

LIFE ABOARD THE U.S.S. HORNET

Herald-Citizen, Cookeville, TN
Sunday, 29 March 2009, Section C

**Editor's Note: The following is an account by World War II veteran and Algood resident Dallas Melton about his time served in the cooler/freezer aboard the U.S.S. Hornet Navy aircraft carrier.*

When I joined the Navy at age 16, I attended cooking and baking school in Norfolk, VA. Then in Newport News, VA, I boarded the U.S.S. Hornet, an aircraft carrier. There were



60 or 70 planes aboard the ship.

I was put in charge of the freezer and cooler food supplies. Our ship would take on 280 tons of meat and vegetables.

(Pictured: Dallas Melton spent time aboard the U.S.S. Hornet aircraft carrier during World War II).

We were the flag ship with Admiral Joe K. Clark. We would

take on Japanese prisoners. I was in charge of feeding them the same menu of the crew on our ship. They really like bread, rice and fruit.

On occasions, the chef for the admiral would call me for food. I would take it to the gallery. Once I was taking food up to the admiral's quarters when I ran into the admiral. He told his chef to have pie for me each time I brought food.



(Pictured: Dallas Melton in his Navy uniform).

Admiral Hausley was in charge of the 7th Fleet. The U.S.S. Hornet was in the 7th Fleet.

The Hornet, with all crew, departed Newport News, Va. We spent one night in Balboa City entering Panama Canal. The (we0 Stopped overnight in San Diego, CA. We picked up 200

Marines and headed for Hawaii. Most of the Marines got seasick, so we used 10 or 12 cases of lemons.

When we arrived in Hawaii, we loaded up with fighter planes, food and supplies. We passed the Marshal Islands. First was Truk Island where the Hornet caught four or five Japanese ships in the harbor. Our fleet consisted of the Battle Wagon, aircraft carrier, cruiser and two destroyers. Next was Palulia Island, which the planes from Hornet bombed. Next was Guam Island, where we sank Japanese ships.

The Hornet took Japanese prisoners aboard. Then the fleet headed for the Philippine Islands via Mindoro Strait for the China Sea.

We met a Japanese fleet for battle. (The) U.S.S. Hornet sank four ships then headed north toward Japan, hitting ships and islands on the way.



(The) Hornet task force bombed Siapan and Tenipan Islands, then went back out to sea and hit a typhoon. It tore off 40 or 50 feet of flight deck.

(Pictured: Dallas Melton (second from left) poses for a photo with other workers in the U.S.S. Hornet butcher shop).

The Hornet is now in dry

dock (as a) tourist attraction in Alamedia, CA.

*Read more about the History of Putnam Co., TN and it's people at:
<http://www.ajlambert.com>