

Story #38

Here's an interesting story that we received a couple of days ago from Bob Olsen, ex Signalman on Butternut AN-9

This is a true story.

My first assignment in the South Pacific was on a shore station in Noumea, New Caledonia while I was awaiting to go aboard the USS Butternut, AN 9. But the shore station was somewhat boring because that sort of duty doesn't move around much. But it had its moments.

There was an area within the city of Noumea that was called the Frisco Inn and was a ship's service in which you could buy almost anything. Included was a barber shop. Next to all that was an old, Victorian-styled house that served as the Naval headquarters for that period of time.

On one occasion, I needed a haircut, so I visited the barber shop and didn't have to wait very long until I was seated in the barber's chair. The barber proceeded to relieve me of some hair when, suddenly, everyone in the place snapped to attention as a man in a khaki uniform came through the door. The barber told me to get up and take a waiting chair for a few minutes. The khaki uniform took my place at the barber chair and got his hair cut. When he was finished, he came to me and apologized for making me wait. He said he was a very busy man and didn't have time to wait around. "My name is Admiral Halsey and maybe we will meet again somewhere." I, of course, never saw the man again and, until that moment, I don't recall ever hearing of Admiral Halsey. I lived a sheltered life. But I never forgot the name again, either.

I never told anyone of that encounter until now because they never would have believed me.

Bob Olsen SM1/c