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(1969 - 1984)



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U.S.S. PHELPS DD 360

Pearl Harbor • Bougainville • Coral Sea • Midway • Guadalcanal • Tulagi • Solomons • Attu • Gilbert Is. • Marshall Is. • Palau • Saipan.

September 29, 1986

NEWS ITEM - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

When the USS Phelps' (DD360) Shipmates gather for their 9th Reunion on October 2-5 at the Quality Inn Hotel downtown Charleston, they will be continuing a record-breaking career the ship boasted throughout its lifetime. Commission in 1936 as the first U.S. Navy ship of her class (1850 Ton destroyer-leader), within eight months she had established records for speed and distance while escorting President Franklin Roosevelt on a good-will tour to South America. Phelps was also one of the very few U.S. Destroyers to fly the Presidential Flag, when she carried President Roosevelt on a visit to Vancouver, B.C., Canada in 1937. Her first Captain, Commander A.H. Rooks, went down with his ship, the USS Houston, at the Battle of the Java Sea in 1942, and was Phelps only "Medal of Honor" recipient.

Anchored off Ford Island at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, her guns began firing within 5 minutes of the Japanese attack, and, by being in every major engagement of the next nine months, a record she shared with only one other Navy vessel - the USS Minneapolis, she earned 12 battle stars and the reputation of being (from Official Navy records) "the best bombardment ship in the Navy". Severely damaged by direct hits at Saipan, in 1944, she left Pacific waters to undergo repairs and modernization at the Charleston Navy Yard. When completed, she joined the Atlantic Fleet in submarine defence of convoys to North Africa. After an extremely short but active life, Phelps was decommissioned in November 1945, and was sold for scrap to Gillette Razor Company.

From the decks of the PHELPS came 25 men who became Rear Admirals, with two (Admiral L.E. Denfeld and Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr.) becoming Chief of Naval Operations, a record unsurpassed by any Destroyer; or, perhaps, any other Navy ship.

Shipmates will come from 31 States and the District of Columbia. These are the men who faced death and duty together, and of their number at this reunion there will be ten sailors attending their first PHELPS Reunion and who have not greeted each other in over 40 years!

Stat Magni Nominis Umbra

U.S.S. PHELPS SHIPMATES 1936-45 ORGANIZED AUGUST 30, 1969, HOUSTON, TEXAS

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Dr. Max Rosenfeld of Silver Spring, Maryland, a former radarman aboard PHELPS will be the banquet keynote speaker. Gilbert Allan, of Summerville, a former Yeoman First Class, will be Master of Ceremonies.

Harold Placette
President & Founder

HP:tk

cc: Charles Christen - Reunion Chairman

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