

## Story #6 Vol. VI Dick Berg USS Mahogany AN-23

I have mentioned before about the time that I first saw the Net Tender that I was assigned to after I had just turned 19. I was a naive boy from the prairies of North Dakota, who had hardly ever been out of his home county. A middle aged civilian was standing by the ship. I greeted him with the following dumb statement; "I guess this small ship will never leave the US." Son, he replied; this ship can travel around the world.

Richard (Dick) Berg from Rochester, New York is in his upper 80's. He and his wife Anita have attended a couple of our reunions. He was a MoMM1c on USS Mahogany AN-23. He recently sent me a copy of an interesting unpublished book that he has written about his navy service during WWII serving aboard this Net Tender. Title of the book is "From Beverly to Buckner Bay and Back"

Like most of the Net Tenders this ship did indeed leave the U.S. for faraway places. It was built on the inland waters on Lake Erie, being launched in February 1941 before the outbreak of WWII. After being placed in service it sailed from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario, then through the St. Lawrence seaway to Argentia, Newfoundland for her first net assignment.

Dick enlisted in the navy in 1942 while living at Beverly, Massachusetts. Unlike a prairie dog like myself he had spent time in sailboats in these eastern waters. He was given orders to report to USS Mahogany at Argentia. Going over there in a convoy he was aware we were in a war when an escort vessel was dropping depth charges on an enemy submarine.

After a few months in Argentia, Mahogany was assigned to the Boston area for a few months. From there Mahogany headed for the Pacific Coast stopping at New York, Guantanamo Bay Cuba, Panama Canal and up the coast of Mexico to San Diego, California.

It was then on to Eniwetok in the Marshall Islnds via Pearl Harbor, where Mahogany remained for 5 months before going to it's final destination at Okinawa via Ulithi.

At Okinawa Dick had a ringside seat to the horrors of war with shelling from our ships, Kamikazes missing and crashing into our ships and making use of the 3 inch cannon and 20 mm guns on Mahogany.

Dick gives a good description in his writings of happenings at all of the above places. His e-mail address is: sailorberg@aol.com.

He was eligible for discharge a few weeks after the war. Shortly after he left the ship Mahogany was caught in a typhoon and grounded on a reef in Buckner Bay at Okinawa. She was towed to Guam for repairs, but these promised to be so extensive that she was scrapped and decommissioned.

After his navy service Dick and a shipmate were presented the Navy and Marine Corp medal for jumping overboard and saving a sailors life, braving rough sea, heavy current and stgrong flood tide.

After being discharged Dick took advantgage of the GI Bill. He went to Northeastern University and after 5 1/2 years of night school received a BBA degree in Engineering and Management. He spent his working years in the Engineering field.

He is now a volunteer at the Wright Museum in Wolfeboro, New Hamshire. The museum focuses on the years 1939-1945 for both America at War and the Home Front.