

## **"FRIENDLY FIRE", 10-10 DAY 1961 by Bob Johannesen, 8th Co.**

I was DCA in USS HULL (DD945). On Pres. Eisenhower's Formosa Patrol, the ship was on a liberty visit, moored fore-and-aft between buoys rigged for downstream release in the Love River, Kaohsiung, Formosa (long called Formosa, in recent times Taiwan has become the generally accepted name for the island). Armed sentries were posted on the focs'l and the fantail.

One third of the crew was granted liberty, transported the 80-or-so yards to and from the wharf (which was on the starboard beam) by the ship's whaleboat and Captain's Gig. Liberty expired at midnight, and when I came up to be briefed to take the Quarterdeck mid-watch, most of the crew had already returned aboard. The off-going OOD and the POW told the story about one of the BMSNs who had helped the ChiNats celebrate the 10-10 Holiday (Double-Ten Day - recognizing the Wuchang Uprising on 10 October 1911 which ultimately led to the collapse of the imperial Qing dynasty and establishment of the Republic of China on 1 January 1912). BMSN did so by lining ten rum-and-cokes up on the bar and trying to toss them down. He quit after three and needed the help of shipmates to navigate to the wharf to catch the whaleboat back to the ship.

About 20:00, impatient and not wanting to wait for the whaleboat, BMSN jumped into the Love River to swim to the ship. Not a smart move - if the Good Lord wanted to give the world an enema, the Love River would be the site of insertion (bodies of old people and girl babies were regularly flowing with garbage and human waste past the ship - or bouncing off the transom - as they passed down river to the sea). The OOD sent the whaleboat after BMSN and, after a bit of a struggle, the crew dragged him into the whaleboat and delivered him to the ship. The Corpsman gave him a number of booster shots, rinsed his eyes, ears and nose and made him gargle, then told the BMC to supervise a hot soapy shower before turning him into his bunk (1st Division Compartment is below the focs'l). We on-coming mid-watch watch standers chuckled, then settled into the watch routine. After checking the last of the liberty party aboard and verifying that all hands had returned, I took the Sound and Security Patrol on a turn about the ship, starting aft and working forward. When we reached the 1st Division Compartment, BMSN was out of his bunk, wrestling with shipmates (who were being supervised by the BMC). I told the BMC that when he had BMSN in his bunk and quieted down to report to me. I returned to the Quarterdeck (after end of the deckhouse, starboard side) and started a log entry. Shortly thereafter, the Sound and Security

Patrol came running aft down the starboard side main deck and reported that BMSN was on deck fighting with the Focs'l Sentry.

I sent the Sound and Security Patrol to awaken and inform the XO about what was going on; ordered the Messenger of the Watch to remain on the Quarterdeck; picked up my trusty symbol of authority, the Long Glass a la Vice-Admiral Sir Lord Nelson; ordered the POW to load his .45 and follow me; and started forward up the starboard side.

At the starboard weather break I met the Fosc'l Sentry, bloody uniform, bent over holding his side and saying, "BMSN has a knife, he took my rifle! BMSN has a knife, he took my rifle!...." I ordered him to go to Sick Bay and await the Corpsman; glanced at the POW manipulating the .45; continued forward through the weather break, and rounded MT 51.

BMSN was seated on the Anchor Windlass, wearing a skivvy shirt and the M-1 ammo bandolier, and preparing to load the M1. I heard the rifle range "chunk" and knew it was loaded.

He swung it toward me, aimed and shouted, "Stop, Mr. Johannesen! Go back! Go back!" I DID stop!, and said something like, "Okay, BMSN, I'm stopped. Why don't you put the gun down before you get into more trouble and come with me...."

BMSN repeated - the barrel of the M1 about 10 feet away, looking about 2 feet in diameter - "Go back! Go back!"

I responded, "Okay, BMSN, I'm going back," put my hands up (still holding the Long Glass), turned around, took three steps, and he shot me.

The round went through my belt - little hole in the back, bigger hole in the front - knocking me to the deck (my medical record reads "Wound, missile, through & through RLQ, no N or A involvement"). I was really surprised.

I laid on my right side on the starboard side of MT 51, not really wanting to move, thinking, "That was a really dumb-ass thing for BMSN to do. He's going to be in real trouble now!" BMSN then started shouting, "Mr. Johannesen thinks he's dead, Mr. Johannesen thinks he's dead!" and shot me a second time - just grazed my left elbow. Then I was scared!

There was now an awareness throughout the ship that something was happening. Two PO1s came up the port side, saw me, stopped, and started trying to figure out what to do. BMSN started shooting at them; hit the QM1 in his right knee; the GM1 dragged him behind the gun mount.

BMSN started firing at folks on the wharf, and they started dancing around and yelling. He loaded a second clip and continued firing.

All this time, the POW had been pounding the .45 on the deckhouse bulkhead. A TM2 just reported aboard from B school, he'd not fired the weapon since boot cap. He'd put the magazine in the pistol backward and was trying to seat it. An FT1 came up, took the .45 from the POW, cleared and charged the weapon, and reported to the XO who had just arrived on scene and was sheltering behind the weather break. The XO sent FT1 forward.

FT1 marched smartly, with pistol pointed skyward, stopped at my head, executed a smart left turn, spread his feet (kicking me in the head), dropped the .45 to firing position, and clicked off the safety... after a pause he clicked the safety back on, raised pistol skyward, came to attention, pivoted to face the XO, and asked "Request permission to shoot, Sir."

XO: "Shoot, FT1, shoot!"

FT1: "Aye, aye sir." Smart about face, assumed firing position (kicking me in the head again, clicked the safety off. Paused. Clicked safety on, raised pistol skyward, pivoted toward the XO, "Shall I shoot to wound or to kill him, Sir?"

XO: " #^)&(#\$%#\$ , shoot, FT1, just SHOOT!"

FT1: "Aye, aye, Sir." Didn't turn, clicked safety off, didn't aim, pointed the .45 in BMSN's general direction and pulled the trigger five times - emptying the magazine. One round hit BMSN in the leg and sent him flying; the whole crew (it seemed!) piled on BMSN.

The XO got things organized. I was air evaced (is that the way it's spelled?) to the Army Support Activity Hospital in Taipei; BMSN and QM1 were air evaced to Naval Hospital Yokosuka. Focs'I Sentry was treated on board.

I returned to limited duty aboard HULL three weeks later, then to full duty. All this before I even made JayGee. And I got to stay with the ship for a three-year tour - MPA, DCA, CHENG.

Hospital stay at Taipei produced another sea story; courts martial of BMSN in Subic Bay even another sea story; the notification to Helen Marr a third; and my Dad's response to the announcement sent to my parents is a fourth. Too bad I don't drink beer like I used to.