

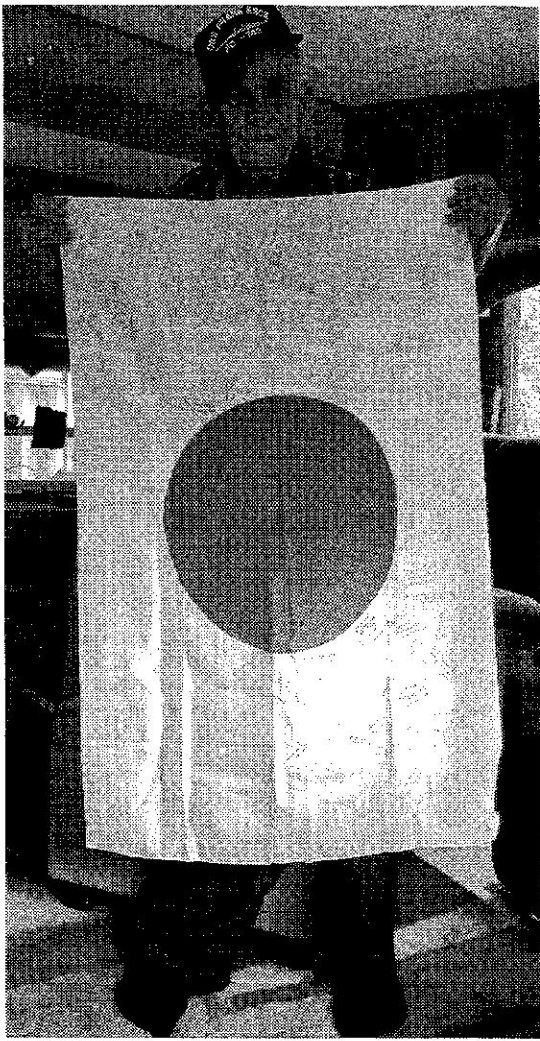
The WWII Diary of
Gerald "Dutch" Harms, TM1
Aboard the USS Frank Knox, DD-742

Transcribed by Steve Cross, LT
USS Frank Knox Reunion Association

January 29, 2018

Gerald "Dutch" Harms, TM1 wrote this for his family to be as events happened in 1945. A diary is a collection of personal thoughts and observations for future reference. The reader needs to suspend all those thoughts about spelling, punctuation and grammar and focus on the events and isolation reported by one man as his ship closes toward ultimate conflict with the Japanese.

Harms was no stranger to naval service. He enlisted in early 1942 and attended Boot Camp in Idaho. Following Boot Camp, he completed training as a torpedoman. His first ship, USS Sturtevant DE 239. The Sturtevant was stationed in the Atlantic and escorted many convoys to England, Europe and two memorable trips to Murmansk Russia. Harms was transferred as a TM3/c to USS Drexler DD741 fitting out in Bath ME and Boston. While on authorized leave Harms discovered the Drexler pulled out suddenly leaving him without a ship. Harms was transferred to USS Frank Knox, the first of a new class of destroyers. Drexler had literally been the last Sumner class destroyer built in Bath ME. Drexler sunk in the early morning hours of May 28, 1945 after being hit by two kamikaze planes. She sunk in 49 seconds. The dead numbered 157 men; the wounded 51 sailors and officers.



①

10
M.S.S.
Dink / Post
wade
DD 742

Joseph. Henry

Abkürzungen 714 1/2

Extra TM 1/2

Chief Programmer & T.M.

Mr. Andrew Alfred Moscardine

8 1/2 mch ste - ship + returning

mate. angle 86/c

7/11/21
Jensen 34

Blackburn TW1 2/c
Pollock 51
Moffin 51

TM²/C

Am Michael TUA3

Volume = 1 m³ mass approx

$$T_{\text{obs}} - T_{\text{M}} \frac{1}{c}$$

Dr. J. B. D. S. 7/2.

U.S.S. 19

Dec 11-1944 Post

The N. S. S. Frank

Not in Consideration

Boston May 1862.

Commissaire d'office

the shipper.

of consideration

Good and the Elder

Wheat & rye.

more very like all

Dec 28 1891

For Washington on E. C.

1600

Need up with me

Adm. H. C. 170

Jan 1, 1942

Washington Nov 11. 1862

For Determined for

Gerald "Dutch" Harms, TM1 Aboard Frank Knox 11/44 to 10/45

His Diary –

G. Harms, TM3/c; USS Frank Knox DD-742

Torp. Gang

Schumacher TM1/c

Evans TM1/c

Chief Brennan TMC

Valentino Alfred Moscardinia? S2/c my ole- ship + running mate

Moller TM2/c

Mikuritz TM2/c

Lingenfeller? TM2/c

Jim Morela? TM2/c

Ryan TM2/c knock up king

Morrea? TM3/c

Lolosecs TM3/c

Smthe B.J. S2/c

Angle S1/c

Harren? S1/c

Polock S1/c

Collins S1/c

Riveria S1/c

TF 38 The USS Frank Knox DD742

Dec 11, 1944 Put the USS Frank Knox in Commission in Boston Navy Yard.

Commander Ford the Skipper & Lt. Commander Taggard the Exec. What a time snowing like hell.

Dec 28 - left Boston for Washington DC to show off ship. Tied up next to Adm. Kings barge.

Jan 1, 1945 - left Washington D.C. for shake down & we really received one too. While we were down Bermuda we established a new record. Fired five torp, made five hits. I recovered 5 fish quite a record. I got to fire all five torpedoes.

Feb 4 (1945) Saw my old ship USS Sturtevant 239. She was on her way for Wales England. Gee it made me feel homesick.

Feb 6 - Pulled back into Boston. We will be here quite awhile for repairs & new modifications. Dam did they ever put on the radar gear everywhere.

Feb 21-22 - Held a big ship's party it cost the ship \$1000 smakeroots. Dam did I get tight. Not much news except it looks like we will be shoving off pretty soon.

Feb 23 - Moseadina? Received a sarcastic letter from his used to be girl friend was it ever hot _____. I hope I never get one from Louise Stallings? Like that. Rained & showered all day.

March 4 - Pulled out of Boston or Casco Bay Maine. I also get restricted by the gun boss for writing bull shit. ___? What a joke. We were underway until March 31 leaving Casco Bay Maine for Boston Mass they say. I hope getting paid tonight and I also have the mid-watch 00-0400. Tough. I also got beat playing rummy by MorardiniS2/c Angle S1/c. I also celebrated another birthday at sea March 29th. When am I gonna get to celebrate one on the beach. The last of this month we lost a hell of a good bunch of torpedomen pulled in Boston 31st) they were Evans, Shumacher, Jim Mercer, John Ryan, Lingenfelter, Mann, Lohneos, a darn good bunch of lugs.

April 1 - Took charge of the Torpedo Mount with Smith BJ as striker. Rate liberty but I'm restricted.

April 2 - had the duty the first day of liberty.

April 3 - W or M and I had first day of liberty in Boston. The first since 1 ½ weeks ago. I also wrote mom and dad a letter.

April 4 - got the duty no liberty. Received a letter from mom and dad, also from Louise Stallings. Gee I wish I could see Louise pretty soon. Ok Yes Jim Mercer

TM2/c owes me 3 bucks. I bet he wasn't man enough to knock out a boy. What luck it was a girl! Saw Spike Jones in person.

April 4 – Had the duty again today. Rate for shit.

April 5 – Hit the beach, went to R.K.O here in Boston and saw Tommy Dorsey and his orchestra. Was really good. He was in _____.

April 6 – I rate liberty today. I guess I will see another movie. Almost broke. So nothing unusual. No mail!!

April 6 - No mail. No nothing.

April 7 – Saturday with the weekend duty. Just my luck. Ok yes received a letter from Louise Stallings. Gee I'd like to see her.

April 8 – Sunday with the weekend duty. 4-8 watch in the morning. Gee time is flying. Oh yes I did a mighty big laundry today.

April 9 – No news

April 10 – letter from home

April 11 – No news

April 12 – Rated liberty dam good time. (Roosevelt died)

April 13 – Lucky thirteen, stuck with the duty, got beat playing rummy. Dam am I ever getting bad.

April 14 – Hurt my ankle pretty bad. What dam luck. No med. But liberty tomorrow.

April 15 – Sunday Pulled out for destination unknown.

April 16 – Still underway off Atlantic City. N Jersey.

April 17 – Still going will be for quite a while. Next stop is supposed to be Pearl Harbor.

April 18 – Still underway. Had practiceis (sic) with F6E fighter planes all day. Sun shining bright, can make out Atlantic City, Jersey this morning. Wish I was there.

April 19 – Underway heading for Gutamo Bay, Cuba. I hope.

April 20 – Still going. Dropped 39 depth charges on supposed to be submarine.

April 21 – Saturday. Still in land. Land 300 or 400 miles away, still heading south. In Gulf of Mexico, South of Florida. Its really hot out 78-80.

April 22 – Sunday. At 1105 this morning we sighted Cuba. Should hit port by 1600 – which is 4:00 this afternoon. Hot as hell.

April 23 – Left Cuba. Heading south. Sighted Jamaica about 0730 this evening. Was a beautiful sight.

April 24 – Still heading South. Getting hotter all the time. It's around 105-110. Dam hot.

April 25, 1945 – At 0700 this morning I sighted land. The Panama Canal. At 0800 we started through the Canal. It took four donkeys to pull us through. Gee was it ever a beautiful thing. Just to think what man can make. It took us 8 hours to go through. 45 miles of swamps trees & etc. It was three big lifts where they raise you above sea level then you hit a big lake, a fresh water lake, at that. Then we hit three other lifts to let us down in the Pacific. The lifts (name) lift you 85 above sea level then lets you down on the Pacific side. Then we hit Balboa and Panama City. Hot as hell. Mort got his feet burned today & can't wear any shoes. (sic)

April 26 – Left Balboa an are heading for San Diego. Made liberty in Panama City. Received a letter from Mom and Dad, also one from Louise Stallings, my little sweetheart.

April 27 – Heading Northwest. Saw the Costa Rica's mainland, and at noon we saw Mexico. Land is mountainous or swampy with (page 13) smoke coming out of the mountains just like Panama. Bye.

April 28 – Saturday. Heading north west. San Diego here we come. Hot as heck.

April 29 – Sunday. Still underway headed Northwest. Hot as hell.

April 30 – Monday. Still headed north. Still hot as heck. No nothing.

May 1st – Still headed north. Getting colder.(page 14)

May 2nd – Still going, haven't seen a ship or land for over a week. Bye.

May 3 – Still sailing. No nothing.

May 4 – Hit San Diego Calif. Have the duty. Received mail.

May 5 – Liberty in San Diego. Called Louise. Had a pretty good time.

May 6 – Sunday. Leaving port at 1100 this morning, heading for Pearl Harbor.

May 7 – Still underway heading west.

May 8 – Tuesday – Still heading west by north west speed – 17 knots. Getting hotter.

May 9 – Wednesday – still going – 75 out. Should reach Pearl Harbor Saturday noon.

May 10 – Thursday – getting hotter out all the time. Still going westward.

May 11 – lg – Still heading west, really hot out. Ocean is really calm and dark blue. Should hit Pearl Harbor tomorrow noon.

May 12 – Turned back west after a Jap submarine. Jap submarine fired fish but missed. Doing patrol duty now.

May 13 – After another sub heading for Hawaii. Still out Mother's Day. Will be out for a week yet. I hope not. Jap fired three more fish but missed. Lucky.

May 14 – Still out on sub patrol. No dam mail. No nothing.

May 15 – Still out. Discovered new sub. Been from the states one month from today. Really getting a sun tan.

May 16 – Pulled in Pearl harbor. I'll be glad when the mail comes aboard. Its really beautiful.

May 17 – Underway firing. Received 5 new torpedoes. Underway - - -

May 18 – Underway shelling God dam beaches, really raising hell, General quarters from 9 this morning until 12 midnight then I have the regular 12 – 4 watch tonight. Bye. Dam I am tired. No sleep for 24 hours. I still no-sleep. S(ic)

May 19 – Underway yet.

May 20 – Pulled back in Pearl harbor.

May 21 – Made liberty in Honolulu & Pearl City. No nothing, no mail.

May 22 – Still in Pearl. No liberty.

May 23 – Still in Pearl. No liberty.

May 24 – Pulled out had firing.

May 25 – Still underway.

May 26 – Still underway.

May 27 – Pulled back in Pearl.

May 28 – Left Pearl this 08.00 this morning heading west. I guess Guam.

May 29 – Still underway. We're with the California Battle Babby – no. 44.

May 30 – Wednesday. - Underway – heading south west. Hot as hell.

May 31 - Underway.

June 1 - No. No. June 1st Crossed the international date line.

June 2 - underway

June 3 – underway

June 4 – underway

June 5 – underway

June 6 – underway

June 7 – underway

June 8 – underway. Passed Guam.

June 9 – Pulled in Ulithin sic Island (Ulithi Atoll and Islands).

June 10 – In port.

June 11 – In port.

June 12 – In port.

June 13 – In port. Headed for the Phillipines. Sic

June 14 – Left port, headed for the Phillypines sic.

June 15 – Underway.

June 16 – Underway. Pulled in Leyite in the Phillysines (sic)

June 17 – In port.

June 18 – In port.

June 19 – In port.

June 20 – In port.

June 21 – In port.

June 22 – In port.

June 23 – Left Leyite for Manila.

June 24 – Underway.

June 25 – Pilled in between Corregodor and Batan. Later in morning pulled in Manila.

June 26 – Still in Manila.

June 27 – Left. Underway.

June 28 – Back in Leyite.

June 29 – In Leyite.

June 30 – Pulled out of Leyete for destination unknown.

July 1 – Underway.

July 2 – Underway rescued pilot from Shangrala.

July 3rd – July 9th Mystering around Tokoyo Japan, we are laying off Japan. Tokoyo only 600 miles at present. We strike Tokoyo tonight or in the morning. Everyone is nervous & trying to do something to take the future off our minds. At 1200 tonight we put on some steam doing 30 knots, 100 miles off the mainland of Japan, the Tokyo area. Jap fighters can reach us in 20 minutes from any of their 80 odd air bases. Will tell later what happens. At present we see drifting mines, a lot of them, and a hell of a big task force, task force 38 under Admiral Halsey. I seen Admiral Halsey yesterday a few yards off on the USS Missouri - 63 – taking

on fuel. Bye. Oh yes we go to G.Q. at 0300 in the morning & stay for - - - time knows how long – without sleep. Dgern (sic) does it make one sleepy & tired, he just doesn't give a dam. It's also raining out & one really thinks about home, what his brothers are doing, what I would be doing if I were home, (I would not leave the house.) I think an awful lot about Louise, course I love her an awful lot. It really makes one blue. Planes have been taking off our carriers & pilots are crashing into the sea. A 2 a day average, with a very few pilots rescued. We rescued the only one.

July 10 – We pulled a big carrier raid on Tokyo 1000 planes. We shot down 6 enemy planes which fell in the water a few miles away; Francis. We lost 6 planes and 3 pilots. We layed out ratio we are laying 60 – 100 miles off Tokyo its self. We rescued one pilot 60 miles off Japan & submarines rescued 2 more 5 miles off the beach. We stayed 60 to 100 miles of Tokyo from 4:00 Tues morning until 0700 Tuesday nite. No sleep 24 hours.

July 11 – Heading north – Honshu – northern Japan – fueled from Wisconsin. We are 200 miles off Japan or less. We had their radar gear on us all day. Only a couple of Boggies (planes) came around today & left.

July 12 – Laying off Japan only 60 miles. Just waiting.

July 13 – “Friday” Supposed to hit the northern part of Japan Honchu and Honddin but turned to stormy to launch planes. Will strike tomorrow I guess. Two cans lost 1 man each fueling at sea. [\$110 on books.] We are only 60 or 40 miles of northern Japan until this morning but pulled out 100 or 150 at noon. Cold and rough. Haven't received any mail since May 30.

July 14 – Saturday. We struck today. Really raised hell with things.

July 15 – Sunday. WE hit Japan again. (Diagram of Honshu and Hoddin with note 'we attacked here today'). The first time Japan's homeland was ever attacked by enemy ships. We are within 10 – 14 miles off land & you could see huge explosions & smoke & fire everywhere. We knocked out a iron & steel mills. Land on three sides of us. Really raised hell with them.

July 16 – Monday Left northern port of Honshu heading for Tokyo.

July 17 – Made raid on Tokyo all day & shelled the beach at night. Really raised hell. Hell was really on earth. Lost 27 planes but saved a few pilots. Tokyo's aflame. 6 miles of land (Tokyo) dam close.

July 18 – Wed – Made another carrier raid on Tokyo. Jap Francis flew right over our heads but left off Tokyo 60 miles or less.

July 19 – Thurs – Laying off fueled today. Exploded a Jap mine.

July 20 – Friday Laying off Japan.

July 21 – Moving down Japan way. Admiral Halsey came aboard.

July 22 – Sunday. Laying off Japan. [Saipan beer party

July 23 – Monday. Started moving in for strikes on Jap homeland and southern Honshu.

July 24 – Tuesday. Struck Jap mainland. Thousands of planes shot down, 1 Mirk, 1 Jill and 1 Zeke. 3 in all. Really raised hell. Poor Japs. Between Okinawa and Jap homeland.

July 25 – Wed. Struck Japan. Southern part of Japan Kure Naval Base.

July 26 – Fueled, provisioned & took on ammo.

July 27 – Fueled ship.

July 28 – Laying around wasting time, to strike again tomorrow.

July 29 – Struck Kure Naval Base in southern Japan. Really raised hell.

July 30 – Struck Tokyo again. Battleships USS Iowa, Wisconsin, Missouri, CVE Independence, Cowpens, Carriers Shangrila, Yorktown, Bohonam Richards, Wasp, Cruisers Chicago, Quincy, St Paul, Lt Cruisers San Diego, Juneau?, __ _ _Detroit. From July 30 until we kept striking Japan day after day until the end of war.

Aug 15 – Planes still attacked us after war was over. Sometimes 24 or less – Day war was ended 16 attacked in one group. Had a hell of a time trying to eat chow. We were about 40-45 (miles) off Tokyo when war ended.

Hershimo

Aug 6 – BOMB. – Plane came over – the bomber & at 8:15 or 16. We were 1-2 min. away There she goes. Big blast.

Aug 15 – War ended>

Aug 16 to Aug 21 Still laying off Japan waiting for peace treaty to be signed – Oh yes Aug 1 one plane (Jap) almost made suicide crash into bridge – USS Borie [ED – official date was 9 August. Killed 48 and wounded 66.] DD704 was hit by suicide plane – there really out today. We l---the yellow bastards. {Note at bottom of page:] plane did hit the big MO 63. [ED – USS Missouri was hit April 11, 1945. No bomb exploded.]

Aug 26 – Aug 28 – Layed 60 mile off Japan.

Aug 27 – Pulled in mouth of Yokohama Bay. Patrolling, could see Mt Fuji – really beautiful about mile of land – could see Japs on beach & their homes – hope nothing happens. GQ day and night here.

Sept 2 – 45 I got to go aboard the old Mo #63 for peace signing. Think there was 9 of us. I'm by the back stack. Going home before long.

October -1945 Yokosuka – I have to leave a note for the kids how I got off the ship in Japan –

I was officer of the Deck – I was also in charge of the torpedo juice (190p alcohol). So I broke out a 5 gallon can of alcohol and went to the & went to the officers storehouse & got 2 gal of orange juice. My old buddy Billy Ray Smith came by and I gave him shot (along with others in the crew.) - he asked for more – pretty soon he got down on all 4 & growled like a dog – I hit him in the rear and told him to go to sack – he crawled along on all 4 but instead of going to his sack he went in the Captains room – Ford the Captain what are you doing Smith & Smith bit the Captain on the leg – you know what happened next. Here comes the Captain mad as all get out – threatening me with a Court Martial – did I ever talk – finally he said if you are off the ship in 15 min I let you go – I was off in 5 – in good standing.

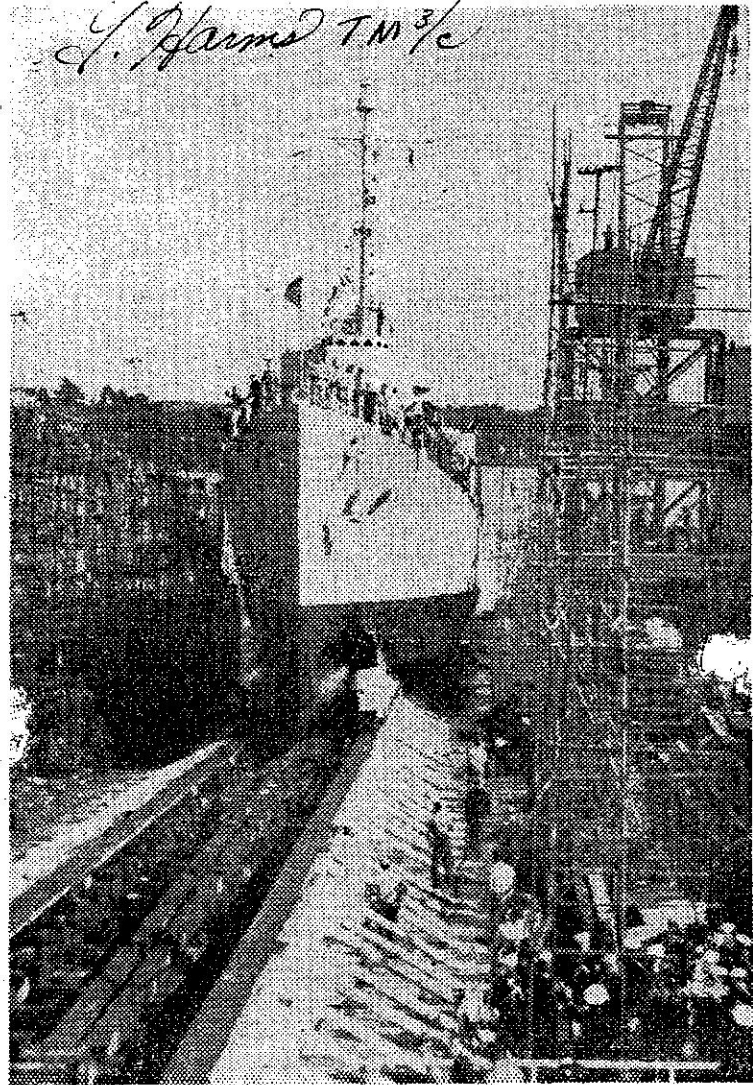
EDITOR - Dutch Harm's diary that I have ends here. When asked how the diary came about Harms recalls "I don't know why – I just wrote it." Thanks to Dutch we have a day to record of the Knox through the end of World War Two. Harms did travel with the ship to Tsing Tao China and back before the

incident with the torpedo alcohol. CDR Ford, later Captain Ford would command the Recruit Training Center at Great Lakes, IL. Harms, settled in Oregon and had a career as a logger. His is married and fathered 3 children. One great grandson, Eli, has been helpful in getting pictures to us of the 94-year-old Harms.

The Reunion association is deeply grateful for the loan of the diary and some of Harm ' pictures.

USS FRANK KNOX IN TOKIO STRIKE

J. Harms TM 3/4



Carrying the names of thousands of New Hampshire men, women and children who bought war bonds to build her, the USS Frank Knox is in action against the Japanese at Tokyo's very front door. Fact that the 2,200-ton destroyer is in battle action was revealed last night by Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, U. S. Pacific commander. She is part of the powerful 3rd Fleet under Admiral William F. "Bull" Halsey which lashed out in an unprecedented Navy attack. Picture shows the ship on the ways of the Bath Iron Works, Bath, Me., during her launching. The ship was commissioned December 1943. Name of commissioning was Comdr. Joel C.

JAPANESE STEEL AND IRON CENTER OF KAMAISHI SMOKES AS THE THIRD FLEET'S BIG GUNS BOMBARD