean, but its name is synonymous with Bataan, Corregidor and Guadalcanal.

The BRAINE was part of the anti-submarine screen for a Task Force, consisting of six carriers, battleships, cruisers and other screening destroyers. This task force crossed the International Date Line on 4 October 1943 at Latitude 20'N and the crew of the BRAINE became members of the Imperial Domain of the Golden Dragon. The task force encountered no enemy action, except for anti-aircraft defense of the island. On the return trip a pilot from one of the carriers stalled on take off and crashed into the sea. The BRAINE was the nearest destroyer and rushed to pick up the pilot, returned him to his carrier and received the traditional treat of ice cream for the crew. The task force returned to Pearl Harbor without further incident. The crew was excited and pleased to participate in an action against the Japanese and earn their first of many battle stars.

After another short liberty in Pearl Harbor, the BRAINE, as part of the screening for a supply convoy, proceeded by a long route to the southwest Pacific to join the Battle of the Solomon Islands. A few days out of Pearl Harbor, enroute to Pago Pago in the Samoa Islands, strange rumors began to circulate about Pollywogs and the horrible punishment inflicted by the Shellbacks.

A Proclamation soon appeared ordering the lowly Pollywogs (everyone, including officers, who had never crossed the Equator) to appear before the Royal Court of Neptunus Rex and accept the decreed punishment and humiliation when the BRAINE crossed the Equator on 17 October 1943 at Longitude 161° 44'W. The poor Pollywogs did not know that the BRAINE was transporting fifty AWOL sailors, who had been previously initiated as Shellbacks, back to their ships in the South Pacific.

After an unappetizing breakfast which the Pollywogs were forced to eat with their hands, the initiation began. The ship was thoroughly searched for cringing Pollywogs to be sure that no one escaped their punishment. The Pollywogs lined up on the starboard main deck and were forced to crawl through a gauntlet of Shellbacks manning fire hoses and paddles made of stuffed canvas resembling a baseball bat and almost as hard. Drenched with sea water, they were forced to crawl up the ladder to the superstructure and accept their punishment in front of the Royal Court of Neptunus Rex.

The Court was presided over by King Neptune himself, an old salt of a Boatswains Mate Malloy, who was covered with tattoos. The King was assisted by Davy Jones and the Royal Queen, Royal Doctor, Royal Dentist, Royal Barber, Royal Chaplain, Royal Baby and Royal Scribe.

After the lowly Pollywog was judged he was forced to consume a bitter concoction and kiss the belly of the Royal Baby. The hair of the Pollywogs was trimmed with decorative paths through his scalp and smeared with a mixture of chocolate and grease. The staggering Pollywog then crawl down the port ladder and through another gauntlet of Shellbacks. After cleaning up, most of the newly initiated Shellbacks visited the ship's barber to have the rest of their hair removed. For several weeks they were easily identified by their skinheads, but proudly displayed their Shellback credentials, hoping for another crossing of the Equator in the future.

The ship made a short fueling stop at Pago Pago, a beautiful island in the Samoa chain, and proceed to the Solomon Islands via New Caledonia and New Hebrides, all the time honing the skills of the crew at their battle stations.

The BRAINE arrived in the Solomon Islands in late October ready to engage in action. As the ship anchored in Purvis Bay at Florida Island near Guadalcanal, the crew saw sunken Japanese barges--another sign that the war was close at hand.

The BRAINE joined Destroyer Squadron 45, with the USS FULLAM - DD474 as flagship, with destroyers USS BENNETT - DD473, USS GUEST - DD472, USS HALFORD - DD480, USS HUDSON - DD475, USS WADSWORTH - DD516, USS TERRY - DD513 and the USS ANTHONY - DD515, a destroyer that would later play an important role in the lives of the crew members of the BRAINE.

The next stepping stone for securing the Solomon Islands was the largest of the island group, Bougainville. Task Force 31 with Destroyer Squadron 45 which included the BRAINE was formed to escort a large convoy of troop transports, supply ships, LST's and smaller landing craft enroute to an invasion at Empress Augusta Bay on the island of Bougainville scheduled for 1 November 1943. The squadron provided submarine screen for the convoy and fire support for the landing troops. During the month of November 1943, the BRAINE settled into a routine of escorting support convoys to the beachhead on the island of Bougainville. The reality of war returned abruptly on the night of 3 December 1943. The BRAINE operating with Task Force 31 was again part of a submarine screen for a slow supply convoy for Bougainville, running at ten knots. The ship had orders not to fire unless attacked which would give away our position. The night was black with no moon. The BRAINE was on the starboard side of the convoy close to Treasury Island. Suddenly Japanese torpedo planes, flying low over the island to avoid radar contact, spotted the formation and attacked.

The attack happened so quickly that General Quarters was sounded and the 20mm and 40mm batteries started firing as the crew rushed to their battle stations. The Officer of the Deck reported that three planes approaching on the starboard side, flying in a triangle formation, with a lead plane on the point.

This pilot suddenly saw the BRAINE broadside to him and launched his torpedo too late and the torpedo went between the stacks. The other two dropped their torpedoes and were so close to the BRAINE as they were diving, the torpedoes went under the ship before they could arm, reached their depth and exploded harmlessly in the center of the convoy. Other ships in the convoy fired on the planes and one was shot down by the USS BENNETT - DD473.

During one of the convoy trips in December the BRAINE had its first submarine contact and dropped depth charges in a pattern. No kill could be confirmed. The BRAINE continued the convoy duty with Task Force 31.7 during January 1944. The Japanese attempted many air attacks on the convoys but were repelled by the air cover from the new airfield on Bougainville. In January 1944 DesRon 45 steamed to Havannah Harbor, Efrate, New Hebrides for routine maintenance alongside a destroyer tenders USS MEDUSA (AR-1) and the USS DIXIE (AD-14). Enroute the squadron conducted routine drills of target practice and torpedo attack runs. The squadron returned to Purvis Bay in the Solomon Islands in late January to prepare for the next operation.

The ring of Allied bases continued to form around the Japanese base at Rabaul. On 15 February 1944, the BRAINE was again a part of the supporting force for the landings on Green Island at the northern end of the Solomon Islands. An airbase was planned for Green Island for land based bombers to continue the assault on Rabaul.

At dawn, when the convoy was a few miles south of Green Island, eight Japanese dive bombers attacked the formation. The BRAINE maneuvered at high speeds in tight circles and opened fire on the nearest plane diving on the ship. The dive bomber was hit, burst into flames

and crashed in the sea. A second dive bomber dived at the formation and dropped a bomb about five hundred yards from the BRAINE. When the landing was successful the BRAINE returned with the squadron to Purvis Bay at Guadalcanal.

On 24 February 1944, after fueling at Treasury Island, DesRon 45 formed up and proceeded to the Rabaul area for shore bombardment and went to General Quarters as the squadron steamed into St. Georges Channel to put the finishing touch on the Japanese base at Rabaul.

The Squadron in column heavily bombarded the Japanese base starting huge fires which spread to other installations. The BRAINE expended 500 rounds of 5" ammunition. It was a perfect operation carried out on a very dark night and completed without mishap. On 20 March 1944 the BRAINE was again part of the screen for the support of an invasion of Emirau Island north of the enemy base of Rabaul. The operation was conducted without enemy interference. In March and early April the BRAINE made several trips as escorts to re-supply the landing force at Emirau. The Squadron returned to Purvis Bay.

The BRAINE had been at sea for seven months with only occasional recreation on the islands of the Solomon's. In mid-April good news quickly circulated around the ship. The BRAINE along with the battleships USS NEW MEXICO (BB-41) and USS PENNSYLVANIA (BB-38) with escorting destroyers were to proceed to Sydney, Australia for ten days for recreation and minor repairs. The liberty in Sydney was exhilarating with friendly girls, drinking and dancing. While in Australian, the BRAINE celebrated its first birthday on 11 May 1944 with a change in command. Commander William W. Fitts, USN relieved Captain Newman who was promoted to a Destroyer Division Commander.

Under the command of her new skipper, the BRAINE proceeded north to the war zone. A fueling stop was made at New Caledonia and the ship was repainted with a camouflage. Additional fueling stops were made at the New Hebrides Islands and Guadalcanal. The BRAINE conducted training exercises in the area with the battleships USS NEW MEXICO (BB-40), USS PENNSYLVANIA (BB-38) and USS IDAHO (BB-42). The task force then proceeded to the recently captured Kawajalien Island in the Marshall Islands. Here Captain Fitts inspected his new ship and crew and made preparations for another large invasion. At Kawajalien and Eniwetok, Task Forces of aircraft carriers, battleships, cruisers and destroyers were being formed, along with the troop transports, LST's, tankers and escort vessels for the invasion of the island of Saipan in the Marianas Island Group. The Marianas Island Group consisting of the large islands of Saipan, Tinian and Guam and smaller islands in the chain. The task force arrived off Saipan on 14 June 1944. Fire Support Unit 7 consisted of the battleship USS NEW MEXICO (BB-40) and the heavy cruisers USS MINNEAPOLIS (CA-36) and USS SAN FRANCISCO (CA-38) along with the BRAINE and other screening destroyers. The unit bombarded Saipan prior to the landings scheduled for the next day.

Reports were received that Japanese AK's and luggers were reported being in Tinian Harbor, the large island south of Saipan. The Commander of Fire Support 7 ordered the BRAINE to "work them over." With the battle ship NEW MEXICO backing us up, the BRAINE entered Tinian Harbor and the range was closed. The boats appeared to be all small sampans or luggers and were taken under fire. Return fire from a Japanese 4.7 shore battery was observed from the north of Tinian and the BRAINE shifted its firepower to this target. Hits were observed and the battery was silenced. At about the same time, a second shore battery to the south of town commenced fire and the BRAINE shifted its firepower to this target. The shore

battery hit the BRAINE amidships, port side with many near misses. The BRAINE was ordered to clear the area and did so at flank speed.

The engagement cost the lives of three crew members and fifteen were wounded. The NEW MEXICO transferred a doctor to the BRAINE and the BRAINE transferred the three most seriously wounded to the NEW MEXICO as the two ships returned to the fire support area off Saipan. That afternoon the BRAINE crew sadly buried their fallen shipmates at sea. The shore battery hit caused considerable damage to the 40mm mounts, the torpedo mount, three torpedoes, the uptake area of No. 2 stack, and the ammunition storage areas.

On 15 June 1944 during the landings on Saipan, the BRAINE was attacked by six Japanese dive bombers at about 3000 yards; the planes were driven off. About 300 miles west of the Marianas a large Japanese aircraft carrier task force was approaching. On 17 June the BRAINE with DesDiv 90 was ordered to join Task Force 58.2 as a screening destroyer for our aircraft carriers headed for a showdown with the enemy task force.

While part of the screen for our aircraft carriers, the BRAINE was attacked three times by enemy planes which were driven off. Our pilots destroyed over 300 enemy aircraft and their pilots while suffering minimal losses. The engagement was officially the Battle of the Philippine Sea, but was more popularly called "The Marianas Turkey Shoot" and was a major turning point of the war in the Pacific. Our pilots had to return to their carriers after dark. Admiral Mitchner made a daring decision. The screening destroyers ringing the formation all turned on their searchlights and the carriers turned on all their landing lights. The returning aircraft were low on fuel and the pilots landed on any convenient carrier. Many crash landed into the sea within the formation. The BRAINE picked up five airmen. Because of the damage to the BRAINE caused by the hit from the enemy shore battery, the ship left the task force at the Marianas and proceeded to Pearl Harbor via Eniwetok, crossing the International Date Line on 5 July 1944. The ship arrived in Pearl Harbor on 10 July 1944 to await orders for repairs. The good news was received with joy--the BRAINE was going back to the states to San Pedro Navy Yard for repairs.

After a month at San Pedro Navy Yard for repairs, the overhaul of the BRAINE was complete. In August she departed for Puget Sound to escort the USS SOUTH DAKOTA (BB-57) to Pearl Harbor. In mid-September the BRAINE was part of TG 33.3 and departed Pearl Harbor via Eniwetok to the Admiralty Islands in preparation for the invasion of the Philippine Islands. As the BRAINE crossed the Equator for the second time Neptunus Rex once again visited the ship with great fanfare for the initiation of the Pollywogs, including the Captain, into his underwater domain. Upon arrival at Manus Island in the Admiralty Islands, the BRAINE loaded with stores and ammunition in preparation for the largest invasion to date - the return of General MacArthur to Philippines - the invasion of Leyte Island. On 20 - 21 October 1944, the BRAINE provided intensive fire support for the ground troops as they landed and repelled several air attacks. The BRAINE was close by as General MacArthur waded ashore and delivered his famous, "I Have Returned" speech.

For the next month the ship provided escort for the re-supply echelons from Admiralty and New Guinea. During one trip a submarine contact was detected and several depth charges were dropped with the results unknown.

On 1 December 1944, the USS BRAINE was detached from DesRon 45 and ordered to join DesRon 23, the famed "Little Beavers" with which she served until the end of the War. On 15 December 1944, the BRAINE was part of the screen and bombardment group for the

invasion of Mindoro and had her first experience with kamikaze planes. She was attacked by four planes. The first plane dropped a bomb that landed 100 feet off the starboard quarter. The plane was shot down and three other aerial attackers were driven off.

As the Pacific War progressed the convoys became larger. In early January the BRAINE was ordered to be part of the large convoy enroute to the invasion of Luzon at Lingayen Gulf. On the moonless night of 7 January 1945, off the entrance to Manila Bay, the radar detected a probing by a Japanese destroyer. The protecting escort fired starshells to illuminate the enemy and sank it with devastating fire. The Japanese ship was one of the destroyers of the Hatsuharu class. This was the last engagement between surface ships of World War II. In support of the invasion the BRAINE drove off several air attacks. The ship was grounded on an uncharted shoal and returned to Leyte for repairs in a floating dry-dock, then continued to act as escort for the re-supply echelons.

In mid-February the BRAINE again escorted troop ships and provided close-in fire support for the paratrooper landings on the island of Corregidor. The ship encountered an enemy minefield and destroyed several mines by gunfire. In mid-March the BRAINE escorted troop carriers and provided fire support for the landings at Zambiangon on the island of Mindanao in the southern Philippines.

Meanwhile the invasion at Okinawa was in progress. Destroyers were assigned to picket duty about forty miles out to act as an early warning radar system. The picket ships were under constant kamikaze attack. As messages were decoded about the action, the names of familiar sister destroyers were listed as casualties. They were either sunk or damaged. In April, fifteen new crew members reported on board the BRAINE. On 13 May LT. Jack B. Lahrmer, USNR reported on board as Executive Officer.

Two days later, the BRAINE with DesRon 23 was ordered to Okinawa. The USS BRAINE arrived at the anchorage at Kerama Retto in Okinawa in mid-May of 1945. Three new officers reported to supervise and operate new, advanced radar and fire control equipment. On 25 May of 1945 the BRAINE proceeded to Picket Station No 5, which had been subjected to heavy kamikaze attacks. She relieved the USS BENNION (DD-662) and took her assigned position with the USS ANTHONY (DD-515) and four "little boys," better known as "pall bearers" - the LCS(L) 13, 82, 86, and 123.

The formation immediately came under air attack by the kamikaze planes. During that night, four enemy planes were shot down. Another air attack soon ensued and four planes were shot down by the combat air patrol under control of the fire directors of the BRAINE. The BRAINE and the ANTHONY shot down an enemy "Betty" which was carrying a baka bomb - a human guided missile. For the next twenty-four inclement weather prevented further attacks, but the kamikaze planes frequently flew overhead, keeping the crew at continuous General Quarters.

May 27th was the 40th anniversary of Japan's victory against the Russians in the Sea of Japan. The Key to Japan's victory was two cruisers presented by Argentina, along with a naval advisor, Domencq Garcia. On Sunday the 27th of May, Admiral Toyodo orders 175 planes to attack the beachhead and picket ships at Okinawa. About 0745 the crew of the BRAINE had just secured from General Quarters. The sky was overcast and there was no air cover.

Suddenly, four kamikaze planes, which were identified as "Vals" dove out of the overcast and attacked the picket station. The first plane was shot down by the combined fire of the BRAINE and the ANTHONY. The second plane was set afire and crashed close aboard the starboard side of the ANTHONY hurling the pilot onto the superstructure and causing some



minor damage to the uptakes of the No. 2 stack. The third plane was set afire as it flew over the ANTHONY.

"The plane narrowly missed us. I watched the joker pass over us almost to the wave tops, then pull up in a left climbing dive to about 1400 feet and then into a dive into the BRAINE," recalled Commander C.J. Van Arsdall, Captain of the ANTHONY.

As the plane approached the BRAINE, Captain Fitts ordered right full rudder and flank speed. The plane came in almost directly over the bow, just above the main deck. It sheered off a wing on the No. 1 gun and crashed into the No. 2 Handling Room, which exploded and killed the men on that gun. The gun crew on the forward 40mm guns were either killed or thrown into the sea. The plane which hit the BRAINE carried a 550 pound bomb with a delayed action fuse which skidded on and exploded in the Wardroom, demolishing the Combat Information Center. The Doctor, the new Executive Officer and the Fire Control Officers were killed. The men in the forward medical aid station and repair party were killed.

Within seconds the fourth plane close on the tail of the first, approached the BRAINE sharp on the starboard bow. It sheered one of its wings on the starboard boat davit and crashed in flames into the deck amidships, and buried itself into the sick bay and supply office. The bombs it was carrying exploded in the uptakes of the No. 2 stack, blowing the stack and the fighter directors into the sea. The force of the impact and the explosions ruptured a high pressure steam line. The amidships medical unit and repair party were killed.

For the next hour the BRAINE was running out of control and moved in a large circle at about 20 knots. After Steering attempted to hold a steady course, but due to a discrepancy in the rudder indicator and actual rudder angle further attempts were unsuccessful. With no water pressure to flood the forward magazines, or to fight the fires, Captain Fitts ordered the men on the bow and the men amidships, who were trapped between the fires, to abandon ship, taking wounded crewmembers with them. The gig was lowered with the more seriously wounded. All power was lost in the after section of the ship when steam to the after generator failed.

All communications were immediately lost on the bridge. The raging fires burned out of control. Their fury was fed by the spilled gasoline and they ignited the shells and ammunition of all four 40mm clipping rooms. The torpedoes were torn loose from their mountings. Many of the crew distinguished themselves that day, fighting fires, jettisoning 5", 20mm, and 40 mm ammunition, and caring for the wounded. The men on the after part of the ship were isolated and not aware of the situation forward, lacked communication with the bridge.

The BRAINE was finally brought under control and was stopped. The ANTHONY and the LCS(L) -86, and 123 came alongside to assist in the fire fight and to care for the wounded. The Marine Corsairs dipped their wings over the survivors in the shark-infested waters. Some were later rescued by the LCS(L) - 86 and 82. More wounded were picked up by PBM-5 from Rescue Squadron VH-3.

Four hours later the fires on board the BRAINE were extinguished. Those crew members who had been transferred to the ANTHONY received emergency care. The USS REEVES (DE-156) and the tug, USS ART 76, came out from Kerama Retto to assist. The REEVES transferred their doctor and Chief Pharmacist Mate to the ANTHONY. They worked diligently, while they proceeded at top speed to transfer the wounded to hospital ships, and tended to their medical needs.

The casualty report listed twenty-seven crewmembers killed and forty missing. The missing were later confirmed as Killed in Action. Among the casualties were eight officers and

fifty-nine enlisted men killed and 102 wounded. Fifty were seriously enough to be hospitalized. The USS BRAINE suffered the highest casualty rate for any destroyer that did not sink.

The BRAINE was moored alongside a tender to have her damage assessed. The hull was found to be intact, but there was severe damage to the after fire room and engine room. The motor from the first plane was imbedded in the Officer's Quarters, which had been destroyed in the initial kamikaze attack and impact. The body of the pilot from the first plane was found wearing a regulation Japanese uniform. He was wearing Texas style cowboy boots, and carried several ceremonial dolls with him to his death. The motor from the second plane was imbedded into the deck of the BRAINE. His wallet was later found. In it was a carefully placed picture of the pilot's wife and child.

One of the planes had a Pratt & Whitney engine and was equipped with Goodyear tires. The damaged torpedoes were delicately removed and jettisoned off the ship. The IC Room was undamaged and the gyro-compass was found to be operational. Temporary communications were rigged with sound powered phones between the Engine Room, Bridge, and After Steering. For the next few weeks the crew, who had remained with the BRAINE, cleaned up the ship and made temporary repairs for the long voyage home. Steel plates were welded over the gaping holes in the deck. The fighter director was lowered and welded in the area of the ship which received the first hit and supports were welded to support the bridge. Those men who were killed were buried at sea. On the 19th of June, 1945, the crew of the BRAINE held a Memorial Service for their fallen comrades, and the ship departed for the States.

The BRAINE was escorted by the USS WATERS (APD-8). Captain Fits wanted all wounded who could walk to sail home with the ship.

The first stop was at Saipan, Marianas, where wounded were received from the hospitals in the area. The BRAINE proceeded to Eniwetok for fueling and on to Pearl Harbor, celebrating two Independence Days, by crossing the International Date Line on the Fourth of July. This was seen by the crew as recognition for its heroics. At Pearl Harbor the hull patches were strengthened in anticipation of heavy weather enroute home. More men who had been wounded reported on board.

Crews from new destroyers moored alongside the BRAINE and headed for combat were shocked at the damage. Letters to the Captain began to arrive from families of the men killed, or reported missing. Some of the crew who came on board had not written home about the damage the BRAINE had received. Their parents could not believe they were casualties. One woman wrote a sad letter. She had written her husband a "Dear John" letter and she hoped he had not received it.

The voyage to San Diego was just within the BRAINE's fuel supply. A submarine contact caused some anxious moments, but after several depth charge runs by escorting destroyers, the contact was lost.

The BRAINE arrived at San Diego on 19 July 1945, in heavy overcast, with no radar and only six hours of fuel left.

The trip through the Panama Canal was uneventful and the BRAINE arrived at South Boston Navy Yard on 6 August 1945, exactly two years from her departure. On that same day half way around the world, an earth-shaking event was taking place - the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. No member of the BRAINE crew ever disagreed with President Truman's decision. The ship was scheduled to be repaired and returned to the Pacific for the

invasion of Japan. Captain Fitts was relieved as Commanding Officer by Lt. Cdr. Marlin D. Clausner, USN.

The Navy Yard removed the entire superstructure to clear battle damage and provide access for maintenance and repairs. The after boiler room casings were extremely damaged. The economizers were twisted and broken. The safety valve was sheared.

The remains of the second suicide plane were removed from the boilers. Visual inspections revealed no damage to the other pressure parts of the boilers. Hydrostatic tests were conducted on the boilers and both held pressure. Measurements indicated the boilers were slightly out of line. New safety valves and the economizers were installed and new boiler casings were built to the boilers new location. When the main deck was removed, it was determined why both the main generators tripped off after the second suicide plane crashed into the BRAINE. The two cables that cross-connected the electrical systems were placed side by side on the centerline of the ship under the main deck. The damage control manual placed the cables two feet below the main deck, one on either side of the ship. Despite the efforts of the Captain and Engineering Officers the cables were reinstalled on the centerline. Fortunately, the decision was never tested again.

Navy Day was celebrated in October 1945 and the Navy Yard held an open house. Families of crew members, who served aboard, including those men killed in action, were permitted on board and visited with crew members about the action the BRAINE and her crew were part of in Okinawa.

Gradually, the ship was being restored to its original configuration and some problems did occur. The main turbine lubricating oil systems had been shut down in August and they did not start again until the following January. The oil in the tanks was too stiff to flow. After some procedures, the oil finally began to circulate. The turbines were put on turning gear to start to remove the sag in the shafts from sitting so long.

The superstructure and all the components from the after stack forward to No.2 5 3/8" gun were replaced and rewired. The process of checking connections was long and tedious. The damaged officer's country was repaired and the superstructure replaced, including the wardroom, combat information center, IC Room and radio shack, as well as damaged armament.

In early 1946, as the time neared for sea trials, personnel moved on board. Many of the experienced officers and petty officers had been discharged and their replacements were new officers and seamen just out of boot camp. The propulsion equipment and control systems were tested along side the dock. At last the BRAINE was ready for sea trials. They were completed and the ship was ordered to Charleston, South Carolina for decommissioning. The BRAINE departed Boston On March 1946 with only three qualified officers to stand underway watches. The enlisted men were placed on port/starboard watches to man the ship, the boiler rooms, and engine rooms. The North Atlantic was very cold. Heating the ship became a problem. The piping for space heaters had not been connected. As the ship moved south the problem disappeared.

The ship was prepared for moth-balling and finally decommissioned on 26 July 1946. For her service in World War II, the BRAINE earned nine battle stars. Her toll on the Japanese was a destroyer, six planes and six invasion supports. Her crew was awarded a Navy Cross, a Legion of Merit, five Silver Stars, a Navy and Marine Corps Medal, ten Bronze Stars, fourteen Commendation Ribbons and 187 Purple Hearts.

With the Cold War in progress and the start of the Korean War, a larger Navy was needed. Many Fletcher class destroyers were taken out of reserve and placed on active duty. On 6 April 1951 the USS BRAINE (DD-630) was recommissioned at the Charleston Navy Yard. Commander Charleston Group, Atlantic Reserve Fleet and Commander Sub Group ONE arrived on board and after inspection, addressed the ship's company and guests. The new commanding officer, CDR Eugene D. Laminman read his orders and assumed command and the first watch was set. The first post-war crew consisted mainly of Naval Reserve Officers and Petty Officers, with some experienced regular Navy personnel transferred from other ships in the active fleet. Seamen and firemen apprentices came directly from boot camp. The personnel were quartered aboard the destroyer tender USS ARCADIA (AD-23) until the ship was retrofitted.

After sea trials in the Atlantic, the BRAINE proceeded directly to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba for a shakedown cruise, conducting exercises and training with the Fleet Training Command in the Caribbean. In October 1951 she returned to duty in U.S. coastal waters in Newport, Rhode Island, the home port of Destroyer Squadron 18. The BRAINE entered the Boston Navy Yard for modifications. New radar was installed on a tri-pod mast and a commodore's cabin constructed on the superstructure forward of the No. 1 stack. The BRAINE departed Newport in April 1952 for a tour of duty in the Mediterranean Sea. As a component of the Sixth Fleet, she made ports of call to Gibraltar; Cagliari, Sardinia; Cannes, France; Taranto, Italy; Catania, Sicily; Trieste, FTT; Venice, Italy; Golfe Juan, France; Rhodes, Greece; Izmir, Turkey; Augusta Bay, Sicily; Bari, Italy; Split, Yugoslavia; Monaco; Villefranche, France and Lisbon, Portugal. In May 1952 CDR Doyen Klein, USN assumed command of the BRAINE.

While operating in the Mediterranean in the summer of 1952, the BRAINE participated with other Sixth Fleet components and NATO in three training exercise maneuvers, USEX VII - and Italian and United States Anti-submarine Warfare exercise; BEHIVE II - an allied amphibious landing exercise at Malta; and MEDLANDEX XIX - an amphibious assault exercise on the Island of Crete. While in Split, Yugoslavia the BRAINE escorted the aircraft carrier USS CORAL SEA (CVA-43) with Marshal Tito on board. The carrier put on a display of striking naval air power for the Yugoslav chief.

The 1952 cruise was not without disaster. During a darkened ship maneuver while crossing the Atlantic, the aircraft carrier USS WASP (CV-18) collided with the minesweeper USS HOBSON (DMS-26) resulting in the sinking of the HOBSON with heavy loss of lives. A second tragedy occurred on board the BRAINE. While exercising a man-overboard drill at sea, Fireman Apprentice Michael D. Haughey was lost in a motor whale boat accident.

In late October, the BRAINE returned to Boston Navy Yard for needed maintenance and repair. At that time extensive changes in armament took place. The K-guns, torpedo tubes, 20mm and 40mm anti-aircraft mounts were removed. The forward 40mm guns were replaced with hedge hogs. The No. 3 - 5"38 gun mount was removed and replaced by twin 3"-50 gun mounts. The midships 40mm mounts were replaced with twin 3"-50 mounts.

She joined the Sixth Fleet again in May 1953 for another cruise to the Mediterranean. On 25 July 1953, CDR James H. Elsom, USN assumed command. The BRAINE made ports of call to Greece, Sicily, Italy, Spain, and Gibraltar. In October she returned for a yard period in the Charlestown Navy Yard, Boston. In late October the BRAINE returned to the United States coastal waters participating in anti-submarine warfare exercises in Key West, Florida and in plane guard duty with the Naval Air Training Squadrons at Pensacola Naval Air Station. She

conducted further training at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. She returned to Newport. Hurricane Carol slammed into Newport pinning the BRAINE against the dock. After minor repairs preparing for her reassignment to the Pacific Fleet, the BRAINE departed Newport in November 1954 for San Diego.

Destroyer Squadron 18 was re-designated as Destroyer Squadron 21 consisting of the USS BRAINE (DD-630), USS MULLANY (DD-528), USS HAZELWOOD (DD-531), USS COWELL (DD-547), USS STODDARD (DD-566), USS COGSWELL (DD-651), AND USS INGERSOLL (DD-652) with San Diego as their home port. With the BRAINE as flagship of DesRon 21 and DesDiv 212, they immediately departed on a tour of duty in the Far East. The Chinese Communists had launched repeated attacks on the Chinese Nationalist held Tachen Islands. In January and February 1955, the BRAINE along with the USS MIDWAY (CVB-41) , USS WASP (CV-18), USS YORKTOWN (CV-10), USS ESSEX (CVS-9) and many other famous WWII ships assisted in the evacuation of 25,000 Nationalist military personnel and 17,000 civilians from the Tachen Islands to Formosa. During the Formosa Patrol, EMFN Arthur Littlejohn was lost at sea during darken ship.

Following her assignment to the Formosan Patrol, the BRAINE returned to Japan, visiting the atomic-bombed city of Hiroshima before sailing to Yokosuka for repair availability. The BRAINE left Japan, taking the "Great Circle Route" to San Diego via Midway Island and Pearl Harbor. She arrived in San Diego 19 June 1955. On 25 July CDR Mervin O. Slater, USN assumed command.

In January 1956 the BRAINE, with other ships of Destroyer Division 212, was deployed again to the Far East. During this cruise, she called at Yokosuka, Buckner Bay, Subic Bay and Hong Kong. The BRAINE along with the heavy cruiser COLUMBUS and the destroyer USS ISHERWOOD (DD-520) made a goodwill trip to the Malay Peninsula, stopping at Port Swettenham and Penang. Enroute to Port Swettenham a distress call was received from an Italian ship FERNANDO FOZZO out of Genoa. The seriously ill sailor was transferred to the BRAINE in the Straits of Malacca and taken to the Kuala Lunspur hospital. Upon returning to the United States in July 1956, the ship underwent a thorough overhaul in the shipyard and then returned to duty with the Pacific Fleet.

Again in 1957, the BRAINE, in command of Destroyer Division 212, made a cruise to the Far East. Ports of call included Melbourne, Australia, Guam, Yokosuka, Kobe and Hong Kong. The BRAINE returned to the states in October 1957 and participated with DesDiv 212 in local fleet operations. CDR Donald A. Henning, USN assumed command on 24 October 1957.

In May 1958 was again deployed to WesPac. The ship made ports of call at Pearl Harbor, Midway, Kobe, Yokosuka, Okinawa, Subic Bay, Singapore, Kaohsiung and Boko-ko. The BRAINE returned to the states in December 1958.

On 27 February 1959 the BRAINE entered the San Francisco Naval Shipyard at Hunter's Point, San Francisco, California where she underwent an extensive overhaul and installation of SQ5-32(RDT) sonar. In June the ship sailed to San Diego to participate in local operations and underway training exercises with Destroyer Division 212.

On 15 August 1959 the BRAINE again deployed to WesPac with DesDiv 212 and joined the attack carrier USS HANCOCK (CVA-19) at Pearl Harbor. The division then proceeded to Subic Bay, Philippines via Guam where they conducted air operations with the carrier. In mid-October the division, in company with the HANCOCK, proceeded to Hong Kong. She returned to Subic Bay and then proceeded to Sasebo, Japan. The BRAINE then joined the USS BAUER (DE-1025) for a three day trip to Chinhae, Korea. Upon completion of ROKN training,

she returned to Sasebo, Japan and then on to a Fast-break Exercise with various units of the Pacific Fleet. During the exercise, typhoon weather damaged MT 51 by bending inward the gun port seal and gun shield. On 27 November CDR David A. Shoner assumed command. Early in December the BRAINE returned to Yokosuka, Japan for repair availability and then departed for the United States.

The USS BRAINE (DD-630) spent the first eight months of 1960 conducting local ASW operations in preparation for joining the USS BENNINGTON (CVS-20) as a Hunter Killer Task Group. She deployed for the Western Pacific in company with DesDiv 212 on 2 October. She conducted local ASW operations in the Hawaiian area. The division departed Pearl Harbor on 21 November for HUK operations in the Philippine Islands. During her cruise she made ports of call at Subic Bay, P.I., Hong Kong and Yokosuka, Japan. She departed Yokosuka on 19 April 1961 for San Diego.

The BRAINE conducted local operations in the San Diego area, and in June entered the U.S. Naval Shipyard in Long Beach for an extensive overhaul. Following her yard overhaul, she returned to San Diego for a period of underway training designed to prime the ship for deployment to the Western Pacific. On 14 August CDR Robert W. Lowman, USN assumed command.

In January 1962 the BRAINE departed San Diego for the Western Pacific via Pearl Harbor and proceeded to the Philippines in company with DesDiv 212 and the new super carrier USS RANGER (CVA-61). She sailed north to Taiwan for the Formosa Patrol. During the next few months she participated in several joint operations with the British and Australian navies. She visited Yokosuka and Kobe, Japan, Hong Kong and Okinawa. Returning to the United States in July, she was engaged in local operations out of San Diego. In November the BRAINE was ordered to Panama Canal Zone on escort duty during the Cuban crisis, returning to San Diego for tender availability along side the USS DIXIE (AD-1). CDR Edward A. Williams, USN assumed command on 12 December.

In January 1963 the BRAINE was awarded the DesRon 21 "E" for overall excellence. At the same time, the BRAINE became one of the few ships in the Pacific Fleet to earn a Gold "A" for five consecutive years of outstanding ASW performance. She conducted local ASW operations, ASW school ship and night plane guarding for the USS CONSTELLATION (CVA-64). In June the BRAINE was in San Francisco for plane guarding for the USS MIDWAY (CVB-41) and anti-aircraft exercise. On 15 October CDR Robert Juarez, USN assumed command. The BRAINE departed San Diego en route to the Western Pacific with Destroyer Flotilla Nine and proceeded to Subic Bay via Pearl Harbor. She sailed north to Sasebo, Japan for extensive repairs on her hull requiring dry dock. Upon completion of repairs, she proceeded to Kaohsiung, Taiwan to begin Formosa Patrol with DesDiv 212.

The BRAINE operated as a unit of the Seventh Fleet from January to April 1964, participating in Strike Exercises/Comtux and other operations. During this period she visited Yokosuka and Beppu, Japan; Subic Bay, P.I.; Kaohsiung, Taiwan; Buckner Bay, Okinawa and Hong Kong. She participated in operations in the South China Sea with USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA-31). She departed Buckner Bay on 30 March for San Diego. In May she conducted training operations in the San Diego area with midshipmen for their summer cruise, with visits to Tacoma, Washington and Port Chicago, California. She spent the latter part of the year in yard overhaul.

In 1964 the BRAINE went Hollywood. Many of the Scenes for the movie, "In Harms Way," starring John Wayne were filmed on the BRAINE. Many celebrities visited the ship. The BRAINE appeared briefly in one scene and was acknowledged in the credits.

CDR Elton V. Conger, USN assumed command in January 1965. In February the BRAINE conducted exercises and drills and refresher training with COMFLETRAGRU. She returned to San Diego and participated in Exercise TEE SHOT, an anti-air warfare exercise. In April she conducted Flotilla Operations off the West Coast. On 4 June the BRAINE, as a unit of Cruiser Destroyer Flotilla NINE, departed for the Western Pacific via the northern great circle route. After a rough crossing, she arrived at Subic Bay and joined TG 77.7 for special operations in the South China Sea. On 7 September the BRAINE covered the coast of South Vietnam firing 2000 rounds of ammunition at fifty different targets. After a trip to Japan she returned to San Diego via Subic Bay, Guam, Midway and Pearl Harbor.

The BRAINE was alongside the USS Prairie (AD-15) and at the US Naval Station in San Diego for upkeep the entire month of January 1966, through 13 February. On 14 February the BRAINE was underway for Flotilla Operations which were highlighted by a weekend trip to San Francisco. The remainder of February through 27 May consisted of ASW and gunnery exercises and tender availability alongside the USS Piedmont (AD-17) and USS Prairie (AD-15). On 28 May CDR Fred J. Fleiner, USN relieved Commander Elton V. Conger as Commanding Officer. On 11 June, BRAINE embarked forty-two midshipmen and departed San Diego to participate in the 1966 PAC MIDTRARON Training Cruise. Every aspect of shipboard life and activities was stressed throughout the six-week cruise, which included liberty in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, Everett, Washington and San Francisco, California. The major fleet exercise BELAYING PIN in July was the graduation exercise for the midshipmen. The most significant accomplishment of BRAINE during the exercise was the detecting and holding down of the exercise submarine USS RAZORBACK (SS-394) for ten hours. On 15 July BRAINE made her way into San Diego Harbor for a well deserved rest. On 28 July Commander Destroyer Division 212 shifted his pennant from BRAINE to the USS Stoddard (DD-566) On 29 July BRAINE was once again underway for the San Diego operations area for three days of ASW training before returning for a tender availability alongside the USS Dixie (AD-14) in preparation for her September deployment. On 14 September the BRAINE departed San Diego for the Western Pacific. Enroute BRAINE experienced a generator casualty and was forced to remain in Pearl Harbor until completion of repairs on 1 October. Encountering heavy weather with gale force winds and heavy seas BRAINE required a stopover in Midway for repairs. On 19 October she joined TG 77.7 on Yankee Station and participated in Operation Starlight. On 1 November BRAINE departed TG 77.7 to operate with TU 77.1.1. Their mission was to prevent coastal water craft from carrying war materials to the Communist troops in South Vietnam and provide gun-fire support for the First Marine Division. At one point while providing gun-fire support, from dawn to dusk, for fourteen straight days, she was refueled and re-supplied in the dark. On 4 November the BRAINE, engaged in a running gun battle with North Vietnamese shore batteries. The BRAINE returned the fire with over four hundred rounds of five-inch ammunition. During one engagement, the BRAINE received slight shrapnel damage, but no casualties were sustained. This marked the third time the BRAINE had been hit by enemy fire. (World War Two, Korea and Vietnam) Several cargo crafts were destroyed or damaged. The Commander Seventh Fleet awarded a commendation to the USS BRAINE for outstanding performance in the action off the coast of North Vietnam. The BRAINE was

nicknamed "The Galloping Ghost of the Vietnam Coast". On 7 November BRAINE departed TU 77.1.1 for availability alongside USS Hector (AR-7) in Kaohsiung, Taiwan.

On 18 November BRAINE departed Kaohsiung to operate as a unit of TG 77.7 however, discovery of a 35-foot section of bilge-keel torn loose on the Port side the BRAINE was forced to Da Nang harbor for repairs 25 through 28 November. On 30 November BRAINE proceeded to serve as gun support ship for the USS Long Beach (CGN-9). During the tour on Yankee Station, the BRAINE was visited by two actors from Hollywood, Mr. John Gavin, star of the TV series CONVOY and Miss Martha Raye, accompanied by a musical group.

On 16 December BRAINE departed Yankee Station and proceeded to Sasebo, Japan with TG 77.4. The remainder of 1966 was spent observing the Christmas Holidays and enjoying upkeep alongside the Sasebo based tender USS Ajax (AR-6).

LCDR BURGESS (Executive Officer) in command; the ship left Sasebo Japan on New Years Eve. The captain had been transferred to a naval hospital in Yokosuka, Japan for a minor operation. He would rejoin the ship in about a week. The BRAINE met the New Year with 12 foot seas as she tossed her way back to Yankee Station, in company with the USS MULLANY (DD-658) and the USS TICONDEROGA (CVA-14). This transit was marked with an emergency breakaway from the TICONDEROGA and a 51 degree roll. Upon arrival to Yankee Station the BRAINE was steaming IAW COMSEVENTHFLT Quarterly Employment Schedule and CTF 77 Op-Order 201-65.

On January 21, the ship arrived in Kaohsiung, Taiwan, and tied up for four days along side the USS HECTOR (AR-7) for an upkeep period prior to getting underway for Hong Kong. On 26 January, the ship moored in Hong Kong for five days of rest and relaxation. Tuesday, 5 February, the ship was underway from Hong Kong to Subic Bay, Republic of Philippines arriving there three days later. After off-loading ammunition, prior to departure for the United States, the ship took advantage of the good weather for a fresh coat of haze gray paint. After this repaint the BRAINE, USS HERBERT J. THOMAS (DD-833), and the USS CORAL SEA (CVA-43) set sail for Yokosuka, Japan, the ships' last stop before departure for San Diego, California. After days of snow and rain the ship left Yokosuka for the United States, steaming accordance with COMFIRSTFLT Quarterly Employment Schedule and CTG 17-2 LOI for the transit. At 1002 on 24 February the BRAINE tied up to Pier 2-D Naval Station, San Diego, California, having completed another successful tour in the Western Pacific.

The period from 24 February to 24 March was spent in the upkeep and holiday period. BRAINE went back to work in earnest on 24 March when she started a tender availability with the USS PRAIRIE (AD-15). Completing the availability on 8 April the ship then went into an upkeep period from 9-16 April, was assigned ASW School Ship from 17-20 April and gunnery school ship from 25 to 28 April. From 29 April until 7 June the ship was in an upkeep status until she started the Midshipman Training Cruise on 8 June.

On 8 June BRAINE embarked 25 third class and 5 first class midshipmen to commence the 1967 Pacific Midshipman Training Cruise. These Midshipmen were from a group of 598 future Naval Officers from the United States Naval Academy and the Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps (NROTC). From 8 to 25 June, BRAINE and the Midshipman spent seven days in port for upkeep, the remainder of the time on local operations in the Southern California op-area. 27 to 30 June was spent enroute to the BRAINE'S 4<sup>th</sup> of July port, Everett, Washington. The people of Everett went out of their way to make the Midshipman and the ship's company feel at home. Two parties were held in honor of the Midshipman with the festivities climaxing with the annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade.



From Everett, BRAINE went to San Diego, for a short three day upkeep period from 8 to 13 July. The next five days were spent enroute to the Hawaiian operating area where various drills and exercises were conducted. The ship visited Pearl Harbor for four days of rest and relaxation from 21 to 24 July. The ship then conducted another three days of operations off the coast of Hawaii and then from 27 July to 1 August BRAINE was enroute to San Diego. Upon arrival BRAINE debarked her thirty Midshipmen. During the cruise, the 1<sup>st</sup> class Midshipman performed duties as Junior Division Officers, standing bridge and Combat Information Center watches and acted as Junior Division Officers. The third class Midshipman were integrated into the crew and stood watches and performed maintenance and upkeep on the ship. Each Midshipman participated in the three departments (operations, engineering, and weapons) for a third of the time they were on board so that they would be exposed to the functions of an operating destroyer. The 18 ships involved in this cruise included the following: USS PREBLE (DLC-15), USS HULL (DD-945), USS HOEL (DDG-13), USS JOHN R. CRAIG (DD-885), USS PERKINS (DD-877), USS URLMAN (DD-687), USS RICHMOND K. TURNER (DIG-20), USS MULLANY (DD-758), USS COGSWELL (DD-651), USS FLOYD B. PARKS (DD-884), USS HENRY B. WILSON (DDG-7), USS STODDARD (DD-566), USS INGERSOLL (DD-652), USS HERBERT J. THOMAS (DD-833), USS EVERESOLE (DD-789), USS BENNER (DD-807), AND THE USS MENHADEN (SS-377)

The period from 6 August to 14 September was spent in an upkeep period with the ship making preparations for a three month shipyard overhaul.

On 15 September, BRAINE commenced a three month regular shipyard overhaul at the Mare Island Naval Shipyard, Vallejo, California. During these two days prior to entering the shipyard, BRAINE off-loaded ammunition and fuel oil to conform with the shipyard's safety regulations. On 27 September the ship entered dry dock and the following work was accomplished on the BRAINE'S hull:

- Replace, Sand blast, prepare and paint entire underwater
- Remove and repair both propeller shafts
- Repair a 25 foot section of the port bilge keel.

The ship left dry-dock on 27 October and work continued around the clock to meet deadlines. By 27 November the shipyard had installed two new 5"/38 gun mounts, and the crew installing three 3"/50 gun mounts and was now ready for a weapons and electronics test period. Dock trials commenced on 1 December for the machinery which had been overhauled. 6 December found the ship getting underway for the first time in two and a half months for the Bay Run. On 11 December, BRAINE once again got underway, this time for Sea Trials. On 18 December, on schedule, BRAINE completed her overhaul and on 19 December, loaded ammunition at the Naval Weapons Station, Concord, California. The following day the ship left for San Diego. BRAINE arrived San Diego, on 22 December upon which started a leave and holiday period to complete the year 1967 for the USS BRAINE (DD-630).

1968 was a cruise year for the USS BRAINE. On 1 January 1968 BRAINE was nested in San Diego harbor having recently returned from a three month yard period at Mare Island Naval Shipyard, Vallejo, California. BRAINE'S first test, refresher training, commenced on 12 February. BRAINE left the familiar surroundings of the Naval Station, San Diego and moored to the buoys south of the Anti-Submarine Warfare School. The isolated buoys were to be her home for the next six weeks.

Refresher training's purpose is to prepare a ship and her crew for the ultimate circumstances they might encounter. This is accomplished by extensive training and rigorous

testing. BRAINE began overconfident and untrained. After failing the first battle problem she took stock of herself. Her crew and officers spent long hours, peaking her long dormant equipment. Her at sea time was spent at general quarters forging the crew into an efficient unit capable of dealing with the myriad destroyer operations. On 23 March, BRAINE steamed out of San Diego harbor challenged by her final battle problem. She returned that afternoon having passed the test and qualified by Commander Fleet Training Group as ready to serve in action. More important BRAINE returned to the Naval Station piers with a crew confident in themselves and their ship.

After a week in port BRAINE returned to sea to participate in Composite Unit Training Exercise 6-68. The exercise gave BRAINE a chance to work with USS HORNE (DLG-30), USS STODDARD (DD-566) and USS INGERSOLL (DD-652), sister ships in Destroyer Squadron TWENTY-ONE, and hulls she would see a great deal of in the up-coming summer. She was also made to utilize her newly honed skills in an operational environment.

The week at sea was followed by two in port; they were not idle weeks. BRAINE had to prepare for her pre-deployment administration and medical inspection. A destroyer cannot exist on her operational skills alone; she must also maintain accurate logs and records. BRAINE'S administrative efficiency was examined on 17 and 18 April and was found satisfactory.

A Fleet Exercise is the most intensive and diversified operational training an Eastern Pacific ship is exposed to. BRAINE took part in "Beagle Leash" beginning on 23 April. Included in the exercise were the nucleus of ships who would undertake Vietnamese operations for the same time span as the BRAINE. Starting with an opposed sortie BRAINE ran the gamut of Anti-Submarine Warfare, Anti-Air Warfare, shore bombardment, and carrier operations. She was continually in company of other ships and was reacquainted with complicated Operation Orders and complex operations.

"Beagle Leash" ended 3 May; BRAINE's training was complete. She went in a leave and upkeep status in preparation for the long journey ahead. The majority of the crew were given leave to set their domestic situations in order and say farewell. BRAINE received final touch ups, her weather decks were painted, her parts inventory was refurbished, and her engineering spaces were brought to maximum steaming efficiency. On the evening of 28 May, BRAINE bronzed for the last time under Point Loma's setting sun.

The following morning BRAINE commenced her Western Pacific deployment. She steamed for Hawaii in company with USS HORNE (DLG-30) and USS CONSTELLATION (CVA-65). The transit was filled with intership drills and intensive study of the various Seventh Fleet operating procedures. From 2 June to 8 June BRAINE moored at Pear Harbor. After the short stop, she continued the transit to Yokosuka, Japan. On 14 June BRAINE crossed 160 East longitudes. Having crossed this geographical boundary, she was formally a member of the Seventh Fleet.

Yokosuka is the threshold of the East for Naval ships. BRAINE moored on 16 June. All ships present were in some way involved in the Vietnamese theater. The tone and style of life on the beach were harbingers of the next seven months liberty. BRAINE left Yokosuka on 20 June and proceeded to Subic Bay, Philippines. She spent from 23 June to 6 July in the Subic Bay area; two days were spent on the Tabones shore bombardment range. The remaining time was spent in general upkeep alongside the USS PIEDMONT (AD-17).

On 7 July, BRAINE entered the Yankee Station operating area on her way to PIRAZ station. She worked in life guard station with USS LONG BEACH (CGN-9) and USS BIDDLE

(DLG-34). It was an exciting initiation in Yankee Station operations. BRAINE became acquainted with the offensive concept of the Naval Air Wing and how their operations were interrelated with surface operations.

On 20 July BRAINE left PIRAZ Station to work as plane guard for USS AMERICA (CVA-66). She continued this duty until 29 August. During this time she worked with USS CONSTELLATION (CVA-64), USS INTREPID (CVS-11 ), USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA-31), as well as the USS AMERICA (CVA-66). The crew worked long hours to keep BRAINE at her maximum efficiency. On top of their regular watches they continually participated in special details. BRAINE sailors became experts at helo details, plane guard details, and refueling details. On Sunday, 25 August, BRAINE was called to task and responded with success. An F-4 Phantom II off CONSTELLATION crashed on take off. BRAINE recovered the only survivor, Lieutenant McPHERSON, within four minutes of the accident. When she arrived in Subic Bay on 29 August, with fifty five days at sea behind her, BRAINE was a tired but proud ship.

BRAINE remained in Subic Bay until 15 September; much of the time was spent aligning her generator and in general upkeep. On 6 September four of BRAINE's crew manifestly demonstrated their valor. BM3 Robert J. Exley, USN, DC3 Raymond J. McDonald, USN, SN Richard W. Klusman, USN, and FN Jimmy D. Keener, USN, dove from the ship to pull a drowning man to safety. The rescued sailor had fallen from the pier while returning to the ship. After the in port period BRAINE resumed her duties on Yankee Station, functioning as a plane guard destroyer.

The operational importance of the line period was over-shadowed by a most significant internal event. On 2 October, Commander Fred J. FLEINER, BRAINE's Captain for over two years, was relieved by Commander Richard D. VAN ANTWERP at sea. The relieving ceremony was brief but meaningful, and within several days the crew responded heartily to their new Captain.

BRAINE left Yankee Station on 14 October for a two week stay in Yokosuka, Japan.

On 26 October BRAINE departed Yokosuka to return to the Vietnam Theater. MM1 Paul T. SCHIMPF, USN, was killed in transit as he courageously attempted weather deck repairs in the face of extremely rough seas. His tragic death was a vivid reminder of the awesome power of a ship's environment.

On 29 October BRAINE returned to the Vietnamese theater. She had a four hour lay over in Kaohsiung for refueling, and then steamed through Yankee Station to the gunfire support team on the coast of Vietnam. Shore bombardment is the most rigorous test of a destroyer's stamina and efficiency. For four days BRAINE fired her guns, at night in DaNang Harbor, during the day along the near by coast. With all missions completed successfully, BRAINE departed enroute to Hong Kong.

BRAINE arrived in Hong Kong 10 November and stayed five days. When she left, her "Mary Sue" paint work glistened in the sun and the sartorial splendor of her crew was unparalleled in the fleet.

On 15 November she steamed south for Subic Bay; it was to be her last journey through the South China Sea. After a night's fueling stop in Subic, Braine continued south enroute to Darwin, Australia. On 20 November, she crossed the equator at 126-21 E. Neptunus Rex delivered forth his awesome wrath and majesty on BRAINE's many lowly Pollywogs. Their battered backs and wounded vanities were still sore when the ship refueled at Darwin. On the

next leg of the journey BRAINE circumvented the northern coastline of the island continent and steamed through the narrow Barrier Reef Channel to Brisbane.

Not all sailors get to visit Australia, but those that do, never forget. Brisbane welcomed the officers and crew handsomely, parties were arranged and homes opened. BRAINE departed Brisbane on 2 December, gratified by her experience.

With Australia behind, BRAINE island-hopped across the Pacific toward San Diego. On 6 December she moored for a day at Suva in the Fiji Islands. She next refueled at Pago Pago, American Samoa. On 13 December, she made her final fuel stop at Pearl Harbor. BRAINE completed her odyssey on 19 December, as she moored to the quay wall in San Diego harbor. BRAINE lay at cold iron through the New Year, and her crew and officers resumed their domestic lives, with the knowledge that they and their ship had spent a very constructive year.

The year 1969 began with a tender availability beside the USS PIEDMONT (AD-17) in San Diego. This being the first tender period since returning from WESTPAC in December 1968, there was much work to be done. The availability lasted until 3 Feb but was interrupted from 20-23 Jan when BRAINE embarked a group of ASW School students for local operations and training. BRAINE returned to sea for a week of local ASW and gunnery operations from 3-7 Feb, for gunnery exercises 10-14 Feb and again from 24-27 Feb, finally setting down to a full two months in port, in San Diego. That time was spent mostly in ship's work.

On 28 April, the ship got underway for a good-will visit to the Mexican port of Acapulco, stopping once in the small port of Manzanillo for refueling. BRAINE dropped anchor in Acapulco Bay 2 May, and stayed for a period of 3 days. The weather was clear and very warm, and many of the crewmen found the beaches to be inviting. There was plenty of night time entertainment too, including the famous cliff divers of La Quebrada. BRAINE weighed anchor on 5 May and returned to San Diego 3 days later. Local operations were conducted through August with underway periods on 12-16 May, 19-20 May, 16-19 June, 28-30 July, 12-13 Aug and 15 Aug.

For her service in Vietnam, the BRAINE earned the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, the Combat Action Ribbon, the Republic of Vietnam Meritorious Unit Citation, the Vietnam Campaign Medal, and the Vietnam Service Medal with 8-Stars.

Word was received on 29 August that BRAINE was to become a Naval Reserve Training Ship home ported in Portland, Oregon. The ship was instructed to get underway for Seattle, Washington on 5 Sept and remain in Seattle until such time as a transfer of personnel could be affected with the USS BRUSH (DD-745), which was the previous training ship in Portland.

BRAINE received orders on 1 Oct. to relieve USS BRUSH (DD 745) as Naval Reserve Training Ship in Portland, Oregon. Operational control was transferred from COMFIRSTFLT to COMNAVRESTRACOMD. The transferal period lasted until 16 Oct. and BRAINE began her new job of training Naval Reservists from the western United States.

On 30 Oct 1969, CDR C.R. NORTON, Jr., USN, previous Captain of USS BRUSH (DD-745), relieved CDR R.D. VAN ANTWERP, USN, as Commanding Officer of BRAINE, and assumed command of Naval Reserve Destroyer Division 273.

During the week-end of 22-23 November, BRAINE made a cruise down the Columbia River to the city of Astoria, Oregon. The purpose of the trip was to give the Reserve Crew practical experience in various aspects of underway procedures. Another reserve crew weekend followed on 6-7 December during which the ship remained in Portland.

On 16 December, CDR PHILIP C. SIMON, USN, relieved CDR NORTON, USN as Commanding Officer, USS BRAINE (DD-630) and Commander Naval Reserve Destroyer Division 273. The year's end found 13 officers and 154 enlisted permanently assigned to the ship. She conducted joint training exercises with the Canadian Navy. The operations included anti-air warfare, anti-surface warfare, multi-ship maneuvers, underway replenishment and individual ship exercises. She continued training exercises for the balance of the year, making several cruises up and down the Columbia River between Portland and Astoria, about an eight hour transit.

The BRAINE continued training exercises in 1971 and underwent some tender period for repair and upkeep. On the last cruise, the BRAINE made a high-speed (four boiler) run at 27 knots between Long Beach and San Diego.

On 7 April 1971, the Chief of Naval Operations directed that the USS BRAINE (DD-630) was unfit for further Naval service. He ordered she be stricken from the Naval Vessel Register and approved the transfer of the ship to the Republic of Argentina Navy.

The USS BRAINE (DD-630) was sold to Argentina on 10 August 1971. She was renamed the ARA ALMIRANTE DOMECCQ GARCIA – (D23). The ship was named after Admiral Manuel Domecq Garcia (1859-1951), a student from the Promotion 4 of the Naval Military School. He was a distinguished seaman and one of the founders of the modern Argentine Navy, where he fulfilled all important positions and superior commands. Admiral Garcia was appointed Secretary of the Navy (1922-1928) during the Presidency of Doctor Marcelo Torcuato de Alvear.

On 17 August at the naval base on Treasure Island, San Francisco, California, the ship was commissioned in a ceremony attended by Admiral Garcia's daughter, Mrs. Eugenia Domecq Garcia de Forn. Commander Mario Eduardo Olmas assumed command and raised the flag of the Republic of Argentina.

After minor repairs, the ship left California in October 1971. She was escorted by the destroyer ARA ALMIRANTE STORNI, the former USS COWELL (DD-547). The ships passed from the Pacific Ocean, through the Panama Canal and arrived at El Callao in November of that same year. During the voyage she participated in exercises at sea, jointly with units of the Peruvian Navy. She arrived at the Naval Base of Puerto Belgrano and joined the sea fleet on 21 November 1971, where the Naval Center donated a Combat Flag to the ship.

While in service with the Argentine Navy the D-23 participated in all the exercises and developments of tactical subjects of the Sea Fleet, in navigation and gunnery in different situations of anti-surface, including anti-air and anti-submarine warfare. She participated in Operations UNITAS XVII AND XXI during 1976 and 1980. In 1977 and 1978 she participated in the COMORAN IV and V with the ships of the Navy of Uruguay.

In 1976 with destroyers PERNAMBUCO and MARANHAO from the Navy of Brazil, she operated in joint operations. In August 1977 ARA ALMIRANTE DOMECCQ GARCIA sailed to Montevideo on a special commission on the occasion of the celebration of the Independence of Uruguay.

During the Malvinas conflict the unit fulfilled functions on the control of maritime transit and early anti-air alarm in the area near Bahia Blanca. Many times and in different attitudes she monitored registrations and visits of foreign fishing ships that were there illegally in the Argentine Sea. In 1975 the famous visit and registration of the ship SHACKLETON, under the English flag, was observed presumable doing oceanographic investigations of the Argentine platform.

The destroyer ARA ALMIRANTE DOMEQC GARCIA – (D23) was taken out of service in October 1982 by Government Resolution. On 30 November 1982 the ship's flag was lowered. She had sailed 123,000 miles under the flag of the Republic of Argentina.

On 19 November 1986, she was used as a target ship and sunk by an Exeracet missile fired by a frigate which struck the ship amidships just above the waterline.

Her final resting place is  
39 degrees 57' South Latitude  
57 degrees 57' West Longitude

Acknowledgements:

The following organizations were used as sources for this history:

Department of the Navy, Naval Historical Center

USS Braine (DD-630) website ([www.ussbrainedd630.com](http://www.ussbrainedd630.com))

Compiled by Richard B. Kirkland, Crewmember; June 1966 – October 1969