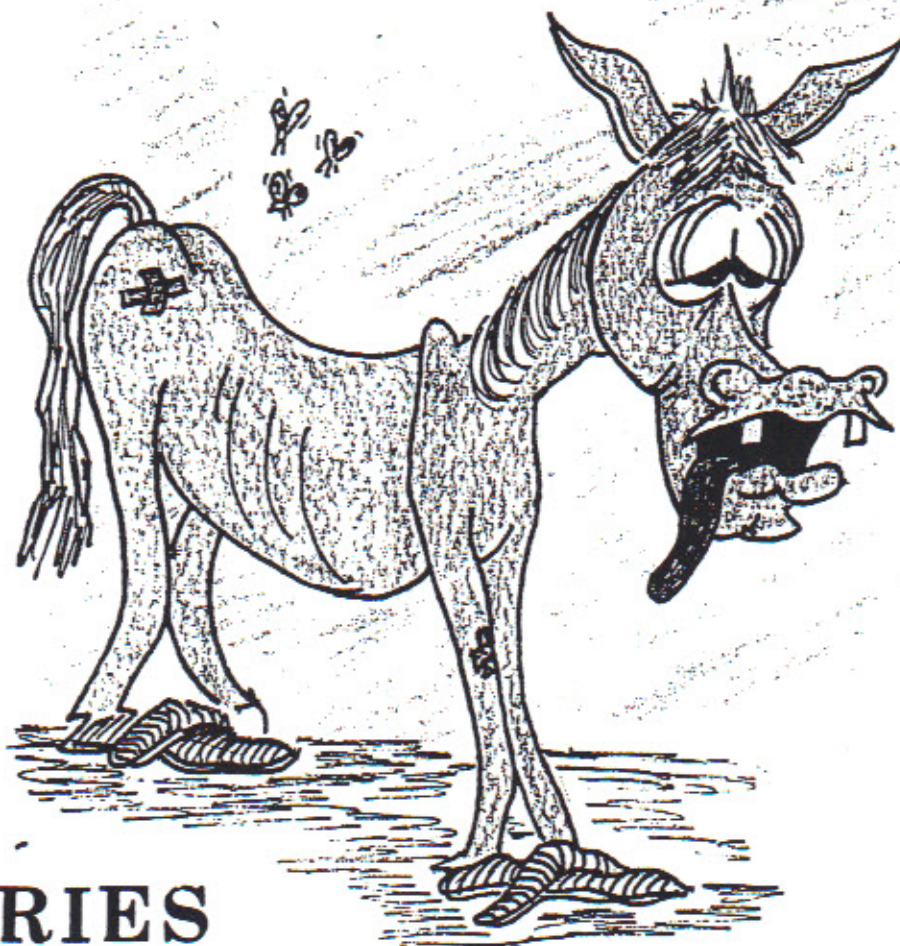


Mule Tales



MEMORIES

from the

MULIPHEN CREW

99.

MULE TALE CONTRIBUTORS

1. Anderson, James L.
2. Autry, Herman T.
3. Beane, Donald R.
4. Bundschuh, John J.
5. Burpulis, John
6. Cook, Bob F.
7. Cook Robert H.
8. Fox, John W.
9. Gayle, "Lucky" E.A.
10. Glasco, Larry
11. Goodakers, Joel
12. Gutek, Ron
13. Hearn, Norman E.
14. Hooley, Richard
15. Johnson, Robert
16. Lindsey, Stewart
17. Lose, Jay
18. Lyles, Thomas J.
19. Makosky, Al
20. Martin, Ed.L.
21. McCarthy, Jim
22. Means, Dave
23. Nuschke, J.
24. O'Connor, John
25. O'Rourke, Jim
26. Price, Stanton R.
27. Ratliff, Homer
28. Riley, D.O. USMC
29. Rodriguez, F.M.
30. Rosenthal, Jim
31. Smith, Harold
32. Soster, Tim M.
33. Spencer, John
34. Suddeth, Henry A.
35. Szymanski, Bernie.
36. Suits, John
37. Thorson, Blaine
38. Villwock, Robert H.
39. Walker, R.
40. Wallace, Lawrence

MULE TALE CREW mentions (the number is the Tale Teller)

Ash, SN (16)
 Autry, H.(10,14)
 Bachman, Rodney(44)
 Brown, Adm. "Cat"(37)
 Brymer(Ed/Lloyd)(7,37)
 Bullen, Capt.(16, 24, 29)
 Butler, Ralph(44)
 Campbell, Capt.(16)
 Cintron(29,6)
 CombsJoe(7)
 Danko, J.J.(7)
 Davies(29,37)
 Fields, W.(30)
 Goodaker(35)
 Green, Cdr. M.F.(4)
 Herkos, SN(28)
 Holliway, Adm.(16)
 Hood,Hollis
 Jarman(16)
 Lindsey, Stew, Sr.(16)
 Link(24)
 Macut, John(16, 29)
 Makosky, Al(36)
 Masterson, Cdr(16)
 McCarthy, Jim(16, 27)
 McKinney, Cdr.
 Means, Dave(16)
 Merritt, Calvin(43)
 Morehead, Ens.(16)
 Murphy, MMC(24)
 Parisi,Sal(29)
 Porterfield, Cdr. "Big Red"(16)
 Prince, Capt.(27)
 Spears, J.(37)
 Stone, Kirk(44)
 Sullins(37)
 Tarquinio(CWO4)(37)
 Tex(12)
 Warner, (8)
 Wheeler, Fred(44)
 Williamson, Capt.(42)
 Winn, BM1(27)
 Zeke, (29)

41. Weeks, Ted G.
42. Welkner, Bob
43. Whitlow, Jim
44. Wiant, Ron
45. Engels, John

Stories from the crew of the USS Muliphen AKA 61
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These are the memories of the Muliphen Family.

Blaine Thorson, RM3(May 55-July 58)

Ed Brymer BM3, was always pulling jokes on Sullins. One day Sullins came to me and asked my advice. He said that Brymer had ordered him to go down to the engine room and get a bucket of steam so that the wildcat(the focsle windlass) could be cleaned. I said, "Let's fix old Ed." We went into the galley and got a piece of dry ice for the bucket and a container of water. I told Sullins, "Wait until you get just to the focsle and then pour the water over the ice." I went back up on the 03 level and watched as the vapor rolled out of the bucket. Later Brymer came up to me and said, " I don't know how you did it, but I'll figure it out."

Among other things Brymer did was throwing firecrackers in the number three hold when the marines were unloading empty shell casings. That occurred after the trip to the Caribbean. He bought many packages while in Havana. While sitting off Vieques Island, Puerto Rico, we had the gangway down and a quarter deck watch set. One morning about 06:15, Brymer passed the word that "Grandby Cleaner was along side. Out on the 01 level, from officer's country comes the XO and OPS officers, both with sleep in their eyes and arms full of laundry. I was on the 03 level and heard Brymer say "Ahhhh Sheeeet! I think I'm in trouble." As he and OOD watched the XO and OPS boss wake up staring at the beach and swaying palm trees.

Incidentally Brymer was a BM2. I don't ever recall him being busted. In fact, I think getting away with everything all the time is what made him so remarkable. He told me, when I made First, that he wouldn't take the test because he didn't want it. As Second class, he was too senior to get details and too junior to be responsible for anything. He was one Cracker Jack Boss and was called on from both officer and enlisted quarters in areas of his profession. He did all the decorative rope work in Captain's Gig, Wardroom and Quarter Deck as well as the "Turk Head" for the lead throwing lines.

Admiral "Cat" Brown, COMSIXTHFLT made an onboard visit to all units when they steamed close to his flag ship. The purpose of the visit was to promote donations towards a "SIXTHFLT Gate" in the new stadium being built at Anapolis. During the high-line transfer from the Fremont to us, the ships swayed together and we dumped him. I was surprised he took it all in good humor and joked about it when he left saying, "Think I should take a bar of soap with me this time?"

My two gripes were the disappointment in the Pizza in Italy. I spent my high junior and senior year drinking Pepsi and eating pizza at the local pizza hut. Going to Italy sent my gastric juices into orbit with the thought of eating authentic pizza. In all honesty, I set myself up for disappointment for the pizza and the fact that we couldn't get French Fries in France.

Coming into port, I was on the 1 JV phones on the focsle when the bridge told me that the Captain wanted me to ask the "skinny Guinea with the meat ball eyes (CWO4 Tarquinio) what

made the wildcat(anchor winch)so wild." The Bos'n said to tell the Captain that," if he had that much anchor chain up his ass, he'd be wild too!"

I had the fan tail phones going into Havana and repeatedly told the bridge that I needed an ensign (flag) back there when they dropped the hook and shifted colors. The OOD, one of our prize LTJGs came back after we shifted colors and told me that "You know we don't have any Ensigns on board!"

Jack Spears(SN) was a walking accident. He was assigned to every department at least twice to see if he could find a job he could do without screwing up. They finally gave him the job of giving the newly embarked Marines a tour and indoctrination of the ship. His first time at it he made it all the way (last function) to after steering. In explaining to them to never, never stick their finger down the hole for the manual tiller, he proceeded to do so as a demonstration and smartly cut off the tip of his finger. His response was, "Damn, I did it again!" as he ran toward sick bay.

Other crazy times were: BT3 Shay down in the Caribbean, wrapped the fishing line around his wrist and was trying to pull a six foot shark he had hooked out of the water. He got mad as a hatter when I cut the line so the shark wouldn't pull him overboard.

There was our Corpsman who played Navy inspector and had all the "ladies of the night" coming to him for his stamp of approval for their tummy which read "USDA CHOICE". The women would then hike up their skirts and show potential customers that they were inspected and clean- they didn't know that it was a joke.

While in Gibraltar and prior to the orders to divert to Lebanon(1958), we made a transfer of all items to our relief ship. Among those items was a reel to reel tape player and over 50 tapes of music that we had recorded prior to deployment and during the cruise. I fought that transfer but lost the battle and was no more successful getting them back when we found out we were extended. The two papa boats were rigged for Mine Sweep operations and stayed in the Med with the deployed unit.

John W. Fox SK1 ('59-'61)

The funniest thing I ever saw was the look on the faces of the women on Visitor's Day when they got to the Mule's Bake Shop. That day "Fat" Warner was making bread and doughnuts. Even when he wasn't working, his "T" shirt had a habit of crawling up his belly. As he was kneading the dough, his sweaty belly kept landing on the steel table, adding his grease to it. His belly would land on the table at one stroke and back off on the next and the dough would land on the same greasy sweat spot on the next stroke. The ladies looked like they were quickly losing their appetite for Muliphen baked goods!

Bob F. Cook HM3 ('58-'60)

(during the '58 Beirut Crisis) "I was 100 yards off the beach in the Medical Boat watching the Marines on the beach. We were in full battle dress watching them drink beer and having a ball while we were dying from the sun beating down on us and eating cold C-rations. At night, of course, we stripped and went into the water to cool off.

ETH was a cough suppressant that made famous my military service. The Mule crew was no exception. Several of our guys had been in the Navy for a while and knew that ETH contained Alcohol....I used to make this stuff in sick-bay(2 qts. of 100 proof per gal as I recall) and the deck

gang would drink this stuff like water as they loaded or unloaded the ship....It seemed that they all had cough most of the time and I could never understand why.....

Richard Hooley IC3 ('54-'56)

In 1955 I was sitting in the mess hall eating along with four others. We were having greasy Pork chops. A Marine sat down across from me and started to eat. After a few bites of the greasy pork chop, he became seasick and barfed all over the trays of food that we all had. He ran for the head. We four went and got new trays of food and came back and sat down at the same table. When the marine came back he thought that we were eating out of the same trays and he ran back to the head barfing more.

James N. ("Rosey") Rosenthal MM1 ('56-'61)

W. Fields MM2(Kankakee, ILL?) was a lot of fun and completely crazy. He as always farting out one end or could really do it under his armpit.

We thought it was funny when we got a newspaper clipping in '58 that said that our wives were planning a march on Washington, DC to protest our extended time in the Med(9 months). They said that we didn't need to be over there as we were all playing shuffleboard on the fantail.<<it was really on the 02 level, port side(FMR)>>

John Burpulis BMSN ('57-'59)

I came aboard the Mule in '57 and was assigned to 1st division. One of our jobs was to sweep and clamp down the main deck before morning chow. We didn't have today's mop buckets with the wringers, but had a bucket and swab that we had to wring out one-handed. There was an art to doing this but I just couldn't get it so we would just damp- not wet swab- the decks. My area, starboard side #2 hatch, I got caught by Hood BM2 not doing it right by one hand. So he showed me the right way and said if he ever caught me not doing it that way, he would put a foot were the sun does not shine. Everything went great for a few mornings but one day, I guess I was in a hurry to eat so went back to my old wrong way of squeezing out the water with two hands. The next thing I knew, I was skidding up towards #1 hatch and had a lot of pain in my backside. When I looked around, there stood Hood with a smile on his face and he said, "I told you so." But to this day, when I have to get a swab just damp, I do it with one hand and always remember Hood, standing there in his size 13 shoes.

Jim O'Rourke LTJG ('56-'59)

I recall returning to Norfolk after a cruise to some ports where liquor had been available at "duty free" prices. Quite a few individuals had taken advantage of the bargains and were bringing home some choice booze. The word went out that Naval inspectors would meet us at Norfolk looking for on board contraband. I will never forget watching guys pitch their bottles over the side(and one sailor on the main deck had a grappling hook going like hell as they hit the sea)! <<FMR. The same thing happened after we came back from the '58 Med cruise. But one guy came back with 2 fifths of Spanish champagne, 2 fifths Fundador cognac, a large collection of miniature liquor bottles, a fifth of Ouzo bought in Athens, and a bottle of Greek Mestica purchased in Salonika. This last has never been opened and is still corked in 2000.>>

Fred Rodriguez EM3 ('57-'59)

One of the craziest things I remember was when we went into Salonika, Greece. The night before, Capt. Bullen got on the P.A. and warned us, "Whatever you do boys, don't drink Ouzo!" "WRONG THING TO TELL A MULIPHEN SAILOR. I had the duty the first day in port and

was in the electric shop when I heard a commotion a few hours after liberty started. I went to the main deck just aft of the super structure and saw a fight in the liberty boat and the master at arms running down the sea ladder and joining the brawl. They finally got the fighter into a strait jacket, on deck and into sick bay where there was another commotion. It was Cintron(2nd Div., SN). He had chugged a bottle of Ouzo. It was said, that when they got him into sick bay, he said, "Nobody hold Cintron," bulged his muscles and tore apart the strait jacket. They tackled him again, spread eagled and manacled him on a sick bay bunk and gave him sedatives.<<B.F. Cook, "We got him to sick bay where we strapped him in and gave him several shots of Thorazine and Paraldehyde before knocking him out....It was said that Cintron had a gun aboard.">>After two days he seemed calm and was let loose. He went to his locker and got a Beretta he had bought in Naples and was going to get the Master at Arms for subduing him. As he walked by the starboard passageway door of the Electric Shop on the way to the Master at Arms shack, he was cold cocked with a marlin spike. When he came to, he was taken to the Captain. He was asked, "You wouldn't shoot anyone, would you?" Cintron answered the Captain, "You get in my way, I shoot you too!" He was flown off to Germany. When we got back to the States, he came aboard and asked me to talk to the Captain to let him come back to the Mule, because he really loved the ship and crew. But his luck was shot.

I never ate soup while on board. In January '58, on our way to the Med during the big storm, I decided to have a bowl of nice, hot tomato soup. As I was spooning it, I noticed some meat in the bottom of the bowl but decided to save it for last. IDIOT---THERE IS NO MEAT IN TOMATO SOUP. I decided to spoon up the meat about 3/4 of the way down. The spoon came up and the meat was a big red cockroach. I was furious, grabbed the bowl and stormed up to the galley to tear up the duty cook. I walked in and confronted skinny Sal Parisi. I was shaking I was so mad. Showed him the bowl. Sal lifted his eyes,shifted the toothpick to the other side of his mouth and nonchalantly said, "What cha bitching about? You got more meat than the rest of the guys!" He completely deflated my anger. I set down the bowl and walked out.

When the movie Titanic came out, the hullabaloo about water tight integrity made me laugh. The Mule was open from the Engine room bilge's to Officers Country. But it brought to mind old Zeke. Don't remember Zeke's real name, but he was a Snipe. At the clean up, at the end of engine room watch, Zeke would fill a bucket with the crud; hook it on the line hanging from the main deck level; walk up and use the pulley to bring it up; go out the Engine room hatch across from sick bay and pitch it over the side. He then would come back into the main deck level of the Engine room space; climb over the railing of the ladder, put a foot into the bucket, give a Tarzan yell and come flying down in the bucket to bang into the steel deck of the Engine room. Scared the hell out of me the first time I heard it. I thought something had blown up. It usually got him scullery duty and he seemed to always be on it. He spent so much time in the scullery, that he was always pasty white in the face. One day, after finishing chow, I slid my tray into the opening in the scullery and saw old Zeke. I said, "Jeez, Zeke you in there again! How are you doing?" Zeke wiped the sweat from his face, looked up with his hang dog eyes and said, "Rod, I think I'm falling in love with a rubber glove full of hot mashed potatoes."

The first day in Valencia, Spain in '58 the P.A. announced that the Captain wanted to see me in his cabin. I went up and Captian Bullen said, "Rodriguez old buddy, would you like to go ashore, stay in a hotel at Navy expense and interpret with the Spanish Police?" I didn't say Hell yeah but I answered something. He also told me to pack what I needed for our stay and that John Macut BM3 was going along to back me. I was told to meet Macut at the masters at arms shack. When I

got there, the duty MAA, Winn, BM 1, was giving John a 45 and holster. I said, "Where's mine?" He answered, "Sheet Rodriguez, if I give you one you'll only shoot yourself in the ass." I was not happy with the answer, but Macut and I went ashore and checked into our hotel. We walked into our room and were stunned. It was so big. There were windows with a view and bedspreads. John went into the next room and said, "Holy Sheet, look at this" It was a huge bathroom with a tub, a shower, sink, toilet and a strange porcelain contraption near the toilet. John, said, "What the hell is this?" Then he pressed a lever and water shot up. He then said, "I think its a water fountain. Want a drink?" Thankfully I declined. We had never seen a bidet before.

The next morning we got up and got dressed and went to look for some breakfast. We found a cafe just opening. John said, "Tell the guy we want steak, potatoes, some lemons, 2 cokes and a fifth of black rum." I said, "Jeez John, its 6:30 in the morning!" He said, "Rodriguez, its better than orange juice." You know, he was right.

Ronald Gutek SK3 ('51-'52)

During one of our cruises('51 or '52), we had a swim party somewhere in the Atlantic. One of our shipmates, nicknamed "Tex", appeared with swim fins and snorkel tube. He was set for big game fishing. To begin with, the currents were so strong, the LCVP had to come and round up the swimmers as you could not swim against the current. While retrieving a swimmer, the Marine Shark Guard started to take aim at what he thought was a shark. Everyone on the LCVP started screaming, "Don't shoot! That's Tex."

On another occasion, I remember loading boats aboard in close proximity to the gangway. As the LCVP was hoisted toward the deck, all four cleats pulled out of the boat, dropping the boat back into the sea. When the boat hit the water it disintegrated and one of the sailors on board literally walked across the top of the water hollering, "I can't swim." I truly believe that I saw someone walking on water.

Stewart Lindsay Lt. ('56-'59)

The shuffleboard<<built during our 9 month '58 Med Cruise. FMR>>was on the 02 level, port side. It was just off the passageway into "Officer's Country". As you came down the ladder from the bridge, you were facing it. Normally one of the 3 LCVPs <<on the port side davit. FMR>> would have been there, but for some reason, we were missing a couple, one on each side, and hence had room for our "game deck".

We did go to Beirut in '57. We were in Rapallo, Italy after a brief stay in Genoa and the call came to head east. We even left some officers and crew who were on a trip to Rome. I can't remember what the reason was for the mad dash--at 14 knots--, but it must have been some Middle East Row up. It delayed our return to Norfolk by about 2 or 3 weeks. So it was nothing compared to our '58 deployment.

My memories of Beirut are numerous but a couple do stand out that were not associated with those wonderful(!) afternoon liberties. In no particular order they are as follows:

1. My boat crews were unloading for almost 48 hours with basically no relief and I never got on the water as I was responsible for supervising the off loading for nos. 1, 2 and 3 hatches. The boat group was really a super unit.

2. You may remember that we always were short of cargo nets. In Beirut we sent Ens. Morehead ashore to recover our nets and to add a few, if possible. I remember boat load after boat load of nets coming back to the ship and we ended with probably three or four times our allotment.

Needless to say they were never returned to their rightful owners.

3. As an officer of the deck underway, I recall how we looked forward to having the watch either in the morning when all the ships came together for signal chit-chats or the watch when we had to move back to the S.W. corner of our operating area. Other watches were usually spent drifting from the S.W. corner to the N.W. Corner and listening to "camel dung" music on portable radios.

4. Reloading to head home brought a couple of memories back. First as Adm. Holliway, CINCCNELM, was walking down the pier one of my BMs--maybe McCarthy--acting as hatch captain gave the following order to a winch man, "take it up a red c--- hair." The admiral never broke stride.

Also, when acting as safety officer on #2 hatch we were loading ammo into nets to be stowed in the deep tanks. In our desire to load as quickly as possible we were greatly overloading each net. One came up swung inboard and as it centered over the hatch a landmine fell out and fell straight down. All of us watched awaiting a rather large explosion when the mine hit the deck. It bounced and settled down next to a case of some explosive and of course nothing hapened. We were a little more careful in loading nets after that. Although it wasn't landing in Beirut, but I will never forget eating supper in the Wardroom as we steamed somewhere between Sicily and Tunisia with the sun streaming in through the ports that faced forward. All of a sudden we realized the sun was no longer there. Then came the word that we were going back to Beirut and we would not even get to land the first group of Marines.

When I was aboard the Muliphen, Mary and I lived on 84th street at Virginia Beach. Captain Campbell lived on 57th and the XO, Cdr. Masterson lived in the 60's. The captain thought it would be very nice if we all carpooled to get to the ship. What was a young Ensign to say but, "Yes sir." I think the XO had the same reaction. Little did I know that those two had little love for each other and I was scared of both of them. Fortunately, by the time we returned from Gitmo, Mary had bought a new, to us, 1952 Chevy station wagon so I did not have to transport the Skipper in my 47 Chevy. The carpool worked out surprisingly well although one day, we had to pound on the XO's door to wake him up. I remember most distinctly one drive when Captain Campbell and I were alone driving to fleet landing at Little Creek. For some unknown reason, the Captain was late picking me up and he was very upset that he was going to be late getting onboard. You would have thought that he was about to miss the last Liberty boat. Finally after listening to his complaints for most of the drive I got up my nerve and said, "No one will call you on the carpet for being AWOL." He smiled, agreed and the rest of the drive he actually relaxed. We arrived on board probably ten minutes after quarters at the latest.

In those days, with so many ships homeported in Norfolk, it was not unusual to have some Amphibs anchored off Little Creek. Captain Campbell liked that, as he felt the ship would stay much cleaner being far away from the coal piers that were just south of the NOB Fleet Landing. The crew really loved being anchored out, especially when weather prevented liberty boats going ashore. It seemed that we were always able to fight off foul winds and high seas to return the liberty party in the morning, but afternoons were a different story. I had the Inport OOD watch one afternoon. It was being stood on the bridge because of bad weather. Why they trusted me up there I will never know, but a messenger arrived from the fantail and requested permission to make smoke. I had no idea what that meant, but the PO of the watch said it was OK so I said go ahead. About two minutes later it looked like the entire after end of the ship was on fire and I was petrified and assumed all hell would soon break out. To this day I do not know why nothing happened. Which just proved that Petty Officers know more than boot Ensigns.

David Means remembered me more for the fact that my car traveled on the ship than for anything else. How it happened is an interesting story. Mary and I had taken leave, left our dogs and daughter with a baby sitter and drove to Halifax to meet the ship. As you may remember, we were there several days and during that time my folks invited many of the officers to visit there

place in Chester, Nova Scotia. My Dad and Captain Campbell hit it off right away, playing, "do you know this officer and that one?" In fact my Dad took Captain C for a ride in our boat, the GIG, and Captain C. played bow hook on the return to the dock. My Dad could really handle destroyers and larger, but small boats were not his thing. Coming along side with the skipper ready to step on the dock, bowline in hand, my Dad went ahead with a spurt instead of back and Capt. C. showed his agility as a former athlete to avoid a dunking. The junior officers watching were hard pressed to control their emotions. I often wondered if any would have jumped in to save the skipper. Back to the car, during this visit the Captain learned that Mary's Mom was going to drive back with her to Virginia and fly home after a short stay with us because she was still working. Capt. C thought that was silly, so he said, "Bring the car to the ship. We will load it in number 3 hold and offload in Norfolk." So on the day of departure, we prepared to embark one 1952 station wagon on Muliphen. The only problem we faced was the gear to lift our ships vehicles was on spreader bars. This meant that we had to drive the car down the railroad tracks alongside the ship to get it on the lifting device. Mary tried and failed, so did I but on the fourth attempt, we were successful and the car came aboard. On reaching Norfolk, we were told to anchor off Little Creek. No problem. After the ship's pickup and carryall went ashore, my car was loaded in a Mike boat and unloaded at one of the ramps at the base. Only damage was a pinched tail pipe as the car crossed over the boat's ramp. At Officers call that afternoon, I picked up the car and drove to the airport to pick up Mary.

Do you remember the disgruntled seaman who spent the good part of the morning with a jitterbug under the Mike boats on number 2 hatch. John Macut called me up to show me that this young man had made a very large heart and written F--- the Navy in the middle. Ah, what was the Division Officer to do? Well, after consultation with John and Jarman my leading POs, we handed our favorite sailor a chipping iron and told him that he chip the entire area by hand and then prepare it for painting. Until it met with our approval, he would not move from the spot. He followed orders and within four hours, his two minute original work was long gone. I can not help but wonder if we would get away with that in today's Navy!

I am sure that you remember the sailor who jumped overboard off the coast of Spain following our Amphibious operation at Almeria. The officers were eating lunch when the "Man overboard. This is no F----- drill," came over the 1MC. For some reason, I raced to the ready LCVP and before you know it, we were maneuvering the boat up to him. It became apparent that we would need a swimmer. In fact I later learned that Cdr. Porterfield was screaming just that over a bullhorn. I suppose I should have led the way and prepared myself to jump in, but just as I was about to shed my shoes and hand my wallet to a sailor, Seaman Ash said, "I will go get the F-----." He proceeded to jump in with no lifeline or even a life vest. The guy swam away, but Ash caught him and delivered a quick chop to the guy's chin and brought him back to the boat. We lowered the ramp, brought them both on board and headed back to the ship. I suppose that someone sat on our jumper so he would not try again, but I don't remember. Once alongside I do remember that we had a difficult time hooking on to be lifted out of the water. Once out and all safely aboard, we were ordered to sick bay for a warming medication. I, being a nondrinker, was very popular as many wanted my shot of whiskey. Being a mean guy I did not succumb to any of the bribes. Later that day talking to Captain Bullen on the bridge, He said, "Well, I should put Ash in ;for some sort of recognition, but seeing as he has been in so much trouble, I will lift his restriction to the ship for the next liberty port." <<FMR. This jumper was taken to sick bay. He was soon joined by his best buddy. The friend was a cook who had gone berserk and had begun throwing knives and pots and pans in the Galley. He was subdued and taken to sickbay. Scuttlebutt had it that they were feather merchants who expected a short Med cruise. Our extension, because of the Middle East problems, caused them to fake a Section 8 to get off the

Muliphen. It was said that they were always whispering in sick bay before they were taken off the Mule.>>

For my last memory before CRS sets in: I was Command Duty Officer where I do not remember, when the Messenger of the watch raced into my room saying, "They need you on the Quarter Deck." Arriving there post haste, the OOD informed me that someone was shooting a pistol in the First Division berthing spaces. Being young and foolish, I headed down there immediately with the Boatswain Mate of the watch a step behind. Having no idea what to do I stepped right into the space, issued some command and all was silent. A quick inspection revealed an empty space but bullet holes in a couple of lockers and a spent casing on the deck. A quick search showed nothing so I raced up to the XO's stateroom to inform him of what had happened. He had had a little too much shore leave and told me to see him in the morning after quarters. As I recall I gathered my Division's POs and we decided they would make sure nothing happened overnight. The next day our job was to find the shooter and the gun. The first proved quite easy as the sailor the shooter was trying to impress described the gunman to us. Macut and Jarman assured me that they would get the gun, if it were still on board. At first they were told it had been thrown over the side, but somehow this did not ring true to my questioners. Macut then requested my permission to do a more in depth investigation, but would not tell me his plans. A short time later he told me that he had what was left of the gun and that other than a probable Captain's Mast, the case was closed. Long after Macut and I left the Muliphen and I was in Norfolk on a Reserve Cruise, I had dinner with Macut and he told me, "the rest of the story." It seems he took our little shooter into number 3 hold, took up a couple of hatch boards, grabbed the man and said, "Tell me where the gun is or you will land down among the vehicles at the bottom of the hold, and likely we won't find you until the next time we off load the ship." End of story.<<FMR As I got the scuttlebutt, we were showing a s---kicker movie on the messdeck. The shooter had just come back from liberty, a little the worst for wear and decided to pop a few of the bad guys on the screen. I do know that all those fools that had bought Berrettas in Naples were tossing them over the side that night, afraid they'd get caught with a gun if there was a shakedown.>>

Ronald Wiant HM3 ('64-'66)

Stationed in Gitmo from Jan 63 to May 64, I had my first experience with the crew of the "Mighty Mule". I had leave in Jan 64 and upon returning to NOB Norfolk to catch a flight back to Gitmo, I was not able to get one. I survived a couple of weeks in the temporary barracks for transit and finally got orders to Gitmo. These orders gave me a ride on the good old USS Muliphen AKA-61. Being a corpsman, of course I did my duty in Sickbay where I got to know a lot of the crew, especially Fred Wheeler HM2. We floated around doing various things, loading, off loading and playing games and then I finally got to Gitmo. As I was leaving the ship Fred asked how I liked being aboard and when I was due for a transfer to another Sea Duty station, I told him I would really like to come to the "Mule" for a duty station. In May of that year it was time for my rotation out of Cuba. I was really shocked that my orders read "report to the USS Muliphen AKA-61 NOB, Norfolk, Va. Thus began one of many memorable experiences aboard the Mule.

My fondest memory of the Muliphen was, as a corpsman, being allowed to steer the ship and being respected by the coxswains as one of them, winning the ROI awards and the team work it took us to accomplish this. Can't recall any bad memories. Possibly the 71 days off Cyprus. Go, no go routine.

One of my memorable accomplishments was during a practice landing in some rough seas, one of the Yeomen (Rodney Bachman) who was manning one of the Papa boats on the port side Wellin davit got his hand caught between the hook and pad eye and severed the last three fingers

of his left hand. He was brought to Sick Bay and after 5 hours of continuous surgery I managed to sew his fingers back on. To my amazement, several months later (with therapy) his fingers began to work again. As far as I know today they are still operating just fine. I did most of the suture on the ship because none of the Docs liked to take the time to do it. I also sutured a couple of eyelids back on after some of the famous Gator Navy fighting libertys (could have been amongst ourselves).

The real high light of my stay on the Mule was my friendship with Herman Autry who tried to teach me semaphore and a coxswain named Kirk Stone. Kirk instructed me in the handling of the Mule underway and the in and outs and eventually I was doing steering on replenishments and other times when most of the crew were needed. Ralph Butler BM3 also taught me how to run yard & stay, vang, and top and hook. I worked his hatch(3) during loading and off loading of the Marines at Moorehead City, NC.

E.A. "Lucky" Gayle MM3 ('65-67)

My fondest memories were the comradeship and growing up. No bad memories.

James C. Whitlow SN ('46-47)

My worst memory was the death of Calvin Merritt, Pt. Barrow, Alaska, 1946, by drowning.

Lawrence D. Wallace ('56-'57)

In the Bethlehem Steel Yards, Staten Island, NY, June and July 1956.

We off loaded ammo at the ammo depot in New Jersey.

We had a few hands getting sick down in the hold, I think it was No. 3 hold, from fumes from a fork lift. When the officer in charge of unloading, from the depot, found out we were using a gas powered fork lift to unload, we were shut down, until they replaced it with an electric powered fork lift. Seems we were breaking the rules with a gas powered lift, only electric power equipment was allowed at the depot. They had pictures all over the place of the depot when a destroyer blew up in W.W. II.

From what I can recall, we received new boilers, and a lot of running gear, rebuilt the Turbines and replaced all the electric motors and pumps in the engine room, also new General Electric MG sets for our A.C. use. <<alternating current, not air conditioning. There was no air conditioning on the Mule. FMR>>When we went on shake down off the coast of Road Island. The bearings in the MG sets froze up and we had no AC power for the radar and radio shack. When we returned to the Bethlehem Steel Yards. The bearings had to be burnt off the shaft, and replaced. Never did hear why the bearings froze up.

All of our boats were put in the yard and overhauled. They opened up the fuel tanks on the Mike boats to clean them. We had to clean and paint one of them with white paint on the starboard side on all the Mike boats. The reason for this was, that we used that tank for fresh water. Later on, we were lucky we never had a need for the extra fuel. I was in charge of all electrical work on the boats. We went from a 12 volt DC positive ground to 24 volt DC ground on all the boats. Big mistake we found out later. All the radios were positive ground, and you got the heck shocked out of you if you weren't standing on a rubber mat we had to keep around. Everything on the boats had to be changed over to negative 24 volt ground and add 4 batteries to each Mike boat, 4 batteries at 6 volts in series for 24 volts.

They added Sperry compasses to all the Mike boats. They stuck up in the air on a post on the back side of the cockpits. The compasses never did work right though. We beached ourselves more than once in the fog, using them. Then we would use the tried and true method when we left the beach. We would keep a wood spar with an eyebolt in the end with a rope tied to it. We

threw it out behind us and keeping the rope straight, we would go out seaward until we saw the ship's search light or heard the fog horn. It always worked, well almost always.

These are some of the things I remember as a member of the Mule's Salvage Boat Crew.

The Salvage Boat was an LCM. There was a cable stretched from the cockpit to the front ramp with a canvas stretched over it. We slept on the stretchers. We ate "C" Rations just like the rest of the beach party. When we went for fuel, we could usually get a hot meal and take a shower on the ship where we refueled. We had an old pair of hand hair clipper's and would give each other hair cuts, right on the Mike boat. I hated getting those darn salt showers on my head and other places. There was an old gasoline engine powered Maytag washer on the LCM also. Fresh water was the big thing. You never had enough. The stuff we would get from the beach always tasted like it had oil in it. That is why the extra fuel tank on the boat that we kept for water was handy. I seem to remember we were supposed to get by on 5 gal. each day.

Our job was to pull boats off the beach if they broached or had engine failure and get them back to one of the ships at anchorage. One of the big headaches we had was boats starting their engines when being towed backwards off the beach. The line would wrap around the shaft and in the screw. You couldn't use a knife to cut the rope underwater like Tarzan does in the movies. You had to use a saw to cut it loose.

THE COVE;

Off to left of Beach Red 1 there was a narrow opening through high cliffs with a lighthouse on the left that sat on the cliff over looking a small bay, that they called the Cove. At the far end of the bay was a nice sandy beach where boats could be beached for the night. Anyone who served on a boat crew would remember the cove by the lighthouse where the small craft would go at night, instead of going back to the Mule. The Bum Boats would always show up with beer, good old beer with the Indian head on the label. They would buy it by the case and then take the CO2 fire extinguishers, open the case and discharge the extinguisher to cool the beer. Luckily, we never had a fire and needed one. An order finally came out that all extinguisher would be checked on return to the ship, any found discharged without reason, would cause a Captain's Mast for the boat crew.

When things got boring, someone would pull a floor board out of a "P" boat and everyone would take a ride behind the boat. This was, of course, against the rules, but it was still fun until you hit a wave and flipped over.

Another favorite pastime was agitating the Marines. The Marines would stack their rifles at night. We would swim in to the beach at night, grab as many rifles as we could and throw them in the drink. This worked a couple of different times, until one night we followed our usual practice and got a surprise. They had strung wire all over the place and tied "C" Ration cans with stones and empty shell casings in them. When we got tangled in the wire, we woke everybody up. We ran back into the water and started to swim back out to the boat. That's when we got the big surprise. They had some big firecrackers or something like them. They threw them out into the water and darn near hit some of the guys. Needless to say that ended our harassing the Marines at night.

The most unpleasant task that the salvage boat had was picking up some Marines who had been sleeping on the beach instead of the jungle and were run over by Amtraks coming onto the beach in the middle of the night. We took them out to one of the APAs. Some of them didn't even last until we got them out. Today they would call in a helicopter for the job and maybe the outcome would have been different.

A TRIP TO ROOSEVELT ROADS

During one landing, we had to go to Roosevelt Roads with the salvage boat. I can't remember why. What made the trip memorable was the return trip. We started taking on water, but the

bilge pump was able to handle it. About the half-way mark back, the port engine quit and they couldn't get it started again. The starter went bad. The water started to get deeper. That's when someone remembered the Bilge pump on the port engine. We started to use helmets to bail with, but couldn't get ahead of the water. Since the starboard engine was running, I asked if could change starters. The Boat Officer said, "Go ahead." I removed the port starter, then the starboard one. All the time the water was getting deeper. For the information of those who have never been in the engine compartment of an LCM, the starter is on the left side of the engine. There is just enough room to get in to work on the starter, with your back up against the inside of the hull. By the time I got the starter bolted onto the engine, I was up to my neck in water. When I bent over to work on the starter, as I made up the wires, the Boat Officer kept asking if I was finished yet. I told him that I would let him know when I was done. I was putting the main cable from the batteries on, and was putting the nut on the stud with my fingers, when asked if I was finished yet. I had just about had it with everyone yelling at me and I shouted, "No," as loud as I could. He thought I said go. I heard the preheater come on. The preheater was a sparkplug that fuel was sprayed across to vaporize it so the engine would start easier. I never got a chance to say anything. I got the shock of my life sitting in that salt water, up against all that steel. The motormack shot the ether into the intake and lucky for me the engine started. I still have a scar on my right index finger pad where it split open. The rest of the trip was, so to say uneventful.

THE BAKERY

The bakery was located on the starboard side main deck on the aft side of the superstructure, across the passageway from the Electric Shop. The Electric shop sat in the middle of three passageways, with the aft side on an outside bulkhead, made for good ventilation. On the way to the mess deck with baked goods, they had to pass by the forward door. Sometimes we would distract them when they were taking the big trays of pie down to the mess deck. Now these pies were made in shallow cake pans about 18" x 24" x 1" deep. The mess cooks would take 3 or 4 trays at a time. While distracted by a decoy, we would take the top tray off and hide it in the oven that we were supposed to bake electrical windings in. That oven was used for just about everything but what it was designed for. Only a few guys in the "E" division knew about the pie in the oven. But they never lasted too long.

MY "P" BOAT TRAINING AND FIRST LANDING

When I went aboard ship as a EMFN striker, I thought it would be great getting aboard ship and watching my first landing. Little did know what was in store for me. I started with my name coming over the PA system to report to #4 hatch for boat engineman training. "They can't mean me. I'm an Electrician Striker!", I thought. So I went about with whatever it was I was working on. Again my name was called, so I thought I should go set things straight. On #4 hatch they set me straight. All FN's are in the boats as "macks," I found out.

THE TRAINING PROGRAM!!!

After telling us the front from the back, the right from the left of the boat, (they kept it in the simplest form so we new people could understand), I was told my duties!!!

1. Take cap off of engine fresh water supply, stick finger in. If it comes out wet, you have water in the system.
2. Pull out engine oil dip stick. If it has oil on it, engine oil is OK.
3. Pull out transmission dip stick. If it has oil on it, the transmission is OK.
4. Shift sand strainer's when you leave the beach.

(They never did say what to do if any of the above wasn't right.)

END OF TRAINING PROGRAM

SET CONDITION 1 ABLE OR MY FIRST LANDING OR MURPHY'S LAW STRIKES

My boat was aft Davit starboard side. Only thing nice about the location was that it was easy getting in and out of the boat.

3 AM. Set condition 1 Able. All boats away.

3:20-6:00 AM run out to an APA to load Marines. Circled off the fantail, starboard side. Trying to see the other boats and trying not to have the boat aft run up on our aft deck. We watched for our boat number to be hoisted on the yard arm. When it was up, we went in to Green "8" to pick up our load. Then we went out to where all the loaded boats were circling. We got the signal to get into line, and then all the boats spread parallel to the beach and we started our run for the beach. At this time, I should say that the Marines were a light weapons group. 30 cal. machine guns, BARs and the little mortars, 2.5 or something like that. And now the fun began.

We were in the first wave and the tide wasn't on time or we were too early, getting to the beach. The coxswain was trying to hit a run out from the beach so we would have deeper water to go into the beach. We were hit by another boat with the same idea. They hit us up forward by the ramp and sent us off at an angle to the beach almost hitting another boat. The coxswain tried to back us out but the waves just pushed further onto the bar. We were stuck. Now the Marine officer asked what could be done to get them to the beach so they could do their thing. He was informed that we would move when the tide came in and we could float free. Now this is the dumbest thing you will ever hear. The officer turned to the sergeant and said, "If this was the real thing what would you do?" The sergeant said, "We would probably have to go from here. But, we can wait for the tide now." "Well", the officer said, "We are going to go from here, just as if it was the real thing." He told the coxswain to lower the ramp. The coxswain advised against doing that and that we should wait for the tide to free us. "Lower the ramp. We are going from here," he was told again. The coxswain turned to me and told me to lower the ramp.

I said, "How do I do that? No one told me about lowering the ramp." (I guess that should have been #5 in the training program.) Now came the good part. "I've been to Little Creek boat training school and I'll tell him how its done," said the officer.

OK. Here goes.

1. Unstrap handle from bulkhead.

OK. I've done that.

2. Put handle on winch.

OK. I've done that.

3. Take up on winch and apply brake with brake handle using the other hand. Then lift dog so winch will run free.

OK. I've done that.

4. Let go of winch handle and release the brake all the way.

OK. I've done that.

"Lookout for that handle!!!" "Get that brake back on!!!" "Watch out the handles coming off!!!"

"There goes the handle over the side." "Too late anyway the ramp is all the way down and at the end of the cable."

It gets much more stupid now.

The officer said, "Let's go Marines." He and the sergeant are in the back of the boat and they start pushing the people in the front of them and out they all go. Funny thing was there was plenty of water depth on the beach side of the sand bar, and the Marines and all that equipment went to the bottom. Thank the good Lord above that they still had on the life preservers and came bobbing backup, minus a lot of gear. Needless to say that the the first good wave floated us off the bar and right on top of the Marines. We learned later that all the Marines were all right. Only their pride and some gear was damaged.

The Coxswain shut down the engine and we ended up beached on the beach(that's sideways), with our ramp bent almost under us. To get us off the beach, they used a bulldozer. They used it to get our ramp up so we could tie it off. We stuffed life jackets in the cracks from the ramp being bent. But when the dozer pushed us off the beach, his blade punched a hole in the hull under our armor plate. We stuffed that with a life jacket too.

When we started to head out to the ship, we began taking on a lot of water. So the coxswain headed for the nearest ship, the Monrovia APA 30 or something. They said go to number 5 hatch and they would take us aboard for repairs. The "P" boat went under just as we got the hook in the harness. Got salt water in the batteries and in the engine air intakes. I can remember the black water shooting out the exhaust as they hoisted us out of the water.

We washed our clothes and shoes out in fresh water and got something to eat and settled down to watch the show on the beach while our clothes dried. We ended leaving the Monrovia with wet clothes. They had the ramp changed, hull patched and the motor running in 1 1/2 hours and off we went. I think it was a week before we got back aboard ship to stay.

I enjoyed my time in the service and remember that time with affection, you had a place to sleep and eat, a regular job to do, and places to see and things to do and remember.

Funny thing is you don't remember being out in the boats, cold and wet in the middle of the night, trying to keep warm with the heat coming off the engine; hanging your head over the side, seasick, then your butt over the side because of the grease in the "C" rations you ate; catching the tip of a finger in the sea painter, and being glad it wasn't your whole finger; getting hit in the head by the boom hook when the boat came up on a wave, and you didn't see the hook.

I'm reading this back to my wife as I type. Her only comment was, "It sounds like you guys had fun."

Ted Weeks LCDR ('65-'67)

"Shooting stars"for the 8 o'clock position(before the days of GPS)and the 2 year tour as Navigator of the Muliphen was the best tour of my career.Can't think of any bad memories.

Henry Suddeth BT3 ('66-'68)

My fondest memory of the shipmates in the boiler room. The worst was transferring black oil.

John Spencer IC2 ('59-'62)

My fondest memory was the crew and the ports we visited. My worst was not being able to get my twin brother stationed aboard the Mule.

Tim Soster SN ('60-'62)

My fondest memory of the Muliphen was the crew. The worst was working at night, landing boats.

Homer Ratliff QMC ('52-'56)

The day I reported aboard for a Med cruise was my fondest memory. My worst was when Capt. Prince pulled me out of my rack and threatened to bust my a--.

Stanton R. Price EN2 ('50-'52)

My fondest memory was of all the memories of the boat shop crew I served with. The worst was the day on board the Muliphen before my transfer.

Edward L. Martin EN3 ('61-'64)

My fondest memory of the Muliphen was meeting my wife. Worst was leaving.

Alfonse M. Makosky ENCS ('51-'55)

My fondest memory was of the Med cruise. No bad memories.

Thomas Lyles QM3 ('60-'62)

My fondest memory was of my shipmates and the Med cruise. Worst memory was watching her go down.

Jay Lose HM1 ('63-'64)

My worst memory was 22 Nov. 1963. We had just returned from the Caribbean cruise when it came over the ship's P.A. that President Kennedy had been shot.

Norman Hearn EM3 ('61-'64)

My fondest memory was the fellowship in the Electric Shop, worst was rigging Med lights before liberty could commence. I came aboard in February of 1961. I was on board two days when we had a collision off the coast of Virginia with a Greek merchant ship. I was aboard 3 years 3 months 3 days. We made 3 Med Cruises. The first one, we made landing for the movie "The Longest Day". Since I was the junior guy in the division, I was bow hook on a "Mike" Boat for condition I-Alpha. LOTS OF FUN!

Larry W. Glasco BM1 ('59-'64)

I met quite a few of the best guys in the world and enjoyed the Mule while I was there, and teaching Herman Autry how to use the Bos'n Pipe.

John Bundschuh EN2 ('51-'52)

My fondest memory was the comraderie, the worst was Cdr. MF Green.

Don Beane EN2('61-'62)

My fondest memory was riding out the hurricane en route to Norfolk from the Med run 1962. The worst was not being able to go on liberty in Turkey because I didn't have a set of dog tags.

Herman T. Autry SMC ('61-'66)

My fondest memory was standing on the signal Bridge and watching the crew of the Muliphen execute an exercise like a fine oiled machine and knowing they are my friends and shipmates. Don't remember any bad memories.

Dr. John D. Nuschke, Sr.(Medical Officer)

A Bos'n appeared in Sick Bay one morning complaining of an "upset stomach". My first question was, "How much coffee do you drink per day?" He answered, "Gee Doc, not much, only 40-50 cups."----Diagnosis?

A sailor arrived at sick call requesting that I remove the tattoos from his ear lobes. Upon examination, I found that he had tattoos on almost every square inch of his body. Why just the ear lobes?

James Anderson (56-58)

I can't really add much about the Beirut landing that you don't already have with one exception, and this is going back forty years you know. Anyway, 2 or 3 nights before we landed the

marines, sometime after midnight we either used one of our LCVs or someone else's to send what looked to be 10 or 12 men dressed in black uniforms. I don't think they were Americans, but I'm not sure. I know it was after midnight because I went on watch then until four(or 0400). I never heard anything concerning it before or after.

Robert H Cook SK2 (54-56)

I came to the USS Muliphen AKA 61 as a seaman apprentice in August 1954 after boot camp at Great Lakes. I did my share of swabbing decks and chipping paint. Lloyd "Gator" Brymer was my Boatswain Mate boss. "Gator" was usually a BM3 whenever he wasn't busted back to Seaman after a liberty. He was quite a guy, and I sure would enjoy seeing him again, assuming he is still alive. We drank a lot of rotten coffee together. I note that his name is not included on the roster you previously furnished to all of us. "Gator" was a areal first class character.

Later, I struck for Storekeeper, and among my duties I managed the ship's store records for the Supply Officer, one LTC J.J. Danko. I'll not forget him either. He was a pretty good guy, for an officer. I made SK2 before I left the Muliphen in the summer of 1956 and transferred to the Motor Torpedo Boat(MBT)Detail at Norfolk.

The Muliphen never got to the "Med" while I was aboard, but I did have some great liberty in San Juan, Kingston, St. John, Bermuda, Ciudad Trujillo and best of all by far, Havana(before Castro). We did spend a hellish amount of time practicing with the boats off Vieques, Puerto Rico. I'll not forget the several months we spent in drydock at Bethlehem Steel Shipyard on Staten Island. Brooklyn and Bayonne were some good liberty too. I had my first car in those days, a not very sleek 1952 Dodge Meadowlark, and we were all quite shocked when it was announced while we were still in Norfolk that anyone who wanted could bring their personal car down to the pier, have it loaded on the ship, and transported free to Staten Island with us. It was great to have the old Dodge to tool around in Brooklyn and Bayonne, and even over to Manhattan. My best friend on the Muliphen was Joe Combs, from Festus, MO. He and I used to get his '54 Mercury and go to way out to the point on the Ocean View Beach, put his aerial as far as it would go, and tune in KMOX in St. Louis and listen to Harry Carey broadcast Cardinal Games. Joe turned me into a Cardinal fan. And we even got to see them(Stan the Man and Co.) play in New York.

Szymanski, Bernard T. EM 3 ('57-61)

I remember when I first came aboard the Mule, fresh out of Electrician's School at Great Lakes, Ill. I was on TAD in Norfolk awaiting the Ship's return. There was a line handling party on the pier and as the Mule was being nudged to the pier by the tugs, the lines were being tossed to the line handlers. I was standing there with my seabag and gear and not doing anything. One of the ship's cooks saw me standing there doing nothing to help the line handling party and hollared down to me, "What's the matter sailor, aren't you hungry? I guess he meant that if I didn't assist, I wasn't going to get fed when I went aboard ship. So I helped.

Once in Gitmo or the Dominican Republic, we anchored out. After Ship's Work knocked off, we set up a cluster light on the starboard side, of the fan tail and lowered it about 2 or 3 feet from the water. That attracted a whole school of minnows that were bait fish. Every once in a while you would see a swirl as they were gobbled up. One of the guys, I think it was Goodaker, took his dog tags, attached them to a hook and lowered it over the side. The next thing we knew he had a strong tug on the line and he hauled in a large tarpon. Afdter a big struggle, he got it on deck. It must have weighed more than 30 pounds, was about 36" long and had a huge head. To get his dogtags back, Goodie had to cut off the fish's head. He then threw the head over the port side. We didn't know that the Captain's gig was tied there to the Jib Boom. The Bloody head

splattered all over. The next morning, I don't know who it was, was down there clearing up the mess before the Captain need the gig.

Tittle, Jerry MM('62-'65)

My Muliphen memories have lasted a lifetime, especially getting to know some very wonderful people and friends. I won't mention any names, but the wildest tattoo was one guy who came back to the ship with a fly tattooed on his private parts.

My worst memories were sitting off coast of Crete for nearly 80 days with no liberty; Port and Starboard liberty, in port; cleaning bilges in the Engine room and painting same.

Richard, Joe BM3('61-'63) 3rd. Div.

July first, 1961, I left Naples on a train to Rome, Italy. When I arrived in Rome with ten other shipmates, we had rooms at the Columbus Hotel about 4 blocks from St. Peter's Square. For three days we all took tours and on July 5, 1961 on my son's(Michael) 5th birthday, we had an audience with Pope John the 23rd. We toured the Vatican and we were allowed to go up on the very top of the Dome! St. Peter's had many alters inside. We also were in the room where they vote to elect a new Pope. The train ride back to Naples was so gorgeous.

Riley, Donald O. Sgt. USMC(Jan.-Oct. 1958)

My unit was SU#1 H&S Co. 1st. Bn.(Reinf.) 8th. Marines. As a support group, we had engineers, shore party, equipment operators, water supply, truck drivers, ets. About 80-90 Marines total. Some of our guys did help in the "Mule's" laundry, bakery, and standing watch. Some of our brass served as officers of the deck.

Our planned four month Med Cruise(NELM) turned into nine months and a landing(police action-show of force) in Beirut, Lebanon.

The convoy consisted of the USS Muliphen AKA-61, USS Speigil Grove LSD-32, USS Fremont APA 44, a destroyer escort(I think)818(Actually USS Olmsted APA 188 and USS Mount McKinley AGC 6<<FMR>>). Do not remember the other ships. I remember one naval officer whose name was Patapa, Herkos(second class) Signalman and a fellow by the name of Kelley, who was in ship's maintenance. Believe he was from Evansville, Indiana.

We departed Moorehead City, NC January 9, 1958. The ports visited:(Liberty & being Marines, we had long hikes ashore). ((see correct list page one Rremembering Beirut<FMR>)

((Almeria, Spain landing))All of the Muliphen's Marines were used as the "bad group" of defenders for this exercise, so we had to be in place before the landing. we Transferred to the Speigil Grove, mounted 20 man rubber rafts and rowed 3-4 miles to shore.

We had served our (4)months time and were anchored at the dock in Gibraltar for the second time, ready for the trip back to the States when all ships sounded their whistles and horns, indicating 'all hands return to you ship' ...NOW. Whithin an hour or so, we had weighed anchor and were underway east. Many sailors and marines "on liberty" were stranded on the beach.

For several days we ate emergency rations consisting of roast beef every meal. We had not had time to reprovision at Gibraltar.

We greeted just over the horizon of the western shore of Lebanon by what was assumed to be their military force. The Muliphen delivered into their hands about (6) of our (10) "Mike" boats. ((We only started out with 8 and came back with most of these.<<FMR>>)) Before soing so, all US identification had to be removed. Shortly after, they left the boats. We moved closer to shore and landed a few days later.

We were on the beach for at least two months during which the Muliphen was at anchor and didn't dock until later. When the "M" boats returned, they had seen a lot of action.

Our unit was relieved in mid to late September and were ordered to return to our original ships. Returned to Morehead City October 5, 1958.

O'Connor, John, MM2 ('44-)

At Pier 90 NYC, I met a couple of CPOs assigned to the same new ship as I. These chiefs arranged for me to be assigned to the Muliphen precommissioning detail. One of my duties was to drive the ship's jeep for Capt. Williamson. I also crawled through engine and fire rooms as the yard pipe fitters were welding equipment in place.

Commissioning occurred 23 Oct 1944 at the Brooklyn Navy yard, then a shakedown to Annapolis and Newport, RI., and finally underway for Key West FL. The run down the East Coast was rather rough or so we new pollywogs thought. During one of our early steaming watches, my buddy Link was in great distress and looking for sympathy. Chief Murphy "suggested" Link get a wire brush, two buckets (one with diesel oil) and polish the deck plates. Link was forever cured of mal de mer.

One of our mates from Brooklyn, NY found a Kosher Deli in Key West. He bought a salami about 36" long and with a friend went bar hopping. The SP decided his buddy was too rowdy and grabbed him. Shapiro beat the SP over the head with the salami. our OD had to bail him out of the brig.

While in the Caribbean we were the target for a series of submarine launched torpedo shots. The inert torpedoes were designed to home in on screw noise, and they did. As a result we had a nicked screw and a shaft vibration for the duration. Also while we waited for them to "fire" at us, our bos'n from Bridgeport, Conn. decided to go shark fishing. He made a large hook from a stainless steel rod and baited with a 1/4 lb. chunk of meat. The fishing was good, the shark great, the swimming uninviting.

We crossed through the Canal and entered the Pacific 17 Dec 1944, Christmas midway to Pearl and New Year's in Honolulu. Our continued westerly course carried us across the 180th meridian and membership in the "Golden Dragon" Society.

Marines and their heavy equipment came aboard in the Mariannas and we hit IWO 19 Feb 1945. I was assigned the forward starboard 40mm-gun tub for Condition 1 Alpha. I never did fire the guns, but had a great view of the flag being raised. Joe Rosenthal, the photographer, had been our passenger.

We unloaded supplies during daylight and retired to sea with convoy at night. We witnessed the sinking of the carrier Bismark Sea and strikes against other ships in the convoy by Japanese kamikaze pilots. We resupplied at Guam and hit Okinawa 1 April 1945. Back to the Mariannas to prepare for invasion of Japan when we received news the war was over. We visited Tokyo harbor within a week of the war's end.

From then on we cruised the Pacific, crossing the equator several times and undergoing an intense shellback initiation. Every swim call required a small boat and machine gun as shark patrol.

On one trip back to the States, we loaded thousands of cases of beer in the bottom of all five holds. The first lieutenant was surprised to discover that he was several hundred cases short--he could not find a trace of them. My gig was the refrigeration equipment including the icemaker. By boss, the chief engineer, Commander McKinney was my best customer for ice during the trip (the beer was always cold).

While at anchor one day in Manila harbor, my cousin came in on a little wooden hull mine sweeper. He sotted AKA61 and came aboard for a visit. We had a great afternoon. After dinner he decided to go back to his ship, only to return to the Muliphen because he couldn't find his ship. After some effort, flashing the 8" light around the harbor with the sweeper's call letters, he

went to the 24" light at the stack. The whole harbor lit up-demanding he kill the light! We secured. The Next morning the sweeper came back after taking on fresh water at a remote location, and my cousin rejoined his ship.

On jour way back home on a great circle route, we lost our stern tube packing due to the Manila Harbor mud. We were just south of the Aleutians and adrift while we repacked the tube gland. On this trip we had sea water ballast in a fuel tank. You guessed it! In a routine switching of tanks, the sea water refused to burn and we were dead in the water again. Our intrepid fire room crew got us underway again without serious damage.

As far as I know we all got home safe and sound.

Engels, John (52-54)

Just for a lark the other night, sleepless, I typed in "Muliphen" into Sherlock, and to my utter amazement came up with several sited devoted to this humble unassuming vessel.

I came aboard with a new commission from the NROTC at Notre Dame, and was aboard from '52 until early in '54. All the time at Little Creek or in the Caribbean, training operations at Vieques, off North Narolina, etc., one trip to Gitmo, otherwise very unexciting duty. At first I was crypto officer, then had the machinists division(don't remember the rating, or the number ot the divisionany longer,) then Assistant Boat Group officer, then briefly, had the boat group to myself. But I thought it dull duty, and applied for a transfer to Korea, but instead was given duty as Communications Officer with CTG 7.3, the joint task force that conducted Operation Castle at Eniwetok-Bikini(that was the Bravo shot of 1954.) After that Assistant Staff Communications Officer with 7th Fleet on the Coral Sea in the Med for my last six months or so. But the Muliphen was the baptism into Naval life for me...began badly with what, looking back on it, I remember as a CO who was extremely unhappy with his assignment. But his replacement, Captain Sampson, was a fine man, and I liked my duty with the Boat Group very much, and at the end was sorry to leave. But that waqs a very long time ago...I'm 70 now....

-Robert R. Styles, BT2, 1 September 1965 --first MULEKICKER AWARD recipient

J.W. May, L/CPL USMC August 1966 MULE TROOPER recipient