

## Sea Stories: Short and Snappy

By Dan McKinnon, RADM, SC, USN, (Ret.), Columnist

The Oakleaf wants more short and snappy stories. Snappy is easy. Short is hard. If you can do it in one sentence, then I offer a column of your short and snappy sea stories. They will be listed under, "I Remember When", and credit your name and Duty Station. Here are 20 examples, mostly true, smudged for protection. *I Remember When:*

- Having ship's liberty in a small U.S. port and letting all know the Navy has arrived by flooding the town merchants with a two-dollar bill payday. (*Ensign John P. Jones Neversail*)

- Not doing well in Disbursing at NSCS and being told that the worse orders a SC JO could get was as D.O. of an aircraft carrier, getting orders as D.O. of an aircraft carrier. (*Ensign Do Not Panic Boxer*)

- Telling the Commanding Officer you must dock his pay because the previous D.O. had been overpaying him. (*Ensign Panicked Princeton*)

- Heading out to sea and sending a Helo back to the beach to pick up the Disbursing Officer who had enjoyed a night of excessive delight. (*Ensign Put in Hack Pearl Harbor*)

- Finding coins strewn on the deck around the safe by disbursing clerks who wanted to panic

the D.O. into balancing the cash book. (*Ensign Not Fooled Duarte*)

- Becoming excited when assigned as Disbursing Officer of an aircraft carrier with safes full of cash and then enjoying the casinos of Reno. (*Ensign Other Guy Leavenworth Kansas*)

- Stocking root beer in the Ship's Store making the crew happy with an island beach party with no one was the wiser real Budweiser. (*Ensign B. Light SUPO Princeton*)

- Selling Rolex watches when the Ship's Store cost limit was more than set by Congress by offering in one package a watch-works, green box, and an expandable bracelet. (*Ensign Happy Marines Boxer*)

- Flying by COD into a foreign port, buying FF&V, exchanging currency, arranging for laundry service, garbage barges, and tours, and declining vender inducements and personal services absent moral content. (*Ensign Stayed Good Coral Sea*)

- Watching the Mess President almost go up in flames when the Chief Steward and Ship's Doctor added too much brandy to the flaming cherry jubilee. (*CDR Needles Sanctuary*)

- Watching the bottom of the Mike Boat alongside the after-boat-pocket become a sea of color as pallets of flavored ice cream melted in the tropical sun. (*USMC LT Milkshake Denver*)
- Accepting an offer for a late evening from an attractive Greek vendor and finding the next morning a crate of mink coats and an unpaid invoice on the quarterdeck. (*Ensign Was Hungover Little Rock*)
- Adding ten dozen duty free Dunlop golf balls to the Ship's Store in Panama and watching the SUPO buy two dozen, and eight dozen more of a not-so-sure-seller when crossing the three-mile limit coming into Norfolk. (*LCDR L.Z. Golfer SUPO Water Hazard*)
- Helping an officer expunge a fitness report with marks down in "judgment" for failing to join the commanding officer in bringing ladies of the night back to the ship. (*Commander Here to Help OP Detailer*)
- Walking swiftly past a window with a sign that said, "Street girls bringing in sailors must pay for room in advance". (*Ensign Not Me*) Actual sign; "Sea Breeze Hotel San Diego CA September 1943".
- Buying a roulette wheel for a Polaris nuclear submarine with a contract that said the Navy had an emergency requirement for a "random number generator"; refusing to buy a sterling silver candelabra for the same boat. (*LCDR Usually Can Do NSC CHASN*)
- Telling the Captain the ship is out of toilet paper, D.O. forgot the safe combination, out of OPTAR, coffee has weevils, no heater for the COD, bake shop flooded, the laundry can't find your socks, and "Skipper cast off all lines, we are ready for sea, the ice cream machine is working." (*CDR Jimmy D. Nimitz*)
- Buying Eskimo furs when resupplying the Artic DEW Line and discovering the skins had been cured in urine, the ship reeked when heading south, the crew pitched the cases over the side before going into port, creating an event not known as the Boston Tea Party, but as the Norfolk Pee Party. (*Senior Chief Cumshaw Ice Breaker*)
- Taking a foreign dignitary on an early morning in-port visit of a diesel boat and watching buckets of bottles and bunches of babes ascend from an after hatch. (*Midshipman Embarrassed Wisconsin*)
- Taking a tour of a diesel boat and a Lieutenant jokingly telling my wife that the peg board on the wardroom bulkhead was not for keys but for officers to hang wedding bands before going ashore. I have not been on a submarine since.